

ECHO Theatre

For press information:
Lisa Taylor, 214-943-1099
lisatmp@swbell.net

Echo Theatre, the Southwest's only theater company dedicated to producing plays written by women, will begin its 11th year of readings and performances in Dallas. This season features 6 readings and 2 fully produced plays, and opens with *American Cassandra: Déjà vu*, a co-production with SMU, developed by Rhonda Blair and directed by Pam Myers-Morgan, on Friday, Sept. 5 at 8 p.m. at the Bath House Cultural Center, 521 E. Lawther Dr. (off Northcliff) at White Rock Lake.

American Cassandra: Déjà Vu will preview Thursday, Sept. 4 at 8 p.m. Performances continue Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., with two Sunday matinees (Sept. 7 and Sept. 14 at 5 p.m.) thru Sept. 27. Admission for Thursday preview and Sunday matinees is Pay-What-You-Can. Fridays and Saturdays are \$20. For reservations, call 214-904-0500, email echoreservations@att.net or visit the website at www.echotheatre.org. (Please note: There are no fees for online ticket purchases).

After years of fruitful collaboration with SMU Professor Rhonda Blair, SMU and Echo are deepening that relationship with a full-fledged co-production. Combining the performing and design talents of Echo, one of Dallas' premiere theater companies, and the city's major educational institution, Southern Methodist University, will provide a creative explosion to usher in the Fall election.

It's been four years since Echo "got political" with its hugely popular DREAMING AMERICA: IN THE BUNKER WITH GEORGE, and Echo is at it again! In the tradition of the mythological Cassandra, Echo has been issuing theatrical warnings since 1999. Will Echo be heard - and heeded - this time?!?

Kateri Cale and Rhonda Blair star with three SMU students: Mirela Selimovic, Regina Bonifasi, and Meredith Alloway. Russell Parkman is designing the set. Clay Eads is the lighting designer. The piece will include monologues, video, singing and dance.

Concurrent with *American Cassandra* will be Thursday staged readings of Iraqi American playwright Heather Raffo's *Nine Parts of Desire*, based on the stories of the women she

met on her first return visit to Iraq as an adult. Readings are September 11, 18 and 25 at 8:00 pm and admission is Pay-What-You-Can.

Echo Reads, Echo's free reading series, is scheduled for Oct. 21, Nov. 18 and Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at the Bath House.

About Echo Theatre

Echo Theatre was founded in the fall of 1997 by Suzy Blaylock, Pam Myers-Morgan and Linda Marie Ford. It is the theatre's mission to unearth the power of the female theatrical voice by presenting a wide array of works written by women for the stage. For years, theatre seasons at all levels of production have been programmed primarily with works by male playwrights, often resulting in an absence of the female voice. Integrating exciting design concepts and exceptional acting with material that probes gender identity and social structures, Echo Theatre exists to shift that balance.

Current producing partners Brandi Andrade, Terri Ferguson, Ellen Locy, Pam Myers-Morgan, and Kateri Cale work together to bring the female voice to urgent, exciting, and challenging life through main stage productions and staged readings of plays by women, classic to contemporary.

- Presented the work of over **EIGHTY** female playwrights to Dallas audiences as the only Dallas company devoted exclusively to the production of theatrical works written by women
- Received over **FIFTY** Rabin awards and nominations, Critics' Forum Awards and citations in End of Year "Best of ..." Lists
- Commissioned six new pieces, produced fifteen full-length plays, presented six original performance art works, participated in fourteen short play festivals, and mounted over **FIFTY** performance readings as part of its innovative series, ECHO READS ...
- Offered a number of **community outreach programs**, including high school internships, free ticket program for clients of local women's shelters, free children's theatre workshops at matinee performances, and discussion panels following all readings and many mainstage shows
- Employed over 250 actors, 80 directors, 120 designers and technicians, and 60 playwrights, musicians and choreographers
- Maintained a **high level of acting and design excellence**, while presenting challenging and exciting plays by women
- Performed **benefit performances** for The Lymphoma Research Foundation, The Art and Music Fund of Northaven United Methodist Church, The American Red Cross, The Degolyer Library at SMU, The Family Place, New Beginnings, The Jewish Federation Women's Division, and Hockaday School