



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Contact: John Olson, 773-517-6962
john@johnolsoncomm.com

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE cast is set
Director Laura Sturm promises a funny and truthful 21st-Century take on Off-Broadway's second-longest-running musical

CHICAGO – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

Top of fall, Quest Theatre Ensemble will follow up its production of *THE FANTASTICKS* with another Off-Broadway offering blessed with longevity and universal appeal: the musical comedy revue *I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE*, by Tony-winning wordsmith Joe DiPietro and composer and entertainer Jimmy Roberts. A charming and tender look inside our deepest, darkest, most secret thoughts — whether out on a date, making headway toward the altar, or juggling the challenges of marriage - the musical will continue Quest Theatre Ensemble's 15th season on Saturday, September 23, 2017 following one preview performance on Friday, September 22. The performance schedule will be Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 2 pm through October 29, 2017. Additionally, there will be Special Accessible Programming Matinee with curb to seat assistances, pre-show touch tour and a conversation with the artists Saturday, October 21 at 2 pm.

To perform DiPietro and Roberts's long-running hit, Quest will feature a quartet of young voices and comedy whizzes directed by Laura Sturm, who appeared as P.T. Barnum's wife in Quest's *BARNUM* and directed Barbara Lhota's *PHANTOM PAIN* for Organic Theater at the Greenhouse Theater Center this spring. Sturm promises a 21st Century perspective on the continuing challenges of dating and mating and family. "The way we search for love is a lot different now from what it was in the mid- '90s when this show was first produced. Technology like smart phones and dating apps connect us to each other in new ways, but also disconnect us, as we don't have as much human interaction as we did once. This makes our face-to-face interaction sometimes a little awkward, and that will inform our interpretation of the material." *I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE* is recommended for audiences age 12 and up, due to some adult themes.

The awkwardness Sturm mentions will be a source of much of the humor in this musical comedy. "The show is a comedy, and our production will remain true to that. However, beneath the humor, we're going to be really

focused on truth and the vulnerability we feel when navigating this complex arena of romantic relationships. We've cast great singers with a lot of acting as well as comedy experience and training.”

The cast will include Liz Jarmer, who returns to Quest Theatre where she appeared earlier this year in the 15th annual production of BLUE NATIVITY. Before moving to Chicago, she was a resident company member at Music Theatre Wichita, the nationally recognized summer theatre. She earned her BFA in musical theatre at nearby Wichita State University, where she played such roles as Sally in YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, CHARLIE BROWN and Mary Sunshine in CHICAGO. The comedic bent of these roles is no small coincidence; her move east includes studying at both The Second City Music Conservatory and iO. She is also a regular performer in Mind Over Chatter, a Second City Training Center sketch show, and can also be found at the comedy theatre, MCL Chicago, where she plays with Your MoMINT of Zen.

Gavin Donnellan is a graduate of both Second City and iO's conservatories and music programs. Since then, he has become a member of Storytown and Funny Bones, organizations dedicated to performing improv for the younger set, the latter of which focuses specifically on the hospital-bound. For another thing, his two-person spatial improv piece, CHAIRS, co-created with Melissa McNamara, has appeared at comedy festivals from Chicago to Vancouver. He and McNamara can currently be seen in another co-creation, the web series THE STUDIO.

Christian Aldridge returned to Illinois in 2016 from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin where he earned his BA in Music Theatre and Theatre Performance in such turns as the Padre in MAN OF LA MANCHA and Prospero in THE BREATH OF STARS, a continuation-of-sorts to THE TEMPEST. This able balancing of comedy and drama continued upon his arrival in Chicago, where he has played both Jesus in GODSPELL and the title role in MACBETH.

Completing the cast is Alys Dickerson, who joins Quest Theatre's production after performing the lead role of Ma Ubu in Organic Theatre's KING UBU. She is a theatre graduate of both the University of Kentucky and Northern Illinois University, where she obtained her Master's in acting. Throughout her studies and her career, the breadth of her range across styles stretches from the title role in ANTIGONE to Margaret in WOYZECK to Annie in THE REAL THING. In 2015, she also played the mad Narrator in a short film adaptation of THE TELL-TALE HEART.

Laura Sturm (Director) recently directed Organic Theater Company's World Premiere production of Chicago playwright Barbara Lhota's PHANTOM PAIN. Other directing credits include a world premiere of the dark sci-fi comedy EPHEMERA, Sheridan's 18th century comedy of manners, THE RIVALS; and the original zoo musical, TUXEDO LOVE. As an actress, she just completed a run in the title role in Lauren Gunderson's EMILIE, LA MARQUISE DU CHATELET DEFENDS HER LIFE TONIGHT with Organic Theater, where she also appeared in THE GOOD DOCTOR, OUT OF THE BLUE and KING UBU. Other favorite roles include Blanche in A STREETCAR NAMED DESIRE, Titania in A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM, Gertrude in HAMLET (Polarity Ensemble Theatre), Ana in THE CLEAN HOUSE (Bluebird Arts), Chairy Barnum in BARNUM (Quest Ensemble Theatre), Doris in SAME TIME, NEXT YEAR (Skokie Theatre), and Mrs. Hardcastle in SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER (Signal Ensemble Theatre). Additionally, Laura has worked with such theatres as Mary-Arrchie, Remy Bumpo, Victory Gardens, Boho, Stage Left, Northlight, Provision, Raven, Theo Ubique, Bailiwick Repertory, and the Texas Shakespeare Festival.

Laura received her MFA from Northern Illinois University, is currently an Adjunct Faculty member at Oakton Community College, taught at Act One Studios for seven years, currently teaches her own movement and Meisner class at the Athenaeum on Saturday mornings, and serves as a private acting and movement coach.

Joe DiPietro (Book and Lyrics) is a two-time Tony Award winner for MEMPHIS, which also received 2010 Tony, Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle awards for Best Musical and a 2015 Olivier nomination. He is also a Drama Desk Award winner and Tony nominee for NICE WORK IF YOU CAN GET IT. Other Broadway credits include: LIVING ON LOVE, and ALL SHOOK UP. Off-Broadway: THE TOXIC AVENGER; THE THING ABOUT MEN; and OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS, among others. In addition to NICE WORK, with a Gershwin score, his adaptations of vintage musicals include Rodgers & Hart's BABES IN ARMS, and Rodgers & Hammerstein's ALLEGRO. Recent works include the plays CLEVER LITTLE LIES, THE SECOND MRS. WILSON, and the musical ERNEST SHACKLETON LOVES ME.

Jimmy Roberts (Music) graduated from the Manhattan School of Music in 1977, where he studied under renowned pianist Constance Keene. Aside from his collaborations with Joe DiPietro on I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE and THE THING ABOUT MEN, other credits include the children's musical THE VELVETEEN RABBIT (words by James Still), produced by Theatreworks/USA; THE HEART OF THE MATTER (words by poet Dana Gioia), a commission performed at the Guggenheim Museum, New York; and songs featured in two other Off-Broadway revues: A...MY NAME IS STILL ALICE and PETS. He

continues to appear across the country as a performer and lecturer, mixing classical and popular music with a dash of comedy.

The production team for *I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE* includes Sara Cate Langham (music director), Mary Albano (choreographer), Shea Messinger (scenic design), Emma Cullimore (costume design), Kevin Allinder (lighting design), Jack Mecherle (sound design). The production team includes Michael J. Hengels (stage manager) and William Allen (production manager) and Jessica Haworth (assistant director).

LISTING INFORMATION

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE

Book and Lyrics by Joe DiPietro, Music by Jimmy Roberts

Directed by Laura Sturm

Music Direction by Sara Cate Langham

September 22nd to October 29th, 2017

Preview Friday, September 22nd at 8:00

PRESS OPENING SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23rd AT 8:00 PM

Performances Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm; Sundays at 2pm. Special Accessible Programming Matinee with pre-show touch tour and conversation with the artists– Saturday, October 21 at 2 pm.

The Blue Theatre – 1609 W Gregory – Chicago, IL 60640

Admission free, but reservations strongly suggested and may be made at www.questensemble.org

Recommended for audiences age 12 and up, due to some adult themes.

I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE may have only had 12 years Off-Broadway to *THE FANTASTICKS'* record of 57 years, but this celebration of the mating game, having been translated into 17 languages and playing sit-down productions worldwide, is clearly its own beast, tackling the truths and myths behind that contemporary conundrum known as 'the relationship.' This hilarious revue pays tribute to those who have loved and lost, to those who have fallen on their face at the portal of romance, to those who have dared to ask, 'Say, what are you doing Saturday night?'

ABOUT QUEST THEATRE ENSEMBLE

Quest Theatre Ensemble, founded in 2002, is known for its productions of established as well as original plays and musicals – and for its innovative visual design frequently including large-scale puppetry. Past productions

have included their annual holiday pageant Blue Nativity performed in venues around Chicago every year since the company's founding; Broadway and Off-Broadway musicals (THE FANTASTICKS, A CHRISTMAS CAROL THE MUSICAL, LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, INTO THE WOODS and BARNUM); original pageants (EVOLUTION/CREATION, THE PEOPLE'S HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES) and original book musicals (TOMATO QUEEN, ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE).

Quest Theatre Ensemble is dedicated to being the "People's Theatre of Chicago" by creating productions that Inform, Delight, Inspire and Unite." Committed to making theatre accessible to everyone, the ensemble chooses stories that have universal appeal, finds innovative ways to engage the community and offers productions free of charge so anyone can participate.

Quest Theatre Ensemble is funded in part by generous grants from the MacArthur Funds for Arts and Culture at the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, and The Saints.

###