

TARRAGON THEATRE

2010-2011 SEASON

Press release # 8

For immediate release

SEANA MCKENNA RETURNS TO THE TARRAGON STAGE IN JOAN DIDION'S THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING

The Year of Magical Thinking

Toronto Premiere

by Joan Didion

A Belfry Theatre Production, Victoria

Starring: Seana McKenna

Director: Michael Shamata

Set & Costume Designer: John Ferguson

Lighting Designer: Michael Walton

Composer: Brad L'Écuyer

Stage Manager: Anne Murphy

Supported by: C.A. Delaney Capital Management

The Year of Magical Thinking opens in the Mainspace on Tuesday, November 9, 2010 at 8:00 pm. Previews from Tuesday, November 2, 2010.

Seana McKenna, one of this country's finest actors, will star in the Toronto premiere of **Joan Didion's The Year of Magical Thinking** at the Tarragon Theatre. Directed by Belfry Theatre (Victoria) Artistic Director **Michael Shamata**, **The Year of Magical Thinking** is based on Didion's best-selling memoir of the same name, a searing account of her journey through grief.

In **The Year of Magical Thinking**, Didion captures the compassion, humour and bewilderment of a fiercely intelligent woman whose world lurches suddenly from the ordinary to the unimaginable. It is Didion's attempt to make sense of the "weeks and then months that cut loose any fixed idea I ever had about death, about illness . . . about marriage and children and memory . . . about the shallowness of sanity, about life itself." Told with raw candour this magnificently written meditation on grief – "a place none of us know until we reach it" – is also a celebration of family, filled with a luminous belief in the power of the human spirit to endure and overcome heartbreak.

The Year of Magical Thinking was published to widespread acclaim and received the National Book Award for Nonfiction in 2005. Joan Didion's first seven books of nonfiction have been collected in a single volume, *We Tell Ourselves Stories in Order to Live*. Didion is celebrated as a practitioner of "new journalism." She and her late husband, John Gregory Dunne, co-wrote a number of screenplays, including *The Panic in Needle*

Park, starring a young Al Pacino, and *Up Close and Personal*, starring Robert Redford and Michelle Pfeiffer.

A graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada, **Seana McKenna** has played lead roles in many major theatres across the country including Maggie in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Grand Theatre, London), Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth, Portia, Viola, Cordelia, and Juliet (Stratford Festival), *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe* (Belfry Theatre, Neptune Theatre, National Arts Centre, Manitoba Theatre Centre), Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Theatre New Brunswick), Eliza in *Pygmalion* and *Candida* (Shaw Festival), Medea and Hedda Gabler (MTC). She won a Jessie Richardson Award for her performance in *Wit* (Vancouver Playhouse) and Dora Mavor Moore Awards for her performances in *Saint Joan* (Theatre Plus) and *Orpheus Descending* (Mirvish Productions / MTC) and her direction of *Valley Song*. Seana won a Genie Award for Best Supporting Actress for the 1997 film *The Hanging Garden*.

The creative team for **The Year of Magical Thinking** includes set and costume designer **John Ferguson**, lighting designer **Michael Walton**, composer **Brad L'Écuyer**, and stage manager **Anne Murphy**.

The Year of Magical Thinking previews in Tarragon's Mainspace on Tuesday, November 2, opens Tuesday, November 9 and runs until Sunday, December 12, 2010.

Previews: Nov. 2 – Nov. 7, 2010

Regular run: Tuesday through Saturday at 8 pm
Saturday & Sunday matinee at 2:30 pm

Prices start at \$23; seniors' and students' prices are available. Friday night and Sunday matinee rush are \$10.

Tickets for **The Year of Magical Thinking** are available online:
tickets.tarragontheatre.com.

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October 13, 2010