

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Beloved Managing Director Cynthia Fuhrman Departs Portland Center Stage After 25 Years of Stewardship**



**February 28, 2022 — PORTLAND, OR.** Beloved managing director, Cynthia Fuhrman, departs Portland Center Stage after helping found the company in 1988, as the Portland branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Fuhrman then oversaw the company’s transition to an independent organization in 1994. She later left PCS, but returned as the director of marketing and was promoted to chief operating officer. She ultimately became the managing director in 2017.

Fuhrman collectively spent 25 years in crucial leadership roles at PCS. She ensured the company’s financial resilience through multiple recessions and epidemics; helped the company earn national recognition for its artistic excellence, as well as its community engagement; and supported the careers of multiple generations of theater industry professionals, both locally and nationally — most recently as a major lobbyist for national relief programs to support artists and performance venues during the COVID-19 shutdown.

Fuhrman departs PCS in early April to continue her long-standing support of the arts industry in a new role with the New York City-based arts consulting firm Tom O’Connor Consulting Group ([www.tomocgroup.com](http://www.tomocgroup.com)). There, she will lead a team in finding the next generation of talent for

the arts field nationally as the vice president of executive search. Fuhrman will remain in Portland in this new role. PCS will begin a national search to fill the position.

"I'm profoundly grateful for my partnership and deep collaboration with Cynthia in my first few— wildly eventful — years at PCS," Artistic Director Marissa Wolf said. "She's the best damn co-pilot I could have asked for, and I've learned so much from her generous, innovative leadership that I will carry with me forever. The field is lucky to have her continued visionary voice at the forefront. I'm thrilled for her journey ahead, as well as for the exciting opportunities that await PCS as the company continues to flourish from the strong foundations Cynthia has helped build."

"It has been a great joy in my life to have had such a wonderful journey with Portland Center Stage over so many years," said Fuhrman. "From the unique experience of being part of setting up and opening a new large regional theater in just six months (when OSF Portland launched); to see it through the successful spin-off from OSF to PCS; and then to return to PCS after its metamorphosis to the spectacular company in residence at The Armory, has been incredible. I have met and worked with the most creative and brilliant theater professionals in the field, and could not be prouder of what we've built. The past four years working with Marissa have been a gift, and I could not have asked for a better partner with whom to navigate the Covid impacts on our company. I have every confidence that PCS will continue to thrive and be a leader in the exciting national change happening in the theater industry under her vision. I look forward to supporting PCS in every way I can as I take on my new position, and to continue to cheer on Oregon's indispensable arts community."

"It can be hard to separate the history of PCS from Cynthia, as she has been a significant force in the growth and success of the company. I am not surprised that she was recruited to take on a national role, and we wish her all the best," said PCS Board Chair Stacey Caldwell Roberts. "A legacy of that success is the strong management team she has helped build at the theater. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Marissa Wolf and an interim managing director who

we expect to announce soon, we know that the theater is ready to continue to recover and thrive while we conduct a national search for Cynthia's replacement."

## **PORTLAND CENTER STAGE**

[Portland Center Stage](#) was established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and became independent in 1994. The company produces a mix of classic, contemporary, and world premiere productions, along with a variety of high-quality education and community programs. As part of its dedication to new play development, the company has produced 28 world premieres, many of which were developed at its JAW New Play Festival. PCS's home is The Armory, a historic building originally constructed in 1891. After a major renovation, The Armory opened in 2006 as the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, the first performing arts venue in the country, and the first building in Portland to achieve a LEED Platinum rating.

Portland Center Stage is committed to identifying and interrupting instances of racism and all forms of oppression, through the principles of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA). Learn more at [pcs.org/idea](https://pcs.org/idea).

[Portland Center Stage's 2021-2022 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars the Regional Arts and Culture Council and the James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation; Season Sponsors the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the state of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts, and US Bank; and Producing Sponsors Ellyn Bye, Ray and Bobbi Davis, Jess Dishman, Ronni Lacroute, Mark Spencer, Argyle Winery, and Deschutes Brewery.

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