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ROUND HOUSE THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2023-2024 SEASON

**46th SEASON INCLUDES FOUR BROADWAY HITS,
INCLUDING TWO PULITZER PRIZE-WINNERS;
A WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL COMEDY;
THIRD ANNUAL NEW PLAY FESTIVAL; AND MORE**

BETHESDA, Md., March 29, 2023 – Artistic Director Ryan Rilette and Managing Director Ed Zakreski are thrilled to announce the full six-show lineup for Round House Theatre’s 46th Season. Following a magical season of performances in 2022-2023—including an American premiere, an enchanting interpretation of a Shakespeare classic, two world premieres as part of the second annual National Capital New Play Festival, and a return to August Wilson’s American Century Cycle—Round House is excited for audiences to experience its 2023-2024 season, which includes a wide range of shows for every theatrical taste.

“Whether you’re a lover of musicals or straight plays, comedies or dramas, celebrated works of the past or the future hits of tomorrow, your seat is waiting for you at Round House this season!” Artistic Director **Ryan Rilette** shares. “Our wide-ranging 2023-2024 Season includes an eclectic mix of styles and scale that offers something for everyone, including four Broadway hits, two Pulitzer Prize winners, two world premieres, two period plays, two musicals, and a play that the *New York Times* has called the best of the 21st Century.”

THE 2023-2024 Season

The season begins with the previously announced *Ink* (August 30 – September 24, 2023), an electrifying drama by **James Graham**. This “riveting” (*The Guardian*) Tony Award-winning Broadway and West End hit depicts the birth of our hyper-partisan news culture in a truth-is-stranger-than-fiction drama that will have you on the edge of your seat.

Jason Loewith will direct this comedic and thrilling exploration of how Rupert Murdoch transformed the media landscape in 1969, reshaping the news, politics, and culture of our world, co-produced with Olney Theatre Center and presented at Round House.

Round House audiences will then experience **Katori Hall's** Olivier Award-winning ***The Mountaintop*** (October 11 – November 5, 2023), an intimate reimagining that weaves historical fact with surrealist fantasy to show us Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis's Lorraine Motel, on the evening of April 4, 1968—the night before his assassination. Directed by **Delicia Turner Sonnenberg**, this “audacious [and] inventive” (*Associated Press*) play shows us the human and flawed side of Dr. King's larger-than-life legacy.

Next up is a world premiere holiday musical, ***A Hanukkah Carol, or Gelt Trip! The Musical*** (December 6 – 31, 2023). With music by **Aaron Kenny**, book and lyrics by **Rob Berliner**, and book and original concept by **Harrison Bryan** (last seen at Round House in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*), this heartfelt production is a hilarious riff on a holiday classic that celebrates making the world a kinder place. This production will be directed and choreographed by **Marlo Hunter**.

The musical theatre experience will continue with the ground-breaking, Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning rock musical, ***Next to Normal*** (January 24 – February 25, 2024). With book and lyrics by **Brian Yorkey**, music by **Tom Kitt** and direction by **Alan Paul**, this production offers a raw look at the difficulties of mental illness, as a woman and her family find a path through grief, depression, and medical trauma. Featuring live video, this “brave and breathtaking” (*The New York Times*) musical will be unlike any that you've ever seen before.

Round House will continue its commitment to producing compelling new work with the third annual **National Capital New Play Festival** (*see page 3 for additional information*), headlined by an incendiary and provocative world premiere. ***A Jumping-Off Point*** (April 10 – May 5, 2024), by rising star playwright and screenwriter (and Round House commissioned artist) **Inda Craig-Galván**, is a sharp and electric new play full of humor and complex characters who are confronted with hard conversations about representation, privilege, who gets to tell what kinds of stories, and what “authenticity” means. Directed by **Jade King Carroll**, the world premiere is accompanied by a series of developmental readings at Round House as part of the 2024 National Capital New Play Festival.

Following the festival, Round House is thrilled to close the season with the masterful, Pulitzer Prize-winning tragicomedy *Topdog/Underdog* (May 29 – June 23, 2024), by **Suzan-Lori Parks**. This modern American classic, named the best American play written in the past 30 years by the *New York Times*, explores the lives of two brothers—Lincoln and Booth—who were abandoned by their parents as teenagers and are bound together by their names, by blood, and by their shared destiny. Parks asks whether we can ever really change the cards we’re dealt as the tug-of-war for dominance builds to devastating, life-changing consequences.

National Capital New Play Festival

In April 2022, Round House launched the inaugural year of the National Capital New Play Festival, a regional celebration of new plays that will be an annual part of the Theatre’s programming. In service of Round House’s longstanding investment in diversifying the voices that are amplified through live theatre, the festival seeks to nurture relationships with both established and early-career playwrights while cultivating an interest in new work among audiences in the DC metro area and demystifying the new play development process.

The 2024 festival will feature one **world premiere production** (*A Jumping-Off Point*) presented on the mainstage season, as well as four plays presented as **developmental readings** (titles to be announced), and **panel discussions**. Full schedule and details will be announced at a later date.

The 22nd Annual Sarah Metzger Memorial Play

Established by the Metzger family and friends to celebrate the memory of Sarah Metzger, an inspiring and active member of the theatre community who was killed in an automobile accident during her freshman year of college, the “Sarah Play” is the culminating performance of the **Teen Performance Company** each year. Following a year of training, master classes with artists working in the field, and behind-the-scenes access to Round House productions, the TPC members direct, design, stage manage, and perform a full production on the Round House stage. Next season’s Teen Performance Company production is **Agyweiwaa Asante’s *The Chosen One Academy***, which transports audiences to the titular academy, where archetypal heroes—the magical anime girl, the troubled bad boy with a dark past, the dystopian survivor, and everybody else from your favorite YA novels and movies—learn to save their world(s). But when the stakes turn all-too-real, the young students learn that being “chosen” might not be all it’s cracked up to be in this loving satire of teen fiction. More details about this world premiere commission will be shared at a later date.

“With two world premieres, plays that have received the highest theatre and cultural honors, and four Broadway hits, this is a season full of compelling stories that represent our commitment to amplifying and

celebrating distinct voices,” adds Managing Director **Ed Zakreski**. “These are stories that will make you smile, laugh, gasp, debate, and perhaps even shed a tear. We can’t wait to see you at the theatre.”

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2023-2024 SEASON DETAILS

ELECTRIFYING NEW DRAMA

Ink

By James Graham

Directed by Jason Loewith

AUG 30 – SEPT 4, 2023 | Co-Produced with Olney Theatre Center

London, 1969. A brash young Australian named Rupert Murdoch approaches journalist Larry Lamb with a staggeringly ambitious proposition: to turn the struggling paper *The Sun* into the best-selling tabloid in the UK...within a year. An unexpected partnership is born as Lamb and Murdoch assemble a team of scrappy underdog journalists and begin to transform *The Sun* into a populist juggernaut. Once they discover the formula to success the consequences are thrilling and terrifying. This “riveting” (*The Guardian*) Tony Award-winning Broadway and West End hit depicts the birth of our hyper-partisan news culture in a truth-is-stranger-than-fiction drama that will have you on the edge of your seat.

HISTORICAL REIMAGINING

The Mountaintop

By Katori Hall

Directed by Delicia Turner Sonnenberg

OCT 11 – NOV 5, 2023

The night before his untimely death, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. returns to his room at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis after delivering a speech to local sanitation workers. While waiting for room service, he is visited by a mysterious and beautiful maid, Camae, with whom he begins a humorous and flirtatious conversation that progresses into a soul-searching discussion about their mutual hopes and fears. When Camae reveals her true identity, Dr. King must reflect on his legacy and the challenges facing the civil rights movement. “Audacious [and] inventive” (*Associated Press*), the Olivier Award-winning play offers an intimate and empathetic portrait of one of history’s most consequential figures.

WORLD PREMIERE MUSICAL COMEDY

A Hanukkah Carol

or Gelt Trip! The Musical

Music by Aaron Kenny | Lyrics by Rob Berliner

Book by Harrison Bryan and Rob Berliner

Original Concept by Harrison Bryan

Directed and choreographed by Marlo Hunter

DEC 6 –31, 2023 | World Premiere

Misanthropic millennial influencer Chava Kanipshin’s internet followers are turning into haters. Desperate to regain her popularity, Chava shuns anything and anyone she sees as an obstacle, including her family, friends, and holiday traditions. But on the first night of Hanukkah, Chava is visited by the ghost of deceased social media star Mimi Marley and other spirits who warn her to change her ways—or be cursed forever. The spirits lead Chava on a madcap journey through Hanukkah’s past, present, and future to help her reconnect with her spirit of generosity, her Jewish identity, and an appreciation of her real-life supporters. Conceived by Harrison Bryan (last seen at Round House in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*), *A Hanukkah Carol* is a heartfelt, hilarious riff on a holiday classic that celebrates making the world a kinder place.

GROUNDBREAKING ROCK MUSICAL

Next to Normal

Book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey

Music by Tom Kitt

Directed by Alan Paul

JAN 24 – FEB 25, 2024

Diana Goodman is a suburban mom struggling with bipolar disorder. Her daughter, Natalie, is a stressed-out overachiever about to snap. And Dan, her exhausted architect husband, is determined to keep everything “normal.” As Diana’s symptoms worsen, and effective treatment remains elusive, the Goodmans must confront their shared griefs and struggles and learn how to finally connect with each other. A masterpiece of modern musical theatre and a powerful depiction of the ripple effects of mental illness, the Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning musical is “brave, breathtaking... [and] much more than a feel-good musical: it is a feel-everything musical” (*The New York Times*).

INCENDIARY AND PROVOCATIVE WORLD PREMIERE

A Jumping-Off Point

By Inda Craig Galván

Directed by Jade King Carroll

APR 10 – MAY 5, 2024 | World Premiere

Leslie Wallace is a promising Black writer who has just landed her first deal with HBO. Her celebration is cut short when she gets a surprise visit from Andrew, a white man from her grad school cohort, who accuses her of plagiarizing his script. Their confrontation—and eventual uneasy alliance—forces a reckoning on representation, privilege, and who gets to tell what kinds of stories. Full of humor and complex characters, *A Jumping-Off Point* is a sharp and electric new play from rising star playwright and screenwriter Inda Craig-Galván. (*Part of the National Capital New Play Festival*)

MODERN AMERICAN CLASSIC

Topdog/Underdog

By Suzan-Lori Parks

MAY 29 – JUN 23, 2024

Abandoned by their parents as teenagers, brothers Lincoln and Booth learned to rely on each other. As adults, Lincoln and Booth are locked in a cycle of love and resentment, foretold by the names they were given by their father as jokes and compounded by the challenges of poverty and racism. In her “utterly mesmerizing” (*Variety*) Pulitzer Prize-winner, named the best American play written in the past 30 years by the *New York Times*, celebrated writer Suzan-Lori Parks asks whether we can ever really change the cards we’re dealt as the brothers’ tug-of-war for dominance builds to devastating, life-changing consequences.

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TICKET INFORMATION

Subscription packages for Round House Theatre’s 2023-2024 Season are now available for purchase online at **RoundHouseTheatre.org** or by calling the Box Office at **240.644.1100**. Subscribers enjoy the best prices and the best seats on their preferred night, with benefits including free ticket exchanges, waived single ticket fees, and more. Tickets for individual productions will be available for sale in mid July.

ABOUT ROUND HOUSE THEATRE

Round House Theatre is one of the leading professional theatres in the Washington, D.C. area, producing a season of new plays, modern classics, and musicals for more than 40,000 patrons each year at our theatre in Bethesda. Round House has been nominated for 213 Helen Hayes Awards and has won 37, including four Outstanding Resident Play Awards and the Charles MacArthur Award for Original New Play in 2016. Round House’s lifelong learning and education programs serve more than 5,000 students each year at its Education Center in Silver Spring, in schools throughout Montgomery County, and at our Bethesda theatre. Cornerstone programs include Free Play, which provides free tickets for students age 13-college, the Teen Performance

Company, which culminates in the student-produced Sarah Metzger Memorial Play, Summer Camp for students in grades K-12, and a full slate of classes for adults and youth.

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