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Media Contact: Rachel Liuzzi
rachel@washingtonensemble.org
(858) 539-3745



Can You Feel the Lulz? *Teh Internet Is Serious Business* is Washington Ensemble Theatre's Twisted Exploration of the Dark Side of the Internet

September 15 - October 2, 2017

By Tim Price

Directed by Wayne Rawley

(August 23, 2017 — SEATTLE, WA) This fall **Washington Ensemble Theatre** will stage ***Teh Internet Is Serious Business***, the first of three plays in the company's 2017/18 season that will put toxic masculinity under a microscope. ***Teh Internet Is Serious Business*** is a captivating and irreverent tale about the hacktivist group Lulzsec, a byproduct of Anonymous, and its rise to global online power. Written by Welsh playwright **Tim Price** and directed by celebrated Seattle director **Wayne Rawley** (writer and director of the critically acclaimed *Live! From the Last Night of My Life*), performances begin on **September 15** and run through **October 2, 2017** at **12th Avenue Arts** (1620 12th Avenue). Tickets range from \$15 - \$25 and are on sale now at www.washingtonensemble.org.

"We chased this play for several years and it's thrilling to finally produce it on our stage," said WET Artistic Director **Samie Spring Detzer**. "When exploring toxic masculinity, it's hard not to bring up the internet, a playground of anonymity that's predominantly made up of white males ages 16 to 30. It's where narcissism and nihilism intersect, creating a world that is complicated, morally ambiguous, and very powerful when it wants to be. Within the scope of our season theme 'no surprise,' *Teh Internet* is the perfect place to start. What happens when you take the most powerful tool in the world and put it in the hands of 15 year old boys? Well, that is certainly no surprise".

Forward slash forward slash, angle bracket, quotation, command, dialogue, angle bracket, semicolon: it's 2011, the year hacktivist group Anonymous emerged as a can't-be-tamed digital authority with unexpected influence. This dark and mercurial tale explores the world of Lulzsec, an online hacktivist group who were previously members of Anonymous, the very famous online hackers who donned Guy Fawkes masks. Lulzsec broke off into its own group to get more "lulz," or jokes at the extreme expense of others. ***Teh Internet Is Serious Business*** explores the bravery and risk behind their often heroic acts, and also the potential cowardice of performing them anonymously and often driven by hate.

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Teh Internet Is Serious Business had a successful world premiere at the Royal Court Theatre in London, where it was praised as “liberating” and “enlightening” by *The Guardian*.

Teh Internet Is Serious Business features the largest cast in WET history. Cast members who have previously been seen on WET’s stage include **Arjun Pande** (*Revolt. She said. Revolt Again.*), **Ian Bond** (*The Things Are Against Us*), **Jeffrey Azevedo*** (*Cherdonna’s Doll’s House, The Things Are Against Us*), **Jessie Underhill** (*Sprawl*), **Nick Edwards** (*Every Five Minutes*) and **Samie Spring Detzer*** (*Cherdonna’s Doll’s House, Revolt. She said. Revolt Again., Sprawl, The Edge of Our Bodies*). **Jordan-Michael Whidbey, Kevin Kelly, Lisa Viertel, Megan Ahiers, Rachel Guyer-Mafune, Ryan Sanders, Stanley Dang,** and **Zenaida Smith** all make their WET debuts.

Teh Internet Is Serious Business is directed by **Wayne Rawley**, choreographed by **Alyza Del-Pan Monley**, and is stage managed by **Joceline Wynn***. Scenic and lighting design is by **Tristan Roberson***, with costume design by **Jennifer Oaster***, and sound design by **Mariah Brougher**. The creative team also includes **Maggie Rogers*** (assistant director and dramaturg), **Cedric Wright** (properties designer), **Ryan Dunn*** (scenic and lighting assistant), and **Natalie Shih** (costume assistant).

About the Playwright

Tim Price is a Welsh playwright and screenwriter. His plays include *For Once, Salt, Root and Roe* (winner of Best English Language playwright at the Theatre Critics of Wales Award), *Demos*, *The Radicalisation of Bradley Manning* (winner of the James Tait Black prize for drama), *I’m With the Band*, *Protest Song* and *Teh Internet Is Serious Business*. He is associate playwright at the Traverse theatre and co-founder of Welsh new writing company Dirty Protest.

About the Director

Wayne Rawley is a director and playwright and the current Artistic Director at Theater Schmeater. Wayne’s plays include *Christmastown: A Holiday Noir* (Seattle Public Theater), *Attack of the Killer Murder... Of Death!* (SPT, Schmeater), *Beating Up Bachman* (BASH Theater) *The Kid Who Could Fly* (SPT) and a multi-media adaptation of Orwell’s *1984* (Empty Space Theater). His play *Live! From the Last Night of My Life* has been produced by Theater 22, and Theater Schmeater in Seattle, at Sacred Fools in LA, and was the winner of the 2012 Theater Puget Sound Gregory Award for Outstanding New Play. His play *Christmastown* was nominated for a 2015 Gregory Award. His short plays *Controlling Interest* and *The Scary Question* are published by Vintage Press and Playscripts Inc and have seen hundreds of performances all around the world. He is the creator of Seattle’s late-night *Money & Run* series, produced here, in Los Angeles, Berkeley, and most recently as a part of Theater Schmeater’s 25th anniversary season. Wayne was the recipient of the 2010 Faith Broome Playwriting Residency at the University of Oklahoma. He is a teaching artist, working with young artists at ACT Theater, Seattle Public Theater and Cornish College of the Arts, his alma matter. He can’t afford to live in Seattle anymore, but lives nearby with his wife and two children.

2017/18 Season Sponsors

Washington Ensemble Theatre thanks 4Culture and Seattle Office of Arts & Culture for their continued support, production sponsors ArtsWA and the National Endowment for the Arts - Art Works, media sponsor *The Stranger*, and restaurant sponsor Omega Ouzeri.

About Washington Ensemble Theatre

Through collaborative artistic leadership, Washington Ensemble Theatre fearlessly creates audacious stories for adventurous Seattle audiences. A resident company at 12th Avenue Arts in Seattle's Capitol Hill neighborhood, The Ensemble is committed to maintaining an environment wherein its members, as well as artists from the community, are challenged to grow through its work as an ensemble. For more information about The Ensemble, please visit washingtonensemble.org.

The 2017/2018 Ensemble is Samie Spring Detzer, Jeffrey Azevedo, Maria Manness, Rachel Liuzzi, Bobbin Ramsey, Tristan Roberson, Karla Davenport, Joceline Wynn, Jenn Oaster, Ryan Dunn, Erika Bailey, Maggie Rogers, Sophie Franco, and Reiko Huffman.

*Member of Washington Ensemble Theatre

For Calendar Editors

WHEN Opening Night: Friday, September 15, 2017 (press opening)
Closing Day: Monday, October 2, 2017

SHOW TIMES Thursdays - Mondays at 7:30 PM

WHERE 12th Avenue Arts (1620 12th Avenue in Captiol Hill)

TICKETS Please visit www.washingtonensemble.org for tickets ranging \$15-\$25

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