



Phoenix Theatre Ensemble

Craig Smith - Elise Stone - Angela Madden - Michael Surabian - Amy Wagner

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**MEDIA ALERT FOR THEATRE EDITORS, ART EDITORS, THEATRE REVIEWERS AND
CALENDAR LISTINGS**

PHOENIX THEATRE ENSEMBLE, THE RWANDA PROJECT, AND SAINT PETER'S CHURCH COLLABORATE ON UNIQUE MULTIMEDIA ARTS EVENT

Limited Engagement begins April 12, 2008 at the Theatre at Saint Peter's

March 17, 2008, New York, NY.... **Phoenix Theatre Ensemble, Saint Peter's Church,** and **Through the Eyes of Children: The Rwanda Project,** announce a unique multimedia arts event commemorating the 1994 Rwanda genocide including a theatre production, a photo exhibit, an ecumenical jazz vespers, and invited speakers beginning on April 12, 2008, and continuing through May 4, 2008, at the Theatre and Art Gallery of Saint Peter's, at 54th Street just East of Lexington Avenue, New York, NY.

Phoenix Theatre Ensemble, an artist directed theatre company, announces the New York premiere of Sonja Linden's celebrated and award winning play **I HAVE BEFORE ME A REMARKABLE DOCUMENT GIVEN TO ME BY A YOUNG LADY FROM RWANDA** starring Susan Heyward and Joe Menino under the direction of Phoenix Co-Artistic Director, Elise Stone. **I HAVE BEFORE ME A REMARKABLE DOCUMENT GIVEN TO ME BY A YOUNG LADY FROM RWANDA** is a poignant and heartfelt journey shared by a young survivor of the Rwanda massacre and the burned-out English poet who befriends her. Profoundly moving, surprisingly humorous, ultimately uplifting, this is the must-see play of the season. Following highly successful runs in the United Kingdom as well as Los Angeles and Boston this production marks the play's New York premiere. The *Times of London* said of ***I Have Before Me....*** " **Beg, buy, or steal a ticket to this show!**" The *Boston Globe* refers to it as "a

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testament to the strength of the human spirit, the healing power of the written word, and the value of individual acts of kindness." *I Have Before Me....* begins performances on April 12 and will play through May 4th at the Theatre at Saint Peter's.

In conjunction with the production *Through the Eyes of Children: The Rwanda Project*, an award-winning photography project of photographs taken by orphans of the genocide, ages 8-18 will be exhibited at Saint Peter's. This traveling exhibit has been shown at such prestigious venues as The United Nations in New York, the Los Angeles and New York premiers of the movie *Hotel Rwanda*, at the U.S. Senate Building in Washington, D.C., at the U.S. Embassy in Kigali, the capital of Rwanda, the Houston Holocaust Museum and at venues in Canada and Europe, including a recent exhibit at The International School of Brussels in Belgium. These photographs are not your typical landscapes or portraits – and they haven't been taken by professional photographers. What is so unusual about this exhibit is that they are photographs taken by children – survivors and orphans of the Rwandan genocide – most of which never saw a camera before this project started. In support of the photography project, the children's photographs are available through a tax-deductible contribution of \$100 to The Rwanda Project, where supporters can receive a photograph of their choice from the exhibit. Funds received are used for future photographic projects, exhibitions, and for the education of the children at the Imbabazi Orphanage. To learn more about The Rwanda Project, visit www.rwandaproject.org.

Phoenix spokesperson Craig Smith states: "Phoenix has a strong commitment to social justice and we have been working on the Rwanda event for over two years. It is an honor and a responsibility to be presenting the New York premiere of this extraordinary play in conjunction with this memorable photography exhibit. The collaboration with Saint Peter's and its peace mission has increased the scope and focus of the project and the facilities at Saint Peter's are perfect for such an event."

A portion of all proceeds will benefit the children of the Imbabazi Orphanage, THROUGH THE EYES OF CHILDREN: THE RWANDA PROJECT as well as carefully selected nonprofit organizations working with Africa. Representatives of humanitarian organizations and artists will conduct "talk backs" after selected performances. Additionally, tools for mobilization and action in ongoing African genocides and crises will be made available. "It is our opinion, that for art to actually change people's lives, we need to be politically and socially proactive with our art." comments Mr. Smith.

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Award-winning playwright **Sonja Linden** has been produced in London and UK regional theatres as well as the United States and Australia. London productions include *Call Me Judas*, *The Jewish Daughter*, sequel to Brecht's *The Jewish Wife*, and *The Strange Passenger*. *I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document* was written in response to her encounters with a number of young Rwandan refugees at the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, where she was a writer in residence from 1997-2004. Here she set up the Write to Life Project, a creative and testimonial writing program offering clients of the Foundation the opportunity to discharge their painful experiences of persecution and exile through the act of writing. Her concern to make these voices public led to her founding iceandfire theatre company, of which she is currently the artistic director. Born out of the urgent need to give a platform to dispossessed voices, the company was launched in 2003 with the highly successful London premiere of *Young Lady from Rwanda*. The play was subsequently adapted for BBC World Service Radio Drama and in 2004 it went on a six week Arts Council funded national tour. *Young Lady from Rwanda* received its American premiere at the Missouri Repertory Theatre in April 2005, with subsequent productions at The Colony Theatre in Los Angeles, Chicago's Victory Gardens Theatre, Milwaukee Rep, Washington's African Continuum Theater and recently at the Stoneham Theatre in Boston.

I Have Before Me will play Tuesdays and Saturdays at 8:00 pm and Sundays at 1:30 and 7:30 pm from April 12th through May 4th. Tickets for ***I Have Before Me...*** are \$20 each and can be obtained by calling 212- 352-3101 or at www.PhoenixTheatreEnsemble.org. For more information, press interviews, photos or for press comps, please contact Craig Smith at 212-465-3446 or 646-256-7455

Listings Editors:

Performances at **Theatre at Saint Peters**

On 54th Street just East of Lexington Avenue

Tickets \$20; Tickets: 212- 352-3101 or PhoenixTheatreEnsemble.org

DAY	DATE	TIME
Saturday	April 12	8:00 pm
Sunday	April 13	1:30 pm
Sunday	April 13	7:30 pm
Tuesday	April 15	8:00 pm
Saturday	April 19	8:00 pm
Sunday	April 20	1:30 pm
Sunday	April 20	7:30 pm
Tuesday	April 22	8:00 pm
Saturday	April 26	8:00 pm
Sunday	April 27	1:30 pm
Sunday	April 27	7:30 pm
Tuesday	April 29	8:00 pm

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Saturday	May 3	8:00 pm
Sunday	May 4	1:30 pm
Sunday	May 4	7:30 pm

The Phoenix Theatre Ensemble is an artist directed ensemble in its 4th season. For further information, call (212) 465-3446. E-mail: info@PhoenixTheatreEnsemble.org. Or visit our website at www.PhoenixTheatreEnsemble.org.