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New York City Center announces 2017 *Encores!* *Off-Center* season:

Stephen Sondheim and John Weidman's *Assassins*, July 12—15

**Special Two-Night-Only engagement of Kirsten Childs'
The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin July 26 and 27**

Carole King and Maurice Sendak's *Really Rosie*, August 2—5

Advance access to \$25 tickets starting Mar 10 for young adults by joining *Peer to Peer* program

New York, NY, February 27, 2017—*Encores! Off-Center* Artistic Director **Michael Friedman** today announced his first season at the helm of New York City Center's acclaimed summer musical theater series. The 2017 *Encores! Off-Center* season will open with Stephen Sondheim and John Weidman's ***Assassins***, directed by **Anne Kauffman**, July 12 through 15, and close with Carole King and Maurice Sendak's ***Really Rosie***, directed by **Leigh Silverman**, August 2 through 5. The season will also include a special two-night-only engagement (July 26 and 27) of Kirsten Childs' ***The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin***, directed by **Robert O'Hara**.

"This season might be called 'Grownups with guns, kids with dreams, and a bubbly girl trying to find her way through America,'" Friedman said. "Planning the fifth *Off-Center* season, I found myself asking: What kind of America do we have?, and What kind of America do we want?, and How can we possibly imagine getting there? These three shows bring with them three very different visions of the American dream and what happens when people try to make their visions real. They exemplify the variety of shows that we do at City Center. They also exemplify the reasons that musical theater matters in the first place."

A carnival ride through the history of political violence, Sondheim and Weidman's 1990 musical *Assassins* looks right into the heart of American anger, providing a series of showstoppers for a gallery of U.S. presidential assassins ranging from John Wilkes Booth to Lee Harvey Oswald to Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme. Kirsten Childs' delightful and provocative autobiographical show *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin* (2000) follows a young woman from Los Angeles as she finds her way from dutiful suburban daughter to Broadway dancer, all while navigating the politics of race and gender on a journey to find her own identity. *Really Rosie* is a classic work for the whole family by two of the most popular artists of the 20th century: Carole King and Maurice Sendak. The genius of *Tapestry* meets the genius of *Where the Wild Things Are* in this sweet, sad, wonderful 1980 musical about a little girl in Brooklyn with a big imagination. Can her dreams come true, or does growing up mean letting go? Inspired in part by the stories in Sendak's Nutshell Library, *Really Rosie's* songs include "Pierre," "Alligators All Around," and "Chicken Soup with Rice."

Encores! Off-Center was founded in 2013 with the mission of presenting Off-Broadway musicals that pushed creative boundaries when they were first produced. Filtered through the lens of today's artists, these shows are presented not as historical documents but as living, vital works that continue to resonate with audiences. *The New York Times* has called *Encores! Off-Center* "a summer theater highlight," with past productions including *Violet* with Sutton Foster; *tick, tick...BOOM!* with Lin-Manuel Miranda; *A New Brain* with Jonathan Groff; *Little Shop of Horrors* with Ellen Greene and Jake Gyllenhaal; and *Runaways* with a cast of 25 young performers. The series also features **The Lobby Project**, a series of free pre-performance events that place each musical in context of its legacy and provide insights into the work the audience is about to experience. (The schedule of Lobby Project events will be announced at a later date.)

Off-Center reflects City Center's ongoing outreach to new and young audiences. In keeping with this mission, advanced access to \$25 tickets will be available to young adults starting Mar 10, before the general public. [NOTE: It is necessary to sign up for City Center's free *Peer to Peer* program to be eligible for these advance tickets.] *Peer to Peer*, New York City Center's discount ticket program for young adults, age 25 and under, provides special ticket offers for select City Center productions throughout the season. Sign up for the program, with proof of age, at www.NYCityCenter.org/P2P.

Tickets go on sale to the general public Mar 14 (Mar 3 for City Center Members, Mar 10 for *Peer to Peer* members). Tickets can be purchased online at NYCityCenter.org, by calling CityTix at 212.581.1212, or in person at the City Center Box Office. New York City Center is located at 131 West 55th Street between 6th and 7th Avenues.

2017 Off-Center Season

Assassins

July 12—15, Wed and Thu at 7:30pm, Fri at 8pm, and Sat at 2 and 8pm

The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds Her Chameleon Skin

July 26—27, Wed and Thu at 7:30pm

Really Rosie

August 2—5, Wed—Fri at 7pm, and Sat at 2 and 7pm

New York City Center gratefully acknowledges Founding Sponsors Stacey and Eric Mindich and Stacy Bash-Polley; Leadership Sponsor Nathalie and Pablo Salame; Series Sponsors American Express, Luigi Caiola and Sean McGill, Elizabeth and Dean Kehler, Andrew Martin-Weber, the Stephanie and Fred Shuman Fund for

Encores! and Barbara and David Zalaznick; with additional support provided by The Frederick Loewe Foundation and Paula and Ira Resnick.

Lead support for *Assassins* is provided by the Ted & Mary Jo Shen Charitable Gift Fund.

In addition, City Center thanks the Howard Gilman Foundation and Lisa and Richard Witten for their generous support in establishing the Artistic Innovation Fund and The Jerome L. Greene Foundation for its generous support of the Arts Access Fund.

The Lobby Project is sponsored by The Frederick Loewe Foundation.

New York City Center (Arlene Shuler, President & CEO) has played a defining role in the cultural life of the city since 1943. For nearly 25 years, City Center's Tony-honored *Encores!* series has been "an essential New York institution" (*The New York Times*). In 2013, City Center launched the *Encores! Off-Center* series, which features seminal Off-Broadway musicals filtered through the lens of today's innovative artists. Dance has also been integral to the theater's mission from the start and programs like the annual *Fall for Dance* Festival remain central to City Center's identity. Home to a roster of renowned national and international companies including Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (City Center's Principal Dance Company) and Manhattan Theatre Club, New York City Center was Manhattan's first performing arts center, founded with the mission of making the best in music, theater, and dance accessible to all audiences. That mission continues today through robust education and community engagement programs which bring the performing arts to over 9,000 New York City students each year and expand the theatrical experience beyond the proscenium to include pre-show talks, master classes, and art exhibitions that offer an up-close look at the work of the great theater and dance artists of our time. www.NYCityCenter.org

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