



Media Contact: Nicole Lane
nlane@artistsrep.org
503.241.9807x102(o) | 360.601.4298(c)

Oregon's Artists Rep & OSF to host Pakistan's Theatre Wallay ***ON COMMON GROUND***

First-hand performance, education and artistic exchange

WHAT: Artists Repertory Theatre and Oregon Shakespeare Festival in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and Ithaca College present *On Common Ground* from Islamabad's Theatre Wallay. A Pakistani/American theatre collaboration of an original theatre piece on the theme of public space.

WHEN: PORTLAND: Artists Rep – June 26 & 28, 2017 @ 7:30pm
– Reception follows June 26 performance

ASHLAND: Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Greenshow – June 30, July 2 & 4 @ 6:45pm
WHERE: PORTLAND: Artists Repertory Theatre, Alder Stage, 1516 SW Alder Street
ASHLAND: Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Green Show Stage, 15 S. Pioneer Street

TICKETS: PORTLAND: FREE, reserve seats @ 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org
ASHLAND: FREE, no reservations, more info: <https://www.osfashland.org/greenshow/>

ENRICHMENT EVENTS – PORTLAND:

Brown Bag Lunch cross cultural music exchange | Tuesday, June 27 @ Noon
Mic Crenshaw, LaRhonda & Mark Steele, Subashini Ganesan, Tom Grant, Susannah Mars, Briley Neugebauer

Post Closing Show cross cultural jam | Wednesday, June 28 @ 9pm
Tom Grant, Mic Crenshaw, Portland State University Chamber Choir, Doug Detrick, Subashini Ganesan, Stephanie Schneiderman, Tony Furtado, Briley Neugebauer

PHOTOS AVAILABLE: [HERE](#)

VIDEO DOCUMENTARY: [HERE](#)

ON COMMON GROUND FACEBOOK PAGE: [HERE](#)

ON COMMON GROUND BLOG: [HERE](#)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Portland, Oregon | June 6, 2017. Artists Repertory Theatre and Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF), in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad and Ithaca College, partner with Islamabad's Theatre Wallay to present *On Common Ground* for Oregon audiences June 26 to July 4 at both venues.

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Supported by a generous Cultural Affairs grant from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad, Theatre Wallay will visit Portland and Ashland with its theatre and music production of *On Common Ground*, as well as participate in professional and artistic exchange throughout their tour. The Pakistani contingent will consist of eight actors, a classical dancer, a young singer, a tabla player and sitarist.

ABOUT ON COMMON GROUND

Theatre Wallay's original piece explores the lives of contemporary young people in Islamabad, and their relationship to public spaces – schools, squares, mosques, parks, wedding spaces and safe spaces – the way these places reflect the lives of modern Pakistanis and what it means to lose these spaces due to terrorism.

On Common Ground is a funny, quirky, music-filled glimpse into the lives of artists living in Islamabad, Pakistan. Oregonians can expect lively stories of life in the Pakistani capital, as well as joyful Pakistani music and dance. Through this work these artists offer American audiences a peek into their lives living in an Islamic country and particularly their relationships with public spaces. They question: What does it mean to lose it? What does it mean to have it? How does access to public space affect the culture? These are questions that transcend a geographic location, but in this context the lived-experiences of these artists are illuminated for American audiences to consider.

On Common Ground will spark dialogue about an intercultural relatable subject matter. The theme of reclaiming communal space will resonate within the context of live theatre as it, too, is a shared experience in a public space. This artistic and cultural exchange will create new person-to-person intercultural bridges between performers and audiences, between American and Pakistani artists, and between Theatre Wallay and American theatrical institutions Artists Repertory Theatre and Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The script was developed by Artists Rep Resident Artist and 24-season OSF company member Linda Alper, who traveled to Pakistan first on a Fulbright Grant in 2015. Her American colleagues, actor/director David Studwell (known to Portland audience from PCS's *Fiddler on the Roof*), and Ithaca College voice professor Kathleen Mulligan who is the executive producer, are also Fulbright scholars.

"When I was a Fulbrighter in Taiwan, we had a great motto: 'A little more knowledge, a little less conflict,'" said Linda Alper. "And that's what this piece is about – learning all the things we all have in common, despite our differences in religion, region, gender. *On Common Ground* tells the real stories of life in contemporary Islamabad – funny, ironic, irreverent, respectful – in an attempt to make sense of the unpredictable lives our artists live as teachers, students, wives, sons, parents, sports fans, writers, theatre artists, activists, musicians and friends."

This project is about cross-cultural understanding, getting to know Muslim artists from Pakistan and offering those artists experiences with Oregon's Artists Rep and OSF. It's about personalizing "the other," fostering a little more knowledge, and a little less conflict. Learn more here: TheatreWallay.com

ABOUT THE EXCHANGE PARTNERSHIPS

This partnership is an opportunity for cultural and artist exchange. While Theatre Wallay artists are in Portland and Ashland, they will have the opportunity to meet local artists, actors, dancers, musicians, educators, as well as technical and creative theatre practitioners to learn new skills and techniques.

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The Pakistani exchange group of multidisciplinary artists will visit and present their work at Artists Rep, in Portland, from June 24 to 28 and present *On Common Ground* June 26 and 28 with community musical and dance exchanges planned. They will travel to Ashland, Oregon June 29 through July 5 and perform in the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Greenshow on June 30, July 2 and 4.

The project will also include a workshop in the Fall at Ithaca College in New York, and finally a theatre tour and workshops in Pakistan.

ABOUT THEATRE WALLAY

Theatre Wallay, the only nonprofit theatre company in Islamabad committed to education and peace building, has written an original piece exploring public spaces – schools, squares, mosques, parks – the way these places reflect the lives of modern Pakistanis and what it means to lose these spaces due to terrorism. Learn more here: TheatreWallay.com

ON COMMON GROUND

by Theatre Wallay, Islamabad, Pakistan

Writers include: Zainab Hassan, Amna Mawaz Khan, Ammar Khalid, Fizza Hassan, Muhammad Haseeb Ali Chishti, Atif Siddique, Mustafa Hassan, Imran Iftikhar, Muhammad Usman Khan, Aiman Rathore, Salman Haider, Shafaq Malik, Asad Raza

CAST

Fizza Hassan
Ammar Khalid
Imran Iftikhar
Atif Siddique
Muhammad Usman Khan
Syeda Rabia Masood Pasha
Muhammad Haseeb Ali Chishti
Zainab Hassan
Amna Mawaz Khan (dancer)
Razia Abrar (vocalist)
Irfan Masih (tabla)
Wajih Ull Hussnain Hamid (Sitar)

PRODUCTION TEAM

Muhammad Kazim Hussain & Stephanie Mulligan | Stage Managers
Mustafa Hassan | Sound Designer
Carl Faber | Lighting Designer
Kristeen Crosser & Artists Repertory Theatre | Production staff
Linda Alper | Producer
Kathleen Mulligan | Executive Producer

Supported by a Cultural Affairs grant from the U.S. Embassy in Islamabad.

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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 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN). Artists Rep's 35th season is announced, the 2017/18 play selections can be [found here](#).

Artists Rep is committed to developing new work through its new play development program [Table|Room|Stage](#). With T|R|S, Artists Rep has created a home for writers from around the country to develop their work. This program strives to make a meaningful impact on diversity, equity and inclusion in the theatre field 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 vital impact on the Portland arts community with its ArtsHub, creating space and offering a home to 10 multidisciplinary arts organizations within its facility. Artists Rep is also home to a core group of over two dozen multidisciplinary theatre professionals. Hailing from around the country, our Resident Artists are nationally renowned and award-winning actors, directors, writers, designers and educators who play a major role in defining Portland's cultural landscape.

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. 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. artistsrep.org

ABOUT OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Founded by Angus Bowmer in 1935, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF) has grown from a three-day festival of two plays to a nationally renowned theatre arts organization that presents an eight-month season of up to 11 plays that include works by Shakespeare as well as a mix of classics, musicals, and world-premiere plays and musicals. OSF's play commissioning programs, which include American Revolutions: the United States History Cycle, have generated works that have been produced on Broadway, throughout the American regional theatre, and in high schools and community theatres across the country. The Festival draws attendance of more than 400,000 to approximately 800 performances every year and employs approximately 575 theatre professionals.

OSF invites and welcomes everyone, and believes the inclusion of diverse people, ideas, cultures and traditions enriches both our insights into the work we present on stage and our relationships with each other. OSF is committed to equity and diversity in all areas of our work and in our audiences.

OSF's mission statement: "Inspired by Shakespeare's work and the cultural richness of the United States, we reveal our collective humanity through illuminating interpretations of new and classic plays, deepened by the kaleidoscope of rotating repertory."

The 2017 OSF season is sponsored by US Bank. 2017 Green Show Partners are Harry & David (June), Avista (July), Lithia Auto Stores (August) and The Standard (September and October).

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