

DAVID ARQUETTE, MIREILLE ENOS, JULIAN SANDS,
JOSH STAMBERG AND MERRITT WEVER
JOIN ANNETTE BENING IN *THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES*

Randall Arney Directs the American Premiere of Joanna Murray-Smith's Comedy
Opening Night - Wednesday February 10

LOS ANGELES, December 17, 2009 — **Annette Bening**, who plays the famed feminist in playwright **Joanna Murray-Smith's** comedy *The Female of the Species*, will be sharing the Geffen Playhouse stage with a diverse group of acclaimed actors: **David Arquette** (*Scream, Never Been Kissed*), Tony Award nominee **Mireille Enos** (*Big Love, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* on Broadway), **Merritt Wever** (*Nurse Jackie*), **Julian Sands** (*A Room with a View, Boxing Helena*) and **Josh Stamberg** (*Drop Dead Diva*). The production is helmed by Geffen Playhouse Artistic Director **Randall Arney** and begins in previews on February 2 with an official opening night of **Wednesday, February 10, 2010**.

Three-time Academy Award nominee **Annette Bening** (*Being Julia, American Beauty, The Grifters*) returns to the Geffen Playhouse as Margot Mason – feminist theorist and author of such influential works as “Madame Ovary” and “The Complete Insignificance of Male Sexuality.” Loosely inspired by a real-life incident, *The Female of the Species* begins with Margot at her country home attempting to pen her next masterpiece in the peace and quiet. Problem is, nothing's coming. Nothing, that is, except for Molly (**Merritt Wever**), a former student who is intent on taking Margot hostage as punishment for her mixed message ideology. Enter Margot's overlooked daughter (**Mireille Enos**), her simplistic son-in-law (**David Arquette**), her longtime publisher (**Julian Sands**) and a disgruntled cab driver (**Josh Stamberg**) ... and all of a sudden a simple kidnapping turns into a battle over who can throw the first punch and get the last word.

“The characters in this play function like the instruments in a good piece of jazz – just as one melody settles in, another element is introduced that changes the dynamic entirely,” said director Randall Arney. “These spectacular actors, many of whom are new to LA theater audiences, promise to bring a freshness to Joanna's fantastic ensemble comedy.”

The Female of the Species had its world premiere at the Melbourne Theatre Company in 2006, which was followed by a production on London's West End in 2008. The Geffen Playhouse production marks the American premiere of Murray-Smith's farce.

For extended bios on the cast and creative team, please see below.

THE FEMALE OF THE SPECIES

Written by Joanna Murray-Smith

Directed by Randall Arney

Previews: Tuesday, February 2 – Tuesday, February 9

Opening Night: Wednesday, February 10

Closing Night: Sunday, March 14

Cast

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| David Arquette | Bryan |
| Annette Bening | Margot |
| Mireille Enos | Tess |
| Julian Sands | Theo |
| Josh Stamberg | Frank |
| Merritt Wever | Molly |

Production Credits

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Set Designer | Takeshi Kata |
| Costume Designer | David Mickelson |
| Lighting Designer | Daniel Ionazzi |
| Composer / Sound Designer | Richard Woodbury |
| Production Stage Manager | James T. McDermott |

Performance Schedule

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|------------------|-----------------|
| Monday | No performances |
| Tuesday – Friday | 8:00pm |
| Saturday | 3:00pm; 8:00pm |
| Sunday | 2:00pm; 7:00pm |

Ticket Info

Ticket prices range from \$35 - \$55 for preview performances and from \$65 - \$85 for the regular run. Tickets are on sale now at the Geffen Playhouse box office, online at www.geffenplayhouse.com, via credit card phone order at (310) 208-5454, at all Ticketmaster outlets, or by calling Ticketmaster at (800) 745-3000.

RANDALL ARNEY (Director)

Randall Arney is known to Geffen audiences for his direction of *Speed the Plow* by David Mamet; *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller, Richard Greenberg's *Take Me Out*, Stephen Jeffreys' *I Just Stopped by to See the Man*, Rebecca Gilman's *Boy Gets Girl*, David Rambo's *God's Man in Texas* and Conor McPherson's *The Weir* and *The Seafarer*. He is an ensemble member and former Artistic Director of Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre, where he directed *The Seafarer*, *I Just Stopped by to See the Man*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *Death and the Maiden*, *Curse of the Starving Class*, *Bang*, *A Walk in the Woods*, *Killers* and *The Geography of Luck*. In addition, he directed the world premiere of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* at Steppenwolf, as well as the subsequent Los Angeles (Westwood Playhouse, Drama-Logue Critics' Award), Off-Broadway, San Francisco, Washington D.C. and Tokyo productions. In Chicago, he oversaw the design, creation and completion of a new state-of-the-art theatre with a mainstage and studio. Broadway transfers under his leadership include *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice*; *The Song of Jacob Zulu* (six Tony Award nominations); and *The Grapes of Wrath* (1990 Tony Award, Best Play). Mr. Arney's acting credits with Steppenwolf include *Born Yesterday* (opposite Glenna Headly); *Ghost in the Machine*; *The Homecoming*; *Frank's Wild Years* (with Tom Waits, directed by Gary Sinise); *You Can't Take it With You*; *Fool for Love*; *True West* (directed by Gary Sinise); and *Balm in Gilead* and *Coyote Ugly* (both directed by John Malkovich). On film he has appeared in *Normal* and *Weapons of Mass Distraction* (HBO); *Mystery, Alaska*; *The Out-of-Towners*; *Chain Reaction*; *The Color of Money* and *Miles from Home*. Mr. Arney has an MFA degree in Acting and has taught acting and directing at Columbia College in Chicago and Illinois State University. He has also held master classes and workshops at Steppenwolf, around the U.S., and in Tokyo.

DAVID ARQUETTE (Bryan)

Most recently seen in *Hamlet 2*, Arquette was discovered at Sundance in 1997 for his role in *Johns*. Other film credits include: the *Scream* trilogy, *Eight Legged Freaks*, *The Grey Zone*, *Stealing Sinatra*, *Never Been Kissed*, *Dream with Fishes*, *Never Die Alone*, and *The Darwin Awards*. In January 2003, Arquette formed the production company, Coquette Productions, with his wife, Courteney Cox. Through their company, Arquette wrote and

produced his directorial debut, *The Tripper* and recently released *The Butters in Love*, for which he served as executive producer and director. Also under the Coquette banner, Arquette produced the FX drama, *Dirt* and is currently the executive producer of *Cougar Town*. Last year, along with his friends Ben Harper and David Bedwell, Arquette launched the clothing line Propr.

ANNETTE BENING (*Margot*)

Bening is returning to the Geffen Playhouse after previously appearing in *Hedda Gabbler* directed by Dan Sullivan. Bening was nominated for a Tony Award for her performance in *Coastal Disturbances*, and other Los Angeles theater credits include: *The Cherry Orchard* (Mark Taper), *Talking Heads* (Tiffany Theater), and most recently *Medea* (UCLA Live). Film credits include: *American Beauty* (Academy Award nomination), *The Grifters* (Academy Award Nomination), *Running with Scissors*, *Being Julia* (Academy Award Nomination), *Richard III*, *The American President*, *Postcards from the Edge* and *The Siege*.

MIREILLE ENOS (*Tess*)

Born to an American father and French mother, Enos was raised in Houston where she attended schools for the dramatic arts, and then was invited to join a two-month project at the Classic Stage Company in New York City. In 2005, Enos won the role of Honey in the Broadway revival of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Tony Award nomination). Enos made the jump from Broadway to Hollywood starring as twins, Kathy & Jodean Marquet in the critically-acclaimed HBO hit *Big Love*. Other TV credits include *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Medium*, *CSI: Miami*, *Sex and the City* and *Without a Trace*.

JULIAN SANDS (*Theo*)

First known in the United States for his romantic turn in the beautiful period piece *A Room with a View*, England's Julian Sands is currently winning a new audience, starring as the heart-crushing uber-villain on the Emmy Award winning television show *24*. On stage, Sands was recently seen in Los Angeles as British Prime Minister Tony Blair in David Hare's *Stuff Happens* at the Mark Taper Forum. Sands' film credits include: *The Killing Fields*, *Boxing Helena*, *Naked Lunch*, *Timecode* and *Leaving Las Vegas*. Television credits include: *Lipstick Jungle*, *Bollywood Hero*, *Beyond Sherwood*, *Castle* and *Smallville*.

JOANNA MURRAY-SMITH (Playwright)

Joanna Murray-Smith, while predominantly a playwright, has also worked as screenwriter, novelist, librettist and newspaper columnist. Her plays, which include *Honour*, *Rapture*, *Bombshells*, *Nightfall*, *Redemption*, *Love Child* and *Flame*, have been produced around the world. *Honour* has been produced in over two dozen countries, including productions in New York, Australia and New Zealand, in Korea, Portugal, Mexico, Turkey, Brazil, Malaysia and at the National Theatre in London and most recently on the West End. *Honour* was first read at the New York Stage and Film Festival in 1995 by Meryl Streep, Sam Waterson and Kyra Sedgwick. Both *Honour* and *Rapture* won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award for Best Play. Joanna has also published three novels *Truce*, *Judgment Rock* and *Sunnyside*.

JOSH STAMBERG (*Frank*)

Last season, Josh appeared with Cynthia Nixon in *Distracted* at New York's Roundabout Theater. Josh spent much of his early career working in the theater. He co-developed and co-starred in the play, *Tape*, with Stephen Belber and Dominic Fumusa, which had productions in New York, Los Angeles and London. On television, Josh recently finished the first season of Lifetime's new hit series *Drop Dead Diva*. He also has had recurring roles on *Six Feet Under*, *Studio 60 on The Sunset Strip*, *Monk* and *Over There*. Guest starring roles include appearances on dramas such as *Lie to Me*, *Brothers and Sisters*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *House* and in comedies *Sex and the City* and *It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia*. Film work includes *Legion*, *Fracture*, *Must Love Dogs*, *A Lot Like Love* and *Drifting Elegant*.

MERRITT WEVER (*Molly*)

Merritt Wever can currently be seen starring in Showtime Network's hit series "Nurse Jackie." Her theatre appearances include *Sam & Lucy*, *Bad Girls*, *Smashing*, *Cave Dweller*, *Roulette*, *Cape Cod Souvenirs*, *To Gillian on her 37th Birthday*, *Running on Earth*, *Here We Are*, and *Children of the Flames*. Wever's upcoming film roles include *Greenberg*, opposite Ben Stiller and Jennifer Jason Leigh and *The Missing Person*, co-starring Amy Ryan and Michael Shannon. Other film credits include *Righteous Kill*, *Into the Wild*, *Michael Clayton*, *Neal Cassady*, *Twelve & Holding*, *A Hole in One*, *Season of Youth*, *Bringing Rain*, *Signs*, *Series 7 The Contenders*, *The Adventures of Sebastian Cole*, *Arresting Gena*, and *Tough* (Best Actor Award, First Run Film Festival). Television credits include *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, *Conviction*, *1/4 Life*, *NCIS*, *The Wire*, *Blue River* and *Something the Lord Made*.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company is helmed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit geffenplayhouse.com.

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