



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
14 August 2008

MEDIA CONTACT: STEPHANIE DODGE
Phone: (773) 972-7301

***My Name is Rachel Corrie* Premieres in Chicago with Purple Bench**

This September, Purple Bench Productions brings *My Name is Rachel Corrie* to the Chicago stage. Edited by Alan Rickman (*Harry Potter* films, *Sweeney Todd*) and Katharine Viner (*The Guardian*), this moving play is a one-woman show adapted entirely from Rachel Corrie's emails, letters and journal entries.

A young, idealistic college student, Rachel Corrie traveled to Gaza in 2003 to protest the violence between Israel and Palestine. Working with the International Solidarity Movement, she acted as a human shield in efforts to protect Palestinian homes from Israeli bulldozers. Her tragic death occurred only months after her arrival in the region, as she was crushed while trying to stop a bulldozer from destroying another home. The situation surrounding her death was immediately controversial—was Rachel a naïve political pawn, or was she simply someone who believed in helping other people?

The play celebrates Corrie's passionate drive to help people and change the world by providing a window into her ideals, relationships and experiences in times of war and peace. In 2005, *My Name is Rachel Corrie* opened to rave reviews in London. Set for a New York premiere in 2006, the play met with controversy when the New York Theater Workshop indefinitely postponed its production due to mounting concerns about the play's content.

Purple Bench Productions is excited and honored to produce this Chicago premiere, directed by Emmy Kreilkamp and assisted by Matthew Zaradich. Chicago actress Jessie Fisher will play Rachel Corrie, a recent graduate of the School at Steppenwolf and a teaching artist for Lookingglass, Writers' Theater and the Actors Gymnasium. Understudies are Melanie Derleth and Kieran Welsh-Phillips, both making their Chicago debut with this production.

My Name is Rachel Corrie runs September 12 — October 5, Thursdays — Saturdays at 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m., at The Artistic Home (formerly Live Bait Theater), 3914 N. Clark St. General admission tickets are \$20. Tickets for the opening night gala are \$30 and a reception will follow the performance. Student tickets (with valid student ID) are \$15. Online tickets can be purchased on our website at www.purplebenchproductions.com. Group rates are available. Media comps, with appropriate credentials, can be obtained by emailing stephanie@purplebenchproductions.com.

For more information on this production, visit www.purplebenchproductions.com.

###



CONTACT INFORMATION

Purple Bench Productions may be contacted...

...via phone at:

Brenden Hill, ARTISITIC DIRECTOR: 317.414.1982

Matthew Zaradich, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: 219.588.4493

Stephanie Dodge, MEDIA RELATIONS: 773.972.7301

...via email at:

General information: info@purplebenchproductions.com

Press Inquiries: stephanie@purplebenchproductions.com

...via post:

431 West Oakdale Avenue

Unit 9C

Chicago, IL 60657

...via website:

www.purplebenchproductions.com

MISSION STATEMENT

Because Purple Bench Productions believes theatre is collaborative, innovative, and essential, our company of actors, directors, designers, technicians, and administrators commit to:

- encouraging artistic growth;
- challenging ourselves and our community;
- producing theatre relevant to the here and now.

This is our Art.

COMPANY BACKGROUND

Purple Bench Productions was founded in early 2007 by Artistic Director Brenden Hill, with Executive Director Matthew Zaradich and founding members Christian Schmitt and Jennifer Harber, all graduates of Indiana University. Since that time, Purple Bench now invokes the talents of an eclectic eight-member board. While Purple Bench retains its Indiana roots, we remind the community we are not alumni-exclusive. Rather, we invite the Chicago community to join us in our artistic journey as we seek truth through art.