

Press Release

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For immediate release:

Of Mice and Men at the Young Auditorium

On Wednesday, October 7, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. the Young Auditorium will feature The Barter Theatre's *Of Mice and Men*. John Steinbeck's captivating tale of the unique friendship between two traveling workers, George and Lennie, and their quest for the American dream is brought to life by one of the nation's oldest professional regional theatres. This program was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts. Tickets are available by calling 262-472-2222, or purchase on-line at www.uww.edu/youngauditorium.

This timeless American masterpiece illuminates the power of a dream and its ability to connect people and provide hope for a brighter future. But as all too often happens, "the best laid schemes o' mice and men" go awry in this powerful production. The Barter Theatre is America's longest-running Equity Theatre and is revitalizing its touring tradition with Steinbeck's timeless masterpiece *Of Mice and Men*.

George and his best friend Lennie are migrant ranch hands, traveling along the Salinas River in search of their next job. Lennie is strong but simpleminded; he doesn't know his own strength, and this has gotten him into serious trouble in other towns. George does the planning for the duo. They hope to one day buy a farm of their own where they can live off the "fat of the land" and Lennie can raise rabbits. Steinbeck's Nobel-Prize winning novel and play is still relevant today. Katy Brown, associate artistic director of Barter Theatre, commented on why this production is still relevant. "There is no greater need for the American Dream, whatever our definition of that may be, than when the world around us seems out of our control," Brown said. "There is something powerful in the reaching, no matter if we attain the dream or not."

You won't want to miss this classic American story performed by a classic American theatre. During the Great Depression, Barter Theatre opened its doors proclaiming, "with vegetables you cannot sell, you can buy a good laugh" beginning a grand experiment that has not only survived, but thrived. In 1946, the theatre was designated the State Theatre of Virginia. Two years later, Barter's founder Robert Porterfield received a Tony Award for his contribution to the development of America's regional theatre movement. Currently celebrating its 76th anniversary, Barter is one of our country's last year-round professional resident repertory companies with an annual attendance of up to 160,000 theatergoers — an astounding figure considering the theatre's rural Appalachian location. Famous Barter alumni include Academy Award winners Ned Beatty (*Network*), Ernest Borgnine (*Marty*), Patricia Neal (*Hud*), Gregory Peck (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) and Tony Award winner Hume Cronyn (*Hamlet*).

The cast features some of the Barter's most experienced resident actors including: John Hardy as George, Mike Ostroski as Lennie, Rick McVey, Ben Mackel, Ashley Campos, Nicholas Piper, Ezra Colon, Jasper McGruder and Sean Campos make up the rest of the cast.

Come and see this American classic, *Of Mice and Men* at Young Auditorium. Tickets are \$32/\$29/\$19 gen. public and \$16 for UW-W students. Tickets are available by calling 262-472-2222 or purchase online at www.uww.edu/youngauditorium

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