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ROUND HOUSE THEATRE ANNOUNCES CAST OF  
**NEXT TO NORMAL**  
**CO-PRODUCED WITH BARRINGTON STAGE COMPANY**

TRACY LYNN OLIVERA AND KEVIN STEPHEN MCALLISTER LEAD CAST OF GROUNDBREAKING,  
TONY AWARD & PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING ROCK MUSICAL

January 24 – February 25 at Round House Theatre

Bethesda, Md. (December 18, 2023) – Round House Theatre continues its 2023-2024 Season with a co-production of the groundbreaking rock musical *Next to Normal* (book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey, and music by Tom Kitt), with Barrington Stage Company. Staged at Round House in an innovative new production featuring integrated video and multimedia, this Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning hit explores the timely narrative about the ripple effects of mental illness. The production is directed by Alan Paul, Artistic Director of Barrington Stage Company, who previously directed *Spring Awakening* at Round House Theatre. Press Night is on Monday, January 29 at 8pm. **Please see below for complete program details and ticket information.**

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 beloved musical is “brave, breathtaking... [and] much more than a feel-good musical: it is a feel-everything musical” (*The New York Times*).

**Artistic Director Ryan Rilette** is thrilled to continue Round House’s longstanding efforts in collaborational storytelling, this time with Barrington Stage Company, and to welcome Alan Paul back to Round House with *Next to Normal*. Rilette previously talked with *American Theatre* magazine about the impact of co-productions and sharing resources. He shared that it’s all about “finding ways to collaborate together—to not fight each other for a small piece of pie and instead try to build a bigger pie.”

**Director Alan Paul** is excited to embark on the rehearsal journey at Round House. “It fills me with great pride to return to Round House to direct *Next to Normal*, which has been on my ‘bucket list’ for many years,” says Paul. “*Next to Normal* is one of the most powerful musicals of the last 25 years, full of heartbreak and uplift, and the score is thrilling. I am so excited to have two local treasures in the leading roles—Tracy Lynn Olivera and Kevin S. McAllister—who will bring their powerhouse talents to these roles.”

The dynamic cast includes **Lucas Hinds Babcock** (*Grease* and *9 to 5* at Clear Space Theatre Company), **Ben Clark** (*Elegies: A Song Cycle* at The Keegan Theatre and *The World Goes Round* at Olney Theatre Center), **Sophia Early** (*Ink* and *Sleep Deprivation Chamber* at Round House Theatre), **Kevin Stephen McAllister** (*Caroline, or Change* and *Come from Away* on Broadway), **Calvin McCullough** (*Kinky Boots* at Olney Theatre Center and *A Christmas Carol* at Ford’s Theatre), and **Tracy Lynn Olivera** (*Violet* at Ford’s Theatre and *Ragtime* revival on Broadway). Understudies for this production include **Calvin McCullough**, **Nicholas Perez-Hoop**, **Olivia Massiah**, and **Garvey X. Dobbins**.

The cast is joined by a brilliant creative team that includes Music Director **Christopher Youstra** (other band members include **Andrea Vercoa**, **Catherine Mikelson**, **Manny Arciniega**, **Arnold**

**Gottlieb**, and **Doks**), Scenic Designer **Wilson Chin**, Associate Scenic Designers **Bridget Lindsay** and **Jimmy Stubbs**, Costume Designer **Helen Huang**, Costume Associate **Rebecca Anne Janne**, Lighting Designer **Sherrice Mojgani**, Sound Designer **Ken Travis**, Projections Designer **Nicholas Hussong**, Choreographer **Eamon Foley**, Properties Coordinator **Chelsea Dean**, Casting Director **Sarah Cooney**, Dramaturg **Naysan Mojgani**, Intimacy Consultant **Megan Behm**, Production Stage Manager **Che Wernsman**, and Assistant Stage Manager **Emily A. Mellon**.

Tickets may be purchased by calling 240.644.1100 or ordering online at RoundHouseTheatre.org. Round House Theatre is located at 4545 East-West Highway, one block from Wisconsin Avenue and the Bethesda station on Metro's Red Line.

#### ARTIST INFORMATION

**Tom Kitt (Playwright/Music)** is a two-time Tony, two-time Emmy, Pulitzer Prize, and Grammy Award winner. As a musical theater composer, he has written the music for six Broadway shows: *Next to Normal* (Tony Award), *If/Then* (Tony nomination), *Almost Famous* (Tony nomination), *Flying Over Sunset* (Tony nomination), *High Fidelity*, and *Bring it On, The Musical*. His work for the stage has also been seen Off Broadway at Second Stage (*Next to Normal*, *Superhero*) and The Public Theater (*The Visitor*, *Shakespeare in the Park*), and he has worked at some of the most prestigious regional theaters, including The Old Globe, Arena Stage, Berkeley Rep, Signature Theater, and ART. In addition, Tom's Broadway credits as an orchestrator include: *Next to Normal* (Tony Award), *The SpongeBob Musical* (Tony nomination), *Jagged Little Pill* (Tony nomination), *Almost Famous*, *Head Over Heels*, *Everyday Rapture*, and *American Idiot*. Tom has also been active in the world of film and TV. As one of the vocal arrangers working on the *Pitch Perfect* films, Tom most notably helped create the classic "Riff-off." Tom also served as music supervisor/arranger/orchestrator for *Grease Live* and contributed songs for *Royal Pains* and *Penny Dreadful*. He also provided music supervision for the NBC series *Rise*, and has written numerous songs for *Sesame Street*. And he is known for his two original opening numbers for the Tony Awards, "Live" in 2019, written with David Javerbaum for James Corden, and the Emmy Award-winning "Bigger" in 2013, written with Lin-Manuel Miranda for Neil

Patrick Harris. Tom is also proud that his musical adaptation of *Freaky Friday*, co-written with Bridget Carpenter and Brian Yorkey, was turned into an original movie musical for Disney Channel. Most recently, Tom served as a Supervising Music Producer on the new Bobby Lopez/Kristen Anderson-Lopez/Steven Levenson/Thomas Kail musical television series *Up Here*.

**Brian Yorkey (Playwright/Book and Lyrics)** received the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, the 2009 Tony Award for Best Score, and the Outer Critics Circle Award for *Next to Normal* and was also nominated for the Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical. He partnered again with the *Next to Normal* team on *If/Then* (Tony Award Nominee for Best Score) starring Idina Menzel. Brian co-wrote the libretto for *The Last Ship* (Outer Critics Nomination, with John Logan), with a score by Sting. He wrote lyrics for the Disney Theatricals musical adaptation of *Freaky Friday*, which also became a Disney Channel Original Movie. Brian most recently served as the Executive Producer and Co-Showrunner for the Netflix series *Echoes*. Prior to that, Brian was the Creator, Executive Producer and Showrunner of *13 Reasons Why* for Netflix and Paramount Television. He has also directed for theatre and television. Brian is a graduate of Columbia University, where he was artistic director of the Varsity Show, an alum of the BMI/Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop and a proud member of the Dramatists Guild, the WGA, and the DGA.

**Alan Paul (Director)** is thrilled to return to Round House after directing *Spring Awakening* in 2020. Alan is currently the Artistic Director of Barrington Stage Company in the Berkshires and spent 15 years as Associate Artistic Director at Shakespeare Theatre. STC highlights include *Camelot*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Man of La Mancha*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Our Town*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Romeo and Juliet*, the world premiere of Lauren Gunderson's *Peter Pan and Wendy*, and the film of Patrick Page's *All The Devils Are Here*. DC credits include *The Pajama Game* at Arena Stage; *Cabaret* at Olney Theatre Center; *I Am My Own Wife* at Signature Theatre; and *Silence! The Musical* and *The Rocky Horror Show* at Studio Theatre. Regional credits include *Cabaret* at Barrington Stage; *Kiss Me Kate* at Seattle's 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Theatre; and *The King and I* at Chicago's Drury Lane. Classical credits include the world premiere of *Penny* at Washington National Opera; *The Pirates of Penzance* at Palm Beach

Opera; *Man of La Mancha* at Portland Opera; and John Williams 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Celebration with the National Symphony Orchestra. Alan has been nominated for five Helen Hayes Awards for Best Director and won in 2014 for *Forum*.

**Christopher Youstra** (Musical Director) Bio will be available to read on our website in the coming weeks.

#### CAST INFORMATION (ALPHABETICAL)

**Lucas Hinds Babcock (Gabe)** is a recent Emerson College graduate and is thrilled to be making his Round House Theatre debut! Regional credits include *Grease*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *9 to 5* at Clear Space Theatre Company; *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* at Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts; and *Mama's Gonna Buy You* (Reading) at Magic Theatre Company. Other credits include Production Vocalist with Norwegian Cruise Lines, *Cabaret* (Clifford Bradshaw), *The Secret in the Wings* (Actor 9), *The Spitfire Grill* (Joe Sutter), and *Into the Woods* (Male Swing).

**Ben Clark (Henry)** is excited to be making his Round House Theatre debut with *Next to Normal*. Previous credits include *Elegies: A Song Cycle* at The Keegan Theatre; *The World Goes Round* at Olney Theatre Center and Everyman Theatre; and *West Side Story* in concert at Olney Theatre Center.

**Sophia Early (Natalie)** is thrilled to return to Round House Theatre this season with *Next to Normal*. Previous Round House credits include *Ink* and *Sleep Deprivation Chamber*, as part of the Adrienne Kennedy festival. DC area credits include Meredith Willson's *The Music Man* at Olney Theatre Center (Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Ensemble); *Poetry for the People: The June Jordan Experience* at Theater Alliance; and *Diagnosed* at Creative Cauldron. Sophia is a proud graduate of Howard University's B.F.A. Musical Theatre Program. Instagram: @sophia.the.early

**Kevin Stephen McAllister (Dan)** Previous credits include *Caroline, or Change* and *Come from Away* on Broadway. Regional credits include *Ragtime* (Sacramento Music Circus), *Blackbeard*, *Grand Hotel*, *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Helen Hayes nomination), *A Little Night Music*, *Titanic*, *SCKBSTRD*, *Brother Russia*, *The Break*, *Show Boat*, *Sweeney Todd* at Signature Theatre; *Lost in the Stars* at Washington National Opera; *The Wiz*, *Ragtime* (Helen Hayes winner, Best Actor), *110 in the Shade*, *Freedom's Song*, *Violet* (Helen Hayes nomination), *Our Town*, *Parade* (Helen Hayes nomination), and *The Civil War* at Ford's Theatre; *Five Guys Named Moe* at Arena Stage; *And the World Goes 'Round*, *Annie* (Helen Hayes nomination), and *Rodgers + Hammerstein's Cinderella* at Olney Theatre Center; Kennedy Center 2013 Gala and *The Phantom Tollbooth* (Kennedy Center); *Expanding the Cycle Series* at CenterStage; *Rent* and *Dreamgirls* at Toby's Dinner Theatre; *Brooklyn*, *Side Show*, and *Wild Party* at Teatro101. Kevin is the Artistic Director for ArtsCentric, Inc., and was named *Broadway World's* Performer of The Decade in 2020.

**Calvin McCullough (Doctor Madden)** is thrilled to be making his Round House Theatre debut. Previous DC credits include *Kinky Boots*, *A.D.16*, *ELF*, *South Pacific*, *Carmen* and *Godspell* at Olney Theatre Center; *A Raisin In the Sun* and *Flying West* at Everyman Theatre; *Freaky Friday* and *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Signature Theatre; *Snow Child* at Arena Stage; *Miss You Like Hell* at Baltimore Center Stage; and *A Christmas Carol* at Ford's Theatre; Regional credits include *Once on This Island* at Cortland Repertory Theatre.

**Tracy Lynn Olivera (Diana)** is happy to be making her Round House Theatre debut. She has worked at many DC theatres, including Signature Theatre (*Assassins* and *A Little Night Music*); Ford's Theatre (*Ragtime* and *110 in the Shade*); Olney Theatre Center (*Beauty and the Beast*); Arena Stage (*Fiddler on the Roof*); and the Kennedy Center (*Ragtime*). She appeared on Broadway in the 2009 revival of *Ragtime*, and has also performed at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago (Mary Zimmerman's *Candide*). Tracy is a two-time recipient of the Helen Hayes Award, for Lizzie in *110 in the Shade* and Charlotte in *A Little Night Music*, respectively. She is a member of the faculty of both Catholic University and American University's musical theatre

programs. Recordings include *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* Original cast album, and her solo LP, *Because*.

#### PRODUCTION INFORMATION

##### **Next to Normal**

Book and lyrics by Brian Yorkey

Music by Tom Kitt

Directed by Alan Paul

January 24 – February 25, 2024

#### CAST LIST (alphabetical order):

Lucas Hinds Babcock: Gabe

Ben Clark: Henry

Sophia Early: Natalie

Kevin Stephen McAllister: Dan

Calvin McCullough: Doctor Madden

Tracy Lynn Olivera: Diana

#### WHERE:

Round House Theatre, 4545 East-West Highway in Bethesda (one block from Wisconsin Ave. and Metro's Bethesda station). For directions, parking, and public transportation info, visit [RoundHouseTheatre.org/Visit-Us/](http://RoundHouseTheatre.org/Visit-Us/).

#### ABOUT THE PLAY:

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*). *Co-produced with Barrington Stage Company.*

### DATES AND TIMES:

*Next to Normal* runs from January 24 to February 25, 2023. Performances are Tuesday through Thursday at 7:30 pm, Friday and Saturday at 8:00 pm, and Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 pm.

Audio described performance: Saturday, February 3 at 2:00 pm

Open captioned performance: Saturday, February 10 at 2:00 pm; additional date TBA

Mask-required performances: Tuesday, February 13 at 7:30 pm; Saturday, February 17 at 2:00 pm

Relaxed performance: Thursday, February 18 at 2:00pm

### TICKETS:

Tickets can be purchased by calling 240.644.1100, ordering online at RoundHouseTheatre.org, or visiting the box office. Available ticket discounts include:

- **Free Play** – free tickets for students ages 13 through college: Round House Theatre’s Free Play initiative ties into our greater strategy to develop theatre audiences of tomorrow by providing rich, meaningful arts experiences today. For more information, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/FreePlay or email [Education@RoundHouseTheatre.org](mailto:Education@RoundHouseTheatre.org).
- **On the House** community ticket access program: Round House’s next step to remove barriers that can make it difficult for some members of our community to experience our work is On the House, which provides complimentary group tickets to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and community-serving organizations with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor. For more information, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/On-Stage/On-TheHouse or email [Community@RoundHouseTheatre.org](mailto:Community@RoundHouseTheatre.org).
- **Pay-What-You-Can performances:** PWYC tickets go on sale online or by phone only (no walk-up sales) beginning three weeks before the first performance of each show. The patron decides the admission price. Limit of two tickets per order. PWYC tickets are



available for performances on Wednesday, January 24 at 7:30 pm and Saturday, January 6 at 2:00 pm and are subject to availability.

- **Blue Star Theatre Program:** Active-duty military personnel, veterans, and their immediate family qualify for a \$10 discount off the single ticket price. Learn more at [RoundHouseTheatre.org/On-Stage/Tickets](http://RoundHouseTheatre.org/On-Stage/Tickets).

- **2-For-1 Tuesday:** For all Tuesday performances of *Next to Normal*, all seats are buy one, get one free. 2-for-1 Tuesday tickets are available online or by phone (240.644.1100) with promo code TWOFORONE. Discounts may not be combined. Not valid on previously purchased tickets.

- **Group Sales:** Groups of 10 or more can save 10% off the single ticket price and are exempt from single ticket fees. These tickets must be reserved and purchased in advance by calling 240.644.1100 or emailing [GroupSales@RoundHouseTheatre.org](mailto:GroupSales@RoundHouseTheatre.org).

#### ROUND HOUSE THEATRE HEALTH & SAFETY POLICIES

Round House Theatre no longer requires that audience members wear masks for most performances in our theatre. However, masks are required for certain performances and for events in other Round House spaces, including our Event Room. We continue to strongly recommend masks as the best way for individuals to protect themselves from COVID-19 and other seasonal viruses, and we ask our audience members to respect the choices of others.

Round House will offer a limited number of mask-required performances for audience members who may prefer a fully masked environment. **Masks are required for performances on February 13 (7:30 pm) and 17 (2:00 pm).**

## ABOUT ROUND HOUSE THEATRE

Round House Theatre is one of the leading professional theatres in the Washington, DC 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 42, 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 ages 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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