University of Florida Performing Arts

presents

RINDE ECKERT
HORIZON

Directed by David Schweizer

Tuesday, October 16, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, October 17, 2007, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, October 18, 2007, 7:30 p.m.

Horizon was commissioned by the Lied Center for the Performing Arts, a unit of the University of Nebraska; the Mondavi Center at the University of California, Davis; the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center at the University of Maryland; and Arts and Cultural Programming at Montclair State University, New Jersey.
Horizon

Created, written and composed by Rinde Eckert
David Schweizer, director
David Barlow, Rinde Eckert, Howard Swain, performers

Alexander V. Nichols, set and lighting designer
Gregory T. Kuhn, sound designer and engineer
David Zinn, costume designer
Recordings composed and performed by Rinde Eckert
Chad Brown, stage manager
David Barlow, choreographer: Wouldn’t it be Something
Painted Image: Horizon 903, September Fields, Lancaster County by Anne Burkholder

Susan Endrizzi, producer
Musical Traditions, Inc., production and tour management
California Artists Management, booking management

First performance: October 27, 2005, at the Johnny Carson Theater in Lincoln, Nebraska
First off-Broadway performance: June 1, 2007, at the New York Theatre Workshop

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Horizon is a 90-minute play performed without intermission.

Of the Horizon

Horizon is, among some other things, a tale of one theologian’s crisis of faith, not over his religious convictions, but over the character of his service to those ideals. Reinhart Poole has been asked to leave the seminary where he teaches “ethics.” His teaching methods are Socratic and exciting, drawing from the Bible surprising insights and provocative questions. It is just these insights and questions that have landed him in trouble with the stolid, self-righteous, or simply ignorant powers of his day.

Reinhart Poole is working on his last lecture. During the night he will talk with his wife, Patricia; he will imagine himself teaching; he will recall conversations with his father and mother; and he will speak with the ghost of his brother. Reinhart will wonder if he has the patience and restraint for a ministry outside the classroom. He wonders if he has the talent for the life of a pastor. He fears he has become too accustomed to the control and freedoms of his academic world, his marketplace of Christian ideas within the seminary. This night in the life of Reinhart Poole is a kind of desert he will have to cross; it’s a deserted road he has to walk down. Reinhart will also re-read a play he is writing in his spare time - a story of two timeless masons endlessly creating and recreating the foundation of a church. “It helps to free my mind,” he tells his wife, Patricia. And it does.
The stage is simple - some cinderblocks and boards with which the artful masons may build their foundation, chalkboards and desks of the classroom, and a Bible, a notebook, and some index cards. Add to that some architectural drawings and a painted landscape, and the picture is complete.

The horizon in Reinhart's world is metaphysical, even implied by two physical matrices - the earth and the air, the source of our strength (and pain) and the character of our dreams (our desires). From a distance, only, can we appreciate it. “One must step back from it to see it at all,” writes Reinhart in his notebook.

The basis for many of the ruminations in Horizon is a modest study of the life and ideas of Reinhold Niebuhr, an influential American theologian and social theorist. But although those familiar with Niebuhr's ideas may see the ghost of them here, one ought not to strain the comparison.

It ought to be acknowledged also that my grandfather, Thomas D. Rinde, a Lutheran minister, taught religious history at a seminary in Fremont, Nebraska, also serving as its director for many years. I like to think he would be pleased to find himself implicated here in my imagined teacher, Reinhart Poole.

The landscape, the horizon, the convivial energies of Lincoln where this piece was born, the Nebraska horizon, the prairie here, have made me step back and look again. I’m grateful.

- Rinde Eckert

RINDE ECKERT, finalist for the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, is a composer, writer, performer and director. His Opera / New Music Theatre productions have toured throughout America, and to major festivals in Europe and Asia. Eckert’s career began in the 1980s as a writer/performer, writing librettos for composer Paul Dresher. Working subsequently with choreographers Margaret Jenkins and Sarah Shelton Mann, he began composing dance scores, including the evening-length Woman, Window, Square for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. As his homage to Dante, The Gardening of Thomas D, performed on tour in America and France, Eckert began composing and performing his own music/theater pieces. Recent work includes the Obie Award-winning And God Created Great Whales (2001), commissioned and produced by The Foundry Theatre; Highway Ulysses (2003) and Orpheus X (2006), both commissioned and produced by American Repertory Theatre; Horizon, a play with music and song (2005); and An Idiot Divine, an evening of two one-act solo operas.

Recent collaborations include Steven Mackey’s oratorio Dream House, Sound Stage with Paul Dresher for the chamber ensemble Zeitgeist, and Sandhills Reunion, a concert and recording with composer Jerry Granelli. Eckert has composed three CDs of songs: Finding My Way Home, Do The Day Over and Story In Story Out. ART, The Foundry Theatre, Culture Project, Center Stage in Baltimore, and Berkeley Repertory Theater have produced his work, which have received two Critics Circle and two Isadora Duncan Awards / San Francisco, an Obie Award and two Drama Desk Award Nominations / New York, and Boston’s Eliot Norton Award for Best Production by a Large Resident Company. Rinde Eckert received the 2005 Marc Blitzstein Award given by The American Academy of Arts and Letters. In 2007, he became a Guggenheim Fellow and was finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama (Orpheus X with 2007 performances at the Edinburgh and Hong Kong International Festivals). Rinde Eckert is the 2008 Granada Artist-in-Residence at the University of California at Davis. He lives in New York with his wife, Ellen McLaughlin, the playwright and actress.
DAVID SCHWEIZER, director, has been directing and developing new theater, performance and opera works for the last 30 years, beginning with his New York debut at Lincoln Center with a radical version of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida* and spanning his return to Lincoln Center last season for his debut with New York City Opera with Sir Richard Rodney Bennett’s *The Mines of Sulphur*. He lives in both New York City and Los Angeles, where he has worked extensively with the Actor’s Gang (Richard Howard’s adaptation of Oscar Wild’e *Salome*), the Mark Taper Forum (Lisa Loomer’s *The Waiting Room*), the Geffen (Sandra Tsing Loh’s *Sugar Plum Fairy*) and LATC (The Joni Mitchell Project, Thomas Babe’s *Demon Wine*, Marlene Meyer’s *Kingfish*). Recent New York work includes Zak Berkman’s *Beauty on the Vine*, Charles L. Mee’s *Wintertime*, William Hamilton’s *White Chocolate*, Anton Dudley’s *Getting Home*, Mike Albo’s *My Price Point*, Mark Campbell’s *Songs from an Unmade Bed* and Rinde Eckert’s Obie Award-winning work, *And God Created Great Whales*, which also toured extensively in this country and in Europe. His many international residencies include Prague, Stockholm, London, Lisbon, Toga Village-Japan and Warsaw, where his version of *Peer Gynt* is still running. Collaborations with other experimental companies include: Mabou Mines (*It’s a Man’s World* by Greg Mehrten), Theatre X (Michel Foucault’s *A History of Sexuality*) and Modern Artists Company (*Plato’s Symposium*). Some notable opera work includes: Thomas Ades’ *Powder Her Face* (Long Beach Opera), Stephen Hartke/Philip Littell’s *The Greater Good* (Glimmerglass) and Mozart’s *Abduction from the Seraglio* (Houston Grand Opera). His work has been seen at major American regional theaters including Yale Rep, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Children’s Theater Company, The Huntington, Arena Stage, Trinity Rep, The Magic, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, and several shows for Center Stage Baltimore, most recently Lynn Nottage’s *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* and Rodgers and Hart’s *The Boys from Syracuse*.

DAVID BARLOW, performer, has appeared in a series of premieres this past year including *Horizon*, Carl Hancock Rux’s *Mycenaean* at BAM, Chuck Mee’s *A Perfect Wedding* at NYU, the original comedy *Perfect Harmony* at the New York Fringe Festival and *Bauerntheater*, a new work in collaboration with UNESCO and the Biorama Projekt in Brandenburg, Germany. New York credits include: *Saved* (dir. Robert Woodruff) and *Andorra* (dir. Liviu Ciolei) at Theater For A New Audience, *Romola and Nijinski* (dir. David Levine) at Primary Stages, *The Seagull* (dir. Michael Barakiva) at The Blue Heron and *Smashing* (dir. Trip Cullman) with the Play Company. Regional credits include: *King Lear* at Kansas City Rep, *On the Jump* at Arena Stage, *A Number* at the Adirondack Theatre Festival and *This is Our Youth* at Philadelphia Theater Co. Barlow is a member of the Mad Dog Company directed by Phil Soltanoff, with whom he co-created *To Whom It May Concern, Lemniation* and *Strange Attractors* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival. He has performed at both the Avignon and Belgrade International Theater Festivals. Barlow is a graduate of Middlebury College and received his M.F.A from NYU.

HOWARD SWAIN, performer, has lived and worked in the San Francisco Bay Area for 30 years and has appeared in more than 200 stage productions, including work at The American Conservatory Theater (*The Seagull, St. Joan, A Lie Of The Mind, The Learned Ladies*), at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (*The Pillowman, Execution of Justice, The Tooth Of Crime, Our Country’s Good*), and San Jose Repertory Theatre (*A Christmas Story, The Baby Dance, Sideman, The Matchmaker*). Other theatre performances include work with The Magic Theatre (*Shakespeare the Sadist, The Red Snake*), The Eureka Theatre (*Vinegar Tom, A Mad World My Masters*), The Aurora Theatre (*Lobby Hero, Seascape*), Theatre-On-The-Square (*Jeffrey, Curse Of The Werewolf*), San Jose Stage (*Wilde West*), and Marin Theatre Company (*Bus Stop, Sacco and Vanzetti*), as well as the Oregon, California, Berkeley, Santa Cruz and Marin Shakespeare Festivals. Howard Swain performed with the national tour of *Picasso At the Lapin Agile*, the long-running San Francisco production of *Killer Joe*, and in the San Francisco production of *Love, Janis*. His television credits include appearances
on Nash Bridges, Midnight Caller, Lying Eyes, Kiss Shot and Hill St. Blues, and in the films Cherry 2000, Miracle Mile, One Night, Golden Gate, Teknolust, Frameup, Night Of The Scarecrow and Valley Of The Heart’s Desire.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS, set and lighting designer, is an artist whose works span from lighting and projections to scenery and costumes for dance, theater, opera and art installations. His design credits include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Rep, Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Huntington Theater, Arena Stage, Alley Theater, National Theater of Taiwan, San Francisco Ballet, ODC/SF, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Alvin Ailey, Hong Kong Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, Kronos Quartet, Paul Dresher Ensemble and Rinde Eckert. Nichols served as resident designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Co., Pennsylvania Ballet, Hartford Ballet and American Repertory Ballet, and as lighting director for American Ballet Theater. He has designed for choreographers Christopher d’Amboise, Val Caniparoli, Ann Carlson, Sonya Delwaide, Marguerite Donlon, Dominique Dumas, Jean Grand-Maitre, Joe Goode, Bill T. Jones, Graham Lustig, Mark Morris, Matjash Mrozewski, David Nixon, Kevin O’Day, Kirk Peterson, Stephen Petronio, Dwight Rhoden, Michael Smuin and Brenda Way. Recent projects include video for Life - A Journey Through Time in collaboration with Philip Glass and Frans Lanting, scenery and lighting for A Slipping Glimpse by the Margaret Jenkins Dance Co., and the structural and lighting design for the touring art installation Circle of Memory in collaboration with Eleanor Coppola.

GREGORY T. KUHN, sound designer and engineer, is a multi-disciplinary and multi-media artist who freelances in the performing and fine arts as sound engineer, designer, composer, installation designer, collaborator and fine arts photographer. His work is experienced by audiences around the world, often in contemporary-music contexts, multi-media performances, and new and experimental media exhibitions in galleries and museums. Recent projects in the performing arts include work with Paul Dresher, Pamela Z, Margaret Jenkins Dance Company and the collaborative Ballet Mori with the San Francisco Ballet. A new collaborative installation, Narcissus’ Well, opened in September 2006 at Midwestern State University in Texas. He is currently composing a music theater work based on Boethius’ Consolations of Philosophy, and editing a photographic series from the Galapagos Islands.

DAVID ZINN, costume designer, has designed costumes and/or sets both on Broadway (Xanadu), and off-Broadway: Bach at Leipzig, Songs from an Unmade Bed (New York Theatre Workshop); Jew of Malta (TFANA); Soldier’s Play, Wintertime (Second Stage); MCC, Atlantic, SALT, Tiny Mythic and Target Margin (Obie award), and for American Repertory Theatre (Orpheus X, Olly’s Prison and Highway Ulysses.) Other credits include sets and/or costumes for Sandra Tsing Loh’s Sugar Plum Fairy (Seattle Repertory Theatre, Geffen Theatre, San Jose Rep), He Hunts (Geffen) and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (Children’s Theatre Company), Mozart’s La Clemenza di Tito (Santa Fe Opera), The Winter’s Tale, The Merchant of Venice, and Henry IV, Part I (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), The Cider House Rules (Mark Taper Forum, Seattle Rep, Atlantic Theater). Other credits include: Spoleto Festival USA, Glimmerglass Opera, Merrimack Repertory Theater, Intiman Theater, Long Wharf Theater, Center Stage (Baltimore), Curtis Institute of Music, Yale Rep, Berkeley Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Portland Stage Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Cincinnati Playhouse, and many others. In New York, his credits include: Second Stage, Culture Project, Jane Street, MCC, Juilliard Opera and Drama, and company member of Target Margin Theater and SALT Theater. David Zinn was awarded the Irene Sharaff Young Master Award from the Theatre Development Fund.
CHAD BROWN, stage manager, has worked on numerous productions with Nebraska Repertory Theatre including Jacob Marley’s Christmas Carol, Omnium Gatherum and Androcles and the Lion, all directed by Virginia Smith; The Guys and Proof directed by Jeffrey Elwell; Local Wonders, directed by Robin McKercher; and Resident Alien, directed by Doug Finlayson. Other professional work includes A Singer’s Romance, directed by James Ford for the Red Cloud Opera House, and the Fall 2006 national tour of Horizon, directed by David Schweizer. Brown received a bachelor of arts in theatre performance from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. While in school, he stage managed La Cenerentola, directed by Ariel Bybee.

ANNE BURKHOLDER, artist, was born in the Nebraska Sandhills and has had her paintings accepted in many national and regional juried shows, winning first place awards for both her oils and watercolors. Her works are included in many collections in the United States, England, Germany, Austria, France, Switzerland and Morocco. She is the designer and developer of the Burkholder Project at 719 “P” Street in Lincoln’s Historic Haymarket District, where she also has her studio. The work used in the set design is from her series, Prairie Horizons, “where the sky meets the earth.” “Horizon 903, September Fields, Lancaster County”, 18’ x 36”, oil.

SUSAN ENDRIZZI, producer, began her arts career as a professional musician and university professor, followed by two decades managing performing artists, booking concerts, and producing tours. She is founding and managing director of California Artists Management, a company representing an international roster of classical and early music, world music and new theater. Susan Endrizzi has produced national tours for artist companies from North America, Europe, Russia, Africa, India and Japan, and she produces concerts festivals, conferences, workshops and special projects for nonprofit arts organizations both in the United States and abroad. Susan Endrizzi and Rinde Eckert have worked together for 15 years. Horizon is the first play they have brought to the stage together.

MUSICAL TRADITIONS, production and tour management, unlike traditional opera and music theater producing organizations, is dedicated to the creation, composition, production, performance and touring of only original works collaboratively created by ensemble members and associates. MT has established a significant national reputation that enables it to continue to produce and tour works of a kind that are largely unavailable to audiences outside of large cities. From its inception in 1985 through 1993, all productions involved Artistic Director Paul Dresher as a composer and key collaborator. Since 1993, MT also commissions, produces, presents and tours new works of collaboratively created opera/music theater from a wide range of writers, composers, designers and directors. Works produced or co-produced with Rinde Eckert include Ravenshead (Mackey/Eckert), The Gardening of Thomas D (Eckert), Sound Stage and Slow Fire (Dresher/Eckert). The solo opera Slow Fire has received more than 150 performances in the U.S. and three tours of Europe, remarkable numbers for new operas.