



## Press Release

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For immediate release:

### ***Time Magazine's Play of the Year Rides into the Carousel Theatre***

The award-winning “4000 Miles” by contemporary playwright, Amy Herzog, will be performed in the Carousel Theatre October 30 through November 16, 2014. The show is sponsored by The Clayton Foundation and Pilot Flying J. Media sponsors include WUTK, WUOT and The Knoxville News Sentinel. The production is performed without an intermission and contains adult content and language.

The touching and humorous production follows Leo, a 21-year-old tree-hugger from Seattle who bicycles across the country and winds up, unexpectedly, at the doorstep of his feisty Jewish grandmother’s New York City apartment. Over the course of their reconnection, we discover their conflicting politics and the fragile connection they share between growing up and growing old. When Leo's ex-girlfriend shows up, the unusual events of his journey begin to unfold. As much about overcoming grief as it is about reaching across great distances be they miles or decades, in “4000 Miles” Leo and Vera become each other’s life raft.

“This show is about finding the common ground between people we think have nothing in common, and respecting the impasses that can exist between people we see as completely compatible. It gets us to notice our presumptions and expectations and maybe even start thinking beyond them. It's about healing. It's about muscling on. And as always, I hope, with theatre - it's about acknowledging how courageous, broken, frightened, glorious, and unbelievably surprising we are - all of us! - in our humanness,” said Washington DC-based Director Lise Bruneau.

The critically acclaimed comic-drama was written by playwright Amy Herzog who based the Vera character on her own grandmother. Herzog was the winner of the 2012 Obie Award for Best New American Play, the 2012 Lucile Lortel Award, and the 2012 Off Broadway Alliance Award. “4000 Miles” was also named “TIME” magazine’s #1 Play of 2012 and was a finalist for the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Providing a very unique theatre experience, this production will be staged “in-the-round,” a form of theatrical presentation in which the audience is seated in a circle around the stage. The Carousel Theatre is one of the oldest theatres in-the-round in the country.

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**Lise Bruneau (Director)** currently resides in Washington, DC, where she is a founding member of the Taffety Punk Theatre Company and has directed several productions. Other regional theatre directing credits include the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival and the MetroStage (DC). As an actor, she has performed in such regional theatres as the Cleveland Playhouse, Arena Stage, the Old Globe, ACT, Seattle Rep, Berkeley Rep; and for the St. Louis, Alabama, Chicago, Santa Cruz, and Oregon Shakespeare Festivals.

The cast is comprised of four actors.

**Carol Mayo Jenkins (Vera)** is a member of the UT Theatre faculty. She was born and raised in Knoxville, attended Salem Academy and Vanderbilt, trained for the theatre in London, spent four years with the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco. She has performed on Broadway and Off-Broadway in New York and has also played leading roles in regional theatres across the country. Moving to Los Angeles, she spent five years on the award-winning television series “Fame” and also performing in regional theatres on the West Coast.

**Steve Sherman (Leo)** is a second year MFA Acting candidate. CBT credits include “Monty Python’s Spamalot,” “The Whipping Man,” “Our Country’s Good,” and “Hank Williams: Lost Highway.” Originally from Olympia, WA, he received a B.A. in Theatre from Western Washington Univ. He has worked in New York, L.A., and regionally in theatre and has appeared in several independent films. Also an avid playwright, his plays have been produced all over the country, including The Kennedy Center. As an improviser and comedian he has performed at The Hollywood Improv and The Comedy Store.

**Shea Madison (Amanda)** is a junior UT Theatre major. CBT credits include: “Monty Python’s Spamalot” and “Five Women Wearing the Same Dress.” She also has performed with ACT and with the Foothills Community Players.

**McKinley Merritt (Bec)** is a senior majoring in Deaf Interpreting, minoring in Theatre who is a native of Nashville. CBT credits include: “Monty Python’s Spamalot,” “Kiss Me, Kate,” “Sweeney Todd,” “The 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” and “Will Power!” She also is a member of the University’s Chamber Singers and the all-girl a cappella group, ReVOLution.

Designers on the production include: UT staff member **Amber Williams (Costume Designer)**; MFA Candidate **Josafath Israel Reynoso Calvillo (Scenic Designer)**; UT faculty member **Kenton Yeager (Lighting Designer)**; UT staff member **Mike Ponder (Sound Designer)**; and UT Theatre undergraduate student **Caleb Cook (Stage Manager)**.

With a dual mission to train the next generation of theatre artists and to provide top quality professional theatre, like that of a teaching hospital, the Clarence Brown Theatre at the University of Tennessee Knoxville is one of only 12 academic LORT (League of Resident Theatre) institutions in the nation. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Calvin MacLean and Managing Director David B. Byrd, the CBT season runs from August through May and features eight productions ranging from musicals to drama.

Productions remaining in the 2014-2015 Season include: “4000 Miles,” “A Christmas Carol,” “Master Harold...and the boys,” “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” “A Shayna Maidel,” and “The Threepenny Opera.”

For more information, tickets or accessibility accommodation requests including Open Captioning, ASL, and assistive technologies, please call the CBT Box Office at 865-974-5161 or visit us online at [clarencetheatre.com/access](http://clarencetheatre.com/access). Stay Connected to the Clarence Brown Theatre on Facebook (Clarence Brown Theatre), follow us on Twitter (@ClarenceBrown) and view Clarence Brown videos on YouTube (Clarence Bro).

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