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Cape May Stage Presents
Happy Days
By Samuel Beckett

Cape May Stage
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The Robert Shackleton Playhouse
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by Samuel Beckett

Cape May, NJ – Cape May Stage, South Jersey’s premier professional Equity theatre, is pleased to announce a new production of a classic of postmodern existentialist theatre: Samuel Beckett’s *Happy Days*. Starring Lynn (*Sex and the City*, *Munich*) and Ron Cohen, *Happy Days* will open Thursday, August 26 at 8:00 p.m. at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse on Bank and Lafayette Streets.

In the original review for the *New York Times*, Howard Taubman called *Happy Days* “a song of rue that will haunt the inner ear long after you have heard it.” Centering on Winnie, “a woman no longer young”, the play is a chilling inspection of the futility of life, inspecting the burdens we all bear. Joined by Willie, her henpecked mate, Winnie's burdens are somewhat literal; nonetheless, she is able to approach her life with an expectation of happiness. While the title of the play is ironic, Winnie finds reasons to consider the days of the play “happy”. Artistic Director Roy Steinberg says, "*Happy Days* resonates anew in 2010 as more couples find themselves in their latter years buried in responsibilities, sometimes debt, and facing health issues. Samuel Beckett, better than any dramatist of our time, explores the questions of existence, communication, and mortality with long-term partners." Funny, touching, and enlightening, *Happy Days* is sure to challenge the audience.

Happy Days received its premiere off-Broadway at the Cherry Lane Theatre in September of 1961. Since then, the play has become one of Beckett's most studied works, with many actresses considering the tour-de-force role of Winnie as being the female equivalent of Hamlet. "When you are given a gift of an artist like Lynn Cohen," says Steinberg, "you search for the right vehicle. This production is a theatrical event with national importance not only because of the level of the artist, but also the fact that we are doing it in a small, sophisticated beach community. These factors speak to our company's mission and echo First Lady Michelle Obama in, 'the arts are not somehow apart from our national life; the arts are at the heart of our national life.'"

About the Cast

Lynn Cohen (Winnie) appeared at Cape May Stage under the direction of Roy Steinberg in last season's *Social Security*. In the interim, Lynn had the pleasure of returning to television's *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit* to play a murderous butcher. She also appeared at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park in Sarah Ruhl's new translation of Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, directed by John Doyle, and then at George Street Theatre, New Brunswick, NJ., in *Creating Claire*, a new play by Joe DiPietro, writer of this year's Tony-winning musical *Memphis*. Of course, she also walked the red carpet to celebrate her continuing appearances as the nanny-housekeeper Magda at the premiere of the latest movie version of *Sex and the City*. Other film and TV credits include *The Extra Man*, Steven Spielberg's *Munich*, *Eagle Eye*, Charlie Kaufman's *Synecdoche, New York*, Woody Allen's *Manhattan Murder Mystery*, Julie Taymor's *Across the Universe*, Tim Robbins' *Cradle Will Rock*, *Everybody's Fine* (with Robert De Niro), Helen Hunt's *Then She Found Me*, all three *Law and Orders*, *Damages*, and *Nurse Jackie*.

Ronald Cohen (Willie) also appeared in last year's *Social Security*. After wrapping up *Social Security*, Ronald appeared in the fall at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park in Sarah Ruhl's new translation of Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, directed by John Doyle. Come early spring, he was again appearing in *Three Sisters*, this time with The Working Theatre of New York. He also had brief turns this year on *Boardwalk Empire*, a new HBO series set to debut this fall, and in a film being shot in Tampa, FL, entitled *Not Waving But Drowning*. Films include such titles as *Ablution*, *Last Call*, and *Strangers When We Meet*. In addition to treading the boards, he was for many years a writer and editor with the fashion industry bible, *Women's Wear Daily*, and currently writes about Broadway for *Musical Stages*, London.

Show Information

Happy Days opens Thursday, August 26, 2010, at 8:00 pm at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse at the corner of Bank & Lafayette Streets in downtown Cape May. Performances thereafter are Wednesday through Sunday through September 25th at 8:00 pm. Tickets are \$35 adults, \$30 seniors, and \$12.50 students. Call (609) 884-1341 for reservations and information or visit the theatre's website, www.capemaystage.com.

During the current run Cape May Stage is participating with eight Cape May gourmet restaurants in a money-saving "Dinner & A Show" package promotion - a special night out. Restaurants involved in the promotion include 410 Bank Street, The Blue Pig Tavern, Harry's Bar & Grille at the Montreal Inn, The Ebbitt Room, Frescos, La Verandah at the Hotel Alcott, The Mad Batter, and The Washington Inn. Call the individual restaurants for reservations and information.

Happy Days is presented through the gracious support of the Wilsey Realty, LLC and The Mad Batter. This season's sponsors include 410 Bank Street/Frescos, Exit Zero, The Washington Inn, Cape May Winery, and Lucky Bones.

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