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**NEIL SIMON'S BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS BRINGS
WIT AND WARMTH TO PLAYHOUSE STAGE**

LAKE WORTH, Florida (November 6, 2009) – The Lake Worth Playhouse continues its 57th season with Neil Simon's award-winning comedy-drama, *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS*, an affectionate and thoroughly entertaining coming-of-age story by one of America's most cherished playwrights. The show runs from November 20 through December 13, 2009 at the Playhouse, located at 713 Lake Avenue in downtown Lake Worth.

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS is Simon's semi-autobiographical portrait of a Jewish-American family as seen through the eyes of 14-year-old Eugene Morris Jerome. Set in the summer of 1937, in post-depression, pre-war-era Brooklyn, the story draws on Simon's own experiences growing up in a lower-middle-class family. Eugene stands in for the author as the play's narrator, a young boy dealing with his own burgeoning sexual awareness while dreaming of playing baseball for his beloved New York Yankees. Through Eugene's eyes, we see a family rich with characters, including a formidable mother, an overworked father, an idealistic but impulsive older brother, a widowed aunt and her two young daughters. The cast of characters is at once eccentric, inspiring, familiar and amusing. The first installment of Simon's Eugene Jerome trilogy, (which includes *BILOXI BLUES* and *BROADWAY BOUND*), *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS* injects Simon's trademark humor into this bittersweet tale of one family's struggle to overcome hard times with warmth and humor.

The Playhouse production of *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS* is directed by **Richie Lester** and **Lisa Bankert**. Lester is an accomplished actor, director and playwright who has performed at the Lake Worth Playhouse, The Cuillo Centre for the Arts, Palm Beach Dramaworks and various venues from West Palm Beach to Miami. He directed the 2007 Lake Worth Playhouse production of Carol Burnett's autobiographical retrospective, *HOLLYWOOD ARMS*. Bankert is a former Hollywood casting director and script consultant with a creative background in playwriting and directing and

a business background in professional theatre administration, studio and independent films, and corporate communications/marketing. She assistant directed the 2008 Lake Worth Playhouse production of *BIG RIVER*, and she wrote and directed two plays performed on the Playhouse stage: *ONCE UPON A HOLIDAY* (2007, 2008) and *STELLA'S WISH* (2008). Bankert is currently the marketing and public relations director for the Playhouse.

BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS features a talented cast that includes **Stoan Maslev**, a graduate of Bak Middle School of Arts and current student of Alexander W. Dreyfoos School of Arts, as Eugene Jerome; local actor and stand-up comedian **Will Watkins** as Stanley Jerome; local theatre actor **Stephanie Haber** as Kate Jerome; actor, journalist and stand-up comedian **Steve D'Oliveira** as Jack Jerome; New York-trained stage and screen actress **Amy Hoerler** as Blanche Morton; local performer, journalist and make-up artist **Katherine Loretta McBroom** as Nora, and Dreyfoos theatre major **Isabella Werber** as Laurie Morton.

Veteran theatre director/designer **Richard Green** brings the Jerome family house to life in an charming two-story, wood-framed Brooklyn house with a warm design and cozy interior that denotes many generations of family living. Green's ambitious set is the largest and most elaborate seen on the Playhouse stage in recent history.

More information on the Lake Worth Playhouse production of *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS* can be found online at www.lakeworthplayhouse.org/brighton.html.

ABOUT LAKE WORTH PLAYHOUSE

Lake Worth Playhouse is a non-profit community theatre with a diverse array of offerings, including award-winning dramas, comedies, musicals, area premieres, Broadway favorites, children's shows, ballets and operas on film, live concerts, improv comedy and alternative programming. In addition to its main stage theatrical fare, the Playhouse presents year-round independent and foreign films in the Stonzek Theatre, an intimate black-box style theatre equipped with a large viewing screen and high-definition projection. The Playhouse is proud to offer a variety of educational programs for adults and children, as well as community outreach initiatives that bring cultural programs into the neighborhoods of underserved youth and also make theatre available free of charge for disadvantaged citizens in the community.

The 57th season of the Lake Worth Playhouse will continue with Broadway dance show ***SWING*** (January 22 – February 7, 2010), Agatha Christie's ***THE MOUSETRAP*** (March 5-21, 2010) and Andrew Lloyd Webber's ***JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT*** (April 16 – May 2, 2010).

SCHEDULE

Opening Night for *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS* is Friday, November 20, 2009 at **8:00 PM**.

Performances take place on Nov 20, 21, Dec 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12 at 8:00 PM; Nov 22, Dec 5, 6, 12, 13 at 2:00 PM; Dec 6 at 7:00 PM. The show closes on Sunday, December 13 at 2:00 PM.

The Playhouse Dinner & Show preview night is Thursday, November 19, 2009 and includes a pre-show dinner at Lake Worth Rum Shack prior to the 8:00 PM performance for a single \$50 ticket price.

TICKETS

Individual tickets are \$25 and \$29 and can be purchased through the Lake Worth Playhouse Box Office at **561-586-6410** or online at **lakeworthplayhouse.org**. Opening night VIP tickets are \$36 and include a pre-show reception catered by OUZO BLUE Greek Taverna and Ouzo Bar. Dinner & Show tickets are \$50 and include a three-course meal at Lake Worth Rum Shack.

LOCATION

Lake Worth Playhouse is located at 713 Lake Avenue in Downtown Lake Worth. It is situated on the south side of Lake Avenue two blocks east of Dixie Highway. Free, well-lighted parking is available on Lake Avenue and surrounding side streets, with free parking lots located behind the Playhouse.

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