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**UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF DRAMA
ANNOUNCES 2009-2010 SEASON**

Productions To Include: *The Seagull*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Pippin*, *The Foreigner*,
Language of Angels and *Dead Man's Cell Phone*

CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA – August 30, 2008 – The University of Virginia Department of Drama is taking a look at identity from many angles in a 2009-2010 season that spans both centuries and genres.

The season kicks off on September 24 with Larry Shue's uproarious comedy *The Foreigner*. The season will also include:

- The timeless classic dramas from Chekhov and Molière in *The Seagull* and the *Imaginary Invalid*
- The beloved and enduring musical *Pippin*
- New works from acclaimed contemporary playwrights in *Language of Angels* and *Dead Man's Cell Phone*

"We are very excited to share this collection of extraordinary works with our audiences this year," said Tom Bloom, Associate Professor and Chair of the U.Va. Department of Drama. "Each was chosen on its individual merit. However, as we look back at this particular grouping it becomes clear that we have classic and contemporary plays, and a musical that, each in their own way, takes us on a journey that transforms our identity and the world around us.

This ranges from the characters of *The Seagull*, whose identities are instrumental to their ever-elusive searches for hope and happiness. *Pippin* is nothing if not a search for identity as a man who could easily assume the throne chooses instead to discover his true self instead. Both *The Foreigner* and *Dead Man's Cell Phone* center around who, due to happenstance, assume brand new identities with results that are in are both funny and informative about how we interact with our world today."

Season subscriptions are currently on sale for \$73 for the general public, \$63 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members and \$50 for students. And this year, thanks to the launch of the U.Va. Arts Box Office and its online ticketing system, ordering both season subscriptions and single tickets is easier than ever before.

Subscriptions and single tickets for all fall semester productions can be purchased online at <http://www.artsboxoffice.virginia.edu/>. Tickets are also available by phone at 434-924-3376 between noon and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and in person at the Arts Box Office, located in the lobby of the Culbreth Theatre also from noon to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. A \$3.50 processing fee applies to Internet, phone and mail orders.

All performances begin at 8:00 p.m and there will be special 2PM matinee of *The Foreigner* on Saturday, September 26.

The season-opening *The Foreigner*, directed by Richard Warner, takes audiences to a backwoods Georgia fishing lodge where a gregarious British soldier and his painfully shy friend arrive for a bit of rest and relaxation and get neither. When the soldier tries to protect his friend from socializing by telling the lodge keeper that his friend Charlie speaks no English, the would-be wallflower is suddenly privy to a swirling storm of confessions and deceptions and must reinvent himself as a charming foreigner. His life-changing acting job propels a series of increasingly hilarious happenings that build to a comic crescendo and a final faceoff of good versus evil.

The Foreigner will be presented at the Culbreth Theatre and will run from September 24-26, September 30 and October 1-2. Single tickets are now on sale and are \$14 for the general public; \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$8 for students.

Language of Angels, by Naomi Iizuka, is a haunting tale that begins in a cave on the edge of a rural North Carolina town, where a young girl once went missing. One of nine friends is responsible for her death, yet her ghostly, echoed cries will haunt each of them forever and send them on parallel paths that lead them to their own tragic fates. What begins as a classic ghost story morphs into a multi-layered musing on grief, loss, guilt and karma as Iizuka's fascinating puzzle reveals itself one surprising revelation at a time. The play will be directed by American Shakespeare Center associate Doreen Bechtol.

Language of Angels will be presented at the Helms Theatre and will run from October 22-24 and October 27-31. Single tickets are now on sale and are \$14 for the general public; \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$8 for students.

The Imaginary Invalid, which will be directed by Colleen Kelly, is the story of a hopeless hypochondriac whose "habit" is supported by all medical practitioners of all kinds. So when it comes time to marry off his daughter, is it any surprise that he sees it as the ultimate chance to gain a doctor for a son? She has other ideas, of course, and the

result is a series of romantic misadventures, mistaken identities and more. Leave it to the winking eyes and sharp wit of Molière to inject some serious laughs into a health care debate that still rages some 406 years after he first put these words to paper.

The Imaginary Invalid will be presented in the Helms Theatre from November 12-14 and November 17-21. Single tickets are now on sale and are \$14 for the general public; \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$8 for students.

Anton Chekhov's remarkable masterpiece *The Seagull* has given us some of our most unforgettable characters and a story of sadness and longing that has resonated through the generations. The complex tale is the ultimate window into the writer's soul from one of the most celebrated playwrights the world has ever known.

The Seagull, which will be directed by Drama Department graduate Amanda McRaven, will be presented in Culbreth Theatre from February 18-20 and February 24-27, 2010. Single tickets go on sale online on Monday, January 18 and are \$14 for the general public; \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$8 for students.

Are we dead when our hearts stop or when our cell phones stop ringing? This is just one of the questions posed in Sarah Ruhl's smart and quirky comedy *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. When a woman chooses to answer a dead man's cell phone at a restaurant, she begins an odyssey that soon has her at the epicenter of the bizarre life he left behind and fully ensnared in a tangled web of lies of her own making. Her intricate ruse delivers plenty of laughs along with fascinating observations about mortality and our obsessive need to connect in this digital age.

Dead Man's Cell Phone, directed by Betsy Tucker, will be presented at the Helms Theatre from March 25-27, March 30-31 and April 1-3, 2010. Single tickets go on sale Monday, January 18 and are \$14 for the general public; \$12 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$8 for students.

Pippin, the all-time favorite musical theatre fairy tale, has been delighting audiences around the world ever since its debut in the 1970's. The tale of the man who would (rather not) be king is a timeless story of passion, power, politics and true love set to a show-within-a-show stopping score by Stephen Schwartz (of *Godspell* and *Wicked* fame) including the classic "Corner of the Sky."

Pippin, directed by directed by Robert Chapel, will be presented in Culbreth Theatre from April 22-24, April 28-30 and May 1. Single tickets go on sale on Monday, January 18 and are \$16 for the general public; \$14 for seniors and U.Va. faculty, staff and Alumni Association members; and \$10 for students.

Parking is free at the Culbreth Road Parking Garage, conveniently located alongside the theaters.

For more information on the 2009-2010 U.Va. Department of Drama season, visit us online at www.virginia.edu/drama.

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