

# ALLEY THEATRE

FOR RELEASE  
September 28, 2015

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## **Alley Theatre Announces First Alley Up Close Event** *One Night Only with legendary American actor Hal Holbrook on October 19*

HOUSTON – Artistic Director Gregory Boyd is pleased to announce legendary American actor Hal Holbrook as his first **Alley Up Close** guest on October 19 in the Hubbard Theatre. Alley Up Close will feature intimate conversations with Mr. Boyd and notable actors, directors and writers as they discuss their work and careers in the past, present, and future throughout the season. Mr. Holbrook has a strong history with the Alley Theatre including the 2005 world premiere of *Be My Baby*.

“Hal Holbrook is unique among American actors – having created landmark performances in theatre, film and television over a six decades long career,” commented Mr. Boyd. “I shall always treasure the performances by Hal and his late wife Dixie Carter in *Be My Baby*. I’m thrilled that our audiences can now get a chance to get to know him a bit more as an actor and an artist.”

Best known for his Tony Award winning portrayal of Mark Twain in *Mark Twain Tonight!*, Mr. Holbrook’s storied career includes five Emmy Awards and appearances in more than 40 films including *All the Presidents Men*, *Into the Wild* (Academy Award Nomination), and *Lincoln* directed by Stephen Spielberg.

Additional artists for Alley Up Close to be announced throughout the fall.

### **ABOUT HAL HOLBROOK**

Hal Holbrook was born Harold Rowe Holbrook, Jr. on February 17, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio to Aileen (Davenport), a vaudeville dancer, and Harold Rowe Holbrook, Sr. After serving in WWII, Holbrook attended Denison University, where his senior honors project focused on constructing a two-person show playing characters from Shakespeare to Mark Twain. He first played Mark Twain as a solo act in 1954, at Lock Haven State Teachers College in Pennsylvania and continued to develop the project in a Greenwich Village nightclub and on tour across America for the next five years. Ed Sullivan saw the act in the nightclub and invited him to appear on his variety show in 1956. Three years later, after honing it for countless audiences Holbrook opened *Mark Twain Tonight!* off Broadway and became an overnight success. He toured the country again, performed for President Eisenhower and at the Edinburgh Festival in Scotland. The State Department sent him on a tour of Europe where he became the first American dramatic attraction to go behind the Iron Curtain after World War Two. He served two years in the original Lincoln Center Repertory Company at its temporary Greenwich Village home, playing Marco in O’Neill’s *Marco Millions*, the German Major in Arthur Miller’s *Incident at Vichy*, the Bailiff in *Tartuffe* and replaced Jason Robards in *After the Fall*. He continued touring Twain and playing Broadway roles in *Glass Menagerie*, *Man of La Mancha*, *I Never Sang For My Father*, *Does A Tiger Wear A Necktie?* with young Al Pacino and brought Mark Twain to Broadway where it won a Tony Award and Emmy nomination and it was seen on CBS Television by 30 million people. He returned to New York with Twain in 1977 and 2005 and after over 2000 performances continues to perform the role throughout the country today.

As The Senator on the 1971 NBC series, Holbrook and the show won six Emmy's. The following year he and Martin Sheen made television history in *That Certain Summer*, the first television movie to treat a homosexual relationship sympathetically. Holbrook received two Emmy Awards for his impassioned performance of Commander Bucher in *Pueblo*. The role of Abraham Lincoln in the series based upon Carl Sandberg's acclaimed biography brought him another Emmy and then a nomination for the Stage Manager in *Our Town*.

He made his film debut at the age of 40 in *The Group* and is known for playing Deep Throat in *All The President's Men* (1976). His 40-odd films include *Wall Street*, *The Fog*, *That Evening Sun*, *Into The Wild* for which he received an Academy Award nomination, and Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*.

Holbrook was Burt Reynolds father-in-law on television's *Evening Shade*, and was Katey Sagal's father on *Sons of Anarchy*. He had the most fun playing opposite his late wife, actress and singer Dixie Carter, on her series *Designing Women*, as he did here at the Alley in *Be My Baby*.

#### **TICKET INFORMATION**

**Alley Up Close** with Hal Holbrook will take place on Monday, October 19 at 7:30 in the Hubbard Theatre. Tickets start at \$21 and are on sale now. Tickets are available online at [alleytheatre.org](http://alleytheatre.org), by phone at 713.220.5700 or in person at the Alley Theatre Box Office, 615 Texas Avenue. Discounted ticket for groups of 10 or more can be purchased by calling 713.315.3346.

#### **ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE**

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading not-for-profit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company lead by Artistic Director Gregory Boyd and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. Home to a Resident Company of actors, the Alley creates a wide-ranging repertoire and innovative productions of classics, neglected modern plays, and premieres. Alley All New, the initiative to commission and develop new work year round, features the Alley All New Festival each season presenting workshops and readings of new plays and musicals in process. A recipient of the Special Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre, the Alley has brought productions to Broadway, 40 American cities including New York's Lincoln Center and internationally to Berlin, Paris, and St. Petersburg throughout its 69 year history.

The Alley Theatre underwent a \$46.5 million building renovation in 2014-2015 season, the first major improvements since the building opened in 1968. With more than 500 performances in 2015-2016, the Alley will produce more performances than all other performing arts organizations in the Houston Theater District combined.

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