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**Kokandy Productions Announces 2016 Season:**

*Chicago Premiere!*

**HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL**

**Book, Music & Lyrics by Kevin Murphy & Laurence O'Keefe**

**Directed by Allison Hendrix**

**Music Direction by Aaron Benham**

**GUTENBERG! THE MUSICAL**

**Book, Music & Lyrics Scott Brown & Anthony King**

**Directed by John D. Glover**

**Music Direction by Kory Danielson**

**Plus Added 2015 Production:**

**A KOKANDY CHRISTMAS**

*Inspired by TV's Greatest Holiday Specials*

**CHICAGO** (March 23, 2015) – **Kokandy Productions** is pleased to announce its 2016 season – plus an added holiday production for the 2015 season. The 2016 season kicks off with the Chicago premiere of the dark “mean teen” comedy **HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL**, based on the hit 1980s cult film of the same name, with book, music and lyrics by **Kevin Murphy** and **Laurence O’Keefe**, directed by Co-Artistic Director **Allison Hendrix** and music direction by **Aaron Benham**.

Then, history gets a zany and hilarious shake-up in **GUTENBERG! THE MUSICAL** with book, music and lyrics by **Scott Brown** and **Anthony King**, directed by Co-Artistic Director **John D. Glover** and music direction by Resident Music Director **Kory Danielson**. The 2016 season will also include two yet-to-be announced new works, presented as part of Kokandy’s **New Staged Musical Reading Series**, dedicated to developing new works for the musical theatre canon.

But first, **Kokandy Productions** will wrap up 2015 with its first-ever holiday show, **A KOKANDY CHRISTMAS**, a musical celebration inspired by some of television’s most beloved holiday specials. All three mainstage productions will be presented at Kokandy’s resident home, **Theater Wit**, 1229 W. Belmont Ave. in Chicago. Tickets will go on sale at a later date. For additional information, visit [www.kokandyproductions.com](http://www.kokandyproductions.com).

"Our 2016 season provides the opportunity to use broad comedy and satire to explore the perils of contemporary life," comments Co-Artistic Director **Allison Hendrix**. "Both **HEATHERS** and **GUTENBERG** play with and poke fun at the tropes of musical theater, while using the form to illuminate important issues we face in modern society. With the addition of **A KOKANDY CHRISTMAS**, this is also the first year we will be producing *three* mainstage productions alongside our two staged readings. We're incredibly grateful for the audience and theater community support that has allowed us to grow so quickly over these last two seasons. We're thrilled to continue that momentum and bring Chicago theater-goers exciting new programming."

Adds Co-Artistic Director **John D. Glover**, "After directing very large companies in *Sweet Smell of Success* and *The Full Monty* during the previous two seasons, I'm looking forward to a more intimate project. Our 2016 season is all about fun storytelling delivered through a musical theater lens,

and GUTENBERG's 'play-within-a musical, no 'fourth wall' structure is sure to leave our audiences wanting more. I'm so looking forward to launching this charming theatrical adventure!"

### **Kokandy Productions' 2015-16 Line-Up Includes:**

**December 3 – 24, 2015**

#### **A KOKANDY CHRISTMAS**

Developed by **Michael Potsic** and Co-Artistic Director **Allison Hendrix**

Directed by **Michael Potsic**

Music Direction by Resident Music Director **Kory Danielson**

Inspired by some of the greatest and most beloved holiday television specials, **A KOKANDY CHRISTMAS** will be a delightful evening of music, laughter and celebration featuring performers from past and present Kokandy productions – plus some surprising new friends.

**February – April 2016**

#### **HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL – Chicago Premiere!**

Book, music and lyrics by **Kevin Murphy** and **Laurence O'Keefe**

Directed by Co-Artistic Director **Allison Hendrix**

Music Direction by **Aaron Benham**

**HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL** is a rock musical based on the 1988 cult film *Heathers*. Seventeen-year-old Veronica Sawyer is a brainy, beautiful teenage misfit who hustles her way into the most powerful and ruthless clique at Westerberg High: The Heathers. But before she can get comfortable atop the high school food chain, Veronica falls in love with the dangerously sexy new kid J.D. Brought to you by the award-winning creative team of **Kevin Murphy** (*Reefer Madness*, "Desperate Housewives") and **Laurence O'Keefe** (*Bat Boy*, *Legally Blonde*), **HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL** is a hilarious, heartfelt, and homicidal new show based on the greatest teen comedy of all time.

**July - August 2016**

#### **GUTENBERG! THE MUSICAL**

Book, music and lyrics by **Scott Brown** and **Anthony King**

Directed by Co-Artistic Director **John D. Glover**

Music Direction by Resident Music Director **Kory Danielson**

In this two-man musical spoof, a pair of aspiring playwrights perform a backers' audition for their new project – a big, splashy musical about printing press inventor Johann Gutenberg. With an unending supply of enthusiasm, Bud and Doug sing all the songs and play all the parts in their crass historical epic, with the hope that one of the producers in attendance will give them a Broadway contract – fulfilling their ill-advised dreams.

### **About the Directors**

**Allison Hendrix** (**HEATHERS: THE MUSICAL**) is the director of Kokandy's New Musical Staged Reading Series, serving as literary coordinator and dramaturg, and will direct 2015's *Loving Repeating*. Previous Kokandy credits include *Assassins* (Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme), *The Last Five Years* (Cathy – Jeff Nomination, Principal Actress in a Musical), and *The Great American Trailer Park Musical* (Music Direction). She has also worked with companies including The Hypocrites (*Into the Woods* - Baker's Wife), Piven Theatre Workshop (*Cities of Light* – Music Director), Boho Theatre (*Floyd Collins* – Associate Music Director/Conductor), Bailiwick (*Zanna, Don't*) - Music Director), The Ruckus (director – Thank God for Music Stands Staged Reading Series), Village Players Theater (*The Full Monty* – Music Director) and Towle Theatre (*Floyd Collins* – Music Director and recipient of NIETF Award for Best Vocal Direction).

**John D. Glover** (**GUTENBERG! THE MUSICAL**) most recently directed Kokandy's *The Full Monty* and *Sweet Smell of Success* (Jeff Nomination – Best Production of a Musical). For six years, John was responsible for the artistic and fiscal direction of the Theater Company of Purdue University, and has directed regionally in Ohio and Indiana, including directing the grand opening production of the Theatre

at the Center in Munster. John is the recipient of several Northern Indiana Excellence in Theater Foundation awards (NIETF), including Best Direction of a Musical for *Pump Boys and Dinettes* at Purdue Theater Company and Best Direction of a Musical for *Floyd Collins* at the Towle Theater, as well as the NIETF Award for Lifetime Achievement in Regional Theater.

### **About Kokandy Productions**

Founded in 2010, **Kokandy Productions** seeks to leverage the heightened reality of musical theater to tell complex and challenging stories, with a focus on contributing to the development of Chicago-based musical theater artists, and raising the profile of Chicago's non-Equity musical theater community.

The company's artistic staff is comprised of John D. Glover (Co-Artistic Director), Allison Hendrix (Co-Artistic Director), Scot T. Kokandy (Executive Producer), Kory Danielson (Resident Music Director) and Jonathan Goldthwaite (Production Assistant).

For additional information, visit [www.kokandyproductions.com](http://www.kokandyproductions.com).

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