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Banned Cold War Play Comes to America

By Patrick Healy

A remounting of a 1985 production of a cold war play that was shut down by Polish authorities because of its subject matter — life in Poland under martial law — will run Thursday through Saturday night at Yale Repertory Theater in Connecticut and Nov. 11-15 at the Abrons Arts Center in New York City.

The play, “Wormwood,” which was banned in Poland for its portrayal of daily hardships, will be performed by Theater of the Eighth Day, the Polish troupe that put on the original production. Under communism, members of the troupe said, they were often under police surveillance, and the company itself went into exile after the authorities shut down the production of “Wormwood.”

Yale will hold talkbacks with members of the troupe after each of the three performances this week.

The production then comes to New York as one of the first offerings in the new arts festival “Performing Revolution in Central and Eastern Europe,” which uses exhibitions and theater, dance, and music performances to examine the fall of totalitarian regimes. The festival begins this weekend and runs through March; more information can be found at performingrevolution.org.