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Kory Kelly – Director of Marketing & Communications at Pasadena Playhouse:

Pasadena Playhouse Announces Initial Programming for PlayhouseLive

Launching online September 30

Highlights include:

- Spoken word artist Javon Johnson in *Still.*, a new commissioned work
- Musical tribute celebrating Broadway legend Jerry Herman
- Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman showcasing a musical in development
- The making of the Playhouse's acclaimed production *Little Shop of Horrors*
- PlayhouseLive Original celebrity interview show with Hashtag Booked
- Never-before-seen 1933 silent documentary film about the Playhouse
- New play readings by Ojai Playwrights Conference
- Bob Baker Marionette Theater productions
- Five classes to stream this fall

September 16, 2020, Pasadena, CA | Pasadena Playhouse announces Fall Programming for PlayhouseLive, a first-of-its-kind nonprofit streaming platform to showcase theatrical productions to a national and international audience, launching online September 30. With the continuation of the Playhouse's efforts as the State Theater of California, PlayhouseLive productions will offer a broad range of voices and perspectives while ensuring that access to the programming will remain accessible to the widest possible audience.

Pay-per-view theatrical streaming events will include: poet, performance artist and professor **Javon Johnson** in *Still.*, a timely one-man performance about the complexities of the Black experience, commissioned by Pasadena Playhouse; the premiere of *Jerry Herman: You I Like*, a new musical revue dedicated to the works of legendary Broadway composer/lyricist Jerry Herman; new works from **Ojai Playwrights Conference**; and family entertainment from the **Bob Baker Marionette Theater**.

In addition, the debut programming will feature the pilot episodes of **four new series**:

In Development gives an insiders' look at unproduced theatrical works as they are introduced to the world for the first time. The first episode will feature Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman performing excerpts from *Iceboy!*, a new musical by Mark Gollman, Jay Reiss and Erin Quinn Purcell.

Intermission with Hashtag Booked features celebrity interviews hosted by LaNisa Frederick and Danielle Pinnock, a comedic duo that started the web series *Hashtag Booked*. Their first guest will be acclaimed actor **Alfred Molina**.

Page to Stage takes you behind the curtain to explore the theatrical journey from conception to opening night. In *Page to Stage: Little Shop of Horrors*, the creative team at Pasadena Playhouse takes you from rehearsal to opening night of their groundbreaking revival; featuring interviews with George Salazar, Mj Rodriguez and Amber Riley. *Page to Stage* is free to the public.

From the Archives celebrates the unique impact regional theater has had across generations in shaping American culture. Initial episodes include a silent film featuring rare vintage footage of the Playhouse from the 1930s; a documentary short chronicling the years the Playhouse went dark (1968 through 1984) and the journey of the extraordinary woman who kept the hope alive to bring the historic theater back; and a fascinating look at the historic 1928 production of Eugene O’Neill’s *Lazarus Laughed* which brought 151 actors together to perform 420 roles in a four-act play – this unforgettable production put Pasadena Playhouse on the map.

PlayhouseLive will also feature educational programming, including ***The Everyday Avant Garde in Black Theatre Making***, led by award winning writer, composer, and performer Eisa Davis, ***Shakespeare Masterclass***, led by internationally-recognized director and actor Rob Clare, ***Basics of Stage Management***, led by Broadway stage managers Kathleen Purvis and Andrew Neal, and the return of Adam Epstein with ***The Contemporary Broadway Musical*** and Janet Fontaine with ***Playtime with Miss Janet***.

To get more information about PlayhouseLive and its programming, including new announcements and pricing specials, sign up for the newsletter at www.playhouselive.org.

PlayhouseLive Membership is being launched with a free trial period through December 2020. Pay-per-view theatrical streaming events start at \$14.99. Pasadena Playhouse Members will receive full access to the content on PlayhouseLive throughout the 20/21 season. Content release dates for PlayhouseLive may vary.

Producing Artistic Director Danny Feldman says, “PlayhouseLive is a new way for audiences and artists to connect during this pause of in-person programming. With a bold new commissioned work about the Black experience in America, a musical celebration of the great Jerry Herman, and a series of shows bringing theater lovers backstage, there is something for everyone. While PlayhouseLive is not a replacement of live theater, it is a high-quality alternative that harnesses the power of theater in an all new way.

Fall 2020 Slate of Offerings on PlayhouseLive

Javon Johnson in *Still*.

As one of the nation's most prominent spoken-word artists, Javon Johnson takes to the Playhouse stage in *Still*, to share his very personal experience at a pivotal time in our history. Johnson blends powerful imagery, witty prose and beautiful lyricism in this timely, unforgettable theatrical event.

Javon Johnson is an Assistant Professor and Director of African American & African Diaspora studies and holds an appointment in Gender & Sexuality Studies in the Interdisciplinary, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Department at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. A renowned spoken word poet, he is a three-time national poetry slam champion, a four-time national finalist, and has appeared on HBO’s *Def Poetry Jam*, BET’s *Lyric Café*, TVOne’s *Verses & Flow*, *The Steve Harvey Show*, *The Arsenio Hall Show*, *United Shades of America* with Kamau Bell on CNN, and co-wrote a documentary titled *Crossover*, which aired on Showtime, in collaboration with the NBA and Nike.

The production is directed by Donny Jackson. A staple of the poetry community for over 2 decades, Donny Jackson is also a doctor of clinical psychology, and a multiple Emmy-winning Producer and Director in unscripted television, including CNN’s *United Shades of America with W. Kamau Bell*, *R&B Divas* for TV One, *The Bachelor* for ABC, A&E’s *Teach*, and *Inside the Label* for BET. Dr. Donny is also an NAACP Image Award winner for his producing duties on TV One’s music documentary series, *Unsung*.

Jerry Herman: You I Like

Jerry Herman: You I Like lovingly celebrates the work of the genius responsible for Broadway classics *Hello, Dolly!*, *Mame*, *La Cage aux Folles* and many more – no one has written “showtunes” with as much exuberance as Jerry Herman. His musicals offer an optimistic approach to the human condition, finding common ground with his audience by showing us that the differences between us are, in fact, what unite us.

In Development: Iceboy! (PHL Original Series)

Join Megan Mullally and Nick Offerman as they give you a rare peek behind the curtain of *Iceboy!*, the hilarious and irreverent new musical from the co-creators of the Broadway hits *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and *Urinetown: The Musical*. *Iceboy!* tells the absolutely untrue story of a 10,000-year-old Neanderthal who's discovered frozen in the Arctic, brought to New York, and adopted by Vera Vimm (Mullally) the biggest Broadway star of 1938. But once thawed, Iceboy becomes an acting sensation whose talents threaten to upstage the once mighty Vera. It's *All About Eve* if only Eve were a caveman. The PlayhouseLive Original series *In Development* puts you in the producer's chair, giving you an insiders' look at unproduced theatrical works as they are introduced to the world for the first time.

Ojai Playwrights Conference

The *Ojai Playwrights Conference* (OPC) is renowned for its development of exciting and cutting-edge playwrights and their plays, many of which have gone on to Broadway, as well as numerous regional theaters across the country. PlayhouseLive will exclusively stream play readings from OPC that will include new works for the American theater from both celebrated and emerging playwrights.

Intermission with Hashtag Booked

LaNisa Frederick and Danielle Pinnock, of the online sketch series *Hashtag Booked* (@hashtagbooked), take on a deliriously funny new talk show for PlayhouseLive called *Intermission with Hashtag Booked*. With special celebrity guests from theater, film and television, this powerful duo takes a playful approach to uncovering the art of the craft and what it takes to make it as an actor in the biz while getting to know some of our favorite personalities a little better.

Launched in 2018, Danielle and LaNisa created *Hashtag Booked* as an improvised sketch show that explored the joys and misfortunes of being an actor of color in show business. These 2020 *Webby Award Honorees* have set the internet ablaze with their viral laugh-out-loud sketches, memes and celebrity IG LIVE interviews. *Hashtag Booked's* content has reached millions of views and has captured the hearts of major networks, celebrities, and nationally acclaimed media outlets including *Forbes*, *Essence*, and *Shondaland*.

Bob Baker Marionette Theater

Bob Baker Marionette Theater (BBMT) has been pulling the strings of family fun since 1963. As a registered 501c3 nonprofit organization, their mission is to educate, celebrate, and rejuvenate puppetry and the allied arts. BBMT are bringing *The Circus*, *Halloween Spooktacular*, and exclusively on PlayhouseLive, Bob Baker's *Holiday on Strings*, directly into your home for the first time.

A beloved Los Angeles tradition, more than one million children of all ages have experienced a Bob Baker puppet performance since the Theater's establishment in 1963. In addition to in-house performances, members of the Bob Baker puppet family have appeared in motion pictures, on frequent television shows, and, through a robust traveling company, at the Hollywood Bowl, community centers, backyards, parades, and anywhere there's fun to be had. Now located in the Highland Park neighborhood of Los Angeles, the Bob Baker Marionette Theater invites you to join in for unique theatrical performances, plus

a variety of illuminating programming designed to celebrate, educate, and rejuvenate puppetry and the allied arts.

Page to Stage

A PlayhouseLive Original Series that takes you behind the curtain to explore the theatrical journey from conception to opening night. The premiere episode features the process of creating Pasadena Playhouse's groundbreaking production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.

From the Archives

A PlayhouseLive Original Series celebrating the unique impact Regional Theater has had across generations in shaping American culture. Fall programs will include a 1930s silent film pulled from the vault of the Pasadena Playhouse, and the story of Peggy Ebright, an extraordinary woman whose passion for the Playhouse kept it going in its darkest days.

Fall 2020 Educational Programming

Playtime with Miss Janet

Instructor: Janet Fontaine

A six-week class for children ages 4 to 6 exploring the imagination through theater-based play. Children will engage in song, dance, show & tell and other enjoyable games, all designed with the goals of building socialization skills, boosting confidence and strengthening their imagination.

The Everyday Avant-Garde in Black Theater Making

Instructor: Eisa Davis

What do you know about the roots and fruits of black theatre? What are the groundbreaking plays black artists are making right now, and from whence do they descend? The undue, absurd suffering that black people have been subjected to during our time here on Turtle Island has often been transmuted into theatre as multivalent as the experience of black life itself. In this course, we will examine four surprising texts and their contexts from a practitioner's perspective within the continuum of innovative Black theatre in the US.

The Contemporary Broadway Musical

Instructor: Adam Epstein

A nine-week seminar which will examine the evolution of the American musical from *Evita* in 1979 to *Hamilton*. This seminar will focus on Broadway from the past three decades, surveying the American musicals of the 1980's, including, but not limited to *Dreamgirls*, *La Cage Aux Folles*, and *Into the Woods*, as well as the British invasion of Andrew Lloyd Webber and Cameron Mackintosh, to the boundary-breaking musicals of the 90's such as *Rent* and *Ragtime* to the biggest hits of the 21st century including *The Producers*, *Hairspray*, *Wicked*, *Jersey Boys*, *The Book of Mormon*, and *Hamilton*. Class lectures will center around how the form has changed since the so-called "Golden Age," what direction(s) the musical has taken, and what it means to be an "American" musical.

Basics of Stage Management

Instructors: Kathleen Purvis and Andrew Neal

This course will examine the job of stage management by discuss the core functions and responsibilities of a stage manager. It will explore the building blocks common to all shows and give students templates to create personalized documents and reports. Upon completion of this course, students should understand the fundamentals skills and basic procedures of being stage manager.

Shakespeare Masterclass

Instructor: Rob Clare

A six-week workshop series illuminating practical strategies for bringing Shakespeare's dramatic literature to life, with truth, spontaneity, individual creativity, and enhanced confidence; close textual analysis and rehearsal of selected texts, to emphasize their flexibility, their openness to interpretation, and their empathetic humanity. Breathe new life into old verse!

About PlayhouseLive

PlayhouseLive breaks down the physical boundaries of theater walls and opens access to audiences all over the world. It is also integrated into the Pasadena Playhouse's Community at Play program which remove barriers to arts participation and ensures free and low-cost ways to engage with the arts. Distribution channels include a standalone website, iPhone and Android apps, AppleTV, Amazon FireTV, Roku, Chromecast, and AirPlay, among others.

Powered by Pasadena Playhouse, PlayhouseLive programming will include new filmed productions, staged readings, and cabarets, as well as original series, documentaries, and theater classes. It is a home for a wide array of theatrical voices through new and revisited work. PlayhouseLive also serves as an online companion to the work that Pasadena Playhouse and partner theaters create on our stages once live theater performances resume.

About Pasadena Playhouse

Pasadena Playhouse is a place where people have gathered for 100 years to experience bold and important theater. It is one of the most prolific theaters in American history with a legacy of profound theatrical impact and courageous new work. In 1937, the Playhouse was officially recognized as the State Theater of California for its contribution and commitment to the dramatic arts. Today, it continues that tradition of excellence under the helm of producing artistic director Danny Feldman. Dedicated to enriching lives through theater, community programs and learning initiatives, Pasadena Playhouse is a living force in the community.

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