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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD TO THE DULUTH PLAYHOUSE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON**

Duluth, Minn. [October 24, 2019] --- The Duluth Playhouse rings in the holiday season with the beloved family adventure musical that is also celebrating the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its feature film, *The Wizard of Oz*. It plays in the NorShor Theatre from December 5-22, 2019, and is directed by guest artist, Joe Chvala (who also directed last year's *Beauty and the Beast*).

Fly over the rainbow with Dorothy as she rides a twister into the merry and troubled land of Oz and learns that no matter how far our journeys take us --- there's no place like home.

The Playhouse promises a fresh and surprising approach to the 1939 MGM movie musical with a stylized take with a touch of art nouveau mixed in.

"We aren't going to reinvent the wheel with this production," explains Chvala. "People want to see *The Wizard of Oz* as they know and love it. I think what's fun about seeing the movie brought to the stage is to see how it translates to being done live."

Among the large cast of 22 actors who will be playing a variety of roles from Munchkins to flying monkeys are Meghan Jarecki (Dorothy), Stuart Gordon (Scarecrow), Brendan Finn (Tin Man), Mike Pederson (Cowardly Lion), and Christina Stroup (Wicked Witch of the West). There will also be a terrier by the name of Truman taking on the role of Toto.

Written in 1900 by L. Frank Baum, "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" was the first American fantasy for children and one of the most-read children's books (according to the Library of Congress). The 1939 film starring Judy Garland was nominated for six Academy Awards but lost Best Picture to *Gone with the Wind*. It did win Best Original Song for "Over the Rainbow" which nearly didn't make it into the final cut. The film was reintroduced to the public with annual broadcasts that began in 1956 earning it the title "most-watched motion picture in history!"

For the best seating, lowest prices, and exclusive perks, patrons are encouraged to become season members. Choose a flex or pro-rated full season pass for the 2019-2020 season for the ultimate theatre experience.

***'The Wizard of Oz' features the following cast list:***

- DOROTHY GALE: Meghan Jarecki
- TOTO: Truman
- SCARECROW: Stuart Gordon\*\*
- TIN MAN: Brendan Finn
- COWARDLY LION & ZEKE: Mike Pederson\*\*
- WICKED WITCH & MISS GULCH: Christina Stroup\*
- GLINDA & AUNTY EM: Louisa Scorich
- UNCLE HENRY: Drew Autio
- PROFESSOR MARVEL & THE WIZARD OF OZ: Michael Kraklio\*\*
- ENSEMBLE: Erin Blazevic, Jesse Davis, Tyler Goebel, Kyleigh Grimsbo, Aili Hakala, Sam Hildestad, Dani Hollar\*\*, Kristen Hylenski, Jonathan Manchester, Joe McLaughlin, Kyle McMillan\*\*, Ben Peter, Mallory Polivka, Andy Roemhildt, Jennie Ross\*\* & Henriette Soderlind

\* Indicates member of Actor's Equity Association (AEA)

\*\* Indicates member of the Playhouse Resident Artistic Advisory Company

Photo attached: *The Wizard of Oz* promotional graphic

## JUST THE FACTS:

WHAT: *The Wizard of Oz*  
 WHEN: December 5-22, 2019  
 VENUE: The NorShor Theatre (211 E. Superior St.)  
 TIMES: Thursday-Saturday @ 7:30pm // Saturday & Sunday @ 2:00pm  
 ASL-Interpreted Performance – Thursday, December 12  
 Brunch and a Show – Sunday, December 15  
 TICKETS: Standard: \$40-\$50 // Youth (17 and under): \$10 off standard ticket. Please call the Box Office to redeem. // Student Rush: \$25  
 BOX OFFICE: 218.733.7555 (M-F, 10am-6pm) or [www.duluthplayhouse.org](http://www.duluthplayhouse.org)

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## About the Duluth Playhouse

Rich with a history dating back to 1914, the Duluth Playhouse is one of the country's oldest theatre organizations. Comprised of three stages: the NorShor Theatre, the Playhouse Family Theatre, and The Underground, the Duluth Playhouse produces year-round theatrical and musical performances as well as provide education opportunities of the highest quality for both youth and adults.