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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WAM Theatre and Chester Theatre Company Partner for “Revolutionary” Free Event

A reading of Lauren Gunderson’s bold comedy, *The Revolutionists*, July 28 at 2:00

LENOX & CHESTER, MA (July 19, 2016) – Chester Theatre Company and WAM Theatre are pleased to announce they will be partnering for a free reading of Lauren Gunderson's smart, sly play *The Revolutionists*, directed by WAM Artistic Director Kristen van Ginhoven. The reading will take place Thursday, July 28 at 2 p.m. in the intimate setting of Chester's Historic Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road in Chester, MA. There will be a talkback following the reading.

This is a first partnership for the two companies, which share a common interest in producing new works rarely seen by audiences in western Massachusetts.

In *The Revolutionists*, four remarkable women lose their heads in an irreverent, girl-powered comedy set during the French Revolution. At the height of the Reign of Terror, playwright Olympe de Gouges, assassin Charlotte Corday, activist Marianne Angelle and former queen Marie Antoinette hang out, plot murder and try to beat back extremist insanity in Paris.

The cast includes Maconnia Chesser (*The Taming of the Shrew* and *Richard III*, Tennessee Shakespeare) as Marianne Angelle, Zoe Laiz (currently *Twelfth Night* and *The Emperor of the Moon*, Shakespeare & Company) as Charlotte Corday, Brenny Rabine (*Other Desert Cities* and *God of Carnage*, Capital Rep) as Olympe de Gouges and Kim Stauffer (*Madagascar* and *Crime and Punishment* at CTC, and the title role in *Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight* at WAM) as Marie Antoinette. For full cast bios and more information visit: <http://www.wamtheatre.com/the-revolutionists/>

"We're so pleased to offer a free event to our audience, and to partner with WAM in exploring this exciting play," said CTC's Producing Artistic Director Daniel Elihu Kramer. "The reading is a chance to share our process, and to hear from our audience."

WAM presented Gunderson's play *Emilie: La Marquise Du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight* to great acclaim as their Main Stage production in 2013. WAM Artistic Director Kristen van Ginhoven directed that production. "Directing '*Emilie*' in 2013 solidified my love for Lauren Gunderson's work," she said. "It's exciting for WAM Theatre to collaborate with Chester Theatre on the free reading of this smart and sassy story. The cast is top notch and I'm excited to hear our audience's thoughts!"

There will be only one performance, so seats should be reserved as soon as possible by calling 1-800-595-4TIX(4849), e-mailing info@chestertheatre.org or visiting <http://chestertheatre.tix.com/Event.aspx?EventCode=888993>.

Quick Facts

Reading of *The Revolutionists*

by Lauren Gunderson

Directed by Kristen van Ginhoven, WAM Theatre

Presented by the Chester Theatre Company and WAM Theatre

July 28 at 2 p.m.

Admission free

Chester Town Hall, 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA

Ticket info: <http://chestertheatre.tix.com/Event.aspx?EventCode=888993>

Cast

Maconnia Chesser as Marianne Angelle

Zoe Laiz as Charlotte Corday

Brenny Rabine as Olympe de Gouges

Kim Stauffer as Marie Antoinette

Creative Team

KRISTEN VAN GINHOVEN (Director) WAM Theatre: *In Darfur* (New England Premiere), *Emilie* (New England Premiere), *The Old Mezzo* (World Premiere), *The Attic*, *The Pearls* and *Three Fine Girls*, and *Melancholy Play*. Elsewhere: *Waxworks* (Williams College), *The Whale* (Adirondack Theatre Festival), 10 Minute Play Festival (Barrington Stage Company), *Petticoats of Steel* (Capital Repertory Theatre), *Footloose* (Cohoes Music Hall), *Children's Hour* (Siena College), *Vendetta Chrome* (Emerson College). Selected assistant directing: *The Physicists* and *42nd Street* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival of Canada), *Two Men of Florence* (Huntington Theatre), *Sleuth and Absurd Person Singular* (Barrington Stage Company). Training: Dalhousie University (BA), Queen's University (BEd), Emerson College (MA). Et cetera: Kristen is an associate member of

the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers and a theatre artist for the International Schools Theatre Association. She was a member of the 2013 Lincoln Center Director's Lab and is a member of the Michael Langham Workshop for Classical Direction at the Stratford Festival of Canada. Kristen is the co-founder and Artistic Director of WAM Theatre. Website: www.kristenvanginhoven.com

Lauren Gunderson (playwright) is an award-winning playwright living in San Francisco. She studied at Emory University and NYU's Tisch School of Performing Arts where she was a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. Her work has been produced and developed at companies across the US including South Coast Rep (*Emilie*, *Silent Sky*), The Kennedy Center (*The Amazing Adventures of Dr. Wonderful And Her Dog!*), Berkeley Rep, TheatreWorks, Crowded Fire, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre, The Magic, Actors Express, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, Second Stage, Playwrights Foundation, Impact Theatre, The Lark, and The O'Neill. *Emilie: La Marquise Du Chatelet Defends Her Life Tonight* is published with Samuel French. The first play in her Shakespeare Cycle, *Exit, Pursued By A Bear*, is now published with Playscripts, as is her second, *Toil and Trouble*. She is a Playwright in Residence at The Playwrights Foundation, and a proud Dramatists Guild member. Los Angeles Times calls Gunderson someone who "possesses an antic imagination that seeks to invent its own rules. As soon as we're drawn in, she shakes and whisks us 10 or 15 paces ahead."

About Chester Theatre Company

Chester Theatre Company (CTC), a professional theatre company located in the foothills of the Berkshires, has been presenting high-quality productions with top-notch actors, directors, and designers from across the country since 1990. Now in its 27th season—the first under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Daniel Elihu Kramer—CTC produces 4 thought-provoking plays each summer in an intimate setting at Chester's Historic Town Hall on 15 Middlefield Road in Chester, MA. Numerous CTC productions have gone on to Off-Broadway, regional, national and international engagements, among them Kramer's own *Pride@Prejudice*.

CTC's 2016 season continues with the Regional Premieres of *Sister Play* by John Kolvenbach, August 3–14, 2016, and *The Mountaintop* by Katori Hall, August 18–28, 2016.

Performances are 8:00 p.m. Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and 2:00 p.m. Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays. There will be audience talkbacks following the Thursday matinees and Saturday evening performances, a Panel Discussion featuring outside experts after the first Sunday matinee of each show, and Cast Conversations following Friday matinees.

Ticket prices are \$37.50 for general audiences and \$10.00 for students and residents of Chester. Tickets may be purchased online at chestertheatre.tix.com, or by phone at 1.800.595.4TIX (4849).

For further information, please call CTC at 413.354.7771, or visit www.chestertheatre.org.

About WAM Theatre

Based in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, WAM Theatre was co-founded in 2010 by Canadian director, actor, educator, and producer Kristen van Ginhoven to create professional theatrical events for everyone, with a focus on women theatre artists and/or stories of women and girls.

WAM Theatre also has a philanthropic mission, inspired by the book *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide* by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, and donates a portion of the proceeds from its theatrical events to organizations that benefit women and girls.

Over the past five years, WAM Theatre has donated more than \$15,000 to seven nonprofit organizations and provided paid work to more than 100 theatre artists. In addition to the main stage productions and special events, WAM Theatre's activities include a comprehensive educational outreach program and the Fresh Takes Play Reading Series. For more information, visit www.WAMTheatre.com

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