



HANK AZARIA PLAYS BILL W. TO MARTIN SHEEN'S DR. BOB IN ONE-NIGHT ONLY FUNDRAISER SUPPORTING GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE AND HAZELDEN

*Full Cast Also Includes Ed Begley Jr., Sharon Lawrence,
JoBeth Williams and Stephanie Zimbalist*

*Reading of Record-Breaking Play Bill W. and Dr. Bob to Feature Post-Show Q&A with
Cast Members and Playwrights Samuel Shem & Janet Surrey*

Monday June 27, 8pm

LOS ANGELES, June 22, 2011 — **Hank Azaria** will play **Bill W.** to **Martin Sheen's Dr. Bob** in a one-night only reading of **Samuel Shem & Janet Surrey's** record-breaking play **Bill W. and Dr. Bob** at the Geffen Playhouse on **Monday, June 27 at 8pm**. The award-winning actors will be sharing the stage with a diverse ensemble including Emmy Award nominee **Ed Begley Jr.** (*Spinal Tap*, *St. Elsewhere*), Broadway actress **Sharon Lawrence** (*Chicago*, *Fiddler on the Roof*), veteran stage and screen actress **JoBeth Williams** (*Poltergeist*, *Kramer vs. Kramer*) and **Stephanie Zimbalist** (*Remington Steele*, *The Story Lady*). A joint fundraiser for the **Geffen Playhouse** and **Hazelden**— a non-profit leader in addiction treatment for more than 60 years – the evening will feature a reading of the play, a post-show discussion with the cast and playwrights as well as a dessert reception. Directed by **Jenny Sullivan**, *Bill W. and Dr. Bob* recounts the story of Bill Wilson and Dr. Robert Smith, Azaria and Sheen respectively, two men whose friendship ultimately led to the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. Together with their wives (Lawrence and Williams), who went on to develop Al-Anon Family Groups, their discoveries have touched and saved countless lives since the program's inception. The reading will take place on **Monday, June 27 at 8pm**.

Bill W. and Dr. Bob debuted in 2007 with an award-winning run Off-Broadway before moving across the country with record-breaking performances in 26 states. In 2012, *Bill W. and Dr. Bob* will return to New York with a new model: the production will be completely supported by tax-exempt donations to Hazelden. The plan is that the profits from these performances will support a national touring company which would travel to college campuses to fight the epidemic of binge drinking and provide scholarships to youth for treatment at Hazelden. The Geffen Playhouse reading marks the kick-off of this long-term endeavor.

"In 1986, as doctors working with alcoholics and addicts, my wife and I stumbled across this astonishing story – a story not just about two drunks who were going to die and found a way, together, to live, but more – a great American success story about the suffering of isolation and the healing power of good connection," said playwright Samuel Shem. "Our dream – and our service – has been to find a way to run this show in perpetuity so it becomes an icon in New York, and then to use the revenues for a national college tour to combat binge drinking. Now, thanks to Hazelden and the Geffen, our dream is about to come true. Our gratitude to you all."

Dr. Samuel Shem and Dr. Janet Surrey, spouses, have been on the faculty of Harvard Medical School for many years and co-authored *We Have to Talk: Healing Dialogues Between Women and Men*. Shem is the author of many novels, including the medical classic *The House of God* and *The Spirit of the Place*.

Tickets to this one-night only reading range from \$75 to \$250 and include the reading, Q&A and post-show reception with desserts provided by Gotta Have S'More and beverages provided by Peet's Coffee & Tea. A limited number of VIP tickets include prime orchestra seating as well as an exclusive meet-and-greet with the actors and playwrights.

BILL W. & DR. BOB

Written by: Samuel Shem & Janet Surrey

Directed by: Jenny Sullivan

Monday, June 27, 2011, 8pm

Tickets: \$75 - \$250

CAST

Hank Azaria	Bill W.
Ed Begley Jr.	Man
Sharon Lawrence	Lois
Martin Sheen	Dr. Bob
JoBeth Williams	Anne
Stephanie Zimbalist	Woman

Please note:

This work does not imply affiliation with or endorsement by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

ABOUT THE GEFFEN PLAYHOUSE

The Geffen Playhouse has been a hub of the Los Angeles theater scene since opening its doors in 1995. Noted for its intimacy and celebrated for its world-renowned mix of classic and contemporary plays, provocative new works and musicals, the Geffen Playhouse continues to present a body of work that has garnered national recognition. Named in honor of entertainment mogul and philanthropist David Geffen, who made the initial donation to the theater, the company is helmed by Producing Director and President of the Board Gilbert Cates, Artistic Director Randall Arney, Managing Director Ken Novice and Chairman of the Board Frank Mancuso. Proudly associated with UCLA, the Geffen Playhouse welcomes an audience of more than 130,000 each year, and maintains an extensive education and outreach program, designed to engage young people and the community at large in the arts. For more information, please visit geffenplayhouse.com.

ABOUT HAZELDEN

Hazelden, a national nonprofit organization founded in 1949, helps people reclaim their lives from the disease of addiction. Built on decades of knowledge and experience, Hazelden offers a comprehensive approach to addiction that addresses the full range of patient, family, and professional needs, including substance abuse treatment and continuing care for youth and adults, research, higher education, public education and advocacy, and publishing. It has facilities in Minnesota, Oregon, Illinois, New York, and Florida. Learn more at www.hazelden.org. For more information about the journey of *Bill W. and Dr. Bob* please visit www.billwanddrbob.com.

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