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GARDEN THEATRE HIRES NEW ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Joe Walsh will take over as Artistic Director in mid-June.

WINTER GARDEN, FL (May 28, 2019): After several weeks of a nationwide search, Garden Theatre has selected **Joseph C. Walsh** to be the new Artistic Director. Mr. Walsh will move from his home in Massachusetts to join the Garden Theatre team and will begin his role as Artistic Director this June.

Joseph C. Walsh is an award-winning theatre director whose credits include *When Harry Met Sally* in the West End (Resident Dir), the London premiere of *Zanna, Don't!*, the Irish premieres of *The Last Five Years*, *Songs For A New World*, *The Laramie Project Cycle*, and the Irish national tours of *Hairspray* and *The King and I* (originated at Cork Opera House). His U.S. productions include *Ghost: The Musical* at White Plains PAC, *Sonder* at The Players Theatre (NYC), and *Cirque of the Dead* at Oberon/American Repertory Theatre (Cambridge). As administrator, he has served in leadership roles at Wild Oats Productions (London), Redhouse Arts Center (Syracuse), and most recently Arlington Children's Theatre (Massachusetts) as Artistic Director.

In the field of Theatre for Young Audiences, Walsh has directed, taught, and developed curricula at White Plains Performing Arts Center, Greenwich Theatre/Young Apprenticeship Programme (London), the Urdang Academy (London), and Cork School of Music at the Cork Institute of Technology (Ireland). He also spent three seasons as the Touring Director for White Horse Theatre, the world's largest touring education theatre company, where his work was seen across Europe and Japan.

"I am thrilled to be joining the remarkable team at the Garden Theatre, with its passionate staff, board, and vibrant artistic community," says Walsh. "Theatre is a living, breathing art form that must engage its audience and community in a way that extends beyond the footlights, and Garden Theater's commitment to creating innovative, impactful, and inclusive theatre which inspires discovery truly exemplifies this and more."

Executive Director **Nao Tsurumaki** says "our national search generated an overwhelming amount of interests from coast to coast. Joe Walsh unequivocally stood out as a director, an educator, and a creative leader. As international and expansive as his experience may seem, he intimately understands how a theatre can and must create an impact in its community through its mission. We're excited to welcome him as our new Artistic Director and continue to push the Garden into exciting new directions."

Walsh added that he is thrilled to begin the next stage of his career at the Garden: "I look forward to becoming a part of this vibrant community by learning about its rich history, engaging directly in the present, and contributing my own experience, passion, and leadership as we look together to the future."

Mr. Walsh holds an MA in Directing from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and a BFA in Theatre Production and Stage Management from Emerson College.

Garden Theatre's 2018 - 2019 season closes with *Flashdance: The Musical* from July 5 - 28, 2019. The theatre's 12th season begins on August 23 with the classic musical *Ragtime*. The 2019 - 2020 season includes *Deathtrap*, *A Christmas Carol: A Ghost Story of Christmas*, *Violet*, *Ben Hur*, *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*, and *Grease*.

ABOUT THE GARDEN THEATRE

Garden Theatre of Winter Garden celebrates its 12th anniversary during the 2019-2020 performance season. Originally built in 1935 as a single-screen cinema, the theatre was the first in Central Florida built for "talkies" and was a gathering place for locals to watch the latest newsreels and films of the day. The building was restored to its former glory in 2008, and the 295-seat Garden Theatre, with a current annual budget of \$1.6 million, has grown to a performing arts center with extensive programming that includes professional live theatre, concerts, dance, special events, movies and a thriving year-round arts education program. Visit gardentheatre.org or contact 407-877-4736 for details about the 2019-2020 season.