



PROFILE THEATRE

2018-19 DOUBLE SEASON:

Lisa Kron / Anna Deavere Smith

FOR IMMEDIATE MEDIA RELEASE:

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Profile Theatre presents Lisa Kron's *Well* and Anna Deavere Smith's *Let Me Down Easy* in Rotating Rep:

Two Plays that Celebrate Extremes of Strength and Frailty of the Human Body

PORTLAND, OREGON, USA. March 25, 2019- PROFILE THEATRE presents two plays in repertory at Portland Playhouse May 9- June 16. *Well* and *Let Me Down Easy* both push the boundaries of what theatre can do, and are inescapably, movingly, mordantly human. Both shows feature the same six all-star cast, including mother and daughter Vana and Eleanor O'Brien.

Well, May 9- June 15, 2019

This glorious and funny new play opens doors of insight and emotion that no other play in New York is opening. I fell in love with 'Well.' – *The New York Times*

Well is Lisa Kron's hilarious play about her mother whose undiagnosed allergies lead to wild and confusing swings in energy and ability. Some days she can't get out of bed. Other days she's pushing the entire neighborhood to fight for the resources to keep their racially integrated neighborhood thriving.

Let Me Down Easy, May 16-June 16, 2019

Vitally important, wide-ranging and ultimately very moving. –*Los Angeles Times*

Let Me Down Easy is Anna Deavere Smith's emotional powerhouse of a play that investigates human resiliency, healthcare and a tendency in American culture to shy away from mortality. Smith uses her signature documentary style to present a gallery of 20 people— from the iconic like Ann Richards, Lauren Hutton, and Lance Armstrong alongside the ordinary and unknown— all in their own words.



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Both productions ask why do some people get sick and others never do? Why do some bodies get better and others do not? Taken together, the shows offer rich insights into American attitudes towards health and mortality. At the same time, the shows which were both originally performed by their creators, are a study in formal contrasts. Artistic Director Josh Hecht notes, "It is fascinating to see these two master of forms side by side: Lisa's purposefully subjective memoir style that life refuses to fit neatly into, next to Anna's documentary rigor-ousness".

Well and *Let Me Down Easy* are directed by Profile Theatre Artistic Director Josh Hecht. The creative team includes: Playwright **Lisa Kron**, Playwright **Anna Devere Smith**, and Director **Josh Hecht** with design by **Dan Meeker** (set and lights — *Crowns* at Portland Playhouse), **Matt Wiens** (sound - *Water By The Spoonful / The Happiest Song Plays Last* at Profile), **Sarah Gahagan & Alex Pletcher** (costumes — *Feathers and Teeth*, Artists Repertory Theatre), **Kyra Sanford** (properties—*The No Play*, Passin' Art Theatre Company). Cast includes **La'Tevin Alexander** (Cory Maxson — *Fences* at Portland Playhouse), **Jennifer Lanier** (Creator/Performer— *None of the Above* in Solo Fest 2019), **Michael Mendelson** (Torvald — *A Doll's House, Part 2* at Artists Repertory Theatre), **Allison Mickelson** (Lisa — *2.5 Minute Ride* at Profile), **Eleanor O'Brien** (Creator/Performer — *How to Really...Really? Really! Love A Woman*), **Vana O'Brien** (Anne Marie — *A Doll's House, Part 2* at Artists Repertory Theatre).

WHERE: Portland Playhouse, 602 NE Prescott Street, Portland OR 97211

WHEN: *Well*: May 9 - 12. Sunday May 12 will have a matinee and an evening show. Opening Saturday, May 11. Other performances: May 22, May 24**, May 26 matinee, May 30, June 1, June 2 evening performance only, June 5, June 7, June 9 matinee.

***Let Me Down Easy*:** May 16-19. Sunday May 19 will have a matinee and an evening show. Opening Saturday, May 18. Other performances: May 23, May 25, May 29, May 31, June 2 matinee, June 6, June 8, June 9 evening show.

**ASL interpretation on May 24

TICKETS: Now available online at www.profiletheatre.org.

Contact box office at (503)-242-0080 or boxoffice@profiletheatre.org

Season Subscriptions on sale now to see 4 plays for \$80-\$144

Single Tickets on sale now for \$20-\$38

*Discounts offered for groups, students, teachers, ASL, 30-and-under, Arts for All and previews.

NEXT UP: 2019-2020 Season Announcement coming soon!

Lisa Kron, Playwright has been writing and performing theater since 1984. Her work has been widely produced in New York, regionally, and internationally. Her play *Fun Home*, a musical written with composer Jeanine Tesori and based on the graphic novel by Alison Bechdel, earned her 2 Tony Awards in 2015, for Best Book of a Musical and Best Original Score (with Jeanine Tesori); the show also won the Tony Award for Best Musical. Other plays include *The Ver**zon Play*; *In The Wake* which received Lortel and GLAAD Media Award nominations, was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize, named a "Best Play



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of 2010” by TimeOut and Backstage; *Well*, was named a “Best Play of 2004” by the New York Times, the Associated Press, the Newark Star Ledger, Backstage, and the Advocate. *2.5 Minute Ride* which received OBIE, L.A. Drama-Logue, New York Press, and GLAAD Media Awards; *101 Humiliating Stories*, which received a Drama Desk nomination. *In the Wake* was Lisa Kron’s first “well-made play” in which she didn’t feature as a character. Oskar Eustis, the artistic director of the Public Theater, described *In the Wake* as “a portrait of the way we live now” and compared it to the work of Tony Kushner. “Lisa has for some time been moving away from her definition as a performer-writer. This is her embracing that what she is a great American playwright.” (*The New York Times*)

[Anna Devere Smith](#), Playwright

Anna Devere Smith is an actress, playwright, teacher, and author. Her most recent play and film, *Notes from the Field*, look at the vulnerability of youth, inequality, the criminal justice system, and contemporary activism. *The New York Times* named the stage version of *Notes from the Field* among The Best Theater of 2016 and *Time* magazine named it one of the Top 10 Plays of the year. HBO premiered the film version in February 2018.

Looking at current events from multiple points of view, Smith’s theater combines the journalistic technique of interviewing her subjects with the art of interpreting their words through performance. Plays include *Fires In the Mirror*, *Twilight: Los Angeles*, *House Arrest*, and *Let Me Down Easy*. *Twilight: Los Angeles* was nominated for two Tony Awards. *Fires in the Mirror* was runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize.

Smith co-stars on the new ABC / Shonda Rhimes series, *For the People*. She also appears on the hit ABC series *Black-ish*. She previously starred as Gloria Akalitus on Showtime’s *Nurse Jackie*, and the National Security Advisor on NBC’s *The West Wing*. Films include *The American President*, *Rachel Getting Married*, *Philadelphia*, *Dave*, *Rent*, and *The Human Stain*.

In 2012, President Obama awarded her the National Endowment for the Humanities Medal. She was the recipient of the prestigious 2013 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize for achievement in the arts. In 2015, she was named the Jefferson Lecturer, the nation’s highest honor in the humanities. She was the 2017 recipient of the Ridenhour Courage Prize. She was the 2017 recipient of the George Polk Career Award in Journalism. Smith is the founding director of the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at New York University, where she is also University Professor at Tisch School of the Arts.

*For additional bios or to arrange interviews with artists, please contact Marketing Consultant Jen Mitas. For more information, visit Profiletheatre.org or call 503.242.0080

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