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**THE FACTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES THE WORLD PREMIERE OF
SHANNON O'NEILL'S *MAY THE ROAD RISE UP*,
FEBRUARY 15 – MARCH 30, 2019**

Spenser Davis Directs This Original Tale about the Painful Truths to be Found in
Returning Home

CHICAGO – The Factory Theater continues its 26th season with *May the Road Rise Up*, February 15 – March 30, 2019, at the Factory Theater, 1623 W. Howard St., Chicago. The play is written by Factory Theater Ensemble Member **Shannon O'Neill** and directed by Factory Theater Ensemble Member and Jeff Award-winning director **Spenser Davis**. Previews are Friday, Feb. 15 and Saturday, Feb. 16 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 17 at 3 p.m. **Opening night is Friday, Feb. 22, 2019 at 8 p.m.** Performance times are Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. Ticket prices are \$10 for previews, \$18 for students and seniors and \$25 for general admission. All tickets may be purchased through the Box Office by calling 866-811-4111 or by visiting TheFactoryTheater.com.

Ten years ago, the Murphys suffered a terrible tragedy. In a town this small, everyone knows what happened, even if no one (including the family) talks about it. Not Danny, the Irish ex-boxer whose sixty-fifth birthday party is steadily approaching. Not his daughter Patty, a nurse on the graveyard shift who is kindling a new romance in secret. Nor her son Michael, who mysteriously left town three years ago and has returned with little more than the clothes on his back. On the eve of what should be a momentous occasion, friends and family members come to realize that the past they buried has been festering beneath the surface... and if they don't act quickly, the wounds may never heal. Shannon O'Neill's newest play shows the consequences of a community that fails to communicate, and how refusing to grieve can lead to tragedies of its own.

The cast for *May the Road Rise Up* includes: **Loretta Rezos**, (Patty); **Vic Kuligowski**, (Michael); **Patrick Blashill**, (Danny); **Julia Rowley**, (Ruby); **Scot West**, (Andy); **Bob Pantalone**, (Rosie); **Zach Bloomfield**, (Don); **Maggie Cain**, (Evelyn); **Rob Quade**, (Mr. Bommer); **Jose Cervantes**, (Sam); **Matthew Johnston**, (u/s Michael); **Kevin O'Brien**, (u/s Danny) and **Morgen Kerian**, (u/s Ruby).

The production team includes: **Shannon O'Neill+**, playwright; **Spenser Davis+**, director; **Brittany Brown**, assistant director; **Emma Cullimore**, costume designer; **Shane Murray-Corcoran**, dialect coach; **Mandy Walsh+**, fight choreographer/ intimacy coach; **David Goodman-Edberg**, light designer; **C.W. van Baale+**, master electrician; **Therese Ritchie**, technical director; **Greg Caldwell+**, production manager; **Christine Jennings**, props designer; **Evan Frank**, scenic designer; **Tony Ingram**, sound designer and **Daniel Parsons**, stage manager.

+Denotes Factory Theater Ensemble Member

ABOUT SHANNON O'NEILL, playwright

Shannon O'Neill has been an active Factory Ensemble Member since 2003. She has worked with the company in many capacities – as an actor, writer, fight choreographer and production manager/producer. Her first contribution to The Factory as a playwright was with *Jenny and Jenni* in 2010; *May the Road Rise Up* marks her second full-length play for the company. As an actor: *Dick Danger: DJ Crime Solver*, *Janice Dutts Goes to Life Camp*, *Mop Top Festival*, *White Trash Wedding and a Funeral – The Remount* and *Jenny and Jenni*. As a production manager, O'Neill has produced *Operation Infiltration* and *Incident on Run 1217*, both by Joseph Jefferson Award-winning playwright Manny Tamayo. O'Neill graduated with a BA in Theater from Columbia College Chicago and has

had the privilege of working with a variety of theaters in Chicago since then: Lifeline, Trap Door, Steep, Stage Left, Journeymen and The Hypocrites.

ABOUT SPENSER DAVIS, director

Spenser Davis is an ensemble member of The Factory Theater, where he previously directed *The Adventures of Spirit Force Five* and performed in *Zombie Broads*. He is also a longtime company member of Broken Nose Theatre, where he most recently wrote and co-directed *Plainclothes*. Also at BNT, he directed Michael Perlman's *At the Table*, which was named "One of the Best Plays of 2017" by the *Chicago Tribune*, *Time Out Chicago*, *Newcity* and teen critic Ada Grey; it also received four Joseph Jefferson Awards, including Best Director/Play and Best Production/Play. Also at BNT, Davis directed Perlman's *From White Plains*, Elise Spoerlein's *A Phase* and several editions of *Bechdel Fest* and acted in *My First Time*, *Beautiful Broken* and *My First Time: The Remount*. Additional directing includes *Bachelorette* at Level 11, numerous editions of the One-Minute Play Festival, as well as work with Strawdog Theatre Company, Otherworld, Mary-Arrchie, First Floor and Pride Films and Plays. He has assistant directed both *Pilgrim's Progress* and *3C* at A Red Orchid, as well as *Divine Sister* with Hell in a Handbag, all with Shade Murray. As a playwright, he is the past winner of Scotland's Solas Festival, a finalist for the Actors Theater of Louisville Heideman Award and his first full-length play, *Merge*, about the rise and fall of the video game company Atari, closed The New Colony's eighth season. Davis' plays have been produced across the United States and Canada and have been published by Smith & Kraus New York. He is the series director of *SQUID*, a microbudget short-form comedy series now on Amazon Prime.

About The Factory Theater

For more than 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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