



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Doorway Arts Ensemble and Arts Alive Theatre present  
*HERCULES IN RUSSIA***

**The fascinating path from Alabama slave to Imperial Russian Guard – based on a true story**

**Bethesda, MD** Doorway Arts Ensemble is pleased to announce that **Ricardo Frederick Evans** will take the stage as Jim Hercules in *Hercules in Russia*, a World Premiere play by Allyson Currin, co-produced with Arts Alive Theatre Artistic Director, Perry T. Schwartz as part of the Arts Alive Theatre Series of Montgomery College Silver Spring.

"In *Hercules in Russia*, award-winning playwright Allyson Currin crafts a memory play based on historical fact, weaving a poignant, complex and evocative tale of love and loyalty in the face of government oppression. Likely born into slavery in the American South, the historical Jim Hercules found his way to a life of comparative privilege as a Royal Guard to Tsar Nicholas II in Russia. Currin's play finds Jim at the royal court on the eve of the Russian Revolution. As the specter of violent change looms over his adopted country, Jim is forced to confront his own deadly past, weighing his love and loyalty for the royal family against his growing awareness of the cruel and oppressive world the tsarist system has created. This intimate tale, played out against the epic upheavals of the age, asks powerful and disturbing questions about the nature of courage versus the need to survive and the very nature of personal responsibility in the face of profound injustice."

**RUNS FEBRUARY 10 THROUGH MARCH 4, 2012**

**PERFORMANCES:** Friday Feb 10 (opening), Thursday-Saturday Feb 11,16,17,18,23,24,25 and Special Performance Monday, Feb 20 at 8pm and Sunday Matinee 2/12, 19, 26, and 3/4/12 (closing) at 2pm

**Special Events**

**Saturday Feb 11** – Press Night (press are welcome to all performances)

Q&A follows performance featuring the dramaturg, director, playwright and actors.

**Sunday Feb 19** - Post-Show Community Forum and Panel Discussion: "*Extraordinary Journeys*" – *African Americans after the American Civil War*; In this conversation following the show, we will discuss the journeys of "Freedmen" post-Civil War in America. *Hercules in Russia* dramaturg Sonya Robbins will moderate.

**TICKETS:** \$20 for general admission/\$10 for students and seniors/\$5 for MC Students, Faculty and Staff. Call 240-567-5775 or order online at [tickets.com](http://tickets.com) (enter Hercules in Russia in the search engine. Click on the link under events) or [Cultural Arts Center Silver Spring](http://CulturalArtsCenterSilverSpring.org). **All Performances Opening Weekend Feb 10, 11, 12 And Special Performance Monday, Feb. 20 Are Pay What You Can.**

**LOCATION:** Theatre 2 Cultural Art Center Montgomery College Silver Spring  
7995 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring, MD 20910

**DIRECTIONS:** [Cultural Arts Center Montgomery College Silver Spring](#). Click on [Map It](#).

**Allyson Currin** [playwright] is an award-winning playwright of over twenty plays. Previous world premieres of her work include: *The Dancing Princesses* (Imagination Stage, with composer/lyricist Christopher Youstra); *Treadwell: Bright and Dark* (The American Century Theatre); *The Secret Lives of White House Pets* (The John F. Kennedy Center's Theatre for Young Audiences); *The Subject and Church of the Open Mind*\*\* (Charter Theatre); *Fur and Other Dangers, Amstel in Tel Aviv*\*\* and *Dancing with Ourselves* (Source Theatre Company); *Learning Curves* (Washington Shakespeare Company); and *Vaudeville!* (Washington Jewish Theatre). Ally is the Vice Chair of The Kennedy Center's American College Theatre Festival New Play Program (Region 2), and teaches in the Theatre and Dance Department at The George Washington University. She is a proud member of the Screen Actors Guild and Actors Equity Association. Visit [www.allysoncurrin.com](http://www.allysoncurrin.com) for more information.

*\*\*Indicates nominations for The Helen Hayes Awards' Charles D. MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play.*

**Jessica Lefkow** [director] is an independent theater director and performer. Since moving back to the DC area in 2003, she has worked with an array of playwrights nation-wide to develop new works. Local directing credits include Theater J's World Premiere of the 2009 Helen Hayes Award-winning *Honey Brown Eyes* (Best New Play); *Frida Vice Versa*, *Margarita*, *Tales of Doomed Love*, *Not Your Granny's Revolution*, (in association with Laura Zam) *Letters to Clio, Part Two*, (Capital Fringe Festivals); *Red Herring*, *Mousetrap* (1<sup>st</sup> Stage), *The F Word*, (The Inkwell); *Dear Sara Jane*, (The Hub Theater); *House of Blue Leaves*, (Montgomery College, Rockville); *TETHER* (Doorway Arts Ensemble); *BENCHED* (independently produced with Allyson Currin, Beth Hylton & Liz Mamana). Jessica's directing work has also appeared in the Source Ten-Minute Play Festivals. Readings and workshops include projects with Theater J, Washington Shakespeare Company, Theatre of the First Amendment, Spooky Action Theatre Company, WWIT.

**CAST:** Jim Hercules: **Ricardo Frederick Evans\***; Grand Duchess Tatiana Nicholaevna Romanov: **Sarah Ulstrup**; Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich Romanov: **Gordon Adams**; Jonah Thomas Washington: **DeJeanette Horne**; Lev: **Andrew Ferlo**; Sunday: **Jasmin Danielle Johnson**.

*\*"Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States".*

***The director and playwright and producing artistic director are available for interviews – Please call to schedule.***

**PRODUCTION TEAM:** Producer: Claire Myles, Producing Artistic Director DAE; Co-Producer: Perry T. Schwartz, Artistic Director AAT; Director: Jessica Lefkow; Playwright: Allyson Currin; Dramaturg: Sonya Robbins; Set and Properties: Sean Urbantke; Costume: Chelsey Schuller; Lighting: Michelle Ashley Man; Sound: Eric Brooks; Stage Manager: Candis Jones; Set Builder: Richard Robinson, Technical Assistant Montgomery College; Publicity: Claire Myles and Marjon Wolfe; Photographer: Colin Hovde; Graphic Designer: Carly J. Bales

***HERCULES IN RUSSIA is supported in part by funding from the Montgomery County government and the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County.***

**ABOUT DOORWAY ARTS ENSEMBLE** Under the leadership of founding Producing Artistic Director, Claire Myles, Doorway Arts Ensemble (DAE) provides an artistic entrance and platform for exceptional talent. DAE works to develop and support a theater company that champions the production of new plays written by the best of promising playwrights and spotlighting new theater talent throughout the Washington, DC metro area. We offer the community opportunities to experience socially relevant new works at affordable prices or as free events. We also offer the chance for meaningful dialogue through our community engagement activities on the topics of social relevance that are raised in each production.

**Doorway Arts Ensemble** Claire Myles, Producing Artistic Director  
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Questions about Arts Alive Theatre and Montgomery College may be directed to Artistic Director Perry Schwartz by email [perry.schwartz@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:perry.schwartz@montgomerycollege.edu) or phone 240-567-1387.

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E-press kits are available by emailing Marjon Wolfe, publicity assistant: [wolfemarjon@gmail.com](mailto:wolfemarjon@gmail.com). Information is also on the Doorway website at [doorwayarts.org](http://doorwayarts.org). Please visit the press page for thumbnail images ready for download and all performance dates.

Full press kits will be available at the box office for members of the press at all performances. When you plan to attend a performance, please email Marjon Wolfe: [wolfemarjon@gmail.com](mailto:wolfemarjon@gmail.com) or phone Claire Myles (301-806-3136)