



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**ADVENTURE STAGE CHICAGO PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE OF
JASON TREMBLAY'S *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK***

**Saturdays & Sundays at 2:00pm April 5 – May 9 (no show April 12) at Vittum Theater, 1012 N. Noble St.
Tickets: \$17 adults, \$12 kids 14 and under. Call 773-342-4141 or visit www.adventurestage.org.**

CHICAGO – Adventure Stage Chicago (ASC) proudly announces the final production in its 2008-2009 season—the world premiere of Jason Tremblay's award-winning play *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK*, directed by Tom Arvetis (ASC Producing Artistic Director).

This exuberant new work featuring a live, six-piece jazz band follows Katrina, a young girl from New Orleans forced to face the powerful hurricane that shares her name. Separated from her beloved father during the storm, Katrina must journey to safety with only ghosts, sweet N'awlins music and her own bravery as companions. Despite enormous obstacles, Katrina is determined to reclaim her name and recover the magic and fire that lie within the city and herself. With musicians serving as both bystanders to catastrophe and heralds of hope, *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK* celebrates the indomitable spirit of one of America's most historical cities.

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK has already received three major honors. It was one of only seven plays from around the world selected as part of the 2008 New Visions/New Voices festival at The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Mr. Tremblay also received the 2008 Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival Playwriting for Young Audiences Award. Lastly, *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK* received an Access to Artistic Excellence grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK is recommended for ages 8 and up (4th thru 8th grades), and all performances include a brief post-show Curtain Conversation with the cast.

KATRINA PERFORMANCE TIMES:

Previews: 10:30am April 3 & 2:00pm April 4.

Weekends: 2:00pm April 5, 11, 18, 19, 25*, 26 & May 2, 3, 9.

Weekdays: 10:30am April 9, 14, 16, 21, 23, 28, 30 & May 1, 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21.

(Weekday shows are primarily performed for school groups, but public tickets are also available for purchase.)

Special Evening Performance: Friday, April 10, 7:00pm.

*The Saturday, April 25th showing of *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK* is part of an ASC benefit entitled *Spring Fling: A Celebration of New Orleans*. The performance is followed by food from Dixie Kitchen; live music by Jazz Links, the Jazz Institute of Chicago's youth performers; a silent auction; and numerous kids' activities. Tickets for this benefit are \$50 adults, \$25 kids 14 and under.

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK tickets are \$17.00 for adults, \$12.00 for children aged 14 and under, \$10.00 for previews and \$8.00 for school groups. Other group discounts, including birthday party packages, are also available. For tickets or more information, call (773) 342-4141 or visit www.adventurestage.org.

SATURDAY WORKSHOP SERIES

Saturdays at 1pm

Saturday workshops begin one hour before the performance and are recommended for children ages 10-14. Tickets are \$5 per participant, and adults are encouraged to join their smaller companions in a creative art project, dramatic activity and discussion related to the origin and meaning of their name and the role their name plays in shaping their identity. Attendees leave the workshop excited and equipped to engage in the world of the play they are about to see.

SUNDAY PERFORMANCE EXTRAS

Ice Cream Social! Sun., April 5

Audience is treated to free ice cream after the show.

Raffle Day! Sun., April 19

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

Backstage Day! Sun., May 3

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

Playwright Jason Tremblay grew up just hours away from New Orleans in southeast Arkansas, and the historic city became his urban refuge by exposing him to art and music—particularly jazz. After Hurricane Katrina, many of Mr. Tremblay’s musician friends rendered homeless by the storm stayed with him in Austin, TX, where he currently resides. These experiences and friendships inspired Mr. Tremblay to write *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK*. Mr. Tremblay recently received his MFA in playwriting from the University of Texas and is an exciting new voice in the world of theater for young audiences.

Director Tom Arvetis is the founder and Producing Artistic Director of Adventure Stage Chicago (formerly known as Vittum Theater) and is the recipient of a 2009 Ann Shaw Fellowship from TYA/USA, the United State chapter of ASSITEJ (The International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People). Mr. Arvetis directed the reading of *KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK* at The Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. as part of the 2008 New Visions/New Voices festival. He has previously directed ASC’s world premiere productions of *The Blue House* by José Cruz González and *I Dream in Blues*, which he co-wrote with Katherine Davis. This summer, he will direct a new play by Elizabeth Wong for Silk Road Theatre Project. Mr. Arvetis is an Emeritus Company Member with Barrel of Monkeys, has acted in award-winning productions with the Neo-Futurists, Bailiwick Repertory Company and Pyewacket Theatre, and is a veteran sound designer. He received his degree from Northwestern University.

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK performers consist of Shakira Lavonne Carter (Katrina), Eugene Parker (Big Daddy), Peter Verdico (Thibeaux), Carolyn Nelson (Beulah), Dan Cox (Stalebread), B. Diego Colon (Gustavo), Amber Starr Friendly (Apparition). The jazz band is comprised of Nick Brodste (trombone), Nate Lepine (saxophone/clarinet), Scott Anderson (trumpet), Mikhail Fiksel (keyboard), and Rick Vitek (drums).

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK production staff consists of Kristin Leahey, Dramaturg; Jessica Simon, Assistant Director; Tresa Makosky, Stage Manager; Colby Beserra, Music Director; Mikhail Fiksel, Composer/Sound Designer; Courtney O’Neill, Scenic Designer; Kat Powers, Props Designer; Jesse Klug, Lighting Designer; Jessica Kuehnau, Costume Designer; Erin Miller, Technical Director.

Adventure Stage Chicago’s mission is to create dynamic theatre for young audiences that activates the imagination, inspires dialogue and celebrates 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. As artists, ASC seeks to produce renowned stories as well as cultivate new work. As educators, Adventure Stage Chicago endeavors to be a model for professional development through workshops, residencies and other resources that offer concrete ways to infuse theatre in the classroom. This is ASC’s fifth season.

ASC (under the former name of Vittum Theater) received the prestigious 2007 Zeta Phi Eta-Winifred Ward Outstanding New Children’s Theatre Company Award from The American Alliance for Theatre and Education. The award, given by Zeta Phi Eta, a national arts fraternity, honors a theatre company serving young audiences which has been in operation at least two full years, but not more than five years. The company must have attained a high level of artistic production, sound management practices, and must have stimulated community interest in its endeavors.

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 over 10,000 students from 95 schools throughout the Chicagoland area.

KATRINA: THE GIRL WHO WANTED HER NAME BACK is 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.

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

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