

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TAPPAN WILDER THORNTON WILDER NEPHEW & LITERARY EXECUTOR TO VISIT PORTLAND

Artists Rep hosts public conversations with Mr. Wilder in conjunction with
lauded production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre
WHAT: Two public conversations with Tappan Wilder
Thursday, June 16 @10pm – Post-show with director Dámaso Rodriguez.
Friday, June 17 @ 6:30pm – Pre-show with moderator Bob Hicks, Oregon ArtsWatch
WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, 1516 SW Alder Street, Portland
TICKETS: FREE
INFO: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Portland, Oregon | June 9, 2016. Artists Rep is honored to welcome Tappan Wilder, nephew and literary executor for the legendary playwright Thornton Wilder, to Portland to see its revival production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*.

Artists Rep will host two conversations with Mr. Wilder offering the public the opportunity to learn more about the life and works of Thornton Wilder with a pre-eminent expert, as well as discuss the production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*. On Thursday, June 16 after the performance, play director and Artists Rep Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez will host a discussion with Mr. Wilder. Pre-show on Friday, June 17, arts and culture journalist Bob Hicks, now with Oregon ArtsWatch, will host a pre-show conversation with Mr. Wilder.

AMOS TAPPAN WILDER

Tappan Wilder (as he is known) is Thornton Wilder's nephew and has served as the literary executor and manager of his uncle's intellectual property since 1995. He plays a similar role for the literary legacies of Thornton Wilder's three sisters and brother, all of whom were also writers.

In 2006, Mr. Wilder completed work on a nine-volume HarperCollins re-issue of Thornton Wilder's novels and major plays. For each volume in this series he contributed an Afterword containing a history of the work together with selected readings, many from unpublished sources. Earlier, he served as co-

editor (with Donald Gallup) of TCG's two-volume edition of Thornton Wilder's short plays. He is currently engaged in revisions of selected titles in the HarperCollins re-issue series and overseeing new or revised acting editions for all of Wilder's dramatic works. Mr. Wilder is also working with Wipf & Stock Publishers on the re-publication of seventeen of Amos Niven Wilder's works covering the fields of New Testament studies, literature and religion, literary criticism and poetry.

Mr. Wilder consulted with the scholarly team of Robin G. Wilder and Jackson R. Bryer, editors of *The Selected Letters of Thornton Wilder*, published by HarperCollins in 2008 and with J.D. McClatchy, editor of the Library of America's three volumes devoted to Thornton Wilder's drama and fiction (published 2007, 2009 & 2012). For more than a decade, he worked closely with Penelope Niven, whose biography *Thornton Wilder: A Life* (2012) is the first Wilder biography to draw on extensive Wilder family materials never before made available to researchers.

Mr. Wilder has also had the pleasure of overseeing several successful new works based on his uncle's plays, among them the *Our Town* opera (with libretto by poet J.D. McClatchy and score by composer Ned Rorem) which premiered in 2006, and an adaptation of George Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* (begun by Wilder in 1939 and completed by playwright Ken Ludwig in 2006).

Mr. Wilder, who speaks widely about his uncle's life, is a graduate of Yale College and holds a MA in history from the University of Wisconsin (Madison) and a M. Phil in American Studies from Yale. Before moving to the Washington, DC area in 1979 to help establish Partners for Livable Places (now Communities), he held a number of administrative positions at Yale, principally in the field of urban studies. He now lives in Northern California.

Mr. Wilder is a member of P.E.N. (American Center), a former Trustee of the Yale Library Associates, an honorary trustee of Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, and a member of the National Council of Graywolf Press. He is also proud to serve as Honorary Chair of [The Thornton Wilder Society](#). More information at [thorntonwilder.com](#).

DÁMASO RODRIGUEZ

Mr. Rodriguez is the director of Artists Rep's production of *The Skin of Our Teeth*. He is in his fourth year as Artistic Director of Artists Repertory Theatre. In 2001, he co-founded the Los Angeles-based Furious Theatre Company, where he served as Co-Artistic Director until 2012. From 2007-2010, he served as Associate Artistic Director of the Pasadena Playhouse. His directing credits include work at Artists Rep, the Pasadena Playhouse, Intiman Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, A Noise Within, The Theatre@Boston Court, Naked Angels and Furious Theatre. Rodriguez is a recipient of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, the Back Stage Garland Award, the NAACP Theatre Award and the Pasadena Arts Council's Gold Crown Award. His productions have been nominated for multiple LA Weekly Theatre Awards and LA Stage Alliance Ovation Awards. In 2012, Rodriguez was honored by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation as a Finalist for the Zelda Fichandler Award. He is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC).

Directing credits at Artists Rep include revivals of *The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson and *The Playboy of the Western World* by J.M. Synge, the world-premiere musical *Cuba Libre* featuring the music of three-time Grammy-nominated Tiempo Libre, the Portland premieres of David Ives' adaptation of Pierre Corneille's *The Liar*, Nina Raine's *Tribes*, *Exiles* by Carlos Lácámara, the U.S. premiere of Dawn King's *Foxfinder*, and the West Coast premieres of Dan LeFranc's *The Big Meal* and Jeffrey Hatcher's *Ten Chimneys*. Credits at other theaters include a mix of plays by contemporary and classic playwrights

including William Shakespeare, Eugene O'Neill, Noel Coward, Bernard Shaw, Clifford Odets, Tennessee Williams and Lillian Hellman. More information at www.damaso-rodriguez.com.

BOB HICKS

Mr. Hicks is a Portland writer whose reviews and essays on theater, dance, visual art, and other cultural matters appear frequently on Oregon ArtsWatch. He's been writing about arts and culture in Portland since 1978, first as arts editor and movie critic at the Oregon Journal, then for 25 years at The Oregonian as a writer and editor covering the performing, visual, and literary arts. His most recent art books include *Kazuyuki Ohtsu* (Pomegranate, 2016), *James B. Thompson: Fragments in Time* (Hallie Ford Museum of Art, 2016), and *Beth Van Hoesen: Fauna and Flora* (Pomegranate, 2014). His work has appeared in *American Theatre*, *Biblio*, *Professional Artist*, *Prologue*, *Art Scatter*, and elsewhere. He also writes the popular daily art-history series "Today I Am" on Facebook.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Thornton Wilder (1897-1915) was an accomplished novelist and playwright whose works explore the connection between the commonplace and the cosmic dimensions of human experience. He won three Pulitzer Prizes: for his novel *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, and two plays *Our Town* and *The Skin of Our Teeth*. Wilder's farce, *The Matchmaker*, was adapted as the musical *Hello, Dolly!* He also enjoyed enormous success as a translator, adaptor, actor, librettist and lecturer/ teacher. Wilder's many honors include the Gold Medal for Fiction and the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Thornton Wilder's timeless comedy has amazed audiences for generations with its unique theatrical style, huge, and not always human, cast and an epic story that spans centuries while reflecting the issues of the era in which it is produced.

This comedic masterpiece takes on the entirety of history, with one ordinary American family who lives through it all. Dad's just invented the wheel, Cain is throwing rocks at the neighbor kid, mammoths and dinosaurs lounge in the family room and mom frets about how to get all those animals on the boat two by two. Through Ice Ages, biblical floods and political conventions, the Antrobus family of Excelsior, New Jersey perseveres. With a huge cast and time-set across the ages, this theatrical allegory captures the human spirit – of brilliance, idiocy and ultimately sweet survival.

Artists Rep's *The Skin of Our Teeth* was extended until June 19 and includes 3 to 10 Community Guest Stars in walk-on roles for every single performance and employs massive multimedia projections, live video feed and a cornucopia of masks. This is a play in three acts and runs approximately 2 hours, 30 minutes, including two intermissions.

WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, Alder Stage, 1516 SW Alder Street, Portland
WHEN: Through June 19 – Tickets & Info: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org
TICKETS: \$48 regular price; student/under 25
PHOTO LINK: [HERE](#)
PROMO VIDEO: [HERE](#)
:15 TRAILER: [HERE](#)
FULL TRAILER: [HERE](#)
CAST & CREATIVE TEAM: [HERE](#)

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artist Rep became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in May 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN).

[Artists Rep's 2016/17 season](#) offers a stylistically diverse season of seven imaginative and entertaining plays that grapple with family and the pursuit of happiness. The season features one World Premiere commissioned by Artists Rep's new play development program [Table|Room|Stage](#), along with five Northwest Premieres (including a musical) by some of the best emerging contemporary playwrights in the country, and one re-imagined classic featuring an all-female cast. The 2016/17 selections emphasize the aesthetic and scope of work Artists Rep has been committed to producing for almost 35 years as Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre.

Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of 24 multidisciplinary theatre professionals. Hailing from around the country, our [Resident Artists](#) are nationally renowned and award-winning actors, directors, writers, designers and educators who have chosen to make Portland and Artists Rep their artistic home. Working together and independently, they create inventive and theatrically rich experiences for our audiences while playing a major role in defining Portland's cultural landscape.

Artists Rep is also home to the [ArtsHub](#), serving as a community arts center, where our performance venues and lobbies buzz with creative energy and Portland's arts-loving audiences can gather. We offer a home within our facility to a diverse range of artists and arts organizations. They can thrive here with access to affordable administrative, performance and rehearsal space, as well as a myriad of support services. Over the last year, hundreds of performances, events and happenings by Portlanders found a place in our building.

Artists Rep's mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2015/16 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate and David and Christine Vernier. *The Skin of Our Teeth* is presented at Artists Rep with support from Work for Art, Mentor Graphics, Maletis Beverage, AH Creative, Jenny & Carter MacNichol and Julie & Robert Ball. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Work for Art.

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