

# PRESS RELEASE

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## ESPIONAGE THRILLER MEETS SCREWBALL ROMANTIC COMEDY IN MARYLAND ENSEMBLE THEATRE'S *THE 39 STEPS*

**Press Night:** Sunday, September 9 @ 7pm (Reception @ 6pm)  
RSVP to [dbrick@marylandensemble.org](mailto:dbrick@marylandensemble.org) or 301.694.4744

**FREDERICK, MD (August 20, 2012)** - Maryland Ensemble Theatre (MET) is kicking off its 2012-13, 15th anniversary mainstage season with *The 39 Steps*. Mix a Hitchcock masterpiece with a juicy spy novel, add a dash of Monty Python and you have *The 39 Steps*, a fast-paced whodunit for anyone who loves the magic of theatre! This 2-time Tony and Drama Desk Award-winning treat is packed with nonstop laughs, over 150 zany characters (played by a ridiculously talented cast of 4), an on-stage plane crash, handcuffs, missing fingers and some good old-fashioned romance! MET Associate Artistic Director Gene' Fouche' directs Patrick Barlow's adaptation of John Buchan's 1915 novel and the 1935 film by Alfred Hitchcock which opened on Broadway in 2008 and won the Olivier Award for Best New Comedy. The show which *The New York Times* called, "theatre at its finest" and the *New York Post* raved was, "the most entertaining show on Broadway" ended its New York run after three years and record setting number of performances for a comedy, 1,135.

In Maryland Ensemble Theatre's new production, actor Matt Baughman plays our hero, Richard Hannay, who is introduced to the espionage organizations know as "The 39 Steps" through a spy portrayed by MET company member Lisa Burl. Lisa plays all three women romantically entangled with Hannay in the show while Tad Janes, MET's Artistic Director, and Andrew Baughman quick-change their way through the dozens and dozens of other men, women and children characters. All four of the show's actors will be familiar to audiences from numerous appearances on the MET stage.

Director Gene' Fouche' is a founding member of MET and has directed dozens of productions, most recently the original show *I Am (Not) My Mother*, Christopher Durang's *Why Torture is Wrong*, and *the People Who Love Them* and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. The production team includes costumes by Tirza Fogle, set design by Greg Davis, sound design by Tom Majorov, props by Rona Mensah and lights by Tabettha White.

Playwright Patrick Barlow is an English actor and comedian. He wrote in the adaptor's forward to *The 39 Steps* (Samuel French, 2009) about his process, "One of the thrilling things about writing this was the challenge of putting an entire movie on stage – complete with train chases, plane crashes, shadowy murders, beautiful spies, trilbied heavies, dastardly villains with little fingers missing, not to mention some of the most iconic moments in the history of cinema. There is much opportunity for comedy and satire here. But it's also a love story."

The show will run from September 6 through 30 every Thursday through Sunday at the MET, located in the historic **FSK Hotel** at 31 W Patrick Street. The first Thursday performance will be a \$5 preview night (cash only at door) and the first Sunday performance will be a gala night with a reception preceding the performance sponsored by *The Greene Turtle*. Tickets are \$15 (Thursdays) through \$24 and can be purchased at 301.694.4744, [marylandensemble.org](http://marylandensemble.org) or in person at the Maryland Ensemble Theatre box office. This production is made possible in part through the support of MET's season sponsors including Comcast, The Frederick Gorilla, Key 103, Eagle 106.9, Ausherman Family Foundatoin, Mark A Pitts Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, The Gazette and both the Frederick and Maryland Arts Councils.

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Now in its fifteenth season the Maryland Ensemble Theatre produces thought-provoking theatre, fun family entertainment, artist residency programs for public schools, theatre camps, challenging classes and the side-splitting **Comedy Pigs**.

## **TICKETS/LOCATION/DATES INFORMATION**

### ***The 39 Steps:***

**By** Patrick Barlow / **From the novel by** John Buchan / **From the** Alfred Hitchcock film / **Directed by** Gene' Fouche'

**Cast:** Matt Baughman (Richard Hannay), Andrew Baughman (Clown #1), (Lisa Burl (Annabella Schmidt / Pamela / Margaret), Tad Janes (Clown #2)

### **Production Team:**

Greg Davis (Scenic Design), Tirza Fogle (Costume Design), Gene' Fouche' (Director), Devin Gather (Stage Manager), Tom Majarov (Sound Design), Courtney McLaughlin (Assistant Stage Manager), Rona Mensah (Properties), Tabetha White (Lighting Design)

**Where:** Maryland Ensemble Theatre, 31 West Patrick Street, Frederick, Maryland 21701

**Dates:** September 6 -30, Every Thursday through Sunday

**Performances:** Thursday - Saturday at 8pm, first and last Sundays at 7pm, middle two Sundays at 2pm

**Ticket Prices:** Adults \$24, Students/Seniors \$20, Thursdays \$15. (Additional service fees may apply.)

\$5 Preview tickets - No Reservations/Cash Only - The first Thursday of each show.

**Box Office:** 301-694-4744 or marylandensemble.org or at the MET (Tuesday - Thursday 10am - 3pm, Friday 11am - 3pm and 1 hour before each show.)

## **PRESS INFORMATION**

**Press Photos & Press Releases:** Dan Brick at [dbrick@marylandensemble.org](mailto:dbrick@marylandensemble.org) or 301-694-4744 x303