



For Immediate Release

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Firebelly's *Proof* Examines the Nature of Creativity, Genius, and Much More

Firebelly Productions presents the Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Proof* by David Auburn November 1 -19, 2006 at Theatre on the Run, 3700 South Four Mile Run Drive, Arlington, VA.

What can we believe without proof? Catherine, just celebrating her twenty-fifth birthday, has spent the last 5 years caring for her father, a renowned mathematician, while his mental health declined. How will she handle the challenges of potential success and love without proof that she will avoid her father's fate?

"*Proof* is a tightly written play," explains Guest Director Ali Miller. "In Act One, Hal describes the work of Catherine's father as '...streamlined: no wasted moves...It's just...elegant.' The same could be said of Auburn's script: there is not a wasted word." The play's efficient structure belies the complexity and messiness of the lives it renders. Each character is asked to believe in something despite the absence of proof. This challenges Catherine, most of all. She knows all too well what effect the mental illness of a loved one can have on a family. How can a young woman who watched her father, her hero, disintegrate, take even the smallest step down a similar path without assurance she will not arrive at the same result?

Auburn ingeniously hinges the mathematics of the play on a familiar concept: prime numbers. There are all kinds of connections between prime numbers and the natural order of the universe. To date, however, no one has been able to prove that a pattern exists to describe their occurrence. "It is something like the Holy Grail of proofs and has mystified mathematicians for centuries," says Miller. "It's the mathematical equivalent of 'What is the meaning of life?'" *Proof*, then, becomes about not having the answers and trying to "connect the dots" anyway...even when our only solution is "lumpy" at best.

"Our mission is to use material that has casting opportunities for young adult artists," explains Firebelly's Artistic Director, Kathi Gollwitzer. "*Proof* certainly provides young actors with challenging roles. Most in the cast are young, as is the Guest Director."

"'What am I supposed to be doing with my life?'" is certainly a question that resonates for me, as I imagine it does for a lot of other young people," says Miller. "Although Catherine is dealing with a very high-stakes version of that question, the next question is of more interest to me: 'Am I brave enough to do what I'm supposed to be doing?'"

Of course, *Proof* is many things— an examination of creativity, genius, and madness. It is also an intimate family drama, a mystery, and a romance, but Miller explains her understanding of the play's appeal a little differently. "It takes the lives of these very real characters and fashions their struggles into something that illuminates the human condition. Ultimately, *Proof* is about a young woman who reconciles with the 'approximations' of life and chooses to believe, without proof, that the answer lies in forging ahead anyway."

CONTACT: (703) 409 2372 • WEB SITE: WWW.FIREBELLYPRODUCTIONS.NET
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Firebelly offers thirteen 8 pm performances, and three Sunday 2 pm matinees. Group rates available. Special cast/audience “talk back” sessions available on request.

Directed by Guest Director Ali Miller

Featuring: Katy Carkuff, Daniel Eichner, K. Clare Johnson, and Don Kenefick

Production dates are Nov. 1-4, 8-11, 14-18 at 8 pm, Nov.5, 12, and 19 at 2 pm. Tickets: \$15 or \$12 students /seniors 65+

Special rates for students, actors, artists, with ID on Tuesdays and Wednesdays of \$5.00.

Special Senior Sundays \$5.00 for seniors 65+; Group rates for students/ group space available all perform

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