

media contact:
erica lewis-finein
brightbutterfly pr
brightbutterfly[at]hotmail.com

**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 DREAMPLAY** 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 25. 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 Dreamplay* 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

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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 Racine's *Phèdre*, an American Premiere translation of Carlo Gozzi's *The Serpent Woman*, and Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*, directed by Yuri Urnov."

"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.

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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

Directed by Ariel Craft

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.

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BOREALIS

By Bennett Fisher
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 DREAMPLAY

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 DREAMPLAY**, 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 DREAMPLAY**.

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.

PHÈDRE

By Jean Racine
Directed by Ariel Craft
November 8, 2015

Phèdre used to be a devoted wife and a model mother but that was so many months ago. Now her secret desires are becoming harder to hide as an attraction to her maturing stepson becomes inescapable and all-enveloping. Impossible passions and absolute taboos combust in Jean Racine's *Phèdre*. This unshakable classic tragedy, dating back to Ancient Greece, remains the reigning champion and dramatic golden standard for salacious and scandalous familial dysfunction.

THE SERPENT WOMAN

By Carlo Gozzi
Directed by Rob Melrose

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December 13, 2015

Based on the same mermaid myth as *Ondine* and *Pelleas and Melisande*, **THE SERPENT WOMAN** follows the ordeals a prince confronts in pursuit of his ideal love. The woman of his dreams is transformed from a doe to a princess to serpent, a cycle that certainly tests the prince's loyalty.

HEDDA GABLER

By Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Yuri Urnov

May 29, 2016

Hedda has returned from her honeymoon with a sigh of ennui, burdened by a husband that fails to ignite or enthrall her, and a new life that fails to impress. When old acquaintances come knocking, Hedda discovers a purpose in her life: to puppeteer the fates of others with callous abandon to deadly, disastrous ends. Russian director Yuri Urnov, who directed a visionary production of *Ubu Roi* at Cutting Ball in 2014, returns to the company to helm one of Henrik Ibsen's most revered plays.

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*.

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT:

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SCHEDULE:

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Directed by Paige Rogers
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Directed by Rob Melrose

May 20 – June 19, 2016

Hidden Classics Reading Series

PHÈDRE

By Jean Racine

Directed by Ariel Craft

November 8, 2015

THE SERPENT WOMAN

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In a translation by Beatrice Basso and Rob Melrose

December 13, 2015

American Premiere

HEDDA GABLER

By Henrik Ibsen

Directed by Yuri Urnov

May 29, 2016

All dates and titles subject to change

All main stage performances Thursday at 7pm, 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 25. 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, Bloomberg Philanthropies, 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 Charitable Foundation, The San Francisco Arts Commission, The San Francisco Foundation, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation, and Season Producers John and Paula Gambs, Ken Melrose, Velia Melrose, Erik Blachford and Maryam Mohit, and Dave and Kate Yrueta.