

ACT II playhouse

World-class theatre • intimate venue

Playwright *and* Actor: Bruce Graham Joins the Cast of *ANY GIVEN MONDAY* When the Production Moves to Act II Playhouse March 3 – 28, 2010

AMBLER, PA – Philadelphia playwright Bruce Graham, who penned the highly acclaimed new play *Any Given Monday*, is moonlighting as an actor – joining the cast when *Any Given Monday* moves to the Act II stage March 3-28. Act II Associate Artistic Director Harriet Power directs this sharp-tongued “comedy of morals”, co-produced with Center City-based Theatre Exile.

In *Any Given Monday*, Lenny is not having a good Monday. His two least favorite football teams are playing on the TV, his daughter is having a crisis of faith and his wife left him for a jerk who builds Wal-Marts. When his best friend Mickey has the perfect plan to fix his marital problems, Lenny has to decide what he is willing to stand up for and whom he is willing to stand up to. When political correctness, religion, class discrimination and social injustice just don't add up anymore, how can we define right and wrong? *Any Given Monday* is recommended for mature audiences.

Any Given Monday features an all-star cast of Barrymore favorites. Three-time Barrymore Award winner **Pete Pryor** stars as the outspoken Mick, while **Bruce Graham** portrays the sensitive Lenny, taking over the role played by Exile Producing Artistic Director **Joe Canuso**. **Catharine Slusar**, who has received several Barrymore nominations and awards, plays Lenny's sophisticated wife, Risa. *Any Given Monday* also features **Genevieve Perrier**, winner of the 2008 Barrymore Award for Outstanding Leading Actress, as Sarah, Lenny's scholarly daughter.

Tickets for Act II's production of *Any Given Monday* are \$20-\$30 (\$10 for students and discounts for groups of 10 or more) and are available at the Act II Box Office by calling (215) 654-0200; visiting 56 E. Butler Avenue, Ambler, PA; or online at www.act2.org.

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Graham's previous play, *Something Intangible*, won seven awards at the 2009 Barrymore Awards, including Outstanding New Play. In October 2009, he returned to acting after a 25 year hiatus, playing the Black Cat Husband in Brat Productions' *Haunted Poe*. Past acting roles include Dudley in *The Time of Your Life*, Bottom in *Midsummer*, Lovborg in *Hedda Gabler*, Gilbert in *Top of the World*, Felix Ungar (twice) in *The Odd Couple*, Paul in *Company* and the title role in the BBC docudrama, *Sheer Genius*.

Has Graham ever acted in his own plays? "About 20 years ago I stepped into my show, *Top of the World*, because the actor's TV series got picked up," he says. "We knew this might happen when we hired him, so the plan was that I would take over the role if necessary. I've also been a last-minute 'understudy' – once up at Long Wharf Theatre in *Minor Demons* and at the Philadelphia Theatre Company in *According to Goldman*. Both times I had to carry a script in hand. In addition, I've done the first readings of a lot of my plays."

Any Given Monday hits on sensitive topics, with Graham penning freewheeling, politically incorrect commentary on football, the homeless, racism and marriage. "This play has been in my head for about 20 years," says Graham. "I always wanted to tie in the vicarious violence of football with the real thing. I also really hate this ridiculous political correctness this country is going through right now," says Graham. "It totally stomps on the First Amendment. Charges of racism have become the new McCarthyism. I've dealt with it before in *Belmont Avenue Social Club* and *Coyote on a Fence*." As a result, he says, "the humor is incredibly important; otherwise, the play becomes a rant and I hate that."

Any Given Monday first took the stage at Theatre Exile February 4 through 28 in Philadelphia, and early reviews have been stellar: *The Philadelphia Inquirer* calls it "a funny and mesmerizingly dark adventure", noting that "Act II's associate artistic director, Harriet Power, stages the play, riding each of Graham's twists like a Go-Karter on a tear"; *Talkin' Broadway* calls it "a lot of outrageous fun, thanks to a truckload of witty dialogue and a strong cast"; and *City Paper* notes that "romantic comedy and dark satire collide convincingly."

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About the Playwright

Bruce Graham – PLAYS: *Burkie*, *Early One Evening at the Rainbow Bar & Grille*, *Minor Demons*, *Moon Over the Brewery*, *Belmont Avenue Social Club*, *The Champagne Charlie Stakes*, *Desperate Affection*, *According to Goldman*, *Dex and Julie Sittin' in a Tree*, *Full Figured Loves to Dance*, and Mum Puppettheatre's *A Christmas Carol*. *Coyote on a Fence* won the Rosenthal Prize, was nominated for two Drama Desk Awards and was produced on London's West End starring Ben Cross. The recent Arden Theatre production of *Something Intangible* garnered 13 Barrymore Nominations. FILM: *Dunston Checks In*, *Steal This Movie*, *Anastasia*. TV MOVIES: *Hunt for the Unicorn Killer*, *The Christmas Secret*, *The Most Wonderful Time of the Year*, *Ring of Endless Light* (HUMANITAS AWARD WINNER, Best Children's Screenplay) *Right on Track*, *Tiger Cruise*. TELEVISION: *Roseanne*, *Leg Work*. BOOK: *The Collaborative Playwright* (co-written with Michele Volansky.) Graham has received grants from the Pew Foundation, the Philadelphia Theatre Initiative, Drexel University's Westphal College, and the Rockefeller Foundation and was a recipient of a Princess Grace Foundation Statuette. He attended Indiana University of Pennsylvania and lives in South Philadelphia with his wife and daughter, Stephanie and Kendall, and their beagle, Truman.

About the Director

Harriet Power became Associate Artistic Director of Act II in May 2008 and is also a Professor of Theatre at Villanova University, where she teaches directing and acting. She has devoted much of her professional directing and dramaturgy career to play development, working with new plays and playwrights at New Dramatists (New York), Philadelphia's PlayPenn, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, West Coast Playwrights, Iowa Playwrights Festival, and the International Women Playwrights Festival. At Act II, she has directed Marc Camoletti's *Boeing-Boeing* (2009), James Still's *Iron Kisses* (2009), the world premiere of Jeff Baron's *Brothers-in-Law* (2008), and the Barrymore-award nominated *Syncopation* (2006). Recent directing: Michael Hollinger's *Ghost-Writer* (PlayPenn), Jen Child's newest one-woman show, *Why I'm Scared of Dance* (performed at Philadelphia Theatre Co.), two world premieres at InterAct Theatre, both by Seth Rozin - *Reinventing Eden* and *Missing Link* (Barrymore nomination, Outstanding New Play); and *Measure for Measure* (Philadelphia Shakespeare Festival; Barrymore nomination, Outstanding Direction of a Play). At Villanova University, she recently directed Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, Pierre Corneille/Tony Kushner's *The Illusion*, and Feydeau's *Le Dindon*, and Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.

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FACT SHEET

Act II Playhouse ANY GIVEN MONDAY

Performances:	Dates: March 3 – 28, 2010 Previews run March 3-4 Opening Night is Friday, March 5, 2010
Wed. 3/3 8 pm (pr, talkback) Thur. 3/4 8 pm (pr)	
Fri. 3/5* 8 pm	Location: Act II Playhouse 56 E. Butler Ave. Ambler, PA 19002 Parking located in municipal lot off Cavalier Drive (free after 6 pm)
Sat. 3/6 8 pm Sun. 3/7 2 pm	Tickets: Previews: \$20 Tues-Thurs: \$25 Fri-Sun: \$30 Students: \$10 Discounts starting at 10% for groups of 10 or more
Tue. 3/9 8 pm Wed. 3/10 2 pm Wed. 3/10 8 pm Thu. 3/11 8 pm Fri. 3/12 8 pm (talkback**) Sat. 3/13 8 pm Sun. 3/14 2 pm	<u>PUBLIC CONTACT INFORMATION</u> Online sales: www.act2.org Phone sales: 215-654-0200
Wed. 3/17 2 pm Wed. 3/17 8 pm Thu. 3/18 8 pm Fri. 3/19 8 pm Sat. 3/20 8 pm Sun. 3/21 2 pm (talkback**)	<u>PRODUCTION TEAM</u> A world premiere co-produced by Theatre Exile and Act II Playhouse Directed by Harriet Power Written by Bruce Graham
Wed. 3/24 2 pm Wed. 3/24 8 pm Thu. 3/25 8 pm Fri. 3/26 8 pm Sat. 3/27 8 pm Sun. 3/28 2 pm	Set: Dirk Durossette Costumes: Alison Roberts Lighting: James Leitner Sound: Mark Valenzuela Dramaturgy: Michele Volansky Production Managers: Sara Chandler (Theatre Exile), Jacob Rothermel (Act II Playhouse) Stage Manager: Margie Price

* **Opening Night**

** **Guest speakers:** Friday, March 12 – John Immerwahr, Professor of Philosophy, Villanova University
Sunday, March 21 – A. Roy DeCaro, Raynes McCarty Trial & Appellate Lawyers