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JANUARY 22ND — FEBRUARY 20TH, 2010

ANT  GONE

ANOUILH'S

ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY has been around the block (and just around the corner from you) since 1957, making us the longest running stage company in Berkeley. We began with seven UC Berkeley alumni from the World War II era. Their love of acting gave birth to a tradition that began with four plays in 1957, which were initially performed in a neighbor's basement. In 1965, AE began performing at the Live Oak Theatre — and has ever since.

Our mission is to enrich, entertain and improve our community through fascinating theatrical works. With social consciousness and an ensemble approach, we provide area residents with opportunities to attend, participate in and be helped through theatre. Our shows will be affordable, our opportunities enjoyable, and our community impact felt year-round.

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!

Contact us at:

Email: info@aeofberkeley.org

Phone: 510-841-5580

www.aeofberkeley.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Alan Barkan, Eric Carlson, Jeremy Cole, Jose Garcia, Bob Gudmundsson, Maggie Gudmundsson, Martha Luehrman, Bill Martinelli, Jerome Solberg, Stanley Spenger, Kim Stewart

Jean Anouilh's
ANTIGONE

Directed by Bruce Coughran

CAST

Antigone.....	Briana McWhorter
Ismene.....	Kate Brauneis-Krull, Allison Blackwell (<i>understudy</i>)
Creon	Lee Vogt
Haemon	Jose Garcia
Eurydice	Helen Slomowitz (<i>1/22 & 2/5</i>), Michele Delattre (<i>2/12</i>), Lisa Drostova (<i>1/29 & 2/20</i>), Martha Luehrmann (<i>2/6</i>), Karol Luque (<i>2/18</i>), Rose Anne Raphael (<i>1/23</i>), Victoria F. Siegel (<i>2/13</i>), Shannon Warrick (<i>2/19</i>)
Nurse	Maureen Coyne
The Messenger.....	Rahi Azizi
Page	Max Kahl
Guard.....	John Hurst, Bob Lane, Frederick Lein, Alecks Rundell
Chorus.....	Norman MacLeod

CREW

Director.....	Bruce Coughran
Set Design	Jerome Solberg
Assistant Set Construction.....	Silas Humphreys
Costume Design	Kim Stewart
Assistant on Costumes	Helen Slomowitz
Light Production	Maia Zimonja, Yu Wu
Assistant Light Design.....	Kate Aragon
Musician	Tom Ferguson
Producer.....	Jerome Solberg
Stage Manager.....	Ericka Wells
Graphics.....	Shu Ping Guan

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Antigone is the third part of Sophocles' trilogy of plays about the story of Oedipus (made famous in modern times by Freud's use of the myth to explore sexual psychology.) After Oedipus finds out that he has unknowingly killed his father and married his own mother, he blinds himself and wanders the countryside with his daughter, Antigone, to make amends for his sins. At his death, his two sons are supposed to rule jointly, but Eteocles refuses to share power, and Polynices raises seven foreign armies that do battle against the city of Thebes and are defeated. Polynices and his brother Eteocles kill each other in the final battle and their uncle Creon becomes king. This is where our play starts.

Of the many adaptations of this 3000 year old story, this version was written by French playwright Jean Anouilh in 1943, in occupied France. The play premiered in Paris, in front of Nazi censors, in 1944, and is widely recognized as speaking to its audience about the French resistance. The play is certainly about standing up to oppressive authority, but I was also interested in exploring its spiritual dimensions. What makes a young girl, even one who has had the extraordinary experiences that Antigone has, find the inner resources to do what is essentially an act of civil disobedience? Her resolve doesn't seem to come from political or religious conviction, but from a place of deep inner knowing. She knows and acts, she does not reason. And the results are surprising, maybe even to herself.

We have seen examples in modern times of how civil disobedience can have huge consequences. In such figures as Martin Luther King and Gandhi we have seen how simple acts - sitting on the seat of a bus, picking up a handful of salt - can bring down empires. But we rarely see the inner life that creates these seemingly simple and spontaneous, but powerful, actions. And I think this play gives us such an opportunity.

Antigone loves life, but she is fated to enjoy it for a brief time. She seems to be strong, a hero even, but inside she is perhaps as fragile and frail as any of us. Regardless, it seems like she rejects the conventional view of life as a "search for happiness". Somehow, she resolves to find the joy in living the moment at hand, with complete conviction, no matter what the cost. She finds her peace in the richness of life in the here and now. Heroism enough for us all, I think.

CAST AND CREW

RAHI AZIZI (The Messenger) has been an actor since the age of 13. Among other parts, he co-starred on a series on Nickelodeon, "Space Cases," and has guest starred on the CBS television series "The Nanny." More recently, he performed as Macduff in a UCLA production of "Macbeth". He is currently attending graduate school at UC Berkeley.

ALLISON BLACKWELL (Ismene understudy): Allison Blackwell is pleased to be making her first appearance with the Actors Ensemble Of Berkeley. She holds an AA in American Sign Language & Deaf Studies from Ohlone College and a BFA in Acting from Tulane University in New Orleans. She is currently a member of Theatre Bay Area's ATLAS program.

BRUCE COUGHRAN (Director): Originally from Southern California, Bruce has been directing and assistant directing up and down the West Coast. He recently directed the world premiere of "Bad Connection?" at West Valley College in Sausalito, and several staged readings for Subterranean Shakespeare Theatre Company. He has also been an assistant director at the Old Globe in San Diego, the La Jolla Playhouse, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, ACT in San Francisco, and the Berkeley Opera. This is the first play he has directed for Actors Ensemble.

KATE BRAUNEIS-KRULL (Ismene): This is Kate's first production with AE having recently moved to Berkeley from Boulder, CO. Favorite past roles include The Jailer's daughter in "The Two Noble Kinsmen" and Kate Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer" with The Upstart Crow theatre company in Boulder as well as Emily Brent in "And Then There Were None" at Chatham University in Pittsburgh. When she isn't acting Kate is busy working as a nanny for two very wonderful little boys.

MAUREEN COYNE (Nurse): During the last few years Maureen has been in a number of Actors Ensemble productions. She got to play Dolly Levi in Thornton Wilder's "The Matchmaker" a couple of seasons ago! Most recently she played Lisbeth Sandry, a Christian zealot, in the Actors Theatre of San Francisco's production of "The Grapes of Wrath".

Actors Ensemble Celebrates

JOHN HURST (Guard): This transplanted New Yorker is delighted to make his second appearance with Actors Ensemble, having first appeared as Saul Kimmer in Sam Shepard's "True West". His fondest memories involve his work as the Fool in "King Lear" and Ivan in "Shakespeare's Lost Masterpiece". He has also been fortunate enough to work on a number of film projects through the Scary Cow film Collaborative where he enacted the role of Hans in "Time Bandits".

JOSE GARCIA (Haemon): Jose Garcia is excited to be back on stage at Live Oak Theatre again. Last summer he was seen in an Orinda Starlight Village of "Cyrano De Bergerac". His favorite roles have been Teacher in "A Dream Play", and Ambassador in "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead".

SILAS HUMPHREYS (Set Construction Assistant): Silas is a British import to the Bay Area. "Antigone" is the second production he has worked on with the Actors Ensemble, and he looks forward to many more.

BOB LANE (Guard): Bob is pleased to work with Actors Ensemble for the first time. In his day jobs, Bob is acting coach for drama students at Irvington High School (Fremont) and teaches Shakespeare every chance he gets. He thanks Sue for her loving support, and Jasper cat for his delightful playing.

FREDERCK LEIN (Guard): Frederick has appeared with many Bay Area theatres including San Francisco Shakespeare, Shakespeare at Stinson and the Ross Valley Players. He is a graduate of Emerson College in Boston. He thanks his lovely wife, the playwright Zazu, for her love and support.

NORMAN MACLEOD (Chorus): Norman trained as an actor with York Repertory Theatre in England. Since 1965 he has performed in numerous local productions including his appearance with Actors Ensemble as Sir Toby Belch in "Twelfth Night" and as Berenger the First in "Exit the King". Norman thanks Dianne for her continued support and forbearance during his theatrical endeavors.

BRIANA MCWHORTER (Antigone): is majoring in theater at UC Berkeley. Her previous theatrical roles include Miranda in "The Tempest", Blanche in "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and Chick in "Crimes of the Heart". She loves studying about Greek mythology and is very excited about the opportunity to bring one of its tragic heroines to life.

ALECKS RUNDELL (Guard): Alecks is happy to be rejoining the Actors Ensemble of Berkeley as an actor. His last performance at Live Oak Theatre was as the Doctor in Ionesco's "Exit the King". He received his Bachelor's Degree in Theatre Arts from Reed College, Portland OR; after completing his thesis on

Fractals and Chaos in modern theatre. He has done lighting designs for several theatre companies in the Bay Area, including Actors Ensemble, Alterena, Virago, Exit Theatre and NOH Space. He would like to give thanks to his parents, Jeanne and Richard Rundell; and send his love to Priscilla.

JEROME SOLBERG (Set Design, Producer): Jerome is happy to be associated with another Actors Ensemble of Berkeley production - somehow it always seems to be the one that starts right after the holidays! He last had a byline as the Director of "Exit the King" last year on this very stage. He thanks his family and friends for all their support over the years.

LEE VOGT (Creon): Thirty years ago on this stage Lee reignited his happiness in acting in Shaw's "The Shewing Up of Blanco Posnet". And he's happy to reignite it again in this show.

HELEN SLOMOWITZ (Eurydice, Assistant on Costumes): Helen is very happy to be back at AE for another great adventure-including her 1st opportunity to be up on stage, in front of the audience (yikes) as opposed to her usual costume design, which she has done for many years now in the Bay Area for film & theatre. She'd like to thank each & everyone of the cast and crew for being so fabulous and a special thanks to Bruce for being such a marvelous Director.

YU WU (Light Production): Yu is working on her second Actors Ensemble production, this time light operation (last time she drew trees for "As It Is in Heaven"), and is entering her second semester as a freshman at U.C. Berkeley, intending to major in media studies. She is grateful for the invaluable experience gained from working at AE and would like to thank everyone for being so nice and dedicated.

MAX KAHL (Page): Though he's not yet graduated from high school (now a Senior at Holden high) this is his second production - his first was as Renfield in "Dracula".

TOM FERGUSON (Bassist): Having returned from San Diego where he completed a degree in double bass performance, this SF Bay Area native is pleased to be making his first appearance with the Actors Ensemble.

KIMBERLY STEWART (Costume Design): Shopping for something for me to wear is bad enough; but for nine people, wow. It almost took the fun out of shopping. Almost :)

THANKS

Gian Banchero
Stanley Spenger

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ANTIGONE by Anouilh **January 22 through February 20**

CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS by Shepard **April 23 through May 22**

BLITHE SPIRIT by Coward **July 23 through August 21**

THE WINTER'S TALE by Shakespeare **August 23 through September 20**

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