



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**There's Always Something To Check Out
at South Puget Sound's Centerstage Theatre.**

***World Premiere Musical, Carl Sagan's CONTACT
Launches the 2009-2010 Season. It Runs Sept. 25 Oct.18, 2009.***

Federal Way, WA – For theatre lovers who want something old and something new, South Puget Sound's Resident Professional Theatre, **Centerstage** has something for everyone. The 2009-2010 Season is off to a stellar start with a brand new musical: **Carl Sagan's CONTACT** running September 24 – October 18 2009. Carl Sagan's widow, Ann Druyan recently wrote to Centerstage, "My feeling is hugely positive ...I really believe your **CONTACT** has a place on Broadway and all around the planet." With a keen eye toward future regional or NY runs Alan Bryce emphasizes, "Centerstage is dedicated to bringing high quality entertainment at an affordable price to South Puget Sound. We want to push the artistic limits of this theatre and this is a benchmark season for us with a solid show lineup and a new role as manager for the beautiful Knutzen Family Theatre."

Bryce continues, "As a southern neighbor to Seattle's vibrant theatre scene I firmly believe that we must participate and engage as wide an audience as possible. Events like Live Theatre Week offer the perfect opportunity to reach out to our neighbors up North and demonstrate our strengths to an expanded audience. For the 2009 Live Theatre Week, Centerstage will present two free play readings on October 14th, **A Piece of My Heart** and on October 15th we will present **Just the Ticket**. Both readings are at 8:00pm, are free, and are at the Knutzen Family Theatre."

But like most arts organizations, Centerstage cannot survive by presenting Free events. Like most theatres Centerstage survives on revenue generated from ticket sales. The discounted Season Pass has proven to be a very popular and affordable option for area residents, and this season five-, nine-, and eleven-show passes are available. Savings are up to 25% off single ticket prices. In addition individual tickets are on sale now. Pass prices for adults range from \$112.50 (5 show season pass) to \$283.75 (11 show ultimate pass). Substantial discounts are available for seniors, military, youth (age 12-17) and kids (under age 11).

All shows are performed at the Knutzen Family Theatre and are general admission. New this season are **Wine with the Director Nights** presented by *Mount Baker Vineyard and Winery*. For an extra \$10, on one special night for each Centerstage production patrons can meet with the show's director at 7:00pm. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served, and the Director will give a short presentation on the show you are about to see that night. There will also be a general audience Q&A for anyone who wishes to stay after the performance. The season shows include:

5 SHOW SEASON PASS:

CARL SAGAN'S CONTACT: Sept. 25 – Oct 18, 2009

Ellie Arroway, the director of "Project Argus," is in search of extraterrestrial intelligence. After encountering the first confirmed communication from extraterrestrial beings, she discovers something more dramatic and unexpected than anyone could have ever predicted. This thrilling new musical is based on the novel by renowned astrophysicist and Pulitzer prize-winning author, Carl Sagan. The score is by European Composer of the Year, Peter Sipos, Lyrics by ASCAP award-winner Amy Engelhardt and Book by Centerstage artistic director, Alan Bryce.

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK: Nov 28-Dec 20

Following up on the wildly popular *Cinderella* and *Aladdin*, Centerstage presents its third annual English Christmas pantomime. "Panto" is a boisterous, high energy musical, designed for kids from 5 to 105. Full of painfully funny gags (many of which you have heard before...but still make you laugh), guys dressed as gals, gals dressed as

guys, popular songs and glorious costumes, Jack and the Beanstalk is guaranteed to brighten even the darkest winter's day.

I LOVE YOU BECAUSE: Feb 5 – 21, 2010

This sweet, funny romantic comedy about dating is set in modern day New York City. Join us as we follow the adventures of two brothers, one a stiff greeting card writer, the other a free-spirited pedi-cab driver, and the women they date, a flaky photographer and an actuary. "I Love You Because is everything an Off-Broadway musical should be! ... A charming piece of work that will send you home smiling." – The Wall Street Journal

ENCHANTED APRIL: March 26 – April 11 , 2010

What could be better than a month by the Mediterranean at a luxurious Italian villa? That sounds grand to the four English women in Enchanted April. This romantic comedy adapted from Elizabeth von Arnim's best-selling 1921 novel tells of four dissimilar women in post-World War One England going on a holiday to a secluded castle in Italy. Seeing this play is the next best thing to taking a vacation.

AIN'T MISBEHAVIN': May 21 – June 6, 2010

In the 1920's and 30's, when Manhattan nightclubs like the Savoy Ballroom were the playgrounds of high society, dives were filled with piano players banging out the new beat known as swing. One such musician, a part of the Harlem Renaissance, was Thomas Wright "Fats" Waller. Step back in time as five performers present an evening of rowdy, raunchy, and humorous songs that encapsulate the various moods of the era and reflect Waller's view of life –journeys are meant for pleasure and play.

9 SHOW SUPER PASS *includes all season pass shows, plus:*

SEATTLE PHILHARMONIC: Jan 17

A true Puget Sound tradition, the Seattle Philharmonic is an orchestra of community members who share a passion for music. Join us for a program of popular favorites including Beethoven and Ravel's Bolero. For more information visit www.seattlephil.com

SONDHEIM, NEWMAN & WEILL

April 17 & 18; 24 & 25 (Sat. at 8pm; Sun. at 2pm)

With an ensemble of artists based primarily in Seattle, Black Box Opera Theatre will perform a cabaret of songs by Stephen Sondheim, Randy Newman, and Kurt Weill. BBOT is a group of professionals that produces topical "opera" and popular music of this century and the last.

AN EVENING WITH MARTIN CHARNIN: March 13 at 8pm; March 14 at 2pm

Spend a fabulous evening with Martin Charnin, Tony Award-winning lyricist and director of the hit musical, Annie. With over half a century of stage work behind him, Mr. Charnin has written, acted in, and directed Broadway musicals since his days as a Jet in West Side Story.

CANCELLED – CANCELLED – CANCELLED

JIM RAGLAND IS... WOODY GUTHRIE: May 8 at 8pm; May 9 at 2pm

Jim Ragland is a recipient of the Gregory Falls Award, the highest award for Services to Seattle Theatre. Jim is a musician and composer (he composed the songs for "The Kentucky Cycle" which the Intiman Theatre took to Broadway). Jim recently moved to Los Angeles where he is making a name for himself on the "folk" circuit. An old friend of Centerstage artistic director, Alan Bryce, Jim is creating the Woody Guthrie one man show at Centerstage's request.

11 SHOW ULTIMATE PASS *includes all super pass shows, plus:*

GRAND OPENING GALA: August 28

It's a spectacular cabaret to kick off Centerstage's new role in management of the Knutzen Family Theatre. This evening to remember features star performers from productions past, present and future, fine wines and hors d'oeuvres.

MY TERRIBLE AUNT: October 23, at the Twin Lakes Country Club

This is the seventh in Centerstage's ever-popular Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre events. Enjoy a five-star dinner, question the suspects, and search the scene of the crime for clues as you help solve the mystery. This year's hilarious story takes place at an Italian family reunion. The family is celebrating the release from jail of terrible Aunt Gina, wrongly incarcerated for the murder of her husband. Now totally exonerated, she is nonetheless as mad as hell! Recommended for ages 18 and over.

Centerstage is Federal Way's resident Theatre Company. It was founded in 1977 and for the past ten years has produced shows at the Knutzen Family Theatre on the shores of Puget Sound. Initially created as a performance

conservatory for aspiring actors, Centerstage's mission changed in February 2004, when Alan Bryce was appointed Artistic Director, replacing the company's founder, Sharon Munsey. The new mission committed the company to producing "innovative, accomplished productions of popular work and for new work with the widest possible audience appeal." Hits like last season's *Always...Patsy Cline* certainly fall into the former category. Centerstage has produced many exciting new works in recent years including: *4 Christmases*, commissioned from 5-time Grammy Nominee, John Forster; a new musical version of the Dickens' classic *Nicholas Nickleby*; *Robin Hood* the first full production of Tom Meehan and Martin Charnin's new project; Alan Bryce's *Nightmare of a Married Man* which won the Tacoma News Tribune's "Best New Play Award, 2007-2008 Season"; and two traditional English "pantomimes," including the wildly popular *Aladdin*, from one of the masters of this uniquely British Theatrical art form, Paul Hendy. Perhaps the most ambitious project undertaken by Centerstage will premiere as part of the 2009-2010 season, when Centerstage presents a brand new musical *Carl Sagan's Contact*. In April 2009, the City of Federal Way awarded the Knutzen Family Theatre management contract to Centerstage saving both the city and theatre company over \$50,000.

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