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GUTHRIE THEATER ANNOUNCES 2020–2021 SEASON, A PROVOCATIVE AND VARIED SLATE OF BOLD CLASSICS AND STIRRING CONTEMPORARY WORKS THAT REFLECT A COMMITMENT TO CHAMPIONING DIVERSE VOICES

Highlights include Shakespeare’s History Cycle trifecta, Joe Dowling’s directorial homecoming, the Guthrie debut of Kathleen Turner in a fiery one-woman play, a high-energy musical by *Hamilton*’s Lin-Manuel Miranda and Lorraine Hansberry’s final play

(*Minneapolis/St. Paul*) — The Guthrie Theater (Joseph Haj, artistic director) today announced the 11 productions of its 2020–2021 mainstage season: Noël Coward’s hot-blooded comedy ***Private Lives***; ***Red Hot Patriot***, a whip-smart one-woman show starring Kathleen Turner; Cummins and Scoullar’s whimsical fairy tale ***The Little Prince***; ***Murder on the Orient Express***, a thrilling mystery by Agatha Christie; ***Tiny Beautiful Things***, a celebration of humanity based on the book by acclaimed author Cheryl Strayed; ***A***

Brittle Glory, a three-part theatrical event featuring Shakespeare's Henriad of *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*; *Les Blancs*, Lorraine Hansberry's story of race and revolution; a sizzling summer musical, *In the Heights*, conceived and created by celebrated artist Lin-Manuel Miranda; and *The Thanksgiving Play*, a wickedly funny satire by Larissa FastHorse of Indigenous Direction.

"We've curated a slate of titles that span many genres, themes and experiences. No two plays cover the same territory, yet they all illuminate our common humanity in beautifully unique ways," said Artistic Director Joseph Haj. "Throughout the season planning process, we ponder which plays will be the most entertaining, inspiring and provocative while amplifying as many voices as possible on our stages. It's a responsibility we take seriously, which is why announcing a season is one of my favorite moments as an artistic director."

The 2020–2021 Guthrie mainstage season begins on the Wurtele Thrust Stage with Noël Coward's hot-blooded comedy, *Private Lives* (September 12 – October 24, 2020). Considered the playwright's most enduring work, it is often regarded as the high point of Coward's career both commercially and artistically. An immediate hit when it was first staged in 1930, *Private Lives'* sparkling dialogue and witty repartee have ensured its popularity ever since. Former artistic director Joe Dowling makes his highly anticipated return to the Guthrie to helm this classic comedy.

The season continues on the McGuire Proscenium Stage with *Red Hot Patriot* (September 26 – November 8, 2020), a whip-smart one-woman play starring Kathleen Turner that is based on the stinging wit and humor of the late, great, Pulitzer Prize-nominated journalist from Texas, Molly Ivins. Ivins got her start in journalism in the late 1960s when she was the first police-beat reporter in the Twin Cities, writing for the *Minneapolis Tribune* (now the *Star Tribune*). In this theatrical portrait, Ivins' folksy manner, irreverent humor and piercing intelligence never waver as she reviews her lifelong love for all things Texas and politics, maintaining her opinionated voice for liberals in the Lone Star State.

Next on the McGuire Proscenium Stage is Cummins and Scoullar's *The Little Prince* (November 21, 2020 – January 3, 2021), a whimsical fairy tale directed by Dominique Serrand and based on the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. *The Little Prince* is a highly imaginative, family-friendly production brought to life by Serrand, best known for his work with Theatre de la Jeune Lune and The Moving Company. A rich and imaginative production of this simple and elegant allegory was directed by Serrand at Jeune Lune during the 2005 holiday season.

Agatha Christie's thrilling mystery *Murder on the Orient Express* (January 16 – March 7, 2021), adapted by Ken Ludwig and directed by Marti Lyons, is next on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. Christie is the bestselling novelist of all time, with more than 60 detective novels and 14 short story collections to her name. This marks the first time the work of Christie or Ludwig has been produced on the Guthrie stage.

Tiny Beautiful Things (February 13 – March 21, 2021), a celebration of humanity based on the book of the same name by lauded author Cheryl Strayed, is next on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. This touching play, adapted for the stage by Nia Vardalos, highlights the heartfelt advice that Strayed shared with readers through her anonymous "Dear Sugar" column. A director will be announced at a later date.

Next on the Wurtele Thrust Stage is the three-part theatrical event **A Brittle Glory** — the History Cycle of William Shakespeare's *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V* (March 27 – May 29, 2021) — directed by Haj with Lavina Jadhvani serving as associate director. This dramatic feat, featuring one company on one stage, was performed in rotating repertory at the Guthrie 30 years ago, with Haj performing in all three productions as a member of the Guthrie acting company. Due to the sizable scope of these plays, they are infrequently produced at this scale, making the Guthrie's run a rare and exciting theatrical experience. This remarkable three-play event marks a historic return to the theater's roots and invites audiences to immerse themselves in Shakespeare like never before.

Lorraine Hansberry's story of race and revolution, *Les Blancs* (May 8 – June 6, 2021) is the next play on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. Internationally acclaimed director Yaël Farber directs this searing and provocative work, which is Hansberry's final play. Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, *Farber* is a multiple award-winning director whose productions have toured the world extensively, earning her a reputation for hard-hitting, controversial works of the highest artistic standard.

A sizzling summer musical, ***In the Heights*** (June 26 – August 29, 2021) is the last work of the 2020-2021 Season on the Wurtele Thrust Stage. With music and lyrics by *Hamilton*'s Lin-Manuel Miranda and a book by Quiara Alegría Hudes — both Pulitzer Prize winners — this joyful, Tony Award-winning musical about a dynamic New York City neighborhood on the brink of change is helmed by director and choreographer Maija García, the Guthrie's director of professional training and the choreographer of the Guthrie's immensely popular *West Side Story* in 2018. A heartfelt and buoyant examination of the bonds that build and sustain a neighborhood, it features danceable Latin pop and salsa alongside soaring ballads and rap.

The 2020–2021 Season closes on the McGuire Proscenium Stage with the wickedly funny satire ***The Thanksgiving Play*** (July 24 – August 22, 2021) by Larissa FastHorse, co-founder of Indigenous Direction, and directed by Jeffrey Meanza, the Guthrie's associate artistic director. The play premiered at Playwrights Horizons in New York City in 2018 and was named one of the 10 most-produced plays for the 2019–2020 theater season in *American Theatre* magazine. Funny, contemporary and smart, FastHorse's satire and critique of liberal allies so afraid of offending anyone that they're unable to act (onstage or off) is about as timely as it gets.

In addition to the mainstage subscription season, the Guthrie will present Charles Dickens' ***A Christmas Carol*** (November 8 – December 27, 2020) for the 46th consecutive year, making it the longest run in regional theater history. Adapted by Crispin Whittell and directed by Lauren Keating with associate director H. Adam Harris, this Twin Cities holiday tradition is for families, friends and champions of good cheer.

The Guthrie Theater's 2020–2021 Season sponsors include the Minnesota State Arts Board, The Shubert Foundation, Target and U.S. Bank. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

The Guthrie's 2020–2021 Dowling Studio Season will be announced at a later date.

TICKET INFORMATION

Eleven plays will be available as part of the 2020–2021 subscription series: *Private Lives*, *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V* and *In the Heights* on the Wurtele Thrust Stage; and *Red Hot Patriot*, *The Little Prince*, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Les Blancs* and *The Thanksgiving Play* on the McGuire Proscenium Stage. New season subscriptions start at \$90 and go on sale June 2, 2020.

Single tickets for *Private Lives*, *Red Hot Patriot* and *The Little Prince* go on sale July 14, 2020. Single tickets for *A Christmas Carol* go on sale September 8, 2020. Single tickets for *Murder on the Orient Express*, *Tiny Beautiful Things*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V* and *Les Blancs* go on sale November 10, 2020. Single tickets for *In the Heights* and *The Thanksgiving Play* go on sale February 16, 2021.

Single ticket prices for all mainstage shows, excluding *A Christmas Carol*, range from \$15 to \$95. Tickets for *A Christmas Carol* range from \$15 to \$135. Discounts are available for students, seniors and children.

To purchase a season subscription, call the Season Ticket Office at 612.225.6238 or 1.877.99.SEASN (toll-free) or visit guthrietheater.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 nearly 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

GUTHRIE THEATER 2020–2021 MAINSTAGE SEASON

Noël Coward's

Private Lives

directed by JOE DOWLING

September 12 – October 24, 2020

Wurtele Thrust Stage

A hot-blooded comedy

It's been five years since divorcees Elyot and Amanda called it quits. They're both on marriage number two and honeymooning in France with their new spouses, Sibyl and Victor, who remain unconvinced that the flames between the contemptuous duo have fizzled. When the couples discover they are vacationing at the same hotel, insults and romantic sparks fly until everyone is caught in the love-hate crossfire and forced to follow their hearts. Former artistic director Joe Dowling makes his much-anticipated return to the Guthrie to direct this will-they-won't-they comedy.

Red Hot Patriot

by MARGARET ENGEL and ALLISON ENGEL

directed by DAVID ESBJORNSON

September 26 – November 8, 2020

McGuire Proscenium Stage

A whip-smart portrait

The late, great Molly Ivins was never one to hold her tongue. During her years as a journalist, including a brief run at the *Minneapolis Tribune*, she wielded her stinging wit and Southern humor against the all-boys club of politicians in her home state of Texas, the White House and beyond. Her on-the-money observations made her a respected icon, but her unwavering tenacity made her a legend. In this uproarious one-woman play performed by the incomparable Kathleen Turner, Ivins is reincarnated into her barb-throwing, bluff-calling self to set the record straight.

A Christmas Carol

by CHARLES DICKENS

adapted by CRISPIN WHITTELL

directed by LAUREN KEATING

November 8 – December 27, 2020

Wurtele Thrust Stage

A Twin Cities holiday tradition

A miserly and miserable man, Ebenezer Scrooge greets each Christmas with "Bah! Humbug!" until he is visited one Christmas Eve by the Ghosts of Christmas Past, Christmas Present and Christmas Future. Through a restless night, the spirits show him happy memories from his past, cruel realities from the present and a grim future should he continue his cantankerous ways. Charles Dickens' timeless tale continues to be a perennial favorite and holiday tradition that invites audiences of all ages to celebrate the merriment of the season with their family and loved ones.

Cummins and Scoullar's

The Little Prince

drama by RICK CUMMINS and JOHN SCOLLAR

based on the book by ANTOINE de SAINT-EXUPÉRY

directed by DOMINIQUE SERRAND

November 21, 2020 – January 3, 2021

McGuire Proscenium Stage

A whimsical fairy tale

After his plane crashes in the Sahara desert, a pilot is plotting his survival strategy when a petite prince with a gleeful spirit appears. Over the course of a week, the prince tells the pilot tales of his intergalactic travels to various planets, Earth included. Each story sheds new light on their philosophical questions until the two unlikely companions find the answers — and their lives — hanging in the balance. Full of whimsy and wonder, this endearing allegory for the whole family explores the contrast between the wide-eyed innocence of youth and the inevitable realities of adulthood.

Agatha Christie's

Murder on the Orient Express

adapted for the stage by KEN LUDWIG

directed by MARTI LYONS

January 16 – March 7, 2021

Wurtele Thrust Stage

A thrilling mystery

Passengers aboard the opulent Orient Express awake to frightful news: Overnight, the American business mogul among them was stabbed to death behind locked doors. Thankfully, debonair detective Hercule Poirot is on the train and on the case. He promptly begins interviewing suspects, securing alibis and forming theories about the killer, who remains at large and could be closing in on the next victim. As the plot thickens and the travelers grow restless, Poirot presents two viable scenarios about who murdered the mogul and why, taking the audience on a wildly glamorous crime-solving ride.

Tiny Beautiful Things

based on the book by CHERYL STRAYED

adapted for the stage by NIA VARDALOS

directed by TBA

February 13 – March 21, 2021

McGuire Proscenium Stage

A celebration of humanity

When lost souls had nowhere to turn and were desperate for answers, they penned heartfelt letters to an anonymous sage named Sugar whose authentic responses garnered a widespread and devoted readership. Turns out the woman behind the advice column was author Cheryl Strayed of *Wild* fame, who spent two years sharing her thoughts on life, love and everyday dilemmas under her “Dear Sugar” guise. Based on Strayed’s bestselling book of the same name, this moving collection of call-and-response stories takes center stage and promises to soften even the hardest of hearts.

A Brittle Glory

Richard II, Henry IV and Henry V

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

directed by JOSEPH HAJ

March 27 – May 29, 2021

Wurtele Thrust Stage

A three-part theatrical event

First comes power, then comes peril. So the history goes in Shakespeare's three dramas encompassing the life and times of key players in the tumultuous English monarchy: *Richard II*, *Henry IV* and *Henry V*.

When King Richard II exiles Henry Bolingbroke and seizes his inheritance, it sets off a challenge for the throne. Eventually Richard abdicates and Bolingbroke becomes the new king, Henry IV. He spends much of his reign divided by two worries: the rebellions of disaffected lords who claim he's a usurper and his wild son and heir, Hal, who prefers to keep company with the fat knight Falstaff than tend to the country. But when Hal assumes the throne as Henry V, he throws off his old ways to become one of England's most honored warrior kings with his unlikely defeat of France at the Battle of Agincourt.

Also known as the Henriad or History Cycle, this dramatic feat was performed in rotating repertory at the Guthrie 30 years ago, marking a historic return to the theater's roots. Performed by one company on one stage, this extraordinary three-play event invites audiences to immerse themselves in Shakespeare like never before.

Les Blancs

by LORRAINE HANSBERRY
final text adapted by ROBERT NEMIROFF
directed by YAËL FARBER
May 8 – June 6, 2021
McGuire Proscenium Stage

A story of race and revolution

In Lorraine Hansberry's powerful final play, Tshembe Matoseh returns to his African home for his father's funeral and discovers that racial discord is at a dangerous tipping point. A divisive conflict is simmering between those who stand for the white colonialism of the past and those who believe nationalism is the future. Battle lines are drawn, even within Tshembe's own family, and he finds himself immersed in the deadly turmoil. But a greater struggle rages inside him: Should he return to his wife and son in England or stay and fight for the revolution at all costs?

In the Heights

music and lyrics by LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA
book by QUIARA ALEGRÍA HUDES
conceived by LIN-MANUEL MIRANDA
directed by MAIJA GARCÍA
June 26 – August 29, 2021
Wurtele Thrust Stage

A sizzling summer musical

At a bodega in Manhattan's Washington Heights neighborhood, owner Usnavi has a front-row seat to the rhythms of the city. Summer is in full swing, making his shop entrance a revolving door of families and friends who are all chasing — or escaping — something bigger than themselves. With temperatures and tensions on the rise, relationships on the block begin to crack under pressure, exposing hopes, dreams and notions of home. Featuring a dynamic score ranging from salsa to hip-hop, this Tony-winning musical from the creator of *Hamilton* will make your heart soar.

The Thanksgiving Play

by LARISSA FASTHORSE
directed by JEFFREY MEANZA
July 24 – August 22, 2021
McGuire Proscenium Stage

A wickedly funny satire

Being on the right side of history is about to go terribly wrong. When three bleeding-heart teaching artists are charged to put on a school pageant about the first Thanksgiving, they resolve to tell both sides of America's backstory and include Indigenous communities in the narrative. Despite their best intentions, things go hilariously awry as they encounter strong creative differences and dodge political landmines. Playwright Larissa FastHorse lays every assumption on the stage and lampoons them with piercing satire, challenging the audience to examine the thin line between truth and tradition.