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For Immediate Release

## Noël Coward's Tantalizing Masterpiece at Main Street Theater

### *Design for Living*

**May 5 – June 3, 2007**

Main Street Theater presents Noël Coward's delicious comic masterpiece *Design for Living*. With previews May 5, 6, and 9, *Design...* opens Thursday, May 10, and runs through June 3 (there is no performance Friday, May 11) at Main Street Theater – Rice Village, 2540 Times Blvd. Performances are on Thursdays at 7:30pm, Fridays and Saturdays at 8pm, and Sundays at 3pm. Tickets range from \$20 - \$35 and are on sale in person at the Main Street Theater Box Office, 2540 Times Blvd., via phone at 713.524.6706, or online at [www.mainstreettheater.com](http://www.mainstreettheater.com).

#### **About *Design for Living***

Says Leo in *Design for Living*: "The actual facts are so simple. I love you. You love me. I love Otto. Otto loves you. Otto loves me. There now! Start to unravel from there." The infamous and unconventional threesome of Otto (the painter), Gilda (the interior decorator), and Leo (the playwright) constitutes an ever-revolving triangle fueled by lust, love, and friendship. As whirling passions drive them from Paris to London and then on to New York, the trio realizes it's madness to be together – but it's impossible to be apart!

*Design for Living* premiered in 1932 with Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne as Otto and Gilda, and Noël Coward himself playing Leo. In Coward's witty and dazzling masterpiece, the language and characters sparkle in this world of dignified chaos! "Coward's cleverest play.... Coward's technique has never been more dizzy or more deft." N.Y. Times.

#### **About the Playwright**

Noël Coward's black comedies were clearly on the edge and ahead of their time. He dealt with issues others were afraid to confront and did so with a flair for language and an unmatched wit. Best known for *The Vortex* (1924), *Private Lives* (1930), *In Which We Serve* (1942), *The Happy Breed* (1944), *Blithe Spirit* (1945), and *Brief Encounter* (1945), he received his knighthood in 1970.

***More...***

### About the Production

Claire Hart-Palumbo returns to Main Street to direct *Design for Living* after directing last season's Coward hit, *Private Lives*. Dwight Clark (*The Countess, Tainted Blood*), Ilich Guardiola (*Anna in the Tropics, The Secret Garden*), and Shannon Emerick (*Poor Richard, Wondergirl*) comprise the threesome of Leo, Otto, and Gilda, respectively. Al Baker makes his Main Street debut as Ernest. Comedienne Michelle Britton (*What the Butler Saw, Call Me Madam*) appears as Miss Hodge and as Grace Torrence. Morgan McCarthy plays Helen Carver, and Matthew Redden plays Henry Carver and Mr. Birbeck.

The design team includes Troy Scheid (set design), Kent Arneson (lighting design), Janel J. Badrina (sound design), Margaret Crowley (costume design), and Art Ornelas (props design). Rob Babbitt is the production stage manager.

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Since 1975, Main Street Theater has produced high quality professional theater for audiences of all ages through its MainStage productions and Main Street Youth Theater. The Main Street Theater Kids On Stage program offers performing arts classes and camps for children 5 years to 14 years of age. The organization produces plays at two locations, 2540 Times Boulevard in Rice Village and 4617 Montrose Boulevard at Chelsea Market.

Main Street Theater is a member of the Fresh Arts Coalition, a collaboration of 23 arts organizations that work collectively to raise awareness of the size and diversity of the arts in Houston, and a constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for not-for-profit theaters. Main Street Theater offers a lively year-round repertory of classic and contemporary plays for audiences of all ages and provides a much-needed showcase for Houston theater professionals. Main Street Theater is also a member of Actors' Equity Association and of ASSITEJ, the world theatre network of theatre for children and young people. Main Street Theater is funded in part by grants from the City of Houston through the Cultural Arts Council of Houston/Harris County, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

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