



**Acclaimed Theater Director Jenny Koons
Brings a New Adaptation of
The Importance of Being Earnest
To Baltimore Center Stage
In partnership with Pittsburgh Public Theater**

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Baltimore, MD – Baltimore Center Stage will mount the regional premiere of a new adaptation of **Oscar Wilde’s *The Importance of Being Earnest*** by **Jenny Koons**. This reimaged version of the classic tells the witty and humorous story of Jack Worthing and Algernon Moncrief, who both create alter egos that supply an escape from the monotony of their lives. This co-production with **Pittsburgh Public Theater** runs for a strictly limited engagement, **May 9-26, 2024**.

“It feels amazing to come back to a comedy, especially at a time when there are so many serious issues that we are all grappling with,” stated Koons, who also directs the production. “Despite how our senses of humor have changed culturally, this humor from the 1800s is still so funny, even now. When I saw it for the first time in high school in Minneapolis, I remember thinking that it was so wild that a play from 100 years ago could get teenagers laughing so many years later.”

The seven-member cast in Koons’ new adaptation of Oscar Wilde’s classic comedy includes Veronica del Cerro as Gwendolyn; Paul Deo Jr. as Jack Worthing; Susan M. Lynskey as Miss Prism; Alex Manalo as Cecily Cardew; Joseph McGranaghan as Lane

and Merriman; Dylan Marquis Meyers as Algernon; and David Ryan Smith as Lady Bracknell.

The production's dynamic creative team includes Set Designer Jason Ardizzone-West, Lighting Designer Annmarie Duggan, Costume Designer Hugh Hanson, Sound Designer and Composer UptownWorks: Daniela Hart, Bailey Trierweiler, & Noel Nichols, Associate Director B Klemeyer, Stage Manager Natalie Hratko, and Assistant Stage Manager Kelly Haywood.

Koons, a theater industry veteran, is known for her work at theaters across the country driving innovative adaptations of classics, like her 2022 adaptation of *Oedipus* at Deaf West Theatre, which featured Protactile ASL, a newer touch-centric language, and the theater company's first DeafBlind cast member. She directed an immersive "dance party" musical *Head Over Heels* at Pasadena Playhouse in 2022, and returns to BCS after directing *Men in Boats* in 2019.

Ticketing Information

For Center Stage: Single tickets are currently on sale by visiting centerstage.org or calling 410.332.0033. Patrons can also visit the box office, located at 700 North Calvert Street.

Reviewing press are invited to the 8:00PM performance on May 11, or any performance afterwards. Please contact bryan@bryanbuttlermediarelations.com for details.

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About Baltimore Center Stage

Designated the State Theater of Maryland in 1978, Baltimore Center Stage provides the highest quality theater and programming for all members of our communities, including youth and families, under the leadership of Artistic Director Stevie Walker-Webb and Managing Director Adam Frank. Baltimore Center Stage ignites conversations and imaginations by producing an eclectic season of professional productions across two mainstages, through engaging community programs, and with inspiring education programs. Everything we do at Baltimore Center Stage is led by our core values—chief among them being Access For All. Our mission is heavily rooted in providing active and open accessibility for everyone, regardless of any and all barriers, to our Mainstage performances, education initiatives, and community programming.

About Pittsburgh Public Theater

Pittsburgh Public Theater strives to be a true public theater to the Pittsburgh region and welcomes more than 70,000 guests through the doors of the O'Reilly Theater every year. The Public is renowned for its exceptional mix of programming, featuring American classics, world premieres, new adaptations, and favorite musicals. Its commitment to

education and engagement initiatives is a cornerstone of its mission and includes the signature Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Contest and innovative community partnerships. The O'Reilly Theater is a project of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. Pittsburgh Public Theater is under the leadership of Artistic Director Marya Sea Kaminski and Managing Director Shaunda McDill and celebrates its 50th season in 2024.