



**News Release
Virginia Repertory Theatre**

Contact: Susan Davenport
Director of Communications
Virginia Repertory Theatre
sdavenport@virginiarep.org
804-783-1688 ext 1133
804-513-8211 Mobile

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**Virginia Repertory Theatre Announces
Kikau L. Alvaro as New Associate Artistic Director**

Richmond, VA -- Virginia Repertory Theatre announces Kikau L. Alvaro as the new Associate Artistic Director. Alvaro teaches Musical Theatre and Movement for the Actor at Virginia Commonwealth University and will continue his teaching position in addition to his new role at Virginia Rep. The Associate Artistic Director position was recently vacated by Chase Kniffen who served in that role for seven years. Kniffen has been recognized by the Richmond Theatre Critics Circle six times as Best Director of a Musical and directed many of Virginia Rep's biggest hits including *The Color Purple* and *Dreamgirls*.

Artistic Director, Nathaniel Shaw commented on the transition, "While it is sad to see Chase Kniffen go, I am eager to see what happens for him creatively in his future endeavors. I'm also excited for the opportunity this transition provides Virginia Rep in the restructuring of artistic leadership and production coordination. Bringing on Kikau Alvaro not only provides Virginia Rep an opportunity to rejuvenate our processes, but will enliven, and deepen, the existing relationship we have with the excellent theater department at VCU." Sharon Ott, Chair of Department of Theatre at VCU, added, "One of the many things that has excited me as I begin my life here in Richmond is the developing collaboration between Virginia Repertory Theatre and the VCU Department of Theatre. Kikau Alvaro's appointment as the Associate Artistic Director of Virginia Rep further cements this important relationship. It is a win/win/win for all of us."

Originally from San Jose, California, Alvaro received his MFA from San Diego State University. For VCU, he directed and choreographed *Monty Python's Spamalot* in 2017 and will direct *Into*

the Woods in 2018. Additionally in 2017, he launched “Broadway Bootcamp: VCU”, a program which brings guest teachers directly to VCU performance majors to offer performance workshops and musical theatre master classes. He recently served as Associate Director of Virginia Rep’s summer hit, *In the Heights*, and Associate Director/Choreographer for *Fun Home*, co-produced by Virginia Rep and Cadence Theatre Company. Acting credits include originating the role of Captain of the Guard in *Up Here* at La Jolla Playhouse; a new musical written by Bobby Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez (*Frozen*), directed by Alex Timbers (*Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson*) and choreographed by Josh Bergasse (*On The Town, Gigi*). Other performing and directing/choreography credits include work at Theatreworks in Palo Alto, The Old Globe in San Diego, San Diego Musical Theatre, Diablo Theatre Center in Walnut Creek, and San Jose University. Alvaro is a member of Actors Equity Association and an Associate Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. He serves as the Northeast Regional Director for Musical Theatre Educators Alliance (MTEA).

About Virginia Repertory Theatre

Virginia Repertory Theatre is the regional professional theatre in Richmond, Virginia. With a budget of \$5.3 million, four distinct venues, an educational touring arm, and an annual audience over 530,000, Virginia Rep is one of the largest performing arts organizations in Central Virginia. Virginia Rep stages four seasons annually: the Signature Season at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, the Cadence Season in Theatre Gym, co-produced with Cadence Theatre Company, the Children’s Season at Willow Lawn, and the Hanover Tavern Season.

About Theatre VCU

The mission of the VCU Department of Theatre is to educate and train students as theatre professionals and /or academicians in the field of performance, design/technology, or theatre pedagogy. The department offers three degrees- a Bachelor of Arts, a Bachelor of Fine Arts, and a Master of Fine Arts and enrolls 230-230 undergraduate and 40-50 graduate students each year. Theatre VCU produces four mainstage productions and numerous graduate and undergraduate projects every season in our two performance spaces, the Hodges Theatre in the Singleton Performing Arts Center, and the Newdick Theatre in Shaffer Hall.

