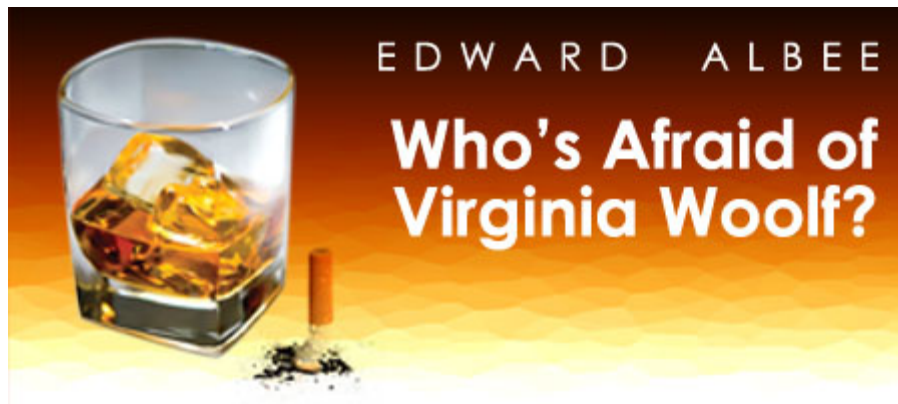


CLOSBC PRESENTS EDWARD ALBEE'S AWARD
WINNING PLAY

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?

AT THE HERMOSA BEACH PLAYHOUSE

OCTOBER 13 - OCTOBER 25



Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities and Executive Producer James A. Blackman, III proudly present Edward Albee's incisive Tony Award winning play ***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** opening with previews **October 13***,14,15 and the Gala Press Opening night on Friday, October 16. The production will be helmed by CLO's Artistic Director Stephanie A. Coltrin, and stars Suzanne Dean as Martha, Matthew Brenher as George, Meredith Rensa as Honey and Dane Biren as Nick. *(Coincidentally the original production opened on Broadway, **October 13, 1962** - 47 years ago!)

Edward Albee's masterpiece of wit and interpersonal play created quite a stir with its Broadway debut. It's 2 a.m. George and Martha have just returned home from a faculty party, at which time Martha announces that they are expecting guests, Nick (a fellow professor at the college) and his wife Honey. When the guests arrive, drinks flow, inhibitions melt and the charade begins!

The play's title, which alludes to the English novelist Virginia Woolf, is a parody of the song "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" from Walt Disney's animated version of *The Three Little Pigs*. Albee said he got the idea for the play's title from a line of graffiti scrawled on a mirror in a bar in London. "I was in there having a beer one night, and I saw "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" scrawled in soap, When I started to write the play it cropped up in my mind again. And of course, who's afraid of Virginia Woolf means who's afraid of the big bad wolf . . . who's afraid of living life without false illusions. And it did strike me as being a rather typical, university intellectual joke."

Starring in the Hermosa Beach Playhouse production will be British actor Matthew Brenher as George. Brenher's background includes classical roles throughout the UK with no less than 20 Shakespearean productions. In Los Angeles for the past 3 years he has continued to appear in classical plays as well as commercials and voiceovers. Suzanne Dean will appear as Martha. Dean is originally from Texas, she received her BFA in Theatre with a focus on Shakespearean & Classical. She has performed with American Drama Academy/Oxford, Shakespeare & Company, The Old Globe Theatre-San Diego and elsewhere. She is a founding member of Little Fish Theatre, a non-profit arts organization dedicated to bringing professional Shakespeare productions & youth education to underserved communities in Los Angeles & Orange County. Dean has appeared in over 50 productions throughout the United States and England.

Meredith Rensa in the role of Honey appeared in *Steel Magnolias* (Shelby) at Hermosa Beach Playhouse. Favorite regional credits include: *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Monologues*, *Private Eyes*, and *Cripple of Inishmaan*. Meredith is a member of the Hermosa Beach Playhouse family. Dane Biren as Nick has performed many roles for the Hermosa Beach Playhouse and the CLO Musicals at the Redondo Beach Performing Arts Center as well as *Aspects of Love* with the Musical Theatre Guild. Dane holds a BFA in acting from The California Institute of the Arts.

Director Stephanie A. Coltrin has served as the Artistic Director for Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities and the Hermosa Beach Playhouse for the past two seasons. She directed the Ovation Award winning *Miss Saigon*, as well as *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Oklahoma!* at Civic Light Opera to rave reviews. At the Hermosa Beach Playhouse, she is the resident director and has shown her versatility as a director with the hit productions of *Blithe Spirit*, *Come Back to the Five & Dime*, *Jimmy Dean*, *Jimmy Dean*, *Sylvia*, *Fully Committed*, *Godspell*, *Quilters*, and *The Reindeer Monologues*. During her tenure as Artistic Director, Civic Light Opera has produced *Kiss Me Kate*, *Cinderella*, *Twice Upon a Time*, *The Full Monty*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Miss Saigon*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. and *Oklahoma!* Coltrin and Managing Director of the CLOSBC Chris Beyries will celebrate their first wedding anniversary in December 2009.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? by Edward Albee opened on Broadway October 13, 1962 and ran a total of 664 performances. The original cast featured Uta Hagen as Martha, Arthur Hill as George, Melinda Dillon as Honey and George Grizzard as Nick, with direction by Alan Schneider. The groundbreaking drama garnered 4 Tony Awards: Best Play, Best Actress, Best Actor and Best Director. It was also selected for the 1963 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. However, the award's advisory board objected to the play's then-controversial use of profanity and sexual themes, and overruled the award's advisory committee, awarding no Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1963.

In 1966, ***Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*** became a major motion picture directed by Mike Nichols and starred real-life couple Elizabeth Taylor as Martha & Richard Burton as George as well as George Segal as Nick and Sandy Dennis as Honey. The film won

5 Academy Awards including Best Actress for Ms. Taylor and Best Supporting Actress for Ms. Dennis.

There have been two subsequent Broadway revivals. In 1976 the revival cast starred Ben Gazzara as George and Colleen Dewhurst as Martha, with Maureen Anderman and Richard Kelton as Honey and Nick. The 2005 revival garnered a Tony win for Bill Irwin as George and starred Kathleen Turner as Martha, with Mireille Enos and David Harbour.

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? is the first show of the 2009/2010 Hermosa Beach Playhouse Season. The remaining shows include: WAIT UNTIL DARK, ON THE FRITZ, SPIT LIKE A BIG GIRL and A MIDSUMMER'S NIGHTS DREAM. The Hermosa Beach Playhouse is located at the corner of Pier Ave and Pacific Coast Highway. For information and tickets please call 310-372-4477.

Calendar

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

by Edward Albee

Executive Producer James A. Blackman III

Artistic Director/Director - Stephanie A. Coltrin

Managing Director/Set Designer - Christopher Beyries

Lighting Designer - Ric Zimmerman

Properties Designer -Theresa Scarano

Costume Designer - Christa Armendariz

Cast:

Suzanne Dean as Martha

Matthew Brenher as George

Meredith Rensa as Honey

Dane Biren as Nick

Dates:

October 13- 25, 2009

PREVIEWS: Oct.13, Oct 14, Oct 15 at 8 P.M.

GALA PRESS OPENING: Friday, October 16 at 8pm

REGULAR SCHEDULE: Tuesday through Saturday at 8 P.M.

SUNDAY MATINEES: Oct 18 & 25 at 2 P.M.

SUNDAY EVENING: Oct 18 at 7 P.M.

CLOSES: Sunday, Oct 25 at 2 P.M.

TICKETS: \$35, \$40, \$45

For Tickets call: 310-372-4477 or order online at www.hermosabeachplayhouse.com

All performances are held at the 400-seat HERMOSA BEACH PLAYHOUSE located on Pier Avenue at Pacific Coast Highway, Hermosa Beach, California.

Valet parking is available in front of the theatre on Pier Ave for Friday, Saturday and Sunday performances for \$5. On Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, you'll find plenty of free parking around the theatre.

For Press Seats please contact:

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