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JENNIFER BIELSTEIN NAMED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

SAN FRANCISCO (June 5, 2018)—Following an extensive nationwide search, **American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Board of Trustees** today named **Jennifer Bielstein** the new executive director of San Francisco’s premier nonprofit theater organization. Bielstein succeeds Peter Pastreich who will depart from American Conservatory Theater at the end of the 2017–18 season.

Jennifer Bielstein joins American Conservatory Theater from the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, MN, where she served as managing director. She also currently serves as President of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), representing 74 theaters nationally. Prior to relocating to the Twin Cities, Bielstein was managing director of Actors Theatre of Louisville for 10 seasons.

“On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am delighted to welcome Jennifer Bielstein as American Conservatory Theater’s new executive director,” said A.C.T. Board of Trustees President **Kay Yun**. “Her passion and dedication to the arts makes her one of most respected and sought-after arts leaders in the country. Jennifer and incoming Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon are the ideal team to lead A.C.T. into the future.”

“I am honored for this opportunity to lead American Conservatory Theater alongside Pam MacKinnon,” said **Bielstein**. “I look forward to becoming a part of the San Francisco Bay Area community and working with the Board of Trustees, the staff, artists, and all of the theater’s stakeholders to build upon and expand A.C.T.’s impressive legacy.”



“I am thrilled Jennifer will be stepping into A.C.T. with me,” adds incoming A.C.T. Artistic Director **Pam MacKinnon**. “Her knowledge of, commitment to, and passion for theater is unparalleled. I cannot wait!”

In Louisville, she served on the boards of Theatre Forward, the Louisville Downtown Development Corporation; Greater Louisville, Inc.; the Arts and Cultural Attractions Council; and as a review panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts. In Chicago, IL, she was the executive director of Writers Theatre and also worked for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, About Face Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre, and Lincoln Park Zoo, and served on the board of the League of Chicago Theatres.

Named by *Minnesota Business* as a Real Power 50 in 2018 and by *Twin Cities Business* as a Person to Know in 2017, Bielstein was also recognized with the Pyramid Award of Excellence in Leadership from the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, as one of *Business First’s* 40 Under 40, and *Today’s Woman* magazine’s Most Admired Woman in the Arts.

Prior to serving as President of the League of Resident Theatres, Bielstein served as LORT's Vice President; Chair of its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee; Secretary; and on multiple union negotiating teams.

Bielstein is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in business administration and theater, Stanford Graduate School of Business's Executive Program for Non-Profit Leaders in the Arts, and Bellarmine University's Masters in Business Administration where she received the MBA Faculty Merit Award and was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma, the honor society for business programs.

"The League of Resident Theatres ("LORT"), and now A.C.T., are incredibly fortunate to have a leader like Jennifer Bielstein," said **Harry Weintraub**, general counsel of the League of Resident Theatres. "Jennifer has served as a LORT Officer since 2009, first as Secretary, then Vice President, and now President. In addition, she has served a number of years as Chair of LORT's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee and has sat on and chaired a number of LORT's union negotiating committees. Jennifer's thoughtful, detailed, and dedicated work on behalf of LORT has had a tremendous impact on the nonprofit theatre industry, and I am confident her impact at A.C.T. will be just as great."

"A.C.T. could not have made a better choice," adds **Joseph Haj**, artistic director of the Guthrie Theater. "Jennifer is tireless, smart, collegial, and skilled. I believe Pam and A.C.T. will find Jennifer to be as valuable a partner as I have found her to be at the Guthrie."

"Jennifer is one of the finest people working in the theatre today," said **Les Waters**, artistic director of Actors Theatre of Louisville. "She is a consummate professional—dedicated, creative, and passionate about the art. I loved working with her at Actors Theatre of Louisville and look forward to the magnificent work that she and Pam will make at A.C.T."

The Executive Director Search Committee, led by Kay Yun, was comprised of nine members of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees and four members of A.C.T.'s leadership staff. They were assisted by David Mallette from Management Consultants for the Arts, one of the premier executive search firms in the field of performing arts.

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