

# NEWS RELEASE

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## **DEAD LETTER OFFICE**

**Dog & Pony Theatre Company presents a world premiere thriller  
at the Chicago DCA Storefront Theater  
June 9 – July 18, 2010**

Dog & Pony Theatre Company, in association with Chicago DCA Theater, presents the world premiere of ***Dead Letter Office***. The production, conceived by Ben Viccellio, written by Philip Dawkins, and directed by Dieterich Gray, comes to Chicago DCA's Storefront Theater at 66 E. Randolph Street, from June 9 to July 18, 2010. Members of the press are invited to the opening performance on Friday, June 11, at 7:30 pm.

In an examination of the changing nature of language in our digital culture, each staff member at the postal service's Dead Letter Office tries to communicate but always seems to miss. Instead, they are stuck sorting the backlog of the postal system and searching for anything of value among the written letters. But when a newcomer joins the group, she uncovers a secret – a secret buried deep within the walls of the post office and threatened to be lost with the building's imminent destruction.

Performances are Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings at 7:30 pm. and Sunday afternoons at 3 pm. There will not be a show on Sunday, July 4, due to the holiday. A post-show discussion will follow the performance on Thursday, June 17.

Tickets for ***Dead Letter Office*** are \$22 for general admission and \$17 for students and seniors. The preview performances on June 9 and 10 as well as all Thursday and Sunday performances are pay-what-you-can shows. Discounts are available for Chicago Cultural Center Mosaic Members, theater industry affiliates, military personnel, ADA companions, and large groups. All tickets are available by calling 312.742.TIXS (8497), visiting [www.dcatheater.org](http://www.dcatheater.org), or stopping by the box office, open Tuesday through Saturday, noon to 6 pm; Sundays, noon to 4 pm; and one hour prior to each performance.

### **Cast and Production Team**

***Dead Letter Office*** playwright Philip Dawkins is a Chicago-based playwright and educator. He is a graduate of Loyola University, Chicago. His play, *Yes to Everything!* has been performed nationally in Chicago, New York, California, and Washington, D.C. Other credits include *Perfect* (The Side Project); *You Gonna Eat That?* (HealthWorks), *Ugly Baby* (Chicago Vanguard/Strawdog Theatre Company), *A Still Life in Color* (T.U.T.A. Company), and *Saguaro* (Estrogen Fest; Estrogenius Festival, NY; 16<sup>th</sup> Street Theatre, Berwyn; Painted Filly, Ireland.). His writing has been published in *The Stranger* and *The Packington Review* and his children's plays are published with Playscripts, Inc. Dawkins is a founding member of Chicago Opera Vanguard, and he teaches playwriting in public schools through Chicago Dramatists. He also teaches martial arts to children through Rising Phoenix Kung Fu.

Dieterich Gray directs ***Dead Letter Office***. Gray has been a Dog & Pony company member since 2006. His directing credits include: *Veuve Clicquot* (Dog & Pony) and *You Wouldn't Want To Take It With You Even If You Could* (Piven) as part of Suzan-Lori Parks' 365 Days/365 Plays Festival; Lanford Wilson's *A Betrothal* (Theatre Lab, ISU), and David Ives' *All In the Timing* (Carl Sandburg Theatre). His acting credits include *Mr. Marmalade*,

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*Crumble (Lay Me Down, Justin Timberlake)*, and *Osama The Hero (Dog & Pony)*; *King Lear* starring Stacy Keach, dir. Robert Falls (Goodman and Shakespeare Theatre Company); Sarah Ruhl's *Passion Play*, dir. Mark Wing-Davey (Yale Repertory); *Mother Courage, The Royal Family*, and *I Just Stopped By To See The Man* (Steppenwolf); Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice* and *Great Expectations* (Piven, ensemble member). Film credits include *DogJack, Rocketship*, and the recent Maverick release, *8 of Diamonds*, opposite Eric Roberts.

The cast of **Dead Letter Office** features Kristen Magee, John Fenner Mays, Susan Price, and Josh Volkens.\*

The production team includes Steve Ptacek\* (sound design), Cathy Tantillo\* (costume design), Aaron Weissman\* (lighting design), Katie Rook (props design), Hannah Fenlon (assistant director), Simone Gianfrancesco (stage management), Shelby Wilson (assistant stage management), Ezra Bookman (production assistant), John Blick\* (producer), and Krissy Vanderwarker\* (artistic director).

Founded in 2002, Dog & Pony Theatre Company is committed to producing vital works by new and emerging playwrights whose use of language and convention are daring and highly imaginative. As an eclectic collective of artists with backgrounds in theatre, public broadcasting, political activism, and religious studies, Dog & Pony is particularly drawn to work with social and cultural relevance. The company has presented 12 full productions in six years including *Crumble (Lay Me Down, Justin Timberlake)*, which received an encore performance at Theater on the Lake, *As Told By The Vivian Girls*, recipient of three After Dark Awards, and most recently the Jeff recommended *The Twins Would Like to Say as part of Steppenwolf's Garage Rep series*. The productions of *Mr. Marmalade, The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabbler*, and *God's Ear* were all nominated for non-Equity Jeff Awards.

The Storefront Theater and the Studio Theater, its companion theater located in the Chicago Cultural Center at 78 E. Washington Street, comprise Chicago DCA Theater, an anchor of the downtown theater district. Chicago DCA Theater offers downtown audiences an off-Loop theater experience with an exciting look at the vibrant emerging theater companies that call Chicago home. Proposals for creative and innovative productions for the January to June 2011 season are now being accepted May 15, 2010.

Discounted parking is available at Wabash Randolph Self Park at 20 E. Randolph. Patrons can receive the \$10 rate by validating their ticket at the Storefront Theater box office.

For more information about Dog & Pony Theatre Company's **Dead Letter Office** and Chicago DCA Theater, call 312.742.TIXS (8497) or visit [www.dcatheater.org](http://www.dcatheater.org). The enhanced website features more about DCA Theater performances and programs, including a blog, photo galleries, and visitor information. More information on Dog & Pony Theatre Company is available at [www.dogandponychicago.org](http://www.dogandponychicago.org).

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Electronic images are available at [www.dcatheater.org/press](http://www.dcatheater.org/press) or by request.