



presents

A Case for the Existence of God

by Samuel D. Hunter

October 13 – November 5, 2023

Directed by **Charlie Flynn-McIver**

Starring

Philip Kershaw*

Ben Mackel*

Production Stage Manager Carrie Day

Scenic Design Julie K. Ross

Lighting Design CJ Barnwell

Costume Design Casey Watkins

Props Artist Sylvia J. Pierce

Sound Design Charlie Flynn-McIver

*“A Case for the Existence of God” is presented by arrangement with
Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com*

*World Premiere produced by Signature Theatre, New York City
Paige Evans, Artistic Director; Tim McClimon Interim Executive Director*

*A Case for the Existence of God was additionally developed at the
2020 Ojai Playwrights Conference; Robert Egan, Artistic Director/Producer.*

*A workshop production of A Case for the Existence of God, directed by Paul Lazar,
was presented in Ketchum, Idaho by Field Daze, Sawtooth Productions,
the Argyros, and Laughing Stock Theater.*

*A Case for the Existence of God was also developed through
a residency at SPACE on Ryder Farm.*

***Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers
in the United States appearing under a Small Professional Theatre SPT Tier 4 Contract**

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Keith Philip Kershaw*

Ryan Ben Mackel*

**This play is performed in one act
with no intermission.**

SETTING

A cubicle inside a small business
in Twin Falls, Idaho.



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Cast Bios

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Philip Kershaw* (*Keith*)



Philip Kershaw (Keith) is a multi-disciplinary artist who graduated from the University of Houston MFA Acting program after earning his undergraduate degrees at the University of Maryland, College Park. He is incredibly honored to be back at North Carolina Stage Company after appearing in *Be Here Now* last season. He has worked on regional productions for Peterborough Players, ZACH Theatre, Theatre Under the Stars, Rec Room Arts, Lean Ensemble Theater, the Houston Shakespeare Festival, A.D. Players, Adventure Theatre MTC, The Wheel Theatre Company, Unity Theatre, Dirt Dogs Theatre Co., The Ensemble Theatre, Penobscot Theatre Company, and Round House Theatre.

Ben Mackel* (*Ryan*)



Ben Mackel is an actor, composer, and singer/songwriter living in Asheville, NC. As an actor, he's worked regionally in theatre & film including Flat Rock Playhouse, Florida Studio Theatre, and as an 8 year resident company member at Barter Theatre. Previous shows at NC Stage company include *Handle With Care*, *All Is Calm*, *Frost/Nixon*, and *King Mackerel And The Blues Are Running*. As a composer, he's had musicals produced at Barter Theatre, South Carolina Children's Theatre, Flat Rock Playhouse, HART, and Dock Street Theatre. As a singer/songwriter, he's toured everywhere from local breweries to Lincoln Center in NYC with his harmony driven string band, *The Blue Eyed Bettys*. He also has a solo project known as *Threadbare*. More information and social media links at theblueeyedbettys.com and threadbaresongs.com

Playwright Bio

Samuel D. Hunter grew up in Moscow, Idaho and lives in New York City. He is the recipient of a 2014 MacArthur “Genius Grant” Fellowship for his work as a playwright. His full-length plays include *The Whale* (Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Play, GLAAD Media Award, Drama League and Outer Critics Circle nominations for Best Play), *A Case for the Existence of God* (New



York Drama Critics’ Circle Award for Best Play), *A Bright New Boise* (Obie Award, Drama Desk nomination for Best Play), *Greater Clements* (Drama Desk nomination for Best Play, Outer Critics Circle Honoree), *Lewiston/Clarkston* (Drama Desk nomination for Best Play), *The Few*, *A Great Wilderness*, *Rest*, *Pocatello*, *The Healing* and *The Harvest*, among others. A film version of *The Whale*, directed by Darren Aronofsky and starring

Brendan Fraser, is set to be released by A24 Films. He is the recipient of a 2012 Whiting Writers Award and an honorary doctorate from the University of Idaho. His work has been produced off-Broadway in New York City by Lincoln Center Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Signature Theatre, Page 73 Productions, Clubbed Thumb and Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre. Elsewhere, his work has been produced by Theatre Royal Bath, Dallas Theatre Center, Seattle Rep, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, South Coast Rep, and Victory Gardens, among others. Two published anthologies of his work are available from TCG Books, and a third is forthcoming. He is a member of New Dramatists and a current Resident Playwright at the Signature Theatre in New York City. He holds degrees in playwriting from NYU, The Iowa Playwrights Workshop, and Juilliard.

Production Bios

Charlie Flynn-McIver (*Director*) is the artistic director and co-founder, with his wife, Angie Flynn-McIver, of NC Stage. He has appeared most recently in *Jeeves Intervenes*, *A Doll's House Part 2*, and *Stones in His Pockets* as well as NC Stage's world premieres of *Someone Else* and *Stalking the Bogeyman*. At Flat Rock Playhouse, he appeared in *The Odd Couple*, *12 Angry Men* and *The 39 Steps*. Some NC Stage credits include: *Hamlet*, *Loot*, *Art*, *All in the Timing*, *Chesapeake*, and *Macbeth*. National tour: *Wit* with Judith Light. Off Broadway: *Ice Island*, *the Wait for Shackleton*. Directing credits for NC Stage include: *The Book Club Play*, *The Understudy*, *R. Buckminster Fuller: The History (and Mystery) of the Universe*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Annapurna*, *4000 Miles*, *All is Calm*, *Rapture Blister Burn*, and *Other Desert Cities*. Charlie has a Bachelor of Music in Music Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory of Music and an MFA in acting from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Carrie Day* (*Production Stage Manager*) has been Production Manager at NC Stage Company for the past 5 years. She is really enjoying the process with everyone on *A Case for the Existence of God!* She has spent most of her life in theatre as a professional dancer, electrician, stagehand, and rigger, and is thrilled that this is how she gets to spend her time. Carrie has all the love and special thanks for her daughter, Catherine, who has been very patient while her mom is away in long rehearsals. As Production Manager, she is grateful for the team of people surrounding her.

Julie K. Ross (*Scenic Design*) is a Florida State University grad that is based out of Asheville, NC. When she's not chasing her toddler, Jacob, around, Julie continues to paint and design in every capacity she can find. Julie is thrilled to be working with the NC Stage team again. Past NC Stage productions include: *The Roommate*, *Jeeves Intervenes*, and *Vanya Sonia Masha and Spike*. When she's not designing sets for the theater, she stays busy painting amusement parks, commercial murals and signage and residential faux finishes. You've probably seen her work at Dollywood (Wildwood Grove), Bass Pro Shops or the new Melting Pot Social. Most recently she painted the new Big Bear Mountain that opened this spring at Dollywood. You can see more examples of her work at www.juliekross.com.

CJ Barnwell [he/him] (*Lighting Design*) designs lighting and visual media for theatre and live events around the country. Starting with *All is Calm* in December 2015, CJ has designed lighting and visual media for a number of shows at NC Stage including *Jeeves Intervenes* (both times!), *Brave New World*, *Grounded*, and *Curvy Widow*. Regionally, CJ has designed a number of shows including *West Side Story*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *9 to 5*, and *South Pacific* at Flat Rock Playhouse in Flat Rock, NC; and most recently *Steel Magnolias*, *Ring of Fire*, and *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill* for North Carolina Theatre in Raleigh, NC. Other recent designs include projections for *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity*, and *Mountaintop* at TheatreSquared in Fayetteville, AK; and *How I Learned What I Learned* by August Wilson at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival. See his other current and upcoming designs at www.CJLights.com.

PRODUCTION BIOS

Casey Watkins (*Costume Design*) A native of Wilmington, NC, Casey Watkins received her BA from NC State University and her MFA in Costume Design from Southern Illinois University. She has worked, designed and taught at various places such as North Carolina Theatre, Porthouse Theatre, Monomoy Theatre, McLeod Summer Playhouse, Valdosta State University, and Texas A&M University Commerce. Her academic work concentrates on the intersection of clothing, culture, and performance, decolonizing theatre practices and pedagogy, and interdisciplinary collaboration. She is currently an assistant professor at UNC Asheville.

Sylvia J. Pierce (*Props Artist*) is a life-long theatre enthusiast playing one of Ole King Cole's fiddlers at age 4. She pursued technical theatre in grad school, deciding she'd rather be a techie than a conceptual designer. Starting out professionally in Cambridge, MA in 1978, she worked her way South, through New York City, Atlanta and all over the US and abroad for the next two decades. Along the way she built and managed shows for theatre and broadcast television events, joined IATSE Local #4, built lots of sets, owned two companies, went on the road, and finally moved slightly north to Asheville. Finding that the mountains felt like home, she finally gave up her nomadic lifestyle and settled down. Now, she works and builds for local theatre companies and is enjoying this phase of her career.

Actors' Equity Association (*Equity*), founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks

Production Crew

Production Manager Carrie Day

Head Carpenter Aaron Shiver

Props Assistant Connor Harmsworth

Master Electrician Jason Williams

Build Assist Rafael Hernandez

Special Thanks to:

Jacob Howard for the use of his baby monitor and toy

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