

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 15, 2017 Company One Theatre Media Contact: Susanna Jackson 617.292.7110 • sjackson@companyone.org Boston Public Library Media Contact: Rosemary Lavery 617.859.2319 • news@bpl.org Press Opening: April 29, 2017 <u>Click to RSVP</u> Publicity Photos & Digital Press Kit

Company One Theatre in collaboration with the Boston Public Library presents

peerless

A play by Jiehae Park, Directed by Steven Bogart April 27 – May 27, 2017 | Rabb Hall, Central Library in Copley Square | 85 min Radically inclusive, totally affordable. All tickets for *peerless* are Pay-What-You-Want

**Boston, MA** — Company One Theatre (C1) and the Boston Public Library are thrilled to enter into a collaborative venture that brings a full-scale, all-ages, pay-what-you-want theatrical production of Jiehae Park's *Peerless* to Rabb Hall at the Central Library in Copley Square—the first fully-staged theatrical run ever to be staged in the space. <u>Performances begin Thursday</u>, <u>April 27 at 7 p.m. and continue through May 28, 2017</u> in conjunction with the Library's "All the City's a Stage: A Season of Shakespeare."</u>

"To stage the first-ever live theatre run at the BPL is an honor," says C1 Artistic Director Shawn LaCount. "And it marks what we hope will be an example to the rest of Boston's artistic and cultural institutions of what we can achieve together as an intersectional community."

"The City of Boston is proud to support Boston's flourishing arts community through Company One Theatre's production of *Peerless* at the Boston Public Library," said Julie Burros, Chief of Arts & Culture for the City of Boston. "The collaboration between the two organizations to bring Rabb Hall to life as a theater performance space is both innovative and exciting. We look forward to this being one of the first of many performances there."

"Today's library spaces can be brought to life with innovative partnerships. In our first year post-renovation, this pilot program with Company One's Theatre performances will undoubtedly bring new energy and dynamism to the Central Library for all to enjoy," said David Leonard, President of the Boston Public Library. "It's yet another way of making Shakespeare come to life."

Company One Theatre and the Boston Public Library are dedicated to making art and information accessible to all. In this spirit, all tickets to PEERLESS are Pay-What-You-Want. By removing the financial barrier to attendance, we hope everyone who wishes to can engage with

this work. No minimum contribution is required to attend PEERLESS, though a \$10 ticket donation *goes to Company One* and directly contributes to the future of financially accessible theater in Boston. Thanks to our generous Lead Sponsors, Boston Public Library Foundation, and the Highland Street Foundation, as well as the Liberty Mutual Foundation, and the Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation for helping us make boundary-breaking art accessible to all.

## >>ABOUT PEERLESS

Twin high school seniors L and M are dead-set on attending not just an Ivy League school, but *the* Ivy League school. With their perfect SAT scores, perfect hair, and "perfect" minority status, they think acceptance should be guaranteed. When a rival student emerges with a personal tragedy to make an admissions officer weep, however, the twins will do anything to knock out the competition. Does that include *murder most foul? Mean Girls* meets *Macbeth* in this dark comedy, which sets one of Shakespeare's bloodiest plays against the backdrop of competitive college admissions.

Hailed by the Hartford Courant as a "bright, loud, colorful and caustic comedy," PEERLESS dives headfirst into the contemporary war zone of college admissions—which, as any high school senior will tell you, is a no-holds-barred battleground. Exploring unbreakable familial bonds and casting a critical eye on the world of top-tier educational institutions (with a hearty dose of Shakespearean tragedy, of course), PEERLESS is "about anger and cruelty and danger and life and death. It's also about coming-of-age and coming to grips with mortality."

# >>TICKETS AND PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Sat, May 13 - 02:00 PM
Sat, May 13 - 07:00 PM
Sun May 14 - 02:00 PM
Thu, May 18 - 07:00 PM
Fri, May 19 - 10:00 AM - STUDENT MATINEE
Sat, May 20 - 02:00 PM
Sat, May 20 - 07:00 PM
Sun May 21 - 02:00 PM
Thu, May 25 - 07:00 PM
Fri, May 26 - 10:00 AM - STUDENT MATINEE
Sat, May 27 - 02:00 PM
Sat, May 27 - 07:00 PM - CLOSING NIGHT

Radically inclusive, totally affordable. All tickets for *peerless* are Pay-What-You-Want. \$0 minimum, \$10 suggested, \$50 you're a hero.

#### \*\*Press Performance: Saturday, April 29th, 2017 at 7pm (CLICK TO RSVP)

- Online at <a href="https://company-one-theatre.ticketleap.com/peerless/">https://company-one-theatre.ticketleap.com/peerless/</a> via CompanyOne.org
- Day of performance: In-person at the library, depending on availability.

## >>ABOUT THE ARTISTS

### Jiehae Park, Playwright

Jiehae Park's plays include *peerless* (Yale Rep premiere, Cherry Lane Mentor Project, Marin Theatre Co, Barrington Stage, Company One, Moxie, First Floor) and *Hannah and the Dread Gazebo (*Oregon Shakespeare Festival premiere, 2017). She is one of the writers of *Wondrous Strange* (2016 Humana/ATL). Development: Sundance Theatre-Makers, Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, Soho Rep, Playwrights Horizons, the Public's EWG, I73, NYTW, Old Globe, Dramatists Guild Fellowship, Ojai Conference, Playwrights Realm, BAPF, and the amazing Ma-Yi Writers Lab. Awards/recognitions: Leah Ryan, Princess Grace, Weissberger, ANPF Women's Invitational (Grand Prize), two years of the Kilroys List. Commissions: Playwrights Horizons, McCarter, Williamstown, Geffen, OSF. Residencies: MacDowell, Yaddo, Hedgebrook, McCarter/Sallie B. Goodman. She is an NYTW Usual Suspect and 2016-17 Hodder Fellow at Princeton. As a performer: La Jolla Playhouse, Studio Theatre, Tiny Little Band, REDCAT, and most recently *Sleep*(Ripe Time/The Play Co) and *Every Angel Is Brutal* (Clubbed Thumb Summerworks). BA, Amherst; MFA, UCSD.

#### **Steven Bogart, Director**

Steven Bogart is a playwright, stage director, teacher and visual artist. He also leads workshops in collaborative playwriting around the state of Massachusetts and has created over 50 devised theatre pieces. Bogart has directed for the American Repertory Theater (Cabaret, The Boston Abolitionist Project), Boston Playwrights' Theatre (Ginger Lazarus's BURNING, Dan Hunter's LEGALLY DEAD), Company One Theatre (Shockheaded Peter), Liars & Believers (Lunar Labyrinth), Brandeis University (Cabaret), and Wheelock Family Theatre (Pinocchio). He has collaborated on projects with Robert Brustein, James Carroll, Neil Gaiman, Kate Snodgrass, and Amanda Palmer. He is a 2015 Massachusetts Cultural Council fellow in playwriting, and was a 2009 Massachusetts Cultural Council Grant recipient in playwriting. He has participated in the Kennedy Center Summer Playwriting Intensive, and The Freedom Art Theatre Retreat where he worked with other playwrights, designer and dramaturgs. He lives with his wife, Amory, in Maynard, Massachusetts.

Cast:

### Brenna Fitzgerald, Dirty Girl

Brenna Fitzgerald is thrilled to return to Company One. Recent local credits include Mika in LAB RATS with Brown Box Theatre, Rose in THE FLICK with Company One (Nominated

Elliot Norton Award for Outstanding Actress In A Small Company), and 44 PLAYS FOR 44 PRESIDENTS with Bad Habit Productions. Brenna holds a BA in theatre education from Emerson College and is an SAFD certified actor-combatant (unarmed combat). She would like to thank the entire company for their amazing work and her friends and family for their unwavering support.

#### James Wechsler, D

James Wechsler earned his B.F.A. degree in theatre performance at Salem State University. Recent credits include Cloten in Brown Box's "Cymbeline", Skylar/Dreaming Man in Gloucester Stage's "The Flick"; Franz Kafka in Salem State's original production, "Kafka in Tel Aviv", for which he received a national Outstanding Performance award from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival; Prince Hal in SSU's "Henry IV, Parts 1 and 2"; and Malcolm/second murder in Marblehead Little Theater's "Macbeth". James was also the winner of KCACTF's Region 1 Irene Ryan Fellowship competition in 2014, and the Best Actor in a Ten Minute/One Act Play award the following year.

#### Khloe Alice Lin, L

Khloe is delighted to make her Company One debut in PEERLESS. Her recent Boston credits include DRIVE BUY (SLAMBoston/Open Theatre Project) and BEAR PATROL (Vaquero Playground). She was in the original cast of the Chinese premier of VAGINA MONOLOGUES, and has performed extensively in Beijing in her native tongue, Mandarin. She is grateful for the steadfast support of her family and friends, especially her husband Tyler, who always told her to follow her heart.

#### Kim Klasner, M

Kim is thrilled for the opportunity to make her Company One debut in PEERLESS. Her recent credits include MISS PENITENTIARY (Maiden Phoenix Theatre Company) and LANGUAGE OF ANGELS (Happy Medium Theatre). She is a graduate of University of Massachusetts-Amherst and currently works at a Boston based non-profit in Product Development. She would like to thank her friends and family for their support, especially the light and love of her life, B.

#### Kadahj Bennett, BF

Kadahj is delighted to be returning to the C1 stage. Recent credits include AN OCTOROON, DRY LAND, HOW WE GOT ON (Company One) as well as a feature role in THE HALLS web series (Beyond Measure Productions). A Posse Scholar and graduate of both Hamilton College & the Boston Arts Academy, Kadahj is currently a Teaching Artist in the Boston Area. When not acting, Kadahj serves as the writer/lyricist/vocalist for two bands, Dancelujah (Boston) & the Downbeat Keys (Brooklyn).

**Designers:** Emmett Buhmann, (Lighting Designer), JiYoung Han (Scenic Designer), Lee Scuna (Sound Designer), and Miranda Giurleo (Costume Designer)

## >>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.

## >>BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

Boston Public Library has a Central Library, twenty-four branches, map center, business library, and a website filled with digital content and services. Established in 1848, the Boston Public Library has pioneered public library service in America. It was the first large free municipal library in the United States, the first public library to lend books, the first to have a branch library, and the first to have a children's room. Each year, the Boston Public Library hosts thousands of programs and serves millions of people. All of its programs and exhibitions are free and open to the public. At the Boston Public Library, books are just the beginning. To learn more, visit <u>bpl.org</u>.

# >>ABOUT ALL THE CITY'S A STAGE

All the City's a Stage: A Season of Shakespeare at the Boston Public Library commemorates the 400th anniversary of William Shakespeare's death. From September 2016 to June 2017, discover the Bard's lasting legacy with two exhibitions at the Central Library in Copley Square and dozens of programs system wide connecting audiences to theater and the dramatic arts.

# >> What's Next

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