

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 19, 2008

Updated April 16, 2008

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## **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL KAHN ANNOUNCES THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY'S 2008-2009 SEASON**

Washington, D.C. – Shakespeare Theatre Company Artistic Director Michael Kahn announced the Company's 2008-2009 season, a lineup that includes Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* and *King Lear* as well as William Congreve's *The Way of the World*, Lope de Vega's *The Dog in the Manger* (the East Coast premiere of a translation and adaptation by David Johnston), Euripides' *Ion* (the American premiere of a translation and adaptation by David Lan) and Noël Coward's *Design for Living*. Both *Ion* and *The Dog in the Manger* were originally read in the Company's ReDiscovery Series, which explores lesser-known classics.

### **SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY'S 2008-2009 SEASON**

#### ***Romeo and Juliet***

**by William Shakespeare****directed by David Muse****September 9 to October 12, 2008****Sidney Harman Hall**

The world's greatest and most enduring love story, *Romeo and Juliet* follows its star-crossed lovers as they hurtle from their first shy glances to their last heartrending kiss. Caught between their feuding families, Romeo and Juliet desperately struggle to build a world insulated from the violence, but their love races toward a final confrontation with fate. Associate Artistic Director David Muse directs Shakespeare's poetic masterwork. Muse has been praised for his "wonderfully sensitive guidance" creating productions that are "triumphant ... glorious" (*Washington City Paper*).

#### ***The Way of the World***

**by William Congreve****directed by Michael Kahn****September 30 to November 16, 2008****Lansburgh Theatre**

Featuring witty repartee in the grand tradition of *The Country Wife* and *The Beaux' Stratagem*, Congreve's delicious comedy of manners sends up courtship and marriage. Amid the gossip and frivolous love affairs of fashionable London society, the clever and conniving lovers Millamant and Mirabell are determined to pursue "a marriage of true minds." But Millamant's jealous guardian stands in their way. The only way to achieve their goal is to beat the fops, the fools and the resentful rivals at their own game—through double-dealing and outrageous deception. Michael Kahn directs this great English comedy, one of the finest of the Restoration era. The cast features Veanne Cox (*The Beaux' Stratagem*) and STC favorites Floyd King, Andrew Long and Nancy Robinette.

***Twelfth Night***

by William Shakespeare

directed by Rebecca Bayla Taichman

December 2, 2008, to January 4, 2009

Sidney Harman Hall

One of Shakespeare's greatest comedies, *Twelfth Night* ponders love lost and found. A shipwreck separates twins Viola and Sebastian, but tragedy quickly turns to comedy when they wash up in a land turned upside-down by love. With raucous antics, ravishing language and rich characters, Shakespeare creates a bittersweet tale of laughter and longing. Rebecca Bayla Taichman returns after her "chic, funny and marvelously acted" production of *The Taming of the Shrew* (*The Washington Post*). Veanne Cox will play Olivia, following her role in *The Way of the World*, and will be joined by STC favorites Floyd King and Nancy Robinette.

***The Dog in the Manger***

by Lope de Vega

translated and adapted by David Johnston

directed by Jonathan Munby

February 10 to March 29, 2009

Lansburgh Theatre

A master of Spain's Golden Age, Lope de Vega explores love, fidelity and class with wry humor in *The Dog in the Manger*. The haughty countess Diana rejects her many aristocratic suitors only to fall in love with her handsome young secretary, Teodoro. To pursue this forbidden love, Diana must sabotage her suitors, deceive her friends and concoct ever-more elaborate schemes. De Vega balances high tragedy and low comedy, examining the savage whims of the human heart. Jonathan Munby makes his STC debut directing the East Coast premiere of David Johnston's translation of this rarely performed classic. Munby, a frequent director with the Royal Shakespeare Company, has been praised for his "high-octane" productions (*The Sunday Times*).

***Ion***

by Euripides

translated and adapted by David Lan

directed by Ethan McSweeney

March 10 to April 12, 2009

Sidney Harman Hall

In *Ion*, the Greek playwright Euripides crafts a remarkable romance of loss and reconciliation. Abandoned by his parents, Ion grows up as an orphan at Apollo's temple. But when his mother appears in search of a prophecy, Ion must confront both his painful past and his unexpected destiny. Euripides' plot twists and turns with jealousy and revenge before culminating in a reunion scene of deep tenderness and pathos. Ethan McSweeney returns to direct his second Greek tragedy for STC, after his "stunning ... acutely theatrical" production of *The Persians* in 2006 (*The Washington Post*). He will direct the American premiere of David Lan's translation, which captures the rich beauty of this neglected masterpiece.

***Design for Living***

by Noel Coward

directed by Michael Kahn

May 12 to June 28, 2009

Lansburgh Theatre

The master of 20th-century English comedy, Noel Coward continued the style of William Congreve and Oscar Wilde with this hilarious and sophisticated look at love, friendship and the joys and perils of fame. Filled with Coward's trademark sparkling wit, *Design for Living* follows three glamorous Bohemians—Otto, Leo and Gilda—as they fall in and out of love with each other. Moving restlessly from Paris to London to New York, the three both pursue and repel each other in an ever-more-maddening love triangle. Michael Kahn directs this provocative modern comedy classic.

***King Lear***  
**by William Shakespeare**  
**directed by Robert Falls**  
**June 16 to July 19, 2009**  
**Sidney Harman Hall**

One of the most powerful dramas in Western literature, *King Lear* is both an intimate family drama and an explosive political epic. Beginning with a monarch's division of his kingdom amongst his three daughters, *Lear* explores the most basic questions of human existence: love and duty, power and loss, good and evil. Tony Award winner Robert Falls remounts his 2006 production, which captures both the stark violence and devastating passion of Shakespeare's masterpiece. Stacy Keach will play the title role, returning to STC for the first time since *Macbeth* in 1995. When the show premiered at Chicago's Goodman Theatre, *The Chicago Tribune* raved, "A colossal, eye-popping operatic production," and *The New York Times* proclaimed it one of the best productions of 2006.

**About the Shakespeare Theatre Company at the Harman Center for the Arts**

The Shakespeare Theatre Company's innovative approach to Shakespeare and other classic playwrights has earned it the reputation as the nation's premier classical theatre company. By focusing on works with profound themes, complex characters and poetic language written by Shakespeare, his contemporaries and the playwrights he influenced, the Company's artistic mission is unique among theatre companies: to provide vital, groundbreaking, thought-provoking, vibrant and eminently accessible theatre in a uniquely American style. Artistic Director Michael Kahn has led the organization for 22 years, establishing the company as "the nation's foremost Shakespeare company" (*The Wall Street Journal*) and "the best classical theatre in the country, bar none" (*The Christian Science Monitor*).

In its 2007-2008 season, the Company opened the Harman Center for the Arts consisting of the new 775-seat Sidney Harman Hall and the 451-seat Lansburgh Theatre, both located in downtown Washington's Penn Quarter neighborhood. A dynamic hub of activity, the Harman Center showcases the Company as well as outstanding local performing arts groups and nationally renowned organizations.

Subscriptions to the Company's 2008-2009 season will be available in April. For more information, contact the Box Office at 202.547.1122, TTY at 202.638.3863 or Toll Free at 877.487.8849. Information is also available at our website at [ShakespeareTheatre.org](http://ShakespeareTheatre.org).

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