



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Raw emotions run high in *Blackbird*

Olympia, WA – July 25, 2019 – Harlequin Productions presents *Blackbird*, August 22nd through September 14th at the State Theater in downtown Olympia. New York-based guest director Kimberly Loren Eaton will direct.

Una, a 27-year-old woman, comes to visit Ray, a 55-year-old man, at his office. They are clearly not comfortable in each other's company, and we soon find out why. Una is looking for answers, not vengeance. Nevertheless, the consequences are shattering. A deeply complex portrayal of two people whose ruined lives are inextricably intertwined, the Olivier Award-winning two-hander was nominated for three 2016 Tony Awards including Best Revival, Best Actor and Best Actress.

On her decision to direct this intimate, emotional piece, director Kimberly Loren Eaton writes, "What draws me to work isn't genre or scale. I believe that every choice we make as storytelling artists is a political act; that art and advocacy are inseparable, so that informs the work I choose to do. As artists, we share our voice and our worldview by what we choose to put on stage, and that is what informs the theatre that I choose to work on, and that can be in the form of an intimate play, or a large scale musical. I'm more interested in the text, and the ideas the work is grappling with. I'm particularly drawn to stories relevant to major issues in the zeitgeist, which move social and cultural conversations forward, to work which brings marginalized voices into the mainstream, and to women-driven work."

Eaton hopes the play calls people to examine some preconceived notions. "Sometimes we- all of us, make judgments about how people present themselves in the world, and seeing a character who presents themselves that way, and then seeing their story, I thought it could be interesting to create space for audiences to realize that before judging others they should step back, because we have no idea what the life experience is of others. Someone who "looks respectable" might not be. Someone you might be quick to judge, for the way they present themselves or interact in the world, might have overcome seemingly insurmountable challenges."

Further, Eaton hopes the play serves as a call to action to examine the way we interact with others and the impact we have: "It's important that we are all examining our impact and holding ourselves accountable to be our best. I hope the play helps those who have suffered from any kind of assault to know they are not alone, and moving on is possible. If the production creates any more empathy and understanding in the world, or makes someone feel less alone, or more accountable to their fellow human beings, I'll consider it a huge success."

Kimberly Loren Eaton+ is a theatrical director and creator focused on developing new works. Select directing credits: *Daughters of the Sexual Revolution* with Sarah Steele and Tim Busfield; Woodward Award finalist, *American Dream*, with David Morse, Tamara Tunie, and Sarita

Choudhury (Manhattan Theatre Club); *The Forgetting Curve* (Boston Center for the Arts, Calderwood Pavilion, Wimberly mainstage); *Ain't Far From Home* (MTF- Playwrights Horizons Downtown), and has been developing *Sammy's Bowery Follies*. A 2019- 2020 SDCF Observership fellow, Women's Work Lab Directing Fellow at New Perspectives Theatre Company where she presented *Terroir*, and alumni of DirectorsLab: Chicago 2018, Founder and principal of Theatrum Mundi Productions, an NYC producing and creative development consulting company, Kimberly has been involved with the producing teams of *Fun Home* (Broadway- 5 Tony Awards including Best Play, and National Tour), *The Velocity of Autumn* (Broadway), and *Freud's Last Session* (Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best Play). Former Artistic & Managing Director of the Off-Broadway Marjorie S. Deane Theatre. Executive Board member, League of Professional Theatre Women. Guest lecturer: BroadwayCon, Juilliard, NYU Tisch. Education: Hofstra University, London Academy of Music & Dramatic Arts, Commercial Theatre Institute.

The intimate two-hander stars Harlequin veteran **Frank Lawler*** (8 previous Harlequin shows, most recently *Henry V* and *Richard III*) and new-comer **Colleen Litchfield** (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival; NYU Tisch).

WHAT: Harlequin Productions presents *Blackbird*, a mature drama about two people whose lives are shatteringly intertwined, directed by Kimberly Loren Eaton.

WHEN: August 22 – September 14, 2019

WHERE: State Theater, 202 4th Ave East, Olympia, WA 98501

TICKETS: Tickets are available online at harlequinproductions.org, by phone at **360-786-0151**, or in person 12-6pm, Tuesday-Friday and 2 hours before performances at the Harlequin Box Office in the State Theater.

General admission tickets are \$35

Senior 60+/Military \$32

Student/Youths Under 25 \$20

Rush Tickets (half-hour prior to showtime) General \$15; Senior/Military/Student/Under 25 \$12

SPECIAL DATES FOR THE AUDIENCE:

Opening Night: Thursday, August 22, 2019 at 8:00pm

Pay-What-You-Can: Wednesday, August 28, 2019 at 8:00pm

Ladies' Night Out: Friday, August 30, 2019 at 8:00pm

Post-show Talkback: Sunday, September 1, 2019 at 2:00pm

Pride Night: Friday, September 6, 2019 at 8:00pm

CATEGORY: Mature Drama

AGE RECOMMENDATION: Includes discussions of sex and sexual assault. Ages 14 and up, under 18 with guidance.

CAST:

Colleen Litchfield	<i>Una</i>
Frank Lawler*	<i>Ray</i>

+ Indicates membership in the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers.

* Indicates membership in the Actor's Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Harlequin Productions is a professional not-for-profit theater company in Olympia, WA. We seek to invigorate, educate, and empower our community and all people to feel more, think more, play more, and judge less through the mirror of real live theatre.

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