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## **WORLD PREMIERE OF JASON GROTE'S *CIVILIZATION (ALL YOU CAN EAT)* BEGINS PERFORMANCES AT WOOLLY MAMMOTH THEATRE COMPANY FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

**SARAH MARSHALL STARS AS A TALKING PIG IN THIS VAUDEVILLIAN ROMP OF CORRUPTION, CONSUMPTION, AND AMERICAN ENTERPRISE TO BE DIRECTED BY HOWARD SHALWITZ**

(Washington, DC) – Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company is proud to present the World Premiere of *Civilization (all you can eat)* written by **Jason Grote** and directed by Artistic Director **Howard Shalwitz**. This wicked satire follows a group of six ambitious Americans on a quest for success at the dawn of the Obama age— and the price they must pay to achieve it. *Civilization (all you can eat)* runs February 13–March 11; Wednesdays–Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 3pm and 8pm, and Sundays at 2pm and 7pm.

“As a director, I love plays that don’t just tell a story, but that give me a chance to create a truly original theatrical event,” says Artistic Director **Howard Shalwitz**. “**Jason Grote’s** *Civilization (all you can eat)*—with its interweaving narratives, bizarre dance episodes, and talking pig—is a veritable director’s playground!”

Shalwitz continues, “The play looks back at our previous Presidential election cycle: the summer of 2008, just as the financial crisis was unraveling and Sarah Palin was announced as John McCain’s running mate. In a series of vivid character portraits, playwright **Jason Grote** captures the nation’s mounting anxiety about questions of race, about ‘making it’ in a hostile economic environment, and about the sustainability of American capitalism.”

**Jason Grote**, whose *Maria/Stuart* had its world premiere at Woolly Mammoth, is currently a writer for the NBC/Dreamworks show “Smash,” premiering February 6<sup>th</sup>, about the making of a Broadway musical based on the life of Marilyn Monroe.

*Civilization (all you can eat)* was originally commissioned by Clubbed Thumb in New York City and was developed with support from Clubbed Thumb, the Denver Center, Sundance Theatre Lab, and Towson University. It will feature Company Members **Daniel Escobar** (*She Stoops to Comedy, Full Circle*), **Naomi Jacobson** (*Full Circle, Maria/Stuart*), and **Sarah Marshall** (*In the Next Room or the vibrator play, Full Circle*) with **JaBen Early**, **Alice Gibson** (*Fever/Dream*), **Tia James**, **Sean Meehan** (*Bootycandy*), **Casie Platt** (*Current Nobody*), and **Jenna Sokolowski** (*Antebellum, She Stoops to Comedy*).

*Civilization (all you can eat)* will feature set design by **Daniel Ettinger**, costume design by **Valerie St. Pierre Smith**, lighting design by Company Member **Colin K. Bills**, sound design by **Veronika Vorel**, and video design by **Aaron Fisher**.

***Civilization (all you can eat)***

Written by Jason Grote

Directed by Howard Shalwitz

**CAST**

Big Hog.....	Sarah Marshall**+
Zoe.....	Tia James+
Carol.....	Naomi Jacobson**+
David.....	Daniel Escobar**+
Mike.....	Sean Meehan+
Jade.....	Casie Platt+
Karen.....	Jenna Sokolowski+
George Washington/Ensemble.....	Alice Gibson
Veterinarian/Ensemble.....	JaBen Early

**CREATIVE TEAM**

Playwright.....	Jason Grote
Director.....	Howard Shalwitz
Dance Choreographer.....	Diane Coburn Bruning
Set Designer.....	Daniel Ettinger
Costume Designer.....	Valerie St. Pierre Smith
Lighting Designer.....	Colin K. Bills**
Sound Designer.....	Veronika Vorel
Video Designer.....	Aaron Fisher
Properties.....	Jennifer Sheetz
Dramaturg.....	Miriam Weisfeld

\*\* Denotes a Woolly Company Member

+ Denotes Member, Actors' Equity Association

***Civilization (all you can eat)*** Catering Sponsor: RSVP Catering

***Civilization (all you can eat)*** Restaurant Sponsor: Cedar

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Jason Grote** is a playwright and television writer based in Brooklyn. Previously at Woolly Mammoth: the world premiere of *Maria/Stuart* in 2008, directed by Pam MacKinnon. Other DC area productions include *1001* and *This Storm Is What We Call Progress* at Rorschach Theater. Other plays include *Hamilton Township*, *Darwin's Challenge*, and *Box Americana*. Jason is a writer for the NBC/Dreamworks show "Smash," created by Steven Spielberg and Theresa Rebeck, with music by Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman. Current projects include a commission from ACT/Seattle about Stalin and Shostakovich and a musical adaptation of *1001* with composer Marisa Michelson. His work has been produced and developed with Sundance, Playwrights Horizons, The O'Neill, The Denver Center, Theater Bielefeld (Germany), Clubbed Thumb, The Civilians, The Foundry, Mass MoCA, The Luminato Festival (Canada), The Glej Theater (Slovenia), Salvage Vanguard, HERE, The Contemporary American Theater Festival, Baltimore CenterSTAGE, Collaboraction, and elsewhere. He was the 2006 P73 Playwriting Fellow.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

**Howard Shalwitz** was co-founder of Woolly Mammoth and has been the visionary force behind the company for 32 seasons, steering the theatre's adventurous play selection, guiding the development and production of dozens of new works, and building a renowned acting company—leading Woolly Mammoth to be the center of groundbreaking theatre in Washington.

Howard received the 2011 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Director for *Clybourne Park*, and has received multiple Helen Hayes nominations as both a director and an actor. At Woolly Howard has directed the world premieres of *Fever/Dream*, *Big Death and Little Death*, along with *She Stoops to Comedy*, *Measure for Pleasure*, and *The Faculty Room*. He has directed for major New York and regional companies including New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, Arena Stage, Studio Arena, Milwaukee Rep, A Contemporary Theatre, and the Kennedy Center. He was recently recognized for Distinguished Service to the Humanities by the Humanities Council of Washington DC, received the 2005 Founders Award from the Cultural Alliance of Greater Washington, and was selected by *Washingtonian Magazine* as a 1999 "Washingtonian of the Year."

## BLOGS, PODCASTS, AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Throughout the run of ***Civilization (all you can eat)***, Woolly will produce a series of blogs and podcasts on everything from Occupy DC, to our civilization's best accomplishments, to viral videos and internet memes. The Woolly Blog can be found at [woollymammothblog.com](http://woollymammothblog.com), and all Radio Woolly podcasts are available for download on iTunes.

Follow the conversation on social media:

[Facebook.com/woollymammothtc](https://www.facebook.com/woollymammothtc)

[Twitter.com/woollymammothtc](https://twitter.com/woollymammothtc), show hashtag: **#WoollyCIV**

Social media initiatives for ***Civilization (all you can eat)*** include the inaugural "Tweet Up," in which selected participants will be invited to attend the first rehearsal of ***Civilization (all you can eat)***, a technical rehearsal, and the final dress rehearsal. Tweet Up participants are invited to tweet their thoughts and reactions to these events using the show's hashtag **#WoollyCIV**.

## CONNECTIVITY EVENTS

### Lobby Design

As part of the theatre's continuing Connectivity efforts, audiences will be encouraged to interact with us in the following two ways:

#### **Civilization – What makes it great?**

##### *Upper Lobby*

Are you Team Ancient Rome or Modern Sweden? We've asked experts (and non-experts) from across DC to name the greatest civilization ever. When you arrive at Woolly, you will be invited to compare each civilization's stats and vote for the best via text, email, Facebook, or Twitter. We'll tally your votes after each performance to determine which civilizations advance to the next round. You can also fill out a bracket à la NCAA March Madness to predict who will make the final showdown and be named "greatest civilization ever." Accurately predict the winner and receive a fabulous grand prize!

#### **(all you can eat) – How much is too much?**

##### *Lower Lobby*

In our lower lobby, we'll be asking our patrons the question, "How much is too much?" by tempting them with a series of tantalizing prizes...and the compromising tasks that must be completed in order to obtain them. Would you corrupt yourself (or an unwitting fellow audience member) in order to get what you want?

### Post Show Discussions

We will be bringing together several members of the DC community with varying perspectives to spark our reflections on the questions, "Is there a viable alternative to capitalism?" and "Who is Big Hog?" These discussions will be 20-30 minutes long and take place directly following the performance. Expected guests include representatives from Occupy DC, the Patriotic Millionaires for Fiscal Strength, and *The Washington Post*—to be announced within the coming month.

Post-show conversations will include two Audience Exchanges and one Mammoth Forum:

**Wednesday, February 22** following the 8pm performance:

Audience Exchange: Each invited guest joins a Woolly facilitator on stage immediately after a performance to jump-start an audience-wide conversation by sharing their personal reflections on the show and its themes.

**Sunday, February 26** following the 2pm performance:

Mammoth Forum: Town-hall style discussion featuring a panel of guests who will share their insights and explore a topic the production examines.

**Thursday, March 1** following the 8pm performance:

Audience Exchange: Each invited guest joins a Woolly facilitator on stage immediately after a performance to jump-start an audience-wide conversation by sharing their personal reflections on the show and its themes.

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE**

***Civilization (all you can eat)*** runs February 13–March 11; Wednesdays–Fridays at 8pm, Saturdays at 3pm and 8pm, and Sundays at 2pm and 7pm. \*Sunday, February 19 at 7pm (no 2pm performance).

**There will be a Pay-What-You-Can performance on Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup> at 8pm. Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> is a Valentine's Day Cheap Date Night at 8pm.**

### **TICKETS**

Tickets for ***Civilization (all you can eat)*** start at \$30 and can be purchased through the Woolly Mammoth Box Office at 202-393-3939, online at [www.woollymammoth.net](http://www.woollymammoth.net), or in person at the Box Office located at 641 D Street, NW (7<sup>th</sup> & D). For directions and parking information, please visit [www.woollymammoth.net](http://www.woollymammoth.net).

### **ABOUT WOOLLY**

Now in its 32nd Season, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company continues to hold its place at the leading edge of American theatre. Acknowledged as "the hottest theatre company in town" (*The Washington Post*), "known for its productions of innovative new plays" (*The New York Times*), Woolly Mammoth is a national leader in the development of new plays, and one of the best known and most influential midsizedtheatres in America.

Woolly's 32nd Season features five works that relate to the question, "Does our civilization have an expiration date?" They include Samuel D. Hunter's *A Bright New Boise* (Oct 10-Nov 13), *The Second*

City's *Spoiler Alert: Everybody Dies* (Dec 6-Jan 8), Jason Grote's ***Civilization (all you can eat)*** (Feb 13-Mar 11), Joey Arias and Basil Twist's *Arias with a Twist\** (Apr 4-May 6), and Anne Washburn's *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (May 28-July 1).

\*This tour of Basil Twist is made possible by a grant from the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation with support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

[www.woollymammoth.net](http://www.woollymammoth.net)

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