

A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

CAREY PERLOFF, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR | ELLEN RICHARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press photos and kits: act-sf.org/press

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER TO PRESENT GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S *MAJOR BARBARA*

Coproduced with Theatre Calgary, *Major Barbara* explores the timely themes of business, faith, family, and morality

• January 8–February 2, 2014 •

SAN FRANCISCO (November 11, 2013) – After 16 years, **George Bernard Shaw** returns to the American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) stage in a sumptuous production of his most witty and richly invigorating works – ***Major Barbara***. Salvation Army officer Major Barbara gets in an intriguing tangle of morality and religion when her church accepts money from her estranged father—a wealthy armaments manufacturer. If the price of supporting the poor is complicity with the country's most successful gun factory, who has the right to be righteous about saving the poor? Timely and topical, *Major Barbara* is a devilishly funny satire exploring themes of business, faith, family, and philanthropy. Coproduced with one of A.C.T.'s favorite Canadian collaborators, **Theatre Calgary** (which hosted A.C.T.'s production of *The Tosca Project* during its 2011 tour), this is the first staging of *Major Barbara* during A.C.T.'s tenure at The Geary Theater. *Major Barbara* will be directed by Theatre Calgary Artistic Director **Dennis Garnhum** and features an international cast of both Canadian and American actors. A.C.T.'s production of *Major Barbara* runs **January 8–February 2, 2014**, at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater (415 Geary Street, San Francisco). **Press night is Wednesday, January 15, 2014.** Tickets (\$20–\$140) are on sale now and may be purchased online at act-sf.org or by calling **415.749.2228**.

Says **Carey Perloff**, Artistic Director of A.C.T.: "As I was planning the season and wrestling with the enormous ongoing conflicts in this country around guns, violence and money, it suddenly seemed an urgent time to revisit Shaw's visionary *Major Barbara*! I can think of no other play that so brilliantly explores the uneasy relationship between ill-gotten gains and corporate philanthropy, as Undershaft tries to appease his passionate daughter Barbara by paying for her good deeds with gunpowder profits. It's thrilling that this will be a genuinely international project, as we team up again with the remarkable Theater Calgary and create a company of superb Canadian and American actors to tell this suspenseful, disturbing and often hilarious tale."

“I am honoured to be directing this masterpiece that speaks of the passion of faith and the passion of war in strikingly modern terms,” says **Garnhum**. “I know the audiences at A.C.T. will enjoy the stimulating mix of thought-provoking narrative and insightful humour.”

The cast for *Major Barbara* includes **Nemuna Ceesay** as Jenny Hill; **Kandis Chappell** as Lady Britomart Undershaft; **Dan Clegg** as Bronterre O’Brien Price and Bilton; **Jennifer Clement** as Mrs. Baines; **Tyrell Crews** as Charles Lomax; **Dean Paul Gibson** as Andrew Undershaft; **Gretchen Hall** as Barbara Undershaft; **Dan Hiatt** as Peter Shirley and Morrison; **Nicholas Pelczar** as Adolphus Cusins; **Stafford Perry** as Stephen Undershaft; **Valeri Planche** as Rummy Mitchens; **Elyse Price** as Sarah Undershaft; and **Brian Rivera** as Bill Walker.

The creative team for *Major Barbara* includes scenic designer **Daniel Ostling** (*Stuck Elevator* and *Once in a Lifetime* at A.C.T.; *Clybourne Park* on Broadway), costume designer **Alex Jaeger** (*Arcadia* and *4000 Miles* at A.C.T.; *Other Desert Cities* at the Mark Taper Forum); lighting designer **Alan Brodie** (*Vigil* at A.C.T.; *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival) and sound designer **Scott Killian** (*Sarah, Sarah* at Manhattan Theatre Club; *The Shaughraun* at Seattle Repertory Theatre).

A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—in association with *Major Barbara* that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while making a whole night out of their evening at the theater:

- **Bike to the Theater Night:** Jan. 23, 7:00 p.m.
Providing a greener alternative to theater transportation, A.C.T. and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition offer free valet bike parking, as well as a special discount on tickets, for this select performance.
- **Audience Prologue:** Jan. 14, 5:30 p.m.
Before the curtain goes up, get behind the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff. **Can't make it to the event? We'll be streaming it live online!**
- **Theater on the Couch:** Fri., Jan. 17, 8 p.m.
Following the show, discuss the minds, motives, and behaviors of the characters with Dr. Mason Turner, chief of psychiatry at San Francisco’s Kaiser Permanente Medical Center.
- **Audience Exchanges:** Tue., Jan. 21, at 7 p.m. | Sun., Jan. 26, at 2 p.m. | Wed., Jan. 29, at 2 p.m.
Learn firsthand what goes into the making of great theater. After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors, designers and artists who develop the work onstage.
- **OUT with A.C.T.:** Wed., Jan. 22, at 8 p.m.
The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy free drinks and treats at this popular after party. Visit www.act-sf.org/out for information about how to subscribe to OUT nights (and other InterACT events) throughout the season.
- **Symposium:** Sat., Jan. 25, at 2 p.m.

You're invited to join us after the show for a lively discussion! A.C.T. invites you to join us in the theater immediately following your performance for a discussion and Q&A with a local expert. The discussion will be moderated by A.C.T. dramaturg **Michael Paller**. **Can't make it to the event? We'll be streaming it live online!**

- **Wine Series:** Tue., Jan. 28, at 5:30 p.m.
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine tasting event featuring unique wines from **The Barrel Room**, a popular wine bar located in Union Square.
- **PlayTime:** Saturday, Feb. 1, at 12:30 p.m.
Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with theater with the artists who make it happen at this interactive workshop.

A.C.T.'s production of *Major Barbara* is made possible by producers **Mr. and Mrs. David Crane; Carlotta and Robert Dathe; Linda Jo Fitz; Mr. and Mrs. Gene Schnair**; and associate producers **Judith and David Anderson; Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Gallagher; Dr. and Mrs. Richard E. Geist; Cricket and Alan Jones; Capegio Properties, Barbara and Chuck Lavaroni; Joseph D. Keegan, Ph.D.; Drs. Michael and Jane Marmor; Mary and Gene Metz; Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Pering; Tom and JaMel Perkins; Rick and Cindy Simons**.

A.C.T. would like to acknowledge its 2013–14 company sponsors **Frannie Fleishhacker; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon P. Getty; Mr. and Mrs. John Goldman; Ambassador James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Burt and Deedee McMurtry; Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Ms. Kathleen Scutchfield; Mary and Steven Swig; Jeff and Laurie Ubben**.

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FACT SHEET

WHAT: *Major Barbara*

Continuing its mission of bringing reimagined classic works to the stage, A.C.T. will present a sumptuous new production of George Bernard Shaw’s political comedy ***Major Barbara (January 8–February 2, 2014)***. In this intriguing tangle of religion and business, a Salvation Army officer becomes disillusioned when her church accepts money from a whiskey distiller and armaments manufacturer—her own father.

WHO: Directed by Dennis Garnhum

Creative Team: **Daniel Ostling** (scenic designer), **Alex Jaeger** (costume designer), **Alan Brodie** (lighting designer), **Scott Killian** (sound designer)

Featuring: Julius Ahn, Marie-France Arcilla, Joseph Anthony Foronda, Raymond J. Lee, Joel Perez

WHERE: A.C.T.’s Geary Theater, 415 Geary Street, San Francisco, CA 94108

WHEN: January 8-February 2, 2014
Press Night: Wednesday, January 15, 2014

InterACT Events

- Audience Prologue1/14 (5:30 p.m.)
- Theater on the Couch.....1/17 (8 p.m.)
- Audience Exchanges.....1/21 (7 p.m.), 1/26 (2 p.m.), 1/29 (2 p.m.)
- OUT with A.C.T.....1/22 (8 p.m.)
- Symposium.....1/25 (2 p.m.)
- Wine Series.....1/28 (5:30 p.m.)
- PlayTime.....2/1 (12:30 p.m.)

TICKETS: Tickets (\$20 -\$140) are on sale now and may be purchased online at act-sf.org or by calling 415.749.2228.

PHOTOS: act-sf.org/press

TIX & INFO: 415.749.2228 | act-sf.org

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