

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Caryl Churchill's Haunting Drama *Far Away* Opens Pillsbury House Theatre's 2004 season

Pillsbury House Theatre opens its 2004 Season with the Area Premiere of *Far Away* by Caryl Churchill, performing March 5 - April 3. In the spring, Pillsbury House will present the world premiere of *Talking Masks*, a co-production with Carlyle Brown & Company, running May 14 – May 29. The area premiere of Daniel Alexander Jones's newest work, *Bel Canto*, concludes the season, October 15 – November 13.

Written by one of the most politically engaged and celebrated playwrights of our time, *Far Away* is a haunting tale of a world where the comforts of home clash with the horrors of war. An imaginative and theatrical contemplation of our increasing intolerance of inhumanity, the American premiere of *Far Away* at New York Theatre Workshop was the runaway hit of the 2002 Off-Broadway season. Pillsbury House Theatre Co-Artistic Director **Noël Raymond** will direct and the cast features **Sage Coy, Laura Esping, Matt Guidry** and **Sandra Struthers**.

“The entire production lasts for less than an hour. Yet no one is likely to leave it feeling underfed...

Each carefully chosen detail seems to vibrate with unsettled depths. And each summons anxieties both primal and mercilessly particular to the times in which we live.”

—Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*

The story unfolds in three scenes, the first beginning innocuously enough. A young girl, Joan, wakes up in the middle of the night and cannot sleep. She turns to her aunt to seek reassurance that there is nothing to be afraid of. What she sees outside her window is indeed a nightmare, but one that is entirely real. In Part Two, Joan has grown up and taken a job making hats. Here she meets and falls for another hatmaker, and the joy of young love plays out against the backdrop of horrific violence. In Part Three, Joan, her now-husband and her aunt reunite to attempt a one-day respite from the escalated war, in which even the animals have chosen sides. *Far Away* sketches a world in which nothing is what it seems, and such mundane tasks as stepping into a river or spotting a butterfly or making a silly hat can turn instantly grotesque.

“In its extraordinary menace and intelligence, its barbaric moral seriousness and apparent apocalyptic frivolity, *Far Away* is a fantastic play that plunges us into universal chaos.”

—John Heilpern, *The New York Observer*

(More)

The 2004 season continues with *Talking Masks*, a co-production with Carlyle Brown & Company. Written and directed by **Carlyle Brown**, *Talking Masks* is comprised of six short plays, crafted specifically for Bessie and Obie Award recipient **Louise Smith**, best known for her work with Ping Chong, Meredith Monk and Julie Taymor. She will be joined by two ensemble actors for an evening of very different short plays about six very different women and the masks they wear to conceal the realities of their lives. The show performs May 14 – May 29, 2004.

The Area Premiere of *Bel Canto* concludes the 2004 season. It's 1978, and sixteen year-old Benjamin Turner has recently moved from Berkley, California to Springfield, Massachusetts with his mother. In his new wintry home, Benjamin makes two important discoveries: love, in the form of schoolmate Terrance Long and a talent for opera. *Bel Canto* is a tender coming of age story featuring first love, searing loss, Marian Anderson and the music of Jimi Hendrix lyrically woven together. *American Theatre Magazine* has named playwright **Daniel Alexander Jones** as one of the fifteen up and coming artists to watch in the 21st century. The performance runs October 8 – November 6, 2004.

All productions open on a Friday and perform Wednesday through Saturday, with performance times at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 Thursday – Saturday, and all Wednesday performances are Pay-What-You-Can. Tickets are available by calling **612-825-0459**. Pillsbury House Theatre is located at 3501 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN, 55407.

CALENDAR LISTING FOR FAR AWAY

Far Away

A haunting tale of a world where the comforts of home clash with the horrors of war.

by Caryl Churchill

March 5 – April 3, 2003

Wednesdays through Saturdays, 7:30pm

Ticket price is 15\$ (Thursday – Saturday)

Wednesday @ The House (pay what you can on all Wednesdays)

Pillsbury House Theatre

3501 Chicago Ave South

Minneapolis, MN 55407

For tickets call 612-825-0459

The mission of Pillsbury House Theatre is to create challenging theatre to inspire choice, change and connection.

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