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MEDIA RELEASE

Nine Performances Added to Skylight Music Theatre Holiday Production of Broadway Blockbuster “Hairspray” Due to Overwhelming Demand Also Announced: *Bethany Thomas Cast as ‘Motormouth Maybelle’* New Show Dates November 16 – December 30, 2018

Milwaukee, Wis. (October 11, 2018) — Skylight Music Theatre today announced that due to overwhelming demand, nine additional performances have been added to Skylight’s holiday show, *Hairspray*. The show, which opens Friday, November 16 will now run through Sunday, December 30, 2018 with special early bird and family-friendly performance times added throughout the run.

This bold, beloved blockbuster Broadway musical will be presented in Skylight’s beautiful Cabot Theatre at the Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway, in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward.

Skylight Artistic Director Ray Jivoff also announced that Bethany Thomas has been cast in the featured role of ‘Motormouth Maybelle.’ Thomas is currently starring in *Songs for Nobodies*, a one-woman show at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, where she was also seen in *The Color Purple*, *Ain’t Misbehavin’* and *Ragtime*. Thomas, a recording artist who has appeared on *Empire* (FOX-TV) and in numerous productions in Chicago and Milwaukee, will make her Skylight Music Theatre debut. Motormouth Maybelle was played by Queen Latifah in the 2007 film version of *Hairspray* and by Jennifer Hudson in the 2016 *NBC Live* broadcast.

Jivoff also announced the 17 area high school students who will perform in *Hairspray*’s youth ensemble. “These talented teens from Milwaukee area high schools will be playing kids their own age in the show,” said Jivoff. “A central storyline of *Hairspray* takes place at an *American Bandstand*-style TV dance show showcasing the infectious music and latest 1960s Baltimore dance hits.”

Hairspray is the story of plus-size teen Tracy Turnblad who dreams of dancing on *The Corny Collins Show*, a dance show similar to *American Bandstand*. She wrestles with body image issues and bullying and undergoes a transformation from social outcast to sudden star. She uses her newfound power to integrate a TV network and win the affections of heartthrob Link Larkin.

"Hairspray is a hilarious musical with depth and heart," said Jivoff. "It deals with important issues facing our community with wit, a great score, a diverse cast, exuberant dancing and memorable songs such as 'Good Morning Baltimore' and 'You Can't Stop the Beat.'"

Lili-Anne Brown will direct the show, making her Skylight debut. She has worked extensively in Chicago and regionally and is the former artistic director of Bailiwick Chicago, where her work garnered numerous awards. Most recently Brown directed an acclaimed production of *Caroline, or Change* at Firebrand Theatre in Chicago.

"There is nothing about *Hairspray* that doesn't make you smile," said Brown. "At the same time, this is a story about anti-racism and body-positivity. *Hairspray* has a heart of gold, with its message of accepting one another and being kind to one another."

The Broadway production of *Hairspray* won eight Tony Awards in 2003, including Best Musical. It features music by Marc Shaiman and lyrics by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman, with book by Mark O'Donnell & Thomas Meehan. *Hairspray* is based on the 1988 John Waters film.

Hairspray, The Broadway Musical

First time at Skylight

November 16 – December 30, 2018

Music by Marc Shaiman, Lyrics by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman, Book by Thomas Meehan and Mark O'Donnell

Based on the New Line Cinema film written and directed by John Waters

Orchestrations by Harold Wheeler, Arrangements by Marc Shaiman

Recommended for ages 9 and up

Creative Team

Stage Director.....	Lili-Anne Brown+
Music Director.....	Cindy Blanc
Choreographer	Ryan Cappleman
Scenic Designer.....	Carey Wong**
Costume Designer.....	Michael Bottari and Ronald Case**
Lighting Designer.....	David Gipson**
Sound Designer.....	Zack Berinstein
Wig Designer.....	Gerard Kelly**
Stage Manager.....	Daniel J. Hanson*

+The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

**The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Wig designers are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829.

*Appearing through an agreement between this theatre, Skylight Music Theatre, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Cast

Tracy Turnblad	Maisie Rose
Corny Collins	Doug Clemons
Edna Turnblad.....	Tommy Novak
Penny Pingleton	Ann Delaney
Velma Von Tussle	Samantha Sostarich
Amber Von Tussle	Amber Smith
Link Larkin	Colin Schreier
Seaweed J. Stubbs.....	Gilbert Domally
Motormouth Maybelle	Bethany Thomas*

Wilbur Turnblad David Flores
Male Authority Figure Rick Pendzich
Female Authority Figure.....Rhonda Rae Busch
Little Inez.....Terynn Erby-Walker

Youth Ensemble

Joshua Brown, Sam Gist, Kamani Graham, Meguire Hennes, Nathan Kabara, Charles Kelley, Jake Koch, Gabby Koziol, Jasmine Love, Jarred Manista, Ashley Nord, Maya O'Day-Biddle, Georgina Pink, Mackenzie Ross, JT Snow, Alexandria Woods

Band

Trumpet..... Greg Garcia
Saxophone..... Curt Hanrahan
Trombone..... Kyle Samuelson
Guitars..... Steve Lewandowski
Bass..... Tom McGirr
Drums..... Michael (Ding) Lorenz

Select Biographies

Lili-Anne Brown (Stage Director) A native Chicagoan, Brown works as a director, actor and educator, both locally and regionally. She is the former artistic director of Bailiwick Chicago, where she directed *Dessa Rose* (Jeff Award), *Passing Strange* (BTA Award), *See What I Wanna See* (Steppenwolf Theatre Garage Rep), and the world premiere of *Princess Mary Demands Your Attention* by Aaron Holland. Other directing credits include *Caroline, or Change* (Firebrand Theatre), *Tilikum* by Kristiana Colon (world premiere, Sideshow Theatre), *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* (American Blues Theatre) among others. She is a graduate of Northwestern University.

Cindy Blanc (Music Director) is a native of Monroe, Wis. and lives on five acres of solitude in the southern part of the state. She holds degrees in music education and performance and was music director/ supervisor at Timber Lake Playhouse in Mount Carroll, Ill. (2010-2017), The Armory in Janesville, Wis. (2005-2010), and is currently a freelance accompanist, parish musician and music teacher, orchestra percussionist, and private music instructor.

Bethany Thomas (Motormouth Maybelle) Regional: *Songs for Nobodies*, *The Color Purple*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Ragtime*, *Man of LaMancha*, *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Rep); *A Moon For The Misbegotten* (Writer's Theatre); *Marry Me A Little* (Porchlight Music Theater); *Fool Me Twice*, *Deja Vu* (Second City); *The Tempest* (Chicago Shakespeare); *Porgy and Bess* (Court Theatre); *Hair* (Paramount Theatre); *Iphigenia In Aulis* (Getty Villa); *Little Shop of Horrors* (Geva Theatre). TV: *Empire* (FOX). Bethany is one quarter of Jon Langford's Four Lost Souls (self-titled album on Bloodshot Records) and released her own EP called "First." BethanyThomasMusic.com.

Performance Information

Performances of *Hairspray* are Friday, November 16 through Sunday, December 30 in the Cabot Theatre, Broadway Theatre Center, 158 N. Broadway in the Historic Third Ward of Milwaukee.

Tickets & Box Office

Tickets are \$30 - \$75 (plus tax and fees) and can be purchased in person at the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office, 158 N. Broadway, by calling (414) 291-7800, or visiting www.skylightmusictheatre.org

Box Office hours are Monday – Saturday, noon - 6 p.m. The Box Office window is open two hours prior to each performance. Group discounts are available for parties of 10 or more by calling (414) 299-4964 or email morganh@skylightmusictheatre.org.

Calendar

New shows are designated in pink below. New early bird show times are highlighted in yellow.

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 2018		16 7:30	17 7:30	18 2:00
21 7:30		23 2:00 7:30	24 2:00 7:30	25 2:00
28 7:30	29 7:30	30 7:30		

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
DECEMBER 2018			DEC. 1 2:00 7:30	2 2:00
5 2:00	6 7:30	7 7:30	8 2:00 7:30	9 2:00
12 7:30	13 7:30	14 7:30	15 2:00 7:30	16 2:00
19 7:30	20 7:30	21 7:30	22 2:00 7:30	23 1:00 6:30
26 1:00 6:30	27 6:30	28 7:30	29 4:00	30 2:00

■ New shows! ● Special Early Bird Show Times Added!

Special Events

Skylight Insights. In-depth discussions with directors and special guests take place one hour before every Wednesday and Sunday performance.

ASL Performance. *Hairspray* will be interpreted in American Sign Language on Friday, November 30 at 7:30 p.m. Call the Box Office at (414) 291-7800 and mention ASL performance to be seated in the appropriate section or go online and enter code ASL to view seats and purchase.

For more information visit www.skylightmusictheatre.org, email info@skylightmusictheatre.org or call the Box Office at (414) 291-7800.

Skylight Bar & Bistro

Skylight Bar & Bistro is located on the second floor of The Broadway Theatre Center. It is open two hours before each performance in the Cabot Theatre and features gourmet dining and fine wine by Indulge Wine Room. Reservations for full table service are recommended and can be made in advance at www.skylightmusictheatre.org/bistro or by calling (414) 291-3773. Counter service is available without reservations.

Parking Vouchers on Sale

Purchase discounted parking vouchers from the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office for use in the Historic Third Ward parking garage at 212 N. Milwaukee Street (one block east and one block north). Vouchers can be purchased for \$5 during normal Box Office hours. Vouchers are valid between 5 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. for evening performances only. Voucher sales stop 30 minutes before showtime and are not available during intermission. *No refunds.*

About Skylight Music Theatre

Skylight Music Theatre’s mission since 1959: To bring the full spectrum of music theatre works to a wide and diverse audience in celebration of the musical and theatrical arts and their reflection of the human condition. Skylight presents productions “Skylight Style” – bringing fresh approaches or interesting twists to music theatre works, creating

meaningful connections, not only between the characters on stage but with the audience as well. The beautiful, intimate Cabot Theatre allows audiences to feel close to the powerful emotions on stage.