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Grove Theater Center

Kevin Cochran, Artistic Director

Charles Johanson, Executive Director

News Release -- For Immediate Release, please

GTC Burbank

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Grove Theater Center Sets January 15 Deadline for its 5th New Play Initiative

Four Reading Finalists, Two Workshop Winners, One Full-Production Winner.

Burbank, CA – The Grove Theater Center New Play Initiative (GTC NPI) is an intensive play development program which leads to a full production for the winning play. In the past three years, GTC is very proud that our world premiere productions have been recognized at the LA Ovation Awards – the most prestigious theater awards in Southern California. *Blake. . .da Musical!* received four nominations and won for Best New Musical in 2005; *Straight Up with a Twist* was nominated as Best Solo Show in 2006; and *Film Chinois* received three nominations and won for Best New Play in 2007!

We are looking for exciting new works that are practical for mid-sized professional theaters to produce. Grove Theater Center, in our fourteen-year history, has developed and worked on new plays with many of the traditional tools – informal readings, staged readings, workshops, and full productions. The NPI is the codification of all of these development tools into a single, cohesive, program.

The New Play Initiative is a tiered program. We choose a minimum of four finalists, which each receive a public reading, two workshop winners which receive a workshop presentation, and one full-production winner. At each level, there are work sessions with the director, rehearsals with professional actors, discussions with the public, and cash royalty awards. The readings, workshops, and the final production are all directed by GTC Artistic Director Kevin Cochran. Full details of the program and the application form can be found at www.gtc.org. There is a \$20 submission fee. This year's NPI deadline is January 15, 2008.

Grove Theater Center created the New Play Initiative in 2004 to expand our work on developing new plays. The first NPI production winner was *Capital* by San Diego Playwright David Hogan. The OC Register raved that it was “a tart and vicious Ortonesque diatribe.” Then came *Blake. . .da Musical*, by Los Angelenos Rick Batalla and Henry Phillips, which was extended three times and nominated for four

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Ovation Awards (and won the Ovation for Best New Musical). Next was the one man show *Straight Up with a Twist* by Paul Stroili (also from Los Angeles) which was videotaped for cable release and has toured the country with over 400 performances so far. Last Season, GTC Presented two NPI world premieres. First was *Dusk*, by Boston playwright James McLindon, which was hailed by the LA Times as "An issue play with a poetic soul – Recommended!" This was followed by Singaporean playwright Damon Chua's *Film Chinois*, which just won the 2007 Ovation Award for Best New Play.

Other NPI plays which have moved on include Bernard Weinraub's *The Accomplices*, which ran at The New Group in NYC and received a Drama Desk nomination for Best New Play in 2007 and Sarah Treem's *Empty Sky*, which was selected for South Coast Rep's Pacific Playwrights Festival and won the Reva Shiner New Play Festival. *A Brief History of Penguins and Promiscuity* by James McLindon will be produced by GTC in January of 2008.

Grove Theater Center was founded by Kevin Cochran and Charles Johanson in 1994, and has presented over 100 professional theater productions employing members of SSDC (the union of stage directors) and Actors' Equity Association. We presented 12 seasons at the 172 seat GTC Gem Theater and the 550 seat Festival Amphitheater in Garden Grove, 5 summer seasons of Theater on the Green in our 246-seat theater in Fullerton and six seasons (so far) at the 98 seat GTC Burbank. In 2009, GTC inaugurates The GRID, a transportable regional theater that presents rotating seasons of plays in multiple locations throughout Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties.

For more information on Grove Theater Center and the GTC New Play Initiative, please go to www.gtc.org. Remember, the deadline for submissions for the New Play Initiative is January 15, 2008.

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