

City Garage presents

Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream

from the novel by Kathy Acker

Directed and Adapted by Frédérique Michel
Production Design by Charles A. Duncombe



June 10—August 28, 2005

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Directed and Adapted by Frédérique Michel
Production Design by Charles A. Duncombe
Assistant Director Paul M. Rubenstein

Cast

Juni Buchér Pat Nixon, Villebranche, et al.
Maureen Byrnes Nurse, et al.
Christie D'Amore Student, De Franville, et al.
Justin Davanzo Saint Simeon, Thomas Hobbes, et al.
David E. Frank Teacher, Nixon, Old Male Creep, et al.
Sophia Marzocchi Don Quixote
Stephen Pocock Angel of Death, et al.

Production Staff

Set and Lighting Design Charles A. Duncombe
Asst. Direction, Publicity Photography . . . Paul M. Rubenstein
Costume Design Josephine Poinot
(à la Jean Paul Gautier)
Light/Sound Operator Bo Roberts

Place

England and America: The Imagination

Time Today.

**The play runs two hours and is
performed without intermission.**

City Garage is supported, in part, by grants from
The Wells Fargo Foundation,
Rocket Science Laboratories,
The Los Angeles County Arts Commission,
and The Santa Monica Arts Commission.

Special thanks to Dan Butts and his crew
for set construction.

Special thanks also to the Iliad Bookshop in North
Hollywood for donating the books that appear onstage.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

About the Play...which is not a play:

"Being dead, Don Quixote could no longer speak. Being born into and part of a male world, she had no language of her own. All she could do was read male texts, which were not hers."

Don Quixote, Which Was a Dream is a novel, not a play. Director/adaptor Frédérique Michel has put it on stage as a type of literary encounter: how do you convey the dreamlike sense of reading a dense, hallucinatory novel like Kathy Acker's in the language of theater? It's very much an ongoing experiment; this production is the first stage of what Michel intends to become a multi-part theater piece which embraces the whole of the political and literary landscape through which Acker's wandering female knight-adventurer journeys. All of the language onstage is Acker's; no text has been added or changed, but Michel has made a rigorous distillation of the novel into its essence: a rebellious young woman is dying of a botched abortion. In the moment of her passage from life to death she undertakes an epic, if imaginary, journey through sex, politics, literature, love, and death. Like Cervantes's Don Quixote, she is on a quest, but just as in the original—the first, and in many ways the greatest, of all western novels—the nature of that quest is elusive. It is not simply a search for love, or for adventure, or even for justice. She, like he, is battling the "evil enchanters," those who mask from us the true nature of the world. She is at war with illusion, falsehood, lies, self-deception, and the forces of society, government, and religion that rely on them to prevent us from seeing with clarity. She, like he, may be an idealist, even a romantic, but unlike the man of La Mancha she cannot be defeated by a mirror. She has looked long and hard into it and has never stopped seeing what truly is.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kathy Acker (April 18, 1947–November 30, 1997) has often been described as post-punk, post-feminist and post-industrial, but her first work appeared in print as part of the burgeoning New York literary underground of the mid-1970s. She remained on the margins of the literary establishment and was only published by small presses until the mid-1980s, thus earning her a reputation as a literary terrorist. 1984 saw her first major publication when the novel *Blood and Guts in High School* was released in Britain. From this point on she produced a considerable body of work: novels, short stories, essays, an opera libretto, and a screenplay.

Acker's novels are all framed in the context of the personal essay, utilizing cut-up techniques first popularized by William S. Burroughs to juxtapose personal imagery with the writings of her direct influences, such as Georges Bataille and Arthur Rimbaud. In these juxtapositions, Acker blends the personal narrative with the story of the cutup narrative, becoming part of the story and thereby transforming her autobiographical narratives into fiction works. She often focuses on raw sexuality, and her prose style is spartan and primordial, but ultimately intimately personal. Some critics credit her with creating a whole new style of feminist prose—a uniquely female narrative structure. But it is doubtful Acker herself would have given credence to such opinions from the literary establishment.

Kathy Acker was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996 and chose to treat the disease through alternative means. She died in Tijuana, Mexico in 1997.

CAST PROFILES

Juni Buchér

Pat Nixon, Villebranche, et al.

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. Juni is very pleased to be a part of this City Garage production.

Maureen Byrnes

Nurse, et al.

Maureen has appeared in theatre all over the U.S. and Canada and throughout Europe. Her most notable performance was in *Oh, Calcutta!* on Broadway in which she danced a nude pas de deux. She previously appeared at City Garage in *The Presidents, Frederick of Prussia/GeorgeW's Dream of Sleep, The Gertrude Stein Project, The Girl In The Flammable Skirt, Katzelmacher, OedipusText: Los Angeles, and The Empire Builders.*

Christie D'Amore

Student, De Franville, et al.

Christie is a Malibu native. She recently appeared in the Los Angeles, Las Vegas, and Off-Broadway productions of *Pieces (of Ass)*. She can also be seen on television in the updated edition of the classic police drama *Dragnet: LA*. Theatre credits include *My Name is Alice and Line*. Film credits include *Hotties, Dumpster, The Nite and Go for Broke*. Christie is excited to be making her City Garage debut.

Justin Davanzo

Saint Simeon, Thomas Hobbes, et al.

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. and *La Leçon* by Eugene Ionesco.

David E. Frank

Teacher, Nixon, Old Male Creep, et al.

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, the Third Age Theatre Company, and The Muncie Civic Theater. 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, and La Leçon.*

Sophia Marzocchi

Don Quixote

Sophia is proud to be part of this production, her first at City Garage. She has a background in physical theater and dance, both of which went in her recent performance in *The Night of the Black Cat*.

Stephen Pocock

Angel of Death, et al.

This production marks Stephen's tenth year at City Garage. He has directed *4-H Club, Christie in Love, and The Universal Wolf*, and has produced several productions here. He has acted in *Titus Tartar; Atrocities; MedeaText: Los Angeles/Despoiled Shore; Noises; Chicago; Wantons, Rogues, and Libertines; The Balcony; The Basement;*

Garbage, the City, and Death; Hamletmachine; Victims of Duty; Girl Gone; and Exiles.

STAFF PROFILES

Frederique Michel, Artistic Director

Director

Frederique was born in Paris and studied theatre at the Conservatoire. She has directed more than eighty productions in the United States, including works by Strindberg, Rozewicz, Vinaver, Horowitz, Fornes and Barker. She received a *Dramalogue* award for her direction of *Dissident*, and has led the company as Artistic Director since its founding in 1987. 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*.

Charles A. Duncombe, Managing Director

Production Designer

Charles is a writer, director and designer. He began his partnership with Frederique Michel in 1985 with her production of *Miss Julie*, 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. In 2004 his play *Patriot Act: A Reality Show* was selected from nearly 200 entrees from six nations as the winner of the the Mario Fratti-Fred Newman Anti-Corruption Playwriting Contest.

Paul M. Rubenstein, General Manager

Assistant Director, Publicity Photographer

Paul most recently appeared at City Garage in *Patriot Act: A Reality Show*. He made his debut with the company in 1998 as part of the LA Weekly Theater Award-nominated ensemble from *George Sand: An Erotic Odyssey in Seven Tableaux*. He received a Backstage West Garlands Award Honorable Mention for his work here in the US premiere of Ionesco's haunting valedictory, *Journeys Among The Dead*.

Bo Roberts

Light/Sound Operator

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; Journey's Among the Dead; Pre-Paradise Sorry Now; Manage Blanc, The Fetishist, Katzelmacher, The Empire Builders.*

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Frederique Michel

Managing Director
Charles Duncombe

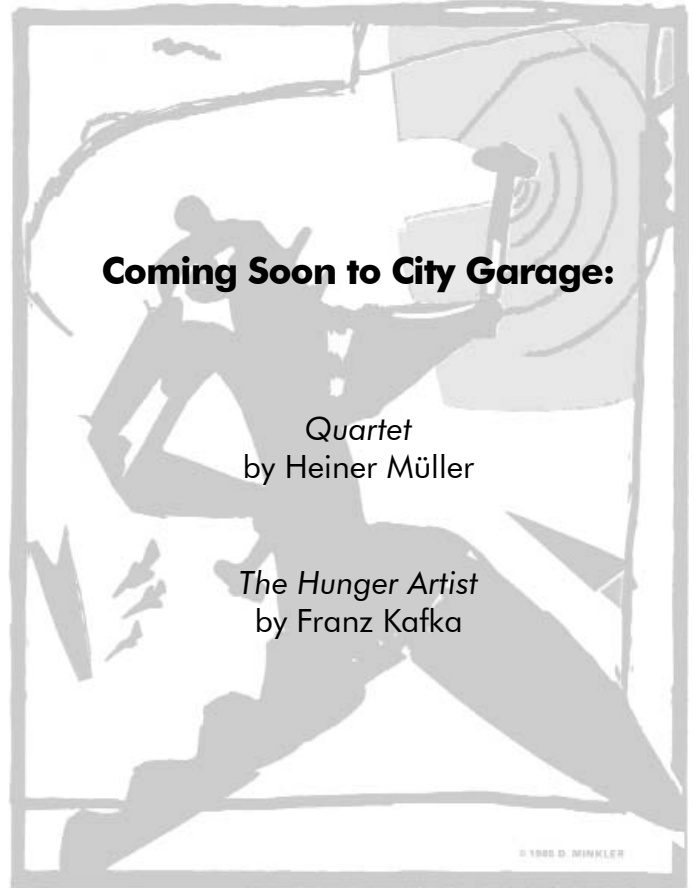
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Coming Soon to City Garage:

Quartet
by Heiner Müller

The Hunger Artist
by Franz Kafka

City Garage recognizes the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, the Santa Monica Arts Commission, the Wells Fargo Foundation, and Rocket Science Laboratories for their generous support.



**Please visit our website:
www.citygarage.org**



Kathy Acker (1947-1997) was the author of novels, short stories, essays, an opera libretto, and a screenplay; she was also a performance artist and a frequent collaborator on various musical and theatrical projects. Her works are noted for their often raw language, fragmented narratives and sexual content; her process often involved literary appropriation and the re-writing of classic texts. Among her major works are *The Childlike Life of the Black Tarantula* (1978), *Blood and Guts in High School* (1984), *Don Quixote: Which Was a Dream* (1986), *Empire of the Senseless* (1990), *In Memoriam to Identity* (1990), *My Mother: Demonology*, and her last novel, *Pussy King of the Plrates* (1996). Acker was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1996 and chose to treat the disease through alternative means. She died in Tijuana, Mexico in 1997.

—Dennis Cooper and Amy Scholder edited *Essential Acker: The Selected Writings of Kathy Acker* in 2002.
