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THE FACTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES 25th ANNIVERSARY SEASON, ITS THIRD SEASON IN ROGERS PARK, AND WELCOMES NEW LEADERSHIP

Season 25 Continues Factory's Tradition of Creating and Producing Original Work with Ensemble Members Manny Tamayo and Stacie Barra Stepping Into the New Role of Co-Artistic Directors

CHICAGO – The Factory Theater is proud to announce its 25th anniversary season of world premieres and its third season at its Rogers Park home: Mike Ooi's ***Captain Steve's Caring Kingdom, October 27 – December 9***, Carrie J. Sullivan's ***The Next Big Thing, March 9 – April 21, 2018*** and Jill Oliver's ***Lametown and the Adventures of Spirit Force Five, June 29 – August 11, 2018***. At the conclusion of the 25th season comes a shift in leadership as Ensemble Members Manny Tamayo and Stacie Barra become Co-Artistic Directors, taking over for current current Artistic Director Scott OKen. Single tickets and three show subscription packages are available for purchase now at www.thefactorytheater.com. All performances will take place at Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St.

The Factory Theater continues the tradition it established at season one: producing original, timely work that is important to the company, its ensemble and Chicago. On the company's 25th anniversary of presenting unique work, its core values have not changed and it continues to do what it does best: entertain its audience totally and completely. Season 25 takes audiences down a dark trail in a land full of talking animals and puppets, back in time to the 90s where dreams of Grunge rock fame were real and along an epic adventure with a squad of cheerleaders who battle against a malevolent spirit stick.

The Factory Theater's New Leadership

Artistic Director Scott OKen, after 12 years of leadership, will be transitioning out of his long-time role, and continues to be a part of the company's artistic ensemble. He passes the torch to long-time ensemble members Manny Tamayo and Stacie Barra who take on the roles of co-artistic directors.

The Factory Theater's 25th Anniversary Season includes:

Captain Steve's Caring Kingdom **WORLD PREMIERE**

Written and Directed by Mike Ooi

October 27 – December 9

Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St.

Previews: Friday, Oct. 27 and Saturday, Oct. 28 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 29 at 3 p.m.

Press Opening: Friday, Nov. 3 at 8 p.m.

Regular Run: Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m.

Tickets: Previews: \$10; Student/Senior: \$18; General Admission: \$25

Everyone is familiar with the host of a children's show visiting a land filled with talking animals and puppets. What happens when the host isn't around? Do the animals also go to jobs they hate? Are they struggling to save their relationships? Do they have issues they can't seem to fix? The Factory Theater takes a glimpse into the lives of the residents of Captain Steve's caring kingdom, in a story not suitable for children.

The Next Big Thing
WORLD PREMIERE

Written by Carrie J. Sullivan

Directed by Robyn Coffin

March 9 – April 21, 2018

Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St.

Previews: Friday, March 9 and Saturday, March 10 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, March 11 at 3 p.m.

Press Opening: Friday, March 16 at 8 p.m.

Regular Run: Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m.

Tickets: Previews: \$10; Student/Senior: \$18; General Admission: \$25

Grunge. The internet. Auto-tune. It was all happening – and about to happen – in 1997. For 19 year-old Beth Peterson, shaking the dust off her small town life to pursue a career in rock 'n' roll is a dream-come-true. In *The Next Big Thing*, audiences watch as the curtain gets pulled back to reveal the harsh realities of the city, the industry and adulthood, and will find out if Beth can navigate her new world.

Lametown and the Adventures of Spirit Force Five
WORLD PREMIERE

Written by Jill Oliver

Directed by Spenser Davis

June 29 – August 11, 2018

Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St.

Previews: Friday, June 29 and Saturday, June 30 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, July 1 at 3 p.m.

Press Opening: Friday, July 6 at 8 p.m.

Regular Run: Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m.

Tickets: Previews: \$10; Student/Senior: \$18; General Admission: \$25

When a cheerleading squad is called upon to save the parallel universe of Lej, they must summon their collective team spirit to destroy the evil spirit stick, save the citizens of Lametown and be back in time for the state championship. Jill Oliver's debut play asks the question, "Ummm...there's an evil stick in this play?"

About Manny Tamayo, newly appointed co-artistic director

Manny Tamayo has been an active Factory Ensemble Member since 2002. He has worked with the company in many capacities - as an actor, director, writer and production manager/producer. As an actor, some favorites include: *Among the Dead*, *Here Comes a Regular*, *Toast of the Town*, and *Easy Six*. As a production manager, Tamayo has produced many of the all-time Factory Classics: *Siskel and Ebert Save Chicago*, *Hey Dancin! Hey Musical!*, and *Fight City*. Tamayo has written four productions for the Factory utilizing his love of B-Movies, exploitation pictures and gritty noir. Most notably, he wrote *Incident on Run #1217*, which won the Joseph Jefferson Citation for Best New Play in 2014. Before devoting a massive chunk of his life to the Factory, Tamayo worked as an actor with several companies

including: The Hypocrites, Stage Left and Lifeline Theatre. Tamayo holds a bachelor's degree from Stephens College for Women in Columbia, MO and hails from Joliet.

About Stacie Barra, newly appointed co-artistic director

Stacie Barra found her way to Chicago from East Texas. She's proud to have worked as an actor with Milwaukee Rep, Griffin Theatre Company, Lifeline Theatre and Strangeloop, to name a few. After performing with The Factory in *GIs in Europe* and two productions of 1985, she found herself a company member where she began to stretch her playwriting muscles. She's been lucky enough to have two of her plays produced, *Take the Cake* and *Born Ready*. In late 2013, she took over as The Factory's casting director and finds such joy in creating a fun space to audition. Barra will also continue as The Factory's casting director.

About The Factory Theater

For almost 25 years, The Factory has created its shows from scratch, doing exactly the kind of theater they wanted to do. From writing workshops to the closing night bash, Factory shows are a unique experience that fits its exacting standards: original, bold, and full-tilt. Its shameless ensemble are ambassadors of a good time, making certain that Chicago remains heartily entertained.

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