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Houston, Texas 77002
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November 7, 2013
For immediate release:

Jason Nodler
Artistic Director
Kirk Markley
Managing Director
Tamarie Cooper
Associate Director

The Catastrophic Theatre

Presents

Marie and Bruce by Wallace Shawn

November 22 - December 14, 2013

All tickets Pay-What-You-Can

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"Darling, why is it that whenever we have a conversation you always feel sick?"

Marie and Bruce have been married a very long time. Maybe ten years, maybe six months. Either way, a very long time.

The play begins on the morning that Marie plans to leave Bruce. They wake up. They have their coffee. We see the very different people they become when alone. They meet at a party. They go to dinner. Seemingly trivial moments in their relationship accumulate like ice on a power line.

"A dangerous writer. A very rare species. He tells people things about themselves that they don't want to know." – Joseph Papp on Wallace Shawn

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The Catastrophic Theatre's love of Wallace Shawn is well documented by its hit productions of *Our Late Night* and *The Designated Mourner*, each of which was declared a "can't miss" production by major critics in Houston. Audiences returned again and again, armed with friends.

Shawn is best known for his character roles in such films as *The Princess Bride*, *Clueless*, and *Annie Hall* as well as his more serious turns in the films *My Dinner with Andre* and *Vanya on 42th Street*, but acting for him is something of a day job. His primary mode of expression is his writing and he is a writer unlike any other.

Jason Nodler, Tamarie Cooper, and Charlie Scott first collaborated on this play in 1999 with Infernal Bridegroom Productions.

In the Houston Press review of the 1999 production Lee Williams wrote:

"Infernal Bridegroom's riotous production of his Marie and Bruce is a perfect entree into the spiny wit of Shawn's verbal imagination... Shawn's message is undeniably bleak, but it is also very, very funny... We talk and talk and giggle and curse, but no matter what words, what sounds we use, we can never find our way into each other's hearts."

In special celebration of their 20 years making theatre together, Nodler, Cooper, and Scott will reprise their roles as director and lead actors in *Marie and Bruce*, a devastating comedy about a terrible marriage that will probably last forever. Sounds like our kind of holiday play.

Tamarie Cooper (Marie) is beloved by Houston audiences for her original summer musicals but she is also a highly accomplished dramatic actress. While continuing to create her summer shows she has taken a reprieve from appearing in other plays in order to spend time raising her young daughter Rose. Previously, and to great acclaim, she has portrayed leading roles in *Medea*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Happy Days* and many others. She also originated the leading role in the world premiere production of Suzan-Lori Parks' *Fucking A*.

Charlie Scott (Bruce) likewise took a very long break from acting in the service of child rearing. Having appeared in highly memorable roles in dozens of plays with Infernal Bridegroom Productions, he made his return to the stage in a widely lauded performance of Estragon in Catastrophic's *Waiting for Godot* earlier this year.

The cast is rounded out by Catastrophic regulars **Greg Dean**, **Karina Pal-Montaña Bowers**, **Kyle Sturdivant**, and **Abraham Zeus Zapata**; Infernal Bridegroom favorite **Jeanne Harris**; and Houston Rockets general manager **Daryl Morey**, in his acting debut.

Scenic design is by **Laura Fine Hawkes** with lighting by **David Gipson**, costumes by **Macy Lyne**, sound by **Chris Bakos**, and props by **Greg Dean**. **Tawny Tidwell** stage manages with assistance from **Chloe Bella DeHoyos**. **Noel Bowers** assists the director.

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