

A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

“An action-packed treat . . . as timely as ever”—*Sarasota Herald-Tribune*

“Galati grabs you with both hands and pulls you into Ionesco’s bad dream”
—*Sarasota Observer*

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES FULL CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR EUGÈNE IONESCO’S *RHINOCEROS*

Directed by Tony Award winner Frank Galati, *Rhinoceros* is the wickedly entertaining comedy about power, conformism, and mass culture

A.C.T.’s Geary Theater
May 29–June 23, 2019

SAN FRANCISCO (April 11, 2019)—**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** announced the full cast and creative team for **Eugène Ionesco’s** “seminal absurdist satire” (*Los Angeles Times*), ***Rhinoceros***, closing out A.C.T.’s 2018–19 season. 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—rumped 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. *Rhinoceros* performs at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater (415 Geary St., San Francisco) **May 29–June 23, 2019**. Press night for *Rhinoceros* will be held on Wednesday, June 5, 2019. Single tickets (ranging from \$15–\$110) are available at the A.C.T. Box Office at **415-749-2228** or online at www.act-sf.org. *Ticket prices are subject to change without notice.*

Says **MacKinnon**: “This is a great play explored by a world-class director and his collaborators. I cannot wait to share with A.C.T.’s audiences Frank Galati’s ongoing obsession with Ionesco’s *Rhinoceros*, as he continues to build and deepen this modern classic with a team of designers, actors, and singers who are committed to exploring simple human foibles and landing both visceral humor and surprising moments of terror.”

“It is a joy for me to be back at A.C.T.,” adds **Galati**. “I am particularly moved that Pam has chosen *Rhinoceros* to be a part of her amazing inaugural season. This play is the comic masterpiece of the ‘theater of the absurd.’ It is the progenitor of an artistic movement that culminated in the works of Edward Albee. How delightful that those gorgeous and cerebral lizards in Albee’s play came from the same intellectual ooze that produced a *Rhinoceros* stampede. And how timely and scary that we have had more than a glimpse of ‘what rough beast . . . slouches towards Bethlehem to be born.’ Here’s to pure theater as only A.C.T. can deliver it: bold, unflinching, and hilarious.”

Rhinoceros is directed by **Frank Galati** and features **David Breitbarth** (“A totally alive, searingly real performance” —*BroadwayWorld*) and **Matt DeCaro** (“A tour-de-force performance” —*Sarasota Herald-Tribune*) reprising their celebrated performances as ‘Berenger’ and ‘Gene,’ respectively, from the Asolo Repertory Theatre production. Joining them are (in alphabetical order) **Rona Figueroa** (*Wild Goose Dreams* at La Jolla Playhouse; *Miss Saigon* on Broadway) as ‘Daisy’; **Trish Mulholland** (*The Mousetrap* and *Phaedra* at Shotgun Players) as ‘Mrs. Boeuf’; **Göran Norquist** (A.C.T. M.F.A student; *A Christmas Carol* at A.C.T.) as ‘Marcel’; **Danny Scheie** (*The War of the Roses* at California Shakespeare Theater; *A House Tour* at Z Space) as ‘Mr. Papillon’; **Lauren Spencer** (*Men on Boats* and *King Charles III* at A.C.T.) as ‘Collette’; **Teddy Spencer** (*Hamlet* at A.C.T.; *Eureka Day* at Aurora Theatre Company) as ‘Dudard’; and **Jomar Tagatac** (*Vietgone* at A.C.T.; *King of the Yees* at San Francisco Playhouse) as ‘Botard.’

The creative team for *Rhinoceros* includes **Robert Perdziola** (Set and Costume Designer), **Chris Lundahl** (Lighting Designer), and **Joseph Cerqua** (Sound Designer and Original Music).

In connection with *Rhinoceros*, A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. Visit act-sf.org/interact to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Bike to the Theater Night:**
Wednesday, May 29, 7 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 these select performances.

- **Prologue:**
Tuesday, June 4, 5:30 p.m.
Before the curtain goes up, get a sneak peek at the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff.
- **Theater on the Couch:**
Friday, June 7, following the 8 p.m. performance
This exciting postshow discussion series addresses audience questions and explores the minds, motives, and behavior of the characters.
- **San Francisco Zoo Day**
Sunday, June 9 following the 2 p.m. matinee.
A.C.T. has collaborated with the San Francisco Zoo to create an interactive experience, which will include exhibits and information on rhino conservation efforts, and special offers for A.C.T. audiences.
- **Audience Exchanges:**
Tuesday, June 11, 7 p.m. | Sunday, June 16, 2 p.m. | Wednesday, June 19, 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.:**
Wednesday, June 12, 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 after-party.
- **Wente Vineyards Wine Series:**
Tuesday, June 18, 7 p.m.
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine-tasting event featuring the Bay Area's hottest local winery.
- **PlayTime:**
Saturday, June 22, 12:45 p.m.
Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with the artists who make it happen at this interactive theater workshop.

A.C.T.'s production of *Rhinoceros* is made possible by Executive Producers **Christopher and Leslie Johnson; Kenneth and Gisele Miller**; Producers **Elsa and Neil Pering**; Associate Producers **Marilee K. Gardner; Mary and Gene Metz; Barbara Phillips; Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP; Lori Halverson Schryer**; and Benefactors **Mr. Joel Krauska and Ms. Patricia Fox**.

A.C.T. would also like to acknowledge its 2018–19 Season Presenters **Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen-Hormel; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Kenneth and Gisele Miller; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Mary and Steven Swig; Jeff and Laurie Ubben; Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck**; and Company Sponsors **Lesley Ann Clement and Karl Lukaszewicz; Ray and Dagmar Dolby Family Fund; Frannie Fleishhacker; Kevin and Celeste Ford; Mr. and Mrs. Gordon P. Getty; Kirke and Nancy Sawyer Hasson; Jeri Lynn and Jeffrey W. Johnson; Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGrath; Burt and Deedee McMurtry; David and Carla Riemer; Patti and Rusty Rueff; Aaron Vermut and Adriana López Vermut; Jack and Susy Wadsworth**; and **Barry Williams and Lalita Tademy**. Additional support provided by **Hilton Union Square and Parc 55 San Francisco**, A.C.T.'s Official Hotel Partner.

FACT SHEET FOR RHINOCEROS

WHAT:

In the opening moments of Ionesco's masterpiece of absurdist satire, 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—rumped 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.

WHO:

Written by **Eugène Ionesco**
Translated by **Derek Prouse**
Directed by **Frank Galati**

CAST (*in alphabetical order*):

David Breitbarth, Matt DeCaro, Rona Figueroa, Trish Mulholland, Göran Norquist, Danny Scheie, Lauren Spencer, Teddy Spencer, and Jomar Tagatac

CREATIVE TEAM:

Robert Perdziola (Set and Costume Designer), **Chris Lundahl** (Lighting Designer), and **Joseph Cerqua** (Sound Designer and Original Music)

WHERE:

A.C.T.'s Geary Theater (415 Geary St., San Francisco)

WHEN:

May 29–June 23, 2019

Press Night: Wednesday, June 5, 2019

PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:

Tuesdays–Saturdays at 8 p.m.

Wednesdays and Saturdays at 2 p.m.

Sundays at 2 p.m.

InterACT Events

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