

OTHER DESERT CITIES

Jon Robin Baitz

Directed by Lindsay Posner

Previews from 13 March 2014

Press night 24 March 2014

Full Cast Announced

The full cast is announced for the UK premiere of Jon Robin Baitz's acclaimed play, *Other Desert Cities*, opening at The Old Vic on Monday 24 March with previews from Thursday 13 March. Directed by Lindsay Posner, the new production will star **Sinéad Cusack, Peter Egan, Clare Higgins, Daniel Lapaine** and **Martha Plimpton**.

Other Desert Cities is the first play in a new season of productions which will be presented in-the-round at The Old Vic. Reprising the transformation of The Old Vic's auditorium into the round, first seen for the award-winning 2008 production of *The Norman Conquests*, this ambitious project is once more made possible by the generous support of CQS. The season of productions is supported for the fourth consecutive year by Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

Other Desert Cities, is a fierce and funny drama deftly exploring family politics, love, loss and redemption. Previewing from 13 March 2014 with a press night on 24 March.

Brooke Wyeth returns to the family home in Palm Springs for the first time in six years with some incendiary news for her Republican parents Polly and Lyman, her brother Trip and her recovering alcoholic aunt Silda. She is about to publish a memoir about her family, exposing a pivotal moment in their painful and explosive past, her actions threatening to push fractured family relations to a point beyond repair.

Other Desert Cities was first seen in 2010 at New York's Lincoln Center, where it won the Outer Critics' Circle Award for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Play before enjoying even greater success on Broadway and gaining five nominations for the 2012 Tony Awards. *Other Desert Cities* was a finalist for the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Sinéad Cusack plays Polly Wyeth. This role marks her return to The Old Vic stage, having last appeared in The Bridge Project (*The Cherry Orchard* and *The Winter's Tale*). Other recent stage work includes *Juno and the Paycock* (National and Abbey Theatre), *Rock 'n' Roll* (Royal Court, West End and Broadway; 2008 Tony Award nomination for Featured Actress) and *The Birds* (Gate, Dublin). Sinéad has also played many leading roles for the RSC, including *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (also on Broadway; Tony Award

nomination for Best Actress) and *Cyrano de Bergerac*. *Our Lady of Sligo* (National, Broadway) saw her win The Evening Standard and Critics' Circle awards for Best Actress, as well as an Olivier nomination.

On screen, Sinéad has starred in *The Wrath of the Titans*, *Eastern Promises*, *V for Vendetta* and *I Capture the Castle*, and is well known to British television audiences for her roles in *A Room With A View* (ITV), the final series of *Poirot* (ITV) and *North and South* (BBC). In 2014 she will appear in the film *Eliza Graves*, alongside Michael Caine, Ben Kingsley and Kate Beckinsale, as well as the new BBC drama *37 Days*, with Ian McDiarmid and Tim Pigott-Smith.

Peter Egan plays Lyman Wyeth. Recent theatre work includes Alan Bennett's *People* (National). Peter's extensive stage roles have included Trevor Nunn's production of *Hamlet*, *Journey's End* (Cambridge Theatre, for which he received the Critics' Circle award for Best Actor), *Arms and the Man*, *You Never Can Tell*, *M Butterfly*, *Noises Off*, *Art*, *The Secret Rapture* and John Osborne's last play, *Déjà Vu*. His first television role was as Seth Starkadder in the BBC serialisation of *Cold Comfort Farm* in 1968. Other screen roles include the controversial Granada series *Big Breadwinner Hog*, the John le Carré dramatisation *A Perfect Spy*, the hit BBC sitcoms *Joint Account* and *Ever Decreasing Circles* and the drama series *Lillie* (in which he played Oscar Wilde). Peter won the BAFTA award for 'Most Promising Newcomer' for his role in the film *The Hireling*, and also went on to play the Duke of Sutherland in *Chariots of Fire* (1981). Other screen work includes *Downton Abbey* (2012 Christmas Special) and the films *Bean*, *The I Inside*, *The Wedding Date* and *Man to Man*.

Clare Higgins plays Silda Grauman. Clare is the recipient of three Olivier Awards; for *Hecuba* at the Donmar; *Sweet Bird of Youth* at the National; and *Vincent in Brixton* also at the National, West End and on Broadway (for which she also won The Evening Standard and Critics' Circle awards for 'Best Actress', and received a Tony nomination). Other notable theatre roles include Jocasta in Jonathan Kent's *Oedipus* opposite Ralph Fiennes (National), Gertrude in *Hamlet* with Rory Kinnear (National), Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman* (Lyric), *The Night of the Iguana* (Lyric), *The Fever* (Royal Court), *Phaedra* (Donmar) and *Mrs Klein* (Almeida). Film work includes the cult films *Hellraiser* and *Hellraiser II*, as well as *I Give It A Year*, *The Golden Compass* and *The Libertine*. Television audiences will know Clare from recent roles such as Mrs. Barlett in the third series of *Downton Abbey*, Lady Claudine in *Parade's End* and Joyce in *The Syndicate*.

Daniel Lapaine plays Trip Wyeth. This production sees Daniel return to The Old Vic, having recently played Eilert Loevborg in *Hedda Gabler*, opposite Sheridan Smith and Adrian Scarborough. His other theatre credits include Howard Davies' production of *All My Sons* (Apollo), *The Dance of Death* (Donmar at The Trafalgar), *Scenes from the Back of Beyond* and *F**king Games* (both Royal Court). Film work includes *Zero Dark Thirty*, *Dead in Tombstone*, *Muriel's Wedding* and *Double Jeopardy*. His many television credits include *Vexed*, *Identity*, *Vera*, *Black Mirror*, *Hotel Babylon*, *Sex the City and Me*, *Jane Hall* and *The Good Housekeeping Guide*. In 2006 he made his directorial debut with the Australian feature film, *48 Shades of Brown*.

Martha Plimpton plays Brooke Wyeth. Award-winning American actress Martha first came to public attention in the 1980's for roles in films such as *The Goonies*, *Parenthood*, Woody Allen's *Another Woman* and *Running on Empty*. She currently stars as Virginia Chance in the FOX television series *Raising Hope*, which earned her an Emmy Award nomination for 'Outstanding Lead Actress in a Comedy Series'. Other regular television roles include *The Good Wife* (for which she won the Emmy Award for 'Outstanding Guest Actress in a Drama series'), *ER*, *Grey's Anatomy* and the HBO series *How To Make It In America*.

Martha is also a respected Broadway actress. Recent work includes *Top Girls* opposite Marisa Tomei (Tony Award nomination for 'Best Featured Actress', Drama League Award Nomination for 'Distinguished Performance'), *Coast of Utopia* opposite Ethan Hawke and Billy Crudup (Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle

awards for ‘Outstanding Featured Actress’, Tony Award Nomination for ‘Best Featured Actress’) and Joe Mantello’s production of the musical *Pal Joey* (Tony, Drama Desk, Outer Critics’ Circle and Drama League award nominations). *Other Desert Cities* is to be Martha’s London theatre debut.

Jon Robin Baitz is a celebrated American playwright and is perhaps best known in this country for his internationally successful TV series, *Brothers and Sisters*, about a wealthy Californian family who grapple with love, loss and living in the modern age. His plays include: *The Substance of Fire*, *A Fair Country*, and *Ten Unknowns*, (all produced at The Lincoln Center), *The Paris Letter*, *The Film Society*, *Mizlansky/Zilinsky* and *Three Hotels* as well as a new version of Ibsen’s *Hedda Gabler*. He is the recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation Award, a Drama Desk Award, is a Guggenheim Fellow, and a Pulitzer Prize finalist for *A Fair Country*. He won a Humanitas Award for the PBS-TV’s *American Playhouse*, with his version of *Three Hotels*, which he also directed, and his version of the Australian TV mini-series, *The Slap*, begins filming this Summer.

Lindsay Posner’s most recent directing credit at The Old Vic was Terence Rattigan’s *The Winslow Boy* starring Henry Goodman, which transferred to New York in October where it enjoyed a critically acclaimed run at the Roundabout Theatre, starring Roger Rees. His productions of *Noises Off* (The Old Vic and West End) toured theatres across the UK and Ireland from March to July 2013. Lindsay was Associate Director at the Royal Court Theatre from 1987 to 1992 where his production of *Death and The Maiden* won two Olivier Awards. His many other theatre credits include *Butley* starring Dominic West (Duchess), *An Ideal Husband* starring Samantha Bond and Rachael Stirling (Vaudeville), *Fool For Love* starring Juliette Lewis (Apollo), Arthur Miller’s *A View From The Bridge* starring Ken Stott (Duke of York’s, nominated for four Olivier Awards), *Carousel* (Savoy), *Fiddler on The Roof* (Sheffield and Savoy), *House of Games*, *Tom and Viv*, *The Hypochondriac*, *Romance* (Almeida), *A Life in the Theatre* (Apollo), the world premiere of *Power* by Nick Dear, *Tartuffe* (National), *Twelfth Night*, *Volpone*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Rivals* (RSC), *Abigail’s Party* (Menier Chocolate Factory) and *Uncle Vanya* (Vaudeville).

| | |
|----------|----------------------|
| Director | Lindsay Posner |
| Designer | Robert Innes Hopkins |
| Lighting | Peter Mumford |
| Music | Michael Bruce |
| Sound | Christopher Shutt |
| Casting | Lisa Makin |

For press enquiries please contact:

Jo Allan: jo@joallanpr.com / 07889 905 850 / + 44 (0)20 7520 9392

NOTES TO EDITORS

Bank of America Merrill Lynch Corporate Responsibility

Developing solutions for economic and social challenges is at the core of Bank of America Merrill Lynch's responsibility platform. In more than 100 markets around the world, the company partners with shareholders, clients, customers and employees to create shared value that empowers individuals and communities to thrive, whilst simultaneously contributing to the long-term success of our business. Bank of America Merrill Lynch focuses on responsible business practices, environmental sustainability, advancing opportunity in local communities through education and employability programmes, investing in global leadership development, and promoting cultural understanding. By harnessing our intellectual capital, sharing knowledge and developing innovative solutions, we can provide opportunities that effect positive change for all. Learn more at www.bankofamerica.com/about and follow us on Twitter at @BofA_Community. Visit the Bank of America newsroom for more Bank of America news.

www.bankofamerica.com

About CQS

CQS is once again delighted to be supporting The Old Vic. CQS is a global multi strategy asset management firm providing investment solutions for institutional investors. Our track record is underpinned by fundamental research and quantitative analysis, with robust institutional operational and risk management platforms. We are a founding member of the HFSB and regulated by the FCA in the UK, the SFC in Hong Kong, ASIC in Australia and registered with the SEC in the US.

www.cqs.ch

About PwC

PwC helps organisations and individuals create the value they're looking for. We're a network of firms in 157 countries with more than 184,000 people who are committed to delivering quality in assurance, tax and advisory services. Tell us what matters to you and find out more by visiting us at

www.pwc.com

About American Airlines

American Airlines supports The Old Vic by providing transatlantic flights. For more information on American Airlines or our support of theatre, contact our press office at polly.tracey@aa.com

The Old Vic Season Sponsor



THE **CQS** SPACE
The Old Vic in the round

Partnering The Old Vic



The Old Vic gratefully acknowledges an award of £5 million in 2012 from the Catalyst Arts Endowment Fund, conditional on our raising £15 million match funding by 2015.



BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

Box Office: 0844 871 7628
www.oldvictheatre.com
The Old Vic, The Cut, London SE1 8NB

OTHER DESERT CITIES

Jon Robin Baitz

Thu 13 March – Sat 24 May

Previews: Thu 13 March – Sat 22 March; Press Performance: Mon 24 March at 7pm
Mon–Sat 7.30pm; Wed & Sat 2.30pm

[Please note there are no matinee performances on Saturday 15 March or Wednesday 19 March].

Captioned Performances: 29 April 7.30pm and 10 May 2.30pm
Audio Described Performance: 13 May 7.30pm

TICKETS: £10, £16, £21, £29, £43, £53

For more information regarding Premium Seats please call the box office.

CONCESSIONS

PwC tickets for Under 25s: 100 £12 tickets for all performances. Bookable in advance for the under 25s but tickets must be collected in person from the Box Office with proof of age.

Senior Citizens: Best available seats for £26 for all matinee performances only.

Groups 10+: £10 off top 3 prices for Mon - Wed eves & Wed matinees.

School Groups 10+: £12 for Mon - Wed eves & Wed matinees.

Disabled Patrons: Top 3 prices reduced to £21 for all performances

Previews: [Thu 13 Mar to Sat 22 Mar] £5 off top 3 prices (Old Vic Friends £7.50 off)

All concessions are limited and subject to availability. All 2014 ticket prices (apart from the PwC tickets for Under 25s, local residents & schools tickets) include a £1 restoration levy.