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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES LINEUP FOR THIRD ANNUAL *NEW STRANDS FESTIVAL*

Sponsored by Mozilla, the free festival features new theatrical pieces, works-in-progress, readings, panel discussions, a master class series, and special happy hours to celebrate and share the artistry and expertise of the Bay Area arts community

Lineup includes an untitled musical by Grammy Award-nominated duo Tegan and Sara, an Afrofuturistic Greek epic, a new play that explores the passion and community of life in the theater, a bold new translation of Friedrich Schiller's *Don Carlos*, and more

SPACE on Ryder Farm, a nonprofit residency program based in New York, named this year's New Strands Residency partner theater company

MAY 17–20, 2018
A.C.T.'s Strand Theater

SAN FRANCISCO (March 28, 2018)—Today, **American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.)'s Associate Artistic Director Andy Donald** announced the lineup for A.C.T.'s third annual **New Strands Festival** taking place at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater (1127 Market Street, San Francisco) **May 17–20, 2018**. Sponsored by **Mozilla**, the New Strands Festival is a free festival that features new theatrical pieces, works-in-progress, and readings, as well as live music, comedy, panel discussions, a master class series, and special happy hours to celebrate and share the artistry and expertise of the creative community within A.C.T.'s Conservatory, as well as from New Strands artists from the local and national theater scene.

In conjunction with the New Strands Festival, A.C.T. also announced that **SPACE on Ryder Farm**, a nonprofit residency program located on a 223-year-old working farm north of New York City, has been named as this year's **New Strands Residency** partner theater company. Now in its second year, A.C.T.'s New Strands Residency gives emerging and established American playwrights—through a partnership with a nationally recognized new-work incubator—the opportunity to create and develop new works in residence at A.C.T.'s state-of-the-art Strand Theater. Over the course of the residency, the playwrights will participate in a reading of their work, develop their works-in-progress with directors and a shared ensemble of actors, and participate in panel discussions. After their participation in the festival, the core creative teams will have a weeklong residency at SPACE to further develop their projects.

“In a city that’s all about creative process, the New Strands Festival has become an annual touchstone for the development of new, important work by local, national, and international artists,” says **Donald**. “In this year’s lineup, the rich diversity of artists and voices is a reflection of the current moment: female- and multicultural-driven stories that aim to shake up society’s norms, offer global perspectives on local issues, and insist on representation. We’re so energized by this collection of artists and can’t wait to share their fresh ideas and perspectives with Bay Area audiences.”

"Innovation and creativity go hand in hand," says **Jascha Kaykas-Wolff**, Chief Marketing Officer of Mozilla. "We are excited about the New Strands Festival this year and our continued collaboration with the creative community."

This year’s New Strands Festival lineup includes four projects commissioned by A.C.T.—including translations, adaptations, and original works from local and national artists currently in development at A.C.T.—as well as two selected new works developed at SPACE on Ryder Farm. The lineup features: Dipika Guha and Jeremy Cohen’s *Malicious Animal Magnetism*, an epic story about love, queerness, and what we can’t help looking at; *Nike, Or We Don’t Need Another Hero*, an Afrofuturistic Greek epic by Ngozi Anywanu (SPACE on Ryder Farm play-in-residence); *Untitled Tegan and Sara Musical*, a queer coming-of-age love story with book by Emily Kaczmarek and music and lyrics by Tegan Quin & Sara Quin, conceived and directed by Kate Sullivan (SPACE on Ryder Farm musical-in-residence); *SeaChange*, a world-premiere play that explores issues of social justice as seen through the eyes of young people; *Both Your Houses*, Susan Soon He Stanton’s new play that explores themes of passion, community, and intimacy and tackles what it takes to make a life in the theatre; and *Don Carlos*, Friedrich Schiller’s passionate drama about power, love, and politics in a new translation by Domenique Lozano. In addition, A.C.T. will present San Francisco-based comedian **Irene Tu** in an evening of stand-up, as well as a new musical project by **Thao Nguyen** from **Thao & The Get Down Stay Down**.

“SPACE on Ryder Farm is thrilled to launch this bi-coastal partnership with Tony Award-winning American Conservatory Theater,” said **Emily Simoness**, co-founder and executive director of SPACE on Ryder Farm. “Not only is this initiative an exciting opportunity to deepen our ongoing commitment to SPACE alumnae like Emily, Kate, and Ngozi, but it’s also an example of how producing institutions such as A.C.T. and artist residencies such as SPACE can work together to create multi-stage, interconnected development opportunities for big, gutsy projects.”

Public presentations of all projects at the New Strands Festival are free and open to the public. Reservations are strongly encouraged. For more information or to RSVP, visit www.act-sf.org/newstrands.

The complete lineup of performances for the third annual New Strands Festival is as follows:

THURSDAY, MAY 17

6 P.M. • HAPPY HOUR FEATURING DRINK SPECIALS AND LIVE MUSIC

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

7 P.M. • PRESENTATION OF *MALICIOUS ANIMAL MAGNETISM*

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

by Dipika Guha and Jeremy Cohen
Directed by Jeremy Cohen

In 1973, amid men in suits, men weeping, and one psychiatrist in a Nixon mask, ten-year-old Peter witnesses a landmark moment in gay rights and reaches out to grab the hand of Oakland boy Deshawn. Co-commissioned with Z Space, *Malicious Animal Magnetism* is an epic story about love, queerness, and what we can't help looking at.

9:30 P.M. • FESTIVAL OPENING TOAST

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

FRIDAY, MAY 18

4 P.M. • PRESENTATION OF *NIKE, OR WE DON'T NEED ANOTHER HERO*

The Rueff at The Strand Theater
SPACE on Ryder Farm play-in-residence

by Ngozi Anyanwu
Directed by Candis C. Jones

In this epic story uniting Afrofuturistic myth, Greek drama, and contemporary language, New York playwright Ngozi Anyanwu crafts a bold hero's journey with an all-black cast. In the aftermath of a battle between the titans, Nike recovers her memory and learns that she is a god with a mighty destiny. As the fates of everyone she loves hang in the balance, can she confront her past and unleash the power she holds within?

6 P.M. • HAPPY HOUR FEATURING DRINK SPECIALS AND LIVE MUSIC

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

7 P.M. • STAND UP COMEDIAN IRENE TU

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

Irene Tu is a Chicago-born, San Francisco-based stand-up comedian, actor, and writer. She has been named one of the "Bay Area's 11 Best Stand Up Comedians" (*SFist*), an "artist on the brink of fame" (*San Francisco Chronicle*), and one of 20 "Women to Watch" (*KQED*). She has performed at SF Sketchfest, Bridgetown Comedy Festival, and Riot LA, and her comedy was featured on Seeso and VICELAND. Tu has opened for comedians including W. Kamau Bell, Gary Gulman, Anthony Jeselnik, Hari Kondabolu, and Aparna Nancherla.

8 P.M. • PRESENTATION OF *UNTITLED TEGAN AND SARA MUSICAL*

The Rembe at The Strand Theater
SPACE on Ryder Farm musical-in-residence

Book by Emily Kaczmarek
Music and lyrics by Tegan Quin and Sara Quin
Music direction, orchestrations, and arrangements by Jared Stein
Conceived and directed by Kate Sullivan

Jesse's life has always gone according to plan. But when tragedy shatters her perfectly ordered world, she finds herself crashing in New York City for the summer . . . and falling hard for Sam, a magnetic girl with a guitar. An original musical set to the music of Grammy Award-nominated duo Tegan and Sara, this bittersweet coming-of-age story takes audiences on the dizzying roller coaster of first love and first heartbreak.

9:30 P.M. • AFTER HOURS @ THE STRAND

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

Grab a drink at the bar and share your thoughts and questions with Festival artists and audiences.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

11 A.M. • PRESENTATION OF *MALICIOUS ANIMAL MAGNETISM*

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

by Dipika Guha and Jeremy Cohen

Directed by Jeremy Cohen

In 1973, amid men in suits, men weeping, and one psychiatrist in a Nixon mask, ten-year-old Peter witnesses a landmark moment in gay rights and reaches out to grab the hand of Oakland boy Deshawn. Co-commissioned with Z Space, *Malicious Animal Magnetism* is an epic story about love, queerness, and what we can't help looking at.

2 P.M. • PRESENTATION OF *SEACHANGE*

The Rembe at The Strand Theater

by Marisela Treviño Orta

Directed by Elizabeth Carter

Playwright Marisela Treviño Orta dives into the world of Bay Area teenagers in this vibrant, fast-moving collage of interlinked stories commissioned for A.C.T.'s Collaborative Youth Arts Project (CYAP), a partnership among the Young Conservatory, A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs, and Destiny Arts Center in Oakland. Exploring the changing face of San Francisco, Orta asks resonant and challenging questions about how that social, economic, and urban evolution affects young people today.

4 P.M. • A NEW THAO NGUYEN MUSICAL PROJECT

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

What happens when who you are collides with where you come from? San Francisco based songwriter and recording artist Thao Nguyen, lead musician of Thao & The Get Down Stay Down, creates a new play with music (but not necessarily, she says, a musical!). As Nguyen explores the loneliness and oft comic absurdity of denying one's identity for the comfort of the family, she writes of coming out, claiming love, and reckoning with her Vietnamese cultural heritage.

6 P.M. • HAPPY HOUR FEATURING DRINK SPECIALS AND LIVE MUSIC

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

7 P.M. • ART SHARE SAMPLER

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

The ArtShare Sampler showcases excerpts of work created by A.C.T.'s 2017–18 ArtShare partners, including Campo Santo, AlterTheatre Ensemble, Bharatanatyam dancer Nadhi Thekkek, and performance artist Sammay Dizon. ArtShare is A.C.T.'s Community Space-Sharing Initiative, which offers space grants and residencies in A.C.T.'s Central Market locations to theater companies and individual artists in the Bay Area.

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SUNDAY, MAY 20

11 A.M. • PRESENTATION OF *BOTH YOUR HOUSES*

The Rueff at The Strand Theater

by Susan Soon He Stanton

Directed by Mina Morita

As the cast of *Romeo and Juliet* play their star-crossed courtship onstage, the *real* drama is happening backstage. In this co-commission with Crowded Fire Theater, playwright Susan Soon He Stanton flips the iconic love story around, pulling back the curtain to explore the all-too-human romance taking place behind the scenes of a Shakespeare production.

2 P.M. • PRESENTATION OF *DON CARLOS*

The Rembe at The Strand Theater

by Friedrich Schiller

Translation by Domenique Lozano

Directed by Carey Perloff

Passionate drama about power, love, and politics from Friedrich Schiller (*Mary Stuart*), pitting young prince Don Carlos against his aging, tyrannical father King Philip II of Spain. Both love the king's young bride, Queen Elizabeth. But more is at stake, as the Marquis of Posa urges Carlos to oppose Philip and fight for the future of freedom and democracy in Europe.

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9 P.M. • FESTIVAL CLOSING TOAST

The Lobby at The Strand Theater

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ABOUT NEW STRANDS

New Strands is A.C.T.'s newly expanded commissioning and development program, devoted to supporting artists in the creation and completion of original theater for A.C.T.'s multiple performance venues. Year-round, A.C.T. offers commissioned artists and companies mentorship, feedback, acting talent, time, and space to work in ways that suit each project specifically, with the goal of seeing their creations on one of A.C.T.'s stages and beyond. From translations and adaptations to original work, A.C.T.'s commissions include interdisciplinary projects, San Francisco-inspired stories, and pieces that have an international scope.

ABOUT MOZILLA

Mozilla is the nonprofit behind the popular web browser, Firefox. We believe the Internet is a global public resource, open and accessible to all. We work to ensure it stays open by building products, technologies, and programs that put people in control of their online lives and contribute to a healthier Internet.

ABOUT SPACE ON RYDER FARM

Founded in 2011 by Emily Simoness and Susan Goodwillie, SPACE on Ryder Farm is a one-of-a-kind artist residency located on the grounds of a 223-year-old working organic farm in Brewster, NY, just an hour north of New York City. SPACE creates an environment singular in its ability to invigorate artists and innovators and their work, and

contributes to the sustainability and resourceful preservation of one of the oldest organic family farms on the East Coast.

Through its fully subsidized residency programs, spanning playwriting to filmmaking to social justice, SPACE has hosted over 1,200 residents since its founding, and has developed a reputation as an incubator for some of our culture's most exciting and relevant creators. SPACE counts among its alumni Academy Award winners, Tony Award nominees and winners, Pulitzer Prize finalists, Guggenheim fellows, Obie Award winners and MacArthur "Genius" Award recipients. Past residents include theater artists Sarah Ruhl, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Lucas Hnath, Young Jean Lee, Samuel D. Hunter, Dave Malloy, Anne Washburn, Adam Rapp, Mfoniso Udofia, David Cale, Adam Bock, and Linda Cho; theater companies Playwrights Horizons, The Public Theater, Ars Nova, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, Soho Rep, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company; musicians Cesar Alvarez, Grace McLean, and Shaina Taub; filmmakers Janicza Bravo, James C. Strouse, and Begonia Colomar; dance company Monica Bill Barnes & Company; and visual artist Alta Buden, to name a few.

For more information, visit spaceonryderfarm.org.