

City Garage presents

# **Patriot Act: A Reality Show**

**A play by Charles A. Duncombe**

Directed by Frédérique Michel

Production Design by Charles A. Duncombe



July 2—August 8, 2004

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## Cast

Bo Roberts .....Man  
Kathryn Sheer .....Interviewer #1  
Paul M. Rubenstein .....Interviewer #2  
Tom Killam .....Interviewer #3

## Production Staff

Set and Lighting Design .....Charles A. Duncombe  
Assistant Director .....Irene Casarez  
Costume Design .....Michele Gingembre  
Music Supervisor .....Paul M. Rubenstein  
Light/Sound Operator .....Jonathon Bernal  
Publicity Photography .....Rick Pickman

**Place and Time:  
America, Today**

**The play runs approximately 90 minutes  
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.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Immediately after September 11, 2001 something peculiar happened: suddenly American flags were everywhere, even on people's cars. And while previously found mainly in the back windows of 4x4 pickup trucks, Old Glory was seen sprouting from Volvos, of all places—even the quintessentially counter-cultural VW bus was not immune to this spontaneous and unironic expression of solidarity and pride.

It was nothing if not patriotic, and it was remarkable for its reach across ideological lines, because for better or for worse, patriotism in America has for the last half-century or so generally been the province of those who lean right. Those who lean left usually seem ambivalent about patriotism, unless they're using it as a shield from behind which they're lobbing sometimes virulent criticism of the country's government, institutions, and culture. They don't wear their flags on their sleeves, figuratively or literally, and they rarely bring up our nation's virtues in casual conversation, though they will generally accede to many of them if pressed. And though many on the left say it is exactly because they love this country so much that they feel compelled to criticize it, the editor of, OpinionJournal.com (the *Wall Street Journal's* online cousin) recently compared them to a husband who constantly belittles his wife, "pointing out her faults and never showing her any kindness. He may love her, but most people would agree he has a twisted way of expressing it."

Yet it is as easy to argue that such passionate critics are performing their true civic duty by holding their elected officials to the high standards upon which the country is founded. Vigorous debate has been an essential facet of the American Experiment since its beginning. In a healthy democracy issues are critically examined, not blindly accepted. Government policies must be able to bear public scrutiny and withstand the challenges and questions of the citizenry that they are meant to serve. Leaders must be answerable to those they lead. It would be hard to call people who dedicate themselves to debating the meaning of the Constitution of the United States of America—even if it puts them at odds with the government—anything but patriots.

Which brings us to patriotism's essential indefinability, especially in times of division and turmoil. We are in murky territory when we desperately want the government to protect us and yet also leave our privacy rights and personal liberty intact. Abraham Lincoln, during the Civil War, suspended the writ of habeas corpus and imprisoned thousands without charge or trial; FDR allowed the internment of thousands of Japanese-Americans during World War II; after 9/11 hundreds of "potential enemies" were swept up and placed in interment camps in Guantanamo Bay without being charged and without access to legal representation. Benjamin Franklin said, "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety," but of course he didn't define what is "essential" and what may reasonably be sacrificed when the populace is faced with genuine threats to its security and wellbeing. There is an inherent tension between security and freedom because the two are ultimately mutually exclusive: on one end of the spectrum is the police state, on the other, anarchy. Americans have contested the proper balance between the two since the nation's founding, and we continue to do so today.

—Program Note by Paul M. Rubenstein

*There is a reference in the play to an entity called the Information Awareness Office. The agency is real, and its mission is as described.*

## CAST PROFILES

### **Bo Roberts**

*Man*

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*; *Marage Blanc*, *The Fetishist*, *Katzelmacher*, and *The Empire Builders*

### **Kathryn Sheer**

*Interviewer #1*

Kathryn has been with City Garage for three years. She previously appeared here in *The Queens*, *The Gertrude Stein Project*, *Cinema Stories: Ceremonies of Unendurable Bondage* and *Katzelmacher*.

### **Paul M. Rubenstein**

*Interviewer #2*

Paul most recently appeared at City Garage in *OedipusText: Los Angeles*. 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*.

### **Tom Killam**

*Interviewer #3*

This is Tom's first production with City Garage since joining the company in January. Recent projects include *The Guys* at Newport Beach Playhouse and *Murder is Announced* and *Wait Until Dark*, both at Long Beach Playhouse. Tom is glad to be part of a socially relevant and politically conscious production.

## 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).

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

*Playwright, 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.

### **Irene Casarez**

*Assistant Director*

This is Irene's second time working with City Garage, having previously appeared onstage as the flutist in *The Gertrude Stein Project*. Irene performs with the Culver City Flute Choir and the St. Andrew's Flute Choir.

### **Jonathon Bernal**

*Light/Sound Operator*

This is Jonathan's debut in the light/sound booth and his first production with City Garage. He is thrilled to be part of the ensemble.

**At City Garage all casting is done strictly within the company.**

**City Garage gratefully acknowledges the following for their generous support:**

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Daniel Slangler  
Charles Swann  
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Kevin Williamson  
Inge Wolf  
Bernard P. Wolfsdorf

**Ensemble Staff**

Artistic Director  
Frederique Michel

Managing Director  
Charles Duncombe

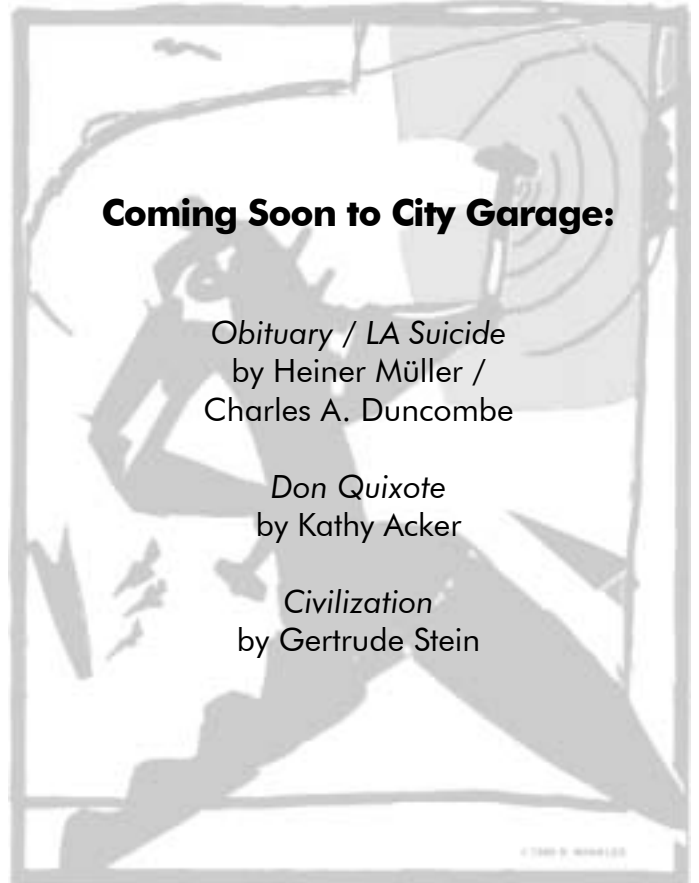
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**Coming Soon to City Garage:**

Obituary / LA Suicide  
by Heiner Müller /  
Charles A. Duncombe

Don Quixote  
by Kathy Acker

Civilization  
by Gertrude Stein

**Please visit our website:  
[www.citygarage.org](http://www.citygarage.org)**

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