



ALIVE AND WELL to open at Virginia Stage Company A New Comedy In A World Premiere - 2nd New Play In American Soil Series

September 15 through October 4, 2009 at the Wells Theatre

Virginia Stage Company (VSC) kicks off its 31st season with a new play written by Kenny Finkle, *Alive and Well*, running September 15 through October 4 at the Wells Theatre. *Alive and Well* is the second new play in the American Soil series which was launched in February 2008 with *Line in the Sand: The Norfolk Battle of Massive Resistance*. Growing new plays is the important province of America's very best theater companies.

American Soil is VSC's multi-year new play project that digs into the cultural and historical foundations of Hampton Roads. VSC will commission and produce a wide range of plays that explore the rich layers of "earth" the community is built on, spanning race, religion, commerce, democracy and beyond.

Following the successful run of his comedy *Indoor/Outdoor* at VSC in 2005, Finkle was commissioned by VSC to write a play addressing the vast and often humorous differences between the Northern and Southern cultures. *Alive and Well* uses two characters to dramatize the impact of their collision and explore how little has changed in the nearly 150 years since the Civil War.

"*Alive and Well* began its journey when Kenny and I first discovered that we'd each recently developed an interest in the American Civil War" said Artistic Director Chris Hanna. "We both marveled at the power the War's unsettled conflicts hold on the nation's psyche today. It immediately sounded like a topic that American Soil was created to explore." Hampton Roads is a natural place to begin a discussion of the Civil War's legacy on contemporary culture. Our region is either as far north that one can travel and still be in the South or as far south but remain in the North. After having explored the LINE between black and white last season, VSC now considers that between Grey and Blue - albeit more lightly. As Kenny Finkle's play happily points out, much of the present conflict is very funny and that comedy itself should be celebrated.

Tickets for *Alive and Well* range in price from \$15 to \$45. A "Dress Rehearsal Night" performance is offered on Sunday, September 13 at 7:00pm with a Suggested Donation of \$10, and the popular Best Ticket in Town performances are Tuesday, September 15 at 7:00pm, Wednesday, September 16 at 8:00pm, and Thursday, September 17 at 8:00pm. Opening night is Friday, September 18 at 8:00pm. All tickets may be purchased through Ticketmaster by calling (800) 982-2787 or at any Ticketmaster outlet, at the VSC box office, or online at www.vastage.com.

Following *Alive and Well*, VSC presents a bold new multi-media staging of Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* in *//romeo&juliet/*, October 20 - November 8, 2010. VSC's popular holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, will follow November 29 - December 24, 2009. The spring will bring the remainder of the season with *Billy Bishop Goes To War* by John MacLachlan Gray and Eric Peterson running January 19 - February 7, 2010 and *Around The World In 80 Days* adapted by Mark Brown from the novel by Jules Verne running February 23 - March 14, 2010. The 31st season will close with the American classic *A Raisin In The Sun*, by Lorraine Hansberry on the 50th anniversary of its Broadway premiere, running March 30 - April 18, 2010.

Virginia Stage Company is the region's only fully professional resident theater company, serving an audience of nearly 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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Media Release

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