

ACTORS
ENSEMBLE OF
BERKELEY

PASSION PLAY

BY

SARAH RUHL

A CYCLE IN THREE PARTS

DIRECTED BY JON WAI-KEUNG LOWE



APRIL 22 THROUGH MAY 2 | LIVE OAK THEATER
WEST COAST PREMIERE

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PASSION PLAY, PART 3, "Originally Commissioned by Arena Stage,
Washington, DC, Molly Smith, Artistic Director"

ABOUT ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY

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. 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!

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley, P.O. Box 663
Berkeley, California 94701
Info@AEOfBerkeley.Org

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Larry Reed, Shadow-
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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

You may not have thought there'd be a lot of laughs in a play based on the story of a man who was tortured to death for espousing kindness. I didn't see it either, when AE offered me this project. I knew that Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room* was resonant with ideas about society and science and the knowledge of oneself and that her *Eurydice* was one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen onstage. I thought, "Cool. I sorta know the outline of the Gospels. I'll just concentrate on the relationships." (See? It's already a comedy.)

There is wit, certainly, in *Passion Play*. Ruhl's satire of what it takes to put on a show is funny because it comes from a loving intimacy with the object of its humor. The laughs in this play come like little blessings: unexpected and often when you could really use one.

An esteemed colleague tried to explain the comedy of Chekhov to me. "I think," she said, "it's because his characters have such enormous dreams that will never, ever come true." That's not the kind of thing one wants to hear when putting on the West Coast premiere of a three-act fantasia on religious and political themes by a Pulitzer-nominated playwright, but it might bear some resemblance to the story we are telling. The richness of Ruhl's writing comes from a profound empathy for her characters. They live in a world where miracles happen. They dream and love and aspire. They also covet and despair and rage against injustice.

This play moves me because it brilliantly deconstructs a pivotal tenet of Christianity, the culpability of Pontius Pilate in the death of Christ. Note that Ruhl's intent is not to dismantle the myth, but, through examination, make it more immediate. To examine is not to blaspheme. Through the knowledge of good and evil, we come closer to God in our understanding of action and responsibility. The critique of the symbiosis between followers and leaders is sharpest in Act 3 (which I hope is not past your bedtime). P's story becomes tragically relevant and damning of our collective amnesia. It is also the most hopeful of the three acts.

This production owes an artistic debt to Larry Reed and Shadowlight Productions for advice, material support, and inspiration. Any clumsiness in the application of their techniques is our own.

Jon Wai-keung Lowe (Director, Set Design, Projection Supervisor) has directed for Actors Ensemble, Ferocious Lotus, Theatre Rhino/Eastenders, and Pocket Opera and has designed scenery and/or lighting for world premieres with San Francisco Mime Troupe and Theatre Rhinoceros. His staging of "Green Bamboo Hermitage" was named Best of the Fringe '05. Jon is a member of Lincoln Center Directors Lab and Directors Lab West. This fall, he will present a one-act using 17th century Chinese melodies with a new English libretto at the SF Fringe Festival. <http://www.theVisibleTheater.org>

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BERKELEY

PASSION PLAY












BY

SARAH RUHL

A CYCLE IN THREE PARTS

DIRECTED BY JON WAI-KEUNG LOWE

Cast

SCOTT ALEXANDER AYRES		CARPENTER 1
JACOB CRIBBS		PONTIUS/FOOTSOLDIER/P
BEN GRUBB		DIRECTOR
DOUGLAS KAUFMAN		CARPENTER 2
JUSTIN LISZANCKIE		JOHN/ERIC/J
MERYN MACDOUGALL		VILLAGE IDIOT/VIOLET
NORMAN MACLEOD		FRIAR/ENGLISHMAN/VA PSYCHIATRIST
ERIC REID		MACHINIST/OFFICER/YOUNG DIRECTOR
ELENA RUGGIERO		MARY 2
ADDIE ULREY		MARY 1/ELSA/MARY 1
LISA WANG		QUEEN ELIZABETH/HITLER/ REAGAN

Act I - 60 Minutes

Intermission is 10 Minutes

Act II - 60 Minutes

Intermission is 10 Minutes

Act III - 75 Minutes

"Passion Play is produced by special arrangement with Bruce Ostler, BRET ADAMS, Ltd., 448 West 48th St., New York , NY, 10036"

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SARAH RUHL

A CYCLE IN THREE PARTS

DIRECTED BY JON WAI-KEUNG LOWE

Crew



JON WAI-KEUNG LOWE	🌀	DIRECTOR, SET DESIGNER, PROJECTION SUPERVISOR
ANDY ISER	🌀	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
KRISTA CARTER	🌀	STAGE MANAGER
JEROME SOLBERG STANLEY SPENGER	🌀	CO-PRODUCERS
JEFFREY W. HAMBY	🌀	COSTUMES
NORMAN DE VEYRA	🌀	GRAPHICS
ALECKS RUNDRELL	🌀	LIGHTING
NATHAN LIVELY	🌀	SOUND DESIGN
PAUL FEINBERG	🌀	PROJECTION GRAPHICS ACT 2
CHRISTINE U'REN	🌀	PROJECTION GRAPHICS ACT 3
DANIEL THOBAS THANH TRAN	🌀	ADDITIONAL PROJECTION GRAPHICS
NAYLA EL-HABER	🌀	PROPS
DAVID HARRIS	🌀	Pre-Production Photos
ANNA KAMINSKA	🌀	Additional Photos
JONATHAN GORDON	🌀	TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
ANNA ANDERSON CLANCI COCHRAN JOSE GARCIA HILDA SCHMELLING	🌀	CREW

Allow Us to Introduce Ourselves

SARAH RUHL (Playwright) plays include In “The Next Room or the Vibrator Play” (Glickman Prize), “The Clean House” (Susan Smith Blackburn award, 2004, finalist for Pulitzer Prize, 2005), “Dead Man’s Cell Phone”, (Helen Hayes award for best new play), “Demeter in the City” (nominated for 9 NAACP awards), “Eurydice”, “Melancholy Play”, “Orlando”, a new version of Chekhov’s “Three Sisters”, and “Passion Play” (Kennedy Center Fourth Forum Freedom Award). Her plays have premiered at the Lyceum Theater on Broadway, produced by Lincoln Center Theater; off-Broadway at Lincoln Center Theater, Playwrights’ Horizons, and Second Stage; and regionally at Berkeley Repertory Theater, Yale Repertory Theater, the Goodman Theater, Cornerstone Theater, Arena Stage, Woolly Mammoth, Cincinnati Playhouse, and the Piven Theater Workshop in Chicago, as well being produced at many other theaters across the country.

Scott Alexander Ayres (Carpenter 1) has been acting since the lead in his 2nd grade class’ production of “Peer Gynt”. Originally from the East Coast, Scott has performed all along the eastern seaboard, but the Bay Area has been his home for over 20 years. Past productions at AE include “Working” and “Uncle Vanya”.

Jacob Cribbs (Pontius/Footsoldier/P) graduated UCSC’s Theater Program in 2010 which included an acting internship with Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Recent parts have landed him in Zimmerman’s “The Odyssey” and Durang’s “Beyond Therapy.” His first full-length play “Animals” received the UCSC Darma Grace Playwright Award.

Paul Feinberg (Projection Graphics Act 2) Alameda based artist – painter – scenic designer, has eighteen years experience in theater, including ten in regional theater working as a properties master, culminating with Berkeley Repertory Theatre. He has a BFA in painting from Temple University’s Tyler School of Art and an MFA in theatrical set design from Temple University.

Ben Grubb (Director) has been seen at Actor’s Ensemble in True West as Lee and, most recently, in LUV as Milt. Other Bay Area appearances include MacDuff in “MacBeth”, Baker in “Into the Woods”, and Subterranean Shakespeare’s staged reading series, most recently “The Bronte Cycle”. He’d like to thank Abby, Josh, and the folks at Habitat for their help and support.

Jeffrey Hamby (Costumes) hails from North Carolina. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and History from the University of North Carolina. He has worked for east coast designers and theatre companies including: Tony Winning Designer William Ivey Long; the North Carolina Shakespeare Festival and Pennsylvania State University. He thanks Matthew and Jack for their unconditional support throughout this past month.

Andy Iser (Assistant Director) Andy most recently spent a year at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, studying literature, playwriting, and Irish drama. He directed “A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum”, “Cut Her Down” (a murder mystery he wrote), and produced 24 Hour Theater - 6 Plays in a Day, at UC Berkeley where he holds a BA in English Literature.

Doug Kaufman (Carpenter 2) is returning to the stage after a nine-year absence, having just celebrated his kids’ ninth birthday --coincidence? You decide. Doug

and his wife just moved from Maryland, where he appeared in “A Funny Thing Happened ...”, “The Odd Couple”, and “The Grapes of Wrath”, among others. He hopes you’ll see more of him at Live Oak in years to come.

Justin Liszanckie (John/Eric/J) was recently seen as Professor Plum in Boxcar Theatre’s “Clue”, and he was in “Canary Yellow”, part of the Bay One Acts Festival, as well as “Much Ado About Nothing” at Cal Shakes. Other past credits include Cliff Bradshaw in “Cabaret” and James in “The Collection”.

Meryn MacDougall (Village Idiot/Violet) is making her Bay Area debut after receiving her B.A. in Theatre from Southern Oregon University. Recent credits include: Georgiana in “Pride and Prejudice”, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Suzanne in “Picasso at the Lapin Agile”. She would like to say, “Finally I am able to play a part that captures my essence: the Village Idiot. This play is gonna Ruhl!”

Norman Macleod (Friar / Visiting Englishman / VA Psychotherapist) trained as an actor with York Repertory Theatre in England. Since 1965 he has performed in numerous local productions including Actors Ensemble’s “Twelfth Night” as Sir Toby Belch; as King Berenger the First in “Exit the King” and as The Chorus in “Antigone”. Norman thanks Dianne for her continued support and forbearance during his theatrical endeavors.

Elena Ruggiero (Mary 2) when Elena was dressed as Mary Magdalene for Halloween, she had no idea how closely life would imitate art! In addition to dancing & decorating cupcakes, she’s also performed in “A Chorus Line” as Sheila, “Ghosts” as Regina and “California Suite” as Millie. Endless thanks to Jeffrey Bihl, Bobby & her ever-supportive family & friends

Eric Reid (Machinist/German Officer/Young Director) usually prefers crunchy over creamy peanut butter except in those rare cases when he only has plain white bread. When that happens, he prefers creamy over crunchy. Eric is also mourning the loss of one of his favorite childhood breakfast cereals, Cap’n Crunch. He also takes tips!

Alecks Rundell (Lighting Design) thanks AE for trusting him; his sister and Frank for supporting him and his parents for love. Thanks to Brian. Thanks to the strangers who listen. Thanks to the sky that falls. Most of all, thanks to Priscilla, for something I still don’t understand

Addie Ulrey (Mary 1/Elsa/Mary 1) was raised by house painters, meditators, farmers, and aspiring poets in Charlotte, Michigan. She has studied theatre at Oberlin College, the National Theatre Institute, and the Moscow Art Theatre. One year ago she moved west to seek her fortune.

Christine U’Ren (Projection Graphics Act 3) is a graphic designer and would-be painter based in Berkeley. She hopes the shadow-work for “Passion Play” comes out half as good as Jon Lowe imagined it. Thanks to her husband Gene Mocsy, for always having good ideas. www.christineu.com

Lisa Wang (Queen Elizabeth, Hitler, Reagan) Lisa is thrilled to be joining the cast of “Passion Play”. She studies and performs improvised theatre. You can also catch Lisa performing in and around SF with her improvised theatre group, The Streetlight People. www.thestreetlightpeople.com

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