

# V-Day Cambridge University 2006

Welcome to The Vagina Monologues!

The Vagina Monologues has become a worldwide phenomenon in recent years, but its success hasn't been limited to professionals in theatres. From Canada to Kuala Lumpur and Manchester to Massachusetts, groups of women in universities, churches and community projects have performed 'The Vagina Monologues' as part of the international V-Day campaign to raise money for local charities seeking to end violence against women and girls. For the very first time, in 2006, we're adding Cambridge to that list!


Some of our monologues are hilarious, others are harrowing. Some are very personal, in other ways many are political and yet 'The Vagina Monologues' appealed as a project because it resonates with all women. Whilst we haven't all invested in an afternoon at the Vagina Workshop, all women can empathise with memories of a first period, of sexual pleasure, and sadly of fearing for their own safety and for that of their vagina.

'The Vagina Monologues' also appealed because it's a collaborative effort from a group of diverse women. Tonight you'll see a group of women perform the Vagina Monologues who are both undergraduate and post-graduate, home student and international student. All of us who were involved in making 'The Vagina Monologues' a reality are involved with the project for different reasons. Some wanted to breakdown the taboos surrounding women's sexuality, others had seen the production elsewhere and really wanted to bring it to Cambridge, some have experienced sexual violence first hand, others wanted to meet likeminded women but each of us has added our own talents to the production and we're hoping that you'll enjoy the results!

We're also hoping to raise more than £900 for Cambridge Rape Crisis and Women's Aid. Both are wonderful charities, and in the words of Eve Ensler who wrote the Vagina Monologues, great 'vagina warriors'.

So sit back, relax, enjoy and remember – the clitoris is the only organ in the body designed purely for pleasure.

Take care,



Michelle Nuttall  
CUSU Women's Officer  
(so-called) Project Manager – Vagina Monologues



## **So what is V-Day?**

It was Eve Ensler, the author of 'The Vagina Monologues' who founded V-Day. As part of the V-Day movement, Eve Ensler waives the rights to her play between Valentine's Day and International Women's Day (March 8th) each year, so that different groups of women can combine art with activism through productions of 'The Vagina Monologues' and donate the funds raised to local charities specialising in the campaign to stop violence against women and girls.

So what does the 'V' stand for? According to Eve, the 'V' stands for Victory, Valentine and, of course, vagina! In the last eight years the V-Day movement has raised over \$35 million.

## **Our Chosen Charities**

### **1. Cambridge Rape Crisis – (in their own words)**

We are a registered charity and operate as an all woman collective. We offer a confidential service of support and information. Our volunteers will listen to what you have to say. They will help you to find ways to express difficult feelings and situations. We do not make judgements about the women who use our service nor do we tell them what to do. We do not profess to have any answers. We aim to give women a space to talk about their own issues at their own pace. Women call us weeks, months, and even years after the assault. It is never too late to talk about the feelings and fears women have surrounding sexual violence.

Calls to Cambridge Rape Crisis are free and they can be reached on (01223) 245888. The phone line is available on Wednesday nights from 7-10pm and Saturday from 11am-2pm.

### **2. Cambridge Women's Aid**

Women's Aid is the national domestic violence charity which co-ordinates and supports an England-wide network of over 300 local projects, providing over 500 refuges, helplines, outreach services and advice centres. Our work is built on almost 30 years of campaigning and developing new responses to domestic violence.

- Offer support and a place of safety to abused women and children by providing refuges and other services
- Empower women affected by domestic violence to determine their own lives
- Recognise and meet the needs of children affected by domestic violence
- Promote policies and practices to prevent domestic violence
- Raise awareness of the extent and impact of domestic violence in society

Funds raised from our performances will be donated specifically to the Cambridge branch of Women's Aid.

**Diya Uberoi:** Hair, I Was There in the Room

The vagina really isn't a very scary place... It can be mysterious, but it is beautiful. This show only helps us to realise that.



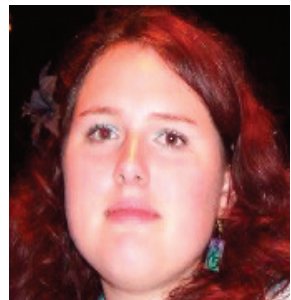
**Kate Pallas:** Director

Directing The Vagina Monologues has presented me with the unique opportunity of working with a group of women to help reclaim the concept of vagina, to appreciate its power rather than seeing it as something passive. In our society it is often denied the right to self-expression along with many forms of female sexuality. Plus, I really like the word cunt.



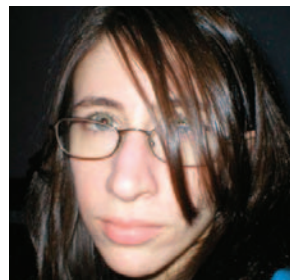
**Gwawr Thomas:** Producer

As well as serving as CUSU Women's Welfare Officer, Gwawr has produced and stage-managed several plays, including Matilda Liar (ADC, 2004), Killing Alex (Downing Dramatic Society, 2005), Thrillseeking (Edinburgh Fringe Festival, 2005), Death and the Maiden (ADC, 2005), and bash (Pembroke Players, 2006). By some strange coincidence, all these plays have involved nasty little stories about violence and murder... But it's just fiction. One in 20 women in England and Wales will be raped; one in four women will be a victim of domestic violence in their lifetime. That's fact.



**Marianna Sanjurjo:** Stage Manager

When not studying European Literature, she takes part in a playwriting workshop. She has previously stage-managed Confusions and Bash at the ADC Theatre, and both times she was completely stuck when having to think about something self-referential to say for the programme. She hopes it won't be held against her this time around either.



**Shona Brothwell:** Publicist

Shona is in the second year of a Neuroscience PhD and is a College MCR Women's and Welfare Officer. Having heard great things about The Vagina Monologues, but having never actually seen it, she thought it would be fun to get involved with this production, especially as it's in aid of such a brilliant cause. And only one person found her 'The Vagina Monologues' poster 'objectionable' - hurrah!

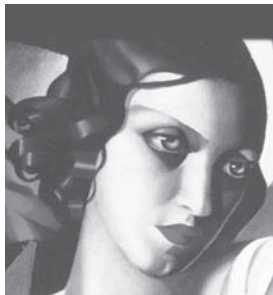
Enjoy the performance!





**Joan Iyiola:** The Flood, The Little Coochi Snorcher That Could

On paper, Joan strikes you as an all-singing all-dancing wannabe barrister! As a first year studying law at Emma she has dived straight into the drama scene, starting as a ball breaking director, followed by a stint as a semi-whore, and up until yesterday she was an irritating messenger! Joan holds the Vagina Monologues as arguably the best script she has worked with so far, 'there's has definitely been a rollercoaster of emotions to work with. My perfect way of describing it...it's that sex education lesson that you DIDN'T have!'



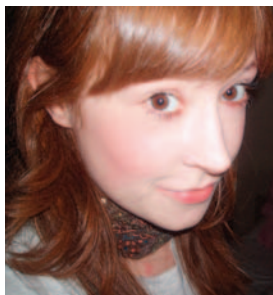
**Victoria Kingham:** Vagina Workshop, I Was There in the Room

Why not? I'm in a place where I never thought I could be at a time in my life when I thought I'd be winding down. Instead I'm into a completely new phase. The vagina monologues are about discovery, wonder, and awe; life's too short to wonder why.



**Margaret Olszewski:** Because He Liked to Look at It, I Was There in the Room

Margaret's vagina wears Seven jeans and silver stilettos. She most associates it with sunshine and Cosmopolitans. If her vagina could talk, it would say "Hi, I'd like to introduce you to my friend, the clitoris." But most importantly, Margaret's vagina is beautiful, and so is yours! She and her vagina are here to help you embrace the power of pussy.



**Tamsin Ryder:** Smell, They Beat the Girl out of my Boy

Tamsin is in her dreaded final year studying history at Robinson. She is generally renowned for her ditzyness and lack of subtlety. Having performed in a play at the Edinburgh Fringe last summer, which involved lesbians, seductive French girls and a lot of swearing, she feels she has been nicely prepared for The Vagina Monologues. Tamsin before doing this play had no idea so many names existed for her 'front bottom' and has found the whole experience quite an eye-opener! Enjoy the show.



**Natalie Szarek:** Wear and Say, They Beat the Girl out of my Boy

I wanted to get involved in this production because I believe that all women -and all men- should be on speaking terms with vaginas, and what better way to start off than cunt conversations on stage! Through sharing and speaking we can work towards the elimination of inequalities and violence against women, as well as learning many names for vaginas that we can use to impress family and friends!

# Order of the Monologues

Introduction  
Hair  
Wear and Say  
The Flood  
The Vagina Workshop  
Vagina Happy Fact  
Because He Liked to Look at It  
I Was 12. My Mother Slapped Me.  
Not-So-Happy Fact  
They Beat the Girl out of my Boy... or so they tried  
My Angry Vagina

## INTERVAL

(Drinks and refreshments will be available)

My Vagina Was My Village  
The Little Coochi Snorcher That Could  
Smell  
My Short Skirt  
Reclaiming Cunt  
A Six-year-Old Girl Was Asked...  
The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy  
I Was There in the Room



**Kiersten Burge-Hendrix:** My Angry Vagina, Reclaiming Cunt, I Was There in the Room

I'm sick of saying "sorry", sick of being sorry. For who we are, what we do, what we want, what we believe, for demanding that we be treated the way we ought to be treated. The open dialogue of this play - militant and angry, soft and persuasive, sometimes just plain freakin' funny- is so frighteningly, incredibly, enormously important. That this play, or simply the title of it, elicits sniggers, sarcasm, repulsion, discomfort, aggression, derision is a clear indication of exactly how important it is to perform.



**Elle Carter:** I was 12. My Mother Slapped Me, Smell

I hadn't set foot on the Cambridge stage prior to this production, but any nerves were dispelled by my keenness to take part in the Vagina Monologues. I think the performance is important because there are unspoken myths about vaginas that need to be uncovered. I like the way the piece uses both humour and more serious tones to convey the experiences of women, whilst supporting women's charities.



**Jemma Chisnall:** Introduction, Short Skirt

Coming from Essex, one could say that I've been preparing for this play my whole life, but nothing can quite prepare you for 'The Vagina Monologues'. It's a show that's shocked and educated me, amused and saddened me, but most of all it's taught me that as women there isn't a subject we should be embarrassed to shout about. So enjoy the show, and lots of shouting please!



**Emily Cook:** Vagina Happy Fact, Not-So-Happy Fact, Smell

Growing up in an age of girl bands and glitter, I was all too familiar with the term 'Girl Power.' But performing the Vagina Monologues has made me ask what exactly this is...What is it that makes us women? I just can't put my finger on it, except the one undeniable thing that brings us here tonight... Vaginas! So gasp, giggle and groan with us, and prepare yourself for a little of that 'Girl Power.....' tonight.



**Rhiannon Edwards:** Introduction, A 6 Year-old Girl Was Asked, I Was 12. My Mother Slapped Me.

Rhiannon is a 3rd year historian at Robinson. She has been in several plays while at Cambridge and was Women's Officer to her College 2005/6. She is very proud to be working with the Women's Union in this production and hopes you will leave feeling more positive about vaginas (yours or other)! She would also like to point out to the male Department Secretary of the Department of Chemical Engineering that there is absolutely NOTHING objectionable about her vagina, anyone else's vagina or the word VAGINA.

**Bronwyn Elliot:** I Was 12. My Mother Slapped Me, Wear and Say

Bron and her vagina have played various parts at her local theatre, the Nomad Theatre in Horsley. They have included everything from nuns to dance-hall hostesses and jitterbugs! Having never been in a play where the focus was her vagina, she describes the experience as 'interesting!' It's been fantastic working with the cast, who are all wonderful, amazing women. She hopes everyone enjoys the show and feels for any men in the audience!



**Rosa Escoda:** Wear and Say, I Was 12. My Mother Slapped Me, They Beat the Girl out of my Boy

Rosa, a local vagina, has explored her sexuality up until now playing as an aspiring diva and friendly slut from the north of England, this last role proving perfect experience for her climax in the Vagina Monologues. Whatever you want to call it: vagina, pussy, twat, chici...she's arguably the best cunt around.



**Amy Golding:** My Vagina Was My Village, They Beat the Girl out of my Boy

'I bet you're worried...'

So were we. A woman's vagina is often a mystery - even to the woman it belongs to! Through being involved in this production, I've learnt a lot - not just about the mystifying world of the vagina - but the different experiences of the women attached to them! The biggest vagina in the world belongs to a female blue whale and measures 6-8 feet - but after tonight's show, we hope you'll feel ready to take on anything....



**Clare Harrison:** They Beat the Girl out of my Boy, various introductions

I wanted to get involved in this project as I'd heard so much about the monologues but never actually seen them. It's an important play because there are so many taboos about vaginas that need to be broken. As women we shouldn't be scared of our vaginas. Vaginas need a voice and mine isn't planning on keeping quiet any time soon....



**Anna Hughes:** Introduction, The Woman Who Loved to Make Vaginas Happy

Anna Hughes and her vagina have been in quite a few productions over the last number of years, but this is the first where the focus has been entirely on the fanny. Anna's career at Cambridge has not always been so colourful; she started out as a lawyer; but over the last few weeks she has tortured her flatmates with hours of line learning and moaning. She dedicates her performance to their vaginas.



# Thank You

This production of 'The Vagina Monologues' would not have been possible without the hard work, commitment, ideas, enthusiasm and patience of the following people:

Our actresses:

Kiersten Burge-Hendrix

Elle Carter

Jemma Chisnall

Emily Cook

Rhiannon Edwards

Bronwyn Elliot

Rosa Escoda

Amy Golding

Clare Harrison

Anna Hughes

Joan Iyiola

Victoria Kingham

Margaret Olszewski

Tamsin Ryder

Natalie Szarek

Diya Uberoi

Gary Davis

Gwawr Thomas

Marianna Sanjurjo

Shona Brothwell

Andrew Lane

Kate Pallas

Sam Caldwell

Laura Rogers

Stuart Jordan

Sarah Ramsey

Susannah Rickards

Thanks must also go to the following for use of their rooms and resources:

CUSU

The Graduate Union

Newnham College

...and last but by no means least – Eve Ensler!



This production has been organised and sponsored by the CUSU Women's Union. The Women's Union is often misunderstood as a bastion of bra-burning, cauldron wielding witches (with three nipples), but the Women's Union exists in Cambridge to promote the interests of women, celebrate the presence of women and break down the barriers that continue to negatively impact on women in Cambridge. International Women's Week is all about celebrating the successes and diversity of our sisters around the world whilst highlighting the struggles that women continue to face. The Vagina Monologues fits perfectly into that remit, and hence here we are today.

To find out more about the Women's Union email Michelle on [womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk](mailto:womens@cusu.cam.ac.uk) to join the weekly Women's Bulletin.