



THE MUSICAL
DIVORCE!



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**FULL CASTING IS ANNOUNCED FOR
THE WORLD PREMIERE OF ERIN KAMLER'S
"DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL,"
STARRING
RICK SEGALL, LOWE TAYLOR, MIKI YAMASHITA,
LESLIE STEVENS AND GREGORY FRANKLIN
WITH MUSICAL DIRECTION AND ARRANGEMENTS BY DAVID O
AND
DIRECTED BY RICK SPARKS**

**PREVIEW PERFORMANCES BEGIN FEBRUARY 5, 2009
WITH THE OFFICIAL PRESS OPENING ON FEBRUARY 14, 2009
AT THE HUDSON MAINSTAGE THEATRE**

LOS ANGELES, CA (December 19, 2008) – Rick Culbertson, in association with Lynn Marks, presents *DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL* at the Hudson Mainstage Theatre (6539 Santa Monica Blvd.) The producers announced the full casting of this world premiere featuring music, lyrics and book by 2008 Frederick Loewe Award-winner Erin Kamler (*Runway 69* at New Dramatists). Multi award-winning director Rick Sparks (*They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*) will direct and musical stage this comedy about one couple's hellish journey to un-tie the knot. *DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL* features musical direction and arrangements by Ovation Award-winner David O (*Ubu Roi* and Jason Robert Brown's *13*). Preview performances begin February 5, 2009 with the official press opening on February 14, 2009.

DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL stars Rick Segall as Rich Hughes (Anthony Newley's *Chaplin* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion), Lowe Taylor as Penny Bailey-Hughes (*The Marvelous Wonderettes* at the El Portal), Miki Yamashita as Laureen Grub/Therapist/Minister (National Tour of *A Chorus Line*), Leslie Stevens as Lisa Groper/Annie Hughes (Broadway's *La Cage Aux Folles*) and Gregory Franklin as Mediator/Don Hughes (Chicago Tour of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* starring Dennis DeYoung. Rehearsals begin January 6, 2009.

"I'm 'over the moon' thrilled with this amazing cast we've had the fortune to sign. Each of them brings soaring gifts and craft to Erin's intelligently written characters. And their huge comedic skills will help light the way on this journey of grief, greed, revenge, and ultimately, love," said Director Rick Sparks.

Set in present-day Los Angeles, ***DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL*** takes us on Penny and Rich's journey, as their fairy-tale marriage unravels. Denial, deception, and raw outrage collide with greedy lawyers, dramatically inclined family members, mountains of paperwork and out-to-lunch therapists. From "Till Death Do Us Part" to "I'm Living In My Parents' Basement And My Friends Forgot My Name" to the realization that each spouse is only left with "Half," ***DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL*** reminds us that laughing in the face of tragedy can sometimes be the best way to move on.

Joining the ***DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL*** creative team are set designer Danny Cistone (Falcon Theatre's *The Groovaloos*) costume designer Denitsa Bliznakova (Old Globe's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*), lighting designer Jeremy Pivnick (Rubicon Theatre's *Man of La Mancha*), sound designer Cricket S. Myers (Pasadena Playhouse's *Orson's Shadow*) and casting director Michael Donovan. Full bios for the creative team are available at www.DivorceMusical.com.

The world premiere of ***DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL*** is presented by Rick Culbertson in association with Lynn Marks.

DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL begins performance February 5, 2009 through March 29, 2009, with the official press opening on February 14, 2009. The world premiere musical plays at the Hudson Mainstage Theatre, 6539 Santa Monica Blvd. in Hollywood. Performance schedule is Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m. Tickets range from \$25.00 - \$34.99. Tickets are available by calling (323) 960-1056 or online at www.DivorceMusical.com.

CAST AND CREATIVE BIOGRAPHIES:

RICK SEGALL (Rich Hughes) was a four-year-old in 1973 when he was being described as "the boy Shirley Temple" and made his national television debut as a regular cast member on *The Partridge Family*. By the age of five, he had recorded his own album. By the age of 13, he had already been performing for a decade, been a series regular twice, done three films, and had worked with the likes of Michael Jackson, Tony Bennett, Bob Hope, Johnny Carson, Jerry Lewis, Shirley Jones, Michael Landon, Donny Osmond, George Segal, Natalie Wood, George Burns, Tim Conway, Harvey Korman, Bernadette Peters, Gilbert Cates, Dick Clark, Merv Griffin, and Mike Douglas, to name a few. Some of Mr. Segall's credits include originating the role of Sidney Chaplin in the world premiere production of Anthony Newley's *Chaplin* at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. He has also played Eugene in all three installments of Neil Simon's *Brighton Beach Memoirs* trilogy, Fagin in *Oliver*, Tevye in *Fiddler on The Roof*, Claudius in *Hamlet*, Buddy in *Come Blow Your Horn*, Danny in *Danny and The Deep Blue Sea* and Tommy in *The Music Man*. After a self-imposed hiatus for several years, Mr. Segall returns to the Los Angeles stage with great anticipation and excitement for this next phase of his already decades long career.

LOWE TAYLOR (Penny Bailey-Hughes) recently completed a run after taking over the role of Suzy Simpson in *The Marvelous Wonderettes* at The Laguna Playhouse. For the previous two years, Lowe had been the standby for ALL 4 roles in *The Marvelous Wonderettes*. She is the first actress ever to perform ALL 4 ROLES! She was also the standby for all 4 roles in *The Winter Wonderettes* (Ovation Award Nominee, Best Ensemble). Lowe has also been seen at the Chance Theater in *Sunday In The Park With George* (Dot/Marie, Chancie Award Best Actress, Best Ensemble), *Into The Woods* (Baker's Wife, Backstage West Critics Pick, Chancie Award Best Ensemble), FCLO's production of *Grease* (Marty, Backstage West Critics Pick), *PILGRIM* (Ester the Ale Girl) and *The Pajama Game* (Babe Williams). Other regional credits include *Once Upon A Mattress* (Princess Winnifred), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey), and major roles in staged readings of Musical Theatre Guilds *See Saw*, *The Man Who Would Be King* at the Rubicon, *Anne of Green Gables*, *I Come For Love* and *Star Power*. Film/TV: *Flirting With Anthony* with Mink Stole and Judy Tenuta, *Maro*, *Hotties*, *The Art of Revenge*, *On Q Live!*, *Wanted*, *Hoop Guys* and *Seeing Stars*, as well as many commercials and industrials. Lowe currently studies at Steppenwolf and The Groundlings in Los Angeles. She is a proud member of The Chance Theatre.

MIKI YAMASHITA (Laureen Grub/Therapist/Minister) was last seen performing her one-woman show, *The Geisha Next Door*, at the Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre in Hollywood. National Tour: *A Chorus Line* (Connie), Regional: *West Side Story* (Maria), *The King and I* (Tuptim), and *Jacques Brel...* (Female Lead), for which she received this review from the NY Times: "Miki Yamashita has a beautiful voice and effortless delivery." Miki was a professional improv/sketch comic at the Walt Disney World Resort, and she is the creator and co-host of *Lutz Chat*, an over-the-top cable access talk show devoted to the world of competitive figure skating, which was hailed by the Village Voice as "the funniest half-hour on TV." Episodes are now viewable at www.youtube.com/lutzchat. Principal roles on network television include *Law & Order*, *As The World Turns*, and *One Live to Live*. Miki was also a Series Lead in a comedy pilot for the Oxygen Network. She received her B.A. in English at Mount Holyoke College.

LESLIE STEVENS (Lisa Groper/Annie/Hughes) appeared on Broadway in *La Cage Aux Folles* where she originated the role of Anne, and in *Victor/Victoria* with the delightful Julie Andrews. Her Off-Broadway credits include James Lapine's *Twelve Dreams* at Lincoln Center, *Most Happy Fella* with New York City Opera, *My Fair Lady* w Kelsey Grammar and the NY Philharmonic and *Macbeth* with The Shakespeare Project as Lady MacDuff. Regionally, she has appeared in *Comedy of Errors* at Actor's Theatre of Louisville, as Miranda in *The Tempest* at North Shore, as Hippolyta in *Tis Pity She's A Whore* at L.A.'s Odyssey Theatre. Last season, Leslie was featured in award-winning productions of *Can Can* and *Ray Charles LIVE* at the Pasadena Playhouse and in Dan Mojica's *On Your Toes* with Reprise. This season she played Moonbeam McSwine in *Li'l Abner* (@ Reprise) and joined Mr. Mojica in *Bye Bye Birdie* at CLO of South Bay. Ms. Stevens has played Charity in *Sweet Charity* for Austin Musical Theatre and

Downtown Cabaret Theatre in CT., both under the direction of Scott Thompson. She was acknowledged with two regional Best Actress Awards for that role, as well as a Connecticut Critic's Circle nomination. She is a proud alumna of the fabulous Hubbard Street Dance Chicago and the Shakespeare LAB at New York's Public Theatre. She has danced in twelve productions with the LA Opera and this year she began a new chapter as a librettist for LA Opera's excellent Education and Community Programs Dept. In addition to the stage, Leslie has numerous television and film credits.

GREGORY FRANKLIN (Mediator/Don Hughes) just completed a summer 2008 Chicago run of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* by Styx rock legend, Dennis DeYoung, to sold-out audiences. Other Chicago highlights include *Galileo* at the Goodman Theatre, *Kabuki Medea* at Wisdom Bridge, Chicago and Grant Park Symphonies as a vocalist, and Ensemble Espanol as a company dancer. Los Angeles 2007-8 credits include *Glengarry Glen Ross* at The Egyptian, *Twentieth Century* at The Lillian Theatre, *Wild About Harry* at Crown City Theatre, *Man of La Mancha* and *The Winter's Tale* at A Noise Within, and the hit cabaret show by Peter Mellencamp, *Jacques Brel: A Life In Song*. He was nominated for a Best Supporting Actor Robbie Award for *Joan of Arc* at The Lobero in Santa Barbara, received a Garland Citation for Best Actor in a Musical Comedy for *The Boys From Syracuse* with Crown City Theatre, and Best Supporting Actor Ticket Holder Nomination for *Man of La Mancha* at A Noise Within. Additional west coast theatre credits include numerous productions with Actors Alley, Actor's Company, Long Beach Studio, Welk Resort, Southern Arizona Light Opera, California Music Theatre Broadway Series, Jewel Box, Theatre Geo, Celebration, Inside The Ford, Lillian, Ark, and Whitefire. Mr. Franklin performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2005. He is a recurring sketch player for Talk Show With Spike Feresten. Recent television and film credits include; *Mad Men*, *Samantha Who?*, *Close To Home*, *Elementary*, *First Date*, *Lords of the Mafia*, *Secret KGB Files*, *Inn Outside The World*, *Us vs. Them*, *5ive*, *Cyberdorm*, *Little Heroes III*, *Abe & Bruno*, *Point of Contact*, *Friendly Fire*, *Pure Love*, *Gun Head And A Choice*, and *Precious Joy* for Raw Impressions Movie Musical Festival. Mr. Franklin recently returned from Japan with a second tour with the Roger Wagner Chorale in November and December.

ERIN KAMLER (Music/Lyrics/Book) has a specific interest in writing musicals based on memoir. A native of Ann Arbor, MI, Erin began performing in musical theater at age nine, created a production company at age ten and went on to write, compose and produce fifteen full-length musicals by eighteen. A three-time winner of Stephen Sondheim's Young Playwright's Festival, Erin's plays have been staged at The Joseph Papp Public Theater and Playwright's Horizons, and she won the 1994 University of Michigan Hopwood Award for playwriting. Her musical *Runway 69* about a strip club on the eve of the Times Square clean-up, is in development at New Dramatists where it won the 2008 Frederick Loewe Award. Other projects include: *The Jews of Calabasas*, a musical about Jewish women in the suburbs of Los Angeles and *Khmer*, a musical about the aftermath of the Cambodian genocide. Erin's albums "Mantra Girl: Truth," "Mantra Girl: Trinity," and Kundalini Yoga instructional DVD's were featured on EXTRA TV,

Entertainment Weekly, in New Line Cinema's *A Man Apart*, on United Airlines' In-flight Entertainment and on KCRW and NPR Radio. Erin has performed to audiences in Japan, India, Thailand, Mexico, Italy, Turkey and throughout the United States. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence College, she is currently pursuing a graduate degree in International Public Diplomacy at USC's Annenberg School for Communication.

RICK SPARKS (Director/Musical Staging) joins *DIVORCE! THE MUSICAL* after winning every major Los Angeles Theatre Award for work as a Director, Writer, Producer, Actor, Sound Designer and Choreographer. He's helmed everything from edgy comedies, classic musicals, to raw drama, and they have inspired the press to label him a "modern impresario." *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* was the undisputed hit of its season winning a record breaking 18 awards. The following year Rick achieved further acclaim from his rock and roll theatrical event, *A Clockwork Orange*. It prompted the late great theatre critic Polly Warfield to call him "a genius director." Some of his other wins have been the Colony Theatre's *Clutter*, the Los Angeles and New York comedy hit *Down South*, and the long running Los Angeles premier of *Psycho Beach Party*. Also dear to his heart: *Dead Bride Running*, John Patrick Shanley's *Where's My Money?*, *Twentieth Century*, *Stage Struck*, *Inconceivable*, *Highballs Ahoy!*, *There's No Place Like Hollywood*, *A Charlie Brown Commercial Christmas*, *Tallulah*, *Poets Garden*, *The House of Blue Leaves*, *A Life in the Theater*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Grease*, *Hey Mr. Producer!*, *Kiss Me Kate*, and choreography for the Lily Tomlin produced *Sheila Sands Live at the Roxy!* As an Actor on Broadway his credits include *Cats*, and *Sunset Blvd.* He is an original cast member of first national company of *Les Miserables*. Other acting credits include: *West Side Story* directed by Chita Rivera, *Tony Mordente*, *Kabuki Medea* at the Kennedy Center and an award-winning portrayal as Elvis Presley in *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* at the San Diego Rep Theatre.

DAVID O (Musical Director and Arranger) is a composer, performer, and musical director whose work has been featured at Walt Disney Concert Hall, The Kennedy Center, The Mark Taper Forum, and the Hollywood Bowl, as well as other venues in Southern California and around the world. His concert compositions include the critically-acclaimed *A Map of Los Angeles* (commissioned and performed by the Los Angeles Master Chorale), *Elements*, and *Dadme*. His original musicals for families include *The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip*, *The Legend of Alex*, (Center Theatre Group's P.L.A.Y. program), *Atalanta* (based on the story from "Free to Be You and Me"), and most recently, *Imagine* (South Coast Rep). Other compositions for the theatre include the a capella score for *Hippolytos* (Getty Villa), and his Ovation Award-winning score for *Ubu Roi* (A Noise Within). His credits as Musical Director include the world premieres of *Toy Story: The Musical* (Disney Cruise Line), Jason Robert Brown's *13* (Mark Taper Forum), and the West Coast premieres of Michael John LaChiusa's *The Wild Party* and *Little Fish*. (The Blank Theater) Many Los Angeles children and their parents know David as "The Professor" for his six years of performances in Summersounds at the Hollywood Bowl (produced by the LA Philharmonic).

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Mainstage Theatre

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