

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Midwest premiere of *Jack's Precious Moment*

Will Act For Food presents Obie-winner Samuel D. Hunter's wry examination of religious fundamentalism and loss February 2-25.

Members of the press are invited to attend the opening and reception on Thursday, February 2.

Chicago, IL- Will Act For Food will present the Midwest premiere (and second production ever) of *Jack's Precious Moment*, by Samuel D. Hunter, directed by Azar Kazemi, opening Thursday, February 2 and running through February 25 at Chemically Imbalanced Theater, 1420 W. Irving Park . Performances will be Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at 8PM. The cast features Havalah Grace, Bryan Hart, Kevin Mullaney, and Ed Porter.

After Bib's twin brother Jack is brutally killed by Muslim fundamentalists in Iraq, he begins (along with his father and Jack's widow) trying to pick up the pieces; but his own fundamentalist Christian beliefs get in the way of making sense of senseless tragedy. The loss of a life leads to a loss of faith, and ultimately to a loss of identity. Maybe finding peace is as simple as a journey to the Precious Moments Inspiration Park, peppered along the way with odd haikus and a philosophical carry. Probably not, though.

Alternately heartbreaking and hilarious, *Jack's Precious Moment* is a darkly comic story of family and faith, of crisis and coping mechanisms. Will Act For Food is extremely excited to bring this play to a Chicago stage for the first time.

This production is WAFF's first with new Artistic Director Andrew Jordan at the helm. "We've taken some time to reflect on our artistic identity," Jordan says, "And we've realized that we're instinctively drawn toward scripts that are somehow unconventional or off-kilter, so we're running with that: embracing the Theater of *Wait. What?*"

Also in the way of firsts, this is director Azar Kazemi's first production since graduating from the MFA Directing program at The Theatre School at DePaul University in 2011. A high school classmate of playwright Hunter's, Kazemi was raised in northern Idaho, where *Jack's Precious Moment* begins. "One of the reasons I love this script is its familiarity," she says, "I grew up with these people, and even if I didn't always relate to them, they helped shape who I have become; just as they did for Sam and we can see it in his work."

In the interest of raising as much food as possible for Chicago's hungry this winter, WAFF is implementing a new food donation discount: One dollar off per item donated, with no limit; admission can be paid entirely in food for the entire four-week run. Additionally, WAFF is adopting the following ticket pricing schedule for this production:

1st week- \$5
2nd week- \$10
3rd week- \$15
4th week- \$20

Every week: \$1 off for every nonperishable food item you donate. All food donations benefit Lakeview Pantry.

Tickets are available at www.willactforfood.com/tix.

Events

Patrons attending the Thursday, February 2 opening night performance of *Jack's Precious Moment* are invited to join the cast, crew, and company for a reception immediately afterward in Chemically Imbalanced Theater's newly renovated space.

Other events, speakers, etc. will be announced as they are confirmed on WAFF's website, willactforfood.com, as well as via Facebook and Twitter.

About the Playwright:

Samuel D. Hunter's recent plays include *A Bright New Boise* (2011 OBIE Award for Playwriting, 2011 Drama Desk Nomination for Best Play; produced originally by Partial Comfort Productions, NYC and LiveWire Theatre in Chicago), *The Whale* (upcoming production at Denver Center in Winter 2012), *Jack's Precious Moment* (Page 73 Productions at 59E59), *Five Genocides* (Clubbed Thumb at the Ohio Theater), *Norway* (Phoenix Theatre of Indianapolis; Boise Contemporary Theater), *I Am Montana* (Arcola Theatre, London; Mortar Theater, Chicago). He has active commissions from MTC/Sloan, Seattle Rep, South Coast Rep, and Boise Contemporary Theater. His plays have been developed at the O'Neill Playwrights Conference, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, PlayPenn, Ojai Playwrights Conference, the Lark Playwrights Workshop, Juilliard, LAByrinth, Rattlestick, Seven Devils Playwrights Conference, 24Seven Lab, and elsewhere. Internationally, his work has been translated into Spanish and presented in Mexico City and Monterrey, and he has worked in the West Bank with Ashtar Theatre of Ramallah and Ayyam al-Masrah of Hebron. At Ashtar, he co-wrote *The Era of Whales* which was performed in Ramallah and Istanbul. Awards: 2011 Sky Cooper Prize, 2008-2009 PONY Fellowship from the Lark, two Lincoln Center Le Compte du Nuoy Awards, others. He is a member of Partial Comfort Productions and is an alum of Ars

Nova's Playgroup. He has taught at Fordham University, Rutgers University, Marymount Manhattan College, and The University of Iowa. A native of northern Idaho, Sam lives in New York City. He holds degrees in playwriting from NYU, The Iowa Playwrights Workshop, and Juilliard.

About the Director

Azar Kazemi is also a native of northern Idaho, where she and Sam Hunter were high school classmates. She recently graduated with her MFA in Directing from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Upon returning from a directing fellowship at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, she most recently assistant directed *In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play* at Victory Gardens. Azar has also assisted Ethan Hawke on two Off-Broadway productions at The New Group in New York City. Some of her directing credits include: *Fool For Love* by Sam Shepard, *Crave* by Sarah Kane, *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill, *Dying City* by Christopher Shinn, and *Tape* by Stephen Belber.

About the Company

Will Act For Food (WAFF) has nourished the Chicago community artistically and literally since its inception in 1997. We take a collaborative approach to theater; finding the light in darkness, revealing truth within fiction, and celebrating the absurd in the everyday. By offering discounted admission in exchange for non-perishable food donations, we empower our audiences to help feed those in need.

For more information, please contact Melissa Tropp at Curious Relations: 312-316-1736, troppy@curiousrelations.com.

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Jack's Precious Moment- Fact Sheet

Media Contact: Melissa Tropp
312-316-1736; troppy@curiousrelations.com

WHAT: Will Act For Food presents the Midwest premiere of *Jack's Precious Moment* by Samuel D. Hunter, directed by Azar Kazemi

WHERE: Chemically Imbalanced Theater, 1420 W. Irving Park in Chicago

WHEN: FOUR WEEKS ONLY: February 2-25, 2012
Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 8PM

TICKETS: www.willactforfood.com/tix

1st week- \$5

2nd week- \$10

3rd week- \$15

4th week- \$20

Every week: \$1 off for every nonperishable food item you donate. All food donations benefit Lakeview Pantry

Cast:

Havalah Grace, Bryan Hart, Kevin Mullaney, and Ed Porter

Production Team:

Assistant Director: Andrew Jordan

Stage Manager: Jason Crutchfield

Dramaturg: Gil Tanner

Lighting Designer: Noah Hayman

Scenic Designer: Ashley Woods

Costume Designer: Rachel Sypniewski

Sound Designer: Jack Hawkins

Props: Andrew Jordan

Violence Coordinator: Greg Poljacik