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Playing Poker with the Devil: The Jungle Theater Presents the Area Premiere of Conor McPherson’s The Seafarer

(Minneapolis, MN) — The Jungle Theater closes its 2009 season with the recent Broadway sensation and Tony Award®-winning The Seafarer by Irish playwright Conor McPherson.


“While the play is set on Christmas Eve, don’t go looking for Santa Claus and the Sugarplum Fairy,” says Associate Artistic Director Joel Sass, who will direct the show. “An Irish redemption story with an edge, a tale of alcoholic dreamers, unattractive lovers, poetry-spouting devils, foul-mouthed saints and accidental heroes, it is both an expert comedy and a chilling ghost story that ups the ante on anyone running from the past.”

The play centers on James “Sharky” Harkin (Stephen Yoakam) who has returned to Dublin to look after his irascible, aging brother Richard (Allen Hamilton), recently gone blind. Old drinking buddies Ivan (Patrick Bailey) and Nicky (Mark Rhein) are holed up at the house, too, hoping to play some cards. As Christmas Eve becomes Christmas Day, the arrival of an oddly familiar stranger, Mr. Lockhart (Phil Kilbourne), reminds Sharky of the bargain he made when in prison—and Sharky suddenly finds himself playing a game with the stakes set at his soul.
“The Seafarer is a great example of the type of theater we do so well at the Jungle,” says Associate Artistic Director Joel Sass, who will direct the show. “Epic emotional experiences, performed by top-notch talent, and presented in a playhouse that feels as intimate as your living room.”

About the Artists

Patrick Bailey (Ivan) was last seen on the Jungle stage in Shining City – also by Conor McPherson – in 2007. He’s appeared at many local theaters, including Commonweal Theatre and Park Square Theater and most recently in Frank Theatre’s Palace of the End and Vinegar Tom.

Allen Hamilton (Richard) has appeared at most of the major theatres in the Twin Cities, as well as theatres in Los Angeles, Arizona, Memphis, St. Louis, Boston and New York. He has appeared on Broadway in three productions, including the multiple Tony award winning revival of Death of a Salesman starring Brian Denehy. Previous productions at the Jungle include Under Milk Wood, The Rivals, and Honour.

Phil Kilbourne (Mr. Lockhart) has appeared in several productions at the Jungle Theater including Hapgood, A Perfect Crime, Bone Dry, and The Dazzle. Phil’s appeared in many theaters throughout the Twin Cities and holds an MFA in directing from Ohio State University.

Mark Rhein (Nicky) was last seen at the Jungle in The House of Blue Leaves. Other Twin Cities’ credits include The Great Gatsby at the Guthrie, The Sound of Music at the Ordway, and many Frank Theatre productions including Machinal and The Threepenny Opera.

Stephen Yoakam (Sharky) is very familiar to Twin Cities’ audiences due to numerous roles over many years at the Guthrie, Mixed Blood, Eye of the Storm, and Pillsbury House theaters. At the Jungle, he’s appeared in A Delicate Balance and Tamarack.

The Seafarer design team includes scenic designer Joel Sass, lighting designer Barry Browning, costume designer Amelia Cheever, sound designer Andrew Mayer, and properties designer John Novak.

About the Jungle Theater

For the past 20 years, the Jungle Theater has had a substantial impact on the Twin Cities theater scene, having established a reputation for excellence that stems from a commitment to high artistic standards and the contributions of many respected and celebrated local artists. A flagship example of the transformative power of the performing arts, the Jungle plays a continuing and vital role in the Lyn-Lake neighborhood’s economic, social and cultural development.
Ticket Information

_The Seafarer_ opens on Friday, November 13 and closes on December 20th. Performances of _The Seafarer_ are Tuesdays ($28) and Wednesdays ($28) at 7:30 p.m.; Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. ($32); Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. ($36); Sundays at 2 p.m. ($32); and Sundays at 7:30 p.m. ($28).

Senior, student and group discounts are also available, and half-price rush tickets are available every night of the week 30 minutes prior to the performance for $10 off the regular price.

Tickets are available at (612) 822-7063 or online at www.jungletheater.com

Calendar Information

_The Seafarer_
By Conor McPherson
Directed and Designed by Joel Sass

A friendly game of poker on a snowy Christmas Eve takes a surprising turn when a mysterious stranger arrives from the past and compels everyone to lay their cards—and their souls—on the table.

**DATES**

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<th>Event</th>
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<td>Preview</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>@ 7:30 p.m.</td>
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<td>Press Opening</td>
<td>Friday</td>
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