



New York, NY---January 24, 2003
For Immediate Release
Press Contact: Scott (212) 545-7114

Synaesthetic Theatre presents

Icon

... a postmodern multi-media retelling of the Narcissus myth

Directed by Joy Leonard & Chris Nichols

Created and Performed by Ziedah F. Giovanni, Maximilian Frey, Margaret O'Sullivan, Clinton Powell & Tina West Chavous

Milagro Theatre @ CSV Cultural Center

Thursday, February 20th -

Saturday, March 15th @ 8:00pm

One Matinee only -- March 15th @ 2:00pm

Narcotic... Narcosis... Narcissus. Echo. Icon.

Icon is a hypnotic, multimedia ride through 50 years of American cinema, whose iconoclastic images have shaped our dreams, delusions and desires.

In this **retelling of the Narcissus Myth**, a self-absorbed media junkie spurns an obsessive lover---instead choosing to admire his own fractured reflection, as seen in the television screens and the icons he surrounds himself with.

Around him, shape-shifting nymphs vie for his attention as they take on cinematic guises of fame and immortality. In a world where image is everything and meaning lies hidden in subconscious waters, can doting lover Echo help Narcissus break through the illusions?

Synaesthetic Theatre explores this question by delving into the fragmented mind of a post-modern Everyman who has been shaped by an American datasphere littered with images culled from film. These images are reshaped, reimagined, replicated and reconstructed by popular culture until they become ICONS---symbolic prisms through which we look to place our own dreams, fears, hopes and beliefs in context.

Theater and film converge in this meditation on our relationship to the media.

Pre-recorded video, slide projections, an original score, found and created text, and live video feeds combine to create an immersive multimedia landscape of replicated gods and fragmented heroes struggling to be human in a world of two-dimensional role models.

Costume/Set Design by David Crittenden; Light Design by Paul Hudson; Music by Rench; Sound Design by James Ford; Video/Film Design by John DesRoches Associate Costume/Set Design by Aubrey Hardwick; Production Coordinator, Paula A. Marchiel; Graphic Designer, Maximilian Frey.

Icon

Milagro Theatre @ CSV Cultural Center

107 Suffolk Street (between Rivington & Delancey)

Subway: F, J, M, Z to Delancey/Essex Street

All Tickets, \$17

To Purchase Tickets Call 212-352-3101

Access the Synaesthetic web site @ www.synaesthetic-theatre.com

Access the ICON WEBSITE www.i-con.tv

Press Photos available @ www.i-con.tv/press

CRITICAL PRAISE for Synaesthetic Theatre

"Synaesthetic Theatre captures the novel's angst and anomie with this multi-media version of *The Trial*. Directors Joy Leonard and Chris Nichols use live video feeds, distorted vocals, voice-overs, lip-synching, a trip-hop soundtrack, pre-recorded film, cross gender casting, dance and stylized acting to provide thematic complements to the play. . .The ambient soundscape, mixed live, cleverly samples bits of dialogue into its loops, creating a constant echo."---Alexis Soloski, *The Village Voice* (re: **ROT**)

"[Directors] Nichols and Leonard like to involve the actors and design team and develop ideas through improvisation. What resulted was a surreal world of paranoia. Video segments explored and imitated film noir, surveillance video, porn movies, and Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*."---Entertainment Technology Online (re: **ROT**)

---"Synaesthetic's unique productions are multilayered, in meanings and theme as well as design. . .the work was presented in a sort of reverse in-the-round format, with the audience sitting around cabaret tables situated in a central square, separated from the four surrounding performance platforms by chain link fencing. This gave the piece an urban vacant-lot quality, and played on the sideshow aspect. . .who was the freak being fenced off, the performers or the audience?"---Entertainment Design Magazine (re: **Ubu 2000**)

ABOUT SYNAESTHETIC THEATRE COMPANY

Sin-uhs-thet-ick ---adj.---Characterizes a work of art which produces harmony out of different or opposing impulses.

Founded in 1997, Synaesthetic has created and produced six original plays for the theatre, five of them multimedia. The productions feature precise physical staging, dance, layers of visual information and non-linear storytelling. Each show has also generated an original score, including sampled sound effects and new compositions of both acoustic and electronic music.

The overall aesthetic combines images and styles from popular culture (television, film, comic books and the Internet) with timeless stories and deconstructed classic texts, such as Franz Kafka's *The Trial*, H. G. Wells' *The Invisible Man*, Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* and William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

In 2000, Synaesthetic Theatre created and launched www.openthebox.net, a cyber companion to Synaesthetic's 1999 science fiction play *Tamatebako {The Box}*. This site is an ever-evolving interactive environment which can be accessed and explored by people all over the world, and new levels are added every year. Each theatre production since 2000 has had an accompanying website, often with opportunities for user input and interaction. New York Foundation for the Arts has fiscally sponsored Synaesthetic Theatre since 2000.

Synaesthetic Theatre is an experimental collective of artists dedicated to creating new multimedia theatre with a social conscience. As a community of creators, our collective strives to synthesize voice, text, movement, sound, video and visual design into a single, harmonious performance experience for spectator and performer alike. Directors, designers and performers collaborate in a unique process to develop each show, resulting in truly ensemble-driven work. In this age of expanding media and isolating technology, Synaesthetic Theatre is committed to producing original works in which intellect and emotion function together, promoting conscious, constructive investigation and evaluation of the world around us.