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September 23, 2016
For Immediate Release

Salt Lake Acting Company Presents
The National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere of
WINTER
By Julie Jensen

inspired by *ROBECK*, in *ENDING LIFE: Ethics and the Way We Die*
by Margaret Pabst Battin, © 2005 Oxford University Press

Salt Lake Acting Company (SLAC) proudly presents the National New Play Network (NNPN) Rolling World Premiere production of resident playwright Julie Jensen's newest play *WINTER*, running **October 12 – November 13, 2016**.

WINTER tells the story of an aging couple who have made a pact to leave this life on their own terms when the time comes. For Annis, the time has come; her mind is deteriorating and she's becoming afraid. Robeck, however, still has work to do. Their two sons and free-spirited granddaughter each have their own ideas about what's best for them, and the audience is left with a thoughtful, provocative look at one of the most controversial topics in America.

Playwright Julie Jensen has long been interested in this topic and took inspiration from **Margaret Pabst Battin's** short story *ROBECK* in her book 'ENDING LIFE: Ethics and the Way We Die.' Battin is a celebrated author and distinguished professor of philosophy at the University of Utah. She has written numerous essays, short stories and books on the ethics of assisted suicide and end-of-life issues.

Jensen says: *"This is a very important subject. I've cared about it for years. I wondered about it when my mother was deep into dementia, and I wonder still as I watch the struggles others. At what point do we lose dignity or become a burden? And most important of all, how do we know when it's the right time. As Annis says, 'We must leave before the last possible minute, or else we lose the capacity to make it happen.'"*

Jensen discussed her working process for the project: *"I worked on this play with a company of actors and a director throughout. We read it many times, many ways. It was a unique experience that made the process less lonely and the product much richer. I am indebted to the work of my other collaborators and will always be."*

When asked about working with director Tracy Callahan, Jensen said: *"Tracy is a great director, great with actors and a genius with physicalization. She brings to a play what I cannot."*

Director Tracy Callahan has been working with Jensen on this play's development since its beginning. Before that the two worked together on Jensen's play *MOCKINGBIRD*, which was produced at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C. and was nominated for two Helen Hayes Awards: Outstanding Original Play and Outstanding Production. The play also won the David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award.

Callahan says: *"Having collaborated with Julie on the adaptation of the book MOCKINGBIRD for almost fifteen months resulting in three productions, we both felt that we had found a creative partner. When the opportunity came up to work with her again on WINTER, I jumped at the chance to be involved. Our creative relationship is quite open and honest. In*

very basic terms Julie writes the words, characters and conflict, and I help her see and hear the action of the play. It is fairly unique in the sense that often we cross over into each other's 'territory' without ego getting in the way. Ideas are explored both in the writing and by using actors in a series of workshops with me directing changes made to the script."

Speaking of the inception of the play, Callahan says, "The journey that has become WINTER began over a bottle of wine with Anne Decker, Julie Jensen and Peggy Battin. As soon as I heard the subject of the story I wanted in. That was over a year ago and we have been experimenting and exploring the story ever since."

WINTER is part of NNPN's Rolling World Premiere program, meaning it will be produced in at least three theatres across the country within a calendar year. The other theatres that will produce WINTER this season are Central Works in Berkeley, CA and Rivendell Theatre Ensemble in Chicago, IL.

WHO'S WHO

PLAYWRIGHT

Julie Jensen has been writing plays for over 30 years. She has won a dozen awards, among them The Joseph Jefferson Award in Chicago for best new work, the LA Weekly Award for best new play, and The David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award. She has been commissioned by a dozen theatres including Kennedy Center (twice) and Actors Theatre of Louisville (twice) and Salt Lake Acting Company (twice). She has received grants from NEA, TCG, Pew Charitable Trusts, among others. Her work has been produced in NYC, London, and theatres nationwide, from Arizona to Alaska, from Michigan to Massachusetts, California to Connecticut. Her work is published by Dramatists Play Service, Dramatic Publishing, and Smith and Krause.

She has taught playwriting at five universities, directed a graduate playwriting program, and has written a book on the craft. She is currently the Resident Playwright at Salt Lake Acting Company, board member of the College of Fellows of the American Theatre, and the Regional Representative of the Dramatists Guild of America.

Her play MOCKINGBIRD, recently nominated for a Helen Hayes Award, will be produced by six professional theatres this season. And WINTER, part of the National New Play Network's Rolling World Premiere, will open at Salt Lake Acting Company and later at theatres in Chicago and Berkeley, CA. SLAC has produced eight world premieres of her work; this is the ninth. Plan-B Theatre and Pygmalion in Salt Lake City have also produced her work.

She is gratified to have spent her life in the theatre, never to have lost interest in its potential, and counts herself lucky to have benefitted from the efforts the extraordinary people who work in it.

DIRECTOR

Tracy Callahan is excited to be back at SLAC directing the world première of Playwright in Residence Julie Jensen's script, WINTER. Past directing projects at SLAC include VENUS IN FUR, MANNING UP, COURSE 86b IN THE CATALOGUE, SIX YEARS and HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE. Tracy is a freelance director and actor in the Salt Lake area where she has had the opportunity to work with Wasatch Theatre, Process Theatre, DarkHorse Theatre, Pygmalion Theatre, Hale Center Theatre and Utah Reparatory Theatre. She has been Head of The Acting and Directing Program at Weber State for the past 21 years where she has directed over 36 productions. This is the second time Tracy and Julie have collaborated on a production. Their first collaboration was Julie Jensen's play MOCKINGBIRD which was commissioned by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington DC and also performed at Weber State and Pygmalion Theatres. Tracy is a founding member of the Process Theatre Company.

CAST

Andrea Peterson (LD) is originally from Texas, but moved to Salt Lake City by way of Boston, NYC, and Miami. She has a bit of wanderlust. She spent most of her life acting on stage, some of her favorite stage roles have been playing in the spoof THE HUNGER GAME OF THRONES as the 'Katniss' character and getting to play Katherine in TAMING OF THE SHREW. Recently, Andrea has been doing film projects that have taken her from playing a tragic ingenue in a romance that never happens in the film, "Collide," acting as a mime in the silent film, 'No Walk in the Park,' and most recently playing a hot mess in the web series 'You Again.' Although, Andrea loves acting, she considers herself a story-teller in whatever facet that life might allow and owns DoYouSee Productions under which she directs, writes, shoots, and edits independent films, music videos, and documentaries. When she is not involved in filmmaking,

Andrea's wanderlust takes over and you can find her hiking through the mountains, on a plane to another country, or relaxing in her backyard with her husband Travis Peterson and their constant shadow, their dog Finn.

Anne Cullimore Decker (*Annis*) loves working in small intimate spaces which makes SLAC one of her most favorite venues. She has had the privilege and pleasure of acting and directing at this theatre. Her most recent production at SLAC was a two hander, in David Kranes' A LOSS OF APPETITE. Other productions here are Aden's Ross' K-MILLE, J.T. Rogers' SEEING THE ELEPHANT, MADAGASCAR (all premieres); THREE TALL WOMEN, RABBIT HOLE, THE CLEAN HOUSE, and a favorite of hers and many others, MASTER CLASS, where she had the pleasure of performing the role of Maria Callas in two separate productions. Other recent productions at other theatres: STAGE KISS at Wasatch Theatre (Rose Wagner) ; THE CRUCIBLE at Pioneer Theatre Co.; 33 VARIATIONS at Leonardo; RARE BIRD, HAMLET at Babcock; RIGHTEOUS & VERY REAL HOUSEWIVES OF UTAH COUNTY at Fort Douglas Post Theatre; Staged reading of QUEENS FOR A YEAR at Hartford Stage, Hartford, Conn. Utah Opera's A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, and CALL ME MADAM; MORNING'S @ SEVEN, MY FAIR LADY at Utah Shakespeare Festival. Her most recent film was: A DARLING COMPANION playing Muriel, the mother to Kevin Kline, Dianne Wiest, and mother-in-law to Diane Keaton. Anne earned both her Bachelors Degree & Masters of Fine Arts degrees at the University of Utah. She taught in the Honors and Actor Training Program at University of Utah for 14 years before retiring. In 2015, the University of Utah bestowed her with an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree. Being a part of WINTER from its early inception, followed by multiple workshops, drafts and readings to a full fledged production has been a rare and treasured privilege. Thank you, Ms. Julie.

Justin Bruse (*Evan*) has been performing in the Salt Lake area for the past 16 years, at various theaters in the valley. Some of his favorite roles include Marc in ART (Pinnacle Acting Company), Tilden in BURIED CHILD (Silver Summit Theatre Company), and Mortimer Brewster in ARSENIC AND OLD LACE (Hale Centre Theatre). He was last seen at SLAC in their production of Kathleen Cahill's CHARM. Justin is proud to be involved in this touching and important production, and hopes you enjoy the show. Special thanks to Jaime and Savannah Bruse.

Robert Nelson* (*Robeck*) taught at BYU (chair 1998-2004), and "came home" in 2005 to chair U of U Theatre. Now back in the classroom full-time, he enjoys history, dramatic literature, dramaturgy, new-play development, acting, directing, and Shakespeare. Stage roles: DR. PRETORIUS, BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN (Sackerson); all nine adult males, SPRING AWAKENING (Uof U); Thomas Jefferson, THIRD CROSSING (Plan-B Theatre). Film: Father Vernon, "Evil Angel"; Isaac Hale, "Emma Smith" and "Joseph Smith." Voice-over: narrator, "The Light of Men" and "The Restoration". Directing: 45 SECONDS FROM BROADWAY and CALIFORNIA SUITE (Neil Simon Festival); FIRST WATER PROJECT (Salt Lake Acting Company). Proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

S.A. Rogers* (*Roddy*) was last seen at Salt Lake Acting Company in BLACKBERRY WINTER as Grey Mole. He has been in a number of short films including DOWN THE HOLE and THE ARCHITECT. Other local work includes Pioneer Theatre Company's productions of MARCH TALE (Play By Play new play reading series) as Robert Cecil, A FEW GOOD MEN as Commander Stone and OF MICE AND MEN as Slim. In Houston, Texas he performed with the Classical Theatre Company (CTC) as Telegin in UNCLE VANYA and Dimas in THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE. Prior to working with CTC, he performed at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where his roles included Gascon/Ensemble in CYRANO DE BERGERAC, First Murderer/Ensemble in RICHARD III, Policeman in MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM, and Second Knight in KING LEAR. His audio book vocal recordings include RETURN POLICY, THE ALMOST TRUE STORY OF RYAN FISHER, THE END IS NOW, AND STRENGTH AND COURAGE FOR CAREGIVERS. S.A. is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

DESIGN TEAM

Set Design – Dennis Hassan

Costume Design – Nancy Hills

Lighting Design – James M. Craig

Sound Design – Cynthia L. Kehr Rees

Asst. Set Designer – Allie Baranowski

Asst. Costume Designer – Heather Wood

Stage Manager – Justin Ivie*

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

WHO:

Salt Lake Acting Company

WHAT:

WINTER

By Julie Jensen

WHEN:

October 12 – November 13, 2016

Wednesdays – Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m., Sundays @ 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Additional performances:

Tuesday, November 1 @ 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, October 12 @ 2:00 p.m.

WHERE:

168 West 500 North

Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

MORE INFO:

Salt Lake Acting Company

168 West 500 North, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103

Box Office: 801-363-7522

Open 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Mon – Fri

www.saltlakeactingcompany.org

Single tickets range from \$15 – \$42, depending on the performance.

Student, Senior and 30 & Under discounts are available.

Discounts are also available for groups of 10 or more.

Subscribers always pay the lowest price.

ABOUT SALT LAKE ACTING COMPANY

Salt Lake Acting Company (SLAC)'s mission is to engage and enrich community through brave contemporary theatre. Founded in 1970, SLAC is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 professional theatre dedicated to producing, commissioning, and developing new works and to supporting a community of professional artists. SLAC has been nationally recognized by the Shubert Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Edgerton Foundation, among others. SLAC operates under a SPT Actors Equity Association contract and is a Constituent Member of Theatre Communications Group (a national organization for non-profit professional regional theatres), and the National New Play Network (a national alliance of non-profit professional theatres that champions the development, production, and continued life of new plays).

ABOUT NATIONAL NEW PLAY NETWORK

National New Play Network (NNPN) is the country's alliance of non-profit professional theaters dedicated to the development, production, and continued life of new plays. Since its founding in 1998, NNPN has supported more than 200 productions nationwide through its innovative National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere program, which provides playwright and production support for new works at its Member theaters. Additional programs - its annual National Conference, National Showcase of New Plays, and MFA Playwrights Workshop; the NNPN Annual and Smith Prize commissions; its residencies for playwrights, producers and directors; and the organization's member accessed Collaboration, Festival, and Travel banks and online information sessions - have helped cement the Network's position as a vital force in the new play landscape. NNPN also strives to pioneer, implement, and disseminate ideas and programs that revolutionize the way theaters collaborate to support new plays and playwrights. Its most recent project, the New Play Exchange, is changing the way playwrights share their work and others discover it by providing immediate access to information on more than 9,500 new plays by living writers. NNPN's 30 Core and more than 75 Associate Members - along with the more than 150 affiliated artists who are its alumni, the thousands of artists and artisans employed annually by its member theaters, and the hundreds of thousands of audience members who see its supported works each year - are creating the new American theater. nnpn.org