



PRESS CONTACT: Claudie Fisher
503.445.3765
claudief@pcs.org

M E D I A R E L E A S E

Portland Center Stage Announces 2016-2017 Season

PCS's 29th season marks the launch of the *Northwest Stories* series and the 10th anniversary in the Gerding Theater at the Armory

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS	HOLD THESE TRUTHS
THE OREGON TRAIL	HERSHEY FELDER AS IRVING BERLIN
ASTORIA	HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW
LAUREN WEEDMAN DOESN'T LIVE HERE ANYMORE	WILD AND RECKLESS
MARY'S WEDDING	CONSTELLATIONS
and our holiday special THE SANTALAND DIARIES	

March 7, 2016 – PORTLAND, OR. Portland Center Stage's 2016-2017 season marks the launch of the company's *Northwest Stories* series and a season-long celebration for the 10th anniversary in the Gerding Theater at the Armory. The *Northwest Stories* series – highlighting the history, culture and artists rooted in our own region – includes two world premieres: *Astoria*, based on the best-selling novel by Peter Stark and adapted by PCS Artistic Director Chris Coleman; and *Wild and Reckless*, a new musical event from local folk rockers, Blitzen Trapper. *The Oregon Trail* and *Hold These Truths* round out this season's *Northwest Stories* offerings.

Kicking off the 2016-2017 season is the delightful and darkly comic musical *The Little Shop of Horrors*. Other musical treats include *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, Lauren Weedman's debut on the U.S. Bank Main Stage – backed by a rocking band – in *Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, and *His Eye is on the Sparrow*, a musical biography of Ethel Waters. Two love stories close the season: *Mary's Wedding* celebrates the resiliency of the heart in the Ellyn Bye Studio, and *Constellations* raises questions between choice and destiny – featuring Silas Weir Mitchell and Bree Turner (Monroe and Rosalee on NBC's *Grimm*). Rounding out the season is a special engagement of *The Santaland Diaries* during the holiday season.

Season packages are on sale now. To purchase season tickets, call 503-445-3700 or visit www.pcs.org. Back by popular demand is the Create Your Own Package, starting at \$70.50 for three plays. The U.S. Bank Main Stage Series starts at \$164.50. The Everything Series starts at \$246.25. Students and those 35 and under enjoy special pricing for both series. The eight-admission Flexpass is available for \$450.

Groups of 10 or more can sign up for the priority seating waiting list today and purchase tickets to the new season starting on July 1, 2016. Groups that book by August 31 receive 30% off regular ticket prices. Groups receive one free ticket for every 20 tickets purchased. For more information call 503-445-3761 or visit www.pcs.org/groups.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE'S 2016-2017 SEASON

Please Note: Date ranges include preview performances.

Official opening night dates are listed separately.

Little Shop of Horrors

By Alan Menken and Howard Ashman

U.S. Bank Main Stage

September 10 – October 16, 2016

Opening Night/Press Night: Sep. 16 at 7:30 p.m.

With a score that is part rock 'n' roll, part doo-wop and part Motown, *Little Shop* is the story of the shy and love-struck florist's assistant Seymour, who finds fame, fortune and a whole lot more when he nurtures a strange little plant with a strong — and scary — thirst. Based on the darkly comic Roger Corman film of the same name, Menken and Ashman created a unique musical that swept the Off-Broadway awards when it premiered, and has continued to be a crowd favorite ever since.

- New York Drama Critics Circle (Best Musical)
- Drama Desk Awards (Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Lyrics, Outstanding Special Effects)
- Outer Critics Circle Awards (Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical, Outstanding Music and Lyrics)

-Northwest Stories-

Hold These Truths

By Jeanne Sakata

Ellyn Bye Studio

October 1 – November 13, 2016

Opening Night/Press Night: Oct. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

As the U.S. joins World War II, Gordon Hirabayashi agonizes over government orders to forcibly remove and mass incarcerate all people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast. As he fights to reconcile his country's betrayal with his passionate belief in the U.S. Constitution, Hirabayashi journeys toward a greater understanding of America's triumphs — and a confrontation with its failures. *Inspired by the true story of University of Washington student, Gordon Hirabayashi.*

-Northwest Stories-

The Oregon Trail

By Bekah Brunstetter

U.S. Bank Main Stage

October 29 – November 20, 2016

Opening Night/Press Night: Nov. 4 at 7:30 p.m.

You have died of dysentery! For those who grew up playing "The Oregon Trail" computer game, dysentery was serious business. In this fresh and funny retelling of our history, two Janes traverse the Oregon Trail. "Now Jane" is playing the computer game in 1997; "Then Jane" is in a covered wagon in 1848. A judgey game show narrator, a domineering sister and two oxen try to corral the two Janes. Fate maneuvers them both to a conclusion that changes their lives and sends them to the end of the trail.

Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin

By Hershey Felder

U.S. Bank Main Stage

November 30 – December 30, 2016

Opening Night/Press Night: Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Songwriter Jerome Kern said it all: "Irving Berlin ... *IS* American music." In this tour de force

performance by award-winning pianist and performer Hershey Felder, the remarkable story of “America’s Composer” takes us from the depths of anti-Semitism in Czarist Russia to New York’s Lower East Side — and ultimately throughout America and the world. Featuring Irving Berlin’s most popular and enduring songs, Hershey Felder’s masterful creation of character and musical performance makes this evening with Irving Berlin an unforgettable journey that epitomizes the American dream. Hailed as “the greatest songwriter that has ever lived,” by George Gershwin, Irving Berlin is known for innumerable American classics such as “White Christmas,” “God Bless America,” “Anything You Can Do” and “Top Hat, White Tie and Tails.”

- *L.A. Times* Critics’ Pick: “Richly entertaining and ultimately touching.”

The Santaland Diaries

By David Sedaris

Adapted for the stage by Joe Mantello

Ellyn Bye Studio

November 26 – December 24, 2016

Opening Night/Press Night: Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Based on the true chronicles of David Sedaris’ experience as Crumpet the Elf in Macy’s Santaland display, this cult classic riffs on a few of Sedaris’ truly odd encounters with his fellow man during the height of the holiday crunch. “An alternative sort of holiday fun is to be had with Portland Center Stage’s delightful production of *The Santaland Diaries* ... playful fun abounds!” -*The Oregonian*

-Northwest Stories World Premiere-

Astoria: Part One

By Chris Coleman

Based on the book *ASTORIA: John Jacob Astor and Thomas Jefferson’s Lost Pacific Empire, A Story of Wealth, Ambition, and Survival* by Peter Stark

U.S. Bank Main Stage

January 14 – February 12, 2017

Opening Night/Press Night: Jan. 20 at 7:30 p.m.

PCS Artistic Director Chris Coleman adapts the true story of this harrowing dual journey — one over land, one by sea — from the best-selling novel by Peter Stark for the first world premiere in PCS’s new

Northwest Stories series. Anyone who has read this fascinating book is probably wondering — wait, how are they going to do that? Magic. Magic. Magic — and over two seasons. Coleman is bringing this story to life not only in a rough and rugged physical way — but also meticulously creating plausible dialogue for our historical characters. At a time when the edge of American settlement barely reached beyond the Appalachian Mountains, two visionaries — President Thomas Jefferson and millionaire John Jacob Astor — foresaw that one day the Pacific would dominate world trade as much as the Atlantic did in their day. Just two years after the Lewis and Clark expedition concluded in 1806, Jefferson and Astor turned their sights westward once again. Thus began one of history’s dramatic but largely forgotten turning points in the conquest of the North American continent.

His Eye is on the Sparrow

A musical biography of Ethel Waters

By Larry Parr

Ellyn Bye Studio

February 4 – March 19, 2017

Opening Night/Press Night: Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m.

From a rough and spirit-breaking childhood to being an unwilling teen bride, Ethel Waters became a Vaudeville success, a recording sensation and crossed racial barriers to emerge as a Broadway and Hollywood star. But a reputation for being difficult and her own distrust of those who might employ her or love her — partly a response to the horrors of Jim Crow America — caused her to lose everything and become a recluse, until she found new strength as a gospel performer. Through it all, there were the songs – the ones that gave her solace and the ones that made her a legend. This is her remarkable story, filled with the greatest hits of a lifetime, including “Stormy Weather” and “Am I Blue?”

-Northwest Stories World Premiere-

Wild and Reckless:

A new musical event from Blitzen Trapper

U.S. Bank Main Stage

March 16 – April 30, 2017

Opening Night/Press Night: Mar. 24 at 7:30 p.m.

Portland folk rockers Blitzen Trapper refuse to be pinned down and boxed in. The acclaimed band has mixed genre after genre into their musical arsenal over the fifteen years of playing together. Now they're unleashing their sound — and knack for lyrical storytelling — on the PCS stage. They've mined their Oregonian roots to create a show that asks: What's the sound of a life falling through the cracks? Fusing the energy of a rock concert with the imaginative possibility of the theater, Blitzen Trapper and PCS join forces in this new project, tracing the unforgettable stories of ordinary Americans caught in an extraordinary struggle to not get left behind.

- “No indie band tells campfire tales better than these flannel-clad Oregonians.” -*Rolling Stone*
- “Part Pavement, part Grateful Dead, part Neil Young, these Northwesterners' sound is a tasty rock 'n' roll Jamba Juice.” -*Spin*

-World Premiere-

Lauren Weedman Doesn't Live Here Anymore

By Lauren Weedman

U.S. Bank Main Stage

March 17 – April 30, 2017

Opening Night/Press Night: Mar. 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Lauren's current obsessions: love and heartbreak; big hair and tight jeans; Loretta Lynn and John Prine — or songs she thinks make her look skinny and appropriately tragic. The hilarious and versatile Lauren Weedman (*Bust, The People's Republic of Portland*) knows a thing or two about love gone wrong, and she's ready to sing her heart out about it (Yes! Lauren sings!) and tell you a few tall tales, too. Lauren will be joined by a band of fine musicians; and we're pretty sure her hair will be bigger than ever.

Mary's Wedding

By Stephen Massicotte

Ellyn Bye Studio

April 15 – May 28, 2017

Opening Night/Press Night: Apr. 21 at 7:30 p.m.

When Mary and Charlie unexpectedly find one another sheltering in a barn during a thunderstorm, a tentative love is born. But the year is 1914, and Mary and Charlie must surrender their fates to the uncertainties of their tumultuous times during the First World War. In this award-winning Canadian

play, their love story unfolds against the most devastating conflagration of war that the world had yet seen, as the playwright weaves time, dreams and memory together to remind us that the heart is beautifully resilient.

- “A brilliantly written piece reflecting true to heart relationships and what is needed to work through obstacles to reach the one you love.” -*Chicago Stage Standard*

Constellations

By Nick Payne

U.S. Bank Main Stage

May 13 – June 18, 2017

Starring Silas Weir Mitchell and Bree Turner (Monroe and Rosalee on NBC’s *Grimm*)

This spellbinding, romantic journey begins with a simple encounter between a man and a woman. But what happens next defies the boundaries of the world we think we know delving into the infinite possibilities of their relationship and raising questions about the difference between choice and destiny. Imagine: What if everything you’ve ever done exists along with everything you’ve never done?

- “Mesmerizing and brilliant! Payne is one of the most dazzlingly gifted dramatists of a new generation — sharp, funny, wise, humane.” -*Vogue*
- “Nick Payne’s gorgeous two-character drama may be the most sophisticated date play Broadway has seen. Sexy ... gorgeous ... a treat.” -*The New York Times*

SEASON TICKET INFORMATION

The 2016-2017 season is on sale now. To purchase season packages or learn more call 503-445-3700 or visit www.pcs.org. Back by popular demand is the Create Your Own Package, starting at \$70.50 for three plays. The U.S. Bank Main Stage Series starts at \$164.50. The Everything Series starts at \$246.25. Students and those 35 and under enjoy special pricing for both series. The eight-admission Flexpass is available for \$450. Season ticket holders get the best seats, great savings, ticket exchange flexibility, a designated patron services representative, discounts on additional tickets and more.

GROUP SALES INFORMATION

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ACCESSIBILITY

PCS is committed to making its performances and facilities accessible to all patrons. For every production at PCS, we are happy to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers, as well as provide professional audio description, sign interpretation and large print playbills. PCS is now pleased to offer open captioned performances for most productions. For specific program questions and ticket information, contact the box office at 503-445-3700 or email boxoffice@pcs.org. Learn more at <http://www.pcs.org/access/>.

AGE RECOMMENDATION

Most productions at PCS are recommended for high school age and up. Children under 6 are not permitted.

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[Portland Center Stage](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Founded in 1988, PCS is the city's leading professional theater and one of the top 20 largest regional theater companies in the U.S. PCS attracts more than 150,000 theatergoers annually with its blend of classical, contemporary and premiere works, along with its summer playwrights festival, JAW. PCS also offers a variety of education and community programs tailored for patrons of all ages.

[The Gerding Theater at the Armory](#) houses the 590-seat U.S. Bank Main Stage and the 190-seat black box Ellyn Bye Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places – and the first performing arts venue – to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006.

[Portland Center Stage's 2016-2017 season](#) is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank; Supporting Season Sponsors the Regional Arts and Culture Council, The Wallace Foundation, Work for Art and KINK FM. The official hotel partner for PCS is the Mark Spencer Hotel. PCS is a participant in the Wallace Foundation's [Building Audiences for](#)

[Sustainability Initiative](#), a four-year effort with a nationwide cohort of 26 performing arts organizations. PCS also receives support from the Oregon Arts Commission, a state agency funded by the State of Oregon and the National Endowment for the Arts.

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