

Join us

directly after the show
Friday March 27th in the Lobby
for

“US Criminal Justice & the Demon of Error”

An Open Forum

Featuring

Hon. William M. Erlbaum

NY Supreme Court Justice

& Member of the

City Bar Association Capital Punishment Committee

Light refreshments will be served

Special Thanks for the organization of this colloquium:

Joseph Grasso

Jessica Blank

Jeff Kirchmeir (CUNY Law)

Mark Schuller

Susan Letteney

Mike Flynn

Brent Buell & Janice Cline

The Innocence Project

& Mathew Katz



York College Theatre
presents

Spring 2009

The true story of six people sent to Death Row for crimes they did not commit

The Exonerated

By Jessica Blank and Erik Jensen

Friday March 27th at 3pm

(with special "Talkback" immediately follow at 4:30pm)

Sat., March 28 at 8PM

Sun., March 29 at 3PM

Tues., March 31 at 12Noon

All tickets: \$10.00

For more information, please call 718.262.5375 or visit us at www.york.cuny.edu

York College
Little Theatre

94-45 Guy R. Brewer Blvd.
Jamaica, NY 11451

YORK COLLEGE IS 

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE
Past Productions



Callaloo 11
Directed by Barbara Nickolich



The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams
Directed by Barbara Nickolich



Oleanna by David Mamet
Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE
Past Productions



SPEAK OUT - adapted & directed by
Tom Marion



Blythe Spirit by Noel Coward
Directed by Sarah Schilling



Anna in the Tropics by Nilo Cruz
Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein



94-45 Guy R. Brewer Blvd.

Little Theatre March 27-31, 2009

YORK COLLEGE THEATRE

Department of Performing and Fine Arts
Kenneth Adams, Chairman

presents

The Exonerated

By Jessica Blank & Eric Jensen

SCENIC DESIGN

David T. Jones

LIGHTING DESIGN

Paul Hudson

PRODUCTION/STAGE MANAGER

*Jessica Pecharsky

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Robert Barnes

DIRECTED by

*Tom Marion

Please refrain from the use of texting devices which may disturb other patrons.

The use of cameras and recorders in the theatre is prohibited.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.

Cellular phones, beepers, and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible mode.

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Managers

The Exonerated

is compiled from interviews, letters, transcripts, case files, and the public record. The entire text of this play is true, and tells the true stories of six people sent to Death Row for crimes they did not commit.

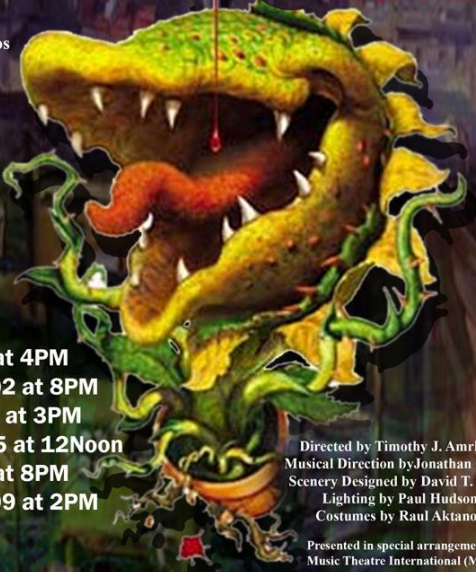
The Exonerated ran for more than 600 performances off-Broadway and has raised more than \$800,000 for the people depicted in the play, who are, by law, not entitled to compensation for their wrongful imprisonment. Between 2002 and 2003 it won the Lucille Lortel Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Play, and a Drama Desk Award.

COMING SOON to the LITTLE THEATRE

York College Theatre
presents

SPRING 2009

LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS



STARRING:

Marc Beard
Christel Pinette
George Kyriakopoulos
Jarrel Lynch
Miya Bass
Jennifer Ceide
Gabrielle Calixte
Staci Ishmael

Books & Lyrics by **HOWARD ASHMAN**
Music by **ALAN MENKEN**

Ceejay Abenn
Earline Stephen
Kemi Aiyedun
Desmond Nicholson
Joe Grasso

Friday, May 01 at 4PM
Saturday, May 02 at 8PM
Sunday, May 03 at 3PM
Tuesday, May 05 at 12Noon
Friday, May 08 at 8PM
Saturday, May 09 at 2PM

Directed by Timothy J. Amrhein
Musical Direction by Jonathan Quash
Scenery Designed by David T. Jones
Lighting by Paul Hudson
Costumes by Raul Aktanov

Presented in special arrangement with
Music Theatre International (MTI)

**York College
Little Theatre**

**94-45 Guy R. Brewer Blvd.
Jamaica, NY 11451**

All tickets: \$10.00

For more information, please call
718.262.5375 or visit us at www.york.cuny.edu

YORK COLLEGE IS 

COMING MUSIC EVENTS – SPRING 2009

Jazz Forum #29 w/ bassist Kim Clarke

Monday, March 30th @ 7 p.m.
Illinois Jacquet Performance Space

YorkJam '09:

a celebration of NYC public high school jazz ensembles

Saturday, April 4th @ 6 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

Jazz Forum #30 w/ trumpeter Eddie Allen

Monday, April 27th @ 7 p.m.
Illinois Jacquet Performance Space

York College Big Band Spring Concert

Wednesday, May 13th @ 7:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

Latin Caucus Dance

Friday, May 15th @ 6 p.m.
Live music provided by the York College Big Band
Faculty Dining Room

York College Blue Notes Spring Concert

Saturday, May 16th @ 7:30 p.m.
Performing Arts Center

CAST

(in order of speaking)

Delbert Tibbs

Solomon Peck

Gary Gauger

Joe Grasso

Sue / Sandra

Crystal Williams

Robert Earl Hayes

Erick Avila

Georgia / Ensemble

Stephanie Ogeleza

Ensemble

Hopeton Allen

Ensemble

Bency Pierre

Kerry Max Cook

Alex Constantinides

David Keaton

Ryshon Shepherd

Sunny Jacobs

Vashti Valerius

ARTISTS' BIOGRAPHIES



Hopeton Allen

Hopeton Allen is a sophomore at York College. He has always had passion for acting and the stage. Hopeton is currently majoring in Psychology, with a minor in Theatre Arts. This is Hopeton's third production here at York College. He was previously in *Harlem Speak Easy*, and *SPEAK OUT*. He has done numerous plays in high school and was in a CAT Youth Theatre production. Hopeton is set on becoming an Entertainment Lawyer in the future. The words he lives by are "Success is the ability to go from failure to failure without losing your enthusiasm. Unless a man undertakes more than he possibly can do, he will never do all that he can. Your talent is God's gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God."



Erick Avila

Erick Avila is a lower Junior in York College majoring in Aviation Management. Although he has his career focused in the Aviation Industry, he may consider doing acting as a side job. Erick says "Acting is an incredible art, for it lets one individual become an endless amount of characters". He was last seen here at York as Bobby Seale in *SPEAK OUT*. Apart from acting, Erick is also a senior member of the Latin Caucus Club at York and loves to dance Bachata, Merengue, and Salsa. Upcoming in May, Erick and many of the Latin Caucus Members will perform in the 2nd Annual Latin Caucus Cultural Event.

SPRING 2009 FINE ARTS EVENTS

**RECENT
CONFIGURATIONS**

a solo exhibition by *Jeffrey Allen Price*

Exhibition Show Dates: March 18 - May 5, 2009

Gallery Hours: M-F 10am-6pm and by appointment

Opening Reception: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 6-8 pm

York College Gallery

YORK COLLEGE
The City University of New York

Still Searching for a Major?

Consider Speech Communication/Theatre Arts at York.

Recent Course Offerings include:

TA 110: Introduction to the Theatre (WI)

TA 114: Stagecraft I

TA 210: History of the Theatre (WI)

TA 211: Basic Acting

TA 215, 216, 217, 218 or 219: Theatre Practice

TA 311: Fundamentals of Directing (WI)

TA 314: Computer Design for the Theatre

TA 392: Scene Painting for the Theatre

TA 490: Independent Research

SPCH 101: Oral Communication in Contemp. Society

SPCH 160: Fundamentals of Oral Interpretation

SPCH 182: Voice and Diction

SPCH 250: Intro. to Mass Communication

SPCH 390: Argumentation and Debate

SPCH 490: Independent Research



Alex Constantinides

Alex Constantinides is 18 years old, and an upper Freshman majoring in Speech & Theatre Arts. This is his first production at York. Alex loves to entertain and is especially interested in comedy. He appreciates all he is learning being a part of this play, and hopes to be involved in future productions at York Theatre, and that acting will be a part of his future. Favorite Quote: "Opinion is the medium between knowledge and ignorance" – Plato.



Joe Grasso

Joe Grasso is a Junior at York college who majors in Political Science/Pre law and minors in Theater Arts. Joe is planning on pursuing both subjects upon graduation. He would like to become a Lawyer and act on the side. But for now he is focusing on his studies and is excited to be involved in *The Exonerated*. Last semester he played Abbie Hoffman in *SPEAK OUT*, and this semester will be performing in York Theatre's production of *Little Shop of Horrors*.



Stephanie Ogeleza

Stephanie Ogeleza is an upper Sophomore at York. She is double majoring in Speech Communications & Theatre Arts and Social Work. She is working her way to becoming a professional actress and at the same time have businesses within the social work field. This is her 5th performance at the Performing Arts Center. She was in *Harlem Speakeasy* as Cousin Minnie, *No Exit* as Inez, *SPEAK OUT* as Malcolm X, her One Woman Show: *The Real World*, and The York College *Student One Acts*. She has a lot more coming up, so please get ready everyone!!



Solomon Peck

Solomon Peck is a Senior at York College. He is earning his degree in English with honors whilst attaining a minor in Theatre Arts. Solomon portrayed Bono in the York College production of *Fences*. Recently at York, Solomon played Frederick Douglass in *SPEAK OUT* and John in *Oleanna*. He is attempting to build his actor's resume, and, simultaneously, record his first R&B album. Aside from his time spent in class and in the theatre, Solomon also works as an Ambassador for the York College Admissions Office. He thanks God for his strength, his family for their support, and his friends for their encouragement.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION/THEATRE ARTS MAJOR

I. Required Speech Communication and Theatre Arts Courses (12 Credits)

Speech Communication 182 (3 Credits)
Voice and Diction

Theatre Arts 210 (3 Credits)
History of Theatre

Theatre Arts 211 (3 Credits)
Basic Acting

Speech Communication 303 (3 Credits)
Ethics & the Freedom of Speech

II. Speech Communication 490 (3 Credits)

Independent Research
or

Theatre Arts 490 (3 Credits)
Independent Research

III. Speech Communication/Theatre Arts Electives (15 Credits)

Students must concentrate in either Speech Communication or in Theatre Arts and complete at least twelve of their eighteen elective credits in the Concentration that she or he has declared.

(A total of 15 credits of SpeechComm/TA coursework must be at the 300-level or higher.)

NOTE: Although Speech Communication students may take as much Theatre Arts *practica* as they please, *no more than 6 credits of Theatre Arts practica* may be applied towards the fulfillment of the Speech Communication Concentration; however, Theatre Arts students *may apply 9 credits of Theatre Arts Practica* towards the fulfillment of the Theatre Arts Concentration. Theatre Arts *practica* courses currently include TA215-19.

***All SpeechComm/TA majors must take SPCH 101 as a Prereq for completion of the Major. Majors in Speech Communication/Theatre Arts must fulfill their General Education Requirements in a discipline other than their major.**

YORK COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Marcia V. Keizs

President

Dr. Ivelaw Griffith

Provost/Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs

Dr. Paniotis Meleties

Acting Dean for Academic Affairs

Dr. Janis W. Jones

Dean for the Executive Office

Acting Vice President for Student Development

Jerald Posman

V.P. and Chief Operating Officer for Administration and Finance

Interim Administrator for Enrollment Management

Earl Simons

Assistant to the Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Dr. Paula Middleton-LaLande

Acting Associate Dean for Student Development

Sharon Davidson

Registrar

Dr. Diatra Jones

Assistant Dean for Career Services

Jean Phelps

Director of Student Activities

Yvette C. Urquhart

Associate Dean for Faculty and Staff Relations

Ronald C. Thomas

Dean for Administration Affairs

Ms. Cynthia Murphy

Director of Adult and Continuing Education



Bency Pierre

Bency Pierre is a 19 year old who is quickly becoming a regular in the York College theater department. Since transferring here from Hofstra University last semester, he has already been cast in four shows. Both *Anna In The Tropics* as well as *SPEAK OUT* have received great reviews and positive reception, and he is glad that he had the opportunity to be a part of them. He was last seen in the *Student One Acts*, and is excited to be part of *The Exonerated*. He saw this show Off-Broadway and can't wait to try and the deliver the same professionalism. In his spare time, he loves to write spoken word poetry and rap. He would like to make a shout out to the cast of *Little Shop of Horrors* who are working diligently as we speak in order to bring forth the first musical production in York College history.



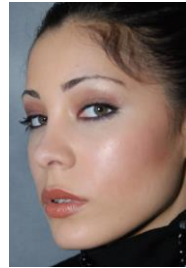
Ryshon Shepherd

Ryshon Shepherd is an upper Sophomore here at York College, majoring in Business Administration and minoring in Theatre Arts. This is his first production at York and he is very excited to be part of a play based on a true story about which few may know. Acting is his passion and he plans on someday being on the big screen.



Vashti Valerius

Vashti Valerius is a Junior majoring in Speech Communication / Theater Arts at York College. This is her first time performing at York College. Last semester, she was Assistant Stage Manager for the productions, *Anna in the Tropics* and *Oleanna*. After graduating, she plans to attend graduate school and pursue a degree in Theatre Arts.



Crystal Williams

Crystal Williams is a upper Junior majoring in Speech Communication / Theater Arts. She has worked on six productions in York, four of which she worked behind the scenes. She appeared in *Callallo 12* in Spring 2008 and has appeared in the *Student One Act Plays* this semester. Crystal has been acting for six years and has done several student films; she appeared in a Burger King commercial, two shorts, one independent film, and is currently working on a SAG feature. She is also currently the Production manager for an Off-Broadway production. Crystal plans to act in future York Productions. Two quotes that she lives by are: "It's NOT about finding YOURSELF. It's about CREATING YOURSELF!" And, "Do what you LOVE, and LOVE what you do!"

YORK COLLEGE PERFORMING AND FINE ARTS **DEPARTMENT**

Kenneth Adams-Chair
Joycelyn Heywood-Administrative Assistant
College Assistants – Cassandra Douglas, Reveca Gonzalez, &
Adrianna Riolo

SPEECH COMMUNICATION AND THEATRE ARTS

Prof. Como (Speech Communication Coordinator)

Assoc. Prof. Amrhein (Theatre Arts Coordinator)

Prof. Emerita Nickolich

Assoc. Prof. Schilling

Sub. Asst. Prof. Tom Marion

Sub. Lecturer Timothy Corkery

CLT Barnes

CLT Pecharsky

FINE ARTS

Asst. Prof. Buxenbaum (Coordinator)

Asst. Prof. Gillespie

Prof. Simkin

MUSIC

Assoc. Prof. Adams (Chairman)

Prof. Ernst (Coordinator)

Instructor Zlabinger

Sr. CLT Dixon

COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Asst. Prof. Smith (Coordinator)

Daniel Phelps



BARBARA NICKOLICH (*Prof. Emerita of Theatre*) received her formal theatre training from Wheaton College, Northwestern University and New York University. In addition, she has been a student of Bobby Troka, voice coach, in NYC. She has appeared as a performer and director with the CUNY Readers Theatre. She developed a one-woman show, *American Counterpoint*, which she performed in Munich, Germany, Nashville and New York City. Most of her work has been as a director of legitimate theatre in university settings. *Antigone*, *Tartuffe*, *Six Plays by Dario Fo*, *Callaloo 7*, *The Miser*, *Camino Real*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Galileo*, *Callaloo 8*, *A Servant of Two Masters*, *Callaloo 9*, *Endgame*, *Callaloo 10*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Callaloo 11*, *Antigone*, and *Callaloo 12*, have been her most recent productions.



SARAH SCHILLING (*Associate Prof. of Theatre*) received her training at Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Playhouse. She performed the role of Heloise in a play by the same name at the Off Broadway Gate Theatre. While teaching, first at Packer Collegiate Institute and then at York, she worked as one of the directors at the Off-Off- Broadway Actor's Place Theatre at St. Luke's in the West Village. She has appeared in Samuel Beckett's *Cascando* at LaMaMa and as a Guide in the Off-Off Broadway production: *A Woman's Work is Never Done*.

DESIGNERS



DAVID T. JONES (*Resident Scenic Designer / Adjunct Prof. of Theatre*) is a resident of Brooklyn and a graduate of Pratt Institute. At York, he designed last season's *Anna in the Tropics*, *Oleanna*, and *Speak Out*. Mr. Jones is the resident designer for the Village Light Opera Group in Manhattan, for whom he has designed most of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas, musicals and operettas. Notable productions include the New York premiere of *Scrooge and Gilbert and Sullivan*, *Kismet*, *Bells Are Ringing*, *La Vie Parisienne*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, a storybook *HMS Pinafore*, an intergalactic *Princess Ida*, and *The Merry Widow* (co-designed with Timothy J. Amrhein). He also designs outside NYC, with his most recent production being *The Baker's Wife* for the Northern Highlands Regional High School; his *Beauty and the Beast* at NHRHS captured a scenic design nomination from the Papermill Playhouse. Mr. Jones is also the owner of a design firm that produces decorative painting and murals for homes and businesses.



PAUL HUDSON (*Lighting Designer*) is glad to be returning to York College after lighting last semester's *SPEAK OUT*, and *Anna in the Tropics*. Recent credits include *Sa Ka La* (Bleeker St. Theaters, Sarah Cameron Sunde, dir), and *Marie Antoinette: Color of Flesh and A Brush with Georgia O'Keeffe* (both remounted at St. Luke's Theatre, Bob Kalfin, dir). Other highlights include Synaesthetic Theatre's, *The Trial of K* (The Culture Project, Chris Nichols & Joy Leonard, Dir's), the premiere of Amy Fox's *One Thing I Like to Say Is...* for Clubbed Thumb's Summerworks program (The Ohio theater, Paul Willis, dir), and working as associate designer to artist Leni Schwendinger on her award-winning public art piece "Dreaming In Color" at the new Seattle Opera House. Apart from the season at York, upcoming projects include *Anna Christie*, directed by Bob Kalfin, *Three Musketeers*, directed by Collette Rice for Actor's Shakespeare Company of NJ, and assisting designer Richard Winkler on a production of *White Christmas* at T.U.T.S. in Houston, TX. MFA from NYU.

PRODUCTION & RUNNING CREW

Scenic Designer.....	David T. Jones
Lighting Designer	Paul Hudson
Technical Director.....	Robert Barnes
Stage Manager.....	Jessica Pecharsky
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Jada Gross
Light Board Operator.....	Leah Kesselly
Sound Board Operator.....	Jarrel Lynch
Sound Design.....	Tom Marion
Poster and Cover Design.....	Timothy J. Amrhein



TIM CORKERY (*Substitute Lecturer of Speech Communication*) earned his Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from York College and his Master's in Social Work from Fordham University's Graduate School of Social Science. While studying at Fordham University, he was the recipient of the United Settlement House Scholarship, for his work in the area of community advocacy. Mr. Corkery has been an adjunct professor for six years in the Speech Communication Discipline. In addition he has been a social service consultant to various social service agencies, where he has used his knowledge of Rhetoric and Social Work to develop effective community-based models of service. In his current work, he is advocating and developing programs in rehabilitative justice. His work is based on his study of Existential Psychotherapy, especially the work of Viktor Frankel's logotherapy. Aside from his work in clinical social work, Tim Corkery, has been successful in the creation of two debate teams in NYC high schools and served as judge for national and international debate competitions.



TOM MARION (*Substitute Assistant Prof. of Theatre*) holds an M.F.A. in Acting from Rutgers' Mason Gross School of the Arts (with Bill Esper), a Certificate of Vocal Coaching from The National Theatre Conservatory (with Tony Church), and an internship with The Royal Shakespeare Company (with Cecily Berry and Andrew Wade.) He is a Designated Teacher of Linklater Voice, a founding member of the Linklater Center for Voice and Language, and an Associate Teacher of Fitzmaurice Voicework. He has taught at several studios and professional actor programs in NYC, including NYU, The Actors' Center, Marymount Manhattan College, and Columbia University. He is a member of Actors' Equity Association, and VASTA (Voice & Speech Teachers' Association.) Prof. Marion directed the well received, *SPEAK OUT* last semester, which subsequently was performed at The Bowery Poetry Club in Manhattan and at York as part of Black History Month.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION / THEATRE ARTS FACULTY



TIMOTHY J. AMRHEIN (*Associate Professor of Theatre/Theatre Arts Coordinator*) holds an M.F.A from Wayne State University in Design. Though Mr. Amrhein is known for his scenic and costume designs on the York College stage and throughout the tri-state area, he has directed several productions as well. Some of his past directorial credits include: *Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz, *Loot* by Joe Orton, *Dark Ride* and *Ramona Quim* by Len Jenkin, *Witness* by Terrence McNally, *Oleanna* by David Mamet, *All in the Timing* by David Ives, *Into the Woods* by Stephen Sondheim, and *Once Upon A Mattress*. Some of his most recent scenic designs have been *No Exit*, *Callaloo 12*, *Harlem Speakeasy*, and *Antigone* (York College), the first New York City revival of *The Full Monty* and *The Fantasticks* (The Gallery Players), and *Twelfth Night* (Princeton Rep Shakespeare Festival). Prof. Amrhein has received the Best Scenic Design award from the *NJ Star Ledger* for *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and the *Detroit Free Press's* Theatre Excellence Award for *Saturday, Sunday, Monday* and *Scapin*. He is a member of United Scenic Artists, Local 829 and the United Sates Institute for Theatre Technology.



JAMES COMO (*Professor of Rhetoric and Public Communication/Speech Communication Coordinator*) holds a Ph.D. degree in Language, Literature and Communication from Columbia University. His commentary on the English literary theorist and medievalist, religious thinker, and Christian apologist C. S. Lewis has earned wide esteem.

"In the beginning was the Word," writes St. John: whether taken psychologically, philosophically or theologically, that proclamation of *Logos* has been a touchstone for Prof. Como, whose interest in literature, language, and the deployment of both – rhetoric – has been at the center of his professional life. His books (*C. S. Lewis at the Breakfast Table*, *Branches to Heaven: The Geniuses of C. S. Lewis*, and *Why I Believe in Narnia*), articles ("Mere Lewis," *The Wilson Quarterly*, "The Arc of Surrender," *The New Criterion*, among many), and broadcast commentary on radio and television (e.g. *The Question of God*, a PBS documentary) have examined the roots of C. S. Lewis's thought and rhetoric and have helped define Lewis's achievement and reputation.

SPEECH COMMUNICATION/THEATRE ARTS STAFF



Robert Barnes (*Technical Director/CLT*) spent many years touring throughout Europe and the United States, working with companies such as the Atlanta Contemporary Dance Company, The Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, and The Alvin Ailey Repertory Ensemble. Mr. Barnes is a member of Actors Equity and has performed under the direction of Ward Baker, Howard DaSilva, and Marshall Mason of the Circle Rep. He has designed lighting for dance and theatre, and has worked on several feature films as a recording engineer. His television audio credits include *The Ricky Lake Show*, *The View*, and *Law and Order*. He has most recently come to us from CNN.



Jessica Pecharsky (*Production-Stage Manager/CLT*) is a native New Yorker and has been involved with dance and theater since the age of five. She then attended Hofstra University for both dance and theater. Once at Hofstra, Jessica moved her focus to stage management. She has been stage managing professionally since 2000. She has held resident stage management positions with Streetlight Productions and The Jekyll and Hyde Club. Other companies she has stage managed for include Classical Theatre of Harlem, Centenary Stage, Ma-Yi Theatre, Chester Theater Company, Boomerang Theater, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, Working Theater, Audax Theatre Group, Capacitor, Theatre LILA, Clubbed Thumb, American Globe Theater, Heartists Productions, and Moonwork. Jessica is a professional member of Actors Equity Association (AEA).

Director's Note:

The Demon of Error

In 1972 The United States Supreme Court ordered the halt of the death penalty, for the first and only time in American history. The case was *Furman v. the State of Georgia*. William Henry Furman had argued that his death sentence was arbitrarily issued by the jury simply because he was African-American, and was therefore in violation of his constitutional right of equal protection under the law. Furman was released, but the repeal was short lived. In time 37 states would pass new statutes to overcome the court's concerns about arbitrary imposition of the death penalty. America was left with the feeling that all had been corrected.

By the late '90's new evidence of error began to impugn the credibility of our criminal justice system. Professor James S. Liebman of Columbia University had published his study, *A Broken System: Error Rates in Capital Cases 1973-1995*. His report revealed that error had infected a plethora of capital cases and that more than two out of every three capital judgments reviewed were seriously flawed. Moreover, The Innocence Project, established in 1992 by civil rights attorneys Barry Scheck and Peter Neufeld, showed to the country the human face of personal suffering caused by judicial error. Using the new science of DNA testing they helped exonerate numerous wrongfully convicted men and women.

With the first presidential run of George W. Bush media coverage of the issue was at its peak. The candidate had been governor of Texas for 6 years, and had allowed the executions of 131 prisoners- far more than any other state. "I'm confident," he stated, "that every person that has been put to death in Texas under my watch has been guilty of the crime charged, and has had full access to the courts."

In 2002, ***The Exonerated*** began its award winning run in NYC. Since then, the Supreme Court has struck down the death penalty for juveniles (*Roper v. Simmons* 2005) and defendants with mental retardation (*Atkins v. Virginia* 2002.) And in 2003 Republican Governor George Ryan of Illinois commuted the sentences of all 167 inmates on death row stating, "Our capital system is haunted by the demon of error- error in determining the guilty, and error in determining who among the guilty deserves to die."

Many criminal justice issues need to be address for successful reform, including eyewitness misidentification, improper forensic science, coerced confessions, prosecutorial misconduct, incentives to informants, inadequate public defense for the poor, and compensation to the exonerated. Yet, those seeking reform must also stay vigilant. For example, "the exclusionary rule"- the principle that evidence obtained by police misconduct cannot be used against a defendant- is under fire in the Supreme Court.

In January 2009, Chief Justice Roberts, writing for the majority in *Herring v. United States*, held that unlawful police conduct should not require the suppression of evidence if all that was involved was isolated carelessness. Kent Scheidegger, the general counsel of the Criminal Justice Legal Foundation, a victims' rights group, stated "I think Herring may be setting the stage for the Holy Grail," referring to the wish of some to strike down the 1961 Supreme Court ruling applying the exclusionary rule to all states. Many, however, see the exclusionary rule as a strong firewall against police misconduct, whether willful or through negligence.

Those who have been exonerated of crimes they did not commit want and deserve change. Perhaps their suffering can be a beacon to lead the way- so that we who have been safe may help direct our country to a committed course of justice, for all.

- Tom Marion