

WORD for WORD

25th Anniversary Season

Word for Word <http://www.zspace.org/aboutwordforword/>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Word for Word Presents

Anniversary! Stories by Tobias Wolff and George Saunders:

Deep Kiss and Victory Lap

Directed by Joel Mullennix and Delia MacDougall

August 8 - September 2

Press Night Saturday August 11, 8pm (Preview Aug 8, 9 & 10)

Z Space Main Stage

450 Florida St. San Francisco

Word for Word celebrates this 25th season with a rare production “Anniversary! Stories by Tobias Wolff and George Saunders featuring Wolff’s “Deep Kiss” and Saunders’ “Victory Lap,” works by two of the companies favorite authors, directed by Joel Mullennix and Delia MacDougall. “Anniversary! Stories by Tobias Wolff and George Saunders opens with a press night Saturday August 11, 8pm (Preview Aug 8, 9 & 10) running through September 2 at Z Space Main Stage in San Francisco’s Mission/SOMA district. **On August 15th, “An Evening With Tobias Wolff and George Saunders” a post-show event with Tobias Wolff and George Saunders in conversation with Z Space Playwright-in-Residence Peter Nachtrieb.**

Tobias Wolff and George Saunders are brilliant performers in the short story form, and the company feels lucky to be staging their stories for its 25th Anniversary. Over the past quarter century, Word for Word has had the pleasure and the honor to work with some of the best writers of all time.

Two stories, by two supreme short story writers, are linked by their themes of adolescence and youthful longing. Tobias Wolff’s “Deep Kiss” captures yearning adolescence: this is Joe Reed’s story of first love which nearly breaks him, and resonates into his middle age. *“A stand out...the painful genius of Tobias Wolff’s storytelling”*--New York Times. “Victory Lap” shows us two awkward teens and one alarming bully, enhanced by Saunders great sense of voice and tone. Humor develops into great menace, with a soul-saving ending. *“Saunders might have achieved perfection...the architecture of this story is a marvel”*--Los Angeles Review of Books

“This year, we’re thrilled to return to the short story master, Tobias Wolff, who gave us some of our earliest hits: ‘Bullet in the Brain,’ ‘In the Garden of the North American Martyrs,’ and ‘Firelight,’ to name a few. We are excited to be performing his heartbreaking ‘Deep Kiss,’ so filled with longing. Paired with the inimitable George Saunders’ astoundingly horrific and hilarious ‘Victory Lap,’ we offer two moving, deftly crafted stories. Both deal with moral choice and the loss of innocence; both remind of us our humanity, and our need for connection.” Susan Harloe and Joanne Winter co artistic directors Word For Word.

Tobias Wolff (author, "Deep Kiss") Tobias Wolff is an American short story writer, memoirist, and novelist. He received BA in English Language and Literature at Oxford University, an MA at Oxon, and an MA at Stanford University. He is known for his short stories and his memoirs, particularly *This Boy's Life: A Memoir* (1989, winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Award) and *In Pharaoh's Army: Memories of the Lost War* (1994). Other works include *The Barracks Thief* (PEN/Faulkner Award), *Back in the World*, *In the Garden of the North American Martyrs*, *The Night In Question*, *Our Story Begins: New and Selected Stories* (The Story Prize), and *Old School*. His work has been anthologized in many, many collections, and published in *The New Yorker*, among other magazines. Other awards include the PEN/Malamud Award for Excellence in Short Fiction, the Stone Award for Lifetime Literary Achievement, The Whiting Award for Fiction and Nonfiction, the Rea Award for Excellence in the Short Story. In 2015, Tobias Wolff received a National Medal of Arts from President Barack Obama.

George Saunders (author, "Victory Lap") George Saunders studied under Tobias Wolff in the graduate program in creative writing at Syracuse University. His work includes the short-story collections *CivilWarLand in Bad Decline* (a finalist for the 1996 PEN/Hemingway Award), "*Pastoralia*," *In Persuasion Nation* (a finalist for the Story Prize), *Tenth of December* (a finalist for the National Book Award and recipient of the Folio Prize), *Congratulations, By the Way: Some Thoughts on Kindness*, and *Lincoln in the Bardo: A Novel* (winner of the Man Booker Prize). Saunders has won prizes for his best-selling children's book, *The Very Persistent Gappers of Frip*, and for a book of essays entitled *The Braindead Megaphone*, and he has been featured in the "O. Henry Prize Stories," "Best American Short Stories," "Best American Nonrequired Reading," "Best American Travel Writing," and "Year's Best Science Fiction and Fantasy" anthologies. Named by *The New Yorker* one of the best American writers under the age of forty in 1999, Saunders has received fellowships from the MacArthur Foundation, the Lannan Foundation, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Delia MacDougall (Director "Victory Lap") is an actor, director and Charter Member of Word for Word. Delia has directed a number of productions for the company including: *Winesburg, Ohio* and *In Friendship* (Critics Circle Award winners for best production), *Oil! The Ride* (Critics Circle Nomination for Best production), *Immortal Heart*, *Mrs. Dalloway's Party*, *The Confessions of Madame Psyche*, and *The Falling Girl*. She has also directed for ACT, Shotgun Players, Marin Shakespeare Company, The Harbor Theater, SFSU, and a number of productions for Campo Santo. Delia is happy to be celebrating Word for Words 25 years with Word for Word's amazing women of the charter group, and with Joel Mullennix with whom she created Industrial Strength Productions years before the birth of Word for Word. To lifelong friends and the creation of art; I am so very thankful.

Joel Mullennix (Director, "Deep Kiss")

Joel Mullennix has directed a number of Word For Word's most successful productions, including "Olive Kitteridge", by Elizabeth Strout, *More Stories by Tobias Wolff*, *Stories by Alice Munro*, and "Which Is More Than I Can Say About Some People" by Lorrie Moore. Additionally, he directed *Acid Test* by Lynne Kaufman, the long running one man show starring Warren David Keith; and *Family Alchemy*, featuring the works of Bernard Malamud and Grace Paley, for A Traveling Jewish Theatre. Joel has also directed *A View From the Bridge*; *The Cherry Orchard*; *Our Lady of 121st Street*, by Stephen Adly Giurgis; *Sons of the Prophet* by Steven Karam; and just directed *Romeo and Juliet* at Chabot College for the 2nd time. He is thrilled to be working with these truly great writers and with the wonderful Delia MacDougall.

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CALENDAR EDITORS PEASE NOTE:

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“Deep Kiss” and “Victory Lap”

Directed by Joel Mullennix and Delia MacDougall

August 8 - September 2

Press Night Saturday August 11, 8pm (Preview Aug 8, 9 & 10)

Sat. 8 PM and Sun. 3 PM

At: Z Space Main Stage 450 Florida St. San Francisco

Performances; Wednesday-Thursday 7 pm, Friday-Saturday 8 pm, Sunday 3 pm

Ticket prices: Tickets \$20-50. with no additional fees. Tickets:415-626-0453 or at www.zspace.org

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