

Coming up at Live Oak Theatre in January 2015

**AE** Actors Ensemble of Berkeley  
@ Live Oak Theatre



**PANHANDLE**  
BY WALTER HALSEY DAVIS  
MUSIC BY MARC REAM & JEREMY SULLIVAN  
DIRECTED BY MICHAEL R COHEN

Combining intense drama, alternately elegiac and joyful music, and wry humor, Panhandle tells the story of a farm community as it struggles through the Dust Bowl and the Great Depression. Opens **Jan. 9<sup>th</sup>** and runs Fri-Sat at 8 p.m. through **Jan 31<sup>st</sup>**. Sunday **matinees** are at 2 p.m. on **Jan. 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>**.

Our Winter 2015 Staged Reading Series

Tuesdays during Panhandle – **Pay What You Can**



Tuesday, Jan 13<sup>th</sup> – **Five Women Wearing the Same Dress**  
by Alan Ball, directed by Zara Benner  
Tuesday, Jan 20<sup>th</sup> - **The Time of Your Life**  
By William Saroyan, directed by Darryl Jones  
Tuesday, Jan 27<sup>th</sup> – **The Wife of Bath/Marriage of Sir Gawain**  
A Musical Reading, by Vicki Siegel, directed by Robert Estes

Opening March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015

**The Importance of Being Earnest**

By Oscar Wilde, directed by Susannah Wood



Actors Ensemble Especially Thanks  
**University One Hour Cleaners**  
Dry Cleaners to Actors Ensemble of Berkeley  
Alterations/Same Day Service/Leather and Suede Cleaning  
We're Proud to participate in the Earth Friendly  
University One Hour Cleaners



Program  
1319 University Ave.  
Berkeley, CA 94702  
510 548 1053

A PROUD MEMBER OF  
**theatre**  
BAY AREA



Actors Ensemble of Berkeley

presents

**Madame Gufay's**

**Free Speech**

*Madame Gufay's*

**Lovelutionaries**

by **Norah Foster**

*Live Oak  
Theatre  
1301 Shattuck  
Berkeley*



*8 p.m. Fridays  
& Saturdays  
Dec. 12-20<sup>th</sup>  
2014*

**A Gufay Play for a Gufay Time**

directed by

**Alan Barkan**

**A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR**

*Madame Gufay's Free Speech Lovelutionaries* started as a screen play and evolved into a stage play. For Actors Ensemble, a community theater dependent on volunteers ticket sales and donations, staging the eighteen characters over fourteen scenes set in twelve different locations without the road map normally provided by a tested script was the real challenge. All of us, from the playwright to the cast the crew and AE's board where involved in sculpting this gem in-the-rough into, we hope, an engaging and humorous stage production.

An empty space no scenery minimal furniture and props, all meant to be enough to enable your imagination to fill in the blanks. Even the dog, have you wondered, seeing the Pink French Poodle on all the promotion, why? That dog is Mieu Mieu the Pink French Poodle and Madame Gufay's constant companion. And as Pink French Poodles tend to do, Mieu Mieu gets into mischief of the kind that can not be ignored. But, alas, a living well trained Pink French Poodle was not in the budget, forcing us to improvise. We hope you enjoy Mieu Mieu. It's both amazing and frightening, given the recent happenings in the news and the streets and the play's theme and sentiments, the more things change the more they remain the same. Viva Lovelutionaries!

Alan Barkan

**A NOTE FROM THE PRODUCER**

Like everything in theatre, *Madame Gufay* is an experiment, but this is a new kind of experiment for us. Theatre isn't fun or interesting without taking a few risks, and we took the meaning of "community theatre" to heart, taking a work that emerged from the author's experience with UCB and finding a way to make it work on stage. We hope you enjoy the result. We called the result part of a new series of "plays in development", *AEDisplay*, with the hope that we can formalize the process and add to the series.

and Agatha Christie's *A Murder Is Announced*. Other local roles include Martha in James Keller's *Good Housekeeping*, Marguerite Paulus in *BookKeepers*, Abby Brewster in *Arsenic & Old Lace*, and Lady Bracknell in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

**Julia Plafker** (Props, ASM) has acted in numerous straight plays and musicals since she was seven years old, and is now trying her hand at the behind-the-scenes side of stage play production. She will be attending Beloit College next fall.

**Mina Price** (Poodle, 2<sup>nd</sup> ASM) For as long as I can remember I've been obsessed with the world of drama (the one onstage.) From a vulgar extra in *West Side Story* to a knife-wielding psychopath in *Urinetown*, I've had many wonderful opportunities to explore theatre. This will have been my first time working with a backstage crew.

**Cai Shaotian** (Officer Braggard/ Ensemble) is an UC Berkeley Theater student. He is making his AEB debut. Favorite credits include Courfeyrac in *Les Miserables* (Raven Players), Henry in *South Pacific* (Mountain Play), and Ensemble work in *Flower Drum Song* (Woodminster). Special thanks to Kelley Hogan. Dedicate to Margo Hall, Michael Mansfield, and Lura Dolas for the help in this semester at Cal.

**Tom Westlake** (Chancellor/ Bully) has most recently been seen in Starlight Players production of *Dracula* in which he played the title role. Currently he can be seen haunting the streets of Victorian London as Jacob Marley at the Great Dickens Christmas Fair. This is his first AEB role.

**Carmen Yu** (Stage Manager) is in the business of managing - by day, as a financial professional - by night, actors and plays. Previously for AEB she managed both *Relatively Speaking* and *Penthesilea*. She is easily recognizable by her tendency to wear suits and her trusty sidekick, a Doctor Doom action figure.

**Vicki Zabarte** (Aunt Amanda/ ensemble) Vicki is making her first appearance with AEB. She had worked with AATC, PCP, BOTTG and Masquers Playhouse. Some of her favorite roles include Mae in *Cat in a Hot Tin Roof*, Frances Reed and Susie in *The Voice of the Prairie*, Romaine Patterson and Aaron Kreifels in *The Laramie Project*.

Green Beret, escaping to Europe only to return in 1975 where she worked at the UCB Library until retiring in 2008.

**Patrick Glenn** (Guard, Radio host) has small supporting roles in Madame Gufay, so you probably shouldn't care too much about his background. He practically grew up on the UC Berkeley campus, but ended up graduating from UCLA, where he majored in history while spending most of his time with his comedy and improv group. He sure likes baseball.

**Cj Gross** (Sherry, Mrs.Foster) has been involved with dance, clowning and theater throughout her life. Cj's performance experience includes Lunatique Fantastique, Make-A-Circus and Grumbling Gryphons Theater. She currently teaches a drama and clowning class to young adults with disabilities. This is her first production with AEB.

**Robert Gudmundsson** (light design, philosopher) has been in and around AEB for more years than Doctor Doom can count, his periodic musings are eagerly anticipated by his many fans, as are his appearances as *Bat Raider* at the Oakland Coliseum.

**Chris Habash** (Aaron) likes to think of himself as a method actor, for much like his character, he is a student at UC Berkeley with one more semester to complete. From the Bay Area, he is performing in his first AEB production and is involved in UC Berkeley's theater department, unlike Aaron. He hopes you enjoy the show.

**Harriett Hache** (Costumes) is grateful to be working with such talented actors. This is the first time she has costumed for a play, but she has won numerous awards for her work in Apparel, from entities such as the National Association of Women Artists, New Yorker magazine, the Boston Museum School, and Peralta College.

**Edward Kimak** (Pew) fell in love with acting watching Sid Caesar and Milton Berle during TV's Golden Age. He performed frequently in college in Chicago. After a several-decade hiatus, he began studying acting in earnest at Studio ACT and has since performed at Chanticleers in Hayward, Outlook Theater in SF and AEB where he appeared as Hastings in *Richard III*.

**Martha Luehrmann** (Governor, policewoman) AEB audiences may remember Martha in *Relatively Speaking*, Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*

## **About Actors Ensemble of Berkeley**

**Actors Ensemble of Berkeley (AEB)** has been around the block (and just around the corner from you) since 1957, making us the longest-running stage company in Berkeley. Since 1965 we have performed primarily at Live Oak Theatre in North Berkeley. Recently we have also taken the opportunity to bring the magic of theatre to John Hinkel Park, the site of many wonderful performances over the years. We hope you enjoy the show and welcome us back for years to come!

As Berkeley's only true community theatre company, we depend on our volunteers to bring their energy and creative vision to each play we produce. If you would like to volunteer in our theatre, give us a call or send us an email! We'd love for you to play a part in our next show!

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley  
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### **Board of Directors**

Paula Aiello, Alan Barkan, Paula Bauer, Michael R. Cohen, Robert Estes, Bob Gudmundsson, Martha Luehrmann, William Martinelli, Emmy Pierce, Vicki Siegel, Jerome Solberg

Actors Ensemble thanks those who contributed to our Indiegogo Fundraising campaign for Madame Gufay:

### ***Bronze contributors:***

Paula Aiello  
Jan Chamelon  
Seymour Chatman  
Sara Frucht  
Gli Gleason  
Karl Goldstein  
Mary Louise Gotthold  
Gribear  
Martha Luehrmann  
Victoria Siegal  
Meghan and Robert  
Wilson

### ***Silver:***

Al Badger  
Jerome Solberg  
Johnny Davis

### ***Gold***

J P K Brennan  
Jonathan Gordon  
John Furth

The performance is approximately 1 3/4 hours long including a 15 minute intermission.

**Madame Gufay's  
Free Speech Lovelutionaries  
Cast**

*In order of appearance*

Madame Gufay.....Simone Bloch  
Guard/Radio Host.....Patrick Glenn  
Officer Braggard/Ensemble.....Cai Shaotian  
Sherri/Library Supervisor.....Cj Gross  
Chancellor/Bully.....Tom Westlake  
Janet.....Alicia Barela  
Vice Chancellor Bean.....Scott Alexander Ayres  
Aaron.....Chris Habash  
Lilly.....Sarang Cho Lee  
Governor's Husband/Ensemble.....Chris Cruz  
Policeman/Governor.....Martha Luehrmann  
Professor Pew.....Edward Kimak  
Aunt Amanda/Ensemble.....Vicki Zabarte  
Coffee Shop Patron.....Julia Plafker  
Poodle Puppeteer.....Mina Price

**Production Crew**

Director .....Alan Barkan  
Costume Design ..... Harriet Hache  
Stage Management/Sound Operation.....Carmen Yu  
Assistant Stage Manager.....Julia Plafker  
2<sup>nd</sup> Assistant Stage Manager.....Mina Price  
Light Design/Operation.....Robert Gudmundsson  
Sound Design ..... Cai Shaotian & Carmen Yu  
Props.....Julia Plafker & Jerome Solberg  
Assistant Costumes & Props.....Norah Foster  
Scene Change Coordination.....Vicki Zabarte  
Photography.....Anna Kaminska  
Producer & Program, Graphics.....Jerome Solberg

**Special Thanks To:** The City of Berkeley, Michael Storm and TheatreFirst, Masquers in Point Richmond.

**Cast and Crew Biographies**

*In Alphabetical Order*

**Scott Alexander Ayres** (Bean), originally from the East Coast, Scott has been performing at various venues in the Bay Area for over a decade. This is Scott's sixth production with AEB, having previously acted in their productions of *Working*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Passion Play*, *Relatively Speaking*, and *Over the Tavern*.

**Alicia Barela** (Janet), a retired physician, is delighted to be making her debut with AEB. After a 25-year hiatus from previous theatrical productions, she has recently completed two seasons with Festival Theatre Ensemble in the South Bay and appeared in two productions of *¡Viva Cristo Rey!* with Quo Vadis Theatre of San Jose.

**Simone Bloch** (Gufay) is a French-American performer who has for more than a decade acted and danced in various shows in the Bay Area. Among other companies, she has been part of Sun and Moon Ensemble and is a founding member of Inferno Theatre. She loves physical theater, but is happy to work with AEB for the second time and to share the stage with an eclectic and interesting cast and team.

**Sarang Cho** (Lilly) is a Korean girl who was raised in the hottest country, Brazil, and more recently Southern California. She is a UC Berkeley student majoring in Theater Performance Studies, you may have seen her in *After the War Blues* from Berkeley. She just love to be on stage and never wants to leave. She would like to thank her lovely family, Dungul, Mio, Jinwoo, Lura and her friends. Also she would like to thank the director and cast & crew!

**Chris Cruz** (Governor's Husband, Ensemble), a Musical Theatre/Dance student at SJSU, is proud to make his Actors Ensemble debut. Most recent credits include Ensemble in the Bay Area Premiere of *Mary Poppins* at Berkeley Playhouse and *Rigoletto* at Opera San Jose, future productions include *Ragtime* with Marquee Productions in San Jose.

**Doctor Doom** (booth supervisor) is a pre-eminent supervillain in the Marvel Comics Universe, and the primary antagonist of the Fantastic Four. Like most supervillains, he gets lots of juicy lines but has a spectacularly poor winning percentage.

**Norah Foster** (Playwright) was born in Winnipeg, CA but grew up in Oakland, Cupertino, and Salinas. Norah married and divorced a