

HARLEQUIN

Press Release

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For info: Helen Harvester

helen@harlequinproductions.org

www.harlequinproductions.org

Harlequin Productions Unveils 2020 “Transformation” Season, Embraces Needed Change

Harlequin Productions’ 2020 Season was revealed on Saturday, March 30 during a gala celebration at the State Theater in downtown Olympia. Members of the Harlequin board, staff, and Artistic Director Aaron Lamb engaged patrons in a multimedia presentation that unveiled a slew of new practices and policies.

Immediate changes:

- As of October 2019, Harlequin became the first theater in the Puget Sound region to adopt the “Not in Our House” Chicago Theater Standards to regulate unsafe practices and abuse
- As of January 2019, actors’ compensation has been increased by 50%
- As of April 2019, Harlequin has entered into a Small Professional Theater contract with the Actor’s Equity Association, and will be employing a mix of Union and non-Union artists in every production.
- As of May 2019, the State Theater lobby will double as an art gallery. Beginning with Henrik Ibsen’s *A Doll’s House*, the work of a local artist will be displayed during every production

Coming in January 2020:

- The 2020 season will feature 9 rather than 7 shows. In a nod to Harlequin’s origins, the two additional productions will be performed in the Washington Center Black Box (where the first seasons of the theater were presented)
- Production seasons will move to a calendar year. The 2020 season will begin in January rather than with the 2019 Holiday show
- Opening nights will move to Fridays. The Wednesday and Thursday before Opening will become preview nights, open to the public at discounted rates
- All evening performances will move from 8pm to 7:30pm
- Saturday matinees will be added to every production
- Student matinees will be added to every production

The 2020 “Transformation” Season:

Holiday 2019: *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*

Seattle playwright John Longenbaugh deftly steers us through this magical holiday mystery, one clue at a time.

January – February 2020: *Noises Off*

Called “the funniest farce ever written,” (Clive Barnes, *The New York Post*) Michael Frayn presents a hilarious behind-the-scenes peek at an acting troupe rehearsing and performing the farce “Nothing’s On.”

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March – April 2020: ***The Highest Tide***

A sensory experience emanates from the pages of local author Jim Lynch’s bestselling novel, which instantly transports us beneath the waters of a marine world teeming with infinite life and exquisite possibility.

April 2020: ***For Peter Pan on Her 70th Birthday***

In the Washington Center Black Box

The refusal to grow up confronts the inevitability of growing old in Pulitzer Prize-nominated playwright Sarah Ruhl’s lyric comedy.

April – May 2020: ***A Bright Room Called Day***

From the Pulitzer-winning playwright behind *Angels in America* comes a dramatic parable for our time. This early Tony Kushner work follows a group of artists and political activists struggling to preserve themselves in 1930s Berlin as the Weimar Republic surrenders to the seduction of fascism.

June – July 2020: ***Into the Woods***

Winner of five Tony Awards and one of Stephen Sondheim’s most celebrated musicals, *Into the Woods* brings The Brothers Grimm onstage with an epic fairytale about wishes, family, and the choices we make.

August – September 2020: ***Snow in Midsummer***

In a contemporary re-imagining of one of China’s most famous classical dramas, a young widow curses those who executed her for a crime she did not commit. Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig’s new interpretation of the Guan Hanqing original was first produced as part of the “Chinese Translations Project” at the Royal Shakespeare Company. A second production was received in 2018 at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

September 2020: ***This Flat Earth***

In the Washington Center Black Box

Stuck at home in a state of shocked limbo after a horrific school tragedy, Julie and Zander, two twelve-year-olds, try to make sense of what they witnessed, their awkward crushes, and an infinitely more complicated future — but the grown-ups are no help at all. An urgent response to our times by playwright Lindsey Ferrentino.

September – October 2020: ***Fun Home***

Winner of five 2015 Tony Awards including Best Musical, *Fun Home* is a refreshingly honest, wholly original musical about seeing your parents through grown-up eyes. By Lisa Kron, Jeanine Tesori, and celebrated graphic artist Alison Bechdel.

Holiday 2020: ***A Christmas Carol***

We begin a new holiday tradition at Harlequin with Artistic Director Aaron Lamb’s fresh adaptation of Charles Dickens’ classic story of transformation, absolution, and grace. Join us for a holiday classic with a healthy dose of holiday cheer, plenty of carols and music, and the kind of ghostly special effects that only Harlequin can deliver.

Press photos of the 2020 Season Announcement and Celebration:

<https://harlequinproductions.org/2019/04/02/2020-season-announcement-and-celebration-press-photos/>

For more information please contact:

Helen Harvester at helen@harlequinproductions.org

202 FOURTH AVENUE EAST – OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON 98501 – 360 705 3250 – FAX 360 534 9659
501(c)3 91-1478538 <http://www.harlequinproductions.org>