

Raue to stage 'I Am The Machine Gunner'

Date: September 27, 2010 **Section:** Sidetracks

"I Am The Machine Gunner" will be staged 8 p.m. Oct. 9 and 3 p.m. Oct. 10 at **Raue Center** for the Arts. **Raue Center** has been working with their new in-house production company, Williams Street Repertory (WS Rep), University of Maryland, the Generous Company and the **Center** for International Theater Development for the past 18 months to develop the theater piece.

"We heard the community's outcry for more thought-provoking, emotional programming," says executive director, Richard Kuranda. "What better to meet that demand than to bring Equity Theater to McHenry County.

The cast features the talent of James Knight matched with the poetic, vulgar translation by John Freedman, the chief critic for the Moscow Times.

The violent, aggressive yet poetic translation of Yury Klavdiev's work transcends time, place and person to capture the struggle of a young Russian gang member trying to find the same honor in his own battles that his grandfather found fighting Germany in WWII.

James Knight performs the one-man play and his performance is almost too real for comfort in what NPR calls "a no holds bar portrayal of the plays' two unnamed characters." Obsessed with memories of his grandfather's stories about fighting the Nazis, he repeatedly finds himself conjuring up the horrors of that brutal combat. All the while, he's trapped in his own contemporary war with battles over turf and what passes for honor. In a brisk, arresting 50 minutes, a lot of emotions and issues are triggered amid the raw street language and chilling battle descriptions. "I Am The Machine Gunner" is intended for mature audiences only.

Tickets are general admission and \$35 each. The audience will sit on

stage for the one-man performance, so seating is limited to only 120 people per performance.

Tickets are available at rauecenter.org or at the box office, located at 26 N. Williams Street in Crystal Lake. Hours are noon to 4 p.m. Monday and Wednesday-Saturday (closed Tuesday and Sunday). In addition, the box office is open one hour prior each performance.

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