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Media Contacts:

Caroline Austin, PR and Communications Manager, carolinea@alleytheatre.org, 713.315.3335

Rachel Applegate, Director of Marketing and Communications, rachela@alleytheatre.org, 713.315.3352

Alley Theatre Announces the Cast & Creative Team of Kate Hamill's *Sense and Sensibility*

Based on Jane Austen's Classic Romance Novel

HOUSTON TX - The Tony Award®-winning Alley Theatre announces the cast and creative team of **Kate Hamill's romance *Sense and Sensibility***. The play is based on Jane Austen's beloved novel and directed by **Adriana Baer** and runs March 4 – March 27, 2022 in the Hubbard Theatre.

A playful new adaptation of Jane Austen's classic novel follows the fortunes (and misfortunes) of the Dashwood sisters—sensible Elinor and hypersensitive Marianne—after their father's sudden death leaves them financially destitute and socially vulnerable. Set in gossipy late 18th-century England, with a fresh female voice, the play is full of humor, emotional depth, and bold theatricality. *Sense and Sensibility* examines our reactions, both reasonable and ridiculous, to societal pressures.

"I couldn't be more excited about *Sense and Sensibility*! Kate Hamill's adaptation is fast-paced, innovative, youthful and fun," said Alley Artistic Director **Rob Melrose**. "It is a far cry from a stuffy masterpiece-theater version of the novel. At the same time, Hunter Kaczorowski's gorgeous period costumes are lush, breathtaking, and executed with the craft and detail in a way that only the Alley's costume shop can do. This is a great show for the whole family and a lovely introduction to one of the greatest novelists of all time. Jane Austen's world really comes alive in this production and director Adriana Baer's take on the material connects it beautifully to our current moment."

"We first started working on this production in 2019. How the world has shifted since then," shares director **Adriana Baer**. "This play centers on sisters who are seeming opposites: one rooted in practicality and reason, the other in emotion and passion. They live in a society in which economics and gender are inextricable, with rules that do not allow people outside of an immediate family to touch each other or even share space indoors. Back in 2019, it was hard to see how a contemporary audience could relate to this play. Now, it seems all too relevant. We have seen great economic pain that has hit women, non-binary folks, and other minorities hardest. We know what it is to not be able to hold the people we long to gather with. We ache for humor. And we are all simultaneously holding onto reason and overtaken with emotion. Our production now has become a love letter to us all, a celebration of emerging from darkness into light."

The cast of *Sense and Sensibility* includes Alley's Resident Acting Company members **Elizabeth Bunch** as Elinor Dashwood, **Dylan Godwin** as John Willoughby/Ensemble, **Chris Hutchison** as Colonel Brandon/Mrs. Ferrars/Ensemble, **Melissa Molano** as Lucy Steele/Ensemble, **Melissa Pritchett** as Marianne Dashwood, **David Rainey** as Sir John Middleton/Doctor/Ensemble, **Christopher Salazar** as Edward Ferrars/Robert Ferrars/Ensemble, and **Todd Waite** as John Dashwood/Lady Middleton/Ensemble.

Rounding out the cast are **Michelle Elaine** (*Sweat*) as Fanny Dashwood/Mrs. Jennings/Ensemble, **Christine Friale** (*A Christmas Carol*) as Mrs. Dashwood/Ensemble/Marianne Dashwood Understudy, and **Laura Kaldis** (Main Street Theatre's *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberly*) as Margaret Dashwood/Anne Steele/Ensemble/Elinor Dashwood Understudy.

The creative team of *Sense and Sensibility* includes Scenic Designer Michael Locher, Costume Designer Hunter Kaczorowski, Lighting Designer Kevin Rigdon, Sound Designer Sharath Parel, Stage Manager Kristen Larson, and Assistant Stage Manager Rachel Dooley-Harris.

PRESS NIGHT: Wednesday, March 9 at 7:30pm. Invitations will be sent at a later date.

UPDATED COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS: We are committed to the health and safety of all of our artists, employees, and guests. In order to maintain the safest environment possible, all Alley Theatre staff, artists, creative teams, crews, and ushers are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

To ensure the safety of all Alley Theatre lovers, we've implemented the following policies for performances held within our Theatres:

- All guests aged 5 and up will be required to show proof of a negative COVID-19 test within 48 hours prior to the performance. Both PCR tests and antigen tests are acceptable. The results must have been performed by a third party, such as a lab. At-home tests will not be accepted. Guests can show either paper or electronic documentation (including photo of negative results).
- Guests aged 5 and up who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (at least 14 days after final dose) may bring proof of vaccination as a substitute for a negative COVID-19 test result. Guests can show either paper or electronic documentation (including photo of card).
- Alley Theatre requires all guests, regardless of age, to wear a mask covering nose and mouth at all times while in the Theatre building, except while actively eating and drinking in the lobby spaces. We highly recommend N95, KN95, or surgical masks be worn. Alley Theatre will provide complimentary surgical masks to guests who forget to bring one. If guests choose not to wear a mask, there will be no admittance to the Theatre building and a refund will be processed.

DIGITAL DISTRIBUTION: From March 28 through April 10, paid digital version of *Sense and Sensibility* filmed live at the Alley, will be available for viewing. Guests who have purchased an in-person ticket and do not feel comfortable attending in-person may transfer their ticket before the start of their ticketed performance to a digital ticket. Digital tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at alleytheatre.org. Limited digital tickets will be available for purchase.

SPONSORS: *Sense and Sensibility* is sponsored by Honorary Producers Craig and Angela Jarchow; Associate Producers Gordon A. Cain Foundation, Donna and Steve Greenlee, Valerie Jalufka, Jesse and Cathy Marion, and Christina and Steve Morse. The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2021-22 Season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre.

TICKETS: Tickets to *Sense and Sensibility* are now on sale and start at \$28. Discounted tickets are available for military, seniors, and any student or educator, regardless of age, with a valid student ID for designated performances. Tickets can be ordered online (alleytheatre.org) or by phone (713.220.5700).

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ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE:

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Artistic Director Rob Melrose and Managing Director Dean R. Gladden. The Alley is committed to developing and producing theatre that is as diverse as the Houston community. The Theatre produces up to 16 plays and nearly 500 performances each season, ranging from the best current work and re-invigorated classic plays to new plays by contemporary writers. Home to a full-time resident company of actors, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline—actors, directors, designers, composers, playwrights—who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The Alley is comprised of two state-of-the-art theatres: the 774-seat Hubbard Theatre and the 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre. The Alley reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance, education, and community engagement programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

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