MEDIA RELEASE
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Michelle Barber makes her Jungle debut playing opposite of Stephen Yoakam in WHO’S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?
Bain Boehlke directs a new staging of Edward Albee’s masterpiece

(Minneapolis, MN) – The Jungle Theater continues showcasing the 20th Century’s most formative plays in its 20th Anniversary Season with a new staging of Edward Albee’s masterpiece, WHO’S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? Starring Stephen Yoakam and Michelle Barber in her Jungle debut, the audacious play that has been captivating audiences for nearly 50 years is directed by Jungle Artistic Director Bain Boehlke.

The Tony Award-winning play, running April 23 through May 30, focuses on George (Yoakam), a disillusioned academic, and Martha (Barber), his caustic wife, who invites a handsome young professor (Sean Neely) and his mousy wife (Jane Froiland) home for a nightcap. An innocent night of fun and games quickly turns dark and dangerous when long-buried resentments are unleashed as George and Martha turn their razor-sharp wits against each other and use their guests as pawns in their verbal sparring.

“Virginia Woolf burst onto the landscape in the early 1960’s just as the American Dream was coming into question,” said Boehlke. “Albee was really looking at the destruction of false illusions and the journey to personal freedom as he examined the hypocrisy of the changing culture. With our recent recession and the rethinking of consumeristic values, we think it’s the perfect time to do this play again, which is bitingly hilarious, profoundly tragic and exceedingly hopeful.”

(more)
Playwright Albee's unsympathetic view of modern times was selected for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1963. However, the award's advisory board—the trustees of Columbia University—objected on the grounds that the play did not represent a “wholesome” view of American life and also on the then-controversial use of profanity and sexual themes. The advisory board overruled the award jury and no Pulitzer Prize for Drama was granted that year.

The Jungle’s creative team includes _____ (lighting), _____ (costumes), _____ (set), _____ (sound), and _____ (properties).

About the Jungle Theater and its 20th Anniversary Season
The Jungle’s 20th anniversary season celebrates and pays homage to the plays and playwrights that helped shape the Jungle’s first two decades. Over the past 20 years, the Jungle has had a substantial impact on the Twin Cities theater scene, establishing 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
Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf opens Friday, April 23 and closes May 30 at the Jungle Theater, 2951 Lyndale Ave. So., Minneapolis. Performances are Tuesdays ($20) and Wednesdays ($25) at 7:30 p.m.; Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. ($30); Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. ($35); Sundays at 2 p.m. ($30); and Sundays at 7:30 p.m. ($25). 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
Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf
By Edward Albee
Directed by Bain Boehlke

When George, a disillusioned academic, and Martha, his caustic wife, invite a handsome young professor and his mousy wife home for a nightcap, an innocent night of fun and games quickly turns dark and dangerous. Long-buried resentments are unleashed as George and Martha turn their razor-sharp wits against each other, using their guests as pawns in their verbal sparring. Winner of the 1963 Tony Award for Best Play, and considered by many to be Albee’s masterpiece.

Dates
Opening Night  Friday  April  23  @ 8:00 p.m.
Press Nights  Friday  April  23  @ 8:00 p.m.
       Saturday  April  24  @ 8:00 p.m.
Audio-Described  @ 7:30 p.m.
Closes  Sunday  May  30  @ 7:30 p.m.
ARTIST’S BIOS

MICHELLE BARBER (Martha) making her stage-debut at the Jungle. Michelle has been a company member of Chanhassen Theatre for 21 years, appearing in Footloose, Les Miz, Anything Goes, 42nd Street, and Cats. She has worked on many other Twin Cities stages, including Caroline, or Change and Pen at the Guthrie, and The Juliet Letters at the Southern Theatre.

JANE FROILAND (Honey) appeared most recently as Esme/Alice in Rock and Roll for Park Square Theatre. She has also appeared with Starting Gate Productions, Illusion Theatre, Theatre in the Round, Nimbus, Gremlin Theatre, Theatre Unbound, and Hardcover Theatre, among others. This will be her Jungle Theater debut.

SEAN NEELY (Nick) recently moved from New York where he worked with Naked Angels, Barefoot Theater Company, Battle of the Bards put on by Partial Comfort and appeared in episodes of Law and Order and Cupid. He has also worked with The Austin Playhouse in Texas, and in Chicago with UMA, Steep Theater Collaboration, and The Griffen Theater. He trained with the LAB Theater in New York and Del Mar Community College in Corpus Christi, Texas.

STEPHEN YOAKAM (George) is a long time member of the Guthrie Theater acting company, where he appeared in dozens of productions over 25 years. Regional credits include roles at The Goodman Theater, A Contemporary Theater, Arizona Theater Company, Arena Stage, the Kennedy Center, and Carnegie Hall with the Minnesota Orchestra. He was seen most recently at the Jungle in The Seafarer. Stephen is a founding member of Mixed Blood Theater, most recently appearing in The Clean House.