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M E D I A   R E L E A S E

Milwaukee Chamber Theatre presents

## **Driving Miss Daisy**

by Alfred Uhry

**October 13-30, 2011**

Broadway Theatre Center's Cabot Theatre

**Milwaukee, WI. ... Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (MCT)** presents Alfred Uhry's Pulitzer Prize-winning classic **DRIVING MISS DAISY**, October 13-30, 2011. MCT co-founder **Ruth Schudson** will perform the title role – which also marks **her 65<sup>th</sup> production with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre**. **DRIVING MISS DAISY** performs in the Broadway Theatre Center's Cabot Theatre in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward.

*When Daisy Werthan, rich, sharp-tongued and Jewish, demolishes yet another car, her son, Boolie, decides it's time to hire a chauffeur. Little does he realize that the thoughtful, but uneducated, Hoke Coleburn will become a major influence in Daisy's life over the next 25 years.*

Set in Atlanta, Georgia between 1948 and 1973, **DRIVING MISS DAISY** is often praised for its sincerity, dignity and honesty in exploring the sensitive issues of racial, geographical and religious prejudice.

**Ruth Schudson** returns to the MCT stage in the role of Daisy Werthan. Schudson and the late Montgomery Davis co-founded Milwaukee Chamber Theatre in 1975 with a production of Shaw's **DON JUAN IN HELL**. At MCT, Schudson has played not only a mother and a wife, but also a teenager, Ethel Rosenberg, a princess, Gertrude Stein, a serpent and even a rabbi. Her 65 productions with the company include **84 CHARING CROSS ROAD, WELL, MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION, THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL, ANGELS IN AMERICA: PERESTROIKA, THE ROAD TO MECCA, FAITH HEALER, LOST IN YONKERS, TALKING HEADS, THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS** and many more.

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DRIVING MISS DAISY playwright **Alfred Uhry** is distinguished as the only American playwright to have won a Pulitzer Prize, an Academy Award and two Tony Awards. A graduate of Brown University, Uhry began his professional career writing for musical theatre, often working for Frank Loesser. His first major success came in 1975 when he wrote the book and lyrics for THE ROBBER BRIDEGROOM. His first play, **DRIVING MISS DAISY**, which is based on Uhry's own grandmother and her chauffeur, opened off Broadway in 1987 starring Dana Ivy, Morgan Freeman and Ray Gill. It ran for three years and **won the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for Drama** and the Outer Critics Circle Award. The play was adapted by Uhry for the 1989 screen version featuring Jessica Tandy, Morgan Freeman and Dan Aykroyd. The film was nominated for nine Academy Awards and won four: Best Picture, Best Actress, Best Makeup and Best Screenplay for Uhry. In October 2010, a revival of **DRIVING MISS DAISY** opened in New York, starring James Earl Jones, Vanessa Redgrave and Boyd Gains, marking the play's first time on Broadway. Uhry received Tony Awards for Best Play for THE LAST NIGHT OF THE BALLYHOO (1997) and Best Book of a Musical for PARADE (1999). His other recent work includes the plays WITHOUT WALLS, EDGARDO MINEA and the book for the musical LOVEMUSIK.

MCT Producing Artistic Director **C. Michael Wright** will direct DRIVING MISS DAISY. In addition to Ms. Schudson, the cast includes **Jonathan West** (TALLEY'S FOLLY) as Daisy's son Boolie Werthan and, making his MCT debut, **Michael A. Torrey** as Hoke Coleburn.

**DRIVING MISS DAISY** is the sixth production in Milwaukee Chamber Theatre's **Pulitzer Prize series**. As a part of MCT's long-standing tradition of producing great literary works, in 2007 Producing Artistic Director C. Michael Wright committed to producing a Pulitzer Prize-winning play for five consecutive seasons. Wright decided to conclude the series with TWO Pulitzer Prize-winning plays: 1981 winner CRIMES OF THE HEART and 1988 winner DRIVING MISS DAISY. Previous productions in the series are the 1980 winner TALLEY'S FOLLY (2007-2008 season), 2007 winner RABBIT HOLE (2008-2009), 1953 winner PICNIC (2009-2010) and 1965 winner THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES (2010-2011).

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**CAST**

Daisy Werthan ..... Ruth Schudson  
 Hoke Coleburn ..... Michael A. Torrey  
 Boolie Werthan ..... Jonathan West

**PRODUCTION STAFF**

Director..... C. Michael Wright  
 Scenic Designer ..... Steve Barnes  
 Costume Designer..... Kristina Van Slyke  
 Lighting Designer ..... Noele Stollmack  
 Sound Designer..... Phil Wooding  
 Properties Master ..... Nikki Kulas

**PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

October 13-30, 2011				
Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	13 7:30 p.m. <sup>P</sup>	14 8:00 p.m. <sup>O</sup>	15 8:00 p.m.	16 2:00 p.m.
19 7:30 p.m. <sup>V</sup>	20 7:30 p.m. <sup>T</sup>	21 8:00 p.m.	22 4:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	23 2:00 p.m.
26 1:00 p.m.*	27 7:30 p.m. <sup>T</sup>	28 8:00 p.m.	29 4:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	30 2:00 p.m.

P = Preview; O = Opening; T = Talkback; V = ViewPoints; \*= Talk Theatre

**Special Events:**

- Pre-performance **ViewPoints**: a free, pre-show presentation by UW-Milwaukee history professor Dr. Rob Smith, Wednesday, October 19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Skylight Bar & Bistro. Dinner is served in The Skylight Bar & Bistro from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.
- Pre-performance **Talk Theatre**: MCT Producing Artistic Director C. Michael Wright will lead a lively and informative chat with Lighting Designer Noele Stollmack beginning at 12:00 noon before the matinee on Wednesday, October 26. Lunch is served in The Skylight Bar & Bistro from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Post-performance **Talkbacks**: Post-show discussion with the cast following performances on Thursday, Oct. 20 and Thursday, Oct. 27.

**DRIVING MISS DAISY** performances will take place October 13-30, 2011 in the Broadway Theatre Center’s Cabot Theatre, 158 N. Broadway in Milwaukee’s Historic Third Ward. Tickets, \$15-\$40, are available Monday through Saturday from noon-6:00 p.m. at the Broadway Theatre Center Box Office, 158 N. Broadway, or by phone at **(414) 291-7800**. Tickets can be purchased online - 24 hours a day at **milwaukeechambertheatre.com**. Group, student and senior discounts are also available. Season ticket packages can be purchased by calling (414) 276-8842. For more information, visit [milwaukeechambertheatre.com](http://milwaukeechambertheatre.com). **DRIVING MISS DAISY** is sponsored by John E. Holland.

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**RUTH SCHUDSON – Daisy Werthan**

DRIVING MISS DAISY marks co-founder Ruth Schudson's 65<sup>th</sup> production with Milwaukee Chamber Theatre. Her numerous MCT highlights include WELL, 84 CHARING CROSS ROAD, MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION, THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL, ANGELS IN AMERICA: PERESTROIKA, THE ROAD TO MECCA, THE FAITH HEALER, LOST IN YONKERS, TALKING HEADS, THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER MEDALS, MISALLIANCE, KIMBERLY AKIMBO, GHOSTS, JOE EGG, THE IMMIGRANT and many others. A graduate of Chicago's Goodman School of Drama, she has also performed with Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Next Act Theatre, Skylight Opera Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre and Princeton's McCarter Theatre, among others. Her film credits include *The Hindenburg* and a featured role in *Baraboo*.

**MICHAEL A. TORREY – Hoke Coleburn**

Michael Torrey makes his MCT debut in DRIVING MISS DAISY. Past Milwaukee appearances include "MASTER HAROLD" ...and the boys at Next Act Theatre and A MIDNIGHT CRY, THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE and THE TRUE CONFESSIONS OF CHARLOTTE DOYLE at First Stage Children's Theater. Hailing from Chicago, he has worked with regional theatres including The Goodman, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Theatre at the Center, Tennessee Repertory Theatre, The Clarence Brown Theatre and New American Theatre.

**JONATHAN WEST – Boolie Werthan**

Jonathan West returns to MCT after appearing in TALLEY'S FOLLY. He currently serves as the managing director of Sunset Playhouse in Elm Grove. He formerly served as artistic director and co-founder of Bialystock & Bloom where he directed and performed in numerous productions. He has performed with Milwaukee Repertory Theater and Skylight Opera Theatre, among others. Also a writer, he blogs regularly at ArtsySchmartsy.com

**C. MICHAEL WRIGHT – Director, MCT Producing Artistic Director**

Since joining the MCT staff in 2005, C. Michael Wright has directed THE LION IN WINTER, THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES, THE SWEETEST SWING IN BASEBALL, PICNIC, BROOKLYN BOY, RABBIT HOLE, TALLEY'S FOLLY, TRYING, TALKING HEADS, A WALK IN THE WOODS and JOE EGG, as well as two original works, DICKENS IN AMERICA and THE DALY NEWS. Before MCT, he served as associate artistic director of Next Act Theatre, where directing credits include THE RETREAT FROM MOSCOW, "MASTER HAROLD" ...and the boys, STONES IN HIS POCKETS, FALLEN ANGELS and HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE. Since moving to Wisconsin in 1988, Michael has directed over 60 productions at companies including American Players Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Madison Repertory Theatre and Skylight Opera Theatre. Michael has been acting professionally for 34 years and has appeared in regional theatres all across the country. His most recent performances have been as Philip in MAURITIUS and Dr. Alfred Feldmann in DUET FOR ONE both at MCT and as Sancho Panza in MAN OF LA MANCHA at Skylight Opera Theatre. In 2009, Michael was honored with an "Artist of the Year" award by the City of Milwaukee Arts Board.

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**MILWAUKEE CHAMBER THEATRE**

Founded in 1975, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre (MCT) produces intimate, high-quality, professional theatrical works of literary merit that engage and challenge the audience, while employing and nurturing principally local theatre artists. Under the leadership of Producing Artistic Director C. Michael Wright and Managing Director Kirsten Mulvey, MCT performs at the Broadway Theatre Center in Milwaukee's Historic Third Ward. For more information, visit [www.milwaukeechambertheatre.com](http://www.milwaukeechambertheatre.com)