



Press Release

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For Immediate Release:

“Top Girls” to Play

In the Clarence Brown Theatre’s Lab Theatre

March 29 – April 16, 2017

Caryl Churchill’s “Top Girls” will be performed in the Clarence Brown Theatre’s Lab Theatre March 29 – April 16, 2017. Patrons are encouraged to purchase quickly as performances do sell out. A Pay What You Wish Preview performance will be held Wednesday, March 29, a talk back with the cast will take place Sunday, April 9 following the 2:00 pm matinee, and an Open Captioned performance is on Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 pm. Media sponsors are WUOT, WUTK, and The Daily Beacon.

Career-driven Marlene lands the top job at a London employment agency over a mail colleague. She celebrates her promotion by throwing a “Mad Hatter” type dinner party for a variety of mythical and historical women, including a Victorian-era Scottish traveler, a Japanese courtesan turned Buddhist nun, Pope Joan and Chaucer’s Patient Griselda. Crossing cultures, generations and politics, the sparkling dinner conversation reveals the sacrifices made as well as the joys experienced by these extraordinary women. Originally a rebuke of Margaret Thatcher’s England in the 1980s, the play remains as relevant and as powerful today.

“This play is not just made up of discussions about weighty issues; it’s made up of stories told by individual women with fantastic tales to tell. By listening to them, we have a chance to see the world from a different vantage point,” said Director Casey Sams.

Casey Sams is Head of Undergraduate Studies in Theatre at UT, where she works in both the Graduate and Undergraduate programs teaching Movement and Acting. In addition to the CBT, she’s had the great fortune to direct, choreograph or be the movement coach at such theatres as Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Round House Theatre (DC), the Utah Shakespearean Festival, PlayMakers Repertory Company (Chapel Hill), Virginia Stage Company (Norfolk), Knoxville Opera Company, and Vermont Stage Company (Burlington). Favorite projects include: “Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play,” and “The Who’s Tommy,” “A Year with Frog and Toad,” and “Underneath the Lintel.”

The cast is comprised of UT Theatre undergraduate students **Gracie Belt** (Lady Nijo / Angie), **Emily Helton** (Isabella Bird / Joyce / Mrs. Kidd), **Alyssa Miller** (Waitress / Jeanie / Nell), **Celeste Pelletier** (Cull Gret / Kit / Shona), **Danielle Pressley** (Pope Joan / Louise), **Meg Sutherland** (Marlene), and **Chauncey Whitlock** (Patient Griselda / Win).

The creative team for this production includes UT MFA candidates **Jelena Andzic** (Scenic Designer), **Devin O'Neill** (Costume Designer) and **Jordan Vera** (Lighting Designer); and UT Theatre staff **Mike Ponder** (Sound Designer). Also assisting with the production are **Abigail Langham** (Voice Coach); **Kerri Ann Considine** (Dramaturg) and UT Theatre undergraduate student **Kara Eble Trusty** (Stage Manager).

Two Previews for “Top Girls” are Wednesday, March 29 and Thursday, March 30 followed by Opening Night Friday, March 31. The production runs through April 16. For tickets, call the Clarence Brown Theatre Box Office at 865-974-5161 or order online 24/7 at www.clarencebrowntheatre.com

This production is part of the Clarence Brown Theatre’s commitment to training. Our Lab Theatre productions are an important part of our dual mission. The production you will see is helping to prepare the students in our Master of Fine Arts and undergraduate programs to take their place as theatre artists.

For more information, tickets or accessibility accommodation requests including Open Captioning, American Sign Language, and assistive technologies, please call the CBT Box Office at 865-974-5161 or visit us online at clarencebrowntheatre.com/access. Stay Connected to the Clarence Brown Theatre on Facebook (Clarence Brown Theatre), follow us on Twitter (@ClarenceBrown) (#CBTTopGirls) and view Clarence Brown videos on YouTube (Clarence Bro).

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