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THE READERS' THEATRE OF ITHACA TO PRESENT FIRST SHORT FILM

The Readers' Theatre of Ithaca (RTI) has aligned with **PACERS National Bullying Prevention Center** (located in Minnesota) to launch their first short film – an anti-bully film called **EASY PREY**.

EASY PREY is a dramatic exploration of the ways in which bullying behavior effects those involved from parent to teacher to friend to the community. In it, five fictional characters tell their side of the story about one tragic incident.

EASY PREY stars five Upstate New York actors, one actor from NYC, and has been written by three Ithaca writers. The actors are: **Brenda Aulbach, Moira Haupt, Cole Long, Tim Mollen, Tim Perry, and Ian Whitt**. The writers are: **Anne Marie Cummings** (RTI's Founder and Artistic Director and also the director and filmmaker for **EASY PREY**), **Evan Stewart Eisenberg**, and **Effie Johnson**. **Marilyn Rivchin**, former Cornell University film professor, is the editor of the short film.

Starting in September, 2014, the short film will air on RTI's and PACERS' websites for an entire year and at no cost to viewers. **EASY PREY** may also have a special, one-night-only screening at **CINEMAPOLIS**, The Readers' Theatre's new location in the heart of downtown Ithaca. The date for the screening is tentatively scheduled to take place following The Readers' Theatre's first LIVE production of their fifth season in September, 2014 of the new play **PHOTOGRAPH 51**, by Anna Ziegler. This screening will be free and open to the public and will include the writers and actors for a talk-back and discussion. More information about the free screening will be provided at the end of this summer.

Music for **EASY PREY** is being provided by **Sage Francis**, internationally well-known political rap artist and the owner of Strange Famous Records in Rhode Island, and **Hank Roberts**, internationally well-known cello player and RTI's Music Advisor. Sections from Francis' song "**The Best of Times**" and from Roberts' song "**Peaceful Mind**" will underscore **EASY PREY**.

Francis and **Yann Tiersen** (French composer who collaborated with Francis in "The Best of Times"), in addition to **Wixen Music Publishing, Inc.** (CA) and **Epitaph Records** (CA), have given RTI free-clearance to use the song "The Best of Times." Francis is known for his song "**Waterline**," the theme song in the film "**Pride and Glory**" starring Edward Norton, Colin Farrell, and John Voight. Tiersen is best known for creating the whimsical music for the film "**Amelie**."

Said Cummings: "*Navigating solutions to bullying are very difficult for those involved, and because it's not a black and white issue, the more we expose its dark sides, then the more the creative and compassionate solutions will appear. Theater and film are affective ways of spreading awareness about timely social issues like bullying, and given the vast information about bullying that PACER has collected, our organizations hope to spread the word about what this community can do about bullying behavior.*"

Eisenberg, one of the writers for the project stated, "*I am honored to be working on the anti-bullying campaign with RTI; it all kind of comes full circle when we learn how to communicate without the bullying, without intimidation, and with peace. I am learning how to use my 'inside' voice when in challenging conflicts with people. Not perfect, but I am getting there.*"

Cummings added that **EASY PREY** has also given local writers an opportunity to flex their writing skills while merging the mediums of theatre and film. "*The pieces are written in a very theatrical way in the form of monologues, but they are being presented in a very simple and cinematic way,*" she said, adding that her inspiration in merging the art forms comes from her mentor writer/director Neil LaBute.

EASY PREY's corporate sponsors include **Cornell University** and local businesses **Cinemapolis, Mighty Yoga** and **Silk Oak**. Short written pieces about bullying will also be posted on RTI's blog by Ithaca writers **Alissa Heyman** (copy editor) and **Kenny Berkowitz**. Assistant Producers for **EASY PREY** are **Randi Rudolph** and **Laura Shannon**.

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