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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE

LITTLE ISLAND

WILL PREMIERE

“OPEN THROAT”

AS PART OF ITS CURRENT SUMMER SEASON

WRITTEN BY **HENRY HOKE**

DIRECTED BY **CAITLIN RYAN O’CONNELL**

WITH

“ABBOTT ELEMENTARY” STAR

CHRIS PERFETTI

AND

LORTEL AWARD NOMINEE

JO LAMPERT

PERFORMANCES BEGIN ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 10

WITH OPENING NIGHT SET FOR THURSDAY, JULY 11



Chris Perfetti, Jo Lampert, Calvin Leon Smith

New York, NY (June 12, 2024) – **Little Island** is pleased to announce ***Open Throat***, a theatrical adaptation of the acclaimed and award-winning novella of the same name by **Henry Hoke**, will star **Chris Perfetti**, the actor from the Emmy® and Golden Globe® Award-winning “Abbott Elementary” as ‘Jacob,’ and Lortel Award nominee **Jo Lampert**. The production will be adapted by Hoke and directed by **Caitlin Ryan O’Connell**, which will begin performances on Wednesday, July 10, with the official opening set for Thursday, July 11. Performances of *Open Throat* will run on Little Island through Sunday, July 14.

Praised by *The New York Times* as “what fiction should be,” *Open Throat* tells the story of a queer and dangerously hungry mountain lion living in the drought-devastated land under the Hollywood sign. Feral and vulnerable, profound and playful, *Open Throat* explores identity, inequality, and our most predatory impulses.

"It's been such a joy to watch readers embrace *Open Throat* over this past year, and to hear how a queer mountain lion speaks to people's very human curiosities, fears, and desires," said Hoke. "I'm so excited for the book to be given new voice onstage by this company of artists, lending their phenomenal talents to help my wild animal get to New York City."

At each performance, Perfetti and Lampert will split the role of the mountain lion, along with the previously announced **Calvin Leon Smith**. The trio will be joined by **Marinda Anderson, Alex Hernandez, Layla Khoshnoudi, Ryan King, Susannah Perkins, and Steven Wendt**.

Working alongside Hoke and O'Connell on the creative team are two-time Tony-nominee **Isabella Byrd**; sound designer and composer **Michael Castogliola**; Obie Award-winning scenic, props and masks designer **Noah Mease**; choreographer **Lisa Fagan**; and shadow puppet designer **Steven Wendt**.

To download headshots, please click [here](#).

Open Throat runs July 10-14 at Little Island's Amph.

Little Island recently announced that an annual, four-month-long summer season of world premieres, which kicked off on June 1, will feature a total of nine newly commissioned pieces. Little Island's new arts program moves towards the future with a commitment to a multi-year roster of original work, all commissioned by and developed at Little Island. Bookended by the premiere of choreographer **Twyla Tharp's** newest work *How Long Blues* and a 90-minute remix of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro* in which outré opera diva **Anthony Roth Costanzo** sings every leading role, the season will offer premieres of varying scales across all areas of performance – including music, dance, theater, opera, comedy, jazz, pop, and funk, all outdoors and directly sited on the Hudson River at 14th Street in New York City. The Amph, the park's 700-seat amphitheater, will house larger scale performances at a \$25 ticket price, while The Glade, the park's 200-seat venue, will be home to more intimate works, all of which will be completely free to the public.

KEY ART FOR SUMMER SEASON AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

IMAGE OF LITTLE ISLAND AVAILABLE [HERE](#)

Tickets to Little Island's summer season of performances are available for purchase on littleislandtickets.com, TodayTix.com, or by downloading the TodayTix app.

CAST & CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES

Marinda Anderson (Cast). Off-Broadway: *Merry Me* (New York Theatre Workshop), *You Will Get Sick* (Roundabout), *Sandblasted* (Vineyard), *The Cake* (MTC), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Mobile Unit), *Teenage Dick*, *Miss You Like Hell* (The Public); *The Treasurer*, *Bella: An American Tall Tale*, *A Life*, *Far from Heaven* (Playwrights Horizons); *Sex of the Baby* (Access Theatre); *Obama-ology* (The Juilliard School). Regional: *Airness* (Humana); *A Doll's House* (Huntington); *Three Sisters* (Playmaker's Rep); *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Intimate Apparel* (Dorset Theatre Festival); *Fairfield* (Cleveland Play House). TV: "A League of Their Own", "Evil", "Law & Order: Organized Crime", "New Amsterdam", "High Maintenance", "Madam Secretary", "Gotham." BFA: Howard University. MFA: NYU Graduate Acting Program. marindaanderson.com

Isabella Byrd (Lighting Design) is a New York-based designer working in live performance. Broadway: *Cabaret* and *An Enemy of the People* (both design 2024 Tony-nominated). Off-

Broadway: *Infinite Life* (Annie Baker), *Primary Trust* (Eboni Booth), *Epiphany* (Brian Watkins), *Sanctuary City* (Martyna Majok), *The Good John Proctor* (Talene Monahon), and many by Will Arbery: *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *Corsicana*, and *Plano*. Many productions with: Clubbed Thumb, Caitlin Sullivan, and dots. Awards: Drama Desk Special Award, three Lucille Lortels, two Obies, Henry Hewes, and featured in *The New Yorker*. Proud USA829 member and pay equity and sustainability advocate. www.isabellabyrd.design

Michael Costagliola (*Sound Design and Composer*) is a New York-based sound designer and composer. His work has been heard in NY in productions by The Public, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, The Shed, La MaMa, Rattlestick, Page 73, and Ars Nova among others, as well as regionally at Shakespeare Theatre Company, Two River Theater, Yale Rep, St. Louis Rep, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, and at various other theaters across the U.S. and abroad. BA in Music from Brown University, MFA in Sound Design from Yale School of Drama. michaelcostagliola.com

Lisa Fagan (*Choreographer*) is a choreographer, performer, and theater maker based in NYC whose work has been dubbed “The High Weird” by critics. She is the director/choreographer and a practicing member of the experimental performance company CHILD. Upcoming: Spring 2025 premiere at New York Live Arts. Recent: HILMA (choreographer) at Tony award winning theater The Wilma. Fagan’s work has been presented in NYC by: New York Live Arts, Baryshnikov Arts Center, Prelude, Mercury Store, LifeWorld, Target Margin, Exponential Festival (2019/20 Exponential Fellow), Mabou Mines, Ars Nova, Movement Research, Gibney, Roulette, and others. On-screen choreography credits include TV pilot THESE DAYS, premiering at Sundance 2021. www.lisafagandanceproblems.com

Alex Hernandez (*Cast*) is a professional actor and amateur hooligan based in Brooklyn, New York. Highlight credits include series regular roles on “The Peripheral” (Amazon), “Unreal” (Lifetime/A&E Studios) and currently on the Colin Ferrell series “Sugar” (Apple TV+); recurs on “The Son” (AMC), “Invasion” (Apple TV+); Off Broadway roles Demetrius in *Midsummer* (The Public’s Shakespeare in the Park), Jason in *Mojada* (The Public), Gabriel in *Time Alone* (Belle Reve Theater); and videogame *Mafia III* (player character Lincoln Clay). He was nominated for a BAFTA for Best Performance for *Mafia III*, and numerous LA theater awards for Lead Actor for *Time Alone*.

Henry Hoke is the author of five books, most recently the memoir *Sticker* (Bloomsbury) and the novel *Open Throat* (FSG/Picador), finalist for the PEN/Faulkner Award, the Barnes & Noble Discover Prize, and the James Tait Black Prize for Fiction. His work has appeared in No Tokens, Electric Literature, Triangle House, and the flash noir anthology *Tiny Crimes*. His play *At Sundown* premiered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and his short film *Taking Shape* screened on HBO. He co-created the performance series “Enter>text” in Los Angeles, and edits humor at *The Offing*.

Layla Khoshnoudi (*Cast*). Select Theater: *Will You Come With Me?* (Play Company); *7 Minutes* (Waterwell); *Men on Boats* (Clubbed Thumb); *Dance Nation* (Playwrights Horizons); *Bull in a China Shop* (Lincoln Center); *Dido of Idaho* (Ensemble Studio Theater); *Nobody’s Girl* (NJ Rep); *Gary: A Sequel to Titus Andronic* (Wellfleet Harbor Actor’s Theater); *Wyoming* (Lesser America); *I am Gordafarid* (Noor Theater). TV: “Instinct” (CBS); “FBI” (CBS); “All Hail Beth” (BricTV), “My Ex is Trending” (YouTube). FILM: *Long Nights*, *Short Mornings*; *Bad at Birthdays*, *Nadia Jaan*; *Androgen*; *Bookends*. MFA in Acting, Brooklyn College.

Ryan King (*Cast*) is an actor, screenwriter, and playwright. Some of his favorite performances include *Plano* (Clubbed Thumb), *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* (Atlantic Theater Co.), *Dying City* (Hartford Stage), *33 Variations* (La Jolla Playhouse), and the world premiere of Duncan MacMillan’s *Lungs* (Studio Theater and Barrington Stage). As a playwright, he’s been a member of the Working Farm at SPACE, Ars Nova Playgroup, The Clubbed Thumb Early Career Writers

Group, and the Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group. His films as a screenwriter include *The Tutor* (released 2023) and *Asphalt City* (released 2024). MFA, Yale School of Drama.

Jo Lampert (*Cast*). Selected Off-Broadway: *The Tempest* (Shakespeare in the Park), *Hundred Days* (NYTW), Joan in *Joan of Arc: Into the Fire* (Public Theater, Lucille Lortel Award nom), Rimbaud in NY (BAM), *New York Animals* (New Ohio), Iphigenia in *Aulis* (Classic Stage Company), and *Dance, Dance Revolution* (Ohio Theater). Regional: Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *Marie Antoinette* (American Repertory Theatre/Yale REP), *Prometheus Bound* (A.R.T.), and *The Last Goodbye* (Williamstown Theater Festival). TV: HBO's "Betty," Amazon's "Transparent" (Musical Finale), Netflix's "Orange is the New Black," Hulu's "The Path."

Noah Mease (Scenic, Props and Masks Design) is an Obie Award-winning prop designer, playwright, and cartoonist. Props this season: *An Enemy of the People* (Broadway), *The Welkin* (Atlantic), *Infinite Life* (Atlantic, National Theatre), *I Love You So Much I Could Die* (NYTW), (*pray*) (Ars Nova). Past design work includes *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812* (Broadway, A.R.T., "Kazino"), *John* (Signature), *Hadestown* (NYTW), *Oklahoma!* (St. Ann's), *An Octoroon* (Soho Rep., TFANA), and three plays with The Debate Society. Noah is an alum of the Ars Nova's Play Group, and the illustrator of "Theatre Work: Reimagining the Labor of Theatrical Production" (Routledge, 2024).

Bea Perez-Arche (*Stage Manager*) is a Cuban American theatre artist focused on creating community through her work in the arts. She has primarily worked at the Public Theater on Shakespeare in the Park, the Under the Radar Festival, and the Public Shakespeare Initiative. She is an Associate Artist at Sanguine Theatre Company and has collaborated with a range of institutions including The Flea, The Civilians, Tectonic Theater Project, One Whale's Tale, Women's Project, La Mama, Little Island, Chelsea Factory, and Ballet Collective. She received her BFA in Theater Arts from Boston University and currently freelances as a stage manager, director, and dramaturg.

Chris Perfetti (*Cast*) stars as Jacob Hill on ABC's Emmy- and Peabody-winning comedy series "Abbott Elementary." For his acclaimed performance, he recently won a Critics Choice Award for 'Breakthrough Performance' and is the recipient of a SAG Award alongside the cast. Broadway: *Picnic* (Roundabout), *Six Degrees of Separation*. Off-Broadway: *King James* (MTC, also Steppenwolf/CTG), MCC's *Moscow x6* (Outer Critics Circle Award; Drama Desk and Drama League nominations), *The Low Road* (The Public), *Everybody* (Signature), *The Tempest* (Shakespeare in the Park), *The Tutors* (Second Stage), *Cloud Nine* (Atlantic), and *Sons of the Prophet* (Theater World Award). TV/Film: HBO's "The Night Of" and "Looking," FX's "What We Do in the Shadows," Fox's "Gotham" and "The Resident," The CW's "In the Dark," NBC's "Crossbones," Netflix's "Bonding," *The Surrogate*, *The Virtuoso*, *Minyan*, *Twinless* (upcoming).

Caitlin Ryan O'Connell (she/her) has directed and developed work at Joe's Pub, Ars Nova, Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, The Bushwick Starr, The Lark, Roundabout, Under the Radar Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Montana Repertory Theater, and The Denver Center. Recent Directing: *King Philip's Head...* (Clubbed Thumb), *Twin Size Beds* (Joe's Pub, Under the Radar), and *War of the Worlds* (Montana Repertory Theatre). Recent Associate Directing: *Uncle Vanya* (Lincoln Center), *Infinite Life* (Atlantic), *Wakey, Wakey* (Signature Theatre), *Underground Railroad Game* (Ars Nova), and Alison Leiby's *Oh God, A Show About Abortion* (Cherry Lane). Caitlin runs a Senior Center Theater Program supported by The Bushwick Starr. BA Wellesley College, MFA Brown University.

Calvin Leon Smith (*Cast*). Broadway: *Fat Ham* (American Airlines Theatre). Off-Broadway: *The Animal Kingdom* (The Connelly Theatre), *Fat Ham* (The Public Theatre, Obie Award winner). Other NY Theater: *The Miser* (Moliere in the Park). Tour: *Sweat* (The Public Theater's Mobile National).

Regional: *On the Grounds of Belonging* (Long Wharf); Several plays at The Clarence Brown Theatre and The Actors Theatre of Louisville, *Macbeth* (Shakespeare on the Sound). TV/film: "The Underground Railroad" (Amazon), "The Deuce" (HBO), "High Maintenance" (HBO); *Benny and James* (Winner of Best Cast – Cannes Short Film Showcase); *Better Man* (Best Actor in a Short, Queens World Film Festival), *Paper Friends*. The Juilliard School.

Susannah Perkins (*Cast*) (they/them). Broadway: *Network*. Off-Broadway: *The Welkin* (Atlantic), Grief Hotel (Clubbed Thumb/New Georges), *The Good John Proctor* (The Connelly), *Judgment Day* (Park Avenue Armory), *The Low Road* (The Public), *The Wolves* (Lincoln Center/The Playwrights Realm), *The Rape Of The Sabine Women* (The Playwrights Realm). Lots of work with Clubbed Thumb. Regional: NYSAF, A.R.T. TV: "The Politician" (Netflix), "Marvelous Mrs. Maisel" (Amazon Prime). Film: *Lapsis* (SXSW), *Snakeeater*, *Enclosure*. BFA: NYU Tisch. Obie and Drama Desk Awards.

Steven Wendt (*Shadow Puppet Designer*). Chocolate Factory Theater (NYC), HERE Art Center (NYC), Barbican Pit (London), Blue Man at Blue Man Group (NYC) 2012-present. Other projects include Cartoon Network and Kids W.B. puppeteer, The Soltanoff/Findlay Project at The Center Theater Group in Los Angeles, Ground to Cloud at REDCAT (Disney Hall Los Angeles), and Growing Up Linda (Edinburgh Fringe Festival.) Puppeteers of America Jim Henson Innovation Award 2023 recipient, Henry Hewes Notable Effects Award nominee. Graduate of The California Institute of the Arts '09 www.stevenwendt.com

ABOUT LITTLE ISLAND

Little Island, the 2.4-acre park that sits along the Hudson River, opened in May 2021 and has since been enjoyed by 4.6 million visitors. In 2013, Barry Diller, in partnership with Hudson River Park Trust leadership, embarked on the unique opportunity to envision a solution for the repair and reactivation of Pier 54, which had been badly damaged by Hurricane Sandy. The park was designed as an entirely new type of public space for New York, one that would create an immersive experience of nature and art. Born from a collaboration of the UK-based Heatherwick Studio and the New York-based landscape architecture firm MNLA, led by Signe Nielsen, the park's imaginative design offers all New Yorkers and visitors a new public space that is dynamic, captivating, and restorative.

Little Island is operated year-round by a 50-member staff co-helmed by Producing Artistic Director **Zack Winokur** and Executive Director **Laura Clement**.

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