

## THE MISSION

To create challenging theatre that inspires choice, change and connection.

## THE PROGRAMS

### BREAKING ICE:

A sociopolitical improvisational performance program that develops performances and workshops on tough issues.

### CHICAGO AVENUE PROJECT:

A theatre mentoring program which brings together neighborhood youth with professional theatre artists to create original theatre.

### MAINSTAGE SEASON PLAYS:

Professional, high quality and daring theatre productions that illuminate the differences that make each person unique and the similarities that bring people together.

## THE COMPANY

- Faye M. Price  
Co-Artistic Producing Director
- Noël Raymond  
Co-Artistic Managing Director
- Heidi Hunter Batz  
Director of Community Programs
- Stacey Parshall  
Director of Chicago Avenue Project
- Suzy Messerole  
Associate Programs Coordinator
- Payton J. Woodson  
Theatre Operations Coordinator
- Anton Jones  
Breaking Ice Company Manager
- Ellen Fenster  
Breaking Ice Company
- Kurt Mattsen  
Breaking Ice Company

3501 Chicago Avenue South  
 Minneapolis, MN 55407


 PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE

## Company Updates: Who's In the House

Updates, Comings and Goings of the Pillsbury House Theatre Company, Associate Company & Breaking Ice Company.

It's a busy time for member of the theatre's Associate Company. **James A. Williams** is performing in *Radio Golf* at the Goodman Theatre in Chicago, January 23 – February 25th ([www.goodmantheatre.org](http://www.goodmantheatre.org)). **Kimberly Joy Morgan** will be in *I Just Stopped By to See the Man* at Penumbra Theatre, April 12 – May 6. **Stephen DiMenna's** upcoming projects include the Off-Broadway play *Uncensored* with the MCC Theater Youth Company opening in April in New York City. This summer, he will lead a theatre workshop in Tanzania with students in a village in Arusha who will write and perform an original play for their village. With a few friends, **Signe Harriday** is producing and performing in the world premiere of Charles L. Mee's *Gone* at 59E59 in New York running from Feb. 1-11 (59e59.org). In addition to getting back into the classroom as a teaching artist, Signe just got back into home ownership with a cozy coop in Harlem. In addition to being the Artistic Director of Theatre L'Homme Dieu, **Brian Goranson** will be in *Act a Lady* at the Illusion Theater, February 23 – March 17.

Pillsbury House Theatre's company members were busy during the December hiatus. Co-Artistic Director **Noël Raymond** directed a workshop of *Lazy* by Jerome Fellow, Andy Bragen at the Playwrights' Center and assisted on *Tokens-n-Change* by **Anton Jones** for Illusion Theater's Lights Up series in January. The Series was produced and curated by **Ellen Fenster**. Company Member **Payton J. Woodson** spent 6 weeks in Nairobi, Kenya, visiting his daughters, Rehema, 9 and Alexina, 7 who are spending the year in Kenya with relatives. "They are doing very well – they are happy and officially Bi-lingual. They speak Swahili way better than me and Alex takes advantage of the fact that she knows something I don't know." **Suzy Messerole** directed *100 Men's Wife* at the History Theatre, which performs January 20 – February 10th ([www.historytheatre.org](http://www.historytheatre.org)) in St. Paul. **Stacey Parshall**, in collaboration with teens across the city, wrote *VOICES*, a performance piece for The Science Museum of Minnesota's RACE Exhibit, with performances beginning February 17th. Stacey has also written *A Strange Ailment*, a Thirst Theatre production running January 29 and February 12 – 19th at Jitters Bar, featuring the acting talents of **Payton J. Woodson**.

PILLSBURY HOUSE THEATRE is a strategy of



## Pillsbury House Theatre turns 15!

**W**hen *Underneath the Lintel* opens on February 23 this year, it marks the start of the theatre's 15th Anniversary Season. A phone call from Actors Equity Association, the union of professional theatre companies, triggered the theatre to remember this important milestone. As Faye Price, Co-Artistic Director, explains, "Actors Equity called to say they were sending us a plaque in recognition of our 15 year anniversary. I had to stop and think for a moment – were we really turning 15?"

It was, in fact, true. 1992 was the first year of producing for the theatre. Although it seems like the celebration for the 10th Anniversary was just a short time ago, much has changed at the theatre in the last five years.

One of the biggest accomplishments has been the increased audience numbers for the theatre. Riding the wave of hits such as *Jesus Hopped the A Train* and *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression*, the audience for mainstage shows has increased steadily, culminating in selling at 80% capacity this past year. The

Breaking Ice program has also grown tremendously – more than doubling the number of performances each year and also stretching its wings nationwide, with performances from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to New York. And the Chicago Avenue Project – the cornerstone of the theatre's work with youth – gained its own Director, Stacey Parshall, and increased to three productions each year as well as adding an additional matinee to each production to try and keep up with audience demand.

2007 promises to build upon this momentum. The season opens with *Underneath the Lintel*, starring former Twin Cities resident John Shuman who is coming off of a Broadway run in *La Cage aux Folles*. In the spring, New York multi-disciplinary artist Rha Goddess performs her powerful one-woman show *LOW* which explore the mythology, stigma, fear and confusion surrounding mental illness. In the fall, Marion McClinton, a nationally renowned director and long-time member of the theatre's Associate Company makes his PHT directing debut with *Home*. And for the first time ever, the theatre's Breaking Ice company will bring its provocative performance style to the mainstage in an original production in May.



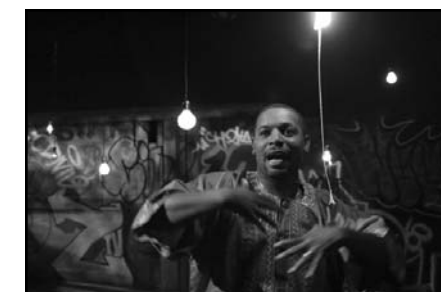
Faye Price & James A. Williams in *Boesman & Lena*, 2002. Photo by Michal Daniel.



Kimberly Joy Morgan in *Hot Comb*, 2005 & 2006. Photo by Usry Alleyene.



Sandra Struthers & Matt Guidry in *Far Away*, 2004. Photo by Michal Daniel.



Zell Miller, III in *Evidence of Silence Broken*, 2003. Photo by T. Charles Erickson.

## From the Artistic Directors



Faye M. Price



Noël Raymond

**2007** promises to be a year rich with challenges. Challenges in the spirit of our mission, challenges that, like the theatre we produce, bring the entire community of PHT participants, supporters and artists face to face with difficult questions and encourage us all to go places we have never gone and do things we have never done.

2007 marks our 15th anniversary of making theatre that connects people to one another. Founded in 1992 by current Minneapolis City Council member, Ralph Remington, the theatre has grown and flourished, achieving the original vision of a place where a diverse community of artists creates provocative theatre for diverse communities of audiences. This year we will celebrate by imagining the PHT of 2022.

2007 is the year that Pillsbury House Theatre will create a clear brand. We have long been engaged in a vigorous dialogue about how to represent PHT in a way that honors the complexity of our history and identity - our relationship to Pillsbury United Communities, the Settlement House Movement, the three distinct program areas, and our geographic location - while capturing the simple essence of the PHT experience. A recent grant from the Bush Foundation has allowed us to engage marketing consultant, Laurie Brickley to lead a process that will culminate in a bold new look for PHT.

2007 will also be a year of building our fundraising capacity. We are thrilled to report that the Ruth Easton Fund of the Edelstein Family Foundation has made a \$25,000 Vanguard Grant with an additional \$25,000 Challenge Grant to be paid when it is matched one-to-one with new and increased individual and foundation support. Both grants will support the creation of original theatrical work across all of the PHT program areas. We are already on our way, but we need your help to meet the challenge completely.

Over the past 15 years PHT has developed into a nationally recognized theatre where new work and difficult issues are embraced, supported and explored. It has also become a valued community resource where artists, youth and families feel welcome, included and important. As we move into 2007, we will be asking for your help to celebrate the past, establish our present identity and build support for the future. We are excited about collaborating with you on 15 more years of challenging theatre that inspires choice, change and connection!

## Chicago Avenue Project: Twice as Nice



Joaquin Vences performs in *All Washed Up*  
Photo by Usry Alleyene

You will have not one, but two opportunities to see the theatre's award-winning Chicago Avenue Project in the first half of 2007. The youth mentorship program will present *Grin & Bear It* on February 5 & 6 and *Heard It Through The Grapevine* on April 30 & May 1st. Each production will feature youth from neighborhood community centers who have been paired with a professional actor, director and playwright in a show written exclusively for them. After the success of last year's *Best of the Chicago Avenue Project*, the theatre decided to return to

producing three Chicago Avenue Project productions each year. Stacey Parshall, Director of the Chicago Avenue Project explains, "We now have classes in four different community centers, which means we have more kids than ever who are eager for the kind of in-depth experience that performing a production brings them. We

simply had to increase productions to meet the demand."

*GRIN & BEAR IT* will feature youth actors Kymesha Bailey, Alejandro Davis-Frescas, Hodo Ibrahim, Mary Juanita Leonard, Kloie Rush-Spratt and Tyree Schultz. The professional artist mentors include playwrights Steve Moulds, Randy Reyes & Deborah Stein; directors Sarah Gioia, David Mann and Harry Waters, Jr., and actors Nat Fuller, Jeany Park and Simone Perrin, among many others. All Chicago Avenue Project productions are free and open to the public and children and families are encouraged to attend.

### CHICAGO AVENUE PROJECT 2007 SEASON

#### *Grin & Bear It*

Monday, February 5, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, February 6, 4:30 & 7:00 p.m.

#### *Heard It Through the Grapevine*

Monday, April 30, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 1, 4:30 & 7:00 p.m.

#### *Face the Music*

Monday, August 27, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, August 28, 4:30 & 7:00 p.m.

## 2006 AT A GLANCE

Over **12,500** attended and/or participated in Pillsbury House Theatre performance in 2006!

3846 people attended mainstage performances (80% capacity for the season)! The return engagement of *Hot Comb: Brandin' One Mark of Oppression* and the world premiere workshop production of Daniel Alexander Jones' *Phoenix Fabrik* both played to full houses. Praise for the fall production of *BUG* even reached the USA Today. A December article on Minneapolis featured Pillsbury House Theatre as "one of the many cultural bargains" in the city. *BUG* also received numerous year-end honors in the local press, including:

- **Outstanding Play, Smaller Theatres**, *Star Tribune*
- **Jodi Kellogg** was named **Outstanding Actress in a Play, Smaller Theatre** by the *Star Tribune* and named



John Catron and Jodi A. Kellogg in *BUG*, 2006.  
Photo by Michal Daniel.

**Best Actress, Non-Musical**, by *Lavender Magazine*.

• **John Catron** was named **Outstanding Actor in a Play, Smaller Theatre** by the *Star Tribune*

• **Joe Stanley's** set design was named one of **Ten Great Sets/Scenic Designs** for 2006.



Vinie Burrows in *Phoenix Fabrik*  
Photo by Usry Alleyene

141 kids participated in *Chicago Avenue Project* activities, 77 adult artists spent 1432 hours mentoring youth & 891 audience members attended Project productions.

*Breaking Ice* created & performed over 30 original performances across the country for over 7700 audience members and 28 youth participated in *Breaking Ice's* intensive residencies.



Ellen Fenster, *Breaking Ice*  
Photo by Studiotohechi

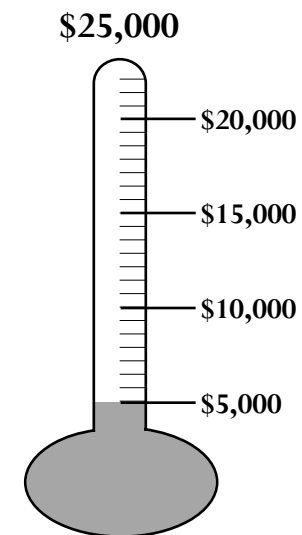
### Help Us Meet Our Match!

This year, if we raise \$25,000 in new donations, the Ruth Easton Fund of the Edelstein Family Foundation will match it with an additional \$25,000 grant.

As you can see, we are already 20% there. Help us meet the challenge by sending your tax-deductible donation to:

Pillsbury House Theatre  
3501 Chicago Avenue S.  
Minneapolis, MN 55406

Thank you for helping us reach our goal!



## 2007 MAINSTAGE SEASON

*Underneath the Lintel* (Area Premiere)  
by Glen Berger  
Directed by Noel Raymond  
February 23 – March 24

A librarian discovers a book 113 years overdue and sets out to collect the fine of his career. But the search for the mysterious offender leads him on a continent hopping journey of cosmic proportions and personal revelation.

*Breaking Ice* (World Premiere)  
By the Breaking Ice Company  
Directed by Heidi Hunter Batz  
May 11 – 12

Pillsbury House Theatre's multi-racial, socio-political improvisational performance troupe *Breaking Ice*, will bring its provocative performance style to the mainstage using poetry, music, movement and scenes to follow a host of characters navigating their way through social norms and cultural biases.

*LOW* (Area Premiere)  
By Rha Goddess  
Directed by Chay Yew  
May 30 – June 16

Combining brilliant poetry, hip-hop rhymes, and straight forward prose, multidisciplinary artist Rha Goddess explores the mythology, stigma, fear and confusion surrounding mental illness in contemporary culture.



Rha Goddess in *LOW*.  
Photo by Jacques-Jean Tiziou

*Home*  
By Samm-Art Williams  
Directed by Marion McClinton  
October 5 – November 3

In this heart-warming classic story, Cephus Miles leaves his boyhood farm in the south to seek happiness in a fast paced northern city. But the glitter of the city quickly fades and Cephus returns to the farm, affirming that home is both a place and a state of mind.

Performances take place Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.  
For additional info or to order tickets call 612-825-0459.