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**A NOISE WITHIN FOUNDERS/ARTISTIC DIRECTORS
GEOFF ELLIOTT AND JULIA RODRIGUEZ-ELLIOTT
TO BE HONORED BY AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE
WITH INAUGURAL “CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FIELD AWARD” IN JANUARY**

**Other First-Time Conservatory Awards Recipients Include
Four-Time Academy Award Nominee Annette Bening,
Rising Star Elizabeth Banks,
A.C.T. Supporters Frannie and the Late Mort Fleishhacker,
and The William Randolph Hearst Foundation**

A Noise Within Founders/Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott are to be honored with the inaugural “Contributions to the Field Award” by the American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.), Tony Award–winning theatre company and home of one of the top training programs in the country. The Elliotts, whose acclaimed classical repertory theatre company is currently celebrating its 20th Anniversary season in a new, state-of-the-art Pasadena venue following a \$13.5 million capital campaign, are among an elite group of A.C.T. alumni and supporters to be honored by the prestigious company at its Conservatory Awards Luncheon on January 24, 2012, at the Westin St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco. The “Contributions to the Field Award” honors artists who have contributed significant leadership in the field of theater locally and nationally beyond their role as actors. Others being honored at the luncheon include four-time Academy Award-nominee and A.C.T. graduate **Annette Bening**, who receives The Edward Hastings Career Achievement Award; Emmy Award-nominated actress and recent A.C.T. alumna **Elizabeth Banks**, recipient of The Rising Star Award; celebrated San Francisco philanthropists and longtime A.C.T. supporters **Frannie and the late Mort Fleishhacker**, presented with The Benefactor Award; and **The William Randolph Hearst Foundation**, which set up a multiyear scholarship fund for the M.F.A. Program, recipient of The Champion Award.

“This is the first time that A.C.T. has formally acknowledged the range of accomplishments of our extraordinary alumni,” said A.C.T. Conservatory Director **Melissa Smith**. “It is truly an amazing feat that

Geoff and Julia have not only established a classical theater company, but that they have had the vision, tenacity, and stamina to sustain it over 20 years. And now they are in the process of growing it with a brand new home for their company. We could not be more proud of them and A Noise Within as the best living testaments to A.C.T.'s mission of conserving the classics in this country."

"To be honored by American Conservatory Theater with this award is particularly significant for both Julia and me because our time at A.C.T. was such a defining period in our lives, and so much of what A Noise Within has come to be was born there," says Elliott of the recognition,

Rodriguez-Elliott adds, "Our love of language, dedication to training future artists, and commitment to education was shaped during our years at A.C.T. We are exceptionally grateful to be recognized for the quality of A Noise Within's work and the strength of our mission."

A Noise Within (ANW) is the only year-round classical repertory company in Southern California and one of only a handful in the entire country dedicated solely to producing classical dramatic literature in the repertory tradition of rotating productions with a resident company of professional artists. It has been lauded by critics as a "premiere classical theatre company," and an "outstanding ensemble" whose "vibrantly theatrical" "brilliant productions" are "freshly imagined," "exceptional," "invigorating," "riveting," "brilliantly atmospheric," "inspired," and "masterfully crafted." Founded 20 years ago with \$3,000 from the Elliotts' savings account, ANW quickly established itself as one of the region's key theatre companies, attracting fiercely loyal audiences and consistently high praise from the media for its productions and as a key force in arts education. As the result of a \$13.5 million capital campaign under the Elliotts' leadership, the company launched its milestone 2011-12 Season and 20th Anniversary in its permanent new home, a spectacular 33,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art venue, hailed as an arts anchor for East Pasadena. The 283-seat theatre's thrust stage, expansive backstage area and cutting-edge technology, accommodating productions both epic and intimate, provide tremendous opportunities for artistic exploration. At the same time, it preserves A Noise Within's unique theatrical communion between actors and audiences, with no seat further from the stage than seven rows. Since A Noise Within's inception, Elliott and Rodriguez-Elliott have produced more than 135 productions of theatre classics and have directed/co-directed more than 40.

For more information on A.C.T.'s Conservatory Awards Luncheon, please visit www.act-sf.org/conservatory_awards_luncheon. For tickets to the inaugural event, contact Luz Perez at (415) 439-2470 or lperez@act-sf.org.

A NOISE WITHIN is located on the corner of Foothill Boulevard and Sierra Madre Villa Avenue at 3352 East Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107. For tickets and information, call (626) 356-3100, or visit www.ANoiseWithin.org.

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