



Presents

# DANCING AT LUGHNASA

by **Brian Friel**

Directed by **Barbara Schofield**

Featuring

**Lane Allison • Sandra Kate Burck • Christopher Cappiello\***

**Martha Demson • Caroline Klidonas • Neil Oktay • Scott Roberts\***

**David Shofner • Ann Marie Wilding • Jennifer Zorbalas**

Scenic Design  
**James Spencer**

Choreography  
**Jason Gorman**

Costume Design  
**Mylette Nora**

Sound Design  
**Tim Labor**

Properties  
**Bruce Dickinson & Ina Shumaker**

Lighting Design  
**Matt Richter**

Scenic Construction  
**Jan Munroe**

Dialect Coach  
**Deborah Ross-Sullivan**

Assoc Lighting Design  
**Kaitlin Chang**

Associate Producer  
**Ben Martin**

Production Stage Manager  
**Jennifer Palumbo\***

Publicist  
**Lucy Pollak**

Produced by **Martha Demson**

Originally produced on the New York stage by Noel Pearson in association with Bill Kenwright and Joseph Harris. References to ANYTHING GOES are included by permission of the Cole Porter Musical and Literary Trusts. References to THE ISLE OF CAPRI by Wilhelm Grosz and James Kennedy are included by permission of Polygram International Publishing Inc. and Warner Bros., Inc.



\*Member, Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. This production is presented under the auspices of the Actors' Equity Los Angeles Membership Company Rule.



*Dancing at Lughnasa* is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the LA County Arts Commission.

Ticketing and CRM Technology provided by PatronManager



## Cast of Characters

Michael .....	David Shofner
Kate (07/06/19-07/22/19) .....	Martha Demson
Kate (07/27/19-08/18/19) .....	Jennifer Zorbalas
Maggie .....	Lane Allison
Agnes .....	Ann Marie Wilding
Rose .....	Sandra Kate Burck
Chris .....	Caroline Klidonas
Gerry .....	Scott Roberts*
Father Jack .....	Christopher Cappiello*
Gerry Understudy / Swing .....	Neil Oktay

**Time and Place: Summer, 1936. County Donegal, Ireland. The town of Ballybeg.**

There will be one ten-minute intermission

### Note from the Director

At its simplest, Brian Friel's masterpiece—*Dancing at Lughnasa*—is a play about memory, and the ways in which the dramatic events of childhood continue to shape and shadow, for good or for ill, our grown-up lives. And it is about trauma—the small and the large traumas of life which seem to, haphazardly, direct the course of our choices and our destinies. Loosely based on his own family experience, and set in the harsh world of depression era Ireland, the women and men in his play are simple, flawed characters—struggling to survive in a world where emotional, financial and spiritual constriction is the norm. They are not important people, nor are they involved in great events. Yet, each is ennobled by something greater than their personal successes or more often failures—ennobled by their passionate desire to connect with life and to endure.

When the opportunity arose to suggest new plays for the Open Fist's spring and summer season, I rushed to put forward *Dancing at Lughnasa* for consideration. In this historically contentious and divisive period, both life and art tend to take sides and push us all toward increasing anger and cynicism. Our vision narrows and it's easy to feel one's soul beset by banality. I needed to breathe.

I found myself longing to bring to life a play which would speak to our common humanity—not in shallow, brutal sound bites—but poetically, lyrically and with great respect for conflicts deeper and more fundamental than those in the daily news. Conflicts between the soul's visceral longing for experiences beyond reason—love, passion, transcendence, magic, *dance*—and the mind's need for safety, order and dominance over everything it fears—everything it cannot control: The conflict which lies at the heart of human experience.

In a world of disposable, frequently brutal, ersatz entertainment which too often leaves our adrenaline racing but our souls empty, Brian Friel has given us a play which challenges our senses and enriches us. It allows us to breathe. *Dancing at Lughnasa* answered this need in me, and I hope it will answer the same need in you.

Thank you for coming today, and for supporting intimate theatre in Los Angeles.

~Barbara Schofield

## THE ENSEMBLE



**LANE ALLISON (Maggie)** (SAG-AFTRA) is thrilled beyond measure to be playing Maggie in this wonderful production. Recently at The Open Fist, Lane performed in *What Matters Now?!* and directed the world premiere of Anne Kenney's *Last Call*. Other OFTC credits include, *DeLEARious*, *1yr Later*,

*Welcome to Your Alternative Reality*, and *Before the Censors Stop Us*. Other LA credits include, the musical *Working and I Fart in my Sleep: Confessions of an Embarrassing Life* (Prod. Co.), *Only the Moon Howls* (Actors Co.), and *No Ex'p Required (Complex)*, and the world premiere of *Paradise St. (Attic)*. Please, visit [LaneAllison.com](http://LaneAllison.com) for more info. Lane would like to thank her Mother and Sister for her strong female roots and her ever fixed Mark for his constant love and support ~ "Lilo" always, my darling husband!



**SANDRA KATE BURCK (Rose)** grew up on the Big Island of Hawaii which soon after moving to Los Angeles earned her the coveted nickname of "The Pineapple Princess!" These days, however, "Storytime Sandi" is likely the more relevant nickname for her as she spends a majority of her free time producing her very own

children's web-series. With this show she strives to provide free educational content for kids in hopes of inspiring them to develop their own unique and individual passion for learning! If you have kids or know any "Little Readers" she encourages you to subscribe to her YouTube Channel which can be found online at: [www.youtube.com/c/storytimesandi](http://www.youtube.com/c/storytimesandi) #ShamelessPlug — Sandra's most recent theatrical credits include *The Middle* (ABC), *Rush Hour* (CBS), and *Key and Peele* (Comedy Central). Some of her most favorite roles on the stage — apart from Rose of course — include *The Miracle Worker* (Annie Sullivan), *Little Woman* (Jo March) and *Anne of Green Gables* (Anne Shirley). She would like to thank Barbara, The Open Fist Theatre Company, and her cast-mates for this wonderful opportunity to spend the summer in Donegal, Ireland and of course all of you for coming to see the show!



**Christopher Cappiello (Father Jack)** is very happy to be back on the Open Fist stage where he was last seen as Schiller in the world premiere of Tom Jacobson's *WALKING TO BUCHENWALD*. Other recent work includes Sidney Bruhl in *DEATHTRAP* at the Sierra Madre Playhouse, a recurring role in the digital series *AUSSIE GIRL*, and numerous projects with the

Classical Theatre Lab. Prior work on both coasts includes leading roles in works by Shakespeare, Shaw, Ibsen, Chekhov, Wilde, Strindberg, Stoppard, Eliot and Pinter. A proud native of the Bronx, Chris is a graduate of Brown University and UCLA, and trained at Circle in the Square and HB Studio. This one's for Mom and her sisters, and all the strong Dowd women who came before and after.



**MARTHA DEMSON (Kate/Artistic Director)** Highlights of Demson's award-winning career with the Open Fist Theatre include: As an actor: *JAMES JOYCE'S THE DEAD* (Nelson/Davey), *FOOTE NOTES* (Foote), *GETTING FRANKIE MARRIED... AND AFTERWARDS* (Foote), *THE ABDICATION* (Wolff). As a Producer: *ANNA IN THE*

*TROPICS* (Cruz), *ALL NIGHT LONG* (O'Keefe), *UNDER MILK WOOD* (Thomas), *THE GARY PLAYS* (Mednick), *THE COSMONAUT'S LAST MESSAGE TO THE WOMAN HE ONCE LOVED IN THE FORMER SOVIET UNION* (Grieg), *HOW TO EXPLAIN THE HISTORY OF COMMUNISM TO MENTAL PATIENTS* (Visniec). As a director: *The Ovation* Award-winning *PAPA* (deGroot), *CASANOVA* (Congden), *ABINGDON SQUARE* (Fomes), *ESCAPE FROM HAPPINESS* (Walker), *FLIGHT OF THE EARLS* (Humble), *DEAR JOHN MAYER* (Shoshana Bean / Eydie Faye) and with Jason Paige the 10-year phenomenon that is *BOTH: A HARD DAY'S SILENT NIGHT* (watch for it this Christmas if you haven't seen it!). Education: Yale University and Sanford Meisner's 2-year master class.



**CAROLINE KLIDONAS (Chris)** may have peaked at age 12 in her home state of Pennsylvania when she won an essay contest and thereby graced the cover of *Discovery Girls Magazine*, but she's still out here in LA giving it the ol' college try. An actor, writer, and spoken word artist, Caroline was last seen in *Open Fist's What Matters*

*Now?!* as Rivvy and as Tammy in the *Ovation*

Recommended *All Night Long*. Her TV credits include SHOWTIME pilot *Queen Fur* and *A Lie To Die For*. She regularly performs spoken word poetry at The Broadwater Theatre and has even had a few poems published. But perhaps most impressive is the fact that she has a dog from Thailand named Mike. For more information: [www.carolineklidonas.com](http://www.carolineklidonas.com)



**NEIL OKTAY (Gerry U/S, Swing)** is a 2018 graduate of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. He has been working and performing with the Open Fist Theatre Company for over a year now. He was first seen in 'Under Milk Wood', last seen as a penguin, 'Sam' in the Political Pop-up show, and is excited to be a Welshman in 'Dancing at Lughnasa'. While currently searching for representation, he's also taking acting classes in North Hollywood. He likes to stay busy and keep himself on his toes, awaiting opportunities.

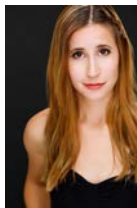


**SCOTT ROBERTS (Gerry)** was last seen in the Open Fist's political pop-up in *The Trouble with Cashews*. LA theatre credits include: *A Moon for the Misbegotten* (Rubicon Theater), *Creation* (Boston Court), *Cyrano* (The Fountain Theater), *The Rainmaker* (A Noise Within), *My Antonia* (Rubicon Theater/PRTE), and *Odyssey* Theatre productions of *How the Other Half Loves*, *First Monday in October* and *The Chicago Conspiracy Trial*. Off-Broadway includes: *Hurlyburly* (Maddox Theatre), *Beyond Therapy* (Bank St. Theater), *O'Neill's Now You Ask Me* (Provincetown Playhouse), *Pride's Crossing* (Bleecker St. Theater). Scott is a graduate of the Actors Studio MFA program and Harvard College. He's also a member of the Actors Studio and Open Fist.



**DAVID SHOFNER (Michael)** is thrilled to be an Open Fist Theatre company member where he most recently appeared in *What Matters Now?!* and also performed in their production of *BOTH* last December. Other selected theatre: *Osvold / Give Me The Sun* (Tony Tanner's adaptation of Ibsen's *Ghosts at the Lounge*

Theatre), *David Koresh / Inside Private Lives* (Lex & Fremont Centre Theatres; Edinburgh Fringe), *James/Corpus Christi* (Zephyr Theatre), *The Clairvoyant* (Playwrights' Arena). Recent film: *Hindsight*, *Careless*, *Redemption Trail*.



**ANN MARIE WILDING (Agnes)** is thrilled to be performing in her second production with Open Fist Theatre! Having received her BFA in Acting for the Stage and Screen from Azusa Pacific University, Ann Marie is also a proud graduate of the UCB School of Improv and a member of both Open Fist Theatre Company and Downtown Repertory Theatre Company. With a strong background in classical theatre, Ann Marie has studied and performed with Independent Shakespeare Company and Southwest Shakespeare Company. Recent credits include *Heart Attack Zack*, at Open Fist's Political Pop Up, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Helena) and *Twelfth Night* (Maria) with Downtown Repertory Theatre Company and *Macbeth* (Malcolm) with Unlikely Shakespeare Company. Thank you to the entire cast and crew of *Dancing at Lughnasa* for this joyful and creative process. And thank you especially to friends, family, and Jimmy, for cheering me on so well and supporting my dreams. Ann Marie is currently represented by The FirmLA Model and Talent. Follow along @annthewildling



**JENNIFER ZORBALAS (Kate)** is originally from Anacortes, Washington. She has appeared in a number of stage productions including *FOUR DOGS AND A BONE* (Shanley), *Shakespeare's RICHARD III, THE NERD* (Shue), *COME BACK LITTLE HORNY* (a premiere with Second Story Theater) and she most recently played a factory

worker in the Open Fist production of *ANNA IN THE TROPICS*. On Television, she played the versatile and unassuming member of renowned magician R. Paul Wilson's con-team in *THE TAKEDOWN*. Additionally she is co-writer/producer/star of an award-winning web series, *THE MOP AND LUCKY FILES* currently streaming on the new indie platform, Seed and Spark.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION



@openfist

## THE CREATIVES

**BRIAN FRIEL (Playwright)** explored the history, humor, and tragedy of Irish life in more than 20 plays, including the widely acclaimed "Dancing at Lughnasa," (pronounced "LOO-nah-sah") which won three Tony Awards in 1992. Mr. Friel, who was considered the leading Irish dramatist of his generation, first won acclaim in the 1960s for "Philadelphia, Here I Come!" an unsentimental treatment of the competing impulses of fleeing Ireland and embracing its people and traditions. In spite of his limited landscape, Mr. Friel explored such universal themes as faith, language, political oppression, family struggle, exile, and the idea of home. He was sometimes known as the "Irish Chekhov" for his adaptations of works by Russian writers Anton Chekhov and Ivan Turgenev, and for his ability to blend humor, regret, and sorrow in his wistful evocations of the Irish countryside. Drifting through much of Mr. Friel's work is the sense of alienation that he felt growing up as part of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland. Although few of his plays were overtly political, he directly addressed the Catholic-Protestant "Troubles" in Northern Ireland in his 1973 play "The Freedom of the City," which was inspired by the Bloody Sunday massacre of 1972, in which British soldiers killed unarmed Irish demonstrators. "Dancing at Lughnasa" had its premiere in Dublin in 1990 and debuted on Broadway in 1991 where it won Tony Awards for best play, best director and best featured actress.

**BARBARA SCHOFIELD (Director)** is thrilled to be directing this talented Open Fist cast in Brian Friel's beautiful play. Other directing credits: LA Premiere Tom Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll*, and Sophie Treadwell's *Machinal*, also critically acclaimed *Stage Door*, (LA Weekly Best Director, Female/Male Comedy, Set, Costumes and Ensemble Nomination--Open Fist Theatre Co.); *Arcadia*, *Proof*, *Incident at Vichy*, *The Fantastiks*, and the upcoming *Permanent Collection* (Sierra Madre Playhouse), NYC: World Premiere: *Great Catherine* with Tamara Geva (Roundabout /Susan Bloch Theatre), World Premier *Karla* Barker's *Uncontrollable Elements* (The Kitchen); *The Maids* (Jean Cocteau Rep.); *Hamlet*, *Three Sisters*, *The Balcony*, *Endgame*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Killer*, *What the Butler Saw* (Independent Theatre Co./House of Candles Theatre); *Out At Sea*, *The Party* (The New Theatre), *Women of Manhattan* (The Producer's Club) Regionally: *Cosi Fan Tutte* (Kansas City Lyric Opera); *The Caretaker* (Lyric Stage, Boston). Univ. Directing: *Tartuffe*, *The Maids*, *The Women*, *Proof* (Univ. of California/UCR); *Holy Ghosts*, *The Common Pursuit*, *The Changeling* (Univ. of Missouri/KC); *Stage Door*, *Elephants Graveyard*, *Incident at Vichy*, *A Bright Room Called Day*, *The Crucible* (AMDA College of the Performing Arts/LA).

**MARTHA DEMSON (Producer)** -- see Actor bios.

**JAMES SPENCER (Scenic Design)** is an Emmy winning Scenic Designer and has been involved with the OFTC for ten years designing: *The Illusion*, *Stage Door*, *When Frankie Gets Married* and *After*, *Machinal*, and *DeLEARious*.

**MYLETTE NORA (Costume Design)** is a recipient of the NAACP Theatre Award for best costumes, listed in the honors edition of The Cambridge Registry of Who's Who Among Executive and Professional Women, works world wide consists of television, film, and stage, and was seen nightly on "The Tonight Show" with Jay Leno and now weekly on "Jay Leno's Garage". The famed artist Synthia St. James noted Mylette as being the inspiration for her world renowned painting "Ensemble" which graced the cover of the best selling novel "Waiting To Exhale" by Terry McMillan. Mylette's designer doggie wear, [www.FromTheHeartDoggieWear.com](http://www.FromTheHeartDoggieWear.com), as well as heirloom dolls, "My Mind's Eye."

**MATT RICHTER (Lighting Design)** is an award-winning designer based in Los Angeles. He is the resident designer for the LA LGBT Center, where he also works full time. Designs for the Center include *Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*; *Revisited* (Ovation nomination), and *Hit The Wall* (Ovation Nomination, LADCC Award). Recent designs for *Sacred Fools* included *Mr. Burns: A Post Electric Play* (Ovation Nomination) and *Too Heavy For Your Pocket*. For *Open Fist: Anna in the Tropics*. Other recent designs include *Oppenheimer* and *Finks*, both for Rogue Machine and *I'm Not A Comedian*, *I'm Lenny Bruce* Off Broadway. Matt also serves as half of the experimental ambient folk duo Lanfair Field ([lanfairfield.com](http://lanfairfield.com)) and creates his own audio strangeness as autodealer ([autodlr.net](http://autodlr.net)). For more information, please visit [mattrichter.net](http://mattrichter.net).

**TIM LABOR (Sound Design)** is a longtime OFTC designer and collaborator. Recent projects include "Welcome to your Alternative Reality," "Under Milkwood," "All Night Long," "What Matters Now?!" and "Anna in the Tropics." Other recent projects include sound and music for "Laramie Project" (Mira Costa High School), arranging for the UCR Orchestra ("Princess Ten Ten and the Dark Skies"), a Gloria Kaufmann Theatre performance of Stacie Chaiken's acclaimed "The Dig," and "Three Places in California," a choral suite for Nova Scotia's Kings Choral.

**BRUCE DICKINSON & INA SHUMAKER (Properties)** began designing props and set pieces for the Open Fist Theatre Company over 15 years ago. Specializing in creating realistic fake foods and period set dressings, some favorite past shows include: James Joyce's *The Dead*, *Travesties*, and *Under Milk Wood*. *Carpe diem*.

**JAN MUNROE (Scenic Construction)** has appeared as an actor in TV, films, theatre and radio. With Open Fist, he appeared as an actor in *GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN* (Mr. ShuFu) and *MAD FOREST* (Vampire) as well as directing John O'Keefe's *Don't You Ever Call Me Anything But Mother* with Tina Preston in 2017 and the production of John O'Keefe's *All Night Long* in fall of 2018.

**KAITLIN CHANG (Associate Lighting Designer)** is thrilled to be back at Open Fist after working on *Anna in the Tropics*. Her previous credits include lighting *The Receptionist* and *Detroit '67* at the Carrie Hamilton Theatre and scenic design for *The Foreigner* and *Plaza Suite* at Little Fish Theatre. A huge thank you to the entire *Dancing at Lughnasa* team for such a great experience and for all their hard work.

**JASON GORMAN (Choreography)** began his professional career at the age of 16, traveling and performing with Michael Flatley's *Lord of the Dance* for over a decade. He has also studied and performed with Erica Sobol (collidEdance), Nate Hodges (RhetOracle), Justin Giles (SoulEscape) and Ryan Heffington (Years and Years, Florence and the Machine). He is on faculty at AMDA, Edge Performing Arts Center and Movement Lifestyle in Los Angeles.

**BEN MARTIN (Associate Producer)** has been a FIST member for about seven years. He has acted in and directed several of our "Pop Up" presentation, as well as readings of two original plays, Chris Longo's *I'm Outta Here*, and Laura Campbell's *Clog*. He was a Los Angeles award nominee for his performance in Tom Jacobson's *Walking to Buchenwald*. In 2018 he directed Open Fist's highly acclaimed production of Dylan Thomas' *Under Milkwood* and in 2019 he originated the role of Walter in the world premiere of Anne Kenney's *Last Call*. A member of AEA, SAG and SCD, he is on the faculty of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts.

**DEBORAH ROSS SULLIVAN (Dialect Coach)** has been coaching actors in accents and dialects in all mediums of entertainment since 1974 in Los Angeles and New York. Accents have been a passion since childhood. Inflections and tone are the music and sound changes are the colors and while we may all have similar emotions the way we portray them in language is different. It makes voice and speech so interesting. Deborah teaches at AMDA, College of the Performing Arts and is also a working voice actress.

**JENNIFER PALUMBO (Production Stage Manager)** is an LA based Stage Manager, Jennifer is happy to be working again with Open Fist Theatre Company on *Dancing At Lughnasa*. Previous OFTC credits include *Last Call*, *All Night Long*, *Under Milk Wood*, *DeLEARious*, *The Gary Plays*, and *Mad Forest*. Jennifer has recently joined the staff at AMDA College and Conservatory of Performing Arts. Selected credits include *The Color Purple* with Greenway Arts Alliance, Katori Hall's *The Mountaintop* – the LA debut at the Matrix Theatre, and in Memphis, TN as part of MLK50 with Hatilloo Theatre at the Halloran Centre - *Suppliant Women* at the Getty Villa with Rogue Machine, and many productions at the Odyssey Theatre including *A Steady Rain*, also at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, GA. Jennifer is grateful to the theatrical community, her family, her partner James, and her feline muse, Chaz, for their continued encouragement and support!

### **The Production would like to give Special Thanks to the following...**

*American Academy of Dramatic Arts  
Robert Greenfield & the WB Props Dept.  
Bolor Sarull  
Kis Knekt – for scenic painting  
John Dimitri*

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### **Neil Simon's MUSICAL FOOLS**

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*Music & Lyrics by  
Phil Swann and Ron West*

*Adapted from the play FOOLS by  
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*Directed by  
Ron West*

*Music Direction by  
Jan Roper*



## Mission

The Open Fist Theatre Company is a community of actors, playwrights, designers and directors who believe that to realize the force and potential of a relevant, contemporary theatre it is necessary to establish a Company founded on the pursuit of artistic excellence. We seek through diverse styles and forms to illuminate the essential relationships that connect individuals and their societies, as we nurture empathy and force identity through our work.

## Board of Directors

Martha Demson, Christopher Lore, Malhar Pagay, Charles Otte, Catie Saralegui, David Shofner, James Spencer

## Company Staff

Artistic Director.....	<b>Martha Demson</b>
Associate Artistic Director .....	<b>Amanda Weier</b>
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Education Director .....	<b>Laura Richardson</b>
Outreach Director .....	<b>Dionna Veremis</b>

## Our Members

Hetty Abbott, Lane Allison, Christine Avila, Tisha Terrasini Banker, Raúl Ramón Bencomo, Chloe Berlinger, Bryan Bertone, Allison Blaize, Phillip William Brock, Brittany Brown, Sandra Kate Burck, Spencer Cantrell, Christopher Cappiello, Christopher Cedeño, Karina Contreras, Stephanie Crothers, John Patrick Daly, Cat Davis, Martha Demson, Bruce Dickinson, Prescilia Esparolini, Lori Gambero, Jeffrey Gibson, Katherine Griffith, Art Hall, Laura James, Antonio Jaramillo, Caroline Klidonas, Carol Kline, Richard Michael Knolla, Tim Labor, Elizabeth Lande, Sherry Larson, Dylan Maddalena, Derek Manson, Gina Manziello, Ben Martin, Lynn Milgrim, Javi Mulero, Jan Munroe, Jennifer Palumbo, Rod Menzies, Amy Moorman, Scott Mosenson, Jan Munroe, Tom Noga, Neil Oktay, Jason Paige, Rebecca Paugam, Alina Phelan, Stevie-Jean Placek, Katie May Porter, Tina Preston, Byron Quiros, Jill Remez, Diane Renee, Laura Richardson, Beth Robbins, Scott Roberts, Kenia Romero, Robyn Roth, Steven Royce, Jade Santana, Bolor Saruul, Judith Scarpone, Barbara Schofield, David Shofner, Ina Shumaker, Kim Swennen, Dionna Veremis, Amanda Weier, Ron West, Steve Wilcox, Ann Marie Wilding





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**... and to all of You, our patrons, for continuing to support intimate  
theatre in Los Angeles.**

