



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact Alicia Andrews, Program Associate 212-262-0200

City Lights Youth Theatre

presents

Anne Frank and Me

By Cherie Bennett

Directed by Damaris Webb

February 5-13, 2005

Saturday, February 5 at 2:00 & 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 6 at 2:00 pm

Thursday, February 10 at 7:30 pm

Friday, February 11 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, February 12 at 2:00 & 7:30 pm

Sunday, February 13 at 2:00 pm

American Theatre of Actors, Chernuchin Theatre

314 West 54th Street (between 8th and 9th Avenues), 2nd Floor

Adults: \$12 Youth (6-18)*: \$8

Special Group Rates Available

For reservations or more information, call City Lights: 212-262-0200

* *Anne Frank and Me* deals with serious issues, including racism and the Holocaust.
The production is most suitable for children aged 10 and over.

New York, NY, January 26, 2005 – City Lights Youth Theatre launches its 14th production season with *Anne Frank and Me*, written by Cherie Bennett and directed by Damaris Webb. This play explores the awakening of a modern teen who doubts the truth of, but ultimately comes face to face with, the reality of the Holocaust. We start out in the teen world of hip-hop and MTV, are transported to Nazi occupied Paris, meet Anne Frank on the road to Auschwitz, and are ultimately brought forward to the light and hope of the present.

Cherie Bennett, a two-time winner of the Kennedy Center's biennial New Visions/New Voices competition, wrote *Anne Frank and Me* in 1994, after watching a "60 Minutes" report featuring Holocaust deniers portraying the Nazi extermination of the Jews as a "deception." Enraged and inspired, Ms. Bennett conceived *Anne Frank and Me* to "do battle with the lie." It premiered in 1995 and was an off-Broadway hit in 1996. In *The New York Times* review of the

1996 production, Lawrence Van Gelder hailed Bennett's story as "an eloquent and poignant play that "deserves to be seen The lesson of **Anne Frank and Me** is clear, the impact is powerful."

Anne Frank and Me is part of **City Lights Youth Theatre's** ongoing Production Program, which is dedicated to expanding the canon of theatrical work relevant to young people and to providing high-quality performance training to youth from a wide range of cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. Ten advanced acting students, ages 13-19, have been workshopping the play with Director Damaris Webb since September. Cherie Bennett's play was especially attractive to **City Lights** due to the large number of compelling and fully realized teen characters in the script. "We are particularly proud of the way our students, who come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, have been able to embrace and portray the culture and traditions of Judaism," reports Artistic Director Paula Meyer. "By immersing themselves in this play, these students now have a unique understanding of the events surrounding the Holocaust."

City Lights Youth Theatre is a nonprofit theatre company providing young people of diverse backgrounds with the opportunity to participate in theatre experiences in order to develop confidence, teamwork, responsibility, and a greater sense of self and community. Since 1991, **City Lights** has reached thousands of New York City youth, ages 3-19, through distinctive in-school residencies, after-school dramatic arts workshops, and full-scale productions. Over 50% of students receive need-based tuition and transportation subsidies through **City Lights'** Scholarship Fund. For more information on **City Lights**, please visit www.clyouththeatre.org.



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