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**One of the best plays of 2017 returns to Toronto for a
limited engagement – 22 performances only**

PRINCE HAMLET

Written by William Shakespeare

Adapted + Directed by Ravi Jain

A Why Not Theatre Production Presented by Canadian Stage

February 6-24, 2019 at the Berkeley Street Theatre

★Selected as “Best Play of 2017” by the Toronto Star & Now Magazine★

★Selected as “2019’s Best in the Arts” by The Globe and Mail★

**“An astonishingly absorbing piece of theatre... Signing adds a sensational layer.”
– The Globe and Mail**

**“This is no ordinary Hamlet...This is a Hamlet both for audiences who think they’ve
had their fill of moody Danes, and for those who’ve never seen the play before
because it sounds like someone else’s culture.” – Toronto Star**

Toronto, ON – One of the most thrilling and original adaptations of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* ever performed returns to Toronto. Canadian Stage presents Ravi Jain’s critically acclaimed *Prince Hamlet* at the Berkeley Street Theatre, February 6-24, 2019.

Award-winning director, Ravi Jain's daring and diverse *Prince Hamlet* breaks through the old restrictions on gender, race and ability, allowing Shakespeare’s work to be told, seen and heard in a bold new way.

The plot for *Hamlet* remains the same. Struggling with the death of his father the king and his mother’s hasty re-marriage to his uncle -- and murderer of the king -- Hamlet undertakes the harrowing task of avenging his father’s untimely death. What changes in *Prince Hamlet* is the cross-cultural, gender-bent cast that challenges conventional ideas of who gets to tell this story of revenge. This imaginative and radically inclusive production also combines English and American Sign Language (ASL) to create a fully integrated retelling for both hearing and Deaf audiences.

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Another element that makes this *Hamlet* so unique is its twist on gender. *Prince Hamlet* features a female lead cast with Christine Horne as Hamlet (Dora Mavor Moore Award Nomination for Outstanding Performance) and Saskatchewan-born deaf artist and Toronto Theatre Critics Award-winner, Dawn Jani Birley as Horatio – who becomes the central character and acts as the narrator using ASL and gestures.

A first for Toronto theatre, Birley's use of ASL and gestures challenge the hearing audiences to understand Horatio's signing and expressions, adding a sensational component to this completely original take on the world's most famous play.

"We could not be more honored to welcome Why Not Theatre with this magnificent and important retelling of one of the Western canon's most significant works," says Canadian Stage Artistic Director Brendan Healy. "Ravi Jain and his group of collaborators have created a smart, clear, and thrilling interpretation of the play while dislodging some of the aspects that have kept it inaccessible to many. *Prince Hamlet* is essential theatre for today's world."

Embarking on a national tour to Banff, Vancouver, Ottawa, and Toronto, *Prince Hamlet* is a must see for Toronto audiences.

Prince Hamlet is on stage at the Berkeley Street Theatre from February 6-24. Performances run Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 8 PM; Fridays at 7 PM; Saturdays at 2 and 8 PM; and Sundays at 2 PM. Performances on February 13 and 20 are at 1 and 8 PM.

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MEDIA NIGHT: FEBRUARY 7 at 8 PM

**To receive further information or for interview requests, please contact
CATHY PAINE at 416-367-8243 ext. 250
cpaine@canadianstage.com**

ABOUT CANADIAN STAGE

Canadian Stage is one of the country's leading not-for-profit contemporary performing arts organizations. The company produces, presents, commissions, and collaborates with multiple partners on cross-disciplinary work with a focus on performance styles that integrate theatre, dance, film, visual arts and more. Sharing innovative and vibrant performance work from Canada and around the world, it stages performances at three Toronto venues: The Bluma Appel Theatre at Civic Theatres Toronto; The Berkeley Street Theatre; and the High Park Amphitheatre. In July 2018, award-winning theatre director Brendan Healy was appointed Artistic Director.

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ABOUT WHY NOT THEATRE

Why Not Theatre is an agile, international theatre company based in Toronto, Canada, rooted in the values of innovation, community and collaboration. Our work is inventive, cross-cultural, and reflects our passion for the exploration of difference. We challenge the status quo, by examining what stories are being told, and who is telling them. More than just a theatre company, we develop creative strategies to build a healthier and stronger arts ecology. We **MAKE** and tour critically-acclaimed and award-winning new work, **SHARE** resources with other companies and artists to produce and tour their work and **PROVOKE** change through new producing models and the presentation of work for new audiences. We are led by a core team of Founding Artistic Director Ravi Jain, Managing Director Owais Lightwala, and Executive Producer Kelly Read.