



Contact: Christine Gradl Seitz – 218.249.3993 // Patty McNulty – 218.213.7242

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Christine Gradl Seitz Ends Distinguished Career with Duluth Playhouse *Transformed theater group into nationally recognized company*

Duluth, MN [February 19, 2020] --- The Board of Directors of the *Duluth Playhouse* has announced Christine Gradl Seitz will retire from her position as Executive and Artistic Director of the *Duluth Playhouse* effective September 30, 2020. Seitz has been leading the Playhouse since January 2000.

In an email to local theater artists announcing her retirement, Seitz praised what she called “the thriving Twin Ports area arts community.”

“The artists in this community make me so proud to be part of this ever-expanding and exciting arts scene, and I feel very honored to have worked with you all,” she wrote. “It has truly been inspiring. You are what makes me excited to go to work each morning, and every night I leave my job in awe of the creativity happening on all our stages. Thank you, everyone.”

Under Seitz’ leadership, the *Duluth Playhouse* has grown from a single stage community theatre to a three-venue theatrical organization offering live theater experiences for actors and audiences of all ages and interests.

The *Playhouse Family Theatre*, led by Artistic Director Amber Burns, presents family-friendly theater with both youth actors and adult performers. The *Underground Theatre*, led by Robert Lee, is a one-of-a-kind 150-seat performance space dedicated to bringing high-quality productions of new scripts, classic plays and intimate musicals to the stage. Both theatres are located in the Duluth Depot. The *Duluth Playhouse* main stage productions are performed at the recently renovated and revitalized NorShor Theatre.

Duluth Playhouse Board Chair Patty McNulty observed, “Christine was the heart of the NorShor Theatre renovation. She worked tirelessly with our private and public partners to bring the vision to life. Today, Duluth has a magnificent historic theatre for *Duluth Playhouse* productions, as well as other local events and touring shows. Christine’s efforts and determination have given our entire region expanded theatrical and music options. The NorShor has transformed the entire historic arts and theater district, bringing a level of excitement to the area not seen in many years.”

Seitz will remain as Executive Director until September 30, 2020. In May of this year, Phillip Fazio will join the organization as Artistic Director of the Playhouse NorShor productions. A nationwide search is being conducted to fill the position of Executive Director.

Having been founded in 1914, the *Duluth Playhouse* is the oldest continually operated community theater in the United States.

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