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**RIVENDELL THEATRE ENSEMBLE ANNOUNCES THEIR  
2014 SALON & BENEFIT: “CAUSING A STIR,” THURSDAY, MAY 15 AND  
ESTHER GRIMM AS THIS YEAR’S WREN AWARD RECIPIENT**  
**In The Spirit Of Rivendell’s Season Of ‘Stirring The Pot,’ The 2014 Salon Recreates 1920s Parisian Café  
Society To Celebrate Those Inspiring Ladies Who Dared To Instigate.**

CHICAGO – Rivendell Theatre Ensemble (RTE), Chicago’s only Equity theatre devoted to the work of women theatre artists, announces their **2014 Salon & Benefit, “Causing a Stir,” Thursday, May 15** at **The Swedish American Museum Gallery, 5211 N. Clark Street, 6 - 9 p.m.** VIP guests enjoy a special reception from 6 – 6:30 p.m. with additional guests joining at 6:30 p.m. for cocktails, hors d’oeuvres and entertainment. This year the **WREN Award** for extraordinary work on behalf of women in the arts is presented to **Esther Grimm**, executive director of 3Arts. VIP tickets are \$125 and general admission tickets are \$100 at the door and \$75 in advance. Donations to sponsor an artist working on Rivendell’s season of pot stirring to attend the Salon are \$75 and may be made by contacting Artistic Director **Tara Mallen** directly at [tara@rivendelltheatre.org](mailto:tara@rivendelltheatre.org). Tickets for the 2014 Salon & Benefit may be purchased online at [www.RivendellTheatre.org](http://www.RivendellTheatre.org) or by phone at 773.334.7728.

In addition to the celebration and the libations, “Causing a Stir” features live performances featuring a sneak peak of Rivendell Theatre Ensemble’s next main stage production, ***Eat Your Heart Out* by Courtney Baron**, featuring RTE founding member **Mary Cross** and pieces inspired by the women who spurred the Parisian salon movement – women unconcerned with traditional roles and limitations, who wanted to be a part of change and growth that would lead an the arts and society in an entirely new direction. One of the highlights of the evening will be the WREN Award presentation to Esther Grimm acknowledging her leadership of 3Arts, the organization that advocates for Chicago’s women artists, artists of color and artists with disabilities. By providing cash awards, project funding, residency fellowships and promotion, 3Arts helps artists take risks, experiment and focus on their creative process.

The evening’s music is 1920s Parisian café society-inspired and a silent auction with prizes including get-away trips, theatre tickets, restaurant certificates and artisan-made luxuries. Guests are encouraged to come dressed ‘to cause a stir’—either in 1920s fashion, or with artistic expression that shakes up tradition and the haute couture of the day.

**ABOUT ESTHER GRIMM**

Esther Grimm, executive director of 3Arts has spent her entire career in the arts spans administration, museum education, arts education and philanthropy. Grimm has also worked as a freelance art writer, researcher, and editor since 1990, with reviews and features in a variety of magazines, exhibition catalogues, book projects, and gallery guides. She authored six children’s non-fiction, art-activity books focusing on the art of ancient and living cultures.

Currently, she is on the Grantmakers in the Arts Individual Artist Support Committee and serves on the boards of the Alliance of Artists Communities and The Hypocrites. In 2013, she founded the Chicago Funders Group, an active cohort of eight local funders who support individual artists.

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### **ABOUT RIVENDELL THEATRE ENSEMBLE**

Since 1994 Rivendell Theatre Ensemble 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.

Rivendell has a long history of world and regional premieres—a history that in addition to Anne McGravie's award winning *Wrens* (1995 and 2012 seasons), 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' *26 Miles* (2006-07 season, with Teatro Vista), Melanie Marnich's *These Shining Lives* (2008 season, remounted in 2010), Stephen Massicotte's *Mary's Wedding* (2009-10 season), Catherine Trieschmann's *Crooked* (2012 season), Lisa Dillman's *American Wee-Pie* (2013 season), which was nominated for a Jeff Award for "Best New Play," and *Rasheeda Speaking* by Joel Drake Johnson (2014 season).

Since 2012, thanks in large 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 N. Ridge Ave. in Chicago's exciting 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.

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