



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 16, 2019
Press release #1759

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**THE GUTHRIE THEATER PRESENTS A SPLIT BRITCHES PRODUCTION OF
UNEXPLODED ORDNANCES (UXO) IN THE DOWLING STUDIO
Playing January 25 – February 10, 2019**

Part of the curated festival *Get Used To It: A Celebration of Queer Artistry*

(Minneapolis/St. Paul) — The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) today announced the presentation of Split Britches' ***Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)*** — the first of three presentations in the Guthrie's curated festival titled ***Get Used To It: A Celebration of Queer Artistry***.

As part of the Guthrie Theater's Level Nine Initiative to present theater that is brave, immediate and community driven, all seats are general admission, every ticket is \$9 and each performance includes an

audience engagement component. Tickets are on sale now through the Box Office at 612.377.2224 or 1.877.44.STAGE (toll-free) and online at guthrietheater.org.

From the groundbreaking, gender-bending Split Britches theater company comes a political satire that explores aging, anxiety and “doomsday” theory through conversation and collaboration with an array of elders and artists. Named after the buried or forgotten munitions of war known as UXOs, this unique production combines darkly playful *Dr. Strangelove*-inspired performance with a daring new protocol for public discussion — the Situation Room. As the performers contemplate where UXOs are located, how much energy they contain and what would happen if they were uncovered, they suggest that this potentially dangerous ammo may also be a metaphor for our unexplored desires.

The cast of *Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)* includes **Peggy Shaw** (Guthrie: debut) and **Lois Weaver** (Guthrie: debut). The piece was written by **Lois Weaver, Peggy Shaw** and **Hannah Maxwell**. *Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)* was created in collaboration with **Jo Palmer, Claire Nolan, Matt Delbridge, Alex Legge, Sarah Vickery, Edythe Woolley** and **Meg Hodgson**.

The creative team for *Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)* includes **Lois Weaver** (director), **Jo Palmer** (technical designer), **Claire Nolan** (video content designer), **Matt Delbridge** (design consultant), **Vivian Stoll** (sound designer) and **Stormy Brandenberger** (choreography consultant).

Founded in New York City in 1980 by Peggy Shaw, Lois Weaver and Deb Margolin, Split Britches continues with the duo and solo work of Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver. The pioneering theater company is known for its innovative and groundbreaking work in establishing the feminist and queer theater movement in the United States and its work with the theatrical form, often mixing a variety of theatrical traditions and styles as it explores the connections between gender roles, class, feminism and homosexuality against a background of American political and literary myth-making.

ABOUT UNEXPLODED ORDNANCES (UXO)

Developed between the U.K. and U.S., with previous residences at the Barbican Centre in London and La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club in New York City, Split Britches brings its largest scale performance to the Guthrie Theater. Inspired by the unexploded Civil War ammunition buried in New York Harbor, Stanley Kubrick’s *Dr. Strangelove* and interviews with elder women, writers Lois Weaver, Peggy Shaw and Hannah Maxwell bring a simulated “war room” experience to the audience that Elisabeth Vincentelli of *The New York Times* described as “Planes carrying nukes, the terrifying sound of life atomized into static noise: *Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)* feels very much of the minute.”

“We don’t know where UXOs are exactly, what energy is left in them or what would happen if we uncovered one — we just know we should be careful with our curiosity,” states Weaver’s onstage persona. By extension, the show suggests that potentially dangerous ammo includes our pent-up desires and abandoned dreams.

To create this “war room” simulation, Shaw and Weaver invite the audience to become a “council of elders.” They determine the ages of those in the audience by asking questions about events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and World War II. Taking on the personas of a pompous general and an inadequate president, Shaw and Weaver use the conflicting ideas of imperativeness and inertia to build a comedic commentary about our modern political systems, our place within them as we age what may be hiding under the surface of ourselves.

ABOUT SPLIT BRITCHES

Pioneers Peggy Shaw and Lois Weaver had to fight to be included in the narrative of New York City's downtown theater scene in the 1970s. In 1980, Peggy Shaw, Lois Weaver and Deb Margolin founded Split Britches and the WOW Café Theatre in the East Village, which was a home for and central to the development of feminist and queer theater.

In their own words, "We create new forms by exploiting old conventions. Our work borrows from classical texts and popular myths, but its true sources are the details of everyday life. We use popular culture as a mode of communication, taking existing forms and cracking them open to queer and personalize them. The work is personal, bordering on the private. It relies on moments rather than plot, relationships rather than story. As we've aged, our work has focused on tapping into the unexplored potential in elders and people with disabilities. Our practice has grown to include dialogic engagement methods as an intrinsic part of the creation and presentation of performances."

Since its inception, Split Britches has been committed to working with women, women of color and LGBTQ+ communities. This has manifested nationally (founding WOW Café Theatre in New York; working in domestic abuse safe houses in upstate New York; collaborating with indigenous and mixed communities in Minnesota) and internationally (women's prisons in Brazil and the U.K.; the Taiwan women's festival). Learn more at www.split-britches.com.

LOIS WEAVER is an artist, activist and professor of Contemporary Performance at Queen Mary University of London. She co-founded Spiderwoman Theater and WOW Café Theatre in New York City and has been a writer, director and performer with Split Britches since 1980. Her experiments in performance as a means of public engagement include Long Tables, Porch Sitings, Care Cafes and her facilitating persona, Tammy WhyNot. Weaver is a 2014 Guggenheim Fellow and 2016–2018 Wellcome Trust Engagement Fellow.

PEGGY SHAW is a performer, writer and teacher of writing and performance. She co-founded Split Britches and WOW Café Theatre in New York City and is a veteran of Hot Peaches and Spiderwoman Theater. Shaw was named a 2014 Senior Fellow by the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics. She is the 2005 Foundation for Contemporary Arts Theatre Performer of the Year, 2012 recipient of the Edwin Booth Award, 2014 recipient of the Doris Duke Artist Award and a 2016 United States Artists Fellow.

Programming in the Dowling Studio is supported by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The Guthrie Theater's 2018–2019 Season sponsors include Bell Bank, The Minnesota State Arts Board, The Shubert Foundation, Target and U.S. Bank.

Unexploded Ordnances (UXO) is supported by Arts Council England, Wellcome Trust, Barbican Centre, University of Sussex, Joy Tomchin, the La MaMa family, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, LMCC, University of Richmond, The Trust for Governors Island, Queen Mary University of London and many more supportive people and organizations.

ABOUT GET USED TO IT: A CELEBRATION OF QUEER ARTISTRY

In the early 1990s, a bold slogan united the gay community and simultaneously demanded acceptance: "We're here. We're queer. Get used to it." This winter, the Guthrie Theater is proud to celebrate queer voices from around the globe with three acclaimed pieces that buoyantly and passionately challenge traditional notions of gender and sexuality. Presented as part of the Level Nine Series, each performance will share an illuminating view of the world through an unapologetic queer lens.

**Get Used To It: A Celebration of Queer Artistry
in the Guthrie Theater's Dowling Studio**

The Guthrie Theater presents
a Split Britches production of
Unexploded Ordnances (UXO)
performed by LOIS WEAVER and PEGGY SHAW
written by LOIS WEAVER, PEGGY SHAW and HANNAH MAXWELL
January 25 – February 10, 2019

The Guthrie Theater presents
Martha Graham Cracker's
Lashed But Not Leashed
songs by DITO van REIGERSBERG, DAVID SWEENY, ELIZA HARDY JONES and VINCE FEDERICI
directed by JOANNA SETTLE
February 14–16, 2019

The Guthrie Theater presents
Hi, Are You Single?
written and performed by RYAN J. HADDAD
directed by LAURA SAVIA
February 21–24, 2019

ABOUT THE GUTHRIE THEATER

The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) was founded by Sir Tyrone Guthrie in 1963 and is an American center for theater performance, production, education and professional training, dedicated to producing the great works of dramatic literature and cultivating the next generation of theater artists. Under Haj's leadership, the Guthrie is guided by four core values: Artistic Excellence; Community; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; and Fiscal Responsibility. The Guthrie produces a mix of classic and contemporary plays on three stages and continues to set a national standard for excellence in theatrical production and performance, serving nearly 400,000 patrons annually. In 2006, the Guthrie opened a new home, designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Jean Nouvel, located on the banks of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Open to the public year-round, it houses three state-of-the-art stages, production facilities, classrooms, full-service restaurants and dramatic public lobbies. guthrietheater.org

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