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**“OUR DEAR DEAD DRUG LORD” BY ALEXIS SCHEER
AND DIRECTED BY CENTER THEATRE GROUP
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR LINDSAY ALLBAUGH
COMES TO THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE AUGUST 20 TO SEPTEMBER 17**

**Cast is Ashley Brooke, Aliyah Camacho, Samantha Wynette Miller,
Coral Peña, Lilian Rebelo, and Juan Francisco Villa**

**PRODUCED IN ASSOCIATION WITH IAMA THEATRE COMPANY
Tickets and information available at CenterTheatreGroup.org**

LOS ANGELES, CA (July 20, 2023)—Named a New York Times Critics Pick, “Our Dear Dead Drug Lord” by playwright Alexis Scheer, directed by Center Theatre Group Associate Artistic Director Lindsay Allbaugh, and produced in association with IAMA Theatre Company, comes to the Kirk Douglas Theatre from August 20 to September 17, 2023 with the press opening on August 27.

Hailed by Ben Brantley of The New York Times as “highly entertaining — equally funny and scary — the play starts off as a hoot and winds up a primal scream. They’re throwing quite a séance.” For its 2019 Off-Broadway WP Theater/Second Stage production, it was cited with the John Gassner Award, Kilroy’s List, LTC Carnival of New Latinx Work, and was a Relentless Award semifinalist.

The cast is Ashley Brooke as Zoom, Samantha Wynette Miller as Squeeze, Coral Peña as Kit, and Lilian Rebelo as Pipe, with additional roles played by Aliyah Camacho and Juan Francisco Villa.

The creative team features Jordan Bass (Casting Director); Veronica Sofia Burt (Movement/Intimacy Coordinator); Marcedés Clanton (Production Stage Manager); François-Pierre Couture (Set Designer); Elena Flores (Costume Designer); Azra King-Abadi (Lighting Designer); Margaux Susi (Associate Director); Veronika Vorel (Sound Designer).

In this fierce and feverish comedy, a gang of teenage girls gather in an abandoned treehouse to summon the ghost of Pablo Escobar. Are they messing with the actual spirit of the infamous cartel kingpin? Or are they really just messing with each other?

Intimate in nature yet universal in its ability to explore the need to connect, the play is an unflinching and powerful reminder of what it means to be human. As it races to its startling conclusion, audiences will be left catching their breath. A rollercoaster ride through the danger and damage of girlhood — the teenage wasteland has never been so much twisted fun. This group ends up being a pivotal way for these young women to cope with the grief and lack of control in their lives.

“As our country continues to demonstrate its disdain and desire for control over my body, this play feels more important now than ever,” said playwright Alexis Scheer. “I’m thrilled to bring it to

Center Theatre Group and radically center the hearts, guts, and brains of teen girls who are in hilarious and horrifying pursuit of power and catharsis.”

“For my directorial debut at Center Theatre Group, I knew that I wanted to focus on a story that centered on young women, was written by a woman, and brought a diversity of voices to the stage. When I read this play, I was on pins and needles,” explained Center Theatre Group Associate Artistic Director Lindsay Allbaugh.

“This was a story that spoke to me on so many levels; the theatricality, the danger, the stark truth-telling that Alexis captures in these young girls. There’s something inherently magical about the setting . . . that treehouse . . . and all the feelings of nostalgia and youthful possibilities it implies, combined with the way that they speak to each other. It takes me right back to my high school days with my best friend and all of the deep feelings, angst, rage and desire we were feeling. This play showcases a deep exploration of womanhood combined with complexities of power, control, grief, and coming of age.”

“We are so thrilled to once again get the chance to work with Center Theatre Group and Lindsay Allbaugh on a premiere play that pushes the boundaries of what storytelling can be,” said IAMA Theatre Company Artistic Director Stefanie Black. “We need more plays that center young women. Our future, our bodies, our stories; nothing is more important right now. Alexis has created a dangerous and exciting new play that will be a ‘must see’ for young L.A. theatregoers.”

“Our Dear Dead Drug Lord” is a play about many things, but, first and foremost, it is a play rooted in the struggles and experiences of adolescence. The protagonists of the play spend equal time talking about the ups and downs of life and their own shared traumas and fears. From unplanned pregnancies to domestic abuse to repressed sexuality, the four girls at the heart of our story hold back no punches.

But time is also dedicated to more trivial obsessions of the early 2000s teenage girl, such as hipsters, dial-up Internet, and the ubiquitous shopping mall store, Hot Topic. Set in the early 2000s, political and cultural moments also get their due; be it conversations surrounding 9/11, the London Bombings, or the impending 2008 presidential showdown between Barack Obama and John McCain. Scheer transports the audience vividly back to this time and showcases what it means to be an angst teen coming of age smack dab in the middle of it all.

Tickets for “Our Dear Dead Drug Lord” are currently on sale and start at \$30. They are available through CenterTheatreGroup.org, Audience Services at (213) 628-2772 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 or at the Kirk Douglas Theatre (open 2 hours prior to curtain) at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City 90232.

CRITICS RESPOND TO “OUR DEAR DEAD DRUG LORD”

Brantley in The New York Times continues, “The self-styled mediums in this equally sobering play come naturally by their affinity for the dark side. They’re all teenagers — or, to be specific, teenage girls, a thin-skinned, hormonally saturated species that tends to exist at the tips of its nerve ends, finding kindred souls among the likes of Buffy, Sabrina, and the vampire-dating Bella Swan . . . but, as befits a show about black magic, they are a fierce incantation, a shield and a vow that speak volumes about surviving the truly terrifying world that waits outside.”

Brittany Crowell in New York Theatre Guide, said, “***** *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* is not quiet, small, or apologetic. It is loud and messy and truthful, incredibly complicated and a thing of extreme beauty. It is everything in women that society tells them they need to repress. It’s as

funny as it is violent and dark, sending a shiver through the audience. I recognized myself and others in these girls and found great sympathy, humor, and catharsis in their journey.”

Christopher Ehlers said on Boston WBUR Radio, “What Scheer does get across convincingly is that these girls are smart. And even smart girls do bad things. In a sense, they have measured their lives in world tragedies. Instead of remembering which album they lost their virginity to they recall with tenderness what catastrophe was breaking on the news at the time. Coming of age in the era of school shootings and terrorism is not without a cost, and this millennial found that aspect of the play relatable. For all the sorrow and — spoiler alert: blood — that courses through the play, ‘Our Dear Dead Drug Lord’ is so frequently thrilling, even in its quietest moments, that I couldn’t help but feel that I might have been witnessing the birth of an important, adventurous new work.”

BIOGRAPHIES

Alexis Scheer’s (*Playwright*) breakout play is the critically acclaimed “Our Dear Dead Drug Lord.” Other plays include “Laughs in Spanish” (premiering 2023 at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts; Kennedy Center’s Harold & Mimi Steinberg Award, NNPN Showcase), and “Christina” (O’Neill Finalist, Roe Green Award). Her work has been developed at the Kennedy Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, McCarter Theatre Center, Boston Playwright’s Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse, San Diego REP, and more. Alexis is a proud New World School of the Arts alum and holds a B.F.A in Musical Theatre from The Boston Conservatory and M.F.A. in Playwriting from Boston University. She is currently under commission by Second Stage, Manhattan Theatre Club, and Miami New Drama. Television: “Pretty Little Liars: Original Sin.” alexisscheer.com

Lindsay Allbaugh (*Director*), Center Theatre Group Associate Artistic Director, has made CTG her home for the past 17 years. Allbaugh most recently directed the award-winning production of “Cry It Out” by Molly Smith Metzler (Best Production: Ovation Award, LADCC Award, Stage Raw Award) at the Echo Theatre Company as well as “Collective Rage: A Play in Five Betties” by Jen Silverman at the Boston Court Theatre. Lindsay was Co-Artistic Director of the Elephant Theatre Company from 2004 – 2014, where she directed and produced countless productions including “100 Saints You Should Know” by Kate Fodor, “Revelation” by Samuel Brett Williams, and “Never Tell” by James Christy. Selected CTG producing credits include — Mark Taper Forum: “Slave Play,” “Archduke,” “Bent,” “Waiting for Godot;” Kirk Douglas Theatre: Creative Producer behind Block Party, “Tambo & Bones” “Good Grief,” “Throw Me On the Burnpile and Light Me Up,” “Endgame,” “Women Laughing Alone With Salad,” “Chavez Ravine,” “different words for the same thing,” “The Nether.”

IAMA Theatre Company Designated by Playbill as “one of 20 regional houses every theatre lover must know,” IAMA is a Los Angeles-based ensemble of artists and non-profit theatre company, committed to invigorating live performance for a streaming generation. Through cutting-edge, cool and hyper-modern stories, IAMA is invested in the immediacy of production and strives to bring audiences out of their personal space and into a shared experience. IAMA was built on ambition and determination while ensuring a steadfast commitment to equity and inclusion on and off stage. Los Angeles is one of the most diverse metropolitan areas in the world and our work reflects the new voices and changing attitudes that continue to shape our city, state, country and world. The award-winning company has seen many plays developed and premiered at IAMA travel to Off-Broadway, Second Stage, and the Roundabout Underground, then go on to be performed regionally and internationally. IAMA members have been featured in numerous critically acclaimed TV shows and films as well as in a vast array of theatre and live performances all over the country, including Off-Broadway and Broadway. IAMA has been dedicated to developing new plays and musicals by emerging and established playwrights since 2007.

Center Theatre Group, one of the nation’s preeminent arts and cultural organizations, is Los Angeles’ leading not-for-profit theatre company, which under the leadership of Artistic Director Snehal Desai, Managing Director / CEO Meghan Pressman, and Producing Director Douglas C. Baker 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 country’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 circumstances to serve Los Angeles. Founded in 1967, Center Theatre Group was led by Founding Artistic Director Gordon Davidson until 2005 when Michael Ritchie was the artistic director until his retirement in 2021; Snehal Desai was appointed the organization’s next artistic director in 2023. Center Theatre Group has produced more than 700 productions across its three stages, including such iconic shows as “Zoot Suit;” “Angels in America;” “The Kentucky Cycle;” “Biloxi Blues;” “Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992;” “Children of a Lesser God;” “Curtains;” “The Drowsy Chaperone;” “9 to 5: The Musical;” and “Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo.” CenterTheatreGroup.org

Center Theatre Group offers a number of services to accommodate persons requiring mobility, vision, and hearing access. For more information, please visit CenterTheatreGroup.org/Access.

Bank of America is Center Theatre Group’s 2023 – 2024 Season Sponsor. Bank of America believes in the power of the arts to help economies thrive, to educate and enrich societies, and to create greater cultural understanding. For more than 20 years, the company has supported Center Theatre Group’s innovative Education and Community Partnerships programs as well as world-class productions. Bank of America is also an instrumental supporter in accelerating Center Theatre Group’s commitment to becoming an anti-racist, equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization.

American Express is the official credit card for Center Theatre Group.

CALENDAR LISTING FOR “OUR DEAR DEAD DRUG LORD”

Venue: Kirk Douglas Theatre, 9820 Washington Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232

Dates: August 20 to September 17, 2023; press opening August 27

Schedule: Tuesday through Friday evenings at 8:00PM; Saturdays at 2:00PM and 8:00PM
Sundays at 1:00PM and 6:30PM

Tickets: **Prices**—begin at \$30

Website—CenterTheatreGroup.org

Phone—Audience Services at (213) 628-2772

In person—Center Theatre Group Box Office (at the Ahmanson Theatre) at The Music Center, 135 N. Grand Avenue in Downtown L.A. 90012 or at the Kirk Douglas Theatre (open 2 hours prior to curtain) at 9820 Washington Blvd. in Culver City 90232.

Groups—CenterTheatreGroup.org/Tickets/Groups-and-Corporate-Offers

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July 21, 2023