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Valentine's Day Arrives In March: VDay Santa Monica's Celebrity Charity Reading on March 27th

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On March 27, 2009, Sacred Interiors will present the first VDay Santa Monica celebrity charity reading of *The Vagina Monologues*. As part of the global VDay campaign initiated by Obie-award winner and activist Eve Ensler, VDAY Santa Monica is working to end violence against women and young girls. Proceeds from the event benefit Peace Over Violence (for which Calista Flockhart is the national spokesperson) and the VDay Global Fund.

The stellar celebrity cast includes Calista Flockhart of *Ally McBeal* and *Brothers & Sisters* fame, Oscar-winner Christine Lahti, Emmy-winner Doris Roberts from *Everybody Loves Raymond*, Penny Johnson Jerald from *24*, Fairuza Balk of the indie hit *Almost Famous* and *The Waterboy*, comedian Debra Skelton (formerly known as Debra Wilson), Tricia Leigh Fischer of *7th Heaven*, and author/actress Elaine Kagan. The cast also features Zoi Katas, theater artist D'Lo, and VDay Santa Monica producers Wendy Hammers and Deborah Kagan. Veteran actress Iona Morris helms the production as director.

VDay Santa Monica will be held at the newly opened The Broad Stage at the SMC Performing Arts Center, a 542-seat state-of-the-art theater at Santa Monica College for which Dustin Hoffman serves as chair of the Advisory Board. The night will present a new monologue written by Eve Ensler inspired by her recent witness to the plight of women in the Congo.

"I believe all women should enjoy their lives as their full, authentic selves," states VDay Santa Monica producer and Sacred Interiors owner Deborah Kagan. "This means celebrating your body, your sexuality, and your prowess. For many victimized women, the by-product of sexual abuse and domestic violence is a disassociation from their own bodies. They don't feel safe in their own skin."

Kagan continues, "I've been a fan of Eve Ensler since 1998 when I saw *The Vagina Monologues* at the Wiltern and I followed her career. When I heard about V to the 10th last year, I had to go. I found myself standing in the New Orleans Superdome with 30,000 people completely inspired and I knew it was time to do something. It was time for a VDAY Santa Monica."

Attendees will be privy to music as well as theater when soulful performances open and close the show. Kicking things off is indie musician Chris Pierce and the gospel/African rhythm/funk fusion of the all women drum and voice group Adaawe end the performances on stage. The evening will then proceed to an exclusive after party at Lexus Santa Monica where partygoers will enjoy a silent auction, tasty treats from Chef Sherie Farah and Urth Caffe, beverages by O.N.E. Natural Experience, and the DJ skills of KCRW's Jeremy Sole.

As a special thank you to the celebrity cast that's lending their talent to VDay Santa Monica, gift bags will be presented that are intended to celebrate the body, femininity, and the spirit of VDay.

Within a gorgeous tote bag supplied by Moonsus (www.moonsus.com), the ladies will find earrings by Nandi Designs (www.nandidesignsjewelry.com), Suds N Such Soap-to-Go portable soap (www.sudnsuch.etsy.com), best-selling book *What Would You Do If You Ran The World?* by Shelly Rachanow, Twisted Limb Paper handmade notes (www.twistedlimbpaper.com), a membership to Step-Up Women's Network (www.suwn.org), Pittsburgh Candle Company Soy Hand Lotion Candles (www.pittsburghcandlecompany.com), carrying cases for the active lifestyle from Portapocket (www.portapocket.com), "Here and Now" CD by Katrina Carlson

(www.katrinacarlson.com), a gift certificate from psychic medium and trainer Megan M. Riley (www.meganmriley.com), Amoriss and Chocolean wellness and satiety chocolates from Phytobase (www.phytobase.com), Chocolate Body Powder from My Pleasure (www.myplesure.com), chewable probiotic formulations from Vidazorb (www.vidazorb.com), a gift certificate from a complimentary casting for Bronze Mask Project from master sculptor Peter Harper (www.last3rhinos.com), gourmet chocolates provided by Intemperantia (www.intemperantia.com), "I'm A Natural" totes from natural and organic beauty emporium Beatorium (www.beatorium.com), Tooth Whitening from Pacific Dental Care (www.pacificdentalcare.org), sake liqueur by TyKu (www.trytyku.com), The Che Way (www.thecheway.com), and a copy of Hollywood's own H Magazine (www.hmonthly.com).

"Nothing touches my heart more than the message to end violence against women and young girls," Susan Miller, owner of Pittsburgh Candle Co., comments who is herself a survivor of domestic violence. "The Pittsburgh Candle Co. was born from my determination to move beyond being a victim. It was further fueled by the fact that I had to care for my small children and I only had enough personal belongings to fit in a suitcase."

VDay Santa Monica unifies the efforts of the sponsors, celebrities, and activists to end the violence and create a new Valentine's Day on March 27th.

The Broad Stage at The Santa Monica College's Performing Arts Center is located on 1310 11th Street, Santa Monica, CA 90401. Tickets for the show as well as the after party are available at www.vdaysantamonica.com

ABOUT PEACE OVER VIOLENCE

Formerly known as the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women, Peace Over Violence is a social service agency dedicated to building healthy relationships, families and communities free from sexual, domestic and interpersonal violence. For more information, visit www.peaceoverviolence.org.

ABOUT VDAY SANTA MONICA

The goal of V-Day 2009 Santa Monica is to bring the issue of violence against women and girls front and center. In order to understand the gravity of this cause, one must know that violence is an issue that plagues all women and men in every part of the world. To better show the depth and scope of violence against women, V-Day.org has compiled a list of statistics and resources that evidence the impact that violence against women has on the individual, and the community. One of V-Day's purposes is to amplify the work of existing groups, thus, since V-Day does not provide direct services, the resources listed on the V-Day.org website are from exceptional groups working to end violence against women locally, nationally and internationally. We hope that you will visit V-Day.org to learn more so that the violence against women and girls is a common issue for all people, and will inspire you to attend V-Day 2009 Santa Monica where all proceeds go to help create a safe place for women and girls.

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