

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Artists Rep presents the inspirational

The Miracle Worker

Triumphant tale embraces spirit of the holiday season

- WHO:** Artists Repertory Theatre
WHAT: *The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson. Directed by Dámaso Rodriguez.
WHEN: December 8 – January 3, 2016
WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre, Alder Stage, 1516 SW Alder Street, Portland
TICKETS: \$48 regular price; \$25 previews, students, under 25
- Pay-What-You-Can First Preview performance: December 8
 - Preview performances: December 8-11
 - Opening Night: December 12
 - Regular run: through January 3
 - Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED: Photo ID-Val Landrum. Photo credit- David Straub

PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE: December 10, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Portland, Oregon | November 20, 2015. Artists Repertory Theatre is delighted to present one of the most triumphant stories of the human spirit ever told. The soul-stirring *The Miracle Worker* evokes hope and inspiration for the entire family at Artists Rep throughout this holiday season and through January 3, 2016.

“This miraculous and true tale of hope, redemption and triumph is exactly in line with the spirit of the season, while being a story that believers (and non-believers) of any faith can share with loved ones of almost any age,” said Artists Rep Artistic Director, and the play’s director, Dámaso Rodriguez. He continues, “This is an ever-relevant play, an inspiring, extremely moving story that captures the deep complexities of human connection and the power of language—in all its forms.”

Told through the dream-like lens of memory, *The Miracle Worker* is a play based on the lives of Helen Keller, who became DeafBlind as an infant, and her teacher, Anne Sullivan, who enabled her to become one of the most influential women of the 20th Century. As the play begins, Helen is a wild child with almost no ability to communicate with the world around her. Nearly at the point of giving up all hope, the Keller family brings the determined, once-blind and sign language-skilled Sullivan into their home in

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a final attempt to reach Helen. Together with the Keller family, the characters make a transformation that powerfully attests to what the human spirit can achieve.

The Miracle Worker offers two famously challenging, visceral roles (originated by Anne Bancroft and Patty Duke) that require highly physical, intense staging and a high skill level regardless of age. Artists Rep Resident Artist Val Landrum plays Anne Sullivan, and one of Portland's very best and most experienced child actors, Agatha Olson, plays Helen Keller. These two performers arrived to the rehearsal process already having built a close acting relationship that began with Artists Rep's production of *The Big Meal* (2013), which Rodriguez also directed. They are supported by an extraordinary cast of some of Portland's finest actors including Susannah Mars, Michael Mendelson, Don Alder, Joshua Weinstein and Josie Seid, alongside an outstanding design team to give this American classic the high-caliber production it deserves.

The Miracle Worker was first presented onstage at the Playhouse Theatre in New York City on October 19, 1959. It was directed by Arthur Penn and starred Anne Bancroft as Sullivan and Patty Duke as Keller. It won the Tony Award for Best Play. The 1962, the film adaptation earned an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay. Both Bancroft and Duke won the Academy Award for Best Actress and Best Supporting Actress, respectively.

The cast and creative team for *The Miracle Worker* features eight Artists Rep Resident Artists: Kristeen Willis-Crosser (Lighting Design), Val Landrum (actor), Mary McDonald-Lewis (Dialect Coach), Susannah Mars (actor), Michael Mendelson (actor), Amy Newman (actor), Rodolfo Ortega (Sound Design) and Joshua Weinstein (actor).

The Miracle Worker

By William Gibson

Directed by Dámaso Rodriguez**

CAST

Michael Mendelson*^	A Doctor/Anagnos
Amy Newman*^	Kate
Don Alder*	Keller
Agatha Olson	Helen
Josephine McGehee	Martha
Saorsa Seid	Percy
Susannah Mars*^	Aunt Ev
Joshua J. Weinstein*^	James
Val Landrum*^	Anne Sullivan
Josie Seid	Viney
Harper Lea	Boy Voice/Jimmy

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CREATIVE TEAM

Tim Stapleton	Scenic Designer
Kristeen Willis Crosser^	Lighting Designer
Bobby Brewer-Wallin	Costume Designer
Rodolfo Ortega^	Composer/Sound Designer
Will Bailey	Properties Master
Mary McDonald-Lewis^	Dialect Coach

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

**Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. For the 2015/16 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 is also home to the ArtsHub, a program which offers residencies within Artists Rep's facility to smaller and emerging arts organizations with subsidized administrative, performance and rehearsal space, as well other infrastructural services. The Artists Rep facility serves as a community arts center, where performance venues and other public spaces are continually buzzing with activity.

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 2015/16 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate and David and Christine Vernier. *The Miracle Worker* is presented at Artists Rep with support from Bob & Janet Conklin and Romy Klopfer. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, Oregon Community Foundation, Collins Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Work for Art.

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