



MUSTARD SEED THEATRE DEBUTS IN ST. LOUIS

New Professional Theatre Company Explores Themes of Faith and Justice

ST. LOUIS, Mo., May 31, 2007 -- Six St. Louis theatre artists have collaborated to form a new professional theatre company designed to explore our relationship with God and our ethical responsibility to the world. Mustard Seed Theatre, inspired by Artistic Director Deanna Jent and Resident Artists Gary Barker, Adam Flores, Kelley Ryan, Michael Sullivan and Leslie Wobbe, will operate under a Small Professional Theatre contract with Actor's Equity Association. The company will work in residence at Fontbonne University, performing in the black box theatre.

"The mustard seed is a Biblical reference to the power of faith, but it's also an image of hope and growth," said Artistic Director Deanna Jent. "In the past year, I've had many conversations with people exploring difficult but important questions about God and how their faith fits in contemporary life. I realized that I had a number of scripts that address these questions -- scripts that would fit perfectly into a theatre company exploring issues of faith and social justice."

Mustard Seed Theatre will debut Sept. 8 – 10, 2007 with a staged reading of *THE AS IF BODY LOOP* by Ken Weitzman. The philosophy of football coaches, an ancient Jewish myth and the aftermath of 9/11 combine in this quirky exploration of family ties and human inter-connectedness. This is the first offering in Mustard Seed's "Dijon Discussion Series," which is designed to plant questions and cultivate dialogue in a post-show discussion format. The Mustard Seed Blog will be made available for continuing post-show discussion.

Set in the future, *REMNANT* by Ron Reed will be the company's first fully staged production. Running Nov. 15 – Dec. 2, 2007, *Remnant* focuses on a family struggling to celebrate a vaguely-remembered holiday known as "the Christ-mas" three generations after a plague has all but wiped out humanity. The unexpected arrival of a stranger launches an exploration of sacrifice and forgiveness.

The Dijon Discussion Series also presents a staged reading of Craig Wright's *THE UNSEEN* on Feb. 23 – 25, 2008. In this allegorical play, two torture victims fantasize about their eventual escape but are horrified by what brings about their eventual salvation.

An exploration of power, justice, faith and mercy, William Shakespeare's *MEASURE FOR MEASURE* veers from slapstick humor to heart-wrenching confrontations as Isabella must choose between her virtue and her brother's life. This fully-staged production closes Mustard Seed's debut season, April 10 – 27, 2008.

The Dijon Discussion Series' staged readings are performed Saturdays and Mondays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10. Fully-staged performances are at 8 p.m. Thursday – Saturday and 2 p.m. Sundays at the Fontbonne University Black Box Theatre in the Fine Arts Building at 6800 Wydown Blvd. in Clayton. Admission is \$20 for adults and \$15 for students and seniors. Thursday performances will be "Pay What You Can Or Pay With A Can" with proceeds donated to local food pantries. 10% percent of all ticket sales will be donated to local designated charities. For tickets or audition information, call the Mustard Seed Theatre office at 314-889-8060 or visit www.MustardSeedTheatre.com.

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