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**CYGNET THEATRE ANNOUNCES SEASON 13 LINEUP AND NEW MEMBER OF
ARTISTIC TEAM**

Rob Lutfy Joins Cygnet as Associate Artistic Director

SAN DIEGO, CA—Cygnet Theatre has announced a Season 13 lineup featuring seven productions sure to take audiences on a rollicking theatrical journey. In choosing the upcoming season, Artistic Director **Sean Murray** looked to the newest member of Cygnet's artistic team for input and advice. **Rob Lutfy** was appointed Associate Artistic Director of Cygnet Theatre and this summer, he returns to San Diego for good.

Rob Lutfy, who directed the critically acclaimed mounting of *The Motherf**ker with the Hat* last season, was until recently, the 2014-2015 National New Play Network Producer-in-Residence at Marin Theatre Company. He has worked on plays in development at The Kennedy Center, The O'Neill Theatre Center, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. He was the 2012-13 William R. Kenan, Jr. Directing Fellow at The John F. Kennedy Center. Rob is a graduate of the directing program at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts School of Drama where he returns annually to teach acting as guest faculty. Lutfy is currently in rehearsal for ***Sons of the Prophet***, which opens January 24.

"I was looking for someone to bounce ideas around with and who will help us make this theater grow," explained Murray, who along with partner Bill Schmidt founded and has run the theater since 2003. "And it doesn't hurt that he is from my beloved North Carolina School of the Arts," Murray added. Lutfy will share directing duties with Murray and will also focus on one of his personal passions - new play development. "I hope to bring my knowledge and the relationships I have forged to the table at my new position. Cygnet is known for challenging, well crafted story telling and I look forward to contributing my skills as a director and an administrator."

Season thirteen's story telling begins in July as director Sean Murray will mount the West Coast premiere of ***Dogfight***, a romantic and comic musical adaptation of the 1991 movie with River Phoenix and Lili Taylor. Winner of the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical in 2013, *Dogfight* represents the new generation of voices in musical theatre creation. Dave Thomas Brown (**NOT CONFIRMED** (*Spring Awakening*- Critic Circle Nominee, *Shakespeare's R&J*) returns to the Cygnet stage after his Off-Broadway premiere in *Heathers*.

In the fall, Cygnet's tradition of shows performed in rotating rep continues with Noël Coward's ***Hay Fever*** (dir. Lutfy) and ***The Vortex*** (dir. Murray). These two plays turned Coward into an overnight sensation, one light and madcap, the other, dark and shocking. Written at the same time, they represent a yin and yang of Coward's talent. San Diego favorite Rosina Reynolds takes on the strong female roles in both these productions.

Yet another Cygnet tradition returns for the holidays with ***A Christmas Carol***, a Critic's Choice of 2014 and always a beloved family favorite.

January ***When the Rain Stops Falling*** (dir. Lutfy) to Cygnet Theatre. Named "The best new play of the year" in 2010 by Time Magazine, it's a powerful drama unfolding with humanity, surprising humor, and hope, as the past plays out into the future. The play, which opens with a fish falling out of the sky, has been hailed by audiences and critics alike.

From a new play, to a musical cult favorite, ***The Rocky Horror Show*** (dir. Murray) is fun, satirical tribute to the science fiction and B-list horror movies of the 20th century. 40 years since

the premiere of the movie, this raw and naughty musical continues to engage audiences in a big way.

Finally, Cygnet will close the season with, pardon our French, ***Stupid F*cking Bird*** (dir. Lutfy), a hilarious “sort-of-adaptation” of Anton Chekhov’s *The Seagull*. Playwright Aaron Posner’s (*My Name is Asher Lev*) smartly written, irreverent remix is sure to ruffle some feathers. A smash hit on the East Coast, it’s been called, “a staggering work of heartbreaking, stupid f*cking genius.”

All seven productions in Cygnet’s thirteenth season will be performed in their home, the Old Town Theatre in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park. “From a fish falling out of the sky in the year 2039, to a sweet transvestite, to one stupid f*cking bird...our next season will take audiences to seven different times and places filled with humanity, laughter, destruction and compassion,” Murray added.

SEASON XIII: 2015-2016 LIST OF PLAYS

DOGFIGHT

Music and Lyrics by BENJ PASEK & JUSTIN PAUL

Book by PETER DUCHAN

Based on the Warner Bros. film and screenplay by Bob Comfort

Directed by SEAN MURRAY

JULY 16TH – AUGUST 23RD, 2015. OPENING JULY 25TH, 2015.

It’s November 21, 1963. On the eve of their deployment to a small but growing conflict in Southeast Asia, three young Marines set out for one final boys’ night of debauchery, partying and maybe a little trouble. But when Corporal Eddie Birdlace meets Rose, an awkward and idealistic waitress he enlists to win a cruel bet with his fellow recruits, she rewrites the rules of the game and teaches him the power of compassion. Praised by countless critics and winner of the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical, Dogfight takes audiences on a romantic and heartbreaking theatrical journey that stays with you long after the performance.

“Superbly crafted, gratifyingly intelligent, richly observant, and immensely enjoyable. This is musical theatre at its finest.” – Backstage

REPERTORY

HAY FEVER

By NOËL COWARD

Directed by ROB LUTFY

SEPTEMBER 23RD – NOVEMBER 8TH, 2015. OPENING OCTOBER 3RD, 2015.

Retired stage star Judith Bliss, her novelist husband and their two bohemian adult children have each invited houseguests for the weekend. But as the Blissesses indulge their artistic eccentricities in a hilarious whirlwind of flirtation and histrionics, the guests begin to wonder if they’ve landed in a madhouse – and if they can survive with their own wits intact. Set in an English country house in the 1920’s, Noël Coward’s hilarious comedy of bad manners has been a favorite amongst theatregoers ever since it first dazzled London’s West End in 1925.

“An evening of intoxicating escape” The New York Times

“Light, Luminous, and charming, and hilariously funny” –The New York Post

REPERTORY

THE VORTEX

By NOËL COWARD

Directed by SEAN MURRAY

SEPTEMBER 24TH – NOVEMBER 8TH, 2015. OPENING OCTOBER 3RD, 2015.

Nicky Lancaster brings his elegant fiancée, Bunty, home to introduce her to his famous mother, stage actress Florence Lancaster. Nicky is shocked to discover that Florence has taken a much younger lover, and when Bunty ditches Nicky to run off with his mother's boy-toy, both are forced to confront the truth about themselves. Noël Coward's first commercially successful hit, *The Vortex* premiered in 1924 in London, and its scandalous subject matter of drug abuse, repressed homosexuality, nymphomania and Oedipal jealousy made Coward an overnight sensation.

"The Vortex (1924) is the play that turned Noël Coward into a star....Almost nine decades later, it still packs a powerful punch." -The Telegraph

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Adaptation and Lyrics by SEAN MURRAY • Score by BILLY THOMPSON

Directed by SEAN MURRAY

NOVEMBER 27TH – DECEMBER 27TH, 2015. OPENING DECEMBER 5TH, 2015.

Cygnets Theatre invites you to start your own family tradition with one of ours. This season welcomes the return of the holiday classic adapted from Charles Dickens' timeless tale of hope and redemption. This re-imagined, fully staged production features original new music, creative stagecraft and puppetry, and live sound effects. Step into a Victorian Christmas card for a unique storytelling experience that is sure to delight the entire family!

"Critics Choice" in 2014 –UT San Diego

WHEN THE RAIN STOPS FALLING

By ANDREW BOVELL

Directed by ROB LUTFY

JANUARY 14TH – FEBRUARY 14TH, 2016. OPENING JANUARY 23RD, 2016.

Alice Springs in the year 2039. A fish falls from the sky and lands at the feet of Gabriel York. And it still smells of the sea. It's been raining for days and Gabriel knows something is wrong. Fifty years earlier his grandfather, Henry Law, predicts that fish will fall from the sky heralding a great flood which will end life on earth as we know it. In an intricate, multi-layered story that spans four generations and two continents, *When the Rain Stops Falling* explores patterns of betrayal, abandonment, destruction, forgiveness and love. This powerful drama unfolds with humanity, surprising humor and hope, as the past plays out into the future.

"The Best New Play of Year" in 2010 – Time Magazine

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW

Book, Music and Lyrics by RICHARD O'BRIEN

Directed by SEAN MURRAY

MARCH 10TH – MAY 1ST, 2016. OPENING MARCH 19TH, 2016.

A satirical tribute to the science fiction and B-list horror movies of 20th century, the show centers around two naïve lovers, Brad and Janet. Seeking shelter from a thunderstorm in an old castle, they find themselves thrust into the laboratory of the cross-dressing mad scientist Dr. Frank 'N' Furter and his motley crew. Stripped of inhibitions — and their clothes — Brad and Janet embark on a wild, unforgettable journey of pleasure and self-discovery. Reality, fiction, and camp collide in this mash up of comics, rock and roll, and late-night horror flicks.

"A musical that deals with mutating identity and time warps becomes one of the most mutated, time warped phenomena in show business." - The New York Times

STUPID F*CKING BIRD

By AARON POSNER

Directed by ROB LUTFY

MAY 19TH – JUNE 19TH, 2016. OPENING MAY 28TH, 2016.

In this irreverent, contemporary, and very funny remix of Chekhov's *The Seagull*, award-winning playwright Aaron Posner wages a timeless battle between young and old, past and present, in search of the true meaning of it all. An aspiring young director rampages against the art created by his mother's

generation. A nubile young actress wrestles with an aging Hollywood star for the affections of a renowned novelist. And everyone discovers just how disappointing love, art, and growing up can be. With music, meta-theatricality, and mad humor, playwright Aaron Posner beats *The Seagull* to a bloody f*cking pulp.

"Bitterly sardonic...Ferociously funny" – Lawrence Bommer, Stage and Cinema

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ABOUT CYGNET THEATRE

Twelve years ago, when Cygnet Theatre opened the doors in a strip mall near La Mesa with the premiere of the rock musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, they were announcing the birth of an unconventional, exciting, and fresh new theatre company in San Diego. Since that opening night, Cygnet Theatre has grown into San Diego's fifth largest theatre company and has become known for producing adventurous, entertaining and thought-provoking live professional theatre year round. At the recently renovated, state-of-the-art Old Town Theatre in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park, Cygnet presents at least six main stage productions annually, ranging from classics and musicals to contemporary works that celebrate the human story. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Sean Murray and Executive Director Bill Schmidt, Cygnet has won more than 100 local awards for artistic excellence, including Theatre of the Year, Producer of the Year and multiple Best Production awards. Cygnet has been the recipient of grants from the National Endowment of the Arts and The James Irvine Foundation, among many others. In addition, Cygnet Theatre is committed to education outreach, new play development and community collaborations. For more information, visit www.cygnettheatre.com.

CYGNET THEATRE MISSION STATEMENT

Believing in the power of theatre to startle the soul, stir debate and embrace the wide diversity of the community it serves, Cygnet Theatre Company is fearlessly committed to the dissection, examination and celebration of the human story through the medium of live theatre.

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