

The Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center Appoints New Artistic Director Bill Rauch

NEW YORK, Feb. 16, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- The Board of Directors for **The Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center** (The Perelman Center) today announced the appointment of **Bill Rauch** - an acknowledged leader in American theater - as the head of its artistic team, planning for The Perelman's opening season. Working with the organization's Board of directors, president and The Perelman team, Rauch joins The Perelman's leadership following his twelve-year tenure as Artistic Director of The Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). The Perelman Center will be New York City's newest state-of-the-art performing arts venue, and is the final component of the original World Trade Center "Master Plan."

"We are incredibly excited to have such an accomplished leader assume the Artistic Director position for The Perelman Center," said **Maggie Boepple**, President and Director of The Perelman Center. "We know that Bill will plan a spectacular first season, building on the remarkable progress that we have made over the past few years."

"We are excited to welcome Bill as the artistic leader for the Performing Arts Center," said **Ronald Perelman**. "His deep experience, creativity, and drive will bring together the diverse array of performances we hope to offer at this extraordinary center for the arts and culture."

Bill Rauch is credited with helping to elevate OSF's profile in the national conversation on theater, having led the festival in staging a record number of world premiere works – many of which were written and directed by women and artists of color, and several that later moved on to have success at renowned theaters across the United States. Rauch directed Robert Schenkkan's Tony Award-winning *All the Way* on Broadway, having commissioned the work as part of OSF's 37-play "American Revolutions: The United States History Cycle." Two other commissions have also transferred to Broadway: *Sweat*, by Lynn Nottage, which garnered the Pulitzer Prize; and Paula Vogel's *Indecent*, winner of two Tony Awards. Rauch also launched "Play on! 36 Playwrights Translate Shakespeare" a commissioning program to engage artists in the creation of modern translations of Shakespeare's plays.

"From my first meeting with Bill to discuss '*All The Way*,' I had a gut feeling that we could have a very open and respectful collaboration on the play. That instinct came to fruition. It was a joy to work with him," said renowned actor **Bryan Cranston** of his work with Rauch. "He is an insightful director with a great appreciation for an actor's process. Bill possesses a genuinely passionate devotion to the art of storytelling. More importantly, he is a man who embraces a society's varied cultures, languages, preferences, and differences, and sees it all for what it is: A necessary and positive contribution to the human experience. I can't wait to see the burst of creativity that will be born from this hallowed ground."

Prior to his tenure at OSF, Rauch co-founded Cornerstone Theater Company, where he directed more than 40 productions, most in collaboration with diverse rural and urban communities across the United States, and served as its artistic director from 1986 to 2006. He has directed a number of world premieres, including Naomi Wallace's *Night is a Room* at New York's Signature Theatre; Dan O'Brien's *The Body of an American* at Portland Center Stage (which, along with Robert Schenkkan's *All the Way*, was co-winner of the inaugural Edward M. Kennedy Prize for Drama Inspired by American History); Sarah Ruhl's *The Clean House* at Yale Repertory Theatre and later at Lincoln Center Theater. Work elsewhere includes productions at South

Coast Repertory, Guthrie Theater, American Repertory Theatre, Berkley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, Pasadena Playhouse, Great Lakes Theater and En Garde Arts.

"I'm humbled and honored by this tremendous opportunity to be part of fostering a place for transformative art to take place and cultivating a community gathering space at a site that has such powerful emotional resonance for New York City, our country and the world," said Rauch. "I am looking forward to working with the incredible leaders on The Perelman Center's Board of Directors and executive team to bring this cutting edge performing arts facility to downtown Manhattan, modeling hope by making art that connects us across all types of communities."

Renowned director, choreographer, and Perelman Center board member **Susan Stroman** notes, "Bill is a leader with a clear and focused artistic vision, which has been evident in the work that he's done throughout his career. He understands the significance of this position, and because of incredible skill at producing dynamic and diverse programming, we know that he is up to the challenge. We're just as excited as he is to have him join us at The Perelman."

About The Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center (The Perelman Center)

The Ronald O. Perelman Performing Arts Center will be a global hub for the creation and exchange of art, ideas, and culture that will present outstanding theater, dance, music, and film from the United States and around the world in a new, state-of-the-art venue. Conceived as part of Daniel Libeskind's master plan for the rebuilt 16-acre World Trade Center site, The Perelman Center will produce and premiere works by emerging and renowned artists in the U.S., and stage collaborations with artists, companies, and institutions from around the globe. The Perelman Center will also be home to the Tribeca Film Festival during its annual run in New York City. Through its innovative technology features, The Perelman Center will be the most connected theater in New York, and will serve as an important cultural center for the renewed Lower Manhattan community and beyond to enjoy, day and night. For additional information, please visit: ThePerelman.org

About Bill Rauch

Bill Rauch became OSF's fifth artistic director in 2007, after five seasons at the Festival as a guest director. In a total of 16 seasons there, he directed seven world premieres -- *Off the Rails*, *Roe*, *Fingersmith*, *The Great Society*, *All the Way*, *Equivocation* and *By the Waters of Babylon* -- and 17 other plays. *All the Way* moved to the Neil Simon Theatre in New York, where it won the Tony Award for Best Play and also earned Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Award nominations for directing.

Bill has served as an associate artist at Yale Repertory Theatre and South Coast Repertory and as a board member for Theatre Communications Group (TCG), and was Claire Trevor Professor of Drama at University of California, Irvine. He was recently awarded the Ivy Bethune Award from Actors' Equity Association to honor his commitment to diversity in casting and producing, and in 2015 served as Visiting Fellow at the Ford Foundation. In addition, he received the Zelda Fichandler Award in 2012, and won TCG's Visionary Leadership Award in 2010 and the Margo Jones Award in 2009. Other honors include a United States Artists Prudential Fellow; Los Angeles Weekly, Garland, Connecticut Critics Circle, Drama-Logue and Helen Hayes awards for direction; Emmy and Ovation nominations and an inaugural "Leadership for a Changing World" award.

Bill graduated from Harvard College.

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