



## Here a Play, There a Play, Everywhere a New Play!



Tired of bad news? Then you've come to the right place. This year's newsletter is brimming over with great news.

In addition to the 10 new plays developed at the 2009 Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, we presented 10 readings in our NYC Sit In! at Jimmy's No. 43.

And there's tons of great news about our playwrights and their plays being produced all over the country - and across the pond!

Plus, you'll find tons of exciting news about upcoming events, includ-

The cast of THE THING WITH FEATHERS by Duane Kelly (far right in photo) gathers in front of the Foresters Club

ing our 2010 Benefit Party, and our 2010 NYC Sit In! reading series.

As we gear up for the 10th Seven Devils Playwrights Conference (yes, really!), we want to offer our gratitude to all of you who have made our work possible: individual supporters, foundations, businesses, actors, directors, dramaturgs, students, interns, stage managers, carpenters, technicians, audiences and of course our talented playwrights.

Thank you all! And enjoy the good news - you've earned it!

### Great News!

- JAMES MCLINDON'S **FAITH** WINS JOHN GASSNOR PLAYWRITING AWARD
- SAMUEL D. HUNTERS **I AM MONTANA** AND RICHARD BROCKMAN'S **INFORMED CONSENT** OPEN IN LONDON
- DANO MADDEN'S **IN THE SAWTOOTH** TO BE PUBLISHED BY SAMUEL FRENCH
- JENNIFER HALEY'S **NEIGHBORHOOD 3: REQUISITION OF DOOM** PUBLISHED BY SAMUEL FRENCH

## 2009 Seven Devils Playwrights Conference: New Friends & Familiar Faces

With a talented, generous and energetic company of artists that included both new friends and wonderful familiar faces, the 2009 Conference tackled 10 new plays in just 14 days!

Samuel D. Hunter returned to the Conference for a second time with IDAHO/DEAD IDAHO. Two of our student actors, Stephen Frandin and Will Minchell came back this year as student playwrights; Evan Seseck, a Boise writer and intern, who developed his play BLACKOUT with us last year, returned this year as an actor!

The Alpine Playhouse, Central Idaho Historical Museum and the Hotel McCall continued their generous support, and the



Evan Seseck and Sam McMurray in THE THING WITH FEATHERS by Duane Kelly

newly opened Foresters Club joined the team providing space for sit-down readings and our playwriting workshop. Our wonderful old friends at Bistro 45 Wine Bar, were joined by new friends at the Fogg Lifter Café right around the corner (allowing for equal servings of wine and coffee).

And the 2009 plays? From present day Idaho (IDAHO/DEAD IDAHO), to the 1960's in Clover, Mississippi (RED ROVER), from the American University Cairo (VEILS) to the beautiful-yet-treacherous vacation island off the coast of somewhere unknown (A PATRIOT SONG), we went on incredible journeys to places both far and near; plumbing the depths of the soul (THE THING WITH FEATHERS) and landscapes surreal (COLONY COLLAPSE)



Above: Kathryn Kates & Bobby Moreno in A PATRIOT SONG by Caridad Svich. Right: Dramaturg Larry Loebell with guest playwright Caridad Svich in rehearsal for A PATRIOT SONG.

## Caridad Svich Works Her Magic at 2009 Conference

It's always exciting to work on a play with one of our guest artists, so we were thrilled to work with award-winning, internationally acclaimed US/Latina playwright Caridad Svich on her exciting new play A PATRIOT SONG. Lyrical, magical and yet brutally real, it is a thoroughly modern, and international, work of theater and we were very honored to be a part of its life.

Caridad also generously shared some of her magic with the rest of us in an exciting free playwriting workshop, at the Foresters Club; and served as a

mentor for student playwright Will Minchell's SAINTS & SINNERS, SINNERS & SAINTS.



## Stimulus *n.* something that arouses action or activity



Dear Friends,  
In a year when we're all thinking about the economy, there is some good news to be had: **when you donate to the arts, you're stimulating the economy – and getting a tax deduction to boot!** What better, and more direct, way is there to keep talented people working and thinking and creating?

Yes, we know you've received stacks of missives from very worthy charities and arts organizations. And we know that in tough times, we all have to consider our charitable giving a bit more

deeply. So this year we've decided to do things a little differently. Rather than using the final page of this newsletter as a place to slap on your address, we're using it to give you a little more information about id: what we do, what we believe, how we make it all happen, and why **your contributions are so crucial to our mission** to develop and support new American plays and playwrights.

Of course we hope you read it and will be immediately inspired to write a check, or donate on-line, or send us a box of a paper or an airline ticket. But

we're also really glad to have the opportunity to share the method behind our madness because we really do believe: not only in what we do, but in *how* we do it and that is a part of the story that we rarely have the chance to share.

On behalf of all of us at id, and nearly 90 playwrights who have benefited from id's programs over the years, we want to take this opportunity to thank you for your generous and, we hope, ongoing support and wish you the best in the coming year.

Gratefully,  
*Jeni, Sheila & Paula*

Photos: Top left-Playwright Michèle Raper Rittenhouse and Sheila McDevitt at rehearsal for RED ROVER; Middle Left-Chris Curry and Gay Smith at the talk back for RED ROVER by Michèle Raper Rittenhouse; Bottom Left-Carly Price and Jeni Mahoney; Bottom Right-John Baker, Playwright Duane Kelly and Christopher Curry at rehearsal for Duane's THE THING WITH FEATHERS

id playwrights: Send your recent play info to us and we'll put it up on our website!!  
paula@idtheater.org

## 2010 NYC Sit In!

The Sit In! continues to thrive in the magical and intimate atmosphere of Jimmy's No. 43 Downstairs. In 2009, we've had a wide variety of fantastic plays in all different stages of development.

The Sit In! hosted 8 playwrights who had attended our Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, from Mara Lathrop, who was in Idaho with us for the very first Conference, with her 2008 Conference play THE GARDEN OF MONSTERS to James McLindon also a 2008 Conference Playwright

– with not one but TWO of his new plays – DEIRDRE OF THE SORROWS and KNUCKLEHEADS. We also enjoyed Ben Sahl's play THE WEIGHT OF BREATH and Andrew Hinderaker's latest - I AM GOING TO CHANGE THE WORLD.

Four Conference playwrights were featured in our first night of One Acts – FEELING GROOVY an evening dedicated to the passing of Earl Brockman and well wishes for George Lathrop (who is doing great).



Rounding out the year were Christopher Chan, recent NYU grad and id intern with ANEM-ONE:POST-TIGER and two playwrights who came to us through Bridgeworks - Brian Quirk with PLUSHLUST and Tom Diggs with LOVE IN THE TIME OF REAGAN. Our January reading of KANDAHAR by Jeni Mahoney was a huge success. We hope to see you at Jimmy's for the rest of the readings in 2010. (See schedule below)

## News and Announcements

Check it Out!! We are in the November 2009 issue of **Stage Directions Magazine!** This is the first in a series of articles about play development by Jacob Coakley—featuring the Seven Devils Playwrights Conference—read it online: <http://tinyurl.com/ybdwt5v>

### id-iots at Play

Thanks to Bob Kerr we've created a playwrights group specifically for id playwrights in the NYC area. They've had their first few meetings to set up guidelines and schedule and we'll be hearing some of the work they are developing at our May Sit In! Size is limited, but we can certainly support more than one group. Any id playwrights interested in meeting with other id playwrights let us know and we'll do our best to help make it possible.

A Million Thanks to Sarah Jessup For All The Great Photos in This Newsletter!!!

### All 2010 Sit In!

Readings begin at **6:30 pm !!!**  
at  
Jimmy's No.43  
43 E. 7th Street - Manhattan

**February 15th** - MY DYING WISH  
by Duane Kelly

**March 15th** - VEILS by Tom Coash

**April 19th** - TBD by Juliann France

**May 17th**- id-iots at play  
ids inaugural playwrights group

**July 19th**—NERINE by Brian Quirk

\*\*\*Seven Devils featured in Gary Garrison's column in this month's **The Dramatist Magazine**\*\*\*

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
Join us for id Theater's  
2010 Benefit

An id-iots Guide to Economic Recovery

March 1st 2010  
7pm-9pm

The Grisly Pear  
107 Macdougall Street  
Between Minetta Lane  
and Bleecker  
Manhattan



# 2009 SEVEN DEVILS PLAYWRIGHTS CONFERENCE

## THE STAGED READINGS



Matt Dickson in *A PATRIOT SONG* by Caridad Svich

### **A PATRIOT SONG** by Caridad Svich

A couple on vacation struggles to "get away from it all" in a mysterious paradise of hustlers and spirit guides; wanderers and runaways. But can they escape the legacy of the damage already done, or will they be lured to the sandy beach covered in bones and the ocean that spits blood.

### **RED ROVER** by Michèle Raper Rittenhouse

Clover, Mississippi, 1969: Miss May and the Good Lord have been on the outs for some time now, so when her grandson Robbie is reported M.I.A. overseas, she has little reason to think He'll help her now; yet something in granddaughter Katie's scheme to lure Robbie - and hope - back from the abyss tugs at Miss May. Encouraging Katie to defy her mother, Miss May unknowingly thrusts Katie into terrible danger risking Katie's life... and her own.



Mary Portser and Bobby Moreno in *IDAHO/DEAD IDAHO* by Samuel D. Hunter

### **IDAHO/DEAD IDAHO** by Samuel D. Hunter

A young taxidermist working at an Indian casino makes a desperate attempt to re-assemble his family by impregnating his cousin. But when his lover returns from Iraq - on his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday - all his best efforts can't seem to stop everything he's built from spiraling toward collapse. A play about family, togetherness, sincere emotion, dead animals & the coming apocalypse.

### **VEILS** by Tom Coash

Intisar, an African-American Muslim student, thought she might finally fit in when she enrolled for a year abroad at the American University in Cairo. However, when a campus-wide ban on wearing burkas causes a riot, Intisar and her Egyptian roommate, Samar, are surprised to find themselves on opposite sides of a bitter cultural divide. Will their video project, exploring the controversial practice of wearing veils..or not, salvage their friendship or shatter it?



Sam McMurray in *THE THING WITH FEATHERS* by Duane Kelly

## THE PLAYWRIGHTS INTENSIVE READINGS

### **COLONY COLLAPSE** by James Price

Boyd's bee colonies are dying just as his brother's company clandestinely develops an experimental pollination process which promises to make bees obsolete. Boyd knows he's facing the battle of a lifetime, and just when it seems that he might lose it all-- his bees, his farm, even his wife, a chance encounter with an unlikely ally promises to change Boyd's luck, and the world's, forever.



John Keckeisen, Ben Smart and Derek Molhar in *SAINTS & SINNERS, SINNERS & SAINTS* by Will Minchell

### **THE THING WITH FEATHERS** by Duane Kelly

There was a time when Harry's coffee farm, and the make-shift family he'd built there, offered the freedom and peace he sought. But with the farm falling into bankruptcy and the ghosts of his past closing in like the bars of a cage, Harry finds his only hope is the very person he came to Costa Rica to escape: himself.



Christopher Curry, Evan Sesek, Fallon Brooking and Chris Chan in *THE BLUNDER* by Stephen Frandrin

### **A SLICE OF LIFE** by James Valle

When Dad teaches the facts of life at his 7-year-old son's birthday party all hell breaks loose. Can he calm the other parents? Does he want to?

### **HI MONSTER** by Kristen Wiking

Adrian just wants to be like all the other girls at school, but will the monster who lives under her bed let her? A modern day fairy tale about coming of age.

### **THE BLUNDER** by Stephen Frandrin

A sexual encounter brings a young couple face-to-face in a courtroom battle that neither of them wished for. But when the trial is over and the truth is revealed... did the system work? Or was believing in each other the greatest blunder of all?

### **SAINTS & SINNERS, SINNERS & SAINTS** by Will Minchell

When Peter's girlfriend dumps him, he finds himself alone on a downward spiral of depression and anger until a series of mysterious encounters open his eyes: he's okay just the way he is, and if she's not it then he's better off without her.



Rachel Simpson and Ed Baker in *RED ROVER* by Michèle Raper Rittenhouse



Dawn-Lyen Gardner and Sarah Nina Hayon in *VEILS* by Tom Coash



Michael Criscuolo and Rose Kinne in *COLONY COLLAPSE* by James Price



Elizabeth Bennet, Hannah Quipp, Meagan Licht & James Price in *HI MONSTER* by Kristen Wiking



*A SLICE OF LIFE* Playwright James Valle works with director Sheila McDevitt

# A THEATER THAT DOESN'T PRODUCE PLAYS? THAT DOESN'T SELL TICKETS?

## Are you id-iots?

Yes. Yes. And technically, yes.

## Why would you do something so id-iotic?

Here's the thing: we're a development organization. So we're not doing productions. Technically, everything we do is still in process, and to our mind the audiences that come to see our work are a part of that process. They work for us: they help us understand where the play is, what the play is and how it's communicating.

So we had a conundrum: as soon as people paid for theater they had some expectation that we were there to give them something, when in fact it was the other way around. It just didn't make sense for us to ask the audiences to pay

for the privilege of letting them work for us, so we decided to offer audiences theater for free, with the agreement that they would work *with* us to support the development of great new plays; plays that would challenge us, inspire us and celebrate us for years to come.

So we don't worry about selling tickets, and that gives us the freedom to focus on making the play stronger, rather than worrying about whether it's "finished." The actors don't worry about it, the production people don't worry about it (in fact let's just paint everything grey and call it a day), and the marketing people –

oh, wait, we don't need marketing people, or box office people, or ushers. In fact, let's just leave the house open all the time – one less thing to worry about! And since we don't worry about all that stuff, our audience doesn't either: they aren't concerned about getting their "money's worth" – because their investment in the play isn't financial. In short, everyone has taken all that extra energy and just channeled it into the plays, creating a cycle in which audiences and artists inspire and support each other.

## That does sound very nice. But all those great actors, directors, dramaturgs, travel, housing, space - How? Playwrights pay to come, right? Or maybe you get a piece of the play?

No, no, no, no. We have three major avenues of funding: grants, in-kind donations and individual donations (otherwise known as **YOU**). All three funding areas are critical if we are to survive and thrive.

We receive grants from: the A.K. Starr Charitable Trust (they believed in us first and helped us grow wings), the National Endowment for the Arts, the Idaho Commission on the Arts, the Dramatists Guild Fund, the Gilmore Foundation and occasionally others (including The Hemingway Foundation, Idaho Community Fund and the Laby Family Foundation).

We have benefitted from an enormous and generous army of in-kind donors. In Idaho: The Alpine Playhouse (our sponsors in Idaho), Central Idaho Historical Museum, The Hotel McCall, Foresters

Club, Bistro 45 and all the bighearted folks who donate everything from housing, to dumpsters, even the services of our fantastic company photographer Sarah Jessup. In New York: Jimmy's No. 43 sponsors our NYC Sit In! readings, Chelsea Studios and Playwrights Horizons Theater School have offered much needed space and a slew of theaters, individuals, restaurants and organizations have donated everything from raffle prizes to paper. *In fact, in-kind donations make up more than a third of our income!*

**And then there is YOU!** Here is something you may not know about **YOU** and how important **YOU** are: major government funders, like the NEA and the ICA, require us to match what they give us. It is one of the ways they ensure that we

have the confidence, and support, of the community we serve. But because we don't sell tickets, we can't match their funds with ticket sales. We need to match that money by reaching out to all of **YOU** who believe that investing in playwrights, and in new American plays, makes better theater for all of us.

The good news? Because we don't sell tickets or build sets or have a lot of administrative overhead to support, we are able to invest the bulk of our money directly in the artists and their work. But, it also means that **every donation really does make a big difference**. In fact, our first Conference was funded almost entirely by donations of \$20 or under!

Thank for reading! We hope this helps you understand how sincere (and literal) we are when we thank you for helping us to:

### Make better theater... one play at a time!

- \$2 Buy a Playwright a Coffee
- \$5 Buy a Playwright Paper
- \$10 Buy a Playwright Lunch
- \$20 One Hour rehearsal for a Sit In!
- \$60 Fill a gas tank at the Conference
- \$100 Buy a toner cartridge (we print a lot of scripts)
- \$180 One Week's Car Rental at the Conference
- \$250 Full Sponsorship of a Sit In! Reading
- \$500 Send a Playwright to the Conference!!!

- \$1000 Look Ma, I'm a Producer
- Phone or email me at: \_\_\_\_\_
- I want to donate Airline Miles
- I want to make an in-kind donation of: \_\_\_\_\_ (housing, food, bike, space, paper, etc.)

Mail Donations to:  
id Theater  
c/o Jeni Mahoney  
343 E. 30th Street #19J  
New York, NY 10016

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[www.idtheater.org](http://www.idtheater.org)

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