



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 13, 2015

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

THE HUMAN RACE LAUNCHES ITS FIRST FESTIVAL OF NEW WORKS, AUGUST 7 AND 8

Two-day festival presents a combination of five new plays and musicals in development.

(Dayton, OH)—This August, The Human Race Theatre Company begins a new chapter in its commitment to the development of new theatre with its first-ever Festival of New Works. This new festival combines the efforts of The Race’s Musical Theatre Workshops and its Marsha Hanna New Plays Workshops into a unified program. “It allows us to showcase what we do—musicals and plays—at one time of year,” says Human Race President and Artistic Director Kevin Moore. “It’s a better use of our resources and personnel. Plus, it creates a greater, more diverse experience for our audiences.” The 2015 Festival of New Works presents a collection of readings of five scripts—three plays and two musicals—by local, national and international writers. Readings will be held in the 60-seat Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center of The Human Race and The 212-seat Loft Theatre in downtown Dayton.

The 2015 Festival of New Works lineup includes full readings of *Have You Ever Played, Dayton?*, a play by Robb Willoughby and *Mann...and Wife*, a musical Douglas J. Cohen and Dan Elish based on Elish’s novel *Nine Wives*, plus three 30-minute “snapshot” readings of Karen Righter’s play, *The Day After Epiphany*, *Central Park Tango*, a musical by Nicky Phillips and Robert Gontier, and Resident Artist Scott Stoney’s adaptation of *Some Self-Evident Truths*, a play based on the journals of Lucille Wheat and Lois Davies. Open talkbacks with the creative teams follows the readings. The three “snapshot” readings will be presented and ticketed as a group.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL SELECTIONS

Have You Ever Played, Dayton?

Friday, August 7 at 7:00 p.m. in The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center

Yellow Springs resident Robb Willoughby’s play follows three Broadway “has-beens” who, after having been tricked by a scheming agent, head out-of-town to resurrect their careers and turn “possibly the worst play ever written” into a hit...despite themselves. *Dayton?* is presented as a full-length table reading directed by Kevin Moore with a seven-member cast featuring Resident Artists Patricia Linhart, Michael Kenwood Lippert and Scott Stoney, Saul Caplan, Jackie Darnell, Mathys Herbert and Kate Young.

Tickets for *Have You Ever Played, Dayton?* are \$15.

“Snapshots” – A collection of three 30-minute readings from two new plays and a new musical
Saturday, August 8 at 2:00 p.m. in The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center

The Day After Epiphany

Dayton playwright Karen Righter’s play takes place in 754 AD as Pope Stephen II crosses the Alps on January 6 to convince King Pepin to take up arms to save Rome. But Pepin has his own problems with a marriage on the rocks and a rebellious daughter in this fictional telling of an actual historic encounter. The reading features Jared Joplin, Scott Stoney and Kate Young (*Other Desert Cities*).

Central Park Tango

It’s a penguin musical about the modern day family by the Canadian writing team of Nicky Phillips and Robert Gontier, inspired by the real life story of Roy and Silo, two male chinstrap penguins who drew worldwide attention when they became mates at the Central Park Zoo. Prior to the festival, Phillips and Gontier join The Human Race for a 10-day residency where they will rework previous versions of the *Central Park Tango* script under the guidance of director Kevin Moore and musical director Sean Michael Flowers and the support of a cast of actors which includes Resident Artists Katie Pees and Scott Stoney, and Jackie Darnell, Rebecca MacDougall, Jacob McGlaun and Ray Zupp. Moore will then select material to present to festival audiences.

Some Self-Evident Truths

Scott Stoney adapts and directs a new script based on the personal journals of Lucille Wheat and Lois Davies, two Troy, Ohio women—one white, one black—written from 1946 to 1951. This play chronicles their lives, their friendship and a community’s awakening to racial equality with performances by Terrilynn Meece, Stoney and Torie Wiggins.

Tickets are \$15 for the group of three readings.

Mann...and Wife

Saturday, August 8 at 7:00 p.m. in The Loft Theatre

From Douglas J. Cohen (*No Way to Treat a Lady*) and Dan Elish (*13*) comes this new musical based on Elish’s novel, *Nine Wives*, about one man’s struggle to find love, happiness and the perfect date for his ex-fiancée’s wedding. Michael Baron, Artistic Director of Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma, helms this staged reading with musical director Scot Woolley and cast members Jamie Cordes, Scott Hunt and Annie Kalahurka. The song “It’s Only a First Date” from *Nine Wives* (*Mann...and Wife*’s earlier title) was an audience favorite at last summer’s Songwriter Showcase, leading Kevin Moore to include the full script in this year’s festival as it prepares for further development at Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma in 2016. Cohen and Elish will have two weeks to work on the script and songs with Baron, Woolley and the cast before the final presentation at the festival.

Tickets for *Mann...and Wife* are \$20.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

In addition to the combining of musicals and plays, the 2015 Festival of New Works marks another change from past festivals in how The Human Race presents such new works. Scripts are

no longer automatically produced as fully staged readings, but rather the level of production is determined on a script by script basis. “Each script comes to us in a different stage of the development process,” explains Kevin Moore. “One of the first things I asked the writers is, ‘What do you need?’ and we proceed from there.” The questioning lead to the development of a variety of presentation styles – “snapshot”-style highlights, table reading and the fully staged reading. “Some scripts may benefit more from just a table reading at this point. We strive to be flexible.”

This year’s festival does retain one critical component to the development process – audience feedback. At the end of every reading, patrons are encouraged to stay and participate in a talkback with the creative teams. “The comments from the audience are just as important for the writers as hearing their words spoken by actors,” says Moore. “The reactions and responses help them in determining what works and what doesn’t.”

The 2015 Festival of New Works is sponsored by the Jesse & Caryl Philips Foundation Fund for the Development of New Works and The Producers’ Circle.

Readings are at The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center of The Human Race, located at 116 North Jefferson Street and the Metropolitan Art Center’s Loft Theatre, located at 126 North Main Street in downtown Dayton, Ohio. General admission tickets are \$15 and \$20, depending on the reading, and are on sale at www.humanracetheatre.org or by calling Ticket Center Stage at (937) 228-3630, and in person 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 for the Victoria Theatre’s Broadway Series, a summer Festival of New Works, and special event programming. The Human Race, under the direction of President and Artistic Director Kevin Moore, 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 Fund for the Development of New Works, 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 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.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

The Human Race Theatre Company presents
The 2015 Festival of New Works
featuring readings of

Have You Ever Played, Dayton?

by Robb Willoughby

Mann...and Wife

music and lyrics by Douglas J. Cohen
book and lyrics by Dan Elish
based on the novel *Nine Wives* by Dan Elish

and 30-minute “snapshot” readings of

The Day After Epiphany

by Karen Righter

Central Park Tango

music and lyrics by Nicky Phillips
book and lyrics by Robert Gontier

Some Self-Evident Truths

by Lucille Wheat and Lois Davies
adapted by Scott Stoney

Readings of ***Have You Ever Played, Dayton?***, ***The Day After Epiphany***, ***Central Park Tango***
and ***Some Self-Evident Truths*** are at The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center of The Human Race
116 North Jefferson Street
2nd Floor (above the Dayton Visual Arts Center)
Dayton, Ohio 45402

The reading of ***Mann...and Wife*** is at The Loft Theatre
Metropolitan Arts Center
126 North Main Street
3rd Floor
Dayton, Ohio 45402

The Human Race Theatre Company presents its first Festival of New Works, featuring a series of readings of three new plays and two musicals by local, national and international writers and composers. It's a rare opportunity for audiences to see theatre in development, created and performed by theatre professionals, and to share in the process with their feedback.

For tickets:

Ticket Center Stage box office phone: (937) 228-3630

Box office hours: Monday – Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. at the Schuster Center Box Office, and two hours prior to performances at The Loft Theatre Box Office.

Online: www.humanracetheatre.org or www.ticketcenterstage.com

Ticket prices: \$15 for *Have You Ever Played, Dayton?*, and the combination of all three “snapshot” readings; \$20 for *Mann...and Wife*. Seating is general admission.

2015 Festival of New Works schedule:

Friday, August 7

7:00 p.m. The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center

Have You Ever Played, Dayton?

Saturday, August 8

2:00 p.m. The Caryl D. Philips Creativity Center

30-minute “snapshot” readings of

The Day After Epiphany

Central Park Tango

Some Self-Evident Truths

Saturday, August 8

7:00 p.m. The Loft Theatre

Mann...and Wife