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**For Immediate Release**

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**Holiday Romance Blooms at Oregon Contemporary Theatre with**

 ***MISS BENNET: CHRISTMAS AT PEMBERLEY* by Lauren Gunderson & Margot Melcon**

**November 30 – December 16, 2018**

**EUGENE, OREGON –** Holiday romance blooms this winter with Oregon Contemporary Theatre’s production of ***Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*** by Lauren Gunderson and Margot Melcon. ***Miss Bennet…*** runs November 30 through December 16 at Oregon Contemporary Theatre, 194 West Broadway in downtown Eugene. Tickets are available online at [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org) or by calling 541-465-1506.

Middle sister Mary finally takes center stage in this charming and clever sequel to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Mary has grown tired of her role as the dutiful daughter and dreams of forging a new path. When the family gathers for ***Christmas at Pemberley***, an unexpected guest sparks Mary's hopes for independence, an intellectual match, and possibly even love. Playwright Lauren Gunderson—author of *Silent Sky*, *I And You* and *The Revolutionists*—teams up with Margot Melcon to create this clever and captivating romantic comedy sure to delight Austen aficionados and newcomers alike!

“Lauren Gunderson and Margot Malcon have done an absolutely top-notch job in capturing Jane Austen’s sophisticated wit while creating a wholly new story for holiday escapism. When you see ***Miss Bennet***, you will understand why it’s one of the most produced plays in America in 2018,” said Craig Willis, OCT’s Producing Artistic Director. Willis also noted, “OCT is proud to have been the first Oregon theatre to produce Lauren Gunderson. We encourage Oregon Shakespeare Festival patrons who enjoyed OSF’s production of Lauren’s *The Book of Will* to come and bring the family to see what Lauren and Margot Malcon have created with ***Miss Bennet…*.”**

***Miss Bennet…*** brings a host of actors back to the OCT stage including: Andrew Beck (*The Great Gatsby*), Lindsey Esch (*Fun Home*), Sabrina Gross (*Successful Strategies*), Matthew Holland (*Middletown*), Melanie Moser (*Tribes)*, Janelle Rae (*The Revolutionists*), Erica Towe (*Successful Strategies*, *Silent Sky*) and Joseph Workman (*Venus in Fur*, *Melancholy Play*).

The production team for ***Miss Bennet…*** includes director Elizabeth Helman, sound designer Bradley Branam, costume designer Jeanette deJong, props designer Kat Matthews, lighting designer Janet Rose and scenic designer Amy Dunn. Christle O’Neill is the production stage manager.

Lauren Gunderson (*Playwright*) is a playwright, screenwriter and short story author from Atlanta, GA. She received her BA in English/Creative Writing at Emory University, and her MFA in Dramatic Writing at NYU Tisch, where she was also a Reynolds Fellow in Social Entrepreneurship. She was the most produced playwright in America in 2017. Gunderson is the winner of a Macarthur "genius" Fellowship, the Lanford Wilson Award, the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award and the Otis Guernsey New Voices Award; she is also a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and John Gassner Award for Playwriting, and a recipient of the Mellon Foundation’s 3-Year Residency with Marin Theatre Company. Her work has been commissioned, produced and developed at companies across the US including South Coast Rep, The Kennedy Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The O’Neill, The Denver Center, San Francisco Playhouse, Marin Theatre, Synchronicity, Berkeley Rep, Shotgun Players, TheatreWorks, Crowded Fire and more. Her works include: *I and You*, *Exit Pursued By A Bear*, *The Taming*, *Toil And Trouble*, *The Revolutionists*, *The Book of Will*, *Silent Sky*, *Bauer*, *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*(co-authored with Margot Melcon) and *Emilie*, among others.

Margot Melcon (*Playwright*) is a theater artist, administrator and writer. She was the Director of New Play Development at Marin Theatre Company for seven years, where she dramaturged over 30 productions—including six world premieres—and administered the company’s two annual new play prizes and commissioning program. She has developed plays with TheatreWorks, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Crowded Fire Theater, Shotgun Players, Berkeley Rep’s Ground Floor, the Kennedy Center, the New Harmony Project, and the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis. She is currently the Program Executive for Promoting Culture at the Zellerbach Family Foundation. Margot is a graduate of California State University - Chico.

Pay-What-You-Can preview performances of ***Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*** are on November 28 and 29 at 7:30pm. For more information or to order tickets, visit [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org) or call the OCT Box Office: (541)465-1506. All performances are at Oregon Contemporary Theatre, 194 West Broadway in downtown Eugene.

Critical praise for ***Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley***:

“An unstuffy, highly entertaining and warm-spirited work, the kind of thing multiple generations can enjoy together." –*The Chicago Tribune*

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***Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley*** Performance Calendar

Wednesday, November 28 7:30pm Preview ($15 suggested or Pay-What-You-Can)

Thursday, November 29 7:30pm Preview ($15 tickets or Pay-What-You-Can)

Friday, November 30 7:30pm Opening Night ($40 includes wine, beer, and dessert

reception with the cast after the performance)

Saturday, December 1 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Thursday, December 6 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Friday, December 7 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Saturday, December 8 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Sunday, December 9 2:00pm Matinee, Tickets start at $20

Thursday, December 13 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Friday, December 14 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Saturday, December 15 7:30pm Performance, Tickets start at $20

Sunday, December 16 2:00pm Matinee, Tickets start at $20

Discounts are available for current students with student ID. For more information, visit [www.octheatre.org](http://www.octheatre.org) or call the OCT Box Office: (541)465-1506.