

# ALLEY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## MEDIA CONTACTS:

Rachel Applegate, Director of Marketing & Communications ([rachela@alleytheatre.org](mailto:rachela@alleytheatre.org))

C: 281.772.1928

Larisa Gawlik, Public Relations and Communications Manager ([larisag@alleytheatre.org](mailto:larisag@alleytheatre.org))

C: 512.560.9342

## **Alley Theatre Restructures Operations in Response to COVID-19**

### ***Reduces Season from Eight to Five Plays***

HOUSTON, TX – Due to the ongoing economic repercussions of the COVID-19 health crisis, the Alley Theatre has been forced to reorganize operations and is reducing its 2020-21 eight-play season to five plays plus *A Christmas Carol*. Based on the current social distancing requirements, it is only practical for the Alley to produce plays in the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre. The Theatre will not be producing plays in the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre next season. Additionally, The Alley will not be producing an Alley All New Festival, but as part of the Alley All New initiative, the Theatre aims to produce a free reading series.

“The Alley is committed to producing a season even in this difficult time. With proper safety protocols and social distancing, we believe that our patrons will be ready to experience live theatre once again,” stated Managing Director **Dean R. Gladden**.

The full season will be announced by Artistic Director Rob Melrose at a later date, after the final budget is approved by the Board of Directors. The season will feature the Alley’s Resident Acting Company and local Houston actors. The five-play season is slated to begin on October 2, 2020 and will continue through July 4, 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements has greatly reduced the Alley’s overall potential earned and contributed income. In order to protect the future of the organization, the Theatre’s annual operating budget of \$20 million must be reduced by 35% to \$13 million. The reduction in income requires the Alley to reduce its staff and cut operating expenses in order to balance its budget. Remaining staff will take pay reductions and all laid off staff members will be fully compensated and offered paid health benefits through June 30, 2020. Laid off staff members will receive severance pay that reflects their years of service.

The Alley's Education and Community Engagement Department will continue its services to the public schools, charter schools, private schools, Houston Public Library, and community organizations with custom online programming specifically designed for the COVID-19 era.

Once open, the Alley will be taking all the necessary protocols to ensure the safety of all its staff and patrons, following the guidelines laid out by government entities, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the county health department. The Alley will be coordinating with its sister arts venues in Houston's Theater District to ensure that every facility is using the same safety protocols. The Alley will be sharing these protocols to patrons as soon as the protocols are established.

The Alley Theatre has served the Houston community since 1947 and is committed to providing live theatre and education programs now and in the future. The Theatre will continue its mission to maintain creative excellence, to be loyal to the resident acting company ideal, to share the Alley's passion for theatre with Houston's diverse community, and to integrate drama in education and community.

### **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 and nearly 500 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a resident company of actors, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The Alley's Hubbard Theatre is a 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue, matched with the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. 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.

###