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Kimberly Joy Morgan returns to Pillsbury House Theatre
as last season's smash hit *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression*
launches PHT's 2006 Mainstage Season

Ivey Award Winner Kimberly Joy Morgan brings her hit one-woman show *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression* back to the Pillsbury House Theatre stage to open the 2006 mainstage season. Dazzling critics and audiences alike, the world premiere of *Hot Comb* last spring sold-out both the initial run and an extension. Under the direction of Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates, the remount opens on **January 20th**. Interdisciplinary artist Daniel Alexander Jones also returns to Pillsbury House Theatre, as the writer and director of the world premiere of *Phoenix Fabrik*, opening on **June 2nd**. Tracy Lett's Off-Broadway sensation, *Bug*, concludes the 2006 season, creeping onto the stage on **October 6th** under the direction of Stephen DiMenna.

"We are extremely excited about this upcoming season" says Co-Artistic Director Faye M. Price. "We received more phone calls than any of us could have imagined after *Hot Comb* closed, asking when we would do it again. We look forward to giving audiences another chance to see this incredible work." The 2006 season continues Pillsbury House Theatre's commitment to supporting the work of emerging artists. Pillsbury House Theatre hosted the development workshop of *Phoenix Fabrik* last June and will welcome artists from Germany, New York and San Francisco back for the world premiere. In contrast to the first two productions of the season, *Bug* promises an altogether different experience at the theatre. "There's no way around it," says Price, "this play is just plain creepy. It offers the kind of raw, edgy theatre that our audiences love and have come to expect from us." The Off-Broadway premiere of *Bug* was a box-office and critical hit and won two Obie Awards.

Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression opens the season on January 20 and performs through February 18. Whether it's nappy, frizzy, fuzzy, puffy or bone straight, it's all about the hair! Blending music, dance, spoken word and original text, writer/performer Kimberly Joy Morgan returns to nimbly interrogate the politics of black hair: the way society gazes at Black women through their hair choices and how they construct themselves because of this stare. Spanning from the Harlem Renaissance to the present, Morgan transforms into ten different characters including knotty hair sistas, dreaded sistas, silky hair sistas, sistas of the perm and hot comb. Kimberly Joy Morgan received the very first Ivey Award this past September for her performance in *Hot Comb*. She has performed locally at Child's Play, History Theater and Pillsbury House Theatre and the *Star Tribune* named her an "**Outstanding New Face**" in 2004 for her performance in *Diva Daughters DuPree* at Penumbra Theatre.

The world premiere of *Phoenix Fabrik* continues the 2006 season. The setting is a doll factory in South Carolina, 1945. A river flows - dark, steady, relentless. As Eleanor, a black girl who works in the factory and Inga, a German girl whose Uncle owns the factory meet and attempt to forge a friendship, they excavate the violent spaces within their own souls. *Phoenix Fabrik* evokes silenced histories and personal transformation in a rich tapestry of music, language and movement. Written and directed by interdisciplinary artist **Daniel Alexander Jones**, the world premiere will bring national and international artists to the Twin

Cities, including Barbara Duchow from Germany, Vinnie Burrows and Rhonda Ross from New York and Kimberlee Koym from San Francisco. Jones is no stranger to Pillsbury House Theatre, he directed Zell Miller, III's *Evidence of Silence Broken* and the theatre produced the area premiere of *Bel Canto* in 2004. Jones has been featured as one of fifteen artists "whose work will be transforming America's stages for decades to come" in American Theatre Magazine and his other plays include *Blood:Shock:Boogie*, *Earthbirths*, *Ambient Love Rites* and *Whale*. His directing and performance work has been seen in several U.S. cities, notably New York, Boston, Austin, Seattle and Minneapolis as well as in London and Dublin.

The mainstage season closes with the area premiere of *Bug* by Tracy Letts. In the play, a divorced waitress with a fondness for cocaine lays low hoping to avoid a recently paroled ex-hubby. She meets a soft-spoken Gulf War drifter who is convinced the government is tailing him. In a seedy motel room in Oklahoma City, the two new lovers try to overcome isolation and delusion – as well as the infestation of bugs. This harrowing thriller crawls with pests and paranoia. "Buckle up and brace yourself for the theatre season's wildest ride," raved the *New York Times* of the Off-Broadway premiere that won two Obie Awards in 2004, one for best acting ensemble and one for best design team. *Bug* runs October 6 – November 4, under the direction of Stephen DiMenna, who has previously directed *Jesus Hopped the A Train* and *Bel Canto*.

CALENDAR INFORMATION

MAINSTAGE PRODUCTIONS

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

Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression

Written and performed by Kimberly Joy Morgan

Directed by Dr. Tawnya Pettiford-Wates

January 20 – February 18, 2006

Phoenix Fabrik

Written and directed by Daniel Alexander Jones

June 2- June 17, 2006

Bug

By Tracy Letts

Directed by Stephen DiMenna

October 6 – November 4, 2006

Mainstage season tickets are \$18 Thursday – Saturday, Wednesday evenings are pay-what-you-can. 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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