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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**“POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE” AND “SPERM WARFARE”: AWARD-WINNING PLAYS OPEN AT THE MATRIX ON MARCH 9**

**WHAT:** “Pomp and Circumstance” and “Sperm Warfare.” Southern California Premiere engagement of two award winning dramatic comedies.

**WHO:** Written and directed by David Rouda. Presented by Jon Katzman and Jim Malloy.

Associate producer: Dorothy Gallagher. A guest production at The Matrix Theatre.

**WHERE:** The Matrix Theatre, 7657 Melrose Av., West Hollywood CA 90046.

**WHEN:** Previews March 3 at 8 p.m.; March 4 at 7 p.m.; and March 8 at 8 p.m. Opens Friday March 9, 2007 at 8 p.m., runs through April 15. Regular showtimes: Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

**ADMISSION:** \$25. Student, senior and group discounts available upon request.

**RESERVATIONS:** 1-800-838-3006 (Brown Paper Tickets).

**ONLINE TICKETING:** [www.davidrouda.com](http://www.davidrouda.com)

<<http://www.davidrouda.com/>>

**ESTIMATED RUNNING TIME:** 2 hours, 30 minutes (intermission included).

**CONSUMER ADVISORY.** Adult themes. Okay for teens to adults.

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“Pomp and Circumstance” involves the two most popular American preoccupations: sex and litigation.

A young attorney who would rather pursue women than billable hours is put on probationary notice and is forced to grow up fast after his father, famed trial attorney Max Ebersohn has had a heart attack and a new generation of partners has wrested control from the aging patriarch. Young Zach seeks to prove his worth to his dad, who is reluctant to let go of the firm he created and of his identity as a star litigator.

Without his father’s consent or the firm’s knowledge, Zach embarks on the course of handling two important cases at once. One is a loss of consortium lawsuit brought by a Modern Orthodox Jewish couple: The man has suffered damage as a result of taking five tablets of a medication for erectile dysfunction. The defense attacks their marriage, sealed with a ketubah (Jewish ritual marriage contract) and observant of niddah (sexual separation during menses). How relevant is religious law in a civil suit? How far is Zach willing to go to prove his case to his father?

Simultaneously, Zach takes on a criminal case, as Saul Robinson, an actor playing Othello has strangled his Desdemona. Was it an accident, or did the actor have a sinister motive? Was he set up by his Iago? Was Saul even in his right mind? Zach will attempt a Stanislavsky defense: that Saul was so immersed in The Method, he did not intentionally slay his acting (and romantic) partner.

As he hops from one courtroom to the other in simultaneous trials, Zach has only one ally upon whom he can rely, a young spitfire associate, Diane, who has a few tricks up her sleeve in court and out. Does Zach have the guts to fight his father’s definition of him and the firm’s billable hour requirements and prove himself a worthy advocate of not just his clients, but himself? Will he prevail on behalf of the couple seeking redress from the drug manufacturer? Can he find his own identity while proving that Saul lost his? Can Zach connect with his father and win his love before it’s too late?

The cast includes Bill Applebaum, Lindsay Cevrich, Kelvin Clayton, Ryan Driscoll, Jeremy Gabriel, Dorothy Gallagher, Dee Kevin Ace Gibson, William Knight, Caroline Langford, Sarah Lappin, Richard V. Licata, Bobby Charles Reed, Scott Roberts, Susan Spano, Fred Tucker and Walter Williamson. Some roles are double-cast.

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“Sperm Warfare” involves an attractive couple facing the approach of middle age and trying to make a baby. She’s a successful professional; he’s been laid off and, to the detriment of his pride, may wind up being a house-husband for a good long while.

Baby-making isn't so simple, so they've gone to a fertility clinic . It turns out that their problems might not all be biological after all. He's stressed by the way he feels treated by his wife, and with only four hours to get his sperm in the cup, he is unable to perform. When his domineering wife and an exquisite young nurse come in to diffuse the situation, things get out of hand.

Behind the plot is an examination of modern sexual roles and the conflict that men and women have with their liberated status, especially given changing contemporary perspectives on biological and traditional roles. Husband and wife must come to terms with evolving expectations in order to make a harmonious family.

The cast includes Tina Bruna, Alexis Corey and Ryan Kitley.

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Production stage manager: Joe Morrissey. Assistant stage manager: Amy Kline.

“Pomp and Circumstance” won the 2006 San Francisco International Fringe Festival Award for “Sold Out Shows.” In 2005, “Sperm Warfare” won the San Francisco International Fringe Festival Best of The Fringe Festival Critic’s Award.

**David Rouda** is the writer and director of both plays. He received a Bachelor’s Degree with Honors from UC Berkeley and a Juris Doctorate from the University of San Francisco School of Law. The fourth generation native San Franciscan has professionally played jazz and pop piano around San Francisco, where he operates his own civil litigation law practice. The 21st Century Renaissance man has written for television and has participated in international athletics, placing 17th in the world in the single scull rowing event at the 1999 World Rowing Championships in an attempt to qualify for the 2000 Olympics. He participated in several of the quadrennial Maccabiah Games in Israel, winning six gold medals in rowing and obtaining dual American-Israeli citizenship.

“Rouda’s direction keeps the plot moving along briskly....In the best Perry Mason style, several scenes lead up to the courtroom pyrotechnics finale. The humor is liberally deposited. ‘Pomp and Circumstance’ works very well.”---S.F. Bay Times

“Eloquently expressed...Sperm Warfare is perfect.”---S.F. Weekly

“Clever, very witty, complex....real emotional honesty....clips along so fast and furious, the audience should be wearing seat belts...”  
Jeffrey Smith, Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle

“Smartly plotted, smoothly directed....a giddy juggernaut!”---  
Beyond Chron (S.F.)