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Press Contact (for media only): Lucy Pollak
(818) 887-1499 lucy@lucypr.com

2009-10 SEASON AT [Inside] the Ford: Three new plays from EST-LA, TheSpyAnts and Circle X about love, loss, betrayal... and America.

LOS ANGELES, CA - Love, loss, betrayal... and America: Los Angeles County's Winter Partnership Program is back with a second season of provocative new work in 2009-10. Once again, three outstanding L.A. theater companies have been selected to present an ambitious season of premieres at [Inside] the Ford, the 87-seat state-of-the-art theater located in Hollywood's Ford Theatres complex.

"These are three beautifully written pieces, each offering a profoundly different perspective on modern America," comments Los Angeles County Arts Commission Executive Director **Laura Zucker**. "We're pleased to be able to help three of L.A.'s most accomplished theater companies bring this exciting new work to Los Angeles audiences."

Ensemble Studio Theatre-LA opens the season in November with a powerfully moving new work that eloquently melds realism and poetry. In the **world premiere** of *Tree* by **Julie Hébert**, three generations divided by race, culture and time connect when a white Southern woman discovers old love letters leading her to an African-American half-brother.

In January, **TheSpyAnts** presents the **Los Angeles premiere** of **Charles L. Mee's** *bobrauschenbergamerica*, a fantastical voyage through the heart of small town America as seen through the eyes of visionary artist Robert Rauschenberg.

Finally, **Circle X Theatre Co.** returns to [Inside] the Ford in March with the **debut production** of *Lascivious Something* by **Sheila Callaghan**. It's 1980 and Reagan has just been elected. On a secluded Greek island, an American ex-pat pursues his passions: wine making and his breathtaking young bride. On the eve of his first tasting, an old lover reappears, and with her, a wild and violent past.

Through the Winter Partnership Program, L.A. County-based theater companies without permanent facilities submit projects for consideration. Three companies are chosen through a competitive process to present at [Inside] the Ford, where they receive significant promotional and technical support while being allowed to keep the lion's share of the box office. The season is supported by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission and the Ford Theatre Foundation, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The first Winter Partnership season at [Inside] the Ford was a resounding critical and popular success. *Song of Extinction* by E.M. Lewis, which was presented by Moving Arts in the fall of 2008, was recognized with a slate of prestigious awards including the 2008 Production of the Year Award from the *LA Weekly*; the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle's Ted Schmitt Award for World Premiere of an Outstanding New Play; and the Harold and Mimi Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association New Play Award, the largest national award for a new play. Circle X Theatre Company's *Battle Hymn* by Jim Leonard was a Los Angeles Times "Critic's Choice," an *LA Weekly* "GO!," and a Back Stage "Critic's Pick." The *LA Weekly's* Steven Leigh Morris called *Home Siege Home*, Ghost Road Company's ensemble-derived adaptation of Aeschylus' trilogy, *The Oresteia* and the final offering of the season, "a calculated blend of ancient lyricism and

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contemporary humor... [Katharine] Noon and company... conjure the psychological and cosmic forces that lead to the end of an era."

Embedded within a 1929 historic structure, [Inside] the Ford is an 87-seat indoor theater space at the Ford Theatres complex that boasts 21st Century lights and sound, comfortable seats, and a decades-long history of nurturing new theater. For decades it was rented by numerous groups, most notably the Mark Taper Forum which made it the home of its second stage Taper, Too from 1972 to 1997. In 1998 the space was extensively renovated and renamed [Inside] the Ford, following which a season of three productions was presented under the Los Angeles County Art Commission's subsidized rental program designed to help theater companies without permanent facilities. From 2000-01 through 2003-04, [Inside] the Ford hosted "Hot Properties," seasons of new plays and musicals produced by County-based theater companies and supported by A.S.K. Theater Projects and the James Irvine Foundation. Finally, from 2005-06 to 2007-08, [Inside] the Ford was the home of the Ensemble Theatre Collective, known as ETC@ITF, a collaboration of five L.A.-based theater companies that was supported in part by the Flintridge Foundation.

The Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Laura Zucker, Executive Director, provides leadership in cultural services of all disciplines for the largest county in the United States, encompassing 88 municipalities. In addition to programming the John Anson Ford Theatres, the Arts Commission provides leadership and staffing to support the regional blueprint for arts education, *Arts for All*; administers a grants program that funds more than 300 nonprofit arts organizations annually; oversees the County's Civic Art Program for capital projects, funds the largest arts internship program in the country in conjunction with the Getty Foundation, and supports the Los Angeles County Cultural Calendar on ExperienceLA.com. The Arts Commission also produces free community programs, including the L.A. Holiday Celebration broadcast nationally, and a year-round music program that funds more than 50 free concerts each year in public sites. The 2009-10 President of the Arts Commission is Araceli Ruano.

[Inside] the Ford is located in the Ford Theatres complex at **2580 Cahuenga Blvd. East, Hollywood, CA 90068**, just off the 101 Hollywood Freeway across from the Hollywood Bowl and south of Universal Studios. **On-site, non-stacked parking is free.**

Single tickets to *Tree*, *bobrauschenbergamerica*, and *Lascivious Something* are priced at \$20 with a special price of \$12 for full-time students with ID and senior citizens. A season subscription for all three plays is \$45. For information go to the Ford Theatres website at www.FordTheatres.org or call **323.461.3673**. Subscriptions and individual tickets go on sale July 15.

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