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News Release

Factory Theatre Announces Michel Marc Bouchard's Withdrawal of Play from 2012/13 Season as a Result of Boycott Environment

Toronto, August 22, 2012 – The Factory Theatre Board of Directors announced today that due to the boycott of Factory Theatre, playwright Michel Marc Bouchard has informed us that he has no choice but to withdraw his play, *Tom and the Coyote*, from the opening slot in the 2012/13 season.

“This is the saddest and most difficult decision I have been forced to make in the thirty years of my career,” Bouchard says in a letter to Ron Struys, the Chair of the Factory Board, also sent to Ken Gass. “I am aware of the impact of this decision on my production team. Ten people have just lost a job. I am also aware of the impact of this decision on the staff at Factory Theatre and on the theatre’s subscribers and audiences. I do hope that mediation is still possible and that the rest of the upcoming season will take place and not add to the collateral damage.... Most of all, I hope that Factory Theatre will survive this devastating conflict.”

Ron Struys said that he received the notification of the withdrawal of the English language premiere, in a translation commissioned by Factory Theatre, with regret. “We admire Bouchard so much, and are sorry for the incredible pressures and untenable situation he has been placed in with his artistic team as a result of this boycott environment. We understand that he and other artists want to work in a positive environment, and we are committed to regaining that for all of the Factory Theatre season artists, with the support of its audiences, artists, funders, Board and staff.”

Struys also reported that, “We recently met with Ken with the help of an outside facilitator and

agreed to get the wheels in motion for mediation in order to find common ground. We thank everyone who helped get us to this stage. We are now working out the details with Ken on the process and look forward to beginning mediation as soon as possible.”

The Board has heard the calls for mediation and, with talks about to begin, appeals to Gass to call for an end to the boycott or other disruptions to the upcoming season. This is, as Struys notes, “the season that Ken himself put in place. Withdrawing a play has negative financial impact for the company, bringing losses as a result of the boycott to tens of thousands of dollars.” Although Ken Gass has as yet not indicated his willingness to do so, Struys says, “We maintain optimism that he will reconsider because we are confident that the cultural and theatre communities recognize that a boycott serves no one and indeed injures artists, staff and audiences of the theatre.”

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