



News Release
Virginia Repertory Theatre

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Mar. 1, 2024

Virginia Repertory Theatre Presents
Zero Hour in partnership with
Weinstein JCC Jewish Family Theatre

Richmond, VA - Virginia Repertory Theatre will present *Zero Hour*, a play by Jim Brochu, opening March 15 in the Theatre Gym at the November Theatre downtown. Theatre legend Zero Mostel's swagger, ferocity, intelligence and fantastic wit is brought back to the stage in this tour-de-force, starring award-winning Richmond favorite **Jason Marks**.

Set in Mostel's painting studio on West 28th Street, a naive reporter attempts to interview the famously volatile artist, prompting an explosion of memory, humor, outrage and juicy backstage lore. Mostel is remembered for his comedic genius and his definitive roles, but in the 1950's he was equally known for his place on the infamous Hollywood blacklist.

Zero Hour was written originally and performed by **Jim Brochu**. The show received the 2010 Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Solo Performance, as well as the Los Angeles Stage Ovation Award for Best Play in 2006.

The play was produced last season at the Weinstein JCC as part of the Jewish Family Theatre series, and ran for 4 performances. Virginia Rep's Artistic Director of Programming, Rick Hammerly, was instrumental in bringing the hit show to Virginia Rep, believing it would be a great fit for its Partnership Productions program.

Director Debra Clinton returns to Virginia Rep to direct *Zero Hour*, having directed previous productions of *1776*, *The Whipping Man*, *Miracle on South Division Street*. She will take the helm this summer in Virginia big summer musical *9 to 5* in the November Theatre. Clinton has also appeared as an actor on local stages, including Virginia Rep, Richmond Shakespeare, Richmond Triangle Players, and more. She currently serves as producing Artistic Director for the

Jewish Family Theatre at the Weinstein JCC, and is also the full time drama director at Hanover High School in Hanover County, VA.

“The show provides an opportunity for people to see all of the things that Jason is capable of,” says Clinton. “I don’t think people will be surprised, because people know how good he is, but I think they will be stunned at the depth he has as an actor.”

Jason Marks returns to his critically acclaimed role of Zero Mostel in *Zero Hour*, reuniting with director Debra Clinton for this production. Jason is a 3-time Artsie Award winning performer, best known to local audiences for his roles of Max Bialystock in *The Producers*, Nicely Nicely in *Guys & Dolls*, and Shrek in *Shrek: The Musical*, and Ben Franklin in *1776*, all with Virginia Rep.

“I could not be more thrilled to bring Zero to new audiences at Virginia Rep, and I’m delighted it’s getting a second chance at life after last year’s production at the JCC. The show means an enormous amount to me, and the story still holds a remarkable amount of relevance, especially in the current highly polarized political and social climate. Zero’s story will never lose its luster because of that,” Marks said.

About Jim Brochu (Playwright)

Jim Brochu is the only actor in America to have won the New York Drama Desk Award, the Washington, DC Helen Hayes Award, the Los Angeles Ovation Award, and the South Florida Carbonell Award, all for Best Actor in a Play (*Zero Hour*). He has appeared in both Broadway and off-Broadway productions, and toured the United States with Zero, garnering both unanimous critical raves and major theatrical honors. His other works include *The Big Voice: God or Merman?*, which he also wrote, as well as *The Last Session*, *A Wonderful Worldful of Christmas*, *Cookin’ with Gus*, *The Lady of the House*, *Fat Chance*, and *The Lucky O’Learys*. His portrait hangs at Sardi’s Restaurant in New York, a singular tribute to a fifty-year show business career as an actor and playwright. Mr. Brochu lives in New York.

About Zero Mostel

Samuel Joel Mostel was born in Brownsville, New York in 1915, the son of an itinerant rabbi. His dream was to be a painter, and he eventually became a successful nightclub comedian. His left-wing sympathies caused him great travails during the Hollywood blacklisting of the 1950s, putting a damper on a blossoming movie career as a character actor and funnyman. Mostel returned to Broadway in triumph in 1961 in the absurdist drama *Rhinoceros*, for which he won his first Tony award. The success of this play caught the eye of Broadway producer and impresario Harold Prince, who cast him as the freedom-craving slave Pseudolus in *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. He won a second Tony award, making him the first performer to win in both musical and dramatic categories. His next success was that of Tevye, the milkman in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Once more, he won the Tony Award, and went on to revive the role several times, including a major US national tour. While snubbed for the film version of *Fiddler*, he went on to create the larger-than-life Max Bialystock in Mel

Brooks' *The Producers* in 1968. During his life, he continued to paint, and always considered himself an artist first and foremost above his career as an actor. He died suddenly in 1977 at age 62 during a Philadelphia tryout of a new play about Shakespeare's Shylock.

Direction & Design

Direction	Debra Clinton
Set & Lighting Design	Todd Schall-Vess
Wig Design	Kevin S. Foster II
Stage Management	Hayley Tsutsumi

Cast List

Zero Mostel	Jason Marks*
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* Member of Actors' Equity Association

Zero Hour runs March 15 - April 7, 2024 at the Theatre Gym at the November Theatre downtown, 114 W. Broad Street.

Ticket Information Box Office: (804) 282-2620

www.virginiarep.org

Full Price Tickets: \$40.00

Discounted Group Rates available.

Press

The play is presented in two 45-minute acts with a 15 minute intermission

Press Kits will be available at <http://va-rep.org/press.html>

Pass code accessible, high resolution photos available to the media.

Username = press

Password = HiRes121

About Virginia Repertory Theatre

Virginia Repertory Theatre is a regional professional theater headquartered in downtown Richmond, and is one of the largest performing arts organizations in Central Virginia. Virginia Rep will stage productions in four venues in 2023-2024: the Signature Season at the Sara Belle and Neil November Theatre, the Barksdale Season at the Hanover Tavern, the Family Season at Virginia Rep Center for Arts and Education, 4204 Hermitage Road in Richmond's Northside, and Partner Productions in the Theatre Gym located within the November Theatre complex downtown. Virginia Rep also tours children's shows, both virtual and live, and provides educational programming to schools throughout Virginia and to major performing arts centers throughout 32 states.