

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 30, 2018

Stage Left Theatre announces leadership change and restructuring

Chicago, Illinois: *Stage Left Theatre announces a change in leadership and refocusing of the company's producing model.*

DEPARTURES

Co-Artistic Directors Jason A. Fleece and Amy Szerlong as well as Co-Literary Manager Zev Valancy will be moving on from the company as of Monday, April 30, 2018.

"The opportunity to lead this 36 year old company has been a great honor and we're proud of the work we've produced over the past two seasons," said Szerlong. Fleece added, "After 9 years with this company, in a variety of capacities, I am hopeful about what the next phase will be for Stage Left but it's time for us to move on to other opportunities." Stage Left's 36th season, programmed by Szerlong and Fleece, yielded three Jeff-recommended mainstage productions, as well as two new play residencies. Most recently, the second mainstage show of the season, *Insurrection: Holding History* by Robert O'Hara, was nominated for Best Ensemble in the 2018 Non-Equity Jeff Awards.

During Valancy's time as Literary Manager, the Downstage Left Residency yielded eight plays that went on to full productions, four at Stage Left and four elsewhere. "I know the company will continue its commitment to new work in the years ahead," said Valancy.

Annaliese McSweeney, the current Co-Literary Manager, will continue on as Literary Manager, stewarding Stage Left's new play development program into the future. Valancy added, "There's nobody better than Annaliese McSweeney to continue the excellent work that Stage Left is doing in many new ways!" Stage Left is currently workshopping its second Downstage Left Residency of the 2017-2018 Season -- *Cercle Hermaphrodites* by Shualee Cook, directed by JD Caudill -- and plans to have a public reading in May.

Board Member Marcey Abramovitz said on behalf of Stage Left's Board, "We are proud of what Jason and Amy have accomplished and wish them well in their future endeavors." During the transition company operations will be maintained by the company's Board, 10-member Ensemble, and 17 Artistic Associates.

RESTRUCTURING

Stage Left Theatre is currently working on its Spring Downstage Left Residency program to be completed in May. SLT has put plans for any mainstage programming in the 2018/2019 season on hold so that the company can focus on the search for new leadership. Abramovitz said, "I think we can all agree that this is a challenging atmosphere for arts organizations across the sector, and Stage Left is no different. While we take a moment to explore new models and opportunities for the company and focus on our leadership search we also look forward to some exciting fundraising initiatives and a forthcoming programming announcement for later this spring."

About Stage Left Theatre: Founded in 1982, Stage Left Theatre inspires debate by cultivating new work and producing plays that explore political and social landscapes. Through a full subscription season and our new play development program Downstage Left, Stage Left strives to ask provocative social and political questions by producing a mix of new works, regional premieres and timeless classics.

Contact:

Marcey Abramovitz

Stage Left Theatre

773.677.2477

press@stagelefttheatre.com

###