

Company One Fronts Lydia Diamond's First Full Production in Beantown

Boston – Company One will break ground on Boston's first full production by nationally acclaimed playwright, Lydia Diamond, when it opens *THE BLUEST EYE* in late October. The young playwright, who has written several commissions for Steppenwolf Theatre Co., has been produced in major theatres around the country and is currently a Huntington Theatre Playwriting Fellow, but has yet to receive a fully mounted production of one of her works in Boston. Company One Artistic Director Shawn LaCount, speaking about the opportunity, remarks, "We are so excited to be the first company in Boston to produce this wonderfully gifted playwright. It is another great step forward for us and, we hope, the beginning of a fruitful and lasting artistic partnership."

This is the second nationally produced playwright who will have their Boston debut with Company One; Kirsten Greenidge, playwright-in-residence with the company since 2005, was the first. John ADEkoje, another Company One resident playwright, had *LOVE JONES* and *SIX ROUNDS / SIX LESSONS* produced as part of previous seasons, and is also now enjoying a good dose of success on the national scene. "We really tapped into something when we worked with Kirsten on *103 WITHIN THE VEIL*," says LaCount, "We're getting in on the ground floor with these playwrights who are on their way to big careers."

Diamond's adaptation of Toni Morrison's *THE BLUEST EYE* premiered at Steppenwolf Theatre, won the Black Arts Alliance Image Award for Best New Play, and was recently remounted at Steppenwolf and moved to a co-production with New Victory Theatre in New York. *THE BLUEST EYE* has also been produced by Theatre Alliance, Washington, D.C.; Playmakers Repertory Co., Chapel Hill, North Carolina; and Plowshares Theatre Company, Detroit, Michigan and is also part of the upcoming season for Hartford Stage and Providence Black Rep.

Diamond is excited about the Boston premiere. "It's thrilling. It's the first time people I interact with on a daily basis - colleagues, students and friends - will be able to see what I do. They all know that I'm a playwright, some people have even been able to make the trek to various cities to see my work... but it will be nice to have it accessible to [those in Boston]. Also, Company One is a theatre that I respect, and it is lovely to know that this play in such good hands."

THE BLUEST EYE, a haunting and tragic portrait of a black girl's coming of age in the racially turbulent 1940s, is the first show of Company One's ninth season. It will be followed by Kirsten Greenidge's *THE GIBSON GIRL* in March and Sondheim's *ASSASSINS* in the summer of 2008.

THE BLUEST EYE runs from October 26 through November 17 at the Boston Center for the Arts. To arrange coverage or interviews, please contact Mason Sand at 617.230.6753 or msand@companyone.org.