

January 5, 2011

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LOVE AND BODY BAGS: TAFFETY PUNK PRESENTS *OWL MOON*
DC playwright Liz Maestri's play gets its world premiere at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop

Taffety Punk Theatre Company presents *Owl Moon* by Liz Maestri
Directed by Taffety Punk founding member **Lise Bruneau**
Featuring Taffety Punk artistic director **Marcus Kyd** and company members **Kimberly Gilbert, Tonya Beckman Ross, Joel David Santner** and **Esther Williamson**

Where: Capitol Hill Arts Workshop (545 7th Street SE, Washington, DC 20003)
When: Friday, February 4 through Saturday, February 26 at 8:00 p.m.
All tickets \$10, reserve at <http://tix.taffetypunk.com> or call 1-800-838-3006

What happens when an *Owl Moon* rises? In DC playwright Liz Maestri's new work, the everyday world veers into extremities – hot blood spurts and passions seep into a wintry landscape of cold and desolation.

Such extreme territory is familiar to Taffety Punk Theatre Company. Whether it is the group's persistent pursuit of fresh and engaging voices (*Owl Moon* is its third production of a new play by a local playwright in as many years), or its desire to devise new and challenging works (last year's critically acclaimed *suicide.chat.room*), or its mission to push Shakespeare to the limit in its Riot Grrrl and Bootleg productions of the Bard, Taffety Punk is never in a mood to play it safe.

And *Owl Moon* is definitely not safe. The play follows a group of characters through conflicts and collisions that stretch taut conventions of style and tone. Add in a talking owl, and you have a play that juggles the heady, humorous and harrowing in equal measure.

"Owls are rather frightening," says Maestri. "And I love this idea that, in nature, beauty and danger often go hand-in-hand."

Maestri also observes that there are a number of hard questions about the nature of love at the center of *Owl Moon*.

"Relationships raise those questions," says Maestri. "To what lengths do people go in order to not be alone? What toll does this take on them? Can we lose ourselves in another person? What is healthy love? Can humans be happy on their own?"

The obsessions that accompany love, Maestri adds, may appear to be life or death, but they are always underpinned with choices. "I don't want to diminish the severity of obsessive love — it can lead to pretty bad things — but I want to remind people that everyone has a *choice*," she says. "No matter how depressed, no matter how alone and desperate, we have the ability to choose what we do with our feelings and how we live our lives."

Director Lise Bruneau says that *Owl Moon*'s tactic of throwing emotions and styles into such high relief is part of its appeal. "I'm so very fond of this play," she says, "but I have to say the tone is the best part, and will be the most fun to navigate. Is it funny? Is it awful? Can we pull off both without cheapening the experience of the audience? We Taffety Punks love making extreme, often outrageous, occasionally downright ludicrous choices that are somehow truthful. One of my favorite directing tasks is to balance out heart and hysterics, tragedy and dumb luck; and I feel like Liz Maestri wrote the perfect play for us to splash around in – if that's what you consider fun. And we do!"

Indeed, Maestri herself makes the connection between the extreme obsessions of *Owl Moon* and the extreme expressions of love that often accompany celebrations of February's preeminent holiday. "*Owl Moon*, she says, is a tale of "four people who must survive the treacherous journey from love to neurosis and back again, because love truly is a battlefield. Happy Valentine's Day from Taffety Punk!"

Owl Moon runs at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop Friday February 4th runs through February 26th, and plays Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:00 pm. There are additional Saturday Matinées at 3:00 pm on February 12, 19, and 26. Tickets are \$10 and can be reserved at <http://tix.taffetypunk.com> or by calling 1-800-838-3006.

Taffety Punk Theatre Company is the resident company at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop (545 7th Street SE, Washington, DC 20003 – two blocks from Metro's Orange/Blue Line stop at Eastern Market.

For hi-res photos, go to: <http://www.taffetypunk.com/press.html>

Taffety Punk Theatre Company won the John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company at the 2008 Helen Hayes Awards. The company was also a 2010 finalist for the D.C. Mayor's Arts Award for Innovation in the Arts. Taffety Punk's mission is to establish a dynamic ensemble of actors, dancers and musicians who ignite a public passion for theatre by making the classical and the contemporary exciting, meaningful, and affordable.

Liz Maestri has been writing stories and essays since childhood, and started studying playwriting in 2005 at New Dramatists. She quit in order to focus on performing, and then took up playwriting again in 2009 with the completion of *Owl Moon* and the beginning of *FALLBEIL*, a play about Sophie Scholl, a troubled girl, and the soldiers they love.