

sandra feinstein-



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GAMM THEATRE SUPPORT SURPASSES MILLION MARK Non-profit Closes Fiscal Year in the Black for Fifth Consecutive Season

PAWTUCKET, RI (July 24, 2007) —**Tony Estrella, artistic director for The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** (The Gamm), is pleased to announce **a milestone in the organization's history, having exceeded the million-dollar mark in revenues** for the first time during the fiscal year that ended June 30. The professional non-profit theater's **\$1,082,700** in support from ticket sales, grants and gifts slightly exceeds its expenses and represents an **12% increase** compared to **\$963,460** at the end of the previous fiscal year. The year-end number dramatically underscores The Gamm's growth since relocating to Pawtucket from Providence in 2003, when fiscal year-end revenues hovered around \$200,000.

Gamm Managing Director Yvonne Seggerman credited the generosity of loyal and hard-working board members and other donors, as well as corporate and non-profit grants, with accelerated growth.

"Our ambitious targets in our five-year strategic plan required an operating budget of \$856,956 for this recently completed year. So that means **we are actually 26% over projections**," Seggerman said. "It is remarkable that so many people are coming out to Pawtucket to enjoy The Gamm's offerings. We also profusely thank our board, under the guidance of President Coline Covington, for their tireless fundraising efforts and high level of committee volunteerism."

Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella reflected on a season in which he said the theater "truly focused our identity."

"Our 2006-2007 season was **our most artistically risk-taking and, without question, our most rewarding yet**," Estrella said. "In taking on such difficult themes as seemingly eternal war, torture and exploitation, tackling a devastating account of the clergy sex-abuse scandal and producing The Gamm's first world premiere, our staff and amazing company of artists challenged themselves with a remarkably intense slate of plays. In doing so, they honored the playwrights, the intelligence and formidable expectations of our audience, and ultimately, Theater's potential to be more than mere diversion or escapist entertainment. I couldn't be prouder of our organization and what the success of this season bodes for our future."

Among the past season's highlights:

- A production of ***The SantaLand Diaries & Season's Greetings***, a pair of comic monologues by award-winning humorist David Sedaris and adapted for the stage by Joe Mantello, **broke The Gamm's box office records. Gross sales of over \$71,000 exceeded the single ticket goal by 60%.**
- The world premiere of ***Radio Free Emerson*** by Brown University graduate and "Law & Order: SVU" writer Paul Grellong marked The Gamm's **first-ever commission**. The darkly humorous drama set entirely in Rhode Island played to popular and critical acclaim, prompting ***The Boston Globe*** to declare: "**The Gamm Theatre's current production should make this small, vibrant outfit the envy of larger companies in Boston and beyond.**"
- The Gamm held its fifth annual fundraising party on May 5. "**New England by Starlight**" **netted \$72,000 toward the theater's education and artistic programming**. Film and television actress **Fionnula Flanagan** ("Rose Caffee" of Showtime's *Brotherhood*) served as special host to nearly 200 guests, alongside **Honorary Event Chairs Sam and Natalie Babbitt and Richard Kazarian, Jr.**

- The pilot year of The Gamm's **Pawtucket Literacy and Arts for Youth (PLAY)** program proved an unequivocal success and highlighted a growing demand for supplementary arts education in the community's high schools and middle schools. Supported by the **City of Pawtucket Planning and Redevelopment Department** through a federal **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)**, PLAY includes in-school residencies, artist-teacher partnerships and after-school drama programs under the direction of Gamm Education Coordinator Steve Kidd. Additional support for PLAY was generously provided by **Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation, Carter Family Charitable Trust, Mary Dexter Chafee Fund, Citizens Bank Foundation, Alice I. Sullivan Foundation of Collette Vacations, Norman & Rosalie Fain Fund Trust, June Rockwell Levy Foundation, Ocean State Charities Trust, City of Pawtucket Arts Funding, Pawtucket Credit Union, Sansiveri, Kimball & MacNamee, L.L.P., Robert F. Stoico/FIRSTFED Charitable Foundation** and **Verizon Foundation**.
- Ongoing **student matinee performances supplemented by curriculum-based study guides** allowed PLAY participants and middle- and high-school students across the region to experience live professional theater free of charge or at significantly reduced prices. In all, **over 3,000 public- and private-school students have participated in The Gamm's educational programs over four seasons.**
- In collaboration with **Rhode Island Council on the Humanities** and **Amnesty International**, The Gamm hosted public discussions following several performances of four one-act plays by modern playwrights Harold Pinter, Samuel Beckett and Peter Barnes, presented under the umbrella title ***Enhanced Interrogation Techniques***. Guest speakers included **human rights activists, lawyers representing detainees at Guantanamo Bay, and a former U.S. Army interrogator.**
- The Gamm's production of Michael Murphy's unflinching documentary drama ***Sin: A Cardinal Deposed*** garnered the support of secular and Church-based support groups for survivors of sexual abuse by Catholic clergy, including representatives for **Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP)** and **Voice of the Faithful**. Some area victims of the far-reaching scandal also participated alongside Gamm artists in post-show discussions following every performance of the highly emotional play.
- The Gamm presented two nearly sold-out performances of ***Los Titingos de Juan Bobo*** in cooperation with Providence's **Spanish-language ECAS Theater and New York City's Teatro Circulo.**
- Long-time **Season Sponsor NBC 10** provided in-kind support **exceeding \$250,000** during Season 22. The Gamm is extremely grateful for the television station's support over the past four seasons, and happy to announce a **renewed sponsorship for the coming season.**
- Ongoing generous production sponsors included **Citizens Bank Foundation, Providence Journal Company, UBS Financial Services** and in-kind sponsors **The Times** and **The Call.**
- **The Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, The Rhode Island Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the Amica Foundation** and the **William Bingham Foundation** all provided significant general operating funds during Season 22.

The Gamm opens its 2007-08 season in September with an approximately **\$1,100,000 budget**. The organization is at 80% of its goal of **1,650 subscribers to Season 23**—well within reach of topping the past season's all-time high of 1,400 subscribers.

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. The Gamm is a member of **New England Area Theatre (NEAT)**, a bargaining unit of the Actors Equity Association.