

For immediate release.

## **CENTER THEATRE GROUP CELEBRATES 50 YEARS AT THE AHMANSON THEATRE**

**THE 2016-2017 GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY SEASON CONTINUES FIVE DECADES OF EXTRAORDINARY THEATRE AT THE MUSIC CENTER OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

**THE NEW SEASON AT THE AHMANSON THEATRE  
BURSTS WITH SIX AWARD-WINNING NEW PLAYS, MUSICALS, BELOVED CLASSICS**

**2016-2017 Season Begins September 7, 2016, and Runs Through September 10, 2017**  
[For complete listing of plays and performance dates, please see final page of release.]

It has been almost 50 years since Center Theatre Group presented its first production in the Ahmanson Theatre at the shining new Music Center of Los Angeles County in downtown Los Angeles.

Eugene O'Neill's "More Stately Mansions," which premiered in 1967 with Ingrid Bergman and Colleen Dewhurst, was the inaugural production that launched decades of extraordinary theatrical experiences at the Ahmanson, where a wide range of superior dramas, musicals, comedies and classic revivals have been presented.

"We'll celebrate this rich history with a stimulating roster of award-winning plays and musicals for the **2016-2017 season**, our golden anniversary season, at the Ahmanson Theatre," said Michael Ritchie, Center Theatre Group's Artistic Director, "and we will set our sights for an equally stellar future.

"The season begins with an intensity and a singularity that marks much of the year ahead. We're presenting **Arthur Miller's 'A View From the Bridge'** in a striking interpretation by **director Ivo van Hove**. It's both beautiful and gut-wrenching and no wonder it won the Olivier Award last year."

"**'Amélie, A New Musical'** is next and it's guaranteed to weave its magic with our audiences," said Ritchie. "The creative team is **Craig Lucas, Daniel Messé, Nathan Tysen, Sam Pinkleton** and **director Pam MacKinnon**, and the musical is pure joy.

"I'm very happy that we will be bringing the 2015 Tony Award-winning Best Musical, **'Fun Home,'** to Los Angeles. Created by **Jeanine Tesori, Lisa Kron, Alison Bechdel** and **director Sam Gold**, it is a particularly intimate and revealing coming of age story that is both funny, intelligent and crushing."

"For pure entertainment," said Ritchie, "we're bringing back two Tony Award-winning musicals: **Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 'Into the Woods'** in the acclaimed **Fiasco Theater's** streamlined production directed by **Noah Brody** and **Ben Steinfeld** and loaded with irreverence and wit and insight; and the ever popular **'Jersey Boys,'** which tells the rags-to-riches story of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons and their infectious music,

created by **Marshall Brickman, Rick Elice, Bob Gaudio, Bob Crew, Sergio Trujillo and Des McAnuff.**

“We close the season with the 2015 Tony Award winner for Best Play, **‘The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time,’** written by **Simon Stephens**, adapted from **Mark Haddon’s** book and directed by **Marianne Elliott**. This new play is a compelling mix of mystery and self-discovery, and it has exactly what I love about theatre – it is inventive and it expands the boundaries of theatricality.”

“As you can see,” said Ritchie, “we have a 50<sup>th</sup> season that is bursting with works that make us laugh, bring tears to our eyes, gasp, ponder new ideas and experience a sense of wonder.

“It’s a great way to spend a year at the Ahmanson, and a great start to the next 50 years.”

### **“A View From the Bridge”**

The 2015 Olivier Award-winning Young Vic production of Arthur Miller’s dark and passionate drama, “A View From the Bridge,” will open the Ahmanson Theatre’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, September 7 through October 16, 2016. The opening is scheduled for September 14.

Directed by Ivo van Hove, who also won an Olivier Award for his work on the London production, “A View From the Bridge,” said Ben Brantley of The New York Times, “... must be what Greek tragedy once felt like, when people went to the theater in search of catharsis ... You also feel ridiculously blessed to have been a witness. ...”

In “A View From the Bridge,” Eddie Carbone is a Brooklyn longshoreman obsessed with his 17-year-old niece, Catherine. When Catherine falls in love with a newly arrived immigrant, Eddie’s jealousy erupts in a rage that consumes him, his family and his world.

“Breathe, everybody, breathe!” said Marilyn Stasio of Variety. “Audiences really need to be reminded of that at the end of Ivo van Hove’s magnificent production. ...” “The tension never dips as the show heads toward the kind of mind-blowing climax that’s the stuff of Broadway legend,” said Elisabeth Vincentelli of the New York Post.

This production of Miller’s classic was first presented at the Young Vic in 2014 and then transferred in 2015 to the West End where Lyn Gardner of The Guardian called “A View From the Bridge” “... a menacing, meticulously conceived production ... It’s like watching a runaway train hurtle towards you. ...” The production opened on Broadway in November 2015 for a limited run and closed this past February.

### **“Amélie, A New Musical”**

The imaginative and captivating “Amélie, A New Musical,” with book by Craig Lucas, music by Daniel Messé and lyrics by Nathan Tysen and Messé, celebrates the holiday season at the Ahmanson Theatre, December 4, 2016, through January 15, 2017. Based on the five-time Academy Award-nominated 2001 film, “Amélie, A New Musical” opens December 16.

Directed by Pam MacKinnon, with musical direction by Kimberly Grigsby and musical staging and choreography by Sam Pinkleton, “Amélie, A New Musical” follows the

mesmerizing journey of the inquisitive and charmingly shy Amélie who turns the streets of Montmartre into a world of her own imagining, while secretly orchestrating moments of joy for those around her. After discovering a mysterious photo album and meeting a handsome stranger, Amélie realizes that helping others is easier than participating in a romantic story of her own.

In 2015, “Amélie, A New Musical” had its critically acclaimed world premiere at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and topped “Best Theater of 2015” lists in the Los Angeles Times and the San Francisco Chronicle. Charles McNulty of the Los Angeles Times called it “... a sparkling musical comedy,” that “... slyly revels in the infinite possibilities of theatrical merrymaking ... The score ... flowers with originality.” Robert Hurwitt of the San Francisco Chronicle said, “A dreamy movie becomes a dream of a stage musical ... wit crackles and charms fill the house. ...” Lou Fancher of the SF Weekly said it is a “...sheer delight ... a magical, timeless plunge into love, art. ...”

### **“Fun Home”**

The groundbreaking, uplifting and exquisite new musical “Fun Home,” winner of five 2015 Tony Awards including Best Musical, will be presented in the Ahmanson’s new season, February 21 through April 1, 2017. The opening is set for February 22.

“Fun Home,” the “... extraordinary musical, which pumps oxygenating fresh air ...” (Ben Brantley, The New York Times), has music by Jeanine Tesori, book and lyrics by Lisa Kron, and is based on the graphic novel by Alison Bechdel. Sam Gold is the director and Danny Mefford is the choreographer.

“Fun Home” introduces Alison at three different ages in her life, as she explores and unravels the mysteries of her childhood. A refreshingly honest musical, Alison eventually sees her parents through the eyes of a grown-up.

Joe Dziemianowicz of New York Daily News said that “Fun Home” is a “... musical drama of rare intensity, honesty and beauty through melodically rich songs that summon yearning, heartache and joy. A bright musical flourish that repeatedly sounds is like a fanfare for an uncommon family.” This is a “... Broadway musical of enormous intelligence and sensitivity...” said Adam Feldman of Time Out. Chris Jones of the Chicago Tribune called the musical “... gorgeously wrought and emotionally overwhelming ... the audience sprang as one from its seats at the ending. ...”

In addition to the Tony Award for Best Musical, “Fun Home” also won for Book, Score and Director of a Musical.

“Fun Home” had its world premiere at The Public Theater in New York in October 2013, and opened on Broadway at the Circle in the Square Theatre in April 2015. It was a finalist for the 2014 Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

### **“Into the Woods”**

Fiasco Theater’s witty and wildly theatrical re-invention of the Tony Award-winning musical “Into the Woods,” with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by James Lapine, will be presented at the Ahmanson Theatre, April 4 through May 14, 2017. The opening is scheduled for April 5.

This thrillingly clever and acclaimed new version of “Into the Woods” is co-directed by Noah Brody and Ben Steinfeld and performed with boundless imagination.

The musical intertwines fairy tale characters, including Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, Rapunzel, Cinderella and others, with two new characters – a childless couple – the Baker and his wife. Each character has a dream, and journeys into the woods to fulfill that dream. With songs such as “Children Will Listen” and “No One is Alone,” this extraordinary musical reveals the power of wishes and what really happens after those wishes come true.

“Truly enchanting...,” said Ben Brantley of The New York Times. “These are the woods that you want to get lost in, a place you’ll find buried treasures that you didn’t even know existed.” Alexis Soloski of The Guardian said of the production, “... a tender and intimate revival ... emotionally rich.” Jennifer Farrar of the Associated Press called the musical “...refreshingly irreverent ... with clever choreography and plenty of zaniness, performing the cautionary bedtime story with heartfelt emotion.”

The “Into the Woods” national tour is produced by the Dodgers (“Jersey Boys,” “Matilda”) and Networks (“The Phantom of the Opera,” “War Horse,” “South Pacific”).

The Fiasco Theater production that became New York’s surprise hit of the 2015 season was unanimously acclaimed and it was extended twice at the Roundabout Theatre Company. The production was originally presented by The McCarter Theatre Center in Princeton, New Jersey, in May 2013, and then at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. It received the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Revival. Fiasco Theater is an ensemble theatre company created by graduates of the Brown University/Trinity Rep MFA acting program.

The original production of “Into the Woods” was first presented at the Ahmanson Theatre in 1989. “Into the Woods” received 10 Tony Award nominations in 1988, winning for Book and Score, among others, and in its 2002 return to Broadway, it won the Tony Award for Best Revival (Musical).

### “Jersey Boys”

The megahit 2006 Tony Award-winning Best Musical, “Jersey Boys,” will be presented May 16 through June 24, 2017. Opening is scheduled for May 18.

Directed by Des McAnuff and written by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice, with music by Bob Gaudio, lyrics by Bob Crewe and choreography by Sergio Trujillo, “Jersey Boys” is the story of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons – Frankie Valli, Bob Gaudio, Tommy DeVito and Nick Massi, and how this group of blue-collar boys from the wrong side of the tracks became one of the biggest American pop music sensations of all time. They wrote their own songs, invented their own sound and sold 175 million records worldwide – all before they were 30.

The show features all their hits including “Sherry,” “Big Girls Don’t Cry,” “Oh What A Night,” “Walk Like A Man,” “Can’t Take My Eyes Off You” and “Working My Way Back To You.”

When “Jersey Boys” first opened on Broadway in 2005, Ben Brantley of The New York Times said, “The crowd went wild ... And everything that leads up to the curtain call feels as real and vivid as the sting of your hands clapping.” Clive Barnes of the New York Post said the show was “... terrific – a show dynamically alive in music, while as a drama, it catches the very texture, almost the actual smell of its time.”

In addition to the Tony Award, “Jersey Boys” is the winner of 2006 Grammy Award for Best Musical Show Album, the 2009 Olivier Award for Best New Musical and the 2010 Helpmann Award for Best Musical (Australia).

“Jersey Boys” is produced by Dodger Theatricals, Joseph J. Grano, Tamara and Kevin Kinsella, Pelican Group, with Latitude Link and Rick Steiner.

“Jersey Boys” was presented at the Ahmanson Theatre in 2007.

### **“The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time”**

The National Theatre production of the dazzlingly inventive new play “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time,” winner of five 2015 Tony Awards including Best Play, will be presented at the Ahmanson Theatre, August 2 through September 10, 2017. Opening is scheduled for August 3.

A new play by Simon Stephens, “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time” is adapted from Mark Haddon’s best-selling novel, and directed by Tony winner Marianne Elliott (“War Horse”).

In “... this highly original, deeply engaging play” (Elysa Gardner, USA Today), 15-year old Christopher has an extraordinary brain; he is exceptionally intelligent but ill-equipped to interpret everyday life. When he falls under suspicion for killing his neighbor’s dog, he sets out to identify the true culprit, which leads to an earth-shattering discovery and a journey that will change his life forever.

Ben Brantley of The New York Times said this play is “... one of the most fully immersive works ever to wallop Broadway. Be prepared to have all your emotional and sensory buttons pushed, including a few you may have not known existed.” Richard Zoglin of Time Magazine said that “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time” is “... a play that works on every level — crowd-pleasing, eye-opening, life-affirming and unmissable.”

Following a sold-out run at the National’s Cottesloe Theatre, the play transferred to London’s West End, where it received a record seven 2013 Olivier Awards, including Best New Play.

On Broadway, the play received five Tony awards, six Drama Desk Awards including Outstanding Play, five Outer Critics Circle Awards including Outstanding New Broadway Play, and the Drama League Award for Outstanding Production of a Broadway or Off-Broadway Play. It is currently in its second smash year.

### **CTG’s 2016-2017 Ahmanson Theatre Season is Available on Subscription Only**

Tickets for the Ahmanson Theatre’s 50th season are currently available by subscription only. For information and to charge season tickets by phone, call the Exclusive Season Ticket Hotline at (213) 972-4444.

To purchase subscriptions online, visit [CenterTheatreGroup.org/Season](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org/Season). For information regarding Project D.A.T.E. (ASL interpretation, open captioning and audio description performances), please call (213) 972-4444 or visit [CenterTheatreGroup.org/tickets/Project-Date/](http://CenterTheatreGroup.org/tickets/Project-Date/).

## **Center Theatre Group**

Center Theatre Group, a non-profit organization, is one of the largest and most active theatre companies in the nation, programming subscription seasons year-round at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and the 1,600 to 2,103-seat Ahmanson Theatre at the Music Center of Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to providing theatre of the highest caliber to the diverse communities of Southern California and beyond, CTG supports a significant number of play development and arts education initiatives.

March 23, 2016

## Center Theatre Group's 2016-2017 Season at the Ahmanson Theatre

### First Season Production

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September 7 – October 16, 2016  
(Opens September 14)

The Young Vic Production of  
Arthur Miller's  
**"A View From the Bridge"**  
Directed by Ivo van Hove

### Second Season Production

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December 4, 2016 – January 15, 2017  
(Opens December 16.)

**"Amélie, A New Musical"**  
Book by Craig Lucas  
Music by Daniel Messé  
Lyrics by Nathan Tysen and Messé  
Musical Staging and Choreography  
by Sam Pinkleton  
Directed by Pam MacKinnon

### Third Season Production

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February 21 – April 1, 2017  
(Opens February 22.)

**"Fun Home"**  
Music by Jeanine Tesori  
Book and Lyrics by Lisa Kron  
Based on the graphic novel by  
Alison Bechdel  
Choreography by Danny Mefford  
Directed by Sam Gold

### Fourth Season Production

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April 4 – May 14, 2017  
(Opens April 5.)

The Fiasco Theater Production of  
**"Into the Woods"**  
Music and Lyrics by  
Stephen Sondheim  
Book by James Lapine  
Directed Noah Brody  
and Ben Steinfeld

### Fifth Season Production

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May 16 – June 24, 2017  
(Opens May 18.)

**"Jersey Boys"**  
Book by Marshall Brickman and  
Rick Elice  
Music by Bob Gaudio  
Lyrics by Bob Crewe  
Choreography by Sergio Trujillo  
Directed by Des McAnuff

### Sixth Season Production

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August 2 – September 10, 2017  
(Opens August 3.)

**"The Curious Incident of the Dog  
in the Night-Time"**  
A New Play by Simon Stephens  
Adapted from Mark Haddon's novel  
Directed by Marianne Elliott