

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Pillsbury House Theatre launches its 2005 Mainstage Season
with Tracey Scott Wilson's provocative new drama: *The Story*

Pillsbury House Theatre, recently named one of the best theatres in the Twin Cities by Mpls/St. Paul Magazine, proudly announces its 2005 season, which features two area premieres and one world premiere on the mainstage, as well as an exciting season of educational programming. Two of the mainstage productions are winners of the prestigious Kesselring Award. The season opens on March 18th with the area premiere of *The Story* by Tracey Scott Wilson, continues with the world premiere of Kimberly J. Morgan's one-woman show *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression*, and concludes with *An Almost Holy Picture*, written by Heather McDonald, freely drawn from Pamela Ward's story "The Hairy Little Girl."

"Pillsbury House Theatre has a strong commitment to presenting challenging work by emerging artists, and we've certainly fulfilled that commitment in 2005," Co-Artistic Director Faye M. Price said. "We're extremely proud to introduce Twin Cities' audiences to two Kesselring Prize winners as well as an exciting new writer and performer in a world premiere production." The Kesselring Prize is awarded to playwrights who show exceptional promise but have not yet received prominent national attention. Heather McDonald received the award in 2002 for *An Almost Holy Picture*, and Tracey Scott Wilson just received the 2004 honor for *The Story* in a ceremony held last month.

The Story opens the 2005 season on March 18, under the direction of Sharon Walton, who previously directed the PHT production of *The Gimmick*. A young, ambitious African-American newspaper reporter investigates the brutal murder of a white man in a black neighborhood. She cracks the murder case with a sensational scoop – but is her story the truth? Tracey Scott Wilson's fast paced and insightful new play explores the elusive nature of truth, the expectations of racial politics and the integrity of the media. The cast includes Co-Artistic Producing Director Faye M. Price and Sonja Parks, both of whom recently appeared in *Bel Canto*. *The Story* performs March 18 – April 16, 2004.

“...a conscientious and absorbing new drama...”
—The New York Times

From May 20 – June 4, Kimberly J. Morgan will perform the world premiere of her one-woman show, *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression*. It's all about the hair! Whether it's nappy, frizzy, fuzzy, puffy or bone straight, writer/performer Kimberly Morgan nimbly interrogates the politics of black hair: how society gazes at Black women through their hair choices and how they construct themselves because of this stare. Blending music, dance, spoken word, and original text this solo work is grounded in fact yet soars through endless possibilities. An actor and dancer as well as a writer, Morgan has performed with theatres in the Twin Cities, Arizona and Seattle, and dance companies such as Opeyo, Adefua and Zeal. Her short story, "A Dancers Dilemma" was adapted and performed by the Son Ra Parable Players in Seattle.

MORE

The mainstage season closes with the area premiere of *An Almost Holy Picture*, written by Heather McDonald, and freely drawn from Pamela Ward's story "The Hairy Little Girl." The production opens September 30th under the direction of Co-Artistic Managing Director Noel Raymond. Former minister Samuel Gentle has heard God's call, but can't understand His mysteries. A tragic bus accident and the birth of his daughter with a rare medical condition have led Samuel on a restless spiritual journey, struggling to comprehend his anger and reclaim his faith. Sometimes poignant, sometimes comic, the play evocatively dramatizes one man's quest for spiritual comfort in the face of uncompromising darkness. In addition to receiving the Kesselring Award, *An Almost Holy Picture* received a 2002 Pulitzer Prize nomination and was named Best New Play of the Year by the *Los Angeles Times*.

"Audience members who are pursuing their own quests for spiritual comfort in the face of loss and destruction will surely find elements here that resonate for them." —NY Times

Pillsbury House Theatre's Chicago Avenue Project, which pairs adult theatre professionals with youth from Minneapolis neighborhoods to create original theatre, will present two productions during the 2005 season. *All Washed Up* will run Monday & Tuesday, April 25 & 26, and *Life of the Party* will run on Monday & Tuesday, August 29 & 30. Past productions of the Chicago Avenue Project have featured some of the Twin Cities' best-known actors and playwrights, including actors Steve Hendrickson, Nat Fuller, Tracey Maloney, Jamila Anderson, Brian Grandison and James A. Williams; and playwrights Bill Corbett, Kim Hines, Tracey Scott Wilson, Randy Latimer, and Carlyle Brown.

CALENDAR INFORMATION

MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

Shows open on Fridays and run Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

The Story

by Tracey Scott Wilson

Directed by Sharon Walton

March 18 – April 16, 2005

Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression

Written and performed by Kimberly J. Morgan

May 20 – June 4, 2005

An Almost Holy Picture

by Heather McDonald, *freely drawn from Pamela Ward's story "The Hairy Little Girl"*

Directed by Noël Raymond

September 30-October 22, 2005

CHICAGO AVENUE PROJECT

All Washed Up, Monday & Tuesday, April 25 & 26 at 7:00 p.m.

Life of the Party, Monday & Tuesday, August 29 & 30, 7:00 p.m.

Mainstage season tickets are \$18 Thursday – Saturday, Wednesdays are pay-what-you-can. Chicago Avenue Project productions are free and open to the public. For more information call 612-825-0459 or visit www.pillsburyhousetheatre.org. The theatre is located at 3501 Chicago Avenue South in Minneapolis.

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

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