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ROUND HOUSE THEATRE ANNOUNCES SPRING 2021 PRODUCTIONS

VIRTUAL SEASON CONCLUDES WITH THREE FULLY STAGED
SOLO STORIES ABOUT COMING OF AGE, FINDING COMMUNITY,
AND CELEBRATING LIFE, PLUS EXPANSION OF
FREE COMMUNITY ACCESS TICKET PROGRAM

Bethesda, Md. (February 10, 2021) – Round House Theatre announces three virtual productions to conclude its 43rd season. The Spring 2021 Season offers three moving, one-person performances: Colman Domingo’s ***A Boy and His Soul***, directed by Craig Wallace; Lucy Alibar’s ***Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up***, directed by Round House Artistic Director Ryan Rilette; and Young Jean Lee’s ***We’re Gonna Die***, directed by Paige Hernandez. All three productions will be filmed live on the Round House stage and available for on-demand streaming during limited runs. *See page 3 for full season programming details.*

Artistic Director **Ryan Rilette** reflects on the 2020-2021 Season, stating, “This season, Round House—like so many of our peer institutions—has had to try new things, explore new ways of making art, and figure out how to build a sense of community in a world where we are unable to gather physically. The second half of our season focuses on three solo performances. In this moment when we’re all trapped in our own individual homes and our own individual realities, we hope these remarkable, deeply personal individual performances by celebrated local actors can bridge that divide and return to us a sense of the togetherness we all so deeply miss. All of the plays will be streamed online, but we are producing and recording them in a format closer to traditional, in-person shows. These productions mark a return to what we do best, and we hope watching them feels like a return to the experience of true theatre for everyone.”

Managing Director **Ed Zakreski** adds, “From *American Dreams* to the Adrienne Kennedy festival to the world premiere of *The Catastrophist*, we are proud of the programming we’ve brought to our virtual stage so far this season. When we announced these programs back in September, we’d hoped that we would be able to return to the theatre this spring with in-person performances. As the pandemic progressed—and with our commitment to the health

and safety of our community as our top priority—it became clear that we would need to carry on virtually for the remainder of the 2020-2021 Season. We are beyond grateful to our audiences for joining us on this new digital journey.”

The Spring Season begins with **A Boy and His Soul** (March 22 – April 18, 2021) by award-winning actor, director, and writer **Colman Domingo** (*Passing Strange*, *Fear the Walking Dead*), directed by Resident Artist **Craig Wallace** (previously at Round House in *Homebound*, “*Master Harold*” ...and the Boys), who makes his Round House directorial debut. The recipient of the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Solo Show and the GLAAD Media Award for Best Play, *A Boy and His Soul* is a vibrant journey into Colman’s history, his identity, and the soul music that was his family’s soundtrack. **Ro Boddie** (previously at Round House in “*Master Harold*” ...and the Boys) stars as JJ, marking the first major production of the autobiographical stage memoir not performed by Colman Domingo himself.

Next, Round House Artistic Director **Ryan Rilette** directs **Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up** (May 3 – 30, 2021) by Academy Award-nominated writer **Lucy Alibar** (*Beasts of the Southern Wild*). Inspired by the playwright’s own childhood in the Florida panhandle with her pro-bono criminal defense attorney father, *Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up* is a hilarious and heartfelt tale “full of cute weirdos, mean authority figures, adorably unruly children, and swampy landscapes” (*Los Angeles Times*). **Beth Hylton** (previously at Round House in *Small Mouth Sounds*, *Handbagged*) stars as the fourth-grade raconteur and part-time legal secretary at the center of Alibar’s one-woman love letter to the South.

The final show of Round House’s 2020-2021 Season is **We’re Gonna Die** (June 14 – July 11, 2021) by **Young Jean Lee** (*The Shipment*, *Straight White Men*), directed by critically acclaimed multidisciplinary artist **Paige Hernandez** (*Queens Girl* repertory at Everyman Theatre, *The Royale* at Olney Theatre Center). In this upbeat exploration of the inevitability of death—part *memento mori* monologues and part indie rock concert—Lee brings us all together to find the joy and relief that community can bring. **Regina Aquino** (Helen Hayes Award Outstanding Lead Actress winner for *The Events* at Theater Alliance) makes her Round House debut as the Singer, sharing tragic stories and catchy songs with the help of a live band. Further casting details to be announced.

The cast and directors for all three productions are joined by a creative team that includes dramaturg and Round House Associate Artist – Literary and New Works **Naysan Mojgani**, production stage manager **Che Wernsman**, scenic designer and Round House Theatre Resident Artist **Paige Hathaway**, costume designer and Round House Theatre Resident Artist **Ivania Stack**, lighting designer **Harold F. Burgess II**, sound designer **Matthew Nielson**, props

master **Kasey Hendricks**, and director of photography and Round House Theatre Resident Artist **Maboud Ebrahimzadeh**.

Round House also announces the continuation of its community access ticket initiative, **On the House**, now expanded to include digital productions for the virtual Spring Season. On the House provides complimentary group tickets to qualifying nonprofit organizations interested in sharing the enjoyment of live theatre with their constituents. During Round House's 2019-2020 Season, free tickets were distributed to more than 30 local organizations through the program. Applications for all three Spring productions are open now to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and community-serving organizations with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor who are based in Maryland, Virginia, or Washington, DC. For more information, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org/OnTheHouse.

Tickets for *A Boy and His Soul*, *Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up*, and *We're Gonna Die* are available now. For more information, visit RoundHouseTheatre.org.

2021 SPRING VIRTUAL SEASON DETAILS

A Boy and His Soul

By Colman Domingo

Directed by Craig Wallace

MARCH 22 – APRIL 18, 2021

“Keep a song in your heart, and you will always find your way”—that’s what JJ’s mom always said. And sure enough, music is what reconnects him to his family when he clears out their West Philadelphia house to be sold. When JJ finds an old record collection of disco, R&B, and classic soul, he is transported by the vibrant soundtrack of his youth through memories of coming of age and coming out in the 1970s and 80s. Tender, funny, and “blazingly charismatic” (*The New York Times*), *A Boy and His Soul* is a one-man show best enjoyed, according to the playwright, with a glass of scotch and wearing your favorite kaftan.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Colman Domingo (Playwright) is a Tony, Olivier, Drama Desk, and Drama League Award nominated actor, director, writer, and producer. Colman recently received his Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters from Ursinus College. He is a Juilliard School Creative Associate and on faculty of the Yale School of Drama. He has starred in some of the most profound films in recent years, such as Barry Jenkins' *If Beale Street Could Talk*, Steven Spielberg's *Lincoln*, Lee Daniels' *The Butler*, Ava DuVernay's *Selma*, and Nate Parker's *Birth of a Nation*. Upcoming films include Jordan Peele's *Candyman* and Janicza Bravo's *Zola*. He has starred on AMC's *Fear the Walking Dead* for seven seasons and guest stars on HBO's *Euphoria* as Ali. He recurred on Steven Soderbergh's series *The Knick*. As a writer, his plays and musicals include *Dot* (Samuel French), *Wild with Happy* (Dramatist Play Service), and *A*

Boy and His Soul (Oberon Books), the Tony Award-nominated Broadway musical *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* and Geffen Playhouse's groundbreaking musical *Light's Out: Nat King Cole*. His plays have been produced by The Public Theater, Vineyard, La Jolla Playhouse, Humana Festival of New American Plays, New York Stage and Film, A.C.T, The Tricycle Theater in London, Brisbane Powerhouse in Australia, and others. He is the recipient of Lucille Lortel, Obie, Audelco, and GLAAD awards for his work. His production company, Edith Productions, has a first look deal with AMC Studios, for which he is developing television, film, theatre, and animation projects. He is currently writing a new musical for The Young Vic in London/Concord Music and hosting Season 3 of his series *Bottomless Brunch at Colman's* across AMC platforms.

Craig Wallace (Director) is a Round House Theatre Resident Artist *making his Round House directorial debut*. *Craig's past performances at Round House include A Doll's House, Part 2; How I Learned to Drive; "Master Harold" ...and the Boys; Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3); Stage Kiss; Permanent Collection; and The Little Prince*. Local credits include performances at Ford's Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Folger Theatre, and others. Regionally, Craig has been on stages all over the country including Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz.

Ro Boddie (JJ) returns to Round House, where he previously appeared in "*Master Harold" ...and the Boys*. Off-Broadway credits include *Socrates* at The Public Theater; *Appomattox* at 59E59 Theaters; and *A Play is a Poem* at Atlantic Theater Company. Select regional credits include *Pipeline* at Studio Theatre; *A Play is a Poem* at the Mark Taper Forum; *Blueprints to Freedom* at La Jolla Playhouse; *Skeleton Crew* at The Old Globe; *The Mountaintop* at Cleveland Playhouse; *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* at Baltimore Center Stage; and *The Whipping Man* at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre. Television credits include *The Good Wife*, *Elementary*, *Person of Interest*, and *Unforgettable*. Ro is an alumnus of University of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up

By Lucy Alibar

Directed by Ryan Rilette

MAY 3 – MAY 30, 2021

A small Florida farmhouse on a watermelon field may not seem like much, but for one little girl, it's where magic happens. It's where her father runs with her every morning, plays Sam Cooke on the radio, and defends death row inmates who have no one else to stand up for them. Oscar-nominated author Lucy Alibar (*Beasts of the Southern Wild*) presents an unforgettable story about her childhood as a fourth grader and part-time legal secretary. Told

through a series of heartfelt and irreverent vignettes, *Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up* is a one-woman love letter to family, the South, and the belief that everyone deserves a defender.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Lucy Alibar (Playwright) has written for *Zoetrope*, the *Oxford American*, and the *Wall Street Journal*. Her plays have been seen at Sundance Theatre Lab, National Theatre Studio, Joe's Pub, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Williamstown Theatre Festival. Her first movie, *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (an adaptation with Benh Zeitlin of her play, *Juicy and Delicious*), received the Sundance Grand Jury Prize and the Cannes Film Festival Caméra d'Or. For her work on *Beasts*, she was nominated for the Scriptor, BAFTA, and Academy Award. Alibar is the winner of the Ray Bradbury Nebula Award, the Humanitas Prize, and the Nantucket Film Festival New Voices in Screenwriting Award. She is a Sundance Screenwriting Fellow. She's since been privileged to work for Pixar, Escape Artists/Amazon, Julia Roberts/New Line Cinema, and Guillermo del Toro/Universal Studios (*The Secret Garden*). Alibar is a Usual Suspect at New York Theatre Workshop and an associate editor at *Oxford American*.

Ryan Rilette (Director) is in his eighth season as Artistic Director of Round House Theatre. During his tenure, he has produced four of the best-selling and highest-attended seasons in the theatre's history. His productions have received 57 Helen Hayes Awards nominations and 13 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Original New Play or Musical, Outstanding Ensemble, and Outstanding Resident Musical. Ryan created the theatre's Equal Play Commissioning program, Resident Artist program, Fair Play pay scale for artists, and Free Play ticketing program. For Round House, he has directed *Homebound*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Oslo*, *Small Mouth Sounds*, "*Master Harold*"...and the Boys, *The Book of Will*, *Angels in America: Perestroika*, *The Night Alive*, *Fool for Love*, *This*, and *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*. Prior to joining Round House, Ryan served as Producing Director of Marin Theatre Company, Producing Artistic Director of Southern Rep Theatre, and co-founder and Artistic Director of Rude Mechanicals Theatre Company. He is the former Board President of the National New Play Network and currently serves on the boards of theatreWashington and Maryland Citizens for the Arts. Ryan is a member of SDC, AEA, and SAG-AFTRA.

Beth Hylton (The Girl) is very happy to return to Round House after appearing in *Small Mouth Sounds*; *Handbagged*; and *Rapture, Blister, Burn*. Beth is a company member of Baltimore's Everyman Theatre: some favorite recent performances include Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Rosemary in *Outside Mullingar*, and Marie Antoinette in *The Revolutionists*. DC-area credits include *Appropriate and Collective Rage* at Woolly Mammoth

and *The Heidi Chronicles* at Rep Stage, as well as productions at Ford's and Olney. Favorite regional performances include Amanda in *Private Lives* at PICT; Nora in *A Doll's House* at Gulfshore Playhouse; Elvira in *Blithe Spirit* at Delaware Theatre Company; and The Woman in *The 39 Steps* at The Maltz-Jupiter. Other credits include PlayMakers Rep, Kennedy Theatre NC, Weston Playhouse, and Public Theatre of Maine. In NYC, Beth was a founding ensemble member of The Ground Floor Theatre Lab. Training: MFA UNC-Chapel Hill PATP.

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We're Gonna Die

By Young Jean Lee

Directed by Paige Hernandez

JUNE 14 – JULY 11, 2021

Bad things will happen to all of us. That's a certainty in life, but it also means that none of us are alone. And while we can't avoid breaking up, getting sick, and losing loved ones, we can sing a little song to feel a little better. Based on true stories of tragedies and traumas, Young Jean Lee creates an experience that is part one-woman stage play, part live-band rock concert, and totally life-affirming. *We're Gonna Die* is a "goofily grim and oddly uplifting" (*Vogue*) meditation on the human experience, blending indie songs with down-to-earth storytelling to offer a simple but hopeful message: *We are going to die...and it'll be okay.*

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

Young Jean Lee (Playwright) is a writer, director, and filmmaker who has been called "the most adventurous downtown playwright of her generation" by the *New York Times* and "one of the best experimental playwrights in America" by *Time Out New York*. She has written and directed ten shows in New York with Young Jean Lee's Theater Company, and toured her work to over 30 cities around the world. Her plays have been published by Dramatists Play Service, Theatre Communications Group, and by Samuel French. She is currently under commission from Lincoln Center Theater and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and has written a screenplay commission for Plan B/Paramount Pictures. Her first short film, "Here Come the Girls," was presented at the Locarno International Film Festival, Sundance Film Festival, and BAMcinemaFest. In 2013, she released her debut album, "We're Gonna Die," with her band, Future Wife. Lee is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, two OBIE Awards, a Prize in Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a PEN Literary Award, a Doris Duke Performing Artist Award, a Doris Duke Artist Residency, a Foundation for Contemporary Arts grant, and the ZKB Patronage Prize of the Zürcher Theater Spektakel. She has also received funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts, the Rockefeller MAP Fund, the Andrew Mellon Foundation, Creative Capital, the Greenwall Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, the New York Foundation for the Arts, the Arts Presenters/Ford Foundation Creative Capacity Grant, the Barbara Bell

Cumming Foundation, and the New England Foundation for the Arts National Theater Project Award.

Paige Hernandez (Director) is a multidisciplinary artist who is critically acclaimed as a performer, director, choreographer and playwright. As an AEA equity actress, Paige has performed on many stages throughout the country. She has collaborated with the Lincoln Center and has been commissioned by several companies including the National New Play Network, the Smithsonian, The Kennedy Center, La Jolla Playhouse and the Glimmerglass Festival. She is the recipient of an Individual Artist Award from the Maryland State Arts Council as well as four Helen Hayes nominations for choreography, directing and performance. Paige has also been named a “classroom hero” by *The Huffington Post*, a “Citizen Artist Fellow” with the Kennedy Center, “40 under 40” by the *Washington Post*, and one of “Six Theatre Workers You Should Know” by *American Theatre Magazine*. She is elated to be the Associate Artistic Director of Everyman Theatre in her hometown of Baltimore, MD. With her company B-FLY ENTERTAINMENT, Paige continues to develop and tour original work internationally. www.paigehernandez.com

Regina Aquino (Singer) is a Filipinx American actor, creative, and activist making her Round House debut. Born and raised in Maryland, she has performed on many of DC’s stages since 2002. She has been nominated for multiple Helen Hayes Awards and in 2019 she was the recipient of the Outstanding Lead Actress in a Play Award for her work in *The Events* at Theater Alliance. Fluent in both English and Tagalog, she lives in Arlington, VA, with her two children and two dogs, across the street from her mother like a good Filipinx daughter. Selected DC credits include *The Events* and *Brownsville Song (B-side for Trey)* at Theater Alliance; *Describe The Night* and *The Arsonists* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company; *Vietgone*, *Red Light Winter*, *Polaroid Stories*, and *Dog Sees God* at Studio Theatre; *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Nell Gwynn* at Folger Theatre; and *Tiger Style!* at Olney Theatre Center. Broadway credits include *Where Words Once Were* at the Lincoln Center and Kennedy Center TYA. International credits include *Our Country's Good* at Actor's Actors Inc. Manila. EDUCATION: Duke Ellington School of the Arts, The Studio Acting Conservatory, Manhattanville College. www.reginaaquino.com



SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

Virtual subscription packages to Round House Theatre’s 2021 Spring Season are now available for \$75 and can be purchased online at RoundHouseTheatre.org, or by calling the Box Office at 240.644.1100. As always, subscribers enjoy increased flexibility with free ticket exchanges and pay no service charges.

Patrons who previously purchased subscriptions for Round House's originally announced 2020-2021 Season will be contacted directly about their tickets.

TICKET INFORMATION

A Boy and His Soul runs from Monday, March 22 to Sunday, April 18, 2021. Tickets for on-demand streaming are available now for \$30.

Throw Me on the Burnpile and Light Me Up runs from Monday, May 3 to Sunday, May 30, 2021. Tickets for on-demand streaming are available now for \$30.

We're Gonna Die runs from Monday, June 14 to Sunday, July 11, 2021. Tickets for on-demand streaming are available now for \$30.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 240.644.1100 or ordering online at RoundHouseTheatre.org. If you have any questions, our Box Office associates will be happy to assist you. Associates are working remotely, Monday through Friday, 11:00am – 5:00pm.

ABOUT ROUND HOUSE THEATRE

Round House Theatre is one of the leading professional theatres in the Washington, DC area, producing a season of new plays, modern classics, and musicals for more than 40,000 patrons each year at our theatre in Bethesda. Round House has been nominated for 197 Helen Hayes Awards and has won 37, including four Outstanding Resident Play Awards and the Charles MacArthur Award for Original New Play in 2016. Round House's lifelong learning and education programs serve more than 5,000 students each year at its Education Center in Silver Spring, in schools throughout Montgomery County, and at our Bethesda theatre. Cornerstone programs include Free Play, which provides free tickets for students age 13-college, the Teen Performance Company, which culminates in the student-produced Sarah Metzger Memorial Play, Summer Camp for students in grades K-12, and a full slate of classes for Adults & Youth.

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