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Page 1 of 2

Sam Singleton Atheist Evangelist at Old Church Satiric Preacher Coming to Portland

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Sam Singleton Atheist Evangelist will be appearing in a “special one-hour performance” at the historic Old Church at the corner of SW 11th Ave. and Clay, Friday, March 27, at 9:30p.m. Doors open at nine. General admission is \$17 dollars, \$12 dollars with student, staff, or faculty identification from any school. Tickets are available at Jackpot Records, online at brownpaper-tickets.com, and for cash-only at the door.

“Believe me, if anybody can use some laughs and encouragement, it’s atheists.” So says writer-actor Roger Scott Jackson of his comedic invention Brother Sam, as he is known informally.

Jackson observes that atheists, unlike theists, do not share a belief system. “They’re a diverse and unruly lot,” he says. “That’s why organized atheism continues to limp fractiously along and why it has so few successes to point to since the Murray v. Curlett ‘prayer in school’ decision in 1963.”

Jackson sees the marginalization of nonbelievers as both an affront to common decency and a threat to the nation’s, and the world’s, future.

“When 85 percent of Americans are convinced that God is the answer to our problems, you better hope that the rest are prepared to say something. Fortunately, the 15 percent represented by atheists turn out to be the top 15 percent.”

Asked to respond to the inevitable charge that what he does is offensive to the vast majority of Americans, Jackson says, “When your beliefs, especially your public beliefs, are off-limits to frank discussion, let alone criticism, you have effectively imposed your rules on the rest of society. You’ve as much as said that other people don’t matter. With an attitude like that it’s easy to put out a contract on a cartoonist or call down a fatwah on a novelist or bomb a clinic.”

Jackson says, “Reminding that majority that they aren’t the only ones on the planet is another

part of Brother Sam’s job.” He adds, “It’s easy for the members of this big honking gorilla-sized group, that has always gotten its own way, to forget that it is unseemly, if not outright obscene, for a privileged majority to comport itself as if it’s a persecuted minority.”

Jackson admits that achieving equal treatment for atheists is a daunting task. “The holders of hegemonies never relinquish them gracefully,” he says. “Every begrudging acknowledgement of anybody else’s rights has to be pried from their iron grip while they alternately whine about their maltreatment and crow about their big-heartedness.”

END

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