



CASA VALENTINA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Oct. 2, 2015

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Jim Torres - 617.529.1670

Press Performance, Tuesday, Oct. 27 – 7:30PM – RSVP here: speakeasystage.com/press
Download high-resolution images: speakeasystage.com/valentinaphotos

(BOSTON) – From October 24 to November 28, 2015, SpeakEasy Stage Company will proudly present the New England Premiere of **CASA VALENTINA**, a hilarious, provocative, and touching new play about gender identity, self-acceptance, and the struggle to find the right pumps.

Based on actual events, **CASA VALENTINA** takes place in 1962 at a Catskills resort where a group of heterosexual men secretly gather to dress and behave like women. Away from their families, in their beehives and brassieres, these men enjoy a carefree camaraderie of cocktails and McGuire Sisters. But when challenged to publicly reveal their female alter-egos in the pursuit of political acceptance, “the sorority” must decide whether freedom is worth the risk of ruin.

A 2014 Tony Award nominee for Best Play, **CASA VALENTINA** is the most recent work by Tony Award-winner Harvey Fierstein, whose credits include the books for the hit musicals *Kinky Boots*, *Newsies*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *A Catered Affair* as well as the play *Torch Song Trilogy*. As an actor Mr. Fierstein is known worldwide for his performances in films like *Mrs. Doubtfire* and *Independence Day*, and his stage work in *Hairspray*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *Torch Song Trilogy*.

Director Scott Edmiston returns to SpeakEasy having previously directed the company’s productions of *Far from Heaven*; *The History Boys*; *The Light in the Piazza*; *Five by Tenn*; *Other Desert Cities*; *Next Fall*; *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*; *Reckless*; *The Women*; *The Last Sunday in June*; and *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*. He has directed more than 60 productions across New England and is the recipient of SpeakEasy’s Outstanding Artist Award, three Elliot Norton Awards, two IRNE Awards, the StageSource Theatre Hero Award, and the Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence in Theatre. He is a Professor of the Practice and Chair of the Theatre Department at Northeastern University.

For this New England Premiere production, Edmiston has assembled an impressive cast of veteran Boston actors, including Timothy Crowe, Thomas Derrah, Kerry A. Dowling, Deb Martin, Greg Maraio, Will McGarrahan, Sean McGuirk, Robert Saoud, and Eddie Shields.

The design team consists of Edmiston’s frequent collaborators: Janie E. Howland (scenic), Gail Astrid Buckley (costumes), Karen Perlow (lighting), and Dewey Dellay (sound).

CASA VALENTINA will run for six weeks, from October 24 to November 28, 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 start at \$25, with discounts for students, seniors, and persons age 25 and under.

For tickets or more information, the public is invited to call the box office at **617.933.8600** or visit **www.SpeakEasyStage.com**.

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Artist Information

HARVEY FIERSTEIN (Playwright) is the author of the books for the hit musicals *Kinky Boots*, *Newsies*, *La Cage aux Folles* (Tony and Drama Desk Awards), *A Catered Affair*, and *Legs Diamond*, as well as the plays *Torch Song Trilogy* (Tony, Drama Desk, and OBIE Awards), and *Safe Sex* (Ace Award). His political editorials have been published in *The New York Times*, *TV Guide*, *The Huffington Post*, and broadcast on PBS's "In the Life." His children's book, *The Sissy Duckling*, is now in its fifth printing. As an actor, Mr. Fierstein is known worldwide for his performances in films like *Mrs. Doubtfire* and *Independence Day*; on stage in *Hairspray* (Tony Award), *Fiddler on the Roof*, *La Cage aux Folles*, and *Torch Song Trilogy* (Tony Award); and on such TV shows as "Smash," "How I Met Your Mother," "The Good Wife," "Cheers" (Emmy nomination), "The Simpsons," and "Nurse Jackie."

SCOTT EDMISTON (Director) returns to SpeakEasy where he directed *Far from Heaven*; *The History Boys*; *The Light in the Piazza*; *Five by Tenn*; *Other Desert Cities*; *Next Fall*; *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)*; *Reckless*; *The Women*; *The Last Sunday in June*; and *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*. He has directed more than 60 productions across New England for Lyric Stage, ART, Huntington Theatre, and New Rep, among others. Highlights: *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *Time Stands Still*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Water by the Spoonful*, *A Marvelous Party*, *Nixon in China*, *Private Lives*, and *Betrayal*. Scott is the recipient of SpeakEasy's Outstanding Artist Award, three Elliot Norton Awards, two IRNE Awards, the StageSource Theatre Hero Award, and the Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence in Theatre. He is a Professor of the Practice and Chair of the Theatre Department at Northeastern University.

Actor Information

TIMOTHY CROWE (The Judge/Amy) returns to SpeakEasy having previously appeared in *The History Boys* and *The Savannah Disputation*. He worked on Broadway in the Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *The Shadow Box*. Off-Broadway, Tim has worked at Soho Rep and Soho Playhouse in *The Servant* and *Bill W. and Dr. Bob* respectively. He is a long-standing and grateful member of the Trinity Repertory Company. Film and TV work include *House of Cards*, *Outside Providence*, *Underdog*, and the soon to be released *The Hollars*. He earned his MA from St. Louis University and studied at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art.

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Actor Information (cont.)

THOMAS DERRAH (George/Valentina) returns to SpeakEasy Stage, having previously appeared in *Necessary Monsters*, *Clybourne Park*, *Red*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Fuddy Meers*. He is a founding member of the ART and has performed in 120 productions there. Mr. Derrah has also performed on Broadway in *Jackie: An American Life* (23 roles) and Off-Broadway in *Big Time*, *Johan Padan*, and *Oliver Twist*. He has performed regionally in theatres in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Houston, and has toured extensively to theatres and festivals in Europe and Asia. He also performed the title role in *Julius Caesar* on several tours throughout France for the Centre Dramatique National d'Orléans. Mr. Derrah has also appeared locally at the Huntington, New Rep, Commonwealth Shakespeare, Stoneham Theatre, and ASP. He has several IRNE and Norton Awards for acting, including the Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence. He was also awarded the 2010 Brustein Award and a Los Angeles DramaLogue Award. Mr. Derrah appeared in Julie Taymor's film *Fool's Fire* as well as programs on CBS, A&E, and PBS. Other film credits include *Mystic River* and *Pink Panther II*. Mr. Derrah teaches acting at Harvard and MIT, and is graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

KERRY A. DOWLING (Rita) returns to SpeakEasy having performed in *Carrie; Far from Heaven; Clybourne Park; Next to Normal; The Drowsy Chaperone; Nine; The Great American Trailer Park Musical; Reckless; Jerry Springer - The Opera; The New Century; The Mystery of Edwin Drood; Parade; The Women; Bat Boy; Company; Elegies; A New Brain; Triumph of Love; Lips Together, Teeth Apart; and Songs for a New World*. Other local credits include: *Nicholas Nickleby, Follies* (Lyric Stage); *A Man of No Importance* (Súgán/SpeakEasy); *Steel Magnolias, Pal Joey* (Stoneham); *The Most Happy Fella, Dueling Divas* (Gloucester); *Distracted* (Underground Railway); *Gypsy* (Next Door Theatre). Kerry received the 2010 SpeakEasy Stage Outstanding Artist Award.

GREG MARAIO (Jonathon/Miranda) is thrilled to be returning to SpeakEasy after appearing as Victor/Clint in last season's *Necessary Monsters* by John Kuntz. A Boston native, Greg has been working as an actor, director, and costumer for the past ten years. He most recently appeared as Jerry in the World Premiere of *Colossal* with Company One, and originated the title role in the World Premiere of *The Misadventures of Spy Matthias* for Theatre on Fire. Other local credits include *Splendor, The Good Negro, The Gibson Girl, Mr. Marmalade, and The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Company One); *A Behanding in Spokane, Mojo, and Act a Lady* (Theatre on Fire); *Stuff Happens, The Kentucky Cycle, Sacred Hearts, and Flesh and Blood* (Zeitgeist Stage). Greg is a graduate of The Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University where he studied acting under Anne Pluto.

DEB MARTIN (Eleanor) is thrilled to return to SpeakEasy, having previously appeared as Holly in *Next Fall* and Corine in *Triumph of Love*. Favorite roles include Goneril in *King Lear* with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Corrine in *Gidion's Knot* with Bridge Repertory Theater of Boston (IRNE Nomination, Best Actress), Victoria Grant in the National Tour of *Victor/Victoria*, Anna in *Ivanov*, Irma in *The Balcony*, Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Kristín in *Miss Julie*. She recently participated in development workshops with New Repertory Theatre & German Stage. Deb can be seen in the film *Spartan*, written and directed by David Mamet. She is a graduate of Emerson College and studied with Atlantic Theater Company. Upcoming projects: Sam in *Mud Blue Sky* (Bridge Repertory Theater).

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Actor Information (cont.)

WILL MCGARRAHAN (Charlotte) is happy to return to SpeakEasy Stage where he has performed in *Big Fish*; *Far from Heaven*; *Next Fall*; *The Drowsy Chaperone*; *Reckless*; *Some Men*; *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*; *Five By Tenn*; *Company*; *The Last Sunday in June*; *Elegies: A Song Cycle*; *Ruthless!*; *A Class Act*; and *A New Brain*. Other local credits include *Light Up the Sky*, *Into the Woods*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Becky's New Car*, *33 Variations*, *The Chosen*, *The Temperamentals*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Grey Gardens*, *November*, *Souvenir*, and *Dirty Blonde* (Lyric Stage); *A Raisin in the Sun* (Huntington Theatre); *The Wind in the Willows* and *Happy Days* (Gloucester Stage); *Nine Circles* (Publick Theatre and Gloucester Stage); *A Moon For The Misbegotten* and *Buried Child* (Nora Theatre); and *The Wrestling Patient* (SpeakEasy Stage/Boston Playwrights/40 Magnolias). Will worked as an actor, singer, and pianist for many years in Seattle before moving to Boston's South End in 2001.

SEAN McGUIRK (Terry) returns to SpeakEasy Stage after having previously appeared in *Adding Machine: A Musical*; *Kiss of the Spider Woman*; *Caroline, or Change*; *Company*; and *A Man of No Importance*. In New England, he has appeared at Lyric Stage, Stoneham Theatre, New Rep, Charles Playhouse, Ocean State Theatre Company, Theatre-By-The-Sea, Gloucester Stage, and Commonwealth Shakespeare. Other theatrical highlights include working with Lou Diamond Philips in *A Few Good Men* and touring in *Mame* with Juliet Prowse.

ROBERT SAOUD (Bessie) was last seen at SpeakEasy as Danny in *Xanadu*. Other SpeakEasy credits include *The Drowsy Chaperone*; *The New Century*; *Some Men*; *Anna in the Tropics*; and *Hello, Again*. Nationally, Robert toured in *Groucho* as Chico Marx, with Gabe Kaplan as Groucho. Most recently, he was seen in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* at Stoneham Theatre. He has also performed at Huntington Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre, Trinity Rep, Lyric Stage, New Rep, Wheelock Family Theatre, and The Publick Theatre. Robert has also appeared in numerous cabarets, and is a Fellow of the 2000 Eugene O'Neill Cabaret Symposium. He is also a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. This spring, he will be featured in the Lyric Stage production of *Peter and the Starcatcher*.

EDDIE SHIELDS (Gloria) is thrilled to be making his SpeakEasy debut. Local credits: *Edith Can Shoot Things and Hit Them* (Benji) with Company One; *The Comedy of Errors* (Dromio of Ephesus) with Actors' Shakespeare Project; *Pinocchio* with Wheelock Family Theatre; and *The Seagull* (Treplev) and *A View from the Bridge* (Rodolpho) at Brandeis Theater Company. NYC: Playwrights Horizons, Everyday Inferno Theatre Company, Rebel Theater Company, and Mettawee River Theatre Company. Eddie received his MFA in Acting from Brandeis University.

For tickets or more information on **CASA VALENTINA**, the public can call the BostonTheatreScene Box Office at 617.933.8600 or visit www.SpeakEasyStage.com.

Press inquiries should be directed to **Marketing & Communications Director Jim Torres**:
Office: 617.482.3279 Cell: 617.529.1670 Email: JimTorres@SpeakEasyStage.com

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Calendar Listing Information

CASA VALENTINA by Harvey Fierstein

Based on actual events, *Casa Valentina* takes place in 1962 at a Catskills resort where a group of heterosexual men secretly gather to dress and behave like women. Away from their families, in their beehives and brassieres, these men enjoy a carefree camaraderie of cocktails and McGuire Sisters. But when challenged to publicly reveal their female alter-egos in the pursuit of political acceptance, “the sorority” must decide whether freedom is worth the risk of ruin. Written by Harvey Fierstein (*Kinky Boots, Hairspray*), *Casa Valentina* is a provocative, hilarious, and touching new play about gender identity, self-acceptance, and the struggle to find the right pumps.

Presented by: SpeakEasy Stage Company, The Calderwood Pavilion Resident Theatre Company at the Boston Center for the Arts; Paul Daigneault, Producing Artistic Director

- Cast: Timothy Crowe, Thomas Derrah, Kerry A. Dowling, Greg Maraio, Deb Martin, Will McGarrahan, Sean McGuirk, Robert Saoud, and Eddie Shields.
- Director: Scott Edmiston
- Design Team: Scenic: Janie E. Howland
Costumes: Gail Astrid Buckley
Lighting: Karen Perlow
Sound: Dewey Dellay
- Production Stage Manager: Dawn Schall Saglio
- Performing at: The Roberts Studio Theatre
in the Stanford Calderwood Pavilion at the Boston Center for the Arts,
527 Tremont Street in Boston's South End
- Performance Schedule: October 24- November 28, 2015
Wed. & Thurs. at 7:30PM; Fri. at 8PM; Sat. at 4PM & 8PM;
Sun. at 3PM. Additional performances Sunday, October 25 at 7PM, Tuesday,
October 27 at 7:30PM, Thursday, Nov. 19 at 2PM; Tuesday, November 24 at
7:30PM and Friday, November 27 at 2PM.
- Run Time: 2 hours, 30 minutes, including one intermission.
- Ticket Prices: Tickets start at \$25. Seniors: \$5 off at all times except gallery seats. Age
25 and under: \$25 at all times.
- Student Rush: \$15 with valid college ID, in person at the box-office only,
two hours before curtain, subject to availability. Limit – one rush ticket per
valid ID.
- Box Office: 617.933.8600; www.SpeakEasyStage.com
- Press Contact Only: Jim Torres – 617.529.1670 (cell – not for publication)