

University of Virginia Department of Drama presents Fall Festival: Cloud 9, For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf, and Call of the Wild in rotating repertory

The U.Va. Department of Drama opens its 2005-2006 Season with two modern classics and an original musical in rotating repertory. The Fall Festival of 3 plays, Caryl Churchill's *Cloud 9*; Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*; and a new musical version of Jack London's *Call of the Wild*, will be performed in the Culbreth and Helms Theatres of the UVa Drama Building November 3–17.

The Fall Festival opens on Thursday November 3 with the Obie award-winning *Cloud 9* by Caryl Churchill. Director Betsy Tucker describes the play as a “funny, farcical look at sex and power.” Written in 1979, the highly theatrical *Cloud 9* features men portraying women, women portraying men, sex, confusion, and dysfunctional families. The first act is set in British colonial Africa in 1880; the second act features the same characters 100 years later in London, though they have only aged 25 years. Along the way, Churchill's wit skewers the power struggles inherent in sexual relations and orientation and explores how much “progress” we have made since the Victorian era.

Tucker believes that “Churchill is a major living playwright,” and she has certainly done her part to showcase Churchill's work in the Charlottesville community, having directed Churchill's *Top Girls* at U.Va. in 1992, *Far Away* at Live Arts last season, as well as their production of *Cloud 9* years ago. Tucker recently directed *As You Like It* and *Measure for Measure* for the U.Va. Drama Department. *Cloud 9* will play in the Helms Theatre November 3–5, 9–12 and 15–17 at 7:30 p.m.

The Festival continues on Friday November 4 with the opening of Ntozake Shange's *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf*. Groundbreaking in every sense, *For Colored Girls...* shares the experiences of African American women in the Twentieth Century. Stories of rape, isolation, pride, death, and ultimately survival are told through a myriad of music, movement, and poetry. Since its inception in 1974, this “choreopoem” has affected and influenced audiences of all races and genders.

This Obie award-winning play is directed by guest artist and professor Theresa M. Davis of West Virginia University. Davis believes that the play has universal appeal because “Art should make us look inside and know who we are: know who we are by seeing ourselves onstage and know who we are by seeing others onstage.” *For Colored Girls...* will play in the Culbreth Theatre November 4, 8, 10, 12, 14 and 16 at 8:00 p.m.

Call of the Wild, the final Fall Festival offering, opens on Saturday, November 5th. For this new musical, playwright Jon Lipsky has combined and adapted Jack London's classic Alaskan adventure novels *Call of the Wild* and *White Fang* into a single story exploring the humanity in every creature and the idea of unconditional love. The music by Bill Barclay is a blend of music hall, honky-tonk, and folk styles.

Call of the Wild is directed and choreographed by Marianne Kubik, who directed *A Devil Inside* last season for the Drama Department, and earlier co-directed *Big Love* with colleague Betsy Tucker. She describes the show as “a poetic play, more suggestive than realistic in nature, evocative in its lyrics, symbolic in its dialogue, and fantastical in its depiction of the worlds of both the dogs and the ‘gods’ they adore.” Kubik adds that the musical “recalls the days of live storytelling, while feeling both provocative and accessible with its hip musical sound.” *Call of the Wild* will be performed in the Culbreth Theatre November 5, 7, 9, 11, 15 and 17 at 8:00 p.m.

Single tickets for Adults are \$16 for *Call of the Wild* and \$14 for the other two plays. Discounts are available for students and senior citizens 60 and up. Season tickets are also available. Full time UVa students may purchase tickets using their Art\$ Dollars. For more information, call the Drama Department Box Office at 434-924-3376. The box office is open from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.