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BC Youth Cast in Award-Winning Play Inspired by *The Decameron* - Concord Floral -

West Coast Premiere of Tender Teen Thriller Presented in Lower Mainland Tour

Vancouver, BC—PuSh International Performing Arts Festival, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Surrey Civic Theatres and Touchstone Theatre present playwright Jordan Tannahill's thrilling *Concord Floral*, Jan. 19 – 21 at the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts; Jan. 25 – 29 at the 2017 PuSh Festival (at the Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre); and Feb. 3 & 4 at the Surrey Arts Centre. Drawing on Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, this deeply moving work is set in a massive abandoned greenhouse where 10 teens must find refuge from a plague they have brought upon themselves. Bravely conceived to give youth a platform for expression, *Concord Floral* is cast exclusively with youth from BC.

"We are delighted to bring *Concord Floral* to the West Coast," says director, producer and co-creator Erin Brubacher. "Re-contextualizing the piece here allows us to find further relevance and meaning in the work, through hearing and seeing new voices and bodies perform it. It is crucial to us that the play be performed by actual teenagers so that their real presence and experiences inform what the work offers. In every iteration, from the first presentation in Toronto in 2014, to this fourth production on the West Coast, we are moved by how our young co-conspirators claim this piece as their own and offer it back to us. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from the hearts, minds, and imaginations of a next generation of artists. It is an honour to witness our teenage ensembles' effect on audiences."

In *The Decameron*, 10 youth flee the 14th century Black Death and escape to an abandoned villa for 10 days where they keep each other alive by telling one other stories. In *Concord Floral*, audiences will see echoes of this classic work in the context of the current age, laced with a captivating sense of fear and fury. When a body is found in the huge abandoned greenhouse—a hangout spot for high school kids where they make and break their own rules—these adolescents must choose between mercy and cruelty, apathy and beauty. They must tell their story to keep themselves alive.

Written by Jordan Tannahill, and shortlisted for the 2016 Governor General's Award, *Concord Floral* is a co-creation of Tannahill with fellow Toronto-based artists Erin Brubacher and Cara Spooner. Erin Brubacher is a multi-talented, multi-disciplinary artist; working in the fields of theatre and photography, she seeks to engage people in collaborative artistic endeavors, creating what she calls "environments of care." Cara Spooner is an innovative choreographer who works in dance, performance art and theatre. Jordan Tannahill, a filmmaker and playwright was called "the future of Canadian theatre" by *NOW Magazine*.

Concord Floral won the 2015 Dora Award for 'Outstanding New Play' and since its premiere has received outstanding praise by critics. J. Kelly Nestruck of *The Globe and Mail* called the play "artfully structured, yet full of suspense, with dialogue that shifts smoothly between the poetic and observational. It's got style and substance – and is scary as all get out." Karen Fricker of *Toronto Star* wrote that it's "a show that stays with you."

This three-city production of *Concord Floral* is supported by the Vancouver Foundation. The PuSh Festival presentation in Vancouver is additionally supported by Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre, Seedlings Foundation and TELUS Community Board.

About the PuSh International Performing Arts Festival (pushfestival.ca)

The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival is Vancouver's signature, mid-winter cultural event, taking place over three weeks each January in theatres and venues across the city. The PuSh Festival presents groundbreaking, contemporary works of theatre, dance, music, and multimedia by acclaimed local, national, and international artists.

About the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts (shadboltcentre.com)

Housed in Burnaby, BC, this year-round, multipurpose arts centre hosts performances, art exhibitions, festivals and special events. The Shadbolt Centre also offers numerous opportunities for education in the fine arts. Its steadfast commitment to culture makes it one of the city's most important institutions.

About Surrey Civic Theatres (surrey.ca/theatre)

With three distinct venues at two locations, Surrey Civic Theatres presents and hosts theatre, music, and dance year-round. The 129-seat Studio Theatre at Surrey Arts Centre is the most intimate space, giving performers and audiences an up close and personal experience.

About Touchstone Theatre (touchstonetheatre.com)

Touchstone has been a mainstay of theatrical innovation and excellence on the West Coast for over 40 years. The company's all-Canadian mandate has helped to launch and develop some of the country's most important theatre artists, and its substantial body of work has garnered over 70 local and national awards. The company explores the contemporary Canadian play through content and form, and stimulates public interest in Canadian cultural perspectives.

LISTING INFORMATION

Concord Floral

Dates & Locations:

Shadbolt Centre for the Arts: Jan. 19 - 21 @ 8pm
PuSh Festival at Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre: Jan. 25 - 28 @ 7pm, Jan. 29 @ 2pm
Studio Theatre at Surrey Arts Centre: Feb. 3 & 4 @ 7:30pm

Ticket Prices:

\$10 - \$25

Box Office:

Shadbolt Centre for the Arts: tickets.shadboltcentre.com or 604-205-3000
PuSh Festival – Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre: ticketfly.com or 604.449.6000
Surrey Civic Theatres: tickets.surrey.ca or 604-501-5566

Website:

pushfestival.ca

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