

## THE ALUMNAE THEATRE COMPANY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March, 2011

## GUINEAPIGGING

by CATHERINE FRID

*Directed by Molly Thom*

*Q. Who or what are guinea pigs?*

*A. People, usually on the fringe of society, willing to risk their health for the chance to earn big bucks by testing unauthorized drugs. For some it's a way of life.*

And that is the answer that inspired **Catherine Frid**, author of last year's SummerWorks hit *Homegrown*, to create her bold new comedy, *GuineaPigging*.

Premiering as part of Alumnae Theatre's 91st consecutive season, *GuineaPigging* focuses on Chris, a young woman suffering from a serious addiction and an unsatisfactory relationship, who walks into a lab looking for a cure. She finds far more than she bargained for. The science is suspect, the test cases are a polyglot bunch of eccentrics and, once the dosing starts, they begin to exhibit some bizarre side effects. This is Alice tumbling down the rabbit hole and events soon spiral completely out of control.

Catherine Frid explains the play's inception: "I found out that guinea pigs are 'locked down', i.e. they have to stay in the facility in order to stay in the study. It seemed like a great setting for a play so I decided to do a drug study myself, as research, and some of the stuff I found out there ended up in *GuineaPigging*, such as the flawed procedures that are the foundation of medical drug testing.

It seemed like an excellent metaphor for how many people live: we hand over control of our lives to other people and institutions because we're under-confident and overwhelmed. *When we're passive and we conform to what we're told is normal – for example in science, relationships or gender – we undermine ourselves. And there are always side effects to doing this.* Hopefully audiences will leave the play laughing and deciding for the good of their health to do things they've always wanted to do but haven't yet because their dreams are 'socially inappropriate.'"

Catherine's partner in *GuineaPigging's* two-year development is Toronto Director and Dramaturge **Molly Thom**. Heading up the production team are Co-Producers **PJ Hammond** and **Tabitha Keast**, Assistant Director **Laurie Williams**, Stage Manager **Stacy Halloran** and Production Assistant **Navneet Rai**, Costume Designer **Jennie Grimard**, Set and Lighting Designer **Ed Rosing**, Props Hound **Razie Brownstone**, and Sound Designer **Angus Barlow**.

The cast is led by **Laura Vincent** as the central character, Chris, with fabulous and, frankly, outlandish support by **Arfina Abdourahime**, **Lionel Boodlal**, **Chantale Groulx**, **Krista Marchand**, **Chris Reid**, **Mike Vitorovich** and **Tim Walker**.

Catherine Frid is available for interviews.

Contact Tina McCulloch at [marketing@alumnaetheatre.com](mailto:marketing@alumnaetheatre.com) or by calling 416-364-4170.

## *The Details* - GUINEAPIGGING

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- Running Time:** GuineaPigging will run approximately two hours. There will be one intermission.
- Opening Night Gala:** Friday April 15, 2011
- Performances:** Friday April 15 - Saturday April 30, 2011
- Schedule:** Wednesday - Saturday 8:00pm; Sunday matinée at 2:00pm
- Tickets:** Wednesday: 2-for-1, Thursday, Friday & Saturday: \$20, Sunday: PWYC
- Location:** Alumnae Theatre, 70 Berkeley Street (at Adelaide Street East), Toronto
- Box Office:** 416-364-4170 (box 1) or email [reservations@alumnaetheatre.com](mailto:reservations@alumnaetheatre.com)  
 Box Office opens one hour prior to each performance  
**Please note:** Box Office does not accept credit or debit cards

## ALUMNAE THEATRE - *Our 2011/2012 Season*

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| <i>After Mrs. Rochester</i> by Polly Teale   | September 23 - October 8, 2011  |
| <i>Sylvia</i> by A.R. Gurney   | November 11 - November 26, 2011 |
| <i>The Trojan Women</i> by Euripides, translation by Gwendolyn MacEwen<br>A retrospective choice from our 1992/1993 Season | January 20 - February 4, 2012   |
| <b>The 24th Annual New Ideas Festival</b>  | March 14 - March 31, 2012       |
| <i>Cosi</i> by Louis Nowra   | April 13 - April 28, 2012       |

For more information or to set up an interview please contact:  
 Tina McCulloch, Marketing & Publicity at 416-364-4170 or [marketing@alumnaetheatre.com](mailto:marketing@alumnaetheatre.com)

**Alumnae Theatre Company** (a non-union, not-for profit company) has been producing thought-provoking, challenging and rarely-performed plays since 1919.

Check our website at [www.alumnaetheatre.com](http://www.alumnaetheatre.com) for press releases, production photographs, and a retrospective on how Alumnae Theatre shaped Toronto's theatre scene.