



My Fair Lady to open 30th Season at Virginia Stage Company

Rare two-piano adaptation provides fresh look at classic musical

September 16 through October 5, 2008 at the Wells Theatre

Virginia Stage Company (VSC) kicks off the 30th season with the classic Broadway musical, *My Fair Lady*, running September 16 through October 5 at the Wells Theatre. Lerner and Loewe's timeless adaptation of the Pygmalion myth is a story that celebrates the human spirit, making it the perfect opener to a season of celebration and excitement at VSC.

A distinguished phonetics professor from London's upper crust places a friendly wager that a common flower girl from the streets can be transformed into a lady, simply by teaching her to speak properly. Little does he know that she may have something of her own to teach. This recently discovered, two-piano adaptation of Lerner and Loewe's sparkling score includes "I Could Have Danced All Night," "Get Me To The Church On Time" and "On the Street Where You Live." *My Fair Lady* is one of the greatest stories of the stage and a musical masterpiece for the whole family.

"Audiences of every stripe are drawn to the story of the lowly flower girl transformed by the curmudgeonly Professor Higgins," said Artistic Director Chris Hanna. "More exciting for me is the eye-popping, two-piano adaptation we've put together. Prepare to be wowed."

My Fair Lady is onstage at the Wells Theatre from September 16 through October 5, 2008. Tickets range in price from \$10.00 to \$42.50. The Pay-What-You-Can performance is Sunday, September 14 at 7:00pm and the popular Best Ticket in Town performances are Tuesday, September 16 at 7:00pm, Wednesday, September 17 at 8:00pm, and Thursday, September 18 at 8:00pm. Opening night is Friday, September 19 at 8:00pm. All tickets may be purchased through Ticketmaster by calling (757) 671-8100 or at any Ticketmaster outlet, at the VSC box office, or online at www.vastage.com.

My Fair Lady is based upon George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. The story concerns Eliza Doolittle, a Cockney flower girl who takes speech lessons from professor Henry Higgins so that she can pass as a lady. Higgins takes credit for Eliza's success, but she realizes that she can now be independent and does not need him. The musical's 1956 Broadway production was a smash hit, setting a new record for the longest run of any major musical theatre production in history. It was followed by a hit London production, a popular film version, and numerous revivals. It has been called "the perfect musical."

The VSC production features an newly discovered arrangement of the original score, utilizing only two pianos. The adaptation was commissioned and supervised by Fritz Loewe shortly after the musical's creation and brings both pianos centerstage as part of the action.

My Fair Lady is the first play of the 2008/09 season, VSC's 30th at the Wells Theatre. Following *My Fair Lady*, VSC presents the new play *Centennial Casting* by Gino Dilorio and Nancy Bleemer, October 21 - November 9, 2008. VSC's popular holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, will follow December 3-23, 2008. The spring will bring the remainder of the season with *Moon for the Misbegotten* by Eugene O'Neill running January 20 - February 8, 2009 and *Line in the Sand: The Norfolk Battle of Massive Resistance* by Chris Hanna running February 24 - March 15, 2009. The 30th season will close with the regional premiere of the bio-musical *Ella*, book by Jeffrey Hatcher, conceived by Rob Ruggiero and Dyke Garrison, based on an original play by Dyke Garrison, musical arrangements by Danny Holgate, running March 31 - April 19, 2009.

Virginia Stage Company is the region's only fully professional resident theatre company, serving an audience of more than 90,000 yearly. In the years since its founding, Virginia Stage Company has made significant contributions to the quality of life in Hampton Roads: presenting more than 125 plays through more than 2500 performances; revitalizing and renovating the historic Wells Theatre; providing educational programs for students of all ages; and preserving the legacy of live theatre for future generations.

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