

For Immediate Release  
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## Z SPACE CELEBRATES ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2018

**Z Space kicks off its anniversary with the world premiere of *Weightless*, a rock opera written by and featuring the Kilbanes, co-produced with piece by piece productions**



*Colman Domingo, The Kilbanes, Lucia Berlin (Kilbanes photo by Julie Schuchard)*

SAN FRANCISCO, September 28, 2017—Z Space, one of the nation’s leading laboratories for the development of new theater works, is pleased to announce its 25th Anniversary in 2018. Among the artistic highlights of the anniversary year are world premiere works by The Kilbanes, The Bengsons, Colman Domingo, Kate E. Ryan, Word for Word and Mugwumpin.

Z Space’s 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary productions exemplify Artistic Director Lisa Steindler’s commitment to discovery and excellence. While the new works Z Space produces aren’t limited to a particular genre or theme, each is its own unique adventure. This is most certainly evident in *Weightless*, the first major production of the 25th Anniversary year, which runs February 27-March 18, 2018. Four years in the making, *Weightless* is a genre-bending theatrical event that combines intimate storytelling with a high-energy rock show. Z Space will be transformed with cabaret seating and cocktail table service.

*Weightless* is one of many productions presented with Z Space’s long standing partner, piece by piece productions. Together Z Space and piece by piece also co-produced The Bengsons’ *Hundred Days*; and co-presented The Wooster Group’s *Early Shaker Spirituals* and *Town Hall Affair*; and Noche Flamenca/Soledad Barrio’s *Antigona*.

They will also co-produce, along with Ars Nova, the world premiere of *The Lucky Ones*, a new musical by The Bengsons and Sarah Gancher, directed by Anne Kauffman, with choreography by Sonya Tayeh. Performances take place in New York City, March - April, 2018.

Other highlights of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary include the world premiere of a new play by Kate E. Ryan; the world premiere of *The Brother(s)* by Colman Domingo; and new works by Word for Word and Mugwumpin.

“This is a powerful year for us. We’re premiering seven diverse new works that we’ve developed with multiple partners around the country,” said Z Space Artistic Director Lisa Steindler. This is the heart and essence of who we are and what we do at Z Space. Artists are taking risks and

creating and performing in new ways, pushing us all into territories of the unknown. That, to me, is what art should be.”

More details follow:

### **World Premiere Productions**

#### **Z Space and piece by piece productions present**

##### **The Kilbanes in *Weightless***

February 27 – March 18, 2018, at Z Space

A world premiere commission conceived and written by Kate Kilbane and Dan Moses, directed by Becca Wolff

Z Space and piece by piece productions present the world premiere of *Weightless*, by the Kilbanes. Four years in the making, *Weightless* is a genre-bending theatrical event that combines intimate storytelling with a high-energy rock show. An adaptation of the story of Procne and Philomela found in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, *Weightless* tells the story of two sisters who are bound by deep love, separated by a vengeful god, and who must travel across worlds to find their way back together. In *Weightless*, the cast and the band are one and the same, blurring the line between actors and musicians, between straight musical theater and concert.

#### **Ars Nova and piece by piece productions and Z Space present the world premiere of**

##### ***The Lucky Ones***

March – April 2018, at The Connolly, New York City

Ars Nova, piece by piece productions and Z Space present *The Lucky Ones*. Obie and Drama Desk Award winner Anne Kauffman directs this world premiere musical, featuring music and lyrics by The Bengsons, a book by Sarah Gancher, and choreography by Sonya Tayeh.

#### **Z Space presents the world premiere of**

##### **A new play by Kate E. Ryan**

October 17 - November 11, 2018, at Z Space

Kate E. Ryan’s latest play follows the members of a Bay Area women’s group as a charismatic newcomer challenges the group’s long-held beliefs and relationships. Developed with Bay Area-based performers and an all-female production team, this piece examines our cultural bubble and our capacity for empathy and understanding in the midst of political clashes.

#### **Z Space presents *The Brother(s)*, a world premiere**

##### **By Colman Domingo, adapted from the short story by Lysley Tenorio**

November 14 - December 9, 2018, at Z Space

*The Brother(s)* is a new play by Colman Domingo about the courage it takes to love your family as they are, and not who you want them to be. With a lively trans chorus and a dynamic set design, the entire space will shift quickly from location to location, bringing the story’s glittering spectacle to life. Beneath the excitement of the production’s sudden shifts and turns lies an intimate relationship between the protagonist, Edmond, and his mother. The death of an estranged younger sibling presents Edmond and his Ma with a choice: to cling to the memory of "Eric," their little brother and son, or to accept Erica’s true identity.

#### **Also - Z Space and Mugwumpin co-produce**

##### ***In Event of Moon Disaster***

January 3 – 28, 2018, at Z Below

“Fate has ordained that the men who went to the moon to explore in peace will stay on the moon to rest in peace...” Thus begins the speech that Nixon would have given if the Apollo XI astronauts had not returned to the earth. And it’s the launch pad for *In Event of Moon Disaster*, Mugwumpin’s new immersive theater experience. With their signature blend of physical rigor and

playful curiosity, Mugwumpin takes you on a retro-futuristic expedition into space, our hunger for what lies beyond, and contingency plans, big and small.

### **Word for Word Productions**

#### **Word for Word: *Lucia Berlin: Stories***

February 14 - March 11, 2018, at Z Below

Word For Word, a program of Z Space since the beginning, has brought over 180 short stories to life. Led by Artistic directors Susan Harloe and JoAnne Winter, the core company—together for the past quarter century—celebrates this silver anniversary with some of their favorite writers. From February 14-March 11 Word for Word presents *Lucia Berlin: Stories*, a full-length production featuring five comic, harrowing stories from a beloved Bay Area writer. These stories all deal with a woman's journey through alcoholism and the unlikely places it takes her. Featuring "Her First Detox", "Emergency Room Notebook 1977", "Unmanageable", "502", and "Here It Is Saturday."

#### **Word for Word: *Stories by Tobias Wolff***

September 1-30, 2018, at Z Below

Word for Word gives their signature theatrical treatment to one of their favorite writers: Tobias Wolff.

### **Z Space History**

Z Space has come a long way over the past 25 years. In 1993, visionary David Dower founded The Z Space Studio (the name would later be shortened to Z Space) to support a large and evolving community of theatre artists working together in the Bay Area. Z Space has since become one of the nation's leading laboratories for developing new voices, new works, and new opportunities in American theater. Throughout the 90s and early 2000s, Z Space worked with such luminaries as Josh Kornbluth, Anne Galjour, Randall Wong, and Brian Thorstensen.

Lisa Steindler joined Z Space in 2005 as New Works Director and assumed the title of Executive Artistic Director in 2007. Her vision and efforts are to establish "a hub for artists of all stripes to rehearse, perform, and exhibit their work while engaging our audiences with the best of Bay Area and national artistry."

In 2009, Z Space leased a theater space for the first time and moved into the former Theatre Artaud. In 2013 Z Space took over Z Below (formerly The Traveling Jewish Theater), an 86-seat complement to the 230-seat warehouse above, doubling its programming and budget.

In 2013, Z Space received a generous three-year grant from Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to sponsor a resident playwright, Peter Sinn Nachtrieb. That grant was renewed in 2016. Since Peter's residency began, Z Space has produced three of his plays, *The Totalitarians* in 2014, *A House Tour of the Infamous Porter Family Mansion with Tour Guide Weston Ludlow Londonderry* in 2016; and *The Making of a Great Moment* in 2017.

Eschewing traditional theater models with fixed seasons and subscription packages, Z Space continues to remain flexible, to focus on artists' needs and to facilitate the time and resources necessary to develop each project fully. Z Space has artistic and producing partnerships with Ars Nova, piece by piece productions, City Arts & Lectures, and American Conservatory Theater, among others. Z Space presented Bay Area premieres of internationally acclaimed performance ensembles The Wooster Group (2015), Elevator Repair Service (2014), Rude Mechs (2015), and Theatre Mitu (2015).

Among Z Space's signature programs are Z Space New Work, a development program that supports artists and ensembles from conception to realization of unique works, Word for Word, an in-house theatre company that transforms works of literature verbatim to the stage, and Youth Arts, Z Space's outreach to schools, promoting literacy and engaging students' creativity.

More info at [www.zspace.org](http://www.zspace.org)