

PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Dan Brick
(301) 694-4744 ext. 303
dbrick@marylandensemble.org



MARYLAND ENSEMBLE THEATRE

31 W. Patrick Street, Frederick, MD 21701
301.694.4744 marylandensemble.org



MARYLAND ENSEMBLE THEATRE'S FUN COMPANY PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE OF *MY MONSTER AND ME*

April 13, 2013 - May 5, 2013 at Maryland Ensemble Theatre

FREDERICK, MD (April 1, 2013) Maryland Ensemble Theatre's (MET) family theatre, **The Fun Company**, is proud to present the World Premiere of *My Monster and Me*, a funny, touching tale about a young boy and his unlikely friend, the monster that lives under his bed!

In *My Monster and Me* a young boy named **Benji** is struggling with the anxieties of being a kid, which for Benji includes a new school and a father who is an active duty member of the military. His angst manifests itself through Benji's fear of the dark and the **Boogieman** in his closet. With the help of **Dex**, the silly monster that lives under his bed, and **Alice**, his first friend at his new school who possesses a peculiar affinity for all things strange, the ragtag gang embarks on a journey to expel the Boogieman from Benji's closet and cure him of his fear of the dark.

A perfect show for kids age seven to thirteen the playwright **Devin Gaither** also had their chaperones in mind when writing the show. "My goal was to create a piece that was not only entertaining and instructive to it's young audience members, but to the parents as well. So often children's shows forget that for every child in the audience, there is a parent that has to pay for the tickets, sit through the show, and then be willing to discuss it with their child afterwards. Children's shows should be entertaining and instructive for the parents as well. This show promotes a dialogue not only about what frightens Benji but also why he has this fear and where it really comes from", said Gaither. An ensemble member of the MET who has been involved with numerous productions as an actress and behind the scenes, Devin Gaither received a Master's of Fine Arts for Creative Writing. "*My Monster and Me* became one of the central pieces in my Master's thesis, which is a collection of short stories and one act plays focused on the role that fear plays in modern society and how it shapes us as a culture."

The show is directed by fellow MET ensemble member **Ashley Hall** who could relate to the military aspect of the story, "I grew up a 'Navy Brat', my father served in the United States Navy for 22 years." Making her MET directing debut, Hall has nothing but praise for her cast and crew. "It's been a challenge, but a lot of fun. The cast is great, I couldn't have asked for a more professional, more amazing group to do this show. Each one of them is perfect in the role or roles they play," said Hall. "**Jack Evans** is simply brilliant as Dex. He's fearless, not only in his physical antics, but he's also not afraid to act or look silly or goofy. He also brings a lot of heart to the role. **Brian Irons** is great as both the bully and the Boogieman. **Kevin Cole** as Benji does a wonderful job tapping into all those insecurities all children have and **Lori Cole** (Kevin's real life mother) plays both Benji's Mom and Alice's Mom. She manages to play both mothers with a lot of heart and sincerity, even though they're very different. **Allison Lepelletier Duvall** is wonderful as Alice, she brings a sort of **Luna Lovegood** [**Harry Potter** character] quality to the character that I absolutely adore."

Hall has also been deeply involved with the design elements. "I knew I wanted the two monster costumes to be amazing. So, I asked my friend, **Lorene Pregoner**, to help me design and build the two monster costumes. I've worked with her for over 15 years and she's such a great person to collaborate with. I couldn't be happier with Dex and the Boogieman's costumes. As for the set, **Joann Lee** has come up with something truly wonderful. It's very simple, but it reminds me a lot of **Jim Henson's** style of drawing, very whimsical and eye-catching. I also asked **Matthew Traks**, who is the co-guitarist, co-vocalist and co-songwriter for the band **Signs Point East**, to write original music for the show. Although it isn't a musical, I know that music can really enhance the feeling and mood of a show and I wanted "*My Monster and Me*" to have it's own soundtrack. I wanted a sort of **Danny Elfman** when he composes for **Tim Burton** vibe. Matt sent me a few of the tracks the other day and I was blown away. He's come up with some wonderfully beautiful, amazing pieces for the show."

My Monster and Me promises to be a great show for children (and adults) of all ages. Lots of laughs and a lot of heart. "I think that when we finally mesh all the elements together- costumes, sets, lights, sound and actors- it's going to be simply magically," added Hall. All performances of *My Monster and Me* are at Maryland Ensemble Theatre, located in the historic **FSK Hotel at 31 W Patrick Street**. The show runs every Saturday from April 13 to May 5 at 2 p.m., and Sunday April 28 and May 5 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 (plus a \$1.50 service fee), and may be purchased by phone at (301) 694-4744, online at marylandensemble.org or in person at the MET box office.

Opening May 25, ***Dakota Kane and the Quest for the Golden Mole*** by **Matt Lee** will conclude The Fun Company's 2012-13 season. The Fun Company seeks to provide high quality, affordable theatre for the whole family that is both educational and entertaining by presenting a yearly Family Theatre Series, an In School Productions outreach program and Fun Camp. The 2012-13 Fun Company season is made possible in part through the support of season sponsors **PNC Bank** and **GTI Federal**.

MY MONSTER AND ME INFORMATION

By Devin Gaither

Directed By Ashley Hall

Featuring: Kevin Cole (Benji), Lori Cole (Benji's Mom/Alice's Mom), Allison Lepelletier Duvall (Alice), Jack Evans (Dex), Brian Irons (bully/Boogieman), Mathew Williams (Salazar -Voice)

Production: Joann Lee (Set Design), Ken Poisson (Sound Design), Sarah Shulman (Lighting Design), Vanessa Strickland (Stage Manager), Matthew Traks (Original Music), Ashley Hall, Lorene Pregoner & MaryBeth Pregoner (Costume Design)

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

Dates: April 13 - May 5, 2013

Performances: Saturdays @ 2pm, Sundays (4/28, 5/5) @ 2 p.m.

Ticket Prices: All Tickets: \$12 (plus a \$1.50 service fee)

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

marylandensemble.org/press

Press Contact: Dan Brick - dbrick@marylandensemble.org or 301-694-4744 ext. 303