

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – AUGUST 9, 2006

Contact: Karin McKie, Interim Director
Marketing and Public Relations
(773) 325-7819, kmckie@depaul.edu

THE THEATRE SCHOOL AT DEPAUL UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCES 2006-2007 SEASON

The Theatre School at DePaul University announces its 2006-2007 season below. **For information or to purchase subscriptions as well as our new Showcase membership program, contact the Box Office at (312) 922-1999, theatreboxoffice@depaul.edu, or visit <http://theatreschool.depaul.edu>**

Founded as the Goodman School of Drama in 1925, The Theatre School is the Midwest's leading theatre conservatory and is recognized around the nation for its professional training programs. Throughout its history, the school has provided Chicago audiences with affordable and meaningful theatrical experiences. Plays are directed by members of the school's professional faculty. Students are involved in all aspects of production — as actors, designers, dramaturgs, technicians and other crew. Acclaimed as "a legendary training ground" by the Chicago Tribune, the school has launched the careers of numerous influential artists from the Merle Reskin Theatre.

THE THEATRE SCHOOL SHOWCASE

The Theatre School Showcase (Dexter Bullard, Artistic Director), offering a dynamic season of contemporary and classic plays, will feature the following productions during the 2006-2007 season at DePaul University's historic Merle Reskin Theatre, 60 E. Balbo Drive, Chicago:

- **CLOUD NINE** by Caryl Churchill, directed by Lisa Portes, opens October 6 and runs through October 15, 2006 (previews on 10/4 & 10/5). 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 more modern London in act two (somehow with most of the same characters), repressive families to gender strictures to the sexual revolution of the 1970s are explored. Recommended for mature audiences.
- **LIFE'S A DREAM** by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, adapted by Adrian Mitchell and John Barton, directed by Barry Brunetti, opens February 9 and runs through February 18, 2007 (previews on 2/7 & 2/8). The acclaimed playwright, generally referred to simply as Calderón, said, "*For all life is a dream, and dreams themselves are only dreams,*" and wrote this secular play around 1637. King Basilo puts the life-long-imprisoned Prince Sigismund to a test of kingship, Lady Rosaura begins a quest to regain her honor and Lord Astolfo and his wife Estrella vie for their place on the throne in this Spanish Renaissance play.

— MORE —

This sweeping saga reveals betrayals, political power struggles and ultimately the power of loyalty and love. Calderón's beautiful poetry weaves a tale about following destiny and walking the fine line between dreams and reality.

- ***THE TRIAL***, by Franz Kafka, adapted by Steven Berkoff, directed by Dexter Bullard, opens April 20 and runs through April 29, 2007 (previews 4/18 & 4/19). When Joseph K. awakes to find himself arrested and accused of unnamed crimes, he must fight through layers of process, rumor and myth to seek the truth and prove his innocence before an unfathomable court of law. Berkoff's adaptation brilliantly illuminates Kafka's questions about the nature of authority, the ambiguity of justice and the power of guilt.
- ***TITLE/AUTHOR TBA***, winner of Columbia College Chicago's **21ST ANNUAL THEODORE WARD AFRICAN-AMERICAN PLAYWRITING CONTEST**, directed by The Goodman Theatre's Chuck Smith, opens May 18 and runs through May 27, 2007 (previews 5/16 & 5/17). The Theodore Ward Prize - named for the African-American author, playwright and Chicagoan (1902-1983) - is a prestigious first stage for many plays that have gone on to professional productions in Chicago and nationwide. This award recognizes the outstanding individual accomplishments of African-American playwrights, as well as their importance to the shape and direction of American drama in our time. Winners are nationally renowned for holding a mirror up to a myriad of subject matters, and this to-be-announced play will receive a full production as a showcase for the playwright, cast and artistic staff.

The Theatre School Showcase offers single tickets are \$6 - \$15. This season, The Theatre School is offering the inaugural membership program – for \$48 (\$24 for students), members will receive a membership card which entitles them to attend any performance of any Showcase production for free, which also includes one free guest pass (and no handling fee). Members are entitled to free ticket exchanges, \$8 parking coupons and other benefits. For complete details or to purchase a membership, call the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

CHICAGO PLAYWORKS FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG AUDIENCES

Founded as the Goodman Children's Theatre in 1925, **Chicago Playworks for Families and Young Audiences** (Lisa Portes, Artistic Director) is the city's oldest continuously operating children's theatre and was one of the first major children's theatres in the United States, presenting productions to more than 37,000 parents, children and schoolchildren each season. The 2006-2007 season will include:

— MORE —

- ***THE DREAM CATCHER***, conceived and directed by Betsy Hamilton, opens October 31 and runs through December 2, 2006. Drawing on Native American tales, myths and legends, faculty member Betsy Hamilton's world premiere follows Girl as she temporarily says goodbye to her life in Chicago to join her mom on an archeological expedition. Out West, new adventures lead her through lessons to be learned, trials to surmount, friends to make and worlds to see. Along the way, she rediscovers her connection to the land of native America. For ages seven and up.
- ***THE BFG*** by Roald Dahl, adapted for the stage by David Wood, directed by Ernie Nolan, opens January 13 and runs through March 6, 2007. In this imaginative story, orphan Sophie is snatched from her bed by the quirky but harmless Big Friendly Giant (the BFG), who uses a trumpet to blow dreams into children's ears. They become friends as they join forces against a few other mischievous giants, and have a fantastic adventure of laughs and magical entertainment. For ages five and up.
- ***EINSTEIN IS A DUMMY***, book and lyrics by Karen Zacarías, music by Debbie Wicks La Puma, directed by Phyllis E. Griffin, musical direction by Mark Elliott, opens March 29 and runs through May 26, 2007. From the team that brought the hit *CINDERELLA EATS RICE AND BEANS* to Chicago Playworks last season, ***EINSTEIN IS A DUMMY*** follows Albert Einstein as a boy. As an adult, he changed our view of the universe, yet as a kid, he struggled with the same issues any 12-year-old might - keeping up with violin lessons, impressing the girl next door, and comprehending the fundamental relationship of space and time to the speed of light, of course. This engaging musical about a fictional day in young Einstein's life boasts a spirited score and a healthy dose of imagination, confirms that each of us is both ordinary *and* special and reveals life's atomic possibilities. For ages eight and up.

Subscriptions to Saturday performances of Chicago Playworks productions are \$21. Single tickets are \$8. Group rates are available for 15 or more people. Free Teacher/Production Guides, performances interpreted in American Sign Language and post-show Ice Cream Socials with the cast are available for each production. Subscribers are entitled to free ticket rescheduling, \$8 parking coupons and other benefits. For complete details and to purchase subscriptions, call the Box Office at (312) 922-1999.

NEW DIRECTORS SERIES

New Directors Series productions are directed in partial fulfillment of the Master of Fine Arts in Directing – performances locations noted under each production.

- ***REFERENCES TO SALVADOR DALI MAKE ME HOT***, by José Rivera, directed by Mark D. Fleischer, opens October 27 and runs through November 5, 2006 (previews 10/25 & 10/26). Peruvian-born Rivera wrote about Californian Gabriela, who is waiting for her soldier husband Benito to return from the first Gulf War. In this meditation of the impossible, a cat and coyote tango while the moon serenades the

desert with a violin. Filled with moonstruck poetry and magical realism, Rivera's lyrical text celebrates the confusion that can grow out of love, and the way in which nature reflects human relationships. Performed at the Bailiwick Repertory Main Stage, 1229 W. Belmont Ave., Chicago, IL.

- **THE LAST FIVE YEARS**, written and composed by Jason Robert Brown, directed by Jason A. Fleece, musical direction by Mark Elliott, opens February 2 and runs through February 11, 2007 (previews 1/31 & 2/1). A contemporary musical loosely based on Tony Award-winning composer Brown's real life, **THE LAST FIVE YEARS** follows a young couple in an interesting fashion - her story begins as their relationship ends, and his starts when they meet. The trials and tribulations of modern love are chronicled in this heartfelt comedy. The New York Times said the show "*pulses with dangerous, irresistible giddiness,*" and the Associated Press added, "*a bracing musical theater piece . . . brimming with persistent melodies, thoughtful lyrics and a heartfelt, compelling story . . . articulated with surprising tenderness.*" Performed at the Athenaeum Studio Three, 2936 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, IL.
- **THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF SAVAGES** by Amy Freed directed by Meghan Beals-McCarthy, opens March 2 and runs through March 11, 2007 (with previews 2/28 & 3/1). Winner of the 1995 Joseph Kesselring and Charles MacArthur Awards for Outstanding New Play, this play uses free verse to take a witty look at lives in the thrall of poets and poetry and how art can affect us. Loosely based on real mid-century poets Ted Hughes, Robert Lowell, Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton, this play is a darkly comic work that explores the paradox between sanity and artistic genius. Performed at the Athenaeum Studio Three, 2936 N. Southport Ave., Chicago, IL.

NEW PLAYWRIGHTS SERIES

The Theatre School's **New Playwrights Series**, created to support the school's Playwriting Program, will present a play to be announced later, opening May 11 and running through May 20, 2007 (with previews 5/9 & 5/10). The New Playwrights Series, now in its fourth year, features a new play by a current Theatre School student or a recent graduate, selected by Theatre School faculty. By providing an opportunity to fully realize the work of a young artist, all involved have the opportunity to craft a new theatrical event and introduce new voices to the community. The production, directed by a Theatre School faculty member or guest artist, will provide the playwright with an opportunity to continue to develop the play throughout the process.

THE THEATRE SCHOOL'S MISSION

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 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. More information about The Theatre School is available at <http://theatreschool.depaul.edu>