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CLOWNS PLUS WRESTLERS EQUALS CUTTING EDGE THEATRE

*** CHICAGO'S COOK COUNTY THEATRE DEPARTMENT DEBUTS NEW PLAY *
ONE WEEK ONLY! MARCH 20-24**

*" an avant-garde play about making avant-garde plays,
so well executed here that it traces a new direction in the avant-garde."*

- Terry Brennan, *Chicago Reader*

Chicago's hippest young theatre company, **Cook County Theatre Department**, will present the New York Premiere of it's critically acclaimed ***Clowns Plus Wrestlers***. This original show will be held at The Kitchen for one week only beginning March 20th.

Clowns Plus Wrestlers is an ensemble generated piece which combines traditional theater, verbal improvisation, modern dance, and baroque music. Part postmodern pastiche, part surrealist game, the play juxtaposes wrestling mathematicians with philosophical clowns as they cavort in a surrealistic landscape. The piece draws upon five unrelated texts, one selected by each cast member, for dialogue: Turk Pipkin's *Be A Clown*, Lou Banach's *The New Breed/Living Iowa Wrestling*, Kenneth Koch's *1001 Avant-Garde Plays*, Robert Ainsley's *Bluff Your Way in Math* and an original text by Gary Wilmes.

Cook County Theatre Department was conceived in 1991 by four artists, two from Chicago and two from Boston, as a company dedicated to creating theatre that was entirely ensemble oriented. According to *Chicago Reader's* Stephanie Shaw the company "seems to revel in leveling our expectations, delivering the unexpected ...theatre that is actually intriguing. Never lacking in personal vision, but leaving

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plenty of room for interpretation." Their first production, *Swing Your Lady*, a deconstruction of the classical musical *Oklahoma* was an instant hit, earning the company much critical acclaim and paving the way for their next four productions. The company currently maintains a 3,000 square-foot loft space in downtown Chicago where it's shows are produced. The Kitchen's presentation of *Clowns Plus Wrestlers* marks the company's first engagement outside of Chicago, although many of it's members continue to work in prominent venues throughout the United States.

Cook County Theatre Department's Clowns Plus Wrestlers will be presented at **The Kitchen, 512 West 19th Street** (between 10th & 11th Avenues) in the West Chelsea district of Manhattan. Performances are at **8:00pm March 20, 21, 22, 23, & 24**. Tickets are \$15. Information and reservations for events at The Kitchen may be obtained by calling **212-255-5793**. Advance tickets and subscriptions are available at The Kitchen, weekdays from 10am to 5pm; at the Bryant Park Tickets Booth, located at the corner of 42nd Street and 6th Avenue; or by telephone through TicketMaster at 212-307-7171. The Kitchen now accepts Visa, Mastercard and ATM cards (service charges apply). Information is also available by e-mail: kitchen@panix.com or via the World Wide Web: <http://www.panix.com/kitchen>.

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