



West End Players Guild News Release

For immediate release – 4/3/12

News Media Contact:
Mark Abels - 314/504-0844
wepgnews@WestEndPlayers.org

West End Players Guild presents Eugene Ionesco's absurdist masterpiece *Exit the King.*

ST. LOUIS, MO (April 3, 2012) -- Okay, so it's time to put out the press release reminding people to line up for their tickets to Eugene Ionesco's *Exit the King*, the West End Players Guild's last show of the 2011-2012 season. So, how do you explain to people this weird play about an insufferable 600-year-old king who is going to die at the end of the second act, having reduced his own kingdom to a state of literally falling into a hole in the earth and oh, by the way, it's a comedy?

You could point out that when Clive Barnes of the New York Times reviewed the show's New York premiere in 1968 he called it Ionesco's "incomparably greatest work," and that the Times' Ben Brantley waxed effusive over the 2009 Broadway revival. But, hey, who believes the elite media anymore?

Or you could note that the plot really is very familiar to anyone who remembers (and enjoyed) the "Bring out yer dead" scene from Monty Python and the Holy Grail (and if you don't remember it, you can watch it [here](#)).

Or maybe we say, "Well, you just have to see it."

The show will run April 13-22 at the theatre at Union Avenue Christian Church (733 Union Blvd.), with performances at 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. on Sundays.

Renee Sevier-Monsey directs the WEPG production, assisted by Carrie Phinney. The cast features Robert Ashton as the doomed King Berenger 1st, whose once-immense empire has shrunk to the confines of his garden walls.

WEPG presents *Exit the King* – Page 2

Nancy Crouse plays Queen Marguerite, the King's first (older) wife, who must help him accept his unacceptable but inescapable fate.

Bridget Barisonek is Queen Marie, the King's second (younger) wife, who is in denial.

David Gibbs is the palace doctor, surgeon, executioner, bacteriologist and astrologist, in charge (as much as anyone, anyway) of orchestrating the King's shuffle off this mortal coil.

The palace staff is reduced to just two loyal servants, Linda Kopchak as Juliette, maid and nurse, and Reginald Pierre as the Guard, both of whom would just like to get this over with.

Together, they form an extremely amusing and, yes, absurd ensemble, who will bring this year's WEPG season to a thoughtful but very funny conclusion.

Tickets to see *Exit the King* are \$20 and can be purchased at the box office or online. Visit www.WestEndPlayers.org for more information and a link to the on-line box office. More information also is available by phone at 314/367-0025.

###



Soon-to-be-dead King Berenger the 1st (Robert Ashton, center) is helped respectfully off the throne by (clockwise, from top left) Nancy Crouse as Queen Marguerite, Bridget Barisonek as Queen Marie, Liana Kopchak as Juliette and David Gibbs as the Doctor/Surgeon/Executioner/etc. Berenger's story is Eugene Ionesco's *Exit the King*, directed by Renee Sevier-Monsey, with performances April 13-22. (Photo by John Lamb)