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M E D I A R E L E A S E

JULY BRINGS AN EXPLOSION OF NEW PLAY ENERGY TO THE ARMORY ***JAW: A Playwrights Festival, July 16th to July 24th, 2011.***

June 30, 2011 – PORTLAND, OR. We have four exciting new plays drawn from a national search, four Oregon playwrights' work to explore and spanning new works from adventurous local companies filling every nook and cranny of the Armory (even the men's room!). Welcome to one of the most exciting weeks in Oregon's performing arts community! **JAW: A Playwrights Festival 2011** will run July 16 – 24, 2011 at the Gerding Theater at the Armory.



During The Big Weekend, July 21 – 24, explore the worlds of a haunted war reporter in Dan O'Brien's *The Body of An American*, a singing teen serial killer in Quincy Long's *The Huntsmen*, a desperate young widow in WWI-era Vienna in David Grimm's *Tales from Red Vienna*, and Russian literature's most tragic heroine in Kevin McKeon's new adaptation of *Anna Karenina*.

There are four Oregon writers featured in the Made in Oregon series, running July 16 - 17 this year. Patrick Wohlmutter will be returning to participate with *Continuum* and Andrea Stolowitz has been selected for a reading of her work *Antarktikos*. Matthew B. Zrebski will present a reading of his new play, *Forky* and Brian Kettler's *Personal* will also receive a reading.

MADE IN OREGON **(July 16-17, Main Stage)**

The Festival will open with the Made in Oregon series, featuring works-in-progress from Oregon writers, with performances at 4:00pm and 8:00 pm July 16th and 17th on the Main Stage. Admission is free and no reservations are required for Made in Oregon readings.

The following plays will be read during Made in Oregon:

***Antarktikos* by Andrea Stolowitz**
Directed by Gemma Whelan
Saturday, July 16 at 4pm

Somewhere between Oregon and Antarctica lie several points on a continuum: Susan, a writer at an artists' residency at the South Pole; Captain Robert Falcon Scott, leader of the British Antarctic expedition of 1912; and Hilary, Susan's 21-year-old daughter. When an insomniac EMT named Alex becomes the hapless link among them, time collapses, geographies blend and destinies emerge.

***Forky* by Matthew B. Zrebski**
Directed by Michael O'Connell
Saturday, July 16 at 8pm

Macy and Banks are married, but not happily married. Macy and Banks are, in fact, teetering on a line that divides reality and a universe of might-have-beens. In a mere forty-eight hours, the view down roads not chosen is hilariously revealed by other dimensional specters. Assaulted by family ghosts, lonely lovers, science teachers, rude baristas, and bank customers demanding crispy cash, Macy and Banks must take comfort in the potential for a fractured universe - where perhaps the dream has come true after all.

Continuum by **Patrick Wohlmüt**

Directed by Stan Foote

Sunday, July 17 at 4pm

Peter is an astronomer who once had a promising career ahead of him, but that was before his work on the true origins of the planet Jupiter stalled, and was finally rendered invalid. Craig is a brilliant con man, who recently used Peter to steal thousands of dollars in research funding. When Peter confronts Craig in prison, what follows is a game of cat-and-mouse that tests the intellects of both men, as betrayal, past injuries, hopes, fears, and the deep friendship they once shared opens up a psychic hall of mirrors from which neither man can escape.

Personal by **Brian Kettler**

Directed by Jessica Nikkel

Sunday, July 17 at 8pm

What happened to Alice Cain? On the eve of her final performance, the world's foremost starlet vanishes. In her wake, she leaves behind a legion of confused and desperate fans. Six months later, Lucy fights to uncover the truth about Alice's disappearance. But she is trapped in a rehabilitation center, programmed to forget that Alice Cain ever existed. Funny and frightening, *Personal* is a story about celebrity obsession, first love, and the twisted road to self-acceptance.

THE BIG WEEKEND (July 21-24, Ellyn Bye Studio)

The JAW Festival Big Weekend is the culmination of two weeks of dramaturgy, rehearsals and rewrites for four plays-in-progress selected from hundreds of submissions received from around the country. An important next step in the development of new work, these **free to the public** workshop readings allow the playwrights to collaborate with professional actors and dramaturges and expose an early draft of their work to audience feedback.

****New this year****

All Big Weekend readings are free, but reservations are required. Reservations can be made by calling the Box Office at 503-445-3700, or in person at the box office located at Gerding Theater at the Armory 128 NW 11th Ave **after July 1**. Reserved tickets will be available for pick the day of the show.

The following plays will be read during The Big Weekend:

The Hunstmen by **Quincy Long**

Directed by Kathleen Dimmick

Thursday, July 21st at 4pm and Saturday, July 23 at 8pm

Fourteen-year-old Devon is driven by dark dreams. His world becomes a surreal landscape of secret societies, violence, mayhem and surprisingly sweet musical harmonies. The songs in his head won't stop, and neither can he.

Anna Karenina Adapted from Tolstoy by **Kevin McKeon**

Directed by Chris Coleman

Thursday, July 21 at 8pm and Saturday, July 23 at 4pm

Tolstoy's classic story of love and marriage in Imperial Russia; this tragic love story has been called by some the greatest novel ever written. When Anna's husband refuses to release her from their marriage to pursue her love for Count Vronsky, the wheels are set in motion for the ultimate sacrifice. Anna Karenina is about uncontrollable passions, and emotional and sexual betrayal, set against one of the most romantic periods of world history.

Tales from Red Vienna by David Grimm

Directed by David Esbjornson

Friday, July 22 at 4pm and Sunday, July 24 at 8pm

Set just after the First World War, *Tales from Red Vienna* follows Helena, a war widow forced into prostitution by her financial circumstances. A friend introduces her to a potential suitor. But does this so-called friend really have her best interests at heart? And is Helena even in a position to date? Helena's search for happiness leads her to unexpected places.

The Body of an American by Dan O'Brien

Directed by Josh Hecht

Friday, July 22 at 8pm and Sunday, July 24 at 4pm

War reporter Paul Watson has witnessed some of the most devastating scenes in modern history. As the ghosts of the tragedies he's recorded bear down on him, he crosses paths with playwright Dan O'Brien, who's battling ghosts of his own. In locations as varied as Kabul, Los Angeles, and the Canadian High Arctic, the two men form a tentative friendship in a quest for absolution.

*Reading times may change. Check www.pcs.org/jaw for up-to-date info.

Also returning to **JAW 2011** will be the **Promising Playwright** readings before select Big Weekend performances, **Devise and Conquer** site specific performances taking place in various locations in the Armory, and **Community Artists Labs** that have been entertaining and informative hallmarks of previous years' festivals.

ABOUT JAW. For 13 years JAW has created a space for playwrights to grow as writers and as professionals. Of the 40 plus plays that have received workshops at the festival, **more than 50% have received world premiere productions** at a regional theaters ranging from the NY Theater Workshop to Steppenwolf to Berkeley Rep to Portland's own Third Rail Rep. Ten JAW plays have later received fully staged productions at Portland Center Stage, giving Portland a strong national reputation for not only incubating new work, but helping to see that work to successful fruition.

JAW: A Playwright's Festival is made possible in part by funding from **Boeing; The Kinsman Foundation;** and **The Oregon Cultural Trust, investing in Oregon's arts, humanities and heritage.**

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including the PCS GreenHouse, a school of theater.

THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY houses a 599-seat Main Stage and a 200-seat black box Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on Oct. 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.