TDPS PRESENTS EXPANSIVE, TIMELY PRODUCTION OF
THE CAUCASIAN CHALK CIRCLE BY BERTOLT BRECHT

NOV. 2019 — UC Berkeley’s Department of Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies (TDPS) continues its 2019–2020 season with The Caucasian Chalk Circle by Bertolt Brecht. Presented in The Playhouse at Zellerbach Hall from Nov. 15–24, the production is directed by Christine Nicholson, a veteran of Sacramento Shakespeare Festival.

The captivating play within a play tells the corresponding stories of a post-war land dispute in the Caucasus Mountains and a young servant who risks her life to raise an abandoned child. Bertolt Brecht masterfully employs historification and distancing to reveal the hidden (and not so hidden) oppression of the powerless by the powerful.

“This is a darkly comedic and politically-charged play that explores the contradictions found at the heart of the concepts of justice, fairness, and compassion,” said director Christine Nicholson. “Each time I approach the script, I ask myself, ‘How does a person stay ethical and optimistic in times of war? What is the purpose of government, and does government ever fulfill its obligation to its people?’”

The expansive, theater-in-the-round production will feature 19 actors playing over 50 roles, live performances of more than three dozen original songs, and intricate scenic design, costuming, and puppetry by TDPS production staff, all of whom are active in the local theater community.

Production Details

TDPS presents The Caucasian Chalk Circle in the Playhouse at Zellerbach Hall on the UC Berkeley campus. The show will run Friday, Nov. 15 through Sunday, Nov. 24, 2019. Patrons may purchase tickets for $13–$20 through the TDPS online box office or at the door beginning one hour before each performance. Discounts are available for all students, seniors (age 65+), UC Berkeley faculty and staff, and groups of 10 or more.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle features scenic and costume design by Annie Smart, lighting design by Jack Carpenter, sound design by Emily Fassler, music composition by Ryan Huber, and puppet design by Glynn Bartlett.

About the Director, Christine Nicholson

Christine Nicholson is a founding member of Synergy Stage, for whom she has appeared in Fat Men in Skirts, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf, Private Lives, Closer, and most recently in the original musical Adventures in Shakespeareland; or How Willy Ruined My Life. She has also appeared with the Sacramento Shakespeare Festival, City Theatre, Foothill Theatre Company, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, and STC, among others. Her recent directing credits include Major Barbara, On The Razzle, Tartuffe, Top Girls, and, currently, Carnival for City Theatre, The Conduct of Life for UC Berkeley, and Much Ado About Nothing for Capitol Stage at the Delta King Theatre. Christine holds an MFA in Theatre from UC Davis, where her emphasis was in Irish Theatre, and currently teaches Theatre at Sacramento City College and for the Actors Training Program at Solano College in Fairfield.

About TDPS

The Department of Theater, Dance and Performance Studies teaches performance as a mode of critical inquiry, creative expression and public engagement. Through performance training and research, we create liberal arts graduates with expanded analytical, technical and imaginative capacities. As a public institution, we make diversity and inclusion a key part of our teaching, art making and public programming.

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