

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS • MANAGING DIRECTOR LINDA DIGABRIELE

For Immediate Release

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Asolo Rep Proudly Presents *Kaleidoscope: Heartbeats* on Monday, May 22, 2017

(SARASOTA, May 8, 2017) – Asolo Rep's Education & Outreach department proudly presents ***Kaleidoscope: Heartbeats*** on Monday, May 22, 2017 at 6pm in the Mertz Theatre, on the set of Asolo Rep's world premiere of ***BEATSVILLE: The Beatnik Musical***. The performance is the culmination of this season's ***Kaleidoscope***, an award-winning annual program founded by Broadway veteran Ann Morrison in 1995, which serves individuals with disabilities from local community organizations and schools to discover creative and personal expression through theatre. Ms. Morrison also plays Mrs. Zwicker and Mrs. Greenberg in Asolo Rep's current production of ***BEATSVILLE***.

This year's ***Kaleidoscope*** participants come from four partner organizations and schools: Bayshore High School, Easter Seals Southwest Florida, The Haven and Oak Park School. Throughout the three months of each residency, participants explore storytelling through acting, movement, music and visual arts, led by Asolo Rep teaching artists. Ann Morrison continues her founding role leading the work for adult participants at The Haven and Easter Seals. Ria Cooper and Elizabeth Guilbert lead the work for students at Bayshore High School and Oak Park School.

The ***Kaleidoscope: Heartbeats*** public showcase presents a glimpse into the unique artistic process of each group. Some ensembles will demonstrate the exact classroom exercises they have been using to develop focus and cooperation in their workshop sessions. Others share characters and stories they have imagined and rehearsed, including original dialogue generated by the participants. Veteran ***Kaleidoscope*** artists who have participated in the program over multiple years perform their own short musical, taking inspiration from the Beatnik-era evoked by Asolo Rep's current production and scenic design by Tony®-winner David Gallo. The showcase performance is free and followed by a dessert reception for the participants.

"Outreach programs like ***Kaleidoscope*** represent our effort to share the creative outlet and expressive power of theatre-making with those in our community who might not otherwise have access, and to offer the best of what we have to share," said Kathryn Moroney, Asolo Rep Education & Outreach Director. "Our participants enjoy full backstage access when they come to Asolo Rep to perform their own words and characters on the beautiful Mertz stage. After their weeks of teamwork trying new things and creating together, we feel so proud to put these artists in the literal spotlight for friends, family, and community to celebrate their efforts."

Tickets are free but reservations are required. To reserve tickets, please call the box office at 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388 or visit www.asolorep.org.

Kaleidoscope is made possible, in part, with support from: Fredrick W. and Margaret D. Kurtz Fund of the Bank of America Client Foundation, Bernard and Mildred Doyle Charitable Trust, Eluned and Edward Russell Charitable Foundation, The Fine Arts Society of Sarasota, Tegna Foundation, and the State of Florida, Division of Cultural Affairs.

About the Founder

ANN MORRISON (Kaleidoscope Founder and Teaching Artist; Mrs. Greenberg/Mrs. Zwicker in **BEATSVILLE**) has starred on Broadway, Off Broadway, the West End in London, regional, cabaret, solo plays, and furniture stores. She won the 1981 Theatre World Award for her role of Mary Flynn in Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along*. She is featured in the documentary "Best Worst Thing That Ever Could Have Happened" about what happened to the original Broadway cast of *Merrily*. Ann is Co-Founder of Kaleidoscope, through which she serves Easter Seals and The Haven as Artistic Director of a musical theatre troupe for persons with developmental differences, and is Co-Founder/Artistic Director of the SaraSolo Festival, celebrating solo performances that illuminate the human condition especially that of those who are perceived as "other than."

About the Participating Organizations

The mission of **Bayshore High School** is to provide to all students an education that prepares them to be college and career ready by engaging them in rigorous academic work that promotes student achievement. The vision of Bayshore High School is to build relationships with all students to ensure academic success.

Through the support of the community and the generosity of its donors, **Community Haven** empowers independence and inclusion in all aspects of society for children, teenagers, and adults with disabilities by meeting their needs for therapy, education, socialization, housing, fitness, vocational training, job placement, and recreation.

Since 1946, **Easter Seals Southwest Florida** has been providing services to help abilities shine for individuals with disabilities and their families. Currently more than 500 individuals are being served from ages 0 to 86 and counting! Key services include development and early intervention in our Lily Preschool and Children's Therapy program, elementary after-school program and summer camp, VIP Academy High School and an Adult Day Program. Life and job skills are developed and our on-site employment services cultivate employment opportunities and transitional support for our students and adults.

The Haven exists as a resource for independence and a champion for inclusion, in all aspects of life, for people with disabilities. We envision a world where people with disabilities are included and valued members of society.

The mission of **Oak Park School** is to provide exceptional students with experiences leading to successful interactions with others, functional independence, and continued education or post-school employment suited to their individual needs.

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