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Company One Theatre Reschedules Summer Production Due To Comm Ave Closures and To Increase Accessibility

BOSTON — Company One Theatre (C1) regrettably announces that their final production of season 18, *Leftovers* by Josh Wilder, will be moved to season 19 due to [significant construction to the Commonwealth Avenue bridge](#) this summer that will impede access to Boston Playwrights' Theatre (the planned venue). However, in moving the production, C1 plans to increase access to this remarkable, original, and timely new work by Josh Wilder. At this time, exact dates and new venue details are pending, but will be shared in a forthcoming Season 19 announcement.

Developed at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference in 2015 and presently through PlayLab (C1's new play incubator), *Leftovers* combines wit, whimsy, big weeds, and brotherly love into an affecting journey through inner-city experiences in a forgotten corner of Philadelphia.

“It’s not often that a play comes along and manages to create something so current and fresh and energetic,” says C1 Artistic Director Shawn LaCount. “There’s magic here — Wilder’s most recent draft leaps off of the page and demands an audience. However, being at the Boston Public Library with our current production of *peerless* — an entirely Pay-What-You-Want program — has affirmed for me that it is our duty at C1 to break down barriers to attendance to the best of our ability with each project we do. We are making moves towards radically inclusive programming and unbridled access and unfortunately the closures, detours, and limitations put in place by the construction make that impossible.”

The decision to postpone is driven by more than just a philosophical belief in accessible, inclusive theatre. The precarious nature of arts funding at this particular moment makes producing a summer show with such catastrophic obstacles to attendance a financially irresponsible endeavor for the organization at this time.

[A recent article in the Boston Globe](#) details the closures saying, “It will affect nearly every mode of transportation, altering bus and train routes and eliminating most traffic on a 1.5 mile stretch of Commonwealth Avenue and the Boston University Bridge, and choking the turnpike below.” The article confirms that Comm Ave will indeed be open to bike and foot traffic, but restrictions and congestion in the surrounding area will make reaching the venue too difficult for audiences, designers, actors, and staff. As the Globe reports, it is likely that the second phase of construction

on Comm Ave will take place next year, so C1 is ruling out BPT as a future venue for this production as well. At this time, venue and date negotiations are still taking place and more information will be available in the coming months.

“It’s particularly unfortunate timing because after completing two very exciting workshop weeks with Josh, we were eager to see the play in the context of the impending Bill Cosby trial this summer, given its connection to the storyline,” says Summer L. Williams, Associate Artistic Director of C1 and the director of *Leftovers*. “But we are energized to use this time to develop new artists (true Company One fashion) to give Josh a proper introduction to the City, and to roll out the red carpet when we bring it to the stage in 2018!”

“This is a blessing in disguise,” says playwright Josh Wilder. “The premiere of *Leftovers* in 2018 is going to be a triumphant one. Radical access is what this play needs and I think every playwright deserves that opportunity to develop a deeper relationship with an audience. Plus I’ll be finished with my MFA at Yale School of Drama and can really take charge of this opportunity to bring the play to Boston. ”

Over the course of this current season, Josh, Summer, and Director of New Work Ilana M. Brownstein have developed a vision for this play that is inclusive of people who don't often hear their own stories on stage, and don't often feel welcome in the theatre. In the Company One spirit of turning challenges into opportunities, the artistic team looks forward to leveraging C1's robust community engagement initiatives to create new paths of access for audiences from across Boston's rich collection of neighborhoods.

>>ABOUT LEFTOVERS BY JOSH WILDER

Weeds are a given in the heart of Philly, but when a giant dandelion sprouts overnight and wishes start falling from the sky, one family begins to see a way out of the cycle of poverty that has governed their lives. For brothers Jalil and Kwamaine, hope is running thin as they wait for the arrival of their absent father—and in time, discover the power of their own dreams and the transformative influence of forgiveness. Seizing the possibility of no longer feeling like the city's leftovers, the two brothers find themselves on an adventure they never could have dreamed of.

>>ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Josh Wilder, Playwright

Josh Wilder is a playwright and actor from Philadelphia. His work has been developed at The Fire This Time Festival, Playwrights’ Center, Pillsbury House+Theater, The History Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, The Drama League, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and The O’Neill National Playwrights Conference. His play *Leftovers* was a recipient of the 2014 Holland New Voices Playwright Award at The Great Plains Theatre Conference. He is a former Jerome Fellow and Many Voices Fellow at The Playwrights’ Center and has been in residence at The Royal Court Theatre. Josh is a MFA candidate in Playwriting at Yale School of Drama. Training: Carnegie Mellon, BFA.

Summer L. Williams, Director

Ms. Williams has been with Company One Theatre since its inception in 1998. Her most recent directing credits include *Barbecue* at Lyric Stage Company of Boston, *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.* at Company One Theatre, *Bootycandy* at SpeakEasy Stage Company, *An Octoroon* and *Colossal* with Company One Theatre--Winner of the 2016 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Director for both productions. Regional credits: *Intimate Apparel* at Lyric Stage Company of Boston, *Shiv* as a part of *The Displaced Hindu Gods Trilogy*, *Shelter of Last Resort* by Miranda Craigwell as a part of XX PlayLab 2014 and the New England Premiere of Jackie Sibblies Drury's *We Are Proud To Present A Presentation About The Herero Of Namibia, Formerly Known As Southwest Africa From The German Sudwestafrika Between The Years 1884-1915*, Idris Goodwin's *How We Got On* and Lynn Nottage's *By The Way, Meet Vera Stark* at the Lyric Stage Company of Boston, *The Brothers Size* and *Marcus; Or The Secret Of Sweet* as part of *The Brother/Sister Plays* (2012 Elliot Norton Award nominated for Outstanding Production and winner of the 2012 IRNE Award for Best Play), *Neighbors*, *Grimm*, *The Good Negro*, *Voyeurs De Venus* (Winner of 2009 Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Director), *The Bluest Eye* (IRNE and Elliot Norton Award nominated), *The Last Days Of Judas Iscariot*, *Spell #7* (IRNE nominated), *Jesus Hopped The A Train* (2004 Elliot Norton Award for Best Fringe Production) *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992* (IRNE nominated). Ms. Williams has also directed for the Boston Playwrights' Theatre, Clark University, Brandeis University, The Theatre Offensive and Huntington Theatre Company.

>>ABOUT C1 PLAYLAB

Through a combination of personalized dramaturgy, group workshops, and professional development classes — featuring a roster of locally and nationally recognized artistic leaders — Company One Theatre's PlayLab is an incubator of new work for writers of varied experience levels and backgrounds. Over its six seasons, C1 PlayLab has provided a multiplicity of dramaturgical support models for more than 40 playwrights, all with the goal of supporting Boston's diverse artistic field.

>>ABOUT COMPANY ONE THEATRE

Dubbed Boston's Best Fringe Theatre by *Boston* magazine, Company One Theatre is Boston's theatre for the people. Founded in 1999, Company One's mission is to change the face of Boston theatre by uniting the city's diverse communities through socially provocative performance and the development of civically engaged artists. The award-winning company has been instrumental in bringing younger and more diverse audiences to see and participate in socially and politically relevant theatre.

>> *What's Next*

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