

FLASHPOINT

A CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PROJECT

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The Art of Suicide: Taffety Punk and Beauty Pill Explore the Difficult Terrain of Self-Murder

Taffety Punk Theatre Company presents *suicide.chat.room* at Mead Theatre Lab at Flashpoint
January 28 – February 13, 2010

Directed by Marcus Kyd, Choreographed by Paulina Guerrero with Music by Beauty Pill

“All of us have been affected by a suicide,” says [Taffety Punk Theatre Company](#) Artistic Director Marcus Kyd, “and no one ever really talks about it. There’s too much grief; too much wondering why. This project gives us an opportunity to engage with real answers. We can’t pretend suicide doesn’t exist.”

Mead Theatre Lab Program at Flashpoint participant Taffety Punk’s latest project *suicide.chat.room* seeks answers in these internet groups that counsel and cajole people who want to end their lives. Kyd’s interest in the virtual rooms has led to an ambitious, new performance piece that weaves dance (choreographed by Taffety Punk company member **Paulina Guerrero**), music (by DC indie stalwarts **Beauty Pill**) and actual transcripts of texts from these troubled communities.

The chat rooms are a virtual space where arguments break out over the exact height from which a fall will be fatal, or how to keep blood from clotting after slitting a wrist – and where a spate of suicides follows the posting of a recipe to make hydrogen sulfide gas from household materials.

“There’s no play here,” Kyd says. “Not in the sense most people understand the word. It’s bigger than that. Dance is the only form that can hold this much.”

***suicide.chat.room* performs** January 28 – February 13, 2010 at Mead Theatre Lab at Flashpoint, Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Saturdays and Sundays at 3pm. **Press night** is January 28, 2010 at 8pm. The production is directed by Marcus Kyd with choreography by Paulina Guerrero, Music by Beauty Pill, costumes by Scott Hammar, Sound Design by Josh Taylor and features company member Kimberly Gilbert. Guest artists include Elizabeth Abt, Paul Edward Hope, Liz Maestri, and Matthew R. Wilson.

“The movement emerged out of a collaborative set of improv-based exercises that we honed and edited to provide a fluid structure,” says choreographer Paulina Guerrero.

Guerrero praises, “the incredible talent, and the brave, adventurous improvisational skills,” of the actors, who move to a score by **Beauty Pill’s Chad Clark**. Clark is a veteran of DC’s independent music scene, with multiple releases on Dischord Records, and also a highly sought after recording engineer. *suicide.chat.room* is his first score for performance.

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“Chad and I have been looking for an excuse to collaborate,” Kyd says. “He played a new Beauty Pill song for me recently that started with the line, ‘In the dream the car fills up with water,’ and I knew this was when I needed him most.”

Costume designer Scott Hammar says, “After previewing the preliminary dance phrases and listening to the musical compositions, a flood of images came into place for the costume design for this production: a monochromatic palette offset by flashes of color that relate to the high levels of emotion and intense thoughts that come with such intentions.”

The January premiere of *suicide.chat.room* represents the culmination of a three-year journey for Taffety Punk Theatre Company, from gestation through a public workshop at the Kennedy Center’s 2006 Page to Stage Festival to being accepted into the Mead Theatre Lab program to develop *suicide.chat.room* in Flashpoint’s Coors Dance Studio this past fall.

Kyd observes that the texts that form the basis of the piece, “...can be overwhelming. It’s full of real people, many of whom we start to care about, and then they’re gone. Sometimes they leave a goodbye. Sometimes they just leave. And their new friends call out to them to no avail. You never know what actually happened.”

suicide.chat.room

Produced by [Taffety Punk Theatre Company](#)

Mead Theater Lab at Flashpoint

916 G Street NW (near Metro Center and Gallery Place Metro)

January 28 – February 13, 2010

[Pay-What-You-Can Previews January 26 & 27 at 8 pm]

[Press Night January 28 at 8pm]

Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Saturdays and Sundays at 3pm

All tickets \$10 at the door. Cash preferred.

For reservations call 202-261-6612, or email tix@taffetypunk.com.

More information is available at flashpointdc.org & taffetypunk.com.

ABOUT THE MEAD THEATRE LAB PROGRAM

Cultural Development Corporation’s Mead Theatre Lab program is an intensive mentorship program for performing artists and independent theatre companies. Inaugurated in January 2006 with *’Capers*, the program provides theatre space, technical production support and production mentoring. A panel of noted DC theatre professionals selects the projects and provides guidance to the chosen producers. The result is an eclectic group of innovative, edgy productions and an environment in which emerging performing artists can grow. The Mead Theatre Lab Program at Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is made possible by the generous support of the Morris & Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, The Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, the Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, the Aaron & Cecile Goldman Foundation, the Mary & Daniel Loughran Foundation, the MARPAT Foundation, Jaylee Mead, the Eugene & Agnes E. Meyer Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Jon and NoraLee Sedmak, and many other sponsors. Hotel Helix is Flashpoint’s 2008-2009 Hotel Partner. Barefoot Wine is Flashpoint’s 2008-2009 Wine Partner.

ABOUT FLASHPOINT

Flashpoint, a Cultural Development Corporation project, is a nonprofit, multi-disciplinary arts space dedicated to nurturing emerging artists and cultural organizations in order to build their professional capacity. Flashpoint provides services and training for cultural organizations to help strengthen their management capacity and offers exhibit and performance spaces that enable arts groups to focus on their artistic goals and expand their visibility. Flashpoint includes a contemporary art gallery, the 75-seat Mead Theatre Lab, the Coors Dance Studio and shared office space for arts organizations.

Mead Theatre Lab at Flashpoint • 916 G Street, NW • Washington, DC 20001

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