

PRESS RELEASE

The Studio Theatre
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STUDIO THEATRE

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THE STUDIO THEATRE PRESENTS DAVID IVES' SEXY AND FIERCE *VENUS IN FUR*

“A tasty new comedy-drama... 90 minutes of good, kinky fun.” —*The New York Times*

VENUS IN FUR

by **David Ives**

directed by **David Muse**

starring **Erica Sullivan** and **Christian Conn**

opening May 25, 2011

in the Milton Theatre

Inspired by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's notorious erotic novel, *Venus in Fur* is a crackling exploration of desire and control. David Ives's saucy and sensational play pits actress against playwright in a virtuosic display of seduction, cruelty, and gamesmanship.

Celebrated American playwright David Ives' completely reimagines Sacher-Masoch's novella, shifting the action to a contemporary rehearsal room, and transforming its characters into an actress and a playwright/director. Sacher-Masoch's own words come to life in the play-within-a-play, a theatrical adaptation of the 1870 story. The original tale concerns a nobleman with a fondness for furs and whips, and the woman who wields them. The novel's sexual peculiarities so shocked the world that the term “masochism” grew out of Sacher-Masoch's name. Through his incomparable wit, ingenuity, and style, Ives makes the story entirely his own, yet the spirit of the original story remains intact.

When an actress arrives unscheduled for an audition, the writer/director grudgingly allows her to try out for his new play, an adaptation of Sacher-Masoch's novel. What begins as a normal audition turns into an increasingly seductive battle for power. As the action shifts between the audition and the play-within-a-play, the two engage in a cat and mouse game that blurs the edges of reality and theatricality, dominance and subjugation, and pleasure and pain.

David Ives is a former Guggenheim Foundation Fellow in playwriting who is best known for his evenings of one-act comedies. His short plays are collected in two anthologies, *All in the Timing* and *Time Flies*. His full-length plays include *Is He Dead?*, *Polish Joke*, *Red Address*, and *Ancient History*. He has adapted some two dozen musicals for *Encores! Great American Musicals in Concert* at New York City Center. His adaptations also include Georges Feydeau's classic French farce *A Flea in Her Ear*, for which he won a Jefferson Award for Best Adaptation and a Prince Prize for New Work, and Pierre Corneille's *The Liar*, seen recently at The Shakespeare Theatre Company. His work was also recently seen in Washington with *New Jerusalem* at Theatre J.

— MORE —

The inaugural 2010-2011 season of new Artistic Director David Muse is generously underwritten by Jaylee Mead and Robert and Arlene Kogod, with additional underwriting from Susan and Dixon Butler, The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Stanley and Rosemary Marcuss, and Vicki and Roger Sant.

*This production of **Venus in Fur** is generously underwritten by David and Joan Maxwell, David and Jean Grier, and A. Fenner Milton.*

VENUS IN FUR INFORMATION

Where: The Milton Theatre

Dates: May 25–July 3, 2011

Performances: Wednesday-Saturday: 8:00pm, Sunday: 7:00pm

Select Tuesdays: June 7, 14, 21, 28: 8:00pm

Matinees: Saturday and Sunday: 2:00pm

Ticket Prices: \$44–\$65

Press Opening: Sunday, May 29, 2011

Starring: Erica Sullivan (Vanda) and Christian Conn (Thomas).

Director and Designers: David Muse (Director), Blythe Quinlan (Set Designer), Jennifer Moeller (Costume Designer), Michael Lincoln (Lighting Designer), and Matt Nielson (Sound Designer).

THE STUDIO THEATRE INFORMATION:

The Studio Theatre is Washington's premiere venue for contemporary theatre, "where local audiences will find today's edgiest playwrights" (*Variety*). Founded in 1978 by Joy Zinoman, the theatre is in its first season under the leadership of Artistic Director David Muse. Muse is joined by Keith Alan Baker, Managing Director/Artistic Director, 2ndStage; Serge Seiden, Associate Producing Artistic Director; and Morey B. Epstein, Executive Director of Institutional Development.

One of the most respected mid-sized theatres in the country, The Studio Theatre produces the work of today's greatest writers, augmented by occasional productions of modern classics, performed by acclaimed actors in intimate spaces. Studio's programming, while purposefully eclectic, emphasizes plays of sophistication and style with true literary and theatrical merit. The five plays of The Studio Theatre Season form the core of its work, and are complemented by its Special Events, which bring unique performances and one-of-a-kind events to Washington DC, and the rawer, frequently irreverent productions of The Studio 2ndStage. Housed in a landmark complex that anchors the 14th Street Arts District, each of Studio's four theatres seats fewer than 225 patrons, giving Studio productions their signature intimacy. Throughout the Theatre's 33-year history, the quality of its work has been recognized by sustained community support as well as with 271 nominations and 54 Helen Hayes Awards for excellence in professional theatre. In addition, The Studio Theatre Acting Conservatory has trained over 10,000 students, many of whom have gone on to acclaimed careers across the country. A premiere cultural organization in Washington DC, The Studio Theatre serves more than 75,000 people annually and is proud to make a vital contribution to its neighborhood and city.

DISCOUNTS

Student, senior citizen (62+) and military discount: \$5.00 off (except Saturday evenings).

Student Rush: \$15 tickets for full-time students are available one-half hour before curtain on a seating available basis (except Saturday evenings).

Groups: for parties of 10 or more. Call the Group Sales Manager at 202-232-7267.

Pay What You Can: Saturday, May 28, 2:00pm.

Studio District Night: Wednesday, May 25, 8:00pm.

Ticket Price: \$10 for residents of the Studio District, with proof of address.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Accessibility: All performances are fully accessible to accommodate patrons with special needs. FM listening assistive system available. Call for schedule of sign-interpreted performances. Accessible seats available by reservation. Call the Box Office at 202-332-3300 or V/TTY 202-667-8436.

Location: 1501 14th Street, NW (Northeast corner of 14th and P Streets).

Parking: Please call the Box Office for parking information.

Metro Stops: Red Line: Dupont Circle, Orange/Blue Lines: McPherson Square, and Green Line: U Street/Cardozo.

Contact Information: Tickets: 202-332-3300 V/TTY: 202-667-8436 Fax: 202-332-1187
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