



November 3, 2009

For Immediate Release  
Contact: Scott Myers  
(313) 463-4216, [smyers@gemtheatre.com](mailto:smyers@gemtheatre.com)

***Ethel Merman takes an extra bow,  
Forbidden Broadway prepares to take the stage***

DETROIT MI – The Gem Theatre is preparing for the holidays as the critically acclaimed show ***Ethel Merman's Broadway*** enters its final weeks of performances and rehearsals begin for the Gem Theatre's most popular holiday show, ***A Forbidden Broadway Christmas***. Tickets (\$19.75 - \$45) are on sale now for both productions through the Gem Theatre Box Office, Ticketmaster Charge by Phone (800) 982-2787, all Ticketmaster Ticketcenters and online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com).

***Ethel Merman's Broadway*** began performances at Detroit's Gem Theatre on September 9<sup>th</sup> to critical praise:

*"McKenzie puts the legend back where she belongs, on the stage!"* - Detroit Free Press

*"Ethel Merman's Broadway is a wow."* – Detroit News

*"McKenzie is note perfect."* – Between The Lines

*"It's easy to see why Merman was called the Queen of Broadway."* – The New Monitor

Performances continue through an added 2:00pm performance on Sunday, November 22.

Rita McKenzie, who has been portraying Ethel Merman for more than 20 years, has become a Broadway star herself reprising Merman's roles on Broadway in hits such as ***Annie Get Your Gun*** and ***Gypsy***. She has carved out her own path as well with the premiere of the musical ***Ruthless***, appearing with Barbara Eden in the national tour of the female version of ***The Odd Couple***, and many appearances in television and film. In addition to her performing career, McKenzie is a passionate chef, mother and an avid pet lover.

Based on the popular *Forbidden Broadway* production, ***A Forbidden Broadway Christmas*** includes spoofs of Broadway's greatest shows and performers. For the holidays, the company adds spoofs of celebrities and holiday favorites such as Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby, Cher, Britney Spears, and more - all singing popular holiday numbers with *Forbidden Broadway's* comedic twists. The show is top-notch quality fun, even if you don't know the tunes!

*Ethel Merman takes an extra bow, Forbidden Broadway takes the stage continued*

This year, ***A Forbidden Broadway Christmas*** returns to Detroit with new-to-Detroit spoofs of Broadway shows and celebrities, as well as the same amazing cast that made the 2007 production the Gem's most successful holiday production. The Gem Theatre cast includes, Janet Caine (Commerce Township), Jennifer George Consiglio (Sterling Heights), Mark David Kaplan (Chicago), Jason Richards (Garden City) and Kimberly Vanbiesbrouck (St. Clair Shores).

Tickets for both shows (**\$19.75-\$45**) are on sale now through the Gem Theatre Box Office (313) 963-9800, Ticketmaster Charge by Phone (800) 982-2787, at all Ticketmaster Ticketcenters, and online at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). A complete list of performance dates and times follows.

The Historic Gem Theatre, Elwood Bar & Grill and Colony Club are the gems in the heart of Detroit's entertainment district offering theatre packages, dinner, lunch, weddings, special events, boxed lunches, tours and more! For more information, call (313) 963-9800, visit online at [www.gemtheatre.com](http://www.gemtheatre.com), or in person at 333 Madison Ave, Detroit MI 48226.

### **Ethel Merman's Broadway Gem Theatre Performance Schedule**

#### **REGULAR PERFORMANCES (Tickets: \$39.50)**

Wednesday, November 4	8:00pm
Thursday, November 5	2:00pm
Thursday, November 5	8:00pm
Friday, November 6	8:00pm
Saturday, November 7	3:00pm
Saturday, November 7	8:00pm
Sunday, November 8	2:00pm
Sunday, November 8	6:00pm

Wednesday, November 11	8:00pm
Thursday, November 12	8:00pm
Friday, November 13	8:00pm
Saturday, November 14	3:00pm
Saturday, November 14	8:00pm
Sunday, November 15	2:00pm
Sunday, November 15	6:00pm

Wednesday, November 18	8:00pm
Thursday, November 19	2:00pm
Thursday, November 19	8:00pm
Friday, November 20	8:00pm
Saturday, November 21	3:00pm
Saturday, November 21	8:00pm
Sunday, November 22	2:00pm

## **A Forbidden Broadway Christmas Gem Theatre Performance Schedule**

### **PREVIEW PERFORMANCES (Tickets: \$19.75)**

Tuesday, November 24	8:00pm
Wednesday, November 25	8:00pm
Friday, November 27	8:00pm
Saturday, November 28	3:00pm
Saturday, November 28	8:00pm
Sunday, November 29	2:00pm
Sunday, November 29	6:00pm

### **REGULAR PERFORMANCES (Tickets: \$39.50)**

Wednesday, December 2	8:00pm
Thursday, December 3	2:00pm
Thursday, December 3	8:00pm
Friday, December 4	8:00pm
Saturday, December 5	3:00pm
Saturday, December 5	8:00pm
Sunday, December 6	2:00pm
Sunday, December 6	6:00pm

Wednesday, December 9	8:00pm
Thursday, December 10	2:00pm
Thursday, December 10	8:00pm
Friday, December 11	8:00pm
Saturday, December 12	3:00pm
Saturday, December 12	8:00pm
Sunday, December 13	2:00pm
Sunday, December 13	6:00pm

Wednesday, December 16	8:00pm
Thursday, December 17	2:00pm
Thursday, December 17	8:00pm
Friday, December 18	8:00pm
Saturday, December 19	3:00pm
Saturday, December 19	8:00pm
Sunday, December 20	2:00pm
Sunday, December 20	6:00pm

Tuesday, December 22	8:00pm
Wednesday, December 23	8:00pm
Saturday, December 26	3:00pm
Saturday, December 26	8:00pm
Sunday, December 27	2:00pm
Sunday, December 27	6:00pm

Monday, December 28	8:00pm
Tuesday, December 29	8:00pm
Wednesday, December 30	2:00pm
Wednesday, December 30	8:00pm

### **NEW YEAR'S EVE PERFORMANCES (Tickets: \$45.00)**

Thursday, December 31	4:00pm
Thursday, December 31	8:00pm

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**Media Notes:** Interviews, and in-studio cooking and performance appearances are available with Rita McKenzie through Saturday, November 21. Interviews are also available with the cast and crew of A Forbidden Broadway Christmas

Members of the media are invited to attend the official **A Forbidden Broadway Christmas** media night on Wednesday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00pm. To request an interview or to RSVP for media night, contact Scott Myers at (313) 463-4216 or [smyers@gemtheatre.com](mailto:smyers@gemtheatre.com).

This press release, publicity photos and more are available online at:  
<http://www.gemtheatre.com/GemNewsPage.html>