



For more information, contact
Diane Rhodes Bergman
Fort Worth Opera
817-269-9795

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HBO'S STUNNING 'ANGELS IN AMERICA' TAKES FLIGHT AT THE MODERN

FORT WORTH, TEXAS — APRIL 28, 2008 — Q Cinema, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and the Fort Worth Opera, in conjunction with the city-wide More Life festival, are joining forces to present a special screening of the HBO production of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America* on Saturday, May 3, 2008 beginning at 2 p.m. at the Modern.

Kushner's Pulitzer- and Tony-winning plays became the defining theatrical events of the 1990s and were an astonishing mix of philosophy, politics and vibrant gay soap opera that summed up the Reagan era for an entire generation of theatergoers. This 2003 HBO adaptation, ably directed by Mike Nichols (*The Graduate*), provides a time capsule of the '80s and reveals the deep emotional subcurrents that give the play its lasting power.

The story centers around Prior Walter (Justin Kirk) and Louis Ironson (Ben Shenkman), a gay couple that falls apart when Prior grows ill as a result of AIDS. But disease is not the only thing invading Prior's life: He begins to have religious visions of an angel (Emma Thompson) announcing that he is a prophet. Louis, who doesn't cope well with suggestions of mortality, leaves and starts a relationship with Joe Pitt (Patrick Wilson), a closeted Mormon who works for Roy Cohn (Al Pacino) — the real-life right-wing lawyer notorious for his ruthless behind-the-scenes machinations. Add in Joe's depressed and hallucinating wife Harper (Mary Louise Parker), his determined but open-minded mother Hannah (Meryl Streep), a fierce drag queen/nurse named Belize (Jeffrey Wright) and you have a work of genuine power. The miniseries went on to win a staggering 11 Emmys and numerous other awards.

Local veteran character actor Jerry Russell, who played Roy Cohn in Stage West's unforgettable production of *Angels in America* in 1998 and '99, will be on hand to introduce the series' second half and the cast of Fort Worth Opera's *Angels in America* opera (which opens May 16) will also attend.

THE SCHEDULE:

2 p.m. Part I: "Millennium Approaches" with two 10-minute intermissions

5:30 p.m. Break for dinner. Wine, beer and light menu available for purchase in Modern Cafe

7 p.m. Part II: "Perestroika" with two 10-minute intermissions

10:15 p.m. Reception with the cast of the *Angels in America* opera at Esoterica, 941 Foch St.

There is no charge to attend this event but a donation of \$20 at the door would be greatly appreciated. Tickets may be reserved in advance by calling Tina Gorski at 817-849-2154 or e-mailing her at tgorski@themodern.org. Reserved tickets must be claimed by 1:45 p.m. on May 3 or **they will be released for reissue**. Any remaining tickets will be available at the Modern beginning at 1 p.m. the day of the event. Seating will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

ABOUT MORE LIFE

More Life: The Art & Science of AIDS is a community-wide effort designed to bring attention to the current HIV/AIDS epidemic in the North Texas area. The More Life Festival will be held May 10–June 8, 2008 and will feature multiple performing and visual arts, town hall meetings as well as educational opportunities from AIDS service organizations and other participating partners, all anchored by the Fort Worth Opera production of *Angels in America*. Most associated activities will take place in the Community Arts Center of Fort Worth. More Life is a collaborative effort of participating social service organizations including AIDS Outreach Center, Tarrant County AIDS InterFaith Network, Samaritan House and Fort Worth Opera, in partnership with arts organizations such as Stage West, Contemporary Dance/Fort Worth, Open Door Productions, Amphibian Stage Productions, Fort Worth Poetry Slams, Hip Pocket Theater and Q Cinema's 10th Annual Fort Worth Gay & Lesbian International Film Festival (taking place May 29-June 7). Information about More Life can be found online at www.morelifetexas.com.

ABOUT JERRY RUSSELL

Jerry Russell has been performing on stage since he was 10 years old. His professional career, over the past 25 years, has included more than 100 stage roles and an equal number of directing credits. As founder and producing director of Stage West Theater, much of his work has been with that organization. Since moving to Texas in 1973, he has also performed at Casa Manana, Dallas Repertory Theater, Shakespeare-in-the-Park, the Majestic Theater, Bass Performance Hall, Lyric Stage, the Dallas Theater Center and the Pittsburgh Public Theater.

Significant roles include *El Gallo* in *The Fantasticks*, *Teach* in *American Buffalo*, *Lear* in *King Lear*, *George* in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, *The Common Man* in *A Man For All Seasons*, *Nat* in *I'm Not Rappaport*, *Marquis de Sade* in *Quills*, *Roy Cohn* in *Angels In America, Pts. 1 & 2*, *Mr. Green* in *Visiting Mr. Green*, and the Stage Manager in *Our Town*. He also performs the one-man show, *Clarence Darrow for the Defense*.

Recent credits include the role of *Tupolski* in *The Pillowman* and direction of acclaimed productions of *Season's Greetings* and *Major Barbara*. He also wrote and directed a special adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* for Performing Arts Fort Worth which played to 5,000 area students.

Russell was recognized as Best Actor of 2005 by *The Dallas Morning News* and received the 2006 Best Actor award from the Dallas Theater League for his performances in *Visiting Mr. Green*.

PRESS MATERIALS: High-res photo attached of Mary Louise Parker and Jeffrey Wright. More images available upon request.