



# Actors Ensemble of Berkeley

2017 Winter Staged Reading Series

## A Wilde Life

A Celebration of the Life and Works of Oscar Wilde

Presented in collaboration with TheatreFirst's T1 Presents performance series

Directed and Curated by Robert Estes

**ONE NIGHT ONLY – Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

Selections from Oscar Wilde (except where noted\*)

Your Hosts for the Evening.....Jerome Solberg and Vicki Siegel  
*Preface to Dorian Gray*.....Ensemble  
*Ravenna: Stanzas 1-3 & 7*.....Stanley Spenger  
*Personal Impressions of the United States*.....Rachel Kayhan  
*The Selfish Giant*..... Jan Pimentel, Tim Bishop  
*The Artist as Critic*.....Jeff Trescott, Greg Estes

### 15 minute Intermission

*The Picture of Dorian Gray*.....Lora Oliver, Karen Coronna and Wendy Wisely  
*Earnest seen through a Prism\**.....Susannah Wood, Martha Luehrmann, and Matthew Weinberg  
*De Profundis*..... Tom Flynn, Sheila Cress, and Christine Sheppard  
*Oscar Wilde Slept Here\**..... Steven Blatt, Matthew Weinberg and Crystal Brown  
*Ballad of Read Gaol*.....Ensemble

\* Earnest Seen Through a Prism by Susannah Wood

\* Oscar Wilde Slept Here by Terry Haley

### **The Most Alive Dead Writer**

by Robert Estes, curator and director of ***The Wilde Life***

Just after Oscar Wilde died in 1900, the Pall Mall Gazette curtly opined that his "gifts included supreme intellectual ability, but nothing he ever wrote had strength to endure."

Today, playwrights ranging from Tom Stoppard to Terrence McNally now revere Mr. Wilde for his wit (Stoppard) to his torching of the Victorian class system (McNally).

Yet, for me, the true test of a writer's popularity is a simple one: if I go to the library to check out a book about the author, will it be available? Bernard Shaw, yes. Even Shakespeare, yes. But just try to check out a juicy book about Mr. Wilde! Three months on the waiting list!

So everyone is greatly intrigued by the martyr myth—a man at the top of the London theater world in January 1895 with two soaring hits on the West End stage (*An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*), who's brought down to absolute personal destruction exactly 100 days after the spectacular opening of the latter play.

Tonight though, we go beyond Wilde's fatally alluring legend, we go beyond a never faltering popularity that seems to make him the most alive dead writer, and we return to Wilde's actual literary work in all of its varied genres: poetry, short stories, essays, novels, criticism, and, well, plays. So yes, take note Pall Mall Gazette, tonight, we realize, for the first time ever, the enduring vital importance of all of Oscar's writing!

Thanks to: Jon Tracy, Kristoffer Barerra, and Lucas Clarvo

### Up Next:

***The Importance of Being Earnest***, by Oscar Wilde, directed by Nicole Menez- runs Fri/Sat 8 p.m. till Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>! Sunday matinee Feb. 5<sup>th</sup> 2 p.m.

**Staged Reading: *GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE***, by Moises Kaufmann directed by Laur Raag, Monday Feb. 6<sup>th</sup>, 8 p.m.

More info always at: [www.aeofberkeley.org](http://www.aeofberkeley.org)