



LA RONDE

WRITTEN BY
ARTHUR SCHNITZLER

DIRECTED BY
JACK ROWE

APRIL 3-6, 2014
SCENE DOCK THEATRE

USC School
of Dramatic Arts



USC School of Dramatic Arts Spring 2014 SCHEDULE

MFA ACTING SPRING REPERTORY

Scene Dock Theatre | February 8-March 9

Our Town

By Thornton Wilder | Directed by Cameron Watson

Trojan Women

By David Bridel & the MFA Acting Class of 2014

Directed by David Bridel

Tartuffe

By Molière | Translation by Richard Wilbur

Directed by Andrew J. Robinson

The Art of Success

By Nick Dear | Directed by Stephanie Shroyer

McClintock Theatre | February 27-March 2

Pericles

By William Shakespeare | Directed by Rob Clare

Bing Theatre | March 6-9

A spring production that showcases our second-year Master of Fine Arts Acting students.

La Ronde

By Arthur Schnitzler | Directed by Jack Rowe

Scene Dock Theatre | April 3-6

Grand Hotel, The Musical

Book by Luther Davis

Music and Lyrics by George Forrest and Robert Wright

Based on Vicki Baum's *Grand Hotel* | By arrangement with Turner

Broadcasting Co., Owner of the motion picture *Grand Hotel*

Additional music and lyrics by Maury Yeston

Directed by John Rubinstein

Bing Theatre | April 3-13

Fortinbras

By Lee Blessing | Directed by Jennifer Chang

McClintock Theatre | April 10-13

NEW WORKS FESTIVAL: YEAR TWO

Massman Theatre | April 11-27

The Dining Room

By A.R. Gurney | Directed by Louie Piday

McClintock Theatre | April 24-27

Kokoro

By Velina Hasu Houston | Directed by Tamara Ruppert

Scene Dock Theatre | April 24-27

NEW WORKS FESTIVAL: YEAR THREE

McClintock Theatre | May 27-31



SHOWTIMES

Thu. & Fri. at 7pm • Sat. at 2:30 & 8pm • Sun. at 2:30pm

TICKET PRICES

PLAYS: General Admission \$10 • Seniors or USC Faculty/Staff with ID \$8
USC Students with ID \$5

For tickets and information:

www.usc.edu/spectrum • arts@usc.edu • 213-740-2167

LA RONDE

By Arthur Schnitzler

with

Joanna Brodecki • Andre Anthony Chahwan • Madison West Gill
Zachary Grant • Annie Hamilton • Kaitlin Kelly
Megan Mountford • Aubrey Rinehart • Kaleb Rudolph
Riley Smith • Jeffrey Stratford

SCENIC DESIGN
Nick Farmer

COSTUME DESIGN
Meagan Smith

LIGHTING DESIGN
Sabrina Cadena

SOUND DESIGN
Kelsi Halverson

STAGE MANAGER
Ramón Valdez

DIRECTED BY
Jack Rowe

April 3 – 6, 2014
Scene Dock Theatre

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Appearance)

The Whore.....Kaitlin Kelly
The Soldier.....Zachary Grant
The Parlor Maid.....Joanna Brodecki
The Young Gentleman.....Jeffrey Stratford
The Young Wife.....Megan Mountford
The Husband.....Kalev Rudloph
The Little Miss.....Aubrey Rinehart
The Poet.....Riley Smith
The Actress.....Madison West Gill
The Count.....Andre Anthony Chahwan
The Chambermaid.....Annie Hamilton

TIME

1910

PLACE

Vienna

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

WARNING

Please be advised that this production contains sexual themes.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Vocal/Dialect Coach..... Anne Burk

Scenic Artist.....Madison Orgill

Assistant Stage Manager.....Kat Brannan-Williams

Crew.....Kat Brannan-Williams,
Claire Chatinover,
Keenan Cochrane,
Lauren Harris,
Ray Knight,
Miriam Neigns,
Catherine Tapling,
Mick Tolbert,
Hanna Turley

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Jack Rowe is an Associate Dean, Director of BFA in Acting and Artistic Director of the School of Dramatic Arts. He also teaches classes in the MFA, BFA and BA programs and directs productions. His first theatre experiences were as an undergraduate at USC, where he majored in Economics. He was a founding member of the Company Theatre, a Los Angeles-based avant-garde collective of the late 1960s. He continues to direct in the L.A. theatre scene when time allows.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Austrian playwright Arthur Schnitzler (1862-1931), one of the seminal forces in world drama, was also a novelist and practicing physician. His plays reveal brute insights into the mind and soul of *fin-de siècle* (turn of the century) Vienna. Much like Sigmund Freud, who described Schnitzler as “the poet for whom I have always had the deepest admiration,” Schnitzler’s work is inextricable from the social and intellectual milieu of his time, which accompanied the decline of the “world-weary” Austro-Hungarian Empire. This was the age of the “Viennese-Secessionists,” exemplified by composers such as Berg, Webern and Schoenberg, painters Gustav Klimt and Oskar Kokoschka, the foundations of modern architecture, and Zionism. World War I was just around the corner. Adding to this ferment, Freud introduced his theories of sexuality, theories that were virtually parallel to those of Schnitzler.

La Ronde deals with these theories through a series of 10 two-character dialogues, each between a man and a woman and each leading to sexual intercourse. The 10 characters bridge the entire range of society, from lowest to highest, from the Prostitute to the Count. And each new dialogue introduces a character of higher social status. Scene 1, the Soldier and the Prostitute leads to Scene 2, the Soldier and the Parlor Maid, to Scene 3, the Parlor Maid and the Young Gentleman, etc., until the final Scene brings together the Count and the Prostitute of Scene 1. The circle is closed. The highest and lowest are effectively reduced to a common denominator.

The play is, however, more than a series of sexual encounters; it is a keen and incisive picture of its time. The unifying thread of the “dialogues” is the deception involved in the supposed act of love. The guiding moment between each couple’s physical union is the ideal of love, but in the end only animal passion has been expended. The final coup is the insensitivity and egocentric unconcern of each for the other. Douglas A. Russell in his *Anthology of Austrian Drama*, described it this way: “Schnitzler will be remembered for his superb recording of the sexual drives and fantasies that men within a decaying society use to give themselves the illusion of youth and power.”

Needless to say, the play—written in 1897-1898 and published under the title *Reigen* in 1903—caused one of the greatest scandals in the history of German Theatre. A six day trial resulted in acquittal, but the physical battles inside the theatre and the right-wing street demonstrations forced Schnitzler to withdraw the play. It was translated by Eric Bentley in 1954. It did not receive a major British production until 1982.

It is a play of profound disillusionment and a challenge to bring to life (and also very funny).

Does any of this relate to our late 20th, early 21st century culture?

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Howard Schmitt

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