



PRESS CONTACT: Cynthia Kirk
503-925-0184
cynkirk@aol.com

N E W S

***THE INTELLIGENT DESIGN OF JENNY CHOW* INTRODUCES PORTLAND THEATER-LOVERS TO WUNDERKIND ROLIN JONES**

Playwrighting Prodigy Mirrors Meteoric Rise of His Title Character

Praise for *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*:

“A fast-paced, roller coaster ride of humor and dysfunction mixed with a bit of science fiction... funny, tender and witty.”

– **CurtainUp.com**

“A wildly inventive heart that embraces the lost, the lonely and the looney in equal measure.”

– **Associated Press**

“It’s gorgeous, it’s magical, it’s beautiful, it’s art, it’s creation. It’s bliss. And there’s joy in that.”

– **San Diego Union-Tribune**

and for playwright Rolin Jones

“A young playwright of uncommon wit and talent...eccentric sensibility...delightfully inventive.”

– **Washington Post**

“Unfolds his tale of pioneering science fueled by post-adolescent angst with pleasing agility... brisk theatricality...a gift for capturing the voices of pleasingly curious characters.”

– **New York Times**

Let’s get one thing perfectly clear: **Rolin Jones’ *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*** has nothing to do with creationism versus Darwinism. The title refers to the creation of a robot, one Jenny Chow, alter-ego to her brilliant but dysfunctional maker, Jennifer Marcus. This very contemporary comedy, subtitled “An Instant Message with Excitable Music,” by a very young playwright (Yale Drama School, class of 2004) has swept up audiences wherever it’s been performed. And its success has been like rocket fuel for Rolin Jones’ career: he now writes for Showtime’s hip suburban satire, “Weeds.”

The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow previews at the Newmark Theatre, 1111 SW Broadway at Main, Tuesday, February 14 - Thursday, February 16; opens Friday, February 17 and closes with the 2 PM matinee on Sunday, March 5. Evening performances take place at 7 PM Tuesday, Wednesday, Sunday and 8 PM Thursday, Friday, Saturday while Noon Thursday and 2 PM Saturday and Sunday matinee dates are also available. Tickets: \$15, 30+under, \$20 - \$56, others; box office: 503-274-6588; information: www.pcs.org. This year, second balcony seats for every PCS production are only \$20. The fourth production in PCS’ 05-06 **McDonald Financial Group** Mainstage series, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* is sponsored by **Adidas**, with additional support from the **Regional Arts and Culture Council**.

Rolin Jones seems to thrive on contradiction: a fresh-faced soccer mom who just happens to sell marijuana (Mary Louise Parker in “Weeds”) and a brilliant young woman who quite literally excels at rocket science but whose head is so messed up she can’t leave her bedroom. ...*Jenny Chow*’s heroine, Jennifer Marcus (**Sue Jean Kim**) is a 20-something techno-geek adopted from China who is so

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anxious to fit in to her alien southern California milieu that she became her high school's mascot. She's a fierce communicator whose email messages light up computer screens all over the world but who can't handle the simplest face to face to conversation without conflict. Desperate to find mother love, yet she rejects the parents who freely took her into their hearts. And she's a sexual naïf who keeps her slacker, pizza-delivery boyfriend (**Craig Marker** as Todd) at arm's length but engages in hot cyber sex to get what she really wants: her birth mother's identity and location. Once she's used her very own personal human GPS, subverting a young Mormon's religious mission in the process, she pilfers parts from her government rocket project in order to build a robot who can walk, talk and fly. Having wired the robot, facetiously named Jenny Chow (**Ka-Ling Cheung**), to be her eyes and ears in China, Jennifer has figured out a way to meet her birth mother, by proxy. All the better for controlling those messy emotions.

As with every Frankenstein story, however, the robot's experience takes on a life of its own and things don't turn out exactly as Jennifer planned. Control can only go so far before it devolves into chaos. After a major setback, Jenny Chow intones "I'm confused"; Jennifer retorts, "That's because I made you. And you're only going to get more confused."

Director **Kim Rubinstein** knows Rolin Jones well through his work at Yale Repertory Theatre and hers at Long Wharf. She is drawn to the playwright's keen way of expressing a contemporary sensibility in a deceptively simple way. Beneath the flash and humor of *Jenny Chow*, lies the all-too-human quest for identity, understanding and love. Rubinstein observes that the fact that the robot has more emotional content than any of the other characters speaks volumes about Jennifer's approach to the world. Jenny Chow's inventor is guarded, mechanistic and brash because of, rather than in spite of, her vulnerability. A not uncommon contradiction, at any age.

Playwright **ROLIN JONES** is a Californian and Yale School of Drama graduate, class of 2004. He was the 2004-05 NEA/TCG playwright-in-residence at Yale Repertory Theatre. In addition to *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, his full-length plays include *Time of No Reply*, *Last of the Chatterbox Wolves* and *The Jammer*, recipient of a Fringe First Award for Best New Writing at 2004's Edinburgh Fringe Festival. *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* received the 2004 Elizabeth Osborne Award for an Emerging Artist (American Theatre Critics Association) and *OC Weekly's* 2004 'Best New Play' Award. His work has been read and produced at South Coast Repertory, Old Globe Theatre, Underwood Theatre, Yale Rep, DC's Studio Theatre, and NYC's Atlantic Theater Company. He has been commissioned by South Coast Repertory and was one of four American playwrights chosen to participate in this year's Old Vic/New Voices Festival in London. He writes for Showtime's award-winning comedy, "Weeds."

Director **KIM RUBINSTEIN** is Associate Artistic Director at Long Wharf Theatre, in New Haven. Recent LWT credits include *Private Lives*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Guys and Dolls*. She is an award-winning teacher and director who's received a TCG/NEA directing fellowship.

Ka-Ling Cheung*	Jenny Chow	Kim Rubinstein	Director
Sue Jean Kim*	Jennifer Marcus	Johanna Gruenhut	Assistant Director
Craig Marker*	Todd	G.W. Mercier	Set Designer
Kevin Rich*	Ensemble	Nephelie Andonyadis	Costume Designer
Valerie Stevens*	Adele	Peter Maradudin	Lighting Designer
Tim True*	Mr. Marcus	Daniel Baker	Sound Designer
		Composer	Matthew Suttor
		Nicole Olsen*	Stage Manager

* The actors and stage manager are Equity.

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***The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* by Rolin Jones**
Portland Center Stage • Newmark Theatre • 1111 SW Broadway • Tickets: \$15 – \$56
Box Office: 503-274-6588 • www.pcs.org

Performance Schedule and Special Events

<u>Evenings</u>	7 PM		8 PM
Tuesdays	Feb 14 (P), Feb 21, 28	Thursdays	Feb 16 (P), Feb 23, Mar 2
Wednesdays	Feb 15 (P), Feb 22, Mar 1	Fridays	Feb 17 (O), Feb 24, Mar 3
Sundays	Feb 19, 26	Saturdays	Feb 18, 25, Mar 4
<u>Matinées</u>	2 PM		Noon
Sundays	Feb 19, 26 Mar 5 (C)	Thursdays	Feb 23, Mar 2
Saturday	Mar 4		

(P) = Preview • (O) = Opens • (C) = Closes Run time: 2 hours

Q&A

Thursdays, February 23, March 2 Noon Third floor Gallery
Discuss the play in an open dialogue with members of the company, immediately following the performance.

Access Performances

Audio Described

Friday, February 24 8 PM

Sign Interpreted

Thursday, March 2 8 PM

The Newmark is fully accessible for all people with disabilities. Large print programs and assistive listening devices are available from the coatroom, **free** of charge.

Forum

Sunday, February 26 2 PM Third floor Gallery

Join special Reed theater professor Kathleen Worley and psychoanalysts Duane Dale and Peter Armstrong for a discussion of “Genius and Manic Depression.” Immediately following the matinée.

PORTLAND CENTER STAGE, founded in 1988 and a resident company of the Portland Center for the Performing Arts, attracts more than 90,000 theatergoers annually. With five mainstage and two second stage productions each season, PCS produces a blend of classical, contemporary and world premiere works in addition to its annual summer playwrights’ festival, Just Add Water/West. PCS has embarked upon a \$32.9 million capital campaign to renovate the historic Portland Armory and create a permanent home for the company. The new facility, recently named the Bob and Diana Gerding Theater, will house a 599-seat mainstage and a 200-seat black box theater and is being designed to be the first historic rehabilitation, and hopes to be the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum rating. To date, more than \$18 million has been secured for the project. The Gerding Theater will open on September 30, 2006. PCS’s remaining 2005 - 2006 season comprises:

- Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt, *The Fantasticks*, January 10 – February 5, 2006
- Rolin Jones, *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, February 14 – March 5, 2006
- Regina Taylor, *Crowns*, March 14 – April 9, 2006
- Itamar Moses, *Celebrity Row*, March 21 – April 16, 2006 -- **World Premiere**