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“A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER & CELEBRATE... LIFE, LOSS, LOVE”

(Brattleboro, VT) In recognition of the 35th year of the AIDS pandemic and to honor the work of the AIDS Project of Southern Vermont (APSV), “A Weekend to Remember & Celebrate... Life, Loss, Love” will be presented at the Latchis Theatre, 50 Main Street in Brattleboro, Vermont.

The benefit weekend begins on Saturday, October 15 at 7:30pm with the one-night-only performance of the 1989 show, “Elegies for Angels, Punks and Raging Queens,” the first piece written about the AIDS pandemic. Elegies is a song cycle with music by Janet Hood and lyrics and additional text by lyricist Bill Russell. It debuted in 1989 at the Ohio Theatre in Manhattan’s SoHo district before moving on to London. Each of the monologues is written from the perspective of characters who've died from AIDS, and the songs represent the feelings of friends and family members dealing with the loss. The piece was developed in the late 1980s and originally entitled “The Quilt” to acknowledge the AIDS Memorial Quilt, founded in 1985 by AIDS activist, Cleve Jones.

The show will open with a special performance by Jody Sperling, founder of the NYC dance company, Time Lapse Dance. The company’s work presents visually arresting kinetic theater fusing dance with mesmerizing fabric-and-light spectacles after the style of modern-dance pioneer Loïe Fuller (1862-1928). <http://timelapsdance.com/>

Elegies Director Sam Maskell and Music Director Richard Smith are joined by a cast comprised of singers and actors from Vermont and New Hampshire, including leads Allie McGahie, Zac Binney, Gregory Higgins and Jeanie Levesque. For a full cast list, visit www.elegiesvt.com.

There are three ticket price points: balcony \$20, orchestra \$40, and VIP \$75 which includes a pre-show reception when a Lifetime Volunteer Achievement Award will be presented to Shirley Squires of Guilford, Vermont who has raised over \$300,000 to support the nonprofit organization. The award will be presented by Karen Peterson, Executive Director and Patrick Brown, Board Chair of APSV. After the show, all ticket holders are invited to attend an informal reception on the stage of the main theatre. Visit <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=larts> to purchase tickets.

On Sunday, October 16, the 1955 film, “All That Heaven Allows,” starring Rock Hudson will be shown at 4pm in the main theatre of the Latchis. This film is free and open to the public. Donations of any amount will be gratefully accepted at the door.

Hudson was the first major Hollywood star to go public with an AIDS diagnosis. Randy Shilts, author of the best-selling chronicle of the early days of the AIDS pandemic, *And*

the Band Played On, wrote, “There was something about Hudson's diagnosis that seemed to strike an archetypal chord in the American consciousness. For decades, Hudson had been among the handful of screen actors who personified wholesome American masculinity; now, in one stroke, he was revealed as both gay and suffering from the affliction of pariahs.” Shilts died from AIDS in 1984.

In 1995, *All That Heaven Allows* was selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress as being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant." Hudson was only 30 when he starred in this film opposite Jane Wyman. The section of the Quilt that includes Hudson's memorial panel will be on display.

Lead sponsor for the event is **The Samara Fund**, a component fund of the Vermont Community Foundation, helping to create a vibrant Vermont LGBTQ community and ensure that LGBTQ Vermonters are connected, healthy, appreciated, safe, and empowered. The Fund will celebrate its 25th anniversary as Vermont's premiere philanthropic organization for LGBTQ and HIV/AIDS causes in 2017. The Vermont Community Foundation is a family of hundreds of charitable funds and foundations dedicated to creating healthy and vital Vermont communities.

<http://www.vermontcf.org/samara>

Net proceeds benefit the **AIDS Project of Southern Vermont**, a 501c3 nonprofit organization founded in 1988. <http://www.aidsprojectsouthernvermont.org/>

For all details about weekend events, visit www.elegiesvt.com. To purchase tickets visit <https://app.arts-people.com/index.php?ticketing=larts>

To read more about Cleve Jones and his involvement in LGBTQ activism, visit <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/aids/interviews/jones.html>. Jones' new book, *When We Rise: My Life in the Movement*, will be released in November. <https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/titles/cleve-jones/when-we-rise/9780316315449/>

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