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**DATE**

**ALLISON JANNEY ANNOUNCED AS HONORARY CHAIR  
OF 2018 WOMEN'S VOICES THEATER FESTIVAL**

**Washington, D.C.** – The Women's Voices Theater Festival is pleased to announce that Allison Janney, award-winning star of stage, screen, and film, is the 2018 Festival's Honorary Chair. While best known for memorable roles in movies (*The Girl on the Train*, *The Help*, *American Beauty*) and television (*Mom*, *Masters of Sex*, and *The West Wing*), in chairing the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival Janney is supporting the American theater, where she honed her career. Janney served on the Festival's Honorary Committee in 2015. Her continued engagement demonstrates a deep and genuine commitment to creating a space in the theater community where the vital contributions of women are recognized and celebrated.

"I was humbled that the organizers of the inaugural Women's Voices Theater Festival invited me to join the initial Honorary Committee and I'm happy to lend my support again. Theater nurtured my career—it's where I came into my own as an actor, and of course, Washington is a very special place for me, because of my time on *The West Wing*," said Janney. "I'm very glad to be a part of this project, and proud to be helping the Festival advocate for women writing for the stage, new plays, and the sharing of diverse stories."

The Festival is a unified effort by theaters across Washington, D.C. to highlight the scope of plays being written by women and the range of professional theater being produced in the nation's capital region. Introduced in 2015, the inaugural Festival was a trailblazing event, heralded by *The Washington Post* as "inspired" and "unprecedented." *The New York Times* praised it as "an energizing showcase." The Festival returns from January 15—February 15,

2018, uniting 25 theaters to present world, national or regional premieres of works penned by women.

“Allison Janney was one of the first women to lend her support and name to the Women’s Voices Theater Festival in 2015,” said Nan Barnett, the Festival’s Coordinating Producer. “We are thrilled to have her step into this leadership role for the second iteration, and delighted that one of America’s most talented and versatile artists will be helping us celebrate these plays and playwrights in 2018.”

Allison Janney has taken her place among a select group of actors who combine a leading lady’s profile with a character actor’s art of performance. While a freshman studying acting at Kenyon College in Ohio, Janney auditioned for a play that Paul Newman was directing and got the part. Soon after, Newman and his wife, Joanne Woodward, suggested she study at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. She followed their advice and went on to make her Broadway debut in Noel Coward’s *Present Laughter*, for which she earned the Outer Critics Circle Award and Clarence Derwent Award. She also appeared in Arthur Miller’s *A View from the Bridge*, receiving her first Tony Award nomination and winning the Outer Critics Circle Award, as well as the musical *9 to 5*, for which she earned a Tony nomination and won the Drama Desk Award. Janney made her return to Broadway earlier this year in the revival of John Guare’s *Six Degrees of Separation* taking on the title role of Ouisa alongside John Benjamin Hickey and Corey Hawkins.

Currently starring in the CBS/Chuck Lorre hit comedy, *Mom*, Janney also received rave reviews for her turn as Margaret Scully on Showtime’s *Masters of Sex*. She won Emmys for both roles in the same year, a rare feat in Emmy history. The following year, she won a second Emmy for *Mom*, making a total of seven Television Academy statues earned in her career.

Critics are applauding her latest feature film role as LaVona Golden, the tough-as-nails mother of Tonya Harding in *I, Tonya*, opening in December 2017. Earlier film releases include *Tallulah* which reunited her with *Juno* co-star Ellen Page, Tim Burton’s *Miss Peregrine’s Home for Peculiar Children*, and Tate Taylor’s *Girl on the Train*. She also lent her talents to recent summer blockbusters *Minions* and *Spy*, with Melissa McCarthy.

Additionally, she co-starred in *The Help*, based on the best-selling novel of the same name. For their extraordinary performances, the cast won Ensemble awards from the Screen Actors Guild, National Board of Review, and the Broadcast Film Critics. The film was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Picture.

Janney has delighted audiences with outstanding performances in *The Way, Way Back* with Steve Carell, and in the movie adaptation of the musical *Hairspray*. For her role in Todd Solondz’s *Life During Wartime*, she was nominated for Best Supporting Actress by the Spirit Awards.

She received another Spirit Award nomination for her work in the independent feature *Our*

*Very Own*, and starred opposite Meryl Streep in *The Hours*, which received a SAG Award nomination for Outstanding Ensemble Cast in a Motion Picture. Other feature credits include the Academy Award and SAG Award winning film *American Beauty*, *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, *10 Things I Hate About You*, *Primary Colors*, *The Ice Storm*, and *Big Night*.

Featured voice work includes Disney's *Finding Nemo*, as well as *Over the Hedge* and *Mr. Peabody & Sherman*, both from Dreamworks.

Janney is still renowned for her starring role in the acclaimed NBC series *The West Wing*, where she won a remarkable four Emmy Awards and four SAG Awards for her portrayal of White House Press Secretary CJ Cregg.

Janney joins a region-wide celebration featuring full productions of new plays by women writers. Theaters producing work for the 2018 Festival include 4615 Theatre Company, Alliance for New Music-Theatre, Ally Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Baltimore Center Stage, Brave Spirits Theatre, Convergence Theatre, dog & pony dc, Folger Theatre, Ford's Theatre, Mosaic Theater Company, Nu Sass Productions, Olney Theatre Center, Pointless Theatre Co., Rainbow Theatre Project, Rapid Lemon Productions, Rep Stage, Round House Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Spooky Action Theater, Studio Theatre, Taffety Punk Theatre Company, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. The Festival is produced by Nan Barnett of Flanagan Theater Projects, with support from theatreWashington, led by President Amy Austin.

The Women's Voices Theater Festival is grateful for the renewed support of lead donors Heidi and Mitch Dupler, and hope that their generosity spurs new and renewed support of individuals and foundations across the national capital region. Additional funding for the Festival comes from Share Fund, Andrew Rodger Ammerman in tribute to Josephine Friedman Ammerman, and The Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.

TodayTix is the official ticketing partner of the 2018 Women's Voices Theater Festival.

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### **About the Women's Voices Theater Festival**

The Women's Voices Theater Festival is dedicated to highlighting the scope of plays being written by women and the range of professional theater being produced in the nation's capital region. The Festival's debut in 2015 featured world premiere plays by female playwrights on stages across Washington, D.C. and was heralded as a landmark in striving for gender parity in American theater. Led by seven of Washington's largest theaters—Arena Stage, Ford's Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Studio Theatre, Signature Theatre, Round House Theatre, and Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company—the Festival leverages collaboration among regional theater producers to create a platform for the nation's most talented and innovative female

and female-identifying playwrights and their newest plays.

To learn more, visit [WomensVoicesTheaterFestival.org](http://WomensVoicesTheaterFestival.org).