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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 14, 2020

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TRINITY REP ANNOUNCES 2020-21 SEASON

**Women's stories, stories of perseverance and
resilience at the heart of the lineup**

Season ends with revival of *The Prince of Providence*

PROVIDENCE, RI: The Tony Award-winning **Trinity Repertory Company**, under the artistic leadership of The Arthur P. Solomon and Sally E. Lapidés Artistic Director **Curt Columbus**, announces the company's 57th season. In addition to the six-play subscription season announced today, a revival of the 2019 sold-out production of *The Prince of Providence* will begin in summer 2021, as previously announced. The company will also produce its new version of *A Christmas Carol*, as well as special programs throughout the year. Tickets for both add-on productions are currently available exclusively to subscribers.

Most notably, the season will launch with *Sweeney Todd* and *Sweat*, which were originally due to be produced this spring but cancelled over public health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trinity Rep is looking forward to welcoming audiences back into its spaces after pivoting to connecting with the community through shared digital content and virtual classes and events. The 2020-21 Season will celebrate the awesome power of live theater to bring people together around a shared experience. The lineup highlights perseverance, resilience, humanity, and all that we have in common, while showcasing some of theater's most exceptional talent. Two Pulitzer Prize-winning plays will be presented, in addition to a Tony Award-winner and plays based on best-selling books. Audiences will experience the work of some of the area's top actors and directors, whose previous work has made an indelible mark on Trinity Rep.

Columbus notes, "Theater is built on the belief that we can make the impossible happen, night after night. We, audience and artists alike, have all willed remarkably beautiful things into existence in darkened rooms. In that spirit, we at Trinity Rep will be ready to once again share the irreplaceable energy and emotion that can only come from live theater when the lights come up on our stages again

in the 2020-21 Season. As it always has, theater will provide the answer as we ask ourselves how to move forward, and this season, in particular, introduces us to characters facing similar questions. Their stories about adapting and persevering will help bring us together around hope and joy.”

The season will launch with ***Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street***. Originally scheduled to close the 2019-20 Season, the show marks the first time in more than two decades that Trinity Rep will produce a **Stephen Sondheim**-composed musical. This production will be directed by **Curt Columbus**, who was at the helm of recent musicals *Ragtime* and *Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*, and concerns the darkly comic pursuit of vengeance by the title character, played by **Joe Wilson, Jr.** The production will also feature **Rachael Warren** as Mrs. Lovett.

Also moved from its original spring slot to the fall is the Pulitzer Prize-winner ***Sweat*** by **Lynn Nottage**, which ran Off-Broadway at the Public Theater in 2016 and on Broadway in 2017. This highly-acclaimed play, set in America’s Rust Belt was inspired by interviews Nottage conducted with the residents of Reading, PA over the course of more than two years. The characters and story that emerged involve shattered friendships, violence, and resentment when the opportunities once afforded to a town disappear. Director **Christie Vela** returns to Providence to lead the production. She was most recently at Trinity Rep directing *Native Gardens* in 2018.

In addition to the shows on stage at its downtown Providence location, Trinity Rep’s partnership with **Rhode Island Latino Arts** continues for the 5th anniversary of **Teatro en El Verano**, which provides free bilingual English/Spanish performances in parks and public spaces throughout Rhode Island. This year’s production, ***Don Quixote***, is adapted by **Anne Ludlum and David Quicksall** from the novels of **Miguel de Cervantes** and directed by **Marcel Mascaró**. Dates and details for this year’s production will be announced at a later date.

The fall season at Trinity Rep will also see the return of **America Too**, a night of short plays generated by stories from the community around a single topic. This year, the event will address the challenges and successes of education and will include stories from the perspectives of students, parents, and educators. Story gathering has already begun and will continue throughout the spring and summer in preparation for the culminating event in October. This free event has previously explored issues around health care, housing, immigration, and police-community relations.

Two shows will hit the stage during the holiday season. Opening in November and running through the holiday season, **Joe Wilson, Jr.** will direct this year's all new production of ***A Christmas Carol***. Wilson, a member of Trinity Rep's resident acting company, played the role of Scrooge in 2017. This will be the 43rd year Trinity Rep has produced *A Christmas Carol*, which is reimagined anew each year with a new slate of director, designers, and cast. Tickets for this holiday tradition are currently available to subscribers and will go on sale to the general public on July 25.

While *A Christmas Carol* is on stage in the Chace Theater, the Dowling Theater will be home to ***Tiny Beautiful Things***. This touching play is based on the best-selling book *Tiny Beautiful Things: Advice on Love and Life from Dear Sugar*, written by **Cheryl Strayed** about her experience as the advice columnist "Sugar." Strayed's book was adapted for the stage by **Nia Vardalos**, the writer and star of *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*. It will be directed by **Curt Columbus**, Trinity Rep's artistic director.

The season continues in the new year with the 2019 Pulitzer Prize-winner ***Fairview*** by **Jackie Sibblies Drury**. This revolutionary play begins as a straight forward family comedy but takes an unexpected turn that stunned and impressed audiences and critics, as well as the Pulitzer Prize committee. It also won Sibblies Drury last year's Steinberg Playwrights Award and Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. The playwright is a graduate of the Brown University MFA program in playwriting and is currently under commission by Trinity Rep. Company member **Jude Sandy** will direct. He was most recently at the helm of Trinity Rep's highly-acclaimed production of *Radio Golf* and co-directed *black odyssey* in 2019.

Up next is the educational centerpiece of the season, ***The Diary of Anne Frank*** by **Frances Goodrich** and **Albert Hackett**. Directed by resident company member **Brian McEleney**, this production will view the well-known story of the persecution of Jews during World War II through the perspective of today's young people. A post-show discussion will be offered following every performance featuring a group of students who will have just seen the show. McEleney previously directed *The Grapes of Wrath*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *Death of a Salesman*.

Deborah Salem Smith, Trinity Rep's Playwright in Residence, brings her world premiere play ***Anna K.*** to the stage in the spring. A re-imagining of Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, this brisk, modern approach examines the epic love stories at the heart of the novel through the eyes of Anna, Kitty, and Dolly. The play is directed by **Jessie Austrian**, an actor, director, and producer who graduated from the Brown/Trinity Rep MFA program and went on to be one of the founders of New York's Fiasco Theater.



Following the subscription season, the revival of *The Prince of Providence* will take the stage and begin its open-ended run on May 27. The show sold out during its 2019 world premiere and broke box office records. Based on the unprecedented demand, the revival production was added to the 2020-21 Season schedule. Subscribers may add this show to their subscription packages, and they will have exclusive access to tickets until spring 2021. The play by **George Brant** tells the story of the rise and fall of former Providence mayor **Buddy Cianci** and is based on the *New York Times* best-selling book of the same name by **Mike Stanton**. Obie Award-winner **Taibi Magar** will return to direct the revival.

Subscription packages for the 2020-21 Season are now available, including the popular 6-Play full season package for the best seats and prices. **Subscribing is an excellent way to help Trinity Rep recover from the impacts of this temporary closure.** Based on the popularity of the season and limited seating availability, full season subscribers will be the only ones guaranteed access to *The Prince of Providence*. Flex Pass packages, which include up to 8 ticket vouchers that can be mixed and matched throughout the season to create a custom experience, are also available, although the best seats are subject to availability. Subscribers may add on tickets at a discount to *A Christmas Carol* and *The Prince of Providence* before they go on sale to the general public. Subscriber benefits also include free ticket exchanges, parking and dining discounts, and invitations to special backstage events.

Packages begin at just \$120 for six plays. Payment plans are available. The Trinity Rep box office is located at 201 Washington Street, Providence, RI (though currently closed to in-person transactions), and can be reached by calling (401) 351-4242. Tickets will go on sale to the general public for *A Christmas Carol* on July 25, 2020; the subscription series productions in summer 2020; and for *The Prince of Providence* in spring 2021.

Trinity Rep's 2020-21 Season is sponsored by the Ocean State Job Lot Charitable Foundation and the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Southwest Airlines is the official airline of Trinity Rep.

TRINITY REPERTORY COMPANY

Rhode Island's Tony Award-winning theater, Trinity Rep has created unparalleled professional theater for and with its community since its founding in 1963. Trinity Rep strives to facilitate human connection and has been a driving force behind the creativity that fuels and defines the region for more than 50 years.



Trinity Rep is committed to reinventing the public square and inspiring dialogue by creating emotionally-stimulating live productions that range from classical to contemporary and innovative education programs for all ages and abilities. Its annual production of *A Christmas Carol* has brought families together for over 40 years and made memories for over a million audience members.

2020-21 Season

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

Book by Hugh Wheeler

Directed by Curt Columbus

August 27 – September 27, 2020

Press opening: August 31, 2020

An indisputable masterpiece by America's greatest living Broadway composer and lyricist, this is a heart-pounding thriller set on the seedy side streets of 19th-century London. Filled with diabolical humor and extraordinary music, this eight-time Tony Award-winning musical tells the tale of an exiled barber's quest to avenge the wrongs done to him and his family. *Sweeney Todd* is a beautiful, soaring dark comedy filled with stunning terror that will leave you gasping!

Sweat

By Lynn Nottage

Directed by Christie Vela

September 10 – October 11, 2020

Press opening: September 14, 2020

Warm humor and tremendous heart permeate this Pulitzer Prize-winner and hit Broadway play. Deep in the Rust Belt, blue collar factory workers swear by longtime friendships that seem unbreakable. These women spend their days working at physically-demanding jobs and their evenings laughing over drinks and dreaming of retirement. But mistrust, pride, and the economic pressures from a changing America introduce fissures in the foundation of this chosen family. Soon the bonds shatter, forever altering the path of two generations.

A Christmas Carol

By Charles Dickens

Original music by Richard Cumming

Directed by Joe Wilson, Jr.

November 5, 2020 – January 3, 2021

Press opening: November 10, 2020

Celebrating 43 years of delighting and inspiring millions at Trinity Rep, Rhode Island's family holiday tradition is reimagined anew every year with a glorious telling of the classic story. Ebenezer Scrooge is guided by Jacob Marley and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present, and Future on a heartwarming journey toward redemption. Scrooge, Tiny Tim, and a full ensemble make the spirit of the season come alive in a memorable holiday experience bursting with hope and theatrical magic.

Tiny Beautiful Things

Based on the book by Cheryl Strayed

Adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos

Co-conceived by Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos

Directed by Curt Columbus

November 19 – December 20, 2020

Press opening: November 23, 2020

A celebration of the simple beauty of being human, this funny, deeply touching, and uplifting play is an exploration of resilience, based on Cheryl Strayed's journey as the beloved anonymous advice columnist for "Dear Sugar." Over the years, thousands of people turned to "Sugar" for words of wisdom, compassion, and hope. Reluctant to claim that she has all the answers, Sugar looks to her own past and draws on her life experiences to bring light, laughter, and humanity to others.

Fairview

By Jackie Sibblies Drury

Directed by Jude Sandy

January 21 – February 21, 2021

Press opening: January 25, 2021

This stunning Pulitzer-prize winner begins simply: It's Grandma's birthday, and Beverly needs the family's celebration to be perfect. But her husband is no help, her sister is getting into the wine, her brother hasn't arrived, and her teenage daughter's secrets threaten to derail the day. Then, this family comedy takes a surprising turn, becoming an unpredictable and thrillingly theatrical experience that boldly confronts perceptions of race and identity.

The Diary of Anne Frank

By Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett

Directed by Brian McEleney

February 25 – March 28, 2021

Press opening: February 29, 2021

Amid the chaos of war and religious persecution, Anne Frank and her family remain confined within their attic refuge struggling to survive. Though she faces unimaginable fear, Anne continues to find hope and beauty in the world. This haunting and inspiring story illuminates one of the darkest periods of human history and celebrates the power of the human spirit. From the director of *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Anna K.

By Deborah Salem Smith

Directed by Jessie Austrian

March 25 – April 25, 2021

Press opening: March 29, 2021

Brisk, playful, and moving, this contemporary re-imagining of *Anna Karenina* highlights the epic romances and fierce friendships at the heart of Tolstoy's masterpiece. Anna, Dolly, and Kitty recount the stories of their tumultuous love affairs, the freedom and restrictions that come from those romances, and the strength they find in one another. Each discovers in her own way that lasting passion comes from continuing to fall hopelessly in love every day, not from the magic that comes 'at first sight.'

The Prince of Providence

By George Brant

Based on the book *The Prince of Providence* by Mike Stanton

Directed by Taibi Magar

Starts May 27, 2021

Press opening: June 1, 2021

The nation knows him from *Crimetown* and Operation Plunder Dome, but Providence has a deeper and more complicated relationship with Buddy Cianci. A charismatic visionary who was also a corrupt philanderer, the long-time mayor defied the odds time after time – from his very first election to winning again after being arrested on assault charges. Surrounded by a colorful carousel of characters, Buddy gave Providence many things: some are more visible – businesses, tourism, and relocated rivers – while others are less tangible, but no less real – pride, notoriety, and now, a great story to tell.

Plays, dates, prices, and artists subject to change.

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