

IMPACT THEATRE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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IMPACT THEATRE ANNOUNCES A TAKE-NO-PRISONERS 2009-10 SEASON FEATURING THREE PREMIERES AND A CLASSIC THAT MIGHT AS WELL BE A DEBUT

The company's 14th season starts with Jon Tracy's *See How We Are*, opening Sep 11

BERKELEY, CA, AUGUST 31, 2009—Impact Theatre, after a record-breaking 2008-09 season, launches an even more daring year in September with the world premiere of *See How We Are*, Jon Tracy's contemporary adaptation of *Antigone*. In fact, *See How We Are* is only one of three world premieres announced for this season, a particularly bold move considering the current economic climate.

"We never play it safe," Artistic Director Melissa Hillman says. "Impact has always been the antithesis of tried-and-true theatre, and we know there's a hunger out there for bold new plays."

The season starts off strong with Jon Tracy's *See How We Are*. Writer-director Tracy, a rising local theatrical powerhouse, most recently blew the lid off John Hinkel Park with *The Farm*, his well-received adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* for Shotgun Players. Now he turns his attention further back in time to the Theban Plays, specifically *Antigone*. In Tracy's retelling, modern-day Thebes is run by the Bank family. After the death of patriarch Edward Bank, leadership of the state is left to his children. National unrest and familial infighting escalate to civil wars both frighteningly large and devastatingly personal. A final defiance could heal all wounds or destroy everything.

See How We Are features an impressive cast of local talent: Rob Dario, Jacqueline Haines, Sarah Mitchell, Kendra Lee Oberhauser, Ryan Tasker, and Seth Thygesen. The play previews Thursday, September 10, opens Friday, September 11, and runs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays through October 17.

2009-10 continues with Steve Yockey's *Large Animal Games*, a co-world premiere with Atlanta's Dad's Garage Theatre. Impact introduced Atlanta-based playwright Steve Yockey to the Bay Area with his absurdist comedy *Cartoon* (named one of the top ten plays of the year by the *East Bay Express*) and the experimental dreamscape *Sleepy*. He has since made splashes with his plays *Octopus* and *Skin* at major local companies, and this year he's the playwright-in-residence at Marin Theatre Company. **He now returns to Impact with *Large Animal Games*, an incisive look at relationships, big-game hunting, and intimate apparel, all seen through the delightfully cockeyed lens of Steve Yockey, one of the new generation of playwrights who should be on anyone's must-see list.**

"I'm really excited to have Steve back at La Val's," Hillman says. "We're proud to have been the company that got him noticed in the Bay Area, and we're thrilled to debut a new play of his."

In an unusual arrangement, Dad's Garage will debut its own production simultaneously. Impact's production, directed by Melissa Hillman, stars a cast of audience favorites including Marissa Keltie, Cindy Im, Jai Sahai, Elissa Dunn, and Timothy Redmond, as well as the Impact debut of Leontyne Mbele-Mbong. The show starts November 5.

In February 2010, La Val's Subterranean explodes with the world premiere of the full-length production of Enrique Urueta's *Learn to Be Latina*. Urueta first came to Impact as its literary manager. After finding brilliant plays for Impact such as Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *Say You Love Satan* and writing for *Impact Briefs*, Urueta went off and got his playwriting MFA from Brown University. He finally returns to Impact with what is sure to be the most blistering new comedy to play the Bay Area this season.

In *Latina*, Hanan is a promising young pop singer, and she has a record label dying to record her...until they find out she's Lebanese. Not to worry, they say: Hanan can still be a star—as long as she learns to be Latina! **In this fiercely funny riff on cultural identities and the music business, sacred cows are poked with some very, very sharp sticks.** The award-winning Mary Guzmán, who helmed *Latina's* first incarnation as a one-act, returns to direct this full-length production. **The *SF Weekly's* Chloe Veltman wrote of the one-act, "*Latina* delivers a serious message about racial stereotyping in the pop music industry through zany, stylized theatrics."**

"Enrique and I have been trying for years to bring one of his plays to La Val's, and I have to say the wait was extremely worth it," Hillman says. **"This is, without a doubt, the most searing thing anyone will put on stage all year, not to mention flat-out hilarious."**

The season concludes in the spring with Impact's seventh classic, *Twelfth Night*. For a play that's more than 400 years old, it might as well be a world premiere once Impact is done with it: **the company's takes on classic tragedies, problem plays, and comedies are legendary for their freshness, beloved by teens(!) to seniors and everyone in between.** Impact follows last season's all-time-record-breaking Eighties-philic *Midsummer Night's Dream* with a new look at another favorite comedy, *Twelfth Night*. Artistic Director Melissa Hillman's production promises, as always, to marry the original text to a contemporary setting that reveals just how resonant those ancient words are today.

Once again, extremely affordable season subscriptions are available. For only \$15 per play, subscribers can decide with 24 hours' notice which performance they want to see, and still have the best seats in the house waiting for them. **With dozens of performances selling out in 2008–09, subscribers got in every time while others had to be turned away.** This year, as a special thank-you, each subscriber will receive one of Impact's brand-new pint glasses. **Subscriptions are available at impacttheatre.com/subscribe.**

For more information, please visit impacttheatre.com.

ABOUT IMPACT THEATRE

Since 1996 Impact Theatre has spoken to a new generation of theatregoers and enthusiasts alike who **want to see something fresh and bold on stage.** Impact's audience ranges from students to professionals to seniors, all of whom share a taste for exciting, unpretentious theatre that doesn't conform to stale assumptions of what constitutes high culture. Impact's primary mission is to directly contribute to the future of

American theatre through focusing on new plays by emerging playwrights. **Impact has produced 17 full-length world premieres, including 12 by local playwrights, as well as dozens of world-premiere ten-minute plays by burgeoning writers nationwide in the *Impact Briefs* series.** Impact also prides itself on its fast-paced, vital, contemporary spins on classic drama. Impact shows compel, provoke, and inspire, at prices everyone can afford. And nowhere else in the Bay Area can you eat pizza and drink beer while you're watching a play. The *East Bay Express* named Impact "Best Small Theatre Company" in its 2008 Best of the East Bay issue and always includes Impact shows in its year-end top-ten lists.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

PRODUCTIONS: *See How We Are* written and directed by Jon Tracy

WORLD PREMIERE

September 10–October 17, 2009 · Thu–Sat 8pm

Large Animal Games by Steve Yockey, directed by Melissa Hillman

CO-WORLD PREMIERE

November 5–December 12, 2009 · Thu–Sat 8pm (no show 11/26)

Learn to Be Latina by Enrique Urueta, directed by Mary Guzmán

WORLD PREMIERE

February 18–March 27, 2010 · Thu–Sat 8pm

Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare, directed by Melissa Hillman

May 6–June 12, 2010 · Thu–Sat 8pm

WHERE: La Val's Subterranean, 1834 Euclid Ave, Berkeley, CA 94709

ADMISSION: Advance tickets: \$17 general / \$12 students, seniors, and TBA members
At the door: \$20 general / \$15 students, seniors, and TBA members
Pay-what-you-wish rush tickets available first two Thursdays of each show

IMPORTANT: PLEASE LIST PRICES AS \$12–20.

MORE INFO: impacttheatre.com

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