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**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA
ANNOUNCES 2012-2013 SEASON**

Productions To Include Ionesco's Iconic Absurdist Comedy *Rhinoceros*; Tony Award-Winning Musical *Spring Awakening*; Touching and Funny *God's Ear* and Classic Comedy *You Can't Take it With You*

Season To Kick Off October 4 In Helms Theatre And Conclude In Brand-New Ruth Caplin Theatre Next Spring

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – September 4, 2012 – The U.Va. Drama Department's 2012-2013 season will go from the ridiculous to the sublime, bookended by Eugene Ionesco's celebrated absurdist comedy *Rhinoceros* and the debut of the brand-new, state-of-the-art Ruth Caplin Theatre with the classic screwball comedy *You Can't Take it With You*.

In between, audiences will get a chance to experience the passion and power of the Tony Award-winning musical *Spring Awakening* and discover a talented new voice in the theatre world, with *God's Ear*, a powerful, poignant and funny look at life, love and loss by playwright Jenny Schwartz.

When we looked ahead toward this season, the word 'untraditional' kept coming to mind," said Tom Bloom, Associate Professor and Chair of the U.Va. Department of Drama. "Our ongoing construction in the theatre complex forced us to look at the season through a different creative and logistical lens, and I think this impacted our choices in interesting and unpredictable ways."

In fact, the season starts off with one of the more interesting and unpredictable works in all of theatre, Eugene Ionesco's *Rhinoceros*. "Here you have a play that at once has no foothold in reality and yet has incredible relevance not only from a historical perspective but also as a sort of cautionary tale for all of us about the dangers of blind conformity," said Bloom.

The explosive 2007 Broadway sensation *Spring Awakening* is by its very nature a look at the boiling point between the traditional and non-traditional, using a powerful pop-infused score to present the struggles of a group of adolescents coming of age in repressive 19th Century Germany. *God's Ear*, by talented young playwright Jenny

Schwartz, will take audiences down a more modern absurdist path, using the power of language and of laughter to explore a young couple's life in the wake of an unimaginable loss.

The season will end on a particularly exciting note when a timeless classic comedy gets new life in a new home with the grand opening of the new Ruth Caplin Theatre and ***You Can't Take it With You***. "We are so excited to usher in this new era for our department and for the arts as a whole at U.Va. with the opening of this wonderful new space," Bloom said.

The 300-seat Ruth Caplin Theatre will provide an exciting, state-of-the-art addition to the Betsy and John Casteen Arts Grounds. The thrust stage theatre is designed to accommodate growth across the University's acclaimed performing arts programs, from drama to dance to film and beyond. The theatre is named for screenwriter Ruth Caplin, and was built thanks in part to a \$4 million donation from Mrs. Caplin and her husband, Mortimer Caplin, an alumnus of the College and the Law School.

Subscription packages for 2012-2013 include tickets to all four productions, and are \$49 for adults, \$34 for students, \$43 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and alumni association members.

Season subscriptions allow patrons the most flexible and inexpensive option for securing the seats and the nights they are looking for. Subscribers will receive priority access to seat reservations and fee-free ticket exchanges and replacements. In addition, returning subscribers will receive priority access to tickets and seats.

Subscription renewals are now available online at www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu. Existing subscribers received an access code via mail. Should anyone need a new code they can get one by emailing artsboxoffice@virginia.edu.

In-person and phone renewals are now also available by calling 434-924-3376 or from noon until 5:00p.m. Monday through Friday at the U.Va. Arts Box Office, located in the lobby of the Culbreth Theatre building.

New subscribers can order their 2012-2013 U.Va. Drama season subscriptions online, in-person or by phone starting Monday, September 10th.

Single tickets for all performances will go on sale Monday, September 24th and can also be ordered online, in person or by phone.

A \$3.75 processing fee applies to all Internet, phone and mail orders.

2012-2013 UVa. Drama Department Productions

One of the most iconic works in the absurdist theater movement, Eugene Ionesco's ***Rhinoceros*** puts mindless conformity firmly in its crosshairs in response to seemingly

unchecked rise of Nazism and Fascism. When residents of a small village begin transforming into rhinoceroses, only one man is able to resist the urge and retain his own individuality and integrity against the pull of mass culture. This funny, bizarre, and biting satire is a cautionary tale for all eras.

Rhinoceros, directed by Marianne Kubik, will be presented at the Helms Theatre from October 4-6 and 10-13 at 8:00 p.m.

Taking Broadway by storm in 2007, ***Spring Awakening*** is a pop/rock/folk adaptation of this 1892 play by Frank Wedekind that follows the lives, loves and longings of a group of German teens exploring and embracing their emerging sexuality under the disapproving eyes of their repressive parents and society at large. Capturing eight Tony Awards including Best Musical, the show features an infectious score by Grammy-winning artist and composer Duncan Sheik.

Spring Awakening, directed by Robert Chapel, will be presented at Culbreth Theatre from November 28-29 and December 1-5 at 8:00 p.m.

Playwright Jenny Schwartz launches buckshot barrages of lyrical wordplay in ***God's Ear***, a touching look at life, love and loss. When a tragedy leaves a couple unable to escape their grief, the power of language to enlighten and obscure takes center stage. Stuck in a world where real has lost all meaning, the characters create new ones where the Tooth Fairy is real, GI Joe is a family therapist and love is more a question than an answer.

God's Ear, directed by Sandy Shinner, will be presented at the Helms Theatre from February 21-23, February 26-28 and March 1-2 at 8:00 p.m.

You Can't Take it With You, Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman's classic 1936 screwball comedy proves that when it comes to crazy families, everything is relative! When the time comes for a young woman to introduce her exceedingly eccentric brood to her buttoned-up future in-laws, the resulting catastrophe brings cascades of laughter along with important questions about individualism, conformity and the real meaning of "normal."

You Can't Take It With You, by George S. Kaufman & Moss Hart, will be directed by J.P. Scheidler and presented in the Caplin Theatre from April 18-20 and 24-27 at 8:00 p.m.

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

For more information on the 2012-2013 U.Va. Department of Drama season, visit us online at www.virginia.edu/drama.

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