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GRIFFIN THEATRE COMPANY CLOSSES 23RD SEASON WITH MIDWEST PREMIERE OF BATHSHEBA DORAN'S "KIN"

Chicago, IL, March, 2012 –The Griffin Theatre Company will close its 23rd season with the Midwest premiere of Bathsheba Doran's **KIN**. **Press opening is Sunday, May 6, 2012 at 3:00pm (April 28 – June 10, 2012)**. Tickets are on sale now at Theatre Wit, (773) 975-8150, or online at www.theaterwit.org.

KIN is a drama with humor that explores the complexities of family ties, as two people, an American scholar and an Irish personal trainer, make the difficult choice of whether or not to come together. It doesn't take long to discover that each person comes bound to their extended families, and that those lines of people and how they are knotted to them will need to be faced if they are to succeed in being together. Messy and sensitive, joyful and devastating, **KIN** chronicles the gradual coming together of a new family. Across two continents, spanning seven years, we watch the lives of ten people who must connect...for better or for worse.

The play continues the Griffin Theatre Company tradition of inter-generational drama that explores the necessity of community in people's lives. **KIN** also reinforces the Griffin's commitment to the next generation of artists by bringing new work to Chicago audiences. **KIN** marks the Griffin's 8th Midwest premiere in the last 5 seasons. Originally produced off-Broadway at Playwrights Horizons, the original production was directed by Sam Gold. Charles Isherwood of the New York Times called **KIN** *"simply terrific, perhaps the finest new play of the season to date. It would be a shame if its many virtues were to be overlooked amid the hollow, distracting commercial babble of the Broadway spring season."*

KIN marks the Griffin directing debut of Jess McLeod, who previously served as Associate Director for the Griffin's hit production of **SPRING AWAKENING**. A recent graduate from Northwestern University's MFA directing program, under the tutelage of Anna D, Shapiro, Ms. McLeod's recent work includes directing **L-VIS LIVE!** at Victory Gardens as well as Suzan Lori Parks' **VENUS** for the inaugural **NEXT UP** series at Steppenwolf.

The **KIN** cast includes Shane Kenyon as Sean and Stacie Beth Green as Anna, both making their Griffin debuts, as well as Maggie Cain, Sandy Elias, John Fenner Mays, Susan Monts-Bologna, Tim Musachio, Ann Sonnenville, and Rani Waterman.

The Technical and Design team for **KIN** includes: Emily Tarleton (Costumes), Scott Mallary (Lights), Scott Davis (Set), Rick Sims (Sound), Sarah Burnham (Props) and Becky Bishop (Stage Manager).

BIOS OF ARTISTIC TEAM

Jess McLeod (Director) is an Associate Artist at The Music Theatre Company in Highland Park and just directed poet Kevin Coval's one-man exploration of the white rapper, *L-Vis Live!*, at Victory Gardens. Her graduate shows at Northwestern included *Venus* (co-produced by Steppenwolf), *In Trousers*, *Mourning Becomes Electra* and several new plays through "Master Clash," the MFA Writer/Director short play festival she co-created. New York credits include Joyce Carol Oates's *The Corn Maiden* (co-adapted with Justin Swain), *Mr. Kolpert*, Rachel Axler's *Kitchen Sink*, Joe Keenan's *The Times*, Harrison David Rivers' *Fell* and *The Last Five Years*. From 2005-08, Jess served as Director of Programming for The New York Musical Theatre Festival, where she oversaw all curating and directed pop/musical theatre fusion concerts like *The Unauthorized Musicology of Ben Folds*. In the pipeline: new musical *The 1* with Matt Gould and Meredith Friedman, the utterly non-musical *Untitled Ayn Rand/Alan Greenspan Project*, *Zanna, Don't!* and other soon-to-be-announced musical projects at TMTC. Jess has assisted at Steppenwolf, Williamstown, Victory Gardens, City Center Encores!, OSF, Chicago Shakes and Griffin, where she served as Associate Director on Jonathan Berry's production of *Spring Awakening*.

Bathsheba Doran (Playwright) grew up in London and studied at Cambridge University. Doran's plays include *Parents' Evening* (Flea Theater); *Living Room in Africa* (Off-Broadway for Edge Theater); *Nest* (commissioned and produced by Signature Theater in Arlington, VA); *Until Morning* (BBC Radio 4); adaptations of *The Blind*, *Peer Gynt* and *Great Expectations*; and her play for young audiences, *Ben and The Magic Paintbrush* (South Coast Rep). She is a recipient of the Helen Merrill Playwriting Award and three Lecomte du Nouy Lincoln Center playwriting awards. She was a Cherry Lane Mentor Project Fellow and a Susan Blackburn Award finalist. Her work has been developed by MTC, the O'Neill Theatre Center, Lincoln Center, Sundance Theater Lab and Playwrights Horizons. Doran studied at Cambridge and Oxford universities before working as a television comedy writer with the BBC. She moved to the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship in 2000, and received her MFA from Columbia University and went on to become a playwriting fellow of The Juilliard School. She is currently under commission from Atlantic Theater and Playwrights Horizons and Schtanhaus in London. She is currently a writer on HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*.

SCHEDULE

KIN begins preview performances Saturday, April 28, 2012. Previews continue Saturday, May 3, 4 and 5, at 7:30pm and Sunday, April 29th at 3:00pm. **Press opening is Sunday, May 6, 2012 at 7:00pm.** Tickets to **KIN** range from \$25-\$35, and are on sale now. The regular run performances (May 10 – June 10, 2012) are Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 pm. and Sunday at 3:00pm. Preview tickets are priced at \$25.00 each and regular run tickets are priced at \$35.00 each. Tickets are on sale now at Theater Wit, 1229 West Belmont Avenue in Chicago, (773) 975-8150, or online at www.theaterwit.org. Senior and student discounts and group rates are available. To learn more about **KIN** please visit GriffinTheatre.com.

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