

worldstage

Harbourfront centre

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**World Stage presents urbanvessel's
World Premiere of *Voice-Box*, a Competitive Concert in a Boxing Ring
November 10-14, 2010**

a Harbourfront Centre Fresh Ground new works commission

TORONTO, ON (Oct. 6, 2010) – Harbourfront Centre's World Stage 2010-11 is proud to host **urbanvessel**, the team behind the critically acclaimed *Stitch*, and the **world premiere** of their genre-crossing, interactive performance that blows the lid off gender and power dynamics with cheekiness, raw talent and real fighting. *Voice-Box* brings together the sweet science of boxing and the power of the singing voice to create a knock-out performance, uniting the talents of choreographer **Julia Aplin**, writer **Anna Chatterton** and composer **Juliet Palmer**. The creators step into the ring with the feisty quartet of **Vilma Vitols** (opera, cabaret, new music singer and accomplished boxer), **Neema Bickersteth** (actor and opera singer), **Savoy Howe** (comedian and boxing coach) and **Christine Duncan** (improviser, jazz and gospel singer).

Recipient of a **Fresh Ground new works** commissioning prize, Harbourfront Centre's national commissioning programme, *Voice-Box* unveils women's power to withstand blows and go beyond expectations. The show runs **November 10 through November 14** at Harbourfront Centre's York Quay Centre, in the Brigantine Room.

"Aggression is a gendered issue", explains Palmer. "If a woman is aggressive, she's often sidelined. But positive assertion is how we can act in the world, how we get things accomplished." Reflecting on the history of the sport, Palmer points out, "It's taken over one hundred years for women's boxing to be allowed back into the Olympics and to be acknowledged as a sport and not a freak show." *Voice-Box* is inspired by this controversy, but also by the curious twists that come from women fighting women.

In *Voice-Box* a fight might take the form of a tango or a tea party, but no-one is pulling any punches by the end when Savoy "Kapow" Howe takes on a surprise guest in a real fight. Unphased by the prospect, Howe responds, "Bring it on!" and adds, "anyone who loves boxing or who can't stand watching boxing, anyone who picks a fight or who is terrified of being beaten up ... should come see this show." Audience members can wrap up after the show in the lobby's mini-gym and also get punching. The collective invite audience members to feel the transformative power of being unashamedly aggressive — in a good way.

The *Voice-Box* creative team brings together choreographer Julia Aplin, writer Anna Chatterton, composer Juliet Palmer, designer Teresa Przybylski and lighting designer Kimberly Purtell. Aplin lends her striking athleticism and goofy humour to the show, while writer Chatterton revels in the vocabulary of boxing and the sounds of the fight.

Palmer's score for a cappella voices is punctuated by the sounds of bells, punching bags, squeaking ropes and the hisses and grunts of a good clean fight.

Harbourfront Centre's World Stage 2010-11

Voice-Box

urbanvessel (Canada)

Part of Fresh Ground new works

November 10-13, 8 p.m. & November 14, 2 p.m.

York Quay Centre, Brigantine Room, 235 Queens Quay West

Tickets: \$15-\$35

Box office: 416 973-4000 or visit: www.harbourfrontcentre.com/worldstage1011

Harbourfront Centre's **Fresh Ground new works** is a national commissioning programme that stimulates the creation of new cross-disciplinary works, providing financial support for innovation, creation and excellence.

Fresh Ground new works is made possible by the generosity of several major individual donors and partners who have actively assisted in the creation of new Canadian artworks: Peter Allen, William J. S. Boyle, Lionel F. Conacher and Joan Dea, Margaret and Jim Fleck, John Kazanjian and Susan Soloway, Michael and Sonja Koerner, Judy and Wil Matthews, George E. Myhal, RBC Foundation, Sonja Smits and Seaton McLean; and grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the J.P. Bickell Foundation. For more information about Fresh Ground new works please visit harbourfrontcentre.com

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