

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Don't we all seek to be understood?

Tribes

**Artists Rep presents Nina Raine's tense & compelling play
about family & deafness**

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre

WHAT: Mainstage production of *Tribes* by Nina Raine

WHEN: February 3 – March 1, 2015 | **Opening Night is Saturday, Feb. 7**

WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre – Alder Stage, 1516 Alder St. Portland, OR 97205

TICKETS: \$25-\$55; Students, under 25 tickets \$25

- Preview performances: Wednesday-Friday, Feb. 4-6
- Pay-What-You-Can preview performance: Tuesday, Feb. 3
- Regular run: Wednesday-Sunday at 7:30pm; Sundays at 2pm; Wednesday, Feb. 18 @ 11am and Saturday, Feb. 28 @ 2pm
- Buy tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

ASL PERFORMANCES:

- The following are ASL-interpreted performances:
 - Sunday, Feb. 8 at 7:30pm
 - Sunday, Feb. 15 at 7:30pm
 - Saturday, Feb. 21 at 7:30pm
 - Saturday, Feb. 28 at 2pm
- All of these performances will be followed by an ASL-interpreted post-show discussion.
- *ASL seating can be secured by emailing boxoffice@artistsrep.org or calling 503.241.1278.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – January 15, 2015. Sweeping the nation at luminary theatre companies like Steppenwolf, Barrow Street Theatre and La Jolla Playhouse after originating at London's Royal Court Theatre, *Tribes* by Nina Raine will open on Artists Rep's Alder Stage starting February 3.

The Northwest Premiere of this tense and compelling play, directed by Artists Rep's Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and features a stellar cast of Artists Rep Resident Artists and favorites alongside Hard-of-Hearing actor Stephen Drabicki, who has played the role of Billy three times before to critical acclaim.

In an interview for the production's playbill, Stephen said "The strength of the play lies in how it makes the audience feel ... the dramatic tension created by the tribal relationships, and the play's sharp, witty, irreverent, and at times, even poetic, dialogue."

"While the specific dramatic questions raised in *Tribes* involve one young man encountering Deaf Culture, the play explores so many universally valid, important and opposing viewpoints on family, belonging, otherness, language, communication, connection, culture, parenting, identity and responsibility," said Dámaso Rodríguez, Artists Rep's Artistic Director who is directing *Tribes*. "Ultimately, *Tribes* is not about a particular group, but rather how we all seek to belong to a community we can call our own, and in doing so, how we too often fail to listen."

ABOUT THE PLAY

Tribes is a scintillating contemporary drama centered around Billy, the only deaf member of his family, whose search for family acceptance sparks often funny, but fierce, tensions at home. He was raised inside an idiosyncratic and politically incorrect cocoon where his family did not allow him to learn sign language or be involved in the Deaf Community. It is not until he meets a young woman, Sylvia, who is on the brink of deafness, that he finally understands what it means to be understood. Grappling with the significance of language and the urge to belong, this Portland debut follows triumphant productions Off-Broadway, at London's Royal Court and Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre. 2012 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Play.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Tribes first premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in London on October 14, 2010, where it was nominated for the Olivier Award for Best Play. The show then premiered in New York Off-Broadway in March of 2012 at the Barrow Street Theatre. The production was directed by David Cromer and featured performances by Will Brill, Russell Harvard, Susan Pourfar, Gayle Rankin, Jeff Perry and Mare Winningham. In 2012, *Tribes* swept up several awards and nominations including the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Play, the New York Drama Critics Circle Award and the Off-Broadway Alliance Award for Best Play. David Cromer again directed *Tribes* in March 2013 at Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and then again at the La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego later that year. In the last couple of years, *Tribes* has been produced at numerous regional theatres including Steppenwolf Theatre, Guthrie Theatre, and most recently, Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

After graduating from Oxford, Nina Raine began her career as a trainee director at the Royal Court Theatre. She dramaturged and directed *Unprotected* at the Liverpool Everyman, scooping up the TMA Best Director Award and the Amnesty International Freedom of Expression Award in the process. Her debut play, *Rabbit*, premiered at The Old Red Lion Theatre in 2006 and, after a sell-out run, it transferred to the West End before heading New York. *Rabbit* won London's Evening Standard Award 2006 for Most Promising Playwright and the Critics Circle Award 2006 for Most Promising Playwright. Her second play, *Tiger Country* was shortlisted for the Sphinx Theatre Brave New Roles Award, and is under commission to the Royal Court Theatre. She also directed *Jumpy* at the Royal Court Theatre and *Shades*, for which she won Critics Circle and Evening Standard Awards for Most Promising Newcomer.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Dámaso Rodríguez is in his second year as Artistic Director of Artists Rep. He is a Co-Founder of the Los Angeles-based Furious Theatre Company, where he served as Co-Artistic Director from 2001-2012. From 2007-2010 he served as Associate Artistic Director of the Pasadena Playhouse. His directing credits

include work at Artists Rep, the Pasadena Playhouse, Intiman Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, A Noise Within, The Theatre @ Boston Court, Naked Angels and Furious Theatre. Dámaso is a recipient of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, the Back Stage Garland Award, the NAACP Theatre Award, and the Pasadena Arts Council's Gold Crown Award, and his productions have been nominated for multiple LA Weekly Theatre Awards and LA Stage Alliance Ovation Awards. In 2012, he was honored by the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation as a Finalist for the Zelda Fichandler Award. He is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). Artists Rep directing credits include the Northwest premiere of *Exiles* by Carlo Lacámara, J.M. Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World*, the U.S. Premiere of Dawn King's *Foxfinder* and the West Coast premieres of Dan LeFranc's *The Big Meal* and Jeffrey Hatcher's *Ten Chimneys* at Artists Rep; Ruth & Augustus Goetz' *The Heiress* (starring Richard Chamberlain), Lillian Hellman's *The Little Foxes* (starring Kelly McGillis) and Austin Pendleton's *Orson's Shadow* (starring Sharon Lawrence) at the Pasadena Playhouse; the reading of Steven Drukman's *The Prince of Atlantis* for the Pacific Playwrights Festival at South Coast Repertory, Clifford Odets' *Paradise Lost* at Intiman Theatre; Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit*, Tennessee Williams' *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale*, Eugene O'Neill's *Desire Under the Elms*, Bernard Shaw's *The Doctor's Dilemma* at A Noise Within. Furious Theatre credits include the Los Angeles premieres of Craig Wright's *Grace*, Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's *Boom* and *Hunter Gatherers*, Bruce Norris' *The Pain and the Itch*, Yussef El Guindi's *Back of the Throat*, Richard Bean's *The God Botherers*, Neil LaBute's *The Shape of Things*, and the world premieres of Alex Jones' *Canned Peaches in Syrup* and Matt Pelfrey's *An Impending Rupture of the Belly* and *No Good Deed*, among others. This season at Artists Rep he will also direct the NW premiere of David Ives' *The Liar*.

CAST

Stephen Drabicki* – Billy
Linda Alper*^ – Beth
Amy Newman*^ – Sylvia
Michael Mendelson*^ – Christopher
Joshua J. Weinstein*^ – Daniel
Kayla Lian+ – Ruth

CREATIVE TEAM

Dámaso Rodriguez – Director
Tal Sanders – Scenic Designer
Gregory Pulver – Costume Designer
Kristeen Willis Crosser^ – Lighting Designer
Sharath Patel^ – Composer/Sound Designer
Natalie Rae Heikkinen – Props Designer
Mary McDonald Lewis^ – Voice & Text Director
Michelle Jazuk* – Production Stage Manager
Assistant Directors – Jessica Evans Irvine, Val Landrum^
Production Assistant – Jory Bowers
ASL Dialogue Coaches – Justin Coleman, Dot Hearn
ASL Interpreters – Richard Hall, Dot Hearn

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

^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

+Equity Membership Candidate

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. For the 2014/15 season Artists Rep will offer eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights, and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions will feature the work of a core group of accomplished Resident Artists, each with a shared history and a shorthand for collaboration, working alongside guest artists from Portland and beyond.

Artists Rep's mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2014/15 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate. *Tribes* is presented with support from The Standard, Rosalie & Ed Tank, Dave & Christine Vernier and an Anonymous donor. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, The Oregon Community Foundation, the Collins Foundation, the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Rafati's Catering.

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