



MEDIA RELEASE

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Signal Announces Continued 2006/07 Season

4th Season Includes Works by Pinter, Albee, Marber, McPherson, Shakespeare

CHICAGO, October 10, 2006 — Following its critically acclaimed production of *THE DUMB WAITER* & *THE ZOO STORY*, Signal Ensemble Theatre (Ronan Marra, Christopher Prentice and Joseph Stearns, artistic directors) is pleased to announce the continuation of its 2006-07 season at the Chopin Theatre. The productions this year feature psychologically dark and often funny plays by world-renowned playwrights.

The company's fourth year, and first four-production season, kicked off in August with a double bill of one-acts: Harold Pinter's **THE DUMB WAITER** and Edward Albee's **THE ZOO STORY**. The season continues in November with Patrick Marber's Olivier Award-winning **CLOSER**, a brutally honest look at modern relationships. 2006 Tony Award nominee Conor McPherson's ghost story-infused **THE WEIR** opens in the studio in February. The season culminates in April with an all-out rendering of Shakespeare's great revenge tragedy **HAMLET** on the mainstage.

"This season's plays are full of darkness and, often painful and unexpected humor, which have become hallmarks of Signal's work," says **Christopher Prentice**, Signal's producing artistic director. "We search to find the humanity and humor in all the pieces we produce."

"We joke that this is the most depressing season ever, but I honestly think it's also our funniest," says **Ronan Marra**, Signal's general artistic director. "The darker the piece, the greater the impact of its inherent humor."

Marra continues: "There are absolutely hysterical moments in *CLOSER*, moments you appreciate more due to the painful truths exposed in the play. *THE WEIR* is very funny, while scary. And I've always thought Hamlet is Shakespeare's funniest character. These are all extremely character driven plays, and while searching for the humanity in each of these people, you unlock the dark and the light. There just may be a little more dark this year."

Tickets for all three remaining productions are now on sale at signalensemble.com.

(more)

The continuation of Signal's fourth season will include:

CLOSER

by Patrick Marber

Directed by ensemble member Ronan Marra

Nov 19-Dec 17 2006 (Opening Nov. 20)

Winner of the Olivier Award for Best Play, CLOSER is a brutally honest and darkly funny look at modern relationships. The production features Jeff nominees Georgann Charuhas and Aaron Snook (both nominated for last season's *Seascape*).

THE WEIR

by Conor McPherson

Directed by ensemble member Christopher Prentice

Feb. 22 – March 24, 2007 (Opening Feb. 24)

Winner of the Olivier Award for Best Play, THE WEIR depicts the Irish penchant for good-time storytelling in the pub, but a young woman turns the table with the most harrowing tale of all. McPherson was nominated for a 2006 Tony Award for best play for *Shining City*.

HAMLET

by Shakespeare

Directed by ensemble member Ronan Marra

Apr. 21 – May 26, 2007 (Opening Apr. 23)

Signal returns to Shakespeare and the Chopin mainstage for an all-out rendering of the Bard's best-known revenge tragedy. Featuring a no-nonsense approach to the text, this production will feature 18 actors and designs from Jeff Citation-winning costumer Laura M. Dana.

Known for its ensemble acting and producing a diverse slate of plays that range from classics to new works, Signal Ensemble Theatre uses the actor as focal point to clearly execute the playwright's vision. Founded by its three artistic directors (Ronan Marra, Christopher Prentice, Joseph Stearns), the company began producing in 2003. Signal's production of *Seascape* won a Jeff Citation and After Dark Award for best costume design.

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