

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 2007

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Mea Culpa Productions presents an Equity Co-op Production -
The Toronto Professional Premiere of Pulitzer Prize Finalist:

COLLECTED STORIES

by Donald Margulies

"Margulies's best play to date. Clever and sensitively written. Poignant and provocative."
- The New York Post

Directed by **Sasha Wentges**

Starring: **Cayle Chernin** (as Ruth) and **Erin Mackinnon** (as Lisa)

Set & Costume Design: **Akiva Romer-Segal**

Lighting Design: **Kristina McNamee**

Live Music: **Daniel Jamieson**

May 23 – June 3, 2007

at Tarragon Theatre Extra Space

Tickets Now On Sale 416-531-1827

30 Bridgman Ave., Toronto, Canada

"The sensation is not unlike what happens when you listen to an opera in which the voices capture ineffable shades of feeling that go way beyond the libretto."

- Ben Brantley, New York Times

Collected Stories is about a respected short story writer and teacher in her mid-fifties, Ruth Steiner (Cayle Cherin) has carved out a comfortable life for herself in a Greenwich Village apartment that she has occupied for decades. Lisa Morrison (Erin Mackinnon) is a callow yet talented young graduate student and aspiring writer, a child of suburban privilege when she meets Ruth and offers to become her assistant. Over six years, in as many scenes, *Collected Stories* eavesdrops on Ruth and Lisa as their relationship evolves (from mentor/protégée to loving friends to adversaries) and ultimately disintegrates-touching on age, artistic license and betrayal.

From the writer of *Sight Unseen* (Winner of an Obie for Best New American Play), *The Loman Family Picnic*, *Broken Sleep*, *Brooklyn Boy* and *Dinner with Friends* (Pulitzer Prize Winner); comes the stage production of *Collected Stories!*

Collected Stories originally opened ten years ago on May 20, 1997 and starred Maria Tucci as Ruth Stein and Debra Messing as Lisa Morrison (who would one year later rise to stardom as the second half of *Will & Grace*). It was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama that year. The legendary late Uta Hagen starred in the 2000 Stratford Festival production (her final performance) opposite Lorca Simons. This challenging script which has attracted such incredible actresses was subsequently made into a film in 2002, starring the great Linda Lavin as Ruth and Samantha Mathis as Lisa.

Collected Stories is directed by Mea Culpa Productions' Artistic Director Sasha Wentges (*The Darling Family*, *Uninvited*) and stars Cayle Chernin (*Goin' Down the Road*, *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, *Vagina Monologues*) and Erin Mackinnon (*Cold Meat Party*, *Salt-Water Moon*, *Unity 1918*). Joining the cast onstage is saxophonist Daniel Jamieson. The design team are recent graduates from Ryerson University: Akiva Romer-Segal (Set & Costume Design) and Kristina McNamee (Lighting Design).

Formed in 1994 in Montreal, Mea Culpa Productions has been successfully producing works that incorporate two or more means of artistic expression (i.e.: dance, music, spoken word, theatre...) and are best known for their delirious cabarets. Since relocating to Toronto in 2000, Mea Culpa has produced two successful productions: *The Darling Family*, which utilized the text of Linda Griffiths and incorporated the use of a videographer and live musician, as well as *Uninvited* (SummerWorks).

"Bracingly smart...A thoughtful and many layered exploration of the relationship between a short story specialist in the autumn of her career and an anxious, bright, young thing ready

to storm the book world barricades. Like the best fiction, in drama or prose, Margulies' "Collected Stories" captures much of the nagging mysteriousness, the intriguing incompleteness of life."

-Variety

"As usual, Margulies holds the rich ore of his material up to the light so that it sends beams in every direction. Changing styles in feminist thought, the tangled connections between creativity and ideology, the writer's odd place in our money-centered world, the way we turn our friends into surrogate families--while always fluid and lively, the play is thick with ideas, like a stockpot of good stew."

-The Village Voice

"A provocative new play. As always, Margulies is literate, intellectually stimulating and able to create characters of both dramatic and human interest. His ideas and language hold our attention and earn our respect."

-New York Magazine

MEA CULPA PRODUCTIONS presents

COLLECTED STORIES by Donald Margulies

Directed by Sasha Wentges Starring Cayle Chernin & Erin Mackinnon

Previews May 23 **Opens** May 24 **Runs** through June 3, 2007

Shows Tuesday – Saturday, 8pm / Saturday & Sunday Matinees, 2:30pm

Tickets: Preview \$10 / Tues, Wed, Thurs & Sat Matinee \$28 / Fri & Sat \$32 / Students \$15 / Seniors & Equity \$20

Tarragon Theatre Extra Space, 30 Bridgman Ave., (1 blk N of Dupont of Bathurst), Toronto

Box Office 416-531-1827 www.TOtix.ca

www.meaculpa productions.ca