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Back Alley Theatre

presents

GLORIA DUPLEX:

An Erotic Worship Service for Theatre

ALLEY BILL

The Back Alley is a nonprofit theatre. That means our work is not aimed at a commercial market, but chosen because it is challenging, provocative, or innovative. Since we began producing in 1979, we have produced plays that are new to Los Angeles (or haven't been produced in a long time) and speak with a unique voice. We always execute our choice of material with the best actors, directors, and designers who live here.

Although people attend the Back Alley from all over Los Angeles County, we have a strong rapport with the three million residents of the San Fernando Valley. This is our neighborhood -- we live and work here -- and we're glad we can bring professional theatre to the Valley. The theatre is grateful for the support this community has given us.

- 1989: THE VOICE OF THE PRARIE
LOIS YOUNG
- 1988: THE FOX
PANCAKES
A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE
BITTERSUITE
AMAZING GRACE
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?
- 1987: THE EARLY GIRL
JACQUES BREL IS...
SAND MOUNTAIN
PASTA, DREAD AND MAZEL
- 1986: DAYS AND NIGHTS WITHIN
FOUND A PEANUT
THE GREEKS
DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE SEA
- 1985: RINGERS
IN THE SWEET BYE AND BYE
DUET FOR ONE
- 1984: SUBURBAN ROMANCE
FIREBIRD THEATRE COMPANY
ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN
SLAB BOYS
THIN WALLS
- 1983: ARE YOU SURE?
CISTERNS
HOT & COLD
A WOMAN OF INDEPENDENT MEANS
- 1982: THREE TOP HATS
24 HOURS
- 1981: THE FOX
- 1980: RUBBERS, YANKS 3, DETROIT 0, TOP OF THE SEVENTH
FEEDLOT
PUTTING ON THE DOG
COWBOY MOUTH
- 1979: THE JOURNALISTS

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The Back Alley Theatre
15231 Burbank Blvd.
Van Nuys, CA 91411
818 780-2240

The Back Alley Theatre
Laura Zucker & Allan Miller,
Producing Directors

presents

GLORIA DUPLEX
An Erotic Worship Service for Theatre

Starring (in alphabetical order)

JEAN HUBBARD BOONE

RHODA GEMIGNANI

GREGG HENRY

BRENDA THOMSON

Written by

REBECCA WELLS

Directed by

TERI RALSTON

Produced by

LAURA ZUCKER

Musical Direction

LARRY WILKINS

Vocal Direction

SHELLEY MARKUM

Set design by

DEBORAH RAYMOND

DORIAN VERNACCIO

Lighting design by

LAWRENCE OBERMAN

Costume design by

SCOTT LANE

Sound design by

JERRY SIDER

Sacred Art by

CRAIG SHEPHERD

Assistant Director

GRETCHEN CORBETT

Cast in order of appearance:

Bud Joseph.....*GREGG HENRY
Lu Gremillion.....*RHODA GEMIGNANI
Gloria Duplex.....*BRENDA THOMSON
Rev. Mother Willie Mae Felix.....*JEAN
HUBBARD BOONE

The Band:

EDDIE FIELD.....Bass, Fiddle
JOHN HARVEY.....Percussion
LARRY WILKINS.....Guitar
BILL SHEPHERD.....Cajun Accordion

There will be one intermission of ten minutes.

The play is set at the Kitten Paradise Temple and Lounge in New Orleans.

Standing by: *LISA PESCIA (Gloria Duplex), *LUCE MORGAN (Lu Gremillion)

*Member of Screen Actors Guild, Association of Film, Television and Radio Actors, or Actors' Equity Association.

Originally produced at The Empty Space Theatre, Seattle, Washington.



JEAN HUBBARD BOONE (Rev. Mother Willie Mae Felix) was last seen in "Horowitz and Mrs. Washington" as Mrs. Washington. Her credits include extensive work in theatre (at the Children's Theatre Company and the Guthrie in Minneapolis) and television. Advanced study was done with Jose Quintero here in Los Angeles. Last year was spent recording an album, "Yours and Mine."



RHODA GEMIGNANI (Lu Gremillion) was seen in LATC's acclaimed TARTUFFE and A RICH FULL LIFE. She appeared in LAAT's FEMALE PARTS for which she won a Drama-Logue Award. Mistress Quickly in MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR at the Old Globe in San Diego, and Titania in MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM at South Coast Rep are other southern California theatre roles. In New York, Ms. Gemignani appeared on Broadway as Freulein Kost with Lotte Lenya in CABARET and as Lucille in Joesph Papp's production of MERT AND PHIL. National tours include Madame Hortense in ZORBA and Golde in FIDDLER ON THE ROOF with the late Herschel Bernardi in 1980-- the highlight there was being directed by Jerome Robbins. Ms. Gemignani's film appearances include Deathwish, Ghostbusters, Three Fugitives, Stick My Fingers, Fleet My Feet, Die Laughing, and Young Lust. "Diary of a Mafia Wife" and "Farrell for the People" are recent movies of the week, while TV series start with the original "Mary Tyler Moore Show," "The Bob Newhart Show," and "Kojak" and move on to "The Jeffersons," "Facts of Life," "Different Strokes," "Mike Hammer," "Hill Street Blues," "St. Elsewhere," "Twilight Zone," "Moonlighting," and Ms. Gemignani's favorite, her recurring role as Mrs. Rossini in ABC's hit, "Who's the Boss?".



GREGG HENRY (Bud Joseph) was last seen on the Los Angeles stage in the world premiere production of *THE WHITE DEATH* at the Cast Theatre. Other productions include *BATTERY*, *FEMME FATALE*, and *HEARTSTOPPER*. He has produced and acted in many productions for the Los Angeles Theatre Unit. He is a veteran of many TV shows. Film credits include *Scarface*, *Boby Double*, and the soon to be released *Casualties of War* directed by Brian De Palma.



BRENDA THOMSON (Gloria Duplex) is an actress, singer, and dancer whose career has included almost every aspect of the entertainment world. She began her television appearances as a dancer and assistant choreographer with such stars as Red Skelton, Tim Conway, and most memorably, Fred Astaire. As an actress, she has been seen in guest appearances on such shows as "M*A*S*H," the ABC series "Masquerade," "Murder, She Wrote," "Downtown," "Dynasty," and most recently the upcoming series "Capital News." Ms. Thomson has starred in numerous theatrical presentations, among them: Charity in *SWEET CHARITY*, Edythe in *MY ONE AND ONLY*, Fran in *PROMISES*, PROMISES, Adelaide in *GUYS AND DOLLS*, Agnes in *I DO! I DO!* and on Broadway in the Tony award winning musical *COMPANY*. Ms. Thomson also made her directing debut in a recent production of *I DO! I DO!*, in which she co-starred with Ken Berry.

REBECCA WELLS (Playwright) grew up on the Bayou Rapides in Central Louisiana. Her play *SPLITTIN' HAIRS* is currently in development as a pilot at ABC-TV. A writer of fiction and non-fiction, Ms. Wells is a frequent contributor to "Seattle Weekly" and her short stories and essays have been published in "Crab Creek Review," "Seattle Fifteen," and "Harvard Post." Her radio commentaries are heard from time to time on National Public Radio.

TERI RALSTON (Director) appeared both off-Broadway and in Los Angeles in the original *JACQUES BREL*. She then worked for three years with Harold Prince and Stephen Sondheim appearing in the Broadway companies of *COMPANY* (which toured to Los Angeles, San Francisco and London), *A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC*, and *SONDHEIM: A MUSICAL TRIBUTE* (which was recorded); and productions of *SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM*. In Los Angeles she has performed at the Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Hartford, the Ahmanson, the Dorothy Chandler Pavillion, and the Las Palmas in productions such as *I'M GETTING MY ACT TOGETHER...*, *THE STUDENT PRINCE*, *THE BAKER'S WIFE*, *HEAVEN SENT*, *HISTORY OF AMERICAN FILM*, *QUILTERS*, and *LET ME SING AND I'M HAPPY: AN EVENING WITH GERSHWIN*, *KERN AND BERLIN* (which she also co-directed and co-produced). Regional theatre credits include the Actors Theatre of Louisville, Cincinnati Playhouse and the Hartman Theatre. At La Mirada Civic she did *BRIGHTON BEACH MEMOIRS* and *COMPANY*, and just directed *NO NO NANETTE*. She has directed four productions of *QUILTERS*, *SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM* with Peggy Lee, *JACQUES BREL* and the L.A. premiere of *OCTETTE BRIDGE CLUB* and others. Her television credits include "E.R.," "Archie Bunker's Place," "One Day at a Time," "Barnaby Jones," "The Tonight Show," "Your Place or Mine," the Christmas special "Cricket on the Hearth," "Slap Maxwell," and "Married with Children." She was a member of the original company of South Coast Rep, performing in *MAJOR BARBARA*, *THE HOSTAGE*, *SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM*, *PRELUDE TO A KISS*, and this summer's production of *SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE*.

LAURA ZUCKER (Producing Director) founded the Back Alley, along with Allan Miller, in 1979. Ms. Zucker is the Chairman of the Associated Theatres of Los Angeles, and serves on the board of Arts, Inc., which administers the Arts Loan Fund and Business Volunteers for the Arts program in Los Angeles. She has served on the board of the Los Angeles Theatre Alliance, was a panelist for the California Arts Council, and presently serves on the steering committee of the National/State/Local Partnership Grant Program. She attended the Yale School of Drama and received her B.A. from Barnard College. She has produced over thirty plays for the Back Alley.

ALLAN MILLER (Producing Director) most recently co-directed A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE, and directed THE FOX and AMAZING GRACE at the Back Alley. Also at the theatre, he directed and appeared in the long-running hit ARE YOU NOW OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN, which he co-produced in its original Los Angeles premiere. Mr. Miller won an L.A.D.C.C. Award for his direction of THE FOX at the Back Alley in 1981, and subsequently directed it Off-Broadway at the Roundabout Theatre in New York. Mr. Miller has taught at the Dramatic Workshop, Circle in the Square, HARYOU ACT Inc. in Harlem, the New Lafayette Theatre, The Focus Theatre in Dublin, New York University, New York City College, and the Yale School of Drama. Trained as an actor in New York, his thirty-five year career includes over fifty plays (most recently WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?), a hundred and fifty television episodics and pilots (most recently "Heartbeat"), fifteen movies made for television, nine feature films and seven soap operas.

LARRY WILKINS (Musical Director) is a music producer, song writer, composer, music arranger, guitarist, and vocalist with twenty-two years of professional experience in the music industry. His performance credits as a guitarist and vocalist include national tours with Tony Melendez, Sugarloaf (with whom he recorded the hit, "Green-eyed Lady"), Aerosmith, ZZ Top, Joe Walsh, Carlos Santana, Sha Na Na, Billy Preston, Chambers Brothers, Isley Brothers, The Kinks, Steppenwolf, Firefall and Steel Breeze. He co-wrote songs for the new Sugarloaf album with Bob Crew and Jerry Corbetta, and composed and scored all the music and soundtrack for the Avoc Embassy horror film Monstosity. He was nominated as a producer for a PBS network award for Best Music Production, Soundtrack or Educational, Entertainment Video, and was awarded an Alfi for music production of a Tokyo Bowl TV ad.

DORIAN VERNACCHIO and DEBORAH RAYMOND (Set Designers) have recently completed scenic and lighting design for HARD COPY at the Coast Playhouse, and are currently working on scenic design for a season of one person shows for the Pasadena Playhouse. Recent productions include Pace Group touring productions of ANNIE GET YOUR GUN and THE BUSINESS OF MURDER, HAPPY JACK, THE DAY YOU'LL LOVE ME, BLAME IT ON THE MOVIES II, and LADIES ROOM. Other productions include BREAKING THE SILENCE (a 1988 L.A. Drama Critics Award winning scenic design), DOWN AN ALLEY FILLED WITH CATS, BEIRUT, NO PLACE TO BE SOMEBODY (a 1987 NAACP Image Award scenic design), LOOT, and CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS. They are the recipients of the L.A. Weekly Career Achievement Award, as well as several Drama-Logue Awards. Both are graduates of the New York University Design Program.

LAWRENCE OBERMAN (Lighting Designer) is resident lighting designer at the Back Alley. His designs for the theatre include WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?, AMAZING GRACE, BITTERSUITE, A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE, THE FOX, and THE VOICE OF THE PRAIRE. He graduated from California Institute of the Arts with a degree in lighting design. Other Los Angeles credits include THE MAGIC PRISON at Theatre West, THE PRICE for the Grove Theatre Company, SHIVAREE at Theatre 40, and LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT at the Skylight Theatre.

SCOTT LANE (Costume Designer) began his costuming career six years ago with Michetti/Knowles Entertainment working on industrial shows, musical revues and their Charles Dickens styled quartets, "The Yuletide Carolers." He is currently the head of wardrobe for San Gabriel Valley Civic Light Opera, designing such shows as ANNIE GET YOUR GUN, MAN OF LA MANCHA, and SEVEN BRIDES FOR SEVEN BROTHERS. He also works extensively for Williams Gerrard Productions of Chicago and NYC, and Westwall Productions, who provide entertainment for cruise ships.

JERRY SIDER (Sound Designer) has designed sound for nine shows at the Back Alley, including THE VOICE OF THE PRAIRE. His design for the Back Alley production of DAYS AND NIGHTS WITHIN in 1986 won a Drama-Logue Award, as did his design for HOT AND COLD. Recently he has been working for KPFK radio in Los Angeles.

CRAIG SHEPHERD (Scenic Artist) is an actor/scenic artist who recently moved to L.A. from N.Y.C. He studied art in Siena, Italy and at the Aegean School of Arts in Samos, Greece.

GRACE IN THE GROIN: Notes from the Playwright

Allright. The word "God" is not going to make everybody happy. I use it because I don't know any better word to describe the whole of things, that deep reality that breathes in everything as sheer gift. You can call it Nature if you want. You can call it Tao, Dharma, or just Truth. You can say Jesus or Buddha or Sophia. It doesn't matter. You can't find anything anywhere that is not a piece of God. Einstein knew it. So did Gandhi. And so did the prostitute priestesses who dispensed the grace of the Goddess in ancient Middle-Eastern temples. Unlimited God who reveals Himslef and Herself specifically and in the wildest ways.

I am interested in, as Flannery O'Connor says, "the action of grace in territory held mostly by the devil." I wanted to write a play about integration of the opposites which split us so sadly. Body/soul, male/female, sacred/profane. I was tired of the exhausting separation of nature and grace which leaves us orphaned, addicted, and horny-- not just for sex, but for true intercourse with the divine that is incarnated in this world of beautiful dumb matter. I was interested in letting all those opposites cook in one big gumbo pot and then watching the intrusion of grace. What I did not know, and what I have come to learn in writing GLORIA DUPLEX, is how hot and pointed the suffering is that precedes and follows a hit of grace. This redemptive business is not so much bliss-out as it is a long walk in darkness, one foot in front of the other.

The more academic may care to learn that "gloria duplex" is Italian for "using both sides of consciousness." The homeowners may want to know that Yes, You Too Can Turn Regular Old Trash Into Sacred Art. (All trash is tranformable and compost makes for fertile gardens.) The erotic dancers in the audience will be relieved to hear that the playwright believes as Lu Gremillion does when she says, "Let them that have eyes, see. Let them that have ears, hear. The rest of y'all just have a good time!"

So You Want To Be a Volunteer!

Over the past decade the Back Alley Theatre has grown from a fledgling organization to the fifth largest nonprofit theatre in Los Angeles. The artists at the Back Alley are supported by a professional administrative and technical staff and, of course, an extensive volunteer program. Through the years volunteers have come to us from many walks of life. We continue to be on the lookout for assistance backstage, in the front of the house, and in the office. Whether you're exploring a new career, looking for school or court credit, hoping to expand your social circle, or just looking for an adventure, we can tailor an assignment and schedule it to fit your needs. Previous experience in working at a theatre is not necessary; we encourage you to sign up for what peaks your interest and we'll do our best to train you. After a minimum of 10 volunteer hours, volunteers are invited to see each Back Alley production with a guest.

Every three months, we recognize a volunteer who has been particularly outstanding in his/her contribution to the Back Alley. This quarter our special volunteer has gone beyond the call of duty, making sure auditions for GLORIA DUPLEX ran smoothly, driving a visiting playwright all over town, and helping with many other jobs and duties. Michael S. Clark, we thank you!

We are especially looking for people with carpentry skills who can help build sets during day-time hours, and those with computer data entry skills and assistants for the stage manager during performances (weekends and evenings). If you're interested in volunteering, please call Lisa Barnet at 818 780-2240.

As a not-for-profit theatre, the Back Alley relies heavily on the generosity of our contributors. Ticket revenue accounts for only 60% of theatre expenses; the balance is earned through contributed income secured through grants from corporations and foundations and through INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT. Gifts from individuals comprise the largest and most reliable segment of our contributed income. Please think of joining the distinguished list below. The Back Alley Theatre gratefully acknowledges the invaluable support of the following donors.

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This project is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a State agency, and the L.A. City Cultural Affairs Department. This performance is made possible in part through the sponsorship of the L.A. County Board of Supervisors and the L.A. County Music and Performing Arts Commission.

The Back Alley is a member of Theatre Communications Group, California Confederation for the Arts, The Associated Theatres of Los Angeles, and Theatre LA.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Don't park in the lot next door because they lock the gates and you'll be stuck! Please turn off all beepers or digital watches which beep. The taking of photographs, eating, drinking and smoking inside the theatre are strictly prohibited.

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The Back Alley has commissioned composer and lyricist Will Holt ("A Walk on the Wildside") and his wife, Dion Alden Holt, a gifted writer of children's stories, to create a new theatre adventure for children 2 - 8 years old. The kids follow three delightful characters on a highly participatory musical journey through two stories. Will Holt has created a series of playful new songs about the perils of waiting, the creation of the red dot circus, and night noises- the scary bedtime sounds that can frighten us all!

MAX & ZOHEY is made possible by a special grant from Meryn's.

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