



KANSAS CITY REPERTORY THEATRE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONTACT:** Ellen McDonald  
816.444.0052 or 816.213.4355  
[publicity@kcrep.org](mailto:publicity@kcrep.org)

**FOR TICKETS:** Box Office at  
816.235.2700 or [www.KCRep.org](http://www.KCRep.org).

**KC Rep Announces Renewal of  
Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
Grant in Support of  
Playwright-in-Residence Nathan Louis Jackson**  
*Three- year residency part of National Playwright Residency Program will strengthen  
KC Rep's commitment to new works*

**Kansas City, MO (Dec. ??, 2015)** – Kansas City Repertory Theatre Artistic Director Eric Rosen is pleased to announce that the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has renewed its support of KC Rep’s three-year playwright residency program for Nathan Louis Jackson through the National Playwright Residency Program. The grant totals \$232,000 and will enable KC Rep’s Playwright in Residence Nathan Louis Jackson to continue his significant contributions to new works, a key component of KC Rep’s mission.

Rosen stated, “Renewing this residency is of critical importance to KC Rep’s expansion of its new work focus. I can’t sufficiently express my gratitude to the Mellon Foundation for its support of Nathan Jackson’s residency these past two seasons, or how proud and excited we are to be able to continue another cycle of work with Nathan. He is a great American writer whose home, family, community, and artistic objectives make him an invaluable part of Kansas City Repertory Theatre and the larger community.”

Jackson stated, “For most playwrights, a theatre is like living in a sublet; it’s a temporary home where your play will find a warm stage to rest on and where you’re treated like a most welcomed guest. This residency has been incredible because it has made KC Rep my artistic home, and I am thrilled to extend

my stay. I was born and raised in Kansas City and I love it here. The opportunity to make a living as a writer in Kansas City is a reality that I never thought possible. The Mellon Foundation has made this - and more - possible. In the past three years I have seen two of my plays produced by KC Rep, and I can't wait to see what we will do together in the three years ahead."

During its 2014-15 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, KC Rep staged the world premiere production of Jackson's *Sticky Traps*, the first new work to result from his playwriting residency. The play was developed through workshops and readings before taking to the stage under the direction of Kyle Hatley. *Sticky Traps* was produced as a part of KC Rep's subscriber season and enjoyed a run of 31 performances over the course of four weeks.

Throughout the residency, Jackson has been involved with community outreach to area colleges, adult and juvenile correctional facilities, and Kansas City public schools. His outreach included work with students in four Kansas City, Kansas high schools and one middle school where he led week-long workshops that culminated in student performances of scenes they had written together and one-day workshops in which he led students through creative exercises, discussed the process of playwriting, and stressed the importance of theatre as a tool of communication.

Nathan will continue his work with Kansas State's Ebony Theatre, a student-run organization dedicated to producing the work of African American playwrights, helping them to recruit new members and rebuild their program and possibly writing a play for them to produce.

Additional ongoing work includes organizing and hosting KC Rep Playwright Slams with Director of New Works Marissa Wolf. These free community events are part of KC Rep's Origin KC new work program.

### **About Kansas City Repertory Theatre**

Kansas City Repertory Theatre, one of the nation's oldest and most respected regional theaters, is the center of a great theatre town. KC Rep produces theatrical excellence, creating and sharing stories at the center of our nation's creative crossroads. KC Rep's mission is to advance the art form while cultivating passionate audiences, artists, and advocates to invest in our region's creative future. We build community by connecting people through productions and outreach that educate, entertain, challenge and inspire. Lauded by *The Wall Street Journal*, *TIME* magazine, *Variety* and *The Toronto Sun*, KC Rep produces mainstage plays and special events at Spencer Theatre, where it serves as the professional theatre in residence at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC), and Copaken Stage located in downtown Kansas City. KC Rep employs more than 250 professional artists, technicians and administrators, and serves more than 100,000 patrons and 12,000 school children annually. Kansas City Repertory Theatre is led by Artistic Director Eric Rosen and Executive Director Angela Lee Gieras.

### **Social and Digital Media**

Receive daily updates by 'Liking' KCRep's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/KCREP](http://www.facebook.com/KCREP) and follow KC Rep on Twitter at @KCRep or on YouTube by visiting <https://www.youtube.com/user/kansascityrep>. High resolution photos can be downloaded [here](#). B-roll is available upon request.

## **2015-2016 Season At A Glance**

### **Kansas City Repertory Theatre**

Kansas City Repertory Theatre ticket office 816.235.2700

Purchase tickets online at [www.kcrep.org](http://www.kcrep.org).

#### ***Sunday in the Park with George***

September 11- October 4, 2015 | Atkins Auditorium at the Nelson-Atkins Museum | Music & Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim | Book by James Lapine | Directed by Eric Rosen

You've seen Georges Seurat's famous painting, but have you heard it? Those who love art, music or both are in for a rare treat as Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's stunning Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece takes the stage inside the Nelson-Atkins Museum. While Seurat works on his famous painting, we see the fascinating drama of his life unfold around him. Savor the Grammy award-winning score that moves the audience through time as we celebrate life, love and the creation of art.

"An audacious, haunting, and in its own intensely personal way, touching work." – *The New York Times*

#### ***Origin KC - WORLD PREMIERE***

##### ***Blueprints to Freedom: An Ode to Bayard Rustin***

October 16- November 15, 2015 | Copaken Stage | Written by Michael Benjamin Washington | Directed by Lucie Tiberghien | Co-production with La Jolla Playhouse

Written by and starring Michael Benjamin Washington, this story is more than relevant. It's riveting. Those who stand up for equality in 2015 are following in the footsteps of Bayard Rustin, the lesser known but powerfully influential civil rights leader who orchestrated the March on Washington and stepped forward himself as an openly gay man at a time when few had the courage to do so. In this ode, an exiled Rustin masterminds "a tribute to the ancestors" 100 years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

#### ***A Christmas Carol***

November 20 - December 24, 2015 | GRAND RE-OPENING of Spencer Theatre | Written by Charles Dickens / Directed by Jerry Genochio

Bah, humbug! Kansas City's favorite holiday tradition is back for its 35<sup>th</sup> season, and the magnificent new Spencer Theatre promises an experience that's more magical than ever. Come share the joy, as our theatre transforms into a page right out of Dickens. Richly textured sets, ornate costumes and spectacular special effects will transport the entire family into the tale of the grumpy Ebenezer Scrooge, who requires the intervention of a few ghostly guides to find the true meaning of Christmas – and life itself.

#### ***The Santaland Diaries***

December 3- December 24, 2015 | Copaken Stage | Written by David Sedaris | Directed by Eric Rosen

Kansas City Repertory Theatre Announces Mellon Foundation Grant to renew KC Rep Playwright in Residence for Nathan Louis Jackson

Leave the kids at home for this hilariously irreverent holiday show. It's David Sedaris' side-splitting send-up of Christmas and his brief, misguided career as a Macy's elf. Featuring an uproarious soundtrack of holiday tunes, *The Santaland Diaries* skewers everything we love (and secretly loathe) about the holidays. See what it's like for the subversive to work at Santaland, where the only thing more plentiful than good cheer is a good case of the giggles.

"...lots of acerbic asides, plenty of irony and numerous chuckles thanks to the incongruous humor of an embittered elf holding back the curtain for us to see the grimy reality of creating 'holiday magic.'" – *Kansas City Star*

### ***The Diary of Anne Frank***

January 29 – February 21, 2016 | Spencer Theatre | Written by Frances Goodrich & Albert Hackett | Newly Adapted by Wendy Kesselman | Directed by Marissa Wolf

The most personal aspects of Anne Frank's story went untold until newly discovered writings became part of a mesmerizing Pulitzer-Prize winning play, adapted for our stage by Wendy Kesselman. Peer into the world of a family in hiding and a gifted young writer who came of age during the horrors of the Holocaust. This adaptation weaves together Anne's reflections with actual survivor accounts to tell the chilling story of Nazi persecution and the prevailing hopes of a girl who – despite everything – inspired generations with her unwavering faith in humanity.

"A powerful new version that moves the audience to gasp, then tears." —Associated Press.

### ***Origin KC- WORLD PREMIERE***

#### ***Roof of the World***

February 26 – March 27, 2016 | Copaken Stage | Written by D. Tucker Smith | Directed by Eric Rosen

Part spy thriller, part *Downton Abbey*, this world premiere production is an epic love story about a British explorer and an Indian spy during Queen Victoria's rule. This high speed, sweeping drama takes you into uncharted territory (quite literally), where suspense and romance keep your pulse racing and your knees weak. It's fun, sexy, edge-of-your seat excitement that will leave you breathless from the exhilaration of a grand overseas adventure.

### ***The Fantasticks***

March 18 – April 10, 2016 | Spencer Theatre | Book and Lyrics by Tom Jones | Music by Harvey Schmidt | Directed by Jerry Genochio

It's the longest-running musical in history for a reason. This is theatre magic in its purest form, with clever props, snappy dialogue, plot twists and the mesmerizing performances of a stunningly talented cast. The delightful drama starts as a tale about a boy and a girl whose fathers lovingly hatch a plan to bring them together. But when the sly El Gallo steps in to assist, the young lovers experience the harsh realities of life before wising up to the world and fully realizing their love. A small cast never made such a big impression. Don't miss it.

### ***Origin KC- New Works Festival***

Kansas City Repertory Theatre Announces Mellon Foundation Grant to renew KC Rep Playwright in Residence for Nathan Louis Jackson

Two WORLD PREMIERES presented in rotating repertory  
April 22- May 22, 2016 | Copaken Stage | Curated by Marissa Wolf

***Fire in Dreamland***

Written by Rinne Groff | Directed by Marissa Wolf

Moments after you've settled into your seat, this coming-of-age story grabs you with such intensity that you can't look away. A world premiere from celebrated playwright Rinne Groff (*Saved!*, *Compulsion*), it's the story of a modern-day young woman named Kate who is seduced by the vision of a Dutch filmmaker obsessed with the tragic 1911 fire on Coney Island. Past and present converge against a destructive backdrop, and when Kate finally sees the illusion of filmmaking – and of life with an inattentive lover – she rediscovers her ambitions as an independent woman.

***Lot's Wife***

Written by Eric Rosen

You're at times inside the play, at times behind the scenes, all the while wondering whether the story is actually a murder confession. This world premiere production from KC Rep Artistic Director Eric Rosen centers on Adam Mace, a promising playwright with a troubling past who has written his first new play since the tragic deaths of his wife and infant child. Set as a 1930s noir thriller, the script opens old wounds between ex-friends and lovers as actors are made to play themselves, and even the dead take the stage to tell their side of the story in an epic meta-theatrical murder mystery that is both heartbreaking and hilarious.

###

**Please direct all media inquiries to: Ellen McDonald at 816.444.0052,  
816.213.4355 (cell) or [publicity@kcrep.org](mailto:publicity@kcrep.org).**

**For further information, please visit our Web site at [www.kcrep.org](http://www.kcrep.org).**

**For Tickets: 816.235.2700 or [www.kcrep.org](http://www.kcrep.org).**

---



The image shows the KCRep logo in large blue letters on the left. To the right, there is a grid of eight production cards, each with a title, subtitle, and dates. Below the grid, a banner reads "NEW LOOK : NEW SEASON! SEASON TICKETS ON SALE NOW at 816.235.2700 or visit KCRep.org." The production cards are: 1. SUNDAY with THE JACKSONS and GEORGE (SEP 11 - OCT 4, 2015); 2. BLUEPRINTS TO FREEDOM: AN ODE TO BAYARD RUSTIN (OCT 16 - NOV 15, 2015); 3. A Christmas Carol (NOV 20 - DEC 24, 2015); 4. SANTALAND DIARIES (DEC 3 - 24, 2015); 5. ANNE FRANK (JAN 29 - FEB 21, 2016); 6. ROOF OF THE WORLD (FEB 26 - MAR 27, 2016); 7. FANTASTICKS (MAR 18 - APR 10, 2016); 8. NEW WORKS FESTIVAL (APR 22 - MAY 22, 2016).