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LEAGUE OF CHICAGO THEATRES ANNOUNCES SILK ROAD THEATRE PROJECT AS THE RECIPIENT OF THE 2008 BROADWAY IN CHICAGO EMERGING THEATER AWARD

CHICAGO (February 6, 2008) – The League of Chicago Theatres is pleased to announce Silk Road Theatre Project as the recipient of the 2008 *Broadway In Chicago* Emerging Theater Award. This is the second year of the award, which provides \$5,000 and a marketing support package that includes a full page ad in the Friday and Sunday Tribune, to an emerging theater company in the Chicagoland area. This is the second year of a five year support pledge for this program from Broadway In Chicago.

Lou Raizin, President of Broadway In Chicago says, “Chicago has a unique theatre community, from storefront operations to permanent resident long-run productions. We as a city are recognized throughout the world for our diverse selection of theatrical offerings. Broadway In Chicago is proud to recognize and support the next generation of top theater artists in our community, and we hope to continue doing so for many years to come.”

“We look forward to celebrating the accomplishments of the Silk Road Theatre Project,” said Eileen LaCario, Vice President of Broadway In Chicago and Chair of the League of Chicago Theatre’s Foundation. “We are thrilled to be working with a neighbor in Chicago’s Downtown Theater District, and a company that has distinguished themselves with their cross cultural message. This diversity is indicative of all that makes Chicago’s theater community the envy of the country.”

“Recognition by one’s peers is the sweetest recognition of all, and we at Silk Road Theatre Project are deeply moved that Chicago’s theatre community has voted to recognize us in such a grand way,” said Jamil Khoury Artistic Director of Silk Road Theatre Project. “To receive Broadway In Chicago’s 2008 Emerging Theater Award, is proof positive that the hard work and dedication that has brought us to where we are is indeed bearing fruit. When we set out to showcase playwrights of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean backgrounds, we knew we were creating a new paradigm, an endeavor as scary as it was exciting. Thus, this award validates a mission that we believe belongs, organically, intrinsically, you name it, to this great theatre town called Chicago.”

Nominations for the award were accepted from late-November through mid-December. Eligible companies must be a member of the League of Chicago Theatres, have been in existence at least 3 and no longer than 10 years, and have demonstrated artistic excellence and fiscal responsibility in business practices.

A nomination committee comprised of industry professionals, educators and League board members reviewed the applications and selected five finalists. The finalists were presented before the entire League membership for a vote in January and Silk Road Theatre Project received a majority vote from the membership.

The 2008 *Broadway In Chicago* Emerging Theater Award will be presented to Silk Road Theatre Project at the League of Chicago Theatres’ Showtime Gala the evening of Monday, March 31 at the historic Auditorium Theatre. The Emerging

The League of Chicago Theatres (LCT) is an alliance of theaters which leverages its collective strength to promote, support and advocate for Chicago’s theater industry locally, nationally and internationally. The League of Chicago Theatres Foundation (LCTF) is dedicated to enhancing the art of theater in the Chicago area through audience development and support services for theaters and theater professionals.

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Theater Award will be presented by Broadway In Chicago along with a member of The House Theatre of Chicago, the theater company that was the first recipient of this award.

In addition to the Emerging Theater Award, the League of Chicago Theatres will honor The Second City with the Artistic Leadership Award, Jackie Taylor with the Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Illinois Arts Council will receive the Tribute Award for its continued support of Chicago theaters.

The League of Chicago Theatres invites the Chicago community to attend this elegant and colorful event. Tickets are available for \$300 per person and all proceeds benefit The League of Chicago Theatres in their annual fundraising event, which supports and promotes live theater in Chicago. To purchase tickets, or for sponsorship opportunities and participation information, visit www.chicagoplays.com or call 312-554-9800.

For more information on Showtime 2008 visit www.chicagoplays.com.

SILK ROAD THEATRE PROJECT

Silk Road Theatre Project showcases playwrights of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean backgrounds, whose works address themes relevant to the peoples of the Silk Road and their Diaspora communities. Through the creation and presentation of outstanding theatre, we aim to promote discourse and dialogue among multi-cultural audiences in Chicago.

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THE LEAGUE OF CHICAGO THEATRES

Founded in 1979, the League is an alliance of theaters that leverages its collective strength to promote, support and advocate for Chicago's theater industry locally, nationally and internationally. Currently, the League serves a diverse membership of more than 190 theaters and theater companies, ranging from small storefront, non-union companies to major cultural centers with multi-million dollar facilities and productions.

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The League of Chicago Theatres gratefully acknowledges the 2008 support of The Alphawood Foundation, The Boeing Company, Chicago Community Trust, CityArts Program IV, Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, the John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Illinois, Mile After Magnificent Mile in corporation with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity/Bureau of Tourism and The Shubert Foundation. For complete information about the League of Chicago Theatres, visit chicagoplays.com.

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