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For Immediate Release

Professor Joins "Our Town" Conversation

March 5, 2009, University Park, IL - Dr. Rosemary Johnsen, Assistant Professor of English at Governors State University, will make an appearance on the stage at the Theater at the Water Tower Works in Chicago after the March 21 matinee performance of "OurTown" by Lookingglass Theatre. The Raven Foundation of Chicago asked Johnsen to lead the post performance conversation and to contribute an essay on the importance and meaning of Thornton Wilder's play for the theatre's Study Guide, which will be distributed throughout the play's run.

The Lookingglass Theatre production of "Our Town." stars David Schwimmer and runs through April 4. It received rave reviews after its February 11 debut. The discussion led by Johnsen is open to everyone attending the 3 p.m. performance on March 21.

According to Johnsen, of Steger, "'Our Town' is a landmark in American literature, and I am honored to lead the discussion. Wilder's deliberate simplicity fosters audience engagement, and it will be fascinating to hear the audience response to this insightful production of Wilder's often-produced play."

Suzanne Ross, founder of The Raven Foundation, believes Johnsen's expertise in American literature and mimetic theory makes her an ideal commentator for this production of "Our Town." René Girard's mimetic theory, which The Raven Foundation promotes, recognizes the pattern of imitation in literature and the theater that teaches empathy that captures the human condition reflected in "Our Town."

"As our nation struggles with the consequences of the financial crisis, "Our Town." reminds us of the importance of community and the appreciation of the many small but profound moments in life," adds Ross, author of the soon to be released "Wicked Truth about Love."

Johnsen's scholarship centers on her study of the English language and American and English literature. In addition to her first book, "Contemporary Feminist Historical Crime Fiction," published in 2006, Johnsen has published essays focusing on crime fiction, twentieth-century literature, and book history. |

Tickets for the performance are available by contacting the Lookingglass Theatre box office at lookingglasstheatre.org or (312) 337-0665. For tickets at half the box office price for this matinee performance, contact The Raven Foundation at (224) 521-2491.

The Theater at the Water Tower Water Works is located at 821 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.