



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 28, 2016

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**THE ACTORS GYMNASIUM PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE
OF *QUEST*, AN ORIGINAL CIRCUS-THEATER PRODUCTION,
FEBRUARY 11 – MARCH 19**

Written and Directed by Leslie Buxbaum Danzig, *Quest* is Loosely Based on Leo Tolstoy's Parable "The Three Questions" and Takes the Audience on a Wild Ride to Answer Three Simple, but Very Important Questions

CHICAGO – The Actors Gymnasium is proud to announce the world premiere of *Quest*, an original circus-theater production adapted and directed by **Leslie Buxbaum Danzig**, featuring original music by **Kevin O'Donnell** and loosely based on **Leo Tolstoy's** short story "The Three Questions." *Quest*, part of Actors Gymnasium's Annual Winter Circus, runs Saturday, Feb. 11 – Sunday, March 19 at Noyes Cultural Arts Center, 927 Noyes St. **Press opening is Sunday, Feb. 12 at 3 p.m.** with an opening night party Saturday Feb. 11 at 7:30 p.m. Performance times are Fridays at 7:30 p.m., Saturdays at 4:30 and 7:30 p.m. and Sundays at 3 p.m. Running time is approximately 80 minutes with no intermission. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$15 for kids, students and seniors and are available online at ActorsGymnasium.org or 847.328.2795. Once online sales are closed, 1 hour and 30 minutes prior to the show start time, the on-location box office will be open. For group reservations and general questions call 847-328-2795. If online sales are sold out, a limited number of tickets will be available at the door the night of the performance.

Quest, loosely based on the Leo Tolstoy story "The Three Questions," has the protagonist ask three simple, but huge, questions, setting in motion a whirlwind journey to find the answers. The hero with her sidekicks venture through obstacles, misinformation, slapstick fun, unexpected detours, music and songs, near crises and amazing feats of partnership in seek of answers.

"One of my favorite books to read to my kids is "The Three Questions." It's one of those children's books that gives as much, if not more, to me as to my kids," said Buxbaum Danzig. "I always thought this would make a great theatrical experience. And, when, Sylvia [Hernandez-DiStasi, Actors Gymnasium artistic director] reached out, I jumped at the chance. I'm a regular winter circus-attendee and I always love the spirit of the show - its mix of professionals, teens, and kids, its generosity with audiences of all ages, its joy, its rigor and its ambition. Within seconds I thought aha, this might be the time and place for "The Three Questions.""

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The cast of *Quest* includes **Flora Bare**, **Kate Braland**, **David Corlew**, **Amanda Crockett**, **Edgar Ortiz** and members of Actors Gymnasium's Teen Ensemble and Young Artists.

The production team includes **Kevin O'Donnell**, original music; **Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi**, circus choreographer; **Tommy Tomlins**, circus co-choreographer and **Erin Kilmurray**, dance choreographer. Other team members include **Jerica Hucke**, costume designer; **Justine Brock**, lighting designer; **Isaac Schoepp**, rigging designer and **Grover Holloway**, sound designer.

ABOUT LESLIE BUXBAUM DANZIG, adapter and director

Leslie Buxbaum Danzig is a director primarily of devised theater productions, working with ensembles over the course of a year or more (or less) to create original performances. Her productions often bring together different performance languages (dance-theater, clown-theater, circus-theater). As both theater-maker and audience member she enjoys the unexpected ways in which narrative (of some kind) emerges from shifting performance forms and logics.

Buxbaum Danzig has worked extensively with Lucky Plush Productions and is currently co-creating/co-directing *Roominghouse*, slated to premiere in Fall 2017. She is also a co-founder of the Chicago-based physical theater company 500 Clown. Other directing credits include Damon Kiely's *The Revel* with the House Theatre of Chicago; Redmoon's *The Elephant and the Whale*, with Chicago Children's Theater (with Frank Maugeri); Redmoon's *Hunchback* at New Victory Theater (NYC) and Rockefeller Memorial Chapel at the University of Chicago; and *Float* with About Face Theater. Prior to turning to directing, she toured nationally and internationally as an actor with NYC's Elevator Repair Service. Buxbaum Danzig is an assistant professor of Practice in the Arts, Theater and Performance Studies, University of Chicago. She received her BA from Brown University and PhD in Performance Studies at Northwestern University, and trained in physical theater at Écoles Jacques Lecoq and Philippe Gaulier.

ABOUT THE ACTORS GYMNASIUM

Since 1995, The Actors Gymnasium has been guided by the vision of a revitalized American theatre: one with performances as thrilling as a rock concert and as mesmerizing as the circus. To that end, they have dedicated themselves to the education and development of multi-skilled, physical-theatre artists.

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CLASSES AT THE ACTORS GYMNASIUM

Actors Gymnasium classes are taught in a 3,000 sq/ft gymnasium space that features a 1,600 sq/ft sprung floor and a fully rigged 24 foot ceiling. All aerial equipment such as the Aerial Hoop, Spanish Web, aerial silks, static trapeze and more are provided, as well as the equipment for ground skills such as unicycling, juggling, tight wire and gymnastics. Additional classes are taught in Studio 108, a 900 sq/ft classroom space that features a floating sprung White Oak dance floor, a fully rigged 14 foot ceiling, a handstand wall, conditioning ladders and room length 12 foot mirrors for aerial work.

The highly skilled instructors create a non-competitive imaginative environment where students can learn as much from each other as their teachers. Students explore their creativity, build courage, and develop community as they tackle circus and aerial arts, physical theatre and so much more.

The faculty includes Artistic Director Sylvia Hernandez-DiStasi, a second-generation circus performer, a Master teacher and an award-winning choreographer. *American Theatre Magazine* has called Physical Theatre Director Molly Brennan “Chicago’s Queen of Mischief and Make-Believe.” The Actors Gymnasium has faculty with circus credentials that stem from training at The Actors Gymnasium, New England Center for Circus Arts, Circus Juventas and National École de Cirque. Instructors have performed with esteemed circus and theatre companies worldwide. For complete bios, visit: www.actorsgymnasium.org/about-us/faculty/.

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Please note: There is no apostrophe in the company name, The Actors Gymnasium.