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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 12, 2019
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***Walnut Street Theatre Announces the “Matt Garfield Stage”
in honor of \$3 million donation***

PHILADELPHIA, PA: At last night's opening for *Young Frankenstein* the Walnut Street Theatre was honored to announce a leading gift to name its new theatre-in-the-round the “Matt Garfield Stage.” Chairman Emeritus of the Walnut's Board of Trustees, Matthew Garfield, made a \$3 million donation to support the theatre's ongoing capital campaign to fund the recently announced \$39 million expansion project, The Future Lives Here. The project's groundbreaking is set to begin next spring and be completed in early 2022.

This past May the Walnut Street Theatre announced a much-needed expansion to address the growing needs of the community the theatre serves. The capital expansion includes a fully-renovated lobby and box office, additional space for its growing education programs, two state-of-the-art rehearsal halls, a public restaurant, and the centerpiece of the project, a 400-seat theatre-in the-round, which will be the first of its kind in the region. In recognition of his tremendous donation, this new stage has been named after Matt Garfield.

“The Walnut Street Theatre's ability to sustain the tradition of professional theatre and contribute to its future viability and vitality is made possible through the generous support of our donors,” says Walnut Street Theatre President and Producing Artistic Director Bernard Havard. “We are incredibly grateful to Mr. Garfield for his years of support in helping the Walnut fulfill its mission of serving our community as the city's premiere theatre education resource and incubator for the arts in Philadelphia.”

Philadelphia native and long-time friend of the Walnut, Garfield has been both a supporter and performer in the arts for many years. Garfield has served on several nonprofit boards, including his over 30 years as a member and chairman of the Walnut's Board of Trustees. He has produced or invested in countless Broadway and off-Broadway shows. Some of his favorite credits include co-producing Rodgers and Hammerstein's *State Fair* in 1995 and serving as associate producer of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, which had an 11-year run at the West Side Theater in New York City. His love of theatre extends to the stage, as he himself is a performer and member of Actors' Equity and the Screen Actors Guild.

Matt Garfield's steadfast support of the arts has bolstered theatre communities in and around the Philadelphia. In 2011 Garfield contributed to the Prince Theatre in Chestertown, MD to help create the Garfield Center for the Arts at the Prince Theatre. His \$3 million donation to the Walnut will help to strengthen and expand the theatre's role as a vital educational resource for the region, as well as a hub of creativity and ingenuity for the arts community.

"Storytelling and theatre are in our DNA and our children and grandchildren are our future," says Mr. Garfield. "It is my hope that my \$3,000,000 Leadership Gift to the Walnut's Capital Campaign will serve to unite these concepts and enable our kids to discover the transcendent experience of "Live Theatre" in our stunning and innovative 400 seat theatre-in-the-round."

The expansion plan provides over 35,000 square feet of critically needed space in order to secure the Walnut's ability to continue to fulfill its multi-faceted mission. Mr. Garfield's gift brings the campaign to two-thirds of its goal. The Walnut has set a goal to raise at least another \$5 million by May 2020. The campaign is accepting donations from subscribers, individual ticket buyers, friends, corporations and foundations, as well as from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

For more information about the expansion, including an animated fly through of the new building, visit www.thefutureliveshere.org.

ABOUT THE WALNUT STREET THEATRE

Walnut Street Theatre is America's Oldest Theatre and the most popular theatre company in Philadelphia. As a producer of live theatre, many of the artists on the stage, in the orchestra and behind the scenes are from the Philadelphia area. As a non-profit institution, the Walnut is recognized nationally for bringing affordable theatre to more subscribers than any other theatre company in the world. In addition to its five Mainstage productions, popular Walnut Street Theatre for Kids Series and Independence Studio on 3 Series, the Walnut's education and outreach programs bring live theatre to over 150,000 students, teachers, parents, and kids every year.

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