



INVITATION – TEACHER PREVIEW – The Who and The What

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Dear Teacher!

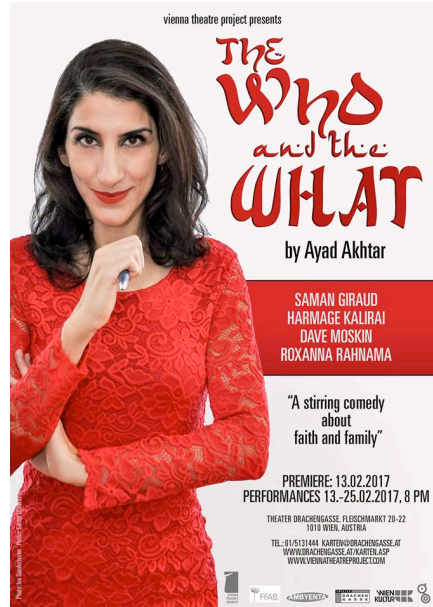
The *U.S. Embassy Vienna* and vienna theatre project in cooperation with Wien Kultur cordially invite you to participate in the Teacher's Preview of the play;

„The Who & the What” by Ayad Akhtar

Sunday 12th February 2017 8pm

Play Duration: 1hr. Talk back: 30 mins.+

Location: Theater Drachengasse Bar & Co,
Fleischmarkt 22, 1010 Vienna



Saman Giraud (Zarina), Best Actress Delhi Shorts International Film Festival 2016 in M4 – My Many Married Men
Harmage Singh Kalirai (Afzal), Emmerdale (TV, Granada), The Illusion (Old Vic), Little Britain (BBC)
Dave Moskin (Eli): Jesus Christ Super Star, The Invisible Hand und Disgraced
Roxanna Rahnama (Mahwish): Konfetti TV, How to Carry a Package (Film), Beinball (Film)
Director: Joanna Godwin-Seidl (Disgraced, Topdog/Underdog, Plenty)
Assistant: David Rodriguez-Yanez

(Disgraced, The Invisible Hand, Evita)

About the show:

From Ayad Akhtar, the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer of *Disgraced* and *The Invisible Hand*, comes a thrillingly fierce and funny new play about identity, religion and the contradictions that make us who we are.

Once again, vienna theatre project tackles deep rooted stereotypes head on in its production of this wonderful piece. Lead character, Zarina, has written a manuscript and it's about to set her Western life on fire. Meanwhile her father has assumed her identity on a Muslim dating website and is vetting potential husbands, whilst her younger sister needs her to marry so she can too.

Growing up Muslim with her close knit family in Atlanta, Georgia, writer Zarina has led a very Western lifestyle, despite the potential constraints of her background. She meets Eli who, as a Christian convert to Islam, and an Imam, is the crossover between her two worlds. Her family think she is writing a book on gender politics, but the foundations of who they all are and what they believe in are shaken when the truth comes to light.

Zarina has a bone to pick with the place of women in her Muslim faith, the interpretation of the hijab and she's been writing a book about the Prophet Muhammad that aims to set the record straight. When her family discover the truth it threatens to tear her family apart. With humor and ferocity, Akhtar's incisive new drama about love, art, and religion examines the chasm between our traditions and our contemporary lives.



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About Ayad Akhtar

Ayad Akhtar was born in New York City and raised in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He is the author of *American Dervish*, published in over twenty languages worldwide and a 2012 Best Book of the Year at Kirkus Reviews, Toronto's *Globe and Mail*, *Shelf-Awareness*, and *O (Oprah) Magazine*. He is also a playwright and screenwriter. His stage play *Disgraced* played at New York's LCT3/Lincoln

Center Theater in 2012, and won the 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. His latest play, *The Who & The What*, premiered at La Jolla Playhouse in February 2014, and will be opening in New York at LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater in June 2014. As a screenwriter, he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay for *The War Within*. He has been the recipient of fellowships from MacDowell and Yaddo, as well as commissions from Lincoln Center Theater and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He is a graduate of Brown and Columbia Universities with degrees in Theater and Film Directing.

What the press say?

„Delightful...an affecting and richly comic portrait.“
The Washington Post

„...all the right ingredients for another coruscating theatrical event“
Variety

Suitable for age 16 and up.

After the preview:

- teachers will be invited to determine best possible dates for schools performances February 13th – 25th 2017
- shown a teacher material package that they can use with their pupils.
- offered a tailor made talk back session for students with the cast and crew.

For information and reservations please contact
karten@drachengasse.at or 01/5131444
Please reserve asap. – there is limited seating only

Best Regards,
vienna theatre project Team

For more info read our newsletter available upon request or www.viennatheatreproject.com

Coming next: "THE DUTCHMAN" April 2016, a play about racism at the Wiener Linien Museum.