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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **BAG&BAGGAGE LAUNCHES 2009-2010 SEASON WITH THE GREATEST PLAY IN AMERICAN THEATRE HISTORY: ARTHUR MILLER'S *DEATH OF A SALESMAN***

Hillsboro, OR – Bag&Baggage Productions, Hillsboro's only professional theatre and the resident in-house performing arts organization at The Venetian Theatre, will launch their 2009-2010 Season of work with one of the most critically acclaimed plays in history; Arthur Miller's **Death of A Salesman**. The show will take place at the historic Venetian Theatre and Bistro beginning on September 23 and will run Thursday – Sunday until October 11, 2009.

Artistic Director Scott Palmer, who will direct the play, said, "As a company, we have committed to producing a classic of American drama as the first show of each season, and there is no other play in the history of American theatre that better fits the definition of a classic than Miller's **Death of a Salesman**."

**Death of a Salesman** is a 1949 play by American playwright Arthur Miller and is a classic of American theater. During its premier year, **Salesman** won the New York Drama Critics' Circle prize for Best Play, the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and the Tony Award for Best Play. Subsequent productions have earned numerous other prestigious awards. The New Yorker called the play a mixture of "compassion, imagination, and hard technical competence not often found in our theater." Since then, the play has been revived numerous times on Broadway and reinterpreted in stage and television versions. The play tells the story of a quintessential American salesman, Willy Loman, who struggles with the cost of his faith in the American Dream and impact that his dreams and aspirations have on his family and friends.

Palmer said, "Even though Miller wrote this work half a century ago, the play is more relevant today than ever before. With our country facing massive economic uncertainty, and families across the nation embroiled in the worst economic calamity since the Great Depression, **Salesman** has a lot to say to modern audiences about the American Dream and about how these difficult times impact family relationships."

The role of Willy Loman, one of the greatest lead roles in all of American drama, will be played by Visiting Guest Artist Dr. Marion Rossi. Rossi, who is a faculty member in Theatre Arts at Oregon State University, joins Maggie Chapin, a Bag&Baggage company member, who will play the role of Linda Loman, Willy's wife. Other cast members include Will Goblrish (recently seen as Romeo in Bag&Baggage's outdoor production of **Romeo and Juliet**) as Biff, and Tylor Neist (previously seen in **The Comedy of Errors** and **The Importance of Being Earnest**) as Happy.

Maggie Chapin, who has acted in almost every Bag&Baggage production since the company was created, said, "This is, without question, the strongest cast we have ever had and will be one of the most moving and emotional productions we have ever done. Marion Rossi is perfect for the role of Willy, and his experience and talent are truly inspirational for the rest of the cast. I think this will be our best show to date."

**Death of A Salesman** is the first of four productions during the 2009-2010 Season at the Venetian Theatre. The second, a family-friendly adaptation of Charles Dickens' **A Christmas Carol**, runs from December 9 - 22, 2009 and also stars Marion Rossi as Scrooge. In February of 2010, Bag&Baggage will present a world premiere adaptation of William Shakespeare's **Taming of the Shrew** combined with the rarely performed sequel, written by John Fletcher, **The Woman's Prize**. The two shows have never been performed together on stage by the same cast, in the same night. Palmer's adaptation will allow audiences to see these two hysterical explorations of love and marriage in a single evening. The fourth play of the season is Noel Coward's **Hay Fever**, which has been called Coward's funniest, wittiest play, which will take place in June of 2010.

Following the last show of The Venetian Theatre Season, Bag&Baggage will return to the Tom Hughes Civic Center Plaza for the second annual Outdoor Summer Shakespeare, **Twelfth Night**. Dates for this outdoor production have not been confirmed, but will take place in July and August of 2010.

"We are an ambitious company, and we believe that the people of Hillsboro, and all of Washington County, deserve to have high quality, professional theatre here in their own community. Our second season of work covers all the bases; comedy, drama, classics, family friendly shows, and world premiere adaptations," Palmer said.

Tickets for **Death of A Salesman** are on sale now, and can be purchased online at [www.bagnbaggage.org](http://www.bagnbaggage.org). Tickets range in price from \$15 - \$23, depending on the night and seat selection, and more information can be found online. The first two performances, on Wednesday September 23 and Thursday September 24, are special preview nights, with reduced ticket prices, and the official opening night of the show is Friday September 25<sup>th</sup>. Evening performances take place Thursday – Saturday at 7:30pm with Sunday matinees at 2:00pm, September 23 – August 11, 2009. .

Bag&Baggage has also partnered with The Venetian Theatre to offer a series of special theme nights, and dinner and brunch options. Information on these dining specials can also be found online at [www.bagnbaggage.org](http://www.bagnbaggage.org) or [www.venetiantheatre.com](http://www.venetiantheatre.com).

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Editor's Note: interviews and photos available upon request.

Calendar Listings:

Bag&Baggage Presents

Arthur Miller's **Death of A Salesman**

The Venetian Theatre

253 East Main Street

Hillsboro, OR 97124

Previews: Wednesday September 23 and Thursday September 24, 7:30pm

Opening Night: Friday September 25, 2009, 7:30pm

Performance Dates: September 26, October 1, 2, 3 and October 8, 9 and 10, 7:30pm

Sunday matinees: September 27, October 4 and 11 at 2:00pm

Preview Nights: \$12, all other nights \$13 - \$23 depending on night and seat selection

Ticket Reservations: [www.bagnbaggage.org](http://www.bagnbaggage.org)