MFA Year 3 Acting Repertory
Scene Dock Theatre
February 1–March 3, 2019

Children of the Sun

Gnit

Swimmers

USC School of Dramatic Arts
Your presence at this performance is invaluable to us, and we trust you will enjoy watching our graduating MFA acting students in any and all of the plays that comprise this “rep” — *Children of the Sun* by Maxim Gorky in a new version by Andrew Upton, *Gnit* by Will Eno and *Swimmers* by Rachel Bonds. This multi-play repertory is the equivalent of the students’ Master’s thesis, and it culminates the ensemble performance aspect of the USC School of Dramatic Arts’ MFA actor training program. For more on the extraordinary challenges and rewards of the repertory experience, please read the words, penned by the MFA Acting’s Founding Director Andy Robinson, which perfectly capture the essence of this remarkable experience.

**DAVID WARSHOFSKY**
Director of MFA Acting

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### The MFA Acting Repertory Experience

**BY ANDY ROBINSON**

This rep serves two purposes in actor training: one, it brings a group of student-actors together into a working ensemble; and two, it gives them an intense repertory experience that allows them to practically apply all aspects of their training. What the actor learns from being a working member of an ensemble is every bit as important as learning the nuts and bolts of the craft. To be a true ensemble player, one develops a vital connection and a responsibility to the other players. Individual talents are brought together into a coherent and responsive ensemble that creates the potential for extraordinary theatre.

Michael Chekhov, the great Russian actor, director and teacher, believed “the purpose of all training is to create character.” After more than two years of classes, workshops and performance situations, each one of these actors has now created three or more characters from three very different plays. And because they are a small group taking on this enormous challenge, they are sometimes playing roles that commercial theatres would be reluctant to hire them to play. Nothing stretches an actor more than to struggle with a character that’s 180 degrees removed from her or his “type.” It’s this kind of “miscasting” that often allows for revelatory performance.

Until relatively recently, actors coming out of drama school had more opportunity to secure an apprenticeship with one of a number of resident repertory companies located throughout the country. The intensity of the rep experience (rehearsing one play during the day, playing another at night) allowed the apprentice to put recent drama school training to the test of practical application. Unfortunately, these resident rep companies have dwindled down to a precious few.

Today, the vast majority of students coming out of drama school are immediately thrown into a “freelance” situation where the work comes sporadically with a lot of “down time” in-between. The formative practical experience that professional rep companies used to provide has now, to a large extent, fallen to academy-styled university or private actor-training programs.

And if the repertory experience is not even offered in these programs, then chances are slim that the graduated actor will ever find it in the professional world.

Multi-play rep is not for the faint of heart. It requires stamina, patience and true belief in the creative imagination. Every bit of intellectual, emotional and physical resource the actor possesses is put into play. It’s an experience that strengthens and expands presence, the actor’s most valuable asset, and I am deeply grateful to the School of Dramatic Arts for keeping the experience alive here at USC.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>REPERTORY PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Children of the Sun</strong></td>
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<td>Fri, Feb 1</td>
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<td>Thu, Feb 28</td>
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<td><strong>Gnit</strong></td>
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<td>Fri, Mar 1</td>
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<td><strong>Swimmers</strong></td>
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<td>Sun, Feb 10</td>
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<td>Fri, Feb 15</td>
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<td>Thu, Feb 21</td>
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<td>Sat, Mar 2</td>
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<td>Sun, Mar 3</td>
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*Photo by Anna Azarov Photography*
MFA Year 3 Acting Repertory
Scene Dock Theatre  February 1–March 3, 2019

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(in order of appearance)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protasov Fyodorich Protasov</th>
<th>Melaniya Borisovna/Avdotya (Yegor’s Wife)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malachy Silva</td>
<td>Briyana Guadalupe</td>
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<td>Antonovna, the Protasov’s Nanny</td>
<td>Efimia Ivanovna (Fima)/Lukeria (Loosha)</td>
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<td>Natalia Leyva Lezcano</td>
<td>Bukola Ogunmola</td>
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<td>Roman/Yakov Troshin</td>
<td>Nazar Avdeyich Vigrusov</td>
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<td>Calahan Skogman</td>
<td>Akshaya Pattanayak</td>
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<td>Elizaveta Fyodorovna (Liza)</td>
<td>Mikhail Nazarov Vigrusov (Misha)</td>
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<td>Tessa Hope Slovis</td>
<td>AJ Clark</td>
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<td>Yegor/Doctor</td>
<td>Elyene Nikolaevna Protasov (Yelena)</td>
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<td>Gabriel Leyva Lezcano</td>
<td>Zaire Martinez Roldan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boris Borisovich Chepurnoy</td>
<td>Dimitri Sergeyich Vaguin (Vageen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brett Wyman</td>
<td>Carlos Harrison</td>
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Time/Place: A small town in Russia in the summer of 1905

ACT 1: In the house after breakfast
ACT 2: The same day in the garden after dinner
ACT 3: In the house the next day
ACT 4: In the garden the next day

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

DIRECTOR’S NOTE
Welcome to this stunning adaptation by Andrew Upton of Maxim Gorky’s masterful Children of the Sun. Maxim Gorky picks up where Anton Chekhov leaves us at the end of The Cherry Orchard. Chekhov looked longingly to the past and gazed warily into the future in his final masterwork and Gorky hurtles us towards this future. Written during the 1905 revolution, Gorky gives us a snapshot of what a group of scientists, artists, merchants, workmen and peasants were thinking about and wrestling with as they looked around them and saw the world that they had grown up with disappearing before their eyes. Upton has updated Gorky’s work so that it tumbles out at us with much overlapping dialogue and vibrant anachronisms. Gorky’s heart beats loud and clear throughout giving us a story that is densely packed but rampage along for a surprisingly fleet experience. Welcome to Russia in 1905.

PRODUCTION STAFF
Vocal Coach Natsuko Ohama | Vocal Coach Lauren Murphy Yeoman | Fight Choreography
Edgar Landa | 1st Asst. Stage Manager Arturo Fernandez, Jr. | 2nd Asst. Stage Manager
Zoya Naqvi | Asst. Scenic Design Mimi Bower | Asst. Costume Design Gigi Shin

SLIGHT/Lighting Design Mentor Jason Thompson | Sound Design Mentor Alma Reyes-Thomas
Assoc. Sound Designer Jack Johnson | Crew Gena Baek, Alexcus Cruz, Courtney Frank, Oscar Gonzalez, Aidan Gray, Michael Howard, Kumar Rohit, Sindri Sigfusson

SPECIAL THANKS
Center Theatre Group, Kevin Williams at UCLA

WARNING Please be advised that this production contains mature language and themes.
CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

Peter
Gabriel Leyva Lezcano
Mother/Dark Lady
Bukola Ogunmola
Stranger 1/Green Family
International Man/Beggar/Auctioneer
AJ Clark
Stranger 2/Green Family/Bartender
Pastor/Shackleton
Calahan Skogman
Stranger 3/Hunter/Robber
Bremen/Grave Digger
Carlos Harrison
Town
Akshaya Pattanayak

Bridesmaid/Women in Green
Sick Woman/Anitra
Natalia Leyva Lezcano
Moyniham/Middle/International Man
Sphinx/Pale Man
Malachy Silva
Uncle Joe/Green Family
International Man/Beggar/Reporter
Brett Wyman
Solway
Briyana Guadalupe
Bride/Case Worker
Tessa Hope Slovis
Groupie/Helen/Anna
Zaire Martinez Roldán

CAST OF CHARACTERS (in order of appearance)

LeAnna
Zaire Martinez Roldán
Priya
Briyana Guadalupe
Walter
AJ Clark
Farrah
Tessa Hope Slovis
Tom
Calahan Skogman
Bill
Malachy Silva
Charlene
Bukola Ogunmola
Dennis
Gabriel Leyva Lezcano
Vivian
Natalia Leyva Lezcano
George
Brett Wyman
Randy
Carlos Harrison

PRODUCTION STAFF

Vocal Coach Natsuko Ohama | Vocal Coach Lauren Murphy Yeoman
Music Direction Tessa Hope Slovis | Fight Choreography Edgar Landa
1st Asst. Stage Manager Zoya Naqvi | 2nd Asst. Stage Manager Arturo Fernandez Jr.
Asst. Scenic Design Edward Hansen | Asst. Costume Design Gigi Shin
LX/Projections Design Mentor Jason Thompson | Sound Design Mentor Alma Reyes-Thomas
Assoc. Sound Designer Kiegan Lee | Crew Wesley Brown, Giovanny Camarena,
Stephen Humes, Isha Kamdar, Elise Kesler, Charrell Mack, Cameron Murphy
Musicians Tessa Hope Slovis, Natalia Leyva Lezcano, Brett Wyman

WARNING Please be advised that this production contains theatrical haze, smoking of herbal cigarettes and mature language.
Kate Burton (Director, Children of the Sun) is a professor of theatre practice at USC. She has directed Three Sisters, The Cherry Orchard and The Seagull for the MFA rep and Twelfth Night for the BFA. She has also directed three versions of Shakespeare/Tchaikovsky for Gustavo Dudamel and the LA Phil featuring Matthew Rhys, Anika Noni Rose, Ioan Gruffth, Malcolm MacDowell and Orlando Bloom. A recipient of three Tony and Emmy nominations, she has appeared in 15 Broadway shows, as well as Grey’s Anatomy and Scandal and the upcoming Where’d You Go Bernadette starring Cate Blanchett. A Russian Studies graduate of Brown University and The Yale School of Drama, she serves as a Western Regional Councilor for Actor’s Equity Association.

Andrei Belgrader (Director, Gnit) is a professor of theatre practice at USC. He is a theatre and television director who has also been a master teacher at the Yale School of Drama, a professor at UCSD and Head of the Directing Department at Juilliard. On television, he has directed numerous episodes of Monk, as well as Law & Order: Criminal Intent and the sitcom Coach. He directed extensively at major regional theatres such as the American Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory, the Goodman and Seattle Repertory, as well as in New York City. Projects in New York include Beckett’s Endgame at BAM, with John Turturro and Elaine Stritch, and The Cherry Orchard at CSC, with Dianne Wiest, John Turturro and Michael Urie. Both productions were named among the 10 best productions of the year in major publications such as The New York Times and New York magazine. The Cherry Orchard was awarded the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Revival in 2012. Among his former students are Frances McDormand, Angela Bassett, Tony Shalhoub, Liev Schreiber, John Turturro, Patricia Clarkson, Chris Noth, Ricardo Chavira, Michael Urie and Jessica Chastain.

David Warshofsky (Director, Swimmers) is the director of the MFA in Acting program at USC. Film credits include Oliver Stone’s Born on the Fourth of July; Paul Thomas Anderson’s There Will Be Blood and The Master; Steven Spielberg’s Lincoln; Paul Greengrass’ Captain Phillips; and the franchise films Taken (1 and 3) and Now You See Me (1 and 2). Warshofsky has appeared in numerous indie films including six at the Sundance Film Festival, most recently as Grant in Beatriz at Dinner by Mike White and directed by Miguel Arteta. Television credits include many Law & Order incarnations and, most recently, the recurring role of Theodore Peus on season 6 of ABC’s Scandal. On stage, Warshofsky originated the role of Gottfried Swetts in Tony Kushner’s A Bright Room Called Day. Additionally, Biloxi Blues and Nicholas Hytner’s revival of Carousel on Broadway; Shakespeare in the Park; Playwrights Horizons and Manhattan Theatre Club; as well as numerous regional theatres.
The USC School of Dramatic Arts would like to recognize the generosity of the following individuals and organizations who have supported the School over the past year towards core programs such as production, professional development, scholarship and the Dean's Strategic Fund. We recognize at the visionary level those donors whose tremendous generosity has reached the cumulative giving level of $1 million. Their extraordinary commitment has built the foundation for our continued ascent and future achievements.

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- & Ernest Cravalho

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*Represents multi-year pledge
MFA Acting YEAR 3
Repertory
SDT Feb 1-Mar 3, 2019

Children of the Sun
By Maxim Gorky
In a new version by Andrew Upton
Directed by Kate Burton

Gnit
By Will Eno
Directed by Andrei Belgrader

Swimmers
By Rachel Bonds
Directed by David Warshofsky

The Two Gentlemen
of Verona
By William Shakespeare
Directed by Drew Barr
BT Feb 21-24, 2019

Holy Ghosts
By Romulus Linney
Directed by Jay Lee
MT Feb 28–Mar 3, 2019

The Busybody
By Susanna Centlivre
Directed by Louise Peacock
SDT Mar 28-31, 2019

Sunday in the Park
with George
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by James Lapine
Directed by Kelly Ward
BT Mar 28–Apr 7, 2019

Rough Magic
By Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa
Directed by John DeMita
SDT Apr 18-21, 2019

Queen Margaret
By William Shakespeare
Edited by J. Steven White
Directed by Kathleen Dunn-Muzingo
MT Apr 18-21, 2019

New Works Festivals
YEAR 1
New Play Readings
Presented in association with Playwrights’ Arena
April 2019

YEAR 2
Playwrights Workshop
Presented in association with Latino Theatre Company
MASSMAN THEATRE Apr 5-14, 2019

YEAR 3
Play Project
Presented in association with The Pasadena Playhouse
May 17 & 18, 2019

KEY:
SDT = Scene Dock Theatre
BT = Bing Theatre
MT = McClintock Theatre

For more information about our shows, visit dramaticarts.usc.edu

TICKET PRICES Plays: Gen $15, USC Students/Faculty/Staff with ID $8, Musicals: Gen $20, USC Students/Faculty/Staff with ID $10
PERFORMANCES Thurs & Fri at 7:30 p.m., Sat at 2:30 & 8 p.m. and Sun at 2:30 p.m. (Except where noted)

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