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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES LINEUP AND PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE FOR 2023/24 SEASON

Season includes the world premiere of the pre-Broadway musical **HIPPEST TRIP — THE SOUL TRAIN MUSICAL**; the world premiere of Kate Attwell’s **BIG DATA**; Kristina Wong’s award-winning solo show, **KRISTINA WONG, SWEATSHOP OVERLORD**; and the National Theatre and Neal Street Productions’ international theatrical sensation, **THE LEHMAN TRILOGY**

The Bay Area’s favorite holiday tradition, **A CHRISTMAS CAROL**, returns in 2023 for the last time in its current version; A.C.T. to present a brand-new production of Dickens’s timeless story of redemption in 2024

Final production for the 2023/24 season to be announced at a later date

SAN FRANCISCO (March 21, 2023)—**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** and **Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein** announced today the productions that will make up the company’s 2023/24 season—the world premiere of the pre-Broadway musical **HIPPEST TRIP — THE SOUL TRAIN MUSICAL**; the world premiere of Kate Attwell’s **BIG DATA**; Kristina Wong’s award-winning solo show, **KRISTINA WONG, SWEATSHOP OVERLORD**; and the National Theatre and Neal Street Productions’ international theatrical sensation, **THE LEHMAN TRILOGY**. The Bay Area’s favorite holiday tradition, **A CHRISTMAS CAROL**, returns in 2023 for the last time in its current version. In 2024, A.C.T. will present a brand-new production of Dickens’s timeless story of redemption. A final production for the 2023/24 season will be announced at a later date.

Said MacKinnon: “A.C.T.’s 2023/24 season thrills me, as it explores *the hustle*, meaning the relentless work it takes to build something bigger than yourself and bigger than what the world thinks of you. What are the joys along the way, the price spent, the dreams deferred and landed? This season dives deep into ambition and is ambitious. It’s attached to Broadway—coming and going. It has two world premieres. It’s a season full of music and big language. It’s human and epic.”

“We cannot wait to welcome audiences into the 2023/24 season as we continue gathering together to celebrate, laugh, and learn from these amazing productions,” adds **Bielstein**. “The best way the Bay Area community can support the arts is by attending performances. Whether you’re an avid A.C.T. theatergoer or a newcomer, we offer a wide range of ticket packages and opportunities that fit your needs and support our mission.”

The wait is finally over! The 2023/24 season kicks off with the world premiere of **HIPPEST TRIP – THE SOUL TRAIN MUSICAL (August 25–October 1, 2023)**, the Broadway-bound musical based on the iconic TV show that brought Black music, dance, and style into every living room in America. Journey back to 1971 Chicago, when Black entrepreneur and radio DJ Don Cornelius transformed the pop culture landscape by recognizing the lack of Black musical artists on television. Within a year, his local dance show went national and became one of the longest running shows in television history. Elegant, determined, and complicated, Cornelius set trends for nearly 40 years by giving a stage—and a camera—to the artists who created the soundtrack of *multiple* generations, and to the dancers, including Rosie Perez and Jody Watley, who became superstars.

The acclaimed creative team of *Hippest Trip*—featuring the first Broadway-bound musical with a creative team of all Black women—includes Tony Award nominated playwright and MacArthur Genius **Dominique Morisseau** (Broadway’s *Ain’t Too Proud*; *The Detroit Project*; “Shameless”), Tony Award nominated choreographer **Camille A. Brown** (A.C.T.’s *Toni Stone*; Broadway’s *for colored girls...*, *Once on This Island*, “Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert!” on NBC), and acclaimed director **Kamilah Forbes** (Apollo Theater’s Executive Producer, Ta-Nehisi Coates’ *Between the World and Me* on HBO; *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark*) as director.

Hippest Trip is produced by Tony Award nominee **Matthew Weaver** (*Rock of Ages*), **Jeffrey Tick** (former owner of Broadway’s Helen Hayes Theater), and **Richard Gay** (5Pack Entertainment founder, Superfly COO, and former executive at Viacom’s Music Networks & BET Networks). Serving as executive producers are four-time Grammy Award-winning & Academy Award-winning artist and author of *Soul Train: The Music, Dance and Style of a Generation* **Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson**; Don Cornelius’s son **Tony Cornelius**; Emmy Award nominated *CSI* creator **Anthony E. Zuiker**; Live Nation Urban president **Shawn Gee**, and Broadway veteran **Devin Keudell** (*Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*), along with co-producers **Nick Stern** and **J. Todd Harris**. **Performances of *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical* will take place at A.C.T.’s Toni Rembe Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, September 6, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.**

NOTE TO JOURNALISTS: The full title of the production—*Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*—should always be used in the first reference.

Returning for the holiday season for the last time in its current version, A.C.T. will present its celebrated production of the Charles Dickens classic, ***A CHRISTMAS CAROL (December 6–24, 2023)***. Featuring a lively cast of dozens, delightful music, gorgeous costumes, and those deliciously spooky ghosts, the Bay Area's favorite holiday tradition returns home. This version of *A Christmas Carol*—adapted by Paul Walsh and Carey Perloff—stays true to the heart of Dickens's timeless story of redemption and brings a playful sensibility to his rich language. *A Christmas Carol* is a decades-long cornerstone of the A.C.T. repertory and has become a holiday tradition for families all around the San Francisco Bay Area. This will be the final chance to see this version of *A Christmas Carol*, one that has enchanted audience members for almost two decades. In 2024, A.C.T. will present a brand-new production of this classic. **Performances of *A Christmas Carol* will take place at A.C.T.'s Toni Rembe Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, December 13, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.**

“It has been an honor to carry the tradition of A.C.T.'s *A Christmas Carol* over the past few years,” said Director **Peter J. Kuo**. “This production holds great memories of the artists who have been involved—from those who have been with the show from its beginning to those who have moved on from our world, as well as the numerous young and emerging actors who have blossomed in their craft and career. I look forward to sharing this version of Scrooge’s beloved story with Bay Area audiences once more before it takes its final bow.”

In early 2024, A.C.T. presents the world premiere of Kate Attwell’s ***BIG DATA (February 15–March 10, 2024)***. What are you really agreeing to when you accept Terms & Conditions? Sam loves Timmy, and Lucy loves Max, but the pressures of modern life leave them anxious, lonely, and susceptible to the siren song of tech. Do our devices—tantalizingly incarnate in this funny, sexy, uncanny world premiere—really know us best? Are our digital footprints predictive of our future choices, or are they choosing for us? When Sam and Lucy’s parents make a shocking announcement, the family is forced to confront what’s distracted them from each other—and the legacy they’ll leave behind. A.C.T.'s Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and playwright Kate Attwell reunite to realize this revolutionary piece, inspired by Attwell’s experience touring Mozilla’s “Glass Room” pop-up interactive exhibit in San Francisco. Come explore questions of attention, connection, nourishment, and the dizzying possibilities of AI. **Performances of *Big Data* will take place at A.C.T.'s Toni Rembe Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, February 21, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.**

“I could not be more delighted to be working with Pam again on a world premiere at A.C.T.,” said playwright **Kate Atwell**. “What an incredible privilege it is to be working with such a brilliant, rigorous, and yet playful

director, who puts such trust in both her performers and the text while always bringing volumes of her own genius creativity to the stage. We have been developing this show since the cusp of the pandemic, and the resonance of the implications of surveillance capitalism on our ordinary, everyday lives only feels ever more present. This play hopes to playfully open a window both on the eroding presence it can have when we welcome it into our lives, and our relationships, both through our devices but also the structures of stress it supports. A.C.T. has given such incredible support to the journey of this play, right from conception through multiple workshops and readings, always supported by an unbelievable creative team lead by Joy Meads and bringing in a host of brilliant actors along the way. It is truly a collaborative work forged in and around S.F.”

Next, 2022 Pulitzer Prize finalist **Kristina Wong** will bring her award-winning solo show, ***KRISTINA WONG, SWEATSHOP OVERLORD***, to A.C.T. (**March 30–May 5, 2024**). On Day 3 of the COVID-19 pandemic, Kristina Wong began sewing masks out of old bedsheets and bra straps on her Hello Kitty sewing machine. Before long, she was leading the Auntie Sewing Squad, a work-from-home sweatshop of hundreds of volunteers—including children and her own mother—to fix the U.S. public health care system while in quarantine. It was a feminist care utopia forming in the midst of crisis. Or was it a mutual aid doomsday cult? The answer to that question is something you’ll have to decide for yourself as Kristina takes you through this capital-H-Hilarious journey. Directed by **Chay Yew** (*Stuck Elevator* at A.C.T.), *Sweatshop Overlord* was a *New York Times* “Critic’s Pick” and received a Lucille Lortel, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance. **Performances of *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord* will take place at A.C.T.’s Strand Theater. Press nights will be held on Thursday, April 4 and Friday, April 5, 2024 at 7:30 p.m.**

“One of the biggest compliments I get is when people see my work and tell me ‘you rep for the Bay,’” said **Wong**. “San Francisco has cradled three generations of my family, it's the city where we forged our American Dreams. This is a homecoming in so many ways. San Francisco is where my mother rounded up her base of friends to sew masks remotely for the Auntie Sewing Squad. It's a large hub of where our Aunties who were strangers to each other in the early pandemic realized our mutual aid efforts and later became good friends. I can't wait to be sharing this story with the Aunties who lived it, with the people who benefited from it, with all of us who survived this moment of history. I can't wait to share this community of Aunties I accidentally brought together who represent a greater hope that is possible. I came of age in San Francisco. Living a characteristically Chinese American double life—aspiring to be a super high achieving strait laced good girl while so many other multiverse temptations sputtered around me. One of those temptations, which I would eventually succumb to, was a life of making performance as my living. As a high school theater kid, A.C.T. was that gold standard of theater, and to play this stage now, sharing this story, feels nothing short of a miracle.”

A.C.T. will close out their 2023/24 season with the National Theatre and Neal Street Productions' critically acclaimed, five-time Tony Award® winning production of **THE LEHMAN TRILOGY (May 25–June 23, 2024)**. Written by **Stefano Massini**, adapted by Tony Award-winner **Ben Power**, and directed by multi-award-winning director, **Sam Mendes** with set design by Tony Award-winner Es Devlin, *The Lehman Trilogy* is an extraordinary feat of storytelling told in three parts on a single evening.

On a cold September morning in 1844, a young man from Bavaria stands on a New York dockside dreaming of a new life in the new world. He is joined by his two brothers, and an American epic begins. 163 years later, the firm they establish – Lehman Brothers – spectacularly collapses into bankruptcy, triggering the largest financial crisis in history. Weaving together nearly two centuries of family history, *The Lehman Trilogy* charts the humble beginnings, outrageous successes, and devastating failure of the financial institution that would ultimately bring the global economy to its knees.

The Lehman Trilogy is a modern theatrical classic. First commissioned by Neal Street Productions and developed and co-produced with the National Theatre, it had its world premiere in London in 2018. It was the most awarded play on Broadway in 2022, winning five Tony Awards® including 'Best Play'. *The Lehman Trilogy* has been hailed as "a genuinely epic production" (*The New York Times*) and a "remarkable exercise in storytelling" (*The Washington Post*).

Performances of *The Lehman Trilogy* will take place at A.C.T.'s Toni Rembe Theater. Press night for *The Lehman Trilogy* will be held on Wednesday, May 29, 2024 at 7 p.m. *A.C.T.'s presentation of The Lehman Trilogy is dedicated to the memory of Chair Emerita Nancy Livingston Levin.*

Season ticket subscriptions range in price from **\$90–\$499** and are available now by visiting act-sf.org or calling the A.C.T. Ticketing Office at 415-749-2228. Single tickets will go on sale to the general public at a later date. Full-season subscriptions offer incredible savings, unparalleled access, exclusive benefits, and personalized customer service. Subscribers save as much as 33% off single-ticket prices. Students and educators are eligible to save 50% on subscriptions, and senior discounts are available for certain series. To make subscriptions more affordable, A.C.T. also offers all subscribers an extended payment plan that allows payment in three easy installments. A.C.T.'s subscriber benefits include free ticket exchanges up to certain time on your scheduled performance, guaranteed best seating, ticket protection, early access to tickets for special events outside of the regular season, subscriber-only events, discounts on convenient prepaid parking one block away from the theater, and discounts for neighborhood restaurants.

A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events** for each mainstage production during the 2023/24 season that give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. InterACT events include **Drinks & Drama Friday**, a preshow evening featuring local DJs, drinks specials and more; **Audience Exchanges**, featuring lively Q&As with the actors and artists who create the work onstage; **Pride Night**, a revamped pre- and post-show party celebrating LGBTQ+ pride within the theater community; **Tasting Night**, a preshow gathering featuring local vendors; and **PlayTime**, a preshow interactive theater workshop with the artists who make each production happen. Additional InterACT events will be added throughout the season.

A.C.T. gratefully acknowledges its Season Presenters **Barbara Bass Bakar; Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Kathleen Donohue and David Sze; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; Michael P. N. A. Hormel, in loving memory of James C. Hormel; Kenneth and Gisele Miller; Barbara Ravizza and John S. Osterweis; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Mary and Steven Swig;** and Company Sponsors **Anonymous; Ray and Dagmar Dolby Fund; Linda Jo Fitz; Frannie Fleishhacker; Kevin and Celeste Ford; Jo S. Hurley; Mary Hynes and Marc Tessier-Lavigne; Fred M. Levin, in honor of Nancy Livingston Levin, The Shenson Foundation; The Marymor Family Fund; Deedee McMurtry; Donald J. and Toni Ratner Miller; David and Carla Riemer; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck.** Additional support provided by **San Francisco Grants for the Arts** and **The Shubert Foundation.**

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