



IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**RIVENDELL THEATRE ENSEMBLE PRESENTS THE SECOND
PRODUCTION IN THEIR 2012 – 2013 SEASON OF REINVENTION: LISA
DILLMAN'S *AMERICAN WEE-PIE***

**Hope Is A Thing With Sprinkles In Dillman's New Comedy, Directed By Megan
Carney, Receiving Its World Premiere January 10 – February 16, 2013 At The New
Rivendell Theatre.**

CHICAGO,— Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (RTE), Chicago's only Equity theatre devoted to the work of women theatre artists, is proud to announce *American Wee-Pie* as the second production in its 2012-2013 Season of Reinvention. The production reunites the core artistic team from Rivendell's critically acclaimed 2009 world premiere of *The Walls*—RTE Resident Playwright **Lisa Dillman** and director RTE member **Megan Carney**. *American Wee-Pie* runs **January 10 – February 16, 2013**, at Rivendell's new performance venue, 5779 N. Ridge. Previews are \$15 and run Thursday, Jan. 10 – Saturday, Jan. 12, 2013 at 8 p.m. There is a gala benefit performance, tickets for the gala benefit are \$50, Sunday, January 13, at 6 p.m., and the **press opening is Monday, January 14 at 7 p.m.** Tickets for regular performances are \$30 with the schedule Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are now on sale online at www.RivendellTheatre.org or by phone, 773.334.7728.

Lisa Dillman's *American Wee-Pie* explores the story of a disenfranchised textbook editor (**Kurt Brocker**) returning to his small midwestern hometown to bury his mother, having no reason to expect this visit might change his life. However, after a chance encounter with an old high school acquaintance (**Jennifer Pompa**), he finds himself pulled along on a journey of self-discovery—a personal renaissance that eventually transforms him from a lonely wrangler of commas and semicolons to an intuitive cupcake chef with a passion for making others happy one delicious confection at a time. *American Wee-Pie* is a big-hearted comedy about economic recession, career second acts, and the sometimes life-altering wonder of a small, good thing.

The play was originally commissioned by and developed with the Goodman Theatre as part of the theatre's inaugural Playwrights Unit in 2011, and was later presented as part of Philadelphia's prestigious PlayPenn Conference and in public staged readings at theatres around the country.

Rivendell's production of *American Wee-Pie* will reunite playwright Dillman with director and fellow RTE member **Megan Carney**, following their successful collaboration on *The Walls*, an ensemble-based work about women and mental illness, which Rivendell produced to wide acclaim in 2009. The cast includes RTE members **Keith Kupferer**, **Mark Ulrich**, and **Jane Baxter Miller**.

The production team includes **Regina Garcia** (set), **Jessica Carson** (lights), **Lauren Lowell** (costumes), **Josh Horvath** (sound), **Joanna Iwanicka** (props), **Stephanie Hurovitz** (production stage manager), and **Jen Seleznow** (production manager).

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About Lisa Dillman, playwright

Dillman's plays include *Detail of a Larger Work* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Ground* (Humana Festival/Actors Theatre of Louisville); *The Walls* (Rivendell Theatre Ensemble/Steppenwolf Visiting Company Initiative); *Half of Plenty* (American Theatre Company; Summer Play Festival-SPF; Rogue Machine); and *Flung* (American Theatre Company). *Rock Shore* was presented in the O'Neill Playwrights Conference. Dillman has also developed work with ACT Theatre, Baltimore CenterStage, Victory Gardens, Huntington Theatre Company, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Philadelphia Theatre Company, The Women's Project, and many others. The Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Northlight, and the Chicago Humanities Festival have commissioned her. Dillman is a company member and playwright in residence at Rivendell Theatre Ensemble and an artistic associate with Route 66 Theatre Company. She is currently working on *Fobbit*, a new play about women veterans commissioned by RTE.

About Megan Carney, director

Carney is a founder of About Face Youth Theatre where her work included award-winning programming and original plays *Up Until Now* and *On The Record* (Goodman Theatre) and *The Home Project* (Victory Gardens). Other About Face credits include *Stupid Kids* (Center on Halsted) and *The Gift* (MCA). Recent projects include *Let Them Eat Cake* (Dixon Place, NYC); *Pittsburgh Project Remix* (Homestead Pump House); *[classified]* (Blacksburg, VA); and *Open Systems*, commemorating five years after Hurricane Katrina made landfall, (Goodman Theatre Chicago). Carney's work has been recognized with multiple After Dark Awards, a TCG Observership Grant, the GLSEN Pathfinder Award, an APA Presidential Citation, induction in Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Hall of Fame, a Rockefeller Foundation MAP Grant and a GLAAD Media Award nomination. She has an MFA in Theatre Arts from Virginia Tech with a focus on Directing and Public Dialogue. She is the Director of the Center for Gender and Sexuality at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

About Rivendell Theatre Ensemble

Since 1994 Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (RTE) has given voice to theater's forgotten majority—women. As Chicago's only professional woman-centered theater company, RTE continues to develop relevant new stories in a fertile environment. Today, RTE remains steadfast in its commitment to provide female theater artists with an ally, advocate and artistic home in Chicago and has developed a reputation, both locally and nationally, for developing exceptional, groundbreaking work with women at the core.

American Wee-Pie is the latest in Rivendell's long history of world and regional premieres—a history that in addition to *Wrens*; includes the American Critics Association "Best New Play," *My Simple City* by Richard Strand; Carson Kreitzer's *Self-Defense* (2004-05 season, with Steppenwolf); Quiara Alegria Hudes' *Elliot, a Soldier's Fugue* (2006-07 season, with Steppenwolf); Melanie Marnich's *These Shining Lives* (2008-09 season, remounted in 2010), Stephen Massicotte's *Mary's Wedding* (2009-10 season) and Catherine Trieschmann's *Crooked* in spring 2012.

In the past year, thanks in huge part to the generosity of the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and the MacArthur Foundation PAV Fund, RTE transformed two adjoining storefronts that had been empty for 30 years into a state-of-the-art 50-seat flexible theatre space at 5779 North Ridge Avenue in Chicago's Edgewater neighborhood. RTE is rapidly becoming a major destination for new women writers, and today offers an actual artistic home for women actors, directors and designers.

For more information about Rivendell's and its 17th season, visit www.RivendellTheatre.org.

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Rivendell season continues with Lisa Dillman's *American Wee-Pie*, page 3 of 3

Rivendell Theatre Ensemble's *American Wee-Pie* by Lisa Dillman and directed by Megan Carney, runs January 10 – February 16, 2013, at Rivendell's new performance venue, 5779 N. Ridge. Previews are \$15 and run Thursday, Jan. 10 – Saturday, Jan. 12, 2013 at 8 p.m. There is a gala benefit performance, tickets for the gala benefit are \$50, Sunday, January 13, at 6 p.m., and the **press opening is Monday, January 14 at 7 p.m.** Tickets for regular performances are \$30 with the schedule Thursdays and Fridays at 8 p.m. and Saturdays at 4 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are now on sale online at www.RivendellTheatre.org or by phone, 773.334.7728.

Free parking is available in the Senn High School parking lot (located a block and a half from the theatre behind the school off Thorndale Avenue). There is limited paid and free street parking in the area and the theatre is easily accessible via the Clark (#22) or Broadway (#36) bus and a short walk from the Bryn Mawr redline El Station.

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