



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Intimate New Musical *Daddy Long Legs* Takes the Allen Stage**

Original Stars Shine in Charming Love Story Helmed by John Caird (*Les Misérables*)

**October 21 – November 13, 2011**

Opening Night: October 26, 2011

*Calendar Editors: See Fact Sheet for Performance Schedule and Special Events*

**CLEVELAND, OH** (September 28, 2011) – Cleveland Play House is thrilled to present the second production of their 2011-2012 inaugural season at PlayhouseSquare - a brand new musical event, ***Daddy Long Legs***, with music and lyrics by Paul Gordon (*Jane Eyre*), book and direction by Tony® and Olivier award-winner John Caird (*Les Misérables*), original musical direction by Laura Bergquist, and featuring original stars Megan McGinnis and Robert Adelman Hancock. ***Daddy Long Legs*** begins in the Allen Theatre at PlayhouseSquare on Friday, October 21 and runs through Sunday, November 13, 2011. Tickets are available at PlayhouseSquare ticket office by calling 216-241-6000 or online at [www.clevelandplayhouse.com](http://www.clevelandplayhouse.com). ***Daddy Long Legs*** is presented with support from Kulas Foundation, Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, and the Ohio Arts Council.

"In the tradition of Jane Austen and Louisa May Alcott," states **Michael Bloom, CPH Artistic Director**, "this charming musical gives us an opportunity to show off the remarkable intimacy of the new Allen Theatre."

#### **ABOUT THE PLAY**

This new adaptation of this story by John Caird is based on the Jean Webster novel of the same name, published in 1912 to popular and critical acclaim. Though this stage production has stayed true to the basic storyline, the character and voice of Daddy Long Legs is completely new.

In early 20<sup>th</sup> century New England, Jerusha Abbott is the "Oldest Orphan in the John Grier Home," until an anonymous benefactor sends her to college to be educated as a writer. Required to write him a letter once a month to practice her epistolary skills, she is never to know the benefactor's identity – so she invents one for him: Daddy Long Legs. Although she knows he will never reply to her letters, she grows more and more fond of this elusive yet kindly 'old' gentleman and begins to think of him as the grandfather she never had. But soon another relationship begins to develop in Jerusha's life. Jervis Pendleton, the well-to-do 'youngish' uncle of one of Jerusha's roommates, introduces Jerusha to a world of literature, travel and adventure. Through her correspondence with Daddy Long Legs and her growing intimacy with Jervis, Jerusha's letters chronicle her emergence as a delightfully independent New American Woman. Yet there is one startling fact about these two gentlemen that Jerusha has yet to uncover – a fact that will change her life forever.

*Daddy Long Legs* was developed in the Ann Deal/Fashion Forms® Plays-in-Progress Series at Rubicon Theatre in the summer of 2007. CPH presents *Daddy Long Legs* in association with Cincinnati Playhouse

in the Park, The Gem Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Rubicon Theatre Company, Skylight Opera Company, TheatreWorks, David Elzer and Michael Jackowitz.

### **DADDY LONG LEGS Cast:**

**MEGAN MCGINNIS** (Jerusha) reprises her role in *Daddy Long Legs*, for which she received the Los Angeles Ovation Award, an Indy Award (West Coast), and the Acclaim Award (Cincinnati). McGinnis was last seen on Broadway starring as Eponine in the revival of *Les Misérables*. She originated the role of Beth March in the Broadway musical adaptation of *Little Women* and had a year-long run as Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*. Other Broadway credits include the Tony® Award-winning *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and the revival of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. She was also in the original cast of *Parade*, directed by Harold Prince and written by Jason Robert Brown and Alfred Uhry. McGinnis has worked regionally at The Kennedy Center, The Muny in St. Louis, Sacramento Music Circus, New York Stage and Film, Fullerton Civic Light Opera, Pasadena Civic Auditorium, Phoenix Symphony Hall, Orange County Performing Arts Center, The Huntington Theatre in Boston, and ACT San Francisco. She has toured the country as Liesl in *The Sound of Music* with Richard Chamberlain and as Lily in *James Joyce's The Dead*. Originally from Southern California, she worked extensively in the local theatre scene and guest-starred on several television series, including *Dear John*; *Sister, Sister*; and *Wings*. She had a recurring role on *Blossom*. McGinnis appeared in the film *Anywhere but Here*, voiced a character in *A Goofy Movie*, and has been seen on *The View*; *Regis and Kathie Lee*; CBS' *The Early Show*; and Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, NBC. McGinnis may be heard on the original cast recordings of *Little Women* and *Parade*; and most recently, on Sutton Foster's album *Wish*, singing the duet "Flight." Her concert appearances in New York range from Joe's Pub downtown to the Upper East Side cabaret Feinstein's. McGinnis made her Lincoln Center concert debut this spring with Sutton Foster at the Allen Room. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English from Columbia University. Please visit [www.meganmcginnis.info](http://www.meganmcginnis.info).

**ROBERT ADELMAN HANCOCK** (Jervis) originated the role of Jervis in the Fashion Forms® Plays-In-Progress series at Rubicon Theatre in Ventura, and has also performed the role at TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Broad in Santa Monica, Laguna Playhouse and La Mirada. Hancock also appeared as Perchik in Rubicon's production of *Fiddler on the Roof*. Other favorite roles include Sky in the National Tour of *Mamma Mia!* and Jay in *COLLEGE: The Musical* at New York Music Theatre Festival. Regional credits include *James Joyce's The Dead*, Chicago's Court Theatre; *The Fantasticks*, Utah Shakespearean Festival; *Hair*, Hangar Theatre; original cast member of *Route 66*, The Milwaukee Rep; *Forever Plaid* for which he received a Barrymore nomination, Delaware Theatre Company; the world premiere of *Muscle* by James Lapine and William Finn, Pegasus Players, Chicago; and *A Christmas Carol*, Westport Country Playhouse. He has also worked with the Summer Play Festival in New York City, Drury Lane Theatre, American Folklore Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre and Clarence Brown Theatre. In 2002, he was a resident artist at Skylight Opera Theatre. He has toured Japan as a soloist with the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and is a member of Chicago's La Red Music Theatre Collective. Television and film credits include *Guiding Light* and *The Liver*. Hancock studied at the University of Tennessee. To learn more see [www.robhancock.com](http://www.robhancock.com).

### **DADDY LONG LEGS Creative Team Bios:**

**JOHN CAIRD** (Bookwriter/Director) is a freelance director and writer working in theatre, opera and musical theatre. Recent work in England includes *Macbeth* at Almeida Theatre and *Hamlet* at National Theatre, both with Simon Russell Beale. In Stockholm, Sweden, Caird has directed productions of

Strindberg's *Dance of Death* and Shakespeare's *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Tempest*, all at Royal Dramatic Theatre where he is principal guest director. In Japan, he has recently directed *Jane Eyre* at Nissay Theatre, his own adaptation of Teru Miyamoto's novel *Kinshu* at Galaxy Theatre, and his version of Bernstein's *Candide* at the Imperial Theatre. Other productions at London's National Theatre include *Candide*, J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, *The Seagull* with Judi Dench, Pam Gems' *Stanley* with Anthony Sher, and *Humbleboy* by Charlotte Jones with Diana Rigg and Simon Russell Beale. Caird is an honorary associate director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, where he has directed over twenty classic and new plays. His RSC productions of *Les Misérables* and *Nicholas Nickleby* have won numerous awards worldwide, including Olivier and Tony® Awards. Other work includes Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Song and Dance* at the Palace Theatre and the *Siegfried and Roy Spectacular* in Las Vegas. Television work includes *Nicholas Nickleby*, *As You Like It* and his adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* for the BBC. In opera Caird has directed Verdi's *Don Carlos* and *Aida*, Welsh National Opera; Puccini's *Tosca*, Houston Grand Opera; and *Brief Encounter*, a new opera by André Previn, for which Caird also wrote the libretto. *Brief Encounter* had its world premiere at Houston Grand Opera in March, 2009, and has recently been released by Deutsche Grammophon. Published work as a librettist and lyricist includes a new version of John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* with the composer Ilona Sekacz, first performed at RSC; a new adaptation of J.M. Barrie's *Peter Pan* which played at RSC and NT; *Children of Eden* with composer Stephen Schwartz; *Jane Eyre* with Paul Gordon; a new version of Leonard Bernstein's *Candide* with new lyrics by Richard Wilbur and Stephen Sondheim; and *Brief Encounter* with music by André Previn. *Theatre Craft*, Caird's new book on directing, was published by Faber & Faber in London and New York in March, 2010. For more information visit [www.johncaird.com](http://www.johncaird.com).

**PAUL GORDON** (Music and Lyrics/Co-Orchestrator) was nominated for a 2001 Tony® Award for composing music and lyrics to the Broadway musical *Jane Eyre*, directed by John Caird and Scott Schwartz. He won a 2011 Ovation Award for his score to *Daddy Long Legs* and won the 2007 Bay Area Critics Circle Award for his book to the musical *Emma*. *Daddy Long Legs*, written with John Caird, had its first production at Rubicon Theatre in Ventura, California in the fall of 2009, garnering three Ovation Awards. The production has since gone on to play TheatreWorks, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Broad Stage, Northlight Theatre, La Mirada Theatre and Laguna Playhouse. *Emma*, for which Gordon wrote book, music and lyrics, has enjoyed productions at The Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and Repertory Theater of St. Louis. His other works include *Analog and Vinyl*, *Death: The Musical*, *Being Ernest*, *The Sportswriter*, and *Little Miss Scrooge*. For more information, please see [www.paulgordonmusic.com](http://www.paulgordonmusic.com).

**LAURA BERGQUIST** (Musical Director) has been part of the *Daddy Long Legs*' journey since the first workshop at Rubicon Theatre Company. She conducted national and international tours of *The King and I*, *Titanic* and *Miss Saigon*. Bergquist is a frequent guest conductor in regional theatres and a clinician in universities and churches. As an ASCAP Awards recipient for composition, her personal catalogue includes more than 60 works in print and several recordings. She was the original musical director for *Jane Eyre* (the first John Caird and Paul Gordon collaboration), as well as a contributing arranger on the Toronto cast recording. Regional theatre credits include Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma, Music Theatre of Wichita, Stage One and Atlanta's Theatre of the Stars, as well as New York Stage and Film Festival, Juilliard, New York Musical Theatre Festival and National Alliance for Musical Theatre. Bergquist also performs with New York cabaret performer Steve Ross, maintains a large coaching studio and is on the music staff at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. Recent projects include *Emma* by Paul Gordon, and *Children of Eden* by John Caird and Stephen Schwartz.

The **design team** for *Daddy Long Legs* includes David Farley (Scenic and Costume Design), Paul Toben (Lighting Design), James C. Swonger (Sound Design). Also on the team: stage manager John Godbout, assistant director Nell Balaban. For a complete list of design team bios, go online at <http://www.clevelandplayhouse.com/main-stage/daddy-long-legs>.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

**Single tickets** are on sale now; prices range from \$41 to \$69. Tickets are \$15 for all **students** under the age of 25. For single tickets, please contact the PlayhouseSquare ticket office at 216-241-6000 or online at [www.clevelandplayhouse.com](http://www.clevelandplayhouse.com). **Groups of 10+** save up to 50% off single ticket prices; call 216-795-7000 x180 or email [cwheeler@clevelandplayhouse.com](mailto:cwheeler@clevelandplayhouse.com).

Founded in 1915, Cleveland Play House is America's first professional regional theatre. More than 11 million people have attended over 1,100 productions at Cleveland Play House – including more than 100 American and/or World Premieres. Today, under the leadership of Artistic Director Michael Bloom and Managing Director Kevin Moore, Cleveland Play House is an artist-driven theatre that serves the community by holding true to its mission: *To inspire, stimulate and entertain diverse audiences in Northeast Ohio by producing plays and theatre education programs of the highest professional standards.*

Cleveland Play House is funded through the generosity of Cuyahoga County residents through Cuyahoga Arts and Culture, and The Ohio Arts Council helps to fund Cleveland Play House with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

## **FACT SHEET – *Daddy Long Legs***

**WHAT:** [Daddy Long Legs](#)

Written and Directed by John Caird / Adapted from the novel by Jean Webster/ Music and Lyrics by Paul Gordon

**Don't miss this brand new musical by Tony® and Olivier Award-winner John Caird (*Nicholas Nickelby*, *Les Miserables*) and the Tony®-nominee Paul Gordon (*Jane Eyre*).**

**SYNOPSIS:** Jerusha Abbott's prayers seem answered when the generosity of an anonymous gentleman that she knows only as "Daddy Long Legs" allows her to move from orphanage to university. Through her grateful letters, Jerusha shares her life with her mysterious benefactor as she grows into an intelligent, independent New American Woman and discovers a budding romance with a wealthy young suitor. Yet there is one startling fact that Jerusha has yet to uncover - one that will change her life forever. A charming and unique musical love story!

**WHERE:** Allen Theatre, PlayhouseSquare, 1407 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio

**WHEN:** Preview Performances: Fri 10/21; Sat 10/22; Sun 10/23; Tue 10/25  
**Opening Night: Wednesday, October 26, 2011**  
Final Performance: Sunday, November 13, 2011  
Tuesday Evenings 7:00 pm  
Wednesday - Saturday Evenings 7:30 pm  
Saturday and Sunday Matinees 2:30 pm  
Weekday Matinee 1:30 pm, Thu 11/3

### **Special Events**

- ***Prologue pre-show conversation*** – Join us 45 minutes before every performance for a lively discussion with a member of the cast or creative team.
- ***PlayBack post-show discussion*** – **Sunday, October 30; Tuesday, November 1; Sunday, November 6; Sunday, November 13, 2011** – Join actors from the cast for these post-show discussions moderated by a member of the artistic staff.
- ***Student Matinees*** - **10:30am on Friday, October 28 and Wednesday, November 9, 2011.** For details, call (216) 795-7000, ext. 149.

### **Prices**

- Regular ticket prices range from \$41 to \$69, with discounts available for groups of ten or more. Tickets are \$15 for all students under the age of 25. **For Single Tickets:** Call (216) 241-6000, or visit [www.clevelandplayhouse.com](http://www.clevelandplayhouse.com). **Groups of 10 or more:** Call Cosandra Wheeler, (216) 795-7000, ext. 180.

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