

# Production has power to change perspective

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surprise performers. Celebrity emcee for the performance will be performer Linda Kash.

"I feel excited about being able to do *The Vagina Monologues* again, and (the director) has assembled a really great cast of women," said Burke. "I don't have any doubt of the power and humour of the piece, because I've performed in it before."

Pieces like Ensler's, says Burke, are at the top of her list when it comes to acting.

"It's the kind of work I love to do the most, because it was written in such passion by the playwright, and it's powerful and it affects people," she said. "It's wonderful to perform,

but it's even more wonderful to know that what you're doing is making effective change. There are going to be women who are going to be helped out, who are going to be empowered when they see this."

Alksnis of Interim Place has seen that first-hand in past years while watching *The Vagina Monologues* with women staying at the shelter.

"It was an unforgettable and life-changing experience for many of the women," she said. "The sense in the play of women's power in themselves, our self-determination, our rights as sexual beings, to be and do what is right for us, is a really inspiring message to women who have been told, maybe for decades, that

they're not in charge."

Alksnis says Interim Place hopes to raise more than \$20,000 from the performance this year, money the shelter needs to continue its counseling, social, recreational and education programs for women and children.

On a yearly basis, Interim Place shelters and serves approximately 300 women and children, takes more than 5,000 crisis calls and offers counseling to more than 800 women.

The benefit performance of *Vagina Monologues* at Stage West Theatre Restaurant, 5400 Dixie Rd., is on stage Saturday, March 1. The performance includes a buffet,

prizes and meet and greet with the cast.

Lunch will be served at 11 a.m. and the show begins at 12:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$56.77 plus tax. Tables of two, four, six and eight are available.

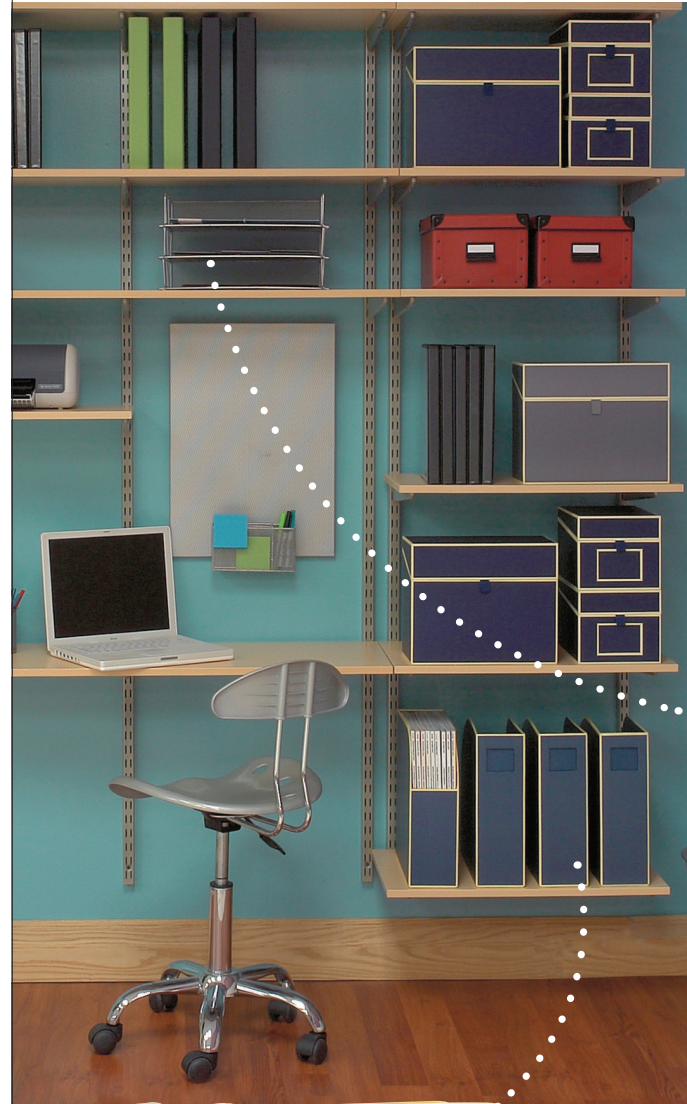
To buy tickets, visit [www.stagewest.com](http://www.stagewest.com) or phone the Stage West Box Office at 905-238-0042.

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