

# CATF Readings to Raise Funds

The Contemporary American Theater Festival (CATF), is hosting a pair of events featuring special readings and discussion with returning playwrights Johnna Adams and Michael Weller.

The events are being held as fundraising opportunities for CATF's 25th season.

Adams produced the world premiere of her play "Gidion's Knot" in 2012 and Weller's play "Fifty Words," was performed during the festival's 2009 season.

This summer both playwrights will return with new work. Weller's 2015 play is "The Full Catastrophe."

Adams discussed her new play, "World Builders," in an interview Tuesday.

"It's a quirky love story," she said.

A departure from the dark and controversial "Gidion's Knot," the unconventional comedy addresses both the serious subject of mental illness and the emotional experience of falling love.

Set in a psychiatric institute, the play follows two participants in a clinical drug study designed to rid them of the elaborate delusional worlds they create inside their heads.

"They each have these elaborate fantasy worlds that they like to retreat to.. as the pills start to work, they start to fall in love," Adams said.

Adams said one theme explored in the play is whether or not even the mentally ill should be able to define their own happiness.

"We definitely want to 'cure' people," Adams said.

Adams, who resides in New York, working full time in theater said she loves CATF because even the big apple's thriving art and theater community can't quite stake up to the environment the local festival creates each summer.

"It's nothing compared to the CATF experience," she said.

"It (CATF) just makes theater vital and important in a way it isn't anywhere else," she said.

Adams described her first go-round with CATF as a "career highlight."

Following its premiere in 2012, her play went on to 30 regional productions and won numerous awards including a citation from the American Theater Critics Association.

"I think CATF had a lot to do with the success," she said.

Adams said she looks forward to being apart of the company again this summer and seeing the work of her fellow playwrights.

"It's a stellar line up," she said.

"I think it's going to be a great festival," she said.

In addition to scene readings the events will include guided discussion, with CATF Producing Director Ed Herendeen serving as moderator.

Audience members will have a chance to speak directly with the playwrights and learn more about the plays first hand.

The first event will be held Saturday, April 18 at 7 p.m. The second will be held May 2, at 7 p.m. Cost for each is \$50. To find more information and to purchase tickets visit the CATF web site at [catf.org](http://catf.org).