

N E W S R E L E A S E

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE THEATRE SCHOOL SHOWCASE PRESENTS CARYL CHURCHILL'S
CLOUD NINE, DIRECTED BY LISA PORTES, OCTOBER 4-15, 2006**

To kick off the 81st anniversary, 2006-2007 season, The Theatre School Showcase at DePaul University presents **CLOUD NINE** by Caryl Churchill, directed by Lisa Portes. The play opens Friday, October 6, 2006, at 7:30 PM, and runs through Sunday, October 15 (with previews October 4 and 5 at 7:30 PM), at DePaul's Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive, Chicago. Performances are Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 PM, and Sundays at 2 PM. For season memberships and single tickets, contact the Box Office at (312) 922-1999 or theatreboxoffice@depaul.edu. Complete information is available at <http://theatreschool.depaul.edu>

In this constantly shifting, time-defying play - a popular and critical success when it premiered in 1979 - British playwright Churchill highlights colonial and gender oppression. From Victorian-ruled Africa in act one to contemporary London in act two with most of the same characters, the play explores gender and sexuality from the 1880's to the 21st century. *Recommended for mature audiences.*

Starting this season, The Theatre School is offering the inaugural Theatre School Showcase Membership Program. For \$48 (\$24 for students), members will receive a membership card entitling them to attend any performance of any Showcase production for free. Members will receive one free guest pass, \$8 parking coupons, other benefits and pay no initial handling fee. For complete details or to purchase a membership, call the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

Regular single ticket prices are \$15, and preview tickets are \$12. Regular run student tickets are \$6, and the two previews are FREE for any college student (with ID). Seniors (over 60), DePaul employees and alumni receive a discount (with ID). Group rates are available for 15 or more people. Tickets are also available online at www.ticketweb.com and www.hottix.org

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Performances are held at DePaul's historic Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive (at Michigan), Chicago. Discount parking is available with coupons from the Box Office, and the theatre is accessible via CTA buses (3-King Drive, 29-State, and 146-Michigan/Museums) and CTA El stops (Red - Harrison stop, Blue - LaSalle stop, Brown/Orange/Purple/Pink - Library stop).

SPECIAL EVENTS: A post-show discussion with the cast follows the performances on Sunday, October 8, and Thursday, October 12. The performance on Wednesday, October 11 is "DePaul Night," when tickets are half price for all DePaul faculty, staff and students, as well as any university student (with ID). Roseexpressions Community Partner Day is also Sunday, October 8, when audience members can enter to win a valuable floral arrangement (a \$75 value).

INTERPRETED PERFORMANCES: The performance on Sunday, October 15 will be interpreted in American Sign Language. For further information, call the Box Office or TTY (773) 325-7975.

DINNER OFFERS: Receive a 15% discount at the Pavilion Restaurant, Buckingham's or Kitty O'Sheas (all at the Hilton Chicago and Towers) with coupons from the Box Office.

The production staff includes **Lisa Portes** (Director), **Katie Schweiger** (Scenic Design), **Jessica Chesak** (Costume Design), **Chris Prezas** (Lighting Design), **Josh Horvath** (Sound Design), and **Shayna O'Neill** (Stage Manager)

The cast includes **Sara Anderson** (Edward/Betty), **Talon Beeson** (Harry/Martin), **Stewart Calhoun** (Betty/Edward), **Susaan Jamshidi** (Mrs. Saunders/Ellen/Lin), **Zach Kenney** (Clive/Cathy), **Adam Poss** (Joshua/Gerry) and **Allison Pryce** (Maude/Victoria).

London-born **Caryl Churchill's** (Playwright) first play, *DOWNSTAIRS*, written while she was still at Oxford University, was first staged in 1958 and won an award at the *Sunday Times* National Union of Students Drama Festival. She wrote a number of plays for BBC radio and television, and her first professional stage production, *OWNERS*, premiered at London's Royal Court Theatre in 1972. She was Resident Dramatist at the Royal Court (1974-5) and spent much of the 1970's and 1980's working with Joint Stock and 'Monstrous Regiment theatre groups. Her work during this period includes *LIGHT SHINING IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE* (1976), **CLOUD NINE** (1979), *FEN* (1983) and *A MOUTHFUL OF BIRDS* (1986), written with David Lan. *THREE MORE SLEEPLESS NIGHTS* was first produced at the Soho Poly, London, in 1980. *TOP GIRLS* was first staged at the Royal Court in 1982, and transferred to Joseph Papp's Public Theatre in New York later that year. *SERIOUS MONEY* was first produced at the Royal Court in 1987 and won the *Evening Standard* Award for Best Comedy of the Year and the Laurence Olivier/BBC Award for Best New Play.

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Other Churchill plays include *MAD FOREST* (1990), written after a visit to Romania, and *THE SKRIKER* (1994). Her plays for television include *THE AFTER DINNER JOKE* (1978) and *CRIMES* (1982). *FAR AWAY* premiered at the Royal Court in 2000, and she has also published a new translation of Seneca's *THYESTES* (2001), and *A NUMBER* (2002), which addresses the subject of human cloning. Her new version of August Strindberg's *A DREAM PLAY* (2005), premiered at the National Theatre in 2005.

Lisa Portes (Director) serves as the Head of Directing and the Artistic Director of Chicago Playworks for Young Audiences for The Theatre School. Recent projects include *SPARE CHANGE* at Steppenwolf, *EL GRITO DEL BRONX* as part of the Goodman Theatre's Latino Theatre Festival, *PERMANENT COLLECTION* at Northlight Theatre, *FAR AWAY* by Caryl Churchill and *IN THE BLOOD* by Suzan-Lori Parks at Next Theatre, and the world premiere of *WILDER: AN EROTIC CHAMBER MUSICAL* by at Playwrights Horizons in New York. Her work has been seen regionally at the Kennedy Center, Guthrie Theatre, South Coast Repertory Theatre's Hispanic Playwrights Project, McCarter Theatre Lab, A Contemporary American Theatre Festival, Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, the Cape Cod Theatre Project, the Santa Barbara Theatre Lab, and the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference; and in New York her work has been seen at Playwrights Horizons, Soho Rep, New York Theatre Workshop, the Public Theatre, the Flea Theatre, and the Cherry Lane Alternative Theatre. Other Chicago productions include *OFFSPRING OF THE COLD WAR* by her husband Carlos Murillo at Walkabout Theatre, and, for Chicago Playworks, *CINDERELLA EATS RICE AND BEANS* and *THE HIGHEST HEAVEN*. Portes is a resident director for Teatro Vista and an artistic associate at Next Theatre and Chicago Children's Theatre.

The Theatre School at DePaul University, educates, trains and inspires students of theatre in a conservatory setting that is rigorous, disciplined, culturally diverse and that strives for the highest level of professional skill and artistry. A commitment to diversity and equality in education is central to the school's 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.

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