LONE TREE ARTS CENTER ANNOUNCES CREATIVE TEAM FOR A.R. GURNEY’S “LOVE LETTERS”

LONE TREE, CO – In its first theatrical production since winning the 2017 Colorado Theatre Guild’s Henry Award for Outstanding Musical Production (EVITA), The Lone Tree Arts Center Event Hall transforms into an intimate theater space for A.R. Gurney’s Love Letters, November 9-19. Director Bruce K. Sevy joins LTAC for the first time to direct the play, which features LTAC favorites Mark Rubald and Candy Brown.

Love Letters takes you on a journey of every emotion from joy to sorrow. Andrew Makepeace Ladd III wrote his first letter to Melissa Gardner to tell her she looked like a lost princess. They were both seven years old. For the next fifty years, through personal triumphs and despair, through wars and marriages and children and careers, they poured out the secrets of their hearts to each other. They defied a fate that schemed to keep them apart, and lived—through letters—for the one most meaningful thing, their undying love for each other. Written by A.R. Gurney (Sylvia, The Dining Room), Love Letters is a tender, funny, and nuanced examination of the shared nostalgia, missed opportunities, and deep closeness of two lifelong, complicated friends.

Bruce K. Sevy has a long relationship with Denver and the Denver Center Theatre Company dating back to 1983. Most recently Bruce served as Associate Artistic Director, Casting Director, and Director of New Play Development for the DCTC from 2005-2016. Bruce has directed such memorable DCTC productions as Master Class, A Prayer for Owen Meany, Doubt, All My Sons, Mrs. Warren’s Profession, A Christmas Carol, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Little Foxes, The Cripple of Inishmaan, Pride and Prejudice, When We Are Married, Animal Crackers, Molly Sweeney, Amy’s View, Dinner with Friends, Valley Song, A Little Night Music, Company, and the world premiere of Jeffrey Hatcher’s Pierre. As Director of New Play Development, he oversaw the creation and expansion of DCTC’s highly successful Colorado New Play Summit. Nationally, he has directed for Arizona Theatre Company, Phoenix Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Lark Play Development Center (NYC), Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Northlight Theatre (Chicago), San Jose Repertory Theatre, Eugene O’Neill...
Theater Center, Pioneer Theatre Company, A Contemporary Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Empty Space and Intiman Theatre in Seattle, the Kimo Theatre in Albuquerque, and Utah Shakespeare Festival. His popular production of *2 Pianos 4 Hands* has been seen at more than twenty theatres nationally. Bruce served as Producing Artistic Director for seven years for Tacoma Actors Guild Theatre in Washington State, and as Associate Artistic Director at Alabama Shakespeare Company. He is the recipient of Henry Awards, *Westword* citations and Denver Post Ovation Awards for Excellence in Directing or for Best Production as well as two 'Zony Awards' for his directing work in Arizona. He has been a panelist for the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Washington State Arts Commission. On directing *Love Letters* at the Lone Tree Arts Center, Sevy says, “I was really excited when [LTAC Executive Director Lisa Rigsby Peterson] approached me. I had directed or produced a few plays by A.R. Gurney during the 90’s, including *Love Letters*, and welcomed the opportunity to revisit it now. Mr. Gurney passed away this summer, leaving an extraordinary number of plays, mostly set in the Northeastern United States, where he was born and raised. Gurney once said, ‘What seems to obsess me is the contrast between the world and the values I was immersed in when I was young, and the nature of the contemporary world.’ His obituary in the *New York Times* explained that his childhood in Buffalo, which he described as ‘the city time forgot,’ remained his primary source of inspiration. It was all about ‘continuity that went back three or four generations,’ he told the *New York Times Magazine* in 1989. Early on, he said, ‘I sensed the comforts of civilization — but also its discontents, what you give up. The emotions are carefully trained, ultimately honed, tamped down.’ *Love Letters* traces a lifelong relationship between Andrew Makepeace Ladd III and Melissa Gardner, through the various letters, Christmas cards, notes, invitations and RSVPs, etc., which flowed between these two characters over an almost 50 year period. What emerges is a richly textured, moving, and often funny ‘love story’ that feels particular yet universal.”

**Candy Brown** (*Melissa Gardner*) is an accomplished actress on stage, television, and film. Candy began her professional career in musical theatre under the tutelage of legendary Broadway directors, choreographers, and performers too numerous to list but who include mentors Bob Fosse and Hal Prince. As a proud member of Actors Equity, some of her Broadway shows are *Pippin, Chicago, Grind, Purlie*, and *Hello, Dolly!* and she was an original participant in the history making workshop of *A Chorus Line*. Her first visit to Denver was in the first national tour of *Applause* with Eleanor Parker in the role created by Bonnie Franklin. As Candy Brown Houston, a proud member of the Screen Actors Guild, she has appeared in numerous television commercials, television programs (*NYPD Blue, Chicago Hope, CSI: Miami, Sister, Sister*, etc) and films including *Ali* where she played mother to Will Smith’s Muhammad Ali. She has worked extensively in regional theaters around the country. Since relocating to Denver, Ms. Brown has performed at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Curious Theatre Company, Local Theatre Company, and the Telluride New Playwright Festival. She directed and choreographed *Once on This Island* for the Aurora Fox Theatre as well as choreographing *Big River*, with Randal Myler directing, at the Lone Tree Arts Center. She has also been teaching and choreographing for the Denver School of the Arts Theatre Department where she most recently choreographed *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Candy holds a BA in Performing Arts from St. Mary’s of California, Moraga. Ms. Brown says, “I find [Love Letters] to be what good theatre does well—insight into the human experience. Specifically, how we connect to one another and how dishonest we can be with our own emotions.”
Mark Rubald (Andrew Makepeace Ladd III) returns to Lone Tree Arts Center, where he was previously seen in The Explorers Club, Big River, South Pacific, It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play, and others. He has performed at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts in numerous productions, including Dinner With Friends, Sideman, A Christmas Carol, John Brown's Body, Comedy Of Errors, Servant Of Two Masters, Arcadia, Man Of The Moment, A Midsummer Night's Dream, A Flea In Her Ear, and others. At the Arvada Center, Mr. Rubald performed in Death Takes A Holiday, Best Little Whorehouse In Texas, Of Mice And Men, Dividing The Estate, Ragtime, Miracle On 34th Street, La Cage Aux Follies, A Man For All Seasons, Defiance, The Importance Of Being Earnest, and others. He has also worked at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Aurora Fox, Curious Theatre, Central City Opera, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, and The Powerhouse Theatre at Vassar in Poughkeepsie, New York. Mr. Rubald is a proud member of Actors Equity Association and Visionbox acting studio. Mr. Rubald says, “A.R. Gurney’s Love Letters is theater and storytelling in its simplest form—a great script read aloud. It's about the liberation of self-expression through writing. It's about listening – for the audience as well as the actors. It's funny, it's compelling, it's touching, it's epic in scope, complex in emotional journeys, and straightforwardly honest in presentation.”

Lisa Orzolek is the Scenic Designer, Liz Porter is the Costume Designer, and 2017 Henry Award Winner Jen Kiser is the Lighting Designer. Mister Erock is the Stage Manager.

Dates & Tickets

Evening Performances: November 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 18, 19.

Matinee Performances: November 11, 12, 15, 16, 18.

All tickets are $35-45. Tickets may be purchased by calling 720-509-1000, Monday-Friday, 10am-4pm or at www.LoneTreeArtsCenter.org.

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