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ACTORS ENSEMBLE OF BERKELEY

JOHN HINKEL PARK AMPHITHEATRE

41 SOMERSET PLACE; BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94707

www.aeofberkeley.org

MOLIERE'S THE IMAGINARY INVALID



DESIGN: KIRSTEN YAMAGUCHI

directed by
JAY MANLEY

adapted by
CONSTANCE CONGDON

from the translation by
DAN SMITH

CAST

- Maureen Coyne (Fleurant)
- Jacqueline Fernandez (Béline)
- David Ghilardi (Purgeon)
- Bruce Kaplan (Argan)
- Joshua Roberts (Cléante)
- Kim Saunders (Toinette)
- Stanley Spenger (De Bonnefoi)
- Skyler Wuolte (Angélique)
- Jean-Paul Zuhur (Claude)

STAFF

- Jane Goodwin (Associate Director)
- Lyre Alston (Costumes)
- Kirsten Yamaguchi (Set Design)
- Susan Dunn (Props)
- Matthew Weinberg (Stage Manager)

PHOTO: VICKI VICTORIA

SATURDAYS & SUNDAYS
AUGUST 24 - SEPTEMBER 8

@ 4 PM

plus **Labor Day,**

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 2nd

BRING PILLOWS, BLANKETS AND/OR LOW STADIUM SEATING

About Actors Ensemble of Berkeley

Actors Ensemble (AE) has been around the block (and just around the corner from you) since 1957, making us the longest-running stage company in Berkeley. Since 1965 we have performed often at Live Oak Theatre in North Berkeley. Recently we have also taken the opportunity to bring the magic of theatre to the John Hinkel Park Amphitheatre, a wonderful outdoor space with a vast legacy of performance.

As Berkeley's only true community theatre company, we depend on our volunteers to bring their energy and creative vision to each play we produce. If you would like to volunteer in our theatre, give us a call or send us an email! We'd love for you to play a part in our next show!

Actors Ensemble of Berkeley
P.O. Box 663
Berkeley, California 94701
www.aeofberkeley.org
info@AEofBerkeley.Org



Thanks to Ruth Giron Wong, Kevin Karplus, Lisa Wang, Jeff Trescott, Martha Luehrmann, Jay Manley, Jerome Solberg, Matthew Campbell, Jennifer Halsing, Kathleen A Shiring, Eugene S. Bardach, Christine Sheppard, Charlotte von der Hude, Tom and Jan Vargo, and all those who have supported Actors Ensemble over the past year.

Board of Directors

Michael R. Cohen[^], Victoria F. Siegel[^], Jeff Trescott[^], Jerome Solberg[^], Hannah Rachel Gerry, Jane Goodwin, Paulette Herring, Jay Manley, Gabriel Ross, Crystal Brown*, Susannah Wood*, Robert Estes*, Martha Luehrmann*, Norah Foster*

*=alternate, ^=officer.

Performance Schedule:

***4 p.m. Saturdays and Sunday August 24th – September 8th
& Labor Day Monday, September 2nd, 2024***

***John Hinkel Park Amphitheater
41 Somerset Pl., Berkeley, CA 94707***

The Performance is approx. 2 hours including an intermission



*Actors Ensemble is supported in part
by a grant from The City of Berkeley
Civic Arts Commission*



The Imaginary Invalid
Le Malade Imaginaire (1674)
by Molière

Adapted by Constance Congdon
Based on a new translation by Dan Smith

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Argan, an imaginary invalid..... Bruce Kaplan
Toinette.....Kim Saunders
Angélique, Argan's daughter, in love with Cléante...Skyler Wuolle
Béline, second wife to Argan.....Jacqueline Fernandez
De Bonnefoi, a notary.....Stanley Spenger
....Understudy.....Francis Serpa
Cléante, in love with Angélique.....Joshua Roberts
Doctor Purgeon, Argan's physician.....David Ghilardi
Claude De Aria, Purgeon's nephew.....Jean-Paul Zuhur
Mme. Fleurant, an apothecary.....Maureen Coyne

Staff

Director.....Jay Manley
Associate Director.....Jane Goodwin
Stage Manager.....Matthew Weinberg
Costumer.....Lyre Alston
Set Designer/Poster Designer.....Kirsten Yamaguchi
Choreographer.....Kim Saunders
Props.....Susan Dunn
Music and Sound.....Jeff Dunn
Photography.....Vicki Victoria
Concessions Coord.....Michael & Mercedes Cohen, Vicki Siegel
Producer & Many Other Things.....Jerome Solberg

*Presented by special arrangement with Broadway Play
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For Photos of the Cast and More check our website or
@actorsensemble on FB or @aeofberkeley on Instagram or X

A Note from the Director

In telling friends about *The Imaginary Invalid*, I have been surprised that many do not know the name “Molière.” He is to the French what Shakespeare is to the English-speaking world. Born Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, Molière – his stage name – was born in 1622, and at the age of 21, he began an illustrious career as both actor and author. As an actor, he toured the provinces and, inspired by the Italian *Commedia dell’Arte* troupes he saw, he returned to Paris to create some of the greatest comedies of all time. He eagerly adapted many of the Commedia’s stock characters, e.g. the saucy and smarter-than-her-master maid, the pompous doctor and the ardent lovers; you’ll find their descendants in *The Imaginary Invalid*.

While Molière captured the patronage of Louis XIV, some of his plays, *Tartuffe* especially, earned him condemnation from the censors (*Tartuffe* lay fallow for five years before its initial presentation). Always enormously popular in his own time, his plays continue to be performed today. Paris’ Comédie Française, the oldest continuously-performing theatre company in the world, grew directly from Molière’s troupe, and is, in fact, still known as “The House of Molière.” Its 2024-25 season includes three of his plays. Canny playwright, Molière wrote his greatest roles for himself, and ironically, in what would be his final performance as the hypochondriac Argan in *The Imaginary Invalid*, he was stricken, dying hours later.

While *The Imaginary Invalid* is a broad farce, it is also a critique. Medical quackery - we still have plenty of that today on the Internet, human avarice and gullibility – in no short supply at present, are particular targets in this play. In the 17th Century, newly-emerging scientific theories, such as those regarding the circulation of the blood, were often scoffed at by conservative, resistant-to-progress doctors, who relied instead on a strict adherence to the Four Humors – black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm - resulting in a dependence on bloodletting, purging and enemas as the prevalent treatments. Molière targets these quack doctors without mercy in our play.

Critiques aside, I chose *The Imaginary Invalid* because it is simply such wonderful, witty and silly fun. And I think we need as much of that as we can find today! Welcome, enjoy, and please keep supporting local theatre!

Thanks: *Jason Matthews, Terrie Vargas, Bruce Platt and Harvena Tracy of the City of Berkeley. Jim Stucker for welding. Shay Oglesby-Smith and Masquers for help with set pieces.*

Cast and Staff Biographies

In Alphabetical Order

Lyre Alston (he/him/she/her) (*Costumes*) is a designer working in and around the bay area in both Costume design and Wig/Makeup design/artistry. Some recent shows include *The Tutor* with New Conservatory Theatre Company, *The Red Shades* at ZSpace, *in the Panto* at The Presidio, and *Much Ado About Nothing* with **AE** earlier this summer. Please enjoy the show!

Maureen Coyne (*Mme. Fleurant*) A former member of the One Act Theatre, Maureen has played with many theatres in the Bay Area. Among them, Ross Valley Players, Actors Theatre of San Francisco, Palo Alto Players and Curtain Theatre in Mill Valley. Most recently she played Queen Rose in *Fairies of the Moonlight* with Actors Ensemble of Berkeley.

Susan Dunn (*Props*) has enjoyed many production challenges at Berkeley Playhouse, Hillbarn Theatre, Altarena Playhouse, Island City Opera and AE. She particularly revels in turning trash into treasures for the stage. This is her 4th role at **AE** and third show at John Hinkel Park, a favorite venue. Susan is also a local theatre critic and you can find her reviews at <https://aisleseatreview.com>.

Jeff Dunn (*Music/Sound*) is a Bay Area music critic and composer. Co-founder of EastBay PlayReaders, he has composed music and created sound effects for more than 50 play readings. His musical *Castle Happy* enjoyed a run at the Altarena Playhouse in 2017, and his operetta *Finding Medusa* with playwright Madeline Puccioni was completed this year. Jeff worked on the sound for **Actors Ensemble's** *Much Ado About Nothing* in John Hinkel Park.

Jacqueline Fernandez (*Béline*) “Jacquie” is reintroducing herself into the Bay Area Theatre scene after several decades since winning “Best Actress” for her performance as Maria in *West Side Story* at Ohlone College. She was offered opportunities in Mexico City, her cultural heritage, and performed in many productions of classical and contemporary genres and was a member of the prestigious International Cervantino Festival company. Her most prominent roles for the stage are Puck, Juliet, Areusa, St. Teresa of Avila, the Milkmaid, Janis Joplin and Frida Kahlo. Monologues include: Remedios Varo, Isadora Duncan. She’s very grateful for this grand opportunity!

David Ghilardi (*Doctor Purgeon*) just finished his 11th book: *A Hole in One* (horror/suspense). See his film credits at https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0315757/?ref_=fn_al_nm_1. My love to Jazz! (Show 185).

Jane Goodwin (*Associate Director*) finds herself happily back in the theater again with Jay Manley who was her drama teacher at Berkeley High School - as well as back at Hinkel Park where she acted with Berkeley Shakespeare Festival in its beginnings for three seasons. For **Actors Ensemble** she acted in *Hay Fever* and *Cabaret*, and since joining its board in 2017 was in stage readings of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *ROE*. **Actors Ensemble** is the little engine that could and does - so glad you're joining us!

Bruce Kaplan (*Argan*) is delighted to be performing again with **Actors Ensemble of Berkeley** at John Hinkel Park where, among other roles in this lovely place, he played Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*. Other recent favorite roles include Mayor Shinn in *The Music Man* and Mr. Mushnik in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Pinole Community Players), Gloucester in *King Lear* (Berkeley Shakespeare Company), Doolittle in *Pygmalion* (Orinda SVP), twin, ten- year-old girls (!) in *Chemical Imbalance* (San Leandro Players), and the Wizard in *Wizard of Oz* (Tri-Valley Theater). Thanks for supporting community theater in the beautiful outdoors!

Jay Manley (*Director*) is excited to join Actors Ensemble of Berkeley and, in a sense, "to come home!" Jay began his directing career heading the Drama Department at Berkeley High School, from which he had graduated. He shares AE Board responsibilities with two former BHS students, Paulette Herring and his Associate Director, Jane Goodwin. Subsequent teaching and directing took him to Foothill College in Los Altos Hills, where he created the award-winning Foothill Music Theatre. Jay has directed widely throughout the greater Bay Area, including six seasons for The Mountain Play, South Bay Music Theatre, New Conservatory Theatre Center and Ross Valley Players, among others. With his husband Vance Martin, Jay leads regular tours for theatre lovers to New York and Ashland. www.nytheatretrou.com

Joshua Roberts (*Cléante*) Some of Joshua's favorite recent roles include Edmund in *King Lear* at Berkeley Shakespeare, Robert Lambert in *Boeing, Boeing* at Benicia Theatre Group, and Mr. Darcy in *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* at Altarena Playhouse. He earned his BFA in New Genres from San Francisco Art Institute. Joshua would like to thank his family and friends for their unwavering support. Enjoy the show!

Kim Saunders (*Toinette/Choreography*) has performed at: The Nat Horne Theatre, Neighborhood Playhouse, American Ballet Theatre at Lincoln Center, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Repertory Theatre, African American Shakespeare and Lorraine Hansberry Theatre. She is also a professional director/choreographer and works as a teaching artist in high schools supporting teachers and the amazing students she has the privilege of working with. www.kimsaunders.net

Francis Serpa (they/them) (*De Bonnefoi* understudy) is excited to be back in John Hinkle Park after playing Cecil last summer in **AE's** production of *A Room with a View* and Frances in **AE's** *Much Ado About Nothing* earlier this summer. Most recently they played Cornelia in Berkeley Shakespeare Company's *Cymbeline*, and a few of Shakespeare's other roles they've played are Romeo, Oberon, and Julius Caesar. Look for Francis also in **AE's** upcoming Summer 2024 Staged Reading Series, as Sherlock in *Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Missing Mystery* and The Sheriff of Nottingham in *Greenwood*.

Stanley Spenger (*De Bonnefoi*) is the founder of the Subterranean Cabaret (as a theatre space), as well as the former Artistic Director of its inaugural company, Subterranean Shakespeare. Later, he was a founding member of Shotgun Players, and president of **Actors Ensemble**. He has performed for companies all over the Bay Area, in many original productions, as well as Shakespeare, Shaw, Mamet, Chekhov, Brecht, Beckett, etc., for nearly six decades, since childhood. Most recently, he played Walt Whitman in a one-man show, directed *Hamlet* for **AE**, and played Rev. Beebe in last summer's *A Room With a View*.

Matthew Weinberg (*Stage Manager*) has performed in prior **Actors Ensemble** productions such as *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *An Enemy of the People*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth* (as the dinosaur!) but is excited to be stepping into a behind-the-scenes role here. When not involved with theater, he writes humorous essays on '60s music and film under his online alter ego the Part-Time Buddhist Pop Culture Guru.

Skyler Wuolle (*Angélique*) is thrilled to return to the stage as Angelique with the Actors Ensemble of Berkeley. You may have seen her earlier this summer at John Hinkel as Beatrice in **AEB's** *Much Ado About Nothing*. From her earliest years at the Grand Rapids Civic Theatre to music videos and feature films, Skyler brings energy and passion to every role. Offstage, Skyler works in technology marketing and resides in Kensington with her husband, Davis. You're likely to see them around town on their quest for the best slice of pizza in Berkeley.

Kirsten Yamaguchi (*Set/Poster Design*) has designed many theater programs and posters and has also worked as an animator on feature films, games and more. This is the second **AE** production Kirsten has designed for this summer after *Much Ado About Nothing*. As a youth in Los Angeles, Kirsten performed on stage in many musicals and with choirs.

Jean-Paul Demitri Zuhur (*Claude de Aria*) is a stage, film, television and voiceover actor. He has worked commercially with Midwestern Talent Agency, Chamber Media and Negative Kitty studios. In Lincoln, Nebraska he worked with Capital City Theatre, OmniArts Nebraska, Flatwater Shakespeare Company, and Red Theatre. Jean-Paul presented original work at the inaugural Fringe Theater Festival in Omaha. Some of his most recent roles include Balthasar in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Julius Caesar in *Julius Caesar* and Florizel in *The Winter's Tale*. He would like to thank Jay and **Actors Ensemble** for casting him in his first production since he moved back to Berkeley.

Donate: www.aeofberkeley.org/donate

*Our website accepts **Paypal** – We are a 501(3)c organization.*

Checks: PO Box 663, Berkeley, CA 94703

Venmo: https://account.venmo.com/u/Actors_Ensemble

Or for Venmo
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Next up for AE:

Our Summer 2024 Staged Reading Series:

All Free, 8 p.m. at LaVal's Subterranean Theater

1834 Euclid Ave., Berkeley 94709

(in the basement of LaVal's Pizza)

The Trial of Katharina Kepler, Fri. August 23rd

***Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Missing Mystery,
Tues. August 27th***

***Greenwood: A new work by Stuart Bousel (and
Shakespeare), Fri. August 30th***

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