

NEIL LABUTE'S THE BREAK OF NOON BREAKS GROUND AT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

Jo Bonney Helms the LA Run of Neil LaBute's World Premiere

Featuring Kevin Anderson, Tracee Chimo, Catherine Dent and John Earl Jelks

Opening Night - Wednesday February 2

LOS ANGELES, January 26, 2011 — Playwright and provocateur **Neil LaBute** opens the world premiere of his divinely-themed play, *The Break of Noon*, at the Geffen Playhouse for the Los Angeles portion of its world premiere run. *The Break of Noon*, which is a co-production with MCC Theater in New York, features **Tracee Chimo** and **John Earl Jelks**, who performed their roles in the New York portion of the run, as well as **Kevin Anderson** and **Catherine Dent**. Helmed by director **Jo Bonney**, *The Break of Noon* opens **February 2, 2011**.

Kevin Anderson, who was recently nominated for a Tony Award for his role in *Death of a Salesman*, portrays the play's central character, John Smith, a man who hears the voice of God during a tragic office shooting. Smith is a selfish, philandering liar – or at least he was. After the incident, this imperfect man reforms himself and goes on a mission to spread the word about a better way of life to everyone surrounding him: his wife and his wife's cousin, both portrayed by **Catherine Dent**, known for her longtime role on *The Shield*; a morning talk show host and a call girl, both played by **Tracee Chimo**, who recently received the Eugene O'Neill Award for her role in *Irena's Vow*; and his lawyer and the detective on the case, both played by Tony Award nominee **John Earl Jelks** (*Radio Golf*). But is John's divine encounter merely a ploy for celebrity, a chance to escape his rocky past, or is it part of an infinite and almighty plan? In *The Break of Noon*, LaBute explores the trials and tribulations of a modern day prophet – and what he signifies in a jaded world that is thousands of years removed from burning bushes and stone tablets.

The opening night festivities, sponsored by Audi and Los Angeles magazine, will be held at the Geffen Playhouse featuring specialty beverages provided by Krol Vodka, catering by Ronen Levy Events, botanicals by Bittersweet Butterfly, an exclusive Malibu Family Wines tasting room and a unique cake sculpture by Montage Executive Pastry Chef Richard Ruskell. The Break of Noon marks the fourth time LaBute's work has been at the Geffen Playhouse; his past works at the theater include *Fat Pig* (also directed by Bonney), *Some Girl(s)* and *Wrecks*, all of which ran in the Audrey Skirball Kenis Theater. The Break of Noon runs through March 6, 2011 and ticket prices range from \$47 to \$77. For extended bios on the cast and creative team, please refer to the following page.

BREAK OF NOON

Written by Neil LaBute

Directed by Jo Bonney

Opening Night: Wednesday, February 2

Closing Night: Sunday, March 6

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Cast

Kevin Anderson	John Smith
Tracee Chimo	Host/Gigi
Catherine Dent	Ginger/Jesse
John Earl Jelks	Lawyer/Detective

Understudies

Russel Edge
Brad C. Light
Heather Prete

Production Credits

Set Designer	Neil Patel
Costume Designer	ESosa
Lighting Designer	David Weiner
Sound Designer	Darron L West
Production Stage Manager	Christina Lowe

Performance Schedule

Monday	No performances
Tuesday – Friday	8:00pm
Saturday	3:00pm; 8:00pm
Sunday	2:00pm; 7:00pm

Ticket Info

Ticket prices range from \$47 - \$77 and are on sale now at the Geffen Playhouse box office at 310-208-5454 and online at www.geffenplayhouse.com.

KEVIN ANDERSON (*John Smith*)

Kevin just returned from London's West End and Dublin as Andy Dufresne in the new stage adaptation of *The Shawshank Redemption*. An ensemble member since 1984, other plays at Steppenwolf include *I Never Sang for My Father*, *Our Town*, *Three Sisters*, *Earthly Possessions* and *Orphans*, which took him to New York (Theatre World Award), London's West End and eventually the movie with Albert Finney. Other Chicago credits include *A Guide for the Perplexed* (Victory Gardens); *Pal Joey* and *Death of a Salesman* (The Goodman); among others. Broadway and off-Broadway include *Death of a Salesman* (Outer Critics and Drama Desk awards, Tony® nomination), the musical *Brooklyn*, *Orpheus Descending*, *Moonchildren*, *Brilliant Traces*, *The Red Address*, *Speaking in Tongues* and *Summer and Smoke*. Other London theatre credits include the original Joe Gillis in *Sunset Boulevard* and *Dinner with Friends*. Some of his films include *Charlotte's Web*, *Miles from Home*, *In Country*, *Sleeping with the Enemy*, *Liebestraum*, *Hoffa*, *The Night We Never Met*, *Rising Sun*, *Firelight*, *A Thousand Acres*, *Eye of God*, *Doe Boy* and the new Al Pacino docu-drama *Wilde Salome*. Cable films include *Orpheus Descending*, *The Wrong Man*, *Hunt for the Unicorn Killer*, *Ruby's Bucket of Blood*, *Monday Night Mayhem* and *Power* and *Beauty*. He starred in the TV series *Nothing Sacred*, which earned him a Golden Globe nomination.

JO BONNEY (*Director*)

Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig* (MCC/Geffen Playhouse) and *Some Girl(s)* (MCC); Culture Clash's *American Night* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); Darci Picoult's *Lil's 90th* (Long Wharf Theatre); Suzan-Lori Parks' *Father Comes Home from the Wars* (Public LAB); Naomi Wallace's *The Hard Weather Boating Party* and *The Fever Chart*; Michael Weller's *Beast* (New York TheatreWorkshop); Alan Ball's *All that I Will Ever Be* (NYTW); Eric Bogosian's *subUrbia*, Charles Fuller's *A Soldier's Play* and Lisa Loomer's *Living Out* (Second Stage); Will Power's *The Seven* (NYTW & La Jolla Playhouse; Lortel Award, Best Musical); Christopher Shinn's *On the Mountain* (Playwrights Horizons); Universes' *Slanguage* (NYTW/Mark Taper Forum); Lanford Wilson's *Fifth of July* (Signature Theatre; Lortel Award, Best Revival); José Rivera's *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot* (The Public Theater); Diana Son's *Stop Kiss* (The Public Theater); Jessica Goldberg's *Good Thing* (The New Group); John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (CSC); Danny Hoch's *Some People* and *Jails, Hospitals & Hip-Hop* (USA/Britain); numerous solos by Eric Bogosian (USA/Britain). Recipient of a 1998 Obie Award for Sustained Excellence of Direction and editor of *Extreme Exposure: An Anthology of Solo Performance Texts from the Twentieth Century* (TCG). Upcoming: Lynn Nottage's *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Second Stage).

TRACEE CHIMO (*TV Host, Gigi*)

Tracee was last seen as Regan in *The Bachelorette*. Broadway: *Irena's Vow*. Off Broadway: *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Lucille Lortel nom, Drama Desk award for Outstanding Ensemble Performance), *Vendetta*

Chrome, Guilty, Bushwhackin', Vamp. Regional: Sundance '08, Humana Festival/Actor's Theatre of Louisville, The Cleveland Playhouse and Philadelphia Theatre Company. TV: Guest-star in the FX series *Louie, Guiding Light*. Film: *Evening, What Would Jesus Do?, Daughters of Liberty* and *Wasted Time*. Last year Tracee was honored by actress Marian Seldes and The O'Neill Studio, where she studied, with the Eugene O'Neill Award for her work in *Irena's Vow*.

CATHERINE DENT (*Ginger, Jesse*)

Theater: (Broadway) *Uncle Vanya* (Off-Broadway) *Amoeba Concerto* (Regional) *The Country, The Street of the Sun*. TV: *N.C.I.S., Law and Order: Los Angeles, The Closer, Rockford Files, Ghost Whisperer, Day One, Lie to Me, Natalee Holloway, The Shield, Law & Order: SVU, Criminal Minds, Sarah Connor Chronicles, Without A Trace, Numbers, Grey's Anatomy, Seattle Serial Killer, Law and Order, Judging Amy, CSI, Taken, The Sopranos, Dharma and Greg, Third Watch, The X-Files, Frasier, L.A. Doctors, Chicago Hope, New York Under Cover*. Film: *Duress, 21 Grams, Auto Focus, The Majestic, Someone Like You, The Replicant, March 29 1997, Nobody's Fool, Jaded*.

JOHN EARL JELKS (*Lawyer, Detective*)

John was nominated for a Tony Award for his performance as "Sterling" in August Wilson's *Radio Golf*, which he also toured to the McCarter, Goodman, Center Stage, Seattle Rep., Mark Taper and Yale Repertory theaters. Jelks also appeared with Phylicia Rashad on Broadway in August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* as "Citizen" (after runs at the Goodman, Huntington, and Mark Taper theaters, where he won an NAACP Theater Award and an L.A. Ovation Award). In 2008, Jelks won an AUDELCO Award for his work in the Off-Broadway revival of *The First Breeze of Summer*. Regional theater credits include *Fetch Clay, Make Man* at the McCarter Theatre, the world stage premiere of the *Shawshank Redemption* at the Gaiety Theatre in Ireland, *Magnolia* at the Goodman Theater, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* at the Penumbra Theatre Company and the Missouri Repertory Theatre, *The Piano Lesson* at the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and *Diary of a Black Man* at the Union Square Theatre and the Shaw Theatre in London, England. Recently, Jelks appeared in Spike Lee's film *Miracle at St. Anna*.

NEIL LaBUTE (*Playwright*)

Neil LaBute received his Master of Fine Arts degree in dramatic writing from New York University and was the recipient of a literary fellowship to study at the Royal Court Theatre, London and also attended the Sundance Institute's Playwrights Lab. His films include *In the Company of Men* (New York Critics' Circle Award for Best First Feature and the Filmmaker Trophy at the Sundance Film Festival), *Your Friends and Neighbors, Nurse Betty, Possession, The Shape of Things* (a film adaptation of his play by the same title), *The Wicker Man, Lakeview Terrace* and *Death at a Funeral*. LaBute's plays include *bash: latter-day plays, The Shape of Things, The Mercy Seat, The Distance From Here, Autobahn, Fat Pig* (Olivier nomination for Best Comedy), *Some Girls, This Is How It Goes, Wrecks, Filthy Talk for Troubled Times, In a Dark Dark House* and *reasons to be pretty* (Tony Award nomination for Best Play). LaBute is also the author of *Seconds of Pleasure*, a collection of short fiction which was published by Grove Atlantic. His new play, *In a Forest Dark and Deep*, will open on London's West End in 2011.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The 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 musicals, the Geffen Playhouse 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 is helmed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit geffenplayhouse.com.

ABOUT MCC THEATER

MCC Theater is one of New York City's leading Off Broadway theater companies, committed to presenting New York and world premieres each season. When MCC Theater was founded in 1986, its mission was simple: to bring new theatrical voices to theater-going audiences. MCC Theater continues to accomplish this yearly through presentation of its mainstage works; its Literary Program, which actively seeks and develops new and emerging writers and its Education & Outreach Program, allowing more than 1,200 students yearly to experience theater, increase literacy and discover their own voices in the arts. Notable MCC Theater highlights include: the 2008 Tony Award-nominated *Reasons to be Pretty* by Neil LaBute, last season's *Fifty Words*, the 2004 Tony-winning production of Bryony Lavery's *Frozen*; Neil LaBute's *Fat Pig*; Rebecca Gilman's *The Glory of Living*; Marsha Norman's *Trudy Blue*; Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*; Tim Blake Nelson's *The Grey Zone* and Alan Bowne's *Beirut*. Over the years, the dedication to the work of new and emerging artists has earned MCC Theater a variety of awards. For a complete production history, visit www.mcctheater.org.