



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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University  
of Victoria

## SO YOU THINK YOU'RE PRETTY. REALLY?

Prominent TV & film actor directs acclaimed black comedy  
that challenges ideas of 'pretty'

2012/2013 Season

### REASONS TO BE PRETTY

**February 14 – 23, 2013**

By Neil LaBute

*The Tony Award-nominated, blue-collar, black comedy about being pretty, being in a relationship and being yourself.*

Director: Christine Willes (MFA Candidate)

Set Designer: Breanna Wise

Costume Designer: Halley Fulford

Lighting Designers:

Michael Whitfield & Erin Osborne

Sound Designer: Hayley McCurdy

Stage Manager: Imogen Wilson

**Preshow Lecture: February 15 @ 7pm**

*The Director's Series: Join us for our series this year that puts our directors front and centre talking about the inspiration for their play.*

**Advisory:** This play is definitely four-letter word friendly. Mature subject matter and very coarse language.

*Reasons to Be Pretty is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc, New York*

Next...

**YOU'RE A GOOD MAN,**

**CHARLIE BROWN** (REVISED)

**March 14 – 23, 2013**

Book, Music and Lyrics by Clark Gesner

Directed by Fran Gebhard

*Broadway hit follows the loveable Peanuts gang through a day as they ponder the meaning of life.*

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Box Office: 250-721-8000

Ask anyone: relationships can suck. We all want to feel pretty; we all want to not care about it. But how can we deal with our own ideas of prettiness when the media is breathing down our necks every day with images of surreally ideal attractiveness? And we never feel the pressure so intensely as on Valentine's Day.

Running from February 14 to 23, 2013, the University of Victoria's Phoenix Theatre invites you and your Valentine to their production of Neil LaBute's ***Reasons to Be Pretty*** – a blue-collar, black comedy that cleverly finds humour in our relationships' miscommunications, intimacies, and preoccupation with appearance. Directed by accomplished theatre, film, and television actor Christine Willes as her Masters in Fine Arts thesis project, the play urges audiences to explore their own thoughts on the social constructs of prettiness.

*"Supposedly, you can't judge a book by its cover, but alas, it appears we do," said Willes. "The fine-looking among us, studies prove, earn more money, and self-identify as happier. True for men, true for women. It may not be fair, but it is real. Or is it?"*

The play goes like this: Steph and Greg are a couple. Then, Greg mentions something about her looks to his best friend, Kent. Steph hears it from Kent's wife Carly. Words are had, insults and expletives are exchanged, and pets are threatened. After this blowout, can they find their way back?

Set designer and fourth-year student Breanna Wise successfully captures the huge, industrial warehouse where three of the characters work as well as the corporate genericness of the shopping mall, and the anywhere-ness of the hometown baseball field. The costumes, designed by fifth-year student Halley Fulford, contrast their institutional uniforms with their youthful, 20-something personal style, and evolve over the play with the four characters. Lighting is designed by third-year student Erin Osborne and sessional instructor Michael Whitfield; Sound Design is created by Hayley McCurdy; and the Stage Manager is Imogen Wilson.

Christine Willes has been a prominent name in both the worlds of theatre and of film and television for over thirty years. She has directed many productions in the Vancouver and Victoria areas, and has won several awards for excellence in theatre. Internationally known as Delores Herbig in Showtime's Emmy-nominated television series, *Dead Like Me*, other film and TV credits include *Red Riding Hood*, *InSecurity*, *Smallville*, and *Emily Owens MD*. An in-demand acting coach, international clients have included Michelle Ryan, Zac Efron, and the cast of *The Secret Circle*.

Neil LaBute is a prolific playwright, screenwriter, and director in both media. *Reasons to Be Pretty*, the last of a trilogy dealing with self-image, was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Play in 2009. Recently, LaBute announced that a companion play, *Reasons to be Happy* (which picks up the story of Steph and Greg three years down the road), will have its Off-Broadway premier this June. His twenty plays are produced more often than those of almost any other contemporary dramatist. LaBute is well known for his provocative plays, dark characters and realistic, contemporary language. *"Mr. LaBute is writing some of the freshest and most illuminating American dialogue to be heard anywhere these days."* (NY Times)

Join us on **Friday, February 15 at 7pm** for a **FREE preshow lecture** with director Christine Willes as she shares her ideas about this production. Call **250-721-8000** for details or visit [phoenixtheatres.ca](http://phoenixtheatres.ca). The performance schedule for ***Reasons to Be Pretty*** is as follows:

**Public Preview Performances 8pm:** February 12 & 13

**Evening Performances 8pm:** February 14 (Opening Night), 15 (Lecture), 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23

**Matinee Performances 2pm:** Saturday, February 23

**Single Tickets:** \$13 Student /\$18 Senior/\$22 Adult/\$24 Weekends @ 8pm (Previews \$7.00, available after 5pm)

**Phoenix Box Office Opens:** February 5 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.