

Book of Days

By Lanford Wilson

Directed by Paul Backer

McClintock Theatre

April 21-24, 2016



USC School of Dramatic Arts 2015/2016 SEASON

USC School of Dramatic Arts

PRESENTS

Book of Days

By Lanford Wilson

WITH (in alphabetical order)

Haley Spence Brown Antonio Chicco Samantha Dammeyer
David Phillip Fishman Parker Huseby Camron Jones
Sara Luna Leconte Lambert Eduardo Maruri
Andrew Jacob Teplitz Patrick Wallace
Isabelle Yamin Eva Zakula

SCENIC DESIGN
Jessica Hong

COSTUME DESIGN
Erica Park

LIGHTING DESIGN
Nicole Eng

SOUND DESIGN
Briana Billups

STAGE MANAGER
Iman Khan

DIRECTED BY
Paul Backer

McClintock Theatre | April 21–24, 2016

Presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc. New York.

Originally commissioned, developed and produced by the Purple Rose Theatre Company, Chelsea, MI. The World Premiere of *Book of Days* was presented by the Purple Rose Theatre Company, Jeff Daniels, Executive Director, Guy Sanville, Artistic Director and Alan Ribant, Managing Director. The production was directed by Guy Sanville.

Book of Days was subsequently produced by Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Steven Woolf, Artistic Director, Mark D. Bernstein, Managing Director, and by Hartford Stage, Michael Wilson, Artistic Director and Elaine Calder, Managing Director.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(in order of appearance)

Walt Bates

Parker Huseby

Martha Hoch

Samantha Dammeyer

Sharon Bates

Haley Spence Brown

Sheriff Conroy Atkins

Andrew Jacob Teplitz

Ginger Reed

Sara Luna Leconte Lambert

James Bates

Patrick Wallace

Len Hoch

Antonio Chicco

Earl Hill

Eduardo Maruri

LouAnn Bates

Isabelle Yamin

Boyd Middleton

Camron Jones

Ruth Hoch

Eva Zakula

Reverend Bobby Groves

David Phillip Fishman

TIME: The present.

PLACE: Various locations in Dublin, Missouri.

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

WARNING Please be advised that this production contains partial nudity, special sound effects, fog, strobe light effects, guns and mature language and themes.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Hair & Make-up Design Erica Park | *Vocal and Dialect Coach* Anne Burk

Fight Choreography Edgar Landa | *Fight Captain* Patrick Wallace

Scenic Artist Vika Teplinskaya | *Scenic PA* Jessica Peeters

Sound PA Ethan Zeitman | *Crew* Ryan Brophy, Liz Buzbee, Anderson Folsom, Sarah Gilman, Christie Griffin, Samantha Ramirez, Emma Vranich

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Lanford Wilson (1937–2011) is one of America's most esteemed playwrights, and often referred to as "America's Chekhov." He has always been fascinated by archeology. Some of his plays specifically revolve around archeology, and virtually all of his plays at least mention it. Wilson is an "archeologist" as a playwright: he delicately removes layer by layer of the apparently mundane topsoil of his characters to reveal the complex layers of secret life hidden underneath. Through this tenacious excavation, Wilson finds how the past illuminates the present, but his plays never judge, they only reveal — with empathy, humor and a robustly American language of lyrical realism.

In *The Rimers of Eldritch* and *Book of Days*, Wilson excavates his own personal roots in small town Missouri life. *Rimers* was one of his earliest plays, written from the perspective of youthful frustration. In *Book of Days*, one of his last plays, he returns to his roots over 30 years later, this time with a mellower, more ripened perspective, like a fine cheddar cheese that is mentioned in the play. But like an aged cheddar, it still has a "bite." For *Book of Days*, Wilson chooses the church, commerce (a cheese plant) and community theatre for his setting. For the story he digs down even further, all the way down to the Middle Ages and Saint Joan of Arc. Wilson specifically parallels his play with George Bernard Shaw's *Saint Joan*.

The title *Book of Days* refers to the illuminated medieval manuscripts with miniature pictures that depicted in exquisite detail the daily lives of people of all classes in the Middle Ages. This was the time of Joan of Arc, a time when all theatre was "community theatre," when politics, religion and individual human passions were woven together in a complex tapestry, and depicted in popular "morality plays" for all social classes. And a time when heroic pursuits for the truth could have consequences were at once both noble and destructive. But, as one character notes in the play, in six hundred years, things have not really changed.

DIRECTOR'S BIO

Dr. Paul Backer is an Associate Professor of Theatre Practice and Director of Undergraduate Voice and Movement at the USC School of Dramatic Arts. He has worked as an actor, director and in production on stage, television and film, and was the Artistic Director of the Ojai Shakespeare Festival for 16 years. At USC, he last directed *Love and Information* by Caryl Churchill.

SPECIAL THANKS

Michelle Brown, Lee Roy Cotter, Alice Spence, Lehman Spence

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Rumors

By Neil Simon
Directed by Edward Edwards
SDT Oct 1-4, 2015

Love and Information

By Caryl Churchill
Directed by Paul Backer
MT Oct 1-4, 2015

Mansfield Park

By Willis Hall
Adapted from the novel by Jane Austen
Directed by Jeremy Skidmore
BT Oct 8-11, 2015

The Quick-Change Room

By Nagle Jackson
Directed by Robert Bailey
SDT Oct 22-25, 2015

Ring Round the Moon

By Jean Anouilh
Adapted by Christopher Fry
Directed by Stephanie Shroyer
MT Oct 29-Nov 1, 2015

You Can't Take It With You

By George S. Kaufman and Moss Hart
Directed by Gigi Bermingham
BT Nov 5-8, 2015

Marisol

By José Rivera
Directed by Denise Blasor
MT Nov 19-22, 2015

La Ronde

By Arthur Schnitzler
Translated by Carl Mueller
Directed by Cameron Watson
SDT Nov 19-22, 2015

MFA Acting Repertory

SDT Feb 6-Mar 6, 2016

Threepenny Opera

Book and Lyrics by Bertolt Brecht
Music by Kurt Weill
English adaptation by Marc Blitzstein
Directed by Andrew J. Robinson

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992

By Anna Deavere Smith
Directed by Gregg T. Daniel

The Oresteia Project

Written by David Bridel and the MFA Acting Class of 2016
Inspired by Aeschylus' *Oresteia*
Directed by David Bridel

The Learned Ladies

By Molière
Translated by Richard Wilbur
Directed by Michael Michetti
BT Feb 25-28, 2016

Camille

By Alexandre Dumas
Translated by Pam Gems
Directed by Debbie McMahon
MT Mar 3-6, 2016

The Country Wife

By William Wycherley
Directed by John DeMita
SDT Mar 31-Apr 3, 2016

A Little Night Music

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick
Suggested by a Film by Ingmar Bergman
Originally Produced & Directed on Broadway by Harold Prince
Directed by Kelly Ward
BT Mar 31-Apr 10, 2016

BFA Sophomore Shows

The Rimers of Eldritch

By Lanford Wilson
Directed by Jack Rowe
MT Apr 7-10, 2016

Book of Days

By Lanford Wilson
Directed by Paul Backer
MT Apr 21-24, 2016

Breath, Boom

By Kia Corthron
Directed by Anita Dashiell-Sparks
SDT Apr 21-24, 2016

New Works Festivals

YEAR 1 New Play Readings
Parkside 1016 May 2, 2016

YEAR 2 Playwrights Workshop
MS Apr 8-24, 2016

YEAR 3 Play Project
MT May 1, 2016

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Greenhouse at The Playhouse
Carrie Hamilton Theatre
at The Pasadena Playhouse

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

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