



# PERSEVERANCE THEATRE

## — Alaskan Regional Theatre —

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Tom Robenolt, Perseverance Theatre  
(907) 364-2421 x226 [Tom@PTalaska.org](mailto:Tom@PTalaska.org)  
Art Rotch, Perseverance Theatre  
(907) 364-2421 x229 [Art@PTalaska.org](mailto:Art@PTalaska.org)

**The 38<sup>th</sup> season marks a first for Perseverance, with a seven show season in Juneau and a six show season in Anchorage**

**February 17, 2016 – Overview:** Perseverance Theatre announces its 38<sup>th</sup> season producing professional theatre by and for Alaskans. Perseverance season includes performances in both Juneau and Anchorage, continuing the theatre's work to make theatre available to more Alaskan audiences. Anchorage programming again includes five subscription plays and our annual Holiday classic, *A Christmas Carol*. In Juneau, the schedule will expand to six subscription offerings and the holiday classic, *This Wonderful Life*, based on the famous holiday film. Five of the subscription plays will play in both Juneau and Anchorage, beginning with the five time Tony Award-Winning family friendly adventure tale, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, by Rick Elice. Next is the world premiere of *Not Medea*, by Alison Gregory, a story about a tired mother who escapes to the theatre, manipulates the night's performance, and reveals the secret of her past. *Hold These Truths*, by Jeanne Sakata, is the true story of Japanese American Gordon Hirabayashi's fight against the United States Government order to forcibly remove and mass incarcerate all people of Japanese ancestry on the West Coast. In the New Year, enjoy a World Premiere by an Alaskan Native playwright, Frank Henry Kaash Kataase. His play, *They Don't Talk Back*, is a story of two Tlingit cousins from different backgrounds looking to find harmony between heritage and contemporary life. In April, *To Kill A Mockingbird*, adapted by Christopher Sergel from the novel by Harper Lee, is the classic and timely tale of a young lawyer learning his limits and the unwritten law of his time. Playing in Juneau only is the season finale of *Steel Magnolias*, by Robert Harling, about longtime friends in Truvy's salon and who support each other with love, laughter and beauty products.

New this year is the expanded calendar for Juneau audiences. As always, subscribers who place their order early will receive the best pricing, Perseverance's 'Early Bird' rate. Prices rise June 1, 2016. Subscriber benefits include unlimited free exchanges if your plans change, and options are available that maximize schedule flexibility and value, with options to pick the whole season or pick a pack of 3, 4, or 5 shows. Additional benefits include invitations to meet the artists, discounts on special events, and a coupon to bring a friend for half price.

**Hi-lights:** Crowd-pleasing productions of *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Steel Magnolias* combine with new plays *Hold These Truths* and two rolling world premieres to make a varied season with something for everyone. Perseverance's world premieres involve national partners and attention. *Not Medea* by Allison Gregory is a National New Play Network (NNPN) rolling world premiere in association with NNPN members B Street Theatre in Sacramento and A Contemporary American Theatre Festival in Shepardstown, West Virginia.

Alaska Native playwright Frank Henry Kaash Katasse's (Tlingit) play *They Don't Talk Back* is an engaging story about young Tlingit men coming of age, and will be co-produced with Perseverance Theatre, Native Voices at the Autry in Los Angeles, and La Jolla Playhouse in La Jolla California. Altogether, the season continues Perseverance's commitment to produce an equal number of plays written by women as men, support Alaska Native writers, and produce more young writers and writers of color.

**The Plays:** The season kick-off is a play the whole family will enjoy, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, by Rick Elice. Adventure with 13-year old Molly Aster, a company of pirates, a giant crocodile, and lots of angry Mollusks as she and three orphan boys attempt to return a trunk of precious starstuff to her father. Pursued by a mustached pirate captain and his sidekick Smee, Molly learns what it means to grow-up and find her father while orphans take up residence on the island where dreams are born, and time is whatever you wish it to be. With music, adventure, and jokes for both the young and the not so young, this five time Tony Award-Winning play is not to be missed. Making her directing debut at Perseverance is Alaskan director Teresa K Pond, who Anchorage audiences will recognize as the incoming Producing Artistic Director at Cyrano's Theatre Company. *Peter and the Starcatcher* opens in Juneau August 19, and closes in Anchorage October 16, 2016.

New play lovers will have two productions that are rolling world premieres, *Not Medea* and *They Don't Talk Back*. *Not Medea's*, in association with Contemporary American Theater Festival and B street Theatre is a National New Play Network rolling world premiere. Perseverance became a core member of the NNPN in 2015. Written by Allison Gregory, *Not Medea* is the story of a single, working mother who comes to see a show on a much needed night off, but instead of watching, she becomes the subject of the performance and reveals the secret of her past. She is not Medea, but a contemporary riff using the Greek classic as a framework to ask big questions about parenting, adoption, and how our actions impact our children. Alaska Native writer Frank Henry Kaash Katasse (Tlingit) gives us his play about coming of age as a young Tlingit man in the 1990s, *They Don't Talk Back*. Two teenage cousins, one from L.A. and one that lives in Southeast Alaska, struggle with what it means to be a family when the city cousin comes to Alaska for a summer to live with his grandfather. In a small village, the boys work on the fishing boat with their grandfather, and find their own balance between work, family and heritage. This new play is a world premiere developed and produced in association with Native Voices at the Autry and La Jolla Playhouse. *They Don't Talk Back* is directed by Native Voices Artistic Director Randy Reinholz, a veteran of many new works by Native American writers and a good friend to Perseverance.

A true story in the form of a one-man-show, *Hold These Truths* is based on the life of an American citizen of Japanese ancestry who resisted the U.S. government's order to report to internment camps early in World War Two. Gordon Hirabayashi always knew he was different. When he was a young man in 1943, and Japanese-Americans were being forced into camps, Gordon chose to fight US Government action rather than obey an order he felt was unlawful. His experiences in the courts and camps of the time sparked a passion for the U.S. constitution, and how it is our duty to uphold it. *Hold These Truths* is his true story.

The holiday spirit is alive and well in 2016, with a special holiday show for both Juneau and Anchorage! In Juneau, audiences will see *This Wonderful Life*, featuring local favorite James Sullivan as he plays every character from the beloved holiday classic film, *It's a Wonderful Life*. Patrons in Anchorage will be able to see *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, adapted by Michael Evan Haney and Alaskan playwright Arlitia Jones. Special pricing and a new 'add-on' option give you the flexibility to purchase as many tickets to these holiday shows as you like for your family, and come to any performance you please, for the best prices available.

The classic *To Kill A Mockingbird* is on stage in the spring, playing in March in Juneau, and April in Anchorage. Atticus Finch finds the limits of his influence when he defends a black man accused of a racially charged crime. Can justice ever be served in such cases? Can Finch advocate for change without sacrificing the very influence and

power that gives him hope to make a difference? Will his family pay an unacceptable price if he tries? See Harper Lee's tale of a young lawyer learning his limits and the unwritten law of his time. This iconic American story could not be more relevant today, decades after the book was first published. Artistic Director Art Rotch (*Of Mice and Men, Annapurna*) directs.

The Anchorage schedule concludes in early May with *To Kill a Mockingbird*, but Juneau audiences will have one more production to look forward to laughing with, the well known comedy *Steel Magnolias*. Longtime friends in a small Southern town fill Truvy's hair salon with laughter, gossip, and tears. As hair is dried, colored, and styled, the women's lives unfold and show the meaning of true friendship. *Steel Magnolias* is a classic comedy filled with unforgettable characters and real-life moments that everyone can relate to.

Growing subscription numbers in Juneau and Anchorage have helped Perseverance invest more in Alaskan theatre artists through wages, education programs, and production values, and have put our Alaskan theatre on a path towards long term sustainability. Many subscribers also donate with their subscription order, which helps the theatre as ticket sales cover only half the costs of the theatre we produce. Contributed income also makes possible longer term investments in new plays for future years, including one that we are delighted to announce will be coming in the 2017-18 season: *Into the Wild*, with a book by Janet Allard and lyrics and music by Niko Tsakalacos will premiere sometime in the next season, with the production directed by Lila Neugebauer. This new look at the famous story of Christopher McCandless is based on the book by Jon Krakauer as well as McCandless's own writing and photography. Thanks to Alaskans' continued patronage and support, Perseverance will be making professional theatre by and for Alaskans well into the future.

## 2016-2017 Season Fact Sheet

**Who:** Perseverance Theatre, 38th Season in Juneau and 6th Season in Anchorage

**What:**

Juneau Schedule:

*Peter and the Starcatcher* by Rick Elice, August 19-September 18, 2016  
*Not Medea* by Allison Gregory, October 14-November 6, 2016  
*Hold These Truths* by Jeanne Sakata, November 18-December 4, 2016  
*This Wonderful Life* by Steve Murray, December 9-December 31, 2016  
*They Don't Talk Back* by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse, January 27-February 19, 2017  
*To Kill A Mockingbird* by Christopher Sergel, March 17-April 16, 2017  
*Steel Magnolias* by Robert Harling, May 19-June 11, 2017

Anchorage Schedule:

*Peter and the Starcatcher* by Rick Elice, September 30-October 16, 2016  
*Not Medea* by Allison Gregory, November 11-20, 2016  
*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, adapted by Michael Evan Hanley and Alaskan playwright Arlita Jones, December 16-29, 2016  
*Hold These Truths* by Jeanne Sakata, January 6-15, 2017  
*They Don't Talk Back* by Frank Henry Kaash Katasse, March 3-12, 2017  
*To Kill A Mockingbird* by Christopher Sergel based on the book by Harper Lee, April 28-May 7, 2017

**Where:**

**Juneau:** Perseverance Theatre, 914 Third Street, Douglas, AK 99824

**Anchorage:** Sydney Laurence Auditorium and Discovery Theatre, both in Alaska Center for the Performing Arts, 621 W. Sixth Ave, Anchorage, AK 99501

**When:** The 38th season in Juneau begins on August 19, 2016, and runs through June 11, 2017. Performance days: Thursday–Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 4:00pm and a closing week Wednesday performance at 7:30 p.m. In Anchorage, the season opens September 30, 2016 and closes May 7, 2017. Performance days: Wednesday-Saturday at 7:30pm and Sunday at 4:00 p.m.

**Why:** Perseverance Theatre was founded by Molly Smith in 1979 in Juneau. Thirty eight years later, Perseverance has grown into a leading professional theatre in Alaska, recognized both statewide and nationally for its programming, training and development that's reflective of the Alaskan community, including over 70 world premieres of plays by Alaskan and national playwrights. Perseverance Theatre's mission is to create professional theatre by and for Alaskans. We value community engagement, cross-cultural collaboration, professional rigor, and regional voice. In 2012, Perseverance launched the initiative to begin performing a season of plays in Anchorage as a resident company in the Alaska Center for the Performing Arts. Find more information on Perseverance Theatre at [www.ptalaska.org](http://www.ptalaska.org). You can also follow Perseverance Theatre at [facebook.com/PerseveranceTheatre](https://www.facebook.com/PerseveranceTheatre) and [Twitter.com/PTalaska](https://twitter.com/PTalaska)

**How:** For more information on performances, subscriptions, and/or single tickets, visit <http://www.ptalaska.org> or call 907-463-TIXS (JNU) or 907-263-ARTS (ANC).

**PR:** Tom Robenolt, Perseverance Theatre 907-364-2421, ext. 226 or [tom@ptalaska.org](mailto:tom@ptalaska.org) (This phone number and email are not for publication.)

**PHOTOS:** Email [tom@ptalaska.org](mailto:tom@ptalaska.org) for photo availability or to schedule a photo shoot.

Perseverance Theatre 2016-2017 Season Sponsors are: Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The City & Borough of Juneau, The Juneau Arts & Humanities Council, Shubert Foundation, Atwood Foundation, 800 KINY - 630 KJNO –

MIX 106 - TAKU 105 - 1330 KXJ, The Juneau Empire, KTOO-KXLL-KRNN, Alaska State Council on the Arts, Alaska Airlines, Charlotte Martin Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Anchorage Press, Alaska Public Media, Anchorage Dispatch News, and Alpha Media.

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