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ARTSEMERSON ANNOUNCES ITS 2018/19 SEASON

FEATURING THREE U.S. PREMIERES INCLUDING THE NATIONAL THEATRE'S LANDMARK PRODUCTION OF *JB PREISTLEY'S CLASSIC THRILLER AN INSPECTOR CALLS*; THE RETURN OF MANUAL CINEMA; SHAKESPEARE STORIES FROM IRELAND, RUSSIA, AND NEW YORK; AND A DIVERSITY OF NARRATIVES ON INCARCERATION, RACISM, DACA, AND WHAT COMES AFTER THE END OF THE WORLD

TICKET PACKAGES ON SALE MAY 8, 2018

email ami@motormmm.com for more information, images, and select interviews

[Boston, MA—May 7, 2018] ArtsEmerson, Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre, proudly announces the 2018/2019 Season, it's ninth, featuring eleven productions from seven countries. The season showcases three U.S. Premieres, including **JB Priestley's Classic Thriller An Inspector Calls**, Dead Center's **Hamnet**, and Global Arts Corps' See You Yesterday. The season also marks the return of multi-media storytellers Manual Cinema, and presents Shakespeare stories from Ireland, Russia, and New York; as well as a diversity of contemporary narratives on incarceration, racism, DACA, and what comes after the end of the world.



Hamnet, Dead Centre



American Moor, Keith Hamilton Cobb



See You Yesterday, Global Arts Corps

"As in any year," shares ArtsEmerson Artistic Director David Dower, "we're delighted to arrive at a season that thrives on diversity, and these eleven shows range in scale from epic to intensely personal and run the gamut from profound literary texts to nearly wordless movement-based work. Some are wrestling with their obsessions through reimagined classics, others have started with a blank canvas."

"There's also an undeniable urgency among artists," he continues, "as they grapple to understand the world today. This urgency is mirrored powerfully in Boston audiences who crave opportunities to

engage, just as we saw this year with the sold-out performances of *The White Card* and *Bangsokol*. To me, this new season lives at the meeting point for audiences and artists who feel this shared urgency.”

“Having established a reputation for working at the intersection of relevance and excellence, ArtsEmerson is positioned to reinvent the possibilities of what an arts organization can be and do for its community,” shares ArtsEmerson Executive Director David Howse. “We continue to push the boundaries of theatre and inspire a community where everyone is welcomed, everyone is seen, and where our common humanity is celebrated! As our audiences grow and become increasingly more reflective of our city, we will discover who we are together, and begin to discover how we thrive and have fun.”

Ticket packages, now on sale, start at \$70 and may be purchased online at www.ArtsEmerson.org, by phone at 617.824.8400, or in person at the box office. Groups of 10 or more tickets to any performance are also available now. Single tickets for each production will go on sale to the public at a later date. Package buyers may also choose to add ArtsEmerson’s upcoming special summer engagement of **Born for This – A New Musical**, from six-time GRAMMY® Award-winning icon BeBe Winans and director Charles Randolph-Wright, **Born For This** plays at the Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre from June 15-July 15, 2018.

Hamnet – U.S. Premiere

Dead Centre (Ireland)

September 20 – October 7, 2018

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Shakespeare’s only son takes center stage. William Shakespeare had one son: Hamnet. While William was away working in London, Hamnet died at 11 years old without ever knowing his famous father. How do our dreams impact our families? Do adults really have it all figured out? Or are we blind to what we could have done better until it’s too late? In **Hamnet**, a tour-de-force performance from a young actor confronts what it means—and what it costs—to be great, and how living in the shadow of that greatness can keep one in the dark. In this moving, meticulous, multimedia wonder, ambition clashes with family responsibilities in a way that rivals the stakes of a great Shakespearean tragedy.

The Peculiar Patriot

National Black Theatre & Hi-ARTS

Written and performed by Liza Jessie Peterson (New York)

October 17 – 28, 2018

Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box

Injustice in the justice system. Inspired by her decades-long work with prison populations, including on notorious Rikers Island, Liza Jessie Peterson’s timely and urgent one-person show unpacks the human impact of mass incarceration in America. Fearlessly funny, smart and provocative, **The Peculiar Patriot** traces the migration of systemic injustice from the plantation to the prison yard. The story follows Liza’s narrator, Betsy, a self-proclaimed “peculiar patriot,” who makes regular visits to penitentiaries to boost the morale of her incarcerated friends and family. Betsy is both victim and victor of this country’s prison system and her story turns statistics into achingly relatable stories drawn from the experience of more than 2.5 million people behind bars.

Measure for Measure

Cheek by Jowl and Pushkin Theatre and (U.K. and Russia)

October 24 – 28, 2018

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre

Contemporary society and Shakespeare's political epic collide, revealing truths of authority, love and justice. The stakes are high and the performances are mesmerizing. Experience Shakespeare's tale in a ripped-from-the-headlines context that is as shocking as it is revelatory. **Measure for Measure** asks vital and unsettling questions about exactly who governs society and, in the process, unmask the true nature of authority, love and justice. As part of its U.S. premiere tour from the UK's Cheek by Jowl and Russia's Pushkin Theatre, Boston audiences will witness the hypocrisy of power and the consequences of a society that relinquishes total control to their government. In the hands of these artists, Shakespeare's infamously complex play becomes what Novaya Gazeta calls "a shattering portrait of contemporary Russia."

WET: A DACamented Journey

Cara Mia Theatre and Ignite/Arts Dallas

Written and performed by Alex Alpharaoh (Los Angeles)

November 8 – 25, 2018

Emerson Paramount Center, Jackie Liebergott Black Box

In America, it should not be impossible to dream. **WET: A DACamented Journey** is a true story of what it means to be an American in every sense of the word except one: on paper. Written and performed by Alex Alpharaoh, it chronicles one man's ongoing story of living all but his first three months of life in the United States as an undocumented American. **WET** captures the precarious, red-tape-ravaged life that's aptly nicknamed the "DREAMer" experience while trying to realize their own American dream. Alpharaoh, a social worker who knows firsthand the mental, emotional and psychological hardship of this unending process, risks his own freedom to share his story in this nationwide tour. The production—which rockets between hilarity and heartbreak—will instantly humanize the headlines and take audiences inside the realities of striving for a better life under the extreme conditions of living life as a political football.

The End of TV

Manual Cinema (Chicago)

January 16 – 27, 2019

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

A quest for connection amid the static. In **The End of TV**, the ingenious artists of Manual Cinema cast a theatrical spell through live-action silhouettes, video feeds, overhead projection and a five-piece band performing an original score. Set against the grain of a Midwestern town in decline, an elderly white woman, who was once a supervisor at the thriving local auto plant, and a young black woman, laid off from her job when the same plant closes, build a genuine connection amid all of the chatter of the television ads that surround daily American life.

To the Source -- U.S. Premiere

AST National Academy of Theatre Arts in Krakow (Poland)

January 30 – February 3, 2019

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Recovering a culture, one song at a time. For over 120 years, Poland was partitioned and its national identity erased from the map of the world. When a group of young artists unearth a motherlode of folk songs and classic compositions from that period, they discover their true cultural inheritance. With a surprisingly contemporary lens, **To the Source** takes audiences on a harmonically thrilling journey to the musical Rosetta Stone of great Polish composers such as Chopin and Szymanowski. It's a sung-through evening built on fresh approaches to classic Polish folk songs that is sure to ignite a range of emotions. With a smart, sexy, infectious appeal, these artists share their delight at uncovering their own cultural DNA, one song at a time.

When Angels Fall

Raphaëlle Boitel (France)

February 20 – 24, 2019

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre

Civilizations die from suicide, not by assassination. French interdisciplinary pioneer Raphaëlle Boitel reveals her ravishing aesthetic and world-class artistry to Boston with **When Angels Fall**. Drawing its inspiration from such disparate sources as Pina Bausch, David Lynch and her longtime collaborator, James Thierrée, this delightfully dark and entrancing production employs dance, cinema and circus to weave a tale of flightless angels surviving in a post-apocalyptic world. Amongst the constant downpour of toxic rain in a stark, mechanical environment, Boitel's survivors confront the fragility of civilization within the sudden absence of a natural environment. When one survivor refuses to settle into this bleak new world, what first feels like a rebellion leads them to question the very structure of reality. Philosophical, poetic and absurd, this U.S. premiere tour of **When Angels Fall** will vividly interrogate the age-old struggle of man versus nature.

JB Priestley's Classic Thriller An Inspector Calls

The National Theatre's Landmark Production (U.K.)

March 14 – 24, 2019

Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre

Knock knock. Is your house in order? Hailed as the theatrical event of its generation and winning more awards than any other production in history, the National Theatre's Landmark Production of **JB Priestley's Classic Thriller An Inspector Calls**, lands in Boston. First produced at the National Theatre of Great Britain this production has been seen on Broadway, had six seasons in London's West End, ten U.K. tours, two Australian tours and a season in Tokyo. This is the first time it's been seen on tour in the United States. Stephen Daldry (Oscar-nominated director of *The Reader*, *The Hours* and *Billy Elliot*) returns to direct his masterpiece. When Inspector Goole arrives unexpectedly at the prosperous Birling family home, their peaceful dinner party is shattered by his investigations into the death of a young working-class woman. His startling revelations shake the very foundations of their lives and challenge audiences to question their own consciences. Wildly entertaining and on a gorgeous grand-scale set, this 1945 thriller is a must-see for a whole new generation of theatre-goers.

American Moor

Keith Hamilton Cobb (New York)

April 10 – 21, 2019

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Taking back Shakespeare's great, black leading man. As an African-American actor auditions for Othello—the role of a lifetime—he is met with four hundred years of prejudice, racism and privilege as he negotiates with a young, white director who presumes to understand, and ultimately dictate, how to portray the character. An introspective dive into the Western theatrical canon,

American Moor challenges the capacity of theatre to fulfill the human longing to be fully visible and embraced, asking the question "who gets to perform Shakespeare?" Addressing the history of turmoil surrounding *Othello*, Keith Hamilton Cobb highlights the inequities when actors such as Laurence Olivier, Anthony Hopkins and Orson Welles all garnered praise for their portrayal of the title role, yet had to blacken their faces to play the part. Cobb's stunning, tour-de-force solo performance returns to Boston after its award-winning 2017 run.

/peh-LO-tah/

Marc Bamuthi Joseph / The Living Word Project (New York)

May 1 – 5, 2018

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

A love letter to black culture, soccer and the beautiful rhythms of life. Poet-performer Marc Bamuthi Joseph's love of soccer is a heritage story. As a child of Haitian immigrants, the blissful freedom of the soccer field represented the race toward the American dream. Using spoken word and fútbol-inspired choreography, **/peh-LO-tah/** travels from the pickup games in rural Haiti to the World Cup stadiums of Rio de Janeiro and Johannesburg, all while combating the discrepancies of a game that promises freedom yet suffers from racial inequities. An exploration of childhood fantasies and global realities, **/peh-LO-tah/** is a multi-disciplinary performance set to sounds of hip hop and samba that celebrates the joy of soccer as perhaps the only game the entire world can agree to play together.

See You Yesterday – U.S. Premiere

Global Arts Corps (Cambodia)

May 16 – 19, 2019

Emerson Paramount Center, Robert J. Orchard Stage

Shattering the silence of history with each breath. On the heels of the sold-out performances of last season's *Bangsokol* comes our latest collaboration with Cambodian Living Arts. Artists from US-based Global Arts Corps and Cambodia's Phare Ponleu Selpak have created this visually stunning U.S. premiere. Nineteen Cambodian circus artists utilize their skills in physical theatre to shatter a legacy of silence. Comprised of second-generation survivors of the Khmer Rouge genocide, **See You Yesterday** explores the fragmented memory of recent Cambodian history, unpacking the long shadow of a genocidal regime as they attempt to forgive the past in order to survive the future.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is Boston's leading presenter of contemporary world theatre and is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard, the year the US Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston, ArtsEmerson committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city by engaging *all* communities through stories that reveal and deepen connections to each other. By cultivating diversity in the art *and* in the audience, ArtsEmerson ignites public conversation around the most vexing societal challenges as a catalyst for overcoming them. ArtsEmerson is committed to welcoming everyone into its landmark venues, located in Boston's downtown Theatre District, for a diverse program of contemporary theatre, film, and music from around the city and around the world. In addition, ArtsEmerson engages in a range of community partnerships and produces a series of initiatives that make visible the rich diversity of cultural activity in the region. ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower and Executive Director, David Howse. For more information, visit ArtsEmerson.org.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,780 undergraduates and 670 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 39,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

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