

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE ANNOUNCES 2009/10 SEASON

*Annette Bening, Laurence Fishburne and Matthew Modine
Take Leading Roles in US, West Coast and World Premiere Productions*

New Season Begins September 16, 2009

LOS ANGELES, April 2009 — The Geffen Playhouse's 2009 / 2010 season boasts award-winning actors (including **Annette Bening**, **Laurence Fishburne** and **Matthew Modine**), acclaimed directors (**Randall Arney**, **Gil Cates**, **Leonard Foglia** and **John Rando**) and contemporary new works, including two world premieres, a North American premiere and a West Coast premiere. The season, which runs the gamut from satire and farce to musical and biography, kicks off with the world premiere of **Blair Singer's** Hollywood parody ***Matthew Modine Saves the Alpacas***, segues into **Bill Cain's** witty historical fiction ***Equivocation***, is followed by the North American premiere of **Joanna Murray-Smith's** wild comedy ***The Female of the Species***, which leads into the world premiere of Jonathan Brielle's gritty musical ***Nightmare Alley*** (postponed from the current season), and concludes with the West Coast premiere of the **George Stevens, Jr's** stunning biography ***Thurgood***.

"When putting together our season, we focus on each play as part of a larger experience – and this year we're taking our audience on quite a ride," said Geffen Playhouse Producing Director Gil Cates. "We'll collectively be transported and provoked by the work on stage, and we'll walk out with a little different perspective than when we walked in. And, that's why we go to the theater."

The Geffen Playhouse season 09/10, which begins on September 16, 2009 and runs through August 8, 2010, includes:

Matthew Modine Saves the Alpacas

Written by Blair Singer

Directed by John Rando

Runs Sept 8 – Oct 18

Opening Night – Sept 16

Matthew Modine stars as Matthew Modine in *Matthew Modine Saves the Alpacas*, the world premiere of this rollicking satire that parodies celebrity humanitarianism, Hollywood and hand sanitizer. Eighties heartthrob Matthew Modine was 'A-List' all the way. But now, a couple decades later, he's not any lists. He needs to get back in the limelight – he needs ... a Cause. With the help of uber-publicist Whimberly North, Matthew channels his talents toward the common good and heads off to a small South American village to meet the Chimborazzi tribe and save their alpacas. Now, if only there wasn't so much dirt in Ecuador...

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Equivocation**Written by Bill Cain****Runs Nov 10 – Dec 20****Opening Night Nov 18**

In a world where history is told by the winner, comes a new play about the night England's infamous Gunpowder Plot was foiled. For hundreds of years, this event has been celebrated as Guy Fawkes Day, but it's clear there is no way the night could have unfolded the way the Crown claimed. So, without Fox News at his disposal, how does King James turn fiction into fact? He hires the world's greatest playwright. Enter William Shakespeare. With the weight of history on their shoulders, Shakespeare and his winsome troupe struggle to dramatize the King's absurd account without losing their integrity - or their heads. Featuring playful allusions to some of the Bard's greatest works, *Equivocation* is a high-stakes tale where history meets fiction and fiction meets its match.

The Female of the Species**Written by Joanna Murray-Smith****Directed by Randall Arney****Runs Feb 2 – March 14****Opening Night – Feb 10**

Academy Award nominee **Annette Bening** returns to the Geffen Playhouse in this wildly wicked farce. Loosely inspired by a real-life incident involving feminist philosopher Germaine Greer, *The Female of the Species* tells the story of Margot Mason – famed auteur of such influential works as “Madame Ovary,” “Love and Other Four Letter Words” and “The Complete Insignificance of Male Sexuality” – who has retreated to her country home to pen her next masterpiece. Problem is, nothing's coming. Nothing, that is, except for a young former student who is intent on taking Margot hostage as punishment for her mixed message ideology. Enter Margot's overlooked daughter, her simplistic son-in-law, her longtime publisher and a disgruntled cab driver ... and all of a sudden a simple kidnapping turns into a battle over who can throw the first punch and get the last word.

Nightmare Alley**Music, Book and Lyrics by Jonathan Brielle****Directed by Gilbert Cates****Runs April 13 – May 23****Opening Night – April 21**

Step into *Nightmare Alley* and enter the titillating world of carnies, cons and clairvoyants. With a score as wild as a funhouse and as evocative as a beautiful tightrope walker, this world premiere musical tells the tale of a young carnie couple who tempt the fickle hand of fate. Based on the darkly evocative 1946 William Lindsay Gresham novel of the same name, *Nightmare Alley* is a night at the theater full of special effects, wondrous feats and enough spirit to make believers of us all. But remember, here, things are never as they seem.

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Thurgood

Written by George Stevens, Jr

Directed by Leonard Foglia

Runs June 27 – August 8

Opening Night – July 7

Witness one of America's greatest stories told from the stage by one of our greatest story tellers. Tony Award Winner, Emmy Award Winner and Oscar Nominee **Laurence Fishburne** transforms into Thurgood Marshall to tell the triumphant story of how a boy from the backstreets of Baltimore changed history. From arguing the 1954 landmark case *Brown v. Board of Education* to becoming the first African-American Supreme Court Justice, Thurgood Marshall's tenacious advocacy broke open the civil rights movement, paving the way for the young African-American leaders of our future. Fishburne's acclaimed Broadway performance of *Thurgood* earned him a Drama Desk Award and an Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Solo Performance, as well as a Tony nomination for Best Performance by a Leading Actor in a Play.

EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

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ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company is helmed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert (Gil) Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Susan Barton and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit **GeffenPlayhouse.com**.

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