

For immediate release

**“THE SECRET GARDEN” ANNOUNCED
AS PART OF CENTER THEATRE GROUP’S
2022-2023 SEASON AT THE AHMANSON THEATRE**

**This reimaged, beloved work is set to play
at the Ahmanson in February and March 2023.**

“The Secret Garden” blossoms again – reimaged for a new generation by the original creators, Tony® Award and Pulitzer Prize winner Marsha Norman and Grammy Award®-winning composer Lucy Simon, which will play at Center Theatre Group / Ahmanson Theatre February 19 through March 26, 2023. Opening is set for February 26, 2023.

This magical production follows the young, orphaned Mary Lennox as she's sent from her home in India to live with her reclusive uncle on his haunted English country estate. Guided by an exceptionally beautiful score, audiences will be swept away with Mary's unapologetic curiosity as she is joined with the help of unlikely companions sending her on a thrilling quest to untangle the pieces of her family's past and, most importantly – discover herself.

“‘The Secret Garden’ is a show that is overdue for a revival. With its dreamy, iconic score and beautiful book, the show is fondly remembered by those who saw the Tony Award-winning production in 1991,” said Center Theatre Group Producing Director Douglas C. Baker. “Center Theatre Group is proud to premier Warren Carlyle’s innovative and heartwarming production. Southern California audiences will experience theatre magic that will unite theatre lovers of all ages in the power of storytelling.”

This revival production based on the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett of the same name will include book and lyrics by Marsha Norman, music by Lucy Simon, direction and choreography by Warren Carlyle and music direction by Rob Berman.

Director and Choreographer **Warren Carlyle** shared, “We couldn’t be more excited to share this new vision of *The Secret Garden* with you. My hope is that audiences will join young Mary Lennox in her extraordinary journey to find her new family. Accompanied by one of the most hauntingly beautiful Broadway scores I have ever heard, ‘The Secret Garden’ promises to be an unforgettable experience for audiences of all ages.”

Tony Award winner **Marsha Norman** (Book and Lyrics) said, “I am thrilled to have Warren Carlyle directing this new production of ‘The Secret Garden.’ He’s the real wizard of dance and has translated all the magic in the original novel into moments of pure joy on the stage. Audiences will cheer for Mary as she recovers from her own grief, finds her new

family, and helps them come back to life in a garden they’ve been forbidden to enter. People of all ages will feel this healing power as all the characters here find their faith in family and gardening are restored. I’m so excited to see this new production of ‘The Secret Garden’ at the Ahmanson Theatre, and I hope to see you there.”

Author **Lucy Simon** (Music) added, “It was a thrill to bring ‘The Secret Garden’ to the Broadway stage, and we are even more excited for this new production that Los Angeles will see first. Experience the mystery, the tale of a reawakened family, and hear some of Broadway’s most talented singers and musicians bring the score to life.”

Nominated for seven Tony Awards and winner of Best Book of a Musical as well as two Drama Desk Awards, this enchanting musical is based on Frances Hodgson Burnett's turn-of-the-century tale about understanding and compassion. Time hailed the original production as “elegant, entrancing... The best American musical of the Broadway season,” while USA Today called it “a splendid, intelligent musical... It's all you can hope for in children's theatre. But the best surprise is that this show is the most adult new musical of the season.”

“The Secret Garden” had its world premiere in 1989 as a Virginia Stage Company production at the Wells Theatre in Norfolk, Virginia. It then premiered on Broadway in 1991 winning three Tony Awards including a win for Daisy Eagan, who is the youngest female recipient of a Tony Award to date for Best Featured Actress in a Musical. “The Secret Garden” went on to be produced all over the world including Australia and in the UK by The Royal Shakespeare Company breaking box office records before a West End run. The production is a favorite among many local and regional theatres.

Tickets to the Ahmanson productions are now on sale by subscription only. Additional 2022 – 2023 offerings at the Ahmanson will be announced at a later time. Subscriptions are available through CenterTheatreGroup.org, Audience Services at (213) 972-4444 or in person at the Center Theatre Group Box Offices (at the Ahmanson Theatre) at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading nonprofit theatre company, which, under the leadership of Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker, and in collaboration with the five Associate Artistic Directors, Luis Alfaro, Lindsay Allbaugh, Tyrone Davis, Neel Keller, Kelley Kirkpatrick, programs seasons at the 736-seat Mark Taper Forum and 1,600 to 2,100-seat Ahmanson Theatre at The Music Center in Downtown Los Angeles, and the 317-seat Kirk Douglas Theatre in Culver City. In addition to presenting and producing the broadest range of theatrical entertainment in the country, Center Theatre Group is one of the nation’s leading producers of ambitious new works through commissions and world premiere productions and a leader in interactive community engagement and education programs that reach across generations, demographics, and circumstance to serve Los Angeles.

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August 11, 2022

BIOS:

Marsha Norman (*Book and Lyrics*) is the winner of the 1983 Pulitzer Prize, Blackburn Prize, Hull-Warriner, and Drama Desk Awards for her play “Night Mother.” In 1992 she won a Tony Award and a Drama Desk Award for her book for the Broadway musical, “The Secret Garden.” She also wrote the book for the Broadway musical, “The Color Purple,” for which she also received a Tony nomination. “The Color Purple” won the 2016 Tony Award for “Best Revival” and is currently enjoying a hugely successful Broadway run. She also wrote the book for the recent Broadway production of “The Bridges of Madison County.” She won a Peabody Award for her writing on the HBO television series, “In Treatment,” starring Gabriel Byrne and Dianne Wiest. Her other plays include “Getting Out,” “Traveler in the Dark,” “Sarah and Abraham,” “Trudy Blue and Last Dance.” Her published work includes “Four Plays,” “Vol. 1: Collected Plays of Marsha Norman,” and a novel, “The Fortune Teller.” She has numerous film and TV credits, Grammy, and Emmy® nominations and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Academy, and Institute of Arts and Letters and the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Ms. Norman is Co-Chair, with Christopher Durang, of the Playwriting Department of The Juilliard School. She writes and lectures frequently on the theatre and has 18 honorary degrees from American colleges and Universities. She is a former Vice-President of the Dramatists Guild of America. Most recently, she received the William Inge Distinguished Lifetime Achievement in Theatre Award. Her extensive television and film, Off-Broadway and regional theatre credits can be found at marshanorman.com.

Lucy Simon (*Music*) is a Grammy Award-winning, critically acclaimed singer/songwriter and composer for the American musical theatre. Born into a musical family, Ms. Simon began her professional career at age 16 with her sister Carly as part of “The Simon Sisters.” This was followed by a career as a songwriter and recording artist. While she was raising her children, she co-wrote and produced the children’s albums, “In Harmony” and “In Harmony 2,” both of which won Grammy Awards. She found her true calling writing for the musical theater. Ms. Simon made her Broadway debut in 1991 as the composer of “The Secret Garden” for which she received Tony and Drama Desk nominations, The Drama-Logue Award, and a Grammy nomination for the recording of the score. “The Secret Garden” was produced in Australia in 1995 and for the Millennium, in the UK by The Royal Shakespeare Company. It broke box office records in its run at Stratford before transferring to the West End. Ms. Simon composed the music for Broadway’s “Dr. Zhivago” and wrote and produced the songs and soundtrack for the multi-award-winning HBO movie, “The Positively True Adventures of the Alleged Texas Cheerleader Murdering Mom.” Ms. Simon returns to home ground as she develops her next musical based on an iconic and beloved American story.

Warren Carlyle (*Director, Choreographer*) is a Tony Award winning Director/Choreographer. Most recently choreographed the Tony Award winning revival of “Hello, Dolly!” starring Bette Midler at The Shubert Theater. Directed and choreographed the Tony nominated Broadway musical “After Midnight” at the Brooks Atkinson Theater, “Chaplin” at the Barrymore Theater, “Hugh Jackman: Back On Broadway” at the Broadhurst Theater, the critically acclaimed, Tony nominated revival of “Finian’s Rainbow” at the St James Theater and “A Tale of Two Cities” at the Al Hirschfeld Theater; Choreographed “She Loves

Me” (Studio 54), “On The 20th Century” (American Airlines Theater), “The Mystery Of Edwin Drood,” (Studio 54), “A Christmas Story” (Lunt Fontanne) and the Broadway revival of Stephen Sondheim's “Follies” at the Marriot Marquis Theater. He directed and choreographed the 2015 “New York Spring Spectacular” starring the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall, creating the first new production in 30 years. In 2018, he premiered a new ballet for New York City Ballet called “Something To Dance About.” Warren has been nominated for two Tony Awards, seven Drama Desk Awards, for Outstanding Direction and Outstanding Choreography, and an Emmy Award for Choreography. He is a winner of the Tony Award, two Outer Critics Circle Awards, the Drama Desk Award, and the prestigious Astaire Award for choreography.

Rob Berman (*Music Director*) just finished fifteen years as music director of *Encores!* at New York City Center, where he conducted over 35 shows culminating with the current Broadway production of “Into the Woods.” Other Broadway music supervision and conducting includes “Bright Star,” “Dames at Sea,” “Finian’s Rainbow,” “White Christmas,” “The Pajama Game,” “The Apple Tree,” “Wonderful Town,” and “Promises, Promises.” Rob won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Music Direction for The Kennedy Center Honors on CBS.