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ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE AND THE ACTORS CONSERVATORY (FORMERLY PORTLAND ACTORS CONSERVATORY) ANNOUNCE ALLIANCE TO JOINTLY EXPAND THEIR EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Introducing:

The Actors Conservatory @ Artists Rep

PORTLAND, OREGON – November 13, 2020 After four years of collaboration and cohabitation, Artists Repertory Theatre (ART) and The Actors Conservatory (TAC, formerly Portland Actors Conservatory) have agreed to form an alliance under the banner of The Actors Conservatory @ Artists Rep. This is step one in a process intended to create a formal strategic alliance that will eventually result in the two organizations being joined under one umbrella with an independent, thriving, nationally accredited education department operating synergistically alongside ART's professional productions, artistic development, and community engagement programs. ART, a LORT theatre, now in its 38th season, is Portland's oldest professional theatre, and TAC, now in its 35th year of operation, is one of twelve free-standing accredited acting schools in the U.S.

Education programs include TAC's rigorous and intensive two-year certificate training program for acting students; the summer conservatory intensive; the studio program, which combines ART's diverse collection of classes with TAC's adult education program; youth programs, which include acting summer camps and teen intensives; and school programs for Portland and

Vancouver middle- and high-school students. ART and TAC are collaborating in the execution of the programs. TAC is overseeing program and curriculum development to ensure that they meet the rigorous standards of the National Association of Schools of Theatres (NAST). One of the benefits of the alliance is that college credit is available for many classes, including some of the classes previously offered by ART, and professional development credit is available for all of the adult classes. A long-term goal of the alliance is to create a Master of Fine Arts in Acting program in Oregon, which does not currently have an actor training program of that caliber. Currently, all classes are being held online due to COVID-19 safety precautions and the requirements of the Oregon Department of Higher Education. Information about current and upcoming studio classes are available at www.artistsrep.org For information about the two-year Conservatory Program, visit www.pac.edu.

The alliance also builds upon the two organizations' recent history of collaboration on ART's main stage productions. During the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 theatre seasons, TAC 2nd-Year students were cast (receiving academic credit) in supporting roles in ART's *1984*, *The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart*, *It's a Wonderful Life* (directed by TAC Founder Beth Harper), and *Everybody*. TAC students also completed coursework as artistic apprentices on ART productions of *Small Mouth Sounds* and the world premiere of *Wolf Play*. These productions were in addition to TAC's fully-staged, public performances, which are central to the two-year curriculum.

During the pandemic-disrupted 2020/2021 theatre season, ART and TAC have shifted focus to theatre works adapted into digital mediums, and will co-produce a new audio drama starring 2nd-Year Conservatory students. This 60-minute audio drama is being written specifically for seven students by acclaimed playwright Diana Burbano, and directed by ART Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez. Award-winning sound designer Doug Newell (ART's *Foxfinder*) will create a cinematic soundscape and original score for the piece. Titled *The Vertical City*, the audio drama is a character study set in a future-Portland built to survive the effects of climate change, and imagines how technology might evolve society at the end of the 21st century, both for better and worse. *The Vertical City* will be recorded in November 2020, and released to the public in February 2021.

"This collaboration is compelling and rewarding in multiple ways," said TAC Founder and Artistic Director, Beth Harper. "Students in our accredited two-year professional program will be able to train alongside accomplished professional artists at a major LORT Theatre. Combining TAC's adult studio and youth programs with ART's education programs will allow for the growth and development of these programs, resulting in more education opportunities for adults, students and community members."

"Learning and mentorship are among our core values at ART, which has long served as a home for young and emerging theatre makers to develop their craft and build their careers alongside Portland's most accomplished professionals," said ART Artistic Director, Dámaso Rodríguez. "This alliance will create an invaluable link to a professional regional theatre for

TAC's two-year accredited, immersive program, while TAC's long-practiced curriculum standards will increase the quality of training for students across all of our education programs."

*"There is tremendous synergy between Artists Repertory Theatre and The Actors Conservatory," said **ART Managing Director, JS May**. "Arts organizations that thrive have diverse revenue streams. TAC and ART joining together as The Conservatory at Artists Rep brings together world-class education and performance programs, and will result in increased quality and efficiency of operations, expanded opportunities for students, resident artists and staff, and improved financial stability with cost reductions. This partnership is built on a solid foundation with four years of collaboration and co-habitation. ART's new building has been designed to take this partnership to the next level."*

ABOUT THE ACTORS CONSERVATORY

The Actors Conservatory's (TAC) mission is to provide comprehensive and rigorous actor training by engaging the mind, heart and spirit of the artist while cultivating a culture to inspire students and global audiences to make a lifelong commitment to and investment in the living arts.

Founded in 1985 as Portland Actors Conservatory, The Actors Conservatory is led by Artistic Director Beth Harper and is the premier school of actor training in the Pacific Northwest accredited by the National Association of Schools of Theatre and licensed by Oregon Higher Education.

THE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM: The Conservatory's two-year professional actor training program is a rigorous and intensive two-year course of study for the serious student with a tenacious desire to become a professional actor.

SUMMER CONSERVATORY INTENSIVE: Students from all over will come to experience this rigorous Conservatory style course which approximates a full term of the professional certificate program.

STUDIO PROGRAM: Evening, online and weekend classes for patrons, theatre lovers and for people invested in the arts but who need a flexible schedule to study the craft of acting. Post-secondary credit is available for some classes and professional development credit is available for all classes.

LORT LAB: Second year students in the Certificate Program work alongside seasoned professionals and Resident Artists in creative performance projects in ART'S season of plays.

YOUTH PROGRAMS: Intensive workshops and classes for teens who are serious about acting, and 2-week youth acting summer camps (Summer on Stage!) for actors age 8-15.

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE'S (ART) mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for a diverse community of artists and audiences to take creative risks.

Artists Repertory Theatre recognizes that we are a predominately white organization and operate within systemic racism and oppression, and that silence and neutrality are actions of complicity. We recognize the critical role the arts play in our culture and national conversation, and accept our responsibility to make positive change through our work, our practices, and our policies. We commit ourselves to the work of becoming an anti-racism and anti-oppression organization, and will work with urgency to end racial inequities in our industry and our culture.

ART gratefully acknowledges our theatre rests on the traditional lands of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River.

Led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director J.S. May, ART (est. 1982) is Portland's oldest professional theatre company and has become a significant presence in the U.S. regional theatre with a legacy of world, national, and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. In 2016, ART became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN). Plays developed by ART have subsequently been produced in New York, Chicago, London, and throughout the country. Recognition for ART commissioned plays includes the Dramatists Guild Foundation Award, the Edgerton New Play Award, NEA Funding, the Mellon Foundation National Playwright Residency Program, *American Theatre Magazine's* Most-Produced Plays, and coverage in *The New Yorker* and the *New York Times*.

Information about Artists Rep's 2020/21 season is [HERE](#).

[TABLE|ROOM|STAGE \(T|R|S\)](#), established in 2015, is Artists Rep's new play program. The T|R|S mission is to develop and produce new work that vividly expresses Artists Rep's [aesthetic values](#). Focused on work by BIPOC writers, women, LGBTQIA+ and gender nonconforming writers, and offer an environment where these playwrights can create provocative, intimate new theatre pieces that challenge, illuminate, and inspire.

T|R|S has produced the following commissions: *The Talented Ones* by Yussef El Guindi (April 2017), *The Thanksgiving Play* by Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota) (April 2018), the NNPN Rolling World Premiere *Wolf Play* by Hansol Jung (March 2019), and the upcoming *Looking for Tiger Lily* by Anthony Hudson (Spring 2021).

T|R|S is home to Mellon Playwright-In-Residence and Steinberg Award Winner, E.M. Lewis, and Lacroute Playwright-In-Residence, Andrea Stolowitz. Playwrights under commission presently include Linda Alper, Anthony Hudson, Steve Rathje, Andrea Stolowitz, and E.M. Lewis, whose play *The Great Divide* is co-commissioned with ART and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. New projects are also being developed with Susannah Mars and Vin Shambry.

T|R|S has had a hand in shaping World Premieres and vital second productions by some of the nation's most exciting playwrights. Productions are: *La Ruta* by Isaac Gomez (November 2019), *Teenage Dick* by Mike Lew (January 2019), *Magellanica* by E.M. Lewis (January 2018), and *Cuba Libre* by Carlos Lacámara (Book) and Jorge Gómez (Music & Lyrics).

Through T|R|S, Artists Rep is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).

RESIDENT ARTISTS have an ongoing history of working on stage and behind-the-scenes of Artists Rep's mainstage productions. They collaborate with administrative staff on education, community engagement, new play development, and fundraising efforts. The Resident Artist title is offered by the Artistic Director in appreciation of each artist's achievements with ART and in the spirit of continued collaboration. These multidisciplinary theatre makers are deeply committed to ART's success, share organizational values, and participate in decision-making processes that impact the theatre's mission and its future. Through the Resident Artists program, a diverse community of Portland-based artists are at the center of the day-to-day life of the theatre and play a vital part in creating the culture at ART.

EDUCATION is dedicated to developing life-long learners at every ability, interest, and level of expertise. Opportunities focus on engaging with our community by offering professional-level classes, coaching, and workshops with our teaching artists. Programs like these serve artists and others seeking professional development, students seeking to engage in the transformative power of the arts, and life-long learners who can take classes in subjects such as dramaturgy, script-writing, and communication for non-actors. With the Student Ambassador Program, students learn about the inner-workings of a major nonprofit professional theatre, meet once per month, see shows for free, and participate in discussions with leading theatre artists and professionals. Access and enrichment are available for educators who enjoy ticket discounts, school programming, and workshops. Enhanced viewing experiences include post-show discussions with the cast, panel discussions with experts, and a dedicated conversation with production designers.

ARTSHUB is Artists Rep's resource sharing and community-building initiative supporting Portland theatre makers, arts and education nonprofits, and community groups. The mission of the ArtsHub is to create a cultural center by supporting Portland's rich artistic ecosystem. Programs and services include below market rates for rehearsal, performance, and meeting space; shared administrative work space for individuals and organizations; and production services such as set construction, scenic painting, and professional technical support from design through performance. We prioritize artists and organizations that support ART's values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and seek to provide a home for artists and audiences to take creative risks.

While the program's origin seven years ago was in response to an opportunity to share underutilized performance space, we have found that the most vital and lasting impact of the ArtsHub is the bustling community that has been formed, and the myriad ways it has led to the empowerment of local artists and the accelerated growth of participating organizations. Our new facility is being designed so that the ARTSHUB can include even more organizations than it currently serves.

RISE: The Campaign for Artists Repertory Theatre is the capital funding drive that will make possible the reinvention of ART's building at 1515 SW Morrison. Originally an Elks Lodge health club, the Artists Rep building has reached the end of its useful life. A major gift in 2018 paid off the outstanding mortgage on the entire downtown block catalyzing the 2019 sale of the north half of the building. ART received \$9 million in the sale, which is now the lead investment for the reimagining of the remaining building. The roof and two massive wood beams will rise to create a modern multiuse performing arts center with two theatres, four rehearsal halls, and collaborative spaces that will give space to the many new stories waiting to be shared.

Artists Repertory Theatre receives generous support from our community of patrons, including significant leadership gifts from: The Oregon Legislature, the Oregon Cultural Trust and the Multnomah County Cultural Coalition; The Robert & Mercedes Eichholz Foundation; The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation; Ronni Lacroute; The Oregon Community Foundation; Regional Arts & Culture Council; The Shubert Foundation; David & Christine Vernier; and The Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund. Additional Corporate and Foundation support comes from: The Cowlitz Tribe Education and Arts Fund; The Kinsman Foundation; Oregon Arts Commission; National Endowment for the Arts; US Bank; The Jackson Foundation; The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation; ECONorthwest; and Rafati's Catering.

The Actors Conservatory receives generous support from the Miller Foundation; the Kinsman Foundation; the Oregon Community Foundation; the Jackson Foundation; the Oregon Arts Commission; the National Endowment for the Arts; the Quinsey Family Foundation; and Business Oregon.

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