

“I Remember Mama” — Marjorie Johnson’s Latest “SOMETHING MORE”



“I Remember Mama” Cast

by Perri Gaffney

A multi-character role in the revival “I Remember Mama” is Marjorie Johnson’s next “Something More” following her successful starring role, earlier this year, in “DOT” at the Vineyard Theatre in New York City. “Can you imagine,” she says smiling, “my next acting challenge has happened without the drudgery of auditioning — that’s every actors dream!”

“I Remember Mama” is a dramedy about a Norwegian immigrant family living in 1910 America. The play debuted on Broadway in 1944. Marlon Brando was featured as the good-hearted son. Several offshoots followed the production: a feature film in 1948, a TV series “Mama” (1949-1957), and in 1979 it was developed anew as a musical. A review found in the *New York Times* described the production as “... plumb tuckered out, a sticky-sweet relic in an age obsessed with more dysfunctional domesticity.”

The latest revival of this American Classic by John van Druten is a non-traditional, multi-racial cast featuring 10 veteran actresses playing 25 roles directed by Jack Cummings III. The actresses cast in this production range in age from early 60s through early 80s. Each actress plays multiple roles, ages and genders. In 2014 a *New York Times* reviewer commented: “Jack Cummings III, the artistic director of the Transport Group, has come up with an inspired gimmick for resurrecting a work that might seem too brazenly sentimental for present-day tastes.”

“Director Jack Cummings III’s creativity and vision is what has attracted me to this project,” says Marjorie. “This opportunity to play multiple character roles,” she continues, “in one play is challenging and intriguing. It’s really fulfilling too to work with experienced stage, TV and film maverick mavens who, during our downtime, beguile us

with their storied careers. Gather all our ages together and the sum total is 500 years of acting experience!" Marjorie Johnson and Mia Katigbak are the "new kids on the block." They join cast members of the 2014 production: Barbara Andres, Louise Sorel, Dale Soules, Alice Cannon, Lynn Cohen, Rita Gardner, Susan Lehman, and Heather Mac Rae.

I asked Marjorie if *I Remember Mama* meets her "Something More" criteria? Beaming she replied "I LOOOVE IT! And Red Bank, New Jersey is a stone's throw from the bright lights of Broadway."

"I Remember Mama" Previews begin June 4th through the 9th. Opening night is June 10th. The production runs through June 26th with a possible extension through July 3rd. Two River Theater (21 Bridge Ave., Red Bank, NJ).