

## A Conversation from the Kitchen

*News from the Kitchen Theatre Company &  
Rachel Lampert Artistic Director*

### Out of the frying pan and into the Fire with SPEECH & DEBATE

We've been trying to keep the plays lively and varied this season. I hope you agree it has been a fun ride thus far with SECRET ORDER, FIRST DAY, and LAST TRAIN TO NIBROC. So, why the frying pan/fire as the title of this article? Well, coming up next on the Main Stage is SPEECH & DEBATE. And it's been setting small fires all across the country this season.

*"There's hilarity to spare here, but sensitivity and understanding as well."* (Rocky Mountain News, Denver), *"intelligent, insightful..."* (Times Picayune, New Orleans) and from its smash Off-Broadway run, the venerable New York Times' critic wrote, *"A plot description doesn't hint at how funny and cliché-free this brilliantly performed little show is."* From Variety, *"Bristling with vitality, wicked humor, terrific dialogue and a direct pipeline into the zeitgeist of contemporary youth."*



Conor Tansey, Adam R. Deremer, & Alison Scaramella play the SPEECH & DEBATE teens, in rehearsal with Rennée Petrofes who plays both a teacher and reporter in the play

Like FIRST DAY, the play pushes the envelope. SPEECH & DEBATE splashes the lives of three teenagers onto the stage with vivid, hilarious and uncensored truth. If you've been wondering about how the computer, with its infinite ability to connect people to people, works in the teenage world, this play reveals it all. And, if you think free speech is an old fight, think again.

What I find so beautifully wrought in this play is the language of teenagers so authentically written and how the long-standing teenage struggles to "fit in" and "be heard" are seen in such a contemporary, cut-from-today's headlines bright light.

We invited a group of teens from around the county to come and watch an early run-through to get their thoughts on the play and ask if it rang true. They doubled over in laughter during the run and then sat silently as some of the issues closest to their

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Adam R. Deremer, Conor Tansey & Alison Scaramella in rehearsal for SPEECH & DEBATE

own experiences were right there in front of their eyes. They reported that the play is very real – as real as the things they face everyday - like censorship in the school newspaper, Internet privacy, being an openly gay teen or just being "different" in any way. They appreciated the way the play showed teens as both confident and terrified; willing to talk and totally closed off; and having a public face and a very different private one. These teens will be joining us at the preview performances to provide a teen prospective during the talk backs. And, they are helping us get the word out with "tweets", Facebook and good old spreading the word.

I know there will be some hot button moments in the performance that may make sparks fly. I also anticipate that you, our Kitchen Theatre Company subscribers and patrons, are going to find this play wonderfully provocative and a conversation starter. If you have adventurous, curious and thoughtful teenage children or grandchildren, this play is bound to strike a chord with them as well. I am looking forward to lively conversations in the Kitchen about SPEECH & DEBATE.

### Update on the Building

All of us at the Kitchen are used to a schedule of putting up plays every six to seven weeks. An entire "family" is formed by a company of actors, director, designers, stage manager and crew; a "home" (the set) is built; a very specific story is told; all the walls are painted, the furniture is put in place; it gets shared with an audience; and then it all is taken apart and we begin again. So, we are used to fast turnarounds and moving mountains at lightning speed. Well, building and renovating doesn't move along like a theater production! All of us at the Kitchen have to keep reining in our usual tempo to match the beat of the construction process.

There is, however, a lot of progress. Ceilings are in. Walls are up in many places. The sprung floor will be going in this week. The plywood on the front of the building hasn't changed, so as you drive by it doesn't look like much has happened, but inside transformation is occurring. I can also tell you we are working with interior designer Cathy Emilian and enjoying creating a "set" on a giant scale for us.

We are as close to on schedule as we can be. We still hope to get into the building before the end of this season. We may have to make some adjustments to the schedule and possibly the programming to make that happen. But, once we move, we will begin to reap the financial benefits of owning our own space, which was the motivating factor to make this move to ensure the Kitchen Theatre Company's future.

Many of you have asked about volunteering to help us. We are getting to the point where you should e-mail me if you'd like to help with painting, carpentry and other manual work we will need to do to prepare the space. We also want to start a list of volunteers who are interested in helping us in the costume area to cull and organize before we move. I am the point person for this, so e-mail me at Rachel@kitchentheatre.org if you would like to volunteer. And, if you'd like to see the progress firsthand, please e-mail me, or Steve at Stephen@kitchentheatre.org and we'll do our best to give you a tour.

### Update on the Capitol Campaign for a Bold, New, Space

Watching the Olympics has some special resonance for us at the KTC. When I see those ice skaters working for extra points by putting a hard jump at the end of their program, I sympathize. The judges know that after a skating full out for many minutes, the thighs are aching and the stamina is reaching its peak—so a big triple anything is going to be a challenge. Well, that is where we are in the Capital Campaign. We have been skating, if you will, a very successful program and we need to do that "big triple" to finish and make our goal. With \$1,069,000 raised we are very close. Thank you to all who have stretched to make this move and renovation possible. And, to those who are able to help us get to the finish line, we encourage you to do it now. There are still NY State Tax Credits available for gifts over \$1000 given before June 30, 2010. But, whatever the size of your gift, all of us at the Kitchen are grateful for the confidence and support our patrons have shown us as we move forward.

### The Music Continues in the Kitchen

With PRECIOUS NONSENSE finishing a very successful run with many new faces coming to the Kitchen from Syracuse, Rochester, Auburn and beyond, we're going to have more music in the Kitchen with the encore production of I HAVE A SONG TO SING O! for six matinee performances only on Saturdays at 1pm and 3pm and Sundays at 1pm, March 6, 7, 13, and 14. Come join the cast of 10 in this musical sing-a-long production for all ages. Kitchen Theatre's Steve Nunley and Lesley Greene make appearances as the persnickety Mr. & Mrs. Snivel who want to stop all the music and singing coming from their new upstairs tenants—the always-singing Corcoran Family. How can the Snivels who hate music so much and the Corcorans who love music so much ever work this out? Well, you can help make it

happen by singing along to all the Gilbert & Sullivan favorites that fill this production.

I have a  
SONG to  
sing O!

I HAVE A SONG TO SING O! is great family afternoon outing during those cold March days. Also starring Chunmei Mckernan, Alex LoPinto, Nathan Hilgartner, Kevin Hilgartner, Erin Hilgartner, Nefertiti Bridges, Brett Bossard and Percy Browning. Tom Peters is the music director.

**Just two weekends!**  
**March 6 & 7 and 13 & 14.**  
**Saturdays at 1pm & 3pm**  
**and Sundays at 1pm.**

### Annual On-Line Auction

It's that time of year again, and the Auction Committee has been gathering a lot of wonderful items. We start on **March 5 and end on March 21**. If you have something to donate, please contact Andrew@kitchentheatre.org and please check out the site when we start—a great way to help the Kitchen and find some unique items.

COMING SOON



### Opera in the Kitchen!

LA VOIX HUMAINE is Poulenc's haunting one-act opera for solo soprano based on text by Jean Cocteau. Guest artists singer Deborah Lifton, director David Lefkovich, and pianist Brian DeMaris will fill the theater with music and this emotional story of love and loss. **At the Kitchen March 17, 18, 20 & 21.**

### Counter Culture finale

Our Kitchen Counter Culture season will conclude with LAY OF THE LAND. LAY OF THE LAND is Tim Miller's saucy, sharp-knifed look at the State of the Queer Union during a time of trial. It friskily gets at that feeling of gay folks being perpetually on trial, on the ballot, and on the menu.

**For just three performances**  
**April 1, 2 & 3.**

