ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
We gratefully acknowledge the following people whose contributions have made this production possible: Oscar Arevalo, Candice Cain, Center Theatre Group Costume Shop, Ashley Dawn, Marcie Fabre, Lynne Fagles, Mary Louise Hart, Penny Hutchinson, Amy Lieberman, Elmo Martin, Merrienne Nedreberg, Daniel Pelzig, The Set Shop, Tony Taccone, JessieAnna Wilton, and Stephanie Workman.

LIVING WITH AESCHYLUS’S AGAMEMNON
Join the play’s director Stephen Wadsworth and Mary Louise Hart, associate curator of antiquities at the J. Paul Getty Museum, as they explore the significance of Aeschylus’s Agamemnon in ancient and contemporary culture and the creative process behind this staging of the tragic tale of the House of Atreus.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2:00 p.m.
Getty Villa, Auditorium
Free; a ticket is required.
Call (310) 440-7300 or get tickets online at www.getty.edu

NEXT YEAR IN THE BARBARA AND LAWRENCE FLEISCHMAN THEATER
Aristophanes’ Peace
In 421 B.C., twenty-seven-year-old Aristophanes launched a rabel and scathing theatrical assault on the entrenched military-industrial complex of Athens. On Mount Olympus, the gods have imprisoned the goddess Peace and hold sway over all of Greece; meanwhile, on Earth below, three rustic patriots hatch a plot to saddle their faithful giant dung beetle and fly to the heavens to engineer her rescue. Return to the Getty Villa next September to see the comic heroes of Culture Clash join forces with the revolutionary spirit of Aristophanes in a free adaptation of his zany, utopian escapade.
"...but the house and these old stones, 
give them a voice and what a tale they'd tell."
—THE WATCHMAN, AGAMEMNON

THE COMPANY

TRANSLATOR
Robert Fagles

DIRECTOR
Stephanie Wadsworth

SCENIC DESIGN CONSULTANT
Thomas Lynch

SCENIC DESIGN ASSOCIATE
Torry Bend

ASSISTANT SCENIC DESIGNER
Rachel Myers

COSTUME DESIGNER
Regina Ellen Rogers

ASSISTANT COSTUME DESIGNER
Stephen Bennett

LIGHTING DESIGNER
Bruno Louchouarn

COMPOSER
Ronn Goswick

PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER
Tara Lamar

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
James Darrah

ASSISTANTS TO THE DIRECTOR
Emma Grimsley

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER
Mary Hubbard

WARDROBE
Steve Rankin

MUSICIANS
Ellen L. Sandor

T.J. Troy

Robert Elston

THE CAST
(in order of speaking)

WATCHMAN
Burton Curtis

CHORUS LEADERS
Nicholas Hormann

IPHIGENIA
Michael Winters

ELECTRA
Frank Corrado

AEGISTHUS
Kathryn Dora Brown

HERALD
Bellina Logan

CLYTAEMNESTRA
Timothy V. Murphy

AGAMEMNON
Mark Deakins

CASSANDRA
Tyne Daly

DEIAGO
Delroy Lindo

FRANCESCA
Francesca Faridany

The performance is approximately ninety minutes with no intermission.
The actors and stage managers in this production are members of Actors' Equity
Association, the only union for professional actors and stage managers in the
legitimate theater.
As a courtesy to our neighbors, we ask that you keep noise to a minimum while
enjoying the production. During the performance, please refrain from loud or
prolonged applause, shouting, whistling, or any other intrusive conduct. While
exiting the theater and the Getty Villa, please do so in a quiet manner.
FROM DIRECTOR STEPHEN WADSWORTH

THE WORLD OF AGAMEMNON

Aeschylus’s Oresteia, consisting of three plays—Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, and The Eumenides—is the only complete cycle that survives from the fifth century B.C., and Agamemnon is arguably the earliest dramatic masterpiece of Western culture. Aeschylus’s audiences, who watched all three plays in one day, were intimately familiar with the historical and cultural references in the plays. Twenty-six centuries later, we offer these notes to orient our audiences. There are many versions of most of the stories referred to in Agamemnon; we follow Aeschylus’s version in these notes.

AGAMEMNON

Agamemnon ruled Mycenae from the city of Argos. He married Clytemnestra, mortal daughter of Zeus and Leda, and had three children: Iphigenia, Electra, and Orestes. All five family members were the subjects of dramas by the three great playwrights of the fifth century B.C. in Athens—Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Iphigenia and Electra are not featured in Aeschylus’s script, but they appear in this adaptation, in the chorus.

THE HOUSE OF ATREUS

Agamemnon’s grandfather Pelops won his wife in a chariot race by cheating, then betrayed and killed his co-conspirator, who as he lay dying, cursed the next generation of Pelops’s family. Pelops’s two sons, Atreus and Thyestes, inherited this curse and lived it out in a grisly power struggle. Thyestes seduced Atreus’s wife and disputed the throne of Argos. Defeated and exiled, he returned with his children as a supplicant: Atreus welcomed his brother back with a celebratory feast, at which he served Thyestes a dish of his own slaughtered sons. Upon realizing what he had eaten, Thyestes cursed Atreus and all his descendants. Atreus’s two sons were Agamemnon and Menelaus, who married Clytemnestra’s sister, Helen, popularly known as Helen of Troy. You’d think marrying Helen of Troy would be curse enough, but Thyestes’s curse chased Atreus’s sons all their lives.

AEGISTHUS

Thyestes, after losing his children and cursing Atreus, sired another son, Aegisthus, whom he reared and trained to seize the throne of Argos from Agamemnon. During the Trojan War, Aegisthus formed an alliance with Clytemnestra, moved in with her, and forged with her a plot against Agamemnon—a plot that suited them both.

THE TROJAN WAR

A magnum opus of fortality city-state in what is now western Turkey, Troy was ruled by King Priam, husband of Hecuba and father of—among others—Cassandra and Paris. The god Apollo had tried to rape Cassandra, and she resisted successfully, and he cursed her with a gift of prophecy that no one would believe until the day she died. When it was foretold that Paris would bring Troy’s destruction, Priam isolated the prince on a mountaintop. The three most powerful goddesses—Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite—visited the handsome Paris there and prevailed upon him to say which of them was the most beautiful. Hera offered him all of Eurasia, Athena offered him victory over the Greeks, and Aphrodite offered him the most beautiful woman. Paris went for the beautiful woman, and this was Helen. On a visit to Meneleus’s palace, Paris fell in love with her, and they escaped to Troy. Bent on revenge, Meneleus and his brother Agamemnon rallied all the Greek armies to the port of Aulis and planned to sail for Troy.

IPHIGENIA AT Aulis

The goddess Artemis opposed the Greek attack on Troy and whipped up hostile winds, making it impossible for the Greeks to sail. The armies languished on the beach, but Agamemnon dug in his heels, reluctant to send them home and fail his brother’s offended honor. Artemis ultimately offered him a deal: she would give him favorable winds if he would sacrifice his own daughter. Agamemnon took the deal, lured Clytemnestra and his children to Aulis with the promise that Iphigenia was to marry the great hero Achilles. And there in Aulis the family was torn apart—Iphigenia slaughtered, Clytemnestra betrayed, both parents heartbroken, and Agamemnon gone for the ten-year siege at Troy. Thyestes’s curse was in full swing. Clytemnestra went back to Argos and ruled there throughout the long war in Troy.

THE GODS

Many of the Greeks’ myths show their gods as a capricious, sensual lot, playing rough with one another and toying with human life. The rules of engagement were clearly laid out: when human beings poached on the prerogatives of the gods, they would be punished. They were to live their daily lives, worship, make sacrifices, and leave the fates of others to the gods. They who took fate into their own hands, they would be punished. Hence an essential tenet of Athenian life, the rule of the golden mean: live life always, in moderation, do not indulge in excess of any kind. Even excessive health, wealth, or other good fortune, says the chorus in Agamemnon, can lead to trouble, “the reach for power can recoil.” And God forbid you should destroy another country and deface its temples. Zeus, king of the gods and god of hospitality (among other things) plays a key role in Agamemnon as the people of Argos ponder the horror of the Trojan War: the Trojan prince Paris betrayed the hospitality of Menelaus when he stole Helen away, and Zeus’s revenge incites the people to anger and acts of war—all of it excessive. Of course, they lose their heads and overstep the bounds, taking the fates of others into their own hands.

THE TRAGIC HERO

The tragic hero must take matters into his or her own hands when circumstances require action. The tragic hero must act, for whatever reason—to protect his people, to uphold honor, to get justice. Yet, as the great mantra line of Agamemnon declares, “He who acts must suffer.” How can you take decisive action in dire circumstances without stepping over the golden mean and incurring the disapproval of the gods? Moreover, the ancient system of justice—an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, Troy for Helen—equated justice with “excessive” action and left humans no choice but to overstep the bounds if justice demanded it. Agamemnon and Clytemnestra feel they have no choice but to act, to take life, and so they must suffer. Later in the Oresteia cycle Orestes and Electra decide to act, and they too must suffer toward the truth.

THE ORESTEIA

What is the truth toward which these characters must suffer? There is a growing awareness through Agamemnon that the old system of justice doesn’t work, can’t work, that it makes of life a vicious cycle, that true justice must be something else. Clytemnestra exists the play with a yearning: “if we could end the suffering, how we would rejoice.” Aeschylus’s ultimate purpose in the Oresteia is to encourage his characters—humans and gods alike—and his audience, to debate the reality before them, to search for new truths, to discover a way to end the suffering. In the second play Orestes and Electra inherit the tragic-hero mantle as they avenge their father with an act of brutality. In the third play Orestes, hooded by the Furies [the ancient goddesses of justice], finds in the goddess Athena a sympathetic;
dispassionate spirit, and before our eyes she renovates justice, calling on the Furies to defend their position, on Orestes to defend his, and on a group of citizens to vote for one or the other. Athena's invention of the jury puts an end to the vicious cycle of retributive justice. She invites the old goddesses (who have lost the case) to play a new role in a new kind of society, and with them, leads the cast and the public out of the theater and through the streets of the forever-changed city. It is one of the most joyous, radical, and triumphant conclusions in world drama, especially after the terrible tragedies and seemingly futile suffering of the first two plays.

AESCYLUS
The Oresteia cycle reflects the golden age of Athens in the fifth century B.C.—a flourishing of independent thinking, democratic culture, and artistic achievement in which the theater was a central forum. In the context of a religious festival, the citizenry gathered in the amphitheater for an event of equal parts political meditation, civic engagement and aesthetic transport. In the Oresteia, art and political action are inextricable. And its political content is multilayered. For example, Aeschylus, veteran of the recent Persian Wars, which had traumatized the Athenians and at one point even cost them their city, engages his audience in a complex rumination on the costs of war. The Athenians had won these wars but lost so many and so much, and Agamemnon hocks his ambivalence upstagingly. Aeschylus launches the play with a densely imagined, morally knotty, oppressive sequence and challenges his audience no less than his characters to debate the issues and find the truth. He is a master of ambivalence and celebrates the fallibilities and uncertainties of his characters as much as, or perhaps even more than, their strengths.

ROBERT FAGLES
The great translator and poet of this version of Agamemnon described Aeschylus's writing to me thus: "His language in the first play is like magma, like a hostile, impassable landscape through which the characters must struggle in their hunger for resolution and the truth." Bob Fagles, who died in March of this year, translated Homer’s Iliad and Odyssey, Sophocles’ The Three Theban Plays, and Virgil’s Aeneid, as well as the Oresteia plays—all cornerstone epics of western European culture. His muscular, biting language has in itself what historian Thomas Cahill calls "a gorgeous strength capable of burnishing each detail to brilliance." I worked with him on the Oresteia for several years, and he continued to search for the truth of the plays as we took it to the stage in Berkeley (2001), always interested in adapting his text with me so that it might suit the actors at hand and find its mark. We miss him and salute him with this investiture of the ever-changing Agamemnon.

—Stephen Wadsworth
ABOUT THE CAST

BURLINGTON (稅man) has performed as Henry in St. John's College in New York. He has appeared in productions at the Studio Theatre in New York, the Theatre Company in Boston, and the Signature Theatre in New York. He is currently appearing in the world premiere of "My Name is Dan" at the Actors' Theatre of Phoenix in Arizona.

KATHRYN DORA BROWN (Phyllis) has been in both New York and Los Angeles productions. She has starred in "The Bible" at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, and "The Sound of Music" at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles. She is currently appearing in "The Little Foxes" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

BELLA LOGAN (Electra) has appeared in "The Merchant of Venice" at the Public Theatre in New York, "Romeo and Juliet" at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., and "The Tempest" at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego.

MICHAEL WINTERS (Chorus Leader) has appeared in "The Cider House Rules" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles. He is currently appearing in "The Importance of Being Earnest" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

NICHOLAS HORN (Chorus Leader) has worked in the American Repertory Theatre in Boston and the Actors' Theatre of Phoenix in Arizona. He is currently appearing in "The Threepenny Opera" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

FRANK CORRADO (Chorus Leader) has been a native New Yorker for over thirty years. He has appeared in productions at the Public Theatre in New York, the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., and the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. He is currently appearing in "The Merchant of Venice" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.

JONATHAN SEAMAN (Assistant Director) has worked as an assistant director at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C., and the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego. He is currently appearing in "The Importance of Being Earnest" at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles.
TIMOTHY V. MURPHY (Agesthus) is a veteran of stage, film, and television and has worked on both sides of the Atlantic. Tim can be seen in National Treasure: Book of Secrets, and has a role in the upcoming western Appaloosa, written and directed by Ed Harris. He just wrapped the independent film Free Grave. His television credits include 24, Alias, Six Feet Under, Nip/Tuck, Faststone, The Agency, and The District. His film credits include the role of Pete in The Butcher, with Eric Roberts, and the lead role in Shallow Ground. He has worked with such directors as Jim Sheridan (In America) and Terry George (Hotel Rwanda). Tim played the title role in Agamemnon at the Getty Villa in 2006 opposite Tyne Daly and has enjoyed a stellar theatrical career. He has received Obie Award nominations for Happy End and The Beauty Queen of Leenane and is a member of The Actors Studio. Tim played Christina Aguilera’s father in her music video “Hurt.”

MARK DEAKINS (Herald) appeared as Ag in the world premiere of Stephen Wadsworth’s The Triumph of Love at McCarter Theatre. Other roles include Orlando in As You Like It, Servius in Arms and the Man (A Noise Within), Tony in Bay Gets Giv (Geffen Playhouse), Tybalt in Romeo and Juliet, Demetrius in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Fair Peter in Measure for Measure (Ahmanson Theatre), Connie The Gropes of Wrath (Broadway/London), Mart in Burning Blue (Court Theatre, LA), Henry VII parts 1 and 2, All’s Well That Ends Well (New York Shakespeare Festival), Dr. Cukrowicz in Suddenly Last Summer (Hartford Stage), Belville in The Rover ( Guthrie Theatre), and Macbeth (La Jolla Playhouse). Film credits include Intervention, The Smith Interviews, Star Trek: Insurrection, Judgment Day, The Devil’s Advocate, Fallout, and The Pickle. Television credits include Head Case, Star Trek: Voyager, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, American Playhouse, Building Light, As The World Turns, The Young and the Restless, and Days of Our Lives. He received his BA in comparative literature from Brigham Young University and his MFA in theater from USCSD.


DEROY LINDO (Agamennon) has appeared in films such as Heist, The Cider House Rules, Wonamouth Dölöön, The Core, The One, Gone in 60 Seconds, Romeo Must Die, Ranam, A Life Less Ordinary, Clockers, Crooklyn, Malcolm X, and Évél du roi Balthazar. He most recently appeared in This Christmas, also serving as Executive Producer. His television credits include Kidnapped (NBC), The Exonerated (Court TV), Profoundly Normal (CBS), the Peabody Award–winning Strange Justice (Showtime), Soul of the Game (HBO), and Glory & Honor (TNT). Also for television, he conceived, produced, hosted, directed, and co-edited documentary interviews featuring Spike Lee, Charles Burnett, and Joan Chen. On Broadway he appeared in Joe Turner’s Come and Gone (Tony and Drama Desk Award nominations, best actor), Master Harold and the Boys (also national tour); at the Kennedy Center and Wilshire Theater in A Raisin in the Sun (Helen Hayes Award nomination and NAACP Image Award, best actor); and at London’s Riverside Theatre in The Exonerated. He has also worked –Broadway and extensively in regional theaters throughout the U.S. and Canada. He has directed Blue Door (Berkeley Rep), and Medal of Honor (LA Weekly Theater Award, best director). He is currently directing Joe Turner’s Come and Gone at Berkeley Rep (onstage October 31 – December 14, 2008).

FRANCESCA FARIDANY (Cassandra) was in the company of Broadway’s The Homecoming: Regional performances include the title role in her own adaptation of Schnitzler’s Fideln, Else. (Sandusky Intermediate Theatre Lab, Berkeley Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf and McCarter Theatres). Other roles include Rosalind (the Old Globe), Trania (Huntington), Beatrice (Berkeley Rep), Evvia/Don Alonso in Molieres’ Don Juan (Shakespeare Theatre Company), Anita/Wendy in Simon Gray’s J ope (Bay Street, Hampton), Gilda in Design for Living (McCarter Theatre and Seattle Rep), Narrator in the Sitwell/Walton Figgate (Caramoor festival, NY), Kyara in Skylight (Chester Theatre Company); Elite Dunn in Heartbreak House, Silvia in Marivaux’s The Game of Love and Chance and Changes of Heart (Berkeley Rep), and Violet in Waiting at the Water’s Edge (Magic Theatre). Film credits include Conceiving Ada opposite Tilda Swinton. She has performed on the radio in Simon Gray’s Quartermaine’s Terms (BBC). Her television credits include ER: Deadline, Law & Order, Law & Order: SVU. Francesca trained in London at the Drama Centre.
RONN GOSWICK (Production Stage Manager) is well known to the LA theater community as a stage manager who has worked on more than one hundred productions including the Hollywood Bowl’s Les Miserables (starring Brian Stokes Mitchell, Metora Harisin, Lea Michelle, John Lloyd Young, and Rosie O’Donnell). His other productions include Pippin (Casting Caila Flockhart, Paul Rudd, and Ron Eldard); Man of la Mancha, The Boys from Syracuse, Of Thee I Sing, Pippin, City of Angels, Fiorello! (Reprise! Broadway’s Best); Pippin (East West Players); Forever Playboy, Beehive (Las Vegas); City Kid (Hudson and Kodak Theatres); Carousel, My Fair Lady (Hollywood Bowl); and the last three years of What a Pair! Producing credits include world premieres of The Gay 90s Musical; The Outsiders; Empire (Ovation Award); Beehive (LDCC Award); They’re Playing Our Song (with Vikt. Lew); and Scott Waara); Nuncrackers (with Sally Struthers and Adrian Zmed); the Rick Weiss Humanitarian Gala (four years); Broadway at the Ford; From Broadway with Love; Aardvarks in Zebra; Broadway Unplugged; Fractured Broadway 1; Fractured Broadway 2; and the S.T.A.G.E. benefit (six years) starring Lucie Arnaz, Roger Rees, Tyne Daly, Sharon Gless, David Hyde Pierce, and many more.

TARA LAMAR (Assistant Stage Manager) received her BFA in stage management from the USC School of Theatre. Recent credits include Apollos, with the Critical Mass Performance Group at Bootleg; the world premiere of Invasion! The Musical; and Love's Labour's Lost with the Actors' Gang. Other credits include The Pajama Game, Tartuffe, Company, Richard III and West Side Story. She would like to thank her family and friends for all their support over the years.

T.J. TROY (Musician) is known for his high-energy performance style and plays with numerous ensembles, notably MESTO, Elvis Schoenberg's Orchestra Surtéal, Adam Rudolph’s Go: Organic Orchestra, Freshly Squeezed, and Parch. A percussive tour de force, he is a featured soloist on the Ali Akbar College of Music’s annual March Concert Series, as well as at Boston Court, Dangerous Curve, and Downtown Music Gallery. Los Angeles Times reviewer Mark Swed writes, “T.J. Troy [is] of a caliber that kept this listener in a state of continual astonishment.”

ROB ELSTON (Musician) is a multi-percussionist whose repertoire includes orchestral, rudimental, Brazilian, Arabic, and Indian percussion styles. He performs with several groups including 18 Squared and has just finished an annual tour with PD productions. Elston is also the instructor for applied percussion at Ventura College. He received his MFA in 2007 from CalArts, where he studied with Randy Gloss, David Johnson, Howman Pourmehdi, Aaron Serfaty, and Pandit Swapan Chaudhuri.

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMMING

THE GETTY VILLA's public programming enhances the experience of the ancient world with a diverse schedule of events anchored by an innovative theater program. Live performances of classical drama offer insight into the social, cultural, and political realities of life in ancient Greece and Rome, while the J. Paul Getty Museum’s permanent collection of antiquities, as well as changing exhibitions, strengthen the connection between modern audiences and the stories within the tragedies and comedies onstage.

Classical dramatists explored basic, human stories that often parallel our contemporary experiences. Because of their universality, ancient plays are ever powerful and resonant, continuing to tempt theater professionals to reinterpret them. The Villa Theater Lab series, presented throughout the year in the Auditorium, fosters experimental and modern approaches to ancient stories. The Auditorium’s technology enables directors, designers, musicians, and actors to freely incorporate advanced stage, music, and sound elements into their productions.

Each summer, a major production is staged in the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater, an outdoor arena based on ancient prototypes. Agamenon is the Getty Villa's third annual play to be presented in this historical setting.

The Villa's public programming also includes music and dance performances, Family Festivals, and film screenings. Visit www.getty.edu for the events calendar, or subscribe to the e-Getty newsletter to receive free programming highlights by e-mail.