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## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES COMPLETE LINEUP FOR THE 2016–17 SEASON

Newly announced productions include David Byrne and Fatboy Slim’s revolutionary musical experience, *Here Lies Love*; the West Coast premiere of Tom Stoppard’s newest work, *The Hard Problem*; and Robert Lepage’s internationally acclaimed play, *Needles and Opium*

SAN FRANCISCO (April 15, 2016) – American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Carey Perloff announced today the final three productions that will comprise the lineup of the company’s 50th subscription season. The West Coast premiere of Tom Stoppard’s newest work, *The Hard Problem*; a reimagined version of Robert Lepage’s world-acclaimed play *Needles and Opium* and David Byrne and Fatboy Slim’s revolutionary musical experience, *Here Lies Love* will join the four previously announced productions—the 2015 Olivier Award–winning Best New Play, *King Charles III*; the world-premiere theatrical adaptation of Khaled Hosseini’s (*The Kite Runner*) best-selling novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*; the acclaimed new play, *John*, by Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Annie Baker; and *Battlefield*, Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne’s intimate new interpretation and staging of Brook’s groundbreaking production of *The Mahabharata*. At this time, only current full-season (7-play) A.C.T. subscribers can renew their subscriptions for the 2016–17 season. To receive priority notice when packages become available to new subscribers, patrons can email [season@act-sf.org](mailto:season@act-sf.org) or call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2250.

Says Perloff: “Extraordinary theater artists from around the world are coming to A.C.T. in celebration of our 50th anniversary! This will be a hugely ambitious, only-at-A.C.T. season that will propel us into our next 50 years with energy and joy. From Tom Stoppard to Khaled Hosseini to Annie Baker, we will present new works from a range of writers of incomparable linguistic beauty and cultural diversity. Visionary directors Peter Brook, Robert Lepage, and Alex Timbers will take us to the limits of theatrical invention. And iconic American musician David Byrne and

British DJ Fatboy Slim will transform the Geary stage with their propulsive rhythms in a poignant and thought-provoking story about the rise and fall of the First Lady of the Philippines. This will be a season of survival and hope, a season of time travel and history and, of course, jazz and disco! We couldn't be more excited."

The 2016–17 season kicks off with the 2015 Olivier Award–winning "Best New Play," ***King Charles III* (September 14–October 9, 2016)**. With its witty echoes of Shakespearean drama, Mike Bartlett's brilliant contemporary work of speculative history blurs the boundaries of truth and tragedy. Queen Elizabeth is dead. Prince Charles ascends to the throne, but what kind of ruler will he make for this once-united kingdom? Flanked by wife Camilla and sons William and Harry, Charles challenges a power-hungry Parliament, but it is his daughter-in-law, ruthless princess Kate, who shows the real ambition for the sceptered isle. Is Charles the man who would be king, or was he born to succeed only in name? Hailed as "fresh, thrilling and fearlessly comic" (*Entertainment Weekly*), this imaginative glimpse of future history is a theatrical event of crowning achievement. *King Charles III* is a coproduction with Seattle Repertory Theatre and Washington, D.C.'s Shakespeare Theatre Company. Performances of *King Charles III* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Tom Stoppard continues his long-term collaboration with A.C.T. and Artistic Director Carey Perloff on his first new play in nearly a decade, ***The Hard Problem* (October 19–November 13, 2016)**, a provocative drama of sex, science, and supercomputing. Razor-sharp psychology grad Hilary wins a prestigious brain research position that forces her to confront her lover (and math tutor) in a fight to defend the soul, altruism, and even God from modern science. But as she competes for funding against a rival project racing to unlock the mathematical secrets behind stock market risk, Hilary realizes that her biggest threat is closer to home—her own genetic secret. From one of theater's greatest voices, *The Hard Problem* shows Stoppard at his best as he dives deep into this compelling conflict of mind versus matter. This marks the ninth time Perloff has collaborated with Stoppard during her 23-year tenure at A.C.T. Other productions include *The Invention of Love* (American premiere in 2000), *Travesties* (2006), *Rock 'n' Roll* (2008), *Indian Ink* (American premiere in 2009, as well as an all-new production in 2015), and *Arcadia* (2013). Performances of *The Hard Problem* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

After its record-breaking run last season, A.C.T. is happy to welcome back the Bay Area's favorite holiday tradition, ***A Christmas Carol* (November 25–December 24, 2016)**. Featuring a lively cast of dozens, delightful music, gorgeous costumes, and deliciously spooky ghosts, this version of *A Christmas Carol*, adapted by Paul Walsh and Carey Perloff, stays true to the heart of Dickens's timeless story of redemption and brings a playful sensibility to his rich language. *A Christmas Carol*—now in its 39th year—is a cornerstone of the A.C.T. repertory and has become a holiday tradition for families around the Bay Area. Performances of *A Christmas Carol* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Ringier in 2017, A.C.T. is thrilled to announce the world-premiere theatrical adaptation of Khaled Hosseini's best-selling novel, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (February 1–26, 2017). The epic story of three generations of Afghan women and their remarkable resilience, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is set amid the war-torn streets of modern-day Kabul. Beautiful Laila, unmarried and pregnant, is forced to marry her older neighbor when her family and home are torn apart. Forging an extraordinary and unlikely friendship with Mariam, her husband's first wife, the two women find the hope and strength to raise a new generation. A stunning new production featuring live music from renowned composer and saw player David Coulter. "Hosseini's writing makes our hearts ache, our stomachs clench, and our emotions reel" (*USA Today*). Hosseini, who resides in the Bay Area, will be intimately involved in the production. *A Thousand Splendid Suns* has sold over six million copies in the United States alone. Performances of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Next, A.C.T. will present Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Annie Baker's new play, *John* (February 22–April 23, 2017). A haunting drama that took off-Broadway by storm, *John* is the latest hit from American theater's hottest new voice. Jenny and Elias show up at an old bed-and-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—he wants to tour the historic battlegrounds, she wants to be left alone. But in the creaking house they find something unsettling. Is it the spirits of the Civil War dead? The smiling dolls that line the rooms? Their curious landlady, Mertis, who switches their bedroom because "the Jackson Room can be a little temperamental"? Or is it just that their relationship is on the skids and one of them is cheating? A delicious nerve-jangler hailed as "A true masterpiece!" (*Slate*), this is a visceral ghost story with a millennial twist that will haunt the intimate Strand Theater. Performances of *John* will take place at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater.

In spring 2017, A.C.T. will present a reimagined version of Robert Lepage's internationally acclaimed play *Needles and Opium* (March 30–April 23, 2017). Jazz legend Miles Davis travels to Europe in 1949 to discover the pleasures of Paris, unlock his creativity, and find his heroine in Juliette Gréco. At the same time, French filmmaker Jean Cocteau embarks on his own opium-fueled journey to New York. Individually, the stories are thrilling and heartbreaking, but what elevates this production is the extraordinary storytelling. Renowned director Robert Lepage mounts his set around a vast suspended cube, with which he frames interlocking scenes from the different journeys. The result is not only a breathtaking dive into art and addiction but also a spellbinding mix of stagecraft and storytelling. Performances of *Needles and Opium* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Following his remarkable worldwide success with *The Suit*, which played to standing ovations and sold-out houses at A.C.T. in 2014, legendary director Peter Brook is back with *Battlefield* (April 26–May 21, 2017). Thirty years after Brook's groundbreaking adaptation of the Indian epic *The Mahabharata*, the director has created an intimate new interpretation and staging of this timeless tale in perhaps his finest work. A newly crowned king

surveys a post-war battlefield—his army has won him the crown, but at what price? Written almost 2,500 years ago, the *Mahabharata*'s magical story of finding tranquility in the midst of war and destruction has striking connections to modern times, and has inspired some of Brook's most beautiful images and most transformative theatrical moments. "Like a Zen master, Peter Brook refines and concentrates his theater ever more. He offers us a play that resembles a perfect and suspended movement, light as a breath" (*Le Monde*). Performances of *Battlefield* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Hailed as "completely wild, original and irresistible" by the *Hollywood Reporter*, A.C.T. closes out its 2016–17 season with ***Here Lies Love* (beginning June 2017)**. From a pretty country girl to the consort of a dictator, Imelda Marcos was the star who came with her own soundtrack. *Here Lies Love* is the visionary musical smash about this infamous Filipina leader who married controversy with karaoke. Created by pop icon David Byrne of Talking Heads and award-winning music producer Fatboy Slim, this is a theatrical event that's going to rock The Geary, transforming the theater into a disco jumping with lights, music, and video. Restaged at A.C.T. by the acclaimed musical team that created the sold-out hit at New York's Public Theater, *Here Lies Love* is nothing less than a musical theater revolution. Performances of *Here Lies Love* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater.

Full-season (7-play) subscriptions are available for **\$91–\$679** and offer incredible savings, unparalleled access, exclusive benefits, and personalized customer service. Subscribers save as much as **50% off single-ticket prices**. Students and educators are eligible to save up to half-price on subscriptions, and senior discounts are available for certain series. To make subscriptions more affordable, A.C.T. also offers all subscribers an **extended payment plan** that allows payment in two easy installments. A.C.T.'s competitive subscriber benefits include **free ticket exchanges** up to the day of your scheduled performance, **guaranteed best seating, ticket insurance**, access to **convenient prepaid parking** one block away from the theater, **discounts for neighborhood restaurants**, and the opportunity to subscribe to ***Words on Plays***, A.C.T.'s in-depth theater guide for each show. To renew a current A.C.T. subscription, please call **415.749.2250** or log on to [www.act-sf.org/renew](http://www.act-sf.org/renew).

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