

ALLEY THEATRE

FOR RELEASE:

Bekah Brunstetter's THE CAKE Serves Up Layers of Comedy at the Alley Theatre

Brunstetter (NBC's "This is Us") mixes a reality TV baking show and complex moral questions for this comedy in the Neuhaus Theatre, June 1- July 1

HOUSTON, TX – The Alley Theatre and interim artistic director James Black announce the cast and crew of *The Cake* by **Bekah Brunstetter** and directed by **Jackson Gay**. *The Cake*, presented as a reading in the 2016 Alley All New Festival, is a timely production that follows a same-sex couple as they travel to North Carolina to plan their nuptials but encounter a local baker who refuses to bake a cake for their wedding. *The Cake* plays the Neuhaus Theatre June 1 – July 1, 2018. Tickets are available at alleytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office at 713.220.5700.

Inspired by Brunstetter's upbringing in North Carolina, the themes and circumstances in *The Cake* continue to appear in the news. In the play, Jen lives in New York but has always dreamed of getting married in her native North Carolina. With the wedding six months away, she heads down South to ask Della, her late mother's best friend who owns a bakery there, to do the honors of making her wedding cake. Della's cakes are the best—she's going to compete on the Great American Baking Show, no big deal. Della is overjoyed to make Jen's cake—until she realizes that there isn't just one bride, but two. She can't really bake a cake for such a wedding, can she? Moral quandaries, reality TV, and loads and loads of butter form this play about three women trying to reach out across a divide that just keeps growing.

The Cake cast includes **Julia Gibson** (PlayMakers Repertory's *The Cake*, *Angels in America*) as Della, **Candice D'Meza** (Rec Room's *Sender*, Catastrophic Theatre's *Buried Child*) as Macy, Elizabeth Stahlmann (Westport Country Playhouse's *Grounded*, The Acting Company's *As You Like It*) as Jen, and Michael Pemberton (Broadway's *The Farnsworth Invention*, *I'm Not Rappaport*) as Tim.

Brunstetter is currently a Supervising Producer on NBC's hit show "This Is Us" and has previously written for MTV ("Underemployed; I Just Want My Pants Back"), ABC Family's "Switched at Birth", and Starz's "American Gods."

The Alley welcomes Jackson Gay back to direct. She previously directed the Alley's production of *Lover, Beloved* and *Grounded*. *The Cake*'s creative team includes Scenic Designer Clint Ramos, Costume Designer Jessica Ford, Lighting Designer David Lander, Sound Designer John Gromada and Stage Manager Rebecca R.D. Hamlin.

In 2016, a reading of *The Cake* was offered during the Alley All New Festival. The play received its world premiere at Echo Theater Los Angeles, enjoyed several regional productions, and recently announced an Off-Broadway run at Manhattan Theatre Club.

Performances of *The Cake* are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8:00 p.m., Saturday at 2:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m., and Sunday at 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. *The Cake* is recommended for mature audiences.

SPONSORS: *The Cake* is sponsored by Associate Producers Jane and Larry Wagner and Supporting Sponsor The Rand Group. The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2017-18 season sponsor United

Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre; Four Seasons Hotel Houston, the official hotel of the Alley Theatre; and Lynn Wyatt.

TICKETS: Tickets to *The Cake* are now on sale and start at \$35. Discounted tickets are available for military and senior, and any student, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for designated performances. Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700).

ALLEY IN CONTEXT: The Alley Theatre will present a pre-show discussion with playwright Bekah Brunstetter on Sunday, June 3 at 1:30 p.m.

TALKBACKS: The Alley Theatre will present Artist TalkBacks following the Saturday, June 9 (2:30 p.m.) and Tuesday, June 12 (7:30 p.m.) performances of *The Cake*. These discussions will feature cast and artistic staff.

PRESS PHOTOS:

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ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading not-for-profit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Interim Artistic Director James Black 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 renovation of the Hubbard Theatre at the Alley was completed in October 2015 – and created a new 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the newly renovated 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.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Whitney Spencer, Public Relations & Communication Manager whitneys@alleytheatre.org
713.315.5454