



## MEDIA RELATIONS CONTACTS

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## FULL SCHEDULE AND IMAGES

<http://mondaviarts.org/press>

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

March 11, 2009

### **A Long Way Gone: Ishmael Beah Speaks at the Mondavi Center**

**Davis, Calif.**—Author **Ishmael Beah** was a child soldier in Sierra Leone, where he was conscripted, armed with an automatic weapon (and drugs), and turned into a professional killer at age 13. Beah not only survived his ordeal but also regained his humanity to write “**A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier.**” Now Beah comes to **Jackson Hall** of the **Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts**, UC Davis, on **Wednesday, April 8**, at **8 p.m.** to share his compelling story.

Says **Don Roth**, Mondavi Center executive director, “Former child soldier Ishmael Beah’s memoirs poignantly detail his long journey back from the depths of desperation and violence to a position of hope and humanity. Please join us to hear his story of redemption. “

**Pricing** is \$45/35/25 for regular tickets and \$22.50/17.50/12.50 for students and children. Purchase tickets online at [MondaviArts.org](http://MondaviArts.org), through the Mondavi Center box office at 530-754-2787 or 866-754-2787 (toll-free), or at the door. Accommodations for persons with disabilities are available upon request. This event is presented as part of the Mondavi Center’s **Distinguished Speakers Series**, which concludes with **Paul Haggis** on **May 11**.

**Ishmael Beah** was born in Sierra Leone in 1980. When he was 11, Beah’s life, along with the lives of millions of other Sierra Leoneans, was derailed by the outbreak of a brutal civil war. After his parents and two brothers were killed, Beah was recruited to fight as a child soldier. He was 13. He fought for more than two years before he was removed from the army by UNICEF and placed in a rehabilitation home in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.

After completing rehabilitation in late 1996, Beah won a competition to attend a conference at the United Nations to talk about the devastating effects of war on children in his country. It was there that he met his new mother, Laura Simms, a professional storyteller who lives in New York. Beah returned to Sierra Leone and continued speaking about his experiences to help bring international attention to the issue of child soldiering and war affected children.

In 1998, Beah came to live with his American family in New York City. He completed high school at the United Nations International School and subsequently went on to Oberlin College in Ohio. Throughout his high school and undergraduate education, he continued his advocacy work to bring attention to the plight of child soldiers and children affected by war around the world. In “A Long Way Gone,” Beah, now 26 years old, tells a remarkable story.

- **Ishmael Beah: “A Long Way Gone”**
- **Wed., April 8, 8 p.m.**
- **Mondavi Center, Jackson Hall**
- **9399 Old Davis Road, Davis, CA 95616 (GPS)**
- **\$45/35/25 regular; \$22.50/17.50/12.50 students, children**
- **530-754-2787**  
**866-754-2787 (toll-free)**  
**530-754-5402 (TDD)**  
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