

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

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April 26, 2011

STEPHENWOLF THEATRE COMPANY'S PRODUCTION OF
EDWARD ALBEE'S *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?*
WHICH WAS RECENTLY PRESENTED AT
ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
TO OPEN ON BROADWAY FALL 2012 WITH ORIGINAL COMPANY

*** Directed by Pam MacKinnon, and featuring Steppenwolf ensemble members
Tracy Letts and Amy Morton with Carrie Coon and Madison Dirks, the production will open
exactly 50 years after of the original Broadway production ***

(Washington, D.C.) On the heels of the April 24 conclusion of the two-month Arena Stage Edward Albee festival comes the news that the celebration of our greatest living playwright, Edward Albee, will continue when Steppenwolf Theatre Company's critically acclaimed production of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* opens on Broadway **Saturday, October 13, 2012**—exactly 50 years to the date after the play's original Broadway opening **Saturday, October 13, 1962**. It will feature the original Steppenwolf cast seen at Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater (February 25 – April 10)—**Tracy Letts, Amy Morton, Carrie Coon** and **Madison Dirks** under the direction of **Pam MacKinnon**.

"It is wonderful that Arena Stage could play a role in bringing Steppenwolf Theatre Company together with Edward Albee, an incomparable giant in American playwriting," shares Arena Stage Artistic Director **Molly Smith**. "From the day Pam MacKinnon discussed with us her idea to cast Tracy and Amy in this epic production, we knew this *Virginia Woolf* was meant to be something special. Collaborations, such as this one with Martha Lavey and her tremendously talented Steppenwolf Theatre Company, exemplify our commitment to presenting and furthering the best of American theater."

On the campus of a small New England college, George and Martha invite a new professor and his wife home for a nightcap. As the cocktails flow, the young couple finds themselves caught in the crossfire of a savage marital war where the combatants attack the self-deceptions they forged for their own survival. Steppenwolf ensemble members Tracy Letts and Amy Morton face off as one of theater's most notoriously dysfunctional couples in Albee's hilarious and harrowing masterpiece, which Peter Marks of *The Washington Post* wrote, "...just may be the sharpest-witted ever purged from the psyche of an American writer."

Arena Stage Managing Director **Edgar Dobie** adds, "What better way to conclude our two-month Edward Albee Festival—the largest celebration of Albee to date—than with this news that the Steppenwolf Theatre Company's brilliant production will be seen on Broadway, providing an opportunity for even more audiences to celebrate our greatest living playwright and join 'Team Edward!'"

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Steppenwolf Theatre Company's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Heads to Broadway—Page 2

The Broadway production will feature the original Steppenwolf creative team: **Todd Rosenthal** (set design), **Nan Cibula-Jenkins** (costume design), **Allen Lee Hughes** (lighting design), and **Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen** (sound design).

Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* will be presented on Broadway by **Jeffrey Richards, Jerry Frankel, Susan Quint Gallin and Mary Lu Roffe** in association with **Steppenwolf Theatre Company** Artistic Director **Martha Lavey** and Executive Director **David Hawkanson**. Richards and Frankel previously teamed up with Steppenwolf to present ensemble member Tracy Letts' Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning production of ***August: Osage County*** and ***Superior Donuts*** on Broadway. They are also producing Steppenwolf's production of the Pulitzer finalist ***Detroit*** by Lisa D'Amour, directed by Steppenwolf ensemble member Austin Pendleton, set to open on Broadway this fall.

Edward Albee (Playwright) was born on March 12, 1928 and began writing plays 30 years later. His plays include *The Zoo Story* (1958), *The Death of Bessie Smith* (1959), *The Sandbox* (1959), *The American Dream* (1960), *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1961-62, Tony Award), *Tiny Alice* (1964), *A Delicate Balance* (1966, Pulitzer Prize; 1996, Tony Award), *All Over* (1971), *Seascape* (1974, Pulitzer Prize), *Listening* (1975), *Counting the Ways* (1975), *The Lady From Dubuque* (1977-78), *The Man Who Had Three Arms* (1981), *Finding the Sun* (1982), *Marriage Play* (1986-87), *Three Tall Women* (1991, Pulitzer Prize), *Fragments* (1993), *The Play About the Baby* (1997), *The Goat Or, Who is Sylvia?* (2000, 2002 Tony Award), *Occupant* (2001), *At Home at the Zoo: (Act 1, Homelife. Act 2, The Zoo Story)* (2004) and *Me, Myself, & I* (2007). He is a member of the Dramatists Guild Council, and President of The Edward F. Albee Foundation. Mr. Albee was awarded the Gold Medal in Drama from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters in 1980. In 1996 he received the Kennedy Center Honors and the National Medal of Arts. In 2005, he was awarded a special Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement.

Pam MacKinnon (Director) is an Obie Award winning New York-based director. Recent productions include premieres of Bruce Norris' Pulitzer Prize-winning *Clybourne Park* (Playwrights Horizons, OBIE award and Lortel nominations); Rachel Axler's *Smudge* (Women's Project); and Cusi Cram's *A Lifetime Burning* (Primary Stages); as well as Shakespeare's *Othello* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); and Gina Gionfriddo's *Becky Shaw* (South Coast Rep). She is a longtime interpreter of the plays of Edward Albee, having directed *A Delicate Balance* (Arena Stage); *The Goat or, Who's Sylvia?* (Alley Theatre and Vienna's English Theatre); and *The Play About the Baby* (Philadelphia Theatre and Goodman Theatre); as well as premieres of *At Home at the Zoo* (formerly called *Peter and Jerry* at Hartford Stage and Second Stage); and *Occupant* (Signature Theatre). Additional recent work includes premieres of Roberto Aguire Sacasa's *Good Boys and True* (Steppenwolf Theatre); Itamar Moses' *The Four of Us* (Manhattan Theatre Club and Old Globe); Richard Greenberg's *Our Mother's Brief Affair* (South Coast Rep); Jason Grote's *Maria/Stuart* (Woolly Mammoth); Itamar Moses' *Bach at Leipzig* (NYTW and Milwaukee Rep); Sheri Wilner's *Father Joy* (Contemporary American Theatre Festival and Summer Play Festival); as well as productions of Bruce Norris' *The Unmentionables* (Woolly Mammoth); Richard Dresser's *Below the Belt* (ACT-Seattle); and David Mamet's *Romance* (Goodman Theatre). She is a Drama League and Lincoln Center Directors' Lab alumna and an Affiliated Artist with the New York downtown company Clubbed Thumb.

Tracy Letts (George) joined the Steppenwolf ensemble in 2002. Previous Steppenwolf productions include *American Buffalo*, *Betrayal*, *The Pillowman*, *Last of the Boys*, *The Pain and the Itch*, *The Dresser*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *The Dazzle*, *Glengarry Glen Ross* (also Dublin and Toronto), *Three Days of Rain*, many others. Other productions include: Orson's *Shadow* (Barrow Street Theatre, NY); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Alliance Theatre, Atlanta); *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial* (A Red Orchid Theatre); *Conquest of the South Pole* (Famous Door); *Bouncers* (the Next Lab). TV and film: *Guinevere*, *U.S. Marshals*, *Profiler*, *Prison Break*, *Seinfeld*, *Home Improvement*, many others. As a playwright, he is the author of *Killer Joe*, *Bug* (also screenplay), *Man from Nebraska* (Pulitzer finalist), *August: Osage County* (Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award for Best Play), *Superior Donuts* and an adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters* to be presented during Steppenwolf's 2011/12 Season.

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Amy Morton (Martha) is an actor, director and Steppenwolf ensemble member since 1997. Her Steppenwolf acting credits include: *August: Osage County* (also Broadway, London and Sydney), *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (also Broadway), *Betrayal*, *Last of the Boys*, *The Well-Appointed Room*, *Berlin Circle*, *The Royal Family*, *Homebody/Kabul*, *Three Days of Rain*, *The Unmentionables*, *Cherry Orchard*, *The Time of Your Life* and many others. Directing credits include *American Buffalo*, *Our Country's Good*, *The Weir*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Dublin Carol*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *We All Went Down to Amsterdam*, *The Pillowman*, *Love-Lies-Bleeding*, *The Dresser* and *Awake and Sing*. Before joining Steppenwolf, she was a member of The Remains Theatre Ensemble in Chicago for 15 years. She can be seen in the films *Up in the Air*, *Rookie of the Year*, *8mm*, *Falling Down* and *The Dilemma*.

Carrie Coon (Honey) made her Steppenwolf debut in Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* In Chicago, she has appeared in *Magnolia* (Goodman Theatre) and *Bronte* (Remy Bumppo Theatre). Regional credits include: *Blackbird* and *reasons to be pretty* (Renaissance Theaterworks); *Anna Christie*, *Our Town*, *The Diary of Anne Frank* (Madison Repertory Theatre); and four seasons with American Players Theatre. A native of Copley, Ohio, Coon received her MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Madison Dirks (Nick) Previous Chicago credits include: *The Chosen* and *Gary* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Girl, 20* (Serendipity Theatre-L.A. remount); *A Man For All Seasons* (TimeLine Theatre); *The Last Supper* (Infusion Theatre); *Hillbilly Antigone* (Lookingglass Theatre-U/S). Film/TV credits include: *According to Jim*, *Public Enemies* and *The Dilemma*. Madison is a native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana and a graduate of Louisiana State University.

For further information including additional bios contact press@arenastage.org.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater is a national center dedicated to the production, presentation, development and study of American theater. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Managing Director Edgar Dobie, Arena Stage is the largest company in the country dedicated to American plays and playwrights. Arena Stage produces huge plays of all that is passionate, exuberant, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Now in its sixth decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. www.arenastage.org.

Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Chicago, IL. (Martha Lavey, Artistic Director; David Hawkanson, Executive Director) is one of the nation's leading ensemble theatres, producing up to 16 productions each year in its three Chicago theater spaces—including programming dedicated to the development of new plays and theatre for young adults. Steppenwolf's productions have enjoyed success both nationally and internationally, including off-Broadway, Broadway, London, Sydney and Dublin. Formed in 1976 by a collective of actors, Steppenwolf has grown into an ensemble of 43 actors, writers and directors. For additional information, visit www.steppenwolf.org, www.facebook.com/SteppenwolfTheatre and www.twitter.com/SteppenwolfThtr.

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