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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Stewart Urist, Managing Director

 412-362-1713, surist@quantumtheatre.com

Who: Quantum Theatre

What: ***King Lear* by William Shakespeare edited by James Kincaid and Julian Markels,**

 **directed by Risher Reddick**

When: **May 10-June 2, 2019**, Wednesday through Saturday Sundays at 7:30PM

Where: **Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark (**Carrie Furnace Blvd, Swissvale, PA 15218**)**

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**QUANTUM THEATRE’S *KING LEAR* STAGED AT THE CARRIE BLAST FURNACES**

*Local cast brings iconic Shakespeare text to Pittsburgh’s majestic industrial site*

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania — **Quantum Theatre** presents ***King Lear****,* widely regarded as Shakespeare’s greatest tragedy, directed by Risher Reddick at **Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark** May 10th – June 2nd. Part of the former Homestead Steel Works, the furnaces are the only surviving pre-WWII blast furnaces in the country. Set on acres of riverfront landscape largely returned to nature in the communities of Rankin and Swissvale – and sandwiched between the historically industrial behemoths of Braddock and Homestead – the Carrie Furnaces are considered the gold standard of historic industrial sites. Rivers of Steel, steward of the Carrie Furnaces and Quantum’s partner in bringing *King Lear* to life, is a pioneer of industrial preservation as a way to support community redevelopment through heritage tourism and creative placemaking.

**Director Risher Reddick** is fascinated by the remnants of iron production at Carrie, and how the furnaces remain as monuments to the steel industry which dominates Pittsburgh’s identity. That aspect of the site resonates for Reddick because the play is “about the stripping away of identity on the way toward the end of life.” He adds “The site is incredible, not only as a feat of engineering, but for its present life, after use as a cog in the steel industry.” The production continues Quantum’s long tradition of reimagining classics in never-before-seen ways. As **Artistic Director Karla Boos** knows, “people are looking for an experience that is like no other.” She saw a reading of *Lear* in this form that inspired her to enable a full production. In homage to its beginning, a foley-based sound treatment and a ‘rough magic’ ensemble approach supports the tight (2 hour) edit of the play by Kincaid and Markels.

The story begins in Lear’s palace in the shadow of the **Carrie Deer**, an iconic sculpture created from materials sourced onsite by the Industrial Arts Co-op in the late 1990s. Responding to nature’s resurgence in this post-industrial space neglected in the aftermath of collapsed steel industry, these guerilla artists included Jeffrey Carpenter (playing *Lear*) and Tim Kaulen. It’s worth noting that Quantum Theatre made Shakespeare’s *Antony & Cleopatra* with both Carpenter and Kaulen in 1996 as the Brew House artist collective Kaulen led explored the idea of performance in the garage/studio where he and six other metal artists worked.

Machinery of a scale to dwarf the human protagonists and a trio of towering puppet figures imagined by set designer **Tony Ferrieri** evoke the grandeur of Lear at court, before his self-destructive fall. As Lear’s sanity disintegrates under attack from his ungrateful children in the second part of the play, the audience will travel to the **Iron Garden**, where native plants and concrete relics evoke ancient Britain. In the twilight of a stone-ringed clearing, the audience intimately experiences the king’s exile and madness.

The cast features Bricolage Production Company founders **Jeffrey Carpenter** and **Tami Dixon** as Lear and The Fool, as well as **Dana Hardy Bingham,** **Ken Bolden, Lissa Brennan, Monteze Freeland, Jessie Wray Goodman, Catherine Gowl, Connor McCanlus, Joe McGranaghan,** and **Michael Angelo Turner.**

The design team features **Susan Tsu** (costumes), **C. Todd Brown** (lighting), **Tony Ferrieri** (set), and **Steve Shapiro** (sound).

*King Lear* performances are **May 10th – June 2nd** Wednesday through Sunday at 7:30PM. Location: Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark, Carrie Furnace Boulevard, Swissvale, PA 15218. Free parking in lot available on-site. Tickets can be purchased by calling 412-362-1713 or online at www.quantumtheatre.com/king-lear. Prices range from $43-$63. Tours of Carrie Blast Furnaces available preshow on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Discounts available for groups of 10 or more.

**Special Performances:**

* **Pay What You Can Night** on Wednesday, May 8th
* **Community Night** on Thursday, May 9th, complimentary underwritten tickets for residents of Swissvale, Rankin, Braddock, Munhall, Homestead and West Homestead.
* **Opening/Press Night** on Friday, May 10th, with a post-show champagne reception.
* **Post-Show Q&A** on Sunday, May 12th, Q&A session with the cast and team.
* **Social Q** sponsored by Reed Smith LLP on Wednesday, May 15th, a reception and look at Pittsburgh through Quantum’s eyes.
* **Quantum Quaff** sponsored by Maher Duessel on Thursday, May 16th, a pre-show wine tasting event.
* **Quantum-on-the-Couch** on Saturday, May 18th, a post-show discussion of the psychology of the characters led by Dr. Manuel Reich, Psychiatrist and Artistic Director Karla Boos
* **Meet the Editors** on Wednesday, May 22nd, a pre-show discussion of *King Lear* with editors James Kincaid and Julian Markelsand the themes they sought to highlight with their new treatment

For press tickets please contact: Stewart Urist, surist@quantumtheatre.com

Now in its 28th season, Quantum Theatre is a company of progressive, professional artists dedicated to producing intimate and sophisticated theatrical experiences in uncommon settings, exploring universal themes of truth, beauty, and human relationships in unexpected ways. Quantum Theatre is devoted to eclectic experimentation, staging its works in environmental sites that inspire directors, designers, and performers, and delight audiences. They reflect Pittsburgh's character, history and architecture, and are as different from one another as a grand museum, an abandoned industrial site, a modern office tower, a beloved City lake, and a waterless indoor swimming pool. The company is influenced by theater artists working in new ways around the world, often bringing such artists to its Pittsburgh laboratory, where Quantum assembles unusual artistic teams, empowers creativity, and nurtures bold ideas.

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