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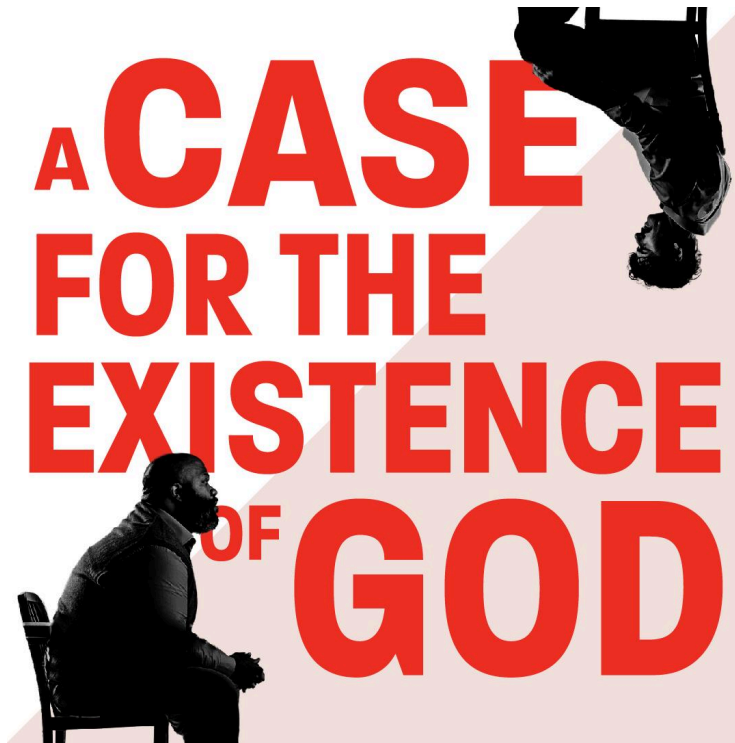


**ACT CONTEMPORARY THEATRE ANNOUNCES CAST  
AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR THE SEATTLE PREMIERE OF  
SAMUEL D. HUNTER'S**

# **A CASE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD**

**The lives of two fathers intertwine in a twisting journey of  
intrigue, revelation and empathy**

*Directed by John Langs in a limited run in ACT's Falls Theatre,  
February 2 – 18. Single tickets on sale now at [acttheatre.org](http://acttheatre.org).*



**SEATTLE, WA (January 4, 2024) — ACT Contemporary Theatre** announced the cast and creative team for *A Case for the Existence of God* by **Samuel D. Hunter**, starting February 2.

ACT's opening play in 2024 is directed by ACT Artistic Director **John Langs** and features powerful Seattle actors **Conner Nedderson** and **Nathaniel Tenenbaum**.

Called a "must-see heartbreaker of a play" by The New York Times, *A Case for the Existence of God* was written by notable playwright **Samuel D. Hunter**, best known for plays *A Bright New Boise*, which won the 2011 Obie Award for playwriting, and *The Whale*, which won a 2013 Drama Desk Award and the 2013 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play. Hunter wrote the screenplay to the award-winning film of the same name, which also featured Seattle's Cornish College of the Arts alumni Brendan Fraser in an Oscar-winning role.

*A Case for the Existence of God* takes place entirely inside a small loan brokerage in Idaho, where two men - a study in opposites - struggle to make a place for their family in the American dream, walking a tightrope while balancing parenthood, financial security, desire, and empathy.

"After my first read, which was a deeply moving experience, someone asked me what the play was about," said **Director (and ACT Contemporary Theatre Artistic Director) John Langs**. "The phrase that came to mind was 'adulthood in the age of anxiety.' The story resonated with the question of how our humanity must navigate the complicated systems and stage gates of being an adult. Playwright Samuel D. Hunter has become a true chronicler of our time by amplifying the existential questions that have become more complex as our society continues to move at the speed of light."

The show starts February 2, and celebrates opening night on February 8, with a pre-show party in collaboration with [Northwest Folklife](#) with entertainment from **Duo Takinai: Guo Ke** and **Reynaldo Ruiz**. Other special events throughout the run include Tix for Teachers, Community Day, an ASL performance, and an audio-described performance. A full list of events can be found below and at [ACTtheatre.org](#).

Samuel D. Hunter's *A Case for the Existence of God* plays in ACT's Falls Theatre February 2 – 18. Tickets and discounted tickets for groups of 10+ are available now at [ACTtheatre.org](#) or by calling the ACT Box Office at (206) 292-7676.

## **MEET THE CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM**

### **ABOUT CONNER NEDDERSEN (Ryan)**

Conner Nedderson is a local theatre and television actor in Seattle with a BFA from Cornish College of the Arts. This will be his first season production at ACT since *A Christmas Carol* in 2018. Other theatre credits include: Seattle Rep, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Seattle Children's Theater, Taproot Theater, and Strawberry Theatre Workshop., He was a member of New Century Theater Company. TV credits include NBC's *Grimm*, and A&E.

### **ABOUT NATHANIEL TENENBAUM (Keith)**

Pre-Quarantine: *Indecent* - Seattle Rep, *UrineTown* - ACT/5TH, *Boeing-Boeing* - TheatreO, *The Pillowman* - ActOne, and *Peter & The Starcatcher* – USF. During Quarantine: Baked one

strawberry cheesecake, sewed one shirt (unwearable), and played his vinyl. Post-Quarantine: *A Christmas Carol* (2021) - ACT, *The Wiz* - 5th Ave, and *Cowboy Bob* - The Alley Theatre (Pre-Broadway). Nathaniel is an ACT Core Company Member.

### **ABOUT JOHN LANGS (Director)**

John Langs has served as ACT Contemporary Theatre's Artistic Director since 2016. He joined ACT in 2013 as Associate Artistic Director. Langs's 16-year freelance career afforded him the opportunity to work with many prestigious theatre companies across the country. He has directed productions at Playwrights Horizons NY, Ensemble Studio Theater NY, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Lookingglass Theater Company in Chicago, Circle X in Los Angeles, The Resident Ensemble, New Century Theatre Company, Washington Ensemble Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Company. Langs received his directing degree from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Some of his favorite directing credits include *The Shaggs Philosophy of the World* (Los Angeles Drama Critic Circle Award for Best Original Musical), *Brothers Karamazov* (seven LADCC Awards including Best Production of the year and Best Direction), and directing Kurt Beattie in *King Lear*. Langs received the first annual Seattle Gregory Award honoring excellence in direction for *The Adding Machine*. As a dedicated fan of original work, Langs has shepherded over a dozen projects to their premiere production.

### **ABOUT SAMUEL D. HUNTER (Playwright)**

Samuel D. Hunter grew up in Moscow, Idaho and lives in New York City. He is the recipient of a 2014 MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship for his work as a playwright. His full-length plays include *The Whale* (Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play, GLAAD Media Award, Drama League and Outer Critics Circle nominations for Best Play), *A Case for the Existence of God* (New York Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play), *A Bright New Boise* (Obie Award, Drama Desk nomination for Best Play), *Greater Clements* (Drama Desk nomination for Best Play, Outer Critics Circle Honoree), *Lewiston/Clarkston* (Drama Desk nomination for Best Play), *The Few*, *A Great Wilderness*, *Rest*, *Pocatello*, *The Healing*, and *The Harvest*, among others. A film version of *The Whale*, directed by Darren Aronofsky and starring Brendan Fraser, was released in 2022 by A24 Films. He is the recipient of a 2012 Whiting Writers Award and an honorary doctorate from the University of Idaho. His work has been produced off-Broadway in New York City by Lincoln Center Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Signature Theatre, Page 73 Productions, Clubbed Thumb and Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre. Elsewhere, his work has been produced by Theatre Royal Bath, Dallas Theatre Center, Seattle Rep, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, South Coast Rep, and Victory Gardens, among others. Two published anthologies of his work are available from TCG Books, and a third is forthcoming. He is a member of New Dramatists and a current Resident Playwright at the Signature Theatre in New York City. He holds degrees in playwrighting from NYU, The Iowa Playwrights Workshop, and Juilliard.

### **ABOUT THE CREATIVE TEAM**

The entirely local creative team features **John Langs** (Director); **Parmida Ziaei** (Scenic Designer); **Danielle Nieves** (Costume Designer); **Connie Yun** (Lighting Designer & ACT Core

Company Member); **Maggie Rogers** (Sound Designer); and **Thorn Michaels** (Assistant Lighting Designer).

The stage management team consists of **JR Welden** (Stage Manager) and **Larcyn Burnett** (Production Assistant).

## FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS:

### WHAT:

#### ***A Case for the Existence of God***

By Samuel D. Hunter

Directed by John Langs

Inside a small loan brokerage in Idaho, two men — a study in opposites — struggle to make a place for their families in the American dream as they balance parenthood, financial security, desire, and empathy. This award-winning play, with a revelatory ending, leads audiences on a journey of intrigue and reckoning as the two fathers' lives intertwine in a powerful narrative about what it means to be human.

[Show Details >>](#)

[Ticket info >>](#)

### WHEN:

#### **February 2 – 18, 2024**

Evening performance times are 7:30 p.m. and matinees are 2 p.m. A full performance schedule can be [found here](#).

Run time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

### Key Dates:

- **First Performance:** Friday, February 2 at 7:30 p.m.
- **Opening Night:** Thursday, February 8 at 7:30 p.m.
  - ACT Contemporary Theatre will celebrate opening night with a pre-show collaboration with Northwest Folklife with entertainment from Duo Takinai: Guo Ke and Reynaldo Ruiz. [Get opening night tickets here >>](#)
- **Tix for Teachers:** Saturday, February 3 at 7:30 p.m.
  - ACT offers K-12 educators free tickets to Tix for Teachers night. Join Artistic Associate Shana Bestock before the show for a casual reception and information about ACT's educational programs. [Get Tix for Teachers tickets here >>](#)
- **ASL (American Sign Language) Interpreted Performance:** Saturday, February 17 at 2:00 p.m.
  - Special seating is reserved for patrons requesting live ASL interpretation of the spoken English performance. Seats are held for patrons during select

performances to guarantee optimal viewing of both the interpreters and the stage. [Get ASL tickets here >>](#)

- **Audio-Described Performance:** Saturday, February 17 at 2:00 p.m.
  - Complimentary audio description is available for patrons who are blind, who have low vision, or who may benefit from having the unspoken action of a play narrated for any reason. See any front-of-house team member before the performance to receive your headset. [Get audio-described tickets here >>](#)
- **Community Day:** Saturday, February 10, 3:30-5:30 p.m. between matinee and evening performances
  - In partnership with Dr. Mavis Tsai and the UW Center for the Science of Social Connection, join ACT Contemporary Theatre for various community events:
    - 3:45-4:30 p.m. – UW Professor & Awareness, Courage, and Love Global Project founder Dr. Mavis Tsai on Creating Extraordinary Interactions
    - 4:30 p.m. – Unexpected Pairings – art activity with ACT’s Young Core Company and TeenTix
    - 4:30-5:30 p.m. – Social Hour
  - Community Day events are free with your ticket to the current production. Tickets do not need to be for the day of the event – see the show on the day of your choice and then join us for Community Day for connection and conversation!

#### **WHERE:**

**ACT Contemporary Theatre’s Falls Theatre**, located at 700 Union Street in Downtown Seattle.

#### **TICKETS:**

**Tickets start with Pay What You Choose to select performances.** We are proud to offer a range of ticket prices for all our plays in our goal to make theatre affordable for everyone.

To purchase tickets, visit <https://acttheatre.org>

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO**

For available pre-production images and headshots, [please visit our Press Room online >>](#)

#### **CONNECT ON SOCIAL:**

[acttheatre.org](https://acttheatre.org)

Facebook - [/ACTtheatre](#)

Instagram - [@ACTtheatre](#)

Show tags: #ACTtheatre #ACTSeattle #CaseForTheExistence

#### **ABOUT ACT CONTEMPORARY THEATRE**

Steadfast in its dedication to producing work that sparks an authentic curiosity about the human condition, ACT produces bold, audacious works of contemporary theatre from its home in Seattle. Over the last 58 years, ACT remains the voice of contemporary theatre in the Pacific Northwest,

presenting necessary and relevant works on current themes and producing more than 300 plays and musicals, including 47 world premieres. Led by Artistic Director John Langs, ACT nurtures theatre-makers of the next generation, with a mission to be a contemporary theatre where artistic ambition and civic engagement unite.

ACT is here to challenge how stories are told. For more information on ACT Contemporary Theatre please visit [ACTTheatre.org](http://ACTTheatre.org).

*Thank you to ACT Contemporary Theatre's Theatre and Season Sponsors: 4Culture, ArtsFund, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, The Shubert Foundation, Nesholm Family Foundation, ArtsWA, Bowery Valuation, The Grousemont Foundation, NBBJ, The Sunderland Foundation, and Katharyn Alvord Gerlich.*

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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