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ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS
MANAGING DIRECTOR LINDA DIGABRIELE



For Immediate Release
December 19, 2017

Casting Announced for Asolo Rep's *MORNING AFTER GRACE* **Directed by Peter Amster; Production runs Jan. 17 - March 4**

(SARASOTA, December 19, 2017) — Asolo Rep continues its repertory season with ***MORNING AFTER GRACE***, a poignant comedy about new love for the older set. Penned by playwright **Carey Crim**, a fresh voice for the American stage, and directed by Asolo Rep Associate Artist **Peter Amster** (Asolo Rep: *Born Yesterday*, *Living on Love*, *The Matchmaker*, and more), ***MORNING AFTER GRACE*** previews January 17 and 18, opens January 19 and runs in rotating repertory through March 4 in the Mertz Theatre, located in the FSU Center for the Performing Arts.

The morning after a funeral, Abigail and Angus awake from a whirlwind, booze-fueled one-night-stand on Angus' couch. And so begins this unconventional comedy, set in a not-so-distant Florida retirement community. As Abigail and Angus uncover the meaning of their hook-up and future, Abigail's neighbor Ollie, a retired baseball pro, struggles to find a way to make sense of his past and the secret he's hidden for decades. Hilarious and heart-warming, ***MORNING AFTER GRACE*** reminds us that it is never too late to rediscover love, and yourself, again.

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MORNING AFTER GRACE premiered at the Purple Rose Theatre Company in 2016. Asolo Rep's production of the play has provided an exciting opportunity for Carey Crim to be in rehearsals and work with Peter Amster to hone and fine tune the play even further.

"Carey Crim, an exciting new playwright for Asolo Rep, and Peter Amster, a much-beloved associate artist, could not be a better match," said Asolo Rep Producing Artistic Director **Michael Donald Edwards**. "They both possess this instinctual understanding of great comedy and its ability to produce much more than laughter, but also empathy and understanding. **MORNING AFTER GRACE** is one of those rare comedies that uses its humor to reveal real truths about love, aging and relationships."

Catherine Smitko plays Abigail. Smitko, who also plays the Nurse in *Shakespeare in Love* at Asolo Rep this season, is a Chicago-based actor who has performed at the Goodman Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Marriott Theatre, and more. **Jack Wetherall** plays Angus. **Wetherall**, who plays Henslowe in *Shakespeare in Love*, appeared on Broadway in the title role in *The Elephant Man*. He also played Vic in *Queer as Folk* on Showtime. **David Alan Anderson** rounds out the cast as Ollie. Anderson's credits include more than 20 years at Indiana Repertory Theatre, as well as the Guthrie, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Cleveland Play House and more.

Peter Amster, who celebrates his tenth season as an associate artist at Asolo Rep, has previously directed *Born Yesterday* [2017], *Living on Love* [2016], *The Matchmaker* [2015], *Vanya and Sonya and Masha and Spike* [2014], and more at the theatre. His work has been seen at Steppenwolf, the Goodman, the Court, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, ACT, Syracuse Stage, Geva Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and more.

"When I pick up a script I've never read before and start to laugh on page one, it's usually a good sign," said Amster. "With **MORNING AFTER GRACE**, it was giggle at first sight. At first it read like a very well-written sitcom from an earlier age, but as the play unfolded I started to fall in love with all three characters, especially when they began describing their experiences of being 'of a certain age.'"

Award-winning playwright Carey Crim's newest play, *Never Not Once*, received the 2017 Chambers Award. Her critically acclaimed play *Conviction*, premiered at Bay Street Theater, starring Sarah Paulson, Garret Dillahunt, and Elizabeth Reaser. Her other works also include *Growing Pretty*, *Wake*, and *Some Couples May...*

CAST

(In order of appearance)

CATHERINE SMITKO*Abigail

JACK WETHERALL*Angus

DAVID ALAN ANDERSON*Ollie

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

SELECTED CREATIVE TEAM

Director.....PETER AMSTER
Scenic Designer.....ROBERT MARK MORGAN
Costume Designer.....DAVID M. COVACH
Lighting Designer.....PAUL MILLER
Sound Designer.....MATTHEW PARKER
Hair/Wig & Make-up Designer.....MICHELLE HART

SELECTED ARTISTIC BIOS

(In Alphabetical Order)

PETER AMSTER (Director, *Morning After Grace*; Choreographer, *Rhinoceros*) returns to Asolo Rep where he directed *Born Yesterday*, *Living on Love*, *The Matchmaker*, *Vanya and Sonya and Masha and Spike*, *You Can't Take it With You*, *Fallen Angels*, *Deathtrap*, *The Perfume Shop*, *This Wonderful Life* and choreographed *1776*. In Chicago, he was nominated for Joseph Jefferson Awards for directing *Once on this Island*, *The World Goes Round*, *The Rothschilds* (Apple Tree Theatre), and *Pride and Prejudice* (Northlight Theatre). Other Chicago area theaters include Steppenwolf, The Goodman, The Court, Live Bait, Pegasus, and Route 66. Regional theaters include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, ACT, Syracuse Stage, Geva Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, American Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Peninsula Players, Weston Playhouse, Maltz Jupiter Theatre, and Laguna Playhouse. Peter has directed and choreographed operas for the Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Opera Theater, Skylight Opera in Milwaukee, and Light Opera Works in Evanston, IL.

DAVID ALAN ANDERSON* (Ollie, *Morning After Grace*) is thrilled to be making his Asolo Rep debut. His regional theatre credits include over 20 years at Indiana Repertory Theatre. Also, The Guthrie, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Denver Center, Lake Tahoe, Pennsylvania and Idaho Shakespeare Festivals, Cleveland Play House, and many others. Recent favorites include the ensemble of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* at Indiana Rep; Troy in *Fences* at Arizona Theatre Co., IRT, and Milwaukee Rep; Caesar Wilks in *Gem of the Ocean* (Black Theatre Alliance Award winner for featured actor) and Dr. King in *The Mountaintop* (Jeff Award nominee for best actor) at Chicago's Court Theatre. Television credits include Showtime's new drama *The Chi*, airing in January. He is a 2013 recipient of the Lunt-Fontanne Fellowship, sponsored by the Ten Chimneys Foundation.

CATHERINE SMITKO* (Nurse/Ensemble, *Shakespeare in Love*; Abigail, *Morning After Grace*) is most happy to join Asolo Rep Theatre! A native Chicagoan, Catherine has most recently been seen as Nurse in *Shakespeare in Love* at Chicago Shakespeare Theatre and has also played Nurse in their NEA tour of *Romeo and Juliet*. Other Chicago credits include: *Camino Real*, *Heartbreak House*, *The Rose Tattoo*, and *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre); *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Oliver*, *Funny Girl* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Les Misérables*, *Singing In The Rain*, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum* (Marriott Theatre). Some regional credits include: *Animal Crackers* (Centre Stage Theatre); *Nero*, *Pleasure and Pain* (Magic Theatre SF).

JACK WETHERALL* (Henslowe, *Shakespeare in Love*; Angus, *Morning After Grace*)
Highlighted roles: Title role, *The Elephant Man* (Broadway); originated role of Mario in *Tamora*; Warwick in the *Henry VI* plays at Theatre for a New Audience; many roles for the Talking Band (Off-Broadway). Regional: *Prospero*, *Pericles*, *Macbeth*, *Richard II*, *Orsino*, *Mercutio*, *Berowne*, *Cyrano*, *Shotover*, *Jack Absolute*, *Orestes*, *Lopakhin*, *Valmont*, *Oscar Wilde*, Edward in *Retreat From Moscow*, Lyman in *Other Desert Cities*. He won Drama-League awards for Dionysus in *The Bacchae* and Jack Tanner in *Man and Superman*. Theatres: Guthrie, Shakespeare Theatre of DC, ACT, Long Wharf, Yale Rep, Folger, Hartford Stage, Goodman, Old Globe, Williamstown. Stratford, Canada: *Henry V*, Orlando in *As You Like It* and Konstantin in *The Seagull* (opposite Dame Maggie Smith). TV: Vic on *Queer As Folk*. He leads the Shakespeare Lab in New York City. www.jackwetherall.com

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The Scoop

One hour prior to every performance of **MORNING AFTER GRACE**
Arrive one hour before curtain to hear the ideas and inspirations that contributed to the making of **MORNING AFTER GRACE**. (Opening Night, January 19, is excluded.)

Tuesday Talkbacks

January 23, February 20
Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Join us for an intimate post-show discussion with featured actors or guests following every Tuesday performance of **MORNING AFTER GRACE**.

Inside Asolo Rep: SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE and MORNING AFTER GRACE

Wednesday, January 31 at 11am

Cook Theatre

Panel discussions are \$5; and free for all donors and Asolo Rep Guild Members

Get rare insights into the artistic process, hear directly from the people responsible for producing **SHAKESPEARE IN LOVE** and **MORNING AFTER GRACE**, and engage in stimulating discussion inspired by the play's themes and issues.

Inside Asolo Rep is sponsored by Designing Women Boutique, Observer Media Group and Hotel Indigo.

Meet the Actors

Sunday, February 11 at 2pm
Asolo Rep's Mertz Theatre

Immediately following the 2pm matinee, ask questions and learn more from members of the cast in a facilitated discussion.

MORNING AFTER GRACE IllumiNation Event

Saturday, February 17 at 1pm

Pre-show reception and a post-show community conversation held on the Mezzanine
Performance in the Mertz Theatre

Contact Asolo Rep's Box Office for series package information and single performance tickets.

A stimulating series of theatre and conversation exploring the topical and social themes threaded throughout our season. IllumiNation events begin one hour prior to curtain with a reception on the mezzanine, continue with the performance, and conclude with a conversation. IllumiNation also includes the Faces of Change performance on April 9 in the Cook Theatre, with additional performances in the Sarasota community on Sunday, April 8 at 7pm at Fogartyville Peace Education & Action Center and Thursday, April 12 at 7pm at The SOURCE Productions.

IllumiNation is sponsored by Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering and Capstan Financial Consulting Group

OUT@AsoloRep: MORNING AFTER GRACE

Thursday, February 22 at 6:30pm; show starts at 7:30pm

Asolo Rep's Mezzanine

Contact Asolo Rep's Box Office for subscription and ticket information

Now in its eighth season, OUT@AsoloRep is Sarasota's premier cultural event connecting local Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender communities with fantastic theatre. Enjoy a pre-show reception and learn about participating LGBT organizations, and gain personal insight into **MORNING AFTER GRACE** from the creative team and cast members.

OUT@AsoloRep is sponsored by Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering, CAN Community Health and Sabal Palm Bank.

TICKETS

MORNING AFTER GRACE contains brief partial nudity.

Tickets for **MORNING AFTER GRACE** and the entire 2017-18 Asolo Repertory Theatre season are on sale now. Tickets for **MORNING AFTER GRACE** start at \$27.

To purchase tickets, call 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388, visit www.asolorep.org, or visit the Asolo Repertory Theatre Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre. Asolo Repertory Theatre is located at 5555 North Tamiami Trail in the Florida State University Center for the Performing Arts.

The Box Office is open Monday 10am – 5pm, Tuesday – Thursday 10am - 7:30pm, Friday – Saturday 10am – 8pm, and Sunday 10am – 2pm. The box office closes at 5pm when there are no evening performances and phone lines close one hour prior to the start of any performance. Season subscription packages are also available online and by visiting or calling the box office.

SPONSORS

Asolo Rep is able to present **MORNING AFTER GRACE** because of the generosity of its sponsors. Corporate sponsors for **MORNING AFTER GRACE** are Tidewell Hospice, Observer Media Group, SNN and Morton's Gourmet Market & Catering. Asolo Rep 2017-18

Major Season Sponsors are Florida State University, Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, The Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Designing Women Boutique, William H. Donner Foundation, Woman's Exchange, Inc., the Huisking Foundation, and Sunset Cadillac of Bradenton. Asolo Rep's artistic programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Asolo Rep is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

About Asolo Repertory Theatre

Now in its 59th season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is recognized as one of the premier professional theatres in America and one of the largest in the Southeastern United States. One of the few select theatres in the nation that performs in true rotating repertory, Asolo Rep's highly skilled acting company and extensive craftsmanship bring to life this unique performance method that gives audiences the opportunity to see multiple productions in the span of a few days. Asolo Rep presents up to 10 productions each season including contemporary and classic works and provocative musical theatre experiences. A theatre district in and of itself, Asolo Rep is committed to expanding its reach into the community, furthering its collaboration with the best theatre artists working in the industry today and cultivating new artists through its affiliation with the FSU/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and Managing Director Linda DiGabriele, Asolo Rep's ambitious theatrical offerings and ground-breaking education and community programming engage audiences and ensure its lasting legacy for future generations.

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