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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **Sideshow Theatre Company Presents the Midwest Premiere of Kathleen Akerley's Critically Acclaimed *Theories of the Sun*.**

CHICAGO, July 20, 2010 – Sideshow Theatre Company kicks off its 2010-2011 season with the Midwest Premiere of Kathleen Akerley's critically acclaimed *Theories of the Sun*. Part mystery and part science fiction, this "lyrical, melancholy new drama" (*Washington Post*) has twists and turns that will keep audiences guessing until the very end.

### **About the Play**

It's 1963 and in a remote French hotel Barbara and Elizabeth Sweeny (an American mother and daughter) undergo some peculiar medical testing by a brilliant and eccentric doctor who specializes in unusual diseases. Accompanied by a young Tom Stoppard, a whiskey-fueled Tennessee Williams, and the mysterious scholar Mr. Asher, Elizabeth seeks to understand and cure her terrifying illness. Blending bold theatricality and movement, Kathleen Akerley's script places each of the hotel's patrons into a direct confrontation with his or her deepest and most secret pains.

"Kathleen's voice is unique and brilliant, and her work is well-known in DC," says Artistic Director Jonathan L. Green. "We are thrilled to be presenting her Midwest Premiere. *Theories of the Sun* is about the gorgeous spiritual mysteries that go right back to the birth of myth and storytelling; it felt like the perfect kick-off for Sideshow's new season."

*Theories of the Sun* premiered in August 2008 with Longacre Lea in Washington, DC, and was called "lovely" by the *Washington Post* and a "mournful valentine to storytelling and the stage" by the *Washington City Paper*.

The cast features Sideshow Artistic Associate Scottie Caldwell (Elizabeth Sweeny), Sideshow Ensemble Member Matt Fletcher (Tom Stoppard), Susie Griffith (Barbara Sweeny), Andy Luther (Tennessee Williams), Andrew Marikis (The Proprietor), Michael Mercier (The American), Dylan Stuckey (Mr. Asher), and Jesse Young (Dr. Giraud). **Actor biographies can be found at [www.theoriesofthesun.com](http://www.theoriesofthesun.com).**

### **When and Where**

**Press Opening** for *Theories of the Sun* is **Thursday, September 9, 2010, at 7:30 PM**, with regular performances through October 3, 2010. **Preview performances are September 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM.** Performance times during the regular run are Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 PM, and Sundays at 3:00 PM. There is a special industry performance on **Monday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm** and an additional matinee on **Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 3:00pm**. All performances will be held at the new **Theater Wit, 1229 W. Belmont**. Tickets are \$20 for all regular run performances, and \$10 for previews. \$15 Student and Industry tickets are available for select Thursday and Sunday performances. For information, visit [www.theoriesofthesun.com](http://www.theoriesofthesun.com) or [www.sideshowtheatre.org](http://www.sideshowtheatre.org). **To purchase tickets, visit [www.theaterwit.org](http://www.theaterwit.org) or call the Theater Wit Box Office at (773) 975-8150.**

### **The Production Team**

Playwright **Kathleen Akerley's** writing credits include *The Oogatz Man*, and an adaptation of Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* for her own company, Longacre Lea. She has also written *Two Party Brainstem*, *Out of Line*, *Maintenance is Death*, and *This Play's Title is Too Long to Fit on a Bumper Sticker* (eXtreme

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eXchange), *1,925 Miles*, *Feet and Banquo's Dead*, *Jim* (Source Festival), *The Long Weight* (Hope Operas) and readings of *The Hungry Dry* (Boston Center for the Arts) and *Only Angels* for Theatre J's 5x5 Series. Commissioned work includes *The Yellow Leaf*, *In the Matter of the Pea*, and *Brief Let Me Be* for Round House Theatre's Heyday Players. Ms. Akerley is a member of the playwriting collective Lizard Claw. As a performer, Ms. Akerley has worked with Catalyst Theatre, Baltimore Shakespeare Festival, Olney Theatre Center, and with the Washington Shakespeare Company including where she played Hapgood in *Hapgood* (for which she received the Theater Lobby "Mary Goldwater" Award), and Lady Macbeth/Hecate in Jose Carrosquillo's 2007 production of *Macbeth*. She has directed regionally at Solas Nua, The Keegan Theater, Theater Alliance, Catalyst Theatre, Rorschach Theatre, and Baltimore Shakespeare Festival. She is the founder of Longacre Lea, a professional DC theater company specializing in physical productions of cerebral works. Ms. Akerley teaches directing at acting at various venues in the DC area.

The Production Staff of *Theories of the Sun* includes Navid Afshar (Stage Manager), Angela Campos (Properties Designer), Emily Cooke (Production Assistant), Gina DiSalvo (Dramaturg), Sideshow Artistic Director Jonathan L. Green (Co-Director) David Hyman (Costume Designer), Jordan Kardasz (Lighting Designer), Sideshow Artistic Associate Christopher M. LaPorte (Sound Designer and Composer), Eric Luchen (Set Designer), Sideshow Ensemble Member Megan A. Smith (Co-Director), and Katie Spelman (Choreographer). **Production team biographies can be found at [www.theoriesofthesun.com](http://www.theoriesofthesun.com).**

## About Sideshow

Founded in 2007, Sideshow Theatre Company's mission is to mine the collective unconscious of the world we live in with limitless curiosity, drawing inspiration from the familiar stories, memories and images we all share to spark new conversation and bring our audiences together as adventurers in a communal experience of exploration. Sideshow's first production, Walt McGough's *Dante Dies!! (and then things get weird)*, was hailed by the *Daily Herald* as "vivid, intimate, and visually arresting." Other Sideshow productions include *Everything Freezes: another winter's tale* by Jonathan L. Green and Walt McGough, *Ekphrasis: Cave Walls to Soup Cans*, by E. Warren Perry Jr, and Janet Burroway's "high-spirited success" (*Time Out Chicago*) *Medea with Child*.

Sideshow's first company-devised work, *Strangerland*, is part of the **DCA Incubator Series** in development in October, with a special one-night-only workshop performance on Monday, **October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010**. Sideshow will be producing *Heddatron* by Elizabeth Meriwether as part of Steppenwolf Theatre's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **GARAGE REP** in spring 2011.

Sideshow also produces the **Chicago League of Lady Arm Wrestlers (CLLAW)**, a popular interactive fundraising event that benefits Sideshow Theatre Company and local charities. CLLAW VII is Friday, **September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010** at the Mystic Celt. **For more information on CLLAW, visit [www.sideshowtheatre.org/cllaw](http://www.sideshowtheatre.org/cllaw).**

Sideshow is proud to have been awarded a \$25,000 grant from the first Chase Community Giving program via Facebook in December 2009.

**For questions, contact Sideshow's Marketing Manager, Bruce Phillips at (703) 577-0640 or email [bruce@sideshowtheatre.org](mailto:bruce@sideshowtheatre.org).** For additional information on Sideshow, visit [www.sideshowtheatre.org](http://www.sideshowtheatre.org), [www.facebook.com/SideshowTheatre](http://www.facebook.com/SideshowTheatre), or [www.twitter.com/SideshowTheatre](http://www.twitter.com/SideshowTheatre).

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