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Classical Theater of Harlem Announces A Revival of the OBIE-Award Winning Play Funnyhouse of a Negro

Written by Adrienne Kennedy

Directed by acclaimed actor/director Billie Allen

Performances Begin on January 11th and will run through February 12th

At The HSA Theater, 645 St. Nicholas Ave. (near 141st Street)

The OBIE Award-winning Classical Theater of Harlem (CTH) will continue their seventh season with a revival of Adrienne Kennedy's best-known work, *FUNNYHOUSE OF A NEGRO*. Performances will be at the HSA Theater (645 St. Nicholas Avenue) and will begin on Wednesday, January 11th to continue through Sunday, February 12th.

FUNNYHOUSE received a 1964 OBIE Award for most Distinguished Play. The play chronicles the last hours in the life of Sarah, a young Black woman troubled by race and identity struggling with self-hatred and alienation from the mainstream culture. *FUNNYHOUSE OF A NEGRO* is Adrienne Kennedy's first performed and best known work. This play launched her career as one of the most respected playwrights of the American stage.

Director Billie Allen appeared on Broadway in several productions including *A Teaspoon Every Four Hours*, *Blues for Mr. Charlie*, *Four Saints in Three Acts* and was a replacement in the original production of *A Raisin in the Sun*. She also originated the role of Sarah in *FUNNYHOUSE* in 1964. As a director, Ms. Allen directed *Saint Lucy's Eyes* with Ruby Dee and has worked with Amas Musical Theatre directing *Stormy Weather...The Lena Horne Story*, *Miss Waters to You*, *The Crystal Tree* and *Before the Flood*.

The cast for *FUNNYHOUSE OF A NEGRO* will include Suzette Gunn (in the role that Ms. Allen originated in 1964). Ms. Gunn appeared in *Sincerity Forever* at the John Houseman Theater and *American Maul* with the Culture Project. Also in the cast is Alice Spivak who won the Joseph Jefferson Award in Chicago for Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite* and who also appeared Off-Broadway in Ossie Davis' *Last Dance for Sybil*. The cast will feature Trish McCall, Monica Stith, Danny Camiel, Leopold Lowe and Kellie McCants.

The Classical Theatre of Harlem is a dynamic and unique theatre company dedicated to producing the classics for a new, young, and culturally diverse audience. Their numerous awards and honors include a 2004 Drama Desk Award (as well as several nominations), 12 AUDELCO Awards (along with 77 nominations) for Excellence in Black Theatre, and five OBIE Awards, off-Broadway's most prestigious honor.

FUNNYHOUSE OF A NEGRO will begin performances on Wednesday, January 11th, and will continue through Sunday, February 12th. Performances will be Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:00pm, with Sunday matinees at 3:00pm. Tickets will be \$35.00 for all seats; student and group discounts are available. Tickets may be purchased by calling (212) 868-4444 or visit www.smarttix.com. Photos will be available for download at www.brettsinger.com/clients/cth2005.html.

FUNNYHOUSE OF A NEGRO

Written by Adrienne Kennedy

Directed by Billie Allen

At The HSA Theater, 645 St. Nicholas Ave. (near 141st Street) in Upper Manhattan

Wednesday, January 11th through Sunday, February 12th.

SCHEDULE: Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8:00pm, Sundays at 3:00pm

TICKETS: \$35.00; Call (212) 868-4444 or visit www.smarttix.com

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