

Theatre Exile logo featuring the words "theatre exile" in a white, typewriter-style font on a black rectangular background.

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**December 17, 2013**

## **Theatre Exile Moves to Plays & Players Theatre to Present Sam Shepard's Darkly Comic *True West***

Directed by Matt Pfeiffer  
January 30 – February 23, 2014

PHILADELPHIA – *December 17, 2013* – Following a widely acclaimed start to its 17th season, South Philadelphia-based [Theatre Exile](http://www.theatreexile.org) will move to the larger **Plays & Players Theatre** to present **Sam Shepard's** modern classic *True West*. Directed by Exile Associate Artistic Director **Matt Pfeiffer**, *True West* features local actors **Jeb Kreager** and **Brian Osborne** as brothers Austin and Lee. Performances run **January 30 – February 23, 2014**. [*Full schedule is below*].

In *True West*, two brothers who have taken opposite paths in life — Austin, a screenwriter, and Lee, a drifter — reunite in the suburbs of Southern California when Austin is housesitting for their mother (**E. Ashley Izard**). The brothers' jealousy toward each other is heightened when Saul (**Joe Canuso**), a Hollywood producer, enters the scene. Fighting for identity and determined to expose each other as frauds, the brothers collide in a sometimes-terrifying, darkly comic struggle for dominance where the powder keg between them threatens to explode at any moment.

*True West* will be performed in the Plays & Players Theatre, a premier Philadelphia location for classic works. Scenic designer Matt Saunders will take advantage of the venue's grandeur and create a set to capture the gritty, emotional immediacy that exists between the characters. The result will contrast the realism of Shepard's play with the reality of the theater space itself. In an environment in which authenticity is questioned, and the audience is left to determine what is real and what is not.

"It is exciting for Theatre Exile to plunge into the world of Sam Shepard," says Director **Matt Pfeiffer**. "His plays are dark, dangerous and absurdly funny; qualities that perfectly define the work of Exile."

*True West* runs **January 30 – February 23, 2014** (press opening: **Wednesday, February 5, 8 p.m.**). Tickets are \$20 – \$50 and are available online at [theatreexile.org](http://theatreexile.org) or by calling the Theatre Exile Box Office at **(215) 218-4022**. Performances will take place at Plays & Players Theatre, 1714 Delancey St. in Center City Philadelphia.

Theatre Exile will close its 2013/14 season with the Philadelphia premiere of *Annapurna* by Sharr White, directed by Joe Canuso and starring Pearce Bunting and Catharine Slusar (April 17 – May 11, 2014).

### **About the Cast and Creative Team**

*True West* stars **Jeb Kreager** and **Brian Osborne** as brothers Austin and Lee. Jeb is a founding member of the Obie Award-winning New Paradise Laboratories and a Barrymore Award-winning actor. Jeb previously worked with Exile on *Aliens* and *Mr. Marmalade* (Barrymore nominated). He has also seen in *Tragic Events* (1812 Productions; Barrymore nominated), *The Foreigner* (People's Light; Barrymore nominated), and *Frozen* (InterAct; Best Lead Actor Barrymore Award), among others. Jeb is a graduate of Virginia Tech and attended Antonio Fava's Scuola Internazionale dell'Attore Comico (Reggio Emilia, Italy) and Circle in the Square (NYC). Brian is a devised theater artist, actor, playwright, director and carpenter, making his Theatre Exile debut. He has collaborated with many artists and companies, including New Paradise Laboratories (*The Word: A House Party for Jesus*), Thaddeus Phillips/Lucidity Suitcase Intercontinental (*WHaLE OPTICS*), The Riot Group (*The Poet Laureate of Capitalism*) and Pig Iron Theatre Company, among others. Brian is on a collaborative team with Lisa D'Amour (playwright), Katie Pearl (playwright) and Mimi Lien (designer) to create a grand site-specific theater work at Longwood Gardens in Fall 2014. He was a 2011/2012 Live Arts Brewery Fellow: a Philadelphia-based laboratory for supporting the research and development of new cross-genre live performance works.

Theatre Exile Founding Artistic Director **Joe Canuso** plays producer Saul. As an actor, Joe has appeared in Theatre Exile productions of *the dreamer examines his pillow*, *Parking*, *Rocketman*, *Princess Ivona*, *American Buffalo* and *Saturn Returns*. He has also directed many of Theatre Exile's shows including *Mr. Marmalade*, *Red Light Winter*, *Full Figured/Loves to Dance*, *The Philly Fan*, *Last Call*, *The Gin Game*, *Cryptome*, *Burkie*, *Amputation Nation*, *Big Blonde*, *Live at the Apollo Diner*, *The Frankenharry Plays* and *Belmont Avenue SocialClub*. He was nominated by the Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Direction of a Play for *Killer Joe* and was part of the Barrymore Award winning ensemble of *Glengarry Glen Ross*.

**E. Ashley Izard** will be making her Theatre Exile debut as Mom. Recent credits include *Hamlet*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, *Arms and the Man* and *The Misanthrope* at Quintessence Theatre Group. She has also worked with Lantern Theater Company, Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre, The Arden, Act II Playhouse, Philadelphia Theatre Company and Walnut Street Theatre. Ashley received the 2000 Barrymore Award for Supporting Actor for *Beyond Therapy* (Lantern Theater Company) and has an MFA in Acting from Temple University.

Scenic designer **Matt Saunders** is a founding member of New Paradise Laboratories, an OBIE Award-winning experimental theatre company based in Philadelphia. As a former resident designer with Exile, Matt's designs have included sets for *Killer Joe*, *American Buffalo*, *North of the Boulevard*, *Glengarry Glenn Ross*, and *Bug*. Matt has also designed for companies such as Brat Productions, The Walnut Street Theater, MOXIE Dance Collective, Pig Iron Theatre Company, the Bessie Award-Winning Headlong Dance Theatre, the Tony Award-winning Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis, and most recently, the OBIE Award-winning production of *Good Person of Szechwan* at La MaMa and The Public Theatre. He is a Barrymore nominated actor and recipient of the F. Otto Haas Award for Emerging Artist in 2007. **Christopher Colucci** (Sound Designer / Composer) makes sound and music as a theater artist, composer and guitarist. With Exile, Christopher has designed sound for *Cock*, *Knives in Hens* and *The English Bride*. Other recent work includes: *Angels in America* (Wilma), *The Rainmaker* (People's Light), *Emma* (Lantern) and *The Woman in Black* (Act II). Since 2008 he has received 11 nominations and 5 Barrymore Awards for *Outstanding Original Music and Sound Design*; and in 2013 he received an Independence Foundation Fellowship in the Arts. Upcoming projects include *Julius Caesar* (Lantern), *Down Past Passyunk* (InterAct), and *Other Desert Cities* (Walnut).

### **About the Director**

**Matt Pfeiffer** is a Philly born actor and director who serves as the Associate Artistic Director of Theatre Exile. He is also a proud member of SDC and AEA. Exile credits include directing *North of the Boulevard*, *The Lieutenant of*

*Inishmore, The Aliens, Glengarry Glen Ross, Shining City, Bug, American Buffalo* and *The Edge of Our Bodies*. Recent directing credits; *A Moon for the Misbegotten* and *The Whipping Man* (Arden Theatre), *Mistakes Were Made* (1812 Productions) and *Run, Mourner, Run* (Flashpoint Theatre). Other credits include Two River, Walnut St. Theatre, Delaware Theatre Co, Orlando Shakespeare Theatre, Brat Productions, Gulfshore Playhouse, Lantern Theatre, The Mask and Wig Club, and 16 seasons with the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. Matt is a seven-time Barrymore nominee and recipient of the F. Otto Haas Award.

### **About Theatre Exile**

Founded in 1996 by Joe Canuso and Trish Kelly, Theatre Exile was created by a group of artists who wanted to rattle the gates of the mainstream. Drawn to plays that explore the complexities of the human condition and contain a sense of true Philadelphia grit and passion, Exile has produced 54 full-scale productions, including 14 world and 25 Philadelphia premieres. They were the first Philadelphia organization to produce such powerhouse playwrights as Pulitzer Prize and Tony winner Tracy Letts, Noah Haidle, Rona Munro, David Harrower, Annie Baker and Rajiv Joseph. For their excellence in producing theatre, they have received 49 Barrymore Award nominations, with six awards total. Theatre Exile believes in freedom of expression formulated through innovation, exploration and provocation, all while providing a safe and creative environment, in which local artists can grow, experiment and ultimately, find their own voice.

## **True West FACTS**

<p><b>Performances:</b></p> <p>Thu, 1/30            7 p.m.          Fri, 1/31            8 p.m.          Sat, 2/1             8 p.m.          Sun, 2/2             3 p.m.</p> <p>Tue, 2/4             7 p.m.  <b>Wed, 2/5*</b>         <b>8 p.m.</b>          Thu, 2/6             7 p.m.          Fri, 2/7             8 p.m.          Sat, 2/8             8 p.m.          Sun, 2/9             3 p.m.</p> <p>Wed, 2/12           8 p.m.          Thu, 2/13           7 p.m.          Fri, 2/14           8 p.m.          Sat, 2/15           8 p.m.          Sun, 2/16           3 p.m.</p> <p>Mon, 2/17           8 p.m.          Wed, 2/19           8 p.m.          Thu, 2/20           7 p.m.          Fri, 2/21           8 p.m.          Sat, 2/22           8 p.m.          Sun, 2/23           3 p.m.</p> <p><b>*Opening Night</b></p>	<p><b>Dates:</b> <i>True West</i>          January 30 – February 23, 2014          Previews run January 30 – February 4  <b>Opening night is Wednesday, February 5, 8 p.m.</b></p> <p><b>Theater:</b> Plays &amp; Players Theatre          1714 Delancey St.          Philadelphia, PA 19103</p> <p><b>Prices:</b> Adults: \$20-\$50; Students: \$10-\$15</p> <p><b>Tickets:</b> Phone: (215) 218-4022 or <a href="http://www.theatreexile.org">http://www.theatreexile.org</a></p> <hr/> <p><b>True West</b>          By <b>Sam Shepard</b>          Directed by <b>Matt Pfeiffer</b></p> <p><b>Cast (in alphabetical order)</b>  <b>Joe Canuso</b>            Saul  <b>E. Ashley Izard</b>       Mom  <b>Jeb Kreager</b>           Austin  <b>Brian Osborne</b>       Lee</p> <p><b>Production Team</b>  <b>Matt Saunders</b>       Set Designer  <b>Alison Roberts</b>       Costume Designer  <b>Thom Weaver</b>       Lighting Designer  <b>Christopher Colucci</b> Sound Designer  <b>Alice Yorke</b>           Props Designer  <b>Brey Ann Barrett</b>    Assistant Director  <b>Lindsay Galbraith</b>    Stage Manager</p>
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**Press Contact for Interviews, Images and Ticket Requests:**

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