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**Earlie Bird Productions offers its debut show
V2: Creation Myth, a collaboratively written
staged reading that explores female sexuality,
empowerment, and solidarity**

**Performances to be held at 8 p.m. on February 23 and 24 at Philly
PACK, 233 Federal Street in Philadelphia, Pa.**

When it premiered on Broadway in 1997, Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* broke ground by giving hundreds of women the opportunity to speak candidly about their bodies and experiences. To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the play, Earlie Bird Productions is pleased to announce the world premiere of its debut production, *V2: Creation Myth*. Tickets are now on sale for performances on February 23 and 24 through www.earliebirdproductions.com.

An extension of sorts from themes in *The Vagina Monologues*, *V2: Creation Myth* continues the conversation of what it is to be a woman in the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election, as experienced by a group of professional women. Part memoir, part composite experience culled from interviews and listening sessions, this staged reading voiced by non-professional performers will cover topics such as sexuality, white privilege and complicity, motherhood, race, assault, aging, work, and more—culminating in an end piece that embodies a new vision of female solidarity and power in America.

“I had originally intended to stage another production of the *Vagina Monologues* with a few additional original pieces layered in,” says producer and director Lauren Leonard of Earlie Bird Productions. “But during the listening and discussion sessions with a diverse array of women, it became clear that we had enough material for an entire original production. Not unexpectedly in the wake of 2016 presidential election and the #metoo movement, women have a lot to say right now. And that’s exactly what I want to do with Earlie Bird Productions. We want to listen to the Philadelphia community, and to help them tell their stories.”

Leonard's production of *The Vagina Monologues* in 2017, performed by much of the same cast as *V2: Creation Myth*, was a sold-out one-night affair, which is why this production has been moved to a larger venue.

The piece was written collaboratively by Heather Shayne Blakeslee, Angie Chilcoat, Bianca Davies, Amanda Jacobs, Grant Leonard, Lauren Leonard, and Susana Mayer, and edited by Blakeslee, the former editor of *Grid* magazine in Philadelphia. While some of the pieces are memoir performed by the women who wrote them, many others delve into composite experiences pulled together after many listening sessions and interviews with a diverse array of women.

"It's clear we have a long way to go to combat the pervasive misogyny in our culture, the brunt of which is borne by the women who have the fewest resources to combat it, which is why we're donating a portion of the proceeds to Planned Parenthood and to the Women's Community Revitalization Project," Leonard continues. "I think we are also still shocked that so many white women voted for Donald Trump, and for Senate candidate Roy Moore, both of whom have been accused of sexual assault. That theme of complicitness is one that we couldn't ignore as we put the show together. My hope is that *V2: Creation Myth* will shine a light on our collective experience as women, and to add to the chorus right now that is calling for more solidarity among women. We have to create a new future where we're supporting one another."

Blakeslee was tasked with weaving the pieces together into a collective whole. "When the pieces came in from the group, the thing that was most striking was the elemental language that characterized a lot of the content. Separately, we went back to the beginning—to waves and the ocean. To fire, to our wildness. To breathing. To an overall rootedness in our bodies, no matter our age or race or sexual identity—it's like everyone knew we had to go back to the beginning in order to make a new start. We need to create a new narrative where women have power not only over their own bodies, but over our relationships with one another and our society as a whole. With *V2: Creation Myth*, we're hitting the reset button and moving forward with a new story in which women are center stage."

Performances of *V2: Creation Myth* will be held February 23 and 24 at Philly PACK (233 Federal Street). A portion of the proceeds from the production will benefit [Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania](#) and the [Women's Community Revitalization Project](#), a Philadelphia-based organization committed to social and economic equity for women and their families living on low incomes.

Tickets are on sale now for shows on Feb. 23 and 24 through www.earliebirdproductions.com.

About Earlie Bird Productions

Earlie Bird Productions is a Philadelphia-based production company rooted in the belief that everyone has a story to tell, and that every story has the potential to effect change. EBP's mission is to give voice and venue to local writers, visual artists, movers, makers, and shakers,

all working collaboratively to mount productions that support and give back to our community. EBP seeks an impassioned and intrepid audience that is eager to support storytelling that entertains, inspires, and instigates. www.earlybirdproductions.com

About the Director

Lauren Earline Leonard is a Philadelphia-based writer, director, and producer. Leonard holds a B.A. in theatre from Temple University, where she worked in technical production on *Chess*, *The Bacchae*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, and *Fences*. She performed as part of the Philadelphia Young Playwrights Festival and in a production of *The Vagina Monologues*. While at Temple, Leonard interned with FringeArts (then Live Art Fringe Festival), going on to work for the organization in its External Relations department after graduation. Leonard has also worked with Flashpoint Theatre Company's *Cloud Nine*.

As a board member and president of the Queen Village Neighbors Association, Leonard forged partnerships with Paradigm Art Gallery to bring the work of artists Calo Buscanigua, Kid Hazo, Kelly Kozma, and My Dog Sighs into public spaces as a means of enhancing quality of life.

Leonard's written work has appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Passyunk Post*, *greenlimbs*, and the *Queen Village Neighbors Association Magazine*.

About the Authors

V2: Creation Myth was written collaboratively by [Heather Shayne Blakeslee](#), Angie Chilcoat, Bianca Davies, Amanda Jacobs, Grant Leonard, Lauren Leonard and [Susana Mayer](#), and edited by Heather Shayne Blakeslee

About the Cast

The cast of *V2: Creation Myth* is comprised of non-professional readers who occupy a diverse range of professions in the Philadelphia community including school principal, midwife, architect, musician, college administrator, writer, sex educator, small-business owner, photographer, yoga instructor and more. Performers are Heather Shayne Blakeslee, Kira Broedeck, Bianca Davies, Angel Hogan, Amanda Jacobs, Catherine Kendig, Susana Mayer, Neely B., [Joanna Nowak](#), [Jessica Noel](#), Lauren Overton, and Natalie Suresch.

About the Design Team

The *V2: Creation Myth* production team includes stage design by Lauren Leonard; costume design by Natalie Suresch; graphic design and photography by [Joanna Nowak Photography](#); movement coaching by Jessica Noel of [Philly PACK](#); lighting design by John Noel; and sound design by Rick Friedrich of [The Philadelphia Record Company](#).

About Philly PACK

Philly Performing Arts Center for Kids is a children's theatre and dance company located in Queen Village, Philadelphia that produces one musical per semester. Philly PACK also hosts a wide range of events including music and theatre productions. For its company of children,

Philly PACK believes in instilling passion for performance art in young people; inspiring art appreciation within the community of Philadelphia; fostering a safe, creative space where students are free to build art on their terms; and teaching valuable techniques along with life lessons that lead to confident, happy, artistic futures.

About Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania

Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania believes that every child should be a wanted child. Then women and men can achieve the self-determination that makes families and societies strong. It is therefore Planned Parenthood Southeastern Pennsylvania's mission to protect and enhance reproductive freedom, to increase access to reproductive health services and information, and to promote sexual health.

About the Women's Community Revitalization Project

The Women's Community Revitalization Project is a Philadelphia-based organization committed to social and economic equity for women with low incomes and their families. They develop affordable housing; provide supportive services; advocate for policy change; and honor and promote leadership, dignity, and justice in our communities.

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