

DzieCi

*Presents a work-in-progress presentation of*

# *The Devils of Loudun*

*A chamber piece about mass possession, sin, and redemption  
inspired by the historical novel by Aldous Huxley*

*costumes Karen Hatt*

*vocal coach Lea Bracher*

*music direction Bob Strock*

*choreography Lenna Kitterman*

*dramaturgy M. Sweeney Lawless*

*adaptation & direction Matt Mitler*

*with*

*Brina Bishop, Yvonne Brechbuhler, Max Faugno*

*Karen Garrat, Joan Merwyn, Matt Mitler*

*John Michael Norman, Samuel Reynolds, Stephen Shesley*

*Rebecca Sokoll, Bob Strock, Nella Vinci*

*Three performances only:*

*Thursday, Friday, & Saturday, November 8, 9, & 10*

*8:00 PM*

*Jan Hus Presbyterian Church*

*351 East 74th Street*

*a donation of \$10 is suggested*

*for further information please call -- 718 638 6037*

*or e-mail -- [dzieci@mindspring.com](mailto:dzieci@mindspring.com)*

Long is the way and hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light.  
*Milton, Paradise Lost*

### A Note on the Production

The international experimental theatre company, DZIECI, has been working diligently but quietly. For almost five years now, an intense effort has been made to train each member and develop a tightly knit ensemble while exploring an organic process toward creativity and personal growth. Towards this aim, DZIECI balances its work on performance with work of service through creative and therapeutic interactions with patients in a variety of institutional settings.

Since its inception, DZIECI has been involved in an open-ended process of adapting and rehearsing Aldous Huxley's historical treatise, *The Devils of Loudun*. The story centers around a group of 17th century Ursuline nuns who, inspired by their Prioress, Sister Jeanne des Anges, became officially "possessed" and were forced to undergo public exorcisms. Blame for the nun's behavior was placed on the cavalier and charismatic priest, Urbain Grandier. Guilty of sins of the flesh but not of the devil, Grandier was imprisoned, tortured, and ultimately martyred. Eventually, a practiced exorcist and spiritual director, Jean-Joseph Surin, was brought in to cure Sister Jeanne. Even as he suffered his own psychotic breakdown, Jeanne's visions of devils were replaced by an apparition of Saint Joseph, and she became "miraculously" marked with stigmata. She cultivated the career of a mystic and lived famed and respected for many years.

From a study of sacred hymns and chants (Le Jeune, Tournai, Machaut, T.L. de Victoria, di Marco, von Bingen, Bach) to Commedia dell'Arte, mime and gymnastics, DZIECI has created a work which aims to be challenging, and emotionally and philosophically complex. Text has been compiled from such sources as Goethe's *Faust*, Marlowe's *Faustus*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, *Paradise Regained*, and *Samson Agonistes*, Blake, Baudelaire, Kingsley, Keats, Crashaw, Calderon, Dante, Dowland, Epictetus, Herbert, Saint Ligouri, Racine, Shakespeare, Shelley, Spenser, Dante, Donne, Rabindranath Tagore, Saint Augustine, *The Nag Hammadi Library*, *The Malleus Maleficarum*, *The Mahabharata*, Swami Vivekananda, and *The Jerusalem Bible*.