

PRESS CONTACT: CYNTHIA FLEMING | 801.363.7522 | [cynthia@saltlakeactingcompany.org](mailto:cynthia@saltlakeactingcompany.org)

August 23, 2018

For Immediate Release

## Salt Lake Acting Company Opens 2018-2019 Season with ***A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Gynecologic Oncology Unit at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center of New York City***

By Halley Feiffer

Salt Lake Acting Company (SLAC) opens its **48<sup>th</sup> season** of brave, contemporary theatre with Halley Feiffer's poignant and provocative romantic comedy with a mouthful of a title, *A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY UNIT AT MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER OF NEW YORK CITY*. Running **September 12 – October 21, 2018**, this irreverent yet deeply moving play is the perfect way to kick off SLAC's 2018/2019 Season, which Executive Artistic Director Cynthia Fleming says is "filled with heart, humor, and deep human connection."

An unlikely pair meets in an unlikely place for romance: the bedsides of their dying mothers, who are sharing a room at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. Karla is a loud, crass comedian, trying to get her act together; Don is a meek, sad super-nerd, dealing with the challenges of single parenting. They couldn't be more different, except that they are sharing one of the most difficult and personal experiences a person can have – losing their mothers.

The daughter of acclaimed cartoonist Jules Feiffer and writer and performer Jenny Allen, playwright Halley Feiffer drew on (and then sensationalized) real-life experiences in the writing of this play. Her mother battled ovarian cancer when Feiffer was in her 20s. In an interview with [City Theatre Company](#), who produced this play last year, Feiffer said, "I remember looking at the curtain that separated her side of the room from her roommate's and thinking, 'God, wouldn't it be great if there were some cute family member of her roommate, say her son, who I could flirt with and that would help make all this pain and fear go away.'" A play is born.

SLAC's production is directed by University of Utah professor Sarah Shippobotham and features a powerhouse cast of local actors. Cassandra Stokes-Wylie (*BULL SHARK ATTACK*, *HARBUR GATE*) plays Karla, Chris DuVal (director of *HAND TO GOD*) plays Don, SLAC newcomer Marion Markham plays Marcie, and SLAC veteran Annette Wright plays Geena.

As SLAC launches into its new season with over 3,000 subscribers, it announces its **single tickets for the entire season will go on sale Friday, August 24**. More information about the full season can be found at [www.saltlakeactingcompany.org](http://www.saltlakeactingcompany.org) or by calling the box office at (801) 363-7522.

**WHO:**

Salt Lake Acting Company

**WHAT:**

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY UNIT AT MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER OF NEW YORK CITY

By Halley Feiffer

**WHEN:**

September 12 – October 21, 2018

Wednesdays – Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m., Sundays @ 1:00 p.m. & 6:00 p.m.

Additional performances: September 22 @ 2 p.m., September 25 @ 7:30 p.m., October 2 @ 7:30 p.m., October 13 @ 2 p.m.

**WHERE:**

168 West 500 North  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84103

**MORE INFO:**

Salt Lake Acting Company

168 West 500 North, Salt Lake City, Utah, 84103

Box Office: 801-363-7522

Open 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Mon – Fri

[www.saltlakeactingcompany.org](http://www.saltlakeactingcompany.org)

Single tickets range from \$15 – \$44, depending on the performance. Student, Senior, and 30 & Under discounts are available. Discounts are also available for groups of 10 or more. Subscribers always pay the lowest price.

**WHO'S WHO****PLAYWRIGHT**

**Halley Feiffer** is a New York-based writer and actress. Her full-length plays include I'M GONNA PRAY FOR YOU SO HARD (World Premiere Atlantic Theater Company — January 2015, dir. Trip Cullman), HOW TO MAKE FRIENDS AND THEN KILL THEM (World Premiere Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre — 2014, dir. Kip Fagan), SIDNEY AND LAURA, and A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE GYNECOLOGIC ONCOLOGY UNIT AT MEMORIAL SLOAN KETTERING CANCER CENTER. She is currently a writer on the Starz series THE ONE PERCENT. Her plays have been produced, commissioned and developed by Manhattan Theatre Club, Second Stage, New York Theatre Workshop, LAByrinth Theater Company, The O'Neill, The Orchard Project, Berkshire Theatre Group, Naked Angels, Cape Cod Theatre Project, SPACE on Ryder Farm, Keen Company, Partial Comfort Productions and the Amoralists. She is currently working on a stage adaption of THE BOY KINGS, Kate Losse's memoir about working at Facebook during its rising year. Halley is an alumna of terraNOVA's Groundbreakers Playwrights' Group, a former resident writer for Blue Man Group, former Playwright in Residence at Stella Adler Studio and a winner of the Young Playwrights Competition and the Lotos Foundation Prize. She is currently under commission by Manhattan Theatre Club/The Sloan Foundation, Jen Hoguet Productions and Playwrights Horizons. Her work is published by Dramatists Play Service, Overlook Press, Vintage Books, Applause Books, and Smith & Kraus. Halley co-wrote and starred in the 2013 film HE'S WAY MORE FAMOUS THAN YOU, and co-created and stars in the web series WHAT'S YOUR EMERGENCY for Stage17.tv (both directed by Michael Urie). As an actress, she has appeared in Jon Robin Baitz' THE SUBSTANCE OF FIRE (Second Stage), Ethan Coen's WOMEN OR NOTHING (Atlantic, dir. David Cromer), Kenneth Lonergan's MEDIEVAL PLAY (Signature, dir. Kenneth Lonergan), the Broadway revival of John Guare's THE HOUSE OF BLUE LEAVES (dir. David Cromer), Kim Rosenstock's TIGERS BE STILL (Roundabout; Drama League Nom., dir. Sam Gold), HBO's BORED TO DEATH and MILDRED PIERCE, and the

films *THE SQUID AND THE WHALE*, *MARGOT AT THE WEDDING*, and *GENTLEMEN BRONCOS*. She holds a BA from Wesleyan University.

#### DIRECTOR

**Sarah Shippobotham** is a Professor in Acting, Dialects and Voice at the University of Utah. Sarah trained as an actor at The Welsh College of Music and Drama in Wales before gaining a Postgraduate Diploma in Voice Studies from The Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Sarah is thrilled to be making her professional directing debut here at SLAC. Prior to this she has directed many shows for the U including: *OUR COUNTRY'S GOOD*, *ARCADIA*, *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*, *ROMEO AND JULIET* and *THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW*. As an actor Sarah was last seen at SLAC in *TRIBES* and she has been in *THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME*, *KING CHARLES III* and *THE CRUCIBLE* at Pioneer Theatre Company. She is also a Voice and Dialect Coach.

#### CAST

**Chris DuVal\*** (*Don*) is thrilled to be returning to SLAC, having directed *HAND TO GOD* last season. Chris has worked at regional theatres throughout the country, including at such venues as Syracuse Stage, Dallas Theatre Center, South Coast Repertory (appearing in the world-premiere of *WIT*), Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Utah Opera, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Shakespeare Orange County, and 18 years at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as a guest teacher, actor and fight director. He is a Master Teacher with Dueling Arts International, a Certified Teacher with the Society of American Fight Directors, and an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework. Chris serves as the Resident Fight Director at Pioneer Theatre Company, and is an Associate Professor / Head of the Actor Training Program at the University of Utah.

**Marion Markham\*** (*Marcie*) is excited to be making her SLAC debut! Off Broadway, she was seen in *THE EVENTS* (New York Theatre Workshop), *SPRING FLUNG* (Public Theatre), *ALL'S FAIR* (Theatre 1010) and *THE EMBRACERS* (Hudson Guild). Selected regional roles include Mrs. Medlock in *THE SECRET GARDEN* (TheatreZone), Mama in *INDIAN JOE* (Goodspeed Musicals) Gertrude in *HAMLET* (Colonial Theatre) Ma Bailey in *IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE* (Ocean State Theatre) Maria in *WEST SIDE STORY* (International Tour) Peter in *PETER PAN* (Fulton Opera House), Rose in *DANCING AT LUGHNASA* (Ivoryton Playhouse) and Smitty in *HOW TO SUCCEED* (American Musical Theatre.) Additionally, Marion has worked on *Law & Order*, *Saturday Night Live*, *All My Children*, and many independent films. Marion is the resident Cabaret singer at the Five-Star Ocean House in Rhode Island. Please visit [www.marionmarkham.com](http://www.marionmarkham.com)

**Cassandra Stokes-Wylie\*** (*Karla*) is thrilled to be a part of this hilarious, touching play. Last season at SLAC she had the privilege of playing a variety of characters in *SATURDAY'S VOYEUR 2017*, Alyson Moss in *HARBUR GATE* and Tanya in *BULL SHARK ATTACK*. Other favorite theater credits include: *IN A TILTED PLACE*; *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*; *IN THE NEXT ROOM, OR THE VIBRATOR PLAY*; *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*; *THE EXIT INTERVIEW*; *THE CRUCIBLE*; *CHEAT*; *THE CHERRY ORCHARD*, and *THE TURN OF THE SCREW*. She has loved working within SLAC's New Play Sounding Series and in the SLAC Lab, helping to develop new plays. Cassandra lived and worked in New York, spent a season with the Milwaukee Rep, and has a BFA in Theater from the University of Utah.

**Annette Wright** (*Geena*) is so happy to have landed in the amazing play with this incredible cast! She has been acting in almost every theatre around SLC since 1989. Recent credits at SLAC include *SATURDAY'S VOYEUR* (2016, 2017) and *BLOODY BLOODY ANDREW JACKSON*. She loves to act in films and TV as well: you'll see her in *Austentatious*, *My Girlfriend's Boyfriend*, *High School Musical 2*, and a handful of Hallmark movies (*I'm Not Ready for Christmas*, *Christmas Land*, and *Sharing Christmas*).

#### DESIGN TEAM

Set Design – Thomas George

Costume Design – La Beene

Lighting Design – James K. Larsen

Sound Design – Cynthia L. Kehr Rees

Prop Design – Janice Jenson  
Stage Manager – William Richardson

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

### **ABOUT SALT LAKE ACTING COMPANY**

Salt Lake Acting Company (SLAC)'s mission is to engage and enrich community through brave contemporary theatre. Founded in 1970, SLAC is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 professional theatre dedicated to producing, commissioning, and developing new works and to supporting a community of professional artists. SLAC has been nationally recognized by the Shubert Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Edgerton Foundation, among others. SLAC operates under a SPT Actors Equity Association contract and is a Constituent Member of Theatre Communications Group (a national organization for non-profit professional regional theatres), and the National New Play Network (a national alliance of non-profit professional theatres that champions the development, production, and continued life of new plays).

###