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**THEATRE FOR A NEW AUDIENCE COMPLETES CAPITAL CAMPAIGN FOR POLONSKY SHAKESPEARE CENTER, ITS STATE-OF-THE-ART HOME IN BROOKLYN, AND FOR LONG-TERM FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**Theatre for a New Audience (TFANA)** is pleased to announce that it has successfully completed its **capital campaign** to stabilize the institution's finances and open a permanent home, surpassing the campaign's \$69.1 million goal. TFANA opened **Polonsky Shakespeare Center**, its state-of-the-art permanent home in the Brooklyn Cultural District, in fall 2013, following a \$10 million naming gift from The Polonsky Foundation. Since that time, the theater has welcomed nearly 150,000 people from across the region for Theatre for a New Audience's acclaimed productions and programs.

"It's a miracle that after so many years of our productions having to fit our rental venues, we can tell our artists to give their imaginations full rein," said **Jeffrey Horowitz, Founding Artistic Director of Theatre for a New Audience**. "What a gift to our audiences, our artists, our students, and the people of New York. We are so grateful to the City, the Polonskys, the SHS Foundation, and all our Board and donors."

The capital campaign, begun in 2000, was comprised of three phases. Phases I and II, totaling \$4 million, stabilized the Theatre's finances, established a \$625,000 Working Capital Reserve, and established an Artistic Growth Fund that expanded the Theatre's offerings to three productions per season, increased its subscriber base and raised its public profile. The stabilization and expansion provided by Phases I and II laid the groundwork for the Theatre to pursue its goal of constructing a home of its own.

TFANA announced Phase III of the campaign, *Shakespeare Works in Brooklyn: The Campaign for a Permanent Home*, in 2005. Prior to the opening of Polonsky Shakespeare Center, TFANA had been an itinerant producer, renting venues across New York City to present its work. Phase III included the design and construction of the Theatre's first home of its own, specifically designed for Shakespeare and classic drama; the establishment of endowments for programs and operations; the marketing and programming launch of the Inaugural Season; and supporting expenses. The inaugural production in the new space was Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Julie Taymor. The total raised by Phase III is more than \$65 million.

TFANA's restricted endowment funds include a \$1.7 million Humanities Fund to support the Theatre's expanded humanities programming, established by a prestigious \$500,000 Challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The \$1 million Elayne P. Bernstein Education Fund Education was established to support the Theatre's education programming in New York City's public schools. Shakespeare and other classic theatre productions are supported

by the Howard Gilman Foundation Fund for Classic Drama, established by a \$1 million gift from the Howard Gilman Foundation.

Roughly seventeen years ago, Horowitz and Theodore C. Rogers, then Chairman of TFANA's Board, began looking for locations where the Theatre could build a home of its own. Harvey Lichtenstein invited the Theatre to build from the ground up in what became the Brooklyn Cultural District, steps away from the Brooklyn Academy of Music and Mark Morris Dance Center. Neighboring arts organizations in the District include 651 Arts, the A.R.T./NY LuEsther T. Mertz South Oxford Space, BRIC, the Irondale Center, the Museum of Contemporary African Diasporan Arts (MoCADA) and UrbanGlass.

Under the administration of Mayor Michael Bloomberg, through the Mayor's Office, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, the Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz, and the New York City Council, The City of New York invested more than \$34 million in Theatre for a New Audience's new home. Additional public support for the project came from Mayor Bill de Blasio's administration, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, and the New York State Council on the Arts. In addition to leadership support from The City of New York and The Polonsky Foundation, major support for the Capital Campaign was provided by the SHS Foundation, Cleary, Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP, Theodore C. Rogers, and The Irving Harris Foundation.

“Jeffrey Horowitz and Ted Rogers had the vision for what Theatre for a New Audience could do. I'm happy to say that the City of New York agreed with them. New York has always been a city that loved Shakespeare with a true passion. The Board had the will to see it through. We are all very proud. Theatre for a New Audience has come into its own, with the stage it always deserved. This is a venue for the ages of which we are all and will continue to be very proud,” said **Henry Christensen III, Chairman of TFANA's Board of Directors.**

The 27,500 square-foot Polonsky Shakespeare Center is a unique performance space in New York. Designed by celebrated architect Hugh Hardy and *H3 Hardy* Collaboration Architecture, it is the first theatre in New York designed and built for classic drama since Lincoln Center's Vivian Beaumont in the 1960s. Its 299-seat Samuel H. Scripps Mainstage combines an Elizabethan courtyard theatre with modern theatre technology. Inspired by the Dorfman at London's National Theatre, the Scripps is completely flexible: the stage and seating can be arranged in a wide variety of configurations to serve the artistic vision of every production. The Scripps was named by the SHS Foundation for Samuel H. Scripps, who before his passing was a longtime member of the Theatre's Board. The facility also includes the Theodore C. Rogers Studio, which was named for Ted Rogers in honor of his more than 19 years of service as the Theatre's Chairman. Polonsky Shakespeare Center has received numerous awards from the New York State and New York City Chapters of the American Institute of Architects, and two national awards for its structural engineering. In addition, the new facility is a sustainable (green) theatre, with an anticipated LEED-NC Silver rating from the United States Green Building Council.

Jeffrey Horowitz said, “I am very proud that the Scripps Mainstage and Polonsky Shakespeare Center are meaningful for artists and audiences and a valuable addition to our community.”

By the end of the current 2016-2017 season, the Theatre will have produced 15 major productions in its new home, with leading theatre artists such as Michael Boyd, Peter Brook, Simon Godwin, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Trevor Nunn, Julie Taymor and Darko Tresnjak, and featuring such leading actors as Maggie Lacey, Kathryn Hunter, Michael Pennington, Michael Shannon, Kristine Nielsen, John Douglas Thompson and Dianne Wiest. Arin Arbus, Associate Artistic Director since 2008, has directed nine productions for the Theatre, including four acclaimed productions in Polonsky Shakespeare Center: *King Lear*, *A Doll's House*, *The Father* and *The Skin of Our Teeth*. The productions of *Pericles*, *Tamburlaine the Great*, *An Octoroon*, *The Killer*, *A Doll's House*, *The Father*, and most recently, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, have been recognized with nominations and awards from the Obie, Drama Desk, Drama League and Off-Broadway Alliance Awards.

Polonsky Shakespeare Center has had a transformative effect on Theatre for a New Audience. Its operations have more than doubled since before the new facility opened, to reach a current annual budget of more than \$6.8 million. The number of people served by the Theatre in that time has increased by nearly 90%. Box office income has increased by 95% and contributed income has increased by 71%.

The new facility has also seen a large increase in the number of young theatregoers. Its extensive arts in education residencies are now in more than 20 New York City Public Schools each season. More than 129,000 students have been served by these programs since they began in 1984. Polonsky Shakespeare Center has also been the host of four Summer Institutes, thanks to the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities' Summer Institutes program. The Theatre's two-week Summer Institute provides training for 25 middle school and high school teachers (selected from applicants nationwide) to develop methods for engaging their students in dynamic lessons and classroom discussions on the plays of Shakespeare.

The Theatre's expanded Humanities programs—ranging from post-show talkbacks with artists and scholars, to special symposia to a thriving theatre book series—provide nearly 20 events each season, most of them free to the public. In addition, the Theatre produces the *360° Viewfinder*, a free online publication for each of its productions, featuring articles on the play's themes, history and context, and interviews with creative teams.

The New Deal, the Theatre's youth and student discount ticketing initiative, provides \$20 tickets that can be booked online and in advance to people aged 30 or younger and all full-time students. More than 18,000 New Deal tickets have been sold since 2013 (an increase of nearly 200%), and now account for one-sixth of all tickets sold each season.

The Theatre has been a powerful factor in the continued economic revival of Brooklyn. More than 3,000 new apartments are coming online within a few blocks of Polonsky Shakespeare Center, bringing an estimated 10,000 new residents to the Cultural District. The Theatre has formed partnerships with many of the existing and new restaurants in the area, providing a growing list of benefits for the Theatre's subscribers and ticket purchasers.

“It has been exciting to round the bend with this capital campaign. The full Board participated and together we attracted 455 donors and supporters, said **Monica Gerard-Sharp Wambold, the campaign's Chair of Major Gifts**. “This ambitious campaign funded the new building, the

Inaugural Season's productions, outreach to new audiences in Brooklyn and gave new impetus to our in-school educational programs. It laid a firm foundation of new relationships that will help sustain the Theatre far into the future."

### **More about Theatre for a New Audience**

Founded in 1979 by Jeffrey Horowitz, Theatre for a New Audience (TFANA) is a modern classic theatre. It produces Shakespeare alongside other major authors from the world repertoire, such as Harley Granville Barker, Edward Bond, Adrienne Kennedy, Richard Nelson, Wallace Shawn and Branden Jacobs-Jenkins. TFANA has played Off- and on Broadway and toured nationally and internationally.

In 2001, Theatre for a New Audience became the first American theatre invited to bring a production of Shakespeare to the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), Stratford-upon-Avon. *Cymbeline*, directed by Bartlett Sher, premiered at the RSC; in 2007, TFANA was invited to return to the RSC with *The Merchant of Venice*, directed by Darko Tresnjak and starring F. Murray Abraham. In 2011, Mr. Abraham reprised his role as Shylock for a national tour.

After 34 years of being itinerant and playing mostly in Manhattan, Theatre for a New Audience moved to Brooklyn and opened its first permanent home, Polonsky Shakespeare Center, in October 2013.

TFANA's productions have been honored with Tony, Obie, Drama Desk, Drama League, Callaway, Lortel and Audelco awards and nominations and reach an audience diverse in age, economics and cultural background.

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