



For Immediate Release

June 22, 2017

Contact: The American Stage

Marketing Team

(727) 823-1600 x 209

marketing@americanstage.org

American Stage presents SEX WITH STRANGERS

The 2016/17 Season continues "new voices" and wraps up the season with this Tampa Bay area premiere. A smart, sexy summer comedy! #asCONNECTIONS

St. Petersburg, FL – American Stage offers summer laughs and concludes its 2016-17 Season - "In Search of...America" - with the Tampa Bay Area premiere of **SEX WITH STRANGERS** by Laura Eason (**HOUSE OF CARDS**). The production will be directed by Janis Stevens (**Vera** in **4,000 MILES**) and will feature actors Carey Urban (American Stage Debut) and Ben Williamson (**Damon** in **TARTUFFE**). **SEX WITH STRANGERS** was listed as one of the Top 10 Most-Produced Plays throughout the country for the last two seasons (15-16 and 16-17) by *American Theatre* magazine. **SEX WITH STRANGERS** is a smart and timely romantic comedy about intimacy in the digital age. Join us as we go "in search of...A CONNECTION" while asking the question, **"Is technology bringing us closer together...or making us virtual strangers?"**

"Laura Eason is a playwright for our times. Her sense of story, character and dialogue, together with her ability to capture the not-so-subtle evolution of intimacy in our tech-culture make SEX WITH STRANGERS a fascinating piece." – Stephanie Gularte, Producing Artistic Director

"It's a real thrill to be returning to American Stage to direct SEX WITH STRANGERS. This is a play that offers the kind of complex, vulnerable characters that actors and directors love to delve into and develop. As well as being funny and provocative, it addresses the dilemma of modern relationships caught up in our device-driven age where 'privacy versus publicity' is constantly at issue." – Janis Stevens, Director of **SEX WITH STRANGERS**

TALKS & EVENTS

American Stage has programmed several audience experience opportunities surrounding the production of **SEX WITH STRANGERS** beginning with the **SPOTLIGHT ON SEX WITH STRANGERS: FOREWORD** on July 2, 2017, an exclusive conversation with **SEX WITH STRANGERS** Director, Janis Stevens and cast members. Throughout the run of the play, ticket holders are invited to arrive early for an exclusive **PROLOGUE** presented by American Stage Apprentice Whitaker Gardner, as well as a 2017-2018 **SEASON-AT-A-GLANCE** presentation 30 minutes prior to each **SEX WITH STRANGERS** performance.

Visit americanstage.org/STRANGERS and click the **TALKS & EVENTS** tab for a full listing of ways to enhance your experience.

SEX WITH STRANGERS runs from **JULY 12th** through **August 6th, 2017**. **Opening night is Friday, July 14th, 2017 with a reception sponsored by The Hangar Restaurant at 7PM, performance at 8PM, and a dessert reception with the cast to follow.** The following includes information on the cast, production, performance dates, and ticketing information, as well as a listing of special events surrounding the production.

-MORE-

ABOUT THE PLAY

When twenty-something sex blogger Ethan tracks down his idol, the gifted but obscure forty-ish novelist Olivia, he finds they each crave what the other possesses. This smart and sexy play encapsulates the divide between Gen-X and Gen-Y, two demographics separated by only a few short years, and an expansive gulf of technical predilections; raising the question "Is technology bringing us closer together...or making us virtual strangers?"

“Sexually and intellectually provocative...A HELL OF A LOT OF FUN!” —*The Hollywood Reporter*

“Just like a page-turner, this smart comedy PULLS YOU IN AND KEEPS YOU WONDERING what’s coming next... well crafted, with SLY WIT AND PITCH PERFECT DIALOGUE.” —*New York Daily News*

CAST

Carey Urban* (Olivia)

Ben Williamson* (Ethan)

CREATIVE

Janis Stevens (Director)

Steven Mitchell# (Scenic Designer)

Jerid Fox (Properties Master)

Joseph Oshry# (Lighting Designer)

Jill Castle (Costume Designer)

Rachel Harrison (Sound Designer/Production Stage Manager)

Rebekah Lazaridis (Scenic Artist)

* = Member of Actors' Equity Association; # = Member of the United Scenic Artists Union

For Cast Bios please visit AmericanStage.org/STRANGERS

DIRECT LINK to publicity photos: AmericanStage.org/media

**Photo credit: Joey Clay Photography. Please note that publicity photos are not typically available until 2 weeks prior to opening. Please contact marketing@americanstage.org for immediate needs.*

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

LAURA EASON is a screenwriter and playwright. She is best known for four seasons on the Netflix drama, HOUSE OF CARDS (WGA Nomination, Outstanding Writing in a Drama Series, on writing team that received three Primetime Emmy Award nominations, Drama Series) and her more than twenty produced plays, both original work and adaptation, including SEX WITH STRANGERS (Second Stage, New York; Steppenwolf Theatre, Chicago; Hampstead Theatre, London; Sydney Theatre, AU; Blackwing Productions, Buenos Aires, AR; one of the most produced plays in the U.S. in '15-'16 and '16-'17 seasons with over fifty separate productions). Laura is a long-time Ensemble Member and the former Artistic Director of Lookingglass Theatre Company in Chicago (2011 Regional Theatre Tony Award). She is a member of the Dramatists Guild, the Television Academy, WGAE, AEA, SAG, SDC and ASCAP and an alumna of the WP Playwrights Lab and Northwestern University. A fourth generation Chicagoan, she now lives in Brooklyn with her family.

-MORE-

TALKS & EVENTS - Full Details

Visit americanstage.org/STRANGERS and click the TALKS & EVENTS tab for a full listing of events.

Sunday, July 2 at 1PM

Spotlight Series: FOREWORD

GUEST SPEAKERS: Janis Stevens and Cast Members

Take your theatre going experience to the next level with an informative and entertaining lecture. Professor Emerita, Dedee Aleccia, will speak on the history, context, and characters of SEX WITH STRANGERS. Director Janis Stevens and cast members also join the conversation to explore the process of the production and its artistry.

Wednesday, July 19

PRIDE Night

Mixer at 6PM | Performance at 7PM

Spend a night OUT at American Stage! Before the performance, mix and mingle with friends old and new, and enjoy a BOGO special on our signature cocktail. Use code PRIDE for \$5 off tickets.

Thursday, July 20

Young Americans Night

Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Young Americans are invited to enjoy **SEX WITH STRANGERS** with BOGO Specialty Drinks plus a special chatback following the evening's performance.

YOUNG AMERICANS between the ages of 21-29 can access \$15 tickets with promo code UNDER30. Code can only be used for one ticket per order when purchased online. Otherwise you can call the Box Office at 727-823-7529 or email youngamerican@americanstage.org. Tickets can be converted to a Young Americans Pass before or after the evening's performance at the Box Office. Young Americans Passholders get **unlimited** access to theatre, comedy, music, improv and more – whenever and however often they choose!

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK

Thursday, July 20*

Sunday, July 23

Sunday, July 30

Post-Performance conversation with the cast of SEX WITH STRANGERS

*Young American Night

-MORE-

AT A GLANCE

WHAT: American Stage presents SEX WITH STRANGERS by Laura Eason

WHERE: Raymond James Theatre
163 3rd Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

WHEN: July 12 – August 6, 2017

Preview Wednesday, July 12, 7pm, “Pay What You Can”

Preview Thursday, July 13, 8pm, \$29 tickets

Opening Night: Friday, July 14, 8pm, \$59 tickets (includes opening night reception at 7pm, and a dessert reception with the cast following the performance.)

Continues: Wednesdays-Sundays through August 6, 2017

Arrive 30 minutes early to enjoy a Prologue and SEASON-AT-A-GLANCE presentation

TIMES & PRICES:

Wednesdays 7pm, \$39 tickets – NEW TIME THIS SEASON

Thursdays 8pm, \$39 tickets

Fridays & Saturdays 8pm, \$49 tickets

Saturdays & Sundays 3pm, \$39 tickets

TALKS & EVENTS:

Spotlight Series: FOREWORD: Sun, July 2 at 1PM

PRIDE Night: Wed, July 19 | Mixer at 6PM | Performance at 7PM

Young American Night: Thurs, July 20 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK: Thurs, July 20, Sun, July 23, & Sun, July 30 (Post-Performance)

-MORE-

SERVICE & FACILITIES

Physical Accessibility: The theatre features accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, and seating.

*Displaying a valid disabled parking permit will allow you to park at City metered spaces for FREE, for as long as your event requires, including those posted with time limit signs (green signs). **This does not apply to loading zones or otherwise restricted parking signage (red signs).***

Large Print Program: Theatregoers may peruse large print programs for each Mainstage production.

Listening System: Theatregoers may enjoy the free infrared listening system from any seat.



AMERICAN STAGE

Since 1977 American Stage has been dedicated to telling meaningful, compelling stories with integrity and professionalism. As the Tampa Bay area's longest-running, most critically-acclaimed professional theatre company, we seek to bring the power of quality live theatre to each generation in our community. American Stage invites you to lean forward and experience the most captivating stories of the moment and the most relevant stories of the past. All told with passion and a commitment to excellence.

Powerful Stories. Boldly Told.

SOCIAL MEDIA



@americanstage

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION:

Phone: (727) 823-PLAY (7529)

Email: BoxOffice@AmericanStage.org

Location: 163 3rd St. North, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

####