

Media Contact: Julie McGarvie 651-288-6784
julie.mcgarvie@penumbratheatre.org



Tickets: Penumbra Theatre Box Office
651-224-3180 or penumbratheatre.org

The Whipping Man
By Matthew Lopez
A riveting story of the birth of American freedom

January 30, 2009; St. Paul, MN: Penumbra Theatre Company, the nation's preeminent African American theatre, proudly announces the opening of ***The Whipping Man***, written by Matthew Lopez, directed by Lou Bellamy, **February 19, 2009**. The production will run **February 19 – March 8, 2009**. Previews on February 17 & 18.

An exciting new playwright, Matthew Lopez, brings to the Penumbra stage a riveting story of violence, passion and hope surrounding the end of the Civil War and the birth of American freedom. In the spring of 1865, Caleb De Leon returns to his father's home in Richmond, Virginia badly wounded. His family gone, the once grand house has been pillaged beyond recognition. Amidst the wreckage are two familiar faces: Simon, the former slave who raised him, and John, the former slave who grew up alongside him. Out from the rubble of the fallen South, Simon, John and Caleb face one another for the first time as free men.

As Lopez invites us to experience the rich complexity of this moment along with Simon, Caleb, and John, he simultaneously illuminates some of the less well known realities during this tumultuous time: the bankrupting of an economic system based on black bodily labor, the fleeing of wealthy slave-owning families in the aftermath of the Civil War, the miscegenation between whites and their black slaves, and the interweaving of Jewish and African American lives and religious beliefs and customs. This last reality is often overshadowed by its Christian corollary, but Jews, though a minority in America, did in fact have a long history in Richmond, and Jewish leaders were vocal on both sides of the slavery debate. As was often the case in Christian slave-owning households, slaves of Jewish masters also took up the practices and beliefs of their owners, infusing them with their own perspectives and symbols, using ritual to ground daily living and provide hope for the future – in this life or the next.

Indeed, as we witness the uneasy reunion of former slaves and former master during three stormy days in 1865, we must ask ourselves who among them is free and who is enslaved? To who and what do each of these characters offer their allegiance? And in the face of their complex reality, how might we understand their humanity, citizenship, rights, liberties, responsibilities, and power?

Starring:

Duane Boutté (John), Joseph Papke (Caleb De Leon), and Bruce A. Young (Simon).

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ARTISTS' BIOS:

LOU BELLAMY (Director& Producer) is the founder and artistic director of Penumbra Theatre. He has been a member of the University of Minnesota's faculty for 31 years and is currently appointed to the rank of Associate Professor in the Department of Theatre and Dance. Recent awards include the 2007 OBIE for Direction and the 2006 McKnight Distinguished Artist Award. His most recent directing credits include *Fences* and *The Piano Lesson* at Penumbra, and *A Raisin in the Sun*, co-produced with Cleveland and Arizona Theatre, and staged at Cleveland Play House and Arizona Theatre Company. This production of *A Raisin in the Sun* will be staged at the Guthrie Theater this season.

MATTHEW LOPEZ (Playwright) premiered his play *The Whipping Man* at Luna Stage in April 2006. His play *Tio Pepe* was recently presented at the Public Theater as part of Summer Play Festival 2008. Other plays include *Reverberation*, *Noble Street*, *Between Us*, and *Phemmi Klompers, Agent to the Stars*. His work has been seen and developed at the McCarter Theatre, The New Group, The Lark Play Development Center, Luna Stage, Backhouse Productions, Monarch Theatre and breedingground Productions. He is a 2009 member of the Ars Nova Writers Group. Matthew is a graduate of the University of South Florida.

DUANE BOUTTE' (John) has performed on Broadway in *Carousel* and *Parade*. Off-Broadway performances include Playwrights Horizons' *The Bubbly Black Girl Sheds her Chameleon Skin*, and *The Heliotrope Bouquet*, and *Civil Sex* at the Public Theater. World premiere credits include Terrence McNally's *Some Men* at the Philadelphia Theatre Co. and Charles Randolph Wright's *Cuttin' Up* at Arena Stage and Alliance Theatre. He has also worked with Vineyard Theatre, The Acting Company, and LaMaMa, Shakespeare Theatre Company (D.C.), Center Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Seattle Rep., La Jolla Playhouse, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center, Goodman Theatre and Dallas Theatre Center, among others. Film credits include *You Belong to Me*, *Stonewall*, and *Brother to Brother*. Credits as a musical composer include *Lyin' Up a Breeze* for Second Stage, Fresno, and *Caravaggio Chiaroscuro* for La Mama, New York.

JOSEPH PAPKE (Caleb De Leon) is proud to be making his Penumbra stage debut. As an actor and dialect coach his professional credits include Park Square Theatre, Mixed Blood Theatre, Actors Theatre of MN, Illusion Theatre, Jon Hassler Theatre, Dudley Riggs, Walking Shadow Theatre Company, Paul Bunyan Playhouse, and The Children's Theatre Company. As an educator, he has taught theater skills at Normandale Community College, Youth Performance Company, and the Guthrie Theater. Joseph earned his M.F.A. from The Shakespeare Theatre Company's Academy for Classical Acting. Look for him in the upcoming film, *Midnight Chronicles*.

BRUCE A. YOUNG (Simon) began his theater career in Chicago as a member of the Organic Theater Company. He was also a founding member of Shakespeare Repertory, now Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. He has performed on Broadway in the American premiere of *Rose Rage* and *Macbeth*. Select television credits include *What Ever*

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Happened to Baby Jane, The Father Clements Story, The X-Files, Highlander, The Sentinel, Grey's Anatomy, The Unit, The Drew Carey Show, Becker, The Guardian, The District, Family Law, Cold Case and NYPD Blue. Film credits include *Enough, Trespass, Blink, Risky Business, Jurassic Park 3, Undisputed, Basic Instinct, The Color of Money, An Innocent Man, The Tie That Binds, The War, Hot Shots, Naked Gun 33 1/3, Edmond, and Phenomenon.*

KENNETH F. EVANS (Scenic Designer) has designed several productions at Penumbra including *King Hedley II, Seven Guitars, Two Trains Running, Joe Turner's Come and Gone, Jitney, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Pill Hill, Playboy of the West Indies, Someplace Soft to Fall, Riffs, Black Eagles, The Piano Lesson* and the one man tour of *Malcolm X*. Other credits include *'night Mother, The Foreigner, Kuni-leml, A Chorus Line, and Painting Churches* at the Birmingham Theater (a Nederlander organization) and Off-Broadway revivals of *Les Blancs* and *Streamers*. Ken received his undergraduate degree from the University of Minnesota and his M.F.A. from Wayne State University. His current lighting designs can be seen locally for *A Prairie Home Companion* with Garrison Keillor.

MARTIN GWINUP (Sound Designer) is an associate professor in the Theatre Arts and Dance Department at the University of Minnesota. He teaches audio and video technology, design and production. He has also worked in the Twin Cities area as a freelance sound/video designer and technician for 18 years. Martin has worked for the Frank Theatre, History Theatre, Children's Theatre, Cricket Theatre and Eye of the Storm. Recent design credits at Penumbra include *Black Nativity—Hear Again the Christmas Story!, Fences, REDSHIRTS, Get Ready, Blue, and Grandchildren of the Buffalo Soldiers.*

KALERE A. PAYTON (Costume Designer) most recently designed costumes for *The Wiz* at the University of Minnesota. Other University of Minnesota Theatre and Dance Costume Design credits include *The Arabian Nights* and Uri Sands' dance piece *Happy*. Kalere is the Costume Designer for the University of Minnesota's upcoming production of Tony Kushner's *A Bright Room Called Day*. Kalere has also assisted Mathew J. Lefebvre, Costume Designer for *Get Ready, REDSHIRTS* and *Fences* at Penumbra and *Two Trains Running* at Signature Theatre Company in New York. She is working towards a Master of Fine Arts in Costume Design/Technology, to be completed in May of 2009.

KATHY A. PERKINS (Lighting Designer) has designed throughout the United States, as well as in Europe and South Africa. She has worked Off-Broadway with The New Federal Theatre and Manhattan Theatre Club and in such venues as Carnegie Hall and Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM). She was resident designer for two seasons at the Los Angeles Theatre Center (LATC). Regional designs include American Conservatory Theatre, The Goodman, Alliance, Mark Taper, Berkeley Repertory, St. Louis Black Repertory, A Contemporary Theatre, Indiana Repertory, Seattle Repertory, Congo Square, Alabama Shakespeare Festival and Court Theatre. Kathy is the editor/coeditor of

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five anthologies focusing on African/African Diaspora women. She currently chairs the lighting design program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

RABBI JOSEPH EDELHEIT (Dramaturgical Consultant) is the Director of Religious and Jewish Studies and Professor of Philosophy at St Cloud State University. He has been a rabbi for more than 35 years and served as the Senior Rabbi of Temple Israel of Minneapolis until 2001. He has a D Min from the Divinity School of the University of Chicago and was the first rabbi to complete his doctoral work in Christian theology. He has been an AIDS activist since 1986 and served on President Clinton's Presidential Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS. He has authored scholarly articles and chapters on interfaith dialogue, Post-Holocaust Theology, HIV/AIDS and religion as well as essays dealing with the Hebrew Bible and Jewish Philosophy. He and his wife Machele Norling direct Living India a non-profit which does HIV/AIDS prevention education and cares for AIDS orphans whose parents have died of AIDS and are themselves infected.

STEPHANIE LEIN WALSETH (August Wilson Fellow) is an M.A./Ph.D. candidate in Theatre Historiography at the University of Minnesota. Previously, she served as the Managing Director of Mu Performing Arts. She has worked professionally as a theatre administrator, actor, director, dramaturg, and stage manager with several theatres including Mu, Mixed Blood Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, The Playwrights' Center, Frank Theatre, Theatre in the Round, Starting Gate Productions, Theatre Unbound, Chaos Theories, CLIMB Theatre, and the Portland Stage Company. Her writing has appeared in the *Baylor Journal of Theatre and Performance*.

PENUMBRA THEATRE was founded in 1976 by Lou Bellamy to make socially responsible art – art that demanded a response, art with intent, art that could create change. At a time when roles for black artists were limited to stereotypes and comical representations, Penumbra produced theater that roared with authenticity through the unrestrained and rich voice of black artists and playwrights. This respect for cultural authenticity became Penumbra's signature style – and demand for it has reached new heights from theatres around the country fostering collaborations, new productions, tours and awards. Penumbra has achieved a national presence with presentations at Roundhouse Theatre in Bethesda, Maryland, Signature Theatre in New York City, the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, Minnesota. This season, Penumbra is proud to co-produce Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* with Cleveland Playhouse and Arizona Theatre Company. For the latest news and updates, visit www.penumbratheatre.org.

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Quick Reference

Production:	<i>The Whipping Man</i>
Playwright:	Matthew Lopez
Producer:	Penumbra Theatre Company and Lou Bellamy
Director:	Lou Bellamy
Ensemble:	Duane Boutté (John) Joseph Papke (Caleb De Leon) Bruce A. Young (Simon)
Design Team:	Kenneth F. Evans (Scenic Design) Martin Gwinup (Sound Design) Kalere A. Payton (Costume Design) Kathy A. Perkins (Lighting Design)
Dates:	February 19 – March 8, 2009 Previews February 17 & 18 Opening Night, Thursday, February 19 at 7:30 pm
Performances:	Wednesdays at 10:00am and 7:30pm Thursdays at 7:30pm Fridays at 7:30pm Saturdays at 7:30pm Sundays at 2:00pm and 7:30pm
Tickets:	651-224-3180 or penumbratheatre.org
Price:	\$18 - \$38
Special events:	Symposium on <i>The Whipping Man</i> March 2, 2009, 6:00 pm At Macalester College - Weyerhaeuser Board Room 1600 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN Free and open to the public ASL Performance on February 28, at 7:30pm Post-play discussions: February 25, 26, and March 4
Theatre Location:	270 North Kent Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102
Media Contact:	Julie McGarvie, Marketing Director 651-288-6784 or julie.mcgarvie@penumbratheatre.org