

# ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

## ADVANCE PRESS RELEASE

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Unconventional holiday musical by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright

## A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS: AN AMERICAN MUSICAL CELEBRATION

Stylistically diverse original musical arrangements by luminary Portland composers

- WHO:** Artists Repertory Theatre
- WHAT:** [Civil War Christmas: An American Musical Celebration](#)  
By Paula Vogel. Music by Daryl Waters.  
Directed by Paul Angelo. Music Direction by Andrew Bray.
- WHEN:** November 22 – December 23, 2016
- Preview performances: Nov 22, 23 & 25
  - There is NO performance on Thanksgiving, Nov 24
  - Opening Night/Press Night: Saturday, Nov 26
  - Regular run through December 23: Wed-Sun @ 7:30pm, Sun @ 2pm  
Tuesdays: Dec 13 & 20 @ 7:30pm;  
Wednesdays: Dec 7 @ Noon; Dec 21 @ 2pm;  
Accessibility Performances: Sun, Dec 11 @ 7:30pm (Open Captioned); Sat, Dec 17 @ 2pm (ASL Interpreted)
  - Post-show discussions follow Sun 2pm matinee performances; Wed, Dec 7 @ noon; Wed, Dec 21 @ 2pm
- WHERE:** Artists Repertory Theatre, Alder Stage, 1516 SW Alder Street, Portland
- TICKETS:** \$50 regular price; \$25 preview/student/under 25  
PREVIEW WEEK SPECIALS
- Pay-What-You-Can First Preview performance: Tuesday, November 22
    - \$10 book ahead or PWYC at the door
  - Preview Play Price & Pizza: Wednesday, November 23
    - \$25 ticket & FREE slice of HotLips Pizza
  - Preview Play & FREE Beer + Happy Hour + Live Music: Friday, November 25
  - Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or [www.artistsrep.org](http://www.artistsrep.org)

## SPECIAL EVENTS

**Nov 28 7:30p** | [SCIENCE ON TAP](#): You & Your Racist Brain: The Neuroscience of Prejudice.

**Dec 6 7:30p** | **MUSIC IN THE MAKING**-Inside the Sounds & Stories of Our American Musical Celebration Special music and storytelling event with the arrangers and contributing artists on creating contemporary work inspired by the Civil War era. Hosted by Susannah Mars.

**Dec 17 Noon-7p** | **HOLIDAY GIFT MARKET**-Seasonal shopping in the Morrison Lobby with 20 unique ADX and Portland Made craft & art vendors.

**SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED:** Photo credit, David Straub

**PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE:** November 23

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Portland, Oregon | October 24, 2016.** Artists Repertory Theatre, in collaboration with Staged!, presents **A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS: AN AMERICAN MUSICAL CELEBRATION** for the holidays. **A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS**, by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel, music by Daryl Waters, features original arrangements of Civil War era songs by luminary Portland musicians: Darrell Grant, Holcombe Waller, Mark and LaRhonda Steele, Okaidja Afroso, Edna Vázquez, Brian Adrian Koch and James Beaton. Runs through December 23 on the Alder Stage.

Set during a time when the country is divided by conflicting ideologies and convictions following a contentious presidential election, Vogel's sweeping, music-rich story plays out one frigid Christmas Eve on the banks of the Potomac River. Amid the hubbub of holiday preparations, an array of abolitionists and assassins, slaves and freemen, Union and Confederate soldiers, along with President Lincoln and Mary Todd, all pursue their paths to liberation. Propelled by traditional American songs, marches and spirituals — all revitalized for this production by a diverse range of Portland musicians — **A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS** is a lively reminder for people of all beliefs about humanity's potential for compassion, reconciliation and hope.

"Though the word 'Christmas' is in the title, Vogel's timely play arrives post-election and celebrates our shared humanity," said Artists Rep Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez. "The play is rife with metaphor, beauty and healing moments that echo our modern, polarized national conversation."

A unique seasonal excursion, this play offers an unconventional storytelling of a time in history that resembles today's political tenor and features known historical figures like President Lincoln, Mary Todd Lincoln, Elizabeth Keckley, John Wilkes Booth and Walt Whitman as characters in the story. The fictional story is woven with musical pieces arranged in a variety of styles by Portland musicians, to tell the tale of one night when people came together in Washington, D.C. mid-Civil War.

**MUSIC.** Artists Rep's production of **A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS** pioneers new arrangements of the period songs in the play's original composition by Portland musicians with special permission from the playwright, Paula Vogel. The company has commissioned seven local musicians from various musical and cultural backgrounds to re-arrange the original score's songs (holiday, hymns, marches and spirituals) by composer Daryl Waters. The result is a new score that merges their work with Daryl Waters'. Each musician has arranged multiple songs throughout the play. The production includes stylistically diverse arrangements by Darrell Grant, Holcombe Waller, Mark and LaRhonda Steele, Okaidja Afroso, Edna Vázquez, James Beaton and Brian Adrian Koch of Blitzen Trapper. Familiar song titles include: *What Child is This?* (arr. Waller), *The Yellow Rose of Texas* (arr. Vázquez), *Balm in Gilead* (arr. Steele), *Children Go Where I Send Thee* (arr. Afroso), *I'm A-Gone Away to Shiloh* (arr. Koch), *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen* (arr. Beaton), *Follow The Drinking Gourd* (arr. Grant).

**CAST.** The large, ensemble cast of Artists Rep's production is among the most diverse casts ever assembled by the theatre and is pointedly reflective of America today. This ensemble of actors will generate all of the live music for the production and play their own instruments. They will be costumed in contemporary clothing, with simple suggestions of the 19<sup>th</sup> century period, to further blur the time period and connect the play to modern times.

#### **ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

Paula Vogel has written HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE (Pulitzer Prize, New York Drama Critics Award, Obie Award, Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and many more.) Other plays include A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS, THE LONG CHRISTMAS RIDE HOME, THE MINEOLA TWINS, HOT 'N' THROBBIN, THE BALTIMORE WALTZ, DESDEMONA, AND BABY MAKES SEVEN, and THE OLDEST PROFESSION. Her plays have been produced by Second Stage, New York Theatre Workshop, the Vineyard Theatre, Roundabout and Circle Repertory Company. Her plays have been produced regionally all over the country at the Center Stage, Intiman, Trinity Repertory, Woolly Mammoth, Huntington Theatre, Magic Theatre, The Goodman Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, Dallas Theatre Berkeley Repertory, and Alley Theatres to name a few. Harrogate Theatre and the Donmar Theatre have produced her work in England. Her plays have been produced in Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand as well as translated and produced in Italy, Germany, Taiwan, South Africa, Australia, Romania, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Poland Slovenia, Canada, Portugal, France, Greece, Japanese, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Peru, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, Brazil and other countries. John Simon once remarked that Paula Vogel had more awards than a "black sofa collects lint." Some of these include Induction into the Theatre Hall of Fame, Thornton Wilder Award, Lifetime Achievement from the Dramatists Guild, the William Inge Award, the Elliott Norton Award, two Obies, a Susan Smith Blackburn Award, the PEN/Laura Pels Award, a TCG residency award, a Guggenheim, a Pew Charitable Trust Award, and fellowships and residencies at Sundance Theatre Lab, Hedgebrook, The Rockefeller Center's Bellagio Center, Yaddo, MacDowell, and the Bunting. But she is particularly proud of her Thirtini Award from 13P, and honored by three Awards in her name: the Paula Vogel Award for playwrights given by The Vineyard Theatre, the Paula Vogel Award from the American College Theatre Festival, and the Paula Vogel mentorship program, curated by Quiara Hudes and Young Playwrights of Philadelphia.

#### **ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

Paul Angelo makes his Artists Rep debut as a director with A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS. As an actor, he has been seen here previously in ITHAKA by Andrea Stolowitz. He serves as the associate artistic director of Staged! musical theatre and as a director in residence with defunkt theatre. A resident of Portland since 2005, he has directed five musicals for Staged!. LES MISERABLES, which received two Portland Area Musical Theatre Awards (PAMTA) including Outstanding Ensemble; BIG RIVER, also awarded two PAMTAs; the Portland Premiere of Jason Robert Brown's '13,' which earned four PAMTA nominations including Outstanding Direction. Also, Jason Robert Brown's PARADE, nominated for five PAMTAs, including Outstanding Direction and awarded Outstanding Ensemble, and DOGFIGHT by Pasek and Paul, four PAMTA nominations including Outstanding Direction. Other Portland directing credits include THE HOMECOMING by Harold Pinter, LET A HUNDRED FLOWERS BLOOM by David Zellnik, BLASTED by Sarah Kane (defunkt theatre), HAMLET by William Shakespeare, EQUIVOCATION by Bill Cain and COYOTE ON FENCE by Bruce Graham (Post5 Theatre), ROMEO AND JULIET (Portland Actors Conservatory) and RUTHLESS! THE MUSICAL (Stumptown Stages). Paul will direct THAT PRETTY, PRETTY OR THE RAPE PLAY by Sheila Callaghan for defunkt theatre in Spring 2017. Paul is a proud member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). Training: BFA: Musical Theatre, SUNY Fredonia. MFA: performance, Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

## **A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS: AN AMERICAN MUSICAL CELEBRATION**

By Paula Vogel

Original Music by Daryl Waters

Directed by Paul Angelo

Music Direction by Andrew Bray

### **CAST**

Mrs. Keckley & Ensemble | **Ayanna Berkshire**\*^

Ward Hill Lamon, James Wormley & Ensemble | **Jimmy Garcia**\*

Ensemble | **Amy Hakanson**

John Wilkes Boothe, Chester Saunders & Ensemble | **Val Landrum**\*^

Mary Todd Lincoln & Ensemble | **Susannah Mars**\*^

Rose & Ensemble | **Crystal Ann Muñoz**

John Hay, Lewis Payne & Ensemble | **Laila Murphy**

Abraham Lincoln, Walt Whitman & Ensemble | **Ted Rooney**\*

Willy Mack, Louis Weichmann & Ensemble | **Seth Rue**

Mary Surrat, Moses Levy & Ensemble | **John San Nicolas**\*^

Decatur Bronson, John Surratt & Ensemble | **Vin Shambry**\*^

George Keckley & Ensemble | **Blake Stone**

Raz & Ensemble | **Kai Tomizawa**

Hannah & Ensemble | **Andrea Whittle**

Jessa & Ensemble | **Miya Zolkoske**

### **CREATIVE TEAM**

Paul Angelo	Director
Andrew Bray	Music Director
Tim Stapleton	Scenic Designer
Bobby Brewer-Wallin^	Costume Designer
Peter West	Lighting Designer
Mary McDonald-Lewis^	Voice & Text Director
Lauren Noyes	Wig/Hair/MakeUp Designer, Dresser
Emily Wilken	Props Master
Kristen Mun	Movement Choreographer
Luan Schooler	Dramaturg
Jamie Lynne Simons*	Stage Manager
Steven Cantor	Assistant Music Director
Samie Pfeifer	Assistant Scenic Designer
Karen Hill, Michelle Jazuk^	Assistant Stage Managers
Amande Kishlock, Karen Hill	Production Assistants
Will Bailey	Wardrobe
Dave Petersen	Board Op

### **MUSIC ARRANGERS**

Darrell Grant (Jazz), Holcombe Waller (Folk), Mark and LaRhonda Steele (Blues), Okaidja Afroso (Ghanaian), Edna Vázquez (Latin), James Beaton (Contemporary), Brian Adrian Koch (Folk/Rock).

### **MAKERS**

Thomas Phillips  
Bill Wessinger  
Dawn Moothart  
Rio Wrenn

Art Design Portland (ADX) Director of Fabrication, piano/harp  
Art Design Portland (ADX) Fabrication Technician, piano/harp  
Portland Apparel Lab (PAL) Textile Artist, set backdrop  
Portland Apparel Lab (PAL) Fabric Dyer, set backdrop

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers

^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

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## **GALLERY INSTALLATION**

For the holiday season, Geezer Gallery will exhibit the life-long Outsider Art collection of Jane Kearns in conversation with A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS. Geezer Gallery's *American Outsider Art – Kerns Collection Exhibit* provides a visual illustration of historical elements rooted in the Civil War era. These two expressions of history come together to illuminate a more comprehensive story of American culture and will expand ideas of what art can be.

Highly collectible and admired, Outsider Art breaks the mold of the artistic establishment. With minimal contact to the mainstream art world, outsider artists' drive to create is unstoppable. Using unconventional materials such as sugar mud and styles unadulterated by artistic culture, they produce one-of-a-kind pieces portraying the inner workings of their psyches. They feel that their experiences and messages must be heard, using creation as a form of communication and therapy. Stemming from each piece is a grasping story that will surely capture the heart and mind of its viewers. Working with collector Jane Kearns, Geezer Gallery has discovered the secrets behind these captivating windows into American history.

Outsider Art is known by names such as Art Brut or 'Raw Art,' and falls into many categories such as art of the mentally ill, tramp art, prison art, and folk art. Each of these groups faces disadvantages that bring about stigmatization, but this does not hinder their artistic pursuits. Currently displayed in reputable institutions such as the American Museum of Folk Art, the Smithsonian National Museum of American Art, as well as in galleries around the world, Outsider Art has become a highly valued genre.

This exhibit for *A Civil War Christmas* runs November 22 to December 23. Exhibit receptions will take place on November 30 at 6:30pm and December 15 at 6:30pm.

## **ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE**

[Artists Repertory Theatre](#)'s mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for artists of varied backgrounds to take creative risks. Artists Rep is Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company and is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. Artist Rep became the 72<sup>nd</sup> 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 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 company.

Artists Rep has become a significant presence in American Regional Theatre with a legacy of world, national and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. The organization is committed to local artists and features a company of Resident Artists, 24 professionals of varied theatre disciplines, who are a driving force behind Artists Rep's creative output and identity. Artists Rep is committed to developing new work through the recently launched new play development program Table|Room|Stage. With T|R|S, Artists Rep strives to empower and support Oregon-based playwrights while also creating a Portland home for writers from around the country to develop their work. Additionally, this program will make a meaningful impact on equity in the arts by mandating opportunities for women writers and writers of color, and cultivating the next generation of theatre-goers by creating work specifically for young people (13 and up). Artists Rep makes a significant impact on the Portland arts community with its ArtsHub, creating space and offering a home to more than eight multidisciplinary arts organizations within its facility.

[RESIDENT ARTISTS](#) – Artists Rep productions feature the work of a core group of 27 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.

[TABLE | ROOM | STAGE](#) – Through T|R|S, Artists Rep is committed to becoming an engine for new play development. As a recipient of a \$125,000 Oregon Community Foundation Creative Heights grant to establish a robust new play development program, the company is creating opportunities for local and national playwrights to ensure that underrepresented voices are heard on stage. The T|R|S program will commission a total of eight plays by 2017 – at least four of the eight commissions will go to writers of color, at least four will go to women, one play will be written for young adults and one will be the [Oregon Play Prize](#), awarded to Oregon playwright Steve Rathje for his play SIGNS. Artists Rep has now extended five of the eight play commissions to Yussef El Guindi, Linda Alper, Larissa FastHorse and Andrea Stolowitz.

[ARTSHUB](#) – Artists Rep is also home to the ArtsHub, serving as a community arts center, where its performance venues and lobbies buzz with creative energy and Portland's arts-loving audiences can gather. Artists Rep offers a home within its 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 Artists Rep's building.

The 2016/17 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by sponsors Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate and David & Christine Vernier and the Robert and Mercedes Eichholz and Renaissance Foundations. Sponsors for A CIVIL WAR CHRISTMAS include: Kinsman Foundation, Opsi Architecture, US Bank Foundation, Boeing, Hotel deLuxe and Charlotte Rubin. Other season support comes from the Collins Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, Theatre Communication Group and the Regional Arts and Culture Council and Work for Art.

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