

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Judy McPeak
434-924-8137
judym@virginia.edu

**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA
TO PRESENT *MUSEUM***

OPENS February 20 AT THE RUTH CAPLIN THEATRE

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA— February 10, 2014— The Department of Drama will present *Museum* by Tina Howe in the Ruth Caplin Theatre February 20-22, 26-28, and March 1 at 8:00 p.m. Directed by U.Va. Associate Professor Doug Grissom, *Museum* takes an absurdist view of the final day of a contemporary art exhibition where over 30 outlandishly entertaining characters peruse the work of a trio of artists.

The works of three artists are on display and include conceptual white on white artwork, sculptures made out of organic material, and a clothesline running across part of the stage. The reactions of the patrons as they traverse the exhibit range from transfixed and exalted to bored and dismissive to mildly amused and dissolved in laughter. Presiding over this diverse group of spectators is a security guard who tries in vain to keep things under control. “The play introduces characters and plot lines constantly,” said Grissom. “Although the guard is a thread throughout the show, he is not a protagonist, but each of the other characters is and that creates the fun of the show. Thirty plus protagonists in a play is unusual and I think the audience will leave with a sense of the fun and vibrancy of a major art exhibit.”

Grissom, a noted playwright himself, was attracted to Howe’s work because of the fluid way that she juggles characters and plotlines. When originally staged at the New York Shakespeare Festival there was a cast of 17 with each actor having multiple roles, but playwright Howe, said that she hoped any group performing *Museum* would “use the large cast size as a challenge and not as a restriction.” U.Va.’s Grissom embraced this challenge and opted to cast most roles individually rather than having actors play multiples roles. “I wanted to use as many actors as possible to give the opportunity to act to new actors as well as seasoned actors. It is a great way for new actors to experience a mainstage production. I told each of the actors that they were Hamlet, for when each is on stage, they are the center of the audience’s attention.”

Ticket prices for *Museum* are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and alumni association members and \$8 for students. Tickets are available online at www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu, by calling 434-924-3376 or in-person from noon until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday at the U.Va. Arts Box Office, located in the lobby of the U.Va. Drama building. *Museum* will be presented without an intermission.

Free parking for all U.Va. Drama performances is available at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the Drama Building.

For more information on the 2013-2014 U.Va. Department of Drama season, visit us online at www.virginia.edu/drama.

Click here for access to photo <https://virginia.box.com/s/wn8havksix91y0xku2hi>. Caption is listed in comments section.