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Uncle Vanya

Michael Van Duzer [Reviews - Theater](#)

Nordling. Photo by Karianne Flatten.

Anton Chekhov is the poet of disenchantment, delusion, and despair. His characters luxuriate in their unrequited desires and petty complaints. Most of them feel helpless to escape the prison of their unhappiness. So why do we return to them again and again?

Chekhov's genius lies in the way he meticulously dissects his characters. (He was, after all, a doctor.) But while he never spares the scalpel, his uniquely generous viewpoint urges the audience to look beyond a character's faults, to their humanity. This is accomplished without the bombast and cleverly constructed climaxes of the well-made play. What we experience in a good Chekhov production feels more random, more muddled. Rather like life.

This feeling of life is very much in evidence with the Antaeus production of *Uncle Vanya*. Director Robin Larsen has staged the show with a simple assurance that shies away from grandstanding or editorializing. Larsen trusts the actors and allows the eloquence of their

SPOTLIGHT

2015 Ovation Awards Nominees

2015 NOMINEES

BEST SEASON

LA MIRADA THEATRE FOR TH

BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL

CARRIE THE MUSICAL

GOOD PEOPLE

JANE AUSTEN'S PRIDE AND P

MARY POPPINS

LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER

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EDWARD ALBEE'S THE GOAT

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[November, 2011](#)[October, 2011](#)[September, 2011](#)[August, 2011](#)[July, 2011](#)[June, 2011](#)[May, 2011](#)[April, 2011](#)[March, 2011](#)[February, 2011](#)[January, 2011](#)[December, 2010](#)[November, 2010](#)[October, 2010](#)[September, 2010](#)[August, 2010](#)[July, 2010](#)[June, 2010](#)[May, 2010](#)[April, 2010](#)[March, 2010](#)[February, 2010](#)[January, 2010](#)[June, 2005](#)[January, 2003](#)

performances to shine through.

Professor Serebryakov (Lawrence Pressman) and his much younger second wife, Yelena (Linda Park), have arrived at the rural estate owned by his first wife for an indefinite stay. This has thrown the normally quiet estate's occupants into chaos. Vanya (Don R. McManus) and his friend Dr. Astrov (Jeffery Nordling) vie for the attention of the beautiful Yelena, while Sonya (Rebekah Tripp) quietly yearns for the doctor.

While Vanya is the titular character, Chekhov focuses equally on Yelena, Astrov and Sonya. McManus' Vanya is wound tighter than any of his friends or family know. He has a lifetime of resentment percolating just below the surface, and, when he finally explodes, we don't know whether to laugh or cry—a perfect Chekhovian moment. Tripp is an admirably sturdy and dependable Sonya who still harbors the plain girl's dream that one day someone will look beyond her face and realize the love she has to share. Nordling's performance as Astrov is a revelation. Handsome and self-loathing, he commands the stage as he reveals the doctor in all his complexity and contradictions. Park is a more kinetic and involved Yelena than usual, and this interpretation makes her more than just a bored woman playing with people's hearts.

Pressman is an appropriately pompous and self-absorbed Serebryakov, while Lynn Milgrim brings a steadfastly maternal quality to Marina, the family nurse. As always, Antaeus has two complete casts playing the roles. But the vicissitudes of being an actor in Los Angeles mean that you might see various combinations of those casts at any given performance. But you can be sure that any cast will be worth seeing.

The production uses a new translation by the Pulitzer prize-winning playwright, Annie Baker. The text is remarkably clear and colloquial, though its naturalistic snap tends to make a few of the longer speeches feel a little overblown.

Michael B. Raiford's spare scenic design and Jocelyn Hublau Parker's contemporary costumes work almost invisibly to augment the storytelling, while Leigh Allen's lighting is notable for those scenes which use shadow to create a moody chiaroscuro effect.

Antaeus Theater October 15 – December 6, 2015 www.Antaeus.org

CONVICTION

LAST TRAIN TO NIBROC THE

THE THEATRE @ BOSTON CC

MY BARKING DOG

SAMUEL BECKETT'S HAPPY L

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Rogue Machine

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Los Angeles LGBT Center

FAILURE: A LOVE STORY

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THE DAY SHALL DECLARE IT

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THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANT
Four Larks
TREVOR
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BEST PRODUCTION OF A PLA
AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY
Theatricum Botanicum
BAD JEWS
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CHAVEZ RAVINE: AN L.A. REVI
Center Theatre Group
LAST TRAIN TO NIBROC
Rubicon Theatre Company
TRYING
International City Theatre
BEST PRODUCTION OF A
SCARY MUSICAL THE MUSICA
NoHo Arts Center Ensemble
SPRING AWAKENING
Deaf West Theatre
THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS
Sacred Fools Theater Company

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DR

Actors Co-op

THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI

DOMA Theatre Co.

BEST PRODUCTION OF A MU

CARRIE THE MUSICAL

La Mirada Theatre for the Perfor

MEMPHIS

Cabrillo Music Theatre

RAGTIME

3-D Theatricals

SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS

Ebony Repertory Theatre

BEST PRESENTED PRODUCT

ANDRE & DORINE

The Los Angeles Theatre Cente

LUNA GALE

Center Theatre Group

THE TRIP TO BOUNTIFUL

Center Theatre Group

ACTING ENSEMBLE OF A PLA

A PERMANENT IMAGE

Rogue Machine

CHAVEZ RAVINE: AN L.A. REVIEW

Center Theatre Group

FAILURE: A LOVE STORY

Coeurage Theatre Company

THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANTON

Four Larks

THEATRE MOVEMENT BAZAAR

Bootleg Theater & Theatre Movement

TREVOR

Circle X Theatre Company

WHAT OF THE NIGHT?

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ACTING ENSEMBLE OF A MUSICAL

MEMPHIS

Cabrillo Music Theatre

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SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts

THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADWAY

Sacred Fools Theater Company

MUSICAL DIRECTION

GERALD STERNBACH

LOVE, NOËL: THE LETTERS A

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

CASSIE NICKOLS

MEMPHIS

Cabrillo Music Theatre

JULIE LAMOUREUX

RAGTIME

3-D Theatricals

JARED STEIN

SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

JOHN BALLINGER

THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS

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THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI

BRENT CRAYON

THE LAST FIVE YEARS Rubico

BOOK OF A WORLD PREMIER

MATT DONNELLY & JAMELLE

RECORDED IN HOLLYWOOD 1

MADELINE SUNSHINE

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Sacred Fools Theater Company
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SAMUEL HUNTER
A PERMANENT IMAGE Rogue I
ADAM BOCK
A SMALL FIRE
The Echo Theater Company
CAREY CRIM
CONVICTION
Rubicon Theatre Company
RON KLIER
GUS'S FASHIONS & SHOES BY
BEKAH BRUNSTETTER

HEY BROTHER Fresh Produce'
JESSICA DICKEY
ROW AFTER ROW
The Echo Theater Company
NICK JONES
TREVOR
Circle X Theatre Company
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MEMPHIS
Cabrillo Music Theatre
T.J. DAWSON
RAGTIME
3-D Theatricals
MICHAEL ARDEN
SPRING AWAKENING
Wallis Annenberg Center for the
KEN ROHT & MATT ALMOS
THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS
ANDI CHAPMAN

THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI

MARCO GOMEZ

THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI

DOMA Theatre Co.

DIRECTION OF A PLAY

JOHN PERRIN

A PERMANENT IMAGE Rogue I

MARY JO DUPREY

AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY Th

LISA PETERSON

CHAVEZ RAVINE: AN L.A. REVI

KEN SAWYER

EDWARD ALBEE'S THE GOAT

MICHAEL MATTHEWS

FAILURE: A LOVE STORY Coet

MAT SWEENEY & SEBASTIAN

THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANT

STELLA POWELL-JONES

TREVOR

Circle X Theatre Company

LEAD ACTOR IN A MUSICAL

LEIGH WAKEFORD as Bert

MARY POPPINS

La Mirada Theatre for the Perfor
TODD ADAMSON as Huey
MEMPHIS
Cabrillo Music Theatre
GARY PATENT as Tateh
RAGTIME
3-D Theatricals
AUSTIN MCKENZIE as Melchior
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HUGO ARMSTRONG as John E
THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS
ELLIS HALL as Singer Oedipus
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
ROGER ROBINSON as Preach
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
LEAD ACTRESS IN A MUSICA
CORI KIDDER as Patsy
ALWAYS...PATSY CLINE Sierra
VICKI LEWIS as Mrs. Wilkinson
BILLY ELLIOT THE MUSICAL
La Mirada Theatre for the Perfor
MISTY COTTON as Margaret
CARRIE THE MUSICAL

La Mirada Theatre for the Perfor
EMILY LOPEZ as Carrie
CARRIE THE MUSICAL
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3-D Theatricals
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KIM STAUNTON as Evangelist /
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
LEAD ACTOR IN A PLAY
JOHN PROSKY as Botvinnik
A WALK IN THE WOODS Sierra
LEON RUSSOM as Dodge
BURIED CHILD Whitefire Theatr
PAUL WITTEN as Martin
EDWARD ALBEE'S THE GOAT
MICHAEL SHEPPERD as Troy
FENCES
International City Theatre
STEPHEN CAFFREY as Falstaf

HENRY IV: PART ONE The Antz

DAVE BUZZOTTA as The Crimir

TIGER BY THE TAIL

The Group Rep at the Lonny Ch

JIMMI SIMPSON as Trevor

TREVOR

Circle X Theatre Company

LEAD ACTRESS IN A PLA

ANNE GEE BYRD as Carol

A PERMANENT IMAGE Rogue I

LILY KNIGHT as Emily

A SMALL FIRE

The Echo Theater Company

ELLEN GEER as Violet

AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY Th

ELYSE MIRTO as Leigh Hodges

CONVICTION

Rubicon Theatre Company

ANN NOBLE as Stevie

EDWARD ALBEE'S THE GOAT

LAURIE METCALF as Sandra

TREVOR

Circle X Theatre Company

PAIGE WHITE as Sarah Schorr
TRYING
International City Theatre
FEATURED ACTOR IN A MUSI
JEFF SKOWRON as Mr. Collins
JANE AUSTEN'S PRIDE AND P
ANDY MIENTUS as Hanschen
SPRING AWAKENING
Wallis Annenberg Center for the
SAMUEL BUTLER as Balladeer
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
LAVAN DAVIS as Choragos
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
J.A. PRESTON as Deacon Creo
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
HECTOR QUINTANA as The Mc
THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI
DOMA Theatre Co.
JOHN QUALE as Snow Queen
THE SNOW QUEEN Falcon The
FEATURED ACTRESS IN A ML
JOANNA JONES as Lois/Bianca
KISS ME, KATE Pasadena Playl

KRYSTA RODRIGUEZ as Ilse
SPRING AWAKENING
Wallis Annenberg Center for the
NICOE POTTS as Soloist
THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI
GINA D'ACCIARO as Miss Ange
THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DR
Actors Co-op
MICHELLE HOLMES as Frau BI
THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI
DOMA Theatre Co.
TONI SMITH as Elizabeth Benni
THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI
DOMA Theatre Co.
BETH KENNEDY as Old Woman
THE SNOW QUEEN Falcon The
FEATURED ACTOR IN A PLAY
STEVEN O'MAHONEY as Billy
A SMALL FIRE
The Echo Theater Company
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A SMALL FIRE
The Echo Theater Company

ANDREW CONNOLLY as John
CORKTOWN ,57 Theatre Plann
MATT ORDUNA as Gabriel
FENCES
International City Theatre
TONY SHALHOUB as Willie
SAMUEL BECKETT'S HAPPY L
ALAN MANDELL as Gregory So
THE PRICE
Center Theatre Group
STEPHEN KEARIN as Company
THE WESTERN UNSCRIPTED
FEATURED ACTRESS IN /
MELORA MARSHALL as Mattie
AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY Th
REBECCA MOZO as W
COCK
Rogue Machine
SOPHINA BROWN as Kate
GOOD PEOPLE
La Mirada Theatre for the Perfor
PEGGY ANN BLOW as Lula
WEDDING BAND: A LOVE/HATI

The Antaeus Company

ANNE GEE BYRD as Herman's

WEDDING BAND: A LOVE/HATI

The Antaeus Company

SAUNDRA MCCLAIN as Lula

WEDDING BAND: A LOVE/HATI

The Antaeus Company

LYNN MILGRIM as Herman's M

WEDDING BAND: A LOVE/HATI

The Antaeus Company

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VS. Theatre Company

JARED SAYEG

PICNIC

The Antaeus Company

TRAVIS HAGENBUCH

SPRING AWAKENING Deaf We:

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THE MISSING PAGES OF LEW

JEAN-YVES TESSIER

THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI

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BRANDON BARUCH

THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANT

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WHAT OF THE NIGHT? The Va

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Center Theatre Group

JOSÉ LÓPEZ

CHAVEZ RAVINE: AN L.A. REVI

KEN BOOTH

JULIUS CAESAR A Noise Withir

JEAN-YVES TESSIER

RAGTIME

3-D Theatricals

BEN STANTON

SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

KARYN LAWRENCE

THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI

KEN BILLINGTON

WATERFALL A NEW MUSICAL

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BROOMSTICK Fountain Theatr

DARCY SCANLIN

COMPLETENESS

VS. Theatre Company

ROBERT SELANDER

EDWARD ALBEE'S THE GOAT

DANNY CISTONE

GUS'S FASHIONS & SHOES BY

ROBERT SELANDER

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The Antaeus Company

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THE TEMPTATION OF ST ANT

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Center Theatre Group

STEPHEN GIFFORD

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JOHN IOCAVELLI

IMMEDIATE FAMILY Center The

DANE LAFFREY

SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

ANTHONY FANNING

SWITZERLAND Geffen Playhou

TOM BUDERWITZ

THE WHIPPING MAN Pasadena

SASAVAT BUSAYABANDH

WATERFALL A NEW MUSICAL

SOUND DESIGN (INTIMATE TH

JOHN ZALEWSKI

DANNY AND THE DEEP BLUE

The Los Angeles Theatre Cente

JOSEPH SLAWINSKI

FLARE PATH Theatre 40

JOHN ZALEWSKI

MY BARKING DOG

The Theatre @ Boston Court

JEFF GARDNER

PICNIC

The Antaeus Company

PHILIP ALLEN

SPRING AWAKENING Deaf We:

JOHN ZALEWSKI

THE DAY SHALL DECLARE IT

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PHILIP ALLEN

THE GOSPEL AT COLONUS EI

JONATHAN BURKE

THE LAST FIVE YEARS Rubico

MICHAEL ROTH

THE WHIPPING MAN Pasadenæ

DREW DALZELL & NOELLE HC

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COSTUME DESIGN (INTIMATE

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ENTROPY Theatre of NOTE

MICHAEL MULLEN

FUGUE

The Echo Theater Company

TERRI LEWIS

PICNIC

The Antaeus Company

ANN FARLEY

THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS

GARY LENNON

THE MISSING PAGES OF LEW

VICKI CONRAD

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DR

BRANDY JACOBS

THE NEW MEL BROOKS MUSI

DOMA Theatre Co.

COSTUME DESIGN (LARGE

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MARCY FROEHLICH

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MELA HOYT-HEYDON

MEMPHIS

Cabrillo Music Theatre

NAILA SANDERS

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SHARON MCGUNIGLE

THE SNOW QUEEN Falcon The

ANGELA CALIN

THE THREEPENNY OPERA A

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WATERFALL A NEW MUSICAL

VIDEO/PROJECTION DESIGN

NICK SANTIAGO

A PERMANENT IMAGE Rogue I

ANTHONY BACKMAN & JIM PIE

ASTRO BOY AND THE GOD O

JASON THOMPSON

CHAVEZ RAVINE: AN L.A. REVI

LUCY MACKINNON

SPRING AWAKENING

Wallis Annenberg Center for the

JASON THOMPSON

THE BEHAVIOR OF BROADUS

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COMPOSER

MAT SWEENEY & ELLEN WAR

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MIKE MAHAFFEY

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PUPPET DESIGN

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SHE KILLS MONSTERS Loft Er

COMPOSER

Theatre 40 Celebrates Its 50th Anniversary

Theatre 40, celebrating its 50th anniversary this season, is pleased to announce a new project, t40too. t40too is a season-long series of play readings and other theatrical events throughout the year.

Productions are at Theatre 40's home at the Reuben Cordova stage, on the

campus of Beverly Hills High School.

Producing the project, in conjunction with artistic director David Hunt Stafford, is Stewart J. Zully. Mr. Zully initiated Theatre 40's one-act festival in 1990, which ran for 11 years.

During Mr. Zully's tenure, two plays were produced on A&E and three were published as a result of being presented at the festival. West coast or world premieres included works from Arthur Miller, Robert Schenkhan, David Lindsay-Abaire, Craig Lucas, Jane Anderson, and many others. Zully also directed *American Wee-Pie*, by Lisa Dillman last season at the theater.

The fourth reading of the t40too project will be *Veils*, by Tom Coash. While studying in Cairo during the onset of the Arab Spring uprising, an American Muslim student and her Egyptian roommate clash over the practice of wearing veils, among other issues. Broadway World called it "a brave new work which addresses the thorny crosscurrents of cultural identity."

Veils recently won the American Theater Critics Association's 2015 M.

Elizabeth Osborn Award as well as being the Grand Prize Winner of the Clauder Competition at Portland Stage, where it premiered in February, 2014. The play is currently running at Barrington Stage Company in Pittsfield, MA. Coash's play *Cry Havoc* was produced at the South African National Arts Festival in 2013. April Webster, two-time Emmy award winner, will direct *Veils* at t40too.

The reading will be Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at 7:30 PM at the Reuben Cordova Theater on the grounds of Beverly Hills High School, 241 Moreno Drive, Beverly Hills, CA. Suggested donation: \$5

Reservations:
playwrightworks@aol.com
www.theatre40.org

LA Drama Critics Address the 99-Seat Theatre Controversy

A Statement Concerning
the Proposed Equity
Changes to Los
Angeles Theater

The Los Angeles Drama
Critics Circle views the

impending changes of policy concerning the small theaters of the greater Los Angeles area with alarm. We are concerned that the inevitable result of such changes will be a drastic reduction in the amount and quality of local theater. Indeed, we foresee what could be the virtual demise of Los Angeles as a leading incubator of plays and theater of innovation and diversity.

As critics, we are the front lines of the audience. Thus, we are keenly aware of the importance of small theaters and the actors who perform at them to the cultural ecosystem of Los Angeles as a major metropolitan center for the arts. Our institutional theaters and touring roadshows provide a valuable and popular service, but they alone do not and cannot provide the vast spectrum of forms of expression which a

great city requires.
Within that spectrum,
live theater plays an
essential role.

Under current
proposals, nearly all of
the winners of our
Margaret Harford Award
for sustained excellence
over the past dozen
years – our highest
honor – would be
threatened with closure
or, at best, severely
curtailed activities. A
majority of the shows
recognized in our annual
nominations and awards
would likely have never
been produced. Worse,
the future would
promise a vastly
constricted, less
diverse, less
venturesome, less
exciting theater scene.

The cultural loss would
be incalculable,
affecting the hundreds
of productions staged
annually in Los Angeles.
The economic loss of all
the businesses
interdependent on that

production output is calculable, but even without the numbers being run, we believe the net impact on the city could be catastrophic. If not of the order of magnitude of the recent threatened port closure, it is analogous in import and effect.

The inner workings of an artists' association, like the management of a corporation, are not the public's business unless or until the impact of those actions has a material adverse effect on civic life, the general welfare, the region's economic well-being, or a city's core identity. At that point, an association's practices become an appropriate matter for intense public concern. In the current situation, it is of critical importance that discussion and debate concerning these

developments take place openly and extensively in the public sphere by all affected stakeholders. The goal is a healthier, more diverse society that provides greater opportunity for all, including the freedom of artists to develop their talents as they believe themselves to be best served.

The current situation is urgent and dire. When an historic piece of eminent architecture is destroyed, a natural resource despoiled, or a species goes extinct, the loss is irreplaceable. Once the infrastructure that undergirds the best of Los Angeles small theater is destroyed, it cannot, realistically, be resurrected. By the time the pain is finally felt and the general outcry heard, the possibility of effective action will have already been long foreclosed.

The Los Angeles Drama

Critics Circle urges all stakeholders in the cultural, civic and economic health of the region to involve themselves in learning about the issues and consequences of the proposals currently on the table. The Mayor, the City Council and the Board of Supervisors need to consider the economic ramifications. Foundations and opinion leaders must consider the changes' potential impact on their missions. Major media must contribute to the disciplined and thoughtful public discourse, even as social media air opinions on all sides. All of these stakeholders have a role to play in a civic crisis, and make no mistake, a crisis is what we are facing. Moreover, it is a crisis whose quiet and parochial buildup has served to sidestep public attention and debate. Very soon, it

may be too late.

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