

For Immediate Release
March 4, 2009

Press Contact: Amy Scott-Douglass
202.547.3230 x 2312
ascottdouglass@shakespearetheatre.org

**SHAKESPEARE THEATRE COMPANY'S
2008-2009 SEASON CONTINUES WITH**

Ion

BY EURIPIDES

IN A NEW VERSION BY DAVID LAN

DIRECTED BY ETHAN MCSWEENEY

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Shakespeare Theatre Company continues its 2008-2009 season with Euripides' *Ion* directed by **Ethan McSweeney** at Sidney Harman Hall (610 F Street NW) from **March 10 to April 12, 2009**. The action centers on Ion, the legendary ancestor of all Athenians, as a young man struggling to find his true identity and origins. The cast includes **Keith Eric Chappelle** as Ion, **Lisa Harrow** as Creusa and **Sam Tsoutsouvas** as Xuthus.

Dubbed "the Greek tragedy with a happy ending," the 2,500-year-old play deals with the remarkably modern themes of familial jealousy and abandonment, and includes plots twists and turns, moments of laugh-out-loud humor and a touching reunion scene. This production marks the American premiere of David Lan's adaptation, which captures the rich beauty and emotional complexity of this neglected masterpiece. Washington, D.C. native Ethan McSweeney returns to direct his second Greek play for STC, after his "stunning ... acutely theatrical" production of *The Persians* in 2006 (*The Washington Post*). "I'm treating *Ion* from my own modernity, not as some distant story from another time," said McSweeney. "It's about letting the play be as contemporary for this audience as it was for Euripides'."

Production support for *Ion* is provided by the **Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA)** and the **National Hellenic Society**, with additional support from **The Doric Column** and **The National Endowment for the Arts**.

ION CAST

In his STC debut, **Keith Eric Chappelle** stars as Ion. On Broadway, Chappelle played Poet/Cadet in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Additional New York credits include Elegba in *The Brothers Size*, Jude in *The Gabriels*, Captain DeTreville in *The Three Musketeers*, Gang Leader in Susan Lori Parks' *365 Plays in 365 Days*, Radio Announcer in *Thorny Bushes* and Barack Obama in *Obama Drama*. Chappelle's television roles include defense attorney Gavin Edlund in *Law and Order*.

Lisa Harrow, who makes her STC debut in the role of Creusa, began her stage career at the Royal Shakespeare Company. At the RSC, she starred as Desdemona and Olivia in John Barton's productions of *Othello* and *Twelfth Night* (the latter opposite Judi Dench), and as Portia

in Terry Hands' *The Merchant of Venice* opposite Patrick Stewart. Her New York credits include Vivian Bearing in the Pulitzer prize-winning play *Wit*. Her extensive list of performances in the U.S. includes Medea in *Medea* (Pittsburgh Public), Elizabeth in *Mary Stuart* (Yale Repertory), Ranyevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard* (Northern Stage), and Kate Keller in *All My Sons* and Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter* (Chautauqua Theatre Company), among others. Her screen credits include Nancy in *Nancy Astor, Playing Shakespeare* and *Kavanaugh QC* (television) and *The Last Days of Chez Nous*, *Sunday* and *The Final Conflict* (film).

Sam Tsoutsouvas returns to STC to play Xuthus after having performed the title role in STC's production of *Titus Andronicus*. His Broadway credits include Sir Watkyn Bassett in *By Jeeves*, Renfield in *Dracula* and Sideway/Collins in *Our Country's Good*. His many other New York credits include *The Mysteries*, *Shooting in Madrid*, *Gus and Al*, *The Puppet Master of Lodz*, *The Bald Soprano*, *Snowing at Delphi*, *Phaedra*, and, for New York Shakespeare Festival, *Timon of Athens*, *Antony and Cleopatra* (dir. Vanessa Redgrave) and *The Taming of the Shrew* (dir. Julie Taymor). Tsoutsouvas also has performed at such regional theatres as Baltimore Center Stage, Dallas Theatre Center and Taper Theatre, among others. His television credits include *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, *Guiding Light* and *One Life to Live*.

Ion also features **Aubrey Deeker** as Hermes, **Colleen Delany** as Athene, **Tana Hicken** as the Pythia, and **Floyd King** as Old Servant, with **Rebecca Baxter**, **Lise Bruneau**, **Kate Debelack**, **Anthony Jackson**, **Leigh Jameson**, **Caleb Jones**, **Floyd King**, **Matthew B. Luceno**, **Laiona Michelle**, **Patricia Santomasso**, **Jeffrey Scott** and **Amanda Tudor**.

THE DESIGNERS

The *Ion* design team includes Costume Design by Rachel Myers, Set Design by Rachel Hauck, Original Music/Soundscape by Michael Roth, Lighting Design by Tyler Micoleau, Choreography by Peter Pucci, Puppet Design by Aaron Cromie and Text Coaching by Ellen O'Brien.

PRODUCTION SPONSORS

The Shakespeare Theatre Company is pleased to acknowledge the **Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation (USA)** and the **National Hellenic Society** as production sponsors for *Ion*. Additional support is provided by **The Doric Column** and **The National Endowment for the Arts**, and from generous donors who share Shakespeare Theatre Company's uncompromising commitment to quality. The financial support from these sponsors and donors make it possible for STC to fulfill its mission to become the nation's leading force in the presentation and preservation of classical theatre.

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES AND EVENTS

There will be audio-described performances of *Ion* on Thursday, April 9, at 8 p.m. and Saturday, April 11, at 2 p.m. Sign-Interpreted performances are Saturday, April 4, at 2 p.m. and Tuesday, April 7, at 7:30 p.m.

On Sunday, March 15 at 1 p.m., members of STC's Artistic staff, Education Department and scholars will lead a lively *Windows* discussion on *Ion*. All are welcome. Call 202.547.1122 and press 4 or visit ShakespeareTheatre.org to reserve a space.

Following the evening performance of *Ion* on Wednesday, March 18, all are welcome to the Lansburgh Theatre for a post-show discussion. Those attending the performance are guaranteed seats. Additional seating is available on a first-come basis. Call 202.547.1122 for the approximate start time. No reservations required.

On Saturday, April 4 following the 2 p.m. matinee, STC sponsors a *Classics in Context* discussion about *Ion* with local scholars and artists. Call 202. 547.1122 and press 4 or visit ShakespeareTheatre.org to reserve a space.

FACT SHEET: *Ion*
By Euripides * Directed by Ethan McSweeney

The Shakespeare Theatre Company continues its 2008-2009 season with Euripides' *Ion* directed by **Ethan McSweeney** at the Sidney Harman Hall (610 F Street NW) from **March 10 to April 12, 2009**. 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. The cast includes **Keith Eric Chappelle** as Ion, **Lisa Harrow** as Creusa and **Sam Tsoutsouvas** as Xuthus.

DATES: March 10-April 12, 2009
Press Night: Sunday, March 15, 2009
Opening Night: Monday, March 16, 2009

LOCATION: Sidney Harman Hall, 610 F Street NW

TIMES: Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. (except March 17 and April 1); Thursdays Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 7:30 p.m.; Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. (except March 15).

TICKETS: \$23.50-\$79.75 with discounts available for students, seniors and members of the military.

ACCESSIBILITY: Sidney Harman Hall is accessible to persons with disabilities, offering wheelchair-accessible seating and restrooms, audio enhancement, and Braille and large print programs.

- There will be audio-described performances of *Ion* on Thursday, April 9, at 8 p.m. and Saturday, April 11, at 2 p.m. Sign-Interpreted performances are Saturday, April 4, at 2 p.m. and Tuesday, April 7, at 7:30 p.m.
- On Sunday, March 15 at 1 p.m., members of STC's Artistic staff, Education Department and scholars will lead a lively Windows discussion on *Ion*. All are welcome. Call 202.547.1122 and press 4 or visit ShakespeareTheatre.org to reserve a space.
- Following the evening performance of *Ion* on Wednesday, March 18, all are welcome to the Lansburgh Theatre for a post-show discussion. Those attending the performance are guaranteed seats. Additional seating is available on a first-come basis. Call 202.547.1122 for the approximate start time. No reservations required.
- On Saturday, April 4 following the 2 p.m. matinee, STC sponsors a Classics in Context discussion about *Ion* with local scholars and artists. Call 202. 547.1122 and press 4 or visit ShakespeareTheatre.org to reserve a space.

PARKING:

Paid parking is available at the Interpark garage located directly beneath the Sidney Harman Hall and AARP Headquarters block; enter from E or F streets between Sixth and Seventh streets.

METRO: Gallery Pl-Chinatown station (Red, Yellow and Green Lines): Patrons attending performances at Sidney Harman Hall should exit using the Arena/7th Street exit. Harman Hall is visible one block to your left. Judiciary Square station (Red Line): Take the F Street Exit toward the National Building Museum, turn left and walk one and one-half blocks along F Street to Sixth Street.

Box Office: 202. 547.1122 (voice) TTY: 202. 638. 3863 Toll Free: 877.487.8849
ShakespeareTheatre.org