

2010-2011 Season

SOMETHING YOU DID

By Willy Holtzman
August 28–October 3

THE ODD COUPLE

By Neil Simon
October 23–November 28

THE KINSEY SICKS in OY VEY IN A MANGER

December 18–January 2

The Cameri Theatre's
RETURN TO HAIFA
Adapted by Boaz Gaon
from the novella
by Ghassan Kanafani
January 15–30

THE CHOSEN

Adapted and directed
by Aaron Posner
Based on the novel
by Chaim Potok
Presented by Arena Stage
March 8–27

PHOTOGRAPH 51

by Anna Ziegler
March 23–April 24

THE MOSCOWS OF NANTUCKET

by Sam Forman
May 11–June 12

Theater J

Aaron & Cecile
Goldman Theater
Washington DCJCC
1529 16th Street NW

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THEATER J BEGINS ITS 2010-2011 SEASON OF COMBUSTIBLE COUPLETS WITH WILLY HOLTZMAN'S EXPLOSIVE POLITICAL DRAMA **SOMETHING YOU DID**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, August 4, 2010

PRESS NIGHT: Tuesday, August 31 at 7:30 pm

CONTACT: Grace Overbeke at (202) 777-3230 or grace@theaterj.org

(Washington, DC) – Theater J is pleased to announce its season kick-off production of *Something You Did*, Willy Holtzman's crackling political drama of characters trying to reconcile their youthful radicalism with the people they later become. This gripping play, about an anti-war activist's attempt to win early release from prison, won critical acclaim in New York in 2008, with *Time Out New York* calling it "a fresh way to discuss modern terrorism." For Theater J's production, starring Associate Artist-In-Residence **Rick Foucheux** and **Deborah Hazlett**, and directed by **Eleanor Holdridge**, Holtzman has adapted the piece to reflect the new political atmosphere.

Something You Did runs August 28–October 3, 2010 at Theater J in the Washington DCJCC's Aaron & Cecile Goldman Theater. Performances on Saturday, August 29 and Monday, August 30 at 7:30 pm are Pay-What-You-Can-previews. The performance on Saturday, August 28 at 8:00 pm is a \$30 preview. Press night is Tuesday, August 31 at 7:30 pm. On Wednesday, September 15 at 7:30 pm the show will be Open Captioned for the hearing impaired. Tickets are available for \$35-\$55 at boxofficetickets.com or (800) 494-TIXS. Limited tickets for patrons 35 and under are \$15 for all performances!

A stellar student from a famed, leftist family, Alison Moulton (Deborah Hazlett) is serving her 30th year behind bars for an anti-war bombing that resulted in the death of a police officer. Once a member of a radical activist group much like the Weather Underground, she now spends her days volunteering in the prison library and providing legal counsel to her irreverent young prison guard Uneeq Edmunds (Lolita-Marie). The play opens only days after the death of Alison's father, as his pugnacious law partner Arthur Rossiter (Norman Aronovic) comes to Alison with a new plan to petition for her parole. Alison, however, has a different idea of how to win the case: Over the objections of others, she's gotten in touch with Lenora Renshaw, the slain officer's daughter (Aakuh Freeman) who has grown into a formidable woman. The encounter between the two goes badly. Alison is also visited by Eugene Biddle (Rick Foucheux), a former comrade and lover, turned neo-conservative author and media star. Biddle, who's been sent by Arthur ostensibly to help Alison appeal to a more conservative constituency, not only argues against her, but implicates a past associate who once worked on Alison's legal defense, now a public official. As the debate unfolds, secrets are revealed and battles revisited. Smear politics, '60s revisionism, and the desire to rejoin society form the driving, conflicting forces in this "fluid and eloquent play" (*The New York Times*).

The creative team brings together artists new to Theater J, such as Eleanor Holdridge and Willy Holtzman, with Theater J design team veterans. Director **Eleanor Holdridge** recently moved to DC to lead the Directing Program at The Catholic University of America after serving as Founding Artistic Director of the Red Heel Theater Company in Philadelphia. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence College and the Yale University School of Drama, she has directed and taught at the Yale School of Drama, New York University, the Juilliard School, and the Shakespeare Theatre Academy for Classical Acting. Her Off-Broadway productions include *Steve & Idi* at the Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre; *Cycling Past The Matterhorn* at the Clurman Theatre and *The Imaginary Invalid*, and *Mary Stuart* at the Pearl Theatre Company.

Playwright **Willy Holtzman's** work often uses actual historical events as jumping-off points for dramatic speculation. *Something You Did*, for instance, is based on the headlines

surrounding the public figure Kathy Boudin, the daughter of a prominent left-wing attorney whose radical activity with the Weather Underground culminated in her incarceration. It also draws, to a lesser extent, on figures like former Underground members Bill Ayers and Bernadine Dohrn. Likewise, his play *Hearts*, nominated for the 2003 Pulitzer Prize, Arthur Miller Award for Dramatic Writing and the Barrymore Award for Outstanding New Play, was inspired by his own father's experiences in World War II. It ran successfully at Baltimore's Center Stage in 2007. His one-man play, *The Real McGonagall*, draws a portrait of the real-life Scotsman William McGonagall, deemed "The Worst Poet in History." Likewise, The Gradiva Award-nominated *Sabina* follows Sabina Spielrein, a Jewish woman who was both a patient and perhaps a lover of Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud before she was murdered by Nazi Death Squads. Holtzman's ability to select fascinating stories from history, people them with deeply-felt characters and pepper them with his signature sense of humor has garnered him international recognition and productions, as well as the Humanitas Prize, a Writers Guild Award, a Peabody Award and an HBO Award at the National Playwrights Conference.

Holtzman, looking forward to his inaugural Theater J production, remarked, "I can't imagine a better place to stage the new version of *Something You Did* than Theater J in an election year! We'll see what electoral impact the Tea Party actually has, how race and gender shape voting results, etc. And, of course, there's the sort of political guilt by association and manipulative smear tactics that we explore in *Something You Did*."

The cast also reflects an exciting mixture of new and familiar faces. Anchoring the piece as former radical Alison Moulton is **Deborah Hazlett**, who has thrilled DC and Baltimore audiences at Everyman Theatre in *The Cherry Orchard*, *Betrayal*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Sight Unseen*, *Proof*, and *Hedda Gabbler*; The Folger Theatre in *Hamlet* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and at Signature Theatre in *The Blue Room*. Audiences may also recognize her from her recurring role as Alison Wyatt on the TV drama *Law & Order*.

Playing Eugene Biddle is Theater J's 2010-2011 Associate Artist-In-Residence, **Rick Foucheux**. Mr. Foucheux first appeared on the Theater J stage in *Born Guilty* and its sequel, *Peter and the Wolf* back in the 2001–2002 season. He returned the following season, playing the lead role of Matt Friedman in *Talley's Folley*, for which he received a Helen Hayes nomination for Outstanding Lead Actor. In the 2003–2004 season, he moved audiences in the Theater J/Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company collaboration of *Homebody/Kabul*. He has been nominated for ten Helen Hayes Awards, and is a two-time recipient of the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Lead Actor.

Also featured is **Norman Aronovic**, who returns to Theater J after performing in *David in Shadow and Light* and *Pangs of the Messiah*. He has performed at theatres throughout the DC area, including Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company and Arena Stage. His film credits include HBO's *The Wire* and *Pelican Brief*. Making their Theater J debuts in *Something You Did* are **Aakhu Freeman** of Arena Stage's *All My Sons*, *The Great White Hope* and *The Royal Family* and **Lolita-Marie**, who recently appeared in *Getting Out* at Journeymen Ensemble Theatre.

Scenic Designer Luciana Steconci returns to Theater J after having designed *Zero Hour* with Jim Brochu. She recently won the 2010 Outstanding Emerging Artist Award at the 25th Annual Mayor's Arts Awards and is currently the Resident Charge Artist at The Studio Theatre. Jason Arnold, who is currently the designer-in-residence at American University will serve as the Lighting Designer. Frank Labovitz, who designed costumes for *Shlemiel the First* and *Sholom Aleichem: Laughter Through Tears* will be designing costumes. Sound Designer Veronika Vorel most recently worked at Theater J designing Hadar Galron's *Mikveh*. Last season, she was nominated for three Helen Hayes Awards for Outstanding Sound Design. Michelle Elwyn, who also collaborated on *Mikveh*, will design props for both *Something You Did* and Theater J's next production *The Odd Couple*.

The production of *Something You Did* will be supplemented by a series of discussions featuring some of DC's most illustrious political and social thinkers. On Sunday, August 29, playwright Willy Holtzman will join director Eleanor Holdridge and members of the design team on stage at 9:00 pm. On Sunday, September 5 at 4:30 pm, Theater J introduces its new multi-faith discussion series, "*Scripture Unscripted: Intercultural Dialogues*" which convenes the second or third Sunday of every run. September's *Scripture Unscripted* panel will focus on **Clerical Perspectives on Protest and Punishment, Prisons and Parole**. On Sunday, September 12, Theater J offers panel discussions on **How the '60s Changed the World** at 4:30 pm, and another entitled **When Protest Comes to Shove: How Far is Too Far?** at 9:00 pm. And on Sunday, September 19 at 4:30 pm, the topic is **Switching Sides: Neo-Conservatism and the Journey of Gene Biddle**. On Sunday, September 26, the post-matinee panel addresses **Protest Movements and the Internet: Political Activism Yesterday and Today**. Thursday, September 28 at 9:00 pm will be a Peace Café on **Defining Terrorism**. Finally, on Sunday, October 3, Theater J brings back its "5 x 5" series of short plays—a collection of plays written by local playwrights and Theater J audience members, responding to the themes and ideas of *Something You Did*. This collection of 5x5 plays will be entitled, **Scenes from After the Revolution**. More information is attached.

Theater J's new play development program will also explore the wages of radical political action through its Tea@2 reading series with a reading of **Zayd Dohrn's** *Haymarket* on September 27. Dohrn is the son of former Weather Underground members Bill Ayers wife Bernadine Dohrn. His play follows the anarchists, policemen, elected officials and ordinary citizens involved in actual terrorist bombing of Chicago in the summer of 1886.

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***SOMETHING YOU DID* Beyond The Stage Fact Sheet**

In partnership with the Washington DCJCC Morris Cafritz Center for Community Service, Theater J would like to invite all audience members to bring in books to donate to local prison libraries through the DC Books for Prisons Project. For more information on volunteer projects at the 16th Street J, visit washingtondcjjcc.org/volunteer.

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Theater J is dedicated to taking its dialogues beyond the stage, offering an array of innovative public discussion forums and outreach programs which explore the theatrical, psychological and social elements of our art. Discussions take place almost weekly, following most Sunday matinees and some Thursday evening performances. For more information on confirmed panelists, go to theaterj.org and click on 'beyond the stage'

Saturday, August 28, 9:30 pm: Post-Preview Talkback

Sunday, August 29, 9:00 pm: Talkback with the Creative Team of *Something You Did*

Sunday, September 5, 4:30 pm: Scripture Unscripted: Clerical Perspectives on Protest and Punishment, Prisons and Parole

Sunday, September 12, 4:30 pm: How the 1960s Changed the World

9:00 pm: When Protest Comes to Shove: How Far is Too Far?

Thursday, September 16, 9:00 pm: Cast Talkback

Sunday, September 19, 4:30 pm: Switching Sides: Neo-Conservatism and Journey of Gene Biddle (and his Brethren)

Sunday, September 26, 4:30 pm: Protest Movements and the Internet: Political Activism Yesterday and Today

Tuesday, September 28, 9:00 pm: Peace Café: Defining Terrorism

Sunday, October 3, 4:30 pm: Scenes from After the Revolution (The Return of "5 x 5"— an open call for five-minute play submissions)

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Theater J presents 5X5: Playwrights respond to SOMETHING YOU DID, a five-minute play festival.

Theater J invites local playwrights to respond to the pertinent issues of smear politics, 1960s revisionism, the desire to rejoin society, and the anti-war movement, as dramatized by Willy Holtzman's *SOMETHING YOU DID*, at Theater J August 28–October 3, 2010. The production, directed by Eleanor Holdridge will mark the world premiere of this updated version of the play.

Playwrights are asked to read the script, available by emailing shirley@theaterj.org, or attend one of three preview performances— August 28 at 8:00 pm, and August 29 and 30 at 7:30 pm. Just mention "5X5" at the box office for Pay-What-You-Can tickets. Then write a five minute play inspired by the show. Five of these plays will be selected and read by professional actors following the October 3 performance of *SOMETHING YOU DID*.

The deadline for play submission is Friday, September 15. Plays can be submitted via email to shirley@theaterj.org. Call (202) 777-3230 or email for more information.

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On Friday afternoons professional actors read the best new works emerging from Theater J's Arlene & Robert Kogod New Play Development Program in an intimate setting with tea and cookies. All readings are \$5.

On Monday, September 27, 2:00 pm Theater J will present a staged reading of HAYMARKET by Zayd Dohrn

The true story of the terrorist bombing that rocked the city of Chicago in the summer of 1886, the play begins moments after the dynamite is thrown, and follows the lives of anarchists, policemen, elected officials and ordinary citizens in the aftermath of tragedy and through the first "red scare" in American history.

All discussion dates and times will be posted at theaterj.org.

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***SOMETHING YOU DID* Fact Sheet**

WRITTEN BY: Willy Holtzman
DIRECTED BY: Eleanor Holdridge
SCENIC DESIGNER: Luciana Steconi
LIGHTING DESIGNER: Jason Arnold
SOUND DESIGNER: Veronika Vorel
COSTUME DESIGNER: Frank Labovitz
PROPERTIES DESIGNER: Michelle Elwyn
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER: Roy A. Gross

FEATURING: Norman Aronovic, Rick Foucheux, Aakhu Freeman, Deborah Hazlett and Lolita-Marie

PRESS NIGHT: Tuesday, August 31 at 7:30 pm

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE: August 28–October 3, 2010

Regular Schedule: Wednesdays and Thursdays at 7:30 pm, Saturdays at 8:00 pm, Sundays at 3:00 pm and 7:30 pm

\$30 Previews: Saturday, August 28 at 8:00 pm

Pay-What-You-Can Previews: Sunday, August 29 at 7:30 pm and Monday, August 30 at 7:30 pm

Special Matinees: Wednesday, September 29 at Noon

Please note: There are no evening performances on Wednesday, September 1; Wednesday, September 8; Thursday, September 9; Wednesday, September 22; Thursday, September 23 and Thursday, September 30.

LOCATION: The Washington DC Jewish Community Center's Aaron & Cecile Goldman Theater at 1529 16th Street NW in Washington, DC, 4 blocks east of Dupont Circle.

PARKING & METRO: Limited parking in the Washington DCJCC lot; additional parking available at Colonial Parking, 1616 P Street NW; limited street parking. Dupont Circle Station RED line.

TICKETS: \$35-\$55. Box Office Tickets (800) 494-TIXS or boxofficetickets.com.

For groups of 10+ call (202) 777-3214 or email becky@theaterj.org

Tickets for patrons 35 & under are half-priced (limited number).

Theater J is handicapped accessible and offers assisted listening devices for interested patrons.

High resolution digital images are available upon request. More information about this production is available at (202) 777-3230 or theaterj.org.

Theater J produces thought-provoking, publicly engaged, personal, passionate and entertaining plays and musicals that celebrate the distinctive urban voice and social vision that are part of the Jewish cultural legacy. Acclaimed as one of the nation's premiere playwrights theaters, Theater J presents cutting edge contemporary work alongside spirited revivals and is a nurturing home for the development and production of new work by major writers and emerging artists exploring many of the pressing moral and political issues of our time. Dedicated above all to a pursuit of artistic excellence, Theater J takes its dialogues beyond the stage, offering an array of innovative public discussion forums and outreach programs which explore the theatrical, psychological and social elements of our art. We frequently partner with those of other faiths and communities, stressing the importance of interchange among a great variety of people wishing to take part in frank, humane conversations about conflict and culture.