

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 4, 2010

"I am very practised at keeping secrets."

HEDDA GABLER

by HENRIK IBSEN

Translated & adapted by JUDITH THOMPSON

Directed by Jane Carnwath

Henrik Ibsen's 19th century Norwegian feminist classic about a desperate woman driven to destruction was ground-breaking in its day, and celebrated Canadian playwright **Judith Thompson's** boundary-pushing adaptation lends it a sharply contemporary perspective.

Director **Jane Carnwath** notes that the play's language, quite wordy and often pedantic in previous translations, becomes in Judith Thompson's adaptation "both lush and sharply vernacular. The characters teem with nuanced, contradictory life, their wars fought on a battlefield of physical and social extremes. Hedda is a restless animal pacing in her cage, driven by demons of fear, rage, longing, a sense of alienation."

Thompson roots Hedda's desperation in her problematic relationship with her father, which drives her to make ill-considered choices that ultimately destroy her. In this production, the action is set in the mid-1930's – when women were still dominated by the men in their lives, but, as Carnwath points out, "were rewarded for being clever and flirtatious - just so long as they behaved themselves and didn't rock too many boats."

Within Alumnae Theatre's intimate Studio space, Set Designer **Ed Rosing** highlights Hedda's sense of confinement in her loveless marriage with prison-like bars hanging from the ceiling, and an abstract spiderweb design on the floor.

Sound Designer/movement coach **Rick Jones** was inspired by the works of the 1930's Neue Wiener Schule (Webern, Schoenberg, and Berg), to compose preludes and entre'acte music evoking this time and place, using its blatant atonality and serialism to create a sense of menace and foreboding. The choreography of Hedda's dream sequence - influenced by 1930's movement analyst and choreographer **Rudolf Laban** - conveys her realization that she has created a trap from which she can find no escape.

Michael Spence's moody lighting design reinforces the inner struggle that Hedda faces as she confronts her sexuality and mortality, and **Margaret Spence's** 1930's costumes provide striking character delineation, ranging from lush and outrageous to sober and buttoned-up.

Alumnae Theatre Company's production of *Hedda Gabler* features **Andrew Batten, Ilene Cummings, James Harbeck, Leslie McBay, Jane Reynolds, Malcolm Taylor, and Sochi Fried** as Hedda.

The Details - HEDDA GABLER

Running Time: approx. 2 hours 15 minutes; including intermission

Opening Night: Friday November 12, 2010

Performances: Friday November 12 - Saturday November 27, 2010

Schedule: Wednesday - Saturday 8:00pm; Sunday matinée at 2:00pm
There will be a **Talkback** with cast & director after the matinée on November 21

Tickets: Wednesday 2-for-1; Thursday, Friday & Saturday \$20; Sunday PWYC

Location: Alumnae Theatre, 70 Berkeley Street, Toronto

Box Office: 416-364-4170 (box 1) or email reservations@alumnaetheatre.com
Box Office opens one hour prior to each performance
Please note: Box Office does not accept credit or debit cards

Candid rehearsal photos are available for download on the **Hedda Gabler** page of our website.

Production photos for *Hedda Gabler* will be available for download on the **Media** page at www.alumnaetheatre.com by November 9.

Read cast & creative team bios on the **Hedda Gabler** page.

Find us on **Facebook!**

Read the blog: alumnaetheatre.wordpress.com

For more information or to set up an interview please contact:
Tina McCulloch at 416-967-4416 or contactus@alumnaetheatre.com

ALUMNAE THEATRE COMPANY *has been producing
thought-provoking, challenging and rarely-performed plays since 1919.*

Check our website at www.alumnaetheatre.com for press releases, production photographs, and a retrospective on how Alumnae Theatre shaped Toronto's theatre scene.