



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CATCO Presents Regional Premiere of *Sex With Strangers* Feb. 15-March 5

Edgy, smart comedy explores ambition, the literary world and sex in the digital age

Opposites attract in CATCO's upcoming regional premiere of *Sex With Strangers*, Feb. 15-March 5, when Olivia, a serious mid-career novelist meets Ethan, an author of dirty books (to call them erotica would press a point). Ultimately, she is as turned on by his commercial success as he is by her literary talent.

"How far will you go to get what you want?," said Joe Bishara, CATCO associate producing director and director of *Sex With Strangers*. "This smart, tantalizing take on modern love flirts with the ever-blurring line between public and private in our digital age."

Laura Eason's smart comedy will be performed at The Verne Riffe Center Studio Two Theatre, 77 S. High St.

Sex With Strangers premiered at Steppenwolf Theater Company in Chicago in 2011 and was performed in 2014 at Second Stage Theatre in New York City. "Wry, wise and wonderfully humorous ... a multi-faceted love story," says the *Chicago Examiner*, while other critics had this to say: "Sexually and intellectually provocative ...," *The Hollywood Reporter*, and "Just like a page-turner, this smart comedy pulls you in and keeps you wondering what's coming next," *New York Daily News*.

Playwright Eason is a screenwriter, playwright and director. In addition, she is a producer on the Emmy award-winning Netflix series *House of Cards*.

Performing in CATCO's production of *Sex With Strangers* is Nicolette Montana (Olivia) and Matthew Sierra (Ethan). Montana has performed, choreographed and directed performances with numerous local theatres, including CATCO, Available Light and Columbus Children's Theatre. At CATCO, she has appeared in *Evil Dead: The Musical*, *Avenue Q* and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Other acting credits include *A Piece of My Heart* (Leeann), *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (Yitzhak), *Putting It Together* (Woman II), and *Cinderella* (Fairy Godmother).

Sierra, a 2016-17 CATCO acting apprentice, has appeared on stage at multiple central Ohio theatre organizations. His acting credits include Lord Alfred Douglas in CATCO's recent production of *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*, *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* and *The Kabuki Sleeping Beauty* with CATCO is Kids!, and *POZ* with Evolution Theatre company.

Bishara has worked at regional theatres in Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida as an actor, director, producer, and administrator. At CATCO, he directed *James and the Giant Peach JR.*, *The Kabuki Sleeping Beauty*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *Elephant and Piggie's "We are in a Play!"*, *The Seussification of Romeo and Juliet*, [title of show], *Master Class*, *A Christmas Carol*, *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, *Revenge of the Space Pandas*, *The Adventures of Tom*

Sawyer, The Rude Mechanicals, and Forbidden Broadway's Greatest Hits: Vol. 1, and appeared in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, Forbidden Broadway, The Story of My Life* and *Evil Dead: The Musical*. Other acting credits include *Titanic, Forbidden Broadway: SVU, The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Last Five Years*. Additional directing credits include *The Spitfire Grill, Madeline's Christmas, Bat Boy: The Musical*, and *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie, The House at Pooh Corner, Wind in the Willows, Encyclopedia Brown, Peter and the Wolf, Beauty and the Beast (Isabella e la Bestia)*, and *School House Rock Live!*

Preview (Discounted Tickets)/Opening Night Performances

There are two previews for *Sex With Strangers*, Wednesday, Feb. 15, at 11 a.m., and Thursday, Feb. 16, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for the 11 a.m. performance, and \$30 for the 7:30 p.m. show. The opening performance is Friday, Feb. 17, at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$40.

Wednesday Morning Matinees

For *Sex With Strangers*, there will be three 11 a.m. matinee performances: Wednesday, Feb. 15, Feb. 22 and March 1. Tickets are \$20.

Ticket/Parking Information

Tickets for all other performances are Thursdays, \$30; Sundays, \$35; and Fridays and Saturdays, \$40.

For *Sex With Strangers*, student tickets can be purchased for \$15 for any performance based on availability and valid I.D. All tickets can be purchased at the box office at 39 E. State St. next to the Ohio theatre, by calling 614.469.0939, visiting ticketmaster.com or calling or visiting any central Ohio Ticketmaster location. Performances are in the Studio Theatres at the Vern Riffe Center, located at 77 S. High St., in Downtown Columbus at the corner of State and High streets. Attached parking is available in the Riffe Center garage, which is entered from Front Street.

Presenting sponsor for *Sex With Strangers* is The Robert Weiler Company.

CATCO's 32nd season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the Barbara B. Coons, Nina B. Pohlman, and Martha G. Staub Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

CATCO's season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library. CATCO's remaining shows for the 2016-17 season follow. To subscribe or for more information about the 2016-17 season, visit www.catcoistheatre.org

- ***Henry Ford's Model E***
(World Premiere)
By Herb Brown
April 19-May 7, 2017
Studio Two

- ***I Do! I Do!***
Books and lyrics by Tom Jones
Music by Harvey Schmidt
May 31-June 18, 2017
Studio Two

CATCO Is Kids' remaining shows of the season are below:

- ***Cowgirls Don't Ride Zebras***
(World Premiere)
By Chris Leyva
March 3-12, 2017
Columbus Performing Arts Center
- ***Anne of Green Gables***
(Co-Production with Columbus School for Girls)
Music by Nancy Ford
Book and Lyrics by Gretchen Cryer
May 5-14, 2017
Columbus School for Girls

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org. Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages.

CATCO Mission Statement

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.

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