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NEW EDGECLIFF THEATRE ANNOUNCES 2010-11 SEASON: “Contenders”

Under new Artistic Director Jim Stump, New Edgecliff Theatre will produce a local premiere and bring back The Cincinnati Directors Competition in its appropriately-named 2010-2011 “Contenders” season. As Stump says, “This season focuses on one of the strongest human instincts – to compete, whether against others or ourselves.” Contending first for your attention will be Tennessee William’s *The Night of the Iguana*. This season-opener is bookended in the spring with the Cincinnati premiere of the Tony-nominated musical, [title of show]. Along the way, two annual favorites return: the Halloween Sweet Suspense radio drama as well as the surly elf of David Sedaris’ *The Santaland Diaries*. But perhaps the biggest news of all is the return in March of the Cincinnati Director’s Competition, now under the guidance of new Associate Artistic Director, Matthew Wilson.

In October, the season opens with what many consider to be not only one of Tennessee William’s finest, but also, most certainly, his ultimate confessional play, *The Night of the Iguana*. Here, Williams, his sister Rose and his mother Edwina are all present in the persons of the defrocked Shannon, the puritanical Hannah and the matriarchal, lusting hotel proprietress Maxine, each of them contending with each other and with their own “blue devil”. Former NET Artistic Director Elizabeth A. Harris returns to direct.

Also in October, New Edgecliff Theatre presents the fourth annual Sweet Suspense Halloween fundraiser event, this year with a new adaptation (by NET’s own Devon Campailla) of Washington Irving’s *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. Ichabod Crane must contend with his fears or they will most certainly conquer him. Live and for one night only, this unique theatrical experience takes audiences back to the Golden Age of radio, when the listener’s imagination could run wild. As always, included in the ticket price is a sampling of desserts from excellent Cincinnati restaurants.

In December, the deliciously irreverent tales by David Sedaris are back on the New Edgecliff stage. Directed by Jim Stump, NET promises a bright new production look. Best of all, the outlandish Macy’s Elf and unhinged Jocelyn Dunbar will have Acclaim winner and multiple-CEA nominee Joshua Steele helping them to tell their tales of Christmas angst and holiday meltdowns. “All in all”, says NET founder and Executive Director Michael Shooner, “this edition of *The Santaland Diaries* will be a re-tooled and specially-wrapped high-octane Christmas package – do *not* try this at home.”

In its first three-year run, the Cincinnati Director’s Competition brought together area directors and actors in a wildly successful four-night event, competing for votes from a panel of theatre professionals as well as the audience itself. With former Associate Artistic Director and CDC founder Nathan Gabriel’s departure, the Competition went on a one-year

hiatus, but with new AAD Matthew Wilson enthusiastically taking the reins, the Cincinnati Directors Competition 4 expects to pull in the best directors and the best four nights of raw theatre yet.

The season concludes with the Cincinnati premiere of the Tony-nominated musical *[title of show]*, music and lyrics by Jeff Bowen and book by Hunter Bell. *[title of show]* follows the journey of two nonentities, Hunter and Jeff. Determined to enter the New York Musical Theatre Festival, these two witty, struggling writers attempt to create a new show in a mere three weeks. With the help of their friends, Susan and Heidi, they write a show about... writing a show. Nominated for 2009 Tony Award for Best Book by Hunter Bell. With songs like "Secondary Characters" and "Two Nobodies in New York", *[title of show]* is a hilarious love letter to Musical Theatre.

The company will return to the Columbia Performance Center (3900 Eastern Ave., Columbia-Tusculum). Single-show tickets and season subscriptions are available online at www.newedgecliff.com or by calling the box office at 888.588.0137.

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