



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Audio Play Adaptation of Tochi Onyebuchi's ZEN AND THE ART OF AN ANDROID BEATDOWN Opens Book-It's Hybrid Season

[Seattle, Wash., October 5, 2021]—Book-It Repertory Theatre (Book-It) is pleased to present **ZEN AND THE ART OF AN ANDROID BEATDOWN**, the first show in its 2021-2022 season of plays, available to stream or download beginning October 12. This searing short story by acclaimed contemporary author **Tochi Onyebuchi** (he/him) delves into the intricacies of identity and who gets to decide what that means for you. Adapted and directed by Book-It favorite, **Gin Hammond** (she/her), this story is the perfect vehicle for her audio drama expertise and creativity.

"I am a theater artist who has developed a love for the marriage of technology and story-telling," says Hammond, "It is particularly important to me to create work which honors the uniqueness and intelligence of each individual."

Onyebuchi's use of androids to expose human truth, and pitfalls, is tailor-made for Hammond's artistry. In the story: Cecile dreams of falling, but her work on the android keeps her grounded. She works to keep him safe, to improve his speed and stamina so that he can continue boxing with minimal risk. But this isn't what he wants. He needs to feel the pain of getting hit to know that he is real, that he is himself and not just a series of recycled chips, code and battered parts. She can't know his heart. She never asks. Without being able to help herself, these efforts to protect him may cost her the secret she holds most dear.

Artistic Director **Gus Menary** (he/him) couldn't wait to add Onyebuchi to Book-It's line-up, saying, "*Zen and the Art of an Android Beatdown* is a hugely exciting story with a deeply philosophical core that asks us one of life's greatest questions: What makes us human? This, in its essence, is a hallmark of great Science Fiction. Like Asimov's *I, Robot* or Philip K. Dicks *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*, we see ourselves reflected in our own creation—a creation that asks us for recognition."

The cast includes **Mandy Rose Nichols** (they/them) as Cecile, **Tim Gouran** (he/him) as Boxer, **Annette Toutonghi** (she/her) as Brianne, **Arlando Smith** (he/him) as Boxers #2 & #4/Bayou Android, **Jesse Calixto** (he/him) as Tom/Referee/Electrocuted Android/Boxer #3 and **Mia Morris** (she/her) as Pilot Android. **Sound design** was created by **Impossible Acoustic**, with **Brendan J. Hogan** (he/him) and **Paul Eric Miller** (he/him) designing. **Rosemary Jones** (she/her) was the rehearsal stage manager. Audio engineering was done by **Benjamin Radin** (he/him) and **Kyle Thompson** (he/him). The Audio Book-It theme music was composed and performed by **Leanna Keith** (she/they).

ABOUT THE SEASON

The 2021-22 season line-up includes ***Zen and the Art of an Android Beatdown***, by **Tochi Onyebuchi**, an audio journey to the heart of identity and connection that will have you on the edge of your seat; ***The Three Musketeers***, an audio adaptation of **Alexandre Dumas'** classic swashbuckling, buddy adventure filled with intrigue and romance; ***Beowulf***, this one-person adaptation by renowned actor **Julian Glover** (*Game of Thrones*, *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*), is a mythic tale that reminds us of the importance of a good story well told; ***Mrs. Caliban***, a delicious combination of social satire and fantasy from author **Rachel Ingalls** and ***The Bonesetter's Daughter***, by celebrated author **Amy Tan**, offers a bittersweet and deeply moving chronicle of war and revenge, through which we are reminded that forgiveness is always closer than it seems.

PROOF OF VACCINATION & MASKING REQUIRED

As part of our 32nd season, presenting both audio plays in 2021 and a return to in-person productions starting January 2022, Book-It Repertory Theatre joins with other area performance groups in requiring masking and proof of vaccinations or negative COVID-19 testing to ensure a safe and successful return of the Seattle-area arts. For entry to any and all performances at The Center Theatre at Seattle Center, patrons, artists, and staff will need to wear a mask and provide proof of vaccination (in a clear and legible format) or negative COVID-19 test (PCR within 48 hours or antigen within 24 hours. Please, do not attend your scheduled performance if anyone living in your household, or to whom you have regular exposure, is awaiting a Covid test within your 48- or 24-hour test period.) **There will be no separate sections for vaccinated/unvaccinated patrons.** Policies will evolve over time in response to the pandemic.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND SINGLE TICKETS

Subscriptions for the 2021-22 season are available online, by phone and by mail-in order form. Subscription packages range from \$122-\$185. Single tickets to the audio dramas are priced at \$20 (*Zen*) and \$25 (*Musketeers*). Single tickets to the in-person productions go on sale beginning November 9. Prices range from \$26-\$50. Students of all ages receive \$20 tickets and must show a valid student ID. Groups of eight or more tickets are eligible for a 10% discount. Pay What You Can performances will also be available; check the website for more information. Purchase tickets at book-it.org or by calling the box office at 206.216.0833. The box office is open Tuesday – Friday, noon to 5pm.

ABOUT BOOK-IT REPERTORY THEATRE

Book-It Repertory Theatre, founded in 1990, is a non-profit organization with a mission to transform great literature into great theatre, through simple and sensitive production, and to inspire its audiences to read.

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS

WHAT: Book-It Repertory Theatre presents ZEN AND THE ART OF AN ANDROID BEATDOWN, a searing short story by acclaimed contemporary author Tochi Onyebuchi that delves into the intricacies of identity and who gets to decide what that means for you.

WHEN: Released Online: October 12, 2021
Available Until: June 30, 2022

WHERE: book-it.org

TICKETS: Single tickets are \$20, \$30 for teachers to use with their classroom. Purchase at book-it.org or by calling the box office at 206.216.0833. The box office is open via phone or email Tuesday through Friday, 12pm – 5pm.

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