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LIVEWIRE CHICAGO THEATRE PRESENTS 5th SEASON *UNDER NEW ARTISTIC MISSION*

The world premiere of “Hideous Progeny” at the DCA Storefront marks LiveWire’s first show under its new mission statement

2010-11 season continues with the 3rd annual new play festival “VisionFest” and the Chicago premiere of Mat Smart’s “The 13th of Paris”

CHICAGO – LiveWire Chicago Theatre kicks off its 5th season under the new mission statement: ***LiveWire Chicago is a collective of artists who create theatre that reflects the current cultural landscape of our community through productions of original and contemporary works.*** LiveWire’s first production under this mission is the world premiere of Emily Dendinger’s “Hideous Progeny,” part of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs’ 2010 fall season at the Chicago DCA Theater’s Storefront Theater, Aug. 26 – Sept. 26, 2010. In November, LiveWire presents “VisionFest3” the 3rd annual short play festival of new work with an emphasis on audience feedback and conversation. This year the theme of the festival is “Feast,” and all plays will incorporate the line “I can’t remember the last time we were all together,” which was selected through a public online poll. LiveWire’s 2010-11 season concludes with the Chicago premiere of “The 13th of Paris,” written by Mat Smart and directed by Hypocrites’ company member Steve Wilson. For tickets and more information, visit livewirechicago.com.

“Hideous Progeny”

A world premiere by Emily Dendinger

Aug. 26 – Sept. 26, 2010

Thursdays – Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m.

Post-show Discussion following the Thursday, Sept. 2 performance

Storefront Theater, 66 E. Randolph Street

Tickets: \$20 general admission; \$15 for seniors and students

www.dcatheater.org or (312) 742-TIXS (8497)

SYNOPSIS: It was a dark and stormy night in a house by the lake when Lord Byron challenged his houseguests to write a ghost story that was both original and frightening. Spurred on by this well-documented event, Mary Shelley famously took up her host’s challenge and created *Frankenstein*, one of the most famous novels in the Western canon. Witty, salacious, and often melodramatic—we’re talking about the Romantics, after all—Emily Dendinger’s world premiere play directed by Jessica Hutchinson depicts the larger than life Romantic figures as the normal teenagers they were – overeducated, egotistical, and convinced they will change the world.

“The feminine lens through which this story is told is one of the things that makes this play unique and sets it apart from other accounts – factual or fictionalized – of this weekend. It is not a *feminist* play, as it’s free of agenda,” said Director Jessica Hutchinson. “It rather takes into account the facts that accompanied womanhood at the time. While the boys are off in boats, not writing compelling ghost stories, Mary Shelley is quietly beginning *Frankenstein* while caring for an infant and for herself in still another pregnancy.”

Emily Dendinger (Playwright) has had plays produced around the country including Massachusetts, North Dakota, Florida and Virginia. Most recently her ten minute play “The Kiss” was seen in 20% Theater’s Snapshot 2009 this past summer in Chicago. Her play “Swimming After Dark” was selected for performance at the 2006 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Regional Festival after being named one of the two winners in the 1X2 One Act Playwriting Competition the previous winter. Recently, it won the 2008 Women Playwrights’ Initiative’s Playwriting Competition and was produced in Orlando, Fl. Dendinger is a recipient of the 2005 National Selection Team Kennedy Center Fellowship for Outstanding Achievements, and she is a twice participant in the KCACTF Summer Intensive Playwriting program. Her one-act play “Family Tree” was named the Senior Theatre League of America’s Best Play 2004, and is currently published by Dramatic Publishing. Dendinger is a Chicago Dramatists Network Playwright with a B.A. from Boston College and a Masters in Humanities with a focus on Literature and Playwriting from the University of Chicago.

Jessica Hutchinson (Director) Jessica makes her LiveWire Chicago Theatre debut with “Hideous Progeny.” Since June 2007, she has served as Artistic Director for New Leaf Theatre and directed the following productions, “The Man Who Was Thursday,” “Touch,” “Six Years,” “The Dining Room” and “Vox Pandora.” Hutchinson has also directed “Orange Flower Water” with BackStage Theatre Company, “Abbie Hoffman Died for our Sins XX and XXI” with Mary Arrchie, “Antigone Coffeehouse” with Caffeine Theatre and the Goodman Theatre as Assistant to the Director for “The Crowd You’re In With.” Hutchinson is an associate member of SDC, the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

“VisionFest 3: Feast”

3rd annual short play festival
November, 2010 for two weekends
Location TBD

LiveWire established “VisionFest” to expose new works to the community and get the community involved in new works. “VisionFest” audience members are offered the chance to provide feedback to the playwrights and artists on the development of the short plays presented through post-show discussions and space for written feedback in the program. For the past two years the festival of new work has surrounded a shared theme or environment. For the 3rd annual “VisionFest,” LiveWire chose the theme of “Feast.” As a new addition, LiveWire asked playwrights to incorporate a certain phrase into their original work submission. Ten suggestions were posted online and with 22% of the votes, the line that was selected by the public to be incorporated into all plays submitted is, “I can’t remember the last time we were all together.”

“The 13th of Paris”

A Chicago premiere by Mat Smart
Directed by Hypocrites’ company member Steve Wilson
March 12 – April 17, 2011
Media Opening: Saturday, March 12 at 8 p.m.
Thursdays – Saturdays at 8 p.m.; Sundays at 3 p.m.
Please note: No performances March 17-20; Special performance Monday, March 21;
Regular performance schedule resumes March 24.
Tickets: \$20 general admission; \$15 for seniors and students
www.livewirechicago.com

SYNOPSIS: In this charming and theatrical romantic comedy, Vincent spontaneously travels to an apartment in Paris with only a suitcase filled with the surprising love letters of his late grandparents. When he begins receiving romantic advice from a dapper ghost in a pinstripe suit, Vincent wonders if the love he imagines is possible, even in the 13th district of Paris.

“The 13th of Paris” was originally commissioned and developed by South Coast Repertory with support from the Elizabeth George Foundation. The writing of “The 13th of Paris” was supported in part by the 2006 Conference of The New Harmony Project. The play received its world premiere at City Theatre in Pittsburgh, Pa. produced by Artistic Director Tracy Bridgen and Managing Director Greg Quinlan. It has since been produced at Seattle Public Theatre, Horizon Theatre in Atlanta, The Public Theatre of Maine and The Warehouse Theatre in Greenville, S.C. “The 13th of Paris” premiered at Pittsburgh’s City Theatre and was the recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Play Award. It will soon be published by Dramatic Publishing.

Mat Smart is the author of 12 full-length plays, the book and lyrics of one musical and numerous one-acts. He is a past recipient of two Jerome Fellowships from the Playwrights' Center. This summer, Williamstown Theatre Festival produced the world premiere of his newest play, “Samuel J. and K.” This winter, Steppenwolf will produce the Midwest premiere of “Samuel J. and K” as part of their Steppenwolf Young Adult repertoire.

Smart’s “The Hopper Collection” won San Diego Playbill's award for Best New Play and was subsequently produced at Huntington Theatre Company in Boston and the Magic Theatre in San Francisco. It is published by Broadway Play Publishing and a monologue from the play appears in Smith and Kraus' “Best Women’s Monologues 2008.” Smart is a co-founder of Slant Theatre Project in New York City, serves on the Board of Directors for The New Harmony Project and is an alumnus of the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab and Ars Nova’s Play Group. He has been commissioned to write new plays by South Coast Rep and Huntington Theatre Company. A graduate of the University of Evansville, he holds an M.F.A. in Playwriting from University of California – San Diego. An avid Chicago Cubs fan, he has seen baseball games at twenty-seven of the current MLB stadiums.

Steve Wilson has been working throughout Chicago as an actor, director and educator for the past 14 years. As an actor, he has worked with the fine folks at The Factory, The Griffin and A Red Orchid, to name a few. He performed with LiveWire in their production of Eric Bogosian's “Red Angel.” He is a proud member of The Hypocrites where he has performed in dozens of shows including “The Bald Soprano,” “Angels in America, Parts 1 and 2,” “The Cherry Orchard,” “Arcadia,” “Balm in Gilead,” “The Glass Menagerie” and most recently as the title role in Sean Graney's adaptation of “Oedipus.” He is set to perform in Shakespeare's “Comedy of Errors” with the Court Theatre this fall. He also serves as The Artistic Director of A Red Orchid Theatre's Youth Ensemble where he will be directing Craig Wright's adaptation of “The Iliad” this November. Previous directing credits include the Chicago premier of “A Very Merry Unauthorized Children's Scientology Pageant” at A Red Orchid and “American Stage Sessions” with The Plagiarists. Wilson is in his fourth year as a full time acting teacher at North Lawndale College Prep.

About Livewire Chicago Theatre

LiveWire has produced four seasons of new and established work scaling all genres. The 2009-10 season focused on the development of a new work by Executive Director Joshua Aaron Weinstein, “Lower Debt,” which was first developed as part of the DCA’s INCUBATOR series in the fall of 2009 and mounted as a fully realized production at the Viaduct in the spring of 2010.

LiveWire's inaugural season was 2006-07 and featured Jean-Paul Sartre's mind-bending "No Exit," Resident Playwright Joshua Aaron Weinstein's mysterious new love story "A/other Lover" and the epic tragedy "Love of the Nightingale" by Timberlake Wertenbaker. LiveWire's 2007-08 season kicked off with the **"thoroughly commanding"** (*Chicago Reader*) production of "The Collector" by Mark Healy, adapted from the novel by John Fowles, which gained Matt Kelly his first Jeff nomination for 'Outstanding Actor in a Principal Role.' In the spring, the company presented the premiere of "Soldiers: The Desert Stand," an original absurdist dark comedy by Weinstein. Aptly described by the *Chicago Reader* as a **"nihilist lampoon,"** *Newcity Chicago* shared, **"the play's comic sensibility is impressive and in perfect balance with the chilling moments."** Madeline Long received an After Dark Award for 'Outstanding Performance in a Play' for her portrayal of Toma Singerson in "Soldiers."

LiveWire began its 2008-09 season with the launch of "VisionFest," a short play festival emphasizing audience feedback and conversation. Six original short works were presented surrounding the theme of "Control," which was chosen through an online poll. LiveWire's **"forward-looking theater festival"** (*Newcity Chicago*) debuted in August of 2008 at the Chemically Imbalanced Theater. In the fall, LiveWire's presented the Chicago premiere of "Red Angel" by Eric Bogosian, which received a Jeff Recommendation and rave reviews. *Time Out Chicago* raved, **"a hell of a lot of fun to watch,"** the *Chicago Tribune* declared, **"This LiveWire Chicago Theatre production has it nailed"** and *The Chicago Reader* stated, **"Weinstein's thoughtful and calibrated production in the tiny Side [Project] space (made to feel much more expansive by Anders Jacobson's terrific book-lined set) teases out the tensions with wit and intelligence."** Scenic Designer Anders Jacobson received a Jeff Nomination for his incredible "Angel" set. The season concluded with another Jeff Recommended show, Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright David Lindsay-Abaire's "Wonder of the World." Venus Zarris of *Steadstyle Chicago* proclaimed, **"the entire cast is charming with some profoundly incredible acting that shines through by Madeline Long, Joel Ewing and Deborah Craft. LiveWire Chicago Theatre is an extremely gifted company on the verge of a real hit."**

Livewire presented the 2nd annual **"VisionFest 2009: Six Worlds on One Street Corner."** Playwrights from across the country submitted their original work, all with the shared location of a 'street corner,' which again was chosen by the public through an online poll. **"The street corner is a perfect setting for six short performances because the audience is already relating to it. Anything can and does happen on a street corner and each audience member has her own stories that start with 'I was at the corner of...'"** (*Gapers Block*). For more information about "VisionFest," visit livewirechicago.com/vision.

LiveWire Collective Members

Sebastian Aguirre, Erin Barlow, Suzanne Bracken, Eric Branson, Brian Cicirello, Cory Conrad, Joel Ewing (Managing Director), Erin Fast, Amber Hilgenkamp, Anders Jacobson, Becca Lasser, Madeline Long, Allison McNeela, Deborah Proud, Glenn Proud (Artistic Director), Judy Radovsky, Joshua Aaron Weinstein (Executive Director) and Chris Zdenek.

For more information, visit livewirechicago.com.