



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Harlequin taps Olympia's deep pool of musical talent for *Hundred Days*

Olympia, WA – April 11, 2023 – Harlequin Productions presents *Hundred Days* by The Bengsons and Sarah Gancher, May 5 - 27, 2023 at the State Theater in downtown Olympia, WA. Producing Artistic Director Aaron Lamb will direct.

Join us as we transform The State Theater into an intimate cabaret for an uncensored, exhilarating, and heartrending true story about embracing uncertainty, taking a leap, and loving as if you only had 100 days to live. With magnetic chemistry and anthemic folk-punk music, creators Abigail and Shaun Bengson explore a fundamental question: how do we make the most of the time that we have?

Says Director Aaron Lamb, "Olympia has such a deep pool of musical talent, and we are very excited to be able to tap some of the very best of what the community has to offer. There is so much value in a group of musicians that work together often and know each other well. When I heard Amy Shephard headlining Sugar and the Spitfires open for Hedwig, I knew there was a group of musicians - many of them already in the Hedwig band - that could bring *Hundred Days* to life. The New York production was created by The Bengsons and reflects their sound, but for this version, I want our musicians to be able to bring some of their unique sound to the table. You should hear a fresh new take on this already really exciting music, bringing in the stylings of Sugar and the Spitfires (Amy Shephard, Brent Pendleton, Andy Garness, Dave Broyles, and Rick Jarvela) and other local musicians (Denim Protégé, Jen Grady and Heather Matthews)."

Says Shephard of the opportunity and the challenge that lies ahead, "As soon as I heard the first song I was immediately on board. The music is rather sophisticated and complicated but at the same time it's approachable and carries a universal message. It's been a vocal challenge for me in some ways, but it's been creatively nourishing to lean in and discover new ways of using my voice to convey emotion and story."

Asked about the band's preparation in the lead-up to rehearsals, keyboardist Brent Pendleton enthused, "I really enjoy working with this group of musicians, and when I heard the songs for *Hundred Days*, I knew I wanted to be a part of it. The music is unique and brilliant! We've been rehearsing once a week for the last month. After two

more rehearsals, we'll load into the venue and begin rehearsing the show several nights a week until opening night."

Next to join the cast was Denim Protégé (of Denim + the Deep Pockets), who Shephard asked to perform as Shaun to her Abigail in a preview of the production at Harlequin's 2023 Season Announcement Gala. Per Protégé, "...any chance to work with her, I'll take. After a couple of rehearsals, she asked me if I'd be down to do the whole show and that was a no-brainer. The music is fantastic, the story is so emotional...I'm most excited to see how the audience reacts to the storytelling through the music. The concept is exciting too. I can't wait to see what it's like to see the State Theater transformed."

Leaning into a long tradition of reimagining the State Theater space, Harlequin will remove the elevated stage and the first row of seats, replacing them with café tables and adding a bar at the back of the house (complete with a bartender during the show). Seating will be general admission. The result will be an intimate, cabaret atmosphere that should enhance the experience of this unconventional musical production.

[Click here for publicity photos for the production, which include photographer and actor credits.](#)

[Click here to listen to the Original Cast Recording on Spotify.](#)

Production Information

WHAT: Harlequin Productions presents [Hundred Days](#) by The Bengsons and Sarah Ganther, an exhilarating indie-rock opera based on a true love story starring local band Sugar and the Spitfires, fronted by Amy Shephard, with Denim Protégé, Jen Grady, and Heather Matthews.

WHEN: May 5 – 27, 2023

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

TICKETS: Seats are general admission for this production (no seat assignments). Tickets are available online at harlequinproductions.org, by phone at 360-786-0151, or in person 12-5:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday at the Washington Center, and beginning 2 hours before performances at the State Theater.

General admission tickets \$50

Senior 60+/Military \$46

Student/Youths Under 25 \$33

Rush Tickets (half-hour prior to showtime) \$25 for all; Teen tickets \$5

SPECIAL DATES FOR THE AUDIENCE:**Opening Night:** Friday, May 5 at 7:30 pm**Pay-What-You-Can:** at least 3 TBA prior to Opening**Closing Night:** Saturday, May 27 at 7:30pm**CATEGORY:** Musical**AGE RECOMMENDATION:** 11 and older with guidance**CAST:**

Amy Shephard	<i>Abigail Bengson</i>
Denim Protégé	<i>Shaun Bengson/Guitar</i>
David Broyles	<i>Guitar</i>
Brent Pendleton	<i>Keys</i>
Andy Garness	<i>Drums</i>
Rick Jarvela	<i>Bass</i>
Jen Grady	<i>Cello</i>
Heather Matthews	<i>Accordion</i>

SELECT BIOS:

Aaron Lamb (*Director*) is the Producing Artistic Director of Harlequin Productions. As Artistic Director, he has directed *A Christmas Carol* (2021, 2022), *This Flat Earth*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *The Highest Tide*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*, *Man of La Mancha*, *A Doll's House*, *Love and Information*, and *The 1940s Radio Hour*. In eleven seasons as an actor and guest director with Harlequin he also directed *I Am My Own Wife*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Ruthless!*, *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 2021-2022 season, as Jacob Marley in *A Christmas Carol*. 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.

Amy Shephard (*Abigail Bengson*) A long-time theater artist, singer, choreographer, and playwright in the Pacific Northwest, Amy holds a BA in Performance from The Evergreen State College and a Master's Degree in Applied Drama at The University of Exeter. Favorite roles include Charlotte in *Charlotte's Web* (Olympia Family Theater), Maria in *Twelfth Night or What You Will* (Animal Fire Theater), The Mouse in *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* (Olympia Family Theater and Nell Gwyn in *Or*, (Harlequin Productions). Ms. Shephard is the co-founder of StoryOly, Olympia's premiere story-slam event. For Harlequin, she has choreographed thirteen productions and performed in nine over the past eight seasons.

Denim Protégé (*Shaun Bengson/Guitar*) is performing in their first show at Harlequin. Denim has been performing in the Pacific Northwest for 19 years, writing and performing with various acts including local favorites, DBST/Form Destroyer and AoTITy. When they're not performing you can find them in their home studio recording music and experimenting with sound design.

Hundred Days is produced by special arrangement with [Broadway Licensing](#).

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.

PR: Helen Harvester, Marketing and Communications Director
helen@harlequinproductions.org
