

PLAYBILL



WALNUT STREET THEATRE

PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Oscar Wilde's



The
IMPORTANCE
of being EARNEST

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AMERICA'S OLDEST THEATRE – PHILADELPHIA'S MOST POPULAR THEATRE COMPANY
WALNUT STREET THEATRE
825 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA PA 19107

Welcome to Walnut Street Theatre! I am thrilled you have joined us for Oscar Wilde's much-loved masterpiece, *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Our creative team has built a luxurious set and beautifully lush costumes to transport us to Victorian London and the glorious countryside for an evening full of mistaken identities, quick proposals and hilarious misunderstandings. With a wonderful cast, my good friend and director Bob Carlton and I are extremely excited to share this production with you. I hope you enjoy Wilde's handsomely witty comedy as much as I do.

Next up on our Mainstage, we'll have one of the most loved dance stories of all time, *Saturday Night Fever*. The film that starred a very young John Travolta became a cultural phenomenon around the world. The musical is even more fun live on stage. The electrifying score, filled with classics from the legendary Bee Gees, made the show Broadway's hottest disco musical. So, put on your "disco shoes" and get ready to dance! I hope to see you there.



Photo: Mark Garvin

I'd also like to invite you to see *Jerry's Girls*, a tribute to the all-American master of song, Jerry Herman. Our Independence Studio on 3 will burst with glamor, optimism, love and women as this all-female cast gives voice to some of Broadway's best ballads and show-stoppers. You've heard Herman's music in *Hello Dolly!*, *Mame*, *Mack and Mabel*, *Dear World* and *La Cage Aux Folles*, some of which we've had on our stage. But, you've never experienced his music like this before. It's just an elevator ride away to our intimate 80-seat theatre and entirely worth the trip.

The fun continues during our 209th anniversary season including Stephen Sondheim's hilarious Broadway musical *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. During the holiday season we'll look to a brighter "tomorrow" with *Annie*. I am thrilled to produce, and direct, *The Humans*. We are the first regional theatre to receive the rights to the 2016 Tony Award-winning Best Play about a Pennsylvania family at Thanksgiving. Next up, the laughter is "on" with *Noises Off*. Lastly, the season ends when we're dancing in the aisles with ABBA and *MAMMA MIA!* Join our Walnut family as a subscriber and don't miss out on the excitement.

For tonight, sit back and enjoy as things get "Wilde" on stage with *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

Sincerely,

Bernard Havard, President and Producing Artistic Director



AMERICA'S OLDEST THEATRE – PHILADELPHIA'S MOST POPULAR THEATRE COMPANY

WALNUT STREET THEATRE

825 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA PA 19107

BERNARD HAVARD

President and Producing Artistic Director

MARCH 14 – APRIL 30, 2017

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

By **OSCAR WILDE**

Scenic Design
ROBERT KOHARCHIK

Costume Design
MARK MARIANI

Lighting Design
STUART DUKE

Sound Design
ELIZABETH ATKINSON

Production Manager
JOEL MARKUS

Stage Managers
**LORI AGHAZARIAN
ANGELA CUCCO**

Directed by
BOB CARLTON

MARK D. SYLVESTER
Managing Director

Director of
Education
THOMAS P. QUINN

Director of
Development
BONNIE S. STEVENS

Director of Marketing
and Public Relations
RALPH WEEKS

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Algernon Moncrieff	DANIEL FREDRICK*
Lane (Manservant)	KEVIN BERGEN*
John Worthington	JAKE BLOUCH*
Lady Bracknell	MARY MARTELLO*
Gwendolen Fairfax	LAUREN SOWA*
Miss Prism	ELLIE MOONEY*
Cecily Cardew	ALANNA J. SMITH*
Rev. Canon Chasuble	PETER SCHMITZ*
Merriman (Butler)	H. MICHAEL WALLS*

UNDERSTUDIES

IAN AGNEW (Merriman), VIRGINIA BARRIE (Lady Bracknell),
KEVIN BERGEN* (Rev. Canon Chasuble), RACHEL BRODEUR (Miss Prism),
RAFAEL MARTINEZ-SALGADO (Lane), CONNOR McELWEE (John Worthington),
IAN MONACO (Algernon Moncrieff), FAITH SACHER (Cecily Cardew),
JACOB SCHRIMPF (Algernon Moncrieff, 2nd cover), KATIE STAHL (Gwendolen Fairfax),
AUSTIN TURNER (John Worthington, 2nd cover)

* Denotes membership in Actors' Equity Association,
the professional union of Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Time: The End of the 19th Century

Place: London

Act I: Algernon Moncrieff's Flat in Half Moon Street, W.

THERE WILL BE ONE 20-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

Act II: The Garden at the Manor House, Woolton.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited

CAST



Kevin Bergen



Jake Blouch



Daniel Fredrick



Mary Martello



Ellie Mooney



Peter Schmitz



Alanna J. Smith



Lauren Sowa



H. Michael Walls

WHO'S WHO

KEVIN BERGEN (Lane, Rev. Canon Chasuble U/S) is pleased to return to the Walnut stage having previously appeared in another Oscar Wilde play, *An Ideal Husband*. Kevin is a member of the Resident Ensemble of Artists at People's Light where he has appeared in over twenty productions, including *Man from Nebraska*, for which he was nominated for a Barrymore Award, and most recently *Sense and Sensibility*. He is a graduate of the American Repertory Theatre Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard.

JAKE BLOUCH (John Worthington) is thrilled to be making his Walnut Theatre debut. Philadelphia: *See What I Wanna See* (11th Hour Theatre Co., Barrymore Award); *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (Theater Exile); *Emma*, *As You Like It*, *Henry V*, *The Liar* (Lantern Theater Co.); *Three Sisters*, *Superior Donuts*, *A Little Night Music* (Arden Theatre Co.); *Assistance* (Wilma Theater); *Mauritius*, *Unnecessary Farce*, *Man of La Mancha* (Act II Playhouse). Lots of love to Sophie.

DANIEL FREDRICK (Algernon Moncrieff) *Red, Mickle Street* (Walnut); *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Arcadia* (Lantern Theater); *Explorers Club* (Delaware Theatre Co.); *Shoplifters* (1812 Productions) *Othello*, *Diary of a Madman* (Quintessence). Regional: *Romeo & Juliet*, *Twelfth Night* (Trinity Shakespeare); *Winter's Tale*, *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Heart of America Shakespeare); *Something Intangible*, *Picasso... Lapin Agile* (Circle Theatre); *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Watertown Theatre). Film/Commercial: Comcast, ABC, Herr's, Optimum, *Treehouse* on Hulu. BFA: Texas Christian University.

MARY MARTELLO (Lady Bracknell) More than 20 shows at WST! Most recently: *Sister Act*, *Harvey*, *Memphis*, *9 TO 5* (WST); *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (Lantern); *The Carols* (1812). A Philadelphia actor for almost 20 years, Mary is always thrilled to be working with the WST family! Please visit marymartello.com for more information. This Lady B is in honor of John Peakes, the founder of the feast.

ELLIE MOONEY (Miss Prism) WST Highlights: *Wizard of Oz* (Wicked Witch),

Harvey (Myrtle Mae), *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Helen), *Sister Act* (Mary Martin-of-Tours), *A Christmas Story* (Miss Shields), *Mary Poppins* (Mrs. Corry), *Amadeus* (Constanze). Love and gratitude to Walnut Street Theatre and Basile family. Up next at WST: *Jerry's Girls* (Director/Choreographer). elliemooney.com

PETER SCHMITZ (Rev. Canon Chasuble) Happy to be back home at WST! (*And Then There Were None*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, *Amadeus*, *Curtains*, *Oliver!*, *Hairspray*, *Les Misérables*, *Carousel*, *Windy City*, et al.). Many thanks to Bob, Bernard, and Mark for the opportunity to be Wilde again! Dedicated to the memory of the late great Richard (Julio) Iglewski, who himself played this role so wonderfully.

ALANNA J. SMITH (Cecily Cardew) Honored to be back at the Walnut! WST: *The Wizard of Oz*, *A Christmas Story*. Regional: *Gypsy*, *James and the Giant Peach* (Hangar Theatre). BFA Ithaca College. Many thanks to Bob, Bernard, Brian, and my family! For Jackie. alanna-smith.com

LAUREN SOWA (Gwendolen Fairfax) is thrilled to return to the Walnut! In Philadelphia: *Harvey*, *Private Lives* (Walnut); *Emma* (Lantern); *Othello* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (Philadelphia Shakespeare Theatre). Other recent credits: *Cymbeline* (Opera House Arts); *Hamlet* and *All's Well That Ends Well* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival); *Romeo & Juliet* (NC Shakes). Film: *42 Seconds of Happiness*, *Café Artist*, *The Rainbow Experiment*. Upcoming film: *The Devil's Well*. Proud member of AEA. laurensowa.com

H. MICHAEL WALLS (Merriman) is delighted to return to WST after appearing in last year's production of *Harvey*. His credits include the Arden, the Wilma, Theatre Exile, Delaware Theatre Company, Pennsylvania and Orlando Shakespeare Festivals, DC's Studio Theatre and Arena Stage. He has worked with Greg Doran, Artistic Director of RSC, playwright Tom Stoppard, Pulitzer Prize winner Jason Miller, and Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott. Many thanks to Bernard and Bob. As always, for Janice.

WHO'S WHO

OSCAR WILDE (Playwright) (1854–1900) was an Anglo-Irish playwright, novelist, poet and critic. He is regarded as one of the greatest playwrights of the Victorian Era. In his lifetime he wrote nine plays, one novel, and numerous poems, short stories and essays. Wilde was a proponent of the Aesthetic movement, which emphasized aesthetic values more than moral or social themes. This doctrine is most clearly summarized in the phrase “art for art’s sake.”

BOB CARLTON (Director) is a British Theatre director who, as a freelancer, has had the good fortune to direct productions in London’s West End, New York, Japan and Australia, as well as theatres across the U.K. Bob has served as Associate Director at The Dukes Playhouse, Lancaster, The Theatre Royal, York; was Artistic Director of London’s Bubble Theatre, and for 17 years served as Artistic Director of the acclaimed Queen’s Theatre in East London. Bob was honored with an Olivier Award for the West End production of his own *Return to the Forbidden Planet* as well as two Off West End Awards for two subsequent plays which he

directed. He has also been nominated for two Outer Critics Circle awards in NYC and two Barrymore Awards here in Philadelphia. Bob has directed *Emmerdale*, *Brookside* and the BAFTA winning children’s series *Streetwise* for British Television. His writing includes *Return to the Forbidden Planet*, *From a Jack to a King*, *Keep on Running* and four record breaking Christmas shows for The Everyman Theatre, Liverpool. He comes from having directed his own adaptation of Klaus Mann’s *Mephisto* at London’s Academy of Live and Recorded Arts, for whom he is currently working on an adaptation of Graham Greene’s *The Third Man*. Bob is the father of screenwriter Emily Carlton and stepfather of rapper Jake Emlyn. He lives in London with his wife Sally who is a behavioral specialist, looking after dysfunctional children, (which is probably why they get on so well).

ROBERT KOHARCHIK (Scenic Design) lives in Indianapolis where he has designed for Indiana Repertory Theatre, Phoenix Theatre, and Lilly Theatre at Indianapolis Children’s Museum. Additional credits include: The

WHO'S WHO

Repertory Theatre of St. Louis (MO), The Cleveland Playhouse (OH), Geva Theatre (NY), The Weston Playhouse of Vermont (VT), Contemporary American Theatre of Columbus (OH), and American Players Theatre (WI). Rob received a Lilly Endowment Creative Renewal Fellowship from the Arts Council of Indianapolis (1999, 2011). He is an Associate Professor in theatre design at Butler University.

MARK MARIANI (Costume Design) Most recently: WST: *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, *Always... Patsy Cline*, *Harvey*, *Private Lives*. Lantern Theater Co: *Taming of the Shrew*. Philadelphia Theater Co: *Disgraced*. Baystreet Theater, NY: *Mystery Of Irma Vep*. The Broad Theater, L.A: *Freud's Last Session*. Off-Broadway: Marjorie Dean Theater and New World Stages, *Freud's Last Session*. BSC: *Brel in the Berkshires* and *See Rock City & Other Destinations*. UAE: *Ambassador Satch*. Many thanks to the costume shops beautiful work!

STUART DUKE (Lighting Design) For Walnut Street: *Private Lives*, *Harvey*. New York: *Orwell in America*, *The Rothschilds*, *Jon & Jen*, *Cast of Characters*, *Frankie*, directed by George Abbott; *The Matchmaker*. Other credits: *The Night Seasons*, written and directed by Horton Foote; *Rags* for Paper Mill Playhouse; *Conrack* at Ford's Theatre; Christopher Lloyd in *Death of a Salesman*. Recent designs: *Round & Round the Garden* for Weston Playhouse; *Disney's Beauty & the Beast* for Alabama Shakespeare Festival, *Living Together* at Northern Stage.

ELIZABETH ATKINSON (Sound Design) as a relative newcomer to Philadelphia, is delighted to return to WST. Regional credits include Pittsburgh's City Theatre Company (Resident Designer, 12 years), The Wilma, Simpatico Theatre, InterAct Theatre Company, People's Light and Theatre Company, Yale Repertory Theatre, Hartford Stage, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, and Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theatre. Named "Sound Designer of the Year" by *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (2003, 2006, 2007) and had the honor of exhibiting at the 2007, 2011, and 2015 Prague Quadrennials.

LORI AGHAZARIAN (Stage Manager) This is Lori's eleventh season here at the Walnut. Prior to joining WST, Lori spent seven seasons as PSM at the Prince Music Theater. Freelance credits include Wilma Theater, Opera Co. of Phila., Pig Iron Theatre Co., 1812 Productions, PTC, and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. In addition to stage managing, Lori spent five years as the box office manager for the Philadelphia Live Arts Festival/Philly Fringe. For Daisy.

ANGELA CUCCO (Stage Manager) is celebrating her 7th Walnut season by moving to the Mainstage! Prior to this move, she stage managed for six seasons upstairs in the Independence Studio on 3. Other stage management credits include *Mary Poppins* on the Walnut Mainstage, Williamstown Theatre Festival, George Street Playhouse, Vineyard Playhouse, Skyline Theatre Company, New York International Fringe Festival and Philly Fringe. Many thanks to Mom, Dad, Laurie and the WST family. Love forever to David.

JOEL MARKUS (Production Manager) This is Joel's sixth season at the Walnut. Other credits: ten seasons at the Indiana Repertory Theatre; four years at Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY; five summers at the Weston Playhouse in Vermont; American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin; and North Shore Music Theatre in Beverly, Massachusetts. He is a graduate of Indiana University and originally from Miami, Florida.

MARK D. SYLVESTER (Managing Director) Mark's extensive career has spanned Summer Stock to Broadway as an actor, stage manager, box office treasurer, theatre manager, marketing and public relations director and general manager. This season he is proud to be celebrating his 23rd season at the Walnut. After several years working with commercial theatre he has devoted his career to non-profit theatre companies since 1987. To date, Mark has been associated with more than 400 stage productions. An avid collector of musical theatre recordings, his collection contains over 3,000 cast albums from around the world. Widely regarded as a theatrical marketing expert, Mark lectures and consults with

WHO'S WHO

organizations internationally. He has served on several boards including seven years with the National Alliance for Musical Theatre where he now holds the honorary position of Board Emeritus and the Advisory Committee of Samuel French, the international play publisher and licensing company. With Bernard Havard he co-authored the book *Walnut Street Theatre*. Since he joined the Walnut in 1994 it has become the most subscribed theatre company in the world.

BERNARD HAVARD (President and Producing Artistic Director) Vox Populi (The Voice of the People) was written on the Walnut Playbills in the 1800s. Whenever the Walnut has strayed from a populist program, the theatre has gone bankrupt. When I came here 34 years ago, we had no programs and no audience. Today we enjoy the largest subscription of any theatre in the world. So, my thanks to our loyal audience and a warm welcome to newcomers who enjoy and believe in what we do. I have

tremendous admiration for the artists who have dedicated their lives to the theatre and the Walnut, in particular. Our theatre is a non-profit 501-C3 institution and we rely on contributed income to extend our reach into the community. Last season we reached more than 172,000 students in our city schools. We have 30 trustees who give their time, wisdom and contributions to help guide this historical treasure. I came to the Walnut in 1982, and I am as excited now about our future as I was in the beginning. My heartfelt thanks to all who enter this theatre. For my biography, go to About Us on our web site at WalnutStreetTheatre.org.

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COMING ATTRACTIONS AT THIS THEATRE!

MAINSTAGE:

Also coming this season: *Saturday Night Fever*, May 16–July 16, 2017.

Don't miss our upcoming 2017-18 season! Three musicals and two plays include: *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*; *Annie*; *The Humans*; *Noises Off*; and *Mamma Mia!* For Mainstage subscriptions, call 215-574-3550, ext. 6 (7 days a week, 10am–10pm).

WST FOR KIDS:

Skippyjon Jones, March 31–April 22, 2017.
Junie B. Jones The Musical, June 2–11, 2017.

Don't miss our upcoming 2017-18 season including: *HONK! Jr.*; *StinkyKids: The Musical*; *The Musical Adventures of Flat Stanley Jr.*; and *Ivy + Bean: The Musical*. For WST for Kids subscriptions, call 215-574-3550, ext. 6 (7 days a week, 10am–10pm).

INDEPENDENCE STUDIO ON 3:

The Gift, Now–March 19, 2017. *Jerry's Girls*, April 4–July 2, 2017. For tickets, call 215-574-3550, ext. 1 (7 days a week, 10am–10pm).

Don't miss our upcoming 2017-18 season including: *Souvenir*; *A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins*; *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*; *Baskerville*; *A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*; *A Steady Rain*; and *Tell Me On a Sunday*. For Independence Studio on 3 subscriptions, call 215-574-3550, ext. 6 (7 days a week, 10am–10pm).

WALNUT STREET THEATRE SCHOOL

For more information on the Summer 2017 semester or Camp Walnut, call 215-574-3550, ext. 510.

For information on any of the above items, or to purchase tickets, call the Walnut at 215-574-3550 or visit our website at WalnutStreetTheatre.org. Tickets for Walnut Street Theatre productions can also be purchased at Ticketmaster or by calling 800-982-2787.

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Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits for its members, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. actorequity.org



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The Director-Choreographer is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.

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NBC10 is proud to support the work and mission of Walnut Street Theatre, the oldest theater in America. For more than 200 years, Walnut Street Theatre has been bringing families together to celebrate arts and culture in Philadelphia, all while remaining committed to local artists, talent and training. From your proud partners at NBC10, "Bravo!"



Metro, Philadelphia's #1 newspaper, is proud to partner with Walnut Street Theatre, now in its 208th season, in supporting Philadelphia's artists and promoting art education in the local communities. Pick up Metro every Thursday for our Going Out section or read it online at metro.us.



NATIONAL ALLIANCE for MUSICAL THEATRE

The mission of the Walnut Street Theatre Company is to sustain the tradition of professional theatre and contribute to its future viability and vitality. It does so through the production and presentation of professional theatre; the encouragement, training and development of artists; the development of diverse audiences; and the preservation and chronicling of its theatre building, a National Historic Landmark.



Walnut Street Theatre is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania, the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, the League of Historic American Theatres and the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce.



Walnut Street Theatre receives support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



Walnut Street Theatre acknowledges with appreciation Bryce's Catering Company (Wynnewood, PA) for their elegant catering of theatre events.



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WALNUT STREET THEATRE 17



AMERICA'S OLDEST THEATRE – PHILADELPHIA'S MOST POPULAR THEATRE COMPANY

WALNUT STREET THEATRE

FOUNDED 1809

825 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA PA 19107

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