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The Pear Avenue Theatre

The Pear Avenue Theatre
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Theatre**

Press Release

"SPEED-THE-PLOW" PRESS RELEASE

On January 8, the Pear Avenue Theatre will present its fiftieth production: David Mamet's savagely witty satire of the motion-picture industry, *Speed-the-Plow*.

Hooray(?) for Hollywood--and its culture of unabashed self-promotion. On his first day on the job, Bobby Gould, the studio's newly minted head of production, basks in the effusive congratulations of Charlie Fox, an old buddy who "knew him when" from years of commiserating in the studio snake pit. But Charlie has come into Bobby's new office with more than just fulsome good wishes. He brings glad tidings of very great joy: the prospect of making a blowout buddy picture with a wildly popular star. As the two old pals try to outdo each other in gleeful back-patting (mega bucks will be made!), they are joined by Karen, a pretty, coffee-toting office temp, who injects a note of sexual tension into the buddy-buddying. When Karen leaves, the men make a \$500 bet about Bobby's ability to seduce her. As his ploy, Bobby asks Karen to give a "courtesy read" to an artsy novel by a respected (i.e., "sissy") East-Coast writer--a post-apocalyptic work of fiction that today's real-life movie critics have been comparing to the post-apocalyptic vehicle for Viggo Mortensen, *The Road*. And therein hangs the conflict: Are art and commerce always opposed? Is it ever possible to be both successful and "pure" in Hollywood? Who will do what to whom in order to get what he or she wants? And most important: Which movie will get the green light?

The *Speed-the-Plow* cast includes Paul Loomis (recently seen at the Pear as Sir Wilfull Witwoud in last season's *Way of the World*) who plays the head of production, Bobby Gould; Jake Vincent (from *Pear Slices 2009* and *Metamorphoses*) as wannabe producer Charlie Fox; and, making her Pear debut in the role of Karen, Sarah Griner, recently seen as Rosalind in Shady Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. Director Ray Renati directed last season's brilliant and highly popular production of *Pick Up Ax*, along with stellar productions of *True West* and *The Baltimore Waltz* in earlier seasons.

David Mamet has written over 30 plays, including *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *American Buffalo*, *Oleanna*, and most recently, *Race*, which opened in December 2009. *Speed-the-Plow* was first produced in 1989, a production chiefly known as Madonna's first and only foray onto the legitimate stage; it was recently revived on Broadway to stunning reviews and sold-out houses. Arguably Mamet's best play, *Speed-the-Plow* explores the playwright's home terrain of ferocious male comradery/one-up-manship, with sharply etched characters, scathing wit, and brilliantly idiosyncratic "Mamet-speak." The somewhat mysterious title alludes to an old English greeting "May God speed the plow"--roughly meaning "May your work prosper." Mamet's deliciously nasty play contorts the benevolence of this old expression, as the three characters scramble for the main chance, in this case, the opportunity to grab the gold ring of Hollywood success..

Speed-the-Plow opens January 8 and runs through January 24, with 8:00 p.m. performances on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, and 2:00 p.m. performances on Sundays and on Saturday, January 23. Performances include a Gala Reception after the opening night and a discussion with cast and director after the first Sunday matinee. There is a "pay-what-you-can" Preview on January 7.

For Release December 8th, 2009

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Ticket prices: Thursdays and matinees, \$20 general / \$15 students, seniors, and TBA members; Fridays and Saturdays, \$25 / \$20; opening night gala, \$30 / \$25.

The Pear Avenue Theatre is located at 1220 Pear Avenue in Mountain View. Directions: Take the Shoreline Boulevard exit from 101. Turn onto Shoreline (left if you come from north of Mountain View; right if you come from the south). Turn right at Pear Avenue, and continue until Pear dead-ends. Take a left into our parking lot and park near the far end of the building. (The theatre is in Unit K.)

For further information, contact: Diane Tasca at 650-254-1148.