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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER TO PRESENT
THE INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED MUSIC-INFUSED PRODUCTION,

THE SUIT

Based on “The Suit” by Can Themba, Mothobi Mutloatse, and Barney Simon
Direction, adaptation, and musical direction by Peter Brook, Marie-Hélène Estienne, and Franck Krawczyk

U.S. tour of The Suit is produced by David Eden Productions, LTD.

APRIL 23–MAY 18, 2014

SAN FRANCISCO (February 4, 2014) – From legendary theatrical innovators Peter Brook, Marie-Hélène Estienne, and Franck Krawczyk comes the internationally acclaimed music-infused production, The Suit. Fresh from sold-out runs in New York, Paris, and London, The Suit is a tragic tale of betrayal and resentment adapted from the short story of the same name by South African writer, Can Themba. When a husband catches his beautiful wife in the arms of her lover, the lover flees—but leaves his suit behind. As her penance, the husband makes his wife “treat the suit as an honored guest,” to accompany her wherever she goes. From the dinner table to walks around the neighborhood, the suit becomes a whimsical yet cruel reminder of her infidelity. Traditional African melodies interweave with jazz standards to underscore this simple yet surprising tale, set in Apartheid-era Johannesburg.

Reminiscent of The Scarlet Letter and overflowing with the same inventiveness as The Overcoat and Brief Encounter, The Suit features innovative staging that integrates virtuosic musicians directly into the action, making Brook’s haunting production of this heartbreaking fable sing. The Suit will perform at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater (415 Geary Street, San Francisco) April 23–May 18, 2014. Press night is Wednesday, April 30, 2014. Tickets ($20 -$120) are on sale now and may be purchased online at act-sf.org or by calling 415.749.2228.

Says A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff: “Last spring I went to Brooklyn Academy of Music to see The Suit, with no agenda other than to delight in the work of one of my favorite artists. Seventy-five minutes later, I rushed backstage and, in the best French I could muster, told the stage manager and company manager from the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord that I wanted to bring the piece to San Francisco next season. The Suit is magical in the most elemental and purely theatrical way. With almost no scenery or props, three actors and three remarkable musicians conjure a South African world of love and infidelity, of loyalty and revenge, that is pungent and sweet and sad and surprising. The Suit reminded me of how I felt when I first read Brook’s seminal work The Empty
— that all it takes is a good story on a bare stage to captivate an audience and help them imagine a whole world. I am so honored to have a chance to celebrate this bold new work by Marie-Hélène Estienne and Peter Brook—another international adventure for the A.C.T. community"

The cast for *The Suit* includes Jordan Barbour, Ivanno Jeremiah, and Nonhlanhla Kheswa. Musicians for *The Suit* are Arthur Astier (guitar), Mark Christine (piano), and Mark Kavuma (trumpet). The creative team for *The Suit* includes assistant director Rikki Henry, lighting designer Philippe Vialatte, and costume designer Oria Puppo.

A.C.T. will offer numerous InterACT events—many of which are presented free of charge—in association with *The Suit* that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while making a whole night out of their evening at the theater. Visit act-sf.org/interact to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Bike to the Theater Night**  
  *Wed., April 23*  
  Providing a greener alternative to theater transportation, A.C.T. and the San Francisco Bike Coalition offer free valet bike parking, as well as a special discount on tickets, for these select performances.

- **Prologue:**  
  *Tue., April 29, 5:30 p.m.*  
  Get inside the artistic process at this lively preshow discussion with A.C.T. artistic staff.

- **Theater on the Couch:**  
  *Fri., May 2, following the 8 p.m. performance*  
  Led by Dr. Mason Turner, chief of psychiatry at San Francisco’s Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, this exciting postshow discussion series explores the minds, motives, and behaviors of the characters and addresses audience questions.

- **Audience Exchanges:**  
  *Tue., May 6, 7 p.m. | Sun., May 11, 2 p.m. | Wed., May 14, 2 p.m.*  
  After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors and artists who create the work onstage.

- **OUT with A.C.T.:**  
  *Wed., May 7, following the 8 p.m. performance*  
  The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy free drinks and treats at this popular afterparty.

- **Symposium:**  
  *Saturday, May 10, 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., May 13, 7 p.m.*  
  Before the show, raise a glass at this wine tasting event featuring leading sommeliers from the Bay Area’s
hottest local wineries.

- **PlayTime:**
  
  *Sat., May 17, 12:30 p.m.*  
  
  Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with theater with the artists who make it happen at this interactive workshop.

In anticipation of *The Suit*, A.C.T. will present the exclusive California screening of *Peter Brook: The Tightrope*, a new and definitive documentary on the creative process of legendary theater director Peter Brook, on **Monday, March 24 at 7 p.m.** at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater (415 Geary Street, San Francisco). Filmed in total immersion with five hidden cameras, *Peter Brook: The Tightrope* plunges audiences into the intimate aspects of Brook working with his troupe of actors and musicians. Without disturbing the truth of the moment, the film reveals the magic inherent to the creative process, taking us beyond the intimacy of a workshop and into a heightened experience. Tickets for *Peter Brook: The Tightrope* are $10 for general admission and $5 for A.C.T. subscribers (with promo code) and may be purchased online at [act-sf.org/tightrope](http://act-sf.org/tightrope) or by calling 415.749.2228. Tickets for groups of 10+ are $8 each and may be purchased by calling Group Sales at 415.439.2309.

A.C.T.’s production of *The Suit* is made possible by executive producers Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; producers Celeste and Kevin Ford; Anne and Michelle Shonk; Ayn Thorne; and associate producers Joel Krauska and Patricia Fox; Christine and Stan Mattison; John and Paula Murphy; Tim Mott; Richard Rava and Elisa Neipp; with additional support by Hafner Vineyard and Piazza Market Catering.

A.C.T. would like to acknowledge its 2013–14 company sponsors Frannie Fleishhacker; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; 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.

A.C.T. subscribers enjoy incredible savings, unparalleled access, exclusive benefits, and personalized customer service. Subscribers save as much as **33 percent off single-ticket prices**. Full-time students, educators, and administrators with valid ID save up to 50 percent off select packages. Senior discounts are available for certain series. A.C.T.’s competitive subscriber benefits include **free ticket exchanges** up to the day of scheduled tickets, **priority seating, ticket insurance**, access to **convenient prepaid parking** one block away from the theater, and **discounts for neighborhood restaurants**. To order a subscription, visit [www.act-sf.org/subscribe](http://www.act-sf.org/subscribe) or call 415.749.2250.

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FACT SHEET

WHAT:  
*The Suit*

Fresh from sold-out runs in New York, Paris, and London, *The Suit* is a tragic tale of betrayal and resentment adapted from the short story of the same name by South African writer, Can Themba. When a husband catches his beautiful wife in the arms of her lover, the lover flees—but leaves his suit behind. As her penance, the husband makes his wife “treat the suit as an honored guest,” to accompany her wherever she goes. From the dinner table to walks around the neighborhood, the suit becomes a whimsical yet cruel reminder of her infidelity. Traditional African melodies interweave with jazz standards to underscore this simple yet surprising tale, set in Apartheid-era Johannesburg. Reminiscent of *The Scarlet Letter* and overflowing with the same inventiveness as *The Overcoat* and *Brief Encounter*, *The Suit* features innovative staging that integrates virtuosic musicians directly into the action, making Brook’s haunting production of this heartbreaking fable sing.

WHO:  
Direction, adaptation, and musical direction by Peter Brook, Marie-Hélène Estienne, and Franck Krawczyk
Creative Team: assistant director Rikki Henry, lighting designer Philippe Vialatte, and costume designer Oria Puppo.
Featuring: Jordan Barbour, Ivanno Jeremiah, and Nonhlanhla Kheswa

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

WHEN:  
April 23 – May 18, 2014
Press Night: Wednesday, April 30, 2014

InterACT Events
Bike to the Theater Night……………………………………… 4/23, (8 p.m.)
Audience Prologue ……………………………………………4/29 (5:30 p.m.)
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Audience Exchanges…………………………………………..5/6 (7 p.m.), 5/11 (2 p.m.), 5/14 (2 p.m.)
OUT with A.C.T………………………………………………5/7 (8 p.m.)
Symposium……………………………………………………5/10 (2 p.m.)
Wine Series……………………………………………………..5/13 (7 p.m.)
PlayTime………………………………………………………5/17 (12:30 p.m.)

TICKETS:  
$20 - $120

PHOTOS:  
http://act-sf.org/home/about/press_room.html

TIX & INFO:  
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BIOGRAFIES

PETER BROOK
Peter Brook was born in London in 1925. Throughout his career, he distinguished himself in various genres: theater, opera, cinema and writing.


In opera, he directed La Bohème, Boris Godounov, The Olympians, Salomé and Le Nozze de Figaro at Covent Garden; Faust and Eugene Onegin at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, La Tragédie de Carmen and Impressions of Pelleas, at the Bouffes du Nord, Paris, Don Giovanni for the Aix en Provence Festival and Une Flûte Enchantée at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord (2010).

Peter Brook received many rewards, such as the “Prix du Brigadier” for Timon of Athens (1975), the “Molière” for the direction of The Tempest (1991), the “Grand Prix SACD” in 2003 or the “Molière d’honneur” in 2011.

Other productions were more recently rewarded, such as Fragments (“Prix Premio Ubu” for the best foreign production in Italy/Milano, 2008), Une Flûte enchantée (“Molière“ of musical theater, Paris 2011 ; Moroccan Federation of Theater’s professionals, Marrakech 2013).

Peter Brook’s autobiography, Threads of Time, was published in 1998 and joins other titles including The Empty Space (1968) – translated into over 15 languages, The Shifting Point (1987), There are no Secrets (1993), Evoking (and Forgetting) Shakespeare (1999) and With Grotowski (2009).


MARIE-HÉLÈNE ESTIENNE
In 1974, she worked with Peter Brook on the casting for Timon of Athens, and consequently joined the Centre International de Créations Théâtrales (CICT) for the creation of Ubu aux Bouffes in 1977.

She was Peter Brook’s assistant on La tragédie de Carmen, Le Mahabharata, and collaborated to the staging of The Tempest, Impressions de Pelléas, Woza Albert !, La tragédie d’Hamlet (2000). She worked on the dramaturgy of Qui est là. With Peter Brook, she co-authored L’homme qui and Je suis un phénomène shown at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord. She wrote the French adaptation of the Can Themba’s play Le costume, and Sizwe Bansi est mort, by authors Athol Fugard, John Kani, and Winston Ntshona. In 2003 she wrote the French and English
adaptations of Le Grand inquisiteur – The Grand Inquisitor based on Dostoievsky’s Brothers Karamazov. She was the author of Tierno Bokar in 2005, and of the English adaptation of Eleven and Twelve by Amadou Hampâté Ba in 2009. With Peter Brook, she co-directed Fragments, five short pieces by Beckett, and again with Peter Brook and composer Franck Krawczyk, she freely adapted Mozart and Schikaneder’s Die Zauberflöte into Une flûte enchantée.

FRANCK KRAWCZYK
Composer, born in 1968, Franck Krawczyk started his musical training in Paris (piano, analysis, and harmonization) then in Lyon (composition) where he currently teaches chamber music at the Conservatory (CNSMD).

Very early on, Mr Krawczyk was discovered by the Festival d’automne à Paris (Autumn Festival in Paris), and started writing several pieces for piano, cello, string quartet, ensembles and chamber choir. In 2000, he received the Prix Hervé Dugardin and the Prix de la SACEM for his orchestral piece Ruines.

His subsequent artistic collaboration with Christian Boltanski gave him new perspectives on his music. With lighting designer Jean Kalman, he created a dozen pieces (“opus”) in France and abroad in locations ranging from Opera Houses to spaces dedicated to contemporary art.

In the meantime, he developed new forms of musical creations for various media: theater (Je ris de me voir si belle with J. Brochen), readings (Les Limbes, Absence, with E. Ostrovski), video (Private joke with F; Salès) and for dance (Purgatorio-In vision, with E. Greco and P.C. Scholten). Always maintaining strong links to the classical repertoire, Mr Krawczyk collaborated with choir Accentus conductor Laurence Equilbey (Vivaldi, Chopin, Schubert, Liszt, Wagner, Mahler, Schoënb erg) and with cellist Sonia Wieder-Atherton (Janacek, Mahler, Rachmaninov, Monteverdi…)

In 2009, upon Peter Brook’s request, he conceived and interpreted a musical accompaniment for Shakespeare’s sonnets (Love is my sin). They continued their collaboration with Marie-Hélène Estienne on Une flûte enchantée, a free adaptation of Mozart’s Opera created in November of 2010 at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in Paris and currently touring internationally.

His last major work Polvere for solo cello, instrumental ensemble and choir was created in 2010 at the Grand Palais (Monumenta-Christian Boltanski) and subsequently performed in New York, Milan and Bologan. He’s currently working on his third String Quartet.

JORDAN BARBOUR
Jordan Barbour is an actor and singer based out of New York City. Born in Willingboro, New Jersey in 1983, Jordan began working professionally while still in high school before moving to New York, where he attended a joint program between Columbia University and The Juilliard School. At Juilliard he studied vocal performance under the tutelage of David Catworth y. Upon completion of the program in 2005, Jordan worked with theatre companies in New York City and around the United States including New York Theatre Workshop, St. Ann’s Warehouse, Urban Stages, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Syracuse Stage (where he received a “Syracuse Area Live Theatre” Best Actor nomination for his work as Aslan in The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe), among others. Jordan has premiered several new works in the United States and internationally as well, including the world premiere of Langston in Harlem, an off-Broadway musical about the life of famed poet Langston Hughes, in which Jordan appeared as Countee Cullen at Urban Stages in New York City. (Rachel Saltz, of The New York Times, called him a “standout.”) Jordan also performed at Pasadena Playhouse in the premiere of Stormy Weather, a musical about the life of Lena Horne (played by Leslie Uggams) in which Jordan played Teddy Jones, her son. Additionally, Jordan helped create and then subsequently toured The Shipment by
acclaimed New York playwright Young Jean Lee. Jordan has performed in *The Shipment* at venues around the globe, including stops at the Festival d’Automne in Paris, France; Theater Spektakel in Zurich, Switzerland; Hebbel Theater in Berlin, Germany; Thalia Theater in Hamburg, Germany; and the Sydney Opera House in Sydney, Australia.

**IVANNO JEREMIAH**

Ivanno Jeremiah is a Ugandan-born actor who currently lives in London. He studied drama at the Brit School of Performing Arts and then won a place at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) where he graduated in 2010. Ivanno was the recipient of The Alan Bates Bursary in 2010, which commemorates the work of Alan Bates and is awarded annually to an actor of exceptional talent.

Ivanno’s theatre credits include: Octavius in *Julius Caesar* with the Royal Shakespeare Company in London and international tour, *Truth and Reconciliation* at the Royal Court, *Welcome Home* at the Pleasance and *As You Like It* at the West Yorkshire Playhouse. During his time at RADA Ivanno performed in a variety of classical plays including Romeo and Juliet, Agamemnon and *The Seagull*.

Ivanno’s film credits include; *The Veteran* and and *Papadopoulos and Sons*. Ivanno had a leading role in the highly acclaimed TV series *The Jury II* and also appeared in *Injustice*, also for ITV.

**NONHLANHLA KHESWA**

Born in one Johannesburg township, Soweto, and raised in another, Alexandra, Nonhlanhla Kheswa was encouraged at a very young age by teachers to be proud of her storytelling gifts. At age 16 she began a professional stage career on Broadway in Disney’s ‘The Lion King’. An accomplished singer not only within South Africa’s celebrated vocal traditions but also in jazz and pop music, Nonhlanhla has toured the world as a featured vocalist with Wyclef Jean and has performed regularly, with her own ensembles, before spellbound audiences in New York, where she has primarily resided for a decade. Plans are afoot for an album with China’s most famous classical pianist, Lang Lang. ‘The Suit’ is Nonhlanhla’s European stage debut.

**ARTHUR ASTIER**

Born in 1985, Arthur Astier has played both guitar and bass guitar with various different rock bands. Drawn to innovative means of expression, he put his guitars to the service of other artistic forms such as plastic arts, theatre and classical music, principally by means of collaboration with the composer Franck Krawczyk: "Je ris de me voir si belle" directed by Julie Brochen, as well as a host of Boltanski/Kalman/Krawczyk productions: "O Mensch!", Festival d'Automne; "Happy Hours", Biennale d’Art Contemporain de Lyon; "Pleins Jours", Théâtre du Châtelet; "Gute Nacht", Nuits Blanches Paris; "Polvere", Monumenta 2010 Paris (Grand Palais).

**MARK CHRISTINE**

Mark Christine is a classically trained actor and musician currently based in Los Angeles. He has performed in both plays and musicals at some of the top regional theatres in the United States including the Guthrie Theatre, Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Denver Center, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. His film and television credits include *The New Year, Fortitude, The List*, and the independent TV pilot *The Band*.

Mark has music directed, orchestrated, and accompanied for a variety of theatres and independent projects over the past decade, including works at Harlem Stage and Signature Theatre. He has played at numerous venues in New York and Los Angeles in addition to clubs and concert halls across the country. He studied classical piano from age 4 and over the years has learned a variety of instruments including accordion, guitar, saxophone, tuba, and harmonica.

He holds an MFA from UC San Diego/La Jolla Playhouse and a BFA from the University of Michigan.
PHILIPPE VIALATTE

Oria Puppo is a scenographer and costume designer who divides her time between Buenos Aires and Paris. In Argentina she has created stage sets and costumes for directors such as Diego Kogan, Rafael Sprengelburd, Roberto Villanueva, Ciro Zorzoli and A. Tantanian. She has collaborated with the latter in Lucerne as well as in Germany, in both Stuttgart and Mannheim, where they staged Kafka's Amerika and Brecht's The Threepenny Opera. She has worked with the Bouffes du Nord Theatre on two Peter Brook productions: Tierno Bokar and A Magic Flute. She was also the technical director of the Buenos Aires International Festival from 1999 to 2007 and her creations include several stage sets and costumes for opera as well as performative installations in contemporary art spaces. Following her work on The Suit, directed by Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne, as of 2012 she is working on the stage sets for a production of Handel's La Resurrezione, directed by Lilo Baur for the Paris National Opera's Atelier Lyrique. She is also at work on the sets and costumes for Jean Genet's The Maids, in a Ciro Zorzoli production featuring Marilù Marini, to be staged in Buenos Aires.

PHILIPPE VIALATTE
Philippe Vialatte started up at the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord in 1985 as a light operator on *Le Mahabharata*, directed by Peter Brook. He assisted Jean Kalman for the light design of *Woza Albert* and *La Tempête*, directed by Peter Brook.

Since the creation of *The Man Who* in Paris in 1993, he has designed the lights for all the plays directed by Peter Brook in the Theatre des Bouffes du Nord: *Qui est là, Je suis un phénomène, Le Costume, The Tragedy of Hamlet, Far Away, La mort de Krishna, La Tragédie d’Hamlet, Ta main dans la mienne, Tierno Bokar, Le Grand Inquisiteur, Sizwe Banzi est mort, Fragments, 11 and 12*, and recently *A Magic Flute*.

He follows all these plays on tour and in each space redesigns and adapts the light of each show.