

MEDIA RELEASE

Soulpepper welcomes back the Mercer family with David French's Of the Fields, Lately

Toronto, ON – May 26, 2009 – **Albert Schultz**, Founding Artistic Director of Soulpepper Theatre Company, today announced that the production of Canadian theatre icon **David French's** *Of the Fields, Lately*, will run June 25 to July 30 at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts.

In French's emotionally charged sequel to *Leaving Home* and *Salt-Water Moon*, young Ben Mercer returns home to Toronto for a funeral. After being away from home for two years, he now confronts the family – and the life – he left behind. *Of the Fields, Lately* returns audiences to the lingering remnants of a broken relationship between father and son.

Winner of the 1973 Chalmers Award, *Of the Fields, Lately* premiered at Tarragon Theatre in Toronto, has since been adapted as a CBC television special, and has played in theatres across Canada and around the world.

Leaving Home, *Salt-Water Moon* and *Of the Fields, Lately* are the first of five plays French has penned about this beloved Newfoundland family. These Canadian classics have finally been compiled into one volume, *Three Mercer Plays*, published by House of Anansi Press, launching this June, with an introduction by Albert Schultz.

To celebrate the release of this remarkable and touching trilogy, Soulpepper has partnered with House of Anansi Press to host a reception and book launch for *Three Mercer Plays* by David French, and *February* by fellow writer and Newfoundlander **Lisa Moore**, at the opening night of Soulpepper's production of *Of the Fields, Lately* on June 30.

Soulpepper Founding Member **Ted Dykstra** directs *Of the Fields, Lately* with several actors returning to their roles from Soulpepper's 2008 production of French's *Salt-Water Moon*. **Diane D'Aquila** returns as Mary, **Jeff Lillico** reprises his role as Ben, **Kenneth Welsh** returns as Jacob, and **Eric Peterson** joins the Mercer family as Wiff.

Previewing June 25, 2009, *Of the Fields, Lately* opens June 30 and runs until July 30 at the Young Centre for the Performing Arts, located at 55 Mill Street, Building 49, in the Distillery Historic District. Tickets range from \$28 – \$68 and are available by calling the Young Centre box office at 416.866.8666 or by visiting www.soulpepper.ca. \$20 tickets are available for 21–30 year-olds at www.stageplay.ca.

This production is generously supported by Fiona Garland & Andrew Bentley and Kevin & Roger Garland. 2009 Soulpepper Lead Sponsors are: Sun Life Financial, Scotiabank Group and TELUS. Soulpepper gratefully acknowledges annual operating support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Toronto Arts Council.

Soulpepper Theatre Company is an artist-founded, classical repertory theatre company with a three-tiered mandate: to present the world's greatest stories in vital Canadian interpretations; to train a new generation of theatre artists; and to inspire and enrich youth through mentorship and access programs.

MEDIA CONTACT:

Laura Barron, Publicist

416.203.6264 x146 / laura@soulpepper.ca