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**Girl Friday Productions
Stages 1936 Pulitzer Prize Winner
IDIOT'S DELIGHT by Robert E. Sherwood**

Minneapolis, MN – A romantic commentary on idealism, greed and the realities of war, **Robert E. Sherwood's IDIOT'S DELIGHT**, produced by **Girl Friday Productions** and directed by **Craig Johnson**, opens **June 30, 2017** on the Andy Boss Thrust Stage at Park Square Theatre. Girl Friday Productions brings its signature large ensemble cast to this dramatic comedy with musical accents, set in a world on the brink.

"The long view is not easy to sustain in this shortsighted world." – Quillery in IDIOT'S DELIGHT

Winner of the 1936 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Idiot's Delight* features an eccentric assortment of characters who are stranded together in a European mountaintop resort at the outbreak of war, including a munitions magnate, his mysterious Russian mistress, and an American song and dance man with his chorine companions "Les Blondes." IDIOT'S DELIGHT lives within the bitter memory of World War I and in the shadow of World War II. A pointed warning against the dangers of blind nationalism and demagoguery, IDIOT'S DELIGHT holds striking relevance and immediacy for Americans today.

IDIOT'S DELIGHT played 300 performances on Broadway in 1936-37 and featured American theatre royalty Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne in the lead roles. Twin Cities' favorites **John Middleton and Stacia Rice** lead Girl Friday Productions' stellar ensemble cast of 17. Girl Friday Productions is offering a rare opportunity for Twin Cities' audiences: to the company's knowledge IDIOT'S DELIGHT has never had a local professional production.

"Girl Friday is particularly interested in themes of human resilience and exploring how that thread in classic works resonates today," says **Girl Friday Productions Artistic Director Kirby Bennett**. *"IDIOT'S DELIGHT reveals an anxious and uncertain world that mirrors the deep uncertainty and fear of our own time. The play makes a plea for pacifism, while reminding us that we have responsibilities as world citizens. At the same time, IDIOT'S DELIGHT is fantastically entertaining, filled with humor, period glamour, romance... and showgirls!"*

IDIOT'S DELIGHT Production Director Craig Johnson returns to the helm for Girl Friday Productions, having directed three of the company's previous productions, including the Ivey Award-winning *Street Scene*, which was honored for Craig's direction. An acclaimed veteran of the Twin Cities theatre scene, Johnson is one of the region's most noted and sought after talents, with more than 35 years experience as an actor and director.

*"One of the great pleasures of working on a Girl Friday show is the opportunity to create intricately on a broad canvas," says **Johnson**. "Sherwood gives us a bountiful expanse of rich, passionate, and very human characters. Excavating their different perspectives within the intimacy of the Andy Boss stage should be potent alchemy for audiences as well."*

IDIOT'S DELIGHT features an ensemble cast of 17 gifted actors, including many Twin Cities' favorites as well as upcoming talent. The cast includes: **Bonni Allen, Kirby Bennett, David Beukema, David Coral, Kevin Dutcher** (also Music Director), **Becca Hart, Eric Knutson, Karissa Lade, Sam Landman, John Middleton, Gabriel Murphy, Addie Phelps, Kory LaQuess Pullman, Stacia Rice, C. Ryan Shipley** (also Choreographer), **Mike Swan** and **Karen Wiese Thompson**. The exceptional production team includes: Scenic Designer **Michael Hoover**, Lighting Designer **Dietrich Poppen**, Costume Designer **Kathy Kohl**, Properties Designer **Abbee Warmboe**, Sound Designer **Anita Kelling**, Stage Manager **Penny Kissinger**, Dramaturge **Christine Gordon** and Dialect Coach **Lucinda Holshue**.

IDIOT'S DELIGHT is made possible, in part, by an appropriation from the **Minnesota State Legislature** with money from the State's general fund; and by the **Saint Paul Cultural STAR Program**. IDIOT'S DELIGHT is being produced by Girl Friday Productions as part of Park Square's "Theatres in Residence" Series.

About Girl Friday Productions

"It's wonderful to see these rarely produced gems." – 2015 audience member

The little company that does big plays, Girl Friday Productions focuses on larger scale American plays of exceptional literary merit that are less frequently produced today. The company's mission is to nurture artists, inspire audiences and illuminate the human condition. Girl Friday Productions chooses not to do a multi-play season but to rather focus on a singular major project every other year. This approach maximizes efforts to work with challenging texts, large and skilled ensemble casts, and distinguished directors and designers. Girl Friday Productions' work is characterized by exceptional literature, humanity, relevance and stimulating theatricality.

Founded in 2004 by Artistic Director Kirby Bennett, Girl Friday Productions' most recent productions were THE MATCHMAKER (2015 year end recognition from Twin Cities Theatre Bloggers), CAMINO REAL ([Lavender Magazine](#) notable performances in 2013) and STREET SCENE (2011 "Top Ten"/Year End Highlights in the [Star Tribune](#), [Pioneer Press](#) and [Lavender Magazine](#); Ivey Award for director). Other highlights include THE SKIN OF OUR TEETH ([MinnPost](#) "Favorite for 2009") and OUR TOWN ([Pioneer Press](#)' "Top Ten Shows of 2007").

Girl Friday Productions presents IDIOT'S DELIGHT by Robert E. Sherwood

June 30-July 23, 2017

Location: Andy Boss Thrust Stage at Park Square Theatre

Historic Hamm Building in Downtown St. Paul
20 West Seventh Place
St. Paul, MN 55102

Tickets: Preview: \$27/\$37; Regular Run: \$40/\$60; discounts for seniors, students, groups, fringe buttons, MPR members, active military service personnel; Pay What You Wish July 10

Reservations: 651.291.7005 or www.parksquaretheatre.org

Information and company website: www.girlfridayproductions.org

Performance Schedule (17 performances over 4 weeks)

Evening shows at 7:30 pm, Sundays at 2:00 pm. The specific performance dates are:

Thursday, June 29 at 7:30 pm Preview

Friday, June 30 at 7:30 pm Opening night and reception

Saturday, July 1 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, July 2 at 2 pm

Thursday, July 6 at 7:30 pm

Friday, July 7 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, July 8 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, July 9 at 2:00 pm

Monday, July 10 at 7:30 pm Pay What You Wish

Thursday, July 13 at 7:30 pm

Friday, July 14 at 7:30 pm Audio Description; Post show discussion

Saturday, July 15 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, July 16 at 2:00 pm American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation

(dates continue on next page)

Thursday, July 20 at 7:30 pm

Open captioning

Friday, July 21 at 7:30 pm

Open captioning

Saturday, July 22 at 7:30 pm

Open captioning

Sunday, July 23 at 2:00 pm

Open captioning, closing performance

– End –