

NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Andrea Tichy
Manager of Public Relations and Special Events
(773) 325-7819, atichy@depaul.edu

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Theatre School at DePaul University's New Directors Series Presents

Reshmi Hazra's *Venus* by Suzan-Lori Parks

Poetry and Comedy Infused in a Tragic Freak-show Story

The Theatre School at DePaul University presents *Venus*, by Suzan-Lori Parks, and directed by Reshmi Hazra, as the final production of the 2011-2012 New Directors Series. *Venus* opens Friday, February 10, and runs through Sunday, February 19, 2012, at the Greenhouse Theater Center. Performances are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 PM and Sundays at 2 PM. Previews are on February 8 and February 9 at 7:30 PM.

In 1810 Sarah Baartman leaves her African home in search of respect, love, and “streets paved with gold.” Instead, she is exhibited in England as the sideshow act Venus Hottentot and is acclaimed for “having the biggest bottom in the world.” Based on a true story, Suzan-Lori Parks’ *Venus* asks if the doors of opportunity are truly open to all.

Admission is FREE but reservations are recommended. Call the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

New Directors Series productions are directed in partial fulfillment of the Master of Fine Arts degree in Directing at The Theatre School. *Venus* serves as Director Reshmi Hazra’s MFA thesis project, after three years of production practice and training in order to fulfill her degree requirements. “I want to create art to unite people that may never have known each other,” asserts Hazra, “stories of people that have been hidden and stuffed away throughout history.” Through the creative process of working on *Venus*, Hazra has deepened her interest in comedic tragedies, and continued her exploration of physical storytelling. To learn more about Hazra’s past projects, The New Directors Series, or the MFA Directing curriculum, please visit <http://theatreschool.depaul.edu>.

The Greenhouse Theater Center is located at 2257 N. Lincoln Ave., in Chicago. The theatre is accessible via public transportation, and street parking is available. For more information please contact the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

RESHMI HAZRA (Director): has her BFA in Drama from NYU. Her previous Theatre School productions include *Normal* by Anthony Neilson, *The Underpants* by Steve Martin, and *Inky* by Rinne Groff. Other credits include *Monster* by Neal Bell, *Mud* by Maria Irene Fornes, and *What Will I Do When You're Gone?* by Neal Bell. She has also developed numerous new plays in the form of readings and productions.

The cast features **Ruben Adorno** (Chorus), **Mike Foster** (Chorus), **Sonaz Izadi** (Chorus, the Bride-to-Be), **Katherine Kerman** (Chorus, the Mother), **Josh Moaney** (The Negro Resurrectionist), **Manny Ortiz** (Chorus, the Uncle), **Matthew Sherrill** (Chorus, the Young Man), **Noah Simon** (The Man, later The Baron Docteur), **Kelly Sloan** (Miss Saartjie Baartman, a.k.a. The Girl and later The Venus Hottentot), **Eric Staves** (Chorus, the Father), and **Lisandra Tena** (The Mans Brother, later The Mother-Showman, later The Grade-School Chum).

The production staff includes **Reshmi Hazra** (Director), **Karly Bergmann** (Dramaturg), **Nick Sandys** (Violence Designer), **Phil Timberlake** (Vocal Coach), **Ingrid Larson** (Scenic Designer), **Holly Haupert** (Costume Designer), **Joe Watrach** (Lighting Designer), **Mikey Moran** (Sound Designer), and **Sarah Geis** (Stage Manager).

An **Opening Night Party** will be held on **Friday, February 10, 2012**, following the performance. A **post-show discussion** with dramaturg **Karly Bergmann** will be held on **Sunday, February 12** (2 PM) and **Thursday, February 16, 2012** (7:30 PM). Contact Andrea Tichy for details and more information.

Photos, additional information, media reservations, and interviews are available upon request.

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The Theatre School at DePaul University educates, trains, and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, and culturally diverse. The school and its students strive for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to its mission. As an integral part of the training, The Theatre School produces public programs and performances from a wide repertoire of classic, contemporary, and original plays that challenge, entertain, and stimulate the imagination. The school seeks to enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the university community, the city, and the profession.