

**WHO'S YOUR  
BAGHDADDY**  
or how i started the iraq war

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DRAMATISTS  
PLAY SERVICE  
INC.

WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY OR HOW I STARTED THE IRAQ WAR  
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WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY was produced Off-Broadway at St. Luke's Theater under the title "Baghdaddy" in 2017 by Charlie Fink through Baghdaddy, LLC. It was directed by Marshall Paillet; the set design was by Caite Hevner; the costume design was by Summer Lee Jack; the lighting design was by Jen Schriever; the sound design was by Toby Algya; the prop design was by Jess Adams; the orchestrations were by Charlie Rosen; and the production stage managers were Courtney Leggett and Krista Swan. The cast was as follows (in alphabetical order):

RICHART BECKER ..... Brennan Caldwell  
TYLER NELSON ..... Jason Collins  
MARTIN BOUCHARD ..... Bob D'Haene  
THE MAN ..... Brandon Espinoza  
CURVEBALL ..... Joe Joseph  
THE WOMAN ..... Claire Neumann  
BERRY STANTON ..... Larisa Oleynik  
JERRY SAMUEL ..... Ethan Slater

WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY was produced Off-Broadway at the Actors Temple in 2015 by Charlie Fink through the New Musical Foundation. It was directed by Marshall Paillet; the set design was by Caite Hevner; the costume design was by Summer Lee Jack; the lighting design was by Jen Schriever; the associate director was Nora Ives; the orchestrations were by Charlie Rosen; and the production stage manager was Hope Villanueva. The cast was as follows (in alphabetical order):

TYLER NELSON ..... Jason Collins  
RICHART BECKER ..... Brennan Caldwell  
MARTIN BOUCHARD ..... Bob D'Haene  
THE MAN ..... Brandon Espinoza  
JERRY SAMUEL ..... Olli Haaskivi  
CURVEBALL ..... Nehal Joshi,  
Pomme Koch (standby)  
THE WOMAN ..... Claire Neumann  
BERRY STANTON ..... Larisa Oleynik

WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY was originally performed at the D.C. Fringe Festival, produced by Charlie Fink through the New Musical Foundation. It was directed by Marshall Paillet; the set and costume design were by Jessica Moretti; the lighting design was by Daisy Long; the choreography was by Kyle Mullins; and the production stage manager was Brian Sekinger. The cast was as follows (in alphabetical order):

JERRY SAMUEL .....	Mikey Cafarelli
CURVEBALL .....	John Dellaporta
RILEY .....	Cyle Durkee
BERRY STANTON .....	Kristen Garaffo
COOP .....	Emily Levey
TYLER NELSON .....	Matthew Myers
APPLE .....	Meredith Richard
RICHART BECKER .....	Paul Scanlan
DAVID KAY .....	Harry Winter

WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY is based on a screenplay by J.T. Allen.

## AUTHORS' NOTE

Hello, friends! Here's some tips for doing our show, feel free to take them or leave them as you see fit.

### The Staging

We performed this version twice in New York—once forty seats in the round, once two hundred seats in a proscenium. In both versions, we tried to expose the theater as much as possible while the audience entered: The work lights were on, there were no programs, there was no set except an ordinary table with coffee and donuts. The setting for the show *was* the venue—a support group *in* the Actor's Temple, or *in* St. Luke's, or now in your theater, church, temple, school auditorium, etc. During pre-show, the actors mingled with the audience, encouraging them to take some coffee, donuts, giving them nametags—the actors hovered somewhere between being in character and being themselves (if they had friends in the audience, they said hi, etc.). The goal was to make the audience feel loose, relaxed, included, but at the same time slightly thrown off-guard (in a good way).

Once we went inside Martin's head, we instantly shifted to theatrical lights and stage magic. Costumes, musical instruments, and props were stashed all around the theater. Most props were something you could find in a support group (paper plate as steering wheel, donut box as computer, etc.). By contrast, the blood effect at the end was extremely realistic, which shocked the audience.

There's a dramatic tone shift over the course of the show. Lean into the tone shift—it's kind of the point of the show. If we do our jobs right, our audience should enter laughing, and leave thinking and feeling. Having said that, our named characters shouldn't shift their acting style from clowns to real people—they're *always* real people, people who take their own worlds extremely seriously. So the tone shift isn't in their changing style of performance, but rather in their changing stakes—at the top they are acting extremely high-stakes about extremely low-stakes issues, and by the end of the show they're acting high-stakes about the highest-stakes issues (which have bounded beyond their control). The Man and the Woman are for sure clowns, but the other characters cannot be.

### The Music

We did this show with a piano and a computer, which played Charlie Rosen's awesome orchestral tracks. Our music director, Rona, played live keyboard and also ran the tracks off a program called QLab. You can use QLab, or any other number of applications. For every track, there is an instrumental and a click track—these tracks should always *fire simultaneously*—the click track feeds to headphones for the pianist, the instrumental track feeds into your speakers and monitors for the

actors and audience. This allows for the flexibility of live performance, but also the full sound of a band. And the tracks sound so good, because Charlie Rosen is so good at making them. (There is also a version where you can add live strings.)

### **In Conclusion**

Tell a moving, human story, and do not condescend to your characters—they are no better or worse than the rest of us. This quality is what audiences took away more than any other single aspect of the piece.

We think that's it. Have so much fun!

## CHARACTERS

MARTIN BOUCHARD

*(50s–60s; baritone)*

Used to be a bigwig WMDs expert, but has fallen several rungs in recent years.  
Knowledgeable, but sometimes shortsighted and rash in his quest to  
reclaim past glory.

RICHART BECKER

*(20s; tenor)*

A junior interrogator with the BND, Germany's national intelligence agency.  
Young, ambitious, not as cool as he thinks. Looking for a friend.  
Plays HOLY HERALD 1.

CURVEBALL

*(30s; bari-tenor)*

An Iraqi defector to Germany, and the only eyewitness source supporting the claim  
that Iraq had biological weapons of mass destruction. Enchanting, manipulative,  
unpredictable with a wild side. Plays HOLY HERALD 2.

TYLER NELSON

*(40s; baritone)*

CIA operative, bureaucrat and consummate company man. Reveres the rules.  
Holier than thou. Plays MALE VOICE in "Who's Your Baghdaddy."

BERRY STANTON

*(early 30s; mezzo-soprano)*

Ambitious but reckless CIA analyst. Smart, abrasive, with minimal people skills.

JERRY SAMUEL

*(late 20s; tenor)*

CIA analyst and super geek. Socially awkward with a strong moral code...for  
the most part.

MAN

*(any adult age; strong comedian; tenor)*

*Plays:* LEADER, CUSTOMS AGENT 2, CO-WORKER, HERR GIMMLEVOGUT,  
DEE, MUSIC VIDEO GIRL 2, NEWS REPORTER 2, GEORGE TENET,  
POLICE OFFICER, MILITARY ESCORT 1, SECOND REPORTER

WOMAN

*(any adult age; strong comedian; soprano)*

*Plays:* SPIRITUAL WOMAN, NEWS REPORTER 1, CUSTOMS AGENT 1,  
HELGA, ADLER, DUM, FAKHIR, MUSIC VIDEO GIRL 1,  
INTERVIEWER, SECOND-IN-COMMAND, MILITARY ESCORT 2,  
FIRST REPORTER

## **LOCATIONS**

Support Group for Starters of the Iraq War;  
CIA—Langley, Virginia;  
BND (German CIA equivalent)—Berlin;  
Northern Iraq.

## **TIME**

2001–2004.



## SONG LISTING

### ACT ONE

1. "The Pledge" All
2. "Marty's Dilemma" Martin, Nelson
3. "We Deserve Better" Martin, All
4. "Stay" Preprise Curveball, Woman
5. "Das Man" Richart, Ensemble
6. "Stay" Curveball, Ensemble
7. "I Deserve a Reprise" Richart, Gimmlevogut
8. "Berry and the Bad Boy" Berry, Jerry, Ensemble
9. "Rules" Nelson, Ensemble
10. "Berry's Dilemma" Berry, Jerry, Martin
11. "Hydrangea Reports" Richart, Curveball, All
12. "We Deserve Another Reprise" Berry, Jerry
13. "Hydrangea Reports" Reprise Richart
14. "Music to Me" Jerry, Man, Woman
15. "Who's Your Baghdaddy?" Curveball, Richart, All

### ACT TWO

16. "Change of Tone" All
17. "Hydrangea Reports" Reprise Richart, Curveball
18. "The Second-in-Command" Second-in-Command, Nelson, Ensemble
19. "Martin's Search" Martin, Berry, Richart, All
20. "Speak to Me Tomorrow" Curveball, Ensemble
21. "The Pledge" Reprise All

# WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY or how i started the iraq war

## ACT ONE

*It's 2004. The audience walks into a setting for a support group meeting. There's a table with coffee, donuts, wine and cheese. The whole environment is very casual with the undifferentiated actors milling around with everyone else. A pianist plays cheesy '90s covers in the corner of the room. There are no programs, no indication that this is anything other than a support group meeting. Fifteen minutes before the official start (the below is a guideline—feel free to improv around these parameters to make it seem natural):*

LEADER. Evening/Afternoon everybody! We're gonna get started in about fifteen minutes, so for now please help yourself to the refreshments, maybe introduce yourself, socialize to your heart's content, whatever. I'll let you know when it's time to take your seats. So carry on.

*Seven minutes before the official start (these are still guidelines—improv):*

Okay you guys, we've got around seven minutes to go, so get yourself more refreshments, check in on your broker, the babysitter, or whatever floats your boat, and start thinking about heading to your seats pretty soon, alright? Thanks much!

*Two minutes before the official start (improv):*

Hey listen up everybody, we're gonna start in about two minutes, so please mosey on over to your seats, thank you!

*After two minutes more have passed (still loose structure—improv):*

Okay then, great... Looks like we got a lot of new faces tonight, always good to see that. And for those of you who are new—not to worry, you can just sit back and take it all in, no one's going to touch you or make you talk or anything like that, I promise. So, go on and let out that big breath you've been holding in. Hmmm... and let's see... Oh yeah, we'll go about two hours, with about a ten-minute break in the middle. Turn off your cell phones of course. So now...

*End of improv.*

Does one of the regulars want to get us started?

BERRY. I'll go.

LEADER. Fantastic.

BERRY. (*Unceremonious.*) I'm Berry and I started the Iraq War.

ALL. Hi, Berry.

LEADER. And what do you do, Berry?

BERRY. You know what I do.

LEADER. For the group?

BERRY. (*Sigh, to the group.*) I'm a CIA analyst.

LEADER. And do you ever blame yourself, Berry?

BERRY. (*Firm.*) I shouldn't have to blame myself. We were gonna invade anyway—if it hadn't been me they would've used some other cog.

SPIRITUAL WOMAN. (*Profoundly, taking her time.*) Sometimes...only by turning the eyes inward can the *inward* self look upon the *outward* self...with acceptance.

*Beat. The Leader nods in supportive yet reluctant agreement.*

LEADER. Okay, who else? Richart?

RICHART. (*Hadn't been paying attention.*) Yeah. I'm Richart.

LEADER. And what did you do, Richart?

RICHART. Oh, I started the Iraq War.

ALL. Hi, Richart.

LEADER. And what's your occupation, Richart?

RICHART. I'm an interrogator for the Germans. I'm German by the way, for those who couldn't tell by the accent.

*He has no accent.*

LEADER. And do you blame yourself, Richart?

RICHART. (*Unsure.*) No. I mean. I don't think I should.

LEADER. You still drinking though?

RICHART. Oh, yeah, all the time.

LEADER. Good for you.

SPIRITUAL WOMAN. (*Meaningfully.*) If you learn to love your flaws, then perhaps you can someday learn to love...love.

*Beat. The Leader presses on.*

LEADER. And...let's see. Nelson, you wanna introduce yourself to the new faces?

NELSON. (*Big sigh, not happy to be here.*) I'm Nelson.

LEADER. And what did you do, Nelson?

NELSON. (*Resolute.*) Everything I could.

LEADER. (*Leading him.*) Uh-huh, and did you...?

*Nelson shrugs.*

Is there anything you...started? Like maybe a...certain international conflagration...?

NELSON. Oh right! That!

LEADER. Yes, that.

NELSON. No. I didn't start that.

BERRY. Denial.

LEADER. No, none of that, please. Nelson will come around in his own time.

*Nelson sighs audibly, so annoyed.*

SPIRITUAL WOMAN. *(So meaningful.)* Today...is the *first day*...

*The group waits for her to finish her thought, until at last it becomes clear that her thought is already complete.*

LEADER. Absolutely. Nelson, do you want to lead us in the pledge?

NELSON. I do not.

LEADER. Okay, well do you want to reconsider that?

NELSON. I do not.

LEADER. Okay, I think you know it's in your best interest to participate.

NELSON. Ugh.

LEADER. *(Continuous.)* So why don't we make an effort today, if we can.

*Beat.*

Do you want to lead us in the pledge?

NELSON. *(Quickly, sarcastic.)* So bad!

LEADER. *(Quickly.)* Okay.

### 1. "The Pledge"

NELSON. *(A hymn, going through the motions.)*

I CAN RUN,  
BUT NEVER FROM MY HEART—  
CAN'T DENY WHAT  
IT KNOWS IS TRUE.

*This pledge has more meaning, or at least a different meaning, for the rest of the group.*

NELSON and RICHART.

I CAN HIDE,  
BUT NEVER FROM MY HEART—  
CAN'T DEFY WHAT  
IT HOLDS ME TO.

NELSON, RICHART, and BERRY.

BUT IF I FACE THE BLAME  
THEN GRACE WILL  
SET ME FREE.

ALL.

IN MY DARKEST HOUR  
PEACE WILL COME TO ME—  
IN MY DARKEST HOUR  
IF I TURN,  
FACE THE BLAME,

THEN PEACE AT LAST  
WILL COME TO ME.

*Martin enters the Support Group, distracted, clutching his flip-phone. He takes his seat, but does not join in song, his mind elsewhere, somewhere dark.*

LEADER. Martin, it's good to see you, as always. No cell phones, please.

MARTIN. *(Going through the motions, putting away his flip-phone.)* I'm Martin I started the Iraq War.

ALL. Hi, Martin.

LEADER. Now, we know you're not big into the talking, but tell us if you can: Do you blame yourself?

*No answer, as Martin struggles.*

Do you blame yourself, Martin?

*No answer.*

Martin?

*No answer.*

Martin?

## 2. "Marty's Dilemma"

*Suddenly, Martin stands as the house lights slam off and the theatrical lights go on. A ding of a triangle is played.*

ALL but MARTIN. How Martin started the Iraq War.

*And we're in Martin's head, looking back to his time at the CIA in the summer of 2001. The refreshment table for the Support Group becomes his desk. Martin is talking to his boss, Nelson, who is holding a clipboard.*

MARTIN. *(Selling.)*

I HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY.

NELSON. *(Skeptical.)*

WHAT?

MARTIN.

THE U.N. SPECIAL COMMISSION

WANTS TO PUBLISH ME ON THE WEB.

NELSON.

PUBLISH WHAT?

MARTIN. *(Gingerly—he has brought this up before.)*

MY COMPENDIUM.

NELSON. *(Immediately disengages.)*

OH GOD.

MARTIN. *(Desperate.)*

A DECADE OF RESEARCH.

NELSON.  
THEORIES.

MARTIN.  
THEORIES, YES, *BASED ON RESEARCH.*

*(Hard-selling Nelson.)*

GERM WEAPONS—  
SADDAM HUSSEIN HAS *LOADS*—  
GERMS, THE *BAD STUFF*,  
ANTHRAX AND CLOSTRIDIUM BOTULINUM—  
SADDAM HAS *CLOSTRIDIUM BOTULINUM*, MAN,  
THOSE ARE JUST THE FACTS.

NELSON.  
THEORIES.

MARTIN.  
THEORIES, YES, *BASED ON FACTS.*

I just need your permission to send it.

NELSON. Marty, this is the CIA. Nothing unsubstantiated goes public.

MARTIN. But...

NELSON. *(A rehearsed lecture, Martin has heard it before.)*

RULES MAKE UP  
OUR DAILY GRUEL,  
EVEN WHEN THEY  
SEEM “UNCOOL”—  
PAY THEM HEED  
OR PLAY THE FOOL.

BRING ME PROOF,  
AND THEN “RAISE THE ROOF”—  
YOU CAN SEND  
YOUR COMPENDIUM, YAY!  
BUT BRING ME PROOF.

*Nelson holds out his clipboard for Martin to consider the form sheet clipped to it; Martin brushes it aside.*

MARTIN.  
TELL ME YOU DON'T THINK.  
SADDAM HAS 'EM—  
TELL ME AND I'LL DROP IT.

NELSON.  
COURSE I *THINK* SO,  
WE ALL *THINK* SO,  
BUT THAT'S NOT HARD PROOF.

# WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY

## or how i started the iraq war

music and book by Marshall Paillet  
lyrics and book by A.D. Penedo

6 men, 2 women (doubling)

The show begins in a church basement, where disgraced spies, along with the unwitting audience, gather for a support group meeting. The action soon shifts to Frankfurt Airport, where a mysterious Iraqi defector claims he built secret Iraqi bio-weapons labs. At CIA headquarters, our other characters are contending with their own ambitions, rash decisions, inflexible bosses, unrequited affections, and unremitting boredom—when a fax arrives from Germany, and with it a golden opportunity. If the defector's story holds up, it will be the ticket out of the basement and into a corner office. It's all fun and games until the looming cataclysm changes everything.

*"Critics' Pick! ...an important, cunning, rock-solid musical comedy with a terrible title..."*  
—**The New York Times**

*"Best of 2015 Theater: Hamilton may have the hype, but it's not the only show in town to leave you in astonishment... [BAGHDADDY is] one of the most bad-ass musicals I've seen in a very long time."*  
—**ManhattanDigest.com**

*"WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY is anything but your run of the mill musical comedy. It is clever in its construction...with an honesty that grants each character dignity, and spellbindingly intellectual."*  
—**BroadwayWorld.com**

*"A whip smart musical comedy... not only impressive, it is deeply important [and] truly magical..."*  
—**Theasy.com**

*"[WHO'S YOUR BAGHDADDY is] two hours of high-paced pondering that will make you laugh, think, and silently wonder what secrets are kept and the casualties they reap."*  
—**NYTheatreGuide.com**

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