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MEDIA ALERT FOR THEATRE EDITORS AND REVIEWERS
AND CALENDAR LISTINGS

**LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS &
MC COY RIGBY ENTERTAINMENT**

present the Fifth and Final Production of their 2006/2007 Season!

THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S OVER THE TAVERN III

by Tom Dudzick
Directed by Glenn Casale

*Limited Engagement begins June 1 at
La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts!
(Press Opening Saturday, June 2)*

May 7, 2007...La Mirada, Calif....LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS & MC COY RIGBY ENTERTAINMENT present the fifth and final production of their 2006-2007 season, **THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S**, written by Tom Dudzick and directed by Glenn Casale. **THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S** will begin performances on Friday, June 1 (with a press opening on Saturday, June 2) and will run through Sunday, June 17 at La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts, 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada, near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue.

OVER THE TAVERN and **KING OF THE MOON'S** final chapter takes place in the barroom almost a decade later, during the infamous Blizzard of '77 and masterfully completes the Pazinski family saga. When the mayor announces a driving ban throughout the city, the Pazinskis find themselves trapped, forcing them to confront family issues through miraculous and comical mishaps. **THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S** is an endearing story about an ordinary family that discovers the gifts of real love.

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ABOUT THE PLAY or (HOW ART IMITATES LIFE)

The Playwright Remembers the Blizzard of '77 - There isn't a Buffalonian over 35 who doesn't remember where he or she was during the great Blizzard of '77. That blustery January I was paying my dues as an actor, performing in homemade musical comedies for Buffalo's dinner theatre industry. ("Industry," he says. Five restaurants.) On the night the snows arrived, my fellow cast members and I were onstage, behaving very unprofessionally, rushing through our lines in an effort to beat the snow before it made the drive home impossible. This dinner theatre was an overblown truck stop called The Packett Inn on the outskirts of Buffalo, New York. We were giving the final performance of an original show entitled *Make Your Moves with Confidence* to an audience of eight people who had great snow tires. It's a strange and rare occurrence when the cast outnumbers the audience, but stranger things were to come.

When the show ended, we thanked the 4 couples for coming, rushed out of our costumes, ran out to our cars and -- *thud* -- couldn't start them. It seems we had all parked in the lot facing "the historical and picturesque Erie Canal" and the 59 mph winds had blown picturesque subzero snow into our engines while we had been inside rushing our lines. Back into the warm restaurant we dashed.

As stranded people go, we were pretty lucky. The Packett Inn was an inn after all. It had rooms. I can think of worse places to wait out a natural disaster than a restaurant/motel.

During the following few nights while the snow paralyzed the city, we performed our show for the stranded motel guests. The daytime hours were filled with rehearsing our new show that was scheduled to open in a week. Coffee and meal breaks were spent looking out windows and seeing nothing but white, white, white. Desperate minutes were spent on the phone tracking the progress of friends and family who were either stranded in offices or department stores, or were inching their way homeward.

A fellow cast member kept a diary during the Blizzard of '77 and left it to me as a memento. Just paging through, it seems that each day starts with the same entry, "This morning we all went out to try and start our cars. No luck!"

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Then one page read: "A driving ban has been posted. \$100 fine for driving! Ridiculous!"

Next page: "That stupid driving ban was finally lifted. Hooray!"

Next page: "Oh my God! Seven people died in their cars on the Thruway last night!"

Next page: "The driving ban was reinstated."

I remember the hours spent watching storm coverage on TV, and wondering, "When will it end?" It ended five intense days later. Main roadways were cleared by the National Guard. Cars were jumped, started and pushed. Families were reunited. And while a city tried to get its life back to normal, we in our little theatrical world were finally able to get our new show up on its feet. Another home-made musical. It didn't shake the world, but we did manage to make a handful of storm-weary patrons forget their troubles for a couple of hours. At the time I never dreamed I was unconsciously gathering background material for a play of my own called *The Last Mass at St. Casimir's*.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM

TOM DUDZICK (Playwright) was born in Buffalo (over a tavern) and received his theatrical training in local dinner theatre during the 1970's. In New York City his first play, *Greetings!*, was produced by Arthur Cantor and starred stage veteran Darren McGavin. It has gone on to become a regional Christmas favorite. Tonight's play, *The Last Mass at St. Casimir's*, is the third and final chapter of the *Over the Tavern Trilogy*, beginning with *Over the Tavern*, which premiered at Buffalo's Studio Arena Theatre and has gone on to great regional success, breaking box office records in such cities as Pittsburgh, St. Louis, Milwaukee, Sarasota, Cincinnati and San Jose. Part two of the trilogy entitled *King o' the Moon* is fast catching up to *Tavern's* success. Mr. Dudzick is an active member of the Dramatists Guild and now resides in the Hudson Valley region with his wife, Holly, and two children, Charles and Emma.

GLENN CASALE (Director) directed on Broadway *Peter Pan* starring Cathy Rigby (Tony Award nomination Best Revival) which was filmed by A&E and garnered two Emmy Awards. Off-Broadway he directed *The Property Known as Garland* starring Adrienne Barbeau, and *Dragapella* at Studio 54 (Drama Desk nomination and Lucille Lortel Award nomination for Best Production). For Joop van den Ende's Stage Entertainment and Stage Holdings, Glenn directed the critically acclaimed *The Wiz* (Netherlands) and *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (Netherlands, Germany, Belgium) which was named the Netherlands' 2006 Musical of the Year and is listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* as that country's highest-grossing musical.

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Tours and regional credits are numerous and varied, including several world premieres: *Camelot* starring Michael York, Rachel York and James Barbour; Leslie Bricusse's *Dr. Dolittle*; Tyne Daly and Charles Durning in *Ballroom*, music and lyrics by Alan and Marilyn Bergman; Lanie Robertson's *Stringbean* starring Leslie Uggams; *Wrestlers* starring Mark Harmon and George Clooney; *Bingo!* the musical by Michael Heitzman, Ilene Reid and David Holcenberg; and Ken and Mitzi Welch's *From the Top* starring Carol Burnett. Glenn was thrilled to again work with Ms. Burnett when she starred as Joanne in *Company* for producer Barry Brown. For California Musical Theatre Glenn has directed *Scarlet Pimpernel*, *Triumph of Love*, *1776*, *Into the Woods*, *Gypsy*, *A Little Night Music* and many others. For Reprise! Broadway's Best he directed Tony Danza in *Fiorello!*, Patrick Cassidy in *The Threepenny Opera*, and the Los Angeles Ovation Award-winning Best Musical *Anything Goes* starring Rachel York, Brent Barrett, Sally Struthers and Fred Willard. His television directing credits include "The Faculty" starring Meredith Baxter and "The Wayans Brothers." Glenn is the head of the graduate directing program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas and serves on the Board of Directors for Nevada Conservatory Theatre.

The cast of **THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S** will feature Robin Pearson Rose, Erin Bennett, Marc Valera, James Leo Ryan and Robert Della Cerra.

THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S has assembled an award-winning design team. The set design is by Gary Wissmann. The lighting design is by R. Kent Sheranian. The sound design is by Josh Bessom. The costume design is by Judy Jou. The Technical Director is David Cruise. The Production Stage Manager is Gina Farina.

THE LAST MASS AT ST. CASIMIR'S will begin performances on Friday, June 1 (with a press opening on Saturday, June 2) and run for three weeks through Sunday, June 17. Performances will be Tuesday through Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. There will be no 2 p.m. performance on Saturday, June 2 or 7 p.m. performance on Sunday, June 3. Tickets are \$45 and \$37.50 and can be purchased at La Mirada Theatre's Web site, lamiradatheatre.com. Student, Senior, Children and group discounts are available. For more information, call the La Mirada Theatre Box Office at (562) 944-9801 or (714) 994-6310.

LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, now in its 29th year, has been hailed by the Los Angeles Times as "one of the best Broadway-style houses in Southern California." This beautiful state-of-the-art theatre has been producing quality productions for its Southern California audiences since 1977. The theatre has produced several National Tours and is the recipient of many accolades including Ovation and Emmy Awards and Tony Award nominations. The theatre is located at 14900 La Mirada Boulevard in La Mirada, near the intersection of Rosecrans Avenue where the 91 and 5 freeways meet. Parking is theatre-adjacent and free. For further information 562-944-9801 or visit www.lamiradatheatre.com.

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McCOY RIGBY ENTERTAINMENT combines the talents of musical theatre star Cathy Rigby with Tom McCoy's extensive production and theatrical experience and has become one of the nation's premier theatrical production companies. Credits include Tony-nominated Broadway shows, long-running national tours, multiple-award-winning Los Angeles stage productions, and hit TV specials.

The number of major theatrical awards garnered by McCoy Rigby Entertainment includes 3 Ovation Awards, 25 Drama-Logue Awards, 3 Backstage Garland Awards and 3 Tony Award nominations, 20 Ovation nominations and 8 NAACP award nominations for the touring production of "Jesus Christ Superstar." In addition, the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences awarded McCoy Rigby Entertainment an Emmy for Best Scene Design as part of four nominations for the A&E network production of "Peter Pan."
www.mccoyrigby.com

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