

City Garage presents

The Mission (Accomplished)
by Charles Duncombe
an adaptation of Heiner Müller's *The Mission*

Directed by Frédérique Michel

Production Design by Charles Duncombe



April 25, 2008—June 1, 2008

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An Adaptation of Heiner Müller's *The Mission*

Directed by Frédérique Michel

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Cast

Ishani Das *Angel of Death*
John Deschamps *Bush/Father*
Troy Dunn *Debuissou*
David E. Frank *Antoine/Rumsfeld*
Dave Mack *Sasportas/Robespierre*
Cynthia Mance *First Love*
Amanda Mayen *Caged Woman/Slave*
Maximiliano Molina *Soldier/Sailor*
Bo Roberts *Galludec/Cheney*

Production Staff

Set and Lighting Design Charles Duncombe
Assistant Director Kenneth Rudnicki
Costume Design Josephine Poinot
Sound Design / Still Photography Paul Rubenstein
Light/Sound Operator Irene Casarez

Time & Place

Jamaica, 1798

United States & Iraq, Today

**The play runs approximately
80 minutes without intermission.**

Special Thanks to:

John Zuehlke

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the Wells Fargo Foundation,

the Los Angeles County Arts Commission
and the Santa Monica Arts Commission.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Heiner Müller (1929-1995) was widely regarded, internationally and in both German states, as the most important German dramatist since Brecht. The extended public wake held upon his death on December 30, 1995 gave expression to a deep sense of loss in the vibrant East Berlin cultural scene that persisted during the communist German Democratic Republic's (GDR) existence, of which he was the most brilliant protagonist.

Müller's work traverses the entire possible and impossible spectrum, from an avant-garde implementation of the Brechtian Lehrstück (learning play), through the increasingly radical deconstruction of classic texts from the broader European and socialist traditions, to an apparent "split" between plays like *Hamletmaschine* [1977] and *Quartet* (1980), which offer themselves to the West with the deadly assurance of the wind that sweeps through Brecht's dead cities in "Of Poor B.B.," as well as one-offs like *Mausier* [1970/1976] and *Der Auftrag* [*The Mission*, 1979], which can justly claim to mark the end-point of a revolutionary avant-garde, spreadeagled across the yawning gap between present and future.

Müller encapsulates the paradox of a GDR avant-garde. A paradox, first, in the most obvious sense of all: the GDR did not want an avant-garde, it ruled it out, as Goebbels opposed the development of a "National Socialist art", as an annoying disturbance of the "normality" the regime wished so desperately to project, as a safeguard against the erosion of a position it always knew to be vulnerable. To occupy the avant-garde was to lay claim to a position the party itself had long since vacated, an ethically and politically troubling vacuum. But in another sense as well: for Müller, as for many other GDR writers of good faith, this paradox was only sustainable within the broader paradox of "socialism as it existed in reality"; it disintegrated on contact with the West. As long as the ultimate contradiction between socialist ideal and reality persisted, the compulsion, both ethical and aesthetic, to bridge the gap could triumph fitfully over the insights of "historical materialism." But when the black hole which promised to generate new worlds but did not contain them itself was finally closed, the paradox perished with it.

—John Milfull, University of New South Wales

ABOUT THE ADAPTATION

In 2003 the United States invaded Iraq in the name of global freedom and democracy. In 1794 the Revolutionary Republic of France, also in the name of global freedom and democracy, attempted to instigate a slave uprising on the British-held island of Jamaica. Both were on a mission to liberate a long-suffering people from a history of brutal rule and to spread the light of their vision about how to make the world a better place. The question is, for whom? The liberated or the liberators? And who gets to define the "better" in this proposition? A passionate conviction of one's own rightness is the fuel of revolutions, be they French or Neo-Conservative. But that very hunger for moral and intellectual purity also fuels both the Reigns of Terror and the Wars Against Terror that can become the undoing of men who begin with the noblest of intentions but end with their arms steeped in blood, baffled by the destruction they have unleashed both on their enemies and on themselves. They look into the mirror but the mirror can no longer tell them who they are. The story in Müller's play is of the tragic failure of the French (and by the inferred parallels) the Communist revolutions. Our adaptation extends the inference one step further, to the events of the present day.

CAST PROFILES

Ishani Das

Angel of Death

Ishani Das receives her MFA in theatre acting from CalArts conservatory theatre program this month. She received her undergraduate degree from M.I.T. Ishani is classically trained as a Bharata Natyam dancer (S. Indian dance form) by Indira Satyapriya who teaches at the Nalanda School of Dance. Recently she has performed as *The Jewish Wife* written by Brecht, and she has proudly worked with Laurie Carlos as Ndeeba in *Cooking Oil*.

John Deschamps

Bush/Father

John is please to make his Los Angeles debut with City Garage. John has worked In Chicago with the Drury Lane South, New City Theatre and the Illinois Theatre Center and has appeared with the New York Shakespeare Festival and Off-Broadway with the C.S.C. Repertory. He has appeared on *Early Edition* and *Angel Street* and was seen in *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer: Part 2*.

Troy Dunn

Debuissou

Troy was seen last year at City Garage as Valmont in *Quartet* and Berenger in *Rhinoceros*. At the 2008 L.A. Weekly Theater Awards he won Best Actor (one-act) for his work in *Quartet*. In 2006 he appeared here as Agamemnon in *Iphigenia* and *Agamemnon* and as Pentheus in *The Bacchae* (all adaptations by Charles L. Mee). 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*; Barnum in *Barnum*.

David E. Frank

Antoine/Rumsfeld

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); *Agamemnon*; *The Bacchae*; *Rhinoceros*; *Quartet*; and *The Bald Soprano*.

Dave Mack

Sasportas/Robespierre

Dave is an M.F.A. Acting graduate of the California Institute of the Arts. He received his B.A. in theatre from Cornell University. Dave has had the pleasure of working with directors such as Regge Life (former producer/director: "The Cosby Show") and David Feldshuh (former Artistic Director: the Guthrie) in various stage productions. His recent performances include *The Black Lawyer* in *Ragtime* at the Actor's Rep of Simi Valley and *Dwarf* in *What to Wear?* at the REDCAT.

Cynthia Mance

First Love

The Mission (Accomplished) marks Cynthia Mance's 10th play over 10 years at City Garage—a thoroughly rewarding run that began with *Wantons, Rogues & Libertines* in 1998. She most recently played the role of Mrs. Martin in *The Bald Soprano*. Cynthia received her BFA in Theatre from the University of Florida, and has performed on numerous stages in three states, including a recent performance with the Coda Theater Project in Austin, Texas. She is a member of SAG and AEA, and is happy to call the L.A. theatre scene home.

Maximiliano Molina

Soldier/Sailor

Maximiliano is happy to have found City Garage. He previously appeared in 2006's *Three by Mee* productions *Agamemnon* and *Iphigenia* as well as *Rhinoceros* and *The Bald Soprano* last year. A graduate of Cal Poly Pomona and the Actors Studio Drama School in New York, he is glad to be back in California. He has been affiliated with such companies as the Zoo District in L.A., Campos Santos in San Francisco, and was a founding member of MMM... Comedy in New York.

Amanda Mayen

Caged Woman/Slave

Amanda Mayen earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Philosophy & Economics from New York University. She studied at the Actor's Conservatory in Manhattan and at the Joanne Baron/D.W. Brown Studio

in Santa Monica. Past theater work includes *The Crucible*, *A View from the Bridge*, and *Proof*. She has also appeared in the films *Games People Play*, *Connection*, and *Haiku*.

Bo Roberts

Galludec/Cheney

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*; *Mariage 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); *Agamemnon*; *The Bacchae*; *Rhinoceros*; and *The Bald Soprano*.

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. She once again won Best Direction (one-act) for *Quartet* at the 2008 LA Weekly Theater Awards.

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. His play *Patriot Act* won the Fratti/Newman Award for Political Playwriting in 2005 and will open in New York at the Castillo Theater this September as part of their 2008 season. He won the 2006 LA Weekly Theatre Award for Best Production Design for the entire *Three by Mee* season and was nominated again in 2007 for Production Design for *Quartet*.

Kenneth Rudnicki

Assistant Director

Kenneth last appeared onstage in *Iphigenia* at City Garage and is honored to be Assistant Directing his second Henry Müller production with the company. Kenneth recently appeared in the film *Change Your Life!* (starring *Ugly Betty* star Tony Plana) scheduled for release later this year and will be appearing in Moving Arts' One Act Festival in June. Mr. Rudnicki may have been involved with the underground guerilla theatre production *I'm Going To Kill the President*. He currently teaches acting and playwriting for various Los Angeles based theatre companies including East LA Classic Theatre, and Theater of Hearts/Youth First.

Irene Casarez

Light/Sound Operator

Irene appeared in *The Gertrude Stein Project*, and was last seen on stage at City Garage in *The Bacchae*. She worked in the booth for *Iphigenia*, *Rhinoceros*, *Quartet*, and *The Bald Soprano*. She is delighted to be working with the company again.

Paul Rubenstein, General Manager

Sound Designer / Still Photographer

Paul has appeared in 10 productions at City Garage, including *The Battle: ABC*, "Best Ensemble" winner at the 2006 LA Weekly Theater Awards.

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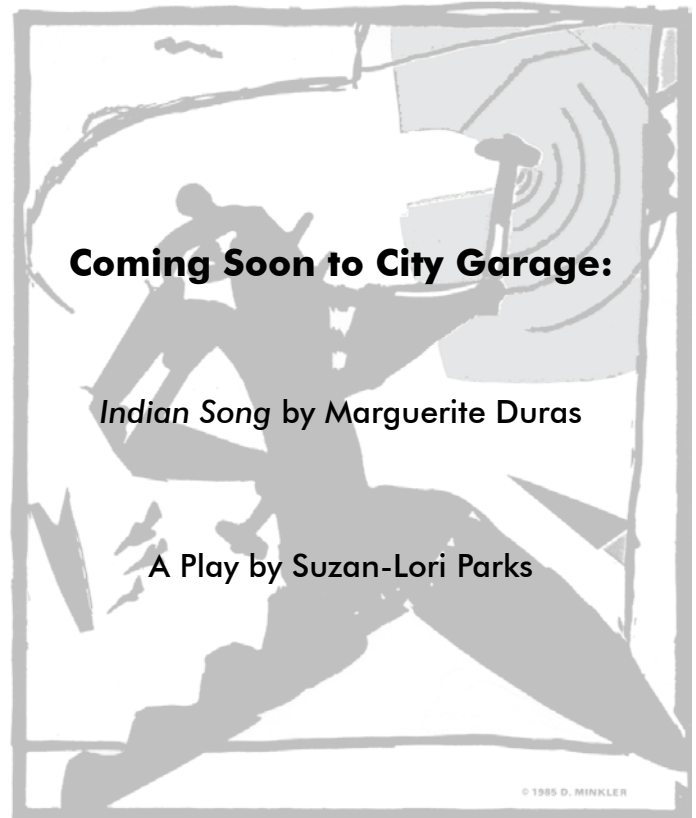
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