

***Jail Baby* panels tackle crime and prevention!**

Winnipeg, May 9, 2013: Continuing with their already stellar reputation as a community-connected theatre company, Sarasvati Productions will be hosting a series of informative post-show panels as part of the theatrical run of *Jail Baby*, which premieres next week.

Jail Baby tells the incredible true stories of women in and out of the justice system. The play was developed out of the desire to bring the often untold stories of these women into the public spotlight and spark an important dialogue about justice in Canada. An extension of this is the post-show panels, which take place after almost every performance throughout the show's run. Panelists include professionals working in the justice system, criminalized women and experts working in and with communities at the grassroots level.

Sarasvati Productions, in partnership with the Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba, developed *Jail Baby* as part of their mandate to use theatre to increase human understanding. Over 60 women from correctional institutions participated in drama workshops and interviews. The production is now coming full circle with many of the groups who participated in the play's creation being represented in the panel discussions.

"This is an important opportunity for the public at large to participate in a dialogue about how we want to handle crime in our community," says Hope McIntyre, Sarasvati Productions' Artistic Director and *Jail Baby* playwright. "The play will explore the reality of women who end up incarcerated in a very visceral way, then the panels will provide greater context, various points of views and a chance for questions to be asked and possible solutions to be presented."

Jail Baby runs from **May 16-26, 2013** at the **University of Winnipeg Asper Centre for Theatre and Film** (400 Colony Street). Tickets are \$18 or \$12 for students and seniors. To purchase tickets and to see show times, please visit www.sarasvati.ca. Admission to the panels is included with ticket purchase.

About Sarasvati Productions: *Sarasvati Dramatic Theatre Producers and Repertory Inc* (founded in Winnipeg in 2000) seeks to inspire artists and audiences through the use of theatre and to provide a place where artists can develop and showcase their skills and celebrate their creativity.

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Sarasvati Productions - *Jail Baby* post-play panels

May 17: *What are the connections between being poor and marginalized and ending up incarcerated?:* lawyer Saul Simmonds, Dianna Bussey (Salvation Army Correctional and Justice Services) and Tracy Booth (Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba)

May 18: *Why is there such a high correlation between being Aboriginal, incarcerated and having a substance abuse problem?:* Tracy Booth (Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba), Marcie Tavares and Tina Chartrand (Ka Ni Kanichihk) and a participant from our original drama sessions (inside correctional facilities)

May 19: *Why do so many women cycle in and out of the system, from foster care, to juvenile detention to adult correctional facilities? Is there a revolving door? What are the needs of women upon release? What programs exist for them?:* Tammy Reimer (SAGE House), Jane Runner (Transition, Education and Resources for Females) and a participant from our original drama sessions (inside correctional facilities)

May 21: *How do we find the balance between safety/security and justice in Canada?:* Megan Bowman (Mediation Services Winnipeg), Debra Parkes (Robson Hall Faculty of Law) and Constable Rose Ledoux (Winnipeg Police Services)

May 22: *How can we move towards a healing and restorative model of justice?:* Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg (host), Marcie Tavares and Tina Chartrand (Ka Ni Kanichihk) and Kevin Brousseau (Assistant Commissioner, RCMP)

May 23: *Will building more prisons solve our problems and make our communities safer?:* Michael Champagne (Aboriginal Youth Opportunities), Amanda Sansregret (Legal Aid Manitoba) and Megan Bowman (Mediation Services Winnipeg)

May 24: *Punishment or Rehabilitation? What is the focus of the Canadian correctional system?:* Jason Burnstick (Onashowewin) and Glenn Morison (Open Circle)

May 25: *Caring for the Children: The difficulties of finding a stable foster home for children when their parents are incarcerated:* Dawn Lavand (Indian and Metis Friendship Centre) and Marie Christian (Voices: Manitoba Youth in Care)