For Immediate Release
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YALE REPERTORY THEATRE PRESENTS THE SOHO REP PRODUCTION OF *WATCH ME WALK*, WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY ANNE GRIDLEY AND DIRECTED BY ERIC TING, NOVEMBER 14-DECEMBER 5

In this acclaimed work of unruly possibility, comic frankness, and taboo-breaking, downtown theater legend Gridley walks the audience through the absurdities of navigating disability and others' perceptions of it

Anne has a disease you've probably never heard of and that doesn't have a cure. Her doctor says it shouldn't define her, but she's going to define it for you.

Yale Repertory Theatre (**Evan Yionoulis**, Artistic Director; **Florie Seery**, Managing Director) presents the **Soho Rep** production of **Anne Gridley**'s ***Watch Me Walk***, directed by **Eric Ting**, November 14-December 5 (at Yale Rep, 1120 Chapel Street, New Haven). "One of downtown theater's tartest, wryest performers" (Helen Shaw, *The New York Times*), Gridley takes audiences on a wild walk through her experiences since being diagnosed with Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia (HSP), a rare degenerative neurological disease which her mother and grandmother also had. Direct from a critically acclaimed Off-Broadway run, *Watch Me Walk* is a hilarious and biting new play about disability, pity, and family mythologies that will stay with you long after the curtain—or Anne—falls.

Here, the Nature Theater of Oklahoma founding member and two-time OBIE Award winner Gridley builds on her decades-long legacy of bold experimental theater-making for her first-ever piece as a solo playwright. In her play that's part observational comedy, part bonkers family history, part critique of our trainwreck of a healthcare system, Gridley points to a personal irony: "HSP is also known as an orphan disease. Such rare diseases that afflict fewer than 200,000 people in the U.S. means there aren't enough people with the disease for pharmaceutical companies to be interested in funding research for medications or cures, so they become 'orphaned.' When I found out about the concept of orphan diseases having lost both of my parents, I found it hilarious — I guess I'm just an orphan with an orphan disease; how perfect is that?"

Hilton Als in *The New Yorker* called *Watch Me Walk* "a prime example of what we get when autobiographical theatre works: intelligence, and the ability to laugh at oneself, with one's heart, as always, in both the wrong and the right place." In *TheaterMania*, Dan Rubins wrote of the "biting" show, "Gridley's wry, warm delivery and her oft-mischievous grin…[allow] her to bring the storytelling to very dark places and then lead us back to the light."

Watch Me Walk is performed by Gridley with **Fernando Contreras** (Off-Broadway: *Bruise & Thorn*, *The Wedding March*) and **Keith Johnson** (Regional: *Austen's Pride*, *Lippa's Wild Party*). The creative team is **Asli Bulbul** (Choreographer), **Noah Lethbridge** (Music Coach and Original Songs), **Alex Gibson** (Original Songs), **Jian Jung** (Scenic Designer), **Lux Haac** (Costume Designer), **Kate McGee** (Lighting Designer), **Tei Blow** (Sound and Video Designer), **Grace Zandarski** (Vocal Coach), **Judith C. Villalva** (Technical Director), **Stephanie Yankwitt & Company Casting** (Casting Director), and **Lisa McGinn** (Stage Manager).

Gridley's play was commissioned by Soho Rep, which shared a long history with the artist: they also commissioned and presented the Nature Theater of Oklahoma's *No Dice* in 2007, and co-produced their multi-part opera *Life and Times* in 2013 for the Under the Radar festival.

In addition to serving as one of the Directors of Soho Rep, Eric Ting's (Yale Rep: *Between Two Knees*; Off-Broadway: *The Comeuppance*) recent work has celebrated iconic downtown artists in Soho Rep's *Give Me Carmelita Tropicana!* and Charles Ludlum's *Galas* with Anthony Roth Costanzo; his staging of Sarah Jones's solo performance *America, Who Hurt You*, is currently running at Theatre for a New Audience. He says of *Watch Me Walk*, "It's not hard to imagine how something like HSP might isolate someone from the world, and certainly how the world might isolate someone with HSP. But with *Watch Me Walk*, Anne challenges us to not simply watch her walk, but to walk with her, as she confronts a changing body with humor, rage, curiosity, and candor."

Watch Me Walk continues Yale Rep's 2026-27 season, the first to be overseen by Artistic Director **Evan Yionoulis** who assumed that role, as well as Elizabeth Parker Ware Dean of David Geffen School of Drama, on July 1. She says, "*Watch Me Walk* exemplifies everything people have come to love about Anne Gridley as a performer, now also as a writer. I'm thrilled Yale Rep is the second theater to present this work before audiences around the world encounter the piece, and that we have the honor of introducing this artist at the height of her powers to New Haven audiences."

“By investing in the commissioning and long-term development of new works, our hope is that the impact of those works will continue beyond their premieres. *Watch Me Walk* is a prime example of this pursuit, and we are thrilled that Yale Rep is the partner to help make that happen,” says Soho Rep co-director Caleb Hammons. “Anne Gridley is a writer and performer whose momentum cannot be halted. As her walk continues across the country and the globe, audiences are in for quite a ride!”

Development and production support for *Watch Me Walk* is provided by Yale’s Binger Center for New Theatre.

Watch Me Walk Tickets & Performance Schedule

Tickets for *Watch Me Walk* are available here, and are $20 and $40 for all previews, $20 and $50 on weeknights after opening, and $20 and $65 on weekends and matinees after opening. Student tickets are $20 for all performances.

Performances take place November 14-December 5 at Yale Rep (1120 Chapel Street, New Haven):

Saturday, November 14 at 8pm (Preview)
Monday, November 16 at 8pm (Preview)
Tuesday, November 17 at 8pm (Preview)
Wednesday, November 18 at 8pm (Preview)
Thursday, November 19 at 8pm (Opening Night)
Friday, November 20 at 8pm
Saturday, November 21 at 2pm
Saturday, November 21 at 8pm
Monday, November 23 at 8pm
Tuesday, November 24 at 8pm
Friday, November 27 at 8pm
Saturday, November 28 at 2pm (Touch Tour, Audio Description, Talk Back)
Saturday, November 28 at 8pm (ASL)
Tuesday, December 1 at 8pm
Wednesday, December 2 at 2pm (Pre-Performance Discussion)
Wednesday, December 2 at 8pm
Thursday, December 3 at 8pm
Friday, December 4 at 8pm (Spanish Captioning)
Saturday, December 5 at 2pm (Open Captioning)

Saturday, December 5 at 8pm (Closing Night)

About Anne Gridley

Anne Gridley *she/her* (Writer and Performer) is a two-time Obie award-winning actor, dramaturg, and artist. As a founding member of Nature Theater of Oklahoma, she has co-created and performed in critically acclaimed works including the Soho Rep-commissioned *No Dice*, *Life and Times* (also presented by Soho Rep and Under the Radar), *Poetics: A Ballet Brut*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Burt Turrido*. In addition to her work with Nature Theater, Gridley has performed with Pan Pan, chameckilerner, Jérôme Bel, Caborca, 7 Daughters of Eve, and Big Dance, served as a dramaturg for the Wooster Group's production *Who's Your Dada?*, taught devised theater at Bard College, and comedy at Northwestern University. Her drawings have been shown at H.A.U. Berlin and Mass Live Arts. B.A., Bard College; M.F.A., Columbia University. Love always to Mom, Dad, and John.

About Eric Ting

Eric Ting (Director) is a two-time Obie Award-winning director and one of three Directors of Soho Rep. Credits include world premieres of *Give Me Carmelita Tropicana!*, *We Are Proud to Present a Presentation…* (Soho Rep); *The Comeuppance* (Signature Theatre); *The Far Country* (Atlantic Theater Co); The 1491s' *Between Two Knees* (OSF and PAC-NYC); and *Parable of the Sower: The Opera* (Lincoln Center). Most recently: *Galas* (Little Island) with Anthony Roth Costanzo. Also: Long Wharf, Hartford Stage, Yale Rep, McCarter, Williamstown, Alliance, Cincinnati Playhouse, Goodman, CTG, ACT, Berkeley Rep. International: Singapore, France, UAE, Holland, Canada, Romania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Bali.

About the Cast

Fernando Contreras (Adonis, Dance Captain) was born in the Dominican Republic, raised in New Jersey, and now lives in Queens, New York. Off-Broadway: *Bruise & Thorn*, *The Wedding March*, *Parrots at The Pagoda*, *Playing Hot*, *La Caída de Rafael Trujillo*. First National and Asia Tours: *Ghost: The Musical*. He is a founding member of Pipeline Theatre Company, and a member of The Dance Cartel and Shiz: Broadway Meets Sketch Comedy. Love to Nealon, the nabesties, and mi familia. Protect the Dolls. Immigrants are Beautiful. @omgizfern

Keith Johnson *he/him* (Adonis) Credits: *Austen's Pride* (National Tour, Stages St. Louis), Andrew Lippa's *The Wild Party* (Lyric Theatre), *Aida* (Stages St. Louis), *In the Heights* (Mill Mountain), *Ragtime* (MTW), *Dreamgirls* (Arrow Rock), *Bring it On* (HSVPA), *Ragtime* (Stages St. Louis), *Cats* (San Diego Musical Theatre), and *A Chorus Line* (Rocky Mountain Rep). Keith attributes his

success to the Holy Spirit's guidance, God's provision, and the unshakeable support from his family and Ms. McGraw! BBDD Phil 4:8.

About the Creative Team

Asli Bulbul *she/her* (Choreographer) is a NYC-based dancer, performer, and choreographer originally from Istanbul. She danced with Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. for a decade after which she joined Nature Theater of Oklahoma for their epic work, *Life and Times*. Some of the other highlights of her career include working with Martha Clarke, RoseAnne Spradlin and Annie-B Parson. She is very excited to be part of the creative team for *Watch Me Walk* and getting to work with Anne Gridley once again.

Noah Lethbridge *he/him* (Music Coach and Original Songs) is a teacher for the DOE, and has been teaching elementary music at PS 142 Amalia Castro since 2019. Previously, he taught vocal music at The International High School in Prospect Heights, Brooklyn and The Dreamyard School in the Bronx. He holds a B.M. in music education from The Eastman School of Music and an M.A. in musicology from CCNY. He studied voice under Robert Swensen and Constance Haas. Noah co-founded The Indie Opera Podcast in 2009 with conductor Peter Szep. He is also the proud father of Otto Lethbridge, fifth-grader.

Alex Gibson (Original Songs). Broadway: *Pirates! The Penzance Musical*, *SpongeBob SquarePants*, and *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*. Off-Broadway: *Octet* (Lortel nomination),*The Unsinkable Molly Brown*, *Fabulation*, *The Voices in Your Head*. Regional: The Old Globe, The Guthrie, Alliance Theatre, Berkeley Rep. Film and television: *The Beast in Me*, *Doom Patrol*, *Schmigadoon!*. Other credits include Adele: Live in New York City (NBC) and touring Japan with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra in Disney on CLASSIC.

Jian Jung *she/her* (Scenic Designer) is an Obie Award-winning set designer from Korea, based in NYC. Recent theater credits include *Staff Meal* at Playwrights Horizons; *The Following Evening* at PAC-NYC; *The Nosebleed* at LCT3, Woolly Mammoth, and New National Theater Tokyo (Japan); *Kiss* at Wilma Theater (Philadelphia); Ocean Filibuster at A.R.T. Boston; *Bodies They Ritual* at Wild Project; *The Day You Begin* at The Kennedy Center; *Suicide Forest* at Bushwick Starr; and *Ludic Proxy* at Soho Rep and Japan Society. Opera and musical credits include productions at Wolf Trap Opera, Fisher Center in Bard, Huntington Theater, Juilliard, and Long Beach Opera. Her productions also have been in Puerto Rico, Cuba, Venezuela, Korea, and Japan. Jung received an M.F.A. in theater design from NYU, and an M.F.A. in environmental design from Ewha Women's University in Korea. She teaches at NYU/Tisch's Design M.F.A. program and Sarah Lawrence College.

Lux Haac *she/her* (Costume Designer). Broadway: *The Thanksgiving Play*. Off-Broadway/New York: *O.K.!* (INTAR Theatre); *Dirty Laundry* (WP Theater); *Manahatta*, Mobile Unit's *The Comedy of Errors* (The Public Theater); B*etween Two Knees*, *Number Our Days: A Photographic Oratorio* (PAC NYC); *On That Day in Amsterdam* (Primary Stages/59E59); *53% Of* (Second Stage Uptown); *Songs About Trains* (Radical Evolution/Working Theater/New Ohio Theatre). Regional: *You Are Cordially Invited to the End of the World!* (South Coast Rep); *In Her Bones* (CSFAC Theater); *Skeleton Canoe* (Chicago International Puppet Festival); *Dial M for Murder*, *Espejos: Clean*, *I and You*, *Annapurna*, *Native Gardens* (Syracuse Stage); *For the People* (Guthrie Theater); *The Wizard of Oz* (Geva Theatre); *LEAR* (Cal Shakes); *Kim's Convenience* (Westport Country Playhouse, TheatreSquared); *Yoga Play*, *Ragtime* (PlayMakers Repertory Company); *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Arizona Theatre Company). Lux is a member of All My Relations Collective, Wingspace Theatrical Design, and USA 829. M.F.A., NYU/Tisch.

Kate McGee *she/her* (Lighting Designer) is a trans lighting designer, new media artist, and deviser of theater works. She recently concluded a years-long world tour as Lighting Designer for esperanza spalding and Antono Brown Dance's *Off-Brand gOdds*. Recent Off-Broadway: *Bowl EP* (Vineyard Theatre); *The Beastiary* (Ars Nova); *I'm Revolting* (Atlantic Theater Company); *Snatch Adams*, N*otes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members* (Soho Rep), *The Hang* (HERE Arts). She was a 2022–23 artist-in-residence at Soho Rep, where she developed the VR piece *Girl Mode*, since seen at Fabric Arts Workshop and the ASU's MIX Center. Kate devised and designed several pieces with Peter Mills Weiss and Julia Mounsey that have premiered in Europe and NYC, including *while you were partying* at Soho Rep.

Tei Blow *he/him* (Sound and Video Designer) Soho Rep: *Public Obscenities*; *Give Me Carmelita Tropicana!*. Playwrights Horizons: *Practice*, *Wet Brain*, *The Trees*, *Staff Meal*. Other recent: *Galas* (Little Island) and *Rheology* (Bushwick Starr). Awards: Henry Hewes Design Award (2023), Foundation for Contemporary Arts Grants to Artists (2024), Creative Capital 2016, Bessie Award for Outstanding Sound Design (2015) for *I Understand Everything Better* (David Neumann/ Advanced Beginner Group).

Grace Zandarski (Vocal Coach) is Associate Chair of the Acting program and Head of Voice and Text at David Geffen School of Drama, where she has taught Voice since 2002. She has coached numerous productions at Yale Rep and the Geffen School including *Rhinoceros*, *Macbeth in Stride*, *The Brightest Thing in the World*, *An Enemy of the People*, *Hamlet*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and *Between Two Knees*. New York coaching credits include the Mike Nichols productions of *Death of a Salesman* and *Betrayal* (Broadway), *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide…* (The Public Theater), and *Homebody/Kabul* (BAM). She was named Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework in 1998. Zandarski is a member and Board Chair of The Actors Center, a member of

Pantheatre (Paris), SAG-AFTRA, AEA, and VASTA. Acting credits include McCarter Theatre, OSF Ashland, Wilma Theatre, and ACT. Directing credits include the *Peer Gynt* Project and Chekhov Shorts. M.F.A., American Conservatory Theater; B.A., Princeton University.

Judith C. Villalva (Technical Director) is a third-year M.F.A. candidate in technical design and production at David Geffen School of Drama, where her credits include the *Utopia*, Carlotta Festival (assistant technical director), *Metamorphoses* (properties manager), and *Kilele (*assistant production electrician). She has also worked as a scenic painter apprentice at Theatre Squared and as an electrician and rigger for Southcoast Audio. Judith designed, built, and painted sets at the University of Texas at El Paso. Born along the El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juárez border, she continues to grow as an artist driven by curiosity and collaboration.

Stephanie Yankwitt & Company Casting *she/her* (Casting Director). Selected casting credits with Soho Rep: *The Great Privation*, *The Fires*, *Public Obscenites*, *Fairview*, *Give Me Carmelita Tropicana!*, *Wolf Play*, *Notes on Killing Seven Oversight Management and Economic Stability Board Members*, and many others. Current NYC credits include *The Emporium* (CSC), *Jesa* (Ma-Yi @ The Public), and *The Laramie Project* (Audible). Regional work includes *Inherit the Wind* at Arena Stage, the national tour of *Here There are Blueberries* (Tectonic), and the West Coast premiere of Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's play *Purpose* at La Jolla Playhouse. Select upcoming film projects include the feature film *Still Life* and *The Year of the Monarchs* (Alex Dinelaris, writer/director, Lexicon). Recent film work includes the 2024 Grand Jury Prize Winner *In The Summers*, written and directed by Alessandra Lacorazza.

Lisa McGinn *she/her* (Stage Manager) Recent credits: *we come to collect: a flirtation, with capitalism* (Jenn Kidwell, The Flea Theater); *Rheology* (Misha Chowdhury, Bushwick Starr); *A Knock on the Roof* (NYTW, directed by Oliver Butler); Geoff Sobelle's *FOOD*, *HOME*, and *The Object Lesson*; *On Beckett: An Evening with Bill Irwin* (tour); *300 Paintings* (Sam Kissijukian, tour); *Underground Railroad Game* (Jennifer Kidwell, Scott R. Sheppard, Ars Nova, tour); *Those With 2 Clocks* (Wilma Theater); *Ocean Filibuster*, *How to Build a Forest* (PearlDamour); *Detroit Red* (ArtsEmerson); *Love* (Alexander Zeldin, Park Ave Armory); *Compass and Sleep* (Ripe Time); *Chimera and The Wholehearted* (Stein | Holum Projects); *This is Reading* (Lynn Nottage, Kate Whoriskey); LA Dance Project (European tour); *Jacuzzi*, *The Light Years* (The Debate Society); *Revolt. She Said. Revolt Again.*, *Winners and Losers* (Soho Rep); *Chekhov* at Lake Lucille.

About Soho Rep

Soho Rep, "...is small, but the company, committed to what it calls 'radical theater makers,' punches way above its weight. The theater has regularly introduced New York audiences to

work by important, and often provocative, playwrights." (*The New York Times*). Established in 1975, Soho Rep provides meaningful opportunities for radical theater makers at critical junctures in their artistic practice through its productions, the Writer Director Lab, and its Studio workshops and commissions. The organization also prioritizes living wages for artists and provides artists with staff positions through Project Number One. Soho Rep was named the "Best Theater in NYC" by *Time Out New York* and the theater received a Drama Desk Award for Sustained Achievement, recognizing "decades of artistic distinction, innovative production, and provocative play selection." Over the last decade alone, César Alvarez and The Lisps' *Futurity* won the 2016 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Musical; Jackie Sibblies Drury's *Fairview*, which was commissioned by and premiered at Soho Rep, went on to win the 2019 Pulitzer Prize in Drama; Hansol Jung's *Wolf Play* transferred to MCC and won 5 Lucille Lortel Awards including Outstanding Play; Misha Chowdhury's *Public Obscenities* was named a finalist for the 2024 Pulitzer Prize in Drama; and Jordan Tannahill's *Prince Faggot* (co-produced with Playwrights Horizons) won the Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play after transferring commercially to Studio Seaview.

About Yale Repertory Theatre

Yale Repertory Theatre, the internationally celebrated professional theatre in residence at Yale University, has championed new work since 1966, producing well over 150 premieres—including two Pulitzer Prize winners and four other nominated finalists—by emerging and established playwrights. Twenty Yale Rep productions have advanced to Broadway, garnering more than 40 Tony Award nominations and 10 Tony Awards. Yale Rep is also the recipient of the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Established in 2008, Yale's Binger Center for New Theatre has distinguished itself as one of the nation's most robust and innovative new play programs. To date, the Binger Center has supported the work of more than 75 commissioned artists and underwritten the world premieres and subsequent productions of more than 40 new plays and musicals at Yale Rep and theatres across the country.

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