

# ALLEY THEATRE

## Tony Award® -Winning Play **THE HUMANS** Sets the Table for Family Drama, March 1-24, 2019

*The Alley's production of **The Humans** by Stephan Karam is directed by Alley Artistic Associate Brandon Weinbrenner and includes returning Alley favorites*

HOUSTON –The Alley Theatre and Interim Artistic Director James Black, announce the cast and crew of the family drama **The Humans** by Stephen Karam and directed by Alley Artistic Associate Brandon Weinbrenner. *The New York Times* calls the play “a beautiful and moving play...a genuine and precious rarity.” *The Humans* runs March 1-24 in the Hubbard Theatre. Tickets are available at alleytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office at 713.220.5700.

Hopeful, heartbreaking, and at times comedic, *The Humans* takes place on Thanksgiving as three generations of the Blake family gather at the youngest daughter and her boyfriend's new apartment in Lower Manhattan's Chinatown. As darkness falls outside and around the pre-war duplex, tensions rise and secrets are divulged. The hopes and fears of each generation – and the American middle class – are revealed in this Tony Award®-winning Best Play that *The New York Times* hailed as “the best play of the year.”

The cast includes Alley Resident Company member **Elizabeth Bunch** (*Twelfth Night, Grounded*) as the eldest daughter in the Blake family, Aimee Blake. Most recently seen in the Alley's production of *The Cake*, **Elizabeth Stahlmann** (Westport Country Playhouse: *Grounded*, The Acting Company: *As You Like It*) is back at the Alley in the role of Brigid Blake, the younger sister to Aimee Blake. **Sharon Lockwood** (Berkeley Rep: *Imaginary Comforts, It Can't Happen Here*), who plays mother Deirdre Blake, appeared in the Alley's 2014 production of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. Former Alley Resident Company member (1986-2007) **Annalee Jefferies** (*A Streetcar Named Desire, Angles in America, The Foreigner, Tender Mercies* reading) returns to the Alley in the role of Momo Blake, grandmother to Aimee and Brigid.

Erik Blake, the patriarch of the family, is played by **Steve Key** (Broadway: *August: Osage County*, NY Shakespeare Festival: *Sweat*) and **Christopher Salazar** (The Public Theater: *Thieves*, Gorilla Rep: *Hamlet*) plays the role of Richard Saad, Brigid's boyfriend.

*The Humans* creative team includes Scenic Design by Kevin Rigdon, Costume Design by Tricia Barsamian, Lighting Design by Lap Chi Chu, Sound Design by Matt Starritt, New York Casting by Binder Casting, and Stage Manager Kristen Larson.

In addition to *The Humans* (Tony Award®, Obie Award for Playwriting, Drama Critics' Circle Award, and Pulitzer Prize finalist), Stephen Karam's plays include *Sons of the Prophet* (Drama Critics' Circle Award and Pulitzer Prize finalist) and *Speech & Debate*. His adaptation of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* premiered on Broadway as part of Roundabout's 2016 season; his film adaptation of *The Seagull* starring Annette Bening premiered in May 2018. Recent honors include two Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards, a Lucille Lortel Award, a Drama League Award, and a Hull-Warriner Award. Stephen is a graduate of Brown University and grew up in Scranton, PA.

Director Brandon Weinbrenner served as Assistant Director for more than twenty-five productions at the Alley. *The Humans* will be the second full Alley production he has directed, having previously directed the Alley's 2013 production of *Venus in Fur*. *The Humans* also marks his first time directing Resident Company Member Elizabeth Bunch. Around Houston, he has directed *Buyer & Cellar* and *Native Gardens* at Main Street Theater, *Fool for Love* at The Landing Theatre Co, and *Stage Kiss* at 4<sup>th</sup> Wall Theatre Company.

*The Humans* begins previews March 1, opens March 6 and runs through March 24 in the Hubbard Theatre. Performances of *The Humans* 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 Humans* is recommended for mature audiences, ages 18 and up.

**SPONSORS:** *The Humans* is supported by Supporting Sponsor Baker Botts and Honorary Producer Mike Loya. The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2018-19 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 Humans* are now on sale and start at \$26. Discounted tickets are available for military, seniors, 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 post-show discussion following the Saturday, March 9 (2:30 p.m.) performance with director Brandon Weinbrenner and members of the cast and creative team.

*The Humans* cast will be featured during a post-show discussion following the Tuesday, March 12 (7:30 p.m.) performance.

**DESIGNER TALK:** An hour before the Sunday, March 3 matinee preview performance (2:30 p.m.), a member of the artistic staff will lead a discussion with the production's creative team to give audiences a behind-the-scenes look at the design process. These pre-show talks will offer audiences an exclusive opportunity to ask questions about the designer's work and learn how they brought the script to life. Designer Talks will take place in the Texas Room.

**PRESS PHOTO:**

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#### **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. Rob Melrose will serve as the Alley's Artistic Director beginning with the 2019-20 Season. 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.

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