



**INVISIBLE THEATRE - PRESS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Invisible Theatre Continues its 47<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

**with the Arizona Premiere of**

**THE VALUE OF NAMES**

**An Evocative Drama**

by

**Jeffrey Sweet**

**November 7\* – 19, 2017**

**\*Tuesday low cost preview**

*(October 18, 2017, Tucson, Arizona);* Invisible Theatre continues its 47th Anniversary Season with the Arizona Premiere of **THE VALUE OF NAMES** by Jeffrey Sweet. Benny Silverman, a celebrated comic, has revived his career via television after many years of forced inactivity following his having been named on the Hollywood blacklist of the Fifties. Now his actress daughter, Norma, has been cast in a play to be directed by Leo Greshen, the man who had testified against him before the House Committee on Un-American Activities, and suddenly Benny must deal again with a moral crisis that he has tried to put behind him. Our all-star cast features David Alexander Johnston, Julianna Grantham and Michael A. Candela. This evocative and timely drama is directed by Fred Rodriguez.

**Made possible in part through the generous support of  
Milton and Elizabeth Kahn Philanthropic Fund**

"THE VALUE OF NAMES has it all: a provocative subject, superb writing,  
a consistently engrossing story, and an almost overwhelming  
emotional wallop at its end. A wonderful play"

*-Chicago Tribune*



**THE VALUE OF NAMES** by Jeffrey Sweet will play from November 7 - 19, 2017 with the official press opening on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 7:30 PM. A low cost preview (\$20) takes place on Tuesday, November 7, 2017 at 7:30 PM. The Invisible Theatre is located at 1400 N. First Avenue (at Drachman), Tucson, AZ 85719.

The single show ticket price for **THE VALUE OF NAMES** is \$34. Discounts are available for groups, seniors, active military and students. Rush tickets are available for purchase at half-price one half hour prior to performance time and are subject to availability.

Tickets are available for purchase by calling the Invisible Theatre Box Office at (520) 882-9721 and are also available 24/7 on-line through OvationTix at [www.invisibletheatre.com](http://www.invisibletheatre.com).

The running time is 80 minutes with no intermission.

**THE VALUE OF NAMES** is appropriate for ages 13 and up.

## THE INVISIBLE THEATRE

The Invisible Theatre (IT) of Tucson, a 501(c)(3) organization, is dedicated to producing quality theatre and arts education experiences for all facets of the community in an intimate setting that showcases local professional talent and guest artists. IT takes its name from the invisible energy that flows between a performer and audience, creating the magic of theatre. Started in 1971 as an arena for local playwrights, the theatre has expanded its programs to include adaptations of classics and recent Off-Broadway plays and musicals, while continuing to encourage new playwrights through both full productions and staged readings.

Under the leadership of Managing Artistic Director Susan Claassen, Associate Artistic Director James Blair, and PR Director Cathy Johnson, IT is strongly committed to community service and outreach programs. The company's current season includes a six play Main Stage season, many special events, a world class cabaret series, organizational collaborations, educational tours, seminars that encourage community dialogue and Project Pastime – an educational theatre program for mentally challenged youth.

The Invisible Theatre, the recipient of the first Arizona Theatre Association Award for Best Producing Theatre Company, is a member of the Theatre Communications Group and has long enjoyed both local and national recognition for its strong leadership role in the arts community. Productions take place in an intimate 80-seat converted laundry building. IT celebrates its 47<sup>th</sup> season with an even greater commitment to professionalism, artistic excellence, accessibility, freedom of expression, diverse programming and creative challenge – thus making the Invisible Theatre a very visible force in Tucson's cultural community.

## ABOUT THE PEOPLE

**MICHAEL A. CANDELA** (*Leo*) is making his IT debut. He has supported his “theatre addiction” with producing and casting films. Michael has directed over 80 productions as Artistic Director with Naugatuck Teen, United Artists, Hollywood Youth, and Theatre Harmony Ensemble. His many awards include a Dramalogue Award (LA) Shakespeare’s TWELFTH NIGHT and an OBIE Award (NYC) for TEA AND SYMPATHY. He has been a member of ten different repertory companies appearing in over 100 productions including Fagin (OLIVER), Judas (GODSPELL), Doolittle (MY FAIR LADY), and Scrooge (Musical, A CHRISTMAS CAROL). Michael has performed in many films including a co-starring role in *Lucky U Ranch* (recently released on Amazon). He owned 7.23 Productions and produced 15 films starring such actors as Brian Dennehy, Christopher Lloyd, Rob Lowe, Michael York and Ben Gazzara. He received Austin Festivals “Best Picture” Award for *La Cuccaracha* (Eric Roberts). As a casting director, he has worked on 70 projects and 4 TV series. Michael now lives in Tucson with wife Dr. Marsha Brooks-Candela and children Nicholas and Hannah.

**JULIANNA “JULES” GRANTHAM** (*Norma*) is a new graduate of the University of Arizona Theatre and Dance program, and is making her first appearance with Invisible Theatre. Julianna is delighted and so is IT! Previously this year, she performed at ATC’s production of FIDDLER ON THE ROOF, and at Borderlands Theater. She performs in Tucson middle schools with the acclaimed STORIES THAT SOAR. Her favorite performances at the University of Arizona were OKLAHOMA at the Repertory Theater and many dance productions at the University of Arizona School of Dance. Julianna loves to sing, dance, hike, and work out.

**DAVID ALEXANDER JOHNSTON** (*Benny*) made his Invisible Theatre debut in DON’T TALK TO THE ACTORS and then appeared in LEAVING IOWA, AN EMPTY PLATE IN THE CAFÉ DU GRAND BOEUF, 2 ACROSS, MOTHERHOOD OUT LOUD, OLIVE AND THE BITTER HERBS, I OUGHT TO BE IN PICTURES, COMING APART, and most recently LEBENSRAUM. He has been seen in ATC’s TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING and MY FAIR LADY. David appeared in AUGUST OSAGE COUNTY and CABARET with Winding Road Theater Ensemble. He then joined the ensemble and appeared in ROUGH MAGIC, UNITED, SAINT JOAN and SOVEREIGN BODY. He proudly played Willy Loman in Winding Road’s DEATH OF A SALESMAN and won a Tucson MAC award for playing Mr. Green in VISITING MR. GREEN at Live Theatre Workshop. David has been seen in multiple other shows since coming to Tucson in 1990. His television and movie credits include *Day of Redemption*, *Spin*, *The Unflyable Plane* for BBC, *Fast Getaway II*, *Tank Girl* as well as regional and national commercials and industrial films.

**FRED RODRIGUEZ** (*Director*) is a graduate of the University of Arizona and treasured member of Invisible Theatre’s staff. His background is in Stage Management, but he did direct the highly successful, MAC Award nominated STEEL MAGNOLIAS for Arizona Onstage Productions. Invisible Theatre is thrilled to have Fred on staff as an Administrative Associate. He has stage managed such favorites as PAGEANT, FOREVER PLAID, WHEN PIGS FLY, LEBENSRAUM, LET’S LIVE A LITTLE! and most recently, INDOOR/OUTDOOR. Some other memorable stage management work includes: AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY with Winding Road Theater Ensemble, LES MISERABLES with Arizona Onstage Productions, A TUCSON PASTORELA with Borderlands Theater and VISITING MR. GREEN with Live Theatre Workshop. Fred also directed Invisible Theatre’s LOOKING FOR MAGIC.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

**JEFFREY SWEET** has been associated as a playwright-in-residence with the Tony Award-winning Victory Gardens Theatre of Chicago since 1979. Of him, former *Chicago Tribune* critic Richard Christiansen says, "He's not only an artist, he's a craftsman." Among the plays Victory Gardens has presented either in world or Chicago premieres are PORCH (winner of the Society of Midland Authors Award), RESPONSIBLE PARTIES, TIES (basis of an Emmy-winning TV show), STOPS ALONG THE WAY (premiere at Lincoln Center), ROUTED, THE VALUE OF NAMES (premiere at Actors Theatre of Louisville, winner of the Heidemann Award), WITH AND WITHOUT, FLYOVERS (Joseph Jefferson Award for playwriting), BLUFF (Jefferson nomination) THE ACTION AGAINST SOL SCHUMANN (American Theatre Critics Association award for playwriting), IMMORAL IMPERATIVES (Jefferson nomination), and BERLIN '45. Other works include AMERICAN ENTERPRISE (premiere at the Organic Theatre, ATCA playwriting award, Kennedy Center-American Express prize, Outer Critics Circle nomination, citation as a "Best Play") and the musicals I SENT A LETTER TO MY LOVE (book and lyrics to music by Melissa Manchester, based on novel by Bernice Rubens) and WHAT ABOUT LUV? (Outer Critics Circle Award for best book, written in collaboration with composer Howard Marren and lyricist Susan Birkenhead, based on the play LUV by Murray Schisgal). The plays have been presented at the Arena Stage, Hartford Stage, Buffalo Arena, North Shore Music Theatre, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre, Vineyard Theatre, Hypothetical Theatre, Jewish Theatre of the South, Theatre J, Encompass Theatre, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Primary Stages, the York Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse, People's Light and Theatre Company, White Plains Performing Arts Center, Queens Theatre in the Park, the Helen Hayes Theatre of Nyack, Arizona Jewish Theatre, and the Phoenix Theatre of Indianapolis. He is the author of three books: "Something Wonderful Right Away" (an oral history of the Second City comedy troupe currently published by Limelight Editions) and two widely-used texts on playwriting, "The Dramatist's Toolkit" and "Solving Your Script" (both published by Heinemann). He writes ongoing columns for *Back Stage* and *Dramatics*. He has written a variety of things for television. As "creative consultant," he wrote the teleplay for the award-winning adaptation of Hugh Whitmore's PACK OF LIES. He was an executive story editor for Jay Presson Allen's TV series "Hot House." He wrote sitcom pilots for Norman Lear and the Charles Brothers. Along the way, he picked up a Writers Guild of America Award and an Emmy nomination. He has taught for a variety of universities and professional programs, including the Actors Studio Theatre School, Second City, New Dramatists, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Rutgers, University of Richmond, and Columbia University. He is a member of Ensemble Studio Theatre, an alumnus of New Dramatists, and a member of the Council of the Dramatists Guild. He was founder of the New York Writers Bloc, a group of writers, directors and actors that met in various apartments and spaces for ten years.

"The Value of Names engages audiences through  
Intellect and emotion!"

-*Westworld Denver*

# FACTS ABOUT THE VALUE OF NAMES

## WHO:

Written by Jeffrey Sweet

Director: Fred Rodriguez

Cast: David Alexander Johnston (*Benny*), Julianna Grantham (*Norma*)  
and Michael A. Candela (*Leo*)

## WHAT:

The Arizona Premiere of THE VALUE OF NAMES

## WHERE:

The Invisible Theatre

1400 N. First Avenue (at Drachman), Tucson, AZ. 85719

## WHEN:

Season Ticket Holders will be seated first and then general admission.

Tuesday	November 7, 2017 at 7:30 PM	<i>(Preview)</i>
Wednesday	November 8, 2017 at 7:30 PM	<i>(Opening)</i>
Thursday	November 9, 2017 at 7:30 PM	<i>(Seminar)</i>
Friday	November 10, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Saturday	November 11, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Sunday	November 12, 2017 at 3:00 PM	

Wednesday	November 15, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Thursday	November 16, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Friday	November 17, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Saturday	November 18, 2017 at 3:00 PM	
Saturday	November 18, 2017 at 7:30 PM	
Sunday	November 19, 2017 at 3:00 PM	

## RUNNING TIME:

80 minutes with no intermission

## AGE RECOMMENDATION:

13 and up

## PRODUCTION STAFF:

DIRECTOR: Fred Rodriguez

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR: James Blair

SET DESIGN: Susan Claassen and James Blair

LIGHT DESIGN: James Blair

SOUND DESIGN: Rob Boone

PROP DESIGN: Katy Voutsas

COSTUME DESIGN: Maryann Trombino

STAGE MANAGER: James Blair

GRAPHIC & PROGRAM DESIGN: Karen Scott & Christine Simpson, Great Scott Design, Inc

**TO PURCHASE TICKETS OR FOR INFORMATION:**

To charge tickets by phone, call our Box Office at (520) 882-9721.

You may also visit the Box Office in the Invisible Theatre Lobby (1400 N First Avenue at Drachman).

To buy tickets online 24/7, go to [www.invisibletheatre.com](http://www.invisibletheatre.com) and click on the Ovationtix logo.

Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express are accepted.

**WHEELCHAIR ACCESS:**

The Invisible Theatre is fully accessible to patrons using wheelchairs or with other mobility challenges.

Seating areas to accommodate persons using wheelchairs are located in the theatre. If patrons require special seating they should inform the Box Office at (520) 882-9721.

**ABOUT THIS PRESS RELEASE:**

This mailing list is for members of the professional media and allied organizations who have requested e-mail press releases from The Invisible Theatre. If you no longer wish to receive e-mail press releases or if there is someone else with your organization that should be added to our list, send a message to [cathy@invisibletheatre.com](mailto:cathy@invisibletheatre.com) or phone Alayna at (520) 884-0672 with your request.

**ONLINE MEDIA MATERIALS:**

Production photos will be available October 27, 2017 at [www.invisibletheatre.com](http://www.invisibletheatre.com) (Press).

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