



RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT

1346 The Alameda, Suite 7-265,
San Jose, CA 95126

phone: (408) 351-4440

email: rte@renegadetheatre.com

www.renegadetheatre.com

MAY 22, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Elizabeth Thies (408) 351-4440
ethies@renegadetheatre.com

RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT PRESENTS
Paul Lucas's brand-new play *The Dice House*

WHAT: Paul Lucas's *The Dice House*, a perverse farce about chance and free will. Based on Luke Rhinehart's classic 1972 novel *The Dice Man*, which Anthony Burgess called "touching, ingenious and beautifully comic," *The Dice House* has earned Rhinehart's own endorsement as "a treat...joyous...my favourite *Dice Man*-inspired work."

WHO: Renegade Theatre Experiment. Director: Russ Marcel. Cast: Sean Murphy, Mark Drumm, Sarah Almazol, Whitney Stebbins, Spencer Haugen, Rimma Dreyband, Peter Canavese, Dan Calvisi, and Gabriel Esparza. San Jose-based company with all-local cast, comprised primarily of SCU alumni.

WHY: A chance for American audiences to enjoy the hit of last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival. A hilarious and irreverent comedy appealing to anyone who's ever wished for a "quick-fix" to the problems of life. *The Dice House* is the opening show of RTE's sophomore season; RTE is a local non-profit theatre company with deep community ties.

WHEN: June 4-5 (Pay-What-You-Can Preview), June 6-7, 11-14, 18-21.

WHERE: Benson Theatre (corner of Elm St. and Emory Ave.). 850 Elm St., San Jose, CA 95126. General Seating.

HOW (MUCH): Ticket Price: \$18.00. Students/Seniors/TBA Members: \$12.00. [Tickets available online](#) and at the door. www.renegadetheatre.com. (408) 351-4440.

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Paul Lucas's *The Dice House*, based on Luke Rhinehart's 1972 cult smash novel *The Dice Man*, comes straight from last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where the play shocked and delighted international audiences. Now, American audiences can discover a play destined to become a theatrical perennial; Renegade Theatre Experiment proudly presents *The Dice House*.

The Dice House satirizes psychiatric "quick fixes" in a post-modern world but also looks deeply at the function of chance in our lives. The play—which comes straight from last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival—concerns two rival psychiatrists: Dr. Drabble invests in traditional methods and Dr. Ratner is the revolutionary proponent of "dice theory," the idea that every life decision should be put to a roll of the dice.

When Drabble's wife succumbs to the alluring abandon of dice theory, he blackmails his anxious patient Matthew into undertaking a commando mission to raid "The Dice House." The Dice House is home to random hijinks and loopy characters, leading Rhinehart to dub the play "a comic romp in the tradition of Moliere" and director Russ Marcel to call it "a farce on acid."

The Dice House will be performed June 4 & 5 (Pay-What-You-Can Previews), June 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, and 21 at Benson Theatre in San Jose (850 Elm St.; corner of Elm and Emory).



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**RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT
ANNOUNCES ITS SPECTACTULAR
SOPHOMORE SEASON: 2 GROUNDBREAKING FARCES**

SAN JOSE, CA—April 12, 2003—At Renegade Theatre Experiment's first annual benefit fundraising event, 100 patrons enjoyed a catered dinner; an evening of music, dance, and comedy performed by Renegade players and friends of the company; and the announcement, by artistic director Sean C. Murphy, of RTE's thrilling second season.

The first show, **Paul Lucas's *The Dice House***, satirizes psychiatric "quick fixes" in a post-modern world but also looks deeply at the function of chance in our lives. The play—which comes straight from last year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival—concerns two rival psychiatrists, one invested in traditional methods and one a proponent of "dice theory," the idea that every life decision should be put to a roll of the dice. When the traditionalist's wife succumbs to the alluring abandon of dice theory, he enlists an anxious patient for a commando mission to raid "The Dice House." The Dice House is home to random hijinks and loopy characters, leading director Russ Marcel to dub the play "a farce on acid."

The season winds up with **Avery Crozier's *Eat the Runt***, a complex skewering of bureaucracy and political correctness powered by an astonishing metatheatrical stunt. An art gallery has selected a leading candidate for the opening of Grants Manager. When not one, but two people arrive claiming to be that candidate, weird interviews turn weirder as the gallery's staff tries to sort out the truth. In a masterstroke, Crozier designed the play in such a way that any of the eight-person cast could—on any given night—play any of the eight non-gender-specific roles. Each night at the theater, the audience will cast the show from the eight-person ensemble of men and women, creating one of 40,320 possible casting variations. Martin Denton of NYTheatre.com called *Eat the Runt* "a play to see over and over again."

Renegade's inaugural season kicked off in June 2002 with ***Sin***, Wendy MacLeod's modern morality play, which blends comedy and drama in telling the story of a woman who reevaluates her life in the wake of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. In August of 2002, Renegade rounded off its first season with ***Hear Me Roar: women's images of self***, an evening on the theme of women's body image and self-worth in American culture featuring "Chocolate Cake" by Mary Gallagher, "Inner Struggle" (choreographed by RTE's Evangeline Maynard) and "The Most Massive Woman Wins" by Madeleine George.

RENEGADE HISTORY

The Renegade Theatre Experiment began in May 2001 as a group of alumni from Santa Clara University joining together to develop as actors. The group practiced monologues in a workshop format for a couple of months, but then collectively decided that--rather than auditioning for local theatre companies—they could be a local theatre company. A core group of committed “renegades” formed the board of directors, set to work picking shows, finding venues, and planning for an uncertain future. The driving force, Sean C. Murphy, stepped forward as Artistic Director of the company.

RTE presented ***The Ives-ing on the Cake: An Evening of One-Acts by David Ives***, on three evenings in August 2001. The warmly received show—performed in downtown San Jose--consisted of five one-acts by David Ives derived from his collection *All in The Timing*. After the success of this trial show, RTE committed to presenting an annual season of shows to the San Jose theatre community, beginning in June 2002. Not content to wait, RTE reimagined *The Ives-ing on the Cake*--with some new cast members, directors, and Ives pieces (including one from *Time Flies*)—for ***The Ives of March***, presented in the March of 2002 at Santa Clara University’s Fess Parker Theatre.

Renegade’s inaugural season kicked off in June 2002 with ***Sin***, Wendy MacLeod’s modern morality play, which blends comedy and drama in telling the story of a woman who reevaluates her life in the wake of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. In August of 2002, Renegade rounded off its first season with ***Hear Me Roar: women’s images of self***, an evening on the theme of women’s body image and self-worth in American culture featuring “Chocolate Cake” by Mary Gallagher, “Inner Struggle” (choreographed by RTE’s Evangeline Maynard) and “The Most Massive Woman Wins” by Madeleine George.

RTE’s 2003 season offers *The Dice House*, Paul Lucas’s hilarious farcical take on Luke Rhinehart’s cult smash novel *The Dice Man*; the story revolves around “dice theory,” the notion that every life decision should be put to a roll of the dice. Following *The Dice House* is Avery Crozier’s *Eat the Runt*, in which eight actors can play any of eight roles in a story of mistaken identity during a series of job interviews.

As the 2003 season unfolds, Renegade Theatre Experiment is busily laying plans for its 2004 season, to be announced soon. For the latest news, check out www.renegadetheatre.com.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Paul Lucas

Paul's first play SWAMP CITY was produced by the Birmingham Rep in 1996. The Birmingham Rep also commissioned and mounted ALL THAT TROUBLE THAT WE HAD (1999) and THE SLIGHT WITCH (2000), both directed by Anthony Clark at The Door, and published by Faber & Faber.

His third play, THE DICE HOUSE, was mounted at The Belgrade Theatre, Coventry in 2001. Paul's next play, THE STAR THROWERS, premiered at the Stephen Joseph Theatre in The Round in Scarborough on 19th February 2002.

THE DICE HOUSE was also revived at The Old Red Lion in March 2002 and then in Edinburgh at the Fringe Festival. Paul is currently under commission to the Hampstead Theatre.

Other work includes THE IGUANODON—a three-part series for Radio 4, broadcast in 1997—and TOASTING THE ORPHANS—an audio piece broadcast on the internet.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Luke Rhinehart

Luke Rhinehart is the acclaimed author of seven works of fiction: THE DICE MAN, THE BOOK OF THE DIE, WHIM, LONG VOYAGE BACK, SEARCH FOR THE DICE MAN, and WHITE WIND, BLACK RIDER (formerly MATARI). Luke is also the author of seven screenplays, several based on his Luke Rhinehart novels. Luke's books explore Chance and self, illusion and freedom.

London's Time Out called THE DICE MAN "The most fashionable novel of the early 1970s", and in 1995 a BBC production named it "One of the fifty most influential books of the last half of the twentieth century." In 1999 LOADED MAGAZINE named THE DICE MAN "The Novel of the Century".

CAST

THE DICE HOUSE

Drabble..... Sean C. Murphy
Ratner.....Mark Drumm
Polly.....Sarah Almazol
Polly.....Whitney Q. Stebbins
Matthew.....Spencer Haugen
Lisa.....Rimma Dreyband
Smith.....Peter Canavese
Victor.....Dan Calvisi
Assassin.....Gabriel O. Esparza

CREW

Artistic Director..... Sean C. Murphy
Managing DirectorWhitney Q. Stebbins
Technical DirectorJim Gross
DirectorRuss Marcel
Production Manager.....Jim Gross
Stage Manager.....Elizabeth Thies
Publicity Manager..... Elizabeth Thies
Scenic Design.....Jim Gross
Sound Design.....Derek Batoyan
Light Design.....Jim Gross
Properties Design.....Jessica Teeter
Costume Design..... Jean McCarron

RENEGADE PROFILES

RUSS MARCEL (Director) Russ has recently relocated from New York City, where he worked as a director and actor for six years (Off and Off-Off Broadway). Russ recently directed the world premier of Matthew Freeman's "Reasons for Moving" at HERE Arts Center in SOHO. He has worked, both as an actor and director, with the following theatre companies: Gorilla Rep, Todo con Nada, The American Globe Theatre, The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, among others. Plays include *Twelfth Night*; *Macbeth*; *Drowning in Euphoria*; *Durang/Durang*; *Pericles*; *Chekhov Vaudeville Festival*; *Bacchus*; *Richard II*; *Romeo and Juliet*; *Pseudolous*; *Julius Caesar*; *Little Murders*; *The Three Sisters*; *Antony and Cleopatra*; *Stand-Up Tragedy*; *Much Ado About Nothing*. Russ is a graduate of the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts' (LAMDA) Classical Acting Program, and received his BA in Theatre Arts at Santa Clara University. Originally from the Bay Area, Russ is ecstatic to be back home, working with the good people at RTE.

SEAN C. MURPHY (Drabble) Murphy is the Artistic Director and a founding member of the Renegade Theatre Experiment. For RTE, he has directed "Sure Thing" as part of *The Ives of March* as well as "Chocolate Cake" for *Hear Me Roar*. A Pacifica resident, Sean was last seen in RTE's *Sin*, where he played the role of Michael (Sloth). His other appearances with RTE include Chuck in "Foreplay or: the Art of the Fugue," the Eunuch in "Babel's in Arms," Trotsky in "Variations on the Death of Trotsky," Marcus in "The Philadelphia" and Narrator in "English Made Simple" for RTE's David Ives productions *The Ives of March* and *The Ives-ing on the Cake*. He has also appeared in *Noises Off*; *Arms and the Man*; *Antigone*; *Measure for Measure*; *Grapes of Wrath*; *Heartbreak House*; and *Macbeth*.

MARK DRUMM (Dr. Ratner) This is Mark's debut with Renegade, but he is no stranger to the stages of the Bay Area. Recently seen as Hysterium in *A Funny Thing Happened on the way to the Forum*, with Sunnyvale Community Players, Mark lives in Belmont and has been performing locally for the past 13 years. His resume includes performing in over 1/3 of Shakespeare's plays. His favorite roles include MacMurphy in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* at Palo Alto Players, Jesus in *Godspell* at The Coastal Repertory Company, and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* with Festival Theater Ensemble. Mark has also directed several shows, including *The Illusion* at Menlo Players Guild and *A Comedy of Errors* with Festival Theater Ensemble.

WHITNEY QUINN STEBBINS (Polly) Whitney is the Managing Director and a founding member of the Renegade Theatre Experiment. She is thrilled to be returning to the stage with RTE's *The Dice House*, having previously appeared in "The Most Massive Woman Wins" for RTE's *Hear Me Roar!* And "Foreplay: or the Art of the Fugue" and "Sure Thing" for RTE's *The Ives of March* and *The Ives-ing on the Cake*. Whitney has appeared in numerous productions in the Bay Area, including *Family*, *The Ridinghood Incident*, *Noises Off*, *Into the Woods*, *Damn Yankees*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, and *Annie*. A Sunnyvale resident, Whitney ran the Chicago Marathon last year and enjoys designing jewelry.

SARAH ALMAZOL (Polly) After spending four years wandering through the jungles of Santa Monica, Almazol has made her triumphant return to Northern California. She is a perennial member of Sanguine Humours, an improvisation troupe which performed at this year's RTE benefit performance, and has been seen previously with RTE as Delia in *Chocolate Cake*.

SPENCER HAUGEN (Matthew) Spencer Haugen is a recent transplant from Seattle, where he spent three years working with the Young Shakespeare Group, performing in various community theaters and the 2000 Fringe Festival. Now a San Jose resident, Spencer has spent the past year performing at Big Lil's Cabaret. This will be his first performance with RTE.

RIMMA DREYBAND (Lisa) Rimma comes to RTE having just completed minors in Performance and Dramatic Writing at San Jose State University. This is her first time performing for RTE, having previously worked the box office for *Sin*. In recent years, she has performed in *Actor's Nightmare*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *When Shakespeare's Ladies Meet*, and the SF Fringe Festival. She can usually be found suffering bodily harm with the performance group Scabaret. Rimma currently resides in San Francisco and her hobbies include rooting for crappy hockey teams, eating too much Ben and Jerry's, and planning productions that have yet to come to fruition.

PETER CANAVESE (Smith) A local actor, director, and writer, Peter Canavese has directed twelve full-length plays over the last eight years. As an actor, Canavese was the first Michael Just in the San Jose production of *Tony and Tina's Wedding*, and has appeared at the San Jose Repertory Theatre and Hillbarn Theatre as well as with the Strange Loop Theatre Group, EMK Productions, and others in comedies, dramas, and even musicals over the years. As a founding member of RTE, Peter directed "Foreplay or the Art of the Fugue" for *The Ives of March*, and acted in *Sin*. Besides performing in *The Dice House*, Canavese directs RTE's second show this season: *Eat the Runt*. A lifelong San Jose native, Peter works at Bellarmine College Preparatory, where he directs and teaches English and drama full-time. Canavese co-wrote (with Tom Alessandri) *The Seven Ages of Bob*, which had its world premiere this spring at BCP and travels to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival this summer. Peter's movie reviews appear every week at www.grouchoreviews.com and semi-regularly on 90.5 FM's *Celluloid Dreams* radio show.

DANIEL P. CALVISI (Victor) Dan has recently relocated from New York City, where he lived for 11 years, graduating from NYU film school and working in the film industry as a Senior Story Analyst for Miramax Films and a private screenplay consultant via his website www.actfourscreenplays.com. He has studied improv comedy and sketch writing with *The Upright Citizens Brigade Theatre* and performed stand-up comedy at The Gotham Comedy Club and other New York stages. He grew up in San Jose, now resides in Santa Cruz, and is very excited to be working with RTE.

GABRIEL O. ESPARZA (Slow Assassin) Gabriel hails from East San José. Gabriel has been part of a National Children's Production of *The Year Of The Child* and also spent time in New York City honing his skills as a performer in workshops at Steps, West Side Dance Project, and the Michael Carson Studios. His most recent work includes a regional tour of *Bard On Board*, a new Shakespeare review (as an actor and tour manager) and the dance concert *Suite Dreams* (as stage manager) at Ohlone College. As an actor Gabriel's credits include *Grease*, *West Side Story*, *A Cry Of Players*, *No Saco Nada De la Escuela* and the world premiere of *Crashing Heaven*, *A Divine Comedy*. He has also been in several films including *Dangerous Minds*, *X-Factor*, *Gone Like The Schwinn*, *Lucidity*, and *The Bald Witch Project*. When not performing, he is also a stage technician. Gabriel was nominated for the **Kate Drain Lawson Scholarship in Lighting Design** at the **2002 Region VIII Kennedy Center/American College Theater Festival**. *The Dice House* is Gabriel's first RTE production, but later this season, he will also appear in *Eat The Runt*. Gabriel is also a local turntable DJ, and spins at local clubs and parties throughout the greater Bay Area.