

'NAMI

by Chad Beckim*

WEST COAST PREMIERE!

October 26 thru November 18, 2007

Friday & Saturday Shows: 8:00pm

Sunday Shows: 4:00pm

The Hayworth Theatre
2511 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA

Call Now! 323-960-7787

New York Times - "'Nami' impressively captures the voices of four very different New Yorkers."

Curtain Up - "'Nami' is an intense, harrowing, and continually fascinating drama with well-rounded, damaged but also funny characters."



www.plays411.com/nami



RANGE VIEW
PRODUCTIONS
www.rangeviewproductions.com

* Written by Chad Beckim, one of the Top 50 to Watch in 2007 per Dramatists Guild

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF THEATRE

By Julio Martinez

MICHAEL MATTHEWS RECALLS HIS FIRST SEASON as Artistic Director of Hollywood-based Celebration Theatre. "I came charging in three years ago with a mandate to oversee an eclectic mix of fresh and brash new works that would be a welcoming artistic breeze flowing over the LA theatre scene. Well, that first season didn't happen the way it was supposed to but I sure learned a lot."

In October, Celebration launched its third subscription season which Matthews has dubbed, "25 Years of Change," celebrating a quarter century of producing gay and lesbian theatre. "We will present six mainstage productions," he says. "All of them are world or LA premieres, two of them created by the company. Our eventual goal is to have all of our stage works in house."

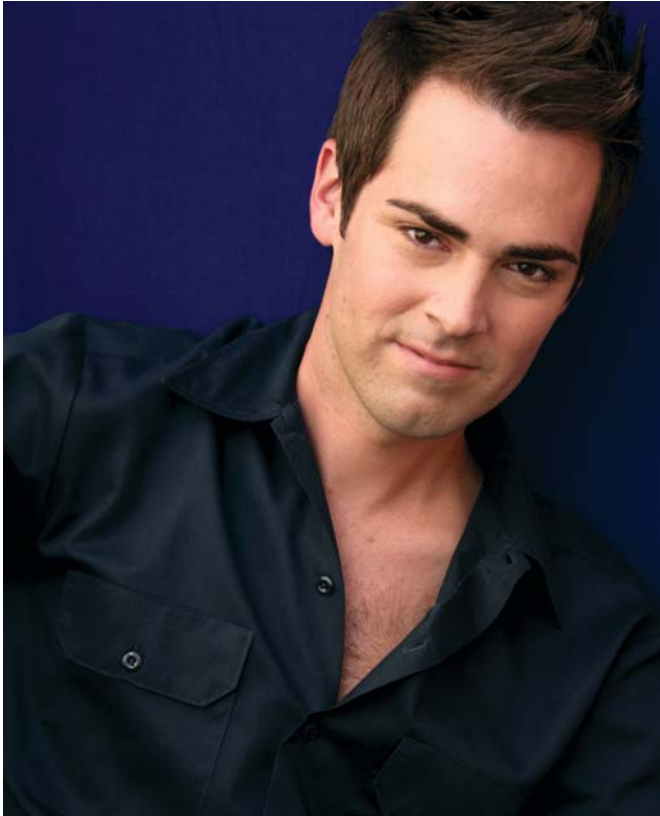
The season's first, Philip Ridley's *The Fastest Clock* in the West (playing until Nov. 18) is a British import, which originally premiered in 1992. The play deals with one man's narcissistic, rapacious need to be young. "This highly satirical work is so theatrically rewarding," Matthews says. "The original London production put actor Jude Law on the map."

The season continues with a holiday work Matthews claims to be a "totally queered world premiere adaptation" of the classic *A Christmas Carol* (opens Dec. 7) by Jason Moyer. "This production was created in-house and is a bit of an irreverent take of the original Dickens work." According to the promotional copy, Eben Scrooge is a world famous fashion designer behind S&M, the line he started with his partner Jake Marley. After Marley's death, Scrooge's life takes a downward spiral. Naturally, he is confronted by ghosts...and they're gay.

Next is the LA premiere of Off-Broadway's *Stupid Kids* by John Russell (Feb. 15) which Matthews is directing. "It is essentially a long one-act about teen angst," he says. "It examines the struggles of four high school students, two gay, two straight, as they deal with the fears, frustrations and longings of youth. It has a very contemporary music-video look to it."

The award-winning novel by April Sinclair, *Coffee Will Make You Black*, adapted by Michael A. Shepperd (April 18), traces the coming of age story of Stevie, a black teenager on the brink of sexual awakening during the turbulent and politically charged late '60s. "This work has been produced previously in Chicago," says Matthews. "It has a powerful message about the need to find acceptance. I was thrilled we got the rights to produce it."

Matthews enthuses over the LA premiere of *Songs From an Unmade Bed* (June 6). "This is a musical with no book. Lyricist Mark Campbell and 17 composers join forces to create this



Michael Matthews

sumptuous tale of a gay New Yorker dealing with the glory and the pain of falling in and out of love." This solo work highlights the talents of an eclectic roster of musical artists including Debra Barsha, Mark Bennett, Peter Foley, Jenny Giering, Peter Golub, Jake Heggie, Stephen Hoffman, Lance Horne, Gihieh Lee, Steve Marzullo, Brendan Milburn, Chris Miller, Greg Pliska, Duncan Sheik, Jeffrey Stock and Joseph Thalken.

"This is a significant event for us," says Matthews. "Celebration will participate as one of the major presenters in the first ever Festival of New American Musicals." It joins theatres from Ventura to San Diego, with special events at The Hollywood Bowl and Walt Disney Concert Hall. "It will showcase the re-emergence of American musical theatre at the center of our popular culture," he adds.

The season closes with a world premiere adaptation of the Greek myth set in modern day New Orleans, *Cassandra on the Levees*, by Allain Rochel (Aug. 15), which Matthews will also direct. This is the same writing/directing team responsible for the Celebration's Ovation Award nominated staging of *The Bacchae* last season. "It is set six months before Hurricane Katrina," explains Matthews, "and follows the conflicted life of a preacher who has visions of the city being destroyed by a flood.

"I am so proud of this season," says Matthews. "It distills everything we've learned over the past three years about how to produce a group of plays that will be rewarding to our regular audience base and still reach out to the public that is simply attracted to good theatre." ■

THE FASTEST CLOCK IN THE WEST

Plays Thurs.-Sat., 8 pm; Sun., 3 pm; closes Nov.18
 Tickets: \$25
 Celebration Theatre
 7051B Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood
 323.957.1884 or www.celebrationtheatre.com

"ANYONE WHO LOVES THE THEATER HAS TO SEE IT!"
 -Jeffrey Lyons, NBC's "Reel Talk"

SHOW BUSINESS

THE ROAD TO BROADWAY

THE REAL DRAMA IS BEHIND THE CURTAIN.

SPECIAL EDITION INCLUDES:
 Audio Commentary with Director Dori Berinstein, producer Alan Cumming & Avenue Q co-creator Jeff Marx
 Over an hour of Deleted Scenes and More!

BUY IT NOW ON DVD **amazon.com**

REGENT LIBERATION DRAMATIC GENIUS ENTERTAINMENT SHOWBUSINESS-THEMOVIE.COM PG