



MEDIA RELEASE

DECEMBER 17, 2004

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE

Contact:

Christopher Prentice, Producing Artistic Director

773-347-1350 / chris@signalensemble.com

SIGNAL ENSEMBLE THEATRE
PRESENTS BECKETT'S TRAGICOMIC CLASSIC
WAITING FOR GODOT

Previews: Jan. 13 & 14, 2005

Opens: Jan. 15, 2005

Closes: Feb. 20, 2005

CHICAGO—**Signal Ensemble Theatre** is pleased to continue its second season with Samuel Beckett's tragicomedy, *WAITING FOR GODOT*. Directed by **Ronan Marra**, the production will be staged in the studio at the Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division Ave., Chicago, 60622. Performances begin Jan. 13, and run through Feb. 20, 2005. **Opening night is Jan. 15 at 8:00 p.m.** General admission tickets are \$15, with discounts for seniors and students (\$10), and can be purchased online at signalensemble.com or reserved by telephone at (773) 347-1350.

Widely acclaimed as a seminal masterwork of the 20th century, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is at once a vaudevillian farce and a heartrending expression of our fear of uncertainty. Also a study of intimate relationships in all their comfortable and irritating glory, it illustrates our need for companionship, our want of understanding, and our desperate hope that something good is waiting for us.

Waiting for Godot was Samuel Beckett's first professionally produced play. It opened in Paris in 1953 and has since become a cornerstone of modern theater. In it, two seemingly vagrant men, Estragon and Vladimir, are waiting to keep an appointment with someone named Godot. During a seemingly interminable cycle of days and nights blending together, the two longtime friends do anything to pass the time: they play word games, bicker, laugh, and muse on the Bible and the chance of God seeing them. The only figures they encounter are Pozzo, his slave Lucky, and a boy.

Rather than highlighting, but not ignoring, the play's well-known elements of clowning and absurdism, Signal's production, featuring a younger ensemble, focuses on the characters' friendship and humanity. Setting the piece right where Beckett wished it, on a road with a tree, Signal continues its mission to let the words lead the way through ensemble-based collaboration and performance.

Signal General Artistic Director **Ronan Marra** directs the production. For Signal he directed *Much Ado About Nothing* and his own *Learning to Fly* last season. Marra also directed *Learning to Fly* in New York, as well as *Say Goodnight Gracie*, *The Swan*, and *The Messiah*. As a playwright, his plays have received productions every year since 1997. Originally a one-act, *Learning to Fly* has been mounted at theaters in New York City, Cleveland, and Chicago at the Bailiwick. The play won first place at ITN Theatre's one-act competition in NYC, and scored second at New York University's Neverland Productions one-act contest. Marra has been seen onstage in Chicago in First Folio's *Twelfth Night* and Chase Park's *Life Is a Dream* and *Hamlet*.

Samuel Beckett (Author) was born in Dublin in 1906 and graduated from Trinity College. He spent most of his life in Paris, where he died in 1989. Originally written in French, *Waiting for Godot* (En Attendant Godot) was translated into English by Beckett. One of the most celebrated authors of the 20th century, Beckett was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1969. His other plays include *End Game*, *Krapp's*

Last Tape, and *Happy Days*. He is the author of several novels including *Murphy*, *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable*.

Waiting for Godot features Signal Ensemble members **Christopher Prentice** (Estragon), **Aaron Snook** (Vladimir), **Charles R. Schoenherr** (Lucky), and **Joseph Stearns** (Pozzo); with **Benton Reynolds** (Boy).

The Design/Production team for *Waiting for Godot* includes **Nancy Freeman** (setting), **Laura M. Dana** (costumes), **Julie Ballard** (lighting), **Lara Maerz** (props), **David Blixt** (violence), and **Anthony Ingram** (assistant director/stage manager). **Ronan Marra**, **Joseph Stearns**, and **Christopher Prentice** are the producers.

Productions Plus is the exclusive production sponsor for *Waiting for Godot*.

This play is produced by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc.

Performers' Bios

Christopher Prentice (Estragon) was seen in Signal productions of *Catch-22*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Chicago credits include John Wilkes Booth in *Assassins* (Boxer Rebellion), and Jaques in *As You Like It* (Velvet Willies) and the title roles in *Hamlet* (Chase Park), and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (New Leaf). Prentice has also acted with the American Players Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, Dallas Theater Center, Illinois Shakes, Next Theatre, and performs school shows with First Folio. He holds a B.F.A. from Southern Methodist University. **Signal Ensemble Member**

Benton Reynolds (Boy) has appeared in *A Christmas Carol* (Provision Theater), *Seussical* and *The Music Man* (Circle Theatre), *The Future of Sound* (Lookingglass), *Prairie Lights* (Stage Left), *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Only A Stage).

Charles Schoenherr (Lucky) played Don John in Signal's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Also a member of A Crew of Patches, he appears in *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Twelfth Night*. He has also worked with Milwaukee Rep, Rising Moon Theatre, and the International Theater of Chicago. He holds a B.F.A. from the University of Illinois. **Signal Ensemble Member**

Aaron Snook (Vladimir) appeared in Signal's *Catch-22* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. Snook also acted in the Jeff Award-winning *Only the Sound* at Chicago Dramatists, *The Red Address* with Footprint on the Sun (LA), and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with the Camden Shakespeare Company (Maine). He is a graduate of Duke University with a double major in drama and English and has spent a summer studying with ACT in San Francisco. **Signal Ensemble Member**

Joseph Stearns (Pozzo) appeared in Signal's *Catch-22*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and *Learning to Fly*. Stearns acted in and composed music for *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Nights Dreame*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Only Love Gods* with the Velvet Willies. He is a graduate of Columbia College. **Signal Ensemble Member**

About Signal Ensemble Theatre, NFP

While producing a diverse slate of plays, Signal Ensemble Theatre uses the actor as focal point to clearly present the playwright's vision. Signal's second season began with the critically acclaimed production of *Catch-22* at the Chopin Theatre.

Signal Ensemble Theatre
 WAITING FOR GODOT
 FACT SHEET

THEATRE: Chopin Theatre, 1543 W. Division Ave., Chicago

DATES: January 13–February 20, 2005

DESCRIPTION: Widely acclaimed as a seminal masterwork of the 20th century, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is at once a vaudevillian farce and a heartrending expression of our fear of uncertainty. Also a study of intimate relationships in all their comfortable and irritating glory, it illustrates our need for companionship, our want of understanding, and our desperate hope that something good is waiting for us.

REGULAR SCHEDULE: Thursdays–Saturdays at 8:00 p.m., Sundays at 3:00 p.m.

INDUSTRY NIGHTS: Every Thursday, with picture/resume.
 NOTE: Special Monday (Jan. 17, 7:30 p.m.) performance is also a \$10 for industry professionals.

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday	1/13/05	8:00 p.m.	Preview
Friday	1/14/05	8:00 p.m.	Preview
Saturday	1/15/05	8:00 p.m.	Opening Night
Sunday	1/16/05	3:00 p.m.	
Monday	1/17/05	7:30 p.m.	Industry Night
Thursday	1/20/05	8:00 p.m.	Industry Night
Friday	1/21/05	8:00 p.m.	
Saturday	1/22/05	8:00 p.m.	
Sunday	1/23/05	3:00 p.m.	
Thursday	1/27/05	8:00 p.m.	Industry Night
Friday	1/28/05	8:00 p.m.	
Saturday	1/29/05	8:00 p.m.	
Sunday	1/30/05	3:00 p.m.	
Thursday	2/3/05	8:00 p.m.	Industry Night
Friday	2/4/05	8:00 p.m.	
Saturday	2/5/05	8:00 p.m.	
Sunday	2/6/05	3:00 p.m.	
Thursday	2/10/05	8:00 p.m.	Industry Night
Friday	2/11/05	8:00 p.m.	
Saturday	2/12/05	8:00 p.m.	
Sunday	2/13/05	3:00 p.m.	
Thursday	2/17/05	8:00 p.m.	
Friday	2/18/05	8:00 p.m.	
Saturday	2/19/05	8:00 p.m.	
Sunday	2/20/05	3:00 p.m.	Closing

TICKET PRICES:

\$15	General Admission
\$10	Senior citizens and students (with ID)
\$10	Industry (with picture/resume)
\$10	Groups of 15 or more
\$10	Preview general admission

TICKETS: Purchase online at signalensemble.com or reserve by phone at (773) 347-1350.

INFORMATION: (773) 347-1350