



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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University
of Victoria

PHOENIX THEATRE PLAYS EXPLORE FAMILY TIES

2009/2010 Season

UVic Department of Theatre announces 2009/10 season

1 SPOTLIGHT ON ALUMNI: THE JOSEPHINE KNOT

October 15–24, 2009

By Meg Braem

Produced by Theatre BOMBUS

Twenty-five-year-old Samantha and her father travel home for the wake of her grandmother and discover the ties that bind a family.

2 ROMEO AND JULIET

November 5–21, 2009

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Brian Richmond (Professor)

The beloved and tragic love story about two "star-crossed lovers" who struggle against the prejudices of their feuding families.

3 PROBLEM CHILD

February 18–27, 2010

By George F. Walker

Guest Director, Michael Shamata (Belfry Theatre)

A fast-paced black comedy about a desperate and dysfunctional couple's attempts to put their troubled past behind them.

4 WRECKAGE

March 18–27, 2010

By Sally Stubbs

Directed by Fran Gebhard (Sessional Instructor)

Violet discovers her long lost mother's diary and through it, the truth about her family's past – including a 1920s drug cartel and a train wreck that changed the course of Violet's life.

Phoenix Theatre

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Anna Karenina, Leo Tolstoy's magisterial novel, begins with the line, "All happy families resemble one another, each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."

Warwick Dobson, Chair of University of Victoria's Department of Theatre is pleased to announce that the 2009/10 Phoenix Theatre season offers four contrasting perspectives on family, from *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare's enduring tale of feuding families, to George F. Walker's contemporary portrait of a thoroughly dysfunctional couple.

The 2009/10 season begins with the Phoenix's Spotlight on Alumni presentation of *The Josephine Knot*, from October 15 to 24, 2009. *The Josephine Knot* follows the experiences of twenty-five-year-old Samantha as she rediscovers the meaning of family when she and her father return home for her grandmother's wake. Written by theatre alumna Meg Braem (BFA '04) and produced by Theatre BOMBUS, this play brings together a team of graduates including Jen Braem (BFA '04), Amiel Gladstone (BFA '94), Laura Harris (BFA '06), Megan Newton (BFA '05) and Erin Macklem (BFA '98). It was nominated in 2007 for "Best New Play" by the Critics' Spotlight Award.

From November 5 through 21, 2009, the Phoenix will present *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare's classic tragedy about two "star-crossed lovers" set within the broader universal context of the story of their feuding families. UVic theatre professor Brian Richmond (*Dark of the Moon*, 2008 and *Wind in the Willows*, 2007), who is also the Founding Artistic Director of the new Blue Bridge Repertory Theatre, will direct *Romeo and Juliet* this fall.

In the new year, the Phoenix Theatre welcomes Michael Shamata, Artist Director of the Belfry Theatre, to guest-direct *Problem Child*. Written by one of Canada's most prolific playwrights, George F. Walker, *Problem Child* is a black comedy that chronicles a desperate and dysfunctional couple's attempts to regain custody of their child. This play, running February 18-27, 2009, marks Shamata's first time directing for the Phoenix Theatre.

The 2009/10 season concludes with *Wreckage*, a story about a young woman's search for her long lost mother and her discovery of the complicated truth about her family's past, including a 1920s drug cartel headed up by a woman named "Momma" and the horrific train wreck that changed all of their lives. Written by Sally Stubbs, *Wreckage* was first produced in 2005 by New West Theatre and partially adapted into the short film *Mother Cutter*. Sally Stubbs is now a Masters of Fine Art candidate in the Writing Department. UVic sessional instructor Fran Gebhard (*Crackpot* and *The School for Scandal*) returns to direct this final play of our season March 18-27, 2010.

The Phoenix Theatre's forty-third season continues a tradition of showcasing the youth, energy and talent of students in the Department of Theatre. "Our students involvement in the theatre process is an essential part of the academic curriculum at UVic," says Dobson. "As well as acting on stage, students assist in the design, stage management, set and costume construction, sound and lighting operation and front of house management."

The Department of Theatre will also continue to offer its **Festival of Innovative and New Drama (FIND) Studio Series** in collaboration with the Department of Writing, March 4-6, 2010.

Subscriptions for the 2009/10 season are now available for as little as \$33 for 3 mainstage shows. Details about the season as well as subscription information are available online at <http://finearts.uvic.ca/theatre/box-office>, or order through the Phoenix Box Office or by calling 250-721-8000.