

ANTON'S WELL THEATER COMPANY AND ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY PRESENT

A PARTICLE OF DREAD:

DEDIPUS VARIATIONS
BY SAM SHEPARD

**DIRECTED BY ROBERT ESTES** 



FEATURING P
AMANDA ARTRU A
BRUCE AVERY S
ZOE CURZI T

CLAY DAVID

LETICIA DUARTE

FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ

DON WOOD

TICKETS: S25 GENERAL.
\$20 SENIOR/STUDENT/LOW INCOME
TICKETS: WWW.ANTONSWELL.ORG

#### **OCTOBER 18-NOVEMBER 10**

INFO: AEOFBERKELEY.ORG

FRIDAY-SATURDAY 8PM. SUNDAY 2:30PM.
(NO PERFORMANCE ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20)
SPECIAL PWYC SHOW: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 5.



PAULA DODD AIELLO NATHAN BOGNER WM. DIEDRICK RAZO JEROME SOLBERG GREG ZEMA

> OLD FINNISH HALL 1819 10TH STREET BERKELEY, 94710

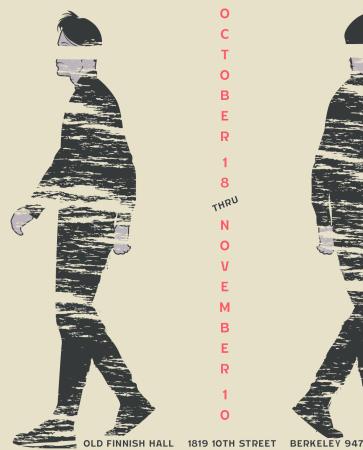


## ANTON'S WELL THEATER COMPANY AND ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY PRESENT



# A PARTICLE OF DREAD: DEDIPUS VARIATIONS

BY SAM SHEPARD



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# Director's Note

#### A Glimmer of Sam Shepard By Robert Estes

"That's the thing that baffles me. They know. They already know."

This thought from Uncle Del has fascinated me from the moment of my first read of the play years ago until the very moment of writing this director's note the day before our first performance.

During all this time, I kept wondering, do we know our story? Even if we can't quite articulate our own story, do we kind of know it in our bones? Do we have the feeling our life will follow a certain path? That we have a fate?

Sometimes, I think we make up everything as we go. Other times, I feel certain dilemmas constantly reappear in life.

In seeing the variations of the Oedipus myth in this play, it almost seems Sam Shepard is grappling with the question of how much freedom do we really have? By understanding our past, can we overcome it, or is the past the future? Do we tell the story or does the story tell us?

Through his own storytelling, Sam Shepard seems to have a driving desire to give shape to the need for every human to seek validation of their own individual story. Shepard seems to be saying even if we know what our story is—we still need to be told a story...that tells us our story.

Yet, he seems ambivalent about whether the storytelling can really change anything. What is the story good for?

As we've said with the other plays we've produced at Anton's Well, we love for you, the audience, to be the detective. As you can see from this director's notes, there are plenty of questions for you to grapple with.

I'm just happy Sam Shepard created this final, painfully searching play for all of us to experience together here in this ghostly ballroom. Perhaps we will all just get a glimmer of what this primal 2,500-year-old family story means for us today.



## Donors to Anton's Well

We thank our donors and sponsors, and encourage you to do the same. As our fiscal sponsor, **Fractured Atlas** has a <u>fiscal</u> sponsorship program that helps artists and arts organizations raise money from charitable sources. Please go to our website, <u>antonswell.org</u>, and click the Donate link at the top.

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Mary Jo Price Madeline Puccioni

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John Stern Matthew Surrence

Rsm Toads Sam Tillis

Denise Tyrrell Anonymous (21)

& The City of Berkeley, Office of Economic Development, Civic Arts Grants Program

## Hello there, Volunteers!

Would you like to work with a scrappy little theater company on fundraising, house managing, marketing, etc.? We would love to hear from you. Let us know what you would like to do by emailing us at antonswell@gmail.com.

# **GODY RISHELL**



### Why Anton's Well? Immortal.

#### Ephemeral.

#### Immediate.

We named ourselves Anton's Well Theater Company from the inspiration we found in the celebrated Russian playwright and short story writer Anton Chekhov's belief that every person before they die should make something useful to mark their existence on earth. He thought digging a water well would be a great legacy. Creating theater is our water well. We're a new East Bay theater company devoted to presenting challenging plays that delightfully engage audiences.

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#### Actors Ensemble of Berkeley **Board of Directors**

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# A Particle of Dread: Oedipus Variations

#### by Sam Shepard

**Time:** Antiquity and the 21st century

**Place:** Thebes, Greece, and the Mojave environs

#### ~ CAST ~

OEDIPUS/OTTO	Clay David
JOCASTA/JOCELYN	Leticia Duarte
ANNALEE/ANTIGONE	Zoe Curzi
UNCLE DEL/TRAVELER/TIRESIAS/	
MANIAC OF THE OUTSKIRTS/ORACLE	Don Wood
LAIUS/LAWRENCE/LANGOS	Francisco Rodriguez
OFFICER HARRINGTON	Bruce Avery
FORENSIC INVESTIGATOR RJ RANDOLPH	

#### ~ CREATIVE TEAM ~

Director	
Producer	Jerome Solberg
Assistant Director/Producing Associate	Wm. Diedrick Razo
Stage Manager & Lighting Design	Nate Bogner
Composer	Greg Zema
Costume Design	
Set, Makeup, Properties, Front of House, Publicity, and Ma	arketing The Company
Publicity Photography	Jane Shamaeva
Rehearsal Photography	. Wm. Diedrick Razo, Leticia Duarte
Graphic Design	
Program Design and Layout	
ATWC Website Manager	Tim Bishop
AEB Website Manager	Jonathan Gordon
~	

#### **Special Thanks!**

Mercedes, Jesus, and Bart of the Old Finnish Hall; retired Berkeley City Councilwoman Linda Maio; City of Berkeley, Office of Economic Development, Civic Arts Grants Program, Katja Rivera; Bill Lingenfelter; TheatreFIRST; Danielle Ferguson; Andrea Schwartz; Vicki Siegel; Patrick Moyroud, Brian Dodd.

The world premiere of A PARTICLE OF DREAD (OEDIPUS VARIATIONS) was produced by Field Day at The Playhouse, Derry, UK on November 30, 2013.

United States premiere produced by Signature Theatre, New York City, James Houghton, Founding Artistic Director, Erika Mallin, Executive Director, on November 23, 2015.



#### ~CAST~

Amanda Artru (FORENSIC INVESTIGATOR RJ RANDOLPH) is a Bay Area based artist. She is excited to make her East Bay theater debut in the West Coast Premiere of Sam Shepard's *A Particle of Dread: Oedipus Variations* with the Anton's Well and Actors Ensemble of Berkeley! Amanda is a company member of the Imaginists Theater Company in Santa Rosa and guitarist in her band, Frankincense is not a Monster. Ms. Artru completed her BA in Sociology and Theater Arts at Sonoma State University.



then went on to earn her Masters in Counseling at University of San Diego. Special thanks to her bandmate Robert for running lines with her and, of course, her scene partner, Bruce Avery!



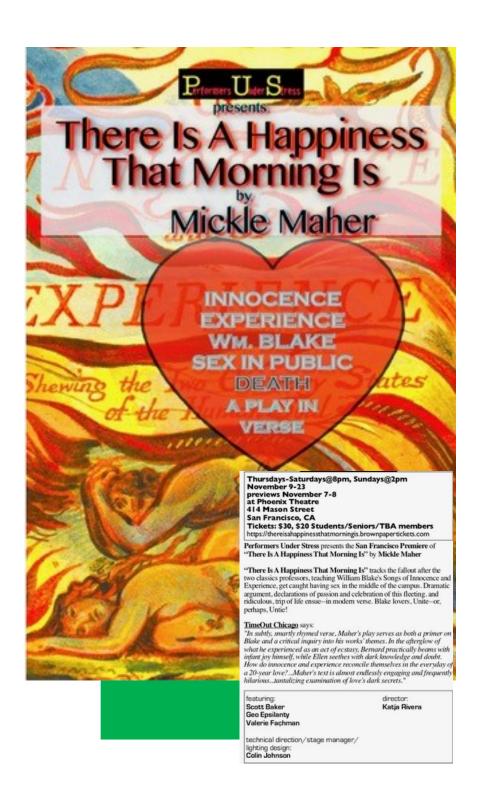
Bruce Avery (OFFICER HARRINGTON) is a Bay Area actor, director, Artistic Director of Bread & Butter Theatre Co., and Theatre Arts professor at San Francisco State University. His PhD is from UC Santa Cruz, where he also worked as Dramaturge for Shakespeare Santa Cruz. His recent directing credits include Pericles, Prince of Tyre and Much Ado About Nothing at SFSU, along with As You Like It and A Midsummer Night's Dream (Bread & Butter Theatre Co). Recent acting credits include Danielson in The North Pool, Rothko in Red, (Bread & Butter Theatre Co.) Peter

Quince in *Midsummer*, Polonius in *Hamlet*, Old Capulet in *Romeo & Juliet*, and Dennis Shepard in *The Laramie Project*.

Zoe Curzi (ANNALEE/ANTIGONE) is an actress, writer, and introspection coach living in the Bay. She recently appeared in Actors Ensemble's reading of *A Dybbuk: Or Between Two Worlds* by Tony Kushner, and directed an evening of Neo-Futurist shorts in Oakland last July. Before moving to the Bay, Ms. Curzi was active in the New York theater scene, appearing in *The Love of the Nightingale* (Insomnium Theater Company) and *The Rules* (Joust Theatre Company). Thank you to Varvara Kovach, Key-



la Seda, Josh Selesnick, and Jessica Watson-Miller. Thanks also to great classes with Tom Bentley-Fisher. Thank you to everyone who worked their butts off on this production to make it happen and the opportunity to participate.



#### **PRODUCER NOTES**

by Jerome Solberg

My journey with Sam Shepard began with the first show I ever produced for Actors Ensemble of Berkeley, *True West*, in 2007. My journey with Robert Estes in a main stage production began with Actors Ensemble in Shepard's *Curse of a Starving Class* (where I also had the great fun of playing Emerson) in 2010. I had met Robert earlier when he directed a few staged readings for Subterranean Shakespeare and found him to be a sensitive director with a quiet but patient way of getting the most out of his actors, and this is true to this day! We have been on several journeys together, and now we have another great journey in this fractured, fantastic (and very Shepardian) reimagining of the Oedipus myth.

Actors Ensemble has been in operation since 1957, producing 2-4 productions a year, generally at Live Oak Theatre and, more recently, a summer season at John Hinkel Park, both in north Berkeley. Now, after a few years of rehearsals here and a series of staged readings last year, we are with Robert trying to revive the Old Finnish Hall as a performance venue. We have begun preliminary talks with the Finnish Hall board exploring how ourselves and other performing arts groups may be able to assist in preserving this wondrous building both as a community center and as a performing arts venue. If you know someone who would be interested in this venture, please let us know.

Thanks go out to many people for their help with this production - Paula Aiello for her fabulous costumes, Rick Razo for getting the sound and the program coordinated, Mercedes and Jesus for shepherding the Old Finnish Hall with us, and most especially Nathan Bogner for his steadfastness and enthusiasm as we dealt with the many (some unexpected) challenges of lighting this grand auditorium.

Coming up for Actors Ensemble is a series of Staged Readings at this very venue, all Pay-What-You Will: *Jizo* on Oct. 22nd, *Lysistrata* on Oct. 28th, and *A Man For All Seasons* on Nov. 4th. Coming up in January 2020 is *She Kills Monsters*, a comedic romp through fantasy role-playing games and finding yourself, directed by the up-and -coming Kayla M. Kaufman. We expect to have two productions next summer in John Hinkel Park. Check the rest of the program or our website <a href="www.aeofberkeley.org">www.aeofberkeley.org</a>.

#### Check out these companies for more local theatre:

Central Works Theatre, <a href="http://centralworks.org/">http://centralworks.org/</a>
Indra's Net Theater Company, <a href="http://www.indrasnettheater.com/">http://www.indrasnettheater.com/</a>
Performers Under Stress, <a href="https://pustheatre.org">https://pustheatre.org</a>
Quantum Dragon Theatre, <a href="https://www.quantumdragon.org/">https://www.quantumdragon.org/</a>
Those Women Productions, <a href="https://thosewomenproductions.com/">https://thosewomenproductions.com/</a>



Clay David (OEDIPUS/OTTO) is a professional theatremaker, from London, Broadway, Off-Broadway, regional theatre, national tours to educational theatre, embracing advocacy, acting, directing, and design. His achievements are recognized in the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critic's Circle Award (five times), AMCO Kennedy Center National Winner, The Victor Borge Legacy Award, TBA TITAN Award for Theatre Excellence, Dean Goodman Choice Award for Best Director in San Francisco Bay, Lee Hartgrave Fame Best Play Award, and the Bravo Award for Outstanding

Innovation and Excellence in Arts. He has performed in numerous modern, musical, and classic title roles: *The Madness of Lady Bright*, (Off-Broadway, Blue Heron, NYC); *Amadeus* and *The Dresser* (Connecticut Repertory Theatre); *The Elephant Man* and *Uncle Vanya* (Jerry Rojo Environmental Theatre, CT); *Hamlet* and *Troilus & Cressida* (London Theatre Royal, St Edmunds, Regency Rep); and *La Cage Aux Folles* (Bay Area Musicals), among others.

Leticia Duarte (JOCASTA/JOCELYN) loves sharing the room with all the lovely folx of Anton's Well and Actors Ensemble of Berkeley! Recent projects: Helen! (Theatre of Yugen), Into the Beautiful North and The King of Cuba (Central Works), Real Women Have Curves (Douglas Morrisson Theatre), and The Normal Heart (Theatre Rhino). They have also worked with Willows Theatre Co., Berkeley Rep., Crowded Fire, Playwrights Foundation, Bay Area Children's Theatre, and various others. Duarte is a graduate of UCLA, UCSC, TBA Titan Finalist, and a former San



Francisco Shakespeare and Women's Will Teaching Artist. They are represented locally by Talent Plus. Next up: Catch Duarte on Season 2 of <a href="https://www.thenorthpoleshow.com">www.thenorthpoleshow.com</a>. As always thank you for supporting live theatre! Find a full range of work by Duarte at <a href="https://www.sfcasting.com/leticiaduarte">www.sfcasting.com/leticiaduarte</a>.



Francisco Rodriguez (LAIUS/LAWRENCE/LANGOS) is an actor and theatremaker working in LA, Mexico, and the SF Bay Area. He was last seen in Duncan Pflaster's *The Underpants Godot* (Theatre Rhinoceros). Francisco is honored to be working on such a dynamic piece with Anton's Well and Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. As founder of The Mexican American Conservatory Theatre, he focuses on translating Mexican and Latin America plays into English,

for North American audiences. Find out more at FranciscoTeatro.com.



**Don Wood** (UNCLE DEL/TRAVELER/TIRESIAS/MANIAC ON THE OUTSKIRTS/ORACLE) This is Don's second show with Robert Estes. His first was a Sam Shepard play as well, *Ages of the Moon*, at Berkeley City Club. Most recently he played Senator John McDowell in *Kings* by Sarah Burgess (Shotgun Players). Next up: a Reverend in *An Invitation Out* by Shualee Cook at Potrero Stage in December (Quantum Dragon Theatre Co.). Thanks to his partner Michelle Talgarow for her love and encouragement.

#### ~ CREATIVE TEAM ~

**Paula Dodd Aiello** (Costumer) always enjoys working with Anton's Well Theater Company and Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. She thanks the cast and crew, especially Clay David, for many creative contributions in the costuming of this play. You can see more of what Paula's been up to at <a href="https://www.sewbecoming.com">www.sewbecoming.com</a>.

Nate Bogner (Lighting Designer and Stage Manager) is excited to continue his relationship with two of his favorite Berkeley theater groups after having lit 4:48 Psychosis (Anton's Well Theater Company) among others and The Skin of Our Teeth (Actors Ensemble of Berkeley) among others. Although known for playing roles such as Parolles in All's Well that Ends Well (Theater of Others) and Pygar, the Blind Angel in Barbarella (Dreams on the Rocks), his first love is technical theater, and, as such, getting the opportunity to make bloody guts has been some of the most memorable of his career. Over the years he painted backdrops for The Village Theater in Danville, applied makeup for Stars 2000 (Diablo Light Opera Company), and participated in over 200 productions on- and offstage. Many of which were very good.

Jerome Solberg (Producer) has been helping Actors Ensemble of Berkeley as an actor since 2005, a board member since 2006, and an officer since 2007. He grew up right next to Highway 15 and rode his bicycle to get milk at a particularly desolate Cucamonga liquor store. He is glad to be helping Robert in this project and so glad to work with such a great cast and crew. Thanks to Hitomi for all her support.

Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged with 9 actors, both at John Hinkel, and Thornton Wilder's The Skin of Our Teeth at Live Oak Theatre. AEB is governed and operated collectively by a volunteer board of directors, who donate their time to ensure ensemble theatre is alive and thriving in the East Bay. We are proud to be helping to produce this wondrous play with Robert and Anton's Well.

AEB is producing in conjunction with *A Particle of Dread* our Fall Staged Reading Series, comprising *Jizo*, by local playwright Jane Goldsmith, directed by Gary Green, *Lysistrata*, adapted by Ellen McLaughlin, directed by Kayla Kaufman, and *A Man For All Seasons*, by Robert Bolt, directed by Gabriel Ross, playing in succession on Monday evenings during the run of *Particle* at The Old Finnish Hall. Coming up in January 2020 is our principal stage production of *She Kills Monsters* by Qui Nguyen, directed by Kayla Kaufman, opening January 10<sup>th</sup> at LaVal's Subterranean Theatre in Berkeley. A comprehensive history and further information on our current programs are available at our website, aeofberkeley.org.

#### **About the Venue: OLD FINNISH HALL**

In the early 1900s there existed a thriving Finnish community in Berkeley, drawn to the Bay Area as a welcoming place for their skills as fisherman and craftsmen. After the 1906 Earthquake, the community was further strengthened by refugees from across the bay. The strong sense of community-led to the building of Toveri Tupa (Comrades' Lodge) at 1819 10<sup>th</sup> Street in Berkeley, comprising a community kitchen and meeting rooms along with a cavernous auditorium, handcrafted by the community itself. The Finnish community included a large contingent drawn to workers' movements of all stripes, and the Hall was notable throughout the 1920s and 1930s as a hotbed of activism. Significant stress was put on the Finnish community by the Finnish Civil War of 1918, and the divisions this engendered led finally to a split in 1935 with the building nearby of the Finnish Kavela (Brotherhood) Hall, also known White Finn Hall. Thenceforth Toveri Tupa was known as Red Finn Hall, and continued as center for Finnish community and workers' movements through to the 1970s. The hall was then sold and endures now as a cultural and community center for the neighborhood. We hope you enjoy this magnificent setting for these mythic characters. https://www.oldfinnishhall.org/

#### **About the Playwright**

Sam Shepard, "the greatest American playwright of his generation" per the New York Times, was a Bay Area resident for many years and won a Pulitzer Prize for *Buried Child*, premiering in San Francisco at the Magic Theatre in 1978. As the Magic's playwright-in-residence, he wrote some of his best work: *Curse of the Starving Class* (1976), *True West* (1980), *Fool for Love* (1983), and *A Lie of the Mind* (1985). Anton's Well presented *Ages of the Moon* in 2016. Mr. Shepard was also an author, actor, director, and screenwriter. *A Particle of Dread: Oedipus Variations* is his final play.

# About the Companies Co-Producing A PARTICLE OF DREAD: OEDIPUS VARIATIONS

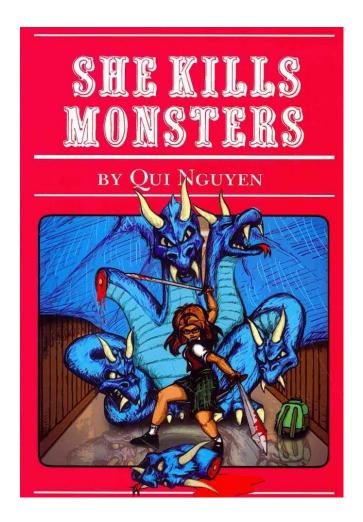
**ANTON'S WELL THEATER COMPANY** began in late 2014 with a production of Harold Pinter's *Old Times*.

In the five years since then, the company has presented Bay Area premieres by Caryl Churchill, Sam Shepard, debbie tucker green, Alexandra Wood, Philip Ridley, Melissa James Gibson, and Christopher Shinn (the productions by the last five playwrights being the first time any of their work has been presented here in the Bay Area). The company also produced the rarely seen *4.48 Psychosis* by Sarah Kane.

Anton's Well plans to offer a four-play season in 2020, made up of plays exploring the possibilities of theatrical language while engaging with the eternal question of what it is to be human.

**ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY** was founded in 1957 by a group of friends who wanted to continue the legacy of Fred and Mary Harris, the founders of UC Berkeley's Dramatic Arts department, with an emphasis on the ensemble. It has been producing plays in Berkeley continuously since that time.

In recent years AEB has produced 2-3 main stage productions per year, both indoors at Live Oak Theatre and outdoors at the John Hinkel Park Amphitheatre, along with numerous staged readings, all in Berkeley. Notable recent productions include *Hamlet* with the role of Hamlet himself shared amongst the ensemble, an adaption of *The Complete* 



#### She Kills Monsters

"Dungeons and Dragons, and Finding Yourself.

A comedic romp through fantasy role-playing games"
by Qui Nguyen
Directed by Kayla M. Kaufman
January 10th - February 1st, 2020
LaVal's Subterranean Theatre

#### **CREATIVE TEAM** (con't)

Robert Estes (Director) began his theater directing career with Sam Shepard's Curse of the Starving Class at Actors Ensemble of Berkeley, where he also directed Heartbreak House, Arcadia, Rock 'n' Roll, and Falstaff! For Anton's Well, Robert helmed: Old Times, Or,, Dying City, What Rhymes with America, Ages of the Moon, Tender Napalm, This Wide Night, The Human Ear, 4.48 Psychosis, dirty butterfly, Escaped Alone, Here We Go, and Knives in Hens. Mr. Estes also directed at other local theaters such as The Masquers Playhouse and RAW at Ross Valley Players. He served as a dramaturg at the California Shakespeare Theatre, the Magic Theatre, and Town Hall Theater. Robert welcomes you to Anton's Well and, as our Artistic Director, he'd be happy to hear from you at antonswell@gmail.com.

Wm. Diedrick Razo (Assistant Director/Producing Associate) assisted Anton's Well and Robert Estes in all its productions since 2015, the last being *Knives in Hens*. Rick notably worked with Sam Shepard on the world premiere of *Fool For Love* at The Magic Theatre. He also worked with theatrical companies such as Theatre Rhinoceros, Performers Under Stress, SAFEhouse for the Arts, and Dragon Theatre Productions. Mr. Razo recently helmed Madeline Puccioni's *The Glass of Time* (Playwrights' Center of San Francisco [PCSF]) and directed a staged reading of her *Time After Time Again* for Dramatists Guild Footlights<sup>TM</sup> (Central Works). Rick guided the concert reading of Ms. Puccioni and Mr. Jeffery Dunn's musical, *Finding Medusa*, *Part I*, at Berkeley Rep School of Theatre. Join him and a remarkable cast this November 11<sup>th</sup> for a concert reading of the new *Time After Time Again* at PCSF.

Cody Rishell (Graphic Design) is thrilled to be a part of this production! He works in the Bay Area theater scene as a poster maker for a decade. You may have seen his work at the SF Olympians Festival, SF Theater Pub, EXIT Theatre, Anton Well's Theater, and Custom Made Theatre. Mr. Rishell's made posters for theater companies in Europe and the Middle East, and is always happy to create posters for local, independent productions. When not making posters, Cody works on a comic strip called *Clyde The Cyclops* which can be found on Facebook. For more information, go to www.codyrishell.com.

SO DE DE

#### **CREATIVE TEAM** (con't)

Greg Zema (Composer) is honored to be returning to Anton's Well, where he previously wrote the incidental music for their production of *Tender Napalm*. Active on both sides of the proscenium as either writer, performer, or piano guy, Greg loves the creative process and hopes people will continue to ask him to compose until he decomposes. Love and thanks to all involved with this project for trusting and believing in him.

# Anton's Well Theater Company's Board of Directors:

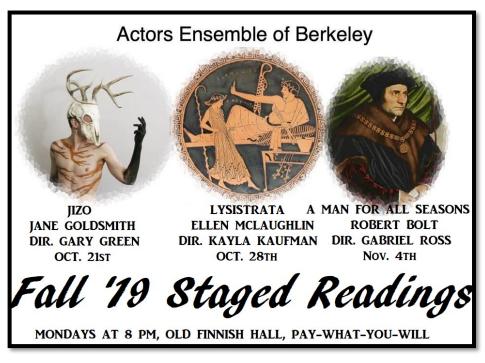
Tim Bishop
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David Cole Robert Estes Leticia Duarte Michael Monaco

Peter Petroski

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#### 



Shows from the Recent Past of Our 62 Year History



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