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**CUTTING BALL THEATER
ANNOUNCES 2015-16 SEASON**

Acclaimed SF theater celebrates 17th season with season dedicated to “Dreams”

SAN FRANCISCO (May 14, 2015) - San Francisco’s cutting-edge **Cutting Ball Theater** proudly announces the lineup for its 17th season. The main stage season opens in October with **LIFE IS A DREAM**, written by Pedro Calderón de la Barca in a new translation by Cutting Ball resident playwright Andrew Saito, followed by the World Premiere of Katharine Sherman’s **ONDINE**. The **RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL** returns with three new works in staged readings that push the boundaries of what theater can be. The season closes with August Strindberg’s **A DREAM PLAY** in a new translation by Paul Walsh. In addition to the main stage season, Cutting Ball Theater continues its **Hidden Classics Reading Series** with three new installments. The entire 2015-16 season will be staged in San Francisco at the Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor (277 Taylor Street at Ellis). Single tickets on sale August 1. For information about season memberships, the public may contact boxoffice@cuttingball.com. For tickets and information, the public may visit cuttingball.com or call 415-525-1205.

“The theme for Cutting Ball’s second of three themed seasons is ‘Dreams,’ and this season is a dream season in more ways than one. Dreams connect people of all cultures and backgrounds and are one of the things that make us human. Since the premiere of August Strindberg’s *A Dream Play* in Stockholm in 1907, new forms of dramaturgy have mirrored the structure of dreams. These experiments lie at the core of Cutting Ball’s work and we know that it is sometimes daunting to audiences who are not used to it. By looking deeply at dreams this season, and how the theater can explore them, we pave a way for people who are not familiar with experimental plays to enter our work,” said Cutting Ball Artistic Director Rob Melrose.

Continued Melrose, “We open the season with a new translation of Pedro Calderón de la Barca’s *Life is a Dream* by Cutting Ball resident playwright Andrew Saito. Exploring the line between our waking life and dreaming life and how dreams and reality might be one and the same, this play is the crown jewel of the

CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

2-2-2-2-2-2

Spanish Golden Age and is considered by many to be the Spanish *Hamlet*. Our second production is the World Premiere of Katharine Sherman's new play, *Ondine*. Based on the same mermaid myth that inspired *The Little Mermaid*, *Pelleas and Melisande*, *Splash*, and Giraudoux's play *Ondine*, Sherman reimagines the play through a millennial lens. Our final production is August Stringberg's seminal play *A Dreamplay* in a new translation by Paul Walsh, who did the translations for all five of the plays presented in Cutting Ball's Strindberg Cycle. Expressionism, surrealism, and modernism can all trace their roots back to this important play, which will be Cutting Ball's seventh production of a new translation of Strindberg's work. RISK IS THIS... The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival returns with new plays by Alex Johnson, Phillip Howze, and Bennett Fischer. The Hidden Classics Reading Series also returns with an American Premiere translation of Carlo Gozzi's *La Zobeide* and Anton Chekhov's classic, *Uncle Vanya*."

"On a more personal note, I will be taking a sabbatical from my administrative duties at Cutting Ball next season; Cutting Ball co-founder and longtime Associate Artistic Director Paige Rogers will be serving as Acting Artistic Director. It promises to be a powerful season filled with the award-winning experimental theater for which Cutting Ball has become known."

In chronological order, The Cutting Ball Theater 2015-16 season is as follows:

LIFE IS A DREAM

Written by Pedro Calderón de la Barca

In a new translation by Andrew Saito

Directed by Paige Rogers

October 2 – November 1, 2015

Press opening: October 8

Gala opening: October 9

Cutting Ball Theater opens its 17th season with **LIFE IS A DREAM**. First published in 1635, **LIFE IS A DREAM** is a philosophical allegory regarding the human situation and the mystery of life. Often described as the supreme example of Spanish Golden Age drama, it tells the story of Segismundo, a Prince of Poland, who has been imprisoned in a tower by his father following a prophecy that the prince would bring disaster to the country and death to the King. When the prince is briefly freed and goes on a rampage, he is put back in jail, and persuaded that his momentary freedom was all a dream. Wrestling with free will and fate, **LIFE IS A DREAM** remains one of Calderón's best-known and most studied works. Following the sold-out success of *Antigone*, Acting Artistic Director Paige Rogers helms this Calderón classic, in a new translation from resident playwright Andrew Saito commissioned by Cutting Ball.

CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

3-3-3-3-3-3

ONDINE

By Katharine Sherman

Directed by Rob Melrose

February 5 – March 6, 2016

Press opening: February 11

Gala opening: February 12

World Premiere

Subtle, lyrical, and daring, **ONDINE** retells *The Little Mermaid* and *Pelleas and Mellisande* myths as a transformational first-love story that is heartbreaking, haunting, and hypnotic. A water sprite leaves the sea to join her lover, an alchemist-knight on a quest for the universal solvent. Desperate for him after he leaves her alone, she curses him: if he falls asleep, he will die. To her dismay, he returns moments later, and the two fight sleep together by telling each other their love story. The narrative they frame comes to life until layers of time and reality collapse in on one another and dissolve into a beautifully tragic dream.

ONDINE was developed as part of the 2014 edition of RISK IS THIS... The Cutting Ball New Experimental Plays Festival.

RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL

March 11 – 26, 2016

RISK IS THIS...THE CUTTING BALL NEW EXPERIMENTAL PLAYS FESTIVAL

is one of the only play festivals in America solely dedicated to experimental works for the stage. This year's festival features three new works in staged readings that push the boundaries of what theater can be.

all of what you love and none of what you hate

By Phillip Howze

Directed by Paige Rogers

March 11 - 12, 2016

A light flickers on. A young girl's universe ruptures. In a desperate search for answers, will she find redemption or be carried away by the conflicted world around her? **all of what you love and none of what you hate** explodes our contemporary culture in a symphony of sound and social media.

MY HOME IS WHERE

Written by Alex Johnson

March 18 - 19, 2016

Some people try to build a scale model of the Crazy Horse Memorial out of Legos. Some people try very hard to fall in love. Some people try to find where they are right now by thinking about where they were just a second ago. A young couple, driven by a vision, travel to work at The Crazy Horse Memorial in Custer, SD. On the way, they get lost, and get some terrible directions. When they finally arrive, it becomes harder to say just exactly where they are.

BOREALIS

By Bennett Fisher

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CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

4-4-4-4-4-4

Directed by Rem Myers

March 25 - 26, 2016

When a cryptic but ominous letter arrives from her brother on the oil fields, thirteen-year-old Cozbi sets off for Valdez, Alaska to find him. Armed with a book by Donald Trump and an axe, Cozbi battles her way through the Arctic wilderness, squaring off against a host of monstrous Ass-Hats on each rung of the corporate ladder. Part mythic journey, part workplace satire, **BOREALIS** is a darkly comic adventure about family obligation, career aspiration, and what we leave behind to make our way to the top.

A DREAM PLAY

Written by August Strindberg

In a new translation by Paul Walsh

Directed by Rob Melrose

May 20 – June 19, 2016

Press opening: May 26

Gala opening: May 27

In **A DREAM PLAY**, Indra's daughter comes down to earth to better understand the plight of humanity. Through this surreal journey, she meets an officer, a lawyer, and a poet, and experiences joy, excitement, pain, and suffering. Strindberg structured this play using a dream logic that was later adopted by Expressionist playwrights. **Paul Walsh**, who translated all five plays in Cutting Ball's 2012 *Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep*, provides this translation of one of Strindberg's most admired and influential dramas. Cutting Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**, who directed all of the plays in *Strindberg Cycle: The Chamber Plays in Rep*, helms **A DREAM PLAY**.

Hidden Classics Reading Series

Cutting Ball's Hidden Classics Reading Series celebrates a variety of works. The series offers a profound look at some of the most adventurous authors to write for the stage in a program that continues to be one of San Francisco's best-kept secrets.

LA ZOBEIDE

By Carlo Gozzi

In a translation by Beatrice Basso and Rob Melrose

December 13, 2015

American Premiere

Queen Zobeide marries a King who is secretly practicing the dark arts. When she learns the truth, Zobeide must stop him without joining his prior victims: 100 wives and lovers discarded in an underground cave. Based on a story from *1001 Arabian Nights*, this play by Gozzi (*Turandot*, *The Green Bird*, *The Love of Three Oranges*) has never been translated into English before and has never been performed in the United States.

UNCLE VANYA

By Anton Chekhov

Directed by Paige Rogers

March 20, 2016

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CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

5-5-5-5-5-5

In this classic drama by Russian master Anton Chekhov, an aging professor and his young new wife leave the city to spend time on his rural country estate, where his daughter and brother-in-law from his late first wife have worked the land for 25 years. Amidst love triangles and betrayal, their routine lives are turned upside down, and despite promises to the contrary, will never go back to the way they were before.

TBA

June 5, 2016

Co-founded in 1999 by theater artists Rob Melrose and Paige Rogers, **Cutting Ball Theater** presents avant-garde works of the past, present, and future by re-envisioning classics, exploring seminal avant-garde texts, and developing new experimental plays. The company has commissioned, developed, and produced new experimental plays, and has partnered with Playwrights Foundation, and the Magic Theatre/Z Space New Plays Initiative to commission new experimental works. In addition to producing West Coast Premieres and re-imaging various classics, Cutting Ball Theater has produced nine World Premieres and seven World Premiere translations. Cutting Ball received the 2008 *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Goldie award for outstanding talent in the performing arts, and was voted “Best Theater Company” in the 2010 *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Best of the Bay issue. The company also earned the Best of SF award in 2006 and “Best Experimental Theater Company” in 2012 from *SF Weekly*, and was selected by *San Francisco* magazine as Best Classic Theater in 2007. Cutting Ball Theater was featured in the February 2010, 2012, and December 2014 issues of *American Theatre Magazine*. In 2012, Cutting Ball was awarded a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to fund a three-year residency for resident playwright Andrew Saito. The American Theatre Wing, best known as the creator of the Antoinette Perry “Tony” Awards, awarded the company with a 2013 National Theatre Company grant. Cutting Ball was also featured in the February 2015 issue of *American Theatre Magazine*.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT:

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CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

6-6-6-6-6-6

Taylor. Single tickets on sale August 1.

SCHEDULE:

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World Premiere

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CUTTING BALL ANNOUNCES 15-16 SEASON

7-7-7-7-7-7

UNCLE VANYA

By Anton Chekhov

Directed by Paige Rogers

March 20, 2016

TBA

June 5, 2016

All dates and titles subject to change

All main stage performances Thursday at 7:30, Friday at 8pm, Saturday at 2 and 8pm, and Sunday at 5pm

All RISK IS THIS...readings are Friday and Saturday at 8pm

All Hidden Classics readings are Sunday at 1pm

WHERE:

The Cutting Ball Theater in residence at EXIT on Taylor, 277 Taylor Street (at Ellis), San Francisco

TICKETS:

Single tickets on sale August 1. For information about season memberships, the public may contact **boxoffice@cuttingball.com**. For tickets or more information, the public may visit **cuttingball.com** or call **415-525-1205**; group discounts and student rush tickets available. Pay What You Can tickets are available to neighborhood residents for all productions.

The Cutting Ball Theater's 2015-16 season is made possible in part by Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, Fleishhacker Foundation, Grants for the Arts / San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Mental Insight Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts, The Kenneth Rainin Foundation, The RHE Foundation, The San Francisco Arts Commission, The San Francisco Foundation, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation, and Season Producers Erik Blachford & Maryam Mohit and Dave & Kate Yrueta

--30--