



For Immediate Release
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BOTTICELLI IN THE FIRE, AN INCENDIARY NEW WORK BY JORDAN TANNAHILL, OPENS AT WOOLLY MAMMOTH MAY 28TH

(Washington, DC) **Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company** announces the fifth production of its 2017-2018 season, *Botticelli in the Fire*. Written by **Jordan Tannahill** and directed by **Marti Lyons**, *Botticelli in the Fire* will run from May 28 through June 24, 2018.

Sandro Botticelli is devoted to beauty, sensuality, and pleasure. While painting *The Birth of Venus*, however, the limits of his dedication are put to the test by the arrival of a conservative priest leading a populist revolution in Lorenzo de' Medici's Florence. When his full-throttle, decadent ways catch up to him, will the famed artist sacrifice his work... or the life of his young apprentice, Leonardo Da Vinci?

Botticelli in the Fire is an ambitious, modern story that sets the present political moment ablaze. The American premiere of this new work by Jordan Tannahill—"the hottest name in Canadian theatre" (*Montreal Gazette*)—will bring Woolly's 38th season to a searing close.

"*Botticelli in the Fire*, Jordan Tannahill's imaginative fantasy about two famous Renaissance artists, points sharply toward the present moment," says **Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director Howard Shalwitz**. "I vividly recall reading the original one-act version of the play during the election season in 2016 and feeling an extreme sense of urgency about seeing it on the Woolly stage. That urgency has only increased over the past two years given the ominous tendencies of the current administration, which has, among many other things, done its best to denigrate intellectuals and experts of all kinds, undermine the free press, and eliminate funding for the arts."

Jordan Tannahill (Playwright) is a Canadian playwright, author, theatre director, and filmmaker. His work has been presented in theatres, festivals, and galleries across Canada and internationally. He has been described by *The Toronto Star* as being "widely celebrated as one of Canada's most accomplished young playwrights, filmmakers and all-round multidisciplinary artists" and by the *Montreal Gazette* as "the hottest name in Canadian theatre." His plays have been translated into multiple languages and honoured with various prizes including the 2014 Governor General's Award for Drama for *Age of Minority: Three Solo Plays*. From 2012-2016, Jordan ran the alternative art space Videofag, in collaboration with William Ellis, out of their home in Toronto's Kensington Market neighbourhood. Over the four years of its operation, Videofag became an influential hub for queer and avant-garde work in Canada. As a filmmaker,

Jordan's work has been presented in festivals and galleries the world over including the Toronto International Film Festival, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the Tribeca Film Festival. His virtual reality performance *Draw Me Close*, produced by the National Theatre (UK) and the National Film Board of Canada, premiered at the 2017 Venice Biennale and will have a run at London's Young Vic Theatre in January 2018. Over the past year, his play *Late Company* transferred to London's West End; his play, *Declarations*, premiered at Canadian Stage in Toronto; and he wrote the text for dancer-choreographer Akram Khan's final solo *Xenos*, currently touring internationally to venues including the Lincoln Centre and Sadler's Wells. His books include *Theatre of the Unimpressed: In Search of Vital Drama* (2015), and the novel *Liminal* (2018).

Marti Lyons (Director) most recently directed *The Wolves* by Sarah Delappe at Studio Theatre and *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* for the Court Theatre in Chicago. Marti has also recently directed *Native Gardens* by Karen Zacarias for Victory Gardens Theatre, *Twelfth Night* for Montana Shakespeare, *The Mystery of Love and Sex* by Bathsheba Doran for Writers Theatre, *Short Shakes! Romeo and Juliet* for Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, *Wit for The Hypocrites*, *Give It All Back* by Calamity West for Sideshow Theatre, and *The City of Conversation* by Anthony Giardina for Northlight Theatre Company. She directed *Wondrous Strange* by Meg Miroshnik, Martyna Majok, Jen Silverman, and Jiehae Park for the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville, as well as Will Eno's *Title and Deed* for Lookingglass Theatre Company and a reading of Martin Zimmerman's *On the Exhale* for the New Stages Festival at Goodman Theatre, where she received the 2015 Maggio directing fellowship. Other projects include Laura Marks' *Bethany*, Marks' *Mine*, and Will Nedved's *Body and Blood* for The Gift Theatre; Catherine Trieschmann's *Hot Georgia Sunday* and Theresa Rebeck's *Seminar* for Haven Theatre; *Prowess* by Ike Holter, *The Peacock* by Calamity West, and *The Last Duck* by Lucas Neff for Jackalope Theatre; *The Play About My Dad* by Boo Killebrew for Raven Theatre; *Mai Dang Lao* by David Jacobi, *9 Circles* by Bill Cain, *Maria/Stuart* by Jason Grote, and co-directing *The Golden Dragon* for Sideshow Theatre. Next Marti will direct *Shakespeare in Love* for Illinois Shakespeare Festival, *Witch* by Jen Silverman for Writers Theatre, *Kings* by Sarah Burgess for Studio Theatre, *Macbeth* for Chicago Shakespeare Theater, and *Cambodian Rock Band* by Lauren Yee for Victory Gardens Theater. Marti is an ensemble member with the Gift Theatre Company, an Artistic Associate with Sideshow Theatre Company, and a proud member of SDC. For more information, please visit: www.martilyons.com.

Jon Hudson Odom (Sandro Botticelli) is a company member at Woolly Mammoth, an Artistic Associate at Olney Theatre Center, and a member of The Ensemble at Forum Theatre in DC. His credits include *An Octoroon* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre), *Angels in America parts 1 & 2** (Round House and Olney Theatre Center), *The Magic Play* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *A Christmas Carol* (McCarter Theatre Center), *Twelfth Night* (Center Stage Baltimore), *The Magic Play*, *Piano Lesson*, *Our Town*, *Hay Fever* and *Colossal** (Olney Theatre Center) *Nat Turner in Jerusalem* and *Passion Play** (Forum Theatre) *Father Comes Home From the Wars parts 1, 2 & 3* (Round House Theatre), *Yellowman* (Rep Stage), *You Can't Take It With You* (Everyman Theatre), *A Christmas Carol* and *Our Town* (Ford's Theatre), *2-2-Tango* (Studio Theatre), *Under the Skin* (The Public Theatre ME), *A Few Good Men* (Keegan Theatre), *Reals* (Theater Alliance DC), *The BFG** (Imagination Stage and The National Children's Theatre), *The Ramayana*

(Constellation Theatre) *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre). Jon is a graduate of University of North Carolina School of the Arts.

Cody Nickell (Lorenzo de' Medici) is a company member at Woolly Mammoth, the recipient of the Connecticut Critics Circle Award for Best Actor, and a three-time nominee for The Robert Prosky Helen Hayes Award. He has been previously seen at Woolly in *Baby Screams Miracle*, *Clybourne Park*, *In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play*, and *Stupid Fucking Bird*. Other DC productions include many performances at The Folger Theatre as well as Shakespeare Theatre and Studio Theatre. For three seasons Cody was the Artistic Associate at Gulfshore Playhouse where favorite productions included *All My Sons*, *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*, and most recently *Constellations*. Cody's work has taken him to theaters all over the country including Portland Center Stage, Santa Cruz Shakespeare, The Wilma Theatre, Playmakers Rep, The Arden Theatre, Syracuse Stage, and Two River Theatre. He is a graduate of the Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama.

Dawn Ursula (Madre Maria) is a company member at Woolly Mammoth, and was last seen at Woolly in *Zombie: The American* by Robert O'Hara*. Other Woolly credits include *Marie Antoinette*, *The Totalitarians*, *We Are Proud to Present...**, *The Convert* (2014 Helen Hayes Award). Also a company member with Everyman Theatre, she was recently seen in *The Revolutionists* by Lauren Gunderson and *Intimate Apparel* by Lynn Nottage. She earned a 2016 Helen Hayes award for her performance in *Queen's Girl in the World* by Caleen Sinnette Jennings's at Theatre J and will reprise the role at Everyman Theatre next season. Dawn has performed locally and regionally with theatres such as Olney, Round House, Arena Stage, Hangar, True Colors, the Kennedy Center, Rep Stage, Imagination Stage, and African Continuum Theater Company and holds other awards and nominations. Television credits include HBO's *The Wire* and PBS' *Prince Among Slaves*. She is a founding member of Galvanize and mentored by Vera J. Katz. For more information please visit www.dawnursula.com.

Alyssa Wilmoth Keegan (Clarice Orsini) is thrilled to be working with Woolly Mammoth for the first time. Her other credits include: Kennedy Center: *Digging Up Dessa*; Mosaic Theater: *The Return*; Olney Theater Center: *Fickle: A Fancy French Farce* and *Bad Dog* (Helen Hayes Award nomination Outstanding Ensemble); Ford's Theatre: *Come From Away* (Helen Hayes Award nomination, Best Supporting Actress in a Musical; Helen Hayes Award winner, Outstanding Ensemble); Round House Theatre: *Cat on A Hot Tin Roof* (Helen Hayes Award winner, Best Lead Actress in a Play) and *Becky Shaw*; Imagination Stage: *The Night Fairy*; Folger Theater: *Richard III*; No Rules Theater Co.: *Late: A Cowboy Song* and *Stop Kiss*; Studio Theater: *Contractions*; Theater J: *The History of invulnerability*; Baltimore Center Stage: *The Container*; American Shakespeare Center: more than 30 productions including 15 of Shakespeare's canon; Broadway: *Thomas the Tank Engine Live On Stage*; and Off-Broadway: LaMama: *Agamemnon*. Education: M.F.A. Academy for Classical Acting, Shakespeare Theater. Upcoming: Woolly Mammoth: *Gloria*

Craig Wallace (Girolamo Savonarola) is thrilled to be returning to Woolly Mammoth for Howard Shalwitz's final season as Artistic Director. Other Woolly credits include *Starving*, *Our Lady of 121st Street* and *The Last Orbit of Billy Mars*. Locally, Craig has performed in numerous theatres across the DC area. Most recently he appeared as Sam in *Master Harold and the Boys* at Round House Theatre, and Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman* and Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (recurring) at Ford's Theatre. Regionally, he has performed all over the country including Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey and Actors Theatre of Louisville. Craig received his BFA at Howard University, an MFA from The Pennsylvania State University and also studied at The National Theatre in London.

Earl T. Kim (Poggio du Chullu) is an international actor, theatre-creator, filmmaker, and performance artist currently based in Los Angeles, California. His work has been seen on stages in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, Japan, South Korea, Russia, the United Kingdom, and throughout the US. He is proud to be making his Metro DC theatre debut with Woolly Mammoth and is honored to be a part of this production. His short film *Han* was awarded 'Best Narrative Short' after premiering at the 2017 DC Asian Pacific American Film Festival, and he was recently named a '2018 Filmmaker to Watch' by the LA Dance Film Festival. He holds an MFA in Acting from East 15 Acting School in London, and a BFA in Contemporary Performance from Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado. Selected Credits: Film/Television- *Avengers: Age of Ultron*, *Han*, *Shameless* (Showtime), *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* (CW), *Training Day* (CBS), *2 Broke Girls* (CBS) Radio- *The Octoroon* (BBC Radio 3), Theatre- *Merica* (Vortex/Gale Theatre Co. - Austin), *Book of Days* (Arcola - London), *Macbeth* (Shakespeare's Globe - London), *The Three Sisters* (GITIS-Moscow), *Cabaret* (QPAC/Zen Zen Zo Physical Theatre- Aus/NZ)

James Crichton (Leonardo Da Vinci) is honored to be making his Woolly Mammoth debut. Off Broadway: *Jasper in Deadland*; National Tour: *Peter and the Starcatcher*; Regional: *The Taming of the Shrew* (Shakespeare Theatre Company), *The Last Ship* (Pioneer Theatre Company), *Sweeney Todd* (Finger Lakes Musical Theatre Festival), & *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* (Sharon Playhouse). Proud member of AEA. Graduate of Hofstra University. Thanks to Wolf Talent Group, Maria Dizzia, Chris Brick, and his family. For more information, please visit www.james-crichton.com.

* denotes Helen Hayes nomination

The remaining members of the production team include **Misha Kachman**[^] (set design); **Colin K. Bills**[^] (lighting design); **Ivania Stack**[^] (costume design); **Robert Croghan** (assistant costume designer); **Christian Frederickson** (composer); and **Rachael Danielle Albert** (stage manager).

[^] denotes Woolly Mammoth company member.

SCHEDULE

Botticelli in the Fire runs May 28, 2018 to June 24, 2018, with performances: Wednesday-Friday at 8 pm, Saturday at 3 pm and 8 pm, Sunday at 2 pm and 7 pm; with two Digital Pay What You Can performances with tickets sold via the TodayTix app and website on Monday, May 28, and Tuesday, May 29 at 8 pm.

In partnership with Woolly Mammoth's production of *Botticelli in the Fire*, on June 8th and 9th Woolly Mammoth will host CAPTURING FIRE, the international queer poetry summit and slam. Led by Artistic Director Regie Cabico, this celebration of trans and queer spoken word encourages allyship, risk-taking, and artistic growth through a series of rousing workshops and performances. Don't miss this weekend of incendiary art!

PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

May 28, 2018: Digital Pay What You Can preview performance at 8 pm

May 29, 2018: Digital Pay What You Can preview performance at 8 pm

May 30, 2018: Preview performance at 8 pm

May 31, 2018: Preview performance at 8 pm

June 1, 2018: Opening Night Performance at 8 pm

June 2, 2018: Press Night Performance & Burn Party at 8 pm

June 3, 2018: Performance at 7 pm

June 6, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 7, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 8, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 9, 2018: Performances at 3 pm and 8 pm

June 10, 2018: Performances at 2 pm and 7 pm

June 13, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 14, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 15, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 16, 2018: Performances at 3 pm and 8 pm

June 17, 2018: Performances at 2 pm and 7 pm

June 20, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 21, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 22, 2018: Performance at 8 pm

June 23, 2018: Performances at 3 pm and 8 pm

June 24, 2018: Performances at 2 pm and 7 pm

TICKETS

Ticket prices range from \$20 to \$69. Visit us online at woollymammoth.net, by phone at (202) 393-3939, via email at tickets@woollymammoth.net, or in person at the Box Office, located at 641 D Street NW. Tickets for Woolly's Pay What You Can performance will be sold through TodayTix.

Patrons who are 30-years-old and younger may, at any time, purchase Section B tickets for \$20 to any performance. There are also discounts available for educators, first responder men and women and active US military personnel, spouses, and veterans. More information is available at woollymammoth.net.

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ABOUT WOOLLY

Woolly Mammoth, a national innovator in the development and production of new plays, is one of the best known mid-sized theaters in the country and “the hottest theater company in town” (*Washington Post*). For almost four decades, Woolly has held a unique position at the leading edge of the American theater, earning a reputation for staying “uniquely plugged in to the mad temper of the times” (*New York Times*).