



NewsRelease

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Playhouse Square is Tickled Pink to Present
Cleveland Play House's Production of
STEEL MAGNOLIAS
May 21 – August 21**



CLEVELAND, OH (April 21, 2016) Playhouse Square and Cleveland Play House (CPH) are joining forces for the first time in history to bring Cleveland audiences a truly unforgettable production full of sass, style and sisterhood. **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** will run **May 21 – August 21** in the Allen Theatre as part of Playhouse Square's KeyBank Broadway Series.

Written by Robert Harling and set in Louisiana in the 1980's, **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** is equal parts hilarious and heartwarming. At Truvy's beauty shop, the motto is: there's no such thing as natural beauty—the women are all sass and brass. Through clouds of hairspray and over the buzz of blow dryers, six southern spitfires gather each week to chat and support each other through thick and thin. But those bonds are about to be tested when M'Lynn and her daughter Shelby face a life-changing crisis. Infused with heart and humor, **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** is a hilarious story that touches on love, loss, and enduring friendship.

Directed by CPH Artistic Director Laura Kepley and comprised of an all-female cast and artistic team, **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** explores the bonds of six friends who know what it's like to be there through thick and thin.

Executive Producer of Playhouse Square Gina Vernaci notes, "When Laura Kepley suggested **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** as our co-production, I read the script. And immediately I was reminded of how much I enjoy this play and the bond between its lovable characters. Laura's insightful touch as the director is certain to make our audiences feel as though they are sitting right in the middle of Truvy's beauty parlor. It will be a memorable night in the intimate Allen Theatre."

"**STEEL MAGNOLIAS** will close out CPH's historic Centennial season with wit, style and heart" stated Kepley. "I cannot wait for Cleveland audiences to sit a spell with the hilarious, charming and relatable women in this play. It's rare today to have all-female casts, and this particular play is a gift to the actresses who will play these parts. We will have three generations of women onstage from newcomers to seasoned veterans. The humor is second-to-none and the unbreakable bond these women share is extraordinary and inspiring. This is a play for women and for all those who love women. We are excited to be collaborating with our friends at Playhouse Square and are looking forward to an incredible summer of great theatre."

STEEL MAGNOLIAS will run from **MAY 21 – AUGUST 21**, in the theatre **Allen Theatre** at Playhouse Square. Tickets are on sale now! Performance times are Tuesday through Friday at 8:00 pm, Saturday at 2:00 pm and 8:00 pm, and Sunday at 1:00 pm and 6:30 pm. Tickets start at just \$10 and are available at playhousesquare.org, 216-241-6000 or the Playhouse Square Ticket Office. Groups of 15 or more call group sales at 216-640-8600.

Playhouse Square is a world-class, not-for-profit performing arts center, arts education champion and downtown developer.

For additional press materials, please visit playhousesquare.org/presskit

Behind-the-Scenes Activities offered by Cleveland Play House:

Behind-the-Scenes: Women in Theatre
May 16, 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.

The 2015 Tony Awards, with a record number of female nominees across all categories, became a true watershed moment for women in theater. Cleveland Play House's Artistic Director, Laura Kepley, proudly joined that moment when she accepted the Regional Theatre Tony Award on behalf of CPH. One of only 15 women to hold top leadership positions in 72 LORT theatres across the country, Laura leads a team of strong women working on ***Steel Magnolias***. Join these trailblazers in a moderated discussion that explores their successes in a world that is traditionally run by men.

Pre-Show Conversations - These fun and interactive 25-minute conversations happen right before the show in the Allen Theatre Complex. Pull back the curtain early and connect with the play in an engaging and relaxed setting, beginning 45 minutes before every performance.

The Cast of **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** includes:

CHARLOTTE BOOKER (*Clairee*) last appeared at CPH in *Man of the Moment* and *Born Yesterday*. New York stage credits include both Broadway revivals of *Born Yesterday*. Off-Broadway: *Leave Me Green*, *Take Me Back*, *Ten Chimneys*, *Five Genocides*, *Deathbed*, *Fugue*, *Psycho Beach Party* and *Bitch!* (which she also wrote). Regional appearances include the recent all-female *As You Like It* (Baltimore Centerstage), *Visitors* (Martha's Vineyard Playhouse), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Cincinnati Playhouse), *Lady With All The Answers* (Theatreworks and Capitol Rep), *Our Town* (Hartford Stage and the Alley Theatre) and leading roles at Williamstown, Denver Center, Gulfshore Playhouse and theaters all over the place. TV: *Power*, *The Jim Gaffigan Show*, *Boardwalk Empire*, *Law & Order*, *CI*, *Murphy Brown*, *Drew Carey*, *Married with Children*, *Larry Sanders*, *Newsradio*, *Chicago Hope*, and many more. She played Honey in the short-lived series *Hi Honey*, *I'm Home*, which aired on ABC and Nick-at-Nite. Film: *Inside Llewyn Davis*, *Brazzaville Teenager*, *Love and Support*, *Stuart Bliss*, and *Temporary Girl*. She holds a BS in Performance Studies from Northwestern University and had the good fortune to study acting in NYC with Uta Hagen, Shelley Winters, F. Murray Abraham and Geraldine Page.

DEVON CARAWAY (*Annelle*) recently graduated from Brown/Trinity Rep's MFA Program. A few credits include: *Pericles* (Bawd, Brown/Trinity Rep), *Lungs* (Woman, Brown/Trinity Rep), *Stone Cold Dead Serious* (Linda/Snake Lady, Brown/Trinity Rep), *A Christmas Carol* (Mrs. Dilber/Sister, Trinity Repertory Company), *Bus Stop* (Grace, Brown/Trinity Rep), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Hero, Brown/Trinity Rep) and *As You Like It* (Rosalind, NYU GRAD Summer Fest). Film credits include the upcoming *Some Freaks*, and *Pesi*. She also holds a BFA from NYU Tisch and is an associate of SDC.

ALLISON LAYMAN (*Shelby*) worked on Broadway last spring standing by for Anna Chlumsky in *Living On Love* with Renée Fleming. She originated the role of Rebecca in the New York premiere of Dean Poyner's *Together We Are Making a Poem in Honor of Life*. Regionally, she appeared in *Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike* (The Huntington Theatre Company and The Old Globe); *All's Well That Ends Well* (inaugural Globe for All Tour); *Pygmalion* (The Old Globe). A company member with Shakespeare Theatre

of New Jersey for two years, she has acted in *The Comedy of Errors*, *Timon of Athens*, as well as the touring productions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Julius Caesar* and *Macbeth*. She can be seen as Shelby (yes, Shelby!) on *The Path* (Hulu/Universal). Allison is a graduate of Wesleyan University and received her MFA from the Old Globe/USD.

ERIKA ROLFSRUD (*M'Lynn*) is excited to be back at Cleveland Play House where she was last seen in *The Game's Afoot!* Her credits include, on Broadway: *The Big Knife*, *Coast of Utopia*, *Exit The King* and *Rabbit Hole*. Off-Broadway: *Electra In a One-Piece*, *Misalliance*, *The Cocktail Party*, *The Glory of Living*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *Love's Fire*, *Trout Stanley*, and more. Regional credits: *God of Carnage*, *The Seagull*, *Cymbeline*, *Henry IV* and *Macbeth* (Old Globe Theatre); *Little Dog Laughed*—Kevin Kline Best Actress Award (St Louis Repertory Theatre); *Good People*, *Time Stands Still* and *Rabbit Hole* (Hartford Theaterworks); *Rabbit Hole* (Pittsburgh Public Theatre); *Bad Dates* (Arizona Theatre Company); *Misalliance* (Shakespeare Theater of New Jersey) and more. She was featured in the film *Alone*, and has been seen on TV in *House of Cards*, *The Mysteries of Laura*, *The Following*, *The Knick*, *Forever*, *Law & Order* and *Third Watch*. For Will. www.erikarolfsrud.com

ELIZABETH MEADOWS ROUSE (*Truvy*) New York: *The Rose Tattoo* (Broadway), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Theater for a New Audience), *Othello* and *A Comedy of Errors* (New World Stages) and T.A.C.T. London credits: Shakespeare's *Globe Mistress Allwitt-A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (T.A.C.T. London opposite Mark Rylance). Regional: *Dirty Blonde* (Cleveland Play House), *Moon Over Buffalo* (Gulfshore Playhouse), *All The Way* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *The Underpants* (Portland Center Stage), *A Comedy of Errors* (Actors Theatre of Louisville/Humana Festival), *As You Like It* (Long wharf Theatre), *The Country Wife* (The Shakespeare Theater), *Steel Magnolias* (Triad Stage), *The Matchmaker* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Fulton Theatre), *Mrs. Mannerly* (Kitchen Theatre Company), *As You Like It* (Center Stage), *Light up the Sky* (Alliance Theatre) and *Born Yesterday* (Pioneer Theatre Company). Television credits include: *30 Rock*, *The Carrie Diaries*, *The Sopranos* and *Law and Order SVU*. Elizabeth received her BFA from Southern Methodist University and her MFA from the University of Washington, under Jack Clay. Elizabeth is represented by Wolf Talent Group.

MARY STOUT (*Ouiser*) is a seasoned Broadway performer appearing in *Jane Eyre*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Copperfield*, *Me and My Girl*, *My Favorite Year* and *A Change in the Heir*. She has toured nationally in numerous shows including *Fiddler on the Roof*. She played Euergia Bremer on AMC's award-winning series *Remember Wenn* and was a featured voice in Disney's *Aladdin* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. For three years she was Mrs. Santa in Radio City Music Hall's Christmas Spectacular. She has appeared in *Far From Heaven* (Playwright's Horizons and Williamstown Theatre Festival); the North American debut of *Beauty Blue Eyes* (Music Theatre of Wichita); *Dividing the Estate* (Palm Beach Dramaworks); *The Full Monty* (Theatre Aspen). Recent work includes *Mood Over Buffalo* at the Gulfshore Playhouse and a TV pilot of the story

and comedy of *Nunsense*. Hopefully to be seen on a network near you in the not-too-distant future. Mary is an Ohio girl, so hello Cleveland!

EMILY CASEY (*Singer/Musician*) is thrilled to make her Cleveland Play House debut. Emily has worked regionally at Steppenwolf Garage, Northlight Theatre, Actor's Theatre of Louisville and American Repertory Theatre. Additional Chicago credits: *All Our Tragic* and *The Gilbert and Sullivan Repertory*, (*The Hypocrites*), *The Casuals* (Jackalope Theatre) and *Frederick* (Chicago Children's Theatre). Emily is also a singer/songwriter and a playwright. She holds a BA from Hope College in Michigan and is a native of Wheaton, Illinois. For more info feel free to visit www.emily-casey.com. Thanks to Ryan, her family and Calleri Casting.

MAGGIE LAKIS (*Singer/Musician*) This is Maggie's CPH debut! Recent work includes Duncan Sheik and Nell Benjamin's new musical *Because Of Winn-Dixie* at Delaware Theatre Co. and John Doyle's re-imagined *Allegro* at Classic Stage Company. She performed in the 1st National Tour of *Avenue Q*, as well as the current Off-Broadway production at New World Stages. Other regional work includes *It's a Wonderful Life: A Radio Play* (Bucks County Playhouse), *Into the Woods* (The Muny), *Clybourne Park* and *Sunday in the Park with George* (Arden Theatre Co), *Tin Pan Alley Rag* (Wilma Theatre), *Sylvia & All My Sons* (Delaware Theatre Co), *Our Show of Shows* (Flat Rock Playhouse) and *Little Shop of Horrors* (11th Hour / Theatre Horizon) for which she received a Barrymore Nomination for Best Actress in a musical.

CATHERINE L. ALBERS (*u/s Clairee and Ousier*) is pleased to be a part of this production and to have the opportunity to work with all these lovely women. She is an Emeriti Professor of Theater from Case Western Reserve University and a Founding Artistic Director of the Great Lakes Michael Chekhov Consortium, an organization that trains teachers in the Michael Chekhov Acting Technique. She has performed throughout the country and favorite roles include Dr. Vivian Bearing in *WIT*, Ismene in *Jocasta* and Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*.

MEGAN KING (*u/s Shelby and Annette*) was most recently seen on Cleveland Play House's stage in *Luna Gale* as Karlie Quinn. Other CPH credits include: *The Little Foxes*, *The Crucible* and an understudy for *A Christmas Story*. She is proud to be a recent graduate of the CWRU/CPH MFA Acting Program's class of 2016 and her credits from the program include: *The Philadelphia Story*, *The Three Sisters*, *Too True to Be Good* and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Undergraduate credits include: *Dromnium*, a devised movement piece, which won seven national awards from The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, as well as *God of Carnage* and *The Three Sisters*. Megan is a class of 2013 graduate from the University of Arkansas at Fort Smith with her B.A. in Theatre Performance. She also holds an Associates of Fine Arts Degree from Arkansas State University Beebe.

The **STEEL MAGNOLIAS** Artistic Team includes:

ROBERT HARLING (*Playwright*) made his directorial debut with *The Evening Star* for Paramount, which he also wrote for the screen based on Larry McMurty's novel. *The Evening Star* reunited Shirley MacLaine and Jack Nicholson and co-stars Juliette Lewis, Bill Paxton, Scott Wolf, Miranda Richardson, and Marion Ross. *The Evening Star* is the continuation of one of the most beloved and acclaimed movies of our time, *Terms of Endearment*. Before launching a successful stage and screenwriting career, Robert graduated from Tulane University School of Law, but instead of taking the bar exam, he opted to become an actor in New York. After years of productive work as an actor in voiceovers and commercials, Harling was inspired to write the highly acclaimed stage play *Steel Magnolias*, which was based on events from his personal life. *Steel Magnolias* continues to thrive in theatrical productions throughout the world. Immediately bridging a career from stage to screen, Harling adapted his original play into the popular film of the same title, which starred Sally Field, Julia Roberts, Shirley MacLaine, Olympia Dukakis, Dolly Parton, and Daryl Hannah. Over the years, Mr. Harling has become a much sought-after screenwriter: other credits, to name a few, include *Soapdish*, which was based on Harling's acting experience and starred Sally Field, Whoopi Goldberg, and Robert Downey Jr., and *First Wives Club* for Paramount, starring Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn, and Diane Keaton.

LAURA KEPLEY (*Director*) is in her third season as Artistic Director and has directed Cleveland Play House mainstage productions of *The Good Peaches* (world premiere), *The Crucible*, *Fairfield* (world premiere), *The Little Foxes*, *Venus in Fur*, *Good People* (also at Syracuse Stage), *A Carol for Cleveland* (world premiere), *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play*, *My Name is Asher Lev* and CPH readings of Roe Green Award-winning plays *Soups, Stews and Casseroles: 1976*, *Marjorie Prime* and *Daphne's Dive*. She joined CPH in 2010 as Associate Artistic Director, having arrived from Trinity Repertory Company in Providence, Rhode Island where she was Resident Director and Artistic Associate for four seasons and Interim Director of the Brown/Trinity Rep M.F.A. in Directing Program for one. She has also directed for The Alliance Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and Contemporary American Theatre Festival, among others. A native Ohioan, Laura received her undergraduate degree from Northwestern University and her Master of Fine Arts from Brown University/Trinity Rep. She is a Drama League Fellow and a recipient of the 2009—2011 National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group Career Development Program for Directors.

VICKI SMITH (*Scenic Designer*), **JEN CAPRIO** (*Costume Designer*), **JENNIFER SCHRIEVER** (*Lighting Designer*), **JANE SHAW** (*Sound Designer*), **WIGS AND WHISKERS** (*Wig Design*).

The Stage Manager will be **JENNIFER MATHESON COLLINS** and the Assistant Stage Manager will be **TOM HUMES**.

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