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ArtsEmerson Announces ERNEST SHACKLETON LOVES ME September 20 Through October 4, 2015 Emerson/Paramount Mainstage, Boston

The press performance is Wednesday, September 23, 7PM. [Click here](#) to RSVP.

[BOSTON, MA – August 12, 2015] ArtsEmerson, under the leadership of Polly Carl, David Dower and David Howse, kicks off its 2015-2016 Season with **Ernest Shackleton Loves Me**, featuring Valerie Vigoda and Wade McCollum, with direction by Lisa Peterson, musical direction by Ryan O’Connell, and book written by Tony Award winner Joe DiPietro. **Ernest Shackleton Loves Me** is presented with special arrangement by Matthew Kwatinetz and performs September 20 through October 4, 2015 at the Emerson/Paramount Mainstage located at 559 Washington Street in Boston’s historic theatre district. Tickets are \$25-65 and may be purchased by calling 617.824.8400 or online at www.artsemerson.org. Group and student discounts are available.



About Ernest Shackleton Loves Me

Kat is a single mom trying to make ends meet as a working artist/musician. After being fired from her day job as a video game music composer, she experiences an extreme bout of insomnia during which she is contacted by none other than the legendary gentlemen-explorer, Ernest Shackleton! Together, the two embark on an Antarctic quest and forge a time-traveling love affair for the ages. Complete with a tongue-in-cheek script by Tony-Award winner Joe DiPietro (*Memphis*) and live accompaniment from Valerie Vigoda and Wade McCullum, **Ernest Shackleton Loves Me** is a geeky, high-tech musical adventure about how a little courage and determination can help us overcome all odds. [Click here](#) to view the video trailer.

“In the same spirit of work like Cheryl Strayed’s *Wild*, **Ernest Shackleton Loves Me** is really about one woman’s journey in finding her inner strength and resilience,” says Polly Carl, ArtsEmerson Creative

Director. “Kat’s a single mother, trying to make ends meet, getting through the day to day. She is truly a protagonist for our times.”

“Two things that are extraordinary about this piece: the art and the artists,” adds David Dower, ArtsEmerson Artistic Director. “The set is a multi-media extravaganza. The performers, Valerie Vigoda and Wade McCollum, are fierce musicians and ferociously funny. Put them under the direction of the Lisa Peterson (ArtsEmerson alum who directed **An Iliad** starring Dennis O’Hare) and you have one fun, wild ride to start our 2015/16 Season.”

Ernest Shackleton Loves Me

September 20 through October 4, 2015

Emerson/Paramount Mainstage

Presented with special arrangement by Matthew Kwatinetz, NYC

Book by Joe DiPietro

Music by Brendan Milburn and Lyrics by Valerie Vigoda

Directed by Lisa Peterson with Musical Direction by Ryan O’Connell

Featuring Valerie Vigoda and Wade McCollum

Performance Schedule:

Sunday, September 20, 2015	2PM	
Tuesday, September 22, 2015	7:30PM	
Wednesday, September 23, 2015	7PM	
Thursday, September 24, 2015	7:30PM	
Friday, September 25, 2015	8PM	post-performance lobby chat
Saturday, September 26, 2015	2PM	
Saturday, September 26, 2015	8PM	post-performance lobby chat
Sunday, September 27, 2015	2PM	
Tuesday, September 29, 2015	7:30PM	
Wednesday, September 30, 2015	7:30PM	
Thursday, October 1, 2015	7:30PM	
Friday, October 2, 2015	8PM	post-performance lobby chat
Saturday, October 3, 2015	2PM	
Saturday, October 3, 2015	8PM	post-performance lobby chat
Sunday, October 4, 2015	2PM	

About the Artists

Valerie Vigoda is a classically trained musician who has toured the world with Cyndi Lauper (opening for Tina Turner and Cher), Joe Jackson, and the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. She founded GrooveLily (originally The Valerie Vigoda Band) in 1994, with the critically acclaimed CD “Inhabit My Heart.” Valerie is a 2009 winner of the ASCAP Foundation Richard Rodgers New Horizons Award, as well as a two-time winner of the Jonathan Larson Award for Excellence in Writing for the Theatre.

Wade McCollum originated the role of Shackleton at both the world premiere in Seattle and more recently at George Street Playhouse. Broadway: **Wicked**-the witch’s father, first national tour of **Priscilla, Queen of the Desert** as Tick/Mitzi, **Jersey Boys** -Norm. Other favorite roles include: The Velociraptor of Faith in the off-Broadway musical **Triassic Park**, Prior in **Angels in America**, Dracula in Steven Dietz’s **Dracula**, Puck in **A Midsummer Night’s Dream**, Crumpet in **The Santaland Diaries**, the Emcee in **Cabaret** (Dallas Fort Worth Critics Circle Award for Best Actor), Charlotte in **I Am My Own Wife**, Batboy in **Batboy the Musical** and Hedwig in **Hedwig and the Angry Inch** for which he garnered Backstage’s Garland Award and the Los

Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Actor and Ovation award for best musical. While in Los Angeles, Wade originated the role of Woody in Milburn/ Vigoda's *Toy Story: the Musical* in several workshops for Disney. Wade can currently be seen on the popular BroadwayWorld Web series *Submissions Only!*

Joe DiPietro is a Broadway veteran who was nominated for a 2012 Tony Award for *Nice Work If You Can Get It* and won Best Book and Best Score Tony Awards for *Memphis*, which was also awarded the 2010 Tony Award, Drama Desk Award, and Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Musical. His other shows include *All Shook Up; I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* (the longest running musical revue in Off-Broadway history); *The Toxic Avenger*, and *The Thing About Men* (both winners of the Outer Critics Circle Award for Best Off-Broadway musical).

Brendan Milburn is an accomplished record producer and has done a lot of arranging for GrooveLily. Seth Rogovoy wrote: "Milburn is a deft pianist, his nimble finger work doing double-duty as the band's bassist and provider of its harmonic foundation, delivered with the jazzy sophistication of Steely Dan's Donald Fagen and the rock and roll theatrics of Billy Joel." Brendan's music and lyrics have, and will, be featured in a number of off and on Broadway shows.

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College. Through its international theater programming and local community partnerships ArtsEmerson serves the city of Boston, the Emerson community (students, faculty and staff), and the global field of performance practice. Founded in 2010, the same year that the U.S. Census confirmed Boston as a majority-minority city, ArtsEmerson is committed to building a cultural institution that embraces and reflects the changing demographics of the City of Boston. ArtsEmerson operates from the core belief that the arts are for everyone. For more information on ArtsEmerson, visit www.artsemerson.org.

ArtsEmerson's History

Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard, ArtsEmerson is designed to address gaps in Boston's cultural landscape through international programming and inviting new audiences into Emerson College's downtown venues. ArtsEmerson quickly established a reputation for putting great work from around the world on its stages—work that emanates from the language of theater, yet pushes the boundaries into dance, music, and opera.

ArtsEmerson's first seasons focused on building a world-class cultural institution that achieved visibility and a leadership role in the city in short order. By 2012, *Boston Magazine* named ArtsEmerson the Best Theatre in Boston. By December of 2013, WBUR critic Ed Seigel cited in his annual "Best of" round-up, saying: "In four short years, [they] have established ArtsEmerson as one of the most important cultural institutions in New England." In 2015, ArtsEmerson repeated as Boston Magazine's Best Theatre in Boston, this time with a special citation for our dual focus on quality programming and deep community involvement. ArtsEmerson continues to evolve its practice on both pillars: artistic excellence and civic impact, committed to building an audience for the work that reflects the diversity of Boston's demographics, and to establishing ArtsEmerson as an active civic partner in Boston.

In 2015 Orchard moved into the role of Creative Consultant. Currently ArtsEmerson is led by Artistic Director, David Dower, Creative Director, Polly Carl, and Managing Director, David Howse. This highly innovative, shared leadership model reflects the organization's values — that multiple voices are essential to leading a 21st century arts organization.

ArtsEmerson's Programming

- **Performing Arts:** ArtsEmerson presents live performance from around the world in its downtown venues. It uses its internal curatorial expertise in conjunction with the curatorial expertise of its community partners to present work that reflects the multicultural vibrancy of Boston. Whether the work comes from South Africa, Russia, Chile, or Roxbury the artists on ArtsEmerson's stages are pushing the boundaries of form, inviting provocative conversations, and fostering connection and collaboration with its growing and evolving audience.
- **Film:** ArtsEmerson uses the same curatorial approach to present films from around the world, supporting a variety of partnerships with local community organizations including the Boston International Film Festival, the Asian American Film Festival, and the Boston LGBT Festival. ArtsEmerson also presents a *Live on Screen* series of some of the best theatre captured on film from the National Theatre in London, the Royal Shakespeare Company, and Shakespeare's Globe.
- **Music:** *Black Box Sounds* brings local Boston bands to the Black Box space (in the Emerson/Paramount Center) in an effort to revitalize the downtown music scene.
- **Civic Engagement:** A series of initiatives aimed at ArtsEmerson's core beliefs that the arts belong to everyone, that art is a common right, and civic engagement is part of ArtsEmerson's DNA. All Civic Engagement initiatives spring from a commitment to community partnerships and evolve through a "curation by listening" process, developed in dialogue with these partners. These initiatives include:
 - **The Seats Lab**, a research effort that uses seats at ArtsEmerson performances as a tool for understanding barriers to participation. Seats Lab initiatives include:
 - **The Ambassadors Project**, where current non-theatergoers in diverse communities see theater around the city for a full year as we, together, try to diagnose and dismantle the barriers to regular theatergoing.
 - **The Play Reading Book Club**, meets in branch libraries throughout the city, to test the theory that theater literacy fosters a greater sense of adventure and resilience in theatergoing for infrequent attenders.
 - **The Audience Residencies**, a series of initiatives designed and led by audience members with innovative ideas of how to increase participation with ArtsEmerson programming among their own networks and communities.
 - **Welcome to Boston Cast Parties**, where local Boston artists and organizations welcome visiting artists with an evening of performance, music, and food at a neighborhood venue.
 - **A Public Dialogue Series**, built around ArtsEmerson's performing arts season where artists and audiences talk as a community about cultural tensions and social challenges for the sake of building civic cohesion.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, with sites in the Netherlands and Los Angeles, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,750 undergraduates and 750 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its study and internship programs in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., the Netherlands, London, China and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 32,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communications and the arts. For more information, visit emerson.edu.

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