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**PING CHONG & COMPANY TO PRESENT *SECRET SURVIVORS* -
POWERFUL THEATER PRODUCTION SHARES EXPERIENCES
OF ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE**

**Free Performance: Saturday, March 12, 2011, 7:30pm
El Museo Del Barrio, New York**

New York- Award winning downtown theater company Ping Chong & Company will present the premiere of *Secret Survivors* on Saturday, March 12, 2011, at 7:30 pm, at a free public performance at El Museo del Barrio. Written and directed by Sara Zatz, Ping Chong & Company Associate Director, *Secret Survivors* is an emotionally compelling and deeply moving theater production featuring adult survivors of child sexual abuse sharing their own personal stories on stage, and is part of Ping Chong & Company's, *Undesirable Elements* series of oral history theater works exploring issues of culture and difference in specific communities.

Secret Survivors (<http://www.secretsurvivors.org>) was conceived for Ping Chong & Company by Amita Swadhin, an educator, anti-violence activist, and incest survivor. The script was written by Sara Zatz, and developed out of writing workshops, interviews, and conversations with the performers: Gabriella Callender, Lucia Leandro Gimeno, RJ Maccani, Diana Sands, and Amita Swadhin. A work-in-progress reading was held in New York in May 2010. The NYC-based cast is drawn from a range of geographic, ethnic, and class backgrounds. The performers currently work or are active in the fields of music/performing arts, public policy, LGBTQ issues, community organizing, and independent media.

Child sexual abuse affects about 1 in 4 female-bodied people and 1 in 6 male-bodied people. However, due to social taboos, very few survivors are able to share their stories publicly. The majority of survivors never report their abuse to state authorities, and many never tell anyone at all. *Secret Survivors* seeks to use direct personal narrative to show that this violence is epidemic, to represent the diverse ways this violence occurs and reverberates throughout survivors' adult lives, and grapple with the many reasons why most survivors remain silent. The complexly-layered theatrical performance features adult survivors sharing their real-life experiences on stage, and explores the social and institutional structures that have allowed child sexual abuse to be both rampant and largely unaddressed in our wider society.

Secret Survivors is part of *Undesirable Elements* (<http://www.undesirableelements.org>), an ongoing series of community-specific oral history theater works by Ping Chong & Company. Created by Ping Chong in 1992, each production is made in a specific community, with local participants testifying to their real lives and experiences. Scripts are based on interviews with participants, who then share their stories in the final production. More than 40 productions have been made across the United States and abroad. Recent productions have explored themes as far ranging as disability, Native American identity, Asian American identity, and the experiences of Congolese refugees in Syracuse, New York.

The performance will take place at 7:30pm on Saturday March 12, 2011, at El Museo Del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Avenue at 104th Street. Admission is free, but reservations are required through <http://www.elmuseo.org/calendar>. A Q&A with the writer and cast will be held immediately following the performance. Not recommended for children under 12. Counseling services and additional resources will be available during and immediately after the performance.

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Ping Chong & Company was founded in 1975 to create and tour innovative works of theater and art that explore the intersection of race, history, culture and technology in the modern world. The New York-based non-profit company has produced more than 90 works by Chong and his collaborators, toured widely in the United States and throughout the world, and received numerous honors and awards. Ping Chong & Company is a 501(c) 3 organization. For more information, visit <http://www.pingchong.org>.

Sara Zatz (Writer and Director) is the Associate Director of Ping Chong & Company, where she has managed the *Undesirable Elements* series since 2002. She has overseen the production of more than a dozen original works in the series and served as co-author with Ping Chong on ten productions. In over a decade in arts management, she has worked with the Henson International Festival of Puppet Theater, the composer Tan Dun, and Lincoln Center Festival, among others. She holds a BA from Bryn Mawr College and an M.Phil in Irish Theater Studies from Trinity College, Dublin.

Ping Chong (Artistic Director, Creator *Undesirable Elements*) is an internationally acclaimed director, playwright, video installation artist and pioneer in the use of media in the theater. His work has been presented at major festivals and theaters, including the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, La MaMa E.T.C, Spoleto USA Festival, the Seattle Repertory Theatre, the New Victory Theater, the Barbican Centre, Vienna Festival and many others. His puppet theater production, *Cathay: Three Tales of China*, created with the Shaanxi Folk Art Theater of Xian, China, was chosen as one of the top 10 productions of the 2005 season by NY Theatre Wire, and recently had its Chinese premiere in Xian. In 2010, *The Devil You Know* premiered at La MaMa as part of the 2010 Under The Radar Festival, and *Throne of Blood* was presented at BAM's Next Wave Festival. Among his many honors and awards, Chong has received a Guggenheim Fellowship, a USA Artist Fellowship, two BESSIE awards and two OBIE awards, including one for sustained achievement in 2000.

El Museo del Barrio, New York's leading Latino cultural institution, welcomes visitors of all backgrounds to discover the artistic landscape of the Latino, Caribbean and Latin American cultures. Their richness is represented in El Museo's wide-ranging collections and exhibitions, complemented by performing arts, music concerts, cultural celebrations, and educational programs. A dynamic artistic, cultural, and community gathering place, El Museo is a center of cultural pride on New York's Museum Mile.

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