



AMERICAN THEATER COMPANY NAMES BONNIE METZGAR INTERIM ARTISTIC DIRECTOR AND INITIATES NATIONAL SEARCH FOR PERMANENT LEADERSHIP

LATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PJ PAPARELLI'S ACCLAIMED *THE PROJECT(S)* CONTINUES THROUGH JUNE 21

June 1, 2015 (CHICAGO, IL)—**American Theater Company's** (ATC) Board of Directors has named respected Chicago artist **Bonnie Metzgar** as its interim artistic director, effective immediately. Metzgar, the former artistic director of About Face Theatre, had an ongoing relationship with ATC including most recently directing the documentary play *Let Me Down Easy* by Anna Deavere Smith earlier this season. The ATC Board also announced it will conduct a national search for new permanent leadership for the theater, following the unexpected passing of ATC Artistic Director PJ Paparelli last month. Details on a Chicago memorial service for Paparelli will be announced soon.

Paparelli's acclaimed world premiere *The Project(s)*, a documentary play on Chicago's public housing, will continue at ATC as scheduled through June 21, 2015. The production was conceived, co-written and directed by Paparelli and co-written by Joshua Jaeger. To purchase tickets or for more information, call 773-409-4125 or visit www.atcweb.org. A select number of free tickets are available at each performance for all former and current public housing residents; interested residents can call ATC at 773-409-4125 for details.

"We are pleased to welcome Bonnie back to ATC, where her artistic leadership will be invaluable during this transition," said ATC Board President Nancy Shields. "Bonnie will help us identify the right leader to carry on PJ's legacy of developing new work in Chicago and telling vital stories about what it means to be an American."

Bonnie Metzgar is a playwright, director, dramaturg and producer. She is currently a member of Goodman Theatre's 2014-15 Playwrights Unit. From 2008-2013, Metzgar served as Artistic Director of About Face Theatre and was proud to work on behalf of LGBTQ artists at a theater dedicated to advancing the national dialogue on sexuality and gender. In 2013-2014, Metzgar was awarded the Carl Djerassi Fellowship in Playwriting at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. Her play *You Lost Me* was a 2014 Finalist for the Eugene O'Neill National Playwrights Festival, and was selected for the 2014 Great Plains Theater Conference in Omaha. Currently, Metzgar is continuing work on a new performance work commissioned by the NEA that was inspired by the life of trans Civil

War soldier Albert Cashier with composer Tamara Roberts. Recent directing credits include *Let Me Down Easy* by Anna Deavere Smith starring Usman Ally at American Theater Company and *Walk Across America for Mother Earth* by Taylor Mac for Red Tape as part of the 2015 Garage Rep at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. Previously, Metzgar produced the 365 Festival with Suzan-Lori Parks and was Associate Producer at the Public Theater. Metzgar is on the National Advisory Committee for Howlround at Arts Emerson and has taught at a number of universities including Brown, University of Chicago and currently at DePaul. She received her MFA in Playwriting from the University of Iowa and her BA from Brown.

About American Theater Company

American Theater Company (ATC) challenges and inspires its community by exploring stories that ask the question, "What does it mean to be an American?" ATC's Ensemble includes Patrick Andrews, Kareem Bandealy, Jaime Castañeda, Kelly O'Sullivan, Tyler Ravelson, and Sadieh Rifai.

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