



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contacts (for media only):

For 24th Street Theatre: Lucy Pollak lucy@lucypr.com

For The Wallis: Laura Stegman press@thewallis.org/laurastegmanpr@gmail.com

World premiere of 'Rapunzel Alone' reimagines classic fairy tale at 24th Street Theatre and The Wallis beginning March 5

LOS ANGELES (February 1, 2022) — **24th Street Theatre**, in association with the **Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts**, presents a sophisticated reimagining of a classic fairy tale geared for adults and children alike. Commissioned by 24th Street and written by Olivier Award-winning playwright **Mike Kenny** (*Walking the Tightrope*), the world premiere of *Rapunzel Alone* is scheduled for a **March 5** opening at 24th Street Theatre, followed by seven performances at The Wallis **March 12** through **March 19**, and a return to the 24th Street venue **March 26** through **April 30**. Low-priced previews take place February 25 through March 5 at 24th Street. To increase audience accessibility, the performances at 24th Street will feature Spanish supertitles.

Loosely inspired by the famous children's story, *Rapunzel Alone* centers on Lettie, a young mixed-race girl from London who is sent to the countryside for her own safety during the daily bombings of World War II. On an isolated country farm, she faces her own battles with a strict new guardian and a very "fowl" goose.

24th Street initially commissioned Kenny in 2019, pre-pandemic, to adapt the Brothers Grimm classic in response to increasing isolation among teens coming of age in the world of social media. Then everything changed. Over the course of the past two years of pandemic, lockdown, social uprising, election, insurrection, climate calamities and war, the play continued to evolve as the world changed around us.

"The play is about our need for connection," says 24th Street Theatre artistic director **Debbie Devine**, who co-directs with **Jesús Castaños-Chima**. "How the consoling power of connection heals the agony of isolation."

Tara Alise Cox, **William Leon** and **Dionne Neish** star, with playwright Kenny providing narration and puppeteer **Matt Curtin** bringing ornery Gertrude the Goose to life. The original score is composed by pianist **Bradley Brough**.

"I'm a fan of historical fiction, but rarely see anyone who looks like me in that genre," says Cox, a mixed-race actor who stars as Lettie.

"I love that the play introduces us to Caribbean culture in England during World War II," agrees Neish, a first generation Jamaican-British actor who plays Lettie's guardian, Miss Pearce. "My parents immigrated to London not long after, in 1955, and would tell me stories about how isolating it was for a Black person to live in London at the time."

In a review of an audio-only version of the play, created last fall as a "teaser" for the in-person world premiere, Broadway to Vegas called *Rapunzel Alone*, "Enchanting... All events in this production are metaphors constructed in a way that are understandable for children, yet not boring to adults... encourage[s] people to think about and discuss universal problems: loneliness, being bullied, being lied about, isolation, heartache, struggle, taking on too many responsibilities and looking out for others."

The audio version remains available for listening at <https://soundcloud.com/user-978180212/rapunzel-alone>.

As an adjunct to both the in-person performances and the audio recording, "[Lettie's Journal](#)," a hauntingly beautiful visual record of the character's experiences is available for both online viewing and digital download.

24th Street Theatre, a multiple award-winning professional theater company, has created a name for itself as leading producer of emotionally rich and provocative productions for families. *Rapunzel Alone* can be enjoyed by adults, as well as by kids ages 7 and up.

"It's non-generational theater," explains 24th Street executive director **Jay McAdams**. "Theater for the whole family that doesn't look, taste or smell like children's theater."

The creative team for *Rapunzel Alone* includes scenic designer **Keith Mitchell**; video designer **Matthew G. Hill**; lighting designer **Dan Weingarten**; sound designer **Jeff Gardner**; costume designer **Shannon Kennedy** and graphic designer **Tara Nitz**. Casting is by **Michael Donovan**, CSA and **Richie Ferris**, CSA. "Lettie's Journal" was created by high school student **Leah Abazari** under the mentorship of Hill.

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Spanish translation for supertitles is by **Aleida Montejo**. The production stage manager is **Sarah King**. **Brittany Franke** is the line producer, and **Jennie McInnis** produces for 24th Street Theatre.

Mike Kenny is one of the England's leading writers, specializing in young people's theater. He is the recipient of numerous awards, was included in the Independent on Sunday's list of Top Ten Living UK Playwrights and his plays are performed regularly throughout the UK and all over the world. In 2013 he was given an Honorary Doctorate of Letters by Nottingham University, England.

24th Street Theatre is a multiple award-winning professional theater company with a unique connection to its local inner-city community: the giant green doors to the theater (a historic 1928 carriage house located on the edge of L.A.'s historic West Adams historic district) are literally kept open to the street every day. Neighborhood residents, homeless people, local kids, students and visiting parents from nearby USC, and others stop in daily for coffee, conversation or to access educational, cultural and social service resources. Founded in 1997 as a more traditional theater, the community needs changed the theater's focus from simply creating high caliber art to using that art to make a difference in the lives of the local neighborhood residents. With a mission to engage, educate, and provoke its diverse community and city with an eclectic array of high quality artistic programming, 24th Street Theatre serves over 10,000 people annually: 6,000 children and youth, and 4,000 adults, the majority of whom are low-income. The 24th Street brand, marked by resolute commitment to the integrity of the work and a heightened, minimalistic style, is reflected in its arts education programs as well as in its mainstage productions for families.

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 300 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as "au courant" (*LaLa Magazine*), The Wallis was lauded by *Culture Vulture*, which proclaims, "If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis." Its programming has been nominated for 79 Ovation Awards and nine L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by chairman of the board Michael Nemeroff and executive director and chief executive officer Rachel Fine.

Proof of full vaccination (including booster shot if eligible) and government issued photo ID are required for admission for all patrons ages 5 and up. Patrons who are exempt from COVID-19 vaccinations must show a negative PCR test result within 48 hours or a verifiable Antigen test within 24 hours from your performance date. Masks, covering both the mouth and nose, are required throughout the performance; N95 or KN95 masks, or double masking with a surgical mask and fabric face-covering, strongly recommended.

Rapunzel Alone opens on **Saturday, March 5** and continues through **April 30**, with performances taking place at 24th Street Theatre on **Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.** and **Sundays at 3 p.m.** except the week of March 12 through March 19, when performances will be at the **Wallis Center for the Performing Arts** on the following schedule: **Saturday, March 12 at 7 p.m.**; **Sunday, March 13 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**; **Thursday, March 17 at 7 p.m.**; **Friday, March 18 at 7 p.m.**; and **Saturday, March 19 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.** Four previews take place at 24th Street Theatre: on Friday, Feb. 25 and Saturday, Feb. 26 at 7:30 p.m., and on Sunday, Feb. 27 and Saturday, March 5 at 3 p.m. Tickets to performances at 24th Street Theatre (except previews) are **\$24** for adults; **\$15** for students, seniors and teachers; **\$10** audiences under 18; and **\$2.40** for residents of the theater's surrounding North University Park neighborhood. Tickets to previews are **\$5**. Tickets to all performances at The Wallis are **\$25**. **24th Street Theatre** is located at **1117 West 24th St., Los Angeles, CA 90007** (at the intersection of 24th and Hoover). **The Wallis** is located at **9390 N Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210**. For reservations and information about performances at both venues, go to www.24thstreet.org.

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Details for Calendar Listings 'Rapunzel Alone'

WHAT:

24th Street Theatre, in association with the **Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts**, presents a sophisticated reimagining of a classic fairy tale that is geared for adults and children alike. Loosely inspired by the Brothers Grimm tale, *Rapunzel Alone* is the story of Lettie, a young mixed-race girl from London who is sent to the countryside for her own safety during the daily bombings of World War II. On an isolated country farm, she faces her own battles with a strict new guardian and a very "fowl" goose. Appropriate for ages 7+.

WHO:

- Written by **Mike Kenny**
- Directed by **Debbie Devine** and **Jesús Castaños-Chima**
- Music composed by **Bradley Brough**
- Starring **Tara Alise Cox**, **William Leon**, **Dionne Neish**
- Narration by **Mike Kenny**
- Puppeteer (Gertrude the Goose): **Matt Curtin**
- Presented by **24th Street Theatre** in association with the **Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts**

WHEN:

Previews at 24th Street Theatre: Feb. 25 – March 5

Opens at 24th Street Theatre: March 5 and March 6

Performances at The Wallis: March 12 – March 19

Performances at 24th Street Theatre: March 26 – April 30

Schedule at 24th Street Theatre:

- **Friday at 7:30 p.m.:** Feb. 25 ONLY (preview)
- **Saturday at 3 p.m.:** Mar. 5 ONLY (preview)
- **Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.:** Feb. 26 (preview), Mar. 5 (Opening), Mar. 26, Apr. 2, Apr. 9, Apr. 16, Apr. 23, Apr. 30
- **Sundays at 3 p.m.:** Feb. 27 (preview), Mar. 6, Mar. 27, Apr. 3, Apr. 10, Apr. 17, Apr. 24

Schedule at The Wallis:

- **Saturday, March 12 at 7 p.m.**
- **Sunday, March 13 at 2 p.m.:** and **7 p.m.**
- **Thursday, March 17 at 7 p.m.**
- **Friday, March 18 at 7 p.m.**
- **Saturday, March 19 at 2 p.m.:** and **7 p.m.**

WHERE:

24th Street Theatre
1117 West 24th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90007-1725

The Wallis
9390 N Santa Monica Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

TICKETS

At 24th Street Theatre:

- Adults: **\$24**
- Under 18: **\$10**
- Family Four Pack (2 adults & 2 children): **\$40**
- Seniors, Students and Teachers: **\$15**
- Preview tickets: **\$5**
- North University Park residents (with ID): **\$2.40**

At The Wallis:

All tickets **\$25**

OTHER:

- Appropriate for ages 7 and up
- Performances at 24th Street Theatre include Spanish supertitles
- Proof of full vaccination (including booster shot if eligible) and government issued photo ID are required for admission for all patrons ages 5 and up.
- Patrons who are exempt from COVID-19 vaccinations must show a negative PCR test result within 48 hours or a verifiable Antigen test within 24 hours from your performance date.
- Masks, covering both the mouth and nose, are required throughout the performance; N95 or KN95 masks, or double masking with a surgical mask and fabric face-covering, strongly recommended.

HOW:

(213) 745-6516 or www.24thstreet.org