

**WILLIAM PETERSEN AND RAE GRAY MAKE THEIR
LOS ANGELES STAGE DEBUT TONIGHT IN *SLOWGIRL*
DIRECTED BY ARTISTIC DIRECTOR RANDALL ARNEY**

*OPENING NIGHT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12
AUDREY SKIRBALL KENIS THEATER AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE*

LOS ANGELES (March 12, 2014) – **William Petersen** (*To Live and Die in L.A.*, the Broadway revival of Tennessee Williams’ *The Night of the Iguana*) and **Rae Gray** (*Boardwalk Empire*, *Chicago Fire*) make their Los Angeles stage debut tonight in **Greg Pierce’s** funny and introspective new play, *Slowgirl* at the Geffen Playhouse. Helmed by Geffen Artistic Director **Randall Arney**, this production received critical acclaim last summer when it appeared at Chicago’s Steppenwolf Theatre.

Petersen and Arney are ensemble members of the Steppenwolf Theatre. They met in 1980 while working on a production of Lanford Wilson’s *Balm in Gilead*. Known for his physical and emotional stage work, Petersen has starred such critically acclaimed productions as *Fool for Love*, *The Belly of the Beast*, *Moby Dick* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

The Chicago Tribune called *Slowgirl*, "Engaging, compassionate and well-written." *The Chicago Sun-Times* said, "Under the sensitive direction of Randall Arney, two marvelous actors—William Petersen and Rae Gray—deliver finely tuned, often surprising performances."

Escape is easy but redemption is hard. When seventeen year-old Becky is shipped off to her Uncle Sterling’s Costa Rican home — a sanctuary to which he escaped many years ago — the two lost souls navigate contrasting philosophies and a maze of regret.

Arney creates an astonishing “tennis court” design in the intimate Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater that will allow audiences to experience the play from two sides of the action.

Special events during the run include the theater’s **Signature Series** performances for no

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additional cost to ticketholders. These evenings include:

Talk Back Tuesdays – March 18, 25 & April 1, 8

Enjoy complimentary Peet's Coffee & Tea before the show and dig deeper into plot, characters and themes with Geffen artists post-performance.

The Geffen Playhouse presents
The Steppenwolf Theatre Company Production of
Slowgirl
By **Greg Pierce**
Directed by **Randall Arney**
Previews: Tuesday, March 4 – Tuesday, March 11
Opening Night: Wednesday, March 12
Closing: Sunday, April 27

LOCATION

The Geffen Playhouse in the Aurdrey Skirball Kenis Theater
10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets are available now in-person at the Geffen Playhouse box office, via phone at 310.208.5454 or online at www.geffenplayhouse.com. Prices are \$57-\$72.

MULTIMEDIA

High resolution photos and video are available in our online media center:
<http://geffenplayhouse.com/mediacenter.php>

BIOGRAPHIES

Rae Gray (Becky)

Rae Gray is thrilled to make her Los Angeles theater debut at the Geffen Playhouse. Chicago credits include *Slowgirl*, *The Book Thief* and *Wedding Band* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre), *Sunday in the Park with George* (Ravinia Festival with Patti LuPone and Audra McDonald), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Victory Gardens Theater), *The North China Lover* (Lookingglass Theatre), *The Real Thing* (Writers' Theatre), *Inherit the Wind* (Northlight Theatre), *The Crucible* and *Cry of Players* (TimeLine Theatre Company), *Meet Me in St. Louis* (Drury Lane Theatre) and *Oliver!* and *State Fair* (Marriott Theatre). Regional credits include *The North China Lover* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and *Meet Me in St.*

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Louis (Gateway Playhouse, NY). Television credits include *Boardwalk Empire* (HBO) and *Chicago Fire* (NBC). Rae is a student at The University of Chicago. Love and thanks to Billy and Randy.

William Petersen (Sterling)

William Petersen has a distinguished background in theater, film and television. In 1979, he founded the Remains Theater Ensemble in Chicago with a group of fellow actors including Gary Cole and Amy Morton and first appeared at Steppenwolf in the seminal 1980 production of *Balm in Gilead*. In 1983, Petersen starred as Jack Henry Abbott in *In the Belly of the Beast* at the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, the Edinburgh Festival and The Kennedy Center. Petersen made his Broadway debut in a revival of Tennessee Williams' *The Night of the Iguana* in 1996 and appeared in a number of regional stage productions including *Blackbird*, *Dublin Carol*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *The Time of Your Life*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Fool for Love* and *Speed-the-Plow*. His feature film credits include *To Live and Die in L.A.*, *Manhunter*, *Cousins*, *Young Guns II*, *Fear*, *The Contender* and the films *Hard Promises* and *Keep the Change*, both of which he also produced. He serves as executive producer on *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* and was nominated in 2004 for a Golden Globe Award for his portrayal of Gil Grissom, the lead investigator. His television credits include *Long Gone*, *The Rat Pack*, the Golden Globe award-winning mini-series *The Kennedys of Massachusetts* and *The Beast*. Petersen was born in Evanston, Illinois and studied acting in Spain.

GREG PIERCE (Playwright)

Greg Pierce is a playwright, lyricist and fiction writer. *Slowgirl* was the inaugural play of Lincoln Center Theater's Claire Tow Theater (LCT3) and is published by Dramatists Play Service. His original musical *The Landing*, written with John Kander, premiered at the Vineyard Theatre. Their second musical *Kid Victory* will premiere in the 2014/15 season. His stage adaptation of Haruki Murakami's novel *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, written with director Stephen Earnhart, premiered at the Edinburgh International Festival and went on to play the Singapore Arts Festival. His play *The Quarry* with music by his brother Randal Pierce will premiere at Vermont Stage Company this spring. He currently holds commissions from Lincoln Center Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club/Sloan Foundation and Second Stage Theatre. He has received fellowships from the Edward F. Albee Foundation, the Djerassi Institute, the New York Public Library, and Yaddo. A graduate of Oberlin College, Greg received his MFA from Warren Wilson College. He grew up in Shelburne, Vermont and now lives in New York City.

RANDALL ARNEY (Director)

Randall Arney has been a theater professional for over 30 years and has served as Artistic Director of the Geffen Playhouse since 1999. In addition to his artistic programming and oversight at the Geffen, Arney has helmed more than 10 productions for the theater, most recently *American Buffalo*, *Superior Donuts*, *The Female of the Species*, *The Seafarer*, *Speed-the-Plow* and *All My Sons*. Arney is an ensemble member and former Artistic Director of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre where his directing credits include: *The Seafarer*, *The Beauty*

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Queen of Leenane, Death and the Maiden, Curse of the Starving Class, Killers and The Geography of Luck, among others. Arney also directed Steppenwolf's world premiere of Steve Martin's *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, as well as the subsequent national and international acclaimed productions. Mr. Arney's acting credits with Steppenwolf include *Born Yesterday, Ghost in the Machine, The Homecoming, Frank's Wild Years, You Can't Take it with You, Fool for Love, True West, Balm in Gilead* and *Coyote Ugly*. As the Artistic Director for Steppenwolf from 1987 to 1995, he oversaw the creation of a new state-of-the-art theater which is Steppenwolf's current home. Broadway transfers under his leadership include *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice, The Song of Jacob Zulu* (six Tony Award nominations) and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1990 Tony Award, Best Play). Mr. Arney has an MFA degree in Acting from Illinois State University and has taught master classes and workshops at UCLA, Steppenwolf, around the U.S. and in Tokyo.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates, and is currently helmed by Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice, General Manager Behnaz Atae, Chief Development Officer Regina Miller and Co-Chairs of the Board Martha Henderson and Pamela Robinson Hollander. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit www.geffenplayhouse.com.

MEDIA CONTACT

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