

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

THEATER

Deaf West Theatre Company Announces 96-97 Season With "Orphans" and "Joan Of Arc"

Los Angeles---In what may prove to be their most sensational season ever, DEAF WEST THEATRE COMPANY will present Lyle Kessler's "ORPHANS," directed by Stephen Rothman and opening November 10. The world premiere original adaptation of the story of Joan of Arc will be presented as the second production of the season, "JOAN OF ARC," adapted (from George Bernard Shaw's "St. Joan") and directed by Kenneth Albers, opening February 1, 1997.

This new season marks the return of both directors to the Deaf West stage, following their award-winning work on "Of Mice and Men" (Stephen Rothman) and "Medea" (Kenneth Albers). Linda Bove will also return to the Deaf West Stage (as St. Joan), where she performed as "MEDEA" during two sold-out smash SRO engagements.

"ORPHANS" also marks the premiere collaboration between Deaf West Theatre Company and the Sacramento Theatre Company. Deaf West's Artistic Director Ed Waterstreet and Stephen Rothman, STC's Artistic Director, have arranged for the production to be presented as part of the Sacramento Theatre Company's 96-97 season.

"ORPHANS" will preview on No-

vember 7, 8 and 9 at 8:00 pm, and will open November 10 at 3:00 p.m. The performance schedule will be Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:00, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:00 pm. through December 15. It's a moving comic drama about two brothers who live together and although adults, there is a childlike quality about them. The older brother supports both of them by petty thievery, and meets a very rich man who becomes a father figure to them; the man's in hiding from potential murderers.

In this production, the older brother will be played by a deaf actor, and the younger, by a hard of hearing actor. Casting will be announced shortly. The play will be presented in American Sign Language with voice interpretation for hearing audiences via infrared headsets. Supertitles will also be featured during the production.

"ORPHANS" premiered in 1983 at the Matrix Theatre, and was produced by Joseph Stern. It has been presented at several theatres across the country and off Broadway. Several critical quotes include "A weird, wonderful thriller filled with suspense, pathos and packing an emotional wallop." (WMCA Radio) "Keeps you transfixed. Imagine a cross between Pinter and Shepard, with a touch of Grand Guignol."

(New York Daily News)

In "JOAN OF ARC," Linda Bove and Kenneth Albers team up again since their work together in "MEDEA." "JOAN OF ARC" will preview on January 30 and 31, February 1, 1997 at 8:00 pm, and open February 2 at 3:00 pm. The performance schedule will be Thursdays through Saturdays at 8:00, and Saturdays and Sundays at 3:00 pm through March 23, 1997. The production will be performed in American Sign Language with on-stage voice interpretation.

Major funding for DEAF WEST THEATRE is provided by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. Deaf West's programs are also funded, in part, by grants provided by the Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department, California Arts Council, National Endowment for the Arts, Los Angeles County Music & Performing Arts Commission, California State University Northridge Department of Deaf Studies, The California Community Foundation, Brody Arts Fund, Norris Foundation, Lloyd E. Rigler-Lawrence E. Deutsch Foundation, Pacific Care Foundation and Shubert Foundation. Deaf West Theatre Company, Inc. is a non-profit organization.

Children's Productions at Deaf West

As children's productions are always a major part of the programming at Deaf West, they will reprise the hit production of "Alice In Wonderland; Ears, Hands and Hearts," which previews April 1, 1997 and opens April 4 at 3:00 pm (call for showtimes). Back by overwhelming demand, Sonja Massie's sign language adaptation of Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" will be directed by Ed Waterstreet. The performances will be scheduled for field trips during the school day, and interested parties are encouraged to call to arrange a performance for a school or group.

DEAF WEST THEATRE COMPANY has received many awards during this past season including Ovation and Drama-Logue Awards for "Medea," an L.A. Weekly Award (Best Actress, Phyllis Frellich) for "A Christmas Carol" and many Critic's Choices and Critic's Picks for "Equus."

Season subscriptions are now available. Deaf West Theatre is located at 660 N. Heliotrope Dr., L.A. (south of Melrose/east of Western; blocks east of Normandie & The Hollywood Fwy. For general information and to purchase subscriptions, please call TTY-(213) 660-8826/(213) 660-4673, VOICE