



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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University
of Victoria

KNICKKNACKS AND PICKLES HELP PRESERVE TIES THAT BIND A FAMILY

2009/2010 Season

UVic alumni return to Alma Mater to present *The Josephine Knot*

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

Media Contact: Adrienne Holierhoek

Marketing & Communications Manager,

Department of Theatre

email: aholierh@finearts.uvic.ca

www.phoenixtheatres.ca

250-721-7992

Box Office: 250-721-8000

A grandfather clock, piles of newspapers, a lamp made out of Popsicle sticks, an old wedding veil and lots and lots of pickles: Welcome to Samantha's grandmother's house.

This is the pack rat world of Baba, created by UVic Theatre alumna Meg Braem in her play *The Josephine Knot*, which opens the University of Victoria's Phoenix Theatre 2009/10 season for their annual "Spotlight on Alumni" and runs October 15 through 24, 2009.

Meg Braem (BFA '04) is joined by her twin sister Jen Braem (BFA '04), also an UVic alumna and general manager of Theatre BOMBUS which has brought together other alumni to work on this production: director Amiel Gladstone (BFA '94) costume and set designer and production manager Megan Newton (BFA '05), lighting designer Michael Franzman (BFA candidate for 2010) and actor Laura Harris (BFA '06).

Laura Harris (of much acclaimed one-woman show about Judy Holliday *Pitch Blond*) plays twenty-five-year-old Samantha who travels with her father, played by veteran Victoria actor Brian Linds, to their family home for the wake of her grandmother, Baba. In and about Baba's hoards of knickknacks and preserves – jars of pickled everything, from potatoes and onions to watermelon and cantaloupe – Samantha wades through long-forgotten relatives and personal family memories as everyone stakes their claim to grandma's treasures.

The play is named after a sailor's knot that is used to make two pieces of rope function as one. "Metaphorically, Baba's house does the same for Samantha and her father David," says designer Megan Newton. "It's only by wading through the mounds of newspaper, dirt and canning that they can come to terms with who she was, what they've lost and appreciate what they have found in each other."

The Josephine Knot was the winner of "The News," Playwrights Theatre Centre's search for exceptional young playwrights, Intrepid Theatre's "Petri Dish" new play award and nominated for best new play by the Victoria critics "Spotlight Award." Monday Magazine said "... given Braem's canny ear for dialogue and the unpretentious sense of reality seen in Amiel Gladstone's direction... *Josephine* avoids the obvious trappings of family feuds and instead sifts through the emotional debris resulting when a family's matriarch finally falls."

This is the first play of four this season that offer 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 in *Problem Child*, and *Wreckage*, and a play by UVic MFA Writing candidate Sally Stubbs of a young woman's search for her mother, years after a train wreck changed the course of her life.

The Phoenix Theatre will host a special performance of *The Josephine Knot* with sign language interpretation for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on Saturday, October 24 at the 2:00pm matinee featuring the internationally known Deaf interpreter Nigel Howard and Victoria hearing interpreter Mary Warner. Everyone is welcome to join us for our **FREE Pre-Show Lecture**, Friday October 16 at 7:00pm with Janet Munsil, Artistic Director and Festival Producer of Intrepid Theatre, who's "Petri Dish" program nurtured the development of *The Josephine Knot* for stage. She'll discuss the implications of recent funding cuts to the development of new theatre.

The performance schedule for *The Josephine Knot* at the Phoenix Theatre @ UVic is as follows:

Public Preview Performances 8pm: October 13 & 14

Evening Performances 8pm: October 15 (Opening Night), 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24

Matinee Performances 2pm: Saturday, October 24 with Sign Language Interpretation

Single Tickets: \$12 Student / \$17 Senior / \$22 Adult or Weekend 8pm (Previews \$6.00, available after 5pm)

Season Subscriptions: \$33 for 3 plays or \$44 for 4 plays.

Phoenix Box Office opens October 7 in person or by calling: **(250) 721-8000**.