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

Adam Bock's *A Small Fire* Makes its West Coast Premiere

**"RAUCOUS, FUNNY AND UNEXPECTEDLY TOUCHING,
life's darkest terrors and most visceral delights both play a role"**

- *The New York Times*

February 28 – March 23

Preview Performances Begin February 22



February 3, 2014 – PORTLAND, ORE. Adam Bock, who penned Portland favorites *The Thugs* and *The Receptionist*, is presented once again at Portland Center Stage. **This engagement offers a unique opportunity for Portlanders to enjoy one of Bock's latest works while he is in residence at PCS writing a new play.**

A Small Fire begins previews February 22, opens on February 28, and runs through March 23 on the Main Stage. Preview tickets start at \$29.

Regular tickets start at \$33. Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and select Sundays; 2 p.m. matinees on select Saturdays and Sundays; matinees at noon on select Thursdays. Special events include a **"Shop Talk"** presentation with members of the creative team and a **"Formative Stages"** discussion presented in partnership with Oregon Psychoanalytic Center.

A Small Fire follows John and Emily Bridges, a long-married couple whose happy, middle-class lives are upended when Emily falls victim to a mysterious disease. As this indomitable woman's senses are slowly stripped away—smell, taste, sight—she finds herself suddenly and completely dependent on the husband whose endless devotions she had always taken for granted. Audiences will recognize Bock's poetic dialogue, and the originality and deep humanity found in his characters.

A Small Fire was first produced at Playwrights Horizons in New York City in 2010, earning a "CRITICS' PICK" from Charles Isherwood of *The New York Times*, who called it a "theatrical combo plate that proves unusually satisfying. Quietly moving, raucous, funny and unexpectedly touching, life's darkest terrors and most visceral delights both play a role. It's hard to keep from getting appropriately teary."

Canadian playwright Adam Bock has a rich history with PCS. His play *The Thugs*, developed at JAW in 2005, later earned Bock an Obie Award. *The Receptionist*, published with *The Thugs* in Bock's *Office Plays* collection, was presented at CoHo Productions in 2008 and then remounted in PCS's Elyn Bye Studio in 2010. In 2012, Bock was again selected for JAW, this time for his play *San Diego*. The same year, Bock was one of two playwrights (along with Lauren Weedman) selected to receive a two-year commission as part of PCS's new play program. Bock will be in Portland working on this new play while *A Small Fire* is in rehearsal.

PCS Associate Artistic Director and JAW Festival Director **Rose Riordan** directed each of the previous Bock offerings and continues her streak with *A Small Fire*. *The Thugs* won four Drammys, including Best Director. *The Oregonian* called *The Receptionist* "must-see theater," noting that the COHO engagement was "presented brilliantly" and the PCS remount was, "very much the same terrific show." Riordan also directed Bock's *Phaedra* for Berkeley's Shotgun Players in 2011, which caught the attention of national press. Riordan most recently directed *The Mountaintop*, *The People's Republic of Portland* and *The Whipping Man* at PCS. In May she'll direct *LIZZIE*, the new musical based on the life of Lizzie Borden.

Making up the Bridges family is **Peggy J. Scott**, making her debut with PCS as the matriarch Emily who slowly loses her senses. Her husband John is played by **Tom Bloom** (*Snow Falling on Cedars*, various characters, 2010) and their daughter Jenny is played by **Hollye Gilbert** (*The Imaginary Invalid*,

Angelique, 2011). Portland native **Isaac Lamb** (*The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, William Barfee, 2010) plays Billy Fontaine, the construction manager for Emily's construction firm.

Scenic Designer Tony Cisek has collaborated with Rose Riordan on *The Whipping Man*, *The North Plan* (Drammy Award), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Drammy Award), *A Christmas Story* (2010 and 2011) and *Frost/Nixon*. He's joined by **Resident Costume Designer Jeff Cone**, Lighting Designer **Diane Ferry Williams** (most recently at PCS for *The Whipping Man*, which earned her a Drammy Award) and **Resident Sound Designer Casi Pacilio** (most recently *Chinglish*, *Twist Your Dickens* and *The Mountiantop*). **Kelsey Daye Lutz** will act as Stage Manager.

RELATED EVENTS – Calendar Editors Kindly Note:

Shop Talk: A Small Fire

March 4, 2014

6:30 p.m. | Prior to the 7:30 p.m. performance.

Join us pre-show in the lobby before the first Tuesday evening performance of every Main Stage production for **Shop Talk**, featuring PCS staff members giving away the secrets of stage magic. Expert designers, craftspeople and carpenters of our production department will join us as presenters.

Free and open to the public. A ticket to the production is not required.

Formative Stages: A Small Fire

March 20, 2014

9 p.m. | Following the 7:30 p.m. performance.

Presented by the Oregon Psychoanalytic Center in partnership with PCS, "Formative Stages" puts theater on the couch and the audience in the conversational driver's seat. A lively discussion focuses on issues, themes and lessons gleaned from the plays, revealing that theater is truly a microcosm of life. Lee Shershow, M.D., a faculty member and training analyst at the Oregon Psychoanalytic Center will lead the discussion.

Free and open to the public. A ticket to the production is not required.

➤ **Next Page: RELATED EVENTS continued**

Prologues and Q&As:

Prologues are free, pre-performance introductions to most Main Stage plays offered on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings during the regular run of each production. Led by PCS staff members in the Main Stage auditorium. 6:55 - 7:10 p.m.

Q&As are informal conversations with the cast and PCS staff about the production, following every Thursday noon matinee performance during the regular run of each production.

A Small Fire | Ticket and Performance Information

When: February 22 – March 23, 2014

Preview Performances: February 22, 23, 25, 26, 27 at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Friday, February 28, 7:30 p.m.

Showtimes: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and select Sundays; 2 p.m. matinees on select Saturdays and Sundays; matinees at noon on select Thursdays.

Complete schedule: <http://www.pcs.org/small-fire/>

Where: On the Main Stage at [The Gerding Theater at the Armory](#)

Preview tickets start at \$29. Regular tickets start at \$33. Rush Tickets are \$20

Discounts for students, those under 25 and groups.

Online: www.pcs.org

By Phone: 503.445.3700, 12–6 p.m.

In Person: PCS's box office is at 128 NW Eleventh Avenue
12 p.m.–curtain on performance days
12–6 p.m. on non-performance days

Groups: Discounts for groups of 10 or more.
Group tickets can purchased at 503.445.3794.

Please Note: *Recommended for ages 16+; mature content, language and sexuality.*

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Additional support for *A Small Fire* is provided by production sponsors Ronni Lacroute/Wilakenzie Estates and Don and Mary Blair. Portland Center Stage's 2013-2014 season is funded in part by Season Superstars Tim and Mary Boyle and Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank; Season Sponsors the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Regional Arts and Culture Council and Work for Art; and Season Supporting Sponsor KINK fm. The Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner for Portland Center Stage. *A Small Fire* is presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.

[PORTLAND CENTER STAGE](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including discussions, classes, workshops and partnerships with organizations throughout the Portland metro area.

[THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY](#) houses the 590-seat 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. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.

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