

GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAST ANNOUNCED FOR GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF “WITCH”

FEATURING EMMY NOMINEE AND GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER
MAURA TIERNEY AS ELIZABETH SAWYER

WRITTEN BY JEN SILVERMAN AND DIRECTED BY MARTI LYONS

ALSO FEATURING BRIAN GEORGE, RUY ISKANDAR, EVAN JONIGKEIT,
VELLA LOVELL AND WILL VON VOGT

PREVIEWS BEGIN AUGUST 20 - OPENING NIGHT IS AUGUST 29

LOS ANGELES (July 22, 2019) – Geffen Playhouse today announced the full cast for its West Coast premiere of *Witch*, written by Jen Silverman (*The Roommate*, *Collective Rage: A Play in Five Betties*) and directed by Marti Lyons (*How to Defend Yourself*, *Boticelli in the Fire*). This marks the first Geffen production to launch the 2019/2020 season, the second season programmed by Artistic Director Matt Shakman.

The cast features Emmy nominee and Golden Globe winner **Maura Tierney** (*ER*, *The Affair*) as Elizabeth Sawyer, as well as **Brian George** (*Three Seasons*, *Stuff Happens*) as Sir Arthur Banks, **Ruy Iskandar** (*Macbeth*, *The Tempest*) as Frank Thorney, **Evan Jonigkeit** (*Sweetbitter*, *The Snow Geese*) as Scratch, **Vella Lovell** (*Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*, *The Big Sick*) as Winnifred and **Will Von Vogt** (*Significant Other*, *Angels in America*), who replaces previously announced Simon Helberg in the role of Cuddy Banks.

Previews for *Witch* begin Tuesday, August 20 in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at Geffen Playhouse. Opening night is Thursday, August 29.

In this fiendishly funny new play by Jen Silverman, inspired by *The Witch of Edmonton* by Rowley, Dekker and Ford, a charming devil arrives in the quiet village of Edmonton to bargain for the souls of its residents in exchange for their darkest wishes. Elizabeth should be the easiest to target, having been labeled a “witch” and cast out by the town, but her soul is not so readily bought. An inventive retelling of a Jacobean drama, this sharp, subversive fable debates how much our souls are worth when hope is hard to come by.

Witch was commissioned by and premiered at Writers Theatre (Michael Halberstam, Artistic Director; Kathryn M. Lipuma, Executive Director).

WITCH

Written by **Jen Silverman**

Inspired by *The Witch of Edmonton* by Rowley, Dekker and Ford
Directed by **Marti Lyons**

Previews: Tuesday, August 20 – Wednesday, August 28, 2019

Opening Night: Thursday, August 29, 2019

Closing Night: Sunday, September 29, 2019

CAST

Brian George as Sir Arthur Banks

Ruy Iskandar as Frank Thorney

Evan Jonigkeit as Scratch

Vella Lovell as Winnifred

Maura Tierney as Elizabeth Sawyer

Will Von Vogt as Cuddy Banks

PRODUCTION TEAM

Scenic Designer **Dane Laffrey**

Costume Designer **Danae McQueen**

Lighting Designer **Keith Parham**

Sound Designer **Cricket S. Myers**

Choreographer **Jessica Lee Keller**

Fight Choreographer **Steve Rankin**

Production Stage Manager **Julie Renfro**

Casting Director **Phyllis Schuringa, CSA**

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

Monday No performance

Tuesday – Friday 8:00 p.m.

Saturday 3:00 and 8:00 p.m.

Sunday 2:00 and 7:00 p.m.

LOCATION

Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater at the Geffen Playhouse
10886 Le Conte Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets currently priced at \$30.00 - \$120.00. Available in person at the Geffen Playhouse box office, by phone at 310.208.5454 or online at www.geffenplayhouse.org. Fees may apply.

Rush tickets for each day's performance are made available to the general public 30 minutes before showtime at the box office. \$35.00 General / \$10.00 Student

COLLEGE AUDIENCES

Through a variety of events and other opportunities, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes college students to experience the live storytelling presented on our stages. We are proud of our association with UCLA's School of Theater, Film, and Television, and open our doors to all college students throughout Los Angeles. More information is available at www.geffenplayhouse.org/college.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Jen Silverman (Playwright)

Jen Silverman is a New York-based writer. Her work includes *Witch* (Writers Theatre), *The Roommate* (Actor's Theatre of Louisville, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Steppenwolf), *Collective Rage: A Play in Five Betties* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Southwark Playhouse, MCC Theater), *Dangerous House* (InterAct Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival) and *The Moors* (Yale Repertory Theatre, The Playwrights Realm). Jen is a member of New Dramatists, an affiliated artist with The Playwrights Center in Minneapolis and SPACE on Ryder Farm. She's a two-time MacDowell Colony fellow, a recipient of a New York Foundation for the Arts grant, the Helen Merrill Award, an LMCC Fellowship, and the Yale Drama Series Award. She was the 2016-2017 Playwrights of New York (PoNY) Fellow at the Lark. Silverman has a two-book deal with Random House for a collection of interlinked stories (*The Island Dwellers*) and a novel. She also writes for TV and film, most recently on Netflix's *Tales of the City*. Education: Brown, Iowa Playwrights Workshop, Juilliard. More info: www.jensilverman.com

Marti Lyons (Director)

Marti Lyons is a Chicago-based director whose most current work includes directing *How to Defend Yourself* by Lily Padilla for the 2019 Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville. She also recently directed *Witch* by Jen Silverman (Writers Theatre); *Botticelli in the Fire* by Jordan Tannahill (Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company); *The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe and *Kings* by Sarah Burgess (Studio Theater); *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (The Court Theatre); *Native Gardens* by Karen Zacarias (Victory Gardens Theatre); *The Mystery of Love and Sex* by Bathsheba Doran (Writers Theatre); *Wit* (The Hypocrites); and *The City of Conversation* by Anthony Giardina (Northlight Theatre Company). Lyons directed *Wondrous Strange* by Meg Miroshnik, Martyna Majok, Jen Silverman and Jiehae Park (2016 Humana Festival) and *Title and Deed* by Will Eno (Lookingglass Theatre Company). Other projects include Laura Marks' *Bethany*, Marks' *Mine* and Will Nedved's *Body and Blood* (The Gift Theatre); Catherine Treischmann's *Hot Georgia Sunday* and Theresa Rebeck's *Seminar* (Haven Theatre); *The Play About My Dad* by Boo Killebrew (Raven Theatre); *Mai Dang Lao* by David Jacobi, *9 Circles* by Bill Cain and *Maria/Stuart* by Jason Grote. She is an ensemble member at The Gift Theatre, an Artistic Associate with Sideshow Theatre and a proud member of SDC.

Brian George (Sir Arthur Banks)

Theater: *Three Seasons* (Bear Theater Company, Toronto); *Awake and Sing* (Toronto Arts Productions); Second City, Toronto; *A Perfect Wedding* by Charles Mee; *Vicuña* by Robin Baitz (Kirk Douglas Theater); *Stuff Happens* (Mark Taper Forum); *Vicuña* (Mosaic Theater Company of DC). Television: *Star Trek* (*Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*); *Seinfeld*; *Grey's Anatomy*; *The Orville*; *The Expanse*; *New Girl*; *Elementary*; *The Big Bang Theory*; *I Feel Bad*. Film: *Ghost World*; *Keeping the Faith*; *Horrible Bosses*; *Shades of Ray*.

Ruy Iskandar (Frank Thorney)

Film/TV: *Benders* (IFC), *Sneaky Pete* (Amazon Studios), *The Blacklist* (ABC), *Gotham* (FOX), *The Rookie* (ABC). Broadway: *Macbeth* (Lincoln Center). Off-Broadway: *The Tempest* (LA Philharmonic), *Dance and the Railroad* (Signature Theatre); *Measure for Measure* (Public Theater); *The Hunters* (Cherry Lane Theater); *Purim Play* (Classic Stage Co.); *You for Me for You* (Ma-Yi Theater); *Hamlet, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Storm*, *Hot I Baltimore* (NYU). Regional: *The World of Extreme Happiness* (Goodman Theatre); *American Night: Ballad of Juan José* (Denver Center Theatre); *Twelfth Night*, *King Lear* (Pennsylvania Shakespeare).

Evan Jonigkeit (Scratch)

Evan Jonigkeit stars in the Plan B/Starz half-hour drama series *Sweetbitter*, now in its second season. He returns to the stage after last appearing in *The Snow Geese*, directed by Daniel Sullivan for Manhattan Theatre Club on Broadway, and *Really Really*, directed by David Cromer for MCC Theater. Evan was nominated for an Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Supporting Actor in Rob Ruggiero's production of *High*, his Broadway debut. Evan's numerous film and television appearances include *Broad City*, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt*, *Frontier*, *Girls*, *Easy*, *Sweetbitter*, *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* and *Tallulah*. He will be next seen in the feature film *The Night House* opposite Rebecca Hall.

Vella Lovell (Winnifred)

Vella Lovell is best known for her starring role as sarcastic voice of reason, Heather Davis, on four seasons of the critically acclaimed series *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. In addition to the CW series, the actress currently lends her voice to the popular reboot of the 80's cartoon series *She-Ra and the Princesses of Power* streaming now on Netflix. Additional television credits include HBO's *Girls* and TV Land's *Younger*. Lovell can also be seen in the Academy Award-nominated film *The Big Sick*, *The Christmas Chronicles* and *The Speed of Life*. Theater: *Significant Other* at Geffen Playhouse, Amy Herzog's *Mary Jane* at Yale Repertory Theatre, *The Bacchae* at The Delacorte Theater, *Kaspar Hauser* at The Flea Theater, *Streetcar Named Desire* at Williamstown Theatre Festival. Graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and The Juilliard School.

Maura Tierney (Elizabeth Sawyer)

Golden Globe winning actress Maura Tierney stars on the Golden Globe winning Showtime series *The Affair*. She is also known for her Emmy nominated role on the top-rated NBC series *ER* of which she starred for 8 seasons. She made her Broadway debut in 2013 starring in Nora Ephron's *Lucky Guy* alongside Tom Hanks. Tierney recently starred in *Beautiful Boy* opposite Steve Carell and Timothée Chalamet, and has upcoming Scott Z. Burns' *Torture Report*, which premiered to critical acclaim at Sundance. Some other feature credits include *Baby Mama*, *Semi-Pro*, *Diggers*, *Welcome to Mooseport*, *Instinct* and *Nature Calls*. In 2006, she starred in the Off-Broadway production of Neil LaBute's *Some Girl(s)*. Additionally, she starred in Nicky Silver's *Three Changes* and the Wooster Group's *North Atlantic*. Tierney starred in Yasmina Reza's award-winning *God of Carnage* at the prestigious Gate Theater in Dublin; and most recently starred in the Wooster Group production *A Town Hall Affair*.

Will Von Vogt (Cuddy Banks)

Will Von Vogt is thrilled to be returning to the Geffen Playhouse after previously starring as Jordan Berman in *Significant Other*. Favorite credits include Prior in *Angels in America*, Shen Te/Shui Ta in Brecht's *Good Person of Szechwan*, Rudy in *Bent* and NBC's *Chicago Fire*. Thanks and appreciation to his team at Vanguard Management Group. To learn more, check out www.willvonvogt.com.

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ABOUT GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and second productions, the not-for-profit organization continues to present a

body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company was founded by Gilbert Cates and is currently helmed by Executive Director Gil Cates, Jr., Artistic Director Matt Shakman and Board Chair Howard Tenenbaum. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains extensive education and community engagement programs, designed to involve underserved young people and the community at large in the arts.
www.geffenplayhouse.org

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