



PRESS RELEASE

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***New Leaf Theatre zooms in on the unexpected with
Touch
by Toni Press-Coffman***

CHICAGO, December 2008: New Leaf is excited to announce our next offering in a season asking ***How do we build a future from a present we didn't expect?*** Our celebrated production of *Six Years* tackled this question by looking at our nation of families across years of metamorphic change. We now turn to a more personal experience of the unexpected in Toni Press-Coffman's ***Touch***.

How do you move forward when your worst nightmare becomes your reality? Kyle is a reserved young astronomer in love with the night sky. When a run-of-the-mill errand turns his life upside-down, he has to fight to find his footing in the void of this bewildering new existence. Through starkly honest storytelling and vivid reliving of key events, ***Touch*** reminds us that even in the blackest parts of grief, there can be a bright flash of hope.

"This play resonated with us on such a visceral level when we first read it early this year," says Artistic Director Jessica Hutchinson, "and its resonance has increased exponentially as the world around us has begun to shift beneath our feet in recent weeks. ***Touch*** allows us to zoom in on a much more intimate experience of the unexpected, following a man through events that would be devastating at any time, but are made all the more so when they come out of the blue – something that I think a lot of us can relate to right now."

Joining New Leaf's acclaimed production team is a cast of four faces familiar to Chicago theatre goers: Dan Granata as Kyle, Matthew Gottlieb as Bennie, Kristina Johnson as Serena, and Jacqueline Stone as Kathleen. These actors, all appearing with New Leaf for the first time, form a powerful ensemble, expertly bringing Press-Coffman's intricately drawn characters to life.

Touch opens Wednesday, January 7, 2009 at 8 PM and runs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8 PM through Saturday, February 14, 2009. All performances take place in New Leaf's home at the Lincoln Park Cultural Center, 2045 N. Lincoln Park West. Tickets are \$18, \$12 student/senior, and \$10 industry.

New Leaf Theatre offers a peek behind the curtain at the process for this production and all it does on the company blog: www.newleaftheatre.org/blog. Guest posts from our visiting artists are featured in addition to company members' perspectives on our journey through ***Touch***.

MORE



TOUCH
By Toni Press-Coffman

FACT SHEET

WHAT: **Touch**
by Toni Press-Coffman
directed by Jessica Hutchinson

How do you move forward when your worst nightmare becomes your reality? Kyle is a reserved young astronomer in love with the night sky. When a run-of-the-mill errand turns his life upside-down, he has to fight to find his footing in the void of this bewildering new existence. Through starkly honest storytelling and vivid reliving of key events, *Touch* reminds us that even in the blackest parts of grief, there can be a bright flash of hope.

WHERE: **New Leaf Theatre**
in residence at the Lincoln Park Cultural Center
2045 N. Lincoln Park West
limited street parking
CTA accessible

WHEN: **Opening Night** – Wednesday, January 7 at 8 PM
Wednesday, January 7 – Saturday, February 14, 2009
Thursdays – Saturdays at 8 PM

TICKETS: \$18 – general; \$12 – students/seniors
\$10 – industry with headshot/resume
Group discounts available
Call (773) 516-3546 for tickets or more info
Reserve or purchase tickets online through www.newleaftheatre.org

CAST: Dan Granata
Matthew Gottlieb
Kristina Johnson
Jacqueline Stone

CREW: Assistant Director: Melissa Pryor
Stage Manager: Amanda Frechette
Set Design: Michelle Lilly O'Brien
Light Design: Jared Moore
Sound Design: Nick Keenan
Costume Design: Rachel Sypnewski

MEDIA: press@newleaftheatre.org / (773) 516-3546

About New Leaf Theatre

New Leaf Theatre is a not-for-profit theatre, founded in 2001, which strives to create intimate, animate theatrical experiences that renew both artist and audience. Last fall's production of *The Dining Room* earned New Leaf two Non-Equity Joseph Jefferson Award nominations – Best Ensemble and Best Director – and was also featured on *Time Out Chicago's* "Ten Most Wanted 2007." Other company highlights include Non-Equity Jeff Award nominations for *The Permanent Way* (2007 – Best Ensemble) and *As It Is in Heaven* (2005 – Best Ensemble), and mention in the "Top Ten Reasons to Take a Risk" in the *Chicago Tribune* (*The Permanent Way* – 2007). New Leaf has also been home to four world-premieres, the Chicago premiere of Morris Panych's *Girl in the Goldfish Bowl*, and the first United States production of David Hare's *The Permanent Way*. Please visit www.newleaftheatre.org for more about where we've been and where we're going.

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