

Dangerously Delightful

By Lisa Peters

Brett Christopher as the Vicompte de Valmont and Anthousa Harris as Émilie

They'll dazzle you, shock you, amaze you and above all, entertain you. The cast of *Dangerous Liaisons* is superb, the director world class and the theatre, staging and choreography spectacular!

Wickedly seductive, you won't want to miss this outstanding theatrical event as the Leonor and Alvin Segal Theatre kicks off a sizzling season of passion and seduction with Christopher Hampton's adaptation of Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' 1782 French novel about lust, greed, deception and romance.

"When it comes to relationships between men and women, after two centuries—nothing has changed!" says award-winning director Alexandre Marine, who resides in Montreal. "This play and its themes of sex, power and manipulation are universal, we're still playing by the same rules," he adds in expressing the timelessness of the play. He previously won the Prix de la Critique award for *Amadeus*, at the Segal, which was an unqualified success and demonstrated his unique creativity in staging large scale period plays. Marine continues to direct plays in his native Russia, where he says theatre is of great importance.

Bryna Wasserman, the Segal Centre's Artistic and Executive Director, was never in doubt as to who should direct this opening play of the Segal's 08-09 season. "I couldn't be more confident in him leading this production! It's a large scale, challenging play,

but with his innovative eye and mastery of the physical aspect of the theatre, his perspective brings it to life in the most distinct and imaginative ways."

The primarily Montreal and Toronto cast of *Dangerous Liaisons* is hot, young and dynamic, with a sexual energy that sears through the 300 seat circular theatre. "We are wicked!" says the stunning and cunning Catherine De Sève (hugely popular for *L'auberge du chien noir* on Radio-Canada, here in her first English stage role). Formally trained at The National Theatre School in Montreal, she enthralled us as the Marquise de Merteuil, who, along with her former lover the Vicomte de Valmont, take pleasure in manipulating and seducing those around them. "We are rich and bored, and prey on others as a sport," she explains. Costume design by Jessica Poirier-Chang is spectacular, and the design team headed by Yannik Larivée team has conceived a stage where reality reflects a foray into fantasy.

"Seduction is like a game of chess," agrees the enormously talented Brett Christopher (who won rave reviews for his one man show in the Segal's *I Am My Own Wife*). He stars as the Vicomte de Valmont. Christopher is the General Manager of Theatre Kingston and a graduate of the George Brown Theatre School where his training also included fencing and stunt expertise, which were invaluable for this role.

Jillian Niedoba plays the virtuous Madame de Tourvel, and is breathtaking in her role. A graduate of York University's acting conservatory, she has this to say about love, lust, and lies. "People make mistakes. They always have and always will. I believe that it is right to forgive. Love is about learning each and everyday."

The highly respected cast also includes Jake Epstein (*De Grassi: The Next Generation*, Gemini Award), Anthousa Harris (*Centaur's Romeo and Juliet*), Gemma James-Smith (*Sidmart's The Haunted Hillbilly*), Vitalii Makarov (*Théâtre Deuxième Réalité's Hamlet*), Tara Nicodemo (*The Segal's The Diary of Anne Frank*), Igor Ovadis (*Minuit le soir*) and Moira Wylie (*The Segal's Hedda Gabler*). Rounding out the company is Maud Desbois, Adam Driscoll, Alexandre Gorchkov, Lauren Roy, Kristina Sandev and David Sklar.

Spectacular sets complete the fantasy, one not to be missed.

Dangerous Liaisons plays until September 28
For tickets call (514) 739-2301 ext. 8327



Jillian Niedoba



Jake Epstein, as Le Chevalier Danceny and Catherine De Sève, as the Marquise de Merteuil