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OBIE AWARD WINNER & OUTER CRITICS CIRCLE NOMINEE

ZAINAB JAH

AND

JESSICA LUCK

JOIN TWO-TIME GRAMMY-NOMINATED COMEDIAN **LISA LAMPANELLI**

AND OUTER CRITICS AWARD WINNER **ANN HARADA**

IN THE WORLD PREMIERE OF

The word "Stuffed" is written in a large, blue, cursive script. It is set against a background of overlapping pink and purple rectangular shapes.

A NEW PLAY WRITTEN BY
LISA LAMPANELLI

DIRECTED BY
JACKSON GAY

PREVIEWS BEGIN SEPTEMBER 23, 2016
OPENING NIGHT SET FOR OCTOBER 7, 2016
AT THE MCGINN/CAZALE THEATER

TO DOWNLOAD PHOTOS VISIT <http://bit.ly/2aP4Yeq>

****TICKETS ARE NOW ON SALE****

(New York, NY) **WP Theater** (formerly Women's Project Theater) is pleased to announce that Obie Award Winning actress **Zainab Jah** (*Eclipsed*) and rising actress **Jessica Luck** will be joining two-time Grammy-nominated comedian **Lisa Lampanelli** (*HBO, Comedy Central, The Howard Stern Show*) and Outer Critics Circle Award winner **Ann Harada** (*Avenue Q, Cinderella*) in completing the cast for the world premiere of **STUFFED**, a new play written by Lampanelli, with additional material by Ashley Austin Morris. Directed by **Jackson Gay** (*These Paper Bullets!*), the play kicks off WP Theater's 2016-17 season at the McGinn/Cazale Theater (2162 Broadway, at 76th Street), with previews beginning Friday, September 23, 2016 and an Opening Night of Friday, October 7, 2016. The limited engagement will play through Sunday, November 6.

"As a first-time playwright, I can say that I am completely blown away by this cast," said Lampanelli. "To attract such accomplished, passionate actresses to this piece is enormously humbling, and I'm literally pinching myself that I get to work with Ann, Zainab, and Jessica. Just looking at their Broadway, off-Broadway, and TV credits leaves me speechless, but I'll try to find my voice by opening night!"

*A bulimic, a compulsive eater, a confident overweight gal, and a chronically thin chick walk into a play and... what happens next could only be told by comic mastermind Lisa Lampanelli. With signature wit and razor-sharp insight, Lampanelli's famously irreverent voice comes to the New York stage with **STUFFED**, bringing together four women's disparate stories to paint an acerbically witty and ultimately poignant*

portrait of the insanity of a world that forces women to address hard-hitting issues like: Is eating an ice cream sandwich in the shower an emotionally fulfilling activity? When it comes to blue jeans, should one opt for a camel toe or a muffin top? And the ultimate question: can food and body-image issues ever truly be conquered or are we all just destined to be 'stuffed'?

Best known as 'Comedy's Lovable Queen of Mean,' Lampanelli, a former newspaper and magazine writer, switched from journalism to comedy at age 30 but maintained her keen observational skills. A comic's comic, Lampanelli has compelled comedy great Jim Carrey to say, "By boldly poking fun at everyone, Lisa releases us from a prison of cultural guilt. She's more than a standup. She's a standout." King of All Media and radio pioneer Howard Stern called her "a true original and a brilliant comedy mind who'll steal the show every time." Known for saying things that most people are afraid to think, Lampanelli's raunchy, gut-busting performances are wildly popular at theaters across the U.S. and Canada. This equal-opportunity offender has had several HBO & Comedy Central Specials, was a cast member on NBC's "Celebrity Apprentice," is a regular on late-night television, and a frequent guest and guest host on Sirius XM satellite radio shows. Having earned two Grammy nominations for "Best Comedy Album," Lampanelli is thrilled to present her first play, *Stuffed*.

Tickets for *Stuffed* are now on sale via <https://bit.ly/STUFFEDTIX> or by calling Ovation tix (866) 811-4111. The regular performance schedule is as follows: Tuesday - Thursday at 7:00pm, Friday at 8:00pm, Saturday 2:00pm & 8:00pm, and Sunday at 2:00pm. There are no Saturday performances on September 24, October 22, and November 5. Sunday performances at 7:00pm have been added on September 25, October 23, and November 6. Special (early) matinees have been added at NOON on Wednesday, October 19 & Wednesday, November 2.

@WomensProject
www.wptheater.org

BIOGRAPHIES:

LISA LAMPANELLI (*Playwright & LISA*) Lisa Lampanelli shot her fifth stand-up special, "Back to the Drawing Board," which premiered June 26, 2015 on EPIX and was nominated for a 2015 Grammy Award for "Best Comedy Album." In the special, Comedy's Lovable Queen of Mean showed off her radically different look after having lost more than 100 pounds. That weight loss, which she has maintained for over four years, inspired her to write *Stuffed* since, having been every size from 2 to 26, she has firsthand knowledge of the food and body-image struggle.

Lisa became a household name when she joined 17 other celebrities on the fifth season of NBC's "Celebrity Apprentice," where she advanced to the final four in the competition, raising \$130,000 for her chosen charity, the Gay Men's Health Crisis. She also starred as a regular on "Bounty Hunters," CMT's first-ever animated series, and recently stole the show on an episode of CBS's "2 Broke Girls," helmed by "Sex and The City" creator, Michael Patrick King. She also was recently accepted into and attended the Yale Summer Conservatory for Actors in New Haven, CT.

Lampanelli joined the ranks of comedy greats with her 2009 HBO comedy special, "Long Live the Queen," and that same year, released her autobiography, *Chocolate, Please: My Adventures in Food, Fat and Freaks* (Harper Collins). Lisa was also a monthly writer for the Women column in *Playboy Magazine* and is a contributor to the blog for Kripalu, the world-renowned yoga and meditation retreat center.

Lisa's rise to the top of the comedy food chain began in 2002 when she was the only female comedian invited to skewer Chevy Chase on the NY Friars Club Comedy Central Roast. She soon became known as the "Queen of the Roasts", going on to lambaste such names as Pamela Anderson, Jeff Foxworthy, William Shatner, Flava Flav, David Hasselhoff and, most recently, Donald Trump. Due to her success as a roaster, in 2009, Lisa was asked to serve as Roastmaster for the highly rated Comedy Central Roast of friend and fellow comic, Larry the Cable Guy.

One of the few white comedians to perform on BET's "Comic View," Lisa has clearly cemented her huge crossover appeal. She went on to appear on Comedy Central's "Last Laugh 2005" and her one-hour special that year, "Take It Like a Man," was a hit with the comedy network yet again. The CD and the DVD of the

same name hit #6 on the comedy charts. Then, in January 2007, Lisa's second one-hour special, "Dirty Girl," debuted on Comedy Central and Warner Bros. Records, and reached #4 on the charts. Soon thereafter, "Dirty Girl" was nominated for a Grammy Award for 2007's "Best Comedy Album".

Lisa appeared in the David Chase-directed feature film, "Not Fade Away." She also appeared in "Larry the Cable Guy: Health Inspector" and had a featured role in "Delta Farce," opposite Bill Engvall, Larry the Cable Guy, and D.J. Quall. She also starred in the hilarious documentary, "The Aristocrats," and played a more maternal version of herself in the Owen Wilson vehicle, "Drillbit Taylor."

ANN HARADA (STACEY) originated the role of Christmas Eve in *Avenue Q* on Broadway and in London. Other Broadway: *Cinderella*, *9 to 5*, *Les Miserables* (revival), *Suessical*, and *M. Butterfly*. Film: *Admission*, *Hope Springs*, *Feel*, *The Art of Getting By*, *Happiness*. Recent TV: "30 Rock," "The Big C," "Lipstick Jungle," "Rescue Me," "The Electric Company" and a recurring role as Linda on "Smash." Twitter: @annharada.

ZAINAB JAH (KATEY) Recent credits include: *Maima*, *Eclipsed*, Broadway; title role of *Hamlet*, (The Wilma Theatre), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo N Juliet* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, (Atlantic Theater, NYC), *Prudence The Convert*, *Josephine*, *Ruined*, *A Doll's House* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Helen of Troy*, *Trojan Women*, (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *In Darfur*, (The Public Theatre /NYSF), *Peter Sellars' Children Of Herakles*, (European Tour). Film / TV credits: *New York, I Love You* (Short), *Law & Order SVU*, *Outliving Emily* (with Andre Braugher and Philicia Rashad), *Along Came Love*, with Vanessa Williams. Awards: Philadelphia Critics' Circle Best actress Award (*Hamlet*) Los Angeles Stage Alliance Ovation Award Best Featured Actress (*The Convert*); San Francisco Bay Area Critics' Circle – Outstanding Performance Female Featured Role (*Ruined*); and Best Featured Actress, Philadelphia Critics' Circle Featured Actress Award (*The Convert*).

JESSICA LUCK (BRITNEY) is thrilled to be making her off-Broadway debut in *Stuffed!* NY Theater: *The Digger* (La MaMa), *The Blood Brothers* (The Brick), *The Quake* (Ideal Glass), *The Disembodied Soul* and *Buddy Becker's Uncut Flick* (NY Fringe). Web Series: "Down Dog" and "Carolers". Jessica is a Yale graduate and a recent Rockwell scholar at ESPA/Primary Stages. She is a member of the rock band My Dear Mycroft and the improv team The Jessica's.

JACKSON GAY (Director) Upcoming: *Chekhov's Three Sisters* (Studio Theatre in association with New Neighborhood). Recent projects include *Transfers* by Lucy Thurber (New York Stage & Film); *Much Ado About Nothing* adapted with Kenneth Lin (Cal Shakes); *Workshop of Suzanne Vega's Lover*, *Beloved*, *An Evening with Carson McCullers* with music by Vega and Duncan Sheik (Rattlestick and Rattlestick West LA); *George Brant's Grounded* (Alley Theatre); *Jen Silverman's The Moors* (Yale Rep); *These Paper Bullets!* Adapted from Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* by Rolin Jones with music by Billie Joe Armstrong (Atlantic Theater Company, Geffen Playhouse, Yale Rep - Critics Pick Time Out NY, Best Production and Adaptation LA Sage Awards, Best of 2015 Time Out Los Angeles, Connecticut Critics Circle Award Best Production and Best Director); *I Saw My Neighbor On The Train And I Didn't Even Smile* by Suzanne Heathcote (co-production New Neighborhood / Berkshire Theatre Festival); *Elevada* by Sheila Callaghan (Yale Rep); *The Insurgents* by Lucy Thurber (Labyrinth Theater Company); *3C* by David Adjmi (Rattlestick/piece by piece/Rising Phoenix); *Lucy Thurber's Where We're Born - The Hilltown Plays* (Rattlestick); *Rolin Jones's The Jammer* (Atlantic Theater Company) and *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* (Atlantic and Yale Rep, Connecticut Critics Circle Award Outstanding Production of a Play); *A Little Journey* (Mint Theater Company, Drama Desk nomination Outstanding Revival of a Play); *Other Desert Cities*; *August: Osage County*; *Red* and Kenneth Lin's *Intelligence-Slave* (Alley Theatre). Jackson is a founding member of New Neighborhood. She is the Director of Artistic Programming for Fuller Road Artist Residency and teaches directing at Yale College. BFA University of the Arts. MFA Yale School of Drama. Jackson is from Sugar Land, Texas.

WP THEATER (Formerly Women's Project Theater) is the nation's oldest and largest theater company dedicated to developing, producing and promoting the work of female-identified theater artists at every stage in their careers. For nearly four decades we have served as leaders at the forefront of a global movement towards gender parity, and the example we set and the artists we have fostered have grown into to a robust and thriving community of female writers and directors in theater and beyond.

WP empowers female-identified artists to reach their full potential and, in doing so, challenges preconceptions about the kinds of plays women write and the stories they tell. As the premiere launching pad for some of the most influential female theater artists today, our work has had a significant impact on the field at large. Nearly every prolific female theater artist has been through our doors, including Eve Ensler, María Irene Fornés, Katori Hall, Pam MacKinnon, Lynn Nottage, Leigh Silverman, and Anna Deveare Smith. These powerful female artists found an early artistic home at WP, and are a testament to our role as a driving cultural force.

WP was founded in 1978 by visionary producer, Julia Miles, to address the significant under-representation of women in theater. Today, WP accomplishes its mission through several fundamental programs, including: the WP Lab, a two-year mentorship and new play development program for women playwrights, directors, and producers; the Playwright In Residence commissioning program; the Developmental series; and the Main Stage series, which features a full season of Off-Broadway productions written and directed by extraordinary theater artists.

QUOTES ABOUT LISA LAMPANELLI:

Tony Award winning director John Rando: *"Lisa has a tremendous capacity to get connected to her feelings and her bravery is boundless. She's terrific, intelligent, and top-notch."*

The Writer Magazine: *"Lisa Lampanelli is fearlessly funny. Onstage, she can repeat something she's told 20 times, but it sounds as if she just thought of it. Others could never get away with it."*

Michael Musto, Paper Magazine: *"The queen of outrageous comedy, Lisa Lampanelli happens to have a lot of heart, particularly when dealing with weight and food issues."*

Psychology Today: *"Lisa's ability to be more open and vulnerable has not only helped her perform to her potential during difficult times, but also the crowd appears to be picking up on this new aspect of her comedy."*

New York Times best-selling author Jane Green: *"She has evolved. She's known as Comedy's Lovable Queen of Mean, but there's so much more depth now. . . more authentic. You can't write a play that resonates with people emotionally unless you've gone through a tremendous amount of stuff. It's about the journey to healing and wisdom."*

Lenny Bruce biographer, Ronald Collins: *"Lisa Lampanelli is a comedian with an independent and irreverent streak akin to that of Lenny Bruce. Her robust comedy, like Bruce's, takes no prisoners — and that's just how it should be."*

The New York Times: *"Queen of Mean. An equal-opportunity offender."*

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