



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harlequin re-imagines *Man of La Mancha* with sound and silence

Olympia, WA – May 20, 2019 – Harlequin Productions presents *Man of Mancha*, June 20th through July 27th at the State Theater in downtown Olympia. Artistic Director Aaron Lamb will direct.

A classic of American musical theatre, Man of La Mancha won 6 Tony Awards when it first opened on Broadway in 1966. This new telling of Cervantes' Don Quixote is re-imagined for the contemporary stage. With an ensemble cast of musician-actors, director Aaron Lamb entwines the classic score with the silence of Artistic Sign Language to tell a four-hundred-year-old story as it has never been heard before.

Asked why he chose *Man of La Mancha* for the 2019 season, director Aaron Lamb says simply, "It's one of my favorite musicals of all time."

Lamb's original conceit was a true ensemble production, in which everyone on stage would be involved in the story, be they musicians or actors. He had also intended to score the show as a mash-up of Flamenco guitar with traditional Mexican banda music. Says Lamb, "That evolved as we started casting. The casting of Monique Holt as Aldonza changed that as well. Live theater is about starting with an idea and then looking at the real world and finding a road down the middle that marries the two. Now it's an exploration of sound, types of sound, and all the different ways the musicians and actors can make music together, including the singing that Monique does with sign language. I think people will be very excited about what we've found."

Lamb saw Ms. Holt, a deaf theater artist who has worked internationally as an actor, lecturer, Sign Coach and Director of Artistic Sign Language, in a production of *Snow in Midsummer* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival last year. When he heard that she had moved to Seattle he immediately reached out, and the rest is history.

Asked what he hopes audiences will come away with from this production, Lamb says, "A renewed sense of hope for humanity? That sounds a little grandiose but I think that's what the play really communicates. Let's just say...a renewed sense of hope."

Allen Fitzpatrick* (*Cervantes/Don Quixote*) has featured in nine Broadway shows, including *Les Misérables*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Memphis*, *42nd Street*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Damn Yankees*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *Sweet Smell of Success*. He starred opposite Petula Clark in *Sunset Boulevard*, and opposite Patti LuPone in *Passion* for which he shared an Emmy®. Mr. Fitzpatrick has acted in roughly 250 plays at Playwrights Horizons, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, National Theatre, Actors Theatre Louisville, Cincinnati Playhouse, Syracuse Stage, Wilma, Olney, Ford's Theatre, Goodspeed, and Pennsylvania Shakespeare. His national

tours include *Six Degrees of Separation*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Little Mermaid*, and many others. A Footlight Award winner for his portrayal of Sweeney Todd, his 50+ Seattle appearances include roles at ACT, Seattle Rep, Intiman, plus 26 shows at the 5th Avenue. TV roles include many *Law & Orders*; films include *Kissing Jessica Stein*. Mr. Fitzpatrick is the Founding Artistic Director of Icicle Creek New Play Festival.

Monique Holt* (*Aldonza/Director of Artistic Sign Language*) Monique Holt has worked for four seasons as an actor, ASL Translator and Sign Coach at Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Her most recent performances there were last season, as Lady Montague/Apothecary in *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Dámaso Rodriguez, and as Worker Chen in *Snow in Midsummer*. She holds a BFA in Acting from NYU and an MFA in Theatre from Towson University. Ms. Holt is a well-known guest lecturer on three subjects: Translating Shakespearean Text to Artistic Sign Language, Voice/Text Coach and Dramaturgy for Signed Productions and How to Use Visual Gestural Communication (VGC) as a Theatre Medium. Having relocated from New York City, she recently accepted a position as Deaf Spotlight's Director of Theatre Programs in Seattle.

Aaron Lamb is the Artistic Director of Harlequin Productions. Last season, Lamb directed *Three Days of Rain*, *I Am My Own Wife*, *Ruthless!* and *The 1940s Radio Hour*. In ten seasons as an actor and director with Harlequin he has also directed *August: Osage County*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Time Stands Still*, *Middletown*, and *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress*. As an actor, he most recently appeared in the 2018 season, as Gary Essendine in Noel Coward's *Present Laughter*. Lamb has worked in Seattle for Village Theatre, Taproot Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Company, and has worked regionally throughout the country. He holds an MFA in Acting from California State University, Fullerton, a BA from Washington State University, and is a member of the Actor's Equity Association.

The ensemble also includes **Aubrey Thomas** (*Ruthless!*), **Nick Hall**, **Cassi Q. Kohl***, **Christopher Sweet** and **Fune Tuatala**, all making their Harlequin debuts.

WHAT: Harlequin Productions presents *Man of La Mancha*, a classic musical comedy re-imagined, directed by Aaron Lamb.

WHEN: June 20 – July 27, 2019

WHERE: State Theater, 202 4th Ave East, Olympia, WA 98501

TICKETS: Tickets are available online at harlequinproductions.org, by phone at **360-786-0151**, or in person 12-6pm, Tuesday-Friday and 2 hours before performances at the Harlequin Box Office in the State Theater.

General admission tickets are \$42

Senior 60+/Military \$38

Student/Youths Under 25 \$25

Rush Tickets (half-hour prior to showtime) General \$20; Senior/Military/Student/Under 25 \$15

SPECIAL DATES FOR THE AUDIENCE:

Opening Night: Thursday, June 20, 2019 at 8:00pm

Pay-What-You-Can: Wednesday, June 26, 2019 at 8:00pm

Ladies' Night Out: Friday, June 28, 2019 at 8:00pm

Post-show Talkback: Sunday, June 30, 2019 at 2:00pm

Pride Night: Friday, July 5, 2019 at 8:00pm

CATEGORY: Musical Comedy

AGE RECOMMENDATION: All ages with guidance

CAST:

Allen Fitzpatrick*	<i>Cervantes/Don Quixote</i>
Nick Hall	<i>Sancho Panza</i>
Monique Holt*	<i>Aldonza/Dulcinea</i>
Cassi Q. Kohl*	<i>Aldonza (vocals)/Innkeeper's Wife/Ensemble</i>
Christopher Sweet	<i>The Duke/Ensemble</i>
Aubrey Thomas	<i>Antonia/Ensemble</i>
Fune Tuatala	<i>Padre/Ensemble</i>

* Indicates membership in the Actor's Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Harlequin Productions is a professional not-for-profit theater company in Olympia, WA. We seek to invigorate, educate, and empower our community and all people to feel more, think more, play more, and judge less through the mirror of real live theatre.

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