

## News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **TIMELINE THEATRE COMPANY OPENS ITS 11<sup>TH</sup> SEASON WITH CLIFFORD ODETS' DEPRESSION-ERA DRAMA *PARADISE LOST* AUGUST 25 – OCTOBER 21, 2007**

TimeLine Theatre Company opens its 2007-2008 season with *Paradise Lost* by Clifford Odets, directed by Louis Contey. The play runs August 25 - October 21, 2007 (previews 8/21 – 8/24) at TimeLine Theatre, 615 W. Wellington Ave., Chicago. Press Opening performances are Saturday, August 25 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, August 26 at 2 p.m. **To purchase tickets, visit [timelinetheatre.com](http://timelinetheatre.com) or call 773.281.TIME (8463).**

Reportedly considered by Odets himself to be his best and most significant work, *Paradise Lost* is an intense family drama set amid the vast landscape of the Great Depression. How will financial misfortune affect the values, relationships and aspirations of the well-educated, middle-class Gordons and their circle of friends? Odets' passionate characters speak with a fast-talking language that sings with big dreams and optimism for the future, despite daunting odds. "It is my hope," wrote the playwright, "that when people see *Paradise Lost*, they're going to be glad they are alive."

"With his blend of social commentary and emotional complexity, Odets revolutionized the American theater during The Depression by putting the struggles and longings of common citizens up on stage," said TimeLine Artistic Director PJ Powers. "He is a playwright who seems custom-made for TimeLine, and Contey is a director who has a tremendous gift for making Odets' urban poetry shine."

Contey received a Joseph Jefferson Citation for Outstanding Direction and TimeLine received a Citation for Outstanding Production for the company's 2002 production of Odets' *Awake and Sing!*.

#### **Performance Schedule/Events**

*Paradise Lost* opens on Saturday, August 25 at 8 p.m. and runs Wednesdays (9/26, 10/3, 10/10, and 10/17 only) and Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 4 p.m. (except 8/25) and 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. through Sunday, October 21, 2007. Preview performances are Tuesday, August 21 through Thursday, August 24 at 8 p.m. *Paradise Lost* will run approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes, including one intermission.

**THEATER THURSDAY:** Thursday, August 30, presented in conjunction with the League of Chicago Theatres. Package costs \$30 and includes pre-show hors d'oeuvres and drinks with members of the company and production team beginning at 6:30 p.m. (location TBA), followed by the 8 p.m. performance and a post-show discussion at TimeLine.

**POST-SHOW DISCUSSIONS:** Free post-show discussions with members of the cast and production team on Thursday, August 30; Sunday, September 2; Thursday, September 6; Thursday, September 13; and Sunday, September 16.

**SUNDAY SCHOLARS SERIES:** An hour-long panel discussion with experts on the themes and issues of the play after the performance on Sunday, September 9, moderated by TimeLine Board Member Peter Kuntz, managing director of programs and production for the Chicago Humanities Festival. Tickets to the Sunday Scholars Series are \$10; \$5 for TimeLine subscribers.

**Buying Tickets**

**Tickets are \$25 (Wednesday – Friday) or \$30 (Saturday & Sunday).** Preview tickets are \$15. Student tickets are \$15 with valid ID. Group rates for groups of 10 or more are available. Advance purchase is recommended as performances may sell out. To purchase tickets or for more information, **call 773.281.TIME (8463) or visit [timelinetheatre.com](http://timelinetheatre.com).**

**Audience Resources**

Dramaturgical lobby displays, a production Study Guide and other information will be made available at [timelinetheatre.com](http://timelinetheatre.com). A streaming video preview will be available at [StageChannel.com](http://StageChannel.com).

**Sponsors**

TimeLine's 2007-08 season is sponsored in part by **Humana, Inc.**

**Location/Transportation/Parking/Accessibility**

TimeLine Theatre is located at 615 W. Wellington Ave., inside the Wellington Avenue United Church of Christ building, near the corner of Wellington and Broadway in Chicago's Lake View East neighborhood. CTA El stops at Wellington (Brown/Purple lines) and Belmont (Red Line) are nearby. CTA busses #36-Broadway, #76-Diversey, #77-Belmont, #22-Clark and #8-Halsted stop nearby. There is limited street parking, but several paid parking facilities are located nearby. Visit [timelinetheatre.com](http://timelinetheatre.com) for complete directions and parking information. There are two flights of stairs totaling 18 steps between the street and the theater space, with no elevator.

**Playwright/Director/Production Staff/Cast**

Playwright **Clifford Odets** has been characterized as the most distinctive and significant American playwright of the 1930s. He was the leading dramatist of the theater of social protest in the United States during the 1930s and his body of work remains a lasting contribution to the American theatre. His affiliation with the Group Theatre, which produced most of his plays, contributed to that company's considerable influence on the American stage. Beginning with *Waiting for Lefty* (1935) and its effective plea for labor unionism, his work vividly communicated the experience of the times. Plays such as *Awake and Sing!* (1935), *Paradise Lost* (1935), *Golden Boy* (1937), *Silent Partner* (1938), *Rocket to the Moon* (1938), *Night Music* (1940) and *Clash by Night* (1941) all tapped into the disappointment of individual potential by economic insecurity and materialistic ideals of middle-class society. Odets also wrote, directed or produced such films as *None but the Lonely Heart* (1943), *The Big Knife* (1949), *The Country Girl* (1950), *The Flowering Peach* (1954), *The Story on Page One* (1959), *Sweet Smell of Success* (1957) and *Wild in the Country* (1961). In 1961, he signed with the television series *The Richard Boone Show* as story editor. A musical based on *Golden Boy* was made in 1964. He died in Los Angeles in 1963.

*Paradise Lost* is directed by **Louis Contey**, an associate artist at TimeLine. He received a Joseph Jefferson Citation for Outstanding Direction of the company's 2002 production of Odets' *Awake and Sing!*, and a Jeff Citation nomination for his direction of TimeLine's *It's All True* in 2004. Other TimeLine productions include *The General from America*, *Pravda* and *Copenhagen*. He has directed more than 60 plays, among them *A View from the Bridge*, *The Manchurian Candidate*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *All My Sons*, *Rocket to the Moon*, *Stalag 17*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *Meet John Doe*, *Boys Next Door* and *Marriage Play*. He is an 11-time Joseph Jefferson nominee and has received seven Joseph Jefferson Citations. He has worked at The Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Theatre at the Center, Buffalo Theatre Ensemble, Shattered Globe Theatre, Provision Theatre, Eclipse Theatre and American Theater Company, among others. He received his M.F.A. in directing from The Theatre School at DePaul University, where he is currently an adjunct instructor.

The production staff for *Paradise Lost* includes **Karen Hoffman** (Scenic Designer), **Alex Wren Meadows** (Costume Designer), **Keith Parham** (Lighting Designer), **Andrew Hansen** (Sound Designer), **Julia Eberhardt** (Properties Designer), **Maren Robinson** (Dramaturg), **Jennifer Martin** (Stage Manager), **Seth Vermilyea** (Production Manager), **Bob Groth** (Technical Director),

**Michael Smallwood** (Master Electrician), **Robert Coleman** (Graphic Designer), **James Keister** (Lobby Display Designer), **Lara Goetsch** (Director of Marketing and Communications), **PJ Powers** (Artistic Director) and **John Bierbusse** (Interim Managing Director).

The cast for *Paradise Lost* features **Scott Aiello** (Pike), **Angela Bullard** (Bertha Katz), **Janet Ulrich Brooks** (Clara Gordon), **Craig Degel** (Foley & Mr. Rogo), **Tien Doman** (Libby Michaels), **Jeremy Glickstein** (Kewpie), **Aaron Golden** (Ben Gordon), **Jurgen Hooper** (Julie Gordon), **Michael Kingston** (Leo Gordon), **Brian J. McCartney** (Sam Katz & Detective), **Mechelle Moe** (Pearl Gordon), **Hanlon Smith-Dorsey** (Post & Schnabel & Williams), **Whit Spurgeon** (Gus Michaels), and **Clayton Smerican** (Felix & Mr. May & Paul).

### **About TimeLine Theatre Company**

TimeLine was founded in April 1997 by six graduates of The Theatre School at DePaul University. Today its mission is to present stories inspired by history that connect with today's social and political issues. TimeLine's first 10 seasons have featured 30 productions, including five world premieres and seven Chicago premieres. Praised as "a must-see company" (*Chicago Sun-Times*) and a "fast-rising Chicago company" (*The New York Times*) and recipient of the 2006 Alford-Axelson Award for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence, TimeLine has received 36 Joseph Jefferson Citations, including a Citation for Outstanding Production six of the past seven years: *Not About Nightingales* (2001); *The Crucible* (2002), *Awake and Sing!* (2003), *Hannah and Martin* (2004), *This Happy Breed* (2005) and *Fiorello!* (2007).

The other productions in TimeLine's 2007-08 season are:

- The Chicago premiere of **TESLA'S LETTERS** by Jeffrey Stanley, directed by Nick Bowling November 10 – December 23, 2007 (previews 11/6 – 11/9)
- The Chicago premiere of **DOLLY WEST'S KITCHEN** by Frank McGuinness, directed by Kimberly Senior, January 26 – March 22, 2008 (previews 1/22 – 1/25)
- A remount of TimeLine's 2006 production of **FIORELLO!**, book by Jerome Weidman and George Abbott, music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, directed by Nick Bowling, musical direction by Doug Peck, April 17 – June 15, 2008 (previews 4/13, 4/15 & 4/16)

Company members are Artistic Director PJ Powers, Director of Marketing and Communications Lara Goetsch, Nick Bowling, Juliet Hart, David Parkes, Maureen Powers and Benjamin Thiem. TimeLine is a member of the League of Chicago Theatres.

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