

sandra feinstein-



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**THE GAMM STAGES NEW ENGLAND PREMIERE OF *THE BEARD OF AVON*
A Hilarious Whodunit for the Masses**

PAWTUCKET, RI (April 27, 2005) — The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre (The Gamm) is pleased to present the **New England premiere** of Amy Freed's uproarious Off-Broadway hit, *The Beard of Avon*. Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella directs this farcical frolic through the life and times of The Bard in a production that promises to delight Shakespeare lovers and phobics alike. *The Beard of Avon* runs from **May 19 through June 19** at The Gamm Theatre, 172 Exchange St., Pawtucket, RI.

Play Synopsis

Poor Will 'Shakspere' hates his life in Stratford-on-Avon, not to mention his bossy wife. But this farmer with a gift for rhyming couplets doesn't know what to do instead. Not until a troupe of traveling players comes through town and inspires him to move to London to become an actor, that is. What follows is the beautifully imagined and hilarious answer to a nagging question: Was this loutish, unlettered boy responsible for the greatest works of the English language; or was he merely a beard, or front man, for such luminaries as the Earl of Oxford, Sir Francis Bacon, or even Queen Elizabeth herself? In the spirit of "Shakespeare in Love" and "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead", Amy Freed dares to tackle the perennial who-wrote-Shakespeare's-plays debate and succeeds magnificently.

Estrella calls *The Beard of Avon* "low comedy that high-mindedly celebrates the greatest writer in the history of our language, human folly and, above all, the nature of collaboration—the secret and hallmark of theatrical success."

The play, "like the film *Shakespeare in Love*, Stephen Greenblatt's new biography *Will in the World*, and Anthony Burgess' *Shakespeare* before it, lovingly paints a new portrait of the man even as it pokes fun at the authorship question," Estrella says. "Freed explodes the myths and conspiracy theories and, in doing so, invents a life and a comedy that would have done its subject proud. *The Beard of Avon* is a fierce, hilarious, bawdy, intelligent low-comedy—a Shakespearean specialty."

The Beard of Avon is sponsored by WBRU. NBC 10 is The Gamm's season sponsor.

About The Gamm

Founded in 1984 as Alias Stage, the nonprofit Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre performs great works of the classic and modern theater in an intimate setting that fosters the vital relationship between author, actor and audience. As the cornerstone of The Arts Exchange at the Pawtucket Armory, The Gamm seeks to engage and enrich the community through affordable entertainment and educational programming.

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION OF *THE BEARD OF AVON*

by Amy Freed
Directed by Tony Estrella

Set Design by William P. Wieters
Costume Design by David T. Howard
Lighting Design by Matt Terry
Music/Sound Design by Charles Cofone
Fight Choreography & Technical Direction by Normand Beauregard

Stage Manager, Stef Work; Assistant Stage Manager, Tray Gearing; Props Master, Marissa Hughes; Dramaturge, Jennifer Madden.

William Shakspeare
Old Colin, Richard Burbage, Lord Walsingham

Steve Kidd
Sam Babbitt

Anne Hathaway
Geoffrey Dunderbread, Lady Lettice
Henry Condel, Walter Fitch, Sir Francis Bacon
John Heminge, Lord Burleigh
Edward De Vere
Minstrel, Lucy
Henry Wriothesley, Lord Derby, Player
Queen Elizabeth

Casey Seymour Kim
Karen Carpenter
Chris Byrnes
Jim O'Brien
Richard Donnelly*
David T. Howard
Ben Johnson
Wendy Overly*

*The actor appears through courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CALENDAR OF PERFORMANCES

May

Thursday, May 19, special performance at 8 p.m. SOLD OUT

Friday, May 20, preview performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 21, preview performance at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 22, preview performance at 7 p.m.

Monday, May 23, press night performance at 7 p.m.

Thursday, May 26, additional preview performance at 8 p.m.

Friday, May 27, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 28, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Sunday, May 29, regular performance at 7 p.m.

June

Thursday, Jun. 2, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Friday, Jun. 3, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jun. 4, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Sunday, Jun. 5, matinee performance at 2 p.m.*

Sunday, Jun. 5, regular performance at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Jun. 8, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Thursday, Jun. 9 no performance

Friday, Jun. 10, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jun. 11, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Sunday, Jun. 12, matinee performance at 2 p.m.

Sunday, Jun. 12, regular performance at 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Jun. 15, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Thursday, Jun. 16, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Friday, Jun. 17, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jun. 18, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Sunday, Jun. 19, matinee performance at 2 p.m.

*Performance followed by **Shared Sundays** humanities discussion. Show attendance not required. Free for all.

Tickets \$21 & \$24, all previews (May 20-26) ONLY \$14! Discounts for subscribers, groups of 10 or more, seniors and students. For single ticket sales, call 723-4266. Or purchase tickets at www.arttixri.com.