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The 5th Avenue Theatre and ACT – A Contemporary Theatre present

Grey Gardens

the Unforgettable Riches-to-Rags Tale of
Jackie Onassis' Most Outrageous Relatives

March 16-May 26, 2013

*Book by Doug Wright; Music by Scott Frankel; Lyrics by Michael Korie
Directed by Kurt Beattie; Musical Staging by Noah Racey*

(Wednesday, February 27, 2013 – SEATTLE WA) Following up 2012's smash hit musical, *First Date*, **The 5th Avenue Theatre** and **ACT – A Contemporary Theatre** will join forces for a third time to produce the cult Broadway hit ***Grey Gardens***. The all-star cast of this will feature some of Seattle's most talented performers including Tony Award-nominated actress **Patti Cohenour** in a tour de force dual performance as Edith Bouvier Beale (Big Edie) in the 1940's and Little Edie in the 1970's. She is joined by **Suzy Hunt** as Big Edie in the 1970's and **Jessica Skerritt** as Little Edie in the 1940's. Also featured in this riches-to-rags tale are **Allen Fitzpatrick**, **Matt Owen**, **Mark Anders**, and **Ekello Harrid Jr.**, with young actresses **Monsterrat Fleck** and **Emerson Guettinger**. The acclaimed Broadway musical combines high drama with a brilliant score, taking audiences on an unforgettable journey from the glamorous home of two East Hampton socialites in the 1940's to a crumbling 28-room mansion housing the two notorious recluses in the 1970's.

Grey Gardens plays **March 16-May 26, 2013** (*press opening March 21*) at **The 5th Avenue Theatre** (1308 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101). Tickets (starting at \$49.00) may be purchased online at www.5thavenue.org, by phone at 206-625-1900, or at the Box Office at 1308 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle. Tickets may also be purchased at the **ACT Ticket Office**, 206-292-7676 or at www.acttheatre.org.

About the Cast

Broadway star **Patti Cohenour** makes a tour de force performance in the dual roles of Edith Bouvier Beale, a 1940s East Hampton socialite and mother to "Little" Edie, a debutante on the brink of engagement to a Kennedy. In Act 2, Cohenour changes gears to play the daughter, Little Edie in the 1970s, now a recluse caring for her mother in the crumbling estate she grew up in. Cohenour appeared at ACT previously as Florence Foster Jenkins in their production of *Souvenir*. She has performed at The 5th Avenue Theatre many times, most recently in the cast of *Damn Yankees*. Cohenour has performed on Broadway many times including *The Light in the Piazza*, *The Sound of Music* revival, *Phantom of the Opera*,

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Big River, and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. She has performed at leading houses throughout Seattle and is the recipient of a Tony nomination, two Drama Desk nominations, a Jeff Award nomination, the Clarence Derwent Award, a Theatre World Award, and three Seattle Footlight Awards.

Seattle theater veteran **Suzy Hunt** portrays the aging Edith Bouvier Beale, now called “Big Edie” in the second act. Hunt was last seen at ACT in *The Female of the Species* and *The Women*. She has performed many times at The 5th in productions of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Singin’ in the Rain*, *On the Town*, and *Cabaret*. She has performed at top regional theatres throughout the country, and throughout Seattle. Rising star **Jessica Skerritt** makes her ACT debut as “Little” Edie Beale in the first act. Skerritt was most recently seen in The 5th Avenue’s hit production of *ELF – The Musical* and has also performed in *Rodgers & Hammerstein’s Cinderella* and *Guys and Dolls*. She has been seen many times at Village Theatre, Coeur d’Alene Summer Theatre, and The Bing Crosby Theatre.

Filling out the cast are **Mark Anders** as George Gould Strong, **Allen Fitzpatrick** as Major Bouvier and Norman Vincent Peale, **Ekello Harrid Jr.** as Brooks Jr/Sr, **Matt Owen** as Joe Kennedy Jr. and Jerry. Seattle native Mark Anders recently appeared as Professor Henry Higgins in Seattle Shakespeare Company’s acclaimed production of *Pygmalion*. His previous ACT appearances include *A Marvelous Party*, *Souvenir*, and *Dirty Blonde*. Seattle theater mainstay **Allen Fitzpatrick** joins the cast after appearing in *ELF – The Musical* at The 5th Avenue Theatre. He has performed at The 5th countless times. Fitzpatrick has appeared on Broadway in *Les Misérables*, *Memphis*, *42nd Street*, *Damn Yankees*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, *Scarlet Pimpernel*, and *Passion*. **Ekello Harrid Jr.** makes his ACT Theatre debut in *Grey Gardens*. He has performed at The 5th Avenue in *On the Town* and has been seen many times at Village Theatre. **Matt Owen** recently received great acclaim as the star of *ELF – The Musical* at The 5th Avenue Theatre, where he has performed many times. As a writer, Owen’s play *The Girl in the Park* premiered in the 2010 New York Fringe Festival to great acclaim.

Child actresses **Montserrat Fleck** and **Analiese Emerson Guettinger** join the cast as young Lee and Jackie (the future Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis) Bouvier. **Make Coreley** understudies both roles.

About the Director

Kurt Beattie is the Artistic Director of ACT – A Contemporary Theatre, and has been creating theater for Puget Sound audiences for nearly 40 years as an actor, playwright, and director. His productions at ACT include *Ramayana* (with Sheila Daniels), *The Pitmen Painters*, *Double Indemnity*, *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Rock ‘n’ Roll*, *Becky’s New Car*, *Intimate Exchanges*, *First Class*, *The Pillowman*, *Mitzi’s Abortion*, *The Underpants*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *Black Coffee*, *Alki*, *Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Fuddy Meers*, *Fully Committed*, *Via Dolorosa*, and the holiday classic, *A Christmas Carol*. Elsewhere he has directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Empty Space, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Children’s Theatre, University of Washington, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Alley Theatre in Houston, and Ojai Playwrights Festival. As an actor, he has appeared in leading and major roles at ACT

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(most recently as Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*), the Seattle Repertory, Intiman, Empty Space Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, as well as many regional theatres throughout the country. Beattie is a recipient of the Theatre Puget Sound Gregory A. Falls Sustained Achievement Award and was recently selected by Arts Fund for their Outstanding Achievement in the Arts Award.

About the Music Director

Chris DiStefano raises the baton as the Music Director of *Grey Gardens*. His previous 5th Avenue credits include The Oklahoma! Project and *Rosie The Riveter* (music director). He has worked closely with many 5th Avenue productions including *ELF – The Musical Oklahoma!*, *Cinderella*, and *Titanic: The Concert*. His additional music director credits include *Sunday In The Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *The Fantasticks*, *Jane Eyre*, *Ragtime*, and *The Scarlet Pimpernel*. He also served as Associate Conductor for the national tours of *Annie* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

About the Musical Staging

The recent star of The 5th Avenue's hit production of *Meredith Willson's The Music Man*, **Noah Racey**, steps behind the scenes to create the musical staging for *Grey Gardens*. Racey has previously choreographed *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* and *Guys and Dolls* for The 5th Avenue Theatre. A graduate of Roosevelt High School, Racey made his Broadway debut in the 2001 revival of *Follies*, and has since appeared in the original casts of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* (where he was also Associate Choreographer), *Never Gonna Dance*, and *Curtains* as Bobby Pepper. Racey's choreography credits include the world premier of *Turn of the Century* at Chicago's Goodman Theatre and the 2008-09 *White Christmas* national tour. He was associate director for Jeff Calhoun's *High School Musical* and *High School Musical 2* at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, and for *Shenandoah* starring Scott Bakula at Ford's Theatre in Washington D.C. He is the founder and Artistic Director of the internationally acclaimed New York Song & Dance Company. Their feature show, *Noah Racey's PULSE*, has its world premier in Asolo Repertory's 2013 season directed by Jeff Calhoun.

The Design Team

The design team for *Gray Gardens* includes **Matthew Smucker** (Set Design), **Cathy Hunt** (Costume Design), **Mary Louise Geiger** (Lighting Design), and **Brendan Patrick Hogan** (Sound Design).

About ACT – A Contemporary Theatre

Located in the heart of downtown Seattle and serving a population of curious, open-minded, and brave audiences, ACT - A Contemporary Theatre is the only local theater dedicated to producing contemporary work with promising playwrights and local performing artists since 1965. A theater of new ideas, ACT serves as a cultural engine that makes plays, dance, music, and film that touch us. Because contemporary life demands examination, ACT is driven to inspire and strengthen our diverse community through works that advance our understanding of human life. With more than 100,000 people who attend shows annually, ACT is an interactive community where artists and the public witness, contemplate, and engage in dialogue on today's thought-provoking issues, ideas and art, presented with

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intelligence, insight, and humor.

About The 5th Avenue Theatre

The 5th Avenue Theatre is one of the nation's premier incubators for new musical theater. Since 2002, the celebrated company has produced 14 new musicals. Seven have moved on to Broadway premieres, including the recent 2012 debuts of *Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson* (formerly *Saving Aimee*) and *A Christmas Story, the Musical!* These seven Broadway musicals have earned a combined 14 Tony Awards, including two for Best Musical (*Hairspray* and *Memphis*). The 5th Avenue Theatre is also known for its world class, critically acclaimed productions of musicals chosen from both the contemporary canon and the Golden Age of Broadway.

Unique in its Chinese-inspired design, this exquisite theater opened in 1926 as a venue for vaudeville and film. In 1980, the non-profit 5th Avenue Theatre began producing and presenting top-quality live musical theater. Today, under the leadership of Executive Producer and Artistic Director David Armstrong, Managing Director Bernadine Griffin and Producing Director Bill Berry, The 5th Avenue Theatre attracts an annual attendance of more than 287,000 and ranks among the nation's largest and most respected musical theater companies.

In addition to its main stage productions, The 5th Avenue Theatre is also committed to encouraging the next generation of theatergoers through its extensive educational outreach program which includes: The Adventure Musical Theatre Touring Company, The 5th Avenue Awards Honoring High School Musical Theatre, the Student Matinee Program, and Spotlight Nights. For more information about The 5th Avenue Theatre, its season and its programs, please visit www.5thavenue.org.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Following up 2012's smash hit musical, *First Date*, **The 5th Avenue Theatre** and **ACT – A Contemporary Theatre** will join forces for a third time to produce the cult Broadway hit ***Grey Gardens***. The all-star cast of this will feature some of Seattle's most talented performers including Tony Award-nominated actress **Patti Cohenour** in a tour de force dual performance as Edith Bouvier Beale (Big Edie) in the 1940's and Little Edie in the 1970's. She is joined by **Suzy Hunt** as Big Edie in the 1970's and **Jessica Skerritt** as Little Edie in the 1940's. Also featured in this riches-to-rags tale are **Allen Fitzpatrick**, **Matt Owen**, **Mark Anders**, and **Ekello Harrid Jr.**, with young actresses **Monsterrat Fleck** and **Emerson Guettinger**. The acclaimed Broadway musical combines high drama with a brilliant score, taking audiences on an unforgettable journey from the glamorous home of two East Hampton socialites in the 1940's to a crumbling 28-room mansion housing the two notorious recluses in the 1970's.

WHEN: **Previews:** March 16-20, 2013
Opening Night: March 21, 2013 (*press night*)
Closing Performance: May 26, 2013

SHOW Tuesdays & Wednesdays – 7:30 PM

TIMES: Thursdays & Fridays – 8:00 PM
Saturdays – 2:00 PM & 8:00 PM
Sundays – 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM

No performance on April 2 and April 17.

No evening performance on March 31, May 23, and May 26.

Added 2:00 PM matinee performance on March 28, April 4, and April 18.

WHERE: ACT – A Contemporary Theatre in the Allen Arena Theatre (700 Union Street, Seattle 98101)

TICKETS: Tickets (starting at \$49.00) may be purchased via **The 5th Avenue Box Office**, 206-625-1900 or online at www.5thavenue.org. Tickets may also be purchased at the **ACT Ticket Office**, 206-292-7676 or at www.acttheatre.org.

SPONSORS:

Special thanks to The 5th Avenue Theatre's 2012/13 season co-sponsors Safeco Insurance and US Bank, as well as media sponsor, the *Seattle Times*.

ACT gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our 2013 Season Sponsors: ArtsFund, The Eulalie Bloedel Schneider Artists Fund, The John Graham Foundation, The Norcliffe Foundation, The Mayor's Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, and The Shubert Foundation.

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