

For immediate release

What I Heard About Iraq

To Make European Premiere at Edinburgh Fringe

9 June 2006 (New York, NY) - Following a twice-extended sold-out run in Los Angeles, ***What I Heard About Iraq***, the hard-hitting documentary play based on **Eliot Weinberger's** controversial London Review of Books article, comes to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. **Running daily at 14.20 (1 hr) from August 2nd – 28th (except 9th & 16th) at the Pleasance Courtyard (Venue 33).**

Adapted for the stage by LA Times Critics Award and PEN Center USA Award-winning writer and director, **Simon Levy**, *WIHA!* employs direct quotes from politicians, military chiefs, soldiers, and Iraqi citizens to reveal the unfolding human story behind the US led invasion of Iraq. In Levy's words, the play is "neither fiction nor speculation; it takes audiences into the war and confronts them with the human drama, the human toll. It is not about history, or about something going on 'over there.'" It is about what's going on right now, and how people worldwide are (and are not) reacting to it.

Critics have called the play "An often stunning distillation of American hubris and denial, *What I Heard About Iraq* should be viewed with an open mind, regardless of political affiliation." (*LA Times*), "Extraordinary and spine-chilling" (*Variety*), and "A must-see event" (*American Radio Network*). Critics' pick for seven major LA publications and radio stations throughout its run, *WIHA!* has also been nominated for Best Adaptation, (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards), and was the recipient of three *Back Stage West* 2005 Critics' List awards.

The Edinburgh premiere, under the direction of **Hannah Eidinow**, (2004 Fringe First, *Gone*) will feature an international cast of five. The production will also incorporate stunning photos by award-winning photojournalists, both "embedded and "unembedded," who captured extraordinary images on the ground in Iraq, many of which have never appeared in print.

First appearing on February 3, 2005 in The London Review of Books, Weinberger's article quickly spread from inbox to inbox through the Internet, and has appeared on well over 100,000 websites. Since that time, it has continued to spark accolades and controversy for its searing depiction of the war in Iraq, not through editorial commentary or opinion, but by using only fully-verifiable facts and quotes from those involved. The text of *WIHA!* has been published as a stand-alone paperback by Verso Books, and has been translated into at least a dozen languages, including Arabic. Of the work, The Guardian said "Every war has its antiwar classic, and here is Iraq's."

What I Heard About Iraq is a co-production of James Seabright for Festival Highlights, Paul Lucas Productions, The Fountain Theatre, and Skulduggery Theatre Company.

What I Heard About Iraq

Directed by **Hannah Eidinow**

At **Pleasance Courtyard (Venue 33)** 60 The Pleasance, Edinburgh EH8 9TJ (sub-venue: Above)
2 – 28 August 2006 (except 9/8 and 16/8) at **14.20** (1 hour)

Tickets £8.50 (£7 concs) Mondays through Thursdays, **£9.50 (£8 concs)** Fridays through Sundays.
Preview performances 2/8 – 5/8 are **£5.00**, with a **Two For One offer** on 6/8 and 7/8.

For more information, contact Paul Lucas Productions at press@paullucasproductions.com, or by telephone at Tel. 1.646.286.3625 or Kat Portman at James Seabright Productions at 0 207 439 1173. During August, please call 07756 050 061. For more information and an EPK, visit www.festivalhighlights.com or www.paullucasproductions.com.