

World: North America

Vagina Monologues due at Catholic colleges

The University of Detroit-Mercy is due to have a production of "The Vagina Monologues". A Vagina Chorus is also scheduled for the play that has sparked controversy among Catholic clergy and laity.

By Martin Barillas

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The website of the University of Detroit-Mercy, Michigan's largest Catholic-affiliated institution of higher learning, has announced that try-outs for Eve Ensler's celebrated play, "The Vagina Monologues", are scheduled for students on January 15 at the campus's Reno Hall.

The director/producer is Yolanda Fleisher, and performance of the controversial play is scheduled for February 21.

On other campuses, both secular and denominational, performances of "The Vagina Monologues" are frequently offered on St. Valentine's Day, ostensibly to raise awareness of violence against women.

The University of Michigan, for example, will host a performance on February 12-14 at the Pendleton Room. Proceeds from the performances are promised to women's shelters and other programs.

According to the Metro Times, a Detroit MI publication, student players will be joined by professionals. Director Fleischer has promised a "Vagina Chorus" adorned with soft-sculpture replicas of female genitalia.

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"The Vagina Monologues" was the product of numerous interviews Eve Ensler conducted with prominent feminists and women about their vaginas and sexual experiences.

Catholic student groups, such as the Cardinal Newman Society, as well as numerous

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Society, as well as numerous priests and theologians, have denounced the play as being at odds with Catholic teachings.



Even so, others such as Rev. James T. Keane - a Jesuit priest of Fordham University - have shown support for the play.

In an essay at the Busted Halo website, Keane says "To be too strictly moralistic about dramatic art is to preclude the performance of everything from the Old Testament

(polygamy! seed spilt on ground! fratricide!) to the life of St. Thomas More (dirty jokes!) to Romeo and Juliet, and indeed anything else in the long tradition of Judeo-Christian civilization".

Performances of "The Vagina Monologues" have taken place since at least 2000 at the Jesuit institution in Detroit. Other Roman Catholic institutions, such as Marquette University, Notre Dame University, Loyola University of Chicago, and Loyola University of New Orleans have also hosted productions of the play.

Sources:

- [Metro Times](#)
- [Busted Halo](#)
- [University of Detroit-Mercy](#)

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