



John Steinbeck's OF MICE AND MEN

Featuring Manny Fernandes and Justin Lang as Lennie and George with (left to right): Kelly Iversen (Curley's Wife), John DeCarlo (Slim), Adam Brick (Whit), Kyle Lucy (Curley), Samuel Sherman (Carlson) and Jack Missett (Candy). Not pictured: Durwood Murphy (Crooks) and Charles Maze (The Boss). Photo by Daren Scott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: THE ENSEMBLE PROJECT at New Village Arts continues with the revered American classic OF MICE AND MEN.

"Guys like us got no families. They got a little stake and then they blow it in. They ain't got nobody in the world that gives a hoot in hell about 'em! But not us."

– George & Lennie, OF MICE AND MEN

"The deafening silence that greeted the final blackout and the cheers that followed gave witness to the enduring power of John Steinbeck's dramatization of his 1937 novel to grab its audience by the heart and never let go... timely and devastatingly effective"

- *New York Times*

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CARLSBAD, CA. September 15, 2011. New Village Arts continues Season 11: THE ENSEMBLE PROJECT with one of the best American stories of all time: John Steinbeck's *OF MICE AND MEN*. Directed by Daren Scott, *OF MICE AND MEN* is the unforgettable story of George and Lennie: two migrant workers during the Great Depression who dream of a place they can call their own, joined by an ensemble of characters each searching for their own version of the American Dream. *OF MICE AND MEN* will be playing at New Village Arts Theatre (2787 State Street, Carlsbad Village) from October 26 – November 20, 2011. The official opening night is October 29 at 8 PM. Tickets can be purchased at www.NewVillageArts.org or by calling 760-433-3245.

Steinbeck's *OF MICE AND MEN* is one of the most cherished stories in American literary history. Frequently included as required reading for most high school students, it is also one of the most banned books in American history. *OF MICE AND MEN* creates an ensemble of people all trying to find a place to belong, led by two of the best characters ever created: George Milton (actor Justin Lang) and Lennie Small (Manny Fernandes). It's been adapted for film and television many times, most recently by Gary Sinise and John Malkovich in an award-winning 1992 film version, and has even been adapted into an opera. New Village Arts brings the talent of director Daren Scott, who portrayed Lennie in a 2005 production by San Diego's Renaissance Theatre Company, to lead this production highlighting the intense, close-knit work of NVA's Ensemble.

John Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California in 1902, and spent most of his life in Monterey County, the setting of much of his fiction. He attended Stanford University intermittently between 1920 and 1926. Steinbeck did not graduate from Stanford, but instead chose to support himself through manual labor while writing. His experiences among the working classes in California lent authenticity to his depiction of the lives of the workers, who remain the central characters of his most important novels.

Steinbeck had his first success with *TORTILLA FLAT* (1935), an affectionate and gently humorous story about Mexican-Americans. Nevertheless, his subsequent novel, *IN DUBIOUS BATTLE* (1936) was notable for its markedly grim outlook. Steinbeck received even greater

acclaim for the novella *OF MICE AND MEN* (1937), a tragic story about the strange, complex bond between two migrant laborers. His crowning achievement, *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, won Steinbeck a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award. After the best-selling success of *THE GRAPES OF WRATH*, Steinbeck went to Mexico to collect marine life with the freelance biologist Edward F. Ricketts, and the two men collaborated on *SEA OF CORTEZ* (1941), a study of the fauna of the Gulf of California. The novels Steinbeck published immediately following World War Two, *CANNERY ROW* (1945), *THE PEARL*, and *THE BUS* (both 1947) were more sentimental and relaxed. Steinbeck also contributed to several screenplays. He wrote the original stories for several films, including *LIFEBOAT* (1944), directed by Alfred Hitchcock, and *A MEDAL FOR BENNY*, and wrote the screenplay for Elia Kazan's *VIVA ZAPATA!*

Steinbeck's later writings were comparatively slight works, but he did make several notable attempts to reassert his stature as a major novelist: *BURNING BRIGHT* (1950), *EAST OF EDEN* (1952), and *THE WINTER OF OUR DISCONTENT* (1961). However, none of these works equaled the critical reputation of his earlier novels. Steinbeck's reputation is dependent primarily on the naturalistic, proletarian-themed novels that he wrote during the Depression. It is in these works that Steinbeck is most effective at building rich, symbolic structures and conveying the archetypal qualities of his characters. Steinbeck received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1962, and died in New York City in 1968.

Director **Daren Scott** knows the play well, having appeared as Lennie in Renaissance Theatre Company's highly acclaimed 2005 production of *OF MICE AND MEN*. He previously directed the critically acclaimed *SWEET STORM* for New Village Arts and is best known for his work as an actor. Previous shows for New Village Arts include *THE SANTALAND DIARIES*, *THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH*, *BE AGGRESSIVE*, *HUMBLE BOY*, *THREE SISTERS*, *CRIMES OF THE HEART*, *A LIE OF THE MIND*, and *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*. For Cygnet Theatre, Daren has appeared in *LOVE SONG*, *THE INVENTION OF LOVE*, *BIEDERMANN AND THE FIREBUGS*, *LAS MENINAS*. Most notable shows for Diversionary Theatre include *EXECUTION OF JUSTICE* and *A BRIGHT ROOM CALLED DAY* (co-produced with Backyard Productions). Other San Diego experience includes the West Coast premieres of *CLOSER* (Backyard Productions), *STOP KISS* (Womens Rep), and *FIT TO BE TIED* (Elephant Productions), and *FRANKIE AND JOHNNY IN THE CLAIRE DE LUNE* for Vantage Theatre (directed by DJ Sullivan). Daren had a recurring role on the FX television series *TERRIERS* and was a regular recurring character on *FASHION HOUSE* (Fox) and a co-star on *THE*

EX LIST (CBS). In addition to his work on stage, Daren is one of the most accomplished theatre photographers in town and has shot photos for NVA, Cygnet and Diversionary, among others.

OF MICE AND MEN invites the men in NVA's Ensemble to take the stage. NVA is gifted with an amazing group of talented actors, and this production will showcase that. The production is lead by one of the best actors in San Diego, **Manny Fernandes**, as Lennie, and one of the best up-and-coming actors in San Diego, **Justin Lang**, as George. Fernandes has won numerous awards in San Diego and is one of NVA's founding Ensemble members. Lang portrayed Orlando in NVA's AS YOU LIKE IT and has appeared frequently with Moxie Theatre, Intrepid Shakespeare and Poor Players. Also featured in the cast are **Adam Brick** (THOM PAIN), **John DeCarlo** (SUMMER AND SMOKE), **Kelly Iversen** (SWEET STORM), **Kyle Lucy** (AH, WILDERNESS!), and **Jack Missett** (DEATH OF A SALESMAN), with NVA acting debuts from **Charles Maze**, **Durwood Murphy**, and **Samuel Sherman** (longtime NVA Stage Manager, now making his acting debut).

New Village Arts is proud to announce that they are partnering with **MandoBasso** to create an original musical soundtrack for the play. MandoBasso is a duo featuring Gunnar Biggs on bass and Bill Bradbury on mandolin. Biggs and Bradbury first came together as colleagues working on projects at both Palomar College and Cal State San Marcos. Biggs comes from a strong background in jazz and classical performance, Bradbury from a composition and computer music background. Their mutual love of Irish and traditional American music brought them together in this unusual pairing of mandolin and bass. MandoBasso performances include mainly new compositions, along with arrangements of traditional music, classical music, jazz and ragtime.

Tim Wallace will be designing the set with Adam Brick designing sound. Christopher Loren Renda is designing lights and Kristianne Kurner and Frances Regal are on costumes. Bonnie Durben will be creating the world of props, Ashley Watkins is the stage manager and Kristianne Kurner is the Artistic Director.

Ticket prices range from \$25 - \$29 for all performances, with the exception of three pay-what-you-can previews on October 26, 27 & 28 at 8 PM. Showtimes are Thursdays and Fridays at 8 PM; Saturdays at 3 PM & 8 PM and Sundays at 2 PM (no 3 PM show on Opening Night, October 29). The theatre is located in the heart of Carlsbad Village, at 2787 State Street. Tickets can be purchased by visiting www.NewVillageArts.org or calling 760-433-3245.

FACT SHEET

OF MICE AND MEN

Written by **John Steinbeck**

Directed by **Daren Scott**

CAST (*all members of THE ENSEMBLE PROJECT except **)

George: **Justin Lang**

Lennie: **Manny Fernandes**

Candy: **Jack Missett**

The Boss: **Charles Maze***

Curley: **Kyle Lucy**

Curley's Wife: **Kelly Iversen**

Slim: **John DeCarlo**

Carlson: **Samuel Sherman**

Whit: **Adam Brick**

Crooks: **Durwood Murphy***

Set Design by **Tim Wallace**; Sound Design by **Adam Brick**; Costume Design by **Kristianne Kurner & Frances Regal**; Light Design by **Christopher Loren Renda**; Properties Design by **Bonnie Durben**; Stage Managed by **Ashley Watkins**; Fight Choreography by **Christopher Loren Renda**.

Featuring Original Music by **MandoBasso**

***Special Guests to THE ENSEMBLE PROJECT**

Three Pay-What-You-Can Previews October 26, 27 & 28 at 8 PM

Opening Night Saturday, October 29 at 8 PM, run continues thru November 20, Thursdays & Fridays at 8 PM; Saturdays at 3 PM & 8 PM; Sundays at 2 PM

(No 3 PM Show on October 29)

Tickets: \$29 General Admission/\$26 Senior, Student, Military/\$25 Groups of 10 or more (Opening Night Tickets \$36)

Purchase Tickets: www.NewVillageArts.org; 760-433-3245.

Listing: THE ENSEMBLE PROJECT at New Village Arts continues with the lauded American classic OF MICE AND MEN by John Steinbeck. This is a haunting tale of two California migrant workers during The Great Depression who dream of a place they can call their own, joined by an ensemble of characters each searching for their own version of the American Dream. OF MICE AND MEN runs October 26 – November 20, 2011 at New Village Arts Theatre at 2787 State Street in Carlsbad Village. Tickets are \$25-\$30 and can be purchased by visiting www.NewVillageArts.org or calling 760-433-3245.

PRE-PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST.

Photo Credit: Daren Scott.

Thank you-

Kristianne Kurner

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