Cast and crew announced for Pride and Prejudice

Baltimore—Aug 20, 2015. Center Stage announces the cast and creative team of Pride and Prejudice, the first show of its 2015/16 Season. The play begins performances Sept. 11, with opening night set for Sept. 18.

Directed by Center Stage Associate Artistic Director Hana S. Sharif, Pride and Prejudice will feature a cast of 21 actors performing Jane Austen’s classic, with a fresh adaptation by Christopher Baker that’s set in 1797. The story revolves around the romance between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, as well as other Bennet sister pairings.

“I can’t be prouder of all we achieved in Season 52, and I’m overjoyed to be opening Season 53 with Pride and Prejudice and to know it’s in the hands of Hana Sharif,” says Artistic Director Kwame Kwei Armah.

“I think that we have an incredible cast,” Sharif says. "Pride and Prejudice is a beloved text. It's about connection and choice, and I think everyone sees someone they know – or themselves – in these characters.”

The principle romantic couples are performed by Kate Abbruzzese (Elizabeth Bennet) and A.J. Shively (Mr. Darcy), Ali Rose Dachis (Lydia Bennet) and Asher Grodman (Mr. Wickham), Mary Jo Mecca (Mrs. Bennet) and Anthony Newfield (Mr. Bennet), Erin Neufer (Jane Bennet) and Josh Salt (Mr. Bingley), Kelly McCrann (Charlotte Lucas) and Christopher Bolan (Mr. Collins), with Victoria Frings as Caroline Bingley

The cast also includes Julia Brandeberry (Mrs. Gardiner), Maya Brettell (Mary Bennet), Patricia Hodges (Lady Catherine de Bourgh), Travis Hudson, Greg Joubert, Carolyn Kashner, Sarah Rose Kearns, Ed Klein, Hillary Mazer (Mrs. Reynolds) and David Sedgwick (Mr. Gardiner).

Pride and Prejudice features scenic design by Scott Bradley, costume design by Ilona Somogyi, lighting design by Colin D. Young, projections by Alex Koch, original music and sound design by Broken Chord, choreography by Paloma McGregor and casting by Pat McCorkle. Production dramaturg is Faedra Carpenter. Stage manager is Amber Dickerson and assistant stage manager is Lindsay Eberly.

Following the success of last season’s interactive lobby creations – such as sand and a reggae DJ creating Jamaica in the lobby for Marley and a boxing ring setting up the 1964 Miami Convention Center for One Night in Miami – audiences will join the world of Pride and Prejudice as soon as they enter Center Stage’s Calvert Street building and be transported to a Regency ball.

Pride and Prejudice opens Friday, Sept. 18, with previews Sept. 11-17, and closes Oct. 11. For more information, visit www.centerstage.org or call the box office at 410-332-0033. Press night is Friday, Sept. 18.

Center Stage’s 2015-16 Season also includes family musical The Secret Garden, new football play X's and O's and a limited engagement of South African opera company Isango’s productions of Carmen and A Midsummer Night’s Dream at the 700 N. Calvert St. home. An all-female version of As You Like It and Dominique Morisseau’s Detroit ’67 will be at the Center for the Arts at Towson University, where Center Stage will be in temporary residency during winter/spring 2016.
THE CAST (in alphabetical order)

Kate Abbruzzese*  Elizabeth Bennet
Chris Bolan*        Mr. Collins
Julia Brandeberry  Mrs. Gardiner
Maya Brettell      Mary Bennet
Ali Rose Dachis*   Lydia Bennet
Victoria Frings*   Miss Caroline Bingley
Asher Grodman*     Mr. Wickham
Patricia Hodges*   Lady Catherine de Bourgh
Travis Hudson      1st Soldier
Greg Joubert       2nd Soldier
Carolyn Kashner    Young Woman #1
Sarah Rose Kearns  Young Woman #2
Ed Klein           2nd Soldier
Hillary Mazer      Mrs. Reynolds
Kelly McCrann*     Charlotte Lucas
Mary Jo Mecca*     Mrs. Bennet
Erin Neufer*       Jane Bennet
Anthony Newfield*  Mr. Bennet
Josh Salt*         Mr. Bingley
David Sedgwick*   Mr. Gardiner
A.J. Shively*      Mr. Darcy

Amber Dickerson*  Stage Manager
Lindsay Eberly*   Assistant Stage Manager

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

ARTISTIC TEAM

Christopher Baker  Adapter
Hana S. Sharif     Director
Scott Bradley     Scenic Designer
Ilona Somogyi     Costume Designer
Colin D. Young    Lighting Designer
Broken Chord      Original Music & Sound Design
Alex Koch         Projections Designer
Paloma McGregor  Choreographer
Meghan Abadoo     Assistant Choreographer
Faedra Carpenter  Production Dramaturg
Maya Brettell     Dance Captain
Pat McCorkle      Casting Director
Brandon Butts    Assistant to the Director

Pride and Prejudice is made possible by DLA Piper and KPMG LLP. Pride and Prejudice media partners are WBJC and Maryland Public Television. Center Stage is supported by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC), an agency dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. An agency of the Department of Business and Economic Development, the MSAC provides financial support and technical assistance to nonprofit organizations, units of
government, colleges and universities for arts activities. Funding for the MSAC is also provided by the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Center Stage’s 2015-16 Season is made possible by Season 2015-16 presenting sponsor M&T Bank and season sponsor The Shubert Foundation.

About Center Stage
Under the leadership of playwright, actor and director Kwame Kwei-Armah OBE (Artistic Director) and national arts leader Stephen Richard (Managing Director), Center Stage is an artistically driven institution committed to engaging, entertaining and enriching audiences through joyous and bold performances.

Hailed by The Wall Street Journal as “one of America’s leading regional companies,” Center Stage has, for more than 50 years, dedicated itself to exploring new works and bringing classics to life. This rich history is marked by critically acclaimed new works that have shaped the American theater—from the Tony Award-winning The Triumph of Love to world premieres such as Miss Evers’ Boys by David Feldshuh and On the Verge by Eric Overmyer.

In 2015, Center Stage’s production of Kwei-Armah’s world premiere Marley became the best-attended and highest grossing show in Center Stage’s 52-year history. The 2015-16 Season is a transitional year when the theater’s historic Mt. Vernon home will undergo a dramatic renovation and revitalization in order to welcome innovative future projects, relocating Center Stage to a temporary residency at Towson University for final two productions of the season.