

**CONTACT:**

Madeline Long, 703.600.9521  
[madeline@livewirechicago.com](mailto:madeline@livewirechicago.com)

Joshua Weinstein, 773.885.6033  
[joshua@livewirechicago.com](mailto:joshua@livewirechicago.com)



**LIVEWIRE CHICAGO THEATRE PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE  
“LOWER DEBT” MARCH 5 – APRIL 4 AT THE VIADUCT**

Following the success of the “Lower Debt” showcase at the DCA’s INCUBATOR series LiveWire mounts a fully realized production at the Viaduct this spring

CHICAGO – LiveWire Chicago Theatre proudly presents the world premiere production of “**Lower Debt**” developed by the LiveWire Collective, written by Executive Director Joshua Aaron Weinstein and directed by Rebekah Scallet. “Lower Debt” tells the story of an everyman who leaves his white-collar existence, and ends up in a tent city among residents all searching for another way to live. Set in the uncertain economic climate at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, this ensemble-based multimedia play explores the themes of community, ownership, loss and hope while asking the question, “How did we end up here?”

LiveWire presents "Lower Debt" at the Viaduct, 3111 N. Western Ave., March 5 - April 4, Thu-Sat at 7:30 p.m., Sun at 3 p.m. A pay-what-you-can preview performance will take place Friday, March 5. **Press night is Saturday, March 6 at 7:30 p.m.**

Tickets are currently on sale and can be purchased online through the Viaduct Theatre’s website, [viaducttheatre.com](http://viaducttheatre.com), by calling the Viaduct’s box office 312.533.4666 or in person at the Viaduct Box Office, 3111 N. Western Ave.

Tickets are \$12. Industry and senior tickets available for \$10. Advance tickets are \$8 if purchased before March 5 with discount code ‘encampment.’ For more information about the production, visit [livewirechicago.com](http://livewirechicago.com).

LiveWire partners with the **Greater Chicago Food Depository** for the run of “Lower Debt.” Attendees who bring a canned good when they attend a performance receive \$1 off their admission price. Attendees who bring two or more canned goods receive \$2 off their admission price. This offer only applies to tickets purchased in-person at the box office. The Greater Chicago Food Depository, Chicago’s food bank, is a nonprofit food distribution and training center providing food for hungry people while striving to end hunger in our community.

LiveWire’s 2009/2010 season has been dedicated to the development of “Lower Debt.” The original work was workshopped as part of the Department of Cultural Affairs’ (DCA) INCUBATOR Series this fall. Over the course of three weeks, the LiveWire Collective collaborated on the script, along with invited guest artists, and then presented a captivating showcase of “Lower Debt” to the public October 19.

“LiveWire captivates audience with a modern Everyman tale: After a well-paced, thoughtful and language filled hour and fifteen minutes, the audience readily stayed in their seats to talk about what they had just seen, and to offer feedback about the changes that could be made before LiveWire launches a fully produced version,” shared the DCA staff on the DCA Theater Blog.

Incorporating feedback from this audience and the artists involved, Weinstein has continued to shape the play for its world premiere production at the Viaduct. Interviews can be arranged.

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### Read more about the workshop at the DCA Theater Blog:

[http://www.dcatheater.org/blog/category/incubator\\_series\\_livewire\\_chicago\\_theatre/](http://www.dcatheater.org/blog/category/incubator_series_livewire_chicago_theatre/)

### Meet the Artistic Team

Originally from Rockville, Md., **Joshua Aaron Weinstein** is the Executive Director of LiveWire Chicago Theatre, as well as an independent playwright, director and filmmaker with WCProductions. Last month he directed the DCA workshop of "Lower Debt" as part of their INCUBATOR series. In August, Weinstein directed an original short play, "Recognition" by Elizabeth Nell Dubus as part of LiveWire's "VisionFest 2009." He also served as the emcee for the festival. Earlier in the summer, he directed the staged reading of Holli Gipson's new play "Her Brilliant Sway of the Moral Hinge" for the Inch Worm Playreading Series.

This summer, Weinstein also received a private commission to write and produce a play for a couple's wedding. They wanted a play written about their unique relationship, she is Indian and he is Jewish, to be performed for family and friends during an evening of entertainment called a Sangeet. Amidst dancing and singing, his original play "When Jaina Met Jared" was presented. An episode of Weinstein's original comedy film series, "It's Madeline Long" titled "The Illusioness" produced by WCProductions was chosen to be a part of the Chicago Short Comedy Video & Film Festival this past July at the Chicago Cultural Center Theater. This short and other film project from WCProductions can be seen at [www.wetcityproductions.com](http://www.wetcityproductions.com).

Weinstein directed LiveWire's Jeff Recommended production of "Red Angel" by Eric Bogosian in the Fall of 2008. The production received such rave reviews as "a hell of a lot of fun to watch" (*Time Out Chicago*), "This LiveWire Chicago Theatre production has it nailed" (*Chicago Tribune*), and "**Weinstein's thoughtful and calibrated production in the tiny Side [Project] space teases out the tensions with wit and intelligence**" (*Chicago Reader*). To learn more about Weinstein, visit [www.jaaronweinstein.com](http://www.jaaronweinstein.com).

**Rebekah Scallet** directs her first production with LiveWire Chicago Theatre. Most recently she directed "The Tempest" for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, "Anne Frank & Me" for the College of Lake County and served as the assistant director for "Twelfth Night" at Chicago Shakespeare Theater. Other directing credits include "Top Girls" at Eureka College and "The Philadelphia Story," "Twelfth Night," "One Flea Spare" and "Oleanna" at Illinois State University, where she received her MFA in Directing. She is also an ensemble member with Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, where she served as dramaturg and assistant director on several productions including "SELF DEFENSE," "Silence," "Be Aggressive" and "Knowing Cairo." Rebekah is an adjunct faculty member at the College of Lake County and a teaching artist with Raven Theatre.

### About Livewire Chicago Theatre

LiveWire has produced three seasons of new and established work scaling all genres. The 2006-07 season presented Jean-Paul Sartre's mind-bending "No Exit," Resident Playwright Joshua Aaron Weinstein's mysterious new love story "A/other Lover" and the epic tragedy "Love of the Nightingale" by Timberlake Wertenbaker. LiveWire's 2007-08 Season took off with the "**thoroughly commanding**" (*Chicago Reader*) production of "The Collector" by Mark Healy, adapted from the novel by John Fowles, which gained Matt Kelly his first Jeff nomination for 'Outstanding Actor in a Principal Role.' In the spring, the company presented the premiere of "Soldiers: The Desert Stand," an original absurdist dark comedy by Weinstein. Aptly described by the *Chicago Reader* as a "**nihilist lampoon**," *Newcity Chicago* shared,

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**“the play’s comic sensibility is impressive and in perfect balance with the chilling moments,”** and Madeline Long received an After Dark Award for ‘Outstanding Performance in a Play’ for her portrayal of Toma Singerson in “Soldiers.”

LiveWire began its 2008-09 season with the launch of “VisionFest,” a short play festival emphasizing audience feedback and conversation by presenting original works based on a theme chosen through an online poll. “Control” won the public vote and we presented nine plays surrounding this theme during our **“forward-looking theater festival”** (*Newcity Chicago*) in August of 2008 at the Chemically Imbalanced Theater. In the Fall, LiveWire’s Jeff Recommended production of “Red Angel” by Eric Bogosian received such rave reviews as **“a hell of a lot of fun to watch”** (*Time Out Chicago*), **“This LiveWire Chicago Theatre production has it nailed”** (*Chicago Tribune*), and **“Weinstein’s thoughtful and calibrated production in the tiny Side [Project] space (made to feel much more expansive by Anders Jacobson’s terrific book-lined set) teases out the tensions with wit and intelligence”** (*Chicago Reader*). Scenic Designer Anders Jacobson received a Jeff Nomination for his incredible “Angel” set. The season concluded with another Jeff Recommended show, Pulitzer Prize-Winning Playwright David Lindsay-Abaire’s “Wonder of the World,” which Venus Zarris of *Steadstyle Chicago* proclaimed, **“the entire cast is charming with some profoundly incredible acting that shines through by Madeline Long, Joel Ewing and Deborah Craft. LiveWire Chicago Theatre is an extremely gifted company on the verge of a real hit.”**

Most recently, Livewire presented the second annual **“VisionFest 2009: Six Worlds on One Street Corner.”** Playwrights from across the country submitted their original work, all with the shared location of a Street Corner, which was voted on by the public through an online poll. **“The street corner is a perfect setting for six short performances because the audience is already relating to it. Anything can and does happen on a street corner and each audience member has her own stories that start with ‘I was at the corner of...’”** (*Gapers Block*). LiveWire is currently accepting visual art submissions for their “VisionFest 2010” poll. More on “VisionFest” at [www.livewirechicago.com/vision](http://www.livewirechicago.com/vision).

Livewire Chicago Theatre is a collective company of artists with a common drive to develop theatre that provokes thought, enlightens the spirit and entertains a community. Our mission is to expose honesty in the modern theatre of both new and established playwrights. Learn more at [www.livewirechicago.com](http://www.livewirechicago.com). General inquires can be sent to P.O. Box 11226, Chicago, Ill., 60611-0226 or email [info@livewirechicago.com](mailto:info@livewirechicago.com).

#### **LiveWire Collective Members**

Sebastian Aguirre, Erin Barlow, Suzanne Bracken, Eric Branson, Cory Conrad, Joel Ewing (Managing Director), Erin Fast, Amber Hilgenkamp, Anders Jacobson, Becca Lasser, Madeline Long, Allison McNeela, Deborah Proud, Glenn Proud (Artistic Director), Joshua Aaron Weinstein (Executive Director) and Chris Zdenek.

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