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THE GAMM TO DELAY SEASON 36 UNTIL FALL 2021 Virtual Programming, Holiday Radio Broadcast, Education Initiatives Take Center Stage

WARWICK, RI (October 1, 2020) — **The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** (The Gamm) announces that it will **delay the opening of its Season 36 subscription season until fall 2021**. With the previously planned 5-play lineup on hold, the organization will focus its efforts on virtual programming and education initiatives, as well furthering its commitment to becoming a more just, equitable, and inclusive organization.

The Gamm is also thrilled to announce that it is collaborating with local NPR affiliate *The Public's Radio* to co-produce *It's A Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* for broadcast throughout Rhode Island and Southern New England over the Christmas and New Year holidays. The play, adapted from the classic movie, enthralled audiences when it was performed on stage last December at The Gamm. This special production will be performed once again as a 1940s radio play, but recorded for *actual* broadcast.

In June, The Gamm announced its intention to open the 2020-2021 subscription season in January 2021. **The decision to move that date to next fall is the result of continuing public health concerns and a commitment to the safety of audiences, artists and staff during the global pandemic.** Ongoing state and federal safety protocols, along with union-mandated workplace protections, will make producing live professional theater for large audiences a practical impossibility for the near future. **However The Gamm hopes to offer innovative live theatrical experiences as soon as it is safe to do so.**

Artistic Director Tony Estrella said, "Though COVID-19 will prevent us from coming together en masse for some time, we look forward to opening our doors again to safe, socially distanced and exciting live events outside of the subscription season. Stay tuned. **The theater will not stay dark!**"

Those who purchased a 5-play subscription package need not do anything at this time. Tickets will automatically be rolled over to corresponding shows starting in fall 2021, when the theater expects to fully resume live performances. The Gamm looks forward to announcing a new subscription schedule in early 2021. At that time the box office will contact ticket holders to confirm performance dates. In the meantime, those with questions can contact the box office at boxoffice@gammtheatre.org or **401-723-4266 ext. 132**.

"The decision to postpone the incredible productions we had planned was extremely difficult. But our top priority, along with enacting our mission, is the well-being of our audiences, artists and staff," Estrella said. "It is my fervent hope and expectation that once the pandemic is under control, we can gather again to experience the epic intimacy and unique power of The Gamm. I can't thank our patrons and supporters enough for their donations and messages of support that are getting us through this crisis. Their largesse and generosity of spirit have been a boon in challenging times."

"The Gamm is strong and we will ride out this storm," added **Managing Director Amy Gravell**. "In the meantime, **our artists and staff are busy and excited about the new ways in which we are connecting with our audience, doing creative and necessary work with schools, and planning for a bright future.**"

The Gamm is also creating **new streaming content** to keep audiences engaged during the subscription season hiatus, starting with a **second season of *Brush Up Your Shakespeare***. The first season, which premiered in March on YouTube, was named a **Rhode Island Monthly Best of Rhode Island winner in the "art goes digital" category**. Hosted by Estrella, the show's first season delved into some of the Bard's best-known texts. New episodes starting this fall will include guest appearances by a variety of local and regional artists sharing their experiences with Shakespeare's plays. In a special "spin-off episode" called ***Brush Up Your American Classics***, long-time **Gamm resident actor Wendy Overly** will share insights and anecdotes from her extraordinary performances in such landmark Gamm productions as *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Awake and Sing!* and more.

The **Gamm Education Department**, having first adapted its classes and programs to an online format this past spring, is expanding its work with both youth and adults. With a **new, robust menu of virtual theater experiences for grades K-12**, Gamm teaching artists are collaborating with teachers across the state with a focus on literacy and social emotional learning. **Gamm Studio** (for adults) and **Gamm Studio Jr.** (for grades 2-12) **has added numerous acting and theater classes to its online roster, as well as several new instructors.** Gamm Studio Jr. includes both online and in-person classes in accordance with COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Additionally, the theater has instituted a limited number of **sliding-scale tuition scholarships** to diminish the financial burden on many emerging artists who seek professional development.

ABOUT THE GAMM THEATRE

Founded in 1984, the non-profit Gamm Theatre is proud to tell stories that entertain, provoke, and engage seriously with the most important issues of our time. The Gamm further serves the public with educational programming that enriches the cultural and civic life of our community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Tony Estrella and Managing Director Amy Gravell, The Gamm is a regionally recognized, award-winning theater and a proud member of New England Area Theatre (NEAT), a bargaining unit of the Actors' Equity Association.

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