



MEDIA CONTACT:

Joshua Ford

Director of Marketing & Communications

301-924-4485 ext. 155

jford@olneytheatre.org

TONY-WINNING *THE HUMANS* LAUNCHES WITH ALL-STAR DC PRODUCTION TEAM

Aaron Posner directs Edelen, Flye, Gilbert, Hébert, Raviv, and Stoller in Stephen Karam's family drama for the new millennium

OLNEY, MD – March 5, 2020 – Olney Theatre Center, recipient of 27 nominations for the 2020 Helen Hayes Awards, begins rehearsals tomorrow for ***The Humans* by Stephen Karam and directed by Aaron Posner**. The 6th show of the 2019-2020 season runs on the Mainstage, **April 1 - May 3, 2020**. Press is invited to attend the performance on **Saturday, April 4 at 8:00 pm**.

Says Jason Loewith, Artistic Director of Olney Theatre Center, "**One of the most highly-praised new plays of the last decade** deserves one of the most talented teams of artists for its DMV resident premiere. So we're proud to bring together award-winning director Aaron Posner with the region's most lauded actors for Stephen Karam's extraordinary play ***The Humans***."

The Humans tells the story of the Blakes, a middle-class American family celebrating a most unusual Thanksgiving. This year, they gather in New York City at youngest daughter Brigid's Chinatown apartment - a basement duplex that would feel like a bargain if not for the lack of sunlight and the sudden, unexplained, loud noises coming from upstairs. Normally they celebrate in Scranton, but the break with tradition is just one of many disruptions with which they're forced to contend. Stephen Karam's brilliant play **delivers both the warm comfort of family and a thoroughly modern anxiety about what's on the other side of the wall**.

The ensemble consists of some of DC's finest actors. **Dani Stoller** (*The Crucible*) plays Brigid, the youngest daughter, who is hosting the meal with boyfriend Richard, played by **Jonathan Raviv** (*The Lightning Thief*). **Mitch Hébert** (*Cabaret*) is Erik, the father of the tribe, harboring his own secrets, and **Sherri L. Edelen** (*How to Succeed...*) is his wife Deirdre, who often serves as the



target of her children's teasing. **Kimberly Gilbert** makes her Olney Theatre Mainstage debut, (Harper in the 2016 *Angels in America* co-production with Round House Theatre) as Aimee, the elder Blake daughter suffering from a variety of personal, professional and physical ailments. The family unit is completed by **Catie Flye**, making her first OTC appearance in years, as Momo, the wheelchair-bound grandmother, mumbling through a haze of dementia.

Posner's creative team includes OTC veterans Paige Hathaway (Set Design), Max Doolittle (Lighting Design) and Sarah O'Halloran (Sound Design). Kelsey Hunt (Costume Design) makes her OTC debut along with Stage Manager Hethyr (Red) Verhoef.

The Humans

By Stephen Karam

Directed by Aaron Posner

April 1 - May 3, 2020

Press Opening: Saturday, April 4, 2020 at 8:00 pm

Regular performances are Wednesday-Saturday at 8:00 pm; matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 2:00 pm; and Wednesday matinees at 2:00 pm on April 8 and 22. There is no Saturday matinee on April 4.

There will be an Audio-described performance for the blind and visually impaired on Wednesday, April 15 at 8:00 pm and a sign-interpreted performance on Thursday, April 23 at 8:00 pm. Audience members who wish to use these services should contact Julie Via, Patron Services Manager (jvia@olneytheatre.org) to confirm.

Tickets begin at \$44.

Available at **olneytheatre.org** or by calling the Box Office 301-924-3400

Discounts available for groups, seniors, military and students.

Special Events:

- Behind the Scenes: **The Evolution of the American Family Drama with Peter Marks, Washington Post Chief Theatre Critic**

Saturday, April 4

5:00 - 6:00 pm

\$10/Free for Olney Theatre Center members

It is a quintessential American theatre story: A family gathers under one roof and what inevitably follows could be a reflection of cultural, generational or intensely personal



issues; but either way secrets will be revealed. Stephen Karam's *The Humans* is the latest, celebrated contribution to a genre that has seen classics from Eugene O'Neill, Tennessee Williams, Neil Simon, Lorraine Hansberry, Paula Vogel, Wendy Wasserstein, August Wilson and more. Artistic Director Jason Loewith will discuss with Peter Marks, Washington Post chief theatre critic, the lineage of *The Humans*, the hallmarks of American family drama and how the genre has continued to evolve.

- *Afterwords* discussions with cast and crew occur following Saturday matinee performances on April 11, 18 and 25

ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER

Mission

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces, presents and tours extraordinary performances for a diversity of audiences, and educates and inspires the next generation of theater-makers.

Vision

We strive every day to unleash the creative potential of our artists and audiences, and in so doing, become a nationally-prominent destination for the most impactful theater performance and education.

History

Once a summer stock retreat in rural Maryland, Olney Theatre Center is now an award-winning, year-round regional theatre surrounded in a 15-mile radius by 1.6 million people representing three of the most ethnically diverse counties in America. Since our founding in 1938, some of the biggest names in theatre have appeared on our stages: from "Golden Era" stars like Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead to contemporary artists like Sir Ian McKellen, Robin De Jesús, and many others. OTC welcomed Artistic Director Jason Loewith and Managing Director Debbie Ellinghaus in 2013 and 2014, respectively, who established a new artistic strategy to broaden programming with the goal of nurturing a diversity of voices and audiences. Olney Theatre Center now produces musicals and plays under the three rubrics of Classic, Contemporary and Family programming. Since 2013 Olney Theatre Center has twice won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production, the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and presented six world premieres. Complementing this work, OTC fulfills its mission as a teaching theater with educational programs like the Our Play program in local 5th grade classrooms, a summer camp and a year-round professional apprentice program. National Players, now in its 70th Season, is the hallmark outreach program of OTC, a unique ensemble touring innovative theater to communities large and small across the United States.

For more information, please visit olneytheatre.org.

Follow Olney Theatre Center on Twitter and Instagram @olneytheatre and on Facebook at facebook.com/olneytheatre.



#