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Press Contact: Timmy Metzner

timmy.metzner@woollymammoth.net

WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE NAMES EMIKA ABE AS NEW MANAGING DIRECTOR

(Washington, DC) After a nationwide search run by **Greg Kandel**, **David Mallette**, and **Management Consultants for the Arts**, Woolly Mammoth will welcome their new Managing Director, **Emika Abe**, on October 7th, 2019. Emika succeeds **Meghan Pressman**, who shattered the glass ceiling by being named the first female managing director of Center Theatre Group in June of 2019.

Emika comes to Woolly after three years as the Associate Managing Director of the Alliance Theatre (Atlanta, GA), the largest regional theatre in the Southeast. At the Alliance, Emika led a portfolio of projects that guided the theatre's organizational strategy, culture, and general management. These included stewarding the 70-person Advisory Board, co-chairing the Alliance's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee, and steering a strategic planning process to redefine the theatre's mission, vision, and values. Emika is on the Advisory Board of Found Stages and serves as Mentorship Co-Chair of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) EDI Initiative, for which she launched a national mentorship program for aspiring theatre leaders from underrepresented groups. She is an alum of LEAD Atlanta, Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta, Stanford Arts Strategies Lab, and Theatre Communications Group's Young Leaders of Color.

Emika holds an MFA in Theater Management from Yale School of Drama, an MBA from Yale School of Management, and a BA in Theater from UCLA. At Yale, she was the recipient of the Morris J. Kaplan Award for Theater Management, Producer and Artistic Associate of Yale Cabaret, and Co-Chair of the Internship Fund. Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Emika has previously held positions at Yale Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the Palo Alto Children's Theatre, as well as fellowships at Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Center Theatre Group, and Artists Repertory Theatre. Emika is passionate about the intersection of art and business, and the essential role that theatre can play in activating individuals and strengthening communities.

Woolly Mammoth Artistic Director **Maria Manuela Goyanes** says "As soon as I met Emika, I knew that she was a kindred spirit not only for me, but also for Woolly. As exemplified by her leadership at the Alliance, Emika has the skills and big vision we need to keep pushing the limits on how expansive the theater can be. I am tremendously excited by the fresh perspective she will bring to Woolly as we embark on my inaugural season of programming, and to partner with her to dream up new and innovative strategies of deepening Woolly's impact in Washington, DC, and beyond."

"In Emika, we have found another theatre professional who is beyond impressive to partner with Maria in leading Woolly and in ensuring that Woolly continues to lead the field." says Woolly Board President **Linette Hwu**. "Among many reasons we have chosen Emika to be Woolly's next managing director are her extensive experience at the Alliance, active involvement with LORT's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative, long track record of challenging the status quo, and personal belief in the power of theatre to have an impact beyond our space. I could not be more eager to work with both of these amazing, inspiring women as Woolly deepens its commitment to

form-breaking artistic innovation, meaningful community relationships, substantive civic discourse, and positive social change.”

Says Emika of her new role, “it is an absolute honor to join Woolly Mammoth at this particularly momentous time for the organization. Woolly is one of the most daring theatres in the country, and I am inspired by its demonstrated commitment to radical inclusion, creative risk-taking, and innovation. I’m thrilled to partner with Maria, the Board, and the staff to envision and create the next dynamic chapter for the company. I believe in theatre that is inherently theatrical, sparks civic dialogue, and deeply engages with its community, and I can think of no better place to be.”

Woolly Board Member, **Stacy Reed**, served as chair of the managing director search committee and shares in Woolly’s excitement about its next chapter. She says “We are thrilled to have Emika Abe join Woolly. Her extensive arts management experience and embodiment of Woolly’s mission will be crucial in leading our organization into the next stage of growth. I’m proud to be a board member of an organization that has chosen three women of color to lead as Artistic Director, Managing Director and Board President. They are a force to be reckoned with and I’m looking forward to seeing what they have in store for the future.”

Alliance Artistic Director, **Susan Booth**, says “Emika’s a rising star who is going to be an electric partner for Maria. She’s that wonderful unicorn of a being who is as deeply invested in and curious about the art as the commerce, and has a fierce commitment to making inclusive theatre that matters deeply to its community. I can’t wait to see what Woolly will do with these powerful women at the helm.” The current Managing Director of Alliance Theatre, **Mike Schleifer**, thinks this is a “perfect match” for both Emika and Woolly. He says “Emika has been an invaluable member of the Alliance’s Senior Staff since she walked in the door and raised the level of sophistication in a lot of the ways we operate. I can’t wait to follow this partnership in the coming years. It’s a great win!”

Events for the community to meet and welcome Emika to DC will be announced at a later date.

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ABOUT WOOLLY MAMMOTH

Woolly Mammoth is “the hottest theater company in town” (Washington Post); priding itself on developing, producing, and making theatre that disrupts conventional processes and stimulates transformative experiences. 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). The leadership of María Manuela Goyanes (Artistic Director) is supported by a core company of artists that holds itself to a high standard of artistic excellence. Woolly is relentless in its desire to take risks, experiment, innovate, interrogate, and create a radically inclusive community.