

PRESS RELEASE

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JOYCE DEWITT SET TO STAR IN BUCKS COUNTY PLAYHOUSE PRODUCTION OF *GYPSY* BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 21, 2005



One of musical theatre's most distinguished achievements, *Gypsy*, begins a three week run on September 21, 2005. Starring one of television's most popular actresses, **JOYCE DEWITT** as Momma Rose, *Gypsy* will continue through October 9, 2005.

With music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Arthur Laurents, *Gypsy* is the quintessential theatrical story of a manipulative stage mother who channels her own frustrated dreams of stardom into her daughter, Baby June. Baby June is the less talented of Rose's daughters but it is Louise who eventually becomes a burlesque stripper causing Rose to suffer a nervous breakdown. The brilliant musical score includes such musical theatre greats as "Let Me Entertain You", "Together" and "Everything's Coming Up Roses".

JOYCE DEWITT is best known to television audiences for her starring role as "Janet Wood" in the ABC Television hit series 'Three's Company'. An original cast member of "Three's Company", Joyce played the role through the series entire eight year run. In later years, she would guest star on numerous television series such as "The Love Boat", "Cybill" and "Living Single". Equally at home on the stage, Joyce has appeared in productions of *Chapter Two*, *Sweet Charity*, *Damn Yankees*, *Middle of the Night*, *Star Spangled Girl*, *The Crucible*, *Medea*, *Tartuffe*, *A Hatful of Rain*, *Lil' Abner*, *South Pacific*, *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, *Peter Pan*, *Brigadoon*, *All the Way Home*, *A Month in the Country*, *The Tempest*, *Stop the World, I Want To Get Off* and *Same Time, Next Year*.

The Bucks County Playhouse production of *Gypsy* starring **JOYCE DEWITT** opens on Wednesday, September 21, 2005 and continues through Sunday, October 9, 2005. Performances are Wednesday and Thursday at 2 PM and 8 PM, Friday at 8 PM, Saturday at 4 PM and 8 PM and Sunday at 2 PM. Ticket prices range from \$22.00 to \$24.00. **A "Day of Show" discount is available to students ages 21 and under and all active military.** Discounts are available day of only with valid identification. For information and reservations, call the Box Office at 215-862-2041. The Bucks County Playhouse is located at 70 South Main Street in historic New Hope, Pennsylvania.



Joyce DeWitt Biography

Miss DeWitt is most widely known to audiences for her starring role as 'Janet Wood' in the ABC Television hit series "Three's Company". She also has an extensive background in the theatre, working both as actress and director in a stage career which spans over forty years.

Miss DeWitt has starred in numerous theatrical productions including most recently the Canadian premieres of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize winning play *Dinner With Friends* and Alfred Uhry's Tony Award-winning play *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*. Other recent stage performances include the North American premiere of the Australian comedy *Daylight Savings*, the British farce *Noises Off*, the revival of Cole Porter's *Anything Goes*, and the Broadway musical *Olympus on My Mind*, for which she completed the cast recording - her first record album.

Miss DeWitt's other theatre credits include starring roles in *Chapter Two*, *Sweet Charity*, *Damn Yankees*, *Middle of the Night*, *Star Spangled Girl*, *The Crucible*, *Medea*, *Tartuffe*, *A Hatful of Rain*, *Desire Under the Elms*, *MacBeth*, *The Mikado*, *Lil' Abner*, *South Pacific*, *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, *Peter Pan*, *Brigadoon*, *All the Way Home*, *A Month in the Country*, *The Tempest*, *The Impossible Years*, *Dracula: An Original Rock Musical*, *Stop the World, I Want To Get Off* and *Same Time, Next Year*.

Her other television credits include singing and dancing in numerous specials having had the pleasure of appearing with such wonderful talents as Greer Garson, Ann Miller, Perry Como, Bill Cosby, Anne Murray, Tony Randall, Rich Little, Cheryl Ladd, John Ritter and Steve Martin. She has also made numerous guest-starring appearances on popular television programs including "The Love Boat", "The Osmonds", "Hope Island", "Cybill", "Twitch City", and "Living Single", as well as starring in the television movies *With This Ring* and *Spring Fling*.

Miss DeWitt holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree from Ball State University and a Master of Fine Arts Degree from UCLA where she was awarded the Master of Fine Arts Fellowship as well as the Clifton Webb Scholarship.

Born in Wheeling, West Virginia, on April 23rd, Miss DeWitt is one of four children. Her childhood years were divided between West Virginia and Indiana.

Having had the good fortune to work with such wonderful human beings as Valerie Harper and Dennis Weaver, whose dedication to ending hunger and homelessness in our world and support of environmental issues is boundless, Miss DeWitt participated with members of the House and Senate at the Capitol Hill Forum on Hunger and Homelessness and has hosted presentations for the Family Assistance Program of Hollywood. She is most grateful for having been allowed the privilege of hosting the International Awards Ceremony at the White House for the Presidential End Hunger Awards, as well as co-hosting, with Jeff Bridges, the World Food Day Gala at the Kennedy Center.

A Brief History of **Gypsy** . . .

Based on the memoirs of Gypsy Rose Lee, a famous burlesque stripper, **Gypsy** tells the story of Rose, an overbearing stage mother who is determined to break into the big time by pushing the vaudeville career of her younger daughter June. However, unwilling to tolerate her mother's manipulations, June elopes with a dancer. Rose then turns all of her attention on her older and less talented daughter Louise. Eventually Rose's dreams come to fruition when she successfully transforms Louise into a famous burlesque stripper known as Gypsy Rose Lee. No sooner has she succeeded, however, than Rose suffers a mental breakdown, realizing that she is no longer needed in her daughter's career.

Directed by the legendary Jerome Robbins, the original production of **Gypsy** featured Ethel Merman who gave the performance of a lifetime as Rose. It was the last stage role Miss Merman would create and the first in which she would tour. Many of the songs from the show ("Some People" and "Everything's Coming Up Roses") took their place among Miss Merman's most closely identified songs.

Gypsy was one of the musical theatre's most distinguished achievements. The germination of the show began with producer David Merrick, who needed to read but one chapter of Miss Lee's autobiography to convince him of its stage potential. Stephen Sondheim, joining *West Side Story* colleagues Arthur Laurents and Jerome Robbins, was originally to have supplied the music as well as the lyrics, but Miss Merman wanted a more experienced composer and Jule Styne was brought in.

The original New York production of **Gypsy** opened at the Broadway Theatre on May 21, 1959 and closed on March 25, 1961 after 702 performances. It was made into a motion picture starring Natalie Wood and Rosalind Russell in 1963. Lisa Kirk dubbed Rosalind Russell's singing voice, but Russell's attempts at singing were rediscovered on scratchy acetate discs and recently made available as supplements on the CD reissue of the film soundtrack. A TV movie starring Bette Midler was made in 1993.

A new production of **Gypsy** opened in New York in 1974 after playing in London. Angela Lansbury starred, Arthur Laurents directed, and it ran for 120 performances. Yet another revival opened on Broadway in October 1989 starring Tyne Daly, later replaced by Linda Lavin. This revival ran for 476 performances before closing in July 1991. Most recently, Broadway audiences saw Bernadette Peters in the role of 'Momma Rose' in a 2003 production that ran for 451 performances. Along with Peters, Tammy Blanchard portrayed Louise and John Dossett played Herbie. It won a 2003 Tony Award for Best Revival of a Musical.

Gypsy
Fact Sheet

WHAT: The Bucks County Playhouse production of **Gypsy starring Joyce DeWitt** with book by Arthur Laurents, music by Jule Styne, lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, direction by Michael Licata and choreography by Stephen Casey.

Gypsy is the quintessential theatrical story of a manipulative stage mother who channels her own frustrated dreams of stardom into her daughter, Baby June while neglecting her more talented daughter who later becomes a burlesque star. Michael Licata directs and Stephen Casey choreographs this musical.

WHERE: The Bucks County Playhouse, 70 South Main Street, New Hope, Pennsylvania

WHO: Direction by **MICHAEL LICATA**
Choreography by **STEPHEN CASEY**
Musical Direction by **LOUIS PALENA**
Costume Design by **LINDA BEE-STOCKTON**
Scenic and Lighting Design by **ERIK H. REID**
Sound Design by **CHERI SNOOK**

CAST: Momma Rose **JOYCE DEWITT**
Louise **ANGELA MAYANS**
June **JILL PALENA**
Herbie **J. T. O'CONNOR**
Tulsa **MATTHEW CLINE**
Uncle Jocko/Kringlein/Pastey **DAMIAN BARTOLACCI**
Grandpa **ERIK H. REID**
Yonkers **PETER MARTINO**
L.A. **BOBBY McGUICKIN**
Angie/Weber/Cigar **PATRICK LUDT**
Miss Cratchitt/Tessie Tura **JESSICA BRADISH**
Mr. Goldstone **PHILIP KATZ**
Baby June **PAIGE GUARILIA**
Baby Louise **KRISTINA LACHAGA**
Electra **TRESSA McCALLISTER**
Mazepa **NICOLE FARINA**
Hollywood Blondes/Showgirls **JESSICA BRADISH, NICOLE D'ANGELO,**
ASHLEY DAVIDSON, NICOLE FARINA,
LORELEI PRINCE

Farm Boys **MATTHEW CLINE, PATRICK LUDT,**
PETER MARTINO, BOBBY McGUICKIN

Newsboys **WESLEY CAPPIELLO, STORM HURWITZ,**
KRISTINA LACHAGA, CHARLES SLOWEY IV

Balloon Girl **PHOEBE TORSELIERI**

TICKET PRICES: Tickets range from \$22.00 to \$24.00.

WHEN: **Gypsy**
September 21 thru October 9, 2005

OPENING PERFORMANCE: Wednesday, September 21, 2005 at 2 PM
Wednesday thru Saturday at 8 PM
Saturday at 4 PM
Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday at 2 PM

CLOSING PERFORMANCE: Sunday, October 9, 2005 at 2 PM