



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ADVENTURE STAGE CHICAGO PRESENTS THE CHICAGO PREMIERE STAGING OF
NEWBERY MEDAL WINNER LOIS LOWRY'S FANTASY NOVEL GOSSAMER.**

**Saturdays at 2:00pm Nov. 7 – Dec. 5 (additional 7pm show Nov. 27 only) at Vittum Theater, 1012 N. Noble St.
Tickets: \$17 adults, \$12 kids 14 and under. Call 773-342-4141 or visit www.adventurestage.org.**

MEET GOSSAMER AUTHOR/PLAYWRIGHT LOIS LOWRY

See Opening Day of GOSSAMER (Sat., Nov. 7) and Join Ms. Lowry for a Post-Show Q&A and Book Signing!

CHICAGO – Adventure Stage Chicago (ASC) proudly presents the first production of our 2009-2010 season: the Chicago Premiere of Lois Lowry's GOSSAMER, directed by ASC ensemble member Brian Bell and featuring original puppet design by Cynthia Von Orthal (Artistic Director, Von Orthal Puppets).

Beautifully staged using colorful projections and enchanting puppetry, GOSSAMER explores the power of dreams and the magical creatures that create them. An eager new Dream-Giver known only as Littlest One struggles to heal the hearts of an abused young boy, his grieving caregiver and his estranged mother before the haunting memories each of them carry become more than they can bear. But are the dreams Littlest One weaves strong enough to fortify and protect the fragile humans in her care?

Every GOSSAMER performance ends with a curtain conversation during which children may ask any question they like of the cast. This safe, permissive atmosphere encourages a child's thoughtful curiosity and spurs ongoing family discussions long after leaving the theatre. GOSSAMER is recommended for ages 8 and older.

GOSSAMER Performance Schedule

Previews: 10:30am Nov. 5 & 6.

Weekends: 2:00pm Saturdays Nov. 7 - Dec. 5.

Weekdays: 10:30am Nov. 10, 12, 17, 19, 20, 24 & Dec. 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17. (*School groups & single tickets.*)

Special Evening Performance: 7:00pm Friday, Nov. 27

SPECIAL EVENT – MEET LOIS LOWRY

Sat., Nov. 7, 2-6pm

Newbery Award-winning author/playwright Lois Lowry will attend the opening performance of GOSSAMER at ASC on Sat., Nov. 7 at 2pm. Ms. Lowry will sign books and answer audience questions after the show. This very special event is open to all attendees of that day's GOSSAMER performance, but reservations are strongly recommended as this show is sure to sell out quickly. (All attendees must have a GOSSAMER ticket in order to attend.)

FAMILY WORKSHOP SERIES

Saturdays at 1pm, Nov. 7 and Dec. 5

Family workshops begin one hour before the first and last Saturday performance of a show's run. Adults are encouraged to join their smaller companions in a succession of interactive activities designed to prepare kids for the themes inherent in the show they are about to see. Tickets are \$5 per participant, and the workshop is recommended for ages 8-14.

SPECIAL PERFORMANCE EXTRAS

Raffle Day! Sat., Nov. 14

Audience is automatically entered in a free raffle to win an ASC Gift Pack.

Behind The Scenes Day! Sat., Nov. 21

Audience is invited onstage after the show to examine the set and props and receive a backstage tour.

Ice Cream Social! Sat., Dec. 5

Audience is treated to free ice cream after the show.

GOSSAMER BOOK DISCUSSIONS

Check out a GOSSAMER book discussion below and you could win 2-for-1 tickets to see the stage version at ASC.

Wed., Nov. 11, 6:30-7:30pm

Sulzer Regional Library, reservations at 312-744-7616 x3.

Wed., Nov. 25, 12-1pm

Skokie Public Library, reservations at 847-324-3149.

Lois Lowry (author/playwright) was co-commissioned by Oregon Children's Theatre (Portland, OR) and First Stage Children's Theatre (Milwaukee, WI) to adapt her 2006 novel *Gossamer* for the stage. GOSSAMER premiered at First Stage in September 2008 and OCT in November 2008. Ms. Lowry began her career as a photographer and journalist before publishing her first children's book, *A Summer to Die*, in 1977. She has since written more than 30 books for children and has twice been awarded the prestigious Newbery Medal for *Number the Stars* in 1990 and *The Giver* in 1994. GOSSAMER is Ms. Lowry's first play.

Brian Bell (director) has been directing and acting in Chicago for the last three years and is an ASC teaching artist and ensemble member. Previously he completed a directing internship with the Carrousel Theater an der Parkaue in Germany and went on to direct *The Retreating World* by Naomi Wallace at Berlin's Acud Theater. Brian graduated with a B.A. in Theatre Performance from the University of North Texas, where he directed and adapted *Woyzeck* by Georg Buechner as a final thesis. Brian is the artistic director of Chicago's Cabaret Vagabond and has worked with Lincoln Square Theatre, Darknight Productions, Piccolo Theatre, Apple Tree Theatre and Collaboraction. He is an alumnus of the Chicago Directors Lab. GOSSAMER is his first play with ASC.

Cynthia Von Orthal (puppet designer) is a writer, performer, teacher and puppet designer. She is the founder and Artistic Director of Von Orthal Puppets in Chicago. She has designed, directed and performed for many theaters across the country and Europe, including Redmoon, The Goodman Theater, The Actors Gang (Los Angeles), Victory Gardens, Running With Scissors, Old Town School of Folk Music, Live Bait Theatrical, CityLit, Pegasus Players and LifeLine Theater. Film and TV credits include "Roseanne," *A League of Their Own*, *Freeing Bernie Baran*, and "I Can Like Peli-Can." Ms. Von Orthal has studied in Prague at the Trejnar Studios and is a graduate of the Goodman School of Drama.

GOSSAMER features cast members Elizabeth Birkenmeier, Peter Verdico, Allison Latta, Lona Livingston, Sandy Elias, Victoria Abram-Copenhaver, Susan Veronika Adler, Kyle Gibson, Kasey Foster and Kevin Crowley.

GOSSAMER production staff consists of Brian Bell (Director), Cynthia Von Orthal (Puppet Designer), Tiffany Lange (Puppet Design Assistant), Mikhail Fiksel (Composer/Sound Designer), Deb Lindell (Stage Manager), Kyle Land (Floor Manager), Karen Hoffman (Scenic Designer), Kat Powers (Props Designer), Sean Mallary (Lighting Designer), Laura Kollar (Costume Designer), Jessica Salinas (Costume Design Assistant), John McCormick (Production Assistant) and Erin Miller (Technical Director).

Adventure Stage Chicago's mission is to create dynamic and transformative theatre for young audiences that activates the imagination, inspires dialogue and strengthens community among families, educators and artists. ASC is Chicago's only professional theatre company dedicated solely to theatrical programming for young people ages 8-14 and the adults in their lives. ASC seeks to cultivate and create challenging new work, produce celebrated stories, and become a leader in theatre education through professional development workshops, residencies and resources that offer innovative ways to infuse theater into the classroom. This is ASC's sixth season. (The first three seasons were produced under the name Vittum Theater.)

ASC has received numerous honors from local and national organizations since its inception in 2004, including:

- Two-time Finalist for the Broadway In Chicago Emerging Theater Award
- Participant in the New Visions/New Voices Festival at the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Washington D.C.
- Zeta Phi Eta Winifred Ward Award for Outstanding New Children's Theatre Company from the American Alliance for Theatre and Education
- Three-time Recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Access to Artistic Excellence Grant

Adventure Stage Chicago is a program of Northwestern University Settlement House, the oldest continually operating settlement house in Chicago. Throughout its 118-year history, the Settlement has remained committed to providing resources that empower our neighbors to overcome the obstacles of poverty. ASC extends this mission by presenting Chicago's young audiences, educators and families with an affordable artistic experience rooted in performance. Last season, ASC served 9,000 students from 82 schools throughout the Chicagoland area.

All shows are performed at Vittum Theater, 1012 N. Noble St., in the heart of Chicago's West Town neighborhood. Free parking is available, and the theater is close to the Noble St. stop on the #56 Milwaukee bus line and the Division stop on the CTA Blue Line. The theater is wheelchair accessible.

GOSSAMER tickets are \$17.00 adults, \$12.00 children aged 14 and under, \$10.00 previews and \$8.00 school groups. Other group discounts available. Passport to Adventure subscriptions are available now. For tickets or more information, call (773) 342-4141 or visit www.adventurestage.org.

For questions about this press release, please contact Jennifer Mathews, ASC Marketing & Public Relations Manager, at (773) 209-3889 or jennifer@adventurestage.org.