

ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Nicole Lane
nlane@artistsrep.org
503.241.9807x102(o) | 360.601.4298(c)

Power. Money. Freedom. At what cost?

The Invisible Hand

**Artists Rep presents political thriller
from the 2013 Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Ayad Akhtar**

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre

WHAT: Mainstage production of *The Invisible Hand* by Ayad Akhtar

WHEN: March 10 – April 5, 2015 | **Opening Night is Saturday, March 14**

WHERE: Artists Repertory Theatre – Morrison Stage, 1515 Morrison St. Portland, OR 97205

TICKETS: \$25-\$55; Students, under 25 tickets \$25

- Preview performances: Wednesday-Friday, March 11-13
- Pay-What-You-Can preview performance: Tuesday, March 10
- Regular run: Wednesday-Sunday at 7:30pm; Sundays at 2pm; Wednesday, March 25 @ 11am and Saturday, April 4 @ 2pm
- Buy tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – February 23, 2015. Artists Repertory Theatre is proud to present Portland audiences with *The Invisible Hand* by Ayad Akhtar, directed by former Artistic Director Allen Nause, beginning March 10, 2015. This production is in association with Seattle’s ACT Theatre and follows their production of the play last September with much of the same design team, but includes two new cast members. ACT’s production was named “Best Play” in the Broadway World 2014 Seattle Critic’s Choice Awards. At the end of 2014, *The Invisible Hand* was produced Off-Broadway at New York Theatre Workshop to [great critical reviews](#).

“This play gets to the very heart of the challenges we face living on an increasingly shrinking planet with an ever-growing population in a technological world,” said Director Allen Nause. “I want the audience to be swept away by a compelling, engrossing political thriller written by one of the most distinctive new voices in the American theatre.”

“I believe *The Invisible Hand* is a powerful and urgently relevant play,” said Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez. “Our production has been a long time coming. After three years of announcing and ultimately postponing production due to scheduling conflicts, international visa set-backs and rewrites,

it was Director Allen Nause's unwavering faith in the importance of this play, and how critical it was that Artists Rep tell this story, that it ultimately made it to Portland."

ABOUT THE PLAY

The 2013 Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright's tense plot involves a kidnapped American "futures" trader in Pakistan playing the market for his life. In this riveting, shockingly relevant play, taut scenarios unfold as the trader works to earn his release while unwittingly handing the tools for financial chaos and political vindication to his captor. Produced in association with Seattle's ACT Theatre.

Ayad Akhtar's *The Invisible Hand* had its world premiere at The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in March 2012 as the first work in the "Ignite! New Play Festival" series. The play's metaphoric title is taken from famed economist [Adam Smith's writings](#), describing the self-regulating nature of the marketplace. The 'invisible hand' refers to Smith's claim that by trying to maximize their own gains in a free market, individual ambition benefits society, even if the ambitious have no benevolent intentions. Seattle's ACT Theatre production, produced in association with Artists Rep, ran Sept. 5-28, 2014 and was directed by Allen Nause and featured much of the same design team and cast. *The Invisible Hand* was produced by New York Theatre Workshop from Nov. 19, 2014 –Jan. 4 2015, was directed by Ken Rus Schmoll and featured Justin Kirk (Showtime, *Weeds*) as Nick Bright. *The Invisible Hand* is presented at Artists Rep with support from Hugh & Mair Lewis and Mentor Graphics.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

[Ayad Akhtar's](#) plays include *Disgraced* (LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater, 2013 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and 2013 Obie Award for Extraordinary Achievement), *The Who & The What* (LCT3/Lincoln Center Theater and La Jolla Playhouse) and *The Invisible Hand* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis). Also a novelist, Akhtar is the author of *American Dervish*, published in 2012 by Little, Brown and Company, published in 20 languages worldwide. He co-wrote and starred in *The War Within* (Magnolia Pictures), which was released internationally and nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay. As an actor, Akhtar also starred as Neel Kashkari in HBO's adaptation of Andrew Ross Sorkin's book *Too Big to Fail*. He studied at Brown University and Columbia University's School of Arts.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Allen Nause served as Artists Rep's Artistic Director from 1988 until 2013 and has directed many of its most popular productions including *Killer Joe*, *Bug*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Superior Donuts*, *The Crucible*, *Seafarer*, *The Clean House* and *Three Days Of Rain*. He directed *Our Town* with Mahesh Dattani in Bangalore, India and led two international tours to Africa and the Near and Middle East, representing American regional theatre for U.S.I.A. Arts America. In 2000, Nause traveled to Vietnam and co-directed a bilingual, bicultural production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and a Vietnamese production of *A Glass Menagerie* as part of the Vietnam/America Theatre Exchange. In May 2007, he directed *All My Sons* with the Palestinian National Theatre in Jerusalem. In 2010, Nause directed *The Odd Couple* in Islamabad, Pakistan. Allen has also directed at many of the Northwest's professional theaters including the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage and ACT Theatre in Seattle.

CAST

John San Nicolas*^ – Dar
Connor Toms* – Nick Bright
Imran Sheikh* – Bashir
William Ontiveros* – Imam Saleem

CREATIVE TEAM

Allen Nause^ – Director
Matthew Smucker** – Scenic Designer
Rose Pederson** – Costume Designer
Kristeen Willis Crosser^ – Lighting Designer
Brendan Patrick Hogan – Composer/Sound Designer
Mary McDonald Lewis^ – Voice & Text Director
Sharath Patel^ – Sound Coordinator
Natalie Rae Heikkinen – Props Coordinator
Jonathan Cole – Fight Coordinator
Connor Toms – Fight Captain
Carol Ann Wohlmut* – Production Stage Manager
Production Assistants – Will Bailey, Jessica Evans Irvine
Board Op – Jason Coffey

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers*

^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

*** Represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE.*

>> PHOTOS AVAILABLE: March 11

ABOUT THE MORRISON LOBBY ART INSTALLATION

Artists Rep partners with company-in-residence [The Geezer Gallery](#) to offer patrons rotating visual art installations that reflect or are inspired by the work onstage. Dozens of local artists have been featured and several pieces sold and the opportunity to see how visual art and performance can be in conversation with each to make for a more enriching experience.

For *The Invisible Hand*, The Geezer Gallery presents “Hand in the East,” a collection of work from master artists Peggy Harkins in wood, Judeemoonbeam and Nosivad in metal and fabric, and Marikay Ross with collage. “Hand in the East” explores these artists’ individual and collaborative expressions of Middle Eastern themes that have the unplanned, unintended and wider views of the “invisible hand.”

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

Portland’s premiere mid-size regional theatre company is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodriguez and Managing Director Sarah Horton. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. For the 2014/15 season Artists Rep will offer eight bold and entertaining plays written by internationally acclaimed playwrights, and guided by esteemed directors. Artists Rep productions will feature the work of a core group of accomplished Resident Artists, each with a shared history and a shorthand for collaboration, working alongside guest artists from Portland and beyond.

Artists Rep’s mission is to engage diverse audiences in fresh, thought-provoking and intimate theatre. We are committed to world-class acting, directing, design and stagecraft that support new playwriting and aspire to embody great literature, moving audiences to truly feel — to *experience* — storytelling in a way that only the best live theatre can.

The 2014/15 Artists Repertory Theatre season is presented by Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate. *The Invisible Hand* is presented at Artists Rep with support from Hugh & Mair Lewis and Mentor Graphics. Our season media sponsors are The Oregonian and KINK. Other season support comes from the Regional Arts Culture Council, The Oregon Community Foundation, the Collins Foundation, the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation, Meyer Memorial Trust, The James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation and Rafati's Catering.

###