

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Richard Engling, Artistic Director

Haunted Play Walks the Boards

[Chicago, IL] Polarity Ensemble Theatre presents Richard Engling's *Ghost Watch* this Halloween season. In it, a bankrupt filmmaker braves a haunted house to make a come-back film—only to have his friends pay the price. The smart, supernatural thriller is based on an actual local haunting. The playwright was inspired to write the play after seeing a ghost appear in his Edgewater neighborhood apartment.

Engling found himself increasingly frightened living in the tiny efficiency apartment before he saw the apparition. The most uncanny thing occurred whenever he walked through the little hallway by the door. For a moment, he'd feel a murderous rage infect him, a feeling which would dissipate as soon as he got out of the hallway.

Late one night, he saw the ghost appear: a woman, translucent, glowing white, kneeling on the floor looking toward the little hallway. She looked as though she were in terror for her life. She looked slowly back and forth at the hallway and at Engling three times and then vanished. "I had gooseflesh so badly that my skin hurt all over my body," Engling said.

He moved out of the apartment as soon as possible, but the mystery of the ghosts, the frightened woman and the murderous male he felt in the hallway, stuck with him until he turned it into a play.

The original version of the play was mounted in 1987, and the *Chicago Reader's* Anthony Adler described the action of the play this way: "The ghosts haunting Richard Engling's *Ghost Watch* are . . . a married couple who lost their lives when the husband's jealousy turned violent, they're stuck in a sort of astral tape loop—an endlessly repeated snuff movie in which they reenact their final passion, complete with original terror and rage. And they can't do anything about it because they've got no bodies.

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“At least not until Adam and his buddies show up. An ambitious young video maker who figures he can break through to visibility if he can document a haunting, Adam takes over the apartment where the domestic slaughter took place, sets up his cameras, and digs in to see if he can't catch himself a ghost. What he doesn't know, of course, is that the ghosts may very well want to catch themselves a man.”

Ghost Watch will be presented at the Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox Avenue, Chicago. It runs November 2 - 25. Performances are 8 pm Thursdays through Saturdays and 3 pm on Sundays. Tickets may be purchased online at www.PETtheatre.com or by calling 773/282-7035. (General admission, \$20; students and seniors with ID, \$15. \$30 Opening Night with Reception). Media nights are November 2nd, 3rd and 4th. PET is a member of the League of Chicago Theatres.

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