

ALLEY THEATRE

EMBARGO UNTIL 3:30 p.m.: November 1, 2018

MEDIA CONTACT:

Whitney Spencer, Public Relations and Communications Manager (whitneys@alleytheatre.org)
713.315.5454

Rachel Applegate, Director of Marketing and Communications (rachela@alleytheatre.org)
713.315.3352

Alley Theatre Announces New Artistic Director

HOUSTON -The Alley Theatre and its Board of Directors today announced that **Rob Melrose** will become the new Artistic Director of the Tony Award®-winning theatre.

Rob Melrose is an award-winning director, writer, teacher, and translator with nearly two decades of creating productions ranging from experimental new plays to re-envisioned classics. Melrose places an emphasis on growing and strengthening the Alley Resident Company, increasing internal collaboration, continuing new play development, and producing work that is bold, innovative, and inclusive.

Melrose was formerly the Artistic Director and Co-founder of Cutting Ball Theater in San Francisco and has worked nationally as a freelance director. He has professionally directed at some of the nation's top theaters including The Public Theater, The Guthrie Theater, The Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and PlayMakers Rep.

"I've always thought of the Alley as the home to great artists, and I am thrilled to lead the Theatre into this new chapter," says Rob Melrose. "The Alley has an exceptional history with high artistic standards and an appetite for risk and innovation. I am looking forward to pushing that path forward by strengthening and broadening the Resident Company, encouraging artistic collaboration, growing a culture where artists and staff are at ease, and most importantly creating productions and cultivating an audience that are as diverse and vibrant as the city of Houston."

"On behalf of the entire board of trustees, it is my great pleasure to welcome Rob Melrose to the Alley Theatre as the new Artistic Director," says board president Butch Mach. "Rob's skilled talent, strong artistic vision, and commitment to growing and diversifying the Resident Company signals a new creative era for the Theatre. With a proven track record of establishing and enhancing efforts to further equity, diversity, and inclusion, Rob is a stellar choice to lead the Alley's artistic endeavors."

"Rob is an exceptional theatrical director who is innovative, creative, and has an uncanny ability to both surprise and delight audiences," says Managing Director Dean Gladden. "He has a collaborative working style and his commitment to the community make him the perfect choice for the Alley. He is dedicated to nurturing and expanding the Resident Company and I look forward to partnering with him to continue to enable the Alley to flourish as a flagship theatre company in America."

Rob Melrose's selection follows a six-month long search conducted by the nationally recognized consulting firm, Albert Hall & Associates with a Board Selection Committee led by Board Members and Co-Chairs, Ken Kades and Kathryn Ketelsen.

“On behalf of the selection committee and my committee co-chair Ken Kades, we are thrilled to select Rob Melrose as the Alley’s next Artistic Director,” says trustee and search committee co-chair Kathryn Ketelsen. “Rob’s deep connection to a sense of community, producing theatre by and for the community was key in his selection. Rob also has a fiercely keen aesthetic, one that’s been seen around the country in major regional theatres as well as Internationally. Additionally, his well-known and highly regarded collaborative leadership style makes him a perfect fit for the Alley. He is a passionate producer and champion of new works as well as classics and everyday favorites. And his desire and willingness to bring his vision to all of these genres will infuse the Alley with new, exciting creative energy.”

Melrose will relocate to Houston in early 2019 and will begin planning the 2019-20 season. James Black will continue as Interim Artistic Director through the 2018-19 season. He will direct and take on the role of Scrooge in the upcoming holiday production *A Christmas Carol*. The 2018-19 Alley season will continue next year with the World Premiere of Robert Askins’ *The Carpenter* and regional premiere of Eliza Clark’s *Quack*.

PRESS MATERIALS: [CLICK HERE](#)

ROB MELROSE

Rob Melrose is the Artistic Director and co-founder of the Cutting Ball Theater and works nationally as a freelance director. He has directed at The Public Theater (*Pericles, Prince of Tyre*), The Guthrie Theater (*Frankenstein, Happy Days, Freud’s Last Session, Pen, Julius Caesar* - with the Acting Company); The Oregon Shakespeare Festival (*Troilus and Cressida* – in association with the Public Theater); Magic Theatre (*An Accident, World Premiere*); The Old Globe (*Much Ado About Nothing*); PlayMakers Rep (*Happy Days*); Black Box Theatre (*The Creature, World Premiere, BATCC Award for direction*); as well as Actors’ Collective; The Gamm Theatre; and Crowded Fire, among others. His directing credits at Cutting Ball include *Timon of Athens, A Dreamplay, Ondine* (World Premiere), *Mount Misery* (World Premiere), *Strindberg Cycle, The Chamber Plays in Rep, Krispy Kritters in the Scarlett Night* (World Premiere), *Pelleas & Melisande*, the Bay Area Premiere of Will Eno’s *Lady Grey* (in ever lower light), *The Tempest, The Bald Soprano, Victims of Duty, Bone to Pick & Diadem* (World Premiere), *Endgame, Krapp’s Last Tape, The Taming of the Shrew, Macbeth, Hamletmachine, As You Like It, The Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World* among others. He has taught at Stanford University, UC Berkeley, USF, the University of Rhode Island, and Marin Academy. He has a BA in English and Theater from Princeton University and an MFA in directing from the Yale School of Drama.

He has translated *Woyzeck, Ubu Roi, Pelleas & Melisande, The Bald Soprano, The Chairs, No Exit, Communiqué n° 10, Where and When We Died, and The Blind*. His translations of *Woyzeck, Ubu Roi, and Pelleas & Melisande* have been published by EXIT Press. He has written a number of plays including: *Helen of Troy, The Flat Earth, Divorsosaurus, When Human Voices Wake Us, Asylum, and Serpentyne* and has written a rock musical adaptation of L. Frank Baum’s *Ozma of Oz* with the San Francisco electro-rock group Z.O.N.K. He is represented by Max Grossman at Abrams Artists Agency.

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America’s leading nonprofit 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 Alley's Hubbard Theatre 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.

###