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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City Theatre presents a time-bending journey:
THE GUARD
By Jessica Dickey

March 11 – April 2, 2017

Pittsburgh, PA (February 17, 2017) – Art, history, and humanity align in City Theatre’s upcoming production of *The Guard* by **Jessica Dickey**. **Directed by Artistic Director Tracy Brigden, the play will run March 11-April 2 on the Main Stage**, continuing the 2016-17 season of new plays. This is the third time Ms. Dickey’s work has been produced at City Theatre, following *Charles Ives Take Me Home* (2013) and *The Amish Project* (2011). The play features a cast of five tackling ten roles—including appearances by the legendary painter Rembrandt and the epic poet Homer—over three time periods. Tickets are on sale now.

About *The Guard*: When dedicated museum guard Henry dares to connect with the paintings he proudly protects, he sets into motion a time-bending journey where art intersects with life. Inspired by Rembrandt’s “Aristotle with a Bust of Homer,” *The Guard* embraces the idea of carpe diem in (and at) any age, for a spellbinding theatrical exploration of the power of human connection.

“*The Guard* was inspired by a trip I took to the National Gallery in London,” revealed **playwright Jessica Dickey**. “I had an epiphany while looking at a painting—and I think I was quite emotional—when I looked beside me and discovered a museum guard. He was a small man with receding strawberry blond hair; he had an attentive face that belied a particular kindness... I was immediately struck that this was his JOB—all day, every day, he watched the art, which meant he also watched the people like me who had come to see the art and I wondered what that was like. So I asked him! Thus began *The Guard*.”

“I am so pleased to welcome Jessica Dickey back to City Theatre and to be at the helm of the second production of this spectacular play,” said **director Tracy Brigden**. “*The Guard* wraps its arms around many vital subjects—life, love, and legacy to name a few. In exploring the lives of these artists and poets, the play hones in on the dreams and fears of every one of us. Jessica’s characters are utterly loveable, her language is gorgeous—often hilarious—and the theatrical storytelling will leave you smiling with surprise.”

The Guard is directed by **Tracy Brigden**. The cast includes **Andrew May** as Henry/Rembrandt, **Stephen James Anthony** as Dodger/Titus, **Melinda Helfrich** as Madeline/Henny, **Billy Hepfinger** as Jonny/Martin, and **Raphael Nash Thompson** as Simon/Homer. **Narelle Sissons** is scenic designer, **Elizabeth Hope Clancy** is costume designer, **Andrew David Ostrowski** is lighting designer, **Zachary Beattie-Brown** is sound designer, and **Eric Shimelonis** will compose an original score for the play.

City Connects UNITY: A conversation with The Thomas Merton Center will take place on Saturday, April 1, following the 1:00 p.m. matinee. City Connects is a program designed to connect City Theatre plays with relevant community organizations to stimulate conversation and activism through art. The discussion with Antonio Lodico of the Thomas Merton Center will touch on the essential themes of the play through the lens of civil disobedience. The TMC works to build a consciousness of values and to raise the moral questions involved in the issues of war, poverty, racism, classism, economic justice, human rights, and environmental justice. TMC engages people of diverse philosophies and faiths who find common ground in the nonviolent struggle to bring about a more peaceful and just world.

Other community engagement and special programming throughout the run of *The Guard* includes a partnership with the **Carnegie Museum of Art** and an off-site event with the **Andy Warhol Museum**. A photography exhibit featuring local museum guards at work will be on display in the lobby throughout the run, featuring photos by Point Park student **Madison Turiczek**. Artists, including **Breanna Martray and Rebecca Harmon** from the local art-studio start-up **Radiant Hall**, will have “touchable” works on display as well. Following the Wednesday, March 15 performance, a conversation with the visual artists will take place in City Theatre’s Gordon Lounge.

THE GUARD

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

March 11-April 2, 2017

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. and/or 7:00 p.m.

Thursdays and Fridays at 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays at 1:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m., and/or 9:00 p.m.

Sundays at 2:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m.

For a complete listing of show times, please visit CityTheatreCompany.org or call 412-431-2489.

PRESS / OPENING NIGHT:

Friday, March 17 at 8:00 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Sipping Sunday – March 12 at 7:00 p.m.

Sample wines specially chosen to complement the production.

Touch the Art Happy Hour at City Theatre – March 15 at 5:30 p.m.

Join the staff of City Theatre for drinks and mingling before the show and be the first to see the “touchable” artworks curated with Radiant Hall. Following the performance, the artists will be available in the lobby to discuss their process and inspiration behind their projects.

Sunday Talkbacks – March 19 & 26

A conversation with the artists immediately following the 2:00 p.m. performances, moderated by City Theatre artistic staff.

Greenroom Young Professionals Night – Friday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m.

\$25 Greenroom ticket includes complimentary snacks, beer, and wine after the performance, and mingling with the cast. Use code GREENROOM when ordering. Special guest and activity to be announced. Food provided by Café du Jour.

Pay-What-You-Want – Saturday, March 25 at 1:00 p.m.

A limited number of tickets are reserved for PWYW and go on sale two hours before curtain, walk up sales only. Call the box office in advance to check on availability.

City Connects UNITY: A Conversation with the Thomas Merton Center – Saturday, April 1

Immediately following the performance, a free dialogue with Antonio Lodico, executive director of the Thomas Merton Center for Peace will take place on the stage. Lodico will discuss the themes of the play through the lens of civil disobedience.

ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCE DATES:

ASL Interpretation Tuesday, March 28 at 7:00 p.m.

Open Captioning and Audio Description Sunday, April 2 at 2:00 p.m.

WHERE:

City Theatre, 1300 Bingham Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 (South Side)

Patron parking is available in the lot across from the City Theatre entrance for \$8.

BOX OFFICE:

412.431.CITY (2489) or citytheatrecompany.org

TICKETS:

Single tickets start at \$37.50.

Season subscriptions are still available and three-show packages start at \$99.

DISCOUNTS:

Audiences under 30 may reserve \$15 tickets in advance for all performances except Fridays at 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 5:30 p.m.; on Fridays and Saturdays, rush tickets are available two hours prior to show time and based on availability. **Seniors age 62 and older** may purchase \$22 rush tickets at the Box Office beginning two hours before show time, based on availability.

Groups of 10 or more are eligible for discounts – contact Joel Ambrose at 412.431.4400 x286.

City Theatre is now in its 42nd season. Located in the historic South Side, City Theatre is Pittsburgh's home for bold new plays, commissioning and producing work by playwrights including Daniel Beaty, Jessica Dickey, Christopher Durang, Michael Hollinger, Willy Holtzman, Tarell Alvin McCraney, and Madeleine George. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tracy Brigden, Managing Director James McNeel, and the Board of Directors, City Theatre's mission is to provide an artistic home for the development and production of contemporary plays of substance and ideas that engage and challenge a diverse audience. CityTheatreCompany.org

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