



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 29, 2016

Media Contact: Steven Box, Director of Marketing and Communications
Chad Wyckoff, Audience and Community Engagement Manager
The Human Race Theatre Company
126 North Main Street, Suite 300
Dayton, OH 45402
(937) 461-3823 ext. 3112
steven@humanracetheatre.org or chad@humanracetheatre.org

THE HUMAN RACE THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES ITS 2016–2017 EICHELBERGER LOFT SEASON

Company launches 30th Anniversary Season with updated logo and mix of new work and well-known revivals

(Dayton, OH) — The Human Race Theatre Company is preparing to celebrate its 30th anniversary as Dayton’s premier professional regional theatre company by unveiling an updated company logo and announcing its 2016-2017 season of shows at its home, the Loft Theatre in downtown Dayton. The season, with two musicals and four plays, begins September 8, 2016.

The 2016–2017 Eichelberger Loft season opens with Stephen Sondheim and Hugh Wheeler’s Tony Award-winning musical thriller, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (September 8 – October 2, 2016); followed by Tom Dudzick’s comedy of faith, *Hail Mary!* (November 3 – 20, 2016); a world premiere drama about the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, *26 Pebbles* (February 2 – 19, 2017), by Eric Ulloa; Ernest Thompson’s warm and welcoming *On Golden Pond* (April 6 – 23, 2017); and closes with Cincinnati writers Janet Yates Vogt and Mark Friedman’s musical adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables*, based on the novel by Lucy Maud Montgomery (June 1 – 25, 2017).

“Thirty seasons—it’s hard to believe,” reflects Human Race President and Artistic Director Kevin Moore. “It’s a great milestone and a testament to the support of our audiences—many of whom, like me, have been with The Human Race since our start in 1986.” Moore sees the thirtieth year as an opportunity to honor the company’s past successes while taking a leap into its future, primarily by introducing a updated logo. “We’ve streamlined our logo—updated it for a new generation—while retaining many of its former elements,” says Moore. “We’re still The Human Race Theatre, but as a company, we continue to grow and mature.”

To pay tribute to the theatre’s past during the 2016-2017 season, Moore has chosen to remount three well-received past productions – *Sweeney Todd*, *On Golden Pond* and *Anne of Green Gables* – for their first stagings in the Loft Theatre. “Every one of these shows was a great success when we did them at the Victoria Theatre for the Victoria Theatre Association’s Broadway Series,” says Moore, “and each time, we said to ourselves, ‘This would be great to do in the Loft.’” First produced in 1996, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* starred Resident Artist Scott Stoney in the title role. Now, twenty years later, Stoney takes on the directing duties. The Human Race introduced Norman and Ethel Thayer, and their lakeside house, in *On Golden Pond* to Dayton theatregoers in 1999. The company’s history with Janet

Yates Vogt and Mark Friedman's adaptation of *Anne of Green Gables* began during the 2002-2003 season with a reading in its Musical Theatre Workshops program. Known then simply as *Green Gables*, the musical received a full production on the Victoria Theatre stage in 2005.

November's production of *Hail Mary!* marks playwright Tom Dudzick's third in the Loft. "Our audiences have absolutely loved his other plays," exclaims Moore. "*Over the Tavern* in 2008 and *Miracle on South Division Street* in 2014 had people crying, they were laughing so hard. When I read this script, I knew right away we had to do it."

In February, The Human Race will address the all-too-often occurrence of gun violence when it presents the world premiere of Eric Ulloa's drama, *26 Pebbles*. Following the 2012 mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School, Ulloa visited Newtown, Connecticut, and interviewed a number of its townspeople about that tragic day and its aftermath. With their blessing, he collected those interviews and developed them into a six-person play where the actors take on multiple roles. "The hope and determination of the people of Newtown floored me in the weeks I spent up there," says Ulloa. "I know that their fierce spirit will touch every person that leaves the theatre." Bringing the play to the Dayton theatre felt like a natural move to the actor/playwright. "When many people think of Ohio, they think of Main Street, USA and all the nostalgic qualities that make it the heart of America," he explains. "By having *26 Pebbles*' world premiere at The Human Race, my creative home since 2008, we have the unique opportunity of starting dialogue about this American epidemic right here in the heart of our great country."

The five plays perform in the Loft Theatre, The Human Race's intimate 212-seat downtown performance space, located in the Metropolitan Arts Center at 126 North Main Street. Throughout the productions' scheduled three- and four-week runs are a number of associated special events: a Thursday night preview performance, preceded by the "Inside Track" discussion with the director; Friday Opening Night with a free post-show party with the cast at downtown Dayton's Uno Pizzeria & Grill; Lite Fare at The Loft, a Tuesday night pre-show dining in The Loft Lobby, with food items provided by Citilites Restaurant; a "While We're on the Subject" talkback following a Sunday matinee; and a Saturday night signed and audio-described performance opportunity.

In addition to the five shows on the theatre's subscription series, The Human Race presents a holiday add-on production, the return of last year's sold out comedy, *The Santaland Diaries* by David Sedaris. Resident Artist Tim Lile once again stars as "Crumpet" for a limited-engagement run in The Loft Theatre (December 8 – 17, 2016).

THE 2016-2017 EICHELBERGER LOFT SEASON LINEUP

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

A Musical Thriller

music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim

book by Hugh Wheeler

from an adaptation by Christopher Bond

September 8 – October 2, 2016

Attend the tale of Sweeney Todd, a barber unjustly imprisoned by corrupt Judge Turpin, who returns to 19th century London fifteen years later to take his revenge on the man who took him from his wife and young daughter. Todd's need for vengeance becomes indiscriminately murderous—and profitable—when he partners with the unscrupulous Mrs. Lovett and opens his new barber practice above her failing meat pie shop. With his busy straight razors and her new secret ingredient, their fame grows until Todd comes face to face with the judge. Can he avenge his family before their dastardly deeds are uncovered?

Hail Mary!

by Tom Dudzick

November 3 – 20, 2016

Plucky novice Mary is causing trouble again, teaching her own unorthodox views on God to the third graders at Saint Aloysius Catholic Elementary School, where she's hardly a favorite with her conservative Mother Superior. Mary's aspirations of becoming a nun are in further jeopardy when her childhood sweetheart reappears and declares his love. Will she give up a life of Sisterhood for the man of her dreams? Or will she choose another path and listen to an eccentric priest who proclaims her to be the world's next savior in this delightful comedy that puts the "fun" in fundamentalism.

A World Premiere

26 Pebbles

by Eric Ulloa

February 2 – 19, 2017

On December 14, 2012, an act of unbelievable madness took the lives of 20 innocent children and 6 adults at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. These 26 deaths—described by one local resident as “pebbles thrown into a pond”—created ripples that captured the attention of the entire nation. Now, through a series of interviews with the people of this small New England town, the true stories of that tragic day and its aftermath come to light in this powerful drama that asks, “How does a community endure the ultimate test, and what comes after the cameras and noise leave?”

On Golden Pond

by Ernest Thompson

April 6 – 23, 2017

For forty-eight years, Norman Thayer and his energetic wife, Ethel, have been spending the summers at their lakeside home on Golden Pond, fishing and watching for loons. This year, their divorced daughter, Chelsea, her new fiancé and his thirteen year old son make an unexpected visit. When Norman develops an unlikely friendship with the boy, it reinvigorates the grumpy retired professor and highlights the rocky relationship between this father and his now middle-aged daughter. As the summer days grow short, there is still time for their family to heal, and to rediscover the joys in everyday life.

Anne of Green Gables

book, music and lyrics by Janet Yates Vogt and Mark Friedman

based on *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery

June 1 – 25, 2017

The timeless tale of Anne Shirley comes to life onstage. When Marilla and Matthew Cuthbert decide to adopt a boy to help run their farm on Prince Edward Island, the orphanage mistakenly sends them a young red-haired girl. Bright, talkative and extremely imaginative, Anne quickly wins them over and life in their close-knit farming village will never be the same. Her adventures are endless as she makes new friends and rivals, tries to dye her hair black and mistakes wine for raspberry cordial. It's a musical story of family, home and irrepressible spirit fit for the whole family.

ADD-ON PRODUCTION

The Santaland Diaries

by David Sedaris

adapted by Joe Mantello

starring Tim Lile as "Crumpet"

December 8 – 17, 2016

The quintessential elf-gone-bad is back to share a series of less-than-merry misadventures in David Sedaris' hysterical antidote for holiday havoc. Spend some time with the irreverent Crumpet—one of Santa's little helpers during the Macy's Christmas shopping rush—as he handles the hordes of insufferable shoppers and their kiddies with whacked out, wicked wit in the return of 2015's sold out hit comedy.

2016-2017 Loft Series subscribers can purchase tickets to this additional holiday offering at a discounted price before they go on sale to the general public.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND TICKETS

Subscriptions are available in 3-, 4- and 5-show packages, as well as in Flex Pass plans. Package prices range from \$102 – \$190, and discounted subscriptions are available for students. Current 2015-2016 season subscribers can guarantee their seats by renewing before May 1, and reservations for new subscriptions can be made now to be seated starting May 23. Both renewing and new subscribers may place their orders with Ticket Center Stage by calling (937) 228-3630 or by visiting the Schuster Center Box Office. Subscribers can purchase tickets to ***The Santaland Diaries*** in advance when renewing or ordering a new subscription. Productions, performance dates and ticket prices are subject to change. Single tickets to ***Sweeney Todd*** and ***Hail Mary!*** go on sale August 1, with tickets to future productions on sale later in the season.

More ticketing and performance information on The Human Race Theatre Company's 2016-2017 and 2015-2016 Loft seasons are available online at www.humanracetheatre.org or by calling Ticket Center Stage at (937) 228-3630, and at the Schuster Center box office.

###

The Human Race Theatre Company was founded in 1986 and moved into the Metropolitan Arts Center in 1991, taking up residence at the 212-seat Loft Theatre. In addition to the Eichelberger Loft Season, The Human Race produces a summer Festival of New Works and special event programming. Under the direction of President and Artistic Director Kevin Moore, the company also maintains education and outreach programs for children, teens and adults, as well as artist residencies in area schools, the Muse Machine In-School Tour, and a summer youth program. Human Race organizational support is provided by Culture Works, the Montgomery County Arts and Cultural District, the Shubert Foundation, the Erma R. Catterton Trust Fund, the Jesse & Caryl Philips Foundation, the Virginia W. Kettering Foundation and the Ohio Arts Council, which helped fund this organization with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The 2015-2016 Sustainability Sponsors are the ELM Foundation, Anne F. Johnson and Steve and Lou Mason. The 2015-2016 Loft season sponsor is the Jack W. and Sally D. Eichelberger Foundation of the Dayton Foundation, with additional support from Premier Health and Morris Home Furnishings.