

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Queer Soup Presents: INVASION OF PLEASURE VALLEY

BOSTON, MA: **Invasion of Pleasure Valley**, a campy queer send-up of all things kitsch from the 1950s including monster movies, game shows and the suburbs will be performed at the Boston Playwrights' Theatre from July 9th through the 31st. Boston Playwrights' Theatre is located at 949 Commonwealth Ave. The production is an original work created by Queer Soup's producers/performers. Tickets are \$20/\$15 (students and seniors) and can be purchased at the door or by placing a reservation. Showtime is 8 PM Thursdays-Saturdays. For reservations and information, please call 617-824-4297, or visit <http://www.queersoup.net/>. **PRESS NIGHT is Saturday, July 10th at 8pm.**

Have you ever noticed that it's only when aliens invade that those quaint little seaside towns really get noticed? Pleasure Valley serves as the quintessential target in which "space invader" takes on a whole new meaning. Suzie Longstaff guides her unsuspecting fellow citizens out of the 1950s suburbs of repression and into the bedrooms of self-satisfaction. Taking a cue from the B-movies of the 50s and 60s, "Invasion" presents a comedy of extra-terrestrial proportions in which even the simplest of kitchen tools will elicit a dramatic response from whoever wields it. Is it an invasion or liberation? The next saleswoman who knocks on your door may know the answer, and she might just take you with her.

The writers of **Invasion** make use of the fodder provided by the B-movies of the 1950s as well as other products of that time – game shows, gender rules, the suburbs, the Cleavers and even Tupperware. Much like today, anxiety and confusion were watchwords of this period. There was a strong sense of evil in the world, primarily concerned with weapons of mass destruction (see A-bomb or Iraq), and Americans centered this fear of evil on the "other" which resulted in the production of B-movie science fiction favorites such as "Invasion of the Body Snatchers," "Queen from Outer Space," and "War of the Worlds." What is also interesting about this time was the fear that children would not grow up with a strong sense of masculinity and femininity, so the advice given to many was to "Live your gender." Pleasure Valley is populated with "manly men" and "womanly women" and its biggest business is the Longstaff Weapons factory where the "long silver shafts of all those missiles are seen coming down the conveyer belt." With a town like this, the Queer Soup creative team had an environment teeming with closet cases just waiting to come out.

"Dick and Suzie Longstaff are the perfect Pleasure Valley couple," says Jess Martin, head writer of **Invasion**, "They represent all that is good and proper in the town, but what we quickly find out is that this is flimsy veneer of who they really are. They are so busy being who they are expected to be that they repress their own queerness. When aliens come to town, it's one grand gay adventure!"

Not only is the community of Pleasure Valley fixated on gender, but they are also obsessed with commercial products to the point of performing their own product placement at every possible moment – even in the throes of an alien attack. Keeping up with the Jones' has never been so outrageous with the introduction of the mysterious alien-manufactured Wonder-Do to this right-wing dream of a society. The latest home party product ends up in the hands of Suzie Longstaff, the perfect housewife. Will she be able to market this latest handy home tool successfully? In the tradition of any American capitalist's dream, Suzie envisions her rise to the top in a more literal sense – she will rule the world.

Invasion of Pleasure Valley will tempt and tease audiences who appreciate an irreverent look at a day and age often described as "simpler times." Nothing is quite so simple in Pleasure Valley

where high school reunions might illicit forgotten moments in the girls' locker room, and a neighborly ride downtown with the local sheriff could lead an upstanding citizen into the clutches of an unknown alien species.

In addition to the play, the Queer Soup artists will be hosting a series of gender-blending workshops to their audiences on the topics of drag performance, writing and improvisational acting. More about workshops can be found at <http://www.queersoup.net/>.

On Thursday, July 29th, Queer Soup will be holding a benefit performance of **Invasion of Pleasure Valley** to raise funds for IMPACT Model Mugging's new self-defense course for LGBT Youth. For years, IMPACT's self defense program has taught hundreds of men, women, and children the hands-on skills that not only help individuals feel empowered to protect themselves but also to be more confident in every aspect of their lives. IMPACT's mission statement is "You have the right to live all aspects of your life in safety and confidence. IMPACT will give you the skills to take control of your life. Living in fear is no way to live: when you decide to take action everything changes." According to the Massachusetts Youth Risk Survey, LGBT youth are at a higher risk of experiencing violence and harassment. Queer Soup is committed to programs such as at IMPACT that empower LGBT youth to not just survive, but to thrive. Queer Soup will donate 50% of every ticket sold on this evening to assist in funding this vital and important program that will allow LGBT youth in the Boston area to take this course cost-free. For more information on IMPACT Model Mugging and the LGBT Youth program go to www.impactboston.com or call 617-232-7900.

Queer Soup is a collaboration of queer artists who cultivate new works that introduce, unite, and incite communities by using laughter to smuggle ideas across society's borders. Previous Queer Soup productions include 'Citizen Queer' at the Jimmy Tingle Off-Broadway Theater, December of 2002's sold out run of 'Buffy the Vampire Slayer's High School Reunion, "Thursday Night Theory/Unbound" at the Boston Playwrights' Theatre and "Instant Queer Soup' at the Boston Center for the Arts.

At a Glance

What: Invasion of Pleasure Valley

Produced by Queer Soup

Written by Kim Hoff, Karen "Mal" Malme, Jess Martin

Directed by Renée C. Farster

When: July 9 – 31st, 2004

Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8pm

Thursday, July 29th – Benefit performance for Queer Youth Project at IMPACT Model

Mugging

Where: Boston Playwrights' Theatre

949 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, MA

Cost/Tix: \$20, \$15 Students and Seniors

Pay what you can nights – July 9 and 10th – available at the door.

To reserve tickets, please call 617-824-4297 or email tix@queersoup.net

For reservations and more information, please visit <http://www.queersoup.net/>

PRESS - To find out more, schedule an interview or reserve seats for opening night, please be in touch with:

Renée C. Farster

617-759-4629

renee@queersoup.net

PRESS NIGHT - Saturday, July 10th at 8pm

JPEGS/Photos and images are available upon request and at

<http://www.queersoup.net/press.html>