

## UPCOMING PERFORMANCES AT REDCAT

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July 10 – 19: Outfest 2009

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# THE WOOSTER GROUP

## *LA DIDONE*

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June 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 2009 | 8:30pm  
June 14 and 21, 2009 | 7:00pm

presented by

REDCAT

Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater

California Institute of the Arts

CALARTS



# THE WOOSTER GROUP

## LA DIDONE

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Music by Francesco Cavalli

Libretto by Giovanni Francesco Busenello

Performed by: Hai-Ting Chinn, Ari Fliakos, Jennifer Griesbach, Hank Heijink, Andrew Nolen, Kamala Sankaram, Scott Shepherd, Harvey Valdes, Kate Valk, David Walker, Judson Williams, John Young

Director: Elizabeth LeCompte

Music Director: Bruce Odland

Associate Director: Kate Valk

Set: Ruud van den Akker

Lighting: Jennifer Tipton

Sound: Matt Schloss, Omar Zubair

Video: Zbigniew Bzymek, Joby Emmons with Andrew Schneider

Production Manager: Bozkurt Karasu

Assistant Director and Baroque Gesture Coach: Jennifer Griesbach

Stage Manager: Teresa Hartmann

Technical Director: Aron Deyo

Master Electrician: Rob Reese

Rigger: Eric Dyer

Costumes: Antonia Belt

Cineturg: Dennis Dermody

Surttitle Operators: Patrizio Annibaldi, Jeff Teeter

Running time: 95 minutes, no intermission

Production: The Wooster Group, KunstenFESTIVALdesArts

Coproduction: Edinburgh International Festival, Productiehuis Rotterdam (Rotterdamse Schouwburg), Grand Théâtre du Luxembourg, CC Belém (Lisbon)

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*REDCAT's new four-year partnership with The Wooster Group is funded in part by the "Leading for the Future Initiative," a program of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.*

*Los Angeles support provided by The Wooster West Contributor's Group of the REDCAT Circle: Joanna Going and Dylan Walsh, Bill Kramer, Lauren McAuliffe and Douglas MacLaren, Kristy Santimyer-Melita and S. Daniel Melita, and Catharine and Jeffrey Soros.*

### VIDEO, FILM & INSTALLATIONS

» BRACE UP! Installation/DVD « in progress

» THERE IS STILL TIME..BROTHER «, a 360° interactive media installation · 2008

» HOUSE/LIGHTS DVD « and » ON TOUR «, a documentary by Ken Kobland · 2004

» THE EMPEROR JONES « · 2000 (with Chris Kondek)

» WRONG GUYS « in progress

» RHYME 'EM TO DEATH « · 1994 (with Leslie Thornton)

» WHITE HOMELAND COMMANDO « · 1992

» FLAUBERT DREAMS OF TRAVEL BUT THE ILLNESS OF HIS MOTHER PREVENTS IT « · 1986 (with Ken Kobland)

### THEATER COLLABORATIONS

SYMPHONY OF RATS · 1988 and MISS UNIVERSAL HAPPINESS · 1985

(written and directed by Richard Foreman/Ontological Hysteric Theater)

AND THAT'S HOW THE RENT GETS PAID · 1984 (written and directed by Jeff Weiss)

### MONOLOGS BY SPALDING GRAY

INTERVIEWING THE AUDIENCE · 1982

NOBODY WANTED TO SIT BEHIND A DESK · 1981

IN SEARCH OF THE MONKEY GIRL · 1981

47 BEDS · 1981

A PERSONAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN THEATRE · 1980

INDIA & AFTER (AMERICA) · 1979

BOOZE, CARS & COLLEGE GIRLS · 1979

SEX & DEATH TO THE AGE 14 · 1979

### GARAGE PRODUCTIONS

ROY COHN/JACK SMITH · 1992 (conceived and performed by Ron Vawter)

For more information on The Wooster Group, visit [www.thewoostergroup.org](http://www.thewoostergroup.org)

### DONORS

The Wooster Group is generously supported by the following public and private sources:

Big Apple Lights, Inc.; California Community Foundation; Carnegie Corporation of New York; Edward T. Cone Foundation; Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation; Fan Fox & Leslie R. Samuels Foundation; Herbert Lee Grayson Foundation; JKW Foundation; J. M. Kaplan Fund, established in The New York Community Trust by the founders of The Reader's Digest Association; Lucille Lortel Foundation; Andrew W. Mellon Foundation New York Theater Program; Minnesota Community Foundation; National Endowment for the Arts; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Council on the Arts; New York Times Company Foundation Fund for Midsize Theatres, a project of A.R.T./New York; "Leading for the Future Initiative", a program of the Nonprofit Finance Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation; Orentreich Family Foundation; Princess Grace Foundation – USA; James E. Robison Foundation; Peter Jay Sharp Foundation; Shubert Foundation; Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust; Trust for Mutual Understanding; United States Artists; Lila Acheson Wallace Theater Fund.

Kate Valk & The Wooster Group are participants in the Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowships, funded by the William & Eva Fox Foundation and administered by Theatre Communications Group.

Isadora video software donated by Mark Coniglio; computer equipment donated by Tekserve.

### INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTORS

George Ahl III; Andrew Andrew & Andrew Andrew; Anonymous; Antonia & David Belt; Vivien Bettencourt & Vincent Katz; Marianne Boesky, Marianne Boesky Gallery; Louise Bourgeois; Winsome Brown & Claude Arpels; Alba & Francesco Clemente; Bernard Dikman; Elizabeth Diller & Ric Scofidio; Erin Douglass & Ari Fliakos; Thomas Dozol; Tiffany Dubin, StylePunch; Luchy & Andrew Edwards; Suzanne & John Emmons; Constantine Fliakos; April Gornik & Eric Fischl; Neil Grayson; Susan Harris & Glenn Gissler; Laurie Hawkinson, Smith, Miller, Hawkinson Architects; Buck Henry; Wendy Vanden Heuvel; Jim Hodges; Genevieve Jones; Ada & Alex Katz; Christine Larsen & Vincent Dopulos; Danielle Lemmon; Diane & Adam Max; Frances McDormand & Joel Coen; Bella Meyer & Martin Kace; David O'Connell; Joelle O'Reilly-Hyland; Justin Ockenden; Amy & John Phelan; Richard Prince; Keith Pugliese; Margaret Sand; Susan Short & John Johnson; Willard Taylor, Sullivan & Cromwell; Jennifer Tipton; Michael Tracy; Francis Williams; Robert Wilson, Jr. & George Loening; Arden Wohl; F. Anthony & Sally Zunino; among others.

## THE WOOSTER GROUP STAFF

Joel Bassin, *Grants Manager*; Clay Hapaz, *Archivist*; Cynthia Hedstrom, *Producer*; Edward McKeaney, *General Manager*; Jamie Poskin, *Operations Manager*; Kaneza Schaal, *Arts-in-Education Manager*

**CURRENT ASSOCIATES 2008-09** - Geoff Abbas, Ruud van den Akker, Joel Bassin, Antonia Belt, Dominique Bousquet, Zbigniew Bzymek, Hai-Ting Chinn, Jim Clayburgh, John Collins, Dennis Dermody, Aron Deyo, Eric Dyer, Joby Emmons, Roy Faudree, Ari Fliakos, Yvan Greenberg, Jennifer Griesbach, Clay Hapaz, Teresa Hartmann, Cynthia Hedstrom, Hank Heijink, Claudia Hill, Felix Ivanov, Bozkurt Karasu, Ken Kobland, Chris Kondek, David Linton, Elizabeth LeCompte, Alessandro Magania, Margaret Mann, Gabe Maxson, Edward McKeaney, Ellen Mills, Andrew Nolen, Bruce Odland, Daniel Pettrow, Jamie Poskin, Rob Reese, Kamala Sankaram, Kaneza Schaal, Matt Schloss, Andrew Schneider, Sheena See, Tanya Selvaratnam, Scott Shepherd, Ariana Smart, Peyton Smith, Casey Spooner, Natalie Thomas, Matt Tierney, Jennifer Tipton, Harvey Valdes, Kate Valk, Judson Williams, Ben Williams, John Young, Omar Zubair

**FOUNDING AND ORIGINAL MEMBERS** – Elizabeth LeCompte, Spalding Gray, Ron Vawter, Jim Clayburgh, Willem Dafoe, Kate Valk and Peyton Smith

## THE WOOSTER GROUP CHRONOLOGY

### THEATER

HAMLET · 2007  
WHO'S YOUR DADA?! · 2006  
POOR THEATER · 2004  
TO YOU, THE BIRDIE! (Phèdre) · 2002  
HOUSE/LIGHTS · 1999/2005  
THE HAIRY APE · 1995  
FISH STORY · 1994  
THE EMPEROR JONES · 1993/2006  
BRACE UP! · 1991/2003  
NORTH ATLANTIC · 1984/2000

THE ROAD TO IMMORTALITY  
FRANK DELL'S THE TEMPTATION OF ST. ANTONY · 1987  
L.S.D. (...JUST THE HIGH POINTS...) · 1984  
ROUTE 1 & 9 · 1981/1987

THREE PLACES IN RHODE ISLAND  
POINT JUDITH (AN EPILOG) · 1979  
NAYATT SCHOOL · 1978  
RUMSTICK ROAD · 1977  
SAKONNET POINT · 1975

### DANCE

I AM JEROME BEL (EXCERPTED) · 2008  
ERASE E(X) · 2004 (with Joji Inc.)  
DANCES WITH T.V. AND MIC · 1998 (with Vincent Dunoyer)  
FOR THE GOOD TIMES · 1982  
HULA · 1981

### RADIO

» THE PEGGY CARSTAIRS REPORT « · 2002  
» RACINE'S PHÈDRE « · 2000  
» THE WOOSTER GROUP'S THE EMPEROR JONES BY EUGENE O'NEILL « · 1998  
(BBC Radio 3 Broadcasts of Festival Radio Productions)

## Who's Who

### *La Didone*

Dido  
Aeneas, Ghost Chorus  
Neptune, Jarbas, Ilioneus, Jove, Ghost Chorus  
Juno, Mercury, Anna, voice of Cupid, Lady  
Ghost of Sichaeus  
Shadow of Dido, Old Man, Guard, Lady  
Shadow of Aeneas, Cupid, Ghost of Sichaeus  
Shadow of Jarbas, Boar, Guard  
Acate

Hai-Ting Chinn  
John Young  
Andrew Nolen  
Kamala Sankaram  
Hank Heijink  
Kate Valk  
Ari Fliakos  
Scott Shepherd  
Judson Williams

### *Terrore nello spazio* aka *Planet of the Vampires*

Sanya  
Mark  
Wess, Salas' body  
Dr. Karan, Burt, Brad  
Tiona  
Eldon  
Kir

Kate Valk  
Ari Fliakos  
Scott Shepherd  
Judson Williams  
Hai-Ting Chinn  
John Young  
Andrew Nolen

### *The Band*

Jennifer Griesbach (keyboard)  
Hank Heijink (6/11-14) & David Walker (6/16, 17, 19-21) (theorbo, baroque guitar)  
Kamala Sankaram (accordion, tambourine)  
Scott Shepherd (ukulele)  
Harvey Valdes (electric guitar)

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*La Didone*: Music by Francesco Cavalli; Libretto by Giovanni Francesco Busenello, first performance: Carnival 1641, Venice

Additional Text: *Terrore nello spazio* aka *Planet of the Vampires*, a film by Mario Bava, 1965 and *Queen of Outer Space* directed by Edward Bernds, 1958

Additional Music: Johann Hieronymus Kapsperger, *Colascione*, 1640

Thanks to Maurice Camps, Liz De Sole, Isabelle Dumont, Anna Henckel-Donnersmarck, Motomi Igarashi, Angel Orensanz Foundation and Charlie Weaver. Lighting (May-August 2007): Jennifer Tipton, Gabe Maxson

## PROGRAM NOTES

The Wooster Group's production of *La Didone* was originally commissioned by the KunstenFESTIVALdesArts in Brussels, under the direction of Frie Leysen. Her goal was to reinvigorate Baroque opera in the 21st century by inviting experimental directors, choreographers and media artists to stage a series of works. She first produced a Monteverdi cycle. The second cycle focused on works by the librettist Giovanni Francesco Busenello.

The original score of *La Didone* is in 3 acts and lasts 4-5 hours. The Group's version is cut to 1.5 hours and begins with Act 2, when Aeneas arrives on the shores of Carthage. Bits of the first act, which deal with the fall of Troy, are heard as echoes in the opening scene.

## SYNOPSIS

*La Didone*: After surviving the destruction of his native city and a deadly storm at sea, Aeneas, prince of Troy, washes up on the shores of Africa, where he is received by Dido, queen of Carthage. The queen is notoriously faithful to her dead husband, a circumstance of no small frustration to Jarbas, the amorous king of a neighboring region in Africa. But the love-god Cupid (disguised as Aeneas' son Ascanius) plunges an arrow into Dido's breast as she looks upon Aeneas, and she falls helplessly in love. Jarbas' jealousy drives him to madness. The queen arranges a grand boar hunt, and during the excitement she and Aeneas sneak off to consummate their love in a dark cave. Almost immediately afterward Aeneas departs, summoned by the gods to his destiny in Italy. Abandoned, Dido tries to kill herself but is rescued by Jarbas (magically cured of his madness by a merciful god), and the two live happily ever after.

*Terrore nello spazio aka Planet of the Vampires*: Two spaceships, the Argos and the Galliot, are investigating a mysterious signal emanating from the planet Aura. Suddenly the force of gravity increases like mad, and both ships plummet to the planet's surface. The Argos crew survives, but the crew of the Galliot is entirely wiped out and the corpses rise up as zombies, reanimated by the alien life forms of the planet. The aliens are desperate to escape their dying sun and are trying to steal a spaceship. A deadly battle ensues between the humans and zombies over the one remaining "meteor rejector", an indispensable piece of spaceship hardware. Eventually the Galliot is blown to bits, and the Argos escapes with three survivors, not all of them human.

"And because according to good doctrine it is permissible for poets not only to alter stories but even history, Dido takes Jarbas for her husband. And if it was a famous anachronism in Virgil that Dido lost her life not for Sychaeus, her husband, but for Aeneas, great minds should be able to tolerate that here there occurs a marriage that is different both from the stories and the histories. He who writes satisfies his own fancy, and it is in order to avoid the tragic ending of Dido's death that the aforementioned marriage to Jarbas has been introduced. It is not necessary here to remind men of understanding how the best poets represented things in their own way; books are open, and learning is not a stranger in this world."

from Giovanni Francesco Busenello's argomento to his libretto for *La Didone*  
(quoted in *A Woman Scorn'd: Responses to the Dido Myth*, ed. Michael Burden)

## FRANCESCO CAVALLI

Venetian composer and impresario Francesco Cavalli (1602-1676) was instrumental in defining opera as we know it today. Before Cavalli, Italian operas were elite court entertainments presented for princes and lords about high-minded subjects. In the early 17th century traveling troupes brought opera to the cosmopolitan port city of Venice where it mutated into a popular and commercial enterprise. During the months of carnival, public operas appealed to a broad audience of patricians, regular citizens and tourists, and turned a profit. *La Didone*, Cavalli's third opera and his second on a libretto by Giovanni Francesco Busenello, premiered at Venice's first public opera house, Teatro San Cassiano, during carnival in 1641. Cavalli and Busenello changed the tragic ending of the Dido and Aeneas story to a happy resolution, and set romantic arias side by side with grotesque humor. Along with the recitative, a musicalized speech usually reserved for serious moments and noble characters, Busenello wrote short poetic verses, which Cavalli transposed into lyrical arias. Cavalli went on to compose 30 more operas, becoming one of the most popular composers of the mid-17th century. His operas traveled widely outside of Venice, where they were routinely adapted for the resources of different troupes. Scenes were rewritten or reordered and singers often added their favorite arias to the score. Although Claudio Monteverdi's operas are better known today, it was Cavalli's work that was more widely performed at the time.

## MARIO BAVA

Italian maestro of the macabre Mario Bava (1914-1980) was the son of a special effects man who worked his way from cinematographer to director. Flourishing in genre films, his major strengths were in gothic horror from *Black Sunday* (1960), his eerie masterpiece about a reincarnated witch (starring saucer-eyed queen of horror Barbara Steele), *Black Sabbath* (1963), *Hatchet for the Honeymoon* (1970), *Lisa and the Devil* (1973), *Baron Blood* (1972), and the unforgettable *Kill, Baby, Kill* (1966) with a town haunted by a giggling malevolent ghost child and her ever-present bouncing ball -- an image that made its way into films by Federico Fellini and David Lynch. *Blood and Black Lace* (1964), his glorious technicolor "giallo" thriller, showed his mastery of lighting and style and *Bay of Blood* (1971), his surprisingly gory murder mystery, may be the beginning of the "body count" movie like *Friday the 13th*. *Planet of the Vampires* (1965) was Bava's only foray into sci-fi but this eerie tale of a space crew who land on a haunted planet showed his brilliance for using lighting, smoke, fog and creating an atmosphere of dread on no budget, and the film was obviously an inspiration for Ridley Scott's *Alien*. Bava set the standard as a master stylist and horror visionary.

**THE WOOSTER GROUP** is an ensemble of artists who are known worldwide for their groundbreaking experiments in theater, dance and media. Under the direction of Elizabeth LeCompte, the Group has made more than 30 works, including *Rumstick Road* (1977), *L.S.D. (...Just The High Points...)* (1984), *Brace Up!* (1991), *House/Lights* (1999), *To You, the Birdie!* (*Phèdre*) (2002) and *Hamlet* (2007). The Group has toured in the U.S. and internationally to Europe, Russia, North and South America, Asia and Australia. The Performing Garage at 33 Wooster Street is the company's permanent home. It owns and operates the Garage as a shareholder in the Grand Street Artists Co-op, established as part of the Fluxus art movement in the 1960s.