

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****
January 13, 2020

**Asolo Rep Continues its Season with
George Brant's *INTO THE BREECHES!***

Directed by Cleveland Play House Artistic Director Laura Kepley

February 12 - March 21

(SARASOTA, January 13, 2020) — Asolo Rep continues its 2019-20 season with George Brant's ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** Helmed by Cleveland Play House Artistic Director **Laura Kepley**, this bright new comedy, set during World War II, puts the women on the front lines. ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** previews February 12 and 13, opens February 14 and runs in rotating repertory through March 21 in the Mertz Theatre, located in the FSU Center for the performing Arts.

It's 1942 in Sarasota, Florida and all of the men are off at war, including all of the leading players of one of the local theatres. But with an ambitious season of Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2* and *Henry V* on the horizon, how could the show possibly go on? Enter a group of wildly determined and passionate — albeit inexperienced — women who are determined to keep the theatre's doors open. This surprisingly modern and moving new play celebrates the singular way that art and community reveal our boldest selves even in the darkest times.

"INTO THE BREECHES!" is one of those rare comedies that infuses humor with a profound, provocative message," said Asolo Rep Producing Artistic Director **Michael Donald Edwards**. "We are in the midst of one of the greatest gender revolutions of all time, and ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** inventively explores the evolving roles of women and men through the lens of World War II. Helmed by Cleveland Play House Artistic Director Laura Kepley, a colleague I deeply admire, this fresh new comedy is also a hopeful love letter to the arts and celebration of the power of live theatre."

Laura Kepley has served as the Artistic Director of Cleveland Play House since 2013, where she has directed the world premieres of *Tiny Houses* by Chelsea Marcantel, *Fairfield* by Eric Coble and *The Good Peaches* by Quiara Hudes, which was a collaboration with The Cleveland Orchestra. She has also directed for The Alliance Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Chautauqua Theater Company, Contemporary American Theatre Festival, Syracuse Stage, Trinity Rep, and many others. She previously helmed *The Heidi Chronicles* at Asolo Rep in 2013.

"I have had the great good fortune to be with this play since its inception," said Laura Kepley. "It has been one of the most gratifying experiences of my career to watch how artists and audiences respond to it. What continues to surprise me is how incredibly moving the play is. I've known from the beginning that it is an extremely funny piece but I was not prepared for how deeply this comedy would touch audience's hearts."

The cast features Asolo Rep favorites **Matt DeCaro** (Ellsworth Snow) and **Peggy Roeder** (Winifred Snow). It also features **Grant Chapman** (Stuart Lasker), **Diana Coates** (Ida Green), **Madeline Maby** (Maggie Dalton), **Tina Stafford** (Celeste Fielding), who are new to Asolo Rep's stage this season. FSU Asolo Conservatory students **Jillian Cicalese** (June Bennet) and **Amber McNew** (Grace Richards) round out the company.

INTO THE BREECHES! had its world premiere at Trinity Rep in 2018. Since then it has played at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Northlight Theatre, Cleveland Play House and more. Playwright George Brant adapts the play to be set in the city in which it is playing to add local resonance. Brant's other plays include *Grounded*, *Marie and Rosetta*, *Elephant's Graveyard*, *The Mourners' Bench*, *Any Other Name*, *Salvage*, *Grizzly Mama*, *Three Voyages of the Lobotomobile*, and *Dark Room*. An Affiliate Writer at the Playwrights' Center, his scripts have been produced internationally by the Public Theater, the Atlantic Theater Company, Cleveland Play House, the Alley Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, the Studio Theatre, City Theatre, the Gate Theatre of London, Page 73, and the Traverse Theatre, among others.

CAST

(In Order of Appearance)

MADELEINE MABY*	Maggie Dalton
TINA STAFFORD*	Celeste Fielding
MATT DeCARO*	Ellsworth Snow
PEGGY ROEDER*	Winifred Snow
GRANT CHAPMAN*	Stuart Lasker
DIANA COATES*	Ida Green
JILLIAN CICALEASE	June Bennet
AMBER McNEW	Grace Richards

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

SELECTED CREATIVE TEAM MEMBERS

Director.....	Laura Kepley
Scenic Designer.....	Robert Mark Morgan
Costume Designer.....	Angela Balogh Calin
Lighting Designer.....	Michael Boll
Sound Designer.....	Jane Shaw
Fight Director.....	Mark Rose
Hair/Wig & Make-up Designer.....	Michelle Hart

SELECTED ARTISTIC BIOS

DIANA COATES* (Ida Green, ***INTO THE BREECHES!***; Countess Andreyni, ***MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS***) is ecstatic to be making her Asolo Rep debut. She was most recently seen in the Midwest premiere of Rachel Bond's *Sundown*, *Yellow Moon* and as the title character in First Folio of Chicago's *Henry V*. Her favorite credits include *The House That Will Not Stand* at the acclaimed Victory Gardens, *Blues for an Alabama Sky* with the African Continuum Theatre Company of DC, and Isabella in Michigan Shakespeare Festival's *Measure for Measure*. Television Credits include *Chicago Fire* starring opposite David Eigenberg and *Chicago Med* starring opposite S. Epatha Merkerson.

LAURA KEPLEY (Director) is the Artistic Director of Cleveland Play House where she has directed numerous plays including the world premieres of *Tiny Houses* by Chelsea Marcantel, *Fairfield* by Eric Coble and *The Good Peaches* by Quiara Hudes, which was a collaboration with The Cleveland Orchestra. Laura has also directed for The Alliance Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Chautauqua Theater Company, Contemporary American Theatre Festival, Syracuse Stage, Trinity Rep, and many others. Laura is thrilled to return to Asolo Rep where she directed *The Heidi Chronicles* in 2013. Laura is a longtime collaborator with ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** playwright George Brant, having directed over a dozen of his plays. A native of Ohio, Laura received her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University and her Master of Fine Arts from Brown University/Trinity Rep.

MADELEINE MABY* (Maggie Dalton, ***INTO THE BREECHES!***) is thrilled to be a part of the Asolo Rep season working on this beautiful play. Some of her favorite regional and NY credits include *A Christmas Story* (Cleveland Play House); *Boeing-Boeing*, *The 39 Steps*, *Spiders Web*, and *Witness for the Prosecution* (The Barnstormers Theatre); *Weekend at an English Country Estate* (Ateh Theater Group); *And to the Republic and The Tragedy of King Arthur* (Guerrilla Shakespeare Project); *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Atlantic Theater Company). Madeleine currently lives in London with her wonderful husband and narrates audiobooks when she's not on stage.

PEGGY ROEDER* (Winifred Snow, ***INTO THE BREECHES!***; Princess Dragomiroff, ***MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS***) has appeared at Asolo Rep in *A Doll's House, Part 2*; *The Crucible*; *The Grapes of Wrath*; *The Matchmaker*; *Vanya* and *Sonia* and *Masha* and *Spike*; *Good People*; *Ah, Wilderness!* and others. She has performed nationally at Steppenwolf, Atlantic Theater Company, Mark Taper Forum, Cleveland Play House, Chautauqua Theater Company, Goodman, Milwaukee Rep, Chicago Shakespeare, Muny, and Peninsula Players. Her work has garnered four Jeff Awards, three Artisan Awards, and two After Dark Awards. Film and TV credits include *Groundhog Day*, *Road to Perdition*, *An Acceptable Loss*, *Stranger than Fiction*, *Star Trek: DS9*, *Law & Order*, and *In Memoriam*.

TINA STAFFORD* (Celeste Fielding, ***INTO THE BREECHES!***; Helen Hubbard, ***MURDER ON THE ORIENT EXPRESS***) is in her first season at Asolo Rep and is excited to collaborate with this wonderful company. She spent two years on the road with the first national tour of the Broadway musical *Once*. Leading roles around the country at Florida Studio Theatre, Cape Playhouse, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Bucks County Playhouse, Paper Mill Playhouse, Goodspeed, Cleveland Play House, Cincinnati Playhouse, Westport Country Playhouse, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, Arena Stage, Geva Theatre Center, KC Rep, and the Utah, Texas, and Maine Shakespeare Festivals, among many others. Proud AEA member.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The Scoop (FREE)

Arrive one hour before curtain to hear the ideas and inspirations that contributed to the making of ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** (Opening Night, February 14, is excluded.)

Tuesday Talkbacks (FREE)

February 18, 25

Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Join us for an intimate post-show discussion with featured actors following every Tuesday performance of ***INTO THE BREECHES!***

Sunday Salon (FREE)

Sunday, February 16

Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Reflect on your experience through a lively and informative post-show discussion following select Sunday matinees in the Mertz and Cook Theatres. Featuring members of Asolo Rep's Artistic Department and special guests.

Inside Asolo Rep: *INTO THE BREECHES!* and *THE GREAT LEAP*

Wednesday, February 26

Cook Theatre

10:30am: Enjoy coffee and light bites by Muse at the Ringling, and visit the Designing Women Boutique Pop-Up Shop

Panel discussions are \$5; and free for all donors at the Cherubim Angels level and higher and Asolo Rep Guild Members.

Get rare insights into the artistic process, hear directly from the people responsible for producing ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** and ***THE GREAT LEAP*** and engage in stimulating discussion inspired by the plays' themes and issues.

Inside Asolo Rep is sponsored by Muse at the Ringling, Designing Women Boutique and The Observer.

OUT@AsoloRep: *INTO THE BREECHES!* [Sold Out]

Wednesday, March 4 at 6:30pm; show starts at 7:30pm

Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Contact Asolo Rep's Box Office for subscription and ticket information.

Now in its 10th season, OUT@AsoloRep is Sarasota's premier cultural event connecting local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities with fantastic theatre. Enjoy a pre-show reception and learn about participating LGBT organizations, and gain personal insight into ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** from the creative team and cast members.

OUT@AsoloRep is sponsored by Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering, CAN Community Health and Sabal Palm Bank.

Herald-Tribune Talkbacks

Through the Eyes of a Critic

Tuesday, March 10

Following the performance, stay for an insightful conversation with *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* Arts Editor and Theater Critic Jay Handelman.

***INTO THE BREECHES!* IllumiNation Event**

Saturday, March 14 at 1pm; performance at 2pm

Pre-show reception and a post-show community conversation held on the Mezzanine

Performance in the Mertz Theatre

Contact Asolo Rep's Box Office for series package information and single performance tickets.

A stimulating series of debate and conversation exploring the topical and social themes threaded throughout our season. IllumiNation events begin one hour prior to curtain with a reception on the mezzanine, continue with the performance, and conclude with a conversation.

The IllumiNation series is made possible, in part, with support from the Koski Family Foundation, Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering, and The Observer.

TICKETS

Tickets for ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** start at \$33.

Subscriptions for the season are also on sale.

To purchase tickets, call 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388, visit www.asolorep.org, or visit the Asolo Repertory Theatre Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre. Asolo Repertory Theatre is located at 5555 North Tamiami Trail in the Florida State University Center for the Performing Arts.

The Box Office is open Monday 10am – 5pm, Tuesday – Thursday 10am - 7:30pm, Friday – Saturday 10am – 8pm, and Sunday 10am – 2pm. The box office closes at 5pm when there are no evening performances and phone lines close one hour prior to the start of any performance. Season subscription packages are also available online and by visiting or calling the box office.

SPONSORS

Asolo Rep is able to present ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** because of the generosity of its sponsors. The corporate sponsors for ***INTO THE BREECHES!*** are Williams Parker, SRQ Media, Observer, Stella Artois, Tableside Restaurant Group, with additional support from the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

Asolo Rep 2019-20 Major Season Sponsors are Florida State University, the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, Charles & Margery Barancisk Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Community Foundation of Sarasota County, the Huisling Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Designing Women Boutique, The Exchange, and Sunset Cadillac of Bradenton. Asolo Rep's artistic programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues.

ABOUT ASOLO REP

Now in its 61st season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is recognized as one of the premier professional theatres in America and one of the largest in the Southeastern United States. One of the few select theatres in the nation that performs in true rotating repertory, Asolo Rep's highly skilled acting company and extensive craftsmanship bring to life this unique performance method that gives audiences the opportunity to see multiple productions in the span of a few days. Asolo Rep presents up to 10 productions each season including contemporary and classic works and provocative musical theatre experiences. A theatre district in and of itself, Asolo Rep is committed to expanding its reach into the community, furthering its collaboration with the best theatre artists working in the industry today and cultivating new artists through its affiliation with the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, Asolo Rep's ambitious theatrical offerings and ground-breaking education and community programming engage audiences and ensure its lasting legacy for future generations.

MEDIA CONTACT

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