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## Riverfront Playhouse to Premiere Comedic Adaptation of Shakespearian Tragedy

The Riverfront Playhouse at 11-13 South Water Street Mall in downtown Aurora will begin their 2010 season with the world premiere of *The M Word: A Scottish Tragedy in 5 Acts Reduced to 2 for the Attention Deficient* by Jack Schultz with additional material provided by William Shakespeare. The all new presentation will open on Friday, February 12, 2010, at 8pm, and continue Fridays and Saturday nights at 8pm through March 20th.

Under the direction of the playwright, the show follows the tradition of the playhouse's version of A CHRISTMAS CAROL, which has become a tradition for the playhouse: a troupe of itinerant actors have come to town on the back of their circus wagons to present a classic drama. In this case, the drama to be performed is Shakespeare's Scottish Tragedy, *Macbeth*.

Students of theatre and the art of acting know that there are several superstitions attached to the Scottish Tragedy, and Schultz's adaptation builds on that superstition. Beyond that, Schultz has closely followed the tragic storyline, tweaking not only the noses of the superstitious, but also the artsy attitudes incumbent upon purveyors of Shakespearian fare. All the while, however, told within the framework of modern influence, we find that *Macbeth* tells a story that is not only timely, but provides valuable insight into our own characters and beliefs.

The itinerant cast in Schultz's presentation is comprised of actors trained in the school of commedia dell'arte. The group includes Howard, a murderous gypsy who thrives on the macabre and actually manages to keep score of the evening's events with a collection of disembodied heads; Drudge, a young apprentice who is eager to learn, eager to please, and eager to create havoc wherever he can; and Curmudgeon, the seasoned actor trained in the ways of classical theatre and terrified of the implications of doing the Bard's play.

The cast features the talents of Bob Becker as Macbeth, Gary Riggle as Banquo, Sherry Winchester Schultz as Lady Macbeth, Thom Dickens as Macduff, Brandon Van Lear as Lennox, Jill Kustush as Lady Macduff, Danny Anderson and Clare Manion as the Macduff children, Shawn Dooley as Howard and the Thane of Ross, Jackson Schultz as Drudge and Malcolm, Steve Rasmussen as Curmudgeon and Duncan, Melissa Elder, Heidi Schultz, and Nickolena Sellen as the Witches, and Tristan Porter in a variety of roles.

Jack Schultz has written a number of shows for the playhouse in the past, including the country-western parody, FAT BILL'S ROADSIDE CAFÉ and last year's popular presentations of NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD: THE MUSICAL and A CHRISTMAS CAROL. He has also delighted Riverfront audiences with such plays as ERETICA, NICHT MARA, THE GYPSY STING, and ALTERNATIVES.

Tickets for *The M Word* are \$15 for adults, \$12 for students and senior citizens, and \$10 for children under the age of 12. Reservations are definitely recommended. You can make reservations by calling the playhouse box office at (630) 897-9496.

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