



RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT

1346 THE ALAMEDA, SUITE 7-265  
SAN JOSE, CA 95126

408.351.4440  
RTE@RENEGADETHEATRE.COM

WWW.RENEGADETHEATRE.COM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT**

**presents**

***WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN***

**San José, CA, October 30, 2007** – Out of the mists of the mysterious Tombigbee Swamp, comes a tale of magic, dreams, and courage. Young Wiley has grown up in the swamp and knows it like the back of his hand. So, Wiley does not fear the swamp, but he does fear what lives in the swamp. Or rather, who.

This November, Renegade Theatre Experiment (RTE), recipient of the 2007 Silicon Valley Theatre Award for Standout Youth or Family Production, continues its tradition of award winning theatre with the distinguished *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* by Suzan Zeder. Like Aesop's Fables, *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* tells the tale of a young boy haunted by a trickster demon. To triumph over the spooky, supernatural Hairy Man, Wiley must trick this boogeyman three times. With the help of his conjure-woman Mother and his faithful hound dog, Wiley learns to rely upon his own resources and conquers two villains: the Hairy Man and his own fear.

Tracing its origins to the oral story telling tradition of the American South, *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* was first captured in text by Donnell Van de Voort as part of the Federal Writers Project of FDR's New Deal Era. Van de Voort, who learned of this African American folktale from a family gardener, submitted it for the collection to represent the state of Alabama. In 1972, Southern Methodist University commissioned and produced Suzan Zeder's rendition of this tale. In Zeder's version, she has changed the ending and has "written a play about a small boy with a big fear who learns to overcome his own problems himself." Zeder goes on to state, "I wanted to write a play about kinds of fears that children face, alone in the dark. I wanted to write a play about magic—good magic and bad—and, most importantly, the magic that all of us have somewhere deep inside us." Zeder's *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* was awarded the prestigious ASSITEJ/USA Outstanding Play Award.

Zeder has been recognized nationally and internationally as one of the nation's leading playwrights for family audiences. "The most rewarding aspect of writing plays about young people is the possibility of dealing with dynamic young characters of enormous emotional velocity at a time when their lives change forever. The dignity and depth of children are sources of constant inspiration and challenge me to render their world as faithfully as I can." Her plays have been performed in all fifty states, Canada, Great Britain, Japan, Australia, Germany, Israel, and New Zealand; and have been published in Great Britain, Germany, and Japan. *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* is regularly performed by professional theatres throughout the country.

THEATRE THAT AMUSES THE MIND



AND FEEDS THE SOUL

*WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* performs on Saturdays and Sundays from November 10<sup>th</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Historic Hoover Theater in San Jose. Saturday performances begin at 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Sunday matinees begin at 2:00 PM. Tickets for *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN* are \$10.00 for Children 12 & Under, \$13.00 for Students, Educators, Seniors, & Theatre Bay Area Members, and \$18.00 General Admission. Tickets are on sale at [www.renegadetheatre.com](http://www.renegadetheatre.com).

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*The Renegade Theatre Experiment (RTE), founded in 2001, is the South Bay's voice for alternative theatre.*

**PUBLICITY PHOTOS:** <http://www.renegadetheatre.com/press>

**CONTACT:** Elizabeth Arnsdorf Patterson

(408) 351-4440

[press@renegadetheatre.com](mailto:press@renegadetheatre.com)

THEATRE THAT AMUSES THE MIND



AN INVITATION TO THE MEDIA

Renegade Theatre Experiment proudly invites you to attend any of our opening weekend performances for

***WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN***  
**Written by Suzan Zeder**

**Historic Hoover Theater  
1635 Park Avenue  
San José, CA 95126.**

**September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Saturday performances begin at 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM  
Sunday matinee begins at 2:00 PM**



## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT Renegade Theatre Experiment:

"They do make it a point to sort of reach out to alternative voices and stories that aren't necessarily told...they're wanting to do the same thing that I'm wanting to do—challenging people to think when they're seeing a show, not shying away from topics that would be taboo. It's a bold company."

[Playwright Erica Hemenway, quoted in *The Salinas Californian*, February 29, 2006]

"A South Bay company that's already received notice from the press for its bold, unconventional productions."

[Karen McKeivitt, *Theatre Bay Area Magazine*, August 1, 2004]

## PAST PRODUCTIONS:

### ***SIDEWAYS STORIES FROM WAYSIDE SCHOOL* written by Louis Sachar**

"As Renegade Theatre Experiment's seasonal "family show," Sideways Stories From Wayside School strikes a juvenile frame of mind while speaking to any adult who grew up on the books of Louis Sachar."

[Marianne Messina, *Metro*, November 8, 2006]

### ***THE BFG* written by Roald Dahl**

"Ever the rebel, trust that the Renegade Theatre Experiment™ first children's production would be delightfully creative yet with a proffered edge...Just don't expect a Disney soufflé. More like a bowl of hot chili, pleasing, but with a kick."

[W. Fred Crow, *Milpitas Post*, November 10, 2005]

### ***NOAH JOHNSON...* by Jon Bastian (Bay Area Premiere)**

"It's a ghoulish story, but an effective reminder of the ghoulish business world we sometimes live in, where we'd prefer not to look too closely at the economic skullduggery that takes place, because its truths are too horrifying and too painful."

[John Angell Grant, *The Palo Alto Daily News*, July 20, 2007]

### ***AMERICANA ABSURDUM* by Brian Parks (West Coast Premiere)**

"Renegade Theatre Experiment's production of "Americana Absurdum" is simply and pleasantly illogical!"

[W. Fred Crow, *Milpitas Post*, September 20, 2007]

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## FACT SHEET

### **RENEGADE THEATRE EXPERIMENT** presents ***WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN***

**WHO:** Renegade Theatre Experiment - San José-based theatre company with Bay Area cast, featuring: Violet Ash, Ambera DeLash, Stephen Evans, Camilla Frausto, Sean C. Murphy, Daniel Norberg, and Lucita Sinohui. Directed by Barbara Murray.

**WHAT:** A tale the whole family can enjoy about a young boy conquering his fear.

**WHY:** Share the magic of live theatre with a Renegade edge.

**WHEN:** November 10<sup>th</sup> through December 2<sup>nd</sup>. Saturday performances begin at 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM. Sunday matinees begin at 2:00 PM.

**WHERE:** Historic Hoover Theater, 1635 Park Avenue, San José, CA 95126. General Seating.

**PRICE:** Ticket Prices:

\$18.00 General Admission

\$13.00 Student/Educator/Senior/TBA Discount Admission

\$10.00 Children 12 and Under

Tickets available online ([www.renegadetheatre.com](http://www.renegadetheatre.com)) and at the door.

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ABOUT RENEGADE THEATRE

THEATRE THAT AMUSES THE MIND



Committed to forward-thinking performance, Renegade Theatre Experiment builds creative partnerships with aspiring and established artists to bring unique, outstanding theatre to the Bay Area. Founded in 2001, when a group of alumni from Santa Clara University joined together to develop as actors, RTE continues to explore the human experience through established and fresh performance works which break with convention. RTE's artistic and critical successes have included the World Premiere of *WAITING TO DANCE* by Erica Hemenway, Roald Dahl's *THE BFG*, the California Premiere of *LORCA IN A GREEN DRESS* by Nilo Cruz, Avery Crozier's *EAT THE RUNT*, Brian Parks' *GONER*, *HEAR ME ROAR: WOMEN'S IMAGES OF SELF*, and the first North American production of the critically acclaimed show, *THE DICE HOUSE* by Paul Lucas.

RTE continues in its tradition of bringing exceptional, avant-garde productions to the South Bay by kicking off its 2007/2008 season with the Bay Area of John Bastian's dark Civil War comedy, *NOAH JOHNSON*... Explore the world of three con artists in the Civil War as they cross and double cross each other in this dark comedy about war, race and the lure of money. This is followed by the West Coast Premiere of *AMERICANA ABSURDUM* by Brian Parks. Americana Absurdum celebrates the dizzying thrill of America in its many, fun-house mirror guises. A family-run funeral home business, a high-stakes courtroom arena, Irish lawyers, leprechauns and a talking wolverine make up this bracing, dark, comic work. In November, RTE presents the Renegade family show with Susan Zeder's *WILEY AND THE HAIRY MAN*, a traditional African American folk tale told through rhyme about a boy and his worst fears of the swamp. This is a tale of personal triumph the whole family can enjoy. The season finishes strongly with the West Coast Premiere of Neil LaBute's bracing work, *THIS IS HOW IT GOES*. Belinda and Cody Phipps appear to be a typical Midwestern couple: teenage sweethearts now married with children and a luxurious home. Typical except that Cody is in almost every respect an outsider - "rich and black and different" in Belinda's words, who finds herself attracted to a (white) former classmate. As the battle for her affections is waged, Belinda and Cody frankly question the foundation of their initial attraction, opening the door wide to bigotry, deception, and betrayal!

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