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## **Profile Theatre names**

### **Josh Hecht as Artistic Director**

PORTLAND Ore.. August 22, 2016 - Profile Theatre is pleased to announce Josh Hecht as its new Artistic Director after a seven month national search. Hecht succeeds Adriana Baer (2012-2015) and Founding Artistic Director Jane Unger (1997-2012). Hecht will begin his tenure in February 2017.

“Profile Theatre was honored to have over 80 qualified applicants from around the world express interest in becoming our Artistic Director,” says Richard Bradspies, Profile Board member and head of the Artistic Director search committee. “We are especially excited to have Josh Hecht join us because he brings outstanding experience coupled with a shared vision and passion for the unique place Profile fills in the Portland arts scene.”

Hecht comes to Profile after having previously served in senior staff positions at two important theaters in New York, [MCC Theater](#) and [WET](#). While at MCC, he commissioned new work by Terrence McNally and John Guare, dramaturged Tony-nominated plays by Bryony Lavery and Neil LaBute, and created and ran the Playwrights Coalition, developing new plays by some of the most honored young playwrights of the last decade including Stephen Adly Guirgis, Lucy Thurber, David Adjmi, Adam Bock, Itamar Moses and many others. At WET he developed new work by some of our most prominent female playwrights including Anna Ziegler, Melissa James Gibson, and Kate Robin. He has consulted with the Lake George Theatre Lab and the Great Plains Theatre Conference, helping them expand their programming and community engagement initiatives.

As a freelance director, Hecht's work has received the Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience, Festival First awards at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe and Dublin Arts Festival, and has been nominated for the IRNE Award (Boston) and the GLAAD Award (New York).

Productions have been seen at theaters around the country including the Guthrie Theater, the Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theater of Louisville, the Berkshire Theater Festival, the Kennedy Center, No Rules at Signature Theater Company in DC, and in New York at MCC Theater, the Cherry Lane, the Duke on 42nd Street, The Culture Project and the Obie-winning collective 13Playwrights, among others. He has continued to develop dozens of new plays at theaters and play development centers across the country.

As an educator, Hecht has been on the faculty of the New School for Drama's MFA Directing program, Fordham University's MFA Playwriting program and Purchase College, SUNY's esteemed BFA Dramatic Writing program, in addition to guest stints at The Juilliard School, NYU, Carnegie Mellon, the University of Minnesota and others.

His writing has been seen at the Kennedy Center in a collaborative piece created with National Medal of Honor-winner Ping Chong, at the Duke on 42nd Street, the Flynn Center in Burlington, VT and the Round House Theater, and has received the support of the Jerome Foundation.

Profile Board Chair Steve Young adds "Along with other members of Profile's AD Search committee, I was impressed by Josh's credentials as an educator and award-winning director with broad and deep experience in American theatre---in NYC and across the US. I am also impressed by his communication, collaboration, and leadership skills and by his passionate belief in theatre's responsibility to contribute to the civic life of our community."

"I've spent my career guided by the belief that it is our writers who help us dream our culture forward," says Hecht. "I'm thrilled to join Profile Theatre, whose distinctive mission uses one playwright's vision as a lens to help us better understand ourselves and our world. And I am inspired by Profile's commitment to artistic excellence, robust community engagement and to presenting artists who reflect the diversity of our shared culture."

Hecht will arrive at Profile Theatre in February 2017 to launch Profile's 2017 Quiara Alegría Hudes Season. "I've been a fan of Quiara Alegría Hudes since seeing *Elliot* nearly a decade ago," says Hecht. "I find her plays profoundly optimistic in world-view, without ignoring the complicated, often painful realities of our lives. They seem to suggest that human connection is the salve that can begin to heal even the biggest traumas." He will direct the rotating repertory productions of Pulitzer Prize-winning *Water by the Spoonful* and its sequel *The Happiest Song Plays Last*, the first time these two have been performed in repertory with a single cast.

### About Profile Theatre

Profile's mission is to produce a season of plays devoted to a single playwright, engaging with our community to explore that writer's vision and influence on theatre and the world at large. We do this through large-scale professional productions, In Dialogue Series readings and lectures, and our vibrant education programs. Recently, Profile was the recipient of the inaugural Age and Gender Equity in the Arts Award, a \$10,000 prize in recognition of the profound impact of its Diversion and Inclusion Initiative on the Portland theater ecology.

The 2016 Tanya Barfield season concludes with *Antigone Project: A Play in 5 Parts*, running September 7-11, 2016 and *Bright Half Life* running October 27-November 13, 2016; and the 2017 Quiara Alegría Hudes season begins with the Pulitzer Prize finalist *Elliot: A Soldier's Fugue*, running February 2-19, 2017.

Profile's 2016 Tanya Barfield Season is supported in part by The Regional Arts and Culture Council including support from City of Portland, Multnomah County and the Arts & Education Access Fund; The Oregon Arts Commission; Kinsman Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation; Meyer Memorial Trust; The Collins Foundation; PGE Foundation; Shubert Foundation and the Oregon Community Foundation.

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