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**Deborah Jean Templin and Larry Daggett star  
in Cape May Stage's production of *Souvenir*  
by Stephen Temperley**

Cape May Stage  
Box Office: (609) 884-1341  
The Robert Shackleton Playhouse  
Bank & Lafayette Streets, Cape May, NJ 08204  
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***Souvenir***

**A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins  
Written by Stephen Temperley  
Directed by Roy Steinberg**

**Preview** May 20, 2009  
**Opens** May 21, 2009  
**Closes** June 20, 2009

*Cape May, NJ – April 2, 2009-* Cape May Stage, Cape May's Premier professional Equity theatre, opens its 21st season with the fun and endearing regional premiere of Stephen Temperley's Drama Desk award winning play, *Souvenir, A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins*. This endearing comedy about the legendary off-key singer Florence Foster Jenkins promises to start the season on an exceptionally high note. Stephen Temperley's, *Souvenir*, directed by Artistic Director Roy Steinberg, previews at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse at Cape May Stage on May 20; opens May 21; and closes June 20. A talk back session with playwright Stephen Temperley is scheduled after the show on May 23.

Real-life eccentric heiress Florence Foster Jenkins fancied herself a coloratura soprano -- but the exact opposite was true! Despite being called "majestically awful," her concerts in the 1930s and '40s, including a legendary appearance at Carnegie Hall, were not only sold-out, but were attended by the crème de la crème of Manhattan society. Told affectionately through the eyes of her longtime accompanist Cosme McMoon, *Souvenir* is the sweet and inspiring, and, yes, hilarious portrait of a passionate music lover who believed that "what matters most is the music you hear in your head."

Barrymore award winner Deborah Jean Templin plays the "first lady of the sliding scale," alongside Broadway veteran Larry Daggett as the faithful accompanist in this affectionate

valentine to the tin-eared opera diva who stunned concert audiences with her unassailable self-confidence and unique interpretations of the opera repertoire.

In his inaugural season as the Equity theatre's new Artistic Director Steinberg notes, "Before *American Idol* or *The Gong Show* there was Florence Foster Jenkins. In a world of reality shows there is a new resonance to this story that makes us consider the role of the artist. In fact, all of our plays this season reflect the American cultural life of the 21<sup>st</sup> century...and they're fun!"

### **About the Cast**

Deborah Jean Templin (Florence Foster Jenkins) Philadelphia audiences have seen her as Widow Corney in *Oliver*, Jeanette in *The Full Monty*, Dolly in *Hello, Dolly!* Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, Fraulein Kost in *Cabaret*, and Kaye Goodman in *Nite Club Confidential* for which she received Philadelphia's Barrymore Award. She's toured nationally in *Mamma Mia!* *Titanic*, *Baby*, and *Annie* (Grace Farrell). Her favorite roles from history include Eleanor of Aquitaine in *Eternal Love*, the poetess Marina Tsvetaeva in *Beautiful Lady*, prohibitionist Carrie Nation in *The Drunkard*, silent star Alla Nazimova in *Lover*, and Auschwitz survivor Fania Fenelon in the U.K. premiere of Arthur Miller's *Playing for Time*. Templin has also appeared in *Man of La Mancha*, *Ernest in Love*, *Take Me Along*, *We're Still Hot!* and on screen in *One Life to Live*, *Law and Order*, *All My Children*, & *Guiding Light*. She has served as a Resident Professional Theatre Associate at Cornell University and on the faculty of the School for Film and Television in New York. Her play "Unsinkable Women: Stories and Songs from the Titanic" has played 60 venues.

Larry Daggett (Cosme McMoon) Credits include: *Ragtime* (Henry Ford; original Broadway cast), *Candide* (New York City Opera), *Red, Hot, and Cole* (Cole Porter), *Damn Yankees* (Applegate), *My Fair Lady* (Alfred Doolittle), *Follies* (Benjamin Stone), *A Little Night Music* (Fredrik Egerman), *H.M.S. Pinafore* (Captain Corcoran), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Quince), *Annie* (Rooster), *The Full Monty* (Harold), *Oliver!* (Fagin), *Levant By Levant* (Oscar Levant), and more, at such theatres as Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arkansas Repertory, Asolo Theatre, Barrington Stage, Cape Fear Regional Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Fulton Opera House, Goodspeed Opera House, Lyric Stage Company of Boston, Music Theatre of Connecticut, New Harmony Theatre, North Shore Music Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Shenandoah Music Theatre, Sierra Repertory, Virginia Musical Theatre, Wilma Theatre of Philadelphia, among others. Daggett is also a graduate of the Asolo Theatre (M.F.A.), the Grove School of Music (Piano/Composition major), and the Lehman Engel Workshop for the development of new musicals.

### **About the Playwright**

Born in London, Stephen Temperley first came to the United States as a teenager. He acted in several plays for the Public Theater in New York before returning to London. There, he performed in the West End, on TV, and in repertory. Since returning to the U.S., he has worked extensively in regional theatres and stock, on Broadway (the original

company of *Crazy For You*) and off Broadway (*Up Against It at the Public*). The first of his plays to be produced was *Beside the Seaside* at Hudson Guild. Plays that followed include: *Money/Mercy* at Chelsea Theatre Center (which was later seen at the first HBO New Writers Workshop in Los Angeles) and *Dance With Me* (first seen at 18th Street Theatre and then at Centenary Stage). *Souvenir* debuted at the Berkshire Theatre Festival before it played on Broadway.

### **Production Team**

Production team includes Donald Toal (Production Stage Manager), Adam Riggart (Set Designer), J. Dominic Chacon (Lighting Designer), Will Knapp (Sound Designer).

### **Ticket Information**

*Souvenir* performances are Wednesdays thru Sundays at 8pm thru June 20<sup>th</sup> at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse of the Cape May Stage. Tickets are \$35 adults, \$25 seniors, and \$12.50 students. Previews on May 20 will be half-price tickets. Call (609) 884-1341 for tickets and information or visit the theatre's website, [www.capemaystage.com](http://www.capemaystage.com). Audio enhancement, wheelchair accessible seating, and large print programs are available with advance notice by calling the box office at (609) 884-1341.

This production is generously co-sponsored by Capri Motor Lodge and The Fudge Kitchen.

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