

For immediate release:

This summer's" Laugh-Out-Loud" Hit
Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire
Written and performed by Mark Sam Rosenthal
Directed by Todd Parmley

Gets Legit run at Off-Broadway's
SoHo Playhouse
Begins performances January 15; Opens January 25



New York: Award winning show ***Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire*** gets legit Off – Broadway run at SoHo Playhouse. ***Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire* is written and performed by Mark Sam Rosenthal, directed by Todd Parmley** will begin performances on **Thursday, January 15 and will open on Sunday, January 25** at the **SoHo Playhouse** (15 Vandam Street). Tickets are \$30 (\$20) for previews through 1/25) and can be purchased by calling 212-691-1555 or visit www.sohoplayhouse.com.

Writer/Performer Mark Sam Rosenthal, a comedic improviser trained with New York's renowned UprightCitizens Brigade, wades into the swamp of his Louisiana roots with a politically incorrect, gender-bending new solo show, ***Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire***. ***Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire* is presented by Kind Strangers and Darren Lee Cole Theatricals.**

Blanche Survives Katrina, an award winning production featured at the 2008 New York Int'l Fringe Festival, imagines that Tennessee Williams' tragic heroine, Blanche DuBois, has neither aged nor left New Orleans. She was there when Katrina hit; she was sent to the Superdome; she was evacuated to Shreveport and entangled in the heartless bureaucracy of FEMA. She gets involved with drugs, is adopted by an Arizona megachurch, and is 'job-placed' at a Popeye's cash register – having for good reason been permanently barred from teaching young schoolboys. Hers is a refugee story whose politics and pathos you have read but never experienced through the eyes of the desperately deliberately fragile, alcoholic, codependent, sex-addicted Blanche DuBois – America's most broken woman™.

***Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire* has been called "...a thoughtful, laugh-out-loud story based on one film icon's descent into reality: hilarious, a little bit heartbreaking and really smart. Like all great comedy, it's funny because it's true—and even better because it's so absurd." Time Out NY, "... a loving tribute to a dazzling character and an unforgiving political commentary." Backstage, "...the wry dialogue, a crafty play on Williams' poetic language, begins to work its manic magic... When Blanche declares, 'even the kindness of strangers fails me now,' we share her despair." Gay City News, "Rosenthal, with a mixture of dark humor and pathos, captures well the woman who thinks she's too good to share this fate with so many..." nytheatre.com, "Funny and poignant... Deftly directed by Todd Parmley... a humorous yet bitterly sad meditation on the desperate conditions during a national disaster where government relief was inept at best, criminal at worst." offoffoff.com, "...a startlingly original show" Edge New York. "Brilliant script, cleverly crafted and surprisingly touching. *Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Desire* is a one-man marvel courtesy of Mark Sam Rosenthal. " HX.**

Rosenthal's idea for introducing Blanche DuBois into the aftermath of Katrina sprang from the images on the news of nameless evacuees arriving bewildered at the Superdome. "No one has ever arrived more famously bewildered and homeless in New Orleans than Blanche at the start of *A Streetcar Named Desire*," says Rosenthal. "I wanted to see what would happen if this delicate flower's story started over in a way, in the midst



of this horrible hurricane mess. Dark humor was just about the only way I could deal with what was happening at home.” He concludes, “And I love that even in the midst of unprecedented catastrophe, Blanche still sees herself as the biggest drama.”

Mark Sam Rosenthal's first solo show, *Love Mercy*, had a sold-out run at the People's Improv Theater in the fall of 2006. A veteran of the New York stand-up world, he has choreographed and performed award-winning burlesque at Joe's Pub, co-hosted shows on Playgirl TV, and been a guest host on Sirius Satellite Radio's morning drive talk show, *OutQ in the Morning*. He currently works as a writer/producer for Comedy Central.

Director, **Todd Parmley** (*Burning Habits*), who directed *516 (five sixteen)* at last year's FringeNYC, has been working with Rosenthal over the past year to develop the script. Parmley and Rosenthal together form Kind Strangers, and *Blanche Survives Katrina* is their first production. Of the playwright, Parmley says, “Mark Sam clearly has an ear for Tennessee Williams' language, which is a big part of the fun of the show.” But Parmley was drawn to the script for the way in which the “fun” dances right alongside the tragic. “This piece is really an exploration of the search for a personal place of safety in America today – physical safety, spiritual safety, and sexual safety. In a society that allows its most vulnerable citizens to drown and starve and then go homeless, can the fragile parts inside any of us be safe?” “Blanche is inside of me”, says Rosenthal. “I think she's inside a lot of men.” He hesitates then adds, “Of course, maybe not as many as have been inside of her.”

Blanche Survives Katrina in a FEMA Trailer Named Desire

Written and performed by **Mark Sam Rosenthal**, directed by **Todd Parmley**

Begins **Friday, January 15, Opens Sunday January 25** (along with Hedda Gabler) through **March 15**

The performance schedule is **Thursday – Friday at 9; Saturday at 3/9PM; Sunday at 7PM.**

The Soho Playhouse is located at 15 Vandam Street

Running time is 70 Minutes

Tickets are **\$30 (\$20 during previews)**. To purchase tickets, call the **Soho Playhouse at 212-691-1555**

or visit www.sohoplayhouse.com.

For photos featuring Mark Sam Rosenthal in Blanche... [click here](#).

Press performances: Thursday, January 22 at 9PM, Friday, January 23 at 9PM; Saturday, January 24 at 3 & 9PM; Sunday, January 25 at 7PM (opening).

Mr. Rosenthal and Mr. Parmley are available for interviews. To arrange interviews or press seats please contact Springer Associates PR at 212 354 4660.

DARREN LEE COLE (Producer/General Manager) has produced and managed plays for 30 years. Producing: *MindGame* by Anthony Horowitz (SoHo Playhouse), *Killer Joe* by Tracy Letts (Vaudeville Theatre, West End, London; Soho Playhouse; The Theatre, Chicago), *Killing Real Estate Women* by Gary Bonasorte, *Hiding Behind Comets*, *Charlaton, O'Keefe*, *Nostalgia Tropical* (all NYC) and *Laticia at L'espace Marais* (Paris). Management credits: *Tango Appassionato*, directed by Graciella Daniele, *The Big Love*, *Parting Gestures*, *Life in a Marital Institution*, *The Aunts* (all NYC), *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Love Letters*, *Over the Tavern* (all Chicago) and *For Colored Girls...* national tour. Mr. Cole has been the Executive Director of the SoHo Playhouse for the past 4 years where he has produced: *Piaf*, *Room Service*, *Jamaica Farewell*, *Belly of a Drunken Piano*, *Bukowski From Beyond* and Simon Lovell's *Strange & Unusual Hobbies*.