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LEAGUE OF CHICAGO THEATRES ANNOUNCES ELECTION OF FOUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

(Chicago), November 4, 2009 – The League of Chicago Theatres is pleased to announce the election of four new board members. The election took place at the annual membership meeting the evening of October 26 at the Victory Gardens Biograph Theater. New board members voted at the meeting include: **Timothy J. Evans**, Executive Director of Northlight Theatre, **Criss Henderson**, Executive Director of Chicago Shakespeare Theater, **James Palmer**, Artistic Director of Red Tape Theatre and **Heather Schmucker**, Producing Director of the American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University.

Also re-elected to serve on the board of directors at the meeting were: **Julie Burros**, Director of Cultural Planning at the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, **Francesca Peppiatt**, Managing Director of Stockyards Theatre Project and **Greg Werstler**, Managing Director of ComedySportz Chicago.

“We are thrilled to welcome this fantastic group of leaders in the Chicago theatre community to our board of directors. Their diverse skills and vast knowledge will be greatly beneficial to guiding the future vision of the League of Chicago Theatres,” says **League of Chicago Theatres Executive Director Deb Clapp**.

The new board members join the group of 21 civic leaders and theatre community professionals that guide the League of Chicago Theatres, a non-profit alliance of theaters that leverages its collective strength to promote, support and advocate for Chicago's theater industry locally, nationally and internationally. Currently, the League serves a diverse membership of nearly 200 theaters and theater companies, ranging from small storefront, non-union companies to major cultural centers with multi-million dollar facilities and productions.

The League of Chicago Theatres provides a wide range of programs and services for the Chicago theater community ranging from audience development programs like Hot Tix, the half-price ticket program, *Theater Thursdays* and *Free Night of Theater* to advocacy and professional development assistance with workshops, roundtables and mentorships.

BIOS:

TIMOTHY J. EVANS, Executive Director of Northlight Theatre, joined the company as Executive Director in 2007 and since his arrival initiated the theatre's new branding campaign, leadership fundraising campaign, new board development and a five-year strategic plan with McKinsey & Company. Prior to his arrival at Northlight, Tim spent a 20-plus year career at Steppenwolf Theatre where he served in various management and producing positions. He created, curated and produced Steppenwolf's acclaimed TRAFFIC Series which included a partnership with Chicago Public Radio for subsequent broadcasts. Tim founded Steppenwolf Films, of which he is still a partner with Gary Sinise, Terry Kinney and Jeff Perry, to develop feature film and television projects including the recently released comedy *Diminished Capacity* with Matthew Broderick, which was an official selection of the Sundance Film Festival in 2008. Tim has produced numerous productions at the Pritzker Pavilion in Millennium Park including the appearance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in 2007. He has served on the board of directors of the League of Chicago Theatres, the Independent Film Project (IFP) and was a charter member of the Governor's Task Force for Media Development. Tim is a graduate of DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana.



CRISS HENDERSON, Executive Director of Chicago Shakespeare Theater, has produced CST's past 19 seasons. Under his leadership the Theater has become one of the city's major cultural attractions; honors include the 2008 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater as well as multiple Laurence Oliver and Joseph Jefferson Awards. Mr. Henderson was named Arts Administrator of the Year by Arts Management Magazine at The Kennedy Center; was recognized among the top 40 business people under the age of 40 in *Crain's Chicago Business*; and was recently named Chevalier de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres by the Minister of Culture of France. Mr. Henderson serves as president of the Producers' Association of Chicago area Theaters and on the Board of Directors of Arts Alliance Illinois. Mr. Henderson is director of the MFA/Arts Leadership Program, a two year graduate-level curriculum in arts management training created through a joint partnership between Chicago Shakespeare Theater and The Theatre School at DePaul University.

JAMES PALMER, Artistic Director of Red Tape Theatre, is in his second season as the company's Artistic Director and served as Managing Director for two years prior. James directed and adapted *Dog in a Manger* (2008). Directing credits include *Enemy of the People* (2009) *Pugilist Specialist* (2008), *Endgame* (2007), *Baden Lehrstück* (2007), *FEP: Jesusland* (2006), and *FEP: Coriolanus* (2006). In 2009 he produced the wildly successful Chicago Fringe Artist Networking Night and is currently producing *Mouse in a Jar* (2009). James is the assistant to Martha Lavey and David Hawkanson at the Steppenwolf Theatre Company. James chairs Steppenwolf's Access Committee and sits on the League of Chicago Theatre's Access Task Force. He is also on the TCG 2010 Host Committee. James is a Steppenwolf Peer Mentor. He is a member of the Vestry at St. Peter's Episcopal Church and chairs their Marketing and Branding Committee. James participated in the 2008 Chicago Directors Lab. James received his Bachelors degree in Theatre Arts from Simpson College and graduated Magna Cum Laude. While at Simpson, he was a member of the Alpha Psi Omega theatre fraternity and served as Secretary in 2004. James received the prestigious Senior Award as well as several Irene Ryan nominations.

HEATHER SCHMUCKER, Producing Director of The American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University, has had the great pleasure of working in the Chicago theatre community for the past ten years. The American Music Theatre Project at Northwestern University is a program that brings professional artists to the university to develop new musicals in collaboration with Northwestern faculty and students. With AMTP, she most recently supported the development of *GIRLS VS BOYS*, a new musical created by The House Theatre of Chicago. She is a trustee and company member at About Face Theatre, where she spent eight years on staff as Producing Director working in collaboration with Artistic Director, Eric Rosen. With About Face, Heather collaborated with Lookingglass, Steppenwolf, Center on Halsted, The Goodman, Victory Gardens and the Museum of Contemporary Art. She serves on the festival committee for the National Alliance for Musical Theatre in New York and she began her professional career in Chicago on the stage management team at the Court. At Northwestern, Heather has developed partnerships with Broadway in Chicago (BIC) to create an innovative marketing practicum for undergraduates led by BIC's marketing team, and with the Dramatists Guild to pilot a new program here in Chicago. Heather serves on the board of About Face and Season of Concern, and she is a graduate of Northwestern University.

THE LEAGUE OF CHICAGO THEATRES

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