

City Garage presents

# **The Bacchae** **by Charles L. Mee**

**Part II of City Garage's *Three by Mee* Season**

Directed by Frédérique Michel

Production Design by Charles A. Duncombe



September 8—October 22, 2006

# The Bacchae

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## Cast

### The Men

Ed Baccari	.....	Tiresias
Justin Davanzo	.....	Dionysus
Troy Dunn	.....	Pentheus
David E. Frank	.....	First Aide
Joel Nuñez	.....	Second Aide
Bo Roberts	.....	Kadmos
Mark Woods	.....	Tony Ulasewitz

### The Bacchae

Juni Buchér	.....	Orange Woman
Irene Casarez	.....	The Flutist
Joan Chodorow	.....	Agave
Katherine Dollison	.....	Young Bacchante
Nita Mickley	.....	Tattooed Woman
Mariko Oka	.....	Lavander Woman
Julie Weidmann	.....	The Cook

## Production Staff

Set and Lighting Design	.....	Charles A. Duncombe
Assistant Director	.....	Amy Oliveira
Light/Sound Operator	.....	Ruthie Crossley
Costume Design	.....	Josephine Poinot
Still Production Photography	.....	Paul M. Rubenstein

## Place & Time

Thebes, Greece, ten generations before the Trojan War

The play runs approximately 75 minutes and is performed without intermission.

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The production features music from: "Ljse sole", "Maha Te Song", and "Tonga" by Faraualla; "Suite for Two Flutes" by Katherine Hoover; "Ciaccona" by Tommaso Vitali. Additional music composed by The Bacchae.

Quotation from "Faraualla" by Stefano Di Lauro

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The Wells Fargo Foundation,  
Rocket Science Laboratories,  
and The Santa Monica Arts Commission.

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Richard B. Fisher and Jeanne Donovan Fisher.

## ABOUT THE TEXT

"This is a bottomless universe, a great abyss beneath our feet. We do not understand it."

These are the last words spoken onstage by Agave, Pentheus's mother, in Charles Mee's play. They come after her final, awful recognition that, in a Bacchic ecstasy of animal madness, she has murdered her own son. She crouches over him, her senses gradually returning, and as they do, the abyss spreads slowly below her. Pentheus, the archetypal embodiment of civilization, the hunger to master the animal within us, has been literally exterminated by the very Nature that created him. It is a terrifying moment.

It is also the essence of what *The Bacchae* is. Euripides's tragedy is one of the most terrifying in literature, haunting and inexplicable in the way *Lear* is. Mee's re-imagining of it simply brings it into our own cultural moment. The god Dionysus comes to earth. The women are seduced. The men are seduced. The god sets a game in motion, watches with fascination, and then simply departs. He leaves nothing behind because he has nothing to offer, not even compassion. Compassion is a human capacity, not a god's. When the humans he has played with wake from their narcotic dream of bliss they face only emptiness. Nothing. That is the true horror of the play. It is about the human hunger to make sense of what cannot be made sense of: the fundamental indifference of the universe. Pentheus is our ache for civilization, the lovely, futile gesture of beauty against the blank. Why do we make it? Because, foolishly perhaps, we believe the gesture matters. The abyss yawns beneath us all. Pentheus, the ultimate tragic hero, steps forward courageously and disappears.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chuck Mee has written *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Wintertime*, *Belle Epoque*, *Vienna: Lusthaus*, *Snow in June*, *A Perfect Wedding*, *Limonade tous les Jours*, and a number of other plays in addition to his work inspired by Greek plays: *Big Love*, *True Love*, *Orestes 2.0*, *Trojan Women A Love Story* and others. His plays have been performed at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, American Repertory Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, the Public Theatre, Lincoln Center, the Humana Festival, Steppenwolf, and other places in the United States as well as in Berlin, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels, Vienna, Istanbul and elsewhere. His complete works are available at [www.charlesmee.org](http://www.charlesmee.org).

## CAST PROFILES

### Ed Baccari

*Tiresias*

Ed made his City Garage debut in *Agamemnon* earlier this year. He also recently appeared as Vincent Van Gogh on television's *Medium*. Theatre credits include *The Zoo Story*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Hedda Gabler*. Film credits include *Jake Lead*, *Arresting Gena*, *Lake Watch*, and many others.

### Juni Buchér

*Orange Woman*

Juni holds a BA in Theatre Arts from UCSC and has appeared in numerous productions throughout California. In addition to her love for the stage, she has a passion for music and has performed lead vocals on several professional recording projects. This Juni's second role at City Garage, having appeared in last year's *Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream*.

### Irene Casarez

*The Flutist*

Irene was last seen at City Garage in *The Gertrude Stein Project*. She was Assistant Director for *Patriot Act*. Irene is a member, secretary, and website administrator for the Culver City Flute Choir. Irene also performs with the St. Andrew's Flute Ensemble as well as various chamber groups in Los Angeles.

### Joan Chodorow

*Agave*

Joan appeared in Charles Mee's *Big Love* at Pacific Resident Theatre. A longtime PRT member, she has appeared in numerous productions there. Also in LA: Ahmanson, *Odyssey*, *Zephyr*, *Victory*, Theatre 40, among others. SF Bay Area: Julian, Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, Black Repertory Group, Oakland Ensemble. She has also performed at the Edinburgh Festival. Joan has won two LA Weekly Ensemble Awards.

### **Justin Davanzo**

#### *Dionysus*

Justin is pleased to be a member of City Garage, where he was previously seen in *The Dumbwaiter* by Harold Pinter, *The Jungle of Cities* by Bertolt Brecht, *The Dispute* by Marivaux, *La Leçon* by Eugene Ionesco, and *Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream* by Kathy Acker. He also appeared in Heiner Müller's *The Battle: ABC* (which won the Best Ensemble award at the 2006 LA Weekly Theatre Awards) and in this year's *Agamemnon*.

### **Katherine Dollison**

#### *Young Bacchante*

Katherine is originally from Hayward, California. She dances professionally and has appeared in one previous play. This is her City Garage debut.

### **Troy Dunn**

#### *Pentheus*

Troy was most recently seen as Agamemnon in *Agamemnon* here at City Garage. He hails from the Midwest and spent most of his professional career in Milwaukee working with the MRT, Theatre X, and Chamber Theatre to name a few. Notable roles include Ariel in *The Tempest*, John Oleanna, Lord Goring in *An Ideal Husband*, Benedict in *Much Ado About Nothing*, Barnum in *Barnum*, and Don Quixote *Man of La Mancha*.

### **David E. Frank**

#### *First Aide*

David is originally from Muncie, Indiana, where he received his degree in Theatre Performance from Ball State University. In addition to his work at BSU, he also appeared with the Vagabond Players and the Third Age Theatre Company. His credits at City Garage include *MedeaText: Los Angeles Despoiled Shore*, *Atrocities: Meetings With Monstrous Men*, *The Skriker*, *Frederick of Prussia/GeorgeW's Dream of Sleep*, *The Gertrude Stein Project*, *Katzelmacher*, *OedipusText: Los Angeles*, *La Leçon*, *Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream*, *The Battle: ABC* (which won the Best Ensemble award at the 2006 LA Weekly Theatre Awards) and *Agamemnon*.

### **Nita Mickley**

#### *Tattooed Woman*

Nita is very pleased to be a new member of CG. This is her LA stage debut, but she has been seen in many other productions around the U.S. including works with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley's Aurora Theater Company, and The Upstart Crow Theater of Boulder, CO. She is also a member of the Santa Monica Symphony as well as a solo artist. Watch for her as host on *Gliving.tv* and as a guest star on the new TV show *Shark*.

### **Joel Nuñez**

#### *Second Aide*

Joel was born and raised in Cuba. Between 1980 and 1993 he worked on thirty projects there including plays and feature films. He has lived in Los Angeles for the past three years and he continues to work in films and appear on television, most recently on Univision Network's telenovela *Te Amare en Silencio*. L.A. stage credits include *Seagulls from Havana* at the Los Angeles Theatre Center. This is Joel's second production onstage with City Garage, having performed in *Agamemnon* earlier this year.

### **Mariko Oka**

#### *Lavander Woman*

Born and raised in Tokyo, Japan, Mariko Oka graduated with high honors from Gakushuin University with a B.A. degree in American and English Literature. Upon graduation, she immediately pursued her career in acting in the U.S. by attending the Lee Strasberg Theatre Institute in New York and Theatre of Arts in Los Angeles. She is also a member of ICAP in Los Angeles. She is excited to be appearing in her first City Garage production.

### **Bo Roberts**

#### *Kadmos*

Bo has previously performed at City Garage in *Blood On A Cat's Neck*; *The Universal Wolf*; *Wantons, Rogues and Libertines*; *George Sand: An Erotic Odyssey in Seven Tableaux*; *Journeys Among the Dead*; *Pre-Paradise, Sorry*

*Now*; *Manage Blanc*; *The Fetishist*; *Katzelmacher*; *The Empire Builders*; *Patriot Act: A Reality Show*; *The Battle: ABC* (which won the Best Ensemble award at the 2006 LA Weekly Theatre Awards) and *Agamemnon*.

### **Julie Weidmann**

#### *The Cook*

Julie has been a member of the Elephant Company since its inception, appearing in numerous productions there as well as co-producing, co-writing and co-starring in the two woman show *Co-Dependent Cooking*. Most recently, she appeared in *Hellcab* at the Elephant, a co-production with the Spyants. This is Julie's first production with the City Garage and she thrilled to be a part of the Mee series.

### **Mark Woods**

#### *Tony Ulasewitz*

From the cornfields of southwest Ohio, Mark graduated from Ohio State University with a B.A. in English Literature. Since attending the University of Miami (FL) M.F.A. Motion Picture Screenwriting Program, Mark has written two feature-length scripts and performed in theatre and film in Chicago and Los Angeles. This is his first time onstage with the company after being the light/sound operator for *Agamemnon* earlier this year.

## **STAFF PROFILES**

### **Frederique Michel, Artistic Director**

#### *Director*

Frederique was born in Paris and studied theatre at the Conservatoire. She has led the company as Artistic Director since its founding in 1987. She received a *Dramalogue* award for her direction of *Dissident*. Her 1998 production of *George Sand: An Erotic Odyssey in Seven Tableaux* was nominated for four L.A. Weekly Theater Awards, including Best Director. She was nominated again for Best Director for *MedeaText: Los Angeles/Despoiled Shore* (2000). In 2005 she won the LA Weekly Award for Best Direction (one-act) for *La Leçon*. Her production of *The Battle: ABC* was nominated for Best Direction and received the 2006 LA Weekly Award for Best Ensemble.

### **Charles A. Duncombe, Managing Director**

#### *Production Designer*

Charles is a writer, director and designer. He began his partnership with Frederique Michel in 1985, and he has designed all of her work since then. He has won two *Dramalogue* awards for production design and in 1999 won the L.A. Weekly Theater Award for Best Lighting Design for *George Sand: An Erotic Odyssey in Seven Tableaux* (1998). He was nominated for two L.A. Weekly awards for *MedeaText: Los Angeles/Despoiled Shore* (2000): Best Adaptation, and Best Set. He was nominated again for two L.A. Weekly awards for *Frederick of Prussia/GeorgeW's Dream of Sleep* (2001): Best Adaptation, and Production Design.

### **Amy Oliveira**

#### *Assistant Director*

Amy was the only student to direct a main-stage show at California State University Northridge last year, where she staged Neil LaBute's *The Shape of Things*. Amy has also served as Assistant Director on Ionesco's *The Lesson* and DePauls' *Alice Devised*. She is currently working on Hart and Kaufman's *You Can't Take it with You*. This is her first time working with City Garage.

### **Ruthie Crossley**

#### *Light/Sound Operator*

Ruthie has been a City Garage member for over 10 years. She appeared here in *Girl Gone*; *HamletMachine*; *Garbage, The City and Death*; *Jungle of Cities*; *Pre-Paradise Sorry Now*; *George Sand: An Erotic Odyssey in Seven Tableaux*; *The Queens*; and *Frederick of Prussia: GeorgeW's Dream of Sleep*. She was stage manager for the production of *Night Coil* and *MedeaText: Los Angeles Despoiled Shore*. This is her first time running the lights, and she welcomes the challenge.

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