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**Strawberry Theatre Workshop returns
to the Erickson Theatre with ground-breaking
AIDS drama “The Normal Heart”**

PLAYS JANUARY 16- FEBRUARY 15, 2014

Written by activist Larry Kramer in 1985, *The Normal Heart* is an intimate story of a tight-knit group of friends that doubles as a real-life political thriller. Called "a masterwork of love, rage, and pride," the play is a fearless look at the sexual politics of New York during the discovery of the AIDS epidemic. Opening January 16, 2014, *Heart* represents Strawberry Theatre Workshop's return to the Erickson Theatre Off Broadway after a absence of more than a year.

Strawshop—an organization with a mission to start community conversations—is partnering with **Lifelong AIDS Alliance** to bring this vital history back to the stage for two constituencies: those who survived the epidemic, as well as a generation of sexually active adults too young to remember the early horror of AIDS. The performances will include talk-back sessions with care givers and activists who will answer questions on the challenges still faced by a community living with HIV/AIDS, our best strategies for prevention, and the hope for a cure.

Directing for Strawshop is **Sheila Daniels**, winner of the 2011 TPS Gregory Award for Strawshop's *Breaking the Code*.

Greg Lyle-Newton is featured as Kramer's semi-biographical alter ego, Ned Weeks. He is supported by Stranger Genius **Amy Thone** as Dr Emma Brookner, Intiman Artistic Director **Andrew Russell** as New York Times columnist Felix Turner, **Rob Burgess** (*Hound of the Baskervilles*) as brother Ben Weeks, and **Peter Crook** (*The Seagull Project*) as the closeted activist Bruce Niles.

The cast also includes **Stephen Black**, **Brian Culbertson**, **Joseph Cummings**, and **Simon Hamlin**. Designers are **Reed Nakayama**, **Ron Erickson**, **Katherine Stromberger**, and Strawshop Artistic Director **Greg Carter**. *The Normal Heart* is stage-managed by **Claire Branch** and **Gabrielle Strong**.

About *The Normal Heart*

The Normal Heart follows the journey of gay activist Ned Weeks as he attempts to establish an AIDS awareness organization in a city with an active and thriving gay population in 1981. The government and medical community's refusal to acknowledge the virus as a crisis presents Ned and his colleagues with obstacles, and raises questions of ethics and human rights in these leading institutions. The resistance from government officials and medical professionals is a reminder that the first step of an international political movement is individual action. At *The Normal Heart's* core is the story of one man who refused to let doctors, politicians, and the press bury the truth of an epidemic behind a wall of silence, but also emphasizes the need for education and compassion surrounding the life-threatening virus.

After a successful 1985 Off-Broadway production at The Public Theater, *The Normal Heart* was revived in Los Angeles, London, and appeared again Off-Broadway in 2004. A Broadway debut opened in April 2011 and won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play. An HBO movie version will be released in May 2014.

About Strawberry Theatre Workshop

Founded in 2004 by Greg Carter, Strawberry Theatre Workshop is a professional theatre company dedicated to socially engaged work of the highest caliber. Strawshop is a **Stranger Genius Award** winner, a four-time **Seattle Times Footlight Award** winner, and the only company to be nominated for a **TPS Gregory Award for Outstanding Production** four years in a row. Known for its critically acclaimed productions of *Breaking the Code*, *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*, *The Elephant Man*, and *The Laramie Project*, Strawshop is anchored in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood. Strawshop is one of three companies selected to operate the new 12th Avenue Arts, a center for theatre slated to open in October 2014.

Mission: Strawberry Theatre Workshop is committed to the idea that the theatre is the people's place of *aspiration*, and that any voice from the stage is translated exponentially into conversations at coffee shops, bus stops, classrooms, and play fields. Strawshop is dedicated to the idea of *ensemble*, in the broadest sense of the word. Our ensemble does not only mean a resident company of workers, but a collective that includes our work, our audience, and our neighborhood. This is an *activist* stance. To be a good neighbor is to be a relevant neighbor, a responsible neighbor, and a vocal neighbor.

LISTING INFORMATION:

The Normal Heart

Opens: **Thursday, January 16, 2014**

Plays: **Thu-Fri-Sat**

All Shows: **7:30 pm**

Venue: **Erickson Theatre Off Broadway**

Address: **1524 Harvard Ave, Capitol Hill, Seattle**

Ticket Prices: **\$36 General, \$27 Seniors, \$18 Students**

Phone Sales: **1-800-838-3006**

Online Sales: **normalheart.brownpapertickets.com**

READ MORE AT: **www.strawshop.org**