



## NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Pittsburgh Public Theater announces new hires, attracts national talent**

*The Public welcomes a new associate artistic director from Baltimore and a development lead from Florida*

**July 25, 2024** | Pittsburgh Public Theater today announced significant additions to its team with the appointment of **Sarah Ashley Cain** (she/they) as Associate Artistic Director and **Toby Guinn** (he/him) as its first Chief Development Officer. The Public also announced the appointment of **Dominique Briggs** (she/her) as Senior Manager of Partnerships and Public Works as the organization expands its work through the upcoming [Public Works](#) initiative.

“These critical additions to our staff reflect one of The Public’s core values of attracting and retaining talent,” Managing Director Shaunda McDill said. “Retention is an organizational and regional imperative. We are eager to welcome these incredible people from Baltimore, Florida, and our own backyard, all who will increase our capacity and productivity while positively informing our culture and serving The Public’s mission.”

Cain joins The Public for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season in 2024/2025 from their immediate past role as the director of artistic producing at [Baltimore Center Stage](#) and has extensive experience bringing artistic visions to life on some of the nation’s most exciting stages. She has been an active participant in the League of Regional Theaters, the [organization](#) that sets best practices for regional theaters across the country, and regularly travels to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival to produce artistic work and elevate emerging artists into national and international conversations.

“I talk about myself as a values-based producer, and I like to use budgets as a way of aligning with my values,” Cain said. “Not everyone thinks of budgeting as a creative, artistic process, but I truly believe it can be and should be. Your budget is a literal representation of what you resource and what you pay attention to.”

Cain’s expertise and passion will ensure the commitment to equity and excellence The Public [presents](#) on stage is supported by transparent, equitable, and excellent processes, contractual agreements, and systems within the organization.

“I don’t necessarily believe that a single piece of theater will change the world,” Cain said, “but I do believe that it will change peoples’ minds, and those people will go on to change the world. Being a true public theater is about putting the work out there that connects with and entertains people, and hoping it sparks within them something meaningful.”

The Public’s new associate artistic director brings deep experience crafting and producing meaningful and entertaining theater while remaining financially responsible. At Pittsburgh Public Theater Cain will make significant contributions to season planning, artistic producing, community programming like Public Works, artistic staffing, and artist orientation.

“Sarah comes to us with an exceptional breadth of producing and artistic experience from her work with Baltimore Center Stage, Yale Repertory Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, and the Virginia Film Festival,” Pittsburgh Public Theater Artistic Director Marya Sea Kaminski said. “In our co-producing



process for 'The Importance of Being Earnest,' I had the opportunity to work with Sarah directly and experience firsthand the expertise, kindness, and innovation she brings to a collaboration."

The Public's new Chief Development Officer Toby Guinn was [previously](#) the director of development for Sarasota Opera, where he also previously performed on stage under the name Scott Guinn. Guinn performed leading and supporting roles for the New York City Opera, among many others, and began his career in arts administration. He previously worked in development at Asolo Repertory Theatre and as development director at Knoxville Opera. Guinn's move to Pittsburgh is also a deliberate one.

"It was time to leave Florida behind. My husband and I wanted to find a place where we felt welcomed, could find a community," he said. "When I came across the listing for this position, I was immediately drawn to the vision of the company and the deliberate and strategic approach to adjust to new realities and to grow into the next 50 years. So, this move works not only for my professional goals but also for my family."

Guinn credits McDill and Kaminski for the transparency shown during the interview process in discussing the challenges the organization faces.

"Philanthropy has a major role to play in the future of The Public. While foundation support is impressively strong, we need to be clear that increasing support from individuals is crucial to the future of the company," Guinn said. "That involves both inspiring existing donors to increase their support over time and cultivating new support. It's incredibly important that people see the return on their philanthropic investment reflected in the organization's success and in the community."

The Public also announced the appointment of accomplished regional artist and theater worker Dominique Briggs as senior manager of Public Works and partnerships, a new role that will expand the theater's ability to share its resources with the community through meaningful and impactful partnerships, like those in the company's upcoming [Public Works](#) production of "Twelfth Night." Briggs served as assistant director for Season 49's production of ["The Coffin Maker."](#) and as senior manager of partnerships will lead vital programming like Pittsburgh Public Theater's annual production of [Veterans Story Night](#).

"I love The Public and I'm excited to join the Pittsburgh Public Theater family," Briggs said. "Having the opportunity to share this amazing place and my love of the arts with the Pittsburgh community is a dream come true for me."

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#### **ABOUT PITTSBURGH PUBLIC THEATER**

*Pittsburgh Public Theater strives to be a true public theater to the Pittsburgh region and welcomes more than 70,000 guests through the doors of the O'Reilly Theater every year. The Public is renowned for its exceptional mix of programming, featuring American classics, world premieres, new adaptations, and favorite musicals. Its commitment to education and engagement initiatives is a cornerstone of its mission and includes the signature Shakespeare Monologue & Scene Contest and innovative community partnerships. The O'Reilly Theater is a project of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust.*

*Pittsburgh Public Theater is under the leadership of Artistic Director Marya Sea Kaminski and Managing Director Shaunda McDill and celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> season in 2024.*