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THE ELEPHANT MAN AT THE GAMM **Critically Acclaimed Drama Sets the Stage for New Season**

PAWTUCKET, RI (August 10, 2007) — The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre (The Gamm) opens **Season 23** with **Bernard Pomerance's masterful, multi-award-winning play, *The Elephant Man***. **Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella** (*Mother Courage and Her Children, Twelfth Night, An Enemy of the People*) helms the harrowing and true story of Victorian Englishman John Merrick, doomed to life as a side show freak until he is befriended by a famous young surgeon. Ben Johnson (*Swiss Cheese in Mother Courage and Her Children, Master Bells in Red Noses*) plays the physically and emotionally demanding title role, alongside a cast of talented Gamm audience favorites including Steve Kidd and Jeanine Kane.

Winner of numerous awards including both the **Tony Award and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play, *The Elephant Man*** runs from **September 6 through October 7** at The Gamm Theatre, 172 Exchange St., Pawtucket, RI.

Play Synopsis

The **true and riveting story** of John Merrick, a Victorian Englishman doomed by his grotesquely deformed body to life as a sideshow freak until he is befriended by a famous young surgeon. Under the care of Dr. Frederick Treves, who educates Merrick and introduces him to London society, the so-called "Elephant Man" changes from a sensational object of pity to the urbane and clever darling of the rich and famous. But can Merrick's dream to be accepted as a man like any other come true? The Broadway favorite of 1979, winning both the **Tony Award and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Play, *The Elephant Man*** is a **poignant and thoughtful journey to the core of human dignity**. With plainspoken yet masterful dialogue, Pomerance creates "**a moving drama**" that "**nests in the human heart.**"—*Time Magazine*.

"An Enthralling and luminous play. Haunting, splendid."—*New York Times*

"A giant of a play."—*New York Post*

Estrella said he's delighted to launch a new season with a play that is **as powerful and contemporary today as it was when it debuted on Broadway in 1979**.

"I think that most people think of *The Elephant Man* as an 'inspired by true events' version of *Beauty and the Beast*, a feel-good melodrama," he said. "I look forward to our audience sharing in and perhaps being surprised by Bernard Pomerance's moving and fiercely intelligent play. **While it certainly affirms Merrick's humanity, it also rigorously questions ours.**"

Embolden is this play's sponsor. **NBC10** is The Gamm's season sponsor. Additional support comes from **WBRU**.

About The Gamm Theatre

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.

ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION OF *THE ELEPHANT MAN*

By **Bernard Pomerance**
Directed by **Tony Estrella**

Set Design by **Bill Wieters**
Costume Design by **David T. Howard**
Lighting Design by **Matt Terry**
Sound/Music Direction by **Charles Cofone**
Technical Direction by **Dade Veron**
Stage Management by **Stef Work***

Assistant Director, **Jimmy Calitri**; Assistant Technical Direction, **Andrew Morissette**; Dialect Coach, **Wendy Overly**;
Props Master, **Marc Dante Mancini**; Dramaturge, **Jennifer Madden**; Assistant Stage Manager, **Robin Grady**;
Costume/Wardrobe Intern, **Kate Dennis-Skilling**

CAST

Steve Kidd	Frederick Treves
Scott Winters*	Carr Gomm/Belgian Policeman
Alan F. Hawkridge	Ross/Bishop Walsham How
Ben Johnson	John Merrick
Jeanine Kane*	Mrs. Kendal/Pinhead
Wendy Overly*	Pinhead Manager/Miss Sandwich/Snork/Princess Alexandra
Tom Gleadow	Lord John/Conductor/Porter
Karen Carpenter	Pinhead/London Policeman/Duchess/Countess

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

CALENDAR OF PERFORMANCES

September

Thursday, Sep. 6, preview performance at 8 p.m.
Friday, Sep. 7, preview performance at 8 p.m.
Saturday, Sep. 8, preview performance at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 9, preview performance at 7 p.m.
Monday, Sep. 10, press performance at 7 p.m.
Thursday, Sep. 13, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Friday, Sep. 14, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Saturday, Sep. 15, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 16, matinee performance at 2 p.m.*
Sunday, Sep. 16, regular performance at 7 p.m.
Wednesday, Sep. 19, regular performance at 7 p.m.
Thursday, Sep. 20, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Friday, Sep. 21, regular performance at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sep. 22, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 23, matinee performance at 2 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 23, regular performance at 7 p.m.
Thursday, Sep. 27, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Friday, Sep. 28, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Saturday, Sep. 29, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 30, matinee performance at 2 p.m.
Sunday, Sep. 30, regular performance at 7 p.m.

October

Wednesday Oct. 3, regular performance at 7p.m
Thursday, Oct. 4, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Friday Oct. 5, regular performance at 8 p.m.**
Saturday, Oct. 6, regular performance at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 7, matinee performance at 2 p.m.

*Performance followed by **Shared Sundays** discussion with artists and scholars. Show attendance not required. Free for all.

**ASL interpreted performance

Tickets \$20-\$34, all previews (Sep. 6-9) ONLY \$20. Discounts for subscribers, groups of 10 or more, seniors and students. For single ticket sales, call **401-723-4266**. Or purchase tickets at **www.arttixri.com**. More information at **www.gammtheatre.org**.

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