Electronic Press Kit

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American Repertory Theater Announces The Cast and Creative Team for ExtraOrdinary

Celebrating a Decade of Musical Theater at the A.R.T.
Under the Leadership of Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus

Cambridge, MA—American Repertory Theater at Harvard University (A.R.T.), under the leadership of Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, announces the casting and creative team for ExtraOrdinary, a cabaret retrospective celebrating ten years of musical theater at the A.R.T. The limited run begins on Friday, November 16 at the Loeb Drama Center in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and ends on Friday, November 30, 2018.

Audiences are invited to join returning A.R.T. artists for songs and stories from the past decade of boundary-breaking musicals, including The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess, Pippin, Prometheus Bound, Waitress, and Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812.

This season marks Diane Paulus’ tenth as the A.R.T.’s Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director. “Over the last decade, we’ve staged more than thirty musicals and music-theater pieces at the A.R.T.” said Paulus. “The musical is one of the great American art forms. As total theater experiences that combine song, story, spectacle, and dance, musicals have the power to engage our hearts and minds; and when musicals grapple with the urgent questions of our day, they can move us like nothing else. The musicals we’ve developed and premiered, the collaborations we’ve formed with writers and composers who created work for the theater for the very first time, and the conversations we’ve had with audiences and scholars around our productions have been central to our mission at the A.R.T. to expand the boundaries of theater. I’m thrilled by the opportunity to revisit many of these musicals with ExtraOrdinary.”
ExtraOrdinary features a company of artists from past A.R.T. productions:

- **Melody Betts** from A.R.T.’s 2014 production of *Witness Uganda* (also *Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert* on NBC)
- **Kathryn Gallagher** from A.R.T.’s 2018 production of *Jagged Little Pill* (also *Spring Awakening* on Broadway)
- **Terrence Mann** from A.R.T.’s 2012 production of *Pippin* and the 2013 Tony Award-winning Broadway revival, for which he received his third Tony Award nomination (also the original Broadway casts of *Les Misérables* and *Disney’s Beauty and the Beast*)
- **Brandon Michael Nase** from A.R.T.’s 2018 production of *The Black Clown* (also *Ragtime* at Tulane Summer Lyric Theatre)
- **Bryonha Marie Parham** from A.R.T.’s 2011 production of *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess* and the 2012 Tony Award-winning Broadway revival (also *Prince of Broadway* on Broadway)
- **MJ Rodriguez** from A.R.T.’s 2017 productions of *Burn All Night* and *Trans Scripts, Part I: The Women* (also “Pose” on FX)
- **Matthew James Thomas** from A.R.T.’s 2012 production of *Pippin* and the Tony Award-winning Broadway revival (also *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark* on Broadway)

A five-piece band led by Music Director **Lance Horne** will perform onstage.

The ExtraOrdinary cast will be joined nightly by a special guest from past A.R.T. musicals. Appearances will not be announced in advance; instead guests will surprise the audience each night.

Throughout the ExtraOrdinary run, the Loeb Drama Center will host a display featuring photographs, costumes, props, and other memorabilia from the more than thirty musicals, music- and dance-theater pieces, and plays with music staged at the A.R.T. over the last decade.

**EXTRAORDINARY CREATIVE TEAM**

- **Diane Paulus**, Director (fourteen productions at A.R.T. including *Jagged Little Pill, The White Card, In the Body of the World, Waitress*, and *Pippin*)
- **Nancy Harrington**, Associate Director (six productions at A.R.T. including *Waitress* and *Pippin*)
- **Lance Horne**, Music Director (*Cabaret* and *Prometheus Bound* at A.R.T., Music Director for Alan Cumming)
- **Abbey O’Brien**, Choreographer (*Jagged Little Pill* at A.R.T. and *Waitress* on Broadway)
- **Jason Sherwood**, Scenic Designer (A.R.T. debut; Sam Smith’s world tour and *The Who’s Tommy* at Denver Center Theatre Company)
- **Emilio Sosa**, Costume Designer (six productions at A.R.T. including *The White Card* and *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess*)
- **Jeanette Oi-Suk Yew**, Lighting and Projection Designer (A.R.T. debut; *Gloria: A Life* at Daryl Roth Theatre and *Relevance* at Lucille Lortel Theatre)
- **Jonathan Deans**, Sound Designer (five productions at A.R.T. including *Jagged Little Pill* and *Waitress*)
- **Julie Baldauff**, Production Stage Manager (four productions at A.R.T. including *Pippin* and *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess*)
• Taylor Brennan, Assistant Stage Manager (twenty-nine productions at A.R.T. including The Black Clown and Jagged Little Pill)

Production support of ExtraOrdinary is provided by The Linda Hammett Ory & Andrew Ory Charitable Trust and The Johnson Family.

TICKETING INFORMATION

Tickets start at $25 and are available now online at americanrepertorytheater.org, by phone at 617.547.8300, and in person at the Loeb Drama Center Ticket Services Offices (64 Brattle Street, Cambridge). Discounts are available to Subscribers, Members, groups, students, seniors, Blue Star families, EBT card holders, and others.

PERFORMANCE DATES

Note: some dates are sold out.

7:30PM
November 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30

2PM
November 21, 24, 25, 28

Press performance: Sunday, November 18 at 7:30PM

Open Captioned performance: Thursday, November 29 at 7:30PM

ABOUT AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER

American Repertory Theater at Harvard University (A.R.T.) is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work in Cambridge and beyond. A.R.T. was founded in 1980 by Robert Brustein, who served as Artistic Director until 2002, when he was succeeded by Robert Woodruff. Diane Paulus began her tenure as Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director in 2008. Under the leadership of Paulus and Executive Producer Diane Borger, A.R.T. seeks to expand the boundaries of theater by producing transformative theatrical experiences, always including the audience as a central partner.

Throughout its history, A.R.T. has been honored with many distinguished awards including the Tony Award for Best New Play for All the Way (2014); consecutive Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical for Pippin (2013) and The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess (2012), both of which Paulus directed, and sixteen other Tony Awards since 2012; a Pulitzer Prize; a Jujamcyn Prize for outstanding contribution to the development of creative talent; the Regional Theater Tony Award; and more than 100 Elliot Norton and IRNE Awards.

A.R.T. collaborates with artists around the world to develop and create work in new ways. It is currently engaged in a number of multi-year projects, including a collaboration with Harvard’s Center for the
Environment that will result in the development of new work over several years. Under Paulus’ leadership, the A.R.T.’s club theater, OBERON, has been an incubator for local and emerging artists and has attracted national attention for its innovative programming and business models.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, the A.R.T. catalyzes discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange among a wide range of academic departments, institutions, students, and faculty members, acting as a conduit between its community of artists and the university. The A.R.T. has trained generations of theater artists through its Institute for Advanced Theater Training, and also plays a central role in Harvard’s undergraduate concentration in Theater, Dance & Media.

Dedicated to making great theater accessible, A.R.T. actively engages more than 5,000 community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

Through all of these initiatives, A.R.T. is dedicated to producing world-class performances in which the audience is central to the theatrical experience.

@americanrep #ExtraOrdinaryART

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ExtraOrdinary Production Photos | Credit: Gretjen Helene Photography

Available for download from
https://americanrepertorytheater.org/shows-events/extraordinary/#photos-videos

Kathryn Gallagher and Brandon Michael Nase | Photo: Gretjen Helene Photography

Melody A. Betts | Photo: Gretjen Helene Photography

Bryonha Marie Parham, Mj Rodriguez, Melody A. Betts, and Kathryn Gallagher | Photo Gretjen Helene Photography.

Patina Miller (guest performer) | Photo: Gretjen Helene Photography
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<th>The company with guest performer Patina Miller</th>
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American Repertory Theater presents

EXTRAORDINARY

Scenic Design
JASON SHERWOOD

Costume Design
EMILIO SOSA

Lighting & Projection Design
JEANETTE OI-SUK YEW

Sound Design
JONATHAN DEANS

Associate Director
NANCY HARRINGTON

Production Stage Manager
JULIE BALDAUFF

Written by
DICK SCANLAN
Based on interviews with the Company

Choreography
ABBEY O’BRIEN

Music Director,
Special Orchestrations & Arrangements
LANCE HORNE

Directed by
DIANE PAULUS

First performance at the Loeb Drama Center on November 16, 2018.

PRODUCTION SPONSORS
The Linda Hammett Ory & Andrew Ory Charitable Trust
The Johnson Family

A.R.T. SEASON SUPPORT

The A.R.T. 2018/19 Season is supported in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which receives support from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the National Endowment for the Arts.
The making of a musical is one of the most collaborative creative processes. As we mark a decade of boundary-breaking work at the A.R.T., we celebrate the extraordinary community of artists who have created this work on our stages.

ExtraOrdinary features songs from the following musicals:

- The Blue Flower
- Burn All Night
- Cabaret
- Finding Neverland
- The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess
- Jagged Little Pill
- Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812
- Once
- Pippin
- Prometheus Bound
- Waitress
- Witness Uganda
- Woody Sez: The Life and Music of Woody Guthrie

The making of a musical is one of the most collaborative creative processes. As we mark a decade of boundary-breaking work at the A.R.T., we celebrate the extraordinary community of artists who have created this work on our stages.
CAST

The Company

MELODY A. BETTS*
KATHRYN GALLAGHER*
TERRENCE MANN*
BRANDON MICHAEL NASE*
BRYONHA MARIE PARHAM*
MJ RODRIGUEZ*
MATTHEW JAMES THOMAS*

Swing
ASHLEY LALONDE

BAND

Music Director/Piano: LANCE HORNE
Guitar/Cello: YAIR EVNINE
Bass: KATE FOSS
Percussion: JANNA GRAHAM
Brass: RILEY MULHERKAR

ADDITIONAL STAFF

Assistant Stage Manager.................................................................TAYLOR BRENNAN*
Rehearsal Assistant Stage Manager.................................................ALEX EBERLE*
Assistant Director...........................................................................MARY McGOWAN
Music Assistant................................................................................MATTHEW AUMENT
Associate Scenic Designer.............................................................CONNOR MUNION
Associate Costume Designer.........................................................DARYL STONE
Associate Sound Designer.............................................................SAM LERNER
Assistant Lighting Designer............................................................JESSICA ELLIOTT
Assistant Projection Designer........................................................CHELSIE McPHILIMY
Voice and Text Coach......................................................................ERIKA BAILEY
Front of House Mixer.......................................................................JACK O’BRIEN

Additional sound equipment provided by Sound Associates.
Additional lighting equipment provided by 4Wall Boston.
ExtraOrdinary rehearsed at Manhattan Theatre Club’s Creative Center.

SPECIAL THANKS

Shure Microphones
Tristan Rocher, Janis Sacco, Sylvie Laborde, Harvard Museums of Science & Culture
Sammi Cannold, Riccardo Hernandez, Scott Pask, Emilio Sosa
Clementine Bordeaux (Sicangu Oglala Lakota)

(*) Member of Actors’ Equity Association
In celebration of the past ten years of musical theater at the A.R.T., audiences are invited to join returning artists for a cabaret featuring songs and stories from boundary-breaking musicals, including *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess*, *Pippin*, *Prometheus Bound*, *Waitress*, and *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*.

Produced by the Johnson Family & Andrew Ory Charitable Trust

**Music Directed by LANCE HORNE**  
**Choreography by ABBEY O'BRIEN**  
**Directed by DIANE PAULUS**

Over the past ten seasons, the American Repertory Theater has produced more than thirty musicals and music theater pieces. *ExtraOrdinary* marks not only the range of this work, but also the A.R.T.’s ongoing commitment to staging boundary-breaking, total theater experiences that combine story, song, spectacle, and dance. A.R.T. musicals have pushed the form in new directions, from fostering collaborations with leading artists in the pop and rock music worlds to creating immersive experiences in our club-theater environment at OBERON and at the Loeb Drama Center, which underwent a radical transformation into a Russian supper club for *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*.

Music has played an integral role in Western theater for millennia. From the choruses of ancient Greek amphitheaters, to religious drama in medieval churches and town squares, to Italian Renaissance opera, to Broadway in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, music has enhanced audiences’ experiences of stories, settings, characters, and conflicts. Song can take us places where words alone cannot. When Jessie Mueller sang Sara Bareilles’ “She Used to Be Mine” in *Waitress* and when Lauren Patten performed Alanis Morissette’s “You Oughta Know” in *Jagged Little Pill*, the soaring emotion of the songs gave audiences access to the thoughts and complex inner lives of the characters. Patten’s expression of her character’s feelings was so intense that—from the first preview through the entire rest of the run—it literally stopped the show. Performance after performance, the audience’s applause at the end of this scene grew into a standing ovation—a communal act of appreciation, validation, and compassion.

When musicals explore challenging subjects, they have the potential to reach and move audiences in profound ways. Productions at the A.R.T. have grappled with some of the most pressing questions of our times, inviting audiences and the theater’s community of scholars at Harvard University to participate in discussions on topics ranging from dictatorship and the brute forces of tyranny, to the history of race and Major League Baseball, to the complexities of volunteer aid work in Africa, to the opioid epidemic in our country today. During the run of *Prometheus Bound*, an alternative rock musical that imagined Prometheus as one of the Western world’s first prisoners of conscience, the A.R.T. partnered with Amnesty International to dedicate every performance to a person who had been unjustly imprisoned. Inviting the audience to write letters that urged governments around the world to free these prisoners, *Prometheus Bound* launched the A.R.T.’s “Act II” series—an initiative that extends the theatrical experience to include dialogue with the audience as an integral part of the show.


As the company members reflect on their own experiences and on the transcendent and transformative power of music in the theater, *ExtraOrdinary* will take audiences on a sweeping journey from classics including *The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess* and *Pippin* to new musicals that premiered at the A.R.T. including *The Blue Flower, Witness Uganda, Waitress*, and *Jagged Little Pill*.

During the run of *ExtraOrdinary*, don’t miss an installation in the lobby of the Loeb Drama Center chronicling the A.R.T.’s growing legacy of musicals and musical theater.

**EXTRAORDINARY THINGS**

Ryan McKittrick reflects on the legacy, and the power, of musical theater.

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Ryan McKittrick is A.R.T. Director of Artistic Programs & Dramaturg
Ten years of Musical Theater

ExtraOrdinary celebrates the American Repertory Theater’s growing legacy of boundary-breaking musical theater. In addition to presenting an extensive array of work by artists and other companies, the A.R.T. has produced the following musicals and music-theater pieces over the past ten seasons.

2009/10 Season
- The Donkey Show
- Best of Both Worlds
- Johnny Baseball

2010/11 Season
- Cabaret
- The Blue Flower
- Prometheus Bound
- Once
- Death and the Powers: The Robots’ Opera

2011/12 Season
- The Gershwins’ Porgy and Bess
- Three Pianos
- Futurity: A Musical by The Lisps
- Woody Sez: The Life & Music of Woody Guthrie
2012/13 Season
- The Lily’s Revenge
- Pippin
- Beowulf - A Thousand Years of Baggage
- The Hypocrites’ Pirates of Penzance

2013/14 Season
- The Heart of Robin Hood
- The Light Princess
- Witness Uganda
- The Tempest

2014/15 Season
- Finding Neverland
- Father Comes Home From The Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)
- The Last Two People on Earth: An Apocalyptic Vaudeville
- Crossing

2015/16 Season
- Waitress
- Kansas City Choir Boy
- Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812
- The Pirate Princess

2016/17 Season
- Arrabal

2017/18 Season
- Burn All Night
- Jagged Little Pill
2018/19 Season
The Black Clown
Dragon Lady
We Live in Cairo
Photos: Page 3: *Bum All Night* | Evgenia Eliseeva.