



ENSEMBLE THEATRE COMPANY
AT THE NEW VIC

MEDIA RELEASE

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ELECTRIFYING TOM WAITS MUSICAL WOYZECK BURSTS ONTO THE ENSEMBLE THEATRE COMPANY STAGE

March 25, 2015 – Santa Barbara, CA — The influential 19th Century play about a soldier fighting to retain his humanity has been transformed into a tender and carnivalesque musical by the legendary vocalist, **Tom Waits**. “If there’s one thing you can say about mankind,” the show begins, “there’s nothing kind about man.” The haunting opening phrase is the heart of the thrilling, bold, and contemporary English adaptation of **Woyzeck** – the classic German play, being presented at **Ensemble Theatre Company** this April.

Inspired by the true story of a German soldier who was driven mad by army medical experiments and infidelity, Georg Büchner’s dynamic and influential 1837 poetic play was left unfinished after the untimely death of its author. In 2000, Waits and his wife and collaborator, **Kathleen Brennan**, resurrected the piece, wrote music for an avant-garde production in Denmark, and the resulting work became a *Woyzeck* musical and an album entitled “Blood Money.” “[The music] is flesh and bone, earthbound,” says Waits. “The songs are rooted in reality: jealousy, rage...I like a beautiful song that tells you terrible things. We all like bad news out of a pretty mouth.” *Woyzeck* runs at the New Vic Theater from **April 16 – May 3** and opens **Saturday, April 18**.

Jonathan Fox, who has served as ETC’s Executive Artistic Director since 2006, will direct the ambitious, wild, and long-awaited musical. “It’s one of the most unusual productions we’ve undertaken,” says Fox. “Although the play is one of the most influential in modern drama, *Woyzeck* is seldom produced at professional theaters, owing, I suspect, in part to its cryptic nature. I’ve always found the play to be gripping and unforgettable. And this musical adaptation by Tom Waits, one of my favorite songwriters, mixes jarring dissonance with beautiful melodies, emphasizing the love story at the center of the play. The live music underscores virtually the entire play, making for a unique theatrical experience.” Fox’s recent directorial credits include the popular and critically acclaimed *A Little Night Music* and *Amadeus*, as well as audience favorites *The Liar*, *Crime and Punishment*, *Underneath the Lintel*, *Buried Child*, and *Take Me Out*.

Büchner’s words (adapted by Anne Christin Rommen and Wolfgang Weins) and Waits’ music will be brought to life by **Stephen Van Dorn**, who will play the title character of *Woyzeck* for ETC. Van Dorn’s theatrical experience is deep and broad, but his voice is especially of note – having been asked to sing

in front of multiple Presidents and First Ladies. He will be joined by a company of eight including **Matt Gottlieb**, who returns to ETC after his acclaimed turn as Rothko in last season's *Red*, **Phillip Brandon**, **Matthew Henerson**, **Matthew MacNelly**, **Gina Manziello**, **Steven Good**, and Santa Barbara favorite's **Tiffany Story** and **Willie Simpson**. A five piece band, led by Musical Director **Sean Bart**, will accompany the cast.

The creative team for *Woyzeck* includes **François-Pierre Couture** (Scenic Designer), **Kate Bergh** (Costume Designer), **Pablo Santiago-Brandwein** (Lighting Designer), **Julie Ferrin** (Sound Design), and **Heather Castillo** (Choreographer).

Those interested in learning more about the fascinating and mysterious history of the original play, the musical adaptation, or the ETC production are encouraged to join pre-performances talks on April 22 and 29, as well as attend the ETC Book Club on April 21, sponsored by the Santa Barbara Public Library. Scripts are available from the Public Library, and the Book Club is open to the public.

TICKETS

Tickets for *Woyzeck* begin at \$35.00. Single Tickets for remaining 2014-15 productions are now on sale and can be purchased by visiting www.etscb.org, through ETC's Box Office by calling 805-965-5400, or in person at 33 West Victoria Street. Group Tickets are also available for purchase by calling 805-965-5400.

Performances run Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:00 pm, Sundays at 2:00 and 7:00 pm, with a Saturday 4:00 pm matinee performance on April 25 and a Tuesday 7:00 pm show on April 21.

To learn more about Ensemble Theatre Company or its productions, please visit www.etscb.org.

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FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Woyzeck*

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY: Tom Waits and Kathleen Brennan

BASED ON THE PLAY BY: Georg Büchner

DIRECTED BY: Jonathan Fox

THEATRE: The New Vic

DATES: April 16 – May 3, 2015

DESCRIPTION:

A wild and thrilling adaptation of the classic tale of a soldier who struggles to provide for his family, leading him to take odd jobs and subject himself to scientific experiments that gradually tear him apart. As he starts to lose his mind, his love for Marie becomes increasingly obsessive. With a poetic combination of blues, jazz, and vaudeville, Tom Waits and Kathleen Brennan have created a musical both carnivalesque and tender.

PERFORMANCES:

Thursday, 4/16/15 – 8:00pm – Preview

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Saturday, 4/18/15 – 8:00 – Opening

Sunday, 4/19/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

Tuesday, 4/21/15 – 7:00pm – Preshow Book Club at Public Library at 5:30pm

Wednesday, 4/22/15 – 8:00pm –Preshow Talk

Thursday, 4/23/15 – 8:00pm

Friday, 4/24/15 – 8:00pm – Martini Night

Saturday, 4/25/15 – 4:00pm/8:00pm

Sunday, 4/26/15 – 2:00pm

Wednesday, 4/29/15 – 8:00pm – Preshow Talk

Thursday, 4/30/15 – 8:00pm - Talkback

Friday, 4/1/15 – 8:00pm

Saturday, 4/2/15 – 8:00pm

Sunday, 4/3/15 – 2:00pm/7:00pm

TICKET PRICES: \$35 - \$75. Discounts available to Seniors, Groups, and those under 30 years old.

TICKETS/INFORMATION: 805-965-5400 or online at www.etc.sb.org

BOX OFFICE LOCATION: 33 West Victoria Street in Santa Barbara's Historic Theatre District

BOX OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday, 1pm – 5pm*

*On days with performances, the Box Office opens one hour prior to curtain and will stay open until show time.

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Founded in 1979, Ensemble Theatre Company is Santa Barbara's leading professional, resident theatre company. Under the leadership of **Executive Artistic Director Jonathan Fox**, ETC has attracted accomplished performing artists from around the country. The 2014-15 Season is the second in the New Vic, ETC's newly renovated 294-seat performing arts venue.