

Press Contact:

Rick Miramontez / Jaron Caldwell / Chelsea Nachman

[rick@omdkc.com](mailto:rick@omdkc.com) / [jaron@omdkc.com](mailto:jaron@omdkc.com) / [chelsea@omdkc.com](mailto:chelsea@omdkc.com)

212-695-7400

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE**

**NICHOLAS WRIGHT SELECTS**

**“UTILITY”**

**BY EMILY SCHWEND**

**AS WINNER OF THE**

**10TH ANNUAL YALE DRAMA SERIES AWARD**

**PLAYWRIGHT RECEIVES**

**\$10,000 DAVID CHARLES HORN PRIZE**

**New York, NY** (March 28, 2016) -- One of the theater world's most prestigious playwriting prizes, the **Yale Drama Series Prize**, will be given to **Emily Schwend** for her play *Utility*. The 2016 award recipient was chosen by playwright **Nicholas Wright**, who has served as judge for the 2015 and 2016 competitions.

Now celebrating its tenth year, the **Yale Drama Series** is the preeminent playwriting award in cooperation with **Yale University Press**, and is solely sponsored by the **David Charles Horn Foundation**. The Yale Drama Series Prize is given out annually for a play by an emerging playwright, selected by a judging panel of one--a distinguished playwright of our time. The winner receives the David Charles Horn Prize of \$10,000, as well as publication of the winning play by Yale University Press and a staged reading at Lincoln Center Theater's Claire Tow Theater. The Yale Drama Series is an annual international open submission competition for emerging playwrights who are invited to submit original, unpublished, full-length, English language plays for consideration. All entries are read blindly.

This year's runners-up are **Sarah DeLappe** for *The Wolves*, a lively and witty account of a girls' football ("soccer") team; and **Nina Segal** for *In the Night Time (Before the Sun Rises)*, a two-hander about a couple dealing with the birth of their child at the time of apocalypse.

"*Utility* is a remarkable play: beautifully written and effortlessly powerful," said Nicholas Wright, who chose *Utility* from over 1600 submissions. "At every moment the happiness of human lives is put at risk: is there any greater dramatic theme? We believe in every step that the characters take and we hold our breath at their efforts to build a stable, solvent home for their children. Their offstage lives, their places of work, their automobiles and their friendships are as vivid as anything that we see on stage. We found it a joy to share their story."

Francine Horn, president of the David Charles Horn Foundation, upon reading *Utility* said, "I am extremely proud of the winning play and welcoming Emily Schwend into the Yale Drama Series family of winners. Her sensitive play portrays great skill. She truly captures the pain and resolve of a young woman trapped in a lifestyle that she did not expect. 3 children. Cheating husband. 2 jobs. Exhausted and overwhelmed but resolute."

Emily Schwend, winner of this year's prize said, "I am honored to add my name to the list of talented and daring playwrights who have won the Yale Drama Series award, a list full of stories by and about women. When I started writing *Utility*, I wanted to show how small setbacks are not so small when there is absolutely no room for error in one's life. And how, for Amber, whose life has become almost entirely composed of endless chores, mounting frustrations, and daily crises, the value of truly being seen

by another person is a rare, altruistic gift. I am so pleased that *Utility* was chosen for this award, which will help this story — and Amber — continue to be seen."

In *Utility*, Amber has two jobs, three kids and an eight-year-old's birthday party to plan. The house needs fixing up and her on-again, off-again husband, Chris just can't help but make things worse. As Amber struggles to keep things from boiling over, she finds herself a stranger to the person she once was and the person she thought she might be.

The David Charles Horn Foundation was established in 2003 by **Francine Horn**, David's wife and partner in the international fashion publication service Here & There. David was a man of vision and discipline with an overriding dedication to the written word. His dream of having his own writing published was never realized. The Foundation seeks to honor David's aspirations by offering other writers the opportunity of publication. More particularly, the Foundation supports emerging playwrights, perhaps in greater need of assistance today than beginning writers in any other of the literary arts. The Foundation provides all funding for the Yale Drama Series.

**Emily Schwend's** plays include *Utility* (The Amoralists), *The Other Thing* (Uptown Series at Second Stage Theatre), *Take Me Back* (Walkerspace, The Poor Theatre in Chicago), *South of Settling* (Next Up Rep at Steppenwolf), and *Splinters* (CUDC Source Festival). She is the recipient of the 2014 Tow Foundation playwriting residency at Second Stage Theatre, an EST/Sloan new play commission, the Lecomte du Nouy Prize, a MacDowell Fellowship, the 2013 Heideman Prize, the 2011 ACT New Play Award, and the 2009 David Calicchio Emerging American Playwrights Prize. Her work has been developed at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, PlayPenn, Lake George Theater Lab, Page 73, and the Old Vic/New Voices festival, among others, and she is a frequent contributor to Christine Jones's Theatre for One booth. She is originally from Texas, and she is a proud alumna of the playwriting programs at Juilliard and NYU.

British playwright **Nicholas Wright** serves as judge for the 2015 and 2016 Yale Drama Series Award. Born in Cape Town, South Africa, he was a child actor who studied at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. He has written over 30 plays, libretti, and screenplays, including *Vincent in Brixton*, *Mrs. Klein*, and *Traveling Light*, which have been performed all over the world from London's Royal National Theatre, Royal Shakespeare Company, and Royal Court, to Broadway by New York's Lincoln Center Theater. His play *A Human Being Died That Night* performed at BAM last spring.

Previous winners of the **Yale Drama Series Prize** include **John Austin Connolly** (selected by Edward Albee in 2007), **Neil Wechsler** (selected by Edward Albee in 2008), **Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig** (selected by David Hare in 2009), **Virginia Grise** (selected by David Hare in 2010), **Shannon Murdoch** (selected by John Guare in 2011), **Clarence Coo** (selected by John Guare in 2012), **Jen Silverman** (selected by Marsha Norman in 2013), **Janine Nabers** (selected by Marsha Norman in 2014), **Barbara Seyda** (selected by Nicholas Wright in 2015).

For additional information about the **Yale Drama Series**, visit [www.dchornfoundation.org](http://www.dchornfoundation.org).

####

[www.dchornfoundation.org](http://www.dchornfoundation.org)  
[www.oandmco.com](http://www.oandmco.com)  
[www.twitter.com/oandmco](https://www.twitter.com/oandmco)