

West End Players Guild
Big Theatre in a Small Space



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Just in time for Valentine's Day. . .

West End Players Guild presents the St. Louis premiere of *Based on a Totally True Story*

ST. LOUIS (January 27, 2010) – Ethan Keene is a young man with relationship problems. First and foremost there's his boyfriend, Michael. Ethan and Michael are both writers, but their relationship suffers because, oddly, they aren't all that good at communicating with one another. Then there's his relationship with Mary Ellen, his pushy agent, who wants to micro-manage Ethan's writing as well as his career. And don't forget Ethan's father, who shows up on Ethan's doorstep when his own relationship with Ethan's mother hits the skids.

That's the stuff of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *Based on a Totally True Story*, a quirky kind of love story that will be seen for the first time in St. Louis February 12-21, presented by the West End Players Guild at Union Avenue Christian Church.

Robert A. Mitchell directs the show, assisted by Liz Henning. The talented cast features John Wolbers as Ethan and Michael Perkins as Michael. Sarajane Alverson plays Mary Ellen, Ethan's agent, and Alan McClintock is Ethan's dad. Leo Gregory Stoff rounds out the cast, playing a number of hunky guys who come and go through Ethan's life.

Although the play is not exactly auto-biographical, Aguirre-Sacasa drew heavily on his own experiences for characters and plot points. Like Ethan, Aguirre-Sacasa is a comic book writer who has branched out into writing for the stage and screen. In the play, Ethan has written – and, miracle of miracles, is about to sell -- a screenplay about a man who emerges from the sea to commit murders in order to reclaim the life of a brain-damaged boy. That is a plot borrowed from another Aguirre-Sacasa play, *The Muckle Man*.

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“When Hollywood comes calling, what does a semi-complex, overly literate, comic-book-writing, Synge-inspired, cute, nerdy, enabling guy to do?” asked director Mitchell. “This is that story, and part of the fun is that this story actually IS based on truth: what happened when a character very similar to the playwright picked up his ringing cell and heard the siren call of Hollywood on the other end.”

Based on a Totally True Story will be presented Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m., February 12-21. All performances are at the theatre in the Union Avenue Christian Church, 733 Union Blvd. There is free parking in the lot behind the building (adjacent to the theatre entrance). Tickets are \$18 and are available at the box office or on-line at www.WestEndPlayers.org. Reservations and more information also are available by phone at 314/367-0025.

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It's a Happy Valentine's Day for Ethan (John Wolbers, front left) and Michael (Michael Perkins, front center), who are happy together, more or less, in the West End Players Guild production of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *Based on a Totally True Story*. Mary Ellen (Sarajane Alverson, front right), Ethan's agent, is happy he's happy, because that's when he works best. The Hot L.A. Guy (Leo Gregory Stoff, rear right) isn't so happy, because he'd be happier if he was making Ethan happy instead of Michael. And Ethan's dad (Alan McClintock, rear left) isn't sad or happy -- he's just a little confused by the whole thing. WEPG presents this funny, quirky play Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 p.m. and Sundays at 2:00 p.m. February 12-21 at the Union Avenue Christian Church. For tickets and more information, visit www.WestEndPlayers.org or call 314/367-0025. (PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN LAMB)



Literary agent Mary Ellen (Sarajane Alverson) wants Ethan Keene (John Wolbers) to give her just one more rewrite of his movie script; Ethan thinks Mary Ellen has already given him more than he can handle. It's a scene from the West End Players Guild's production of Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's ***Based on a Totally True Story***, to be presented February 12-21 at the Union Avenue Christian Church, 733 Union Blvd., St. Louis. For tickets and more information, visit www.WestEndPlayers.org or call 314/367-0025. (PHOTO CREDIT: JOHN LAMB)

NOTE TO EDITORS: JPG files of these and other production photos can be obtained by e-mail at wepgnews@westendplayers.org or by phone at 314/504-0844.