



West End Players Guild News Release

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West End Players Guild presents John Morogiello's *Engaging Shaw*

ST. LOUIS, MO (Jan. 29, 2013) – In the late 19th century, famed playwright George Bernard Shaw was one of England's best-known philanderers. He thought the institution of marriage was basically corrupt and evil.

Charlotte Payne-Townshend, a wealthy heiress, was a socialist and free-thinker who wanted nothing to do with children and loathed sex.

So where else could their acquaintance lead but marriage – a marriage that lasted 45 years, despite the fact that it reportedly was never consummated?

Just how that happened is the stuff of *Engaging Shaw*, John Morogiello's relentlessly witty account of how Bernie chased Charlotte until she caught him.

West End Players Guild continues its 2012-2013 season with the St. Louis premiere of *Engaging Shaw*, opening February 8 for a two-week run at the theatre in the Union Avenue Christian Church. Matt Hanify and Suki Peters play Shaw and Charlotte, with Jeff Kargus and Nancy Nigh as their mutual friends Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Robert Ashton directs.

Reviewing the show's New York premiere in 2010, the *New York Times* noted that "if there's a minute of the play that's less than clever, you'll be hard pressed to find it." Although it is a fictional account, playwright Morogiello's script follows the actual events of the courtship and he peppers the dialogue with many of Shaw's own words. The result is a show which is as literate as it is funny.

Evening performances of *Engaging Shaw* will be February 8-9 and 14-16 at 8:00 p.m.; Sunday matinees will be February 10 and 17 at 2:00 p.m. New for the 2012-2013 season, WEPG has added a Thursday evening show to the second weekend of each run. All shows are in the theatre at the Union Avenue Christian Church, 733 Union Blvd. (just north of Delmar). There is ample free parking in the lot at the rear of the building, near the theatre entrance. Tickets for all shows can be purchased on-line at www.WestEndPlayers.org; telephone reservations are accepted at 314/367-0025.

WEPG's season of St. Louis premieres continues with Michael Hollinger's *Opus*, directed by Jerry McAdams, April 5-14.

West End Players Guild is St. Louis's oldest continuously-operating theatre company, providing "big theatre in a small space" since November, 1911, and now presenting its second century of performances. For more information on our history, season tickets and volunteer opportunities, please visit us online at www.WestEndPlayers.org.

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George Bernard Shaw (played by Matt Hanify, R) and his friends have various reactions to a new portrait of Shaw's favorite person, Shaw. Also pictured (L to R) are Suki Peters as Charlotte Payne-Townshend, Nancy Nigh as Beatrice Webb and Jeff Kargus as Sidney Webb. It is a scene from the West End Players Guild's production of John Morogielo's *Engaging Shaw*, directed by Robert Ashton and opening on February 8. (Photo by John Lamb)