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AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER ANNOUNCES ACT II SPEAKERS AND ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMING FOR *BECOMING A MAN*

FEB 16 – MAR 10 WORLD-PREMIERE RUN
TO FEATURE RADICAL WELCOMES AND PORTRAIT EXHIBITION *ARE YOU OK?*

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Cambridge, MA – American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University has announced **Act II** guest speakers and associated programming for its upcoming production of *Becoming a Man*. Adapted from P. Carl’s acclaimed memoir and co-directed by A.R.T. Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus and P. Carl, *Becoming a Man* is a story about the courage—and the community—we need to become ourselves.

Each performance of the one-act play will culminate in **Act II**, a 20-minute facilitated conversation with a local leader, scholar, or activist and a brief audience Q&A exploring the production’s essential question, “*When we change, can the people we love come with us?*”

“A.R.T. is dedicated to catalyzing dialogue and transformation through the theater we create, and the **Act II** series for *Becoming a Man* will give our audiences a vital opportunity for conversation and community building,” said Paulus.

Conceived as an equal part of the experience as the scripted show, **Act II** events invite audience members to move into dialogue with one another and to deepen their engagement with A.R.T. productions, themes, and essential questions. **Act II** often highlights A.R.T. community members making an impact in the Boston area and the world. Past A.R.T. productions featuring **Act II** include *Gloria: A Life* (2020), *The White Card* (2018), *Notes from the Field: Doing Time in Education* (2016), and *In the Body of the World* (2016).

Becoming a Man Act II guests will include:

- **Dr. Brandon Thomas Crowley** (he/him)
Senior Pastor of the Historic Myrtle Baptist Church
- **Cheryl Katon** (she/her)
Vice President of Development and Donor Engagement at Fenway Health
- **Dallas Ducar** (she/her)
CEO of Transhealth
- **Emmie Finckel** (they/them)
*Scenic Designer for **Becoming a Man***
- **Errik Jersey** (he/him)
A.R. T. Staff Member
- **Jen Rodstorm** (she/her)
Community Member, TEDx Speaker
- **Jenny Siegel** (she/her)
Director of Trans Health at MGH
- **Jesse Freidin** (he/him)
Photographer, Are You OK?
- **Jo Michael Rezes** (they/them)
Theater maker
- **Julie Thompson** (she/her)
Director of Transgender Health at Fenway Health
- **Justice Williams** (he/him)
Facilitator, Speaker Intersectionality Consultant, Founding Director Fitness4AllBodies
- **Meagan von Rohr** (she/they)
Director, Office of BGLTQ Student Life at Harvard University
- **Micha Martin** (he/him)
Community Support Advocate
- **Michael Bobbitt** (he/him)
Executive Director of Mass Cultural Council, Director, Choreographer, Playwright
- **Quyen Tran** (she/her)
Education and Outreach Coordinator, Transtape
- **Qween Jean** (she/her)
*Costume Designer for **Becoming a Man***
- **Rebecca Minor** (she/her)
LICSW, Gender Specialist
- **Ruben Hopwood** (he/him)
Former Manager of the Trans Health Program at Fenway and psychologist
- **Steph DeNormand** (they/them)
Coordinator of Transgender Health at Fenway
- **Tre'Andre Valentine** (he/they)
Executive Director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition

Visit AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/BAMActII for an updating list of **Act II** guests.

Act II Facilitators will include **Athena Vaughn** (she/her), **Chastity Bowick** (she/her), **Dan Rice** (he/they), **Dante Gonzalez** (he/they), **Justice Williams** (he/him), and **Lyam B. Gabel** (they/he).

ASSOCIATED PROGRAMMING

- **Essential Question**

A.R.T. leads with inquiry and believes in asking questions in a spirit of brave curiosity in a never-ending journey of learning and growth. For each production, the creative team, company, and Engagement team develop an **Essential Question** to guide work in the rehearsal room, onstage, and for engaging with audiences. For ***Becoming a Man***, the essential question is, *when we change, can the people we love come with us?*

- **Radical Welcome**

Before each performance, a community member will welcome the audience to the A.R.T and share what has brought them to the show.

- ***Are You OK?* Exhibit by Jesse Freidin**

A trans survival project, ***Are You OK?*** by portrait photographer Jesse Freidin documents the experiences and stories of trans and non-binary youth living in the United States. Flanked by their supportive families, these outspoken and deeply loved youth present their strength to the world in a revolt against the country's attempt to erase them.

"For the past few years I've been terrified not only just for myself and my queer community, but for the innocent and sweet young people who are the most directly affected by our nation's incredibly dangerous anti-trans legislation," says Freidin. "I started 'Are You OK?' as a response to the fear and anger these bills awoke in me, as a way to pass the microphone to the kids and families who find empowerment in sharing their stories, and more importantly as a visual remedy to trans stigmatization."

The exhibit will feature banner prints with an individual portrait and story, plus a QR code so audience can hear directly from trans youth. Learn more at AreYouOKPortraits.com.

- **Access Performances**

- **ASL Interpreted***

Sunday, March 3, 2024 at 2PM & Wednesday, March 6, 2024 at 7:30PM

- **Audio Described***

Saturday, March 2, 2024 at 2PM and Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 7:30 PM

- **Open Captioned***

Saturday, March 2, 2024 at 2PM and Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 7:30 PM

- **Relaxed Performance***

Sunday, March 3, 2023 at 2PM

*Book Access seats online, by contacting Access@amrep.org, or calling 617.547.8300

ABOUT BECOMING A MAN

The newest A.R.T. world-premiere play is about one man's gender transition amid a pivotal political moment in America. From acclaimed memoirist P. Carl and Tony Award-winning director Diane Paulus, ***Becoming a Man*** is a story about the courage—and the community—we need to become ourselves.

For fifty years, Carl lived as a girl and then a queer woman, building a career and a loving marriage while waiting to realize himself in full. When he decides to affirm his gender, his transition puts everything—family, career, friendships—at stake. “This moving narrative illuminates the joy, courage, necessity, and risk-taking of his gender transition” (*Kirkus*).

Becoming a Man is supported, in part, by the **Robert Brustein Endowment Fund for New Works, Marybeth and Stephen Bisson**, and **Emerson College**. **Act II** is supported by **The Boston Foundation**.

Tickets from \$35 are available at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/BecomingAMan.

Discounts are available to students and ticket-buyers under age 25, Blue Star families, EBT cardholders, seniors, Harvard faculty and staff, and others. More information at AmericanRepertoryTheater.org/PlanYourVisit.

A.R.T.'s 2023/24 season support is provided by **Harvard University, The Barr Foundation, The Bob and Alison Murchison New Work Development Fund, The Shubert Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Barton & Guestier, and Meyer Sound**.

ABOUT AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATER

The American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) at Harvard University is a leading force in the American theater, producing groundbreaking work that is driven by risk-taking and passionate inquiry. Terrie and Bradley Bloom Artistic Director Diane Paulus began her tenure in 2008 and co-leads the theater in partnership with Executive Director Kelvin Dinkins, Jr., who began his tenure in June 2022. A.R.T.'s mission is to expand the boundaries of theater, always including the audience as partner.

The A.R.T. focuses on the research and development of groundbreaking theatrical experiences, serving as a creative hub that has launched productions seen across the US and around the world. A.R.T. received the Tony Award for Best New Play for ***All the Way*** (2014); consecutive Tony Awards for Best Revival of a Musical for ***Pippin*** (2013) and ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess*** (2012), both of which Paulus directed. A.R.T.'s Tony Award-winning and nominated productions include ***1776***; ***Jagged Little Pill***; ***Waitress***; ***Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812***; ***All the Way***; ***The Glass Menagerie***; ***Pippin***; ***Once***; ***The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess***. International productions include ***Waitress***, ***Nice Fish***, ***The Glass Menagerie*** (West End); ***Waitress***, ***Pippin*** (Japan); ***Jagged Little Pill***, ***Pippin*** (Australia); ***Sleep No More*** (China). ***Sleep No More*** currently runs in New York City.

Throughout its history, A.R.T. has been honored with many other distinguished awards including a Pulitzer Prize; a Jujamcyn Prize for outstanding contribution to the development of creative talent; the Regional Theatre Tony Award; and more than 100 Elliot Norton and IRNE Awards.

As the professional theater on the campus of Harvard University, A.R.T. plays a central role in the cognitive life of the University, catalyzing discourse, interdisciplinary collaboration, and creative exchange among a wide range of academic departments, institutions, students, and faculty members. A.R.T. is also engaged in a number of multi-year initiatives with partners at Harvard that explore some of the most pressing issues of our day.

A.R.T. is dedicated to making great theater accessible to all. It builds community with its audiences, artists, students, staff, and neighbors, actively engaging community members and local students annually in project-based partnerships, workshops, conversations with artists, and other enrichment activities both at the theater and across the Greater Boston area.

In 2024, A.R.T. will break ground on its new home, the David E. and Stacey L. Goel Center for Creativity & Performance. Designed by Haworth Tompkins, the new center will include two flexible performance venues, rehearsal studios, teaching spaces, a spacious public lobby, and an outdoor performance yard designed to host ticketed and free programming. Porous and welcoming intentional architecture will galvanize creativity and collaboration and fuel the mission. A.R.T. expects to begin producing in the new center in 2026.

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