



IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 18, 2010

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Jim Torres (617) 529-1670

(BOSTON) – SpeakEasy Stage Company will kick-off its 20th Anniversary Season with the Boston premiere of Sarah Ruhl’s acclaimed Broadway comedy **IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play)**, running from September 17 – October 16, 2010.

Both a 2010 Pulitzer Prize finalist and a 2010 Tony Nominee for Best Play, this laugh-out-loud, provocative and touching play is based on the bizarre historical fact that in the 1880s, at the dawn of the age of electricity, doctors used vibrators to treat ‘hysteria’ in women and some men.

The idea for the play, says Ruhl, came from reading Rachel Maines’ book “The Technology of Orgasm,” in which Maines points out that, “from the time of Hippocrates until the 1920s, massaging “hysterical” female patients to orgasm was a staple of medical practice among Western physicians.” The vibrator, states Maines, “first emerged as an electromechanical medical instrument in direct response to demand from physicians who, far from enjoying the implementation of pelvic massage, sought every opportunity to substitute the services of midwives and, later, the efficiency of mechanical devices.”

Set in a spa town in upstate New York during the 1880s, Ruhl’s play focuses on Dr. Givings and how his practice of this new electric vibrator therapy affects his entire household.

IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play) was the first of Ms. Ruhl’s works to be presented on Broadway. Her other plays include *The Clean House* (Pulitzer Prize finalist, 2005); *Passion Play*, a cycle (Pen American Award); *Dead Man’s Cell Phone* (Helen Hayes Award for Best New Play), and *Eurydice*. Originally from Chicago, Ms. Ruhl received her MFA from Brown University where she studied with Paula Vogel.

Norton Award-winner Scott Edmiston will direct this Boston premiere production, which will feature two of the city’s most acclaimed actresses, Marianna Bassham and Anne Gottlieb. Craig Wesley Divino, Frances Idlebrook, Lindsey McWhorter, Dennis Trainor Jr. and Derry Woodhouse are also featured.

The design team includes Susan Zeeman Rogers (set), Gail Astrid Buckley (costumes), Karen Perlow (lighting), Dewey Dellay (sonnd) and Michael Getz (props).

IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play) will perform in the Roberts Studio Theatre in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont Street in Boston’s South End.

Ticket prices range from \$30-\$55 with discounts for students and seniors. For tickets or more information, the public is invited to call 617-933-8600 or visit www.SpeakEasyStage.com.

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IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play) premiered at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre on Feb. 5, 2009 where it was directed by Les Waters.

The play officially opened on Broadway on November 19 at the Lyceum Theatre, where it was again directed by Mr. Waters. The Broadway production featured Laura Benanti and Michael Cerveris and ran for 60 performances, closing as scheduled on January 10, 2010.

For the SpeakEasy Stage Company production, director Scott Edmiston has assembled an impressive roster that includes:

MARIANNA BASSHAM* (Sabrina Daldry) returns to SpeakEasy, where she has appeared in *Blackbird* (Elliot Norton Award – Best Actress) and *Reckless* (IRNE Award – Best Actress). Local: *Little Black Dress* by Ronan Noone (Boston Playwrights' Theatre); *Othello* (Commonwealth Shakespeare); *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Love's Labor's Lost*, and *The Merchant of Venice* (Actors' Shakespeare Project, Resident Acting Company member); *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Silence*, *Tartuffe*, *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and *Quills* (New Rep); *Miss Witherspoon* and *Talley's Folly* (The Lyric); *Antigone* and *Not Enough Air* (The Nora). Outside Boston: Gloucester Stage, Wellfleet Harbor Actors' Theater, Great Lakes Theater Festival, Oldcastle Theatre, Stoneham Theatre, New Century Theatre, and St. Michael's Playhouse.

CRAIG WESLEY DIVINO *(Leo) SpeakEasy: debut. New York: *King John* (workshop), *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (Guerrilla Shakespeare Project), *Romeo and Hamlet* (Gayfest 2010). Regional: *Arcadia*, *Rx*, *The Winter's Tale* (Chautauqua Theater Co.), *A Christmas Carol* (Trinity Rep), *In Spite of the Devil* (B/T Playwrights Rep), *Henry V* (Rites and Reason), *Pericles*, *The Learned Ladies*, *The Cure at Troy*, *Camino Real*, *Angels in America: Perestroika* (Brown/Trinity Consortium). Film: *Girlfriend*, *The Replacement Child*. MFA: Brown University/Trinity Rep Consortium.

ANNE GOTTLIEB* (Catherine Givings) is delighted to return to SpeakEasy, having played, Ety Hillesum in *The Wrestling Patient* and Mary Haines in *The Women*. Anne recently appeared in *Blithe Spirit* for the Lyric Stage and as Sophie Treadwell in Nora Theatre Company's production of *Not Enough Air*. Other favorite credits include : Emma in *Betrayal*, "C" in *Crave*, (*Nora Theatre Company*), Stevie in *The Goat*, (*Gloucester Stage Co.*) Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra* (Boston Theatre Works), and Celia in *As you Like it* (Shakespeare & Company). Anne formed FortyMagnolias Productions five years ago and co-produced the world Premiere of *The Wrestling Patient* with SpeakEasy Stage Company and Boston Playwrights' Theater in 2009. Her original adaptation of the myth of Gilgamesh toured to the Roy Hart International Centre in Southern France. Anne teaches with the Michael Chekhov Association. She is a Resident Scholar in collaborative theatre at the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis University.

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FRANCES IDLEBROOK (Annie) SpeakEasy: debut. A native of Maine, Frances was most recently seen in *To The Moon* with The Theater At Monmouth. Other past roles include Adam in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* at The Dorset Theatre Festival, Romaine Patterson and Aaron Kreifels in the Maine Humanities Council tour of *The Laramie Project*, Frenchy in *Grease*, Sarah Siddons in *The Actor's Nightmare*, and Rosalind in *As You Like It* with Ten Bucks Theatre.

LINDSEY MCWHORTER* (*Elizabeth*) SpeakEasy: debut Lindsey received her MFA in Acting from Brandeis and her B.A. in Theatre Arts from Alabama State. She began her career at the Hangar Theatre where she appeared as Elise in *The Overwhelming*. Lindsey has also appeared as Patricia in *Good Goods* at Yale. In Boston, Lindsey has appeared as Abigail in *In the Continuum* (Up You Mighty Race) and Hymen in *As You Like It* (CSC). She has also performed with Montana Repertory Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Idaho Summer Repertory, and Double Edge Theatre Company.

DENNIS TRAINOR, JR. * (Mr. Daldry) SpeakEasy: debut. Boston-area credits include *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* (Gloucester Stage); *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (New Rep); *The Pain and The Itch* (Company One); *The Rainmaker* (Foothills) *November* (Lyric Stage); *The Seagull* (The Publick); and *MacBeth* (North). Selected New York Credits: *The Winter's Tale* (SoHo Rep); *Waiting for Godot* (Expanded Arts), Mac Wellman's *Cellophane* (The Flea). Also a writer, his plays include *I COUDLA BEEN A KENNEDY* (NYC Fringe Festival), and *PLUG* (Inaugural production, Rude Mechanicals) as well as the independently produced T.V. pilot, *CONSENTING ADULTS* (Artful Dodger productions). He holds an M.F.A. in Acting from American Conservatory Theatre and is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

DERRY WOODHOUSE* (Dr. Givings) returns to SpeakEasy, having played Mr. Lockhart in *The Seafarer* (Elliot Norton Award - Best Ensemble; IRNE nomination - Best Supporting Actor). He has worked extensively in the Boston-area with the Sógán Theatre, Tirna Theatre, Publick Theatre, Gloucester Stage, Stoneham Theatre, and Wellesley Summer Theatre. Other credits include *Molly Sweeney* in LA; *Stones In His Pockets* in Cincinnati, New York, Belgium, and New Hampshire; *Mojo Mickybo* for the Tirna Theatre, New York; and the *Beauty Queen of Leenane* for the Banyon Theatre in Florida. Film credits include "*Deportation*," "*Blue Monday*" and "*The Departed*."

For tickets or more information on **IN THE NEXT ROOM (or the vibrator play)**, the public can call the Boston Theatre Scene Box-Office at 617-933-8600 or visit www.BostonTheatreScene.com.

Press inquiries should be directed to **SpeakEasy Marketing Director Jim Torres**:
Office: 617-482-3279 Cell: 617-529-1670 Email: JimTorres@SpeakEasyStage.com.

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SPEAKEASY STAGE COMPANY - *Calendar Listing Information*

In the Next Room (or the vibrator play) by Sarah Ruhl

2010 Pulitzer Prize Finalist & 2010 Tony Nominee - Best Play

This laugh-out loud, provocative and touching play is a comedy about marriage, intimacy and electricity. Set in the 1880s at the dawn of the age of electricity and based on bizarre historical fact that doctors used vibrators to treat “hysterical” women (and some men), the play centers on a doctor and his wife and how his new therapy affects their entire household.

Contains Nudity and Adult Language

Presented by: SpeakEasy Stage Company, a resident theatre company at the Boston Center for the Arts; Paul Daigneault, Producing Artistic Director

Cast: Marianna Bassham, Craig Wesley Divino, Anne Gottlieb, Frances Idlebrook, Lindsey McWhorter, Dennis Trainor Jr., Derry Woodhouse

Director: Scott Edmiston

Production Stage Manager: Amy Weissenstein

Design Team: Susan Zeeman Rogers (Scenic Design)
Gail Astrid Buckley (Costume Design)
Karen Perlow (Lighting Design)
Dewey Dellay (Sound Design)

Performing at: The Nancy & Edward Roberts Studio Theatre
in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion
at the Boston Center for the Arts,
527 Tremont Street in Boston's South End

Press Performance: Sunday, September 19, 2010

Performance Schedule: Sept. 17 – Oct. 16, 2010
Wed., Thurs. at 7:30PM; Fri at 8PM; Sat. at 4PM & 8PM; Sun at 3PM
Also, Tuesday, Oct. 12 at 7:30PM

Run Time: *2 hours, 30 minutes including one 15 minute intermission*

Ticket Prices: Wed., Th. 7:30PM; Fri. 8PM, -- \$50.00 / \$45.00 Seniors
Sat. 4PM & 8PM; Sun. at 3PM -- \$55.00 / \$50.00 Seniors

Gallery Seats \$30 at all times.

Under Age 25 \$25 at all times.

Student Rush: \$14 with valid college ID, at the box-office only, one hour before curtain, subject to availability

Box Office: 617-933-8600; www.BostonTheatreScene.com

Press Contact Only: Jim Torres – 617- 529-1670 (cell)
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