

Gregory Crafts
(310) 717-3102
Gregory@gregorycrafts.com
www.friendsliketheseplay.com

Acclaimed original *Friends Like These* goes to Fringe!

Rising playwright Gregory Crafts' powerful exploration of teen violence rides its popularity and critical praise to both the Hollywood and New York Fringe Festivals.

LOS ANGELES – After playing to sell out crowds in both 2009 and early 2010, endorsements from local press and critics (including a “GO!” from *LA Weekly*) and a nomination for Best Ensemble Cast at the Artistic Director Achievement Awards, the original piece *Friends Like These* is excited to announce that it has been accepted to both the acclaimed New York International Fringe Festival and the first-ever Hollywood Fringe Festival.

A new work that first debuted last fall with Theatre Unleashed, *Friends Like These* takes a candid and poignant look at the staggering issue of violence in our high schools. Garrett is an outsider who spends most of his troubled existence in a fantasy world called Haven...that is until he meets Nicole, the popular cheerleader with a curious mind. As quickly as things begin looking up for Garrett, they come crashing down, forcing him to face both his past mistakes and his harsh present reality while he struggles for redemption. This gut-wrenching piece unswervingly explores the emotional trauma brought on by social mores during high school, forcing a confrontation with the causes and tragic consequences that left us staggered as a nation during Columbine and other high school shootings.

“Although Columbine occurred 10 years ago, violence amongst teenagers and young adults is still an ongoing issue,” said co-director Sean Fitzgerald. “After Columbine, those who dressed similar to the shooters were further ostracized. This production seeks to explore this cycle and to humanize those who are regarded merely as outcasts.”

The show, which features most of the original cast, will be performed Thursday-Saturday, June 24-26 at 9 p.m. as well as a special 1 p.m. matinee on the 26th at The Ruby Theatre @ The Complex in Hollywood. On famed Theatre Row. It will be one of 176 different productions playing at 40 various locations around the city over 10 days that will make up the inaugural Hollywood Fringe Festival, ranging from classic works to original plays, sketch comedy, improv and more. The dates and the location for its appearance at FringeNYC is TBD.

“I’m thrilled to be able to take *Friends Like These* to the Fringe this summer as its an exciting opportunity to get my work out there,” said playwright Gregory Crafts. “I wanted to introduce it to a wider audience. These festivals provide an excellent opportunity for a producing artist like me to get my work out there to the masses. It’s also a great chance to meet fellow artists and what others are doing. Both L.A. and New York are going to be exciting festivals.”

Crafts entry was also made possible thanks to various donors and a clever grass roots fundraising campaign that featured a karaoke party, a partnership with Menchie's Frozen Yogurt, a magic show with some of the city’s best illusionists, an online donation drive and more. Crafts and his crew are still looking to raise more funding for the New York festival. More information can be found on the show’s website www.friendsliketheseplay.com or on www.hollywoodfringe.org and www.fringenyc.org.

“It’s an important piece for me...I was an outcast in high school and certainly felt like a ‘trenchcoat kid,’ so I had a lot of personal experience to pull from,” Crafts said. “I don’t think the story is very self-reflective anymore and I certainly don’t think it’s just about a school shooting. It’s a story about five kids and how complex their lives are.”

Calendar Listing Request:

Friends Like These – Hollywood Fringe Festival

Directed by Sean Fitzgerald and Vance Roi Reyes
Written by Gregory Crafts
Produced by Gregory Crafts and Theatre Unleashed

SYNOPSIS:

Appearing in the first ever Hollywood Fringe Festival, the wildly popular and critically acclaimed *Friends Like These* takes a candid and poignant look at the staggering issue of violence in our high schools. Garrett is an outsider who spends most of his troubled existence in a fantasy world called Haven...that is until he meets Nicole, the popular cheerleader with a curious mind. As quickly as things begin looking up for Garrett, they come crashing down, forcing him to face both his past mistakes and his harsh present reality while he struggles for redemption. This gut-wrenching piece will unswervingly explore the emotional trauma brought on by social mores during high school, forcing a confrontation with the causes and tragic consequences that left us staggered as a nation during Columbine and other high school shootings.

DATES AND TIMES:

June 24-26
Thursday-Saturday, 9 p.m.,
**Special Saturday matinee performance on June 26 at 1 p.m.*
***Meet and greet with artists after each show*

LOCATION:

The Ruby Theatre @ The Complex
6476 Santa Monica Blvd.
Hollywood, CA 90038
**Valet parking available for all evening performances*

TICKET PRICES:

General Admission: \$10
**Order tickets by calling (866) 811-4111 or at www.hollywoodfringe.org*
***Tickets can also be purchased at the box office on the day of the show (if available).*

MORE INFORMATION:

For further information, check out our website at: www.friendsliketheseplay.com
Or check out www.hollywoodfringe.org.

PRESS CONTACT:

Gregory Crafts
(310) 717-3102
Gregory@gregorycrafts.com
www.friendsliketheseplay.com