



THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 6, 2008

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Jim Torres (617) 529-1670

Norton-Winner Edmiston to Direct Tony-Winning Musical

(BOSTON) – From September 19 to October 18, 2008, SpeakEasy Stage will proudly present the Boston Regional Theatre premiere of the lush romantic musical **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA**.

Winner of 6 Tony Awards, this soaring musical whisks its audience away to Italy for a captivating tale which celebrates the beauty and passions of the human heart.

It's the summer of 1953, and Margaret Johnson, the wife of a North Carolina businessman, is touring the Tuscan countryside with her daughter Clara. In their travels, Clara meets and falls for a young Florentine boy, who is ardent in his pursuit of her. As the young couple's love blossoms, Margaret is faced with a difficult choice: should she reveal a truth that could destroy her daughter's happiness; or say nothing and let fate run its course?

This musical, which premiered in 2003 in Seattle, was adapted from Elizabeth Spencer's popular 1960 novella of the same name. Craig Lucas (*Prelude to a Kiss*) wrote the book for the show; and Adam Guettel (*Floyd Collins*) wrote the music and lyrics, which were hailed for their blend of tradition and innovation. Guettel is the grandson of composer Richard Rodgers, and the godson of composer Stephen Sondheim. Not surprisingly, the influence of both men is evident in the score.

Scott Edmiston (*The History Boys*, *The Women*, *Five by Tenn*) will direct the SpeakEasy production. This is Edmiston's first musical for SpeakEasy, and his first musical since directing the 2008 Tony Award-winning Noel Coward revue *A Marvelous Party* for the American Repertory Theatre.

The production reunites Edmiston with scenic designer Susan Zeeman Rogers, with whom he collaborated on the New England Premiere of *Nixon in China* for Opera Boston. Teaming with Edmiston and Rogers are designers Charles Schoonmaker (costumes) and Karen Perlow (lights).

The SpeakEasy production is also notable for returning the show to its origins as an intimate chamber musical, employing 12 actors and 6 musicians to tell the story. (The Broadway production expanded the company to 18 actors and 15 musicians).

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The cast is a unique combination of performers from the worlds of opera, musical theatre, and classical theatre, all of whom are making their SpeakEasy debuts.

Wilmington, MA resident Amelia Broome leads the company as Margaret Johnson. A native of Georgia, Ms. Broome has extensive musical theatre, opera and acting credits, most recently appearing as Katharine Hepburn in the one-woman play *Tea at Five* for Worcester Foothills. She is also on the acting faculty at Emerson College.

Erica Spyres, a newcomer to Boston, will play Clara. A graduate of Drury University where she studied voice and theatre with famed Sondheim interpreter Robert Westenberg, Ms. Spyres has recently performed the roles of Rosa in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and Anne in *A Little Night Music*.

John Bambery will play Ms. Spyres' love interest, the fiery and passionate Fabrizio Nacarelli. John is a senior at the Boston Conservatory, where he appeared last season as Tony in their production of *West Side Story*. He has also trained at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, the Moscow Art Theater School, and the National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

Joel Colodner, a Portsmouth, NH resident, will play Signor Naccarelli. He has appeared in Boston in productions of *King John*, *Titus Andronicus*, *The Winters Tale*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He was also seen this summer in the Publick Theatre productions of *The Seagull* and *Hay Fever*. He has appeared Off-Broadway as Uncle Peck in *How I Learned to Drive*, and in major roles at The Guthrie Theatre, Long Wharf, Mark Taper Forum, Arena Stage, Hartford Stage and the Alliance Theatre of Atlanta.

Rounding out the Boston cast are Alison Eckert, Karen Fanale, Christian Figueroa, Heather Hannon, Craig Mathers, Joel Perez, Paul Soper, and Carolynne Warren.

José Delgado will music-direct and conduct.

David Connolly will choreograph.

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA will be performed in the Nancy and Edward Roberts Studio Theatre in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts, 527 Tremont Street in Boston's South End.

Adult ticket prices range from \$30 - \$54. Students and seniors save \$5 off at all times, except on \$30 gallery seats. Student rush seats, when available, are \$14.

For tickets or more information on **THE LIGHT IN THE PIZZA**, the public is invited to call 617.933.8600 or go online to www.SpeakEasyStage.com.

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THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA was developed as a musical in 2003 at the Intiman Playhouse in Seattle, and had a stop in Chicago at the Goodman Theatre in 2004, before arriving in New York. The Broadway production opened at the Vivian Beaumont Theater at Lincoln Center on April 18, 2006, where it ran for 504 performances. Bartlett Sher, who is currently represented on Broadway by *South Pacific*, directed the New York production, which featured Victoria Clark as Margaret Johnson, Kelli O'Hara as Clara, and Matthew Morrison as Fabrizio.

On June 15, 2006 shortly before its closing night, the show was broadcast on the PBS television series *Live from Lincoln Center*.

Acclaimed New York playwright Craig Lucas received a Tony nomination for his work writing the book for **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA**. Among Mr. Lucas' many credits are the plays *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Blue Window*, *The Dying Gaul*, *Stranger*, *Small Tragedy* and *The Singing Forest*. His screenplays include *Longtime Companion*, *The Secret Lives of Dentists*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Reckless* and *The Dying Gaul*, the last of which he also directed. Mr. Lucas currently serves as associate artistic director at Intiman Theater in Seattle, where he recently presented a new adaptation of the Chekhov classic *Uncle Vanya*.

Adam Guettel wrote the music and lyrics for **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA**. Mr. Guettel is perhaps best known for the musical *Floyd Collins*, for which he also wrote the music and lyrics. His other works include *Lydie Breeze* at the New York Theatre Workshop; a collaboration with John Guare on *Love's Fire* for The Acting Company; and *Saturn Returns: A Concert* at the Public Theatre/New York Shakespeare Festival. Mr. Guettel is the recipient of the Stephen Sondheim Award (1996), the Lucille Lortel Award (1996) and the ASCAP New Horizons Award (1997). For his work on **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA**, he was rewarded with the 2005 Tony for Best Score.

Now retired and widowed, author Elizabeth Spencer lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina where she most recently was a visiting professor in creative writing at UNC. She actively followed the development of the musical and was there to offer encouragement in Seattle, Chicago and New York, contributing mostly on matters to do with Italian culture and manners.

For more information on **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA**, the public is invited to call the BostonTheatreScene.com Box Office at 617-933-8600 or go online to 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

SpeakEasy Stage is a proud to be the resident theater company at the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at **The Boston Center for the Arts (BCA)**. *The Boston Center for the Arts (BCA) is the nonprofit performing and visual arts center whose mission is to support working artists to create, perform, and exhibit new work; to develop new audiences; and to connect the arts to a broad public. For more information, visit www.bcaonline.org.*

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SPEAKEASY STAGE COMPANY

Calendar Listing Information

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA

Book by Craig Lucas; Music & Lyrics by Adam Guettel

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

Cast : John Bambery, Amelia Broome, Joel Colodner, Alison Eckert, Karen Fanale, Christian Figueroa, Heather Hannon, Craig Mathers, Joel Perez, Paul Soper, Erica Spyles, and Carolynne Warren.

Director: Scott Edmiston

Music Director: José Delgado

Choreographer: David Connolly

Production Stage Manager: Dawn Schall

Assistant Stage Manager: Andrea Healy

Design Team: Susan Zeeman Rogers, Scenic Design
Charles Schoonmaker, Costume Design
Karen Perlow, Lighting 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, Sept. 21, 2008 3PM

Performance Schedule: Sept. 19 – Oct. 18, 2008
Wed., Thurs. at 7:30PM; Fri at 8 PM; Sat. at 4 & 8; Sun at 3PM
Added performance, Tuesday, October 14 at 7:30PM

Ticket Prices: Wed., Th. 7:30PM; Fri. 8, -- \$51.00 / \$46.00 student/sr.
Sat. 4 & 8 PM; Sun. at 3PM -- \$54.00 / \$49.00 student/sr.
Tuesday, Oct. 14 – 7:30PM - \$51.00/\$46.00 student/sr.

Gallery Seats \$30 at all times, subject to availability!

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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