

**The Wallis to Present *The Miracle Project Live!*,
an All-Ability Performance Troupe, and
The Intimidation Game, an Anti-Bullying Musical**



(Beverly Hills, CA Feb 2) The Miracle Project, a performing arts nonprofit for all abilities and disabilities, is partnering with the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts to present two education programs, *The Miracle Project Live!* and *The Intimidation Game*. The collaboration, which launched on Jan. 11, offers fully inclusive performing arts workshops that culminate in public performances at The Wallis in May 2016.

Ten students were selected to participate in the first session of *The Miracle Project Live!*, forming a unique performance troupe comprised of individuals with and without disabilities. During an eight-week session that began on Jan. 19 and continues through March 15, students learn audition skills and vocal techniques that allow them to be competitive within the theater community. Performances will be staged, choreographed, and rehearsed at The Wallis, with a parent group present to assist at classes. A second session of *The Miracle Project Live!* begins March 29 and continues through May 17. A fundraiser performance, benefiting The Miracle Project, and featuring participants from both sessions will be presented at The Wallis in May 2016. For audition information regarding the second session and the benefit performance, please email ryan@themiracleproject.org.

The Intimidation Game brings together fourteen young adults with and without autism and other disabilities to perform an original anti-bullying musical. The musical, about students in high school, aims to help others understand autism and neurological differences, as well as teach tolerance, compassion and inclusion. The program that began on Jan. 19 meets every Tuesday from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. at The Wallis to workshop, stage, and rehearse *The Intimidation Game* culminating in a public performance at the Lovelace Studio Theater in May 2016. Ticket information and pricing forthcoming.

“Our students deserve the best environment to bring out their voices and talents,” said Miracle Project founder Elaine Hall. “The Wallis is the best of the best and provides the visibility to enhance community awareness of inclusion, possibility and joy. It’s a dream come true!”

“The Wallis is dedicated to including and celebrating people of all abilities and disabilities on our stages, in our classrooms and in our audiences,” said Mark Slavkin, Director of Education. The Wallis and Deaf West Theater received national recognition for their co-production of *Spring Awakening* performed simultaneously in American Sign Language and spoken English, and which transferred to Broadway directly from the engagement at The Wallis.

As seen on *AUTISM: The Musical*, HBO's double Emmy award-winning documentary, *The Miracle Project Live!* is comprised of individuals with and without disabilities creating and rehearsing original songs to perform at venues and events around Los Angeles. Previous engagements have included performances at CBS Los Angeles' "Stephanie's Day," Club Nokia with Temple Grandin, the Pantages Theater and the World Special Olympics.

In a recent study sponsored by the NEA, The Miracle Project was identified as an evidence-based intervention program in easing anxiety, increasing confidence, and self-esteem for those on the autism spectrum. The Miracle Project has inspired similar programs throughout L.A., in New York City, and across the U.S. Selected by *LA Parent* as Editor's Choice, The Miracle Project has been lauded by Autism Speaks, Autism Society of America, the HollyRod Foundation, The United Nations and Autism experts including Temple Grandin, Dr. Stephen Shore, Dr. Barry Prizant and T. Berry Brazelton for its innovation and inclusion methodologies.

For downloadable photos, please visit TheWallis.org/Press.

About The Miracle Project:

Founded in 2004, The Miracle Project incorporates a groundbreaking and proven methodology that integrates theater, film and the expressive arts to bring out the best in individuals with autism (verbal and non-verbal) and all abilities. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, autism now affects 1 in 68 children in the United States. Autism is a complex condition that affects a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships, and is often accompanied by behavioral challenges.

Through shared experiences with non-disabled peers, the Miracle Project allows individuals with autism and other disabilities to find their voice, develop their talents and become part of a unique, dynamic, inclusive community. The Miracle Project assists all children of all abilities to grow in skill and in spirit while creating and performing in original musicals. Students, once too anxious to even enter a room of peers, have now performed in front of thousands including Angel Stadium, the Pantages Theater, Club Nokia, Carnegie Hall and the United Nations. This acclaimed arts program was documented in the HBO double Emmy Award-winning documentary, *Autism: The Musical*. For more information, visit: www.themiracleproject.org.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

The mission of The Wallis is to be a vital cultural hub that uses unique arts events and education programming to entertain, enlighten and inspire children and adults in our community and across the nation. Since opening its doors in October 2013, The Wallis has produced or presented over 100 dance, theatre, opera, classical music and children's programs to an ever-expanding audience. The 2014-15 season—recently awarded six LA STAGE Alliance Ovation awards including "Best Season" and "Best Musical Production" for *Spring Awakening*, which transferred to Broadway and continues its run through January at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre—saw audiences at The Wallis grow to over 44,000 attendees with another 50,000 anticipated for the 2015-16 Season which officially began in September with a sold-out and live-streamed conversation with two-time Academy Award winning actor Denzel Washington followed by four sold-out performances of the Twyla Tharp 50th Anniversary Tour.

Located in the heart of Beverly Hills, California, The Wallis brings audiences world-class theater, dance and music, performed by many of the world's most talented and sought-after artists. With eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles, and its notability as the entertainment

capital of the world, The Wallis offers original and revered works from across the U.S. and around the globe.

Nominated for 26 Ovation Awards, four L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards and the recipient of five architectural awards since opening in 2013, The Wallis is a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot venue that celebrates the classic and the modern and was designed by Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA of Studio Pali Fekete architects. The building features the restored, original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places) that serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and houses the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater, GRoW at The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education (a gift of Gregory Annenberg Weingarten and Family and the Annenberg Foundation) and the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater. Together, these structures embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. For more information about the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, visit TheWallis.org.

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