

March 9, 2011

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TINY ALICE GETS PUNK'D IN ARENA STAGE'S EDWARD ALBEE FESTIVAL!
Taffety Punk Theatre Company Tackles One of the Playwright's Most Enigmatic Works

Taffety Punk Theatre Company presents *Tiny Alice* by Edward Albee
Directed by Taffety Punk founding member **Lise Bruneau**
Featuring Taffety Punk artistic director **Marcus Kyd** and company members **Daniel Flint**,
Tonya Beckman Ross, **Joel David Santner** and special guest artist Todd Scofield

Where: Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, Ammerman Rehearsal Hall
When: Friday, March 25 at 7 p.m. and Saturday, March 26 at 5 p.m.
Tickets free // Call 202-488-3300 for up-to-the-minute availability information.

Taffety Punk Theatre Company is renowned in the DC area for its innovative “bootleg” productions of the less-trodden works of William Shakespeare: the actors get off book, assemble on the day of the show, and rehearse and perform the work in a single day. They’ve done *Cymbeline*, *Henry VIII*, *Troilus and Cressida* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as bootlegs – as well as a new play – *Reals* – by Taffety Punk’s playwright-in-residence Gwydion Suilebhan.

The company is taking a similar tack for its two performances of Edward Albee’s 1964 play *Tiny Alice* in Arena Stage’s Edward Albee Festival. Sort of.

“It’s not quite ‘bootleg,’” says Taffety Punk artistic director Marcus Kyd, who will play The Lawyer in the production. “It’s more like a ‘guerilla production.’ We’ll be off book and bringing a lot of movement to it, but we are rehearsing.”

Founding Taffety Punk company member Lise Bruneau – who directs the production -- quips that “we’re aiming for no stage directions.” The entire cast, she adds, “is up for the challenge of attacking *Tiny Alice* and really owning it.”

In one sense, Taffety Punk’s guerilla production and its warlike approach is a great fit for *Tiny Alice* – which was one of the most contentious American plays of its era. Gallons of ink were spilled on interpreting Albee’s religious symbology in the play. (Indeed, a *New York Times* piece from January 21, 1965 ticked down a list including the Last Supper and a “Judas Kiss.”)

The play also elicited a homophobic rant of a review in the *New York Review of Books* from author Phillip Roth, who termed the play a “homosexual day-dream” and attacked “its tediousness, its pretentiousness, its galling sophistication, its gratuitous and easy symbolizing, its ghastly pansy rhetoric and repartee...”

In her talk with Albee about the play, Bruneau says that the playwright emphasized the grappling with the essence of spirituality at the heart of the play. “He told me that it was an argument with faith and the church,” the director says. “A play about what acceptance and belief was all about.”

What appeals most to Bruneau about Albee’s work – and *Tiny Alice* in particular – is the candor of his characters. “Albee resides in this bizarre world,” she says, “in which the characters are so open, frank and honest about how fucked up they are. It’s dynamic and psychologically dark. These are dark places in which his characters are comfortable living and speaking. It’s terrifying.”

The cast of Taffety Punk’s guerilla take on *Tiny Alice* is rounded out by three company members – Daniel Flint (Butler), Tonya Beckman Ross (Alice) and Joel David Santner (Julian) – and special guest artist and Taffety Punk Bootleg Shakespeare veteran Todd Scofield (The Cardinal).

For a full schedule of the Arena Stage Edward Albee Festival visit www.arenastage.org.

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.

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.