



headlinestheatre

MEDIA RELEASE

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HEADLINES THEATRE presents

after homelessness...

Theatre company collaborates with homeless population to create dialogue on safe, affordable housing

November 21 to 29, 2009
Preview November 20 • Tickets 2 for 1
Firehall Arts Centre
280 E. Cordova Street, Vancouver, BC
Box Office: 604.689.0926
Tickets: \$10 + \$2 advance purchase fee

December 1 to 6, 2009
Holy Trinity Cathedral
514 Carnarvon Street, New Westminster
Box Office: 604.871.0508
Tickets: \$10

Free vouchers available at various housing support centres

Praise for past performances:

"(Here and Now is) a genuinely gripping piece, which is powerful enough to prompt heartfelt responses that can only help deal with the problem."

-Peter Birnie, Critic's Picks, Vancouver Sun, November 24, 2006

"2° of Fear and Desire was the most profound activism I have ever witnessed."

-Molly Caron, Vancouver BC, March, 2008

VANCOUVER, OCTOBER 6 — We witness homelessness every day: in the news, outside our windows and in our lives. We hear about organizations and government trying to solve the issue. We know solutions exist, but how do we tap into them?

In all the controversy surrounding the homeless emergency in Metro Vancouver, how *do* we create safe and affordable housing in the region? What services do we need for supported housing? Where do we find the space for this? These are just a few of the questions Headlines Theatre will be tackling in their 2009 production **after homelessness...** running November 21 to 29 at the Firehall Arts Centre in Vancouver and December 1 to 6 at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Westminster.

Directed by David Diamond and created and performed by people who have been homeless, and have lived with issues of mental health, **after homelessness...** will explore the subject of supported and affordable housing through Forum Theatre. The process begins with a week-long workshop of twenty people including the five cast members to explore these issues in their lives. The cast, director and professional design team then have three weeks to create the play. The play is interactive and acts as a vehicle for change as audience members take the stage to illustrate their distinct perspectives and solutions.

Theatre making policy

These performances will give the homeless community and the general public a creative venue to use theatre to inform policy. The **after homelessness...** project will generate a Community Action Report which will be received by the following organizations for use in their respective research for national, provincial, regional and local strategies on mental health and homelessness:

- The Mental Health Commission of Canada
- BC Housing
- The City of Vancouver
- The Greater Vancouver Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness
- RainCity Housing
- Coast Mental Health

after homelessness... has become more than a policy-producing play; the project includes a group art exhibition at Gallery Gachet for the Downtown Eastside Heart of the City Festival, November 6 to 29, and will also host a series of Community Dialogues at the Firehall Arts Centre.

The **Community Dialogue Sessions: housing the homeless** will get at the nuts and bolts of creating safe, affordable and supportive housing. The sessions will deal with location, financing and necessary supports and services, respectively. Moderated panels will be made up of people who have experienced homelessness, Metro Vancouver city councillors and business leaders, including: Vancouver's Assistant Director of Housing Policy **Jill Davidson**, RainCity Housing's **Mark Smith**, and BC Housing's **Craig Crawford**. Panelists will each present a short talk on the day's topic, followed by an open dialogue with the audience. Moderators are: Journalist **Kathryn Gretsinger**, Headlines' Artistic Director **David Diamond** and the Georgia Straight's Editor **Charlie Smith**. The Sessions start at 1:30pm each day, November 24, 25 and 26. Admission is free and open to the public.

after homelessness... runs November 21 to 29 at the Firehall Arts Centre in Vancouver and December 1 to 6 at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Westminster. Tickets are \$10 and are available for the Vancouver shows through the Firehall Box Office at 604.689.0926 and at 604.871.0508 for the shows in New Westminster. There will be a preview performance on November 20, with 2 for 1 tickets. Free vouchers for both venues are available at various housing support centres. For more information please call 604.871.0508 or email info@headlinestheatre.com.

About Headlines Theatre:

For 28 years, Headlines Theatre has produced internationally renowned issue-based, community specific theatre. Led by Artistic and Managing Director David Diamond and based on Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Headlines' THEATRE FOR LIVING helps living communities tell their stories. **after homelessness...** will be Headlines' third foray into making theatre to create policy. Past projects include *Practicing Democracy (2004)* and *Here and Now (2007)*. Using audience-interactive Forum Theatre, Headlines' work has informed policy-making in the areas of poverty and gang violence.

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Headlines Theatre gratefully acknowledges

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Thank you to our Community Partners for their help and support: SPARC BC and our Community Working Group • PHS Community Services Society • Gallery Gachet • The Downtown East Side Heart of the City Festival and Vancouver Moving Theatre •