

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Rachel Applegate, Director of Marketing and Communications, rachela@alleytheatre.org, 281.772.1928
Larisa Gawlik, Public Relations and Communications Manager, larisag@alleytheatre.org,
512.560.9342

Alley Theatre Announces the Complete 2020-21 Season ***Modifications made from previous season announcement and two previously canceled productions from the 2019-20 season are included: Amerikin and Dead Man's Cell Phone***

HOUSTON, TX – The Tony Award®-winning Alley Theatre and Artistic Director **Rob Melrose** are proud to announce the 74th season. The 2020-21 season programming, the second season curated by Rob Melrose, will feature world premiere plays developed in the Alley All New Festival, the return of two previously canceled productions, and a lineup of work featuring a diverse group of playwrights, directors, and designers. The previously announced ***Clue*** will become the season opener and will be part of the subscription season, as opposed to the originally scheduled ExxonMobil Summer Chills play. ***Clue*** will now run from **September 18 - October 25, 2020** in the Hubbard Theatre.

In February 2020, the Alley announced four shows of the 2020-21 season: the world-premiere of Duncan Sheik and Kyle Jarrow's musical ***Noir***; the hilarious whodunit, ***Clue***; the world-premiere of ***Born With Teeth*** by Liz Duffy Adams; and Ken Ludwig's ***Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery***. All four of these shows will still be part of the 2020-21 season.

"I am pleased to announce the Alley's full 2020-21 season. After the cancellation of the latter half of the current season, due to safety precautions surrounding COVID-19, I'm happy to bring back two of those productions for this upcoming season," said Artistic Director Rob Melrose. "Sadly, we're forgoing producing a Summer Chills production out of an abundance of caution. But I hope Houstonians will be glad to finally get to see two productions we were so sad to lose this season. I'm also proud that the Alley is presenting five world premiere productions as well as a wide range of offerings featuring our Resident Acting Company. In spite of all obstacles, it is going to be a wonderful new season!"

"A new play festival is succeeding if the work presented goes on to have productions – both at the theatre itself and elsewhere. And I love that next season we will present three plays that we have developed in our Alley All New Festival and Reading Series," said the Alley's Director of New Work **Elizabeth Frankel**. "In Rob Melrose's second season, new work is thriving!"

Adding to the four previously announced productions, Alley Theatre brings back two previously canceled productions, welcomes a world premiere holiday play, and will have a co-production with Dallas Theater Center.

Amerikin by **Chisa Hutchinson**, originally slated for the 2019-20 season but canceled due to ongoing public health precautions, will now have its world premiere during the 2020-21 season. The play was developed in the 2019 Alley All New Festival and will be directed by **James Black**, who directed the reading in the Festival. *Amerikin* will now run **October 9 - November 8, 2020** in the Neuhaus Theatre.

The off-the-wall comedy ***Dead Man's Cell Phone*** by **Sarah Ruhl** returns after being canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Directed by Associate Producer & Casting Director **Brandon Weinbrenner**, *Dead Man's Cell Phone* plays **April 30 - May 23, 2021** in the Hubbard Theatre.

Closing out the Neuhaus season will be the absurdist classic masterpiece ***Waiting for Godot*** by **Samuel Beckett**. Directed by Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**, *Waiting for Godot* runs **May 21 - June 20, 2021** in the Neuhaus Theatre.

After being developed in the 2020 Alley All New Festival, ***High School Play: A Nostalgia Fest*** by Texan playwright **Vichet Chum** will be a co-world premiere with **Dallas Theater Center** directed by Houston native **Tiffany Nichole Greene**. *High School Play: A Nostalgia Fest* runs **June 11 – July 4, 2021** in the Hubbard Theatre following a run at Dallas Theater Center.

In addition to the Alley's annual holiday tradition of ***A Christmas Carol – A Ghost Story of Christmas***, the Theatre is producing the world-premiere of ***What-A-Christmas!***, an Alley Theatre commission by **Isaac Gómez**, as an additional holiday add-on. Directed by the Alley's Associate Producer & Casting Director **Brandon Weinbrenner**, *What-A-Christmas!* is a one-woman holiday comedy that runs **December 1 - December 27, 2020** the Neuhaus Theatre.

All titles, dates, and artists in the Alley's 2020-21 season are subject to change.

The Full 2020-21 Season

HUBBARD

A New Comedy

CLUE

Based on the screenplay by Jonathan Lynn

Written by Sandy Rustin

Additional Material by Hunter Foster and Eric Price

Based on the Paramount Pictures Motion Picture

Based on the Hasbro board game CLUE

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

September 18 - October 25, 2020 in the Hubbard Theatre

It's a dark and stormy night, and you've been invited to a dinner party. Murder and blackmail are on the menu when six guests assemble at Boddy Manor for a night they'll never forget... if they make it out alive. Was it Mrs. Peacock in the study with the knife? Or Colonel Mustard in the library with the wrench? Based on the cult movie and the classic board game, *Clue* is the ultimate *whodunit* that will leave you *dying* of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist.

World Premiere Musical

NOIR

A new musical

Music by Duncan Sheik

Book by Kyle Jarrow

Lyrics by Kyle Jarrow and Duncan Sheik

Directed by Darko Tresnjak

By Special Arrangement with Robert Cole, Mary Beth O'Connor, and Carl Moellenberg

January 21 - February 21, 2021 in the Hubbard Theatre

A heartbroken man never leaves his apartment, finding his only solace in the music on the radio. Then a couple moves in next door. Eavesdropping becomes his new entertainment - and his new obsession. Soon he finds himself drawn into a web of love, lies, deceit, and danger. Inspired by early radio plays and classic film noir, this new musical is written by Broadway artists Duncan Sheik (*Spring Awakening*) and Kyle Jarrow (*The SpongeBob Musical*) and directed by Darko Tresnjak (*A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*).

A Comedy-Mystery

Ken Ludwig's

BASKERVILLE: A SHERLOCK HOLMES MYSTERY

By Ken Ludwig

Directed by Eleanor Holdridge

March 12 - April 4, 2021 in the Hubbard Theatre

Get your deerstalker cap on—the play's afoot! Comedic genius Ken Ludwig (*The Three Musketeers*, *Murder on the Orient Express*) transforms Arthur Conan Doyle's classic *The Hound of the Baskervilles* into a murderously funny adventure. The male heirs of the Baskerville line are being dispatched one by one, but Sherlock Holmes is on the case! To find the killer, Holmes and Watson must brave the desolate moors before a family curse dooms its newest heir. Our intrepid investigators try to escape a dizzying web of deceit, silly accents, and disguises, as five actors portray more than forty characters. Join the fun and see how far from elementary the truth can be.

Off-the-Wall Comedy

DEAD MAN'S CELL PHONE

By Sarah Ruhl

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

April 30 - May 23, 2021 in the Hubbard Theatre

An incessantly ringing cell phone in a quiet café. A stranger at the next table who has had enough. And a dead man. So begins *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, a wildly imaginative comedy by Sarah Ruhl (*The Clean House*, *Euridyce*). An off-the-wall play about the odyssey of a woman forced to confront her own assumptions about morality, redemption, and the need to connect in a technologically obsessed world.

World Premiere Comedy

HIGH SCHOOL PLAY: A NOSTALGIA FEST

By Vichet Chum

Directed by Tiffany Nichole Greene

June 11 - July 4, 2021 in the Hubbard Theatre

It's senior year in Carrollton, Texas, and Riverside High School's competitive theatre troupe is climbing back to the top from last year's unprecedented loss. Dara is trying to rally his teammates, while new kid Paul disrupts Dara's complete understanding of himself and his small-town suburban life. When Coaches Dirkson and Blow make a bold choice for the one-act play competition and the community takes issue, friends and rivals duke it out and find themselves in this uniquely Texan and thoroughly universal coming of age comedy by Texan playwright Vichet Chum, directed by Houston native Tiffany Nichole Greene. Developed in the 2020 Alley All New Festival. Co-world premiere with Dallas Theater Center.

NEUHAUS

World Premiere

AMERIKIN

By Chisa Hutchinson

Directed by James Black

October 9 - November 8, 2020 in the Neuhaus Theatre

Developed as part of the 2019 Alley All New Festival. Jeff Browning, a new father desperate for community, casually follows his buddy's advice and tries to join a white supremacist group...but the results of his ancestry test prove surprising. *Amerikin* follows Jeff as serious consequences come knocking and the line between "us" and "them" gets incredibly blurry.

World Premiere Play

BORN WITH TEETH

By Liz Duffy Adams

Directed by Rob Melrose

April 2 - May 2, 2021 in the Neuhaus Theatre

An aging authoritarian ruler, a violent police state, a restless polarized people seething with paranoia: it's a dangerous time for poets. Two of them—the great Kit Marlowe and the up-and-comer Will Shakespeare—meet in the back room of a pub to collaborate on a history play cycle, navigate the perils of art under a totalitarian regime, and flirt like young men with everything to lose. One of them may well be the death of the other. Developed in the Alley All New Reading Series.

Classic Masterpiece

WAITING FOR GODOT

By Samuel Beckett

Directed by Rob Melrose

May 21 - June 20, 2021 in the Neuhaus Theatre

Considered one of the most significant plays of the 20th century, *Waiting for Godot* is Nobel Prize-winning playwright Samuel Beckett's masterpiece. In this wickedly funny, frequently moving existential play, two men, Didi and Gogo, meet near a tree to wait for the arrival of the mysterious Godot, who never seems to come. They discuss their philosophies, debate their lots in life, and question why they were put on earth. Then they encounter Lucky, Pozzo, and a messenger boy, who engage in enlightening conversations about the human condition and uproarious physical comedy as they wait...and wait...and wait for Godot.

HOLIDAY

A CHRISTMAS CAROL – A GHOST STORY OF CHRISTMAS

By Charles Dickens

Adapted and Originally Directed by Michael Wilson

Directed by James Black

November 20 - December 30, 2020 in the Hubbard Theatre

Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Alley premiere of Michael Wilson's adaptation. *A Christmas Carol - A Ghost Story of Christmas* is a thrilling, family-friendly re-telling of Charles Dickens' classic story, which follows Ebenezer Scrooge's journey with the three ghostly spirits who visit him on Christmas Eve. *A Christmas Carol* instills a powerful message about redemption and the spirit of the holiday season.

World Premiere One-Woman Comedy

WHAT-A-CHRISTMAS!

By Isaac Gómez

Directed by Brandon Weinbrenner

December 1 - December 27, 2020 in the Neuhaus Theatre

Meet Margot, a 30-something Tejana who works at a beloved what-a-sized Texas burger joint. The Christmas Eve overnight shift is her personal tradition—even if that means spending the holiday dealing with grumpy drive-thru customers and an equally grumpy robotic Santa. But when her dead best friend Jackie Marley drops by to warn her of impending late-night visits by spirits, Margot has no choice but to roll with the punches and confront the very Scrooge she’s become. It’s a Christmas Eve like none other in this brand-new holiday show filled with humor and heart set right here in H-town by Texan playwright Isaac Gómez.

TICKET AND SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: Current Alley subscribers may renew subscriptions now online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700). Five-play subscription packages include *Clue*, *Noir*, *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*, *Dead Man’s Cell Phone*, and *High School Play: A Nostalgia Fest*. Eight-Play packages include the above titles as well as *Amerikin*, *Born With Teeth*, and *Waiting for Godot*. New subscriptions will be available May 25, 2020 and can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700). Package prices range from \$125 - \$649. Subscribers may purchase priority tickets for *A Christmas Carol – A Ghost Story of Christmas* and *What-A-Christmas!* before they go on sale to the general public in June.

FLEX SUBSCRIPTION PASSES: The Flex Subscription is 6 or 10 vouchers to use for any Alley subscription show in the 2020–21 season and includes all subscriber benefits. Passes are valid September 2020 – July 2021 and good for any seat in the house. Prices range from \$450-\$650. For more information visit <https://www.alleytheatre.org/season>

SPONSOR: The Alley Theatre’s 2020-21 Season sponsor is United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre.

PRESS MATERIALS:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ksng1subk66131o/AACwEgByyFb4LX81bQLRcDqma?dl=0>

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE:

The Alley Theatre, one of America’s leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley produces up to 16 plays each year in its newly renovated Theatre, ranging from the best current work, to re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. The Alley is home to a resident company of actors. In addition, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The recent renovation of the Alley's Hubbard Theatre created a new 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the newly rebuilt 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre, the Alley offers nearly 500 performances each season. The Company reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance and education programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages

###