American Repertory Theatre

presents

The Seagull

by Anton Chekhov
directed by János Szász
January 10 — February 1
Loeb Drama Center

Cambridge, Mass. — The American Repertory Theatre presents the fourth production of its 2008-09 Season: Anton Chekhov’s masterpiece The Seagull, in a translation by Paul Schmidt and directed by János Szász, at the A.R.T.’s Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle Street, Cambridge. The production begins performances on Saturday, January 10 and runs through Sunday, February 1; it will be available for press viewing from Wednesday, January 14 at 7:30pm.

“We have to show life not the way it is, or the way it should be, but the way it is in dreams.”

— Konstantin in The Seagull

Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina, a famous but aging actress, arrives at her brother’s country estate with her lover, the prominent writer Trigorin. Her son Konstantin is infatuated with Nina, the beautiful girl next door and also an aspiring actress. He has written and staged a symbolist drama with Nina in the lead role. When his mother ridicules his avant-garde endeavor, Konstantin storms off in a rage. Trigorin, meanwhile, is intrigued by Nina. Before long, she falls in love with Trigorin and eventually follows him back to Moscow, where they have a disastrous affair. Years later, Nina returns to the estate to see Konstantin one last time. Written in 1896, Chekhov’s tragicomedy of life and art astonished the old century as it heralded the birth of modern drama. Dreams born and shattered, loves won and lost – The Seagull paints a rich and tumultuous portrait of the human heart. Director János Szász, whose lush and cinematic productions (Mother Courage, Marat/Sade, Desire Under the Elms, and Uncle Vanya) have made him a favorite with A.R.T. audiences, returns to stage this beautiful and haunting play.

The professional acting company includes A.R.T. actors Thomas Derrah as Dorn, Jeremy Geidt as Sorin, Karen MacDonald as Arkadina, and Remo Airaldi as Shamrayev; they are joined by returning actors Mickey Solis as Konstantin, Molly Ward as Nina, and incoming actors Brian Dykstra as Trigorin and Cheryl D. Singleton as Paulina. A.R.T. Institute’s second-year actors Shawn Cody as Medvedenko and Nina Kassa as Masha complete the cast. Set design is by Riccardo Hernandez, costume design by David Zinn, lighting design by Christopher Akerlind, and sound design by David Remedios.

Brief biographies of the Company:

Remo Airaldi has appeared in fifty-six productions at the A.R.T. He has performed at Hartford Stage, La Jolla Playhouse, Geffen Playhouse, American Conservatory Theatre, Walnut St. Theatre, Prince Music Theater, Actors’ Theatre of Louisville, Serious Fun Festival, Moscow Art Theatre, Taipei International Arts Festival, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company.

Thomas Derrah has appeared in more than 100 roles at the A.R.T. over 27 years, receiving a number of awards. He has toured with the Company across the U.S., and throughout Europe, Canada, Israel, Taiwan, Japan, and Moscow. He was seen on Broadway in twenty-seven roles in Jackie: An American Life, as well as off-Broadway, in regional theatres and local companies. He is the recipient of a number of awards from local critics and the Los Angeles DramaLogue Award (for title role in Shlemiel the First).

Brian Dykstra was seen in New York: Breaking Legs, Antigone, Clean Alternatives, STRANGERHORSE, America Absurdum, and three productions with New York Shakespeare
Festival, and in his own one-man shows The Jesus Factor (available on DVD) and Cornered & Alone. Regional credits include Copenhagen (Heisenberg), Dinner With Friends (Gabe), A View From the Bridge (Eddie Carbone), Twelfth Night (Sir Toby), and All The Rage (Tim). Film and television include Freedomland, HBO Def Poetry, Law & Order, Third Watch.

Jeremy Geidt, A.R.T.'s Senior Actor, was a founding member of the Yale Repertory Theatre and the A.R.T. This is his third turn as Sorin in The Seagull. He performed in over forty productions at Yale (including The Seagull) and this is his one hundredth at the A.R.T., including The Onion boys! (Major Barbara (Undershift), Heartbreak House (Shotover), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Quince four times, Snug once), Henry IV (Falstaff), Twelfth Night (Toby Belch), The Caretaker (Davies), The Homecoming (Max), and Waiting for Godot (Vladimir). He teaches at Harvard College, its Summer and Extension Schools and at the A.R.T./MXAT Institute.

Karen MacDonald is a founding member of the A.R.T., has appeared in sixty-three productions, and received a number of Elliott Norton and IRNE Awards for her work. She directed Dressed Up! Wigged Out!, for Boston Playwrights Theatre, played in numerous productions in local theatres, as well as nationwide at the Alley Theatre (Company member), Goodman Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Syracuse Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Hartford Stage, and Philadelphia Festival of New Plays.

Cheryl D. Singleton's credits include Cinderella Rocks!, Cleopatra, the Musical, and Whizzir!, with the Gold Dust Orphans; Kentucky Cycle and Stuff Happens with Zeitgeist Stage Company; Home with Queer Soup; Hamlet and Measure for Measure with Theatre Coop; The Robert Cycle with ImprovBoston; Years of Struggle, Years of Freedom at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Film: She's Gotta Have It.

Mickey Solis was seen at the A.R.T. as Romeo in Romeo and Juliet, Eben in Desire Under the Elms, and Oliver in Olly's Prison. He appeared as Demetrios in A Midsummer Night’s Dream at the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival and as Victor in House at Actor and Playwright’s Initiative Theatre. He is a recent graduate of the A.R.T./MXAT Institute for Advanced Theatre Training.

Molly Ward appeared at the A.R.T. as Masha in Three Sisters (Elliott Norton Nomination) and Benvolio in Romeo and Juliet. Other recent credits include Desdemona in Othello at Hartford Stage, Teresa Rebeck’s new play Our House at the Denver Center, Camille at Bard SummerScape, Arms and the Man at Barrington Stage, and Before Breakfast at Provincetown Theater. New York credits include Richard Foreman’s Paradise Hotel at the Ontological Hysterical Theater, which toured Europe. She is also a recent A.R.T. Institute graduate.

About the Creative Staff

Director János Szász previously created Desire Under the Elms, Uncle Vanya, Marat/Sade, and Mother Courage and Her Children at the A.R.T. Theatre work in his native Hungary includes Master and Margarita, Ghosts, The King Stag, A Streetcar Named Desire, Uncle Vanya, Baal, Mother Courage, and Marat/Sade, and in the U.S. A Streetcar Named Desire for Arena Stage. His films include Opium, Woyzeck (twenty different prizes at fifty-five international film festivals across Europe, Hungarian nominee for the Oscars), The Witman Boys (presented at more than fifty international film festivals, official selection of the Cannes Film Festival and winner of several awards), Szédülés (Don’t Disturb - Best Director Prize, Bogota, Venezuela, Best Foreign Film, Bratislava), and Eyes of the Holocaust, a documentary film about the Hungarian holocaust produced by Steven Spielberg for the Shoah Foundation, presented at the Los Angeles Jewish Film Festival. He is a member of the European Film Academy.

Set Designer Riccardo Hernandez has collaborated with Szász on Uncle Vanya, Desire Under the Elms, and Marat/Sade; he also designed Julius Caesar, Britannicus, Romeo and Juliet, The Miser, Full Circle, Enrico IV, Phaedra, and Othello among others for A.R.T. Broadway credits include Tony Kushner’s Caroline, or Change, Topdog/Underdog (also Royal Court, London), Elaine Stritch at Liberty (also West End’s Old Vic, London and National Tour), Parade (Tony and Drama Desk Nominations), Noise/Funk (also National Tours and Japan), The Tempest; over a dozen productions at New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater and all over the United States.

Costume designer David Zinn’s A.R.T. credits include sets and costumes for Island of Slaves, Orpheus X, Olly’s Prison, Highway Ulisses. On Broadway he designed costumes for Xanadu and A Tale of Two Cities. New York credits include set and costumes for Edward Bond’s Chair (TFANA), and Itamar Moses’ Back Back Back (Manhattan Theater Club), and scenery for The Sound and the Fury (ERS/NYTW) and Paradise Park (Signature). He also has designed for opera companies all over the U.S. and for numerous regional theatres.

Lighting Designer Christopher Akerlind designed Britannicus, Island of Slaves, Orpheus X, Olly’s Prison, Desire Under the Elms, Oedipus, La Dispute, Uncle Vanya, Enrico IV, and Misalliance at the A.R.T. Recent credits include Martha Clarke’s Garden of Earthly Delights and
Kaos in New York, the world premiere of Phillip Glass’ Appomattox directed by Robert Woodruff at San Francisco Opera, I Capuleti et I Montecchi at Glimmerglass Opera, Kafeneion for the Athens/Epidaurus Festival, and the Broadway production of Top Girls. Other Broadway credits include 110 in the Shade (Tony nomination), Shining City, Rabbit Hole, Talk Radio, Awake and Sing (Tony nomination), Seven Guitars (Tony nomination), and The Light in the Piazza (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics, & Henry Hewes awards) among others. He has extensive credits in opera all over the country. He is the recipient of an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design, the Michael Merritt Award for Design and Collaboration and numerous nominations for the Drama Desk, Lucile Lortel, Outer Critics Circle and Tony Awards.

Resident Sound Designer David Remedios has forty-four productions to his credit, including Cardenio, Julius Caesar, Copenhagen, Donnie Darko, No Man’s Land, Oliver Twist, The Onion Cellar, Orpheus X, The Provok’d Wife (original music), Absolution, Enrico IV, Man and Superman. He has toured regionally and internationally for the A.R.T. and has created sound designs for several regional theatres. He is the recipient of numerous awards for his work as designer and composer.

The performance schedule of The Seagull is as follows:

January 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, 31 at 8:00pm; January 13, 14, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 29 at 7:30pm; January 11, 17, 18, 24, 25, 31, and February 1 at 2:00pm. Special performances include Under 35 Night on Thursday, January 15 with a pre-show reception, and Out at A.R.T. for the GLBT community on Friday, January 23, with cash bar.

Single ticket prices range from $25-$79, with a $10 discount for seniors. Student discounts include the $60 Student Pass for 5 performances (at $12 a seat); single tickets at $25 advance purchase, and $15 day of performance. Other discounts include 50 @ 15 at noon ($15 tickets on sale at noon on the day of performance; in person only, based on availability) and Pay What You Can (50 tickets available for every Saturday matinee performance of the season at the Loeb Drama Center for patrons to purchase at whatever amount they can afford (based on availability). Group rates, with extra savings for senior citizens and student groups are also available.

The balance of the A.R.T. 2008-09 Season includes Endgame by Samuel Beckett, directed by Marcus Stern (February 14 — March 15, Loeb Stage); the world premiere of Trojan Barbie by Christine Evans, directed by Carmel O’Reilly (March 28 — April 22, Zero Arrow Theatre); and Romance by David Mamet, directed by Scott Zigler (May 9 - 31, Loeb Stage).

The A.R.T. is offering various plans for the season — including choose-your-own and flex plans — with a host of benefits, including free Zipcar membership; free tickets to A.R.T. Institute productions; discounts on parking, on books at the Harvard Coop, fine dining, and tickets to other theatres; a child-care series (Saturday matinee); and pre-performance and post-performance discussion series (Saturday matinees).

To learn more about this production and the A.R.T.’s upcoming season, log onto the A.R.T. website at www.amrep.org or call the A.R.T. InfoLine at (617) 547-8300. The InfoLine is also available 24 hours a day to provide directions to the theatre; to order brochures, calendars, and newsletters; and to allow direct access to the A.R.T. Box Office (hours are noon to curtain time on performance days, noon to 5 pm on non-performance days, closed on Mondays).

The AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATRE (A.R.T.) is one of the country’s most celebrated resident theatres and the winner of numerous awards — including the Tony Award, the Pulitzer Prize, and numerous local Elliot Norton and I.R.N.E. Awards; it was recently named one of the top three theatres in the country by Time magazine. Over its twenty-eight-year history the A.R.T. has welcomed major American and international theatre artists whose singular visions generate and define the theatre’s work, presenting a varied repertoire that includes new plays, progressive productions of classical texts, and collaborations between artists from many disciplines. The Company has performed throughout the country, and worldwide in twenty-one cities in sixteen countries on four continents. This fall the organization welcomes its new Artistic Director, Diane Paulus, who begins plans for the 2009-10 Season, the Company’s 30th in Cambridge.

The A.R.T., located at the Loeb Drama Center at 64 Brattle Street, and at the Zero Arrow Theatre at the corner of Arrow Street and Massachusetts Avenue, Harvard Square, Cambridge, are accessible to persons with special needs and to those requiring wheelchair seating or first-floor restrooms. Deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons can also reach the Theatre by calling the toll-free N.E. Telephone Relay Center at 1-800-439-2370.

Public transportation and discount parking are available nearby.
WHAT:
THE SEAGULL
By      Anton Chekhov
Translated by     Paul Schmidt
Director    János Szász
Set Design    Riccardo Hernandez
Costume Design   David Zinn
Lighting Design   Christopher Akerlind
Sound Design    David Remedios

Cast
Irina Nikolayevna Arkadina  Karen MacDonald*
Konstantin Gavrilovich Treplev  Mickey Solis*
Pyotr Nikolayevich Sorin  Jeremy Geidt*
Nina Mikhailovna Zarechnaya  Molly Ward*
Ilya Afanasyevich Shamrayev  Remo Airaldi*
Paulina Andreyevna  Cheryl D. Singleton
Masha  Nina Kassa
Boris Alexeyevich Trigorin  Brian Dykstra*
Yevgeny Sergeyevich Dorn  Thomas Derrah*
Semyon Semyonovich Medvedenko  Shawn Cody
Yakov  Dan Pecci

(*) Members of Actors’ Equity Association.

WHEN:
Sa Jan 10  8:00pm (preview) HOT DATE
Su Jan 11  2:00pm (preview) HOT DATE
Tu Jan 13  7:30pm (preview) HOT DATE
We Jan 14  7:30pm Press opening
Th Jan 15  7:30pm Under 35 Night
Fr Jan 16  8:00pm HOT DATE
Sa Jan 17  2:00pm & 8:00pm (Playback: post play discussion after matinee performance)
Su Jan 18  2:00pm & 7:30pm HOT DATE
Tu Jan 20  7:30pm
We Jan 21  7:30pm
Th Jan 22  7:30pm
Fr Jan 23  8:00pm Out at A.R.T.
Sa Jan 24  2pm & 8:00pm (Playback: post play discussion after matinee performance)
Su Jan 25  2pm & 7:30pm (Pre-play discussion at 1pm)
Tu Jan 27  7:30pm
We Jan 28  7:30pm (Pre-play discussion at 6:30pm)
Th Jan 29  10:00am & 7:30pm (Pre-play discussion at 6:30pm)
Fr Jan 30  8:00pm
Sa Jan 31  2:00pm & 8:00pm (Playback: post play discussion after matinee performance)
Su Feb 1  2:00pm

WHERE: Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle Street, Harvard Square.

TICKETS: $25-79
Students: $25. Student rush $15
Seniors $10 off ticket price.
Tickets may be charged to American Express, Visa, or MasterCard.
Group discounts are available.

Box Office Phone and A.R.T. InfoLine: (617) 547-8300   www.amrep.org
E-mail address: press@amrep.org   Web address: www.amrep.org

Production photos of The Seagull can be downloaded from www.amrep.org/media beginning January 12.