



Mayslake Peabody Estate, 31st St. & Rt. 83, Oak Brook, IL
www.firstfolio.org

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FIRST FOLIO ANNOUNCES SEASON OF SUSPENSE *2010 - 2011 productions brings wide range of spine tinglers*

OAK BROOK – Tickets and subscriptions are now on sale for First Folio Theatre’s 2010-2011 season. Opening the Season of Suspense is an encore production of *The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe: A Love Story*, followed by Noël Coward’s *Blithe Spirit*, and the long-running London hit *The Woman in Black*. The season will close with *Romeo and Juliet* under-the-stars. Season subscriptions and individual tickets may be purchased by calling the box office at 630-986-8067 or online at www.firstfolio.org. Ticket prices range from \$20-35, and subscription packages begin as low as \$51.

Oak Brook-based First Folio Theatre begins the Season of Suspense with an encore production of *The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe: A Love Story*. The show brings Poe’s macabre and melancholic tales & poems to life as Poe and his wife Virginia guide the audience through historic Mayslake Hall, taking them from the garrets to the dungeons and deep into the madness of Edgar Allan Poe. Written by Artistic Associate David Rice, *The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe* received its world premiere at First Folio in 2006, and was honored with a Jeff nomination for Original Adaptation. The *Chicago Tribune* said it was “melancholy and macabre...will change the audience’s mind about Poe.” The *Daily Herald* declared it to be “masterfully macabre and shrewdly directed” and *TimeOut Chicago* gave it four stars.

The Season of Suspense will continue with Noël Coward’s comedy of the supernatural, *Blithe Spirit*. When Charles Condomine brings his new bride Ruth back to their English country home, his plan is to spend a calm summer working on his new novel. But when the daffy medium Madame Arcati holds a séance, she unwittingly conjures up the spirit of Charles’ first wife Elvira. As Charles and Madame Arcati frantically work to banish the spirit, Ruth becomes increasingly jealous of her ethereal rival and plots the specter’s destruction. Directed by Alison C. Vesely and featuring artistic associates Nick Sandys and Melanie Keller, this promises to be another in a string of comedic Coward hits for First Folio that include *Private Lives* and *Design for Living*.

The indoor portion of the subscription series finishes with *The Woman in Black*, adapted by Stephen Mallatratt from the novel by Susan Hill. Proud and solitary, Eel Marsh House surveys the windswept reaches of the salt marshes beyond Nine Lives Causeway. Arthur Kipps, a junior solicitor, is summoned to attend the funeral of Mrs Alice Drablow, the house’s sole inhabitant, unaware of the tragic secrets which lie hidden behind the shuttered windows. It is not until he glimpses a wasted young woman, dressed all in black, at the funeral, that a creeping sense of unease begins to take hold, a feeling

deepened by the reluctance of the locals to talk of the woman in black - and her terrible purpose. Years later, he recounts his experiences to an actor in a desperate attempt to exorcise the ghosts of the past. The play unfolds around the two characters as they act out the solicitor's experiences on Eel Marsh all those years ago...with chilling consequences. This long-running London hit is "One of the most brilliantly effective spine-chillers you will ever encounter" (*London Daily Telegraph*) and "sends shock waves through the audience with splendid thrills and chills" (*London Independent*).

Closing the season with its annual Shakespeare-under-the-Stars, First Folio will present one of the Bard's darkest romances. Two families under a mysterious, age-old curse; children thrown together in the face of a dark fate; young men dying violently and needlessly; a strange priest dabbling with experimental drugs; a young woman haunted by visions of tombs and ghosts. This is Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet*, set in the Age of Romance and Revolution--amidst gorgeous poetry, brutal fights, elegant dances, where the dream of love turns into an eerie nightmare, taking the audience on a ride that hurtles them from a young woman's bedroom to a corpse-filled tomb. With direction and fight choreography by artistic associate Nick Sandys, this tale of star-crossed lovers will chill and thrill audiences anew.

First Folio is also offering an additional treat this year. For one special weekend, audiences will have the chance to experience the myth, mystery, and infinite jest of David Kovac in *Fooling Buddha*, his hit one-man show. This is your chance to catch the latest show by the magician hailed by the *Chicago Tribune* as a "Trickster Hero," who has thrilled audiences at Second City, the Green Mill, and the famed Magic Castle in Hollywood. *Fooling Buddha* is a delightful mix of thrilling magic and inspirational humor, with a dash of jazz to round it all out. This show runs for five performances only, and is not a part of the regular subscription series.

All performances take place on the grounds of the Mayslake Peabody Estate, which is owned and operated by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County. Indoor shows are presented in Mayslake Hall, a 30-room Tudor Revival style mansion originally built by coal baron Francis S. Peabody. Completed in 1922, the mansion is on the National Registry of Historic Places. Located at 31st St. and Rt. 83 in Oak Brook, First Folio is easy to get to from either the East-West Tollway (I-88) or the Stevenson Expressway (I-55). Free parking is available on the grounds.

First Folio Theatre is supported in part by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a State Agency, and the DuPage Community Foundation.

Performance schedules and ticket prices are attached.

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2009-2010 SEASON SCHEDULE

The Madness of Edgar Allan Poe: A Love Story by David Rice, based on life and writings of Edgar Allan Poe

Previews: Oct. 6, 7, 8 @ 8:00
Opening Night: October 9 @ 8:00
Runs: October 6 ~ November 7
Performance Times: Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays @ 8:00;
Sundays @ 3:00 & 8:00
Tickets: \$29-35 adults, \$25-30 Students/Seniors (Previews \$20)

Blithe Spirit by Noël Coward

Previews: Feb. 2, 3, 4 @ 8:00
Opening Night: Feb. 5 @ 8:00
Runs: February 2 ~ March 6
Performance Times: Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays @ 8:00; Sunday matinees @ 3:00
Tickets: \$29-35 adults, \$25-30 Students/Seniors (Previews \$20)

The Woman in Black adapted by Stephen Mallatratt from the novel by Susan Hill

Previews: March 30, 31, & April 1 @ 8:00
Opening Night: April 2 @ 8:00
Runs: March 30 ~ May 1
Performance Times: Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays @ 8:00; Sunday matinees @ 3:00
Tickets: \$29-35 adults, \$25-30 Students/Seniors (Previews \$20)

Romeo and Juliet by William Shakespeare

Previews: July 6, 7, 8 @ 8:15
Opening Night: July 9 @ 8:15
Runs: July 6 ~ August 7
Performance Times: Wednesdays thru Sundays @ 8:15
Tickets: \$29-35 adults, \$25-30 Students/Seniors (Previews \$20)

Fooling Buddha written and performed by David Kovac

Runs: March 11, 12, 13
Performance Times: Friday March 11 @ 8:00
Saturday March 12 @ 5:30 & 8:00
Sunday March 13 @ 3:00 & 7:30
Tickets: \$20

Subscriptions: \$51-99

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