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**SOUTHERN REP LAUNCHES NEW PLAY BACCHANAL :
Features Gulf Coast South Writers**

New Orleans —The **SOUTHERN REP NEW PLAY BACCHANAL** will showcase an array of workshops and readings featuring writers **Jim Fitzmorris, Steve Yockey, Pete Sturman and Brian Sands among others; and guest lectures with DOUG WRIGHT and ERIC OVERMYER, January 14th – January 31st, 2010**. In addition, SRT will feature the **10-MINUTE PLAY RIOT and RADIO RIOT COMPETITION winners and finalists; host the late night ALTERNA-ENDINGS PLAY SLAM; and close out the Bacchanal with a celebratory TOGA! PARTY!**

“Southern Rep had a new play reading series many years ago,” said Artistic Director Aimée Hayes. “With the advent of so many new writers in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region it made sense to bring back the work but reincarnated into more fully-realized workshops, incorporate a ten-minute play competition and radio play contest, and use new work as a pre-Mardi Gras celebration—hence the Bacchanal reference. Instead of feasting on wine, parades and wildness we’ll celebrate with words, stories, and playwrights.”

THE WORKSHOPS AND READINGS:

Kicking off the theatrical celebration is **THE THANATOS BRASS BAND, by Jim Fitzmorris**. On the eve of a monumental funeral, Death and his wife Persephone return to New Orleans, where the rest of the Greek Pantheon have taken up residence disguised as some of the city’s elite. When mysterious forces threaten his plans, Death must wrestle with a contentious mother-in-law and scheming relatives to discover who’s plotting to destroy the city and whether the mighty forces of Hades can stop it. **THANATOS BRASS BAND** runs **Thursday, January 14th through Sunday, January 17th**, Thursday through Saturday at **8pm** and Sunday at **3pm**. Directed by Aimée Hayes.

Following with a hint of magic and darkness is **AFTERLIFE by Steve Yockey**. A ghost story in the most literal sense, **AFTERLIFE** follows Connor and Danielle as they prepare their abandoned beachfront house for an impending storm. But when a great wave comes to their doorstep, they may not be able to escape from the haunting world of grief, death and everything after. **AFTERLIFE** runs **Thursday, January 21st through**



Sunday, January 24th. Thursday through Saturday at **8pm** and Sunday at **3pm**. Directed by Aimée Hayes.

Featuring a Louisiana country-fried pop/rock score, **THE THING ABOUT IT – A NEW MUSICAL**, music & lyrics **Pete Sturman**, concept & libretto **Brian Sands** is a coming out tale about a young man's journey as he negotiates relationships and love, with an original sound that'll have your toes tapping right along. **THE THING ABOUT IT** runs **Thursday, January 28th through Sunday, January 31st**. Thursday through Saturday at **8pm** and Sunday at **3pm**. Directed by Holly-Anne Ruggiero.

The **10-MINUTE PLAY RIOT and RADIO RIOT winners and finalists** will receive staged readings featuring a host of local actors and directors on **January 20th and 27th at 8pm**. The winners will be announced December 20, 2009.

THE EVENTS:

DOUG WRIGHT SPEAKS, the Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize winning playwright of *I AM MY OWN WIFE*, book writer for *GREY GARDENS*, playwright and screenwriter of *QUILLS*, along with numerous other publications, shares stories and insight. **January 19th at 7:30pm, FREE and open to the public.**

CHAT WITH ERIC OVERMYER a multitalented writer and producer for *THE WIRE*, *LAW AND ORDER*, and *ST. ELSEWHERE*, among others. Overmyer is the playwright of works such as *ALKI*, an adaptation of Ibsen's *PEER GYNT*, *DARK RAPTURE*, *NATIVE SPEECH*, and *ON THE VERGE*. Overmyer is currently collaborating with David Simon on HBO's *TREME*. **January 26th at 7:30pm, FREE and open to the public.**

The **late-night ALTERNA-ENDING PLAY SLAM** allows theatre makers an opportunity to submit and perform a twist ending to familiar works. Join us as Willie Loman ends his life retired in sunny Florida and Ophelia skips a watery death and smacks some sense into Hamlet. Audience applause will determine the **ALTERNA-ENDING** winner who will receive \$100 cash, bragging rights and perform their winning Alterna-Ending at the Southern Rep Toga! Party! Interested Entrants should go to www.southernrep.com for more information. **January 23rd at 11pm, FREE and open to the public.**

What Bacchanal would be complete without togas, food and wine? Join SRT artists and staff as we celebrate with a **TOGA! PARTY!** Complimentary Feast and a Cash Bar available. Togas may be purchased for a small donation at the door! **JANUARY 29th at 10pm. \$5 at the door.**



PLAYWRIGHT BIOS

A professor of playwriting at Tulane University, **Jim Fitzmorris** also works with The Shakespeare Festival at Tulane where he serves as Associate Artistic Director. His work as a performer, director, and writer continues to receive acclaim with plays such as The Heidemann Award finalist THE SONS OF MICKEY, this year's Big Easy Award winner WHAT HAS THIS THING APPEARED AGAIN TONIGHT? And THE LAST MADAM, co-written with Carl Walker, which was a finalist for both The American Theatre Critics Award and The Sternberg Award.

Steve Yockey is a roaming member of Out of Hand Theater. His projects with the company include HELP! and CARTOON. Actor's Express Theatre in Atlanta, GA presented the world premiere of OCTOPUS in January 2008, followed in May/June by an extended run in San Francisco, co-produced by Encore Theatre Company and Magic Theatre. He is a regular fixture at Dad's Garage Theatre Company including the short play cycle SLEEPY, a work commissioned to inaugurate the second stage "Top Shelf" series, and the adult-only SKIN – both directed by Kate Warner. Dad's Garage and Berkeley's Impact Theatre produced the co-world premiere of the new play LARGE ANIMAL GAMES this fall and WONDER opened at NYU's Atlas Theatre last December, directed by Rachel Chavkin. OCTOPUS, CARTOON and SUBCULTURE (collected short plays) are available from Samuel French. Other plays include: BELLWETHER, HEAVIER THAN... and BLISS. He is a Phi Beta Kappa, summa cum laude graduate of the University of Georgia and holds an MFA in Dramatic Writing from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Steve recently completed a Coca-Cola Artist Residency teaching dramatic structure at Emory University in Atlanta, GA and currently lives/works in San Francisco Bay Area as the National New Play Network's playwright in residence at Marin Theatre Company.

Brian Sands has had works produced by Four Humors (LOVE AT THE LOUNGE), Artists Cooperative Theater (LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURE, ALL NIGHT SERVICE), Dillard University (LAGNIAPPE, A MUSICAL) and DramaRama (featured artist, 2005). His play TWO SECOND LIEUTENANTS IN THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL ARMY was selected by Des McAnuff as a finalist in the Contemporary Arts Center's playwriting contest. ROI C. NOGGIN, an adaptation of UBU ROI, was included in DramaRama 2008 and subsequently presented by Pavement Productions in Portland, OR. Brian is a member of the Dramatists Guild and has been the Literary Manager for Southern Rep since 2004.

Pete Sturman moved to New Orleans in 1992 and started singing at Checkpoint Charlie's, where he met singer/pianist Paul Cowgill. They began performing together as the unambiguously gay music duo **Pistol Pete & Poppun Paul**. The two developed a loyal following and released two CDs under Mike West (*Fine Red Wine*, 1998 and *Son of*



a *Gun*, 2000). The duos' collaborations were brought to a stop after Hurricane Katrina when Pete moved to New York. Pete's first solo release *True Stories* was also recorded by Mike West.

TICKET INFORMATION:

Performances will run Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm and Sundays at 3pm. Tickets are on sale now for \$10 per performance or purchase a BACCHANAL PASS for \$20-\$25, which grants you access to all events and workshops. Southern Rep Theatre is located on the 3rd floor of the Shops of Canal Place, where validated parking is available. For more information and to order tickets, call (504) 522-6545, or visit www.southernrep.com.

Southern Rep celebrates 23 years of excellence, developing and producing new plays which provide audiences with professional theatre of the highest artistic quality and achievement and establishing a creative working environment that nurtures theatre professionals. As New Orleans' premiere professional theatre, Southern Rep strives to use the artistry of theatre to enlighten, educate, and entertain audiences, and aims to extend that service through educational and outreach programs.

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