



**PRESS CONTACTS:**

Laura Stegman, (310) 470-6321, [laura\\_stegman@hotmail.com](mailto:laura_stegman@hotmail.com)  
Libby Huebner, (562) 799-6055, [nyjazz@aol.com](mailto:nyjazz@aol.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**A NOISE WITHIN,  
LOS ANGELES' CRITICALLY ACCLAIMED  
REPERTORY THEATRE COMPANY,  
PRESENTS CLIFFORD ODETS' AMERICAN CLASSIC  
*AWAKE AND SING!***

**Saturday, March 20 – Sunday, May 23, 2010  
(previews begin Saturday, March 13)**

A Noise Within (ANW) presents ***AWAKE AND SING!***, an American classic by **CLIFFORD ODETS**, opening Saturday, March 20 and closing Sunday, May 23, 2010 (previews begin Saturday, March 13), directed by Andrew J. Traister. Featuring veteran actor Len Lesser (Jacob), who is well known to contemporary audiences as *Seinfeld's* "Uncle Leo" and highly regarded ANW Resident Artists Deborah Strang (Bessie Berger) and Joel Swetow (Myron Berger), the play also features Alan Blumenfeld (Uncle Morty), Molly Leland (Hennie Berger), David Lengel (Sam Feinschreiber), Daniel Reichert (Moe Axelrod), Adam Silver (Ralph Berger) and Alan Wasserman (Schlosser).

*Awake and Sing!* is set among the economic ravages of 1930s New York that threaten to destroy the tenuous ties that bind the Berger family. In order to keep the struggling clan intact, matriarch Besse Berger is willing to crush her children's dreams, but the irrepressible spirit of youth refuses to be extinguished in gifted social dramatist Odets' soaring ode to what is good and true in the American character.

"Odets captures the essence of the human spirit – the tragic and the comic – displayed in a Jewish family in the Bronx fighting to keep their heads above water at the height of the Depression," says Traister, who notes that Odets has been called the American Chekhov. "Families do whatever they can to survive in tough times, regardless of their ethnic background. There is a depth to this family's love during trying times that may not be near the surface of their emotions. As we get to know this family over the course

**(MORE ON REVERSE)**

of a year, we discover the vagaries of their life, the choices, often sad, sometimes comic, that propel an existence filled with many varied endings.”

A Noise Within was founded in 1992 and quickly established itself as one of the nation's leading theatre companies. It continues to maintain its celebrated status as the only year-round classical repertory company in Southern California, attracting fiercely loyal audiences and high praise from the media for its productions of great works of world drama and also as a leading regional force in arts education. Since its inception, the company has presented more than 120 plays from the classics of world literature, each season producing plays from authors ranging from Shakespeare and Molière to Ibsen, O'Neill and Shaw to Miller and Williams. The theatre's consistent dedication to quality has been rewarded with more than two-dozen Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards as well as numerous LA Weekly and Back Stage Garland awards. Past highlights include a collaboration with the Los Angeles Philharmonic in a performance of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Hollywood Bowl. ANW's next chapter provides the long-awaited opportunity to sink deep and lasting roots when it moves in 2011 from its long-time leased base in Glendale to a spectacular, permanent 35,000 square-foot home in Pasadena. The mixed-use development is located in the historic Stuart Pharmaceutical building at the corner of Foothill Boulevard and Sierra Madre Villa Avenue. The facility is designed to expand A Noise Within's artistic possibilities, offer a greater scope of educational opportunities, meet ticket demand and allow the company to expand its role as a leader in the presentation and preservation of classical theatre.

**ANDREW J. TRAISTER** (Director) made his directorial debut with ANW in 2007 with the critically acclaimed production of *Waiting for Godot* that has been reprised annually. During the 2008-09 season he also directed the company's production of *The Rainmaker*. Among his other directing credits are *Lolita* and *Road To Nirvana* at The Actor's Playpen in Los Angeles, and he has also has directed at The Old Globe, Alaska Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Phoenix, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild, Geva Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Diego Repertory Theatre and many other theatres across the country. He has taught at Cornish College of the Arts, California Institute of the Arts, SUNY Binghamton and SUNY Brockport. From 1987-89 Traister served as artistic director of Alaska Repertory Theatre. In 1980 he received an NEA Directing Fellowship. For the big screen, Traister directed the independent film *Nicky's Birthday Camera*, starring Robert Hays, Jamie McShane and John Walcutt, which was released in 2007.

**LEN LESSER** (Jacob), best known as Uncle Leo in the hit television show *Seinfeld*, returns to ANW following appearances with the company as Knut Brovik in *The Master Builder*, Max in *The Homecoming*, and Gregory Solomon in *The Price*. A veteran of television since its earliest days, the seasoned actor has been featured on more than 400 TV shows since 1955, including such classics as *The Monkees*, *Alfred Hitchcock Presents*, *Get Smart*, *Quincy*, *The Rockford Files*, *Mad About You*, *All in the Family*, *Boy Meets World* and *Everybody Loves Raymond*, in which he had a recurring role as Garvin, as well as *Seinfeld*. Lesser also has more than 50 feature films to his credit, among them *Outlaw Josey Wales*, *Kelly's Heroes*, *Birdman of Alcatraz* and *Death Hunt*. His other stage roles have included Marco in *The Moths* at the Mark Taper Forum; Marzo in *Capt. Brassbound's Conversion* at The Ahmanson; Rabbi Bindler in *The Legacy* at the Old Globe Theatre; Cardinal Ragna in *Hadrian VII* at the Alley Theatre; Father in *My Father's House* at 7 Angels Playhouse; Goldberg in *The Birthday Party* at ACT; *The Wonderful Ice Cream Suit* at The Coronet Theatre; and ReadyMoney Matt in *Thereepenny Opera* at Marines Memorial Theatre. He studied at the American Theatre Wing and with Uta Hagen, Lee Strasberg and Milton Katselas, and holds a B.A. from College of City of New York.

**DEBORAH STRANG** (Bessie Berger) has been a resident artist with A Noise Within for 17 years and has performed in more than 40 productions, including this season in *Noises Off* and *Richard III*, and *Ghosts* and *Hamlet*

(MORE)

last season. Other productions have ranged from Shakespeare to Tennessee Williams, and Chekhov to Alfred Jarry. Her favorite roles include Maxine Faulk in *The Night of the Iguana*, Mrs. Dearth in *Dear Brutus*, Paulina in *The Winter's Tale*, the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, Nora Melody in *A Touch of the Poet*, Ma Ubu in *Ubu Roi*, Dolly Levi in *The Matchmaker*, Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*, Mrs. Antrobus in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, Regina in *Little Foxes*, Alexandra in *O Pioneers*, Ranyevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*, Rosemary in *Picnic* and as Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a co-production with the LA Philharmonic at the famed Hollywood Bowl. Also at ANW, Strang co-directed Moliere's *The Learned Ladies* on the main stage as well as productions of *Comedy of Errors* and *Twelfth Night* for the Summer With Shakespeare teen programs. She currently teaches Acting Shakespeare and coaches the interns in the ANW Conservatory and was a guest artist at the acclaimed Oklahoma Arts Institute at Quartz Mountain. Her film and TV credits include *Cold Case*, *Close to Home*, *Numb3rs*, *Ghostwhisperer*, *Threshold*, *Carnivale*, *The X-Files*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Kiss the Girls*, *Things To Do In Denver*, and *Eagle Eye* with Shia LaBeouf. Strang can be heard most Saturday mornings as the voice of Aunt May in the new animated TV series *The Spectacular Spider-Man*.

**ALAN BLUMENFELD** (Uncle Morty) has appeared in numerous A Noise Within productions, including most recently as Grumio in the 2008-09 season production of *Taming of the Shrew* as well as McCleavy in *Loot*, Sancho in *Man of La Mancha*, Pere Ubu in *Ubu Roi*, Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Hollywood Bowl, Chrysalde in *School for Wives*, Dogberry in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Etienne in *A Flea in Her Ear*. The veteran actor has also performed in *An Italian Straw Hat*, *A Feminine Ending*, and *Born Yesterday* with South Coast Repertory Theatre and in Theatricum Botanicum's productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, for which he won an LA Drama Critics Circle Award, *The Miser*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*; *Lysistrata*, *King Lear*, *The Seagull*, *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, *Talley's Folly*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, among others. Blumenfeld was cast in the first national tour of Neil Simon's *Laughter on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor*, and, regionally, has appeared with ACT in San Francisco, Renaissance Rep in Chicago; PCPA in Santa Maria; and San Francisco Opera. With more than 200 television guest star roles to his credit, Blumenfeld plays the recurring role of the Nightmare Man on *HEROES*, and earned accolades for appearances in *Madmen*, *Gray's Anatomy*, *CSI*, *Without a Trace*, *Gilmore Girls* and *ER*. On the silver screen, he has appeared in *Righteous Kill*, *In Her Shoes*, *The Ring*, *Heartbreakers*, *2gether*, *MTV*, *Tin Men*, *The Elder Son*, *The TV Set* and *Callback*.

**MOLLY LELAND** (Hennie Berger) makes her ANW debut in this production of *Awake and Sing!* Her theatre credits in the United States and abroad include Medea in *Medea Redux* at the Black Box Theatre; Rossanah Deluce in *Brilliant Traces* at the Michael Woolson Studio; April in *Infinite Black Suitcase* at Moving Arts; Isadora Duncan in *Garbo's Cuban Lovers* at the Stella Adler Theatre; *Starving Necrophilia (One Woman Show)* for the American and European tours, which earned a five-star review at Edinburgh Fringe Festival; Nurse in *Grim* at the Davai Theatre Group; Ensemble in *Night at the Circus* at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center; Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Boston's Arts Festival; and Lena in *Rimers of Eldritch* at the Merrick Theatre. Leland has appeared in such films as *Cassandra*, *Divinity*, *Trail of Crumbs*, *A Woman Called Job*, *Alice Hour*, *Electronica II*, *Static Electricity*, *Air of a Blue Shadow*, and *Hopeless Virgins in Love*. She was also cast in the pilots for the television shows *My So-Called Hollywood Life* and *Three Chris's*. Leland holds a BA in Theatre Arts from Brandeis University and has studied at the Groundlings, the National Theatre Institute, St. Petersburg Arts Academy in Russia, Circle in the Square Summer Training, and the Scott Sedita Acting Studio.

**DAVID LENGEL** (Sam Feinschreiber) also makes his ANW debut in this production. The New York native has appeared as Doug in *Blue Surge* at the Henke Acting Studio; Buddy in *Come Blow Your Horn* at Glendale Centre Theatre; Adam in *The Shape of Things* at the Stella Adler Studio; and Arnold in *Biloxi Blues* at the Performing Arts Theatre. His numerous film and television credits include *iCarly*, *Blow It Up*, *House*, *The Amazing Mrs. Novak*, *Criminal Minds*, *Everybody Hates Chris*, *Days of Our Lives*, *Bald*, *Pandemic*, *The Tonight Show*, *Balloons*, and *Streamers*. Lengel earned a BFA from New York University Tisch School of the Arts and also studied at the Brad Henke Acting Studio, Groundlings and RADA.

**DANIEL REICHERT** (Moe Axelrod), who has appeared in such films as *Batman Forever*, *Judging Amy*, *Charmed*, *Get Real*, *Prophet of Evil*, and *Dead in the Water* and NBC's *Days of Our Lives*, previously played Lopakhin in *The Cherry Orchard* at A Noise Within. His other theatrical productions include *Bus Stop*, *Side Man*, and *Enchanted April* at Pasadena Playhouse; *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof*, *Burn This*, *Tale of Two Cities*, *Saint Joan*, *King Lear* and *Twelfth Night*, among others, at the American Conservatory Theater; *Macbeth* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* at Intiman Theater; *Arms and the Man* and *The Rivals* at Portland Center Stage; *The Misanthrope*, *Betrayal* and *The Elephant Man* at Andak Stage Company; *King Lear*, *Oedipus Rex* and *Midsummer's Night Dream* at American Players Theater; *Much Ado About Nothing* at San Francisco Shakespeare Festival; *The Rivals* at Denver Center Theater; *Arms and the Man* at South Coast Repertory; and *Orpheus Descending* at New York Stage and Film Company. Reichert holds a B.A. from Vassar College and an M.F.A. from the American Conservatory Theater.

**ADAM SILVER** (Ralph Berger) is the third cast member making his ANW making his debut in *Awake and Sing!* Silver has also played Orpheus in *Surf Orpheus* at The Getty Villa; Scott in *Not Fade Away* (workshop) at The Blank; Adam in *Cross Town*, Cst in *No Place Like Home* (workshop), and Assistant Director for *Lady Madeline* at Steppenwolf; Robert in *Shenandoah* and Derek in *Big* at Drury Lane; Brad Majors in *The Rocky Horror Show* at New Studio; Laurent in *Tartuffe* at Stage Left; Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at WNEP Theatre; and Thurio in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* at the Library Theatre. Silver earned a BA in Cultural Studies and Anthropology from Columbia College in Chicago, where he also studied at Second City, and has appeared in numerous episodes of the HBO series *Californication*, as well as in such feature films as *The Runaways*, *Marla* and *The Kari Files*.

A Noise Within Resident Artist **JOEL SWETOW** (Myron Berger) has played Estragon in ANW's *Waiting for Godot* for the past two seasons as well as Pastor Manders in the 2008-09 season production of *Ghosts*. Also with ANW, he portrayed Duke Vincentio in *Measure for Measure*, Philante in *The Misanthrope*, Jagers in *Great Expectations*, Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, Vershinin in *The Three Sisters*, Arnolphe in *The School for Wives*, the title role in *Tartuffe*, Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*, as well as major roles in *Under Milk Wood*, *The Seagull*, *Major Barbara*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Blood Wedding*, *Man and Superman*, *The Duchess of Malfi* and *The Way of the World*. For ANW he also co-directed *The Learned Ladies*. Among his numerous roles with New York City and regional theatre companies, Swetow played Marc Antony in *Antony and Cleopatra* at Theatricum Botanicum, appeared in *Mad Forest* at the Matrix Theatre Company, and played lead roles in *The Normal Heart*, *Talley's Folly*, and *The Sound of Teeth*. He directed *The Cherry Orchard* at Interact Theatre Company, which earned the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, Best Production of 1999, *As You Like It* at Actor's Co-op, and the world premieres of *My Brain Tumor* and *Muckrakers*. Swetow directs *The Crucible* at Actors Co-op this spring. His film and television credits include *Burn Notice*, *Charmed*, *Alias*, *Judging Amy*, *Stargate*, *She Spies*, various *Star Treks*, *Days of our Lives*, *3 Ninjas*, *Live From Baghdad*, *The President's Man 2*, Clive Barker's *Lord of Illusions*, the award winning shorts *Chicxulub* and *Vartan LLP*, and many others.

**ALAN WASERMAN** (Schlosser) is the third cast member making his A Noise Within debut in *Awake and Sing!* The Canadian-born actor, who was raised in Los Angeles area and has more than 20 years of stage experience, has appeared at the Knightsbridge Theatre as Inspector Trotter in *Mousetrap*, Earl of Gloucester in *King Lear*, Joe Pendelton in *Heaven Can Wait*, Don Adriano De Armado in *Love's Labours Lost* and Inspector Rough in *Gaslight*. His resume of independent films includes *North Mission Road - Minute Evidence*, *The Wedding Video*, *Reckoning*, *Before Turning the Gun* and *The Appointment*. Wasserman studied theatre at Los Angeles Valley College.

**Single Tickets are \$44** (Friday and Saturday evenings, Sunday matinees); **\$40** (Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings, Saturday matinees); and **\$30** (previews). Groups (10 or more) are \$25, or \$30 on Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees; School Groups (10 or more) are \$16, or \$20 on Saturday evenings and Sunday matinees.

A NOISE WITHIN is located at 234 South Brand Boulevard, Glendale, CA 91204. To purchase tickets or for a full season brochure, call 818-240-0910 x1 or visit [www.ANoiseWithin.org](http://www.ANoiseWithin.org).

# # #

EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE: **CALENDAR LISTING**

**WHO:**

A Noise Within – one of the nation's leading repertory theatre companies

**WHAT:**

**CLIFFORD ODETS' *AWAKE AND SING!***

**Cast and Crew:**

Andrew J. Traister (Director)  
Monique Fisher (Assistant Director)  
Caitlin Hart (Directing Intern)  
Alan Blumenfeld (Uncle Morty)  
Molly Leland (Hennie Berger)  
David Lengel (Sam Feinschreiber)

(MORE)

Len Lesser (Jacob)  
Daniel Reichert (Moe Axelrod)  
Adam Silver (Ralph Berger)  
Deborah Strang (Bessie Berger)  
Joel Swetow (Myron Berger)  
Alan Wasserman (Schlosser)

Scott Kriloff (Stage Manager)  
Michael Smith (Set Designer)  
Julie Keen (Costume Designer)  
Danielle Horn (Costume Assistant)  
James Taylor (Lighting Designer)  
Merrienne Nedreberg (Props)  
Rebecca Baillie (Production Manager)  
Adam Lillibridge (Technical Director)  
Monica Sabedra (Wig/Hair and Makeup Designer)  
Brittany Baughman (Scenic Artist)

**WHEN:**

**Previews:**

Saturday, March 13, 8 pm  
Sunday, March 14, 7 pm  
Wednesday, March 17, 8 pm  
Thursday, March 18, 8 pm  
Friday, March 19, 8 pm

**Opens:**

Saturday, March 20, 8 pm

**Runs:**

Sunday, March 21, 2 pm  
Sunday, March 28, 2 pm  
Sunday March 28, 7 pm  
Wednesday, March 31, 8 pm  
Thursday, April 1, 8 pm  
Friday, April 23, 8 pm  
Saturday, April 24, 2 pm  
Saturday, April 24, 8 pm  
Thursday, May 6, 8 pm  
Friday, May 7, 8 pm  
Saturday, May 8, 2 pm  
Saturday, May 8, 8 pm  
Sunday, May 23, 2 pm  
Sunday, May 23, 7 pm

**WHERE:**

A Noise Within  
234 South Brand Blvd., Glendale, CA 91204

**TICKET PRICES:**

\$44 (Friday and Saturday evenings, Sunday matinees);  
\$40 (Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday evenings, Saturday matinees);  
\$30 (Previews).  
Group rates and special rates for school groups available

**TICKETS & INFO:**

818-240-0910 x1 [www.ANoiseWithin.org](http://www.ANoiseWithin.org)

###