

Washington, DC's first professional theatre showcasing the talents of artists with disabilities.



open circle theatre

For Immediate Release:
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Open Circle Theatre Presents: *Songs For a New World* by Jason Robert Brown In a New, Bold, and Challenging Adaptation

"...music that not only deserves to be listened to - it demands attention." Brad Hathaway

**SAVE THE DATE: Press Night Thursday, August 9 – 8PM at Round House Theatre Silver Spring
8641 Colesville Road**

SILVER SPRING, MD (July 13, 2007) -- Open Circle Theatre announces its sixth production: a new adaptation of *Songs For A New World* by Jason Robert Brown that will run from August 9 through August 26.

Open Circle Theatre's (OCT) Founding Artistic Director Suzanne Richard directs this unique production of *Songs For A New World*, which is usually staged as a musical review that explores the important moments, and dynamic changes in people's lives. With music and lyrics are rearranged to tell the story of two soldiers who leave their families to serve in Iraq, the ensuing piece explores both the soldiers' lives, and those that they have left behind on the home front. Through Mr. Brown's music and lyrics, with no added libretto, this concept comes to life, and creates a dynamic story that highlights the sacrifice and bravery of the men and women who currently serve, have served, will serve and have given their lives in Iraq & elsewhere. As a group of artists who deal with the challenges and opportunities that living with disability can present, OCT hopes that this performance will let those troops who are currently facing new disabilities know that they will still be able to contribute to and participate in the things they care about in their lives.

This is the first production Suzanne Richard will direct for OCT since receiving a Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Director of a Resident Musical, and winning the Theatre Lobby's Mary Goldwater Award for directing *Jesus Christ Superstar*. OCT is continuing its partnership with Liz Lerman Dance Exchange who is providing choreography that contributes to the adaptive spirit of OCT and focuses on performers' abilities rather than disabilities. A talented cast of 24 are called on to stretch not only their singing talents with Jason Robert Brown's rich and challenging score, but also their accomplished acting talents. Warren "Wawa" Snipe returns from *Evita* to lead the cast with his vivid signing and movement. Rob McQuay and Debra Buonaccorsi also return and we introduce James Garland as the powerful voice of Mr. Snipe's character. There are other old and new faces to round out a stellar cast which has poured their heart and soul into this tribute to our service men and women in this time of war.

As Open Circle Theatre has demonstrated in the past, accessibility is a key part of our production values. American Sign Language and captioning are incorporated into the performance, making it accessible to deaf audiences. As always, OCT is offering assistive listening devices for people who are hard of hearing, and all shows are audio described on demand for the blind and low vision

population. And, of course, OCT is lucky to continue its artistic partnership with Round House Theatre and to have the wonderfully accessible space of Round House Theatre Silver Spring for people with mobility disabilities.

JASON ROBERT BROWN has been hailed as "one of Broadway's smartest and most sophisticated songwriters since Stephen Sondheim" (*Philadelphia Inquirer*). He is the composer and lyricist of the musical, [The Last Five Years](#), which was cited as one of *Time Magazine's* 10 Best of 2001 and won Drama Desk Awards for Best Music and Best Lyrics. He won a 1999 Tony Award for his score to [Parade](#), a musical written with Alfred Uhry, and subsequently won both the Drama Desk and New York Drama Critics' Circle Awards for Best New Musical. His first musical, [Songs for a New World](#), has since been seen in more than two hundred productions around the world. His newest musical, [13](#), written with Dan Elish, premiered this January to rave reviews at Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum, and opens on Broadway in the spring of 2008. He is the winner of the 2002 Kleban Award for Outstanding Lyrics and the 1996 Gilman & Gonzalez-Falla Foundation Award for Musical Theatre and he was a Tony Award nominee for his contributions to the score of [Urban Cowboy the Musical](#).

Press Performance:

Thursday, August 9, 2007 @ 8:00pm

General Performance Information:

August 9 – August 26

Thursday thru Saturday at 8:00pm; Sundays at 2:00pm and 7:30pm (no 7:30 performance 8/12)

All performances will be:

Sign interpreted/Captioned
Assisted Listening
Audio description on demand

Ticket Information:

- Thursday & Sunday shows are \$15.
- Friday shows are \$25. \$5 discount for students, seniors, and groups of 10 or more.
- Saturday shows are \$30. \$5 discount for students, seniors, and groups of 10 or more.
- 2-FOR-1 PRICING FOR ALL SHOWS WITH A MILITARY ID

To reserve tickets and pay cash or check at the door, please call 240/683-0305 or email director@opencircletheatre.org

To pay with a credit card, please go to: <http://www.boxofficetickets.com/>

Theater Location:

Round House Theatre Silver Spring
8641 Colesville Road,
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Production Team:

Producer:	Ian Armstrong
Director:	Suzanne Richard
Assistant Director:	Colin Hovde
Musical Director:	Zak Sandler
Sign Master:	Monique Holt
Choreographer:	Shula Strassfeld & Peter Dimuro with Liz Lerman Dance
Exchange	
Set Designer:	Klyph Stanford

Light Designer:
Costume Designer:
Stage Manager:

Marianne Meadows
Erin Nugent
Kate Kilbane

Cast:

Warren Snipe
James Garland
Debra Buonaccorsi
Rob McQuay
Jan Johns
Lanny Slusher
Barbara Catrett
Elver Ariza
John Dellaporta
Zehra Fazal
Joe Isenberg
JP Illaramendi
John Robert Keena
Jill Maybruch
Melissa Mustard
Nora Palka
Joe Peck
Rachael Saltzman
Tosia Shall
Greg Anderson
Tiffany Garfinkle
Ashley Ivey
Pauline Spanbauer
Andrew Vergara Retizos