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**THE GAMM THEATRE PRESENTS ODETS' AWAKE AND SING!**  
**Landmark Depression-era Play is Timely Entertainment for 2009 Audiences**

"Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isaiah 26:19)  
 –Jacob Berger, *Awake and Sing!* by Clifford Odets

PAWTUCKET, RI (December 18, 2008) — **The Sandra Feinstein-Gamm Theatre** (The Gamm) is pleased to open the new year with *Awake and Sing!*, **Clifford Odets' 1935 comedy-drama** about a Jewish family struggling to stay afloat during the Great Depression. **Gamm Resident Director Fred Sullivan, Jr.** helms an exciting cast through the dreams and disappointments, and hopes and fears of three generations of a working-class family jammed into a Bronx apartment.

*Awake and Sing!* features talented newcomers **Marc Dante Mancini** as Ralphie and **Diana Buirski** as Hennie, and includes Gamm Resident Actors **Wendy Overly** as the resolute matriarch, Bessie Berger; **Sam Babbitt** as her idealistic father, Jacob; and Gamm Artistic Director **Tony Estrella** as the cynical wise-cracking boarder, Moe Axelrod.

*Awake and Sing!* runs from **January 15 through February 15** at The Gamm Theatre, 172 Exchange St., Pawtucket, RI. **Tickets \$24-\$39, all previews (Jan. 15-18) only \$24.** Discounts for subscribers, groups of 10 or more, seniors and students. For tickets call **401-723-4266** or go to **artixri.com**. Information at **gammtheatre.org**.

**Play Synopsis**

Living together in a cramped Bronx tenement and laid low by the Great Depression, a working-class Jewish family copes with financial hardship and dreams of a brighter future. Indomitable Bessie Berger rules her family with an iron hand including her nebbish husband Myron, her children Ralph and Hennie, her Marxist-leaning father Jacob and the boarder Moe Axelrod, a small-time bookie embittered over losing a leg in World War I. Bent on forcing her daughter into a marriage of convenience and her son out of a relationship that she considers beneath him, Bessie tirelessly wages war against the idealism of the family she is trying to protect. **Gritty, passionate, funny and heartbreaking, Odets' 1935 multi-generational masterpiece beautifully captures the hopes and struggles of an unforgettable American family.**

**Gamm Artistic Director Tony Estrella** said he hopes audiences will connect with the play's timely themes.

"Odets' bona fide American classic isn't merely a paean to hope in hard times. It's a tough, beautiful story of family survival and the wonderful, horrible complexities that define them and enable them to persevere in crisis," Estrella said. "Awake and Sing! is the ground zero of American theatrical realism. **More than 70 years since its first production, it remains as resonant and powerfully relevant as ever.**"

*Awake and Sing!* is made possible in part by a grant from the **Rhode Island State Council on the Arts**, through a grant from the **National Endowment for the Arts 'American Masterpieces' program**.

Additional support for *Awake and Sing!* 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. 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 Awake and Sing!

By **Clifford Odets**  
Directed by **Fred Sullivan, Jr.**

Set Design **William P. Wieters**  
Costume Design by **Marilyn Salvatore**  
Lighting Design by **Richard Van Voris**  
Sound & Music Design by **Kerry Callery**  
Technical Direction by **Dade Veron**  
Stage Management by **Stef Work\***

Assistant Director, **Steve Kidd**; Dialect Coach, **Wendy Overly**; Props Master, **Katryne Hecht**; Dramaturge, **Jennifer Madden**; Assistant Stage Manager, **Nicholas Thibeault**; Production Assistant, **Rachel Pontbriand**

### CAST

Ralphie Berger	<b>Marc Dante Mancini</b>
Myron Berger	<b>Chuck Reifler</b>
Hennie Berger	<b>Diana Buirski*</b>
Bessie Berger	<b>Wendy Overly*</b>
Jacob	<b>Sam Babbitt*</b>
Schlosser	<b>Tom O'Mahoney</b>
Moe Axelrod	<b>Tony Estrella*</b>
Uncle Morty	<b>Tom Gleadow</b>
Sam Feinshreiber	<b>Stephen Abrams</b>

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

### CALENDAR OF PERFORMANCES

#### January

Thursday, Jan. 15, preview performance at 8 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 16, preview performance at 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 17, preview performance at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, Jan. 18, preview performance at 7 p.m.\*  
**Monday, Jan. 19, press performance at 7 p.m.**  
Thursday, Jan. 22, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 23, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 24, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, Jan. 25, matinee performance at 2 p.m.\*\*  
Sunday, Jan. 25, regular performance at 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, Jan. 28, regular performance at 7 p.m.  
Thursday, Jan. 29, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Friday, Jan. 30, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Jan. 31, regular performance at 8 p.m.

#### February

Sunday, Feb. 1, matinee performance at 2 p.m.  
Thursday, Feb. 5, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Friday, Feb. 6, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Feb. 7 at 8, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, Feb. 8, matinee performance at 2 p.m.  
Sunday, Feb. 8, regular performance at 7 p.m.  
Wednesday, Feb. 11, regular performance at 7 p.m.  
Thursday, Feb. 12, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Friday, Feb. 13, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Saturday, Feb. 14, regular performance at 8 p.m.  
Sunday, Feb. 15, matinee performance at 2 p.m.  
Sunday, Feb. 15, regular performance at 7 p.m.

\*Preceded by multi-media presentation/Q&A and book signing by **Susan Quinn**, author of "**Furious Improvisation: How the WPA and a Cast of Thousands Made High Art out of Desperate Times**". Presentation at 5 p.m., followed by book signing at 6 p.m. Open to the public at no charge.

\*Followed by **Shared Sundays** discussion with artists & scholars. Show attendance not required. Open to the public at no charge.