



AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

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AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE ANNOUNCES FIRST WINTER SHOW

Original musical *The Gift of the Magi* to premiere in November.

SPRING GREEN, WIS: American Players Theatre (APT) will produce a winter holiday show for the first time in 2010. This musical version of *The Gift of the Magi* – adapted from O. Henry’s classic story of love and generosity – was written by APT Core Company member James DeVita, with original music by Josh Schmidt. DeVita will also direct. The show features Core Company members Tracy Michelle Arnold as Della and Brian Mani as O. Henry, and APT favorite (and Ms. Arnold’s real-life husband) Marcus Truschinski as Jim. *The Gift of the Magi* will premiere in APT’s 200-seat, indoor Touchstone Theatre on November 26, 2010, and close December 19, 2010 after 26 performances.

According to playwright James DeVita, APT is an ideal fit for *The Gift of the Magi* because of their shared simplicity and honesty. He calls it “a simple holiday show based on the story...and just two musicians--a cello and viola.” He went on to say “This is a great story celebrating some of the very simple truths which we all know, but we often forget in the bustle of life. A good story helps to remind us of what we already know in our hearts...Jim and Della's life is all about how much they can do with how little, and when in doubt they too fall back upon the simple truth they know—that they have each other.

Tickets go on sale for *The Gift of the Magi* September 13, 2010. For tickets, call the box office at (608) 588-2361 or order online at www.playinthewoods.org.

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The Gift of the Magi

Based on the short story by O. Henry

Written and Directed by James DeVita

Music by Josh Schmidt

Lyrics by James DeVita and Josh Schmidt

First Preview Performance: November 26, 2010

Opening Night: November 28, 2010

Closing Night: December 19, 2010

Jim and his wife Della are very much in love, but can barely afford their one-room apartment due to a recent decrease in Jim's salary. As a Christmas gift, Della scrapes together pennies to buy Jim a fob for his prized pocket watch given to him by his grandfather. When her savings doesn't cover the cost of the fob, she cuts off and sells her long, beautiful hair cut to make up the extra. Meanwhile, Jim decides to sell his watch to buy Della a beautiful set of tortoiseshell combs for her lovely hair. Although each is disappointed to find the gift they chose rendered useless, in the end they are even more pleased with the gift they received, because it represents their love for one another. Featuring original songs written by James DeVita and Josh Schmidt, and performed by Tracy Michelle Arnold, Brian Mani and Marcus Truschinski.

Bios:

James DeVita

Playwright / Director

James, a native of Long Island, marks his sixteenth season acting with APT. When not on stage himself, James is a playwright, with his works *Dickens In America*, *The Desert Queen* and last season's *In Acting Shakespeare* appearing on the APT stages. James is also the author of two novels, *The Silenced* and *Blue*, as well as a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship for Fiction, and is APT's dramaturg. Visit www.jamesdevita.com for more information.

Josh Schmidt

Sound Design & Original Music

In Nine Seasons at APT, Josh has composed original music and sound design for: *Long Day's Journey Into Night*, *Henry V*, *Widowers Houses*, *Misalliance*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Tartuffe*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Playboy of the Western World*, *The Cherry Orchard*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. BROADWAY: *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (with Fitz Patton) OFF-BROADWAY: As Composer/Co-Author – *ADD1NG MACH1N3* (Minetta Lane), *Whida Peru* (59E59); As Sound Designer – *Crime and Punishment* (59E59), many others. AWARDS: Lortel, Outer Critics, Jeff, ASCAP, NEA/TCG.

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Tracy Michelle Arnold as Della

Tracy returns for her 11th season with APT where past roles include Shakespeare's Cleopatra, Lady M, Beatrice, Olivia, Rosaline, Emilia, Regan and Titania. She has also reveled in Shaw, Williams, Synge, Wilder and Chekhov here on the hill and was seen last season in Pinter's *Old Times* and Coward's *Hay Fever*. Tracy spent the winter playing Amanda in *Private Lives* at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Elsewhere in Chicago, Tracy has performed with Writers' Theatre, Northlight and Steppenwolf. A proud member of Actors' Equity Association since 1990, she is married to fellow APT actor, Marcus Truschinski, with whom she has a son, Gus.

Brian Mani as O. Henry

This is Brian's 12th season at APT. Some favorites over the years include Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale* ('09), Falstaff in *Henry IV: The Making of a King* ('08), Sartorius in *Widower's Houses* ('08), Timon in *Timon Of Athens* ('07), Rev. Morell in *Candida* ('05) and Enobarbus in *Antony and Cleopatra* ('02). He resides and acts in Milwaukee when not at APT. Enjoy!!

Marcus Truschinski as Jim

This is Marcus's seventh season in the woods. You may have seen him in seasons past as Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Antipholus of Syracuse in *Comedy of Errors*, Antonio in *Twelfth Night*, Guiderius in *Cymbeline*, Claudio in *Much Ado About Nothing*, or Johnny in *Misalliance*. Regionally Marcus has performed as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Andre Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* at Great River Shakespeare festival, Orlando in *As you Like It* at Writers' Theatre and Don John in *Much Ado* at Milwaukee Shakespeare to name a few.

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