



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Sex, Lies, and Hilarious Farce:
Joe Orton's *What the Butler Saw* Begins Performances at The
Shakespeare Theatre September 6**

MADISON, NJ — First performed in 1969, this uproarious farce shocked audiences when it was first produced. Now, almost 50 years later, what were racy subjects are far less so, and audiences are able to both laugh more and see better the delightfully wicked bullets that **playwright Joe Orton** fires in startling pace from beginning to end. This brilliant comedy unveils the fragile state of truth in the hands of those in power, and the power of truth despite our easy ability to twist it. Because the show includes moments of partial undress and adult subject matter, it is not suitable for young children.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey continues their “**Art of Hope**” season with *What the Butler Saw* by **Joe Orton**. Marking the third Main Stage and fourth overall production of the company's 55th season, *What the Butler Saw* follows the Theatre's successful runs of *The Bunter* by Molière and Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, on the Main Stage and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the Outdoor Stage.

This is the first Joe Orton play to be produced at The Shakespeare Theatre, something **Artistic Director Bonnie J. Monte** is very excited about. “Set in a veritable madhouse, **Joe Orton's masterpiece farce** provides the perfect comedic response to our current world, one in which we find ourselves questioning our sanity or that of others on a daily basis,” she said.

Tickets for this production can be purchased at ShakespeareNJ.org or by calling the Box Office at 973-408-5600. Performances of *What the Butler Saw* begin **September 6** at the F.M. Kirby Shakespeare Theatre located at 36 Madison Ave, Madison, New Jersey.

What the Butler Saw's **Opening Night celebration** will be sponsored by **Forgotten Boardwalk Brewing Company**; the official ale of the production, who will be supplying their beer of the same name, “**What the Butler Saw.**”

The Cast:

John Hutton is making his STNJ debut in the role of Doctor Rance. For the last 30 years, Mr. Hutton has been a member of The Denver Center Theater Company. He has also performed at The Colorado Shakespeare Festival, The Hudson Stage Company, The Mint Theatre and various other theaters throughout the country. Film and television credits include Stephen Spielberg's *Lincoln*, PBS's *Murder of a President*, and the miniseries *Nobel*.

Peter Simon Hilton, who will be playing Doctor Prentice, is entering his second season at The Shakespeare Theatre, after last season's production of *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. Peter's other credits include the national tours of *Les Misérables*, *Oklahoma!*, and *Frost/Nixon*; and productions at The Denver Center, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Drury Lane, Gateway Playhouse, among others. He is a United States Board member of Shakespeare's Globe in London and a Genie Award-winning playwright.

Vanessa Morosco is making her Main Stage debut after playing Titania and Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the Outdoor Stage this summer. She plays Mrs. Prentice. She has performed regionally with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, New York Classical Theatre, and the Folger Shakespeare Theatre. Her film and television credits include *I, Witness* and *Isn't it Delicious*.

Returning to The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey for his second production this season is **Jeffrey M. Bender**, who will be playing Sergeant Match. This production marks his 18th overall season with the company. Select recent company credits include: *The Merchant of Venice*, director of last season's Outdoor Stage production *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged) (revised)*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Alchemist*, and *The Tempest*. Broadway credits include *A Time to Kill* at The Golden Theatre and *Cymbeline* at Lincoln Center.

Allison Layman returns for her third season and will be taking on the role of Geraldine Barclay. Her previous company credits include *The Comedy of Errors*, *Timon of Athens* and Shakespeare LIVE!. She has performed regionally at The Cape Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, The Old Globe, and Huntingdon Theatre. Television credits include the role of Shelby on Hulu's *The Path*.

Returning for his second season is **Robbie Simpson**, who will be playing Nicholas Beckett. Mr. Simpson's recent New York credits include the original cast of *Afterglow*. He has also performed at The Old Globe, Syracuse Stage, Berkshire Theater Festival, and Majestic Theater. His television credits include *The Path* on Hulu and *Can You Survive a Horror Movie* on SyFi.

The Director:

Paul Mullins returns for his 26th season at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. Mr. Mullins returns to the Theatre this season after last year's well-received production of *Richard III*. Previous STNJ credits include *A Song at Twilight*, *Equivocation*, *Henry VIII*, *Noises Off*, *The Threepenny Opera*, among many, many others.

The Artistic Staff:

The creative team includes **Scenic Designer Brittany Vasta**, **Costume Designer Kristin Isola**, **Sound Designer Steven L. Beckel**, and **Lighting Designer Tony Galaska**. The Production Stage Manager is **Alison Cote**.

Tickets:

Tickets for *What the Butler Saw* can be purchased at www.ShakespeareNJ.org or by calling the Box Office at 973-408-5600. The Theatre is proud to bring back its successful **30 UNDER 30** program for the 2017 season. Patrons aged 30 and under can purchase tickets for only \$30 with valid ID, subject to availability. For tickets, patrons can **call the Box Office at 973-408-5600 or visit www.ShakespeareNJ.org**

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey offers various cost-saving opportunities, including a Bank of America customer discount, \$15 **student rush tickets**, which are available 30 minutes prior to each performance, with a valid student ID, and a limited number of **Pay What You Can** tickets on a first come, first serve basis.

Special Performances:

For the same price as a regular ticket, the **Symposium Series performances** offer a post-show discussion with the cast and artistic staff. For *What the Butler Saw*, the symposia will be held after the following performances: September 12 at 7:30 p.m., Saturday, September 16 at 2:00 p.m., and Saturday, September 23 at 2:00 p.m.

The **Know the Show** pre-show talks are offered free-of-cost. Prior to the show, an artist from the Shakespeare Theatre presents a talk providing background information and an inside perspective on the production. This program is free with the purchase of a performance ticket, and for *What the Butler Saw* will be held on Thursday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m., with the show beginning at 8:00 p.m. The **Know the Show** pre-show talk will also be broadcast live, free of charge, on the company's Facebook page.

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The acclaimed Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey is an independent, professional theatre company located in Madison and Florham Park, NJ. One of the leading Shakespeare theatres in the nation, serving approximately 100,000 children and adults annually, it is New Jersey's largest professional theatre company dedicated solely to Shakespeare's canon and other world classics. Through its distinguished productions and education programs, the company strives to illuminate the universal and lasting relevance of the classics for contemporary audiences.

The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey's programs are made possible, in part, by funding from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as funds from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional major support is received from Bank of America, The Merrill G. and Erita E. Hastings Foundation, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, The F.M. Kirby Foundation, The Edward T. Cone Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, CTW Foundation, and The Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, The Samuel H. Scripps Foundation as well as contributions from numerous corporations, foundations, government agencies and individuals.

***What the Butler Saw* Snapshot:**

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: Bonnie J. Monte

MANAGING DIRECTOR: Todd Rosen

MAIN STAGE:

36 Madison Avenue (at Lancaster Road)

Madison, NJ
(located on Drew University's campus)

What the Butler Saw

By Joe Orton

Directed by Paul Mullins

Previews begin: Wednesday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Saturday, September 9 at 8:00 p.m.

Performances:

September 6 – October 1

Previews: Wednesday, September 6 at 7:30 p.m.; Thursday, September 7 at 8:00 p.m., Friday, September 8 at 8:00 p.m.; and Saturday, September 9 at 2:00 p.m.

Opening Night: Saturday, September 9 at 8:00 p.m.

Post-Show Symposium Performances: Tuesday, September 12 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, September 16 at 2:00 p.m.; Saturday, September 23 at 2:00 p.m.

Know the Show: Thursday, September 14 at 7:00 p.m.; curtain at 8:00 p.m.

Performances:

Tuesdays (7:30 p.m.): September 12, 19, and 30

Wednesdays (7:30 p.m.): September 6, 13, 20, and 27

Thursdays (8:00 p.m.): September 7, 14, 21, and 28

Fridays (8:00 p.m.): September 8, 15, 22, and 29

Saturdays (2:00 p.m.): September 9, 16, 23, and 30

Saturdays (8:00 p.m.): September 9, 16, 23, and 30

Sundays (2:00 p.m.): September 10, 17, 24, and October 1

Sundays (7:30 p.m.): September 10, 17, and 24

For tickets and information: Call 973-408-5600 or visit www.ShakespeareNJ.org.

“**What the Butler Saw**” is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.