

For immediate release

Curse of the Starving Class

By **Sam Shepard**
Directed by
Mark Thomson

By arrangement with Josef Weinberger Limited

20 March – 11 April



Photo: Douglas McBride©

“I’m going into crime. It’s the only thing that pays these days.”

Sam Shepard’s *Curse of the Starving Class* comically dissects the corruption of American values. On a run-down Californian farmstead, at the edge of the desert and within migrating distance of the Mexican border, an alcoholic husband and his wife are each scheming to sell off their family home without the other’s knowledge, while their children struggle to come to terms with the harsh reality of the world they have been born into. Debt, stolen dreams and a fear of the future fuel the family’s self-destructive behaviours, as they sacrifice their meagre values, and each other, to attain something of the better life they envision for themselves.

Behind Shepard’s exploration of the corruption of money and the all-consuming lure of corporation is a painfully funny portrait of a family in decline, unsure whether to reject or embrace the label of America’s ‘starving class’ while teetering on the edge of poverty, sanity and society itself.

Shepard’s work explores many similar themes to playwrights such as Arthur Miller and Eugene O’Neill, but through more contemporary eyes, and with a brash, raw energy that befits the playwright often described as the ‘bucking bronco’ of American theatre.

Lyceum Artistic Director **Mark Thomson** (*The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, Six Characters in Search of an Author*) leads on the creative team including assistant director **Xana Maclean** (*DeoxyriboNucleic Acid, Fugee*, Lyceum Youth Theatre), designer **Georgia**

THE LYCEUM PRESS RELEASE

Royal Lyceum Theatre Edinburgh

Monday, 23 March 2009

McGuinness (365, National Theatre of Scotland), Lighting designer **Jeanine Davies** (*The Man Who Had All The Luck, Trumpets & Raspberries*) and dialect coach **Lynn Bains** (*The Man Who Had All The Luck, The Glass Menagerie*).

The Lyceum welcome a strong cast including **Christopher Fairbank** (*Auf Wiedersehen Pet, Tess of the D'urbervilles, The Scarlet Pimpernel, The Fifth Element, Aliens III, Hamlet*), **Carla Mendonça** (*My Parents Are Aliens, ITV*), **Neil McKinven** (*The Merchant of Venice; The Unconquered, Stellar Quines*), **Mark McDonnell** (*Merchant of Venice, Trumpets & Raspberries*) and **Jordan Young** (*Legit, BBC*).

-ENDS -

Notes for Editors:

The production will include a live appearance of a lamb courtesy of Gorgie City Farm, Edinburgh.



Christopher Fairbank



Carla Mendonça

Cast:

WESTON

ELLA

WESLEY

EMMA

TAYLOR

ELLIS

MALCOLM/SLATER

EMERSON

Christopher Fairbank

Carla Mendonça

Christopher Brandon

Alice Haig

Neil McKinven

Stewart Porter

Mark McDonnell

Jordan Young

Director

Assistant Director

Designer

Lighting Designer

Dialect Coach

Mark Thomson

Xana Maclean

Georgia McGuinness

Jeanine Davies

Lynn Bains

Press night: Saturday 21 March at 7.45pm

TICKETS & PERFORMANCES:

Performances: 20 March – 11 April

Evenings: Tuesday – Saturday at 7.45pm

Matinees: 25, 28 March and 1, 4, 11 April at 2.30pm

First Look Friday (preview performance) sponsored by *The List*: Friday 20 March at 7.45pm – all tickets £5

Pre-show talk with Artistic Director Mark Thomson: Tuesday 24 March at 6pm – tickets £3 / under 18s free

Post-show discussion with members of the cast: Tuesday 31 March (FREE)

Audio described performances: Thursday 2 April at 7.45pm & Saturday 4 April at 2.30pm

Touch Tour for the visually impaired: Saturday 4 April at 12.30pm

BSL signed performance: Wednesday 8 April at 7.45pm

Evening performances (full price): £12 - £26

Matinee Performances: Wednesday and Saturday Matinees £15

Concessions: £2 off full price for all Tuesday – Thursday shows

Under 18s: Half Price any performance

School Groups: £7.50 (stalls & grand circle). £6.50 (upper circle). Matinees – all seats £6.50. One teacher free with every ten pupils.

Registered unemployed: (Tues – Thurs) half price in advance, £1 tickets available on the day (max 20, stalls only). ID required.

Students/ people with disabilities: Half price (excludes First Look Fridays), £5 for Wed matinees. Wheelchair spaces are available in the stalls boxes. Students – full time only – ID required.

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Groups: 8+ £3 off each ticket (matinees £2 off); 20+ £4 off each ticket (matinees £3 off) plus one free ticket.

To book tickets please call our box office on 0131 248 4848. For group bookings of 8+ please call 0131 248 4849.

For press enquiries and to arrange press tickets please contact Melissa Clarke, Press Officer on 0131 248 4822 or email: mclarke@lyceum.org.uk



~~Free preview: Friday 22 March~~

~~Full price: £7.00—17.50~~

~~Concessions: £2 off full price Tue—Thu evenings~~

~~Students & people with disabilities: half price~~

~~Group discounts available.~~

~~Box office: 0131 248 4848; Groups (10+): 0131 248 4949~~