



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Villanova Theatre Presents *Beyond Therapy*

Christopher Durang's Hilarious Comedy Launches the 2007-2008 Season

Villanova Theatre will kick off its 2007-2008 theatre season with *Beyond Therapy*, a hilariously off-kilter comedy by Christopher Durang. The production marks theatre professor Dina Amin's Villanova Theatre directorial debut. *Beyond Therapy* runs October 2 –14 in Vasey Hall on the Villanova University campus. Performances are held at 8:00pm on Tuesday – Saturday and at 2:00pm on Saturday and Sunday. Tickets cost \$18-\$24, with discounts for seniors, students, and groups, and may be ordered by calling the Villanova Theatre Box office at (610) 519-7474. Additional information is available online at www.theatre.villanova.edu.

In *Beyond Therapy*, two singles seek love and find sanity (sort of) as they navigate the neuroses of their not-so-stable psychoanalysts. Prudence's therapist swears a lot and calls her nasty names; Bruce's shrink encourages barking as a form of self-expression. When a personal ad brings them together, the hapless couple must come to their senses and overcome their zany therapists' "help" to find romance in a whacked-out world.

Director Dina Amin appreciates the quick wit of the script, but also recognizes the human emotions that bring *Beyond Therapy*'s characters to the brink of insanity. "The characters in this play exist in a world where everything is permitted," says Amin. "That makes it very difficult for them to figure out the best way to find happiness. They spend a lot of time wavering, trying to work through things with their therapists, but ultimately each one has to decide whether or not to compromise on issues that are important to them. As bizarre as the situations are, we find ourselves reflected in the characters' dilemmas, and that empathy is where the comedy comes from."

Christopher Durang was born in Berkeley Heights, New Jersey, on January 2, 1949. He received a B.A. in English from Harvard University and an M.F.A. in Playwriting from the Yale

School of Drama. He is the recipient of playwriting grants from CBS, the Rockefeller and the Guggenheim Foundations; a Tony Award nomination for *A History of the American Film*, Obie Awards for *Sister Mary Ignatius* and *The Marriage of Bette and Boo* and a Drama Desk nomination for acting.

As assistant professor of Arab Literature & Culture and Theatre, Amin is the first Villanova University professor to be hired as an equal member of two departments. She holds a Ph.D. in Dramatic Literature from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.F.A. in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University. She did her graduate and undergraduate studies at the American University in Cairo in English and Comparative Literature. She was singled out nationwide to receive an ITT Scholarship from the Fulbright Commission in Egypt to study theater in the U.S. At Carnegie Mellon University, Amin was the recipient of the West Coast Drama Clan Award (in honor of William Ball) for best director. She directs in the U.S. and Egypt, in Arabic and English. Her most recent production was *al-Jabal (The Mountain)* by Naguib Mahfouz at Villanova University in 2007. Before that her production of *Tawfiq al-Hakim's Suq al-Hamir (The Donkey Market)* in 2005 was the first ever Arab play in the Arabic language at Georgetown University. Her staging of a one-woman show, *Al-Meshwar al-Akhir (The Last Walk)*, received an award of excellence in the Amman Festival for Free Theater in Jordan in 2000. Amin has published in major academic journals and has translated a number of Arabic plays into English; she received an award from the Association of American Teachers of Arabic for her translation of *al-Shakhs (The Person)* by Egyptian playwright Alfred Farag.

The cast of *Beyond Therapy* includes graduate theatre students Carl C. Granieri, Rachel Anne Stephan, Amy Walton, Luke Moyer, Jeffrey S. Paden, and Lance Mekeel, as well as Janet McWilliams, a Villanova sophomore. Four of the cast members appeared at Villanova Theatre last season: Granieri in *Three Sisters*, Mekeel in *The Tempest*, and Walton and McWilliams in *The Robber Bridegroom*.

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VILLANOVA THEATRE FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Beyond Therapy*

WHERE: Villanova Theatre
Vasey Hall
Lancaster & Ithan Avenues
Villanova, Pennsylvania

WHEN: October 2 – October 14, 2007
Preview: Tuesday, October 2, at 8:00pm
Opening: Wednesday, October 3, at 8:00pm
Performs Tuesday-Saturday at 8:00pm
Saturday and Sunday at 2:00pm

TICKET PRICES: \$20.00 Tuesday Preview
\$22.00 Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday
\$24.00 Friday/Saturday/Sunday

CAST: *Bruce* Carl C. Granieri
Prudence..... Rachel Anne Stephan
Dr. Stuart Framingham..... Jeffrey S. Paden
Mrs. Charlotte Wallace..... Amy Walton
Bob Luke Moyer
Andrew Lance Mekeel
Coffee House Singer Janet McWilliams

WRITTEN BY: Christopher Durang

DIRECTED BY: Dina Amin

SCENIC DESIGN: Carrie Ballenger

COSTUME DESIGN: Susan Shaeffer

LIGHTING DESIGN: Jerold R. Forsyth

SOUND DESIGN: Bill Moriarty

DRAMATURG: Callie Hisek

TICKETS: (610) 519-7474

INFORMATION: www.theatre.villanova.edu