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NEWS FROM THE GETTY

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THEATER AT THE GETTY VILLA

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

OUTDOOR THEATER

At the Getty Villa, an innovative theater program enhances the visitor's experience of the ancient world. Live performances of classical drama offer insight into the social, cultural, and political realities of life in ancient Greece and Rome, while in the Museum's galleries, the connection is deepened between modern audiences and the stories underlying the tragedies and comedies on stage.

Classical dramatists explored basic, human stories that often parallel our contemporary experiences. Because of their universality, these archetypal stories are ever powerful and resonant, attracting each new generation of theater artists to interpret them anew.

Each summer, a major production is staged in the Villa's Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater, an outdoor theater based on ancient prototypes. This year, Culture Clash dives head-first into Aristophanes' "Peace," opening on September 10, 2009.

VILLA THEATER LAB

The Villa Theater Lab Series is a workshop-residency program presented throughout the year in the Auditorium, in which the Museum invites teams of artists and ongoing ensembles to the Villa to create fresh takes on Classical theater and culture. The Getty provides each Villa Theater Lab company with the time and resources to rehearse and present three to four public work-in-process performances. The series is integral to the Villa's mission to cultivate innovative approaches to the Classical canon, and has proven to be both tremendously stimulating to the participating artists, and enormously popular with the theater-going public. Audiences have enjoyed work-in-progress presentations by the Troubadour Theater Company, Theatre Movement Bazaar, the Antaeus Company, Culture Clash, Lookingglass Theatre Company, the SITI Company, and a host of other artists from throughout California and across the U.S.

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"The Getty Villa's theater program offers the public a bountiful mix of experiences," says Karol Wight, senior curator of antiquities for the J. Paul Getty Museum. "Between the outdoor theater production and the Villa Theater Lab presentations, our programming conveys to audiences the importance theater had in antiquity, and the ways in which Classical drama continues to inspire contemporary playwrights and companies today."

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About Public Programs at the Getty Villa:

The Getty Villa offers a variety of public programs including theater, musical performances, film screenings, Family Festivals, lectures, and seminars. These events complement the J. Paul Getty Museum's permanent antiquities collection and changing exhibitions, as well as reflect the scholarly activities of the Getty Trust's four programs. The predominant focus of the Villa's public programming is on theater, rooted in Greek and Roman plays of antiquity. A major production is presented each fall in the outdoor Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater. The Villa Theater Lab, a series that acts as an incubator for the development of new approaches to the classical canon, is featured each winter and spring in the Auditorium.

About the Getty:

The J. Paul Getty Trust is an international cultural and philanthropic institution that focuses on the visual arts in all their dimensions, recognizing their capacity to inspire and strengthen humanistic values. The Getty serves both the general public and a wide range of professional communities in Los Angeles and throughout the world. Through the work of the four Getty programs—the Museum, Research Institute, Conservation Institute, and Foundation—the Getty aims to further knowledge and nurture critical seeing through the growth and presentation of its collections and by advancing the understanding and preservation of the world's artistic heritage. The Getty pursues this mission with the conviction that cultural awareness, creativity, and aesthetic enjoyment are essential to a vital and civil society.