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**GUTHRIE THEATER PRESENTS A SITI COMPANY PRODUCTION OF EURIPIDES'
SPELLBINDING GREEK TRAGEDY *THE BACCHAE*, DIRECTED BY ANNE BOGART**

The acclaimed SITI Company makes its Guthrie debut on the McGuire Proscenium Stage

(Minneapolis/St. Paul) — The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) today announced SITI Company's cast and creative team for the riveting ancient tale *The Bacchae*, written by Euripides, translated by Aaron Poochigian and directed by celebrated SITI Company co-founder **Anne Bogart**. The globally renowned acting company's debut on the Guthrie's mainstage offers a rare opportunity for local theatergoers to experience this influential Greek tragedy through a contemporary lens.

The Bacchae will run February 29 – April 5, 2020, on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. Single tickets start at \$15 for preview performances (February 29 – March 5) and regular tickets start at \$25. Tickets are on sale now through the Box Office at 612.377.2224, 1.877.44.STAGE (toll-free) or online at guthrietheater.org. Post-play discussions and access services (ASL-interpreted, audio-described and open-captioned performances) are available on select dates and by request.

In Euripides' tale of hubris and tyranny, a disguised Dionysus descends on the city of Thebes to prove Zeus is his father and settle a score with his mortal adversary King Pentheus. His attempts to tear the people's loyalties away from the king cause a frenzy of emotion that lands Dionysus in prison. But Pentheus' misguided attempt to suppress the god's influence tests his leadership and threatens to bring his family to ruin. With striking visuals and bewitching beauty, Bogart gives this ancient tale a modern, razor-sharp edge.

For more than three decades, SITI Company has redefined and revitalized contemporary theater through its collaborative, groundbreaking work. Artistic Director Joseph Haj was a member of the acting company early in his career and recently shared this reflection: "The importance of Anne Bogart in the theater landscape cannot be overstated. The practice that she developed has become training methodology for actors across the country. Watching where Anne and SITI Company were with their work all those years ago and seeing what they have become today is stupendous. Our opportunity to bring their irreverent and smart production of *The Bacchae* to the Guthrie is a tremendous gift."

This SITI Company adaptation of *The Bacchae* was commissioned by the J. Paul Getty Museum and first performed at the Getty Villa in September 2018 before playing Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival the following month. This presentation of SITI Company's bold and innovative work marks its Guthrie debut. The Guthrie previously produced *The Bacchae* in 1987 under the direction of former artistic director Liviu Ciulei.

Critics have praised Bogart's ability to make *The Bacchae*'s ancient themes resonate with modern audiences. *The New York Times* wrote that its "back-burnered anxieties about women and power feel very front-burnered and very now." To prepare for the production, Bogart spent 18 months studying *The Bacchae* with a classicist at Columbia University. SITI Company then hosted a four-week workshop with 60 theater artists in Saratoga Springs, New York.

Euripides was the youngest of the three great Greek tragedians and considered highly innovative in his storytelling. His depictions of heroes and gods frequently allowed for humanity and fallibility, and his works often revealed the dark side of human nature. In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, Bogart said, "I think every great play also asks a great question at its heart. With the Greek plays, and certainly including *The Bacchae*, the essential question is about hubris. [Euripides] sent us a message in a bottle, and we are able to see an ancient artifact through the lens of our own time."

The cast of *The Bacchae* includes **Akiko Aizawa** (Guthrie: debut) as Agave, **J. Ed Araiza** (Guthrie: debut) as Soldier, **Will Bond** (Guthrie: debut) as Second Messenger, **Leon Ingulsrud** (Guthrie: debut) as First Messenger, **Ellen Lauren** (Guthrie: debut) as Dionysus, **Barney O'Hanlon** (Guthrie: debut) as Tiresias, **Roshni Shukla** (Guthrie: debut) as Chorus, **Donnell E. Smith** (Guthrie: debut) as Pentheus, **Samuel Stricklen** (Guthrie: debut) as Chorus and **Stephen Duff Webber** (Guthrie: debut) as Cadmus.

The creative team for *The Bacchae* includes **Anne Bogart** (director), **Aaron Poochigian** (translator), **Brian H Scott** (scenic and lighting designer), **Lena Sands** (costume designer), **Darron L West** (sound designer), **Erik Sanko** (composer), **Ellen M. Lavaia** (company manager), **Alyssa Escalante** (production stage manager), **Nana Dakin** (assistant director), **Addie Gorlin** (Guthrie assistant director), **Joey Guthman** (assistant scenic and lighting designer), **Helene Foley** (dramaturg), **Norman Frisch** (dramaturg), **Kelly Maurer** (choral consultant), **Gian Murray Gianino** (rehearsal director), **Michelle Preston** (executive director) and **Megan E Carter** (producing director).

Anne Bogart (director) is one of the three co-artistic directors of SITI Company, which she founded with Japanese director Tadashi Suzuki in 1992. She is a professor at Columbia University where she runs the graduate directing program. Works with SITI Company include *Falling & Loving*; *The Bacchae*; *Chess Match No. 5*; *Lost in the Stars*; *Persians*; *Steel Hammer*; *A Rite*; *Cafe Variations*; *Trojan Women (After*

Euripides); *American Document*; *Antigone*; *Under Construction*; *Freshwater*; *Who Do You Think You Are*; *Radio Macbeth*; *Hotel Cassiopeia*; *Death and the Ploughman*; *La Dispute*; *Score*; *bobrauschenbergamerica*; *Room*; *War of the Worlds – The Radio Play*; *Cabin Pressure*; *Alice's Adventures*; *Culture of Desire*; *Bob*; *Going, Going, Gone*; *Small Lives/Big Dreams*; *The Medium*; Noël Coward's *Hay Fever* and *Private Lives*; August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*; and Charles L. Mee's *Orestes*.

Recent operas include *The Handmaid's Tale*, George Frideric Handel's *Alcina*, Antonín Dvořák's *Dimitrij*, Giuseppe Verdi's *Macbeth*, Vincenzo Bellini's *Norma* and Georges Bizet's *Carmen*. She is the author of five books: *A Director Prepares*; *The Viewpoints Book: A Practical Guide to Viewpoints and Composition*; *And Then, You Act: Making Art in an Unpredictable World*; *Conversations With Anne*; and *What's the Story: Essays About Art, Theater and Storytelling*.

This production was funded, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Howard Gilman Foundation and the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation.

SITI COMPANY is an ensemble-based theater company whose three ongoing components are the creation of new work, the training of young theater artists and a commitment to international collaboration. SITI Company was founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart and Tadashi Suzuki to redefine and revitalize contemporary theater in the U.S. through an emphasis on international cultural exchange and collaboration. www.siti.org

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 more than 350,000 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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