

For Immediate Release
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The Gallery Players
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THE GALLERY PLAYERS ANNOUNCE THE NEXT 'PLAYERS' SHAKESPEARE: ONSTAGE' PRODUCTION
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
July 18th – August 4th

Dominic Cuskern, *'Players' Shakespeare: OnStage' Producer*
Frankie Dailey, *Producer*
Mark Harborth, *Director*
Sidney Fortner, *Asst. Director/Dramaturge*

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE – Players' Shakespeare: Onstage is proud to present William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* which will open July 18th and run through August 4th. **Dominic Cuskern** (*Inherit the Wind, A Perfect Ganesh*), Broadway veteran and long-standing member of the Pearl Theatre Resident Acting Company, stars as Shylock. Returning to Gallery, **David Patrick Ford** (*Macbeth, Othello*) will play Antonio opposite Cuskern. Gallery President and admired Director **Mark Harborth** (*Noises Off, Chess, Othello, Dreamgirls*) will again direct. Bringing the play to life under Harborth's direction are Lighting Designer Scott A. Calley, Sound Designer **Jacob Subotnick**, Costume Designer **Sidney Fortner**, and Stage Manager **Becky J. Doster**. The cast will include **Erin Beirnard** as Portia, **Hunter Hoffman** as Bassanio, **Louis Lavoie** as Launcelot, as well as **J.B. Alexander, Kevin Blackwelder, Colin Dweir, Cara Farlow, Jonathan Green, Luke Hofmaier, Mark Kinch, Zack Krajnyak, Chris Richards, Louise Stewart**.

Performances will take place at 7:30 pm on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, as well as 3:00 pm on Sunday. Tickets are \$18 for Adults, \$14 for senior citizens and children 12 and under. The Gallery Players will also host a "Pay What You Can" night on Monday, July 22nd at 7:30 pm. Tickets can be purchased 24/7 online at www.galleryplayers.com or by calling OvationTix at 212-352-3101 (phone hours 9-9 weekdays, 10-6 weekends). *Merchant* is an Actors Equity Association showcase, approval pending.

Which is the merchant here? And which the Jew?

Portia, Act IV, Scene 1

An astonishing question, given that Shylock would literally have been a marked man? *The Merchant of Venice*, written in 1596-97, is Shakespeare's great play about differences: religious, economic, racial and cultural. Set as an Italian Renaissance fairy tale, Director Mark Harborth shows two worlds in collision – that of Antonio and of Shylock. Perhaps more than any other of his plays, Shakespeare dramatizes the issues of modern society – issues of race, anti-Semitism, and living on the margins both culturally and economically. This candid comedy speaks to us across four centuries with humor, passion, disguises,

twists and turns. It is revived continually because of its relevance to our world which is paradoxically evermore socially, religiously, financially and politically polarized in this electronic age.

DOMINIC CUSKERN (SHYLOCK) - Dominic Cuskern, AEA, appeared on Broadway in *Inherit the Wind*. He created the role of Ganesha, the Hindu God, in Terrence McNally's *A Perfect Ganesh*. As well, he played Labisse in the National Tour of *Victor/Victoria*. Dominic has performed numerous roles as a longstanding member of the Resident Acting Company with The Pearl Theatre where he will be premiering Terrence McNally's *And Away We Go* this fall. In the more than 20 years Dominic has been with The Gallery Players, his roles have included actor, director, Board of Directors President, Creator and Producer of The Peanut Gallery, and Producer of Players' Shakespeare: OnStage.

THE GALLERY PLAYERS – The Gallery Players (TGP) has provided Brooklyn audiences with quality theatre since 1967. Located in Park Slope but beloved on both sides of the Brooklyn Bridge, The Gallery Players is dedicated to producing classic and contemporary plays and musicals as well as premiering new works. Recipient of the Off-Off Broadway Review's 2000 Award for Lifetime Achievement, and Innovative Theater (IT) awards for outstanding musical for *Urinetown*, *Yank*, and *Like You Like It*. The Gallery Players' season comprises three plays and three musicals, covering a remarkably wide range of dramatic and comedic styles. The season finale is the Annual Black Box New Play Festival, which gives world premier performances of works by playwrights.

PLAYERS' SHAKESPEARE – Gallery's newest initiative: a home for The Bard in Brooklyn. PS has evolved from its initial production of *King Lear* in 2009 to a platform comprised of three divisions: OnStage, PlayerStudio, and Revels. As good as its name, Players' Shakespeare: OnStage projects—fully realized productions, staged readings, and school-based programming—will focus on Shakespeare's plays and the players who bring them to life. Players' Shakespeare: PlayerStudio will afford training and study opportunities; Players' Shakespeare: Revels will host a variety of events, such as the 'Chris'ning Pub Crawl,' celebrating Shakespeare's christening by hoisting and quoting. Throughout its year-long program of productions, education, and events, the Players' Shakespeare platform is dedicated to the pursuit and enjoyment of Shakespeare at The Gallery Players

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