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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER TO RECEIVE $50,000 GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

Grant to support the upcoming production of Eugène Ionesco’s Rhinoceros, performing at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater May 29–June 23, 2019

SAN FRANCISCO (May 16, 2019)—National Endowment for the Arts Acting Chairman Mary Anne Carter has approved more than $80 million in grants as part of the Arts Endowment’s second major funding announcement for fiscal year 2019. Included in this announcement is an Art Works grant of $50,000 to San Francisco’s American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) to support the upcoming production of Eugène Ionesco’s “seminal absurdist satire” (Los Angeles Times), Rhinoceros, performing at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater May 29–June 23, 2019. Art Works is the Arts Endowment’s principal grantmaking program. The agency received 1,592 Art Works applications for this round of grantmaking, and will award 977 grants in this category.

“These awards, reaching every corner of the United States, are a testament to the artistic richness and diversity in our country,” said Mary Anne Carter, acting chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “Organizations such as American Conservatory Theater are giving people in their community the opportunity to learn, create, and be inspired.”

“A most gratifying part of my job as artistic director is supporting dream projects of great artists,” said A.C.T. Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon. “Through the NEA’s Art Works grant, we are able to make Frank Galati’s upcoming production of Rhinoceros possible.”

Adds A.C.T. Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein: “The NEA’s support of work in communities around the country is critical. The art they support at our organizations directly builds empathy and inspires creative solutions to challenges—both help to build stronger communities. We are grateful to the NEA for their support of A.C.T.”

In the opening moments of Ionesco’s masterpiece, a rhinoceros rampages through a village square. At the local café, people argue over what they saw. Was it really a rhino, or just fake news? As the eccentric villagers shed refined façades for hides and horns—smashing windows and crushing flowerbeds—rumpled everyman Berenger faces a desperate choice: take a stand against the armored brutes or join the mindless herd? Hailed as “masterful . . . and downright hilarious,” this outrageous, comedic story of a civilized community shifting from
defiance to compliance is chillingly resonant and riotously funny. From Tony Award–winning director Frank Galati (1776 at A.C.T.) comes an all-new adaptation of this wickedly entertaining comedy about power, conformism, and mass culture. Rhinoceros is based on the production directed by Galati at Asolo Repertory Theatre.

For more information on Rhinoceros, visit www.act-sf.org/rhino.

For more information on projects included in the NEA grant announcement, visit arts.gov/news.

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