



For Immediate Release
May 11, 2017
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American Stage presents THE INVISIBLE HAND

The 2016/17 Season continues “new voices” with this Florida premiere.

St. Petersburg, FL – American Stage continues its 2016-17 Season - “In Search of...America” - with the Florida premiere of **THE INVISIBLE HAND** by Pulitzer Prize-winner playwright Ayad Akhtar. This intense, fast moving, and contemporary political drama follows a kidnapped American investment banker held for ransom in Pakistan. **THE INVISIBLE HAND**, the phrase invisible hand was introduced by Adam Smith in his book 'The Wealth of Nations,' goes “in search of... A FREE MARKET” while asking the question, **“What is the cost of American capitalism in the Middle East?”**

*“Ayad Akhtar is one of the most exciting American playwrights of this generation. American Stage is proud to be the first Florida theatre to produce the follow-up to his highly acclaimed **DISGRACED**. This newer play is perhaps even more powerful and visceral. **THE INVISIBLE HAND** is an intense and captivating story that plays like an in-the-moment thriller, but ultimately draws a compelling portrait of human nature.”*

– **Stephanie Gularte, Artistic Producing Director**

TALKS & EVENTS

American Stage has programmed several audience experience opportunities surrounding the production of **THE INVISIBLE HAND** beginning with the **5/21/17 SPOTLIGHT ON THE INVISIBLE HAND: FOREWORD**, an exclusive conversation with American Stage Producing Artistic Director and Director of **THE INVISIBLE HAND**, Stephanie Gularte. Throughout the run of the play, ticket holders are invited to arrive early for an exclusive **PROLOGUE** which will explore fascinating details about the play and the artists 30 minutes prior to each **THE INVISIBLE HAND** performance.

Visit americanstage.org/INVISIBLE and click the TALKS & EVENTS tab for a full listing of ways to enhance your experience.

THE INVISIBLE HAND runs from May 31st through June 25th, 2017. **Opening night is Friday, June 2nd, 2017 with a reception sponsored by Parkshore Grill Catering at 7PM, performance at 8PM, and a dessert reception with the cast to follow.** The following includes information on the cast, production, performance dates, and ticketing information, as well as a listing of special events surrounding the production.

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ABOUT THE PLAY

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Ayad Akhtar lays bare the raw, unfettered power of global finance in this intense, fast-moving, and contemporary political drama. This “throat-clenching thriller” (NY MAGAZINE) follows a kidnapped American investment banker, held for ransom in Pakistan. But with no one negotiating his release, he agrees to an unusual plan. THE INVISIBLE HAND is a chilling and complex look at how far we will go to save ourselves and the devastating ramifications of our individual actions on global power and politics.

“...a scary (and dreadfully funny) treatise on the universality of greed.” - Variety

“...a hand-wringing, throat-clenching thriller...” – NY Magazine

CAST

Mujahid Abdul-Rashid* (Imam Saleem)

Joe Ditmyer* (Nick Bright)

Benjamin Ismail* (Bashir)

Shrey Neil (Dar)

CREATIVE

Stephanie Gularte (Director)

Sadie Lockhart (Directing Apprentice)

Steven Mitchell# (Scenic Designer)

Jerid Fox (Properties Master)

Chris Baldwin (Lighting Designer)

Jill Castle (Costume Designer)

Karla Hartley (Sound Designer)

Rachel Harrison* (Production Stage Manager)

Shelby Smotherman (Scenic Artist)

* = Member of Actors' Equity Association; # = Member of the United Scenic Artists Union

For Cast Bios please visit AmericanStage.org/INVISIBLE

DIRECT LINK to publicity photos: AmericanStage.org/media

**Photo credit: Joey Clay Photography. Please note that publicity photos are not typically available until 2 weeks prior to opening. Please contact marketing@americanstage.org for immediate needs.*

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ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

AYAD AKHTAR was born in New York City and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is a novelist and author of *American Dervish*, published in over 20 languages worldwide. His play *DISGRACED* won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Drama, ran on Broadway at the Lyceum Theatre, and was nominated for the 2015 Tony Award for Best Play. His plays *THE WHO & THE WHAT* and *THE INVISIBLE HAND* received Off-Broadway runs and are currently being produced around the world. Akhtar was listed as the most produced playwright for the 2015/16 Season by *American Theatre* magazine. As a screenwriter, he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay for *THE WAR WITHIN*. He has received fellowships from MacDowell, Djerassi, the Sundance Institute, Ucross, and Yaddo, where he serves as a Board Director. He is also a Board Trustee at PEN/America and New York Theatre Workshop. Akhtar is currently the Resident Playwright with Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater.

TALKS & EVENTS - Full Details

Visit americanstage.org/INVISIBLE and click the TALKS & EVENTS tab for a full listing of events.

Sunday, May 21 at 1PM

Spotlight Series: FOREWORD

GUEST SPEAKER: Stephanie Gularte

Take your theatre going experience to the next level through an informative and entertaining lecture. Professor Emerita, Dedee Aleccia, will speak on the history, context, and characters of *THE INVISIBLE HAND*. Director, Stephanie Gularte also joins the conversation to explore the process of the production and its artistry.

Wednesday, June 7

PRIDE Night

Mixer at 6PM | Performance at 7PM

Spend a night OUT at American Stage! Before the performance, mix and mingle with friends old and new, and enjoy a BOGO special on our signature cocktail. Use code PRIDE for \$5 off tickets.

Thursday, June 8

Young Americans Night

Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Young Americans are invited to enjoy **THE INVISIBLE HAND** with BOGO Specialty Drinks plus a special chatback following the evening's performances.

YOUNG AMERICANS between the ages of 21-29 can access \$15 tickets with promo code UNDER30. Code can only be used for one ticket per order when purchased online. Otherwise you can call the Box Office at 727-823-7529 or email youngamerican@americanstage.org. Tickets can be converted to a Young Americans Pass before or after the evening's performance at the Box Office. Young Americans Passholders get **unlimited** access to theatre, comedy, music, improv and more – whenever and however often they choose!

Thursday, June 8*

Sunday, June 11

Sunday, June 18

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK

Post-Performance conversation with the cast of *THE INVISIBLE HAND*

*Young American Night

-MORE-

Monday, June 12, 2017

Spotlight On... THE INVISIBLE HAND: FORUM

\$5 for general public | Free for American Stage Subscribers and Act 1 Club Members

What are the roots of Islamic terrorism? What role does the American dollar play in events that shape terrorist activities around the world? THE INVISIBLE HAND raises these very raw questions about the past, present, and future.

American Stage FORUMs dig deeper into the relevant and often controversial topics explored by our MainStage productions. Join a panel of local experts for a lively conversation on the global impact of money and terrorism as we further explore THE INVISIBLE HAND. Special Guests TBA.

Spotlight Series: PROLOGUE

Arrive early and enjoy our new interactive prologue series. This discussion will explore fascinating details about the play and the artists prior to each performance. The prologue will take place 30 minutes prior to each THE INVISIBLE HAND performance, presented by an American Stage Apprentice, Matt Acquard.

2017/2018 SEASON AT A GLANCE

This presentation by Producing Artistic Director, Stephanie Gularte will take listeners through the upcoming 2017/2018 Season at American Stage. The presentation will take place following each THE INVISIBLE HAND PROLOGUE, prior to each performance.

AT A GLANCE

WHAT: American Stage presents THE INVISIBLE HAND by Ayad Akhtar

WHERE: Raymond James Theatre
163 3rd Street North
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

WHEN: May 31 – June 25, 2017

Preview Wednesday, May 31, 7pm, "Pay What You Can"

Preview Thursday, June 1, 8pm, \$29 tickets

Opening Night: Friday, June 2, 8pm, \$59 tickets (includes opening night reception at 7pm, and a dessert reception with the cast to follow the performance.)

Continues: Wednesdays-Sundays through June 25, 2017.

TIMES & PRICES:

Wednesdays 7pm, \$39 tickets – NEW TIME THIS SEASON

Thursdays 8pm, \$39 tickets

Fridays & Saturdays 8pm, \$49 tickets

Saturdays & Sundays 3pm, \$39 tickets

TALKS & EVENTS:

Spotlight Series: FOREWORD: Sun, May 21 at 1PM

PRIDE Night: Wed, June 7 | Mixer at 6PM | Performance at 7PM

Young American Night: Thurs, June 8 | Happy Hour at 7PM | Performance at 8PM

Spotlight Series: CHATBACK: Thurs, June 8, Sun, June 11, & Sun, June 18 (Post-Performance)

Spotlight Series: PROLOGUE: 30 minutes prior to each THE INVISIBLE HAND performance

17/18 SEASON AT A GLANCE: 15 minutes prior to each THE INVISIBLE HAND performance

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SERVICE & FACILITIES

Physical Accessibility: The theatre features accessible parking, entrances, restrooms, and seating.

Benefits of a Valid Disabled Parking Permit: Displaying your valid disabled parking permit will allow you to park at City metered spaces for FREE, for as long as your event requires, including those posted with time limit signs (green signs).

This does not apply to loading zones or otherwise restricted parking signage (red signs).

Listening System: Theatregoers may enjoy the free infrared listening system from any seat.



AMERICAN STAGE

Since 1977 American Stage has been dedicated to telling meaningful, compelling stories with integrity and professionalism. As the Tampa Bay area's longest-running, most critically-acclaimed professional theatre company, we seek to bring the power of quality live theatre to each generation in our community. American Stage invites you to lean forward and experience the most captivating stories of the moment and the most relevant stories of the past. All told with passion and a commitment to excellence.

SOCIAL MEDIA

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BOX OFFICE INFORMATION:

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