



**EMBARGOED UNTIL 8 A.M. TUESDAY, AUG. 11**

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**West Bend Theatre Company, The Bend add live show to 2020 calendar**

*Newly renovated downtown theatre to stage 'An Act of God' in September*

WEST BEND, Wis. (Aug. 11, 2020) – The West Bend Theatre Company and the Historic Downtown West Bend Theatre are excited to announce a partnership to host a live stage performance of “An Act of God,” written by 13-time Emmy Award winner David Javerbaum in collaboration with the late Adam Schlesinger, who either won or was nominated for an Emmy, a Tony, an Academy Award, a Golden Globe and a Grammy Award during his remarkable songwriting career before his death in April.

“We’re excited to bring this show to the West Bend community and to The Bend,” said Jeff Potts, Historic Downtown West Bend Theatre executive director. “We’re equally excited for the partnership with the West Bend Theatre Company to be the first local community theatre group to perform at The Bend.”

There will be two shows – 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 12. Tickets are on sale now and are \$28.

“This opportunity to perform at the newly renovated downtown theatre is one that was impossible to pass up,” said Nancy Storrs, West Bend Theatre Company president. “We’re so excited for the opportunity to perform at The Bend, but also to perform live theater once again.”

To adhere to safety and health guidelines set forth during the COVID-19 pandemic, capacity for both shows will be set at 85 seats – about 25 percent of The Bend’s capacity. Social distancing will be strongly emphasized to go along with regular cleaning and sanitizing efforts, as well as masks will be required to attend the show. In addition, there will be no tickets sales at the door and there won’t be ticket sales done at local businesses. All tickets must be purchased online ahead of time.

“An Act of God” has only three cast members – Robb Bessey, Megan Bell and Mack Bates.

The One with the first and last word on everything has finally arrived to set the record straight. After many millennia, and in just 90 minutes, God, who will be played by Bessey – assisted by His devoted

angels (Bell and Bates) – answers some of the deepest questions that have plagued mankind since Creation.

A review by NY Magazine said, “The jokes keep landing – nearly one per sentence – and ... they are always smart. But Javerbaum (is) too theatrically savvy to leave it at that. Another note, slowly introduced among the zingers and rim shots, eventually becomes dominant, and this one, while still funny, is darker and potentially more theologically challenging than mere spoofs of Bible stories.”

Javerbaum has won 13 Emmy Awards in his career, 11 of which he received for his work on “The Daily News with Jon Stewart.” “An Act of God” opened on Broadway in spring 2015 starring Jim Parsons and again in spring 2016 starring Sean Hayes.

Schlesinger was nominated for an Academy Award and a Golden Globe in 1997 for writing the title track to Tom Hanks’ film “That Thing You Do!” Fountains of Wayne was nominated for two Grammys in 2003 for Best New Artist and Best Pop Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal for “Stacy’s Mom.”

Schlesinger and Javerbaum received two Tony nominations in 2008 – Best Musical and Best Original Score – for the musical “Cry Baby.” Schlesinger received a 2013 Daytime Emmy nomination for Outstanding Original Song for his “Elmo the Musical” theme for “Sesame Street.”

He won the 2019 Emmy Award for Outstanding Original Music and Lyrics for “Antidepressants Are So Not A Big Deal.”

Schlesinger died April 1 after complications from COVID-19. He was 52.

Founded in 2010, incorporated in 2017, the West Bend Theatre Company is a non-profit theater entity presenting live theater, camps, workshops and special events. The mission of the West Bend Theatre Company is to celebrate, enhance, and inspire by producing excellent theatre and by giving back to our community.

The West Bend Theatre Company annually performs Charles Dickens’ classic tale “A Christmas Carol” and sells out each year. This year’s rendition will be done virtually with video on-demand. Five shows are planned for 2021 – “Calendar Girls,” (May 21-23, 2021) “The Secret Garden,” “End of the Rainbow”, “Our Town” (September 2021), and “A Christmas Carol.”

For more information about the West Bend Theatre Company, as well as upcoming shows, visit our website: [www.wbtheatreco.com](http://www.wbtheatreco.com). Be sure to also follow us on Facebook (@wbtheatreco), Twitter (@WB\_Theatre\_Co) and Instagram (@westbendtheatrecompany).

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