



Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse to Become Launching Pad for Innovative Plays and Musicals

--University will collaborate with RWS Entertainment Group to produce new works, beginning with world premiere stage adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea*--

PITTSBURGH, PA – November 8, 2018 – Point Park University's [Pittsburgh Playhouse](#) announced today its innovative new collaboration with award-winning entertainment production company **RWS Entertainment Group (RWS)** to produce compelling entertainment.

Point Park University's Pittsburgh Playhouse, a 90,411-square-foot, state-of-the-art teaching and entertainment center, will serve as a launching pad for new productions being developed by New York-based RWS. The pioneering program with this Downtown Pittsburgh university will produce new plays and musicals that RWS has in development. The Playhouse's rich history as the theatrical home of such award-winning musical and theater greats as Shirley Jones and Rob Ashford makes it a perfect venue to launch an innovative model that will create and advance new works, while at the same time, offering Point Park University students an opportunity to work on professional productions bound for national stages.

"Building our beautiful new Playhouse was just the first step for the University," said Point Park University President Paul Hennigan. "With the announcement of this relationship with RWS Entertainment Group, we are developing a new model where we will not only be able to bring cutting edge productions to Pittsburgh for the theater-going community, we will provide our students with the opportunity to meet and work with professionals from all over the country, in every area of the entertainment creation process."

The first production from the collaboration will be the world premiere stage adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*. The Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winning 1952 short novel tells the story of Santiago, an aging Cuban fisherman who struggles with catching a giant marlin far out in the Gulf Stream off the coast of Cuba. The novel will be adapted for the stage by centenarian playwright A.E. Hotchner and Tim Hotchner. In addition to serving as Hemingway's official biographer, Hotchner was also Hemingway's good friend until his death in 1961. One of Hemingway's most famous works, the story has been adapted for the screen three times and has become one of the most taught novels in American high schools. The production will be staged in the new Highmark Theatre and led by Point Park's Conservatory of Performing Arts and Playhouse artistic director, Ronald Allan-Lindblom. Principal casting will be handled by Binder Casting, a subsidiary of RWS Entertainment Group, which has cast the Broadway productions of [The Lion King](#), [A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder](#), [The King and I](#), and [Gypsy](#) with [Patti LuPone](#), as well as the film adaptations of [Dreamgirls](#) and [Hairspray](#).

RWS has had a longstanding relationship with Point Park. RWS CEO and founder Ryan Stana received a bachelor of fine arts in theatre arts from Point Park and serves as a current University Trustee. Stana has long been committed to fostering Point Park talent in the entertainment industry as well as within his own company that includes several Point Park graduates, some of whom hold executive positions.

"As a state-of-the-art facility unsurpassed for a university setting, the new Playhouse will not only have a global impact on arts education, but will also serve as a creative laboratory for creatives and talent," said Stana. "Point Park has established itself as a competitive performing arts program among the best and I am proud to continue working with students, faculty and artistic professionals in Pittsburgh."

The \$60 million Pittsburgh Playhouse project will act as an interdisciplinary space and state-of-the-art learning center for the entire Point Park campus community.

Point Park's Conservatory of Performing Arts recently outranked the University of North Carolina School of the Arts, The Juilliard School and Northwestern University on Playbill.com's list of the 10 Most Represented Colleges on Broadway. Point Park's bachelors of fine arts programs in dance and musical theater also landed among the top 10 on OnStage Blog.

Tickets are now on sale for *The Old Man and the Sea*, which runs from Jan. 31 to Feb. 17. To purchase tickets, go to www.pittsburghplayhouse.com or call the Playhouse Box Office at 412-392-8000.

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About Point Park University

Founded in 1960, Point Park University, a College of Distinction, is a dynamic, urban university with a strong liberal arts tradition. Located in Downtown Pittsburgh, Point Park enrolls more than 4,000 full- and part-time students in more than 100 undergraduate and graduate programs offered through the School of Arts and Sciences, Rowland School of Business, School of Communication and Conservatory of Performing Arts. Visit PointPark.edu to learn more.

About RWS Entertainment Group

Operating out of a 52,000 square foot office, rehearsal studio complex and performer housing in New York City, Emmy Award-winning RWS Entertainment Group is North America's largest provider of branded stage shows and experiences.

Founded in 2003, the multi award-winning live entertainment production company has produced innovative productions and custom brand experiences for top resorts, cruise lines, theme parks, corporate events and NYC fashion events for an impressive roster of clients that include Holland America Line, Azamara Club Cruises, Hard Rock Resorts, Prada, NBCUniversal, Six Flags, Cedar Fair, Hershey Entertainment and Resorts, Westfield, Macy's, Vera Wang, Mattel. RWS is now the foremost turn-key solution in the industry, providing full design and installation services for interactive experiences, theming, décor and more, to create unparalleled immersive experiences.

In 2018, RWS announced the launch of a Theatrical and Development Department, set to produce theatrical shows for Broadway, Off-Broadway and more. Additionally, RWS-owned Binder Casting recently opened two new divisions

– commercial and film – operating alongside the already established theatrical team. For more information about RWS Entertainment Group, please visit rwsnyc.com, bindercasting.com, [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).

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