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**GREATER BOSTON STAGE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 20th SEASON –
CELEBRATING 20 YEARS WITH STORIES BOTH FRESH AND FAMILIAR**

Greater Boston Stage Company celebrates its 20th Anniversary Season with two World Premieres, an adaptation of a beloved holiday classic, a hit Broadway musical, and a musical collaboration with Front Porch Arts Collective.

“How do you celebrate 20 years?” posed Producing Artistic Director Weylin Symes. “As we headed into Season 20, we asked ourselves that question a lot. We thought about a ‘greatest hits’ season of favorite shows. Then we considered a whole season of brand-new titles highlighting our commitment to new work. But, in the end, we decided to produce the type of great theatre that has come to be expected from GBSC: familiar stories told in fresh new ways alongside exciting new work and, sometimes, both ideas combined into one show.”

The 2019-2020 season rolls in on September 5th with the World Premiere of Producing Artistic Director Weylin Symes’ hilarious and heart-warming ***Last Night at Bowl-Mor Lanes*** - a look at friendship, love, competition, and... bowling. Featuring Paula Plum and Ceit Zweil.

Next is George Brandt’s ***Marie and Rosetta***, a look at two ground-breaking women of rock-n-roll in the 1940’s (co-produced with The Front Porch Arts Collective). Inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2018, Tharpe is heralded as an inspiration for artists such as Little Richard, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley, and Jerry Lee Lewis.

Then GBSC presents its Holiday offering, ***Miracle on 34th Street***, based on the cherished Twentieth Century Fox film. Featuring William Gardiner as Kris Kringle, this show is a reminder that generosity and kindness can better our world.

In March, the *Giving Voice Foundation Trust Drama Series* play takes the stage (the title will be announced shortly). Funding from The Foundation Trust enables Greater Boston Stage Company to fulfill its commitment to producing, over the next five years, an annual play that will feature playwrights from traditionally underrepresented communities within the theatre industry. These communities will include but are not limited to women, people of color, members of the LGBTQ community, and people with disabilities. These plays will have been written within the last 50 years or be contemporary adaptations or explorations of classic work.

Dennis Kelly and Tim Minchin's glorious musical adaptation of **Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical** - a five-time Tony award winner including Best Book of a Musical - will be directed and choreographed by Associate Artistic Director, Ilyse Robbins in April. A story of courage and empowerment for adults and children alike, **Matilda** will feature GBSC's up and coming shining stars from its Young Company.

To close the season, Christopher M. Walsh's World Premiere of **Miss Holmes Returns**, based on the characters by Arthur Conan Doyle and a follow-up to the GBSC 2018 smash hit *Miss Holmes* will be this season's **Don Fulton New Play Project** production. Directed by Weylin Symes, it will herald the return of Marge Dunn as Miss Holmes, Brittany Rolfs as Dr. Watson, and Alexander Platt as Mycroft. About his new work Walsh shares, "I'm writing the sequel because I love these characters, and I've been eager for the chance to revisit them and expand upon this version of the Sherlockian universe. As proud as I am of *Miss Holmes*, I think we only scratched the surface of the stories these characters have to tell. The first *Miss Holmes* has been described as a feminist exploration of the Sherlock Holmes mythos. With *Miss Holmes Returns*, I want to push that exploration more toward intersectionality as well. I'm excited to have it premiere at GBSC because I was moved by the reception the first production received. All of my work to date has premiered in Chicago, but I'm working to uncover new facets of these characters and the world they inhabit, and so I'm looking to step outside of my own comfort zone and develop this script with a new group of artists."

The **Don Fulton New Play Project** is named after the donor whose major philanthropic commitment made it possible. This project represents Greater Boston Stage Company's pledge to produce a World Premiere play each year as part of the Mainstage series.

Alongside the Mainstage productions, GBSC announces three Special Events: Celebrate summer with the **Calamari Sisters' Sausagefest** and then ring in the New Year with **Martha Reeves and the Vandellas**, the all-female group with timeless hits such as "Heat Wave," "Jimmy Mack" and the epic "Dancing in the Street."

Greater Boston Stage Company is proud to announce a Special Dance Event, **Swan Lake in Blue: A Jazz Ballet**, created and composed by GBSC favorite Steve Bass. Choreographed by Ilyse Robbins, *Swan Lake in Blue* reimagines Tchaikovsky's ballet, *Swan Lake*, for tap and jazz dancers. Accompanied on stage by a full 17-piece big band, *Swan Lake in Blue* puts this beautiful story into 1930's Harlem. "This production is the perfect compliment to Weylin's commitment to telling familiar stories in fresh new ways," says Robbins. "The only difference being that this story gets told through music and dance rather than the traditional theatrical form."

Memberships are now on sale for Greater Boston Stage Company's Season 20. All Access, Flex Pass, 6-Show, 4-Show, and Senior Matinee Memberships are available from \$125-\$375. For more information or to purchase a Membership, call GBSC's Box Office at 781-279-2200, or visit www.greaterbostonstage.org.

GREATER BOSTON STAGE COMPANY'S SEASON 20 MAINSTAGE SHOWS:

LAST NIGHT AT BOWL-MOR LANES

September 5 - 29, 2019

By Weylin Symes

World Premiere

Featuring Paula Plum and Ceit Zweil

What happens when a couple of old broads break into a bowling alley? Gutter. Ball. Gold.

Ruth and Maude are on a mission. After 49 years of “friendly competition” the score is tied. It all comes down to one final string before the Bowl-Mor... is No-Mor. Join us for an “unforgettable evening of drunkenness, debauchery ... and very bad bowling.” There will be Cheetos.

MARIE AND ROSETTA

October 17 - November 10, 2019

By George Brandt

Co-produced with **The Front Porch Arts Collective**

Gospel, guitar and the godmother of rock-n-roll.

Celebrated for her ferocious guitar playing and swinging gospel music, Sister Rosetta Tharpe broke boundaries and influenced rock 'n' roll's earliest icons. Set in 1940's Mississippi, Marie and Rosetta shows the legendary icon rehearsing with her young protégée, Marie Knight as the two prepare to embark on a tour that will ultimately cement them as one of the greatest musical duos in history.

MIRACLE ON 34TH STREET

November 29 - December 22, 2019

Adapted by Mountain Community Theater from the novel by Valentine Davies. Based upon the Twentieth Century Fox motion picture *Miracle on 34th Street*.

Featuring William Gardiner

If you really believe, anything can happen.

When Kris Kringle agrees to serve as a last-minute replacement for Santa in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, he is so convincing that he is offered a job as the Santa for Macy's Department store. He claims to be the real Santa Claus, but can he convince the doubters, including an 8-year-old girl longing to find something to believe in?

TBD

March 12 - April 5, 2020

Giving Voice Foundation Trust Drama Series

We're still looking!

We expect to announce our Giving Voice Foundation Trust Drama Series play within the coming months. With funding from The Foundation Trust, GBSC is committed to producing a play annually that will feature playwrights from traditionally underrepresented communities.

ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA THE MUSICAL

April 23 - May 17, 2020

Book by Dennis Kelly

Music and Lyrics by Tim Minchin

Directed by Ilyse Robbins

Music Direction by Steve Bass

Somewhere inside all of us is the power to change the world.

Based on the beloved novel by the brilliantly batty Roald Dahl, comes a larger than life Broadway musical about an extraordinary girl with a sharp mind and a vivid imagination whose talents are constantly belittled by her cruel parents and headmistress. Dreaming of a better life for herself, she dares to take a stand. With the help of her friends and kind-hearted teacher, this miraculous girl sparks a revolution!

MISS HOLMES RETURNS

June 4 - 28, 2020

By Christopher M. Walsh

Based on characters by Arthur Conan Doyle

Don Fulton New Play Project

Directed by Weylin Symes

Featuring Marge Dunn, Alexander Platt, & Brittany Rolfs

The World's Greatest Detective is Back!

Sherlock and Watson are back on the case in this riveting follow-up to our 2018 smash hit *Miss Holmes*. Murder, mystery, betrayal, and a dose of social justice are all on the docket this time around for the unstoppable crime-fighting duo.

ABOUT GREATER BOSTON STAGE COMPANY:

We bring vibrant professional theatre and dramatic education beyond the boundaries of Boston, featuring world and regional premieres alongside fresh interpretations of familiar work. Within this setting, we uniquely foster the artists of tomorrow by providing ongoing performance and employment opportunities to our company of current and former students. Now in its 19th Season of live theatre in Stoneham, MA, Greater Boston Stage Company produces six Mainstage shows, presents a series of Special Events, and runs year-round classes, lessons, and fully staged productions through The Young Company for students in grades 1–12.

Box Office: (781) 279-2200

Box Office Hours: Mondays – Fridays, 11am to 6pm; Saturdays, 1pm to 6pm

Location: 395 Main Street, Stoneham, MA 02180

Website: www.greaterbostonstage.org

Flagship Season Sponsors: StonehamBank and the Stoneham Savings/Salem Five Charitable Foundation

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