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**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA TO PRESENT  
SHAKESPEARE'S BELOVED "SERIOUS COMEDY" TWELFTH NIGHT**

*Show Aims To Welcome Shakespeare Novices And Experts Alike With Welcoming Approach  
Including Pre-Show Performances and Interactions With Characters In Theater Lobby*

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – November 14, 2007** – Love will most certainly be in the air, and on the stage, and even in the lobby when the University of Virginia Drama Department presents Shakespeare's beloved comedy *Twelfth Night*.

The timeless tale of love, loss and laughter, directed by Theresa M. Davis, comes to Culbreth Theater beginning on November 29th. The run will continue on November 30<sup>th</sup>, December 1<sup>st</sup> and from December 5<sup>th</sup> through the 8<sup>th</sup>.

All performances begin at 8p.m. Single ticket sales are \$14 for adults, \$12 for seniors and \$8 for students and can be ordered by calling the Drama Box Office at 434-924-3376 or by visiting the Culbreth Theatre Monday through Friday between the hours of 1pm and 6pm.

New this year, we are offering a 15% discount on all tickets and subscriptions to U.Va. Faculty and Staff. Also, full-time U.Va. students can use their **Arts Dollars** as a form of payment to purchase both individual show and season tickets. Visit [www.virginia.edu/artsdollars](http://www.virginia.edu/artsdollars) for more information.

Hailed by many as Shakespeare's greatest comedy, *Twelfth Night* features mistaken identity, foolish pomposity, gender-reversal and a hilarious and unconventional love triangle in an evening of carefully controlled theatrical chaos. By the play's end, deceptions are unveiled, truths are revealed, laughs are unleashed and a future is foreshadowed to have as much potential as it does portent.

Davis, who is returning to the play after last directing it 14 years ago, is enjoying the process of rediscovering the play and its characters. "It's been such an interesting journey," she said. "It speaks volumes to me in terms of love and loss."

The play also speaks volumes about excess, Davis said. "This play is happening during the Epiphany, a time when one let down his or her inhibitions. It was a time defined by excess. There is excess of love, excess of sadness, excess of avoidance. You have the character of Toby, with his issues of gluttony. You have Olivia telling Malvolio that he is full of self love, so there

is an excess of pride and envy. Olivia's mourning is clearly an excess of sadness. And in Orsino you have someone who is clearly in love with the thought of love more than he is with Olivia. And in the end, you have, of all people, the clown Feste as the only one who can read these people and truly tell us what is going on."

While all "curtain times" for performances technically begin at 8p.m., the evening's entertainment will start the minute audiences come through the doors with a series of pre-show activities that will include the actors, in-costume as well as in-character, performing for and interacting with patrons in the lobby.

"I love the idea of theater as an event," Davis said. "I love the fact that people will come and share their time and energy with us, and this is a great way for us to round out the whole experience. There will be singing, recitation of Shakespeare sonnets and more as we work to basically set the stage for the production."

The pre-show activities will also serve as a sort of welcome mat laid out for those who may be new to the Shakespeare experience, Davis said. "Here we have the most produced playwright in the world but yet there are still people who have never seen a live Shakespeare production. In this pre-show, we will provide an introduction to some of the characters and to the theatrical experience they are about to have. I envision a wonderful multi-generational audience where those who love Shakespeare will come to us along with those just discovering it."

The 2007-2008 season will continue with the acclaimed musical revue *Songs for a New World* (Culbreth, February 14-16 & 20-23, 2008); U.Va. Drama Associate Professor Doug Grissom's drama *So Careless* (Helms, March 20-22 & 25-29, 2008) and the David Mamet-adapted Harley Granville-Barker play *The Voysey Inheritance* (April 17-19 & 23-26, 2008).

Tickets for *Twelfth Night* are on sale now, and tickets for the remaining productions will go on sale approximately two weeks prior to the opening date. All performances begin at 8p.m.

The new Arts Parking Garage is scheduled for completion by Spring 2008 and will feature parking conveniently located next to the theatres. Until that time, construction has closed the lots flanking Culbreth Road and Culbreth Road itself. Free parking is available in the Mad Bowl lot adjacent to the Peyton House and the Madison Hall lot. Free spaces may also be found on University Way, University Avenue or McCormick Road. Parking for an hourly rate is available at the Central Grounds Garage. You may purchase a short-term parking pass for the Emmet/Ivy Garage by contacting U.Va. Parking and Transportation at 434-924-7231. Please allow extra time to park and walk to the theatre.

For complete information on the 2007-2008 season, visit [www.virginia.edu/drama](http://www.virginia.edu/drama).

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