

bold • intimate • engaging

KITCHEN theatre company

17th Season - Artistic Director, Rachel Lampert

Office (607) 272-0403

Fax (607) 273-4816

Tickets (607) 273-4497

www.kitchentheatre.org

Historic Clinton House, 116 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca, N.Y.

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Lesley Greene, Kitchen Counter Culture Producer, 607.272-0403; lesley@kitchentheatre.org

KITCHEN COUNTER CULTURE 2007-08

February 29-March 2, 2008

Big Head

written and performed by Denise Uyehara

Performances: February 29 & March 1 at 8:00 PM and March 2 at 4:00 PM (see calendar page 2)

Tickets: \$14-\$16 (senior, student, and subscription discounts available) and may be purchased in person at the Ticket Center located in the Historic Clinton House, Downtown Ithaca near the Commons, 116 N. Cayuga Street, Ithaca, NY (corner Cayuga and Seneca Streets), by calling (607) 273-4497 or online at www.kitchentheatre.org **Photos available upon request. Artist available for interview.**

The Kitchen Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the generous support of Kitchen Counter Culture Series sponsors New York State Council on the Arts, Foster Custom Kitchens and CSP Management and hospitality sponsor Hilton Garden Inn. Additional support for this production comes from Cornell Council for the Arts; Department of Theatre, Film, & Dance; Cornell Feminist, Gender, & Sexuality Studies; and Cornell Asian American Studies. This funding helps the Kitchen bring bold, intimate and engaging theater to life.

Performance Artist tackles our fear of “the enemy”

Kitchen Theatre welcomes Los Angeles performance artist Denise Uyehara

ITHACA, NY: The Kitchen Theatre Company's KITCHEN COUNTER CULTURE series, featuring cutting-edge, outside-the-box work by guest artists from around the country, continues this month with a piece by Los Angeles performance artist **Denise Uyehara**. Uyehara will perform **BIG HEAD** for three performances only: February 29, March 1, and March 2. **All performances will be followed by a talkback with the artist.**

BIG HEAD revisits the treatment of Japanese Americans during World War II and considers current-day treatment of those perceived as “the enemy” now, including Muslim Americans, Arab Americans, and South Asian Americans. A work that has been in the making since early 2001, this poetic, interdisciplinary performance offers up letters from Rohwer Internment Camp in Arkansas, responds to recent hate crimes and imprisonments, and considers the coalition-building between these various communities during times of crisis. A non-linear montage of images, clay animation, movement, and text, **BIG HEAD** evokes the mysteriously winding path of collective memory and how we interpret our past to provide hope for the future.

BIG HEAD has been performed to excellent reviews in Los Angeles and New York City. The *LA Times* describes Uyehara as “a virtual conflation of Laurie Anderson and Myoshi Umeki” who “addresses imperiled democracy in the present war-shrouded landscape... [with] her signature fusion of impish humor, sober recollection and kinetic self-commentary.” The *LA Weekly* called the piece “powerful, compelling, potent and deeply chilling.” **BIG HEAD** was selected for performance at the National Asian American Theater Festival in New York City in June 2007.

Denise Uyehara is an interdisciplinary performance artist/writer/playwright whose work has been presented across the United States (the Walker Art Center, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Highways Performance Space), and internationally (the Institute for Contemporary Art in London, the Kiasma Museum in Helsinki, Dokkyo Performance Studies Conference and the Morishita Studio in Tokyo, the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, Women in View Festival in Vancouver). She was a founding member of the Sacred Naked Nature Girls, an all female, multi-ethnic, experimental performance collective that made waves, beginning with their first, all-nude, performance piece in 1994.

The recipient of numerous awards, Uyehara recently received a fellowship from the Asian Cultural Council, a California Civil Liberties Public Education Program grant, and was a Poets & Writers 'Writer on Site' at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Beyond Baroque Literary Center. Uyehara teaches workshops in the community and has taught performance for the Dept. of World Arts & Cultures at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), and for the Depts. of Asian American Studies and Studio Arts at the University of California, Irvine (UCI).

The Kitchen Theatre is pleased to partner with Cornell University in bringing Denise Uyehara to Ithaca. While in Ithaca, Uyehara will be giving two workshops at Cornell. On Wednesday February 27 at 4:30pm, she will give a lecture demonstration entitled "Shedding Light: Performance and Illumination" in Cornell's Schwartz Center Room 124. On Saturday March 1, 12:00-3:00pm, she will lead a workshop in solo performance entitled "Finding Voice" at the Schwartz Center Film forum. For more information on the Cornell events or to register for the solo performance workshop, email Sara Warner at slw42@cornell.edu.

Kitchen Theatre Company's KITCHEN COUNTER CULTURE series brings Central New York the cutting-edge, outside-the-box, bold, uncensored work of writer/performers who are fearless in their convictions and daring in their presentations. The series celebrates new voices and diverse approaches to the act of performance with artists who are breaking rules and breaking new ground. This season the series highlights five artists of color. First in the series was Indian American standup comedian and playwright Vijai Nathan's **GOOD GIRLS DON'T, BUT INDIAN GIRLS DO**. Darian Dauchan performed **MEDIA MADNESS** in November. The series continues in February with actor/teaching artist Vickie Tanner's new play **RUNNING INTO ME** and acclaimed performance artist Denise Uyehara's **BIG HEAD**, and concludes in April with playwright/poet Lenelle Moise's **EXPATRIATE**. Funded by **New York State Council on the Arts** and sponsored by **Foster Custom Kitchens, CSP Management** and hospitality sponsor **Hilton Garden Inn**.

Performance Dates:

February 29, 2008, Friday at 8:00 pm

March 1, 2008, Saturday at 8:00 pm

March 2, 2008, Sunday at 4:00 pm

Bold, intimate, engaging...Kitchen Theatre Company (KTC), now in its 17th season, is downtown Ithaca's critically acclaimed and nationally recognized year-round professional theatre with four performance series (Main Stage, Family Fare, Kitchen Counter Culture, Kitchen Sink). KTC is the first not-for-profit recipient of the David R. Strong Memorial "**Small Business of the Year**" Award from the **Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce**. KTC provides an engaging mix of regional and world premiere plays and musicals to Central NY in an intimate 73-seat theatre that encourages a bold relationship between audience and actor. The theatre is located in the historic Clinton House, a renovated hotel in Downtown Ithaca, New York. Ithaca is located on the southern tip of Cayuga Lake in central New York. Kitchen Theatre Company receives public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency and the Tompkins County Room Occupancy Tax Fund. For the 2007-08 Season the Kitchen Theatre Company is receiving support from the **Shubert Foundation** and the **New York State Music Fund**.

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