



For Immediate Release
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MEDIA RELEASE

Strong female characters and artists
highlight Theatre Calgary's production of

THE SCARLET LETTER by Phyllis Nagy

Adapted from the novel by Nathaniel Hawthorne

February 26 - March 23, 2019

(CALGARY, AB) - Theatre Calgary is thrilled to bring the classic novel *The Scarlet Letter* to life with this fresh adaptation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel by Phyllis Nagy.

It is 1642, and Hester Prynne has been branded an adulterer by her Puritan village and forced to wear the titular scarlet letter as repentance. However, in Nagy's modern adaptation, Hester is unashamed of her actions and proudly subverts society's rigid standards put upon women to be virtuous and good. Today, as we continue to grapple with these expectations, Hester's story resonates all the more.

Nagy is an exceptional writer and well-known for her stage adaptations, however she may be most famous for the film *Carol* for which she was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay. Nagy's adaptation of *The Scarlet Letter* was originally commissioned for the Denver Centre Theater Company in 1994, and subsequently opened in New York later that year in a production by the Classic Stage Company, featuring Cynthia Nixon.

Directing *The Scarlet Letter* is one of Canada's most accomplished directors, MICHELINE CHEVRIER, whose work has most notably been seen at the National Arts Centre and Shaw Festival, and whose previous Theatre Calgary shows include *Hay Fever* and *The Sisters Rosensweig*. "*From the first reading of Nagy's play, I was drawn to Hester's strength. She is anything but a victim: she remains in control of her fate, of her choices. And this, despite the challenges, the continuous threats to her happiness or, at the very least, peace of mind,*" says Chevrier. "*In fact, I admire all the female characters in the play. They all dare to be themselves, refusing to submit as they resist the pressures of this oppressive patriarchal society to behave.*"

THE CAST

The cast of *The Scarlet Letter* features HEATHER PATTENGALE (Hester Prynne), KRISTEN PADAYAS (Pearl), CHARLIE GALLANT (Arthur Dimmesdale), PAUL COWLING (Master Brackett), BOBBI GODDARD (Mistress Hibbins), CHRISTOPHER HUNT (Roger Chillingworth), and DECLAN O'REILLY (Governor Bellingham).

THE CREATIVE TEAM

Joining Micheline Chevrier are JUDITH BOWDEN (Set & Costume Design), HARRY FREHNER (Lighting Design), ALLISON LYNCH (Composer), CRISTINA CUGLIANDRO (Assistant Director), JANE MACFARLANE (Voice Coach), KARL H. SINE (Fight Director), EMMA BRAGER (Stage Manager), and JUSTIN BORN (Assistant Stage Manager).

Performances at Theatre Calgary run Tuesday thru Sunday with evening curtain at 7:30pm (Tues-Thurs & Sunday) and 8:00pm (Fri & Sat), weekend matinees at 2:00pm. Opening Night is Friday, March 1st, at 8:00pm. Tickets for all performances start as low as \$45.00 and can be purchased through Theatre Calgary at 403-294-7447 or online at theatrecalgary.com. All performances take place in the Max Bell Theatre in Arts Commons.

For more information or interview requests please contact:
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TELEVISION/VIDEO MEDIA CALL - WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27 - 1:00pm

Max Bell Theatre, Arts Commons

PRINT - photos available upon request