

NEWS FROM PENUMBRATHEATRE

For Immediate Release

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A Gang Bullet Slays Another Innocent Victim A Community is Torn Asunder *What place does art have in fighting gang violence?*

April 14, 2006; St. Paul, MN: Penumbra Talk Backs, in conjunction with its current production, *Zooman and the Sign*, explore current challenges with gangs, law enforcement, and civic responsibility. As acknowledged by the participants, these forums provide a safe place for difficult dialogue between community members and experts against the backdrop of recent news coverage describing gun violence and the deaths of innocent bystanders. The series consists of seven Talk Backs with a panel of experts that include: St. Paul Police Chief John Harrington, Pioneer Press journalist Ruben Rosario, Director of Human Rights Tyrone Terrill, Community Activist Spike Moss, President of St. Paul NAACP Nathaniel Khaliq, and Ava Brown, a victim of violence, among others. For a full list of participating panelists, please [click here](#).

The first two Talk Backs of the series were held on April 12 and 13 with approximately 100 people representing a diverse cross-section of the local community, church organizations, college students, and residents of the Twin Cities. Comments shared by panelists and audience members during the Talk Backs revealed recurring themes:

- **We are all human—victim, killer, family, neighbors, police force.** A “Zooman” is a natural and inevitable result of a society’s choice not to value the lives of all of its members.
- **Consequences and Choices.** What makes us choose the things we do?
- **Apathy.** Why does a community become apathetic? What does it take to get people to care?
- **Intervention.** What kind of intervention programs can we develop? What will address the layers of trauma and underlying needs? How do we prevent the making of more “Zooman?”

There are five remaining Talk Backs:

- Friday, April 14
- Thursday, April 20
- Friday, April 21
- Saturday, April 22
- Thursday, April 27

*****MORE*****

In addition to the Talk Back series, Penumbra's Symposium partners with Macalester College to present **COMMUNITY-IN-ACTION: Response to the Past Repeating in the Present on Wednesday, April 19.**

The Symposium will take place in the Weyerhauser Chapel. A meet and greet with food will take place in the lower level of the Chapel at 5:30 p.m., followed by a panel presentation in the sanctuary of the Chapel at 7:00 p.m. Professor Harry Waters Jr., from the Theatre and Dance Department at Macalester College will serve as moderator, and the key presenter will be Dr. Baron Kelly, Professor at Chapman University. The event is free and open to the public.

If you are interested in witnessing this candid dialogue, please join us on one or more of these unique events. For more information on Penumbra's Talk Back series, the Symposium or to review a study guide, go to penumbratheatre.org or contact Julie McGarvie, Director of Marketing at 651-290-8686 x250 julie.mcgarvie@penumbratheatre.org

Founded in 1976, Penumbra is one of the few remaining African American theatres of the Black Arts Movement, and the only professional African American company in the state of Minnesota. The theatre is recognized for the quality of its powerful, mission driven art, and is widely regarded as a pioneer of cross-cultural dialogue. Penumbra is considered a leader in the interpretation of African American theatre and an authority in producing the work of August Wilson, and the development of many other culturally specific artists. Located in the heart of Saint Paul's historic African American neighborhood, the theatre has earned a reputation for providing an authentic forum for culturally specific work as well as a safe place for open and honest dialogue around issues of racism.

For more information, go to www.penumbratheatre.org.