

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES

For Immediate Release
March 4, 2014

RIPE TIME PRESENTS THE WORLD PREMIERE OF *THE WORLD IS ROUND*, A SONG-INFUSED FABLE BASED ON THE GERTRUDE STEIN BOOK, APRIL 17 – 30 AT BAM FISHER

**Production Conceived, Written and Directed by Ripe Time’s Rachel Dickstein
Features Music and Lyrics by Heather Christian**

Ripe Time, the Brooklyn-based company led by **Rachel Dickstein**, has garnered acclaim for creating physically charged, visually powerful adaptations of classic and contemporary stories by authors ranging from Edith Wharton to Jhumpa Lahiri. Conceived, written and directed by Dickstein, the play *The World is Round* epitomizes the company’s work, creating from **Gertrude Stein**’s book a fable (for grownups and mature children) full of original, live music by **Heather Christian** and aerial movement choreographed by **Nicki Miller**. Ripe Time’s first new show since its celebrated *Mrs. Dalloway* adaptation *Septimus and Clarissa* (2011), *The World is Round* makes its world premiere April 17 – 30 at BAM Fisher (Fishman Space, 321 Ashland Place, Brooklyn).

Performances will take place April 17-21, 23-27, 29 & 30 at 7:30pm; and April 19 & 26 at 2:30pm. Tickets are \$40 (\$30 for theater professionals, \$20 for students) and can be purchased at www.bam.org/theworldisround or 866-811-4111.

Critics are welcome as of the 7:30pm performance on Friday, April 18 for an official opening at 7:30pm on Monday, April 21.

Ripe Time’s *The World is Round* was a finalist for the highly competitive Richard Rogers Award, which the Academy of Arts and Letters gives to the best new musical of the season. The show is a funny, joy-filled, musically adventurous ride through one girl’s dreams and ambitions. Playing off of the current dialogue *Lean In* has sparked about women and ambition, *The World is Round* follows Rose, a young girl uncertain about asserting herself in the world. Armed with a blue chair, she does the impossible: climbs a mountain on her own, looking for answers. In Dickstein’s eccentrically humorous, fable-like work, Rose “leans in,” but what she finds at the top is not at all what she expected.

The New Yorker has said, “Dickstein’s true innovation is in the visual language she creates,” and *The World is Round* finds her further honing her design idiom with longtime collaborators including **Mimi Lien** (sets), recent recipient of an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence, Bessie Award-winner **Jane Shaw** (sound) and **Iona Somogyi** (costumes, *Clybourne Park*). The focus upon movement, a Ripe Time signature, here takes the form of spectacular aerial dance choreographed by **Nicki Miller**. Lighting by **Jiyoun Chang** and projections by **Hannah Wasileski** play key roles in the production’s visual richness. *Time Out NY* “Downtown Innovator To Watch” Heather Christian’s live score is indie rock crossed with Dr. Seuss, Lewis Carroll and Screamin’ Jay Hawkins.

The cast features **Kristin Sieh** (*February House*, Pig Iron’s *Twelfth Night*, “Boardwalk Empire”) as Rose, **Grace McClean** (*Natasha*, *Pierre* and *The Great Comet of 1812*) as RoseRoseRose, **Blake DeLong** (*Natasha*, *Pierre* and *The Great Comet of 1812*) as RoseManLion and **Hannah Heller** (*Actress Fury*) as RoseWillieRose.

Heather Christian serves as music director, **Megan Carter** as line producer, **Drew Francis** as production manager and **Anne Posluszny** as production stage manager.

The new production follows *Septimus and Clarissa*, which playwright Ellen McLaughlin adapted for Ripe Time from Virginia Woolf’s radical modernist novel *Mrs. Dalloway*, and which Dickstein directed. *Septimus and Clarissa* was nominated for Drama Desk and Callaway Awards, and was one of only five productions nominated for best play production of the year by the Drama League. *The New York Times* described the production as “thrilling and richly theatrical” and said, “*Septimus and Clarissa* finds hypnotic poetry in the ordinary, the solemn, the rapturous and just about everything in between.” Jim O’Quinn, Editor-in-Chief of *American Theatre*, lauded Ripe Time’s talent for

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES

transforming literary classics into compelling live performances: “*Septimus & Clarissa* is the most successful adaptation for the stage of Virginia Woolf’s work I have ever seen.”

About the Artists

Rachel Dickstein (Director, *The World is Round*; Artistic Director, Ripe Time) has devised, choreographed, and directed *Septimus and Clarissa* (Baruch, Drama Desk, Drama League and Joe A. Callaway Award nominations, the latter for Outstanding Direction)), *Fire Throws* at 3LD, *Innocents* (Ohio Theatre), *Betrothed* (Ohio Theatre), *The Secret of Steep Ravines* (P.S. 122), *The Holy Mother of Hadley New York* (with New Georges), and *The Palace at 4 A.M.* at HERE Arts Center. Other projects include Vijay Iyer & Mike Ladd’s *In What Language?* (Asia Society, REDCAT, PICA) and Ellen McLaughlin’s *The Trojan Women* (Purchase, Fordham). Dickstein received the NEA/TCG Director’s Fellowship and multiple Drama League Fellowships. She is developing *Lear’s Shadow* for Estelle Parsons and is under commission from People’s Light and Theatre/Longwood Gardens to create *And Suddenly a Kiss, There on the Back of My Neck*, a site-specific outdoor performance with designer Susan Zeeman Rogers. Dickstein is on the Theatre and Performance faculty at Purchase College, SUNY. She is a resident Artist at the Drama League, a Usual Suspect at NYTW, an affiliated artist at New Georges, and a former Resident Director at New Dramatists.

Heather Christian (Composer, Music Director, performer) scored and performed in *Of Mice and Men* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse and *Mission Drift*, for which she was nominated for the Drama League Outstanding Performance Award. Composing credits include her own multi-media concert *North* (La MaMa), *Mud* (IAmA Theater Company, Los Angeles), *Learning in Lower Animals* (DTW) and numerous compositions for dance pieces and short films, such as *Gregory Go Boom*, which took the Grand Jury Prize at Sundance. Christian is a long time collaborator in devised theater and has worked and performed with the TEAM, Jane Comfort Company, Mac Wellman, Big Dance Theater, Taylor Mac, and Witness Relocation Company, of which she is a core member. *Time Out NY* recently named her a Downtown Innovator To Watch. She performs worldwide with her band, Heather Christian and the Arbornauts. Her latest album, *Cabinet* (2012) was won critical acclaim. Christina and Arbornauts are currently working on their sophomore record, *House/Hymn*. www.heatherchristian.bandcamp.com

Nicki Miller (Aerial Designer) is a Brooklyn-based aerial artist, actress and aerial theater director. After graduating from Syracuse University with a degree in acting, Miller discovered New York City’s aerial community, in which she began to hone her circus skills. She has performed, taught, produced, curated and choreographed for aerial theater in NYC since 2010. In 2011, she co-founded aerial theater company Only Child, which explores aerial acrobatics as a vocabulary for heightened storytelling in theatrical productions. www.onlychildaerialtheatre.com

Kristen Sieh (Rose) is a founding member of The TEAM, with whom she has written and performed in plays including *Particularly in the Heartland*, *Architecting* and *RoosevElvis*. She has also performed with Elevator Repair Service (*Gatz*, *The Sound and the Fury*, *Shuffle*), at The Public Theater (as Carson McCullers in *February House*), and with Pig Iron (as Viola in *Twelfth Night*) The Builder’s Association (*Jet Lag*), Lear DeBessonet (in the title role in Brecht’s *St. Joan of the Stockyards*), Banana Bag and Bodice (*Beowulf: A Thousand Years of Baggage*), Taylor Mac, Tim Crouch, The National Theatre of Scotland, The New Group and many others. Her regional and international credits include Long Wharf Theater, Syracuse Stage, Denver Center, Baltimore CenterStage, The A.R.T., The Barbican Center, The Almeida Theatre, The Adelaide Festival, The Singapore Arts Festival and Lisbon’s Culturgest. She has appeared on TV in *Orange Is the New Black*, *Boardwalk Empire* and *Law & Order*.

Hannah Heller (RoseWillieRose) was recently seen in Grand Lady Dance House’s *Actress Fury*, and in Brave New World Repertory Theatre’s *Nun\$*. Heller created the title role in Nellie Tinder’s *Evelyn*, choreographed Half Straddle’s *House of Dance*, and was a founding member of Savion Glover’s group Ti Dii. In France, Heller played the sole role in a film adaptation of Jean Cocteau’s *La Voix Humaine* and directed a short film entitled *Herma’s Question No. 151*, while studying with Philippe Gaulier. She is also a dancer and violinist.

Grace McClean (RoseRoseRose) has appeared in *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812*, *Sleep No More*, *La MaMa Cantata* (La MaMa New York and Spoleto, Italy; Zagreb, Croatia; Belgrade, Serbia), *From The Fire* (Edinburgh Fringe Festival 2011, MTM Best New Musical), *The Last Goodbye* (WTF 2010), *Twelve Ophelias* (Woodshed Collective)

BLAKE ZIDELL & ASSOCIATES

and *Grace McLean Lives in Concert* (Flea Theater, Ars Nova, Joe's Pub). Her EP *Make Me Breakfast* is available on iTunes. www.gracemclean.com

Blake DeLong (RoseManLion) has appeared Off-Broadway in *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova/Kazino), Abi Morgan's *Tiny Dynamite* (59E59), *The Man-made Rock* (Fourth Street Theatre), *Viva Los Bastarditos!* (FringeNYC/LaMaMa) and *Taboos* (SoHo Playhouse). Regional highlights: Portland Center Stage, Pig Iron Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Triad Stage, Shakespeare Theatre (DC). New works developed with Yale Rep, The Lark, New Dramatists, Pig Iron, Rude Mechs, JAW, Prelude, others. Film: *We Need To Talk About Kevin* (World Premiere Cannes 2011), *Thank You A Lot* (World Premiere SXSW 2014), and the award winning short films *Sons of the Rodeo* and *Expecting*.

Mimi Lien (Set Designer), recent recipient of an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence, designs sets and environments for theater, dance and opera. She is an artistic associate with Pig Iron Theatre Company and the Civilians, and is a co-founder of JACK, an art/performance space in Clinton Hill, Brooklyn. Recent work includes *Stop Hitting Yourself* (Rude Mechs/LCT3), *Natasha, Pierre, & The Great Comet of 1812* (Kazino/Ars Nova), *An Octoroon* (Soho Rep), *Our Town* (Actors Theatre of Louisville). Lien is a recipient of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program, American Theatre Wing Hewes Design Award, Barrymore Award, four Barrymore nominations, and Bay Area Critics Circle nomination.

Jane Shaw (Sound Designer) has collaborated with Rachel Dickstein on *Septimus and Clarissa, Fire Throws* (Ripe Time), and *Eurydice and Anon(ymous)* (SUNY Purchase). At BAM: Pick Up Company's *Not What Happened*, Susan Marshall's *Sleeping Beauty and Other Stories*, Big Dance Theater's *Supernatural Wife*. Recent designs include *London Wall* (Mint), *Grounded* (P73), *Pinkolandia* (Two River), *Macbeth* and *La Dispute* (Hartford Stage), *Around the Bend* (Tami Stronach), *La casa de los espíritus* (Denver, Gala Theater, Costa Rica). Accolades include a Bessie, Henry Award, Meet the Composer grant, Premio ACE Award 2012, TCG's Career Development Program, and nominations for two Lortels, Connecticut Critics Circle, and Elliot Norton awards.

About Ripe Time

Ripe Time, founded in 2000, develops and presents ensemble-based theatre with rich language, visual power, and physical rigor. The company creates dynamic visually rich theatre that offers potent allegories for our time, exploring such polarizing cultural forces as money, power, and ambition, and the impact they have on women's lives.

The company devises performances that pull from both dance and theater, developing work collaboratively with an ensemble of artists over extended development periods. The work ranges from company-created originals works to new adaptations of novels or stories and dynamic stagings of classic plays.

**Press contact: Blake Zidell or Emily Reilly at Blake Zidell & Associates:
718.643.9052, blake@blakezidell.com or emily@blakezidell.com.**