

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE PRESENTS
A LANDMARK SEASON – TWO DECADES IN THE MAKING

THE NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF PRODUCING
NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED THEATER FOR LOS ANGELES AUDIENCES

The Yale Repertory Theatre Production of

THESE PAPER BULLETS!

A Modish Ripoff of William Shakespeare's

Much Ado About Nothing

Written by **Rolin Jones**

Songs by **Billie Joe Armstrong**

Directed by **Jackson Gay**

Co-Production with **Atlantic Theater Company**

West Coast Premiere

GUARDS AT THE TAJ

Written by **Rajiv Joseph**

Directed by **Giovanna Sardelli**

West Coast Premiere

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR

Written by **John Patrick Shanley**

Directed by **Randall Arney**

BARCELONA

Written by **Bess Wohl**

Directed by **Trip Cullman**

West Coast Premiere

SEX WITH STRANGERS

Written by **Laura Eason**

Directed by **Kimberly Senior**

STAGE KISS

Written by **Sarah Ruhl**

Directed by **Bart DeLorenzo**

BIG SKY

Written by **Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros**

Directed by **John Rando**

World Premiere

[UNTITLED, DEREK DELGAUDIO]

Written and Performed by **Derek DelGaudio**

World Premiere

LOS ANGELES (June 23, 2015) – Geffen Playhouse announces its upcoming landmark 20th anniversary season which underscores the two decades of world-class theater the not-for-profit organization has produced since its 1995 opening. Artistic Director Randall Arney's selections feature some of theater's most established artists: Tony, Pulitzer Prize and Academy Award winner John Patrick Shanley; four Pulitzer Prize finalists Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros, Rolin Jones, Rajiv Joseph and Sarah Ruhl; multi-Grammy Award winner Billie Joe Armstrong; *House of Cards* writer Laura Eason; much produced playwright Bess Wohl (*American Hero*, *Pretty Filthy*); and famed sleight-of-hand artist Derek DelGaudio, whose previous Geffen Playhouse production of *Nothing to Hide* broke box office records.

The eight plays in the Geffen Playhouse's Gil Cates and Audrey Skirball Kenis Theaters include the world premiere of **BIG SKY** written by Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros (*Omnium Gatherum*) and directed by Tony Award winner John Rando (*The Underpants*, *All in the Timing*); three West Coast premieres starting with **THESE PAPER BULLETS! A Modish Ripoff of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing** written by Rolin Jones (*Friday Night Lights*, *Boardwalk Empire*), songs by Green Day frontman Billie Joe Armstrong, directed by Jackson Gay and co-produced with Atlantic Theater Company; followed by **GUARDS AT THE TAJ** written by Steinberg Award recipient Rajiv Joseph (Broadway's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*) and directed by a veteran of Joseph's work, Giovanna Sardelli; then **BARCELONA** by Bess Wohl, directed by Trip Cullman (*Choir Boy*); and three new Geffen Playhouse productions of **OUTSIDE MULLINGAR** by John Patrick Shanley (*Four Dogs and a Bone*, *Moonstruck*, *Doubt*), directed by Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director Randall Arney; **SEX WITH STRANGERS** by Laura Eason (*House of Cards*) and directed by Kimberly Senior (*Disgraced* on Broadway); and **STAGE KISS** by Sarah Ruhl (*The Clean House*), directed by Ovation Award winner Bart DeLorenzo (*Shipwrecked*, *Coney Island Christmas*, *Death of the Author*). The final production in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse will be **[UNTITLED, DEREK DELGAUDIO]**, a world premiere work from Derek DelGaudio; regular Geffen Playhouse attendees will know him from the 2013 production of *Nothing to Hide*, directed by Neil Patrick Harris.

Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director Randall Arney says, "For the last 20 years, Geffen Playhouse productions have been destinations for artists and audiences alike – drawing from our Los Angeles roots and building national as well as international acclaim. Having the privilege of serving as artistic director for 15 of those years, I see this season is indeed a landmark. Our two decades of prior work produced theatrical touchstones for the broad community we serve, and in that way, this coming season is no different."

"We seek plays that speak to our audience. Recently, a critic said that our plays have also begun to 'speak to each other' and that is the dialogue that these plays celebrate. Our landmark 20th anniversary season speaks with the creative community of playwrights, directors, actors and designers that bring our theaters a vibrancy as full and rich as any I have experienced in my career. The events of one play resonate with the events of others, creating a dialogue with audience and artists that began when Gil Cates founded our theater two decades ago. The coming season adds to that conversation by introducing a new vanguard of artists and pillars of American playwriting to our ever-expanding audience."

To renew or purchase a new subscription, please call the subscriber hotline at 310.208.2028 (Monday - Friday 10:00am - 6:00pm; Saturday & Sunday 12:00pm - 6:00pm); for more information, please visit www.geffenplayhouse.com.

The West Coast premiere of **THESE PAPER BULLETS! A Modish Ripoff of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing** begins the season in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse (September 8 – October 18, 2015). *THESE PAPER BULLETS!* was written by Pulitzer Prize finalist and Emmy Award nominated writer Rolin Jones with songs by Grammy Award winner Green Day's Billie Joe Armstrong and staged by Jackson Gay. The musical was commissioned by Yale Repertory Theatre (where it was premiered in 2014) and will be co-produced with Atlantic Theater Company.

Los Angeles audiences may recall the Geffen Playhouse and Atlantic Theater Company last teamed up in 2009 for the Atlantic Theater Company production of *Farragut North*. The Los Angeles run featured Dan Bittner, Mia Barron, Justin Huen, Chris Noth, Chris Pine, Olivia Thirlby and Isaiah Whitlock, Jr.; the play enjoyed sell-out houses every performance and was later adapted into a feature film.

GUARDS AT THE TAJ (October 6 – November 15, 2015) is written by Pulitzer Prize finalist and Steinberg Award recipient Rajiv Joseph. The West Coast premiere begins the season in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse. Joseph's other works include *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, *Animals Out of Paper* and *Gruesome Playground Injuries*, as well as seasons three and four of the Showtime series, *Nurse Jackie*. *Guards at the Taj* recently received the Laurents/Hatcher Foundation Award. *New York Magazine* said Rajiv Joseph is, "a real stage poet ... not afraid to debate the cosmos. His voice is a major one," and the *Los Angeles Times* called him, "one of the most provocatively talented American playwrights." Giovanna Sardelli, who has helmed over a half-dozen of Joseph's plays, will direct.

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR (November 10 – December 20, 2015) is written by Tony Award, Pulitzer Prize, and Academy Award winner John Patrick Shanley. This modern romantic comedy, set in the Irish countryside, received a 2014 Tony Award nomination for Best Play. *The New York Times* called it, "Shanley's finest work since *Doubt*." *Four Dogs and a Bone*, also written by Shanley, opened the inaugural Geffen Playhouse season in October of 1995. *Outside Mullingar* will open within weeks of that 20 year commemorative date and longtime Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director Randall Arney will helm the production.

BARCELONA (February 2 – March 13, 2016) is set against the backdrop of the Spanish city's beautifully unfinished cathedral, La Sagrada Familia. Written by actor and playwright Bess Wohl (*Flight Plan*, *Heights*) and directed by Trip Cullman (*Choir Boy*) this West Coast premiere examines the tragedies and triumphs that have the power to build us up, as well as tear us down. *The Philadelphia Inquirer* said of Wohl's work, "It's been a long time since a new work has challenged the core of existence."

The season continues in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater with **SEX WITH STRANGERS** (March 1 – April 10, 2016) by Laura Eason and directed by Kimberly Senior. *Sex with Strangers*, which received its world premiere at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, follows two writers, from different generations, as they approach love, sex and literature in comically different ways. *Newsweek* said of *Sex with Strangers*, "Laura Eason's incisive look at the double edged quest for artistic validation in the digital era ... a compelling, comic drama ... deftly encapsulates the divide between Gen-X and Gen-Y."

The Geffen brings one of America's most celebrated playwrights to the Gil Cates Theater with Sarah Ruhl's **STAGE KISS** (April 5 – May 15, 2016), directed by Geffen alum Bart DeLorenzo. Ruhl is a Pulitzer Prize finalist, MacArthur Fellow and PEN winner. Her other works include *The Clean House*, *Eurydice* and *In the Next Room or the Vibrator Play*. *Stage Kiss* follows former spouses and actors on and off-stage as they navigate a forgotten 1930s melodrama, quickly losing touch with what is real and what is theater. *The New York Times* hailed *Stage Kiss* as a, "Critic's Pick ... suffused with warmth and humor, Sarah Ruhl has frothily whipped together a romantic comedy and backstage farce."

Geffen Playhouse concludes its 2015/16 Gil Cates Theater season with the world premiere of **BIG SKY** (June 7 – July 17, 2016) by Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros, directed by Geffen alum John Rando (Tony Award winner for *Urinetown*, *On the Town* on Broadway). Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros is a Pulitzer Prize finalist for co-writing the post-9/11 work, *Omnium Gatherum* with Theresa Rebeck.

The final production in Geffen Playhouse's Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater is **[UNTITLED, DEREK DELGAUDIO]** (May 3 – June 12, 2016) which will be written and performed by acclaimed conjurer Derek DelGaudio. Derek DelGaudio was previously seen at the Geffen Playhouse in *Nothing to Hide*, directed

by Neil Patrick Harris, which transferred to the Signature Theatre in New York. He has been twice been named the "Close-Up Magician of the Year," by The Academy of Magical Arts.

2015/2016 GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE SEASON

The Yale Repertory Theatre Production of

THESE PAPER BULLETS! *A Modish Ripoff of William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing*

Written by **Rolin Jones**

Songs by **Billie Joe Armstrong**

Directed by **Jackson Gay**

A Co-Production with **Atlantic Theater Company**

West Coast Premiere in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

September 8 – October 18, 2015

Pulitzer Prize nominee Rolin Jones (*Friday Night Lights, Weeds*) joins multi-Grammy Award winner Billie Joe Armstrong (Green Day, *American Idiot*) for, "A Modish Ripoff of William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*," with a serious backbeat.

GUARDS AT THE TAJ

Written by **Rajiv Joseph**

Directed by **Giovanna Sardelli**

West Coast Premiere in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

October 6 – November 15, 2015

Pulitzer Prize finalist and Ovation Award nominee Rajiv Joseph (*Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*) brings a violently beautiful, gruesomely funny comedy to the intimate Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse.

OUTSIDE MULLINGAR

Written by **John Patrick Shanley**

Directed by **Randall Arney**

In the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

November 10 – December 20, 2015

Pulitzer Prize, Tony and Academy Award winner John Patrick Shanley sets this modern romantic comedy in the Irish countryside. Los Angeles audiences will be treated to this heartwarming love story which had a successful Broadway engagement.

BARCELONA

Written by **Bess Wohl**

Directed by **Trip Cullman**

West Coast Premiere in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

February 2 – March 13, 2016

This searing and seductive look at values and cultural collisions bursts through the backdrop of Gaudi's beautifully unfinished Sagrada Familia Cathedral. This new play's biting humor uncovers the individual tragedies and triumphs that have the power to build us up as well as tear us down.

SEX WITH STRANGERS

Written by **Laura Eason**

Directed by **Kimberly Senior**

In the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

March 1 – April 10, 2016

The title says it all - or does it - in this provocative new work about two writers approaching love, sex and literature in comically different ways.

STAGE KISS

Written by **Sarah Ruhl**

Directed by **Bart DeLorenzo**

In the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

April 5 – May 15, 2016

MacArthur "Genius Grant" recipient and Pulitzer Prize finalist Sarah Ruhl's new comedy follows former spouses and actors on and off-stage (and script) - helmed by Ovation Award winner and Geffen alum Bart DeLorenzo.

BIG SKY

Written by **Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros**

Directed by **John Rando**

World Premiere in the Gil Cates Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

June 7 – July 17, 2016

Tony Award winning director and Geffen Playhouse alum John Rando helms this brilliant new family comedy from Pulitzer Prize nominee Alexandra Gersten-Vassilaros.

[UNTITLED, DEREK DELGAUDIO]

Written and Performed by **Derek DelGaudio**

World Premiere in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse

May 3 – June 12, 2016

Derek DelGaudio, critically acclaimed writer/magician of *Nothing to Hide* (directed by Neil Patrick Harris), returns to the Geffen for a world premiere. This radically new show traverses uncharted regions of imagination by way of impossible happenings, poetic interactions and awe-inspiring gestures.

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

Gil Cates and Audrey Skirball Kenis Theaters at the Geffen Playhouse

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ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates, and is currently helmed by Artistic Director Randall Arney, Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., and Co-Chairs of the Board Martha Henderson and Pamela Robinson Hollander. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit www.geffenplayhouse.com.

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