



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**THE LARAMIE PROJECT: TEN YEARS LATER (AN EPILOGUE)
OCTOBER 12, 2009**

*Magic Theatre presents the San Francisco leg of the national event coordinated by
Tectonic Theatre Project honoring the memory of Matthew Shepard
All proceeds to benefit LYRIC and The Matthew Shepard Foundation*

23 September, 2009 - SAN FRANCISCO, CA. Magic Theatre, San Francisco's premiere home for new plays, is proud to present the local premiere of *THE LARAMIE PROJECT: 10 YEARS LATER*. This groundbreaking original script focuses on the long-term effects of the murder of Matthew Shepard on the town of Laramie, Wyoming and how the crime continues to reverberate in our society.

The premiere takes place on October 12, 2009 - the eleventh anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death. The reading is part of an ambitious effort to unveil the script in over 100 other theaters across the country and around the world. Magic's goal is to use this reading as a springboard to connect the local community and foster continued discussion about the issues raised by the play.

The epilogue includes new interviews with Matthew's mother Judy Shepard and Mathew's murderer Aaron McKinney, who's serving dual life sentences, as well as follow-up interviews with many of the individuals from the original piece. The writers of this play are Tectonic Theater Project members Moisés Kaufman, Leigh Fondakowski, Greg Pierotti, Andy Paris and Stephen Belber.

"I will never forget the Opening Night of *The Laramie Project* in New York. It is extremely rare to have theater contribute to a national dialogue with such depth and humanity, even rarer when the theatrical event itself is truly first rate. To be a part of reconvening this meaningful dialogue that began ten years ago on compassion, tolerance, and hate in America is an honor for Magic Theatre." says Loretta Greco, Magic's Artistic Director.

Magic Theatre's production, which is produced by members of Magic's Artists Lab, will include a procession featuring excerpts from the original *Laramie Project*, a staged reading of *The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later*, and a benediction. In addition, Magic's Artists Lab will produce a short video including interviews with San Franciscans discussing the lasting effects of Matthew Shepard's murder. These interviews will be included on an online interactive community www.laramieproject.org, (launched by the Tectonic Theatre Project,

creators of both Laramie plays), where participants can share their stories about the play and blog about presenting the epilogue in their communities.

“We are honored to bring this epilogue to *The Laramie Project* to San Francisco,” said Ms. Greco. “This important piece of American theater tells a universal human story and has been a transformative experience for the cast and audience. Our hope is that the epilogue helps us examine Matthew’s death in the context of history and creates a bridge to the future,” concluded Ms Greco.

According to LYRIC, even though LGBTQQ people are being increasingly accepted by society, many of the issues that led to the horrible death of Matthew Shepard are still very much a concern. 66% of LGBTQQ students continue to report harassment. Approximately 20 to 40% of all homeless youth are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT). Youth who "come out" to their families are often thrown out, or run away because of abuse. And violence is still a major concern for many youth, including in their schools, on the streets, and even in their own family. The reality for many LGBTQQ youth shows that the tragedy of what happened to Matthew Shepard is still very real for many youth, and serves as a reason to continue to remember Matthew and what his death symbolizes in the struggle for LGBTQQ acceptance.

Doors to the theatre open at 6:30pm for a gallery presentation and reception in The Magic Lounge, with the events of the evening beginning at 7pm. The event is free and open to the public, with a suggested donation of \$20. All proceeds from the event will be donated to The Matthew Shepard Foundation and LYRIC. Reservations may be made by calling (415) 240-4454.

ABOUT MATTHEW SHEPARD AND THE LARAMIE PROJECT

On October 6th of 1998 Matthew Shepard was beaten and left to die tied to a fence in the outskirts of Laramie, Wyoming. He died 6 days later. His murder became a watershed moment in America that highlighted the violence and prejudice lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people face.

A month after the murder, the members of Tectonic Theater Project traveled to Laramie and conducted interviews with the people of the town. From these interviews they wrote the play *The Laramie Project*, which they later made into a film for HBO. The piece has been seen by more than 50 million people around the country.

ABOUT MAGIC THEATRE

Now in its 43rd season, Magic Theatre is one of the most prominent theatres in the nation solely dedicated to the development and production of new plays. The mission of Magic Theatre is to give voice to playwrights, both emerging and established, and to develop and promote the work of theatre artists. Magic Theatre engages audiences in intimate, productions that speak to contemporary issues with originality and wit, a sense of urgency and adventure. For more information, visit www.magictheatre.org

ABOUT LYRIC

LYRIC’s mission is to build community and inspire positive social change through education

enhancement, career training, health promotion and leadership development with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth, their families and allies of all races, classes, genders and abilities. LYRIC was founded in 1988 as a place where LGBTQ youth can develop peer-support systems, gain skills to make healthy choices and build an appreciation of their role in creating social justice. Through LYRIC, Bay Area LGBTQ youth connect with peers and adult allies, grow as individuals and become responsible and productive community members. Last year, LYRIC served over 500 youth and outreached to another 1500 youth throughout the Bay Area, while providing a unique support role and serving as a leading advocacy voice for LGBTQ youth. www.lyric.org

ABOUT TECTONIC THEATER PROJECT

Tectonic Theater Project (Moisés Kaufman, Artistic Director, Greg Reiner, Executive Director, Jeffrey LaHoste, Managing Director, Dominick Ballesta, General Manager) is the company behind such plays as *Gross Indecency*, *The Laramie Project*, and *I Am My Own Wife*. Awards including the Humanitas Prize, the Obie, the Lucille Lortel Award, The Outer Critics Circle Award, the GLAAD Media Award, the Artistic Integrity Award from HRC, and the Making a Difference Award/Matthew Shepard Foundation. Tectonic works in Universities around the country and hosts a NY based lab for theater artists. Thanks to the NEA, Greenwall Foundation, Arcus Foundation, Small Change Foundation and Educational Foundation of America. For more information, visit www.tectonictheaterproject.org

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

What:

The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later

Magic Theatre presents the local premiere of the epilogue to the Laramie Project on the anniversary of Matthew Shepard's death.

Where:

Magic Theatre
Fort Mason Center, Building D
San Francisco, CA 94123
Entrance at Buchanan St and Marina Blvd

Dates/Times:

October 12th, 2009

7pm (Doors open at 6:30 for Gallery Presentation and Reception in The Magic Lounge)

Tickets:

Free and Open to the Public

Suggested donation of \$20

All proceeds to benefit The Matthew Shepard Foundation and LYRIC

For reservations call (415) 240-4454

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