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**The Wallis Studio Ensemble
Presents
S.O.S.
Directed by Madeleine Dahm**

**January 31 – February 10, 2019
At the Circle X Theatre**

(Beverly Hills, CA December 20, 2018) The Wallis Studio Ensemble presents *S.O.S.*, an original multi-media physical theatre work about love and resilience in times of crisis, directed by Madeleine Dahm, from Thursday, January 31 through Sunday, February 10, 2019 at the Circle X Theatre (Please note: *S.O.S.* is *not* being performed at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, but at the Circle X Theatre in Atwater Village). The production uses little known love letters by great writers and activists such as Vita Sackville West, Frederick Douglas, Maya Angelou, Tchaikovsky, Frida Kahlo, Virginia Woolf, Rainer Maria Rilke and others, along with original text, movement, film and photography.

"*S.O.S.* explores how political opportunists and economic systems have fed off and taken advantage of a rise in our sense of personal isolation and how we might find a way back to belonging to each other and the world we inhabit," says Dahm.

Cast members Trecey Dory, Schuyler Girion, Ella M. Joseph, Kelvin Morales, Sina Pooresmaeil, Jo Rodriguez, Helya Salarvand, Alexander Sheldon, Lucia Towers, Viva Kanani Obiajulu Wittman, and Siera Williams are part of The Wallis Studio Ensemble, created by Dahm and GRoW @ The Wallis for early career actors committed to creating innovative theatre for social change. Its mission to cross boundaries is blended with an ethos of collaboration and to create thoughtful and provocative work that is rooted in examining our humanity.

"As recent studies by the World Health Organization and The United Nations have revealed, more people feel a sense of isolation than ever before," Dahm says. "*S.O.S.*, is about a group of strangers finding connection by seeking out small moments of humanity, remembering they don't have to learn something new in fighting

loneliness and isolation, they have to remember something forgotten.”

“We are very proud to provide an artistic home at The Wallis for these talented young actors,” says Mark Slavkin, Director of Education at The Wallis. “But we’re also excited to bring these artists and this timely piece to reach new audiences, thanks to our friends at Circle X Theatre.”

Consistent with The Wallis’ approach to programming, The Studio Ensemble is exploring new ways to adapt work, create new works and re-imagine existing texts for a contemporary age.

In addition to director Dahm, the creative team for *S.O.S.* includes lighting design by Bosco Flanagan, production design by Madeleine Dahm, puppets and masks by Alex Sheldon and time-lapse photography by Jeremy Evans.

Single tickets are now available for \$25. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit TheWallis.org, call 310.746.4000, or stop by in person at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services located at 9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210. Ticket prices subject to change.

Circle X Theatre is located in Atwater Village at 3269 Casitas Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90039

About the Artists

Madeleine Dahm (Director and Production Designer) is an award winning theater director, choreographer, dramaturg and arts activist. Originally from London, her work has been presented in the UK, Europe and U.S. She has been the Resident Artist at GRoW @ The Wallis since 2015, and is the Founding Director of The Wallis Studio Ensemble. Recent directing credits include: Co-Director and Choreographer *Salt*, in Milan for Italian theatre company Bämsemble; Rehearsal Supervisor of *Panorama* for The Martha Graham Dance Company; Associate Director and Choreographer for the seminal work on Forough Farrokhzad *The House is Black*, created by Sussan Deyhim (*Argo*), Co-Director Robert Egan (*Angels in America*), recently at The Met in New York. Madeleine is working on the dramaturg and direction of the stage play *Isn't it Rich* from the feminist novella by journalist Victoria Looseleaf. She is the Director and Choreographer of a new musical comedy by Emmy Award winning composer Harold Faltermeyer (*Beverly Hills Cop*), and renowned Disney writer Philip LaZebnik. Madeleine hails from the UK and trained at the Old Vic and Royal Court, also with legendary Martha Graham. She holds a post-graduate from Trinity Laban Conservatory and has coached and trained actors and dancers internationally for over twenty years, she is currently working with director Jon Kellam, formerly of The Actors' Gang, on a comprehensive actor training program called 'Superdrama.'

Bosco Flanagan (Lighting Designer) is a multi-award winning lighting designer who has worked across the UK, Ireland, Europe, Asia and the US. He is the resident lighting designer for Tim Robbin's company *The Actors' Gang*, and the critically acclaimed *Independent Shakespeare Company*. Bosco has worked with Madeleine on various theatre and dance productions in Los Angeles for the past twelve years. He is the recipient of 6 Ovation Awards for Lighting Design. His other lighting credits include: The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Grand Opera House (Dublin), The Royal Court Theatre (London), The New York and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals and touring with the late David Bowie, U2 and *The Rolling Stones*.

Alex Sheldon (Masks and Puppets) is one of the founding members of the Wallis Studio Ensemble, now in its third year, and the resident fight choreographer. He was raised as an artist at Will Geer's Theatricum

Botanicum, steeped in classical theatre throughout his life and training, and has since performed over a decade of Shakespeare as a company member at Theatricum. Most recently Alex created the entire alien puppet and mask characters for The Ensemble's hit production *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. Mired in classical tradition, Alex integrates a gothic and romantic aesthetics with a modern, progressive approach. Alex also works in a variety of other mediums, serving as an illustrator, sculptor, and playwright.

Calvin Ripley (Company Manager/Assistant Director) has spent over 6 years working along-side artists as an administrative assistant, stage-hand, light board operator and co-director. Born and raised in the twin cities of Minnesota, Calvin was involved in the vibrant theatre scene of Children's theatre, fringe festivals, and local outreach programs. Now in LA, Calvin is honored to be part of the Wallis Studio Ensemble and the dynamic work that they do - finding new and interesting ways to talk about important social issues and highlight often neglected topics.

Andrew Villareal (Acting Coach), proud graduate of Texas A&M Int'l and the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, is honored to have been given the opportunity to work with such stellar artists. Honors include 'Year's Best Performance' - Stage Scene LA for his work as Arnold Beckoff in *Torch Song Trilogy*. 'Best Actor' wins for *The Rocky Horror Show* (Stage Scene LA) and *Equus* (Santa Monica Theatre Guild). Andrew recently completed work on the comedy web series, *Kaplan's Korner* and *Dead Sexy* 'Best Comedy' at the IFS Film Festival. Additional credits: Konstantin in *The Seagull*, Dieter Keller in *The Red Dress* at The Odyssey, and Voldar in the beloved Orange County cult classic *Santa Claus Conquers the Martians*.

Geoffrey Stirling (Stage Manager) is a proud native of California and alumni of Cal State Northridge. Geoffrey works as a stage manager and production manager in Los Angeles. Most recent Credits: *Word of Mouth*, *Thebes*, "Broadway Dreams Showcase" and *Disposable* at The Wallis, *The Drowsy Chaperone* at Valley Performing Arts, *Batboy - The Musical*, *Odilia*, *The Vagina Monologues*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Oktoberfest The Musical*. Geoffrey is the Programs Administrator for the non-profit organization OperaWorks.

About The Company:

The Wallis Studio Ensemble was launched in 2016 when GRoW @ The Wallis joined with theatre director Madeleine Dahm to form this groundbreaking ensemble for early-career actors, creating innovative and visceral theatre as a galvanizing force for social change. Since its inception, The Ensemble has mounted four full scale theatrical productions at The Wallis' Bram Goldsmith and the Lovelace Theatres: Two highly original devised pieces exploring our political, social, and ecological challenges in a post-truth era, and a contemporary adaptation of the Greek tragedy *Thebes* by British playwright Gareth Jandrell (US premiere 2017). Their first devised production *Word of Mouth* was featured on NPR by Priska Neely, at Rise Up LA and was also performed in Italy at the Crisis Art Festival (2017); their production of *Disposable*, an uncompromisingly dark and avant-garde work, was performed at the San Diego International Fringe Festival in July, 2018; and their most recent production, Douglas Adams' *The Hitch Hikers Guide to the Galaxy*, was the LA Times 'Pick of the Week.' Through its productions, The Ensemble has acquired a reputation for creating socially conscious, cutting edge theatre with a strong physical component.

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

Since opening its doors in October 2013, The Wallis has produced or presented more than 250 dance, theatre, opera, classical music and family programs to an ever-expanding audience. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Paul Crewes and Managing Director Rachel Fine, The Wallis brings audiences world-class theater, dance and music, performed by many of the world's most talented and sought-after artists. Featuring eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its notability as the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis offers original and revered works from across the U.S. and around the globe.

The mission of The Wallis is to create, present and celebrate unique performing arts events and educational programs that reflect the rich cultural diversity of our community. Nominated for 47 Ovation Awards, four

L.A. Drama Critic's Circle Awards and the recipient of six architectural awards, The Wallis is a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot venue that celebrates the classic and the modern and was designed by Zoltan E. Pali, FAIA of Studio Pali Fekete architects. The building features the restored, original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places) that serves as the theater's dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and houses the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater, GRoW at The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education (a gift of Gregory Annenberg Weingarten and Family and the Annenberg Foundation) and the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater. Together, these structures embrace the city's history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike.

The Official Sponsors of The Wallis' 2018/19 Season include: Delta Air Lines (Official Airline Sponsor), Waldorf Astoria (Preferred Hotel) and Mercedes-Benz of Beverly Hills (Official Automotive Sponsor).

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For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

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TICKET INFORMATION:

What: **S.O.S.**
Madeleine Dahm, director

Where: **Circle X Theatre**
3269 Casitas Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90039

When: **Thursday, January 31 – Sunday, February 10**
Thursday, January 31, 8 pm
Friday, February 1, 8 pm
Saturday, February 2, 8 pm
Sunday, February 3, 3pm
Thursday, February 7, 8pm
Friday, February 8, 8pm
Saturday, February 9, 8pm
Sunday, February 10, 3pm

Tickets: Single tickets: \$25 (includes all service fees; prices subject to change)
Online: www.TheWallis.org/SOS
By Phone – 310.746.4000
Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services
9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

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