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TORONTO PREMIERE OF THE MUCH-LOVED PLAY AS SEEN ON HBO

EVERY BRILLIANT THING

Written by Duncan MacMillan with Johnny Donahue

Directed by Brendan Healy

November 27-December 16, 2018 at the Berkeley Street Theatre

“One of the funniest plays you’ll ever see about depression – and possibly one of the funniest plays you’ll ever see, full stop.” – The Guardian

“*Every Brilliant Thing* approaches suicide with touching comic sincerity.” – LA Times

Toronto, ON – *Every Brilliant Thing* has moved audiences around the world to laughter and tears since it first hit the stage in 2013. The play proved so popular that it became an HBO documentary in 2016. Canadian Stage is delighted to share with Toronto audiences this joyous, life-affirming play starring the brilliant Kristen Thomson (I, *Claudia*) at the Berkeley Street Theatre, November 27 to December 16, 2018.

The list began after her first attempt. A list of everything brilliant about the world. Everything worth living for.

1: Ice cream

2: Water fights

#24: Spaghetti Bolognese

#315: The smell of old books

#823: Skinny dipping

#1654: Christopher Walken’s voice

Every Brilliant Thing strikes a delicate balance between sobering loss and cathartic laughter. Touching, intimate and utterly transformative, *Every Brilliant Thing* tells the story of a young woman who has lived in the shadow of her mother’s mental illness. In an attempt to raise her spirits, she starts a list of everything that’s brilliant about the world – all of the reasons to want to live. As she grows up and has her own experiences with love, loss, and depression, the list evolves to serve as a lifelong reminder that joy can be found even in seemingly insignificant moments.

Without avoiding the darkness that comes with depression, *Every Brilliant Thing* points us to the moments of beauty and wonder we tend to overlook. A refreshingly straightforward approach to talking about mental health and its impact on a family, *Every Brilliant Thing* is the kind of theatre that can profoundly affect our thinking and our willingness to see and feel the sublime in the ordinary.

A unique immersive storytelling experience, the play is staged in the round with the house lights on and features one performer, Kristen Thomson, and a willing audience who become cast members. In this warm environment the vulnerability and empathy at the heart of the play also allows the audience to share their stories.

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"I am so thrilled to be working on this play – the first show I am directing since becoming Artistic Director at Canadian Stage. Working with one of Canada's great actresses is a true dream," says Brendan Healy.

Every Brilliant Thing is an intimate solo piece that charts the lengths we will go for those we love.

Every Brilliant Thing is on stage at the Berkeley Street Theatre from November 27-December 16. Performances run Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8 PM, Wednesdays at 1 and 8 PM, Fridays at 7 PM, Saturdays at 2 and 8 PM, and Sundays at 2 PM

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MEDIA NIGHT: NOVEMBER 29

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ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage is one of the country's leading not-for-profit contemporary performing arts organizations. The company produces, presents, commissions, and collaborates with multiple partners on cross-disciplinary work with a focus on performance styles that integrate theatre, dance, film, visual arts and more. Sharing innovative and vibrant performance work from Canada and around the world, it stages performances at three Toronto venues: The Bluma Appel Theatre at Civic Theatres Toronto; The Berkeley Street Theatre; and the High Park Amphitheatre. In July 2018, award-winning theatre director Brendan Healy was appointed Artistic Director.

KRISTEN THOMSON

Is an award-winning actor/writer for theatre, film, television, and the recipient of four Dora Awards, two ACTRA Awards, two Canadian Comedy Awards, a Genie, a Gemini and a Leo. For **Canadian Stage**: SOMEONE ELSE (also playwright/Crows co-pro), PEGGY PICKETT SEES THE FACE OF GOD (Volcano co-pro), HYSTERIA, OLEANNA. **Recently**: WEDDING PARTY, (also playwright) enjoyed two successful runs at Crows Theatre and will be touring to NAC in the new year. **Elsewhere**: I CLAUDIA, (performer and playwright) first produced at Tarragon, later Crow/Soulpepper, toured internationally and was adapted for television. Other credits include: THE CHAIRS, THE BALD SORPRANO, THE LESSON, SCHOOL FOR WIVES, STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, THE GUARDSMAN, MIRANDOLINA, UNCLE VANYA (Soulpepper); THE MEMORY OF WATER (Tarragon Theatre); PROBLEM CHILD (Factory). **Film and Television**: Recurring role in CARDINAL/CTV; AWAY FROM HER; I SHOUT LOVE; FLOWER AND GARNET and THE REPUBLIC OF LOVE.

BRENDAN HEALY

In July 2018, Montreal-born, award-winning theatre director and actor Brendan Healy was appointed Artistic Director. A graduate of Canada's Theatre School, Healy was the Artistic Director of Buddies and Bad Times Theatre and most recently the Artistic Director, Performing Arts, for the City of Brampton. As a director, Healy has created close to 50 productions across Canada—ranging from new Canadian plays to classical repertoire—that garnered multiple Dora Mavor Moore Awards and drew attention to his passionate commitment to the social, educational, and economic health of communities.

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