

# ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Artists Rep's 2015/16 Season Portland Premieres, Rare Revivals & Broadway-Scale World Premiere Musical**

**PORTLAND, OREGON – July 30, 2015.** Artists Repertory Theatre announces an ambitious and stylistically diverse 2015/16 season of eight engaging plays. These selections emphasize Artists Rep's role as Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company by offering five critically acclaimed contemporary plays, alongside two magnificent mid-20th Century classics, and the world premiere production of the Broadway-scale musical, *Cuba Libre*.

"This season's line-up of bold and diverse plays presents us with characters facing and ultimately emerging through life's obstacles," said Dámaso Rodríguez, Artistic Director. "From challenges of immense or fantastical proportions to deep, internal hindrances they may not yet understand, the characters this season reveal the grace and beauty of accepting change through adaptation and perseverance." Rodríguez continues, "I hope both veteran and new theatre-goers see titles that inspire them to discover what makes Artists Rep such a special place to experience theatre in Portland."

The 2015/16 season will again feature the work of Artists Rep's Resident Artist Company, alongside guest artists from Portland's top-notch theatre community and beyond. Now comprised of 24 theatre practitioners, Artists Rep's Resident Artist Company represents some of Portland's finest talent, in a variety of theatrical disciplines.

**TICKETS:** All shows on sale August 1, 2015

- \$48 regular price; \$25 previews, students, under 25  
For *Cuba Libre* only: \$46-\$56 regular price; \$35 previews, students, under 25
- Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or [www.artistsrep.org](http://www.artistsrep.org)
- Pay-What-You-Can First Preview for each performance at the door
- ASL Interpreted performances on Saturday matinee performance of each play
- Open-Captioned performances third Sunday night performance of each play

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## ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE'S 2015/16 SEASON

### ***The Understudy***

**by Theresa Rebeck**

**Directed by Michael Mendelson**

An understudy rehearsal for a fictional Kafka play on Broadway teeters on the edge of reality when Harry – the understudy for Jake, who is the understudy for Bruce, a Hollywood action star about to land a multimillion-dollar part – must work with the ill-fated production's exasperated stage manager whose life he ruined long ago. *The Understudy* is a raucously funny existential exposé on human motivation that examines the underbelly of the theatre business and the personal drama behind the curtain.

- Off-Broadway and regional theatre hit comedy from the writer of TV's *Smash*
- Portland Premiere

### ***Cuba Libre***

**Featuring Music by Tiempo Libre**

**Book by Carlos Lacámara**

**Music & Lyrics by Jorge Gómez**

**Directed by Dámaso Rodríguez**

**Choreography by Maija Garcia**

The irresistible rhythms of Cuban music drive this riveting, timely story of a man caught between countries, losses and loves, and his search for freedom. Set in America and Cuba, this universal tale reverberates across politics, ambition and romance with quick-witted dialogue, joy-filled dance and Latin-fusion beats. This Broadway-scale, contemporary musical features the internationally acclaimed, three-time Grammy nominated band Tiempo Libre with a company of 22 actors, dancers and musicians in a not-to-be-missed theatrical event.

- Portland's Broadway-scale World Premiere

### ***Broomstick***

**by John Biguenet**

**Directed by Gemma Whelan**

A fairytale-twisted yarn of delightful humor and spine-tingling suspense conjures a spooky seasonal experience unlike any other. With Vana O'Brien in a tour-de-force solo performance, an Appalachian witch tells a heartfelt and poetic tale of her long life from first love, to heartache, to the hair-raising vengeance she wreaks upon those who've crossed her.

- Critically-acclaimed spellbinding sensation
- NW Premiere

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## ***The Miracle Worker***

**by William Gibson**

**Directed by Dámaso Rodríguez**

One of the most triumphant stories of the human spirit ever told, the soul-stirring *The Miracle Worker* evokes hope and inspiration for the entire family. With dignity, perseverance and respect in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges, a child, a teacher and a family learn to communicate. A play based on the lives of Helen Keller, who became Deaf-Blind as an infant, and her teacher, Anne Sullivan, who enabled her to become one of the most influential women of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- 1960 Tony Winner for Best Play
- 1962 Academy Award-winning classic film
- Uplifting Family Classic

## ***Mothers and Sons***

**by Terrence McNally**

**Directed by Jane Unger**

In this sensitive and wryly humorous 2014 Tony Award-nominated play, a mother, after a 20-year silence, pays a surprise visit to her deceased son's former lover seeking a connection she can't fathom. At his Central Park apartment, with his husband and young son by his side, he shows her that healing and hope are possible, even after devastating loss. In this play, vastly different worlds collide, yet truth and compassion rise to reveal that all dreams begin with the common ground of forgiveness.

- 4-time Tony Award-winning playwright
- NW Premiere

## ***We Are Proud to Present a Presentation About the Herero of Namibia, Formerly Known as South West Africa, From the German Sudwestafrika, Between the Years 1884-1915***

**by Jackie Sibblies Drury**

**Directed by Kevin Jones**

A multiracial cast of six idealistic actors sets out to improvise a story about the first colonial genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Africa, but get lost in the reality of their undertaking. The unusual presentation, humor and inevitable discomfort of this provocative new play gripped theatre hubs like New York, Chicago, London, Washington D.C. and Seattle with its unique theatrical investigation of prejudice, power and perspective. "90 minutes of original, enlightening, pulse-pounding theater... It's absolutely thrilling ... it is visceral, fiercely intelligent and entertaining." – Backstage

- Off-Broadway and regional theatre hit
- Portland Premiere

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## ***Grand Concourse***

**by Heidi Schreck**

**Directed by JoAnn Johnson**

In an industrial soup kitchen in the Bronx, Shelley is a nun struggling to pray and questioning her life's work. Her world in service to the needy, alongside a Dominican immigrant security guard and joke-writing "regular," is rocked when a rainbow-haired college drop-out comes to volunteer. The girl's enthusiasm and erratic behavior will change the course of their lives. With touching humor this motley group unravels the intricacies of need, the vagaries of compassion and limits of forgiveness.

- Recent Off-Broadway comedic drama
- Susan Smith Blackburn Prize 2014/15 Finalist
- West Coast Premiere

## ***The Skin of Our Teeth***

**by Thornton Wilder**

**Directed by Dámaso Rodriguez**

This comedic masterpiece spans 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 an immense cast and time-set across the ages, this theatrical allegory captures the human spirit – of brilliance, idiocy and ultimately sweet survival.

- Rare and epic revival of the 1943 Pulitzer Prize winner

### **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. For the 2015/16 season Artists Rep will offer eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions will feature the work of a core group of accomplished Resident Artists, each with a shared history and a shorthand for collaboration, working alongside guest artists from Portland and beyond. Artists Rep is also home to the ArtsHub, a program which offers residencies within Artists Rep's facility to smaller and emerging arts organizations with subsidized administrative, performance and rehearsal space, as well other infrastructural services. The Artists Rep facility serves as a community arts center, where performance venues and other public spaces are continually buzzing with activity.

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 playwrighting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

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The 2015/16 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. *Cuba Libre* is sponsored by The Standard and Oakwood America, with funding from the Kinsman Foundation, and with media sponsorship from Portland Monthly Magazine and Oregon Public Broadcasting. 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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