Theatre and Dance Presents "The Inland Sea"

St. Paul, Minn. - The Macalester College Theatre and Dance Department presents “The Inland Sea” in the Janet Wallace Fine Arts Center, Main Stage Theater, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, Minn. Tickets are $7 general admission and $5 for seniors and groups. Performances are at 7:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday Nov. 11 and 12, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday Nov. 17–19 and at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 13. “The Inland Sea” is directed by Theatre and Dance Department chair Beth Cleary. For ticket information, call 651-696-6359.

This is the U.S. premiere of MacArthur “genius” playwright Naomi Wallace’s play about 1760s rural England. It has received only one other full production, in 2002 by the Oxford Stage Company at Wilton’s Music Hall in London.

Wallace, one of America’s most eloquent and prolific contemporary playwrights, has received commissions from the Royal Court Theatre in London, the Guthrie Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and the Actors Theatre of Louisville, among other institutions. Wallace’s writing is about “how work shapes people’s bodies and minds, and how the conditions under which most people work delimit their dreams,” says Cleary. “But crucially, Wallace also writes about how people resist, come together, and rise up.”

“The Inland Sea” is set in the 18th century England of Capability Brown, a historical figure who was the first landscape architect; a man responsible for moving tons of earth on vast estates to create the famous English pastoral landscape. Wallace reminds us who did the digging for those projects—off-season London shipbuilders, mutineers on the run, underemployed soldiers—as well as how many thousands of villagers were displaced for pastoral dreams, and how many lives wrecked for aristocratic whims. The play pits class against class, man against woman, living against dead through Wallace’s evocative language, provocative scenes, and vision of complex hope.

The cast, in order of appearance, consists of Jon Dahl ’14 (Roseau, Minn.) as Leafeater; Rob Gelberg ’14 (North Cladwell, N.J.) as Capability Brown; John Bennett ’14 (Edina, Minn.) as Asquith Brown; Zoe Michael ’13 (Santa Fe, N.M.) as Hesp Turner; Tamara Clark ’12 (Seattle) as Simone Faulks; Ann Stromgren ’12 (San Jose, Calif.) as Bliss; Will French ’13 (Paradise Valley, Ariz.) as Jayfort; William Gambucci ’12 (Minneapolis) as Castle; Jeffery Kaplan ’14 (Pittsburgh) as Slip; Chad Wilson ’15 (Fort Worth, Ind.) as Scahr; Jeesun Choi ’13 (Bangkok) as Nutley; and Zoe Rodine ’13 (San Jose, Calif.) as Ellen. Sam Olson ’15 (Hopkins, Minn.), Kat Hunter ’13, (Friday Harbor, Wash.), Matthew Delher ’14 (Ramsey, Minn.), and Thalia Kostman ’12 (Los Olivos, Calif.) are also in the cast.

Macalester College, founded in 1874, is a national liberal arts college with a full-time enrollment of 1,958 students. Macalester is nationally recognized for its long-standing commitment to academic excellence, internationalism, multiculturalism, and civic engagement. Learn more at macalester.edu.

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