



**AURORA THEATRE COMPANY  
ANNOUNCES 2010-2011 SEASON**

*Acclaimed intimate theater to present first professional American production of Kafka classic;  
World Premiere from lauded GAP playwright Allison Moore;  
Bay Area Premiere from solo virtuoso David Cale*

BERKELEY, Calif. (March 30, 2010) – Berkeley’s acclaimed **Aurora Theatre Company** proudly announces the lineup for its 19<sup>th</sup> season. The company opens the season with the Professional Bay Area Premiere of Alice Childress’ stunning **TROUBLE IN MIND**, starring Bay Area favorite **Margo Hall**, directed by Robin Stanton. Acclaimed solo performer **David Cale** returns to the Bay Area with the Bay Area Premiere of his new one-man play **PALOMINO**. Aurora Theatre Company will also present the second main stage production to develop from its Global Age Project, the **World Premiere** of Allison Moore’s **COLLAPSE**, directed by Jessica Heidt; as a **National New Play Network World Premiere**, the play will be produced at Curious Theatre Company (Denver) and Kitchen Dog Theater Company (Dallas) following Aurora’s lead production. The 2010-11 season will be dedicated to Tennessee Williams in honor of the prolific playwright’s 100<sup>th</sup> birthday; all of the selections for the season’s Script Club meetings will be works Williams penned for the stage, and Aurora Theatre Company Artistic Director **Tom Ross** will helm a production of Williams’ rarely-produced stage gem **THE ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE**. The company is also poised to present the first American professional production of British director David Farr and Icelandic actor-director Gísli Örn Gardarsson’s thrilling avant garde adaptation of Franz Kafka’s **METAMORPHOSIS**, directed by Bay Area auteur **Mark Jackson**. The regular season will be staged August 2010 through July 2011 at the intimate Aurora Theatre in the downtown Berkeley arts district. For single tickets (\$34-\$55) or subscriptions (\$145-\$235), the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**.

In chronological order, the Aurora 2010-11 season is as follows:

**TROUBLE IN MIND**  
**By Alice Childress**  
**Directed by Robin Stanton**  
*Professional Bay Area Premiere*  
**August 20-September 26, 2010 (Opens: August 26)**

## AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 10-11 SEASON

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Aurora Theatre Company opens its 19<sup>th</sup> season with Alice Childress' vibrant, humorous, and heartbreaking look at racism through the lens of the theater, **TROUBLE IN MIND**. More than 40 years after it was written, **TROUBLE IN MIND**, according to *The New York Times*, "still has the power to make one feel its anger and humor." Set during the early years of the Civil Rights movement, it offers a disconcerting yet disarmingly funny look at the inequalities of American life in the 1950's, and the half-truths we tell ourselves about race relations and societal progress in America.

**TROUBLE IN MIND** follows a cast of black and white actors attempting to mount a production of a "progressive" new play. The play-within-the-play, entitled *Chaos in Belleville*, an anti-lynching drama set in the South, written by a white writer and directed by a white director, marks the first opportunity for Willetta Mayer, a gifted African American actress, to play a leading lady on Broadway. But what compromises must she make to succeed? **Robin Stanton** (*Speech & Debate, Betrayed, Permanent Collection*) directs this play about race, identity, and opportunity, featuring Bay Area favorite **Margo Hall** in her Aurora Theatre Company debut.

While **TROUBLE IN MIND** made Childress the first female writer to win an OBIE award, in a twist of irony echoing the tribulations in the play itself, she was offered a Broadway production of **TROUBLE IN MIND** if only she would rewrite the ending and change the title. Childress refused, and the following year Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* went on to become the first Broadway play written by an African American woman.

### **PALOMINO**

**Written, directed, and starring David Cale**

*Bay Area Premiere*

**October 29-December 5, 2010 (Opens: November 4)**

A brilliant writer and actor, **David Cale**, best known for his solo works *Somebody Else's House, Deep in a Dream of You, Smooch Music, The Redthroats*, and the OBIE-winning *Lillian*, brings his new solo play, **PALOMINO**, to the Aurora Theatre Company. In this beautifully-realized play written for one actor, Cale inhabits five different characters, both male and female, to tell the story of Kieren McGrath, a handsome, literate, Central Park carriage driver who dreams of writing a great novel. When he is offered the opportunity to become an escort to a number of lonely, wealthy women in New York City he believes he has finally found his subject. Or has he?

The *San Francisco Chronicle* declared Cale "a spellbinder," noting that as "fascinating as he is to watch, and exquisite as his verbal imagery can be, it is Cale's gifts as a storyteller that hold an audience rapt." David Cale's monologues have been featured on NPR's "This American Life" and "The Next Big Thing;" as a lyricist, his words have been performed by Elvis Costello, Deborah Harry, and The Jazz Passengers. **PALOMINO** received its World Premiere in 2009 at Kansas City Repertory Theatre, after undergoing development at the Sundance Theatre Lab, where Cale was writer-in-residence.

### **COLLAPSE**

**By Allison Moore**

**Directed by Jessica Heidt**

*World Premiere (National New Play Network World Premiere)*

**January 28-March 6, 2011 (Opens: February 3)**

Aurora Theatre Company continues its 19<sup>th</sup> season with Minneapolis-based playwright Allison Moore's **COLLAPSE**. This surprising comedy, which originated as one of Aurora Theatre Company's Global

## AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 10-11 SEASON

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Age Project (GAP) finalists last season, is the second main stage production to develop from the GAP; it will receive its main stage debut as a National New Play Network World Premiere, a collaboration with Aurora Theatre Company (lead theater), Curious Theatre in Denver, and Kitchen Dog Theater in Dallas. In **COLLAPSE**, Hannah tries desperately to hold the façade of her perfect life together, even as her husband, David, mysteriously calls in sick to work day after day, they struggle with infertility, and Hannah herself is on the verge of being laid off. When Hannah's sister appears on their doorstep, she brings with her a feisty, renegade attitude and an illicit package that sends David and Hannah on a 12-hour odyssey into some quirky corners of Minneapolis, and into the heart of their deepest fears. **Jessica Heidt** directs this comedy about surviving and transcending, inspired by the 2007 collapse of the Mississippi River Bridge in Minneapolis.

**COLLAPSE** will be the fully-staged anchor production in this season's Global Age Project, an Aurora Theatre Company initiative that encourages playwrights and directors to explore life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond. In addition, several new plays dealing with global age concerns will be chosen from an international pool of playwrights and presented in a series of developmental readings during the run of **COLLAPSE**.

### **THE ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE**

**By Tennessee Williams**

**Directed by Tom Ross**

**April 1-May 8, 2011 (Opens: April 7)**

In honor of the playwright's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, Aurora Theatre Company presents Tennessee Williams' haunting drama **THE ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE**. Written in 1951, the play debuted on Broadway in 1976, after being fine-tuned by Williams for 25 years; more than just a revision of his 1947 play *Summer and Smoke*, it became a radically different work of art. When the play was revived in 2008 by The Actors Company Theatre, *The New York Times* called **THE ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE** "a warm, rich play full of that compassion and understanding and that simple poetry of the heart that is Mr. Williams at his shining, gentle best," a sentiment echoed by *Variety*, which declared, "It's time to reevaluate 'The Eccentricities of a Nightingale' ...as an exquisite work."

Set shortly before World War I in Glorious Hill, Mississippi, **THE ECCENTRICITIES OF A NIGHTINGALE** is a story of irrepressible longing and rebellion. Known as "the nightingale of the Delta," Alma Winemiller is a lonely, unconventional woman hemmed in by her stern, puritanical father and her unstable mother. Heading towards spinsterhood, with an artistic temperament that her father tries to suppress, Alma finds consolation in her music and in the secret lifelong love she has for the boy-next-door. But it turns out that neither time nor circumstance will allow the two to be together. Aurora Theatre Company Artistic Director **Tom Ross** helms this magnificent play filled with all of the majestic themes, oversized characters, and gentle poetry that earned Williams his exalted position in American theater.

### **METAMORPHOSIS**

**By Franz Kafka**

**Adapted by David Farr and Gísli Örn Gardarsson**

**Directed by Mark Jackson**

*First Professional American Production*

**June 10-July 17, 2011 (Opens: June 16)**

## AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 10-11 SEASON

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Closing Aurora Theatre Company's 19<sup>th</sup> season is the first professional American production of **METAMORPHOSIS**. This powerful exploration of alienation, a terrifying, yet comic, adaptation of Franz Kafka's classic 1915 novella by British director David Farr and Icelandic actor-director Gísli Örn Gardarsson of Iceland's Vesturport Theatre, was hailed as "a parable for our times" by *The Daily Telegraph* (UK). Performed in London's West End, Dublin, Australia, and Hong Kong, "It's the story of a very ordinary family where something awful happens," Farr says. "But there is a lot of laughter in among the awfulness."

**METAMORPHOSIS** is a masterful mix of horror and absurdity, telling the story of a traveling salesman's bizarre transformation from man to man-sized insect. Award-winning Bay Area director, performer, and playwright **Mark Jackson** returns to Aurora Theatre Company, where he helmed the company's acclaimed productions of *Salome* and *Miss Julie*, to put his own unique spin on this landmark work of existential literature.

Nominated for 27 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for 2009, Aurora Theatre Company continues to offer challenging, literate, intelligent stage works to the Bay Area, each year increasing its reputation for top-notch theater. Located in the heart of the Downtown Berkeley Arts District, Aurora Theatre Company has been called "one of the most important regional theaters in the area" and "a must-see midsize company" by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, while *The Wall Street Journal* has "nothing but praise for the Aurora." The *Contra Costa Times* stated "perfection is probably an unattainable ideal in a medium as fluid as live performance, but the Aurora Theatre comes luminously close," while the *San Jose Mercury News* affirmed "[Aurora Theatre Company] lives up to its reputation as a theater that feeds the mind," and the *Oakland Tribune* declared "it's all about choices, and if you value good theater, choose the Aurora."

Beginning with the 2010-11 season, Aurora Theatre Company will offer performances on all Tuesdays during the run of each production. Due to increased ticket sales over the past three seasons, the company will also now operate under Tier 4 of the Bay Area Theatre Actors' Equity contract. This adjustment means increased salaries for Equity actors and stage managers, as well as additional rehearsal hours and the option for Aurora to have seven performances per week.

## AURORA THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 10-11 SEASON

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### **FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

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**METAMORPHOSIS**

**By Franz Kafka**

**Adapted by David Farr and Gísli Örn Gardarsson**

**Directed by Mark Jackson**

*First Professional American Production*

**June 10-July 17, 2011 (Opens: June 16)**

Performances Tuesdays at 7pm; Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8pm; Sundays at 2pm and 7pm

**WHERE:** Aurora Theatre, 2081 Addison Street, Berkeley, CA

**TICKETS:** For single tickets (\$34-\$55) or subscriptions (\$145-\$235), the public can call **(510) 843-4822** or visit **auroratheatre.org**. Discounts for students, seniors, and groups available.

Aurora Theatre Company gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and government agencies for their support: Actors' Equity Foundation, Alameda County Arts Commission, Berkeley Civic Arts Program & Civic Arts Commission, Dramatists Guild Fund, The Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Norway House Foundation, The Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation, The Bernard Osher Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation.

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