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The Playwrights' Center presents reading of Jenny Connell Davis' new play *Goddess of Mercy*

(Minneapolis, MN—January 14, 2013)—The Playwrights' Center presents a reading of Core Writer Jenny Connell Davis' new play *Goddess of Mercy* on Monday, February 3, at 7 p.m., as part of the Center's 2013-14 Ruth Easton New Play Series. The reading is free and open to the public. The Playwrights' Center is located at 2301 E. Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis.

Goddess of Mercy is a compelling play about how individual actions can have global consequences. In the play, Kate and her boyfriend, Mike, struggle to hold their relationship together as she fights with the condo board and he copes with a transcontinental commute. The stress reaches a boiling point when Mike's sister Brianna returns from the Peace Corps to crash on their couch. When Brianna finds out Mike's oil company is sending him to hush up trouble in the same part of Asia she just left, their opposing views about what is right provoke an international incident that could bring tragedy to the entire family.

Playwright Jenny Connell Davis wants to get audiences thinking about what she calls "circles of responsibility." Davis says, "There are many different ways to draw the lines that help us think about who we're responsible for in the world, and to whom we're responsible. If somebody who was very focused on their inner sanctum was faced with somebody who was all about the outermost levels of responsibility, what's the worst thing that could happen? That's what I explore in this play."

Playwrights' Center Producing Artistic Director Jeremy B. Cohen says, "It can be quite unsettling to think about how our words and actions can, in an instant, be amplified on a global scale, causing unforeseen consequences. Jenny has crafted an intricate exploration of these consequences. Each of her characters is so distinctly developed; seeing people with such wildly different priorities and worldviews interact is fascinating."

The reading will be directed by Jerry Genochio of the Kansas City Repertory Theatre. Also on the creative team are dramaturg Wendy Weckwerth and set designer Joel Sass.

Jenny Connell Davis is in the first year of her three-year Core Writer term with the Playwrights' Center. Her plays include *Dragon Play*, *The Scientific Method*, *The Psyche Project* and *A Play on War* (an adaptation of *Mother Courage and Her Children*.) Her stage plays have been developed or produced with Ars Nova, NAATCO, Theatre MITU, New York Stage and Film, Shrewd Productions, Stage Left and The Gift Theatre. Her short films have been screened at festivals worldwide, including SXSW and Toronto. She has been a finalist or semi-finalist for the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwright Conference, Seven Devils, BAPF, the Nicholl and the Heideman Award. She is a proud member of ScriptWorks (Austin), The Gift Theatre (Chicago) and former member of the Ars Nova Play Group (New York). Jenny trained as an actor at Court and Steppenwolf theaters in Chicago, and in playwriting at University of Texas at Austin.

The Ruth Easton New Play Series provides Playwrights' Center Core Writers with 20 hours of workshop time to develop a new play in collaboration with top-notch actors and other theater artists. The workshops culminate in a public reading, giving audience members a uniquely intimate and accessible way to experience the thrill of raw new work and be part of the creative process.

Seats for the reading of *Goddess of Mercy* are free and going fast—reservations are recommended. Reserve your seats by visiting www.pwcenter.org, emailing info@pwcenter.org or calling (612) 332-7481 x110.

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The Playwrights' Center champions playwrights and new plays to build upon a living theater that demands new and innovative works.

One of the nation's most generous and well-respected theater organizations, the Playwrights' Center focuses on both supporting playwrights and moving new plays toward production at theaters across the country. The Center has helped launch the careers of numerous nationally recognized artists, notably August Wilson, Lee Blessing, Suzan-Lori Parks, Jordan Harrison, Carlyle Brown, Craig Lucas, Jeffrey Hatcher, Melanie Marnich, and Kira Obolensky. Work developed through Center programs has been seen nationwide on such stages as Yale Rep, Woolly Mammoth, the Guthrie, Goodman, and many others.

Programs and services

The Ruth Easton Lab brings the Playwrights' Center Core Writers—25-30 of the most exciting playwrights from across the country—and their collaborators to Minneapolis for play development workshops and a formal season of public readings with prominent directors, actors, dramaturgs, and designers. Core Writers are promoted by the Center and provided opportunities through an extensive network of colleges and universities, cultural institutions, and producing theaters.

Local and national partnerships elevate the role of living playwrights. The Center works with several theaters each year to develop work for their stages. Recent partners have included Tectonic Theater Project, Mixed Blood Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, The Public Theater (NY), Goodman Theatre (Chicago, IL), Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Guthrie Theater, Ten Thousand Things Theater Company, Berkeley Rep, Marin Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and others. The Center also collaborates with local cultural institutions as the Walker Art Center and Minnesota History Center to develop theater that deepens their programming.

Fellowships, made possible by the McKnight and Jerome foundations, provide more than \$200,000 each year for residencies, commissions, and development funds. Through these fellowships, the Playwrights' Center functions as a home for:

- Jerome Fellows (three to five emerging American playwrights);
- Many Voices Fellows (two early-career and two beginning playwrights of color);
- McKnight Advancement Grants (two Minnesota-based playwrights whose work demonstrates exceptional artistic merit and potential);
- McKnight National Residency and Commission (one playwright selected annually from an impressive national pool); and
- McKnight Theater Artist Fellows (three Minnesota-based professional theater artists recognized for their outstanding skill and talent).

Membership is open to all for just \$50 per year and provides more than 1,300 playwrights worldwide with tools, resources and support. Benefits include a database of playwriting opportunities, online and in-person seminars and classes, access to readings with professional actors, dramaturgical services and more. In addition, the Playwrights' Center's New Plays on Campus program serves dozens of colleges and universities nationwide, providing script-matching services, arranging playwright residencies, and offering immersive apprenticeships to student playwrights and dramaturgs.