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WORLD PREMIERE OF "THE ZEITGEIST CHRONICLES" OPENS SEPT. 13TH

*American Theatre Project production showcases native talent and eyes Off-Broadway future
Producers expect audiences to talk about it all the way to the voting booth*

New Orleans, La., August 22, 2012— American Theatre Project (ATP), in cooperation with Dillard University, announced today that its newest production, “The Zeitgeist Chronicles” by local playwright Stephen Montagne, will premiere at Dillard’s Samuel DuBois Cook Performing Arts Center on Thursday, September 13, 2012 at 8:00 p.m., and run through September 29. Four years after one of the most remarkable events in American and global history, the timely world premiering play revisits the “Change” election of 2008. Featuring a 13-member cast of all-local talent, the fast-moving production follows three multi-generational storylines that ultimately collide as the United States elects its first African-American president. The three-weekend run includes Thursday, Friday and Saturday night performances, along with previews on Tuesday, September 11 and Wednesday, September 12.

In three acts, the play presents the stories of an Alabama-born progressive reporter/staunch Hillary Clinton supporter (played by Jennifer Schemke) in Los Angeles who interviews her reformed racist uncle (Ray Vrazel) now campaigning for Barack Obama; four comedians in New York, including a 25-year-old, Mormon standup comedian (Taylor McClellan) and his Rat Pack era mentor (Janet Shea) who now lives in a retirement home; and several generations of a New Orleans African-American family (Martin “Bats” Bradford, Kari Cojoe, Robert Doqui, Spencer Howard, Damien Moses) trying to keep its elderly patriarch alive through the November 2008 election. These generationally, politically and racially diverse viewpoints will have audiences talking all the way to the voting booth.

“This production examines a time of real hope, and an opportunity to be engaged, involved and proactive. It encapsulates a time-slice of life, an incalculable period of American emotional, spiritual and philosophical change,” said Producing Director Ed Bishop. “The Zeitgeist Chronicles’ reminds us of what happened in 2008 and how it affected our lives.”

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“Zeitgeist Chronicles” Managing Producer Mark Shays explained the decision to use an all-local company saying, “New Orleans is home to incredibly high caliber, professional, compelling talent – both cast and crew members, especially those we’ve encountered at Dillard. Our goal is to take the production Off-Broadway and then on tour. We’re hoping to make a big enough splash in New Orleans to convince others to workshop their productions here before heading to Broadway or on tour and fulfill the vision of a thriving, native live theatre industry in Louisiana.”

To that end, the show has partnered with Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation (LCEF) a non-profit, 501(c)(3) that focuses on supporting artists and other entrepreneurs in the cultural industries of Louisiana. <http://www.zeitgeistchronicles.com/charity/> Additionally, “The Zeitgeist Chronicles” production is working with actors, artists, activists, athletes, musicians, political figures, film makers, and other celebrities to lend their voices in raising awareness to the resiliency of New Orleans, the need for supporting the arts, and the importance of participating in the political process.

Tickets are available now online at <https://www.zeitgeistchronicles.com>. The site also includes complete cast and crew list and preview video directed by San Francisco-based filmmaker Will Harper.

*Over its 16-year history, **American Theatre Project** has maintained an ongoing commitment to three essential goals of theater: to elevate, to educate and to entertain. “The Zeitgeist Chronicles,” the company’s newest project, falls squarely into that mission.*

*Since 1869, **Dillard University** has been committed to providing students with a quality, four-year liberal arts education. Dillard is a fully accredited private, historically black university. In 2010, U.S. News & World Report ranked Dillard among the nation’s Top 10 HBCUs based on comprehensive undergraduate studies. Dillard also was awarded a Top 10 ranking in 2010 for liberal arts schools in the social mobility category by Washington Monthly.*

For more information on this groundbreaking theatrical event, please also visit or follow us at:

Homepage: <https://www.zeitgeistchronicles.com/>

American Theatre Project: <http://atpno.org/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ZeitgeistC>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TheZeitgeistChronicles>

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