



@ BETTE AITKEN *theater arts* CENTER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

**Chance Theater proudly announces its
2017 Season of shows**

**Anaheim's official resident theater announces next year's line-up:
5-Show Season 19 Series,
2-Show Theater for Young Audiences (TYA) Series
2-Show Holiday Series,
and a 4-Show OTR New Works Series**

November 17, 2016 ... Anaheim, California ... Chance Theater is thrilled to announce its lineup for 2017, which will be the third to employ both stages in its new home at the Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center. Next year will feature nine fully-staged productions, a workshop production, and three staged readings of new plays still in development.

RESIDENT PLAYWRIGHT

For the 7th year in a row, Chance Theater will have a resident playwright whose work will be featured throughout the year in the On The Radar Series. Previous resident playwrights include Marshall Paillet (whose musical *Triassic Park* at the Chance won the Ovation Award for Best Musical), Lauren Yee (whose play, *King of the Yees* will be produced at Kirk Douglas Theatre in 2018) and Nick Jones (who later had two of his shows that were featured in the OTR Series receive major world premiere productions at Lincoln Center and Manhattan Theatre Club). Over the years, the resident playwrights have returned time and again to have their work featured in both the OTR Series (Lauren Yee's recent *Untitled Music Play*) and the Main Season (Marshall Paillet's *Loch Ness, a new musical*).

In 2017, we are very excited to announce that our resident playwright will be **Ted Malawer**. A current Lila Acheson Wallace Playwrights Fellow at The Juilliard School, his plays include *The Anatomy of Love*, *Daddy Issues*, *Times Square Psychic*, *The Watcher*, and *arrhythmia*. Ted's plays have been read or developed at MCC Theater (2016 PlayLabs), Atlantic Theater Company (2017 Amplified Reading Series, upcoming), Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre, Juilliard, HERE Arts Center/Untitled Theater Company #61, The New Colony, Edge Theatre Company, and more. Ted has published six

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novels, including the *Mystic City* series (Penguin Random House), which has been translated into over ten languages and optioned for television by CBS. He is a Presidential Scholar in the Arts and the recipient of fellowships from the Lecomte du Nouy Foundation, the NFAA/YoungARTS, and the Association for Jewish Theatre. Ted is a graduate of the Columbia University-Juilliard School Exchange Program, and received his Masters in Literature from Fordham University.

"We're thrilled to have Ted Malawer join the Chance family," said Literary Manager Jennifer Ruckman. "His plays are diverse and exciting, exactly the kind of bold theater we want to bring to our audiences."

In 2017, Ted will have two of his shows featured in the OTR Series -- a staged reading of a brand new play that he's still writing, and a LAB Workshop of *The Anatomy of Love*, a play about two parents dealing with the gender fluidity of their child.

SEASON PRODUCERS - BETTE & WYLIE AITKEN

True and hearty supporters of the Chance, and one of them is the namesake for our new home, the Chance is honored to have Bette & Wylie Aitken as the producers of all nine shows being produced in 2017.

Why? "Because Wylie and I love the Chance family and their incredible work," said Bette Aitken.

The Aitkens played an integral role in helping the Chance move into its new home by contributing a major gift to the "Bold New Home" Capital Campaign. As an acknowledgement of their humbling support, the Chance officially named their new home the "Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center."

As Coast Magazine wrote, "Alone, Wylie is known for his legal prowess and keen litigation skills, but when he is with Bette, his wife of over 50 years, they are known as the power couple of philanthropy and the arts."

Wylie served for five years on the California Arts Council, including two years as Chair. He also served previously as President of the Board of Trustees of South Coast Repertory, and currently serves on the Board of Segerstrom Center for the Arts and is Vice Chair of the American Film Institute's National Council. Bette currently serves on the Board of Directors of South Coast Repertory, MUZEO and Chance Theater. She has also previously served as the co-chair for The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric Aids Foundation "World of Heroes," and a board member of the California State University, Fullerton Special Games. Together they have chaired the committee which coordinated the opening of the state of the art Chapman University Musco Center for the Arts.

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SEASON 19

January 27 – February 26, 2017 on the Cripe Stage
West Coast Premiere

CLAUDIO QUEST

Book, Music and Lyrics by Marshall Paillet and Drew Fornarola
Directed by Marshall Paillet
Musical Direction by Ryan O'Connell
Choreographed by Maxx Reed
Executive Producer: Mary Kay Fyda-Mar

A new musical comedy that follows a very super hero, his less super little brother, and one butt-kicking princess, as the three embark on a mission to overcome killer eggplants, a love-starved platypus, and their own 8-bit existential crisis.

**Winner of 9 New York Musical Theatre Festival Awards*

"A delightfully bouncy parody...Claudio Quest is smart pop-culture fun." -- *The New York Times*

"An endearing and ridiculous examination of the psyches of the most beloved video game characters of all time." -- *The Washington Post*

April 21 – May 21, 2017
on the Fyda-Mar Stage
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

MIDDLETOWN

by Will Eno
Directed by Trevor Biship
Executive Producers: Scott & Sandra Graham

Middletown is a deeply moving and funny new play exploring the universe of a small American town. As a friendship develops between longtime resident John Dodge and new arrival Mary Swanson, the lives of the inhabitants of Middletown intersect in strange and poignant ways in a journey that takes them from the local library to outer space and points between.

** 2010 Inaugural Horton Foote Prize for Most Promising New American Play*

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"Delicate, moving, piercing, tart, funny, gorgeous. Mr. Eno's gift may be unmatched among writers of his generation. Glimmers from start to finish." -- *The New York Times*

"Richly engaging and satisfyingly theatrical, with heart and humor. A modern-day equivalent to Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*." -- *Theater Mania*

"Utterly spellbinding! Four stars! Will Eno's dark comic genius inspires all." -- *Time Out New York*

June 30 – July 30, 2017
on the Cripe Stage

PARADE

Book by Alfred Uhry

Music and Lyrics by Jason Robert Brown

Directed by Kari Hayter

Musical Direction by Robyn Manion

Executive Producers: Sophie & Larry Cripe

Associate Producers: Laurie Smits Staude and Rachelle Menaker & Eddie Schuller

Amid religious intolerance, political injustice and racial tension, this stirring Tony Award-winning musical explores the endurance of love and hope against all the odds. In 1913, Leo Frank, a Brooklyn-raised Jew living in Georgia, was put on trial for the murder of a 13-year-old girl. Armed with a rousing score and a powerful script, *Parade* takes an unflinching look into the darkest corners of America's history.

* Winner of 2 Tony Awards, including "Best Book of a Musical"

* Winner of 12 Drama Desk Awards, including "Outstanding Musical"

* Winner of NY Drama Critics Circle Award for "Best Musical"

"striking, moving, fantastic" -- *Time Out New York*

"a vividly dramatic tapestry of sound" -- *New York Daily New*

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September 8 – October 8, 2017

on the Fyda-Mar Stage

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA PREMIERE

IN A WORD

by Lauren Yee

Directed by Jocelyn A. Brown

Executive Producers: Rachelle Menaker & Eddie Schuller

Associate Producer: Nexgen Pharma

Today is the two-year anniversary of Fiona's son's disappearance, and still, nothing makes sense to her. Not her blasé husband, the incompetent detective, or the neighborhood kidnapper who keeps introducing himself in the checkout line. As Fiona delves back into her memories of that fateful day, to uncover that crucial missing piece, grief and comedy collide, and ordinary turns of phrase take on dangerous new meanings.

NOTE: This show contains some adult language.

* Winner of the Will Glickman Playwright Award

* Winner of NETC John Gassner Playwriting Competition

"This is a complex and arresting journey..." -- *Cleveland Scene*

"It's a theatrical punch to the gut that will leave audiences breathless." -- *Chicago Theater Review*

September 22 – October 22, 2017

on the Cripe Stage

ORANGE COUNTY PREMIERE

TRIBES

by Nina Raine

Directed by Marya Mazor

Executive Producers: Tod & Linda White

Associate Producers: Sophie & Larry Cripe and Laurie Smits Staude

Billy was born deaf into a hearing family. He was raised inside its fiercely idiosyncratic and politically incorrect cocoon. He has adapted brilliantly to his family's unconventional ways, but they've never bothered to return the favor. It's not until he meets Sylvia, a young woman on the brink of deafness, that he finally understands what it means to be understood.

NOTE: This show contains some adult language and themes.

* Winner of the 2012 Drama Desk Award for "Outstanding Play"

* Winner of NY Drama Critics Circle Award for "Best Foreign Play"

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"Subtle and scintillating... as much about the tyranny of language as it is about the misery of not being able to hear it." -- *The New Yorker*

"...bright and boldly provocative drama." -- *Associated Press*
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Theater for Young Audiences

February 17 – March 5, 2017
on the Fyda-Mar Stage

THE LITTLE PRINCE

by Rick Cummins and John Scoullar
From the book by Antoine de Saint-Exupery
Directed by Darryl B. Hovis
Executive Producer: Elizabeth Jones

A story that reminds us of all we leave behind to grow up and invites us to see the world again with the fresh eyes of youth. A journey of simple beauty, Saint-Exupery's tale has a different meaning for each of us. Young and Old alike will enjoy this visually alluring masterpiece. Join us for an adventure that spans from the Sahara to Outer Space and Beyond; a place where it's never too late to rediscover your dreams.

"There aren't many plays in New York or anywhere else that can hold the attention of both children and serious adult theatre patrons the way this play can." -- *Baton Rouge Advocate*

"...a multilayered tale that awakens the child tucked inside all of us." -- *Cape Cod Times*

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May 5 – 28, 2017
on the Cripe Stage

ENCORE PRESENTATION

FANCY NANCY, THE MUSICAL

Book & Lyrics by Susan DiLallo

Music by Sam Viverito

Based on the book *Fancy Nancy* by Jane O'Connor and illustrated by Robin Preiss Glasser

Directed by Kelly Todd

Musical Direction by Robyn Manion

Executive Producer: Robert Berman

Back by popular demand!

Fancy Nancy and her friends Bree, Rhonda, Wanda, and Lionel are going to be performing in their very first show, “Deep Sea Dances.” Nancy is positive, that’s fancy for 100 percent sure, that she and Bree will be picked to be mermaids. When another girl wins the coveted role of the mermaid, Nancy is stuck playing a dreary, dull tree. Can Nancy bring fancy flair to her role, even though it isn’t the one she wanted?

Holiday Series

November 24 – December 23, 2017
on the Cripe Stage

THE SECRET GARDEN – THE MUSICAL

Book and Lyrics by Marsha Norman

Music by Lucy Simon

Adapted from the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett

Directed by Casey Long and KC Wilkerson

This enchanting classic of children’s literature is now a brilliant musical by a Pulitzer Prize winning playwright. Orphaned in India, an 11 year old girl returns to Yorkshire to live with an embittered, reclusive uncle and his invalid son. Her own personality blossoms as she and a young gardener bring life to a neglected garden. This Tony Award winner is a treasure for children and adults alike.

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December 8-23, 2017
on the Fyda-Mar Stage

THE EIGHT: REINDEER MONOLOGUES

by Jeff Goode
Directed by Alex Bueno

The Chance Un-Holiday Tradition Returns!

We just couldn't shut them up.... so for the 14th straight year, accusations, rumors and all-out attacks are (still) flying fast and furious around the toyshop. Hear the truth straight from the reindeer who know Santa best. When a doe says "No" she means "No."

WARNING!! *This show contains FOUL-MOUTHED REINDEER and very inappropriate ADULT HUMOR! Definitely no kids or anyone who doesn't want to see the dark side of Santa Claus, Mrs. Claus and the North Pole!*

All tickets and subscriptions can be purchased by calling (888) 455-4212 or by visiting www.ChanceTheater.com.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, schedule press comps or for any additional information, please contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or by e-mail at casey@chancetheater.com.

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER recently received a National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing. The Chance has won six Ovation Awards, including two for Best Production of a Musical – Intimate Theater for its West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical* and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the official resident theater company of Anaheim”, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization”. Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

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