



NEW VILLAGE ARTS

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MEDIA ALERT

**San Diego Premiere of THE ROOMMATE Comes to Dea Hurston New Village Arts
April 1 to April 23 (previews March 24-March 31)
Critically Acclaimed Play Stars Milena (Sellers) Phillips and Kim Strassburger**

CARLSBAD, CA. March 2, 2020 – New Village Arts, North County’s cultural hub, announces the **San Diego Premiere** of **THE ROOMMATE** by **Jen Silverman**. This new dark comedy about self-discovery and new beginnings will be directed by longtime NVA collaborator **Samantha Ginn**, and will star **Milena (Sellers) Phillips** and **Kim Strassburger**.

“The premiere of this show was originally scheduled for spring of 2020, but because of COVID, everything was shut down a few days before we were supposed to open” said director **Samantha Ginn**. “So I’m thrilled that we’re now getting the chance to do this amazing play. The playwright, Jen Silverman, gave these actors so many comedic moments to work with. The comedy is grounded in complete truth as well. Often that truth is coming from a lonely and sad place in the characters. So, it’s enjoyable to watch those characters discover the moments of dark comedy. I think audiences will be very surprised. This play is *not* a predictable story. It’s a transformation play. These characters are not the same as they were at the start of the play. It’s surprising to see how they change and evolve.”

Described as “THE ODD COUPLE meets BREAKING BAD,” THE ROOMMATE is a dark comedy about two women who forge an unlikely bond despite their many differences. Sharon (Phillips), in her mid-fifties, is recently divorced and needs a roommate to share her Iowa home. Robyn (Strassburger), also in her mid-fifties, needs a place to hide and a chance to start over. But as Sharon begins to uncover Robyn’s secrets, they encourage her own deep-seated desire to transform her life completely. THE ROOMMATE is a dark comedy about what it takes to re-route your life – and what happens when the wheels come off.

Samantha Ginn will make her mainstage directorial debut at NVA with THE ROOMMATE. Ginn, the Director of Education for New Village Arts, oversees all of NVA's education programs, including nationally recognized neurodiverse education programs. These programs give teenagers and young adults with

neurodiversity professional training in theatre. Ginn is also a regular performer at NVA. Some of her favorites include SYLVIA, THE MISS FIRECRACKER CONTEST, and THE WEIR. She appeared most recently in the critically-acclaimed premiere adaptation of THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS (which she also co-adapted).

Milena (Sellers) Phillips returns to the NVA stage after acclaimed turns in 1222 OCEANFRONT: A BLACK FAMILY CHRISTMAS, INTIMATE APPAREL, MEN ON BOATS, and HAVING OUR SAY. She is joined by Kim Strassburger, making her return to the NVA stage after several years away (NVA credits include SEASCAPE and SIMPATICO). Both women will bring their considerable experience to this production.

The design team includes frequent, critically-acclaimed NVA collaborators: **Christopher Scott Murillo** (Scenic Designer), **Annelise Salazar** (Lighting Designer), **Katrina DeRoche** (Costume Designer), **Samantha Ginn & Marcus Rico** (Sound Designers), and **Andrea Moriarty** (Properties Designer).

NVA's 21st Season is sponsored by The Conrad Prebys Foundation and Jazzercise.

THE ROOMMATE will run from April 1 to April 22, with previews from March 24 – 30. Photos will be available on NVA's press page beginning March 30: www.newvillagearts.org/press

REVIEWS:

"tugs at the heartstrings as much as it tickles the funny bone." – Louisville Magazine

"a new play about isolation, second chances and the consequences of our choices, is as tragic as they come – and it's a tragedy that subtly grows beneath peals of uproarious laughter." – Broadway World

"in between the laughs and poignant moments... The Roommate delivers 90 minutes of what theatre can and should look like" – The Theatre Times

CALENDAR LISTING INFORMATION:

THE ROOMMATE

San Diego Premiere

Written by **Jen Silverman**

Directed by **Samantha Ginn**

Cast

Sharon: **Milena (Sellers) Phillips***

Robyn: **Kim Strassburger**

**Member of Actors' Equity Association*

Theatre: New Village Arts, 2787 State St. Carlsbad CA 92008

- next to the Carlsbad Village Train Station

Website: newvillagearts.org

Phone: 760.433.3245

Performance Dates and Times:

Show Dates: Friday, March 24th to Sunday, April 23rd
(**Pay-What-You-Can Previews:** March 24 – 31, 2023)

Opening: Saturday, April 1 at 7.30 pm

Wednesday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Thursdays: 7:30 p.m.

Fridays: 8:00 p.m.

Saturdays: 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Sundays: 2:00 p.m.

For Press Tickets, contact Sakshi Tiwari at sakshi@newvillagearts.org. 760.433.3245

Tickets: \$27 - \$50, with discounts available for Seniors, Students, and Active Military. Tickets can be purchased in person at New Village Arts (2787 State Street, Carlsbad, CA), online at www.newvillagearts.org, or via phone at 760.433.3245

Summary: Described as “THE ODD COUPLE meets BREAKING BAD,” THE ROOMMATE is a dark comedy about two women who forge an unlikely bond despite their many differences. Sharon (Phillips), in her mid-fifties, is recently divorced and needs a roommate to share her Iowa home. Robyn (Strassburger), also in her mid-fifties, needs a place to hide and a chance to start over. But as Sharon begins to uncover Robyn’s secrets, they encourage her own deep-seated desire to transform her life completely. A dark comedy about what it takes to re-route your life – and what happens when the wheels come off.

Stage Manager: **Alex H. Hajjar***

Lighting Designer: **Annelise Salazar**

Sound Designer: **Samantha Ginn & Marcus Rico**

Set Designer: **Christopher Scott Murillo**

Properties Designer: **Andrea Moriarty**

Costume Designer: **Katrina DeRoche**

Master Carpenter: **Greg Ertel**

Assistant Stage Manager: **Joseph Prete**

*Appearing courtesy of Actors Equity Association, the union for actors and stage managers in the United States.