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First production of A Noise Within's 2018-2019 Season

## ***Man of La Mancha***

**By Dale Wasserman, Music by Mitch Leigh, and Lyrics by Joe Darion**

**August 16 – September 9, 2018**

**Press Opening August 18**

**Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**

Pasadena, CA (March 13, 2018) – A Noise Within (ANW), the acclaimed classical repertory theatre presents critical and audience favorite ***Man of La Mancha*** by Dale Wasserman, music by Mitch Leigh and lyrics by Joe Darion, original production staged by Albert Marre, originally produced by Albert W. Selden and Hal James, and based on Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. ANW Artistic Director Julia Rodriguez-Elliott directs. *La Mancha* performs August 16 – September 9, 2018 (Press Opening August 18).

With sold-out houses, standing ovations, and extensions added, *Man of La Mancha* earned A Noise Within's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season a host of accolades and inspired renewed faith in the impossible dream. Chosen as a 2017 Critic's Choice by the LA Times, the production's previous stagings won rave reviews from critics whose praise include "a stunning, modernistic, most entertaining take...Run, don't walk to see this" (*Broadway World*); "Uplifting...one of the best shows in town" (*Hollywood Progressive*); "An extraordinary piece of theater that is beyond compare" (*Tin Pan LA*); "edgy, contemporary rethinking...stunningly staged and strikingly redesigned" (*StageSceneLA*); and "Daring...a crackling re-imagining" (*South Pasadenan*).

"Though many often associate *Man of La Mancha* with elaborate set pieces and fanciful costumes," says Rodriguez Elliott, "Its earliest stagings were sparse, encompassing the spirit of a rag-tag band of

prisoners putting on a play with found objects. The play celebrates the power of make believe, and I want to go back to those roots. This production is fueled by an almost childlike sense of ‘play’ – where an ordinary object can seamlessly become a horse simply because we endow it as such.”

“My goal is to evoke that magical, improvisational quality we have as children but is often lost as adults. The modern-day setting – a bleak, destitute ‘holding tank’ for prisoners – is intentional. Reminiscent of third-world prisons and military detention centers, and populated with empathetic characters, I want this *La Mancha* to feel personal to our audiences. The stakes are real, and I want the transformation from hardened criminals to true believers to be palatable to our audiences. “

“This is a real-world fairy tale: despite the dire circumstances, through the power of art, these prisoners have the ability to transform their claustrophobic existence into the vastness of Cervantes vision.”

Julia Rodriguez-Elliott references this quote by Pablo Picasso: “We artists are indestructible; even in a prison, or in a concentration camp, I would be almighty in my own world of art, even if I had to paint my pictures with my wet tongue on the dusty floor of my cell.”

Rodriguez-Elliott points out that ANW’s state-of-the-art theatrical space – 283-seat house with a thrust stage – is the perfect playground on which to explore the epic and intimate nature of this play.

“*La Mancha* is about the power of imagination – and how important it is onstage and in our own lives. It’s a play that truly represents the transformative power of the theatre,” says Rodriguez-Elliott.

Tickets for *Man of La Mancha* starting at \$25 are available online at [www.anoisewithin.org](http://www.anoisewithin.org) and by phone by calling 626-356-3121.

#### **About *Man of La Mancha***

In *Man of La Mancha*, playwright Dale Wasserman takes a more meta-approach to the source material, Miguel de Cervantes’ *Don Quixote*, also originally published in the early 1600s. The fictionalized author ‘Cervantes’ is the main character of *Man of La Mancha*. While in prison during the Spanish Inquisitions, he is forced to act out parts of *Don Quixote* for the other inmates.

This story-within-a-story of Don Quixote's musical misadventures – rife with love, chivalry, and of course, four-armed giants – unfurls into something more transcendent: a beacon of hope in a dire world. One of the most important hits of Broadway's golden age, audiences have been dreaming "The Impossible Dream" for the past half century with the wandering hidalgo in this quintessential tale about the resilience of the human spirit, and the power of storytelling when faced with insurmountable odds.

First performed in 1965, *Man of La Mancha* is based on an earlier teleplay *I, Don Quixote* that Wasserman wrote for television. It won five Tony® Awards and has subsequently become one of the most enduring works of musical theater. It started its life in New York on a thrust stage, much like the ANW's Redmond Stage, at the ANTA Washington Square Theatre in Greenwich Village before moving uptown to Broadway in 1968. A Noise Within first performed *Man of La Mancha* in 2007.

In summing up *La Mancha*'s achievements, *The New York Times* said, "It was a harbinger of the concept musical – *Cabaret* would open the following year – and a pioneering effort in what could perhaps be called the musical-theater counterculture." Critic Gerald Bordman in his encyclopedic *American Musical Theatre* said, "its excellent reviews and favorable word of mouth from audiences that no longer demanded the well-mannered niceties of an earlier era soon made it the 'hottest' ticket in town...it could be considered the last major hit to emerge from Broadway before rock and roll overwhelmed the nation."

The *Man of La Mancha* cast includes Geoff Elliott\* as Don Quixote, Cassandra Marie Murphy\* as Aldonza, Kasey Mahaffy\* as Sancho Panza, Gabriel Zenone\* as Innkeeper/Governor, Cynthia Marty\* as Innkeeper's Wife Maria, Michael Uribe\* as Dr. Sansón Carrasco/Duke/Juan, Jeremy Rabb\* as Padre/Paco, Andrew Joseph Perez\* as Pedro/The Barber, Jordan Goodsell as Anselmo, Nick Bruno as Tenorio/Ensemble, Marc Leclerc as Jose/Ensemble, and Cassie Simone\* as Antonia/Fermina.

\* Denotes member of Actors' Equity

Scenic Design by Fred Kinney, Costume Design by Angela Balogh Calint†, Lighting Design by Ken Booth, Music Direction by Dr. Melissa Sky-Eagle, Sound Design by Martín Carillo, Sound Engineer Christopher Bosco, Make-Up Design by Clint Flowers. Props Master is Erin Walley, Fight Choreographer is Kenneth R. Merckx, and Additional Casting is Amy Lieberman.

†Designer is represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829 of the IATSE

### **About Wasserman, Leigh, and Darion**

**Dale Wasserman**, born in 1914 in Wisconsin and after riding the rails as a hobo in his youth, wrote for theater, television and film for more than 50 years and is best known for the musical *Man of La Mancha*, a multiple Tony Award winner. He also wrote the stage play *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, based on Ken Kesey's novel, which has won several Tony Awards. Both shows continue to be produced nationally and internationally with an estimated 300 productions a year. In 2008, Dale Wasserman passed away at age 94 at his home in Paradise Valley, Arizona.

**Mitch Leigh** (born Irwin Michnick in 1928 – died 2014) was an American musical theatre composer and theatrical producer best known for the musical *Man of La Mancha*. He was the composer of several popular commercial jingles as well as the ill-fated musical *Halloween*.

**Joe Darion** (1911-2004) wrote lyrics for several shows besides *Man of La Mancha*, including *Shinbone Alley* and *Illya Darling*, as well as some early 1950s pop hits.

### **Symposium, Conversations, Pay What You Can**

The run of *Man of La Mancha* includes a Pay What You Can performance on Thursday, August 16 at 7:30 pm and a Post-Show Conversation on August 24, August 31, and September 7.

### **LET ME IN – MAN OF LA MANCHA**

*Man of La Mancha* is the first show announced for ANW's 2018-19 Season, themed *Let Me In*.

"All of our 2018-19 offerings feature characters who are outliers – people who have blazed their own trail but nevertheless struggle for acknowledgement and acceptance," says Geoff Elliott. "*Let Me In* isn't about a physical space, it's about the deeply human passion to be understood for who we are."

## **ABOUT A NOISE WITHIN**

A Noise Within, which celebrated its 25th Anniversary in the 2016-17 Season, was called “an oasis for those who love classic stories” by *The Los Angeles Times*, and is a leading regional producer based in Pasadena, CA. ANW’s award-winning resident company practices a rotating repertory model at their state-of-the-art, 283-seat performing space. This venue, established in 2011, has allowed ANW to expand its audience, surpassing its previous box office, subscription, and attendance records each year.

In addition to producing world-class performances of classical theatre, the organization runs robust education programs committed to inspiring diverse audiences of all ages. Helmed by Producing Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott, who hold MFAs from San Francisco’s American Conservatory Theatre, A Noise Within truly delivers CLASSIC THEATRE, MODERN MAGIC.

<http://www.anoisewithin.org>

### **Calendar Listing: *Man of La Mancha***

by Dale Wasserman, Music by Mitch Leigh and Lyrics by Joe Darion

Original Production Staged by Albert Marre

Originally Produced by Albert W. Selden and Hal James

Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott

At A Noise Within, 3352 E Foothill Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107

### **Performances:**

Thursday, Aug 16 at 7:30 pm (*PWYC*)

Friday, Aug 17 at 8 pm

Saturday, Aug 18 at 2 pm

Saturday, Aug 18 at 8 pm (*Opening*)

Sunday, Aug 19 at 2 pm

Thursday, Aug 23 at 7:30 pm

Friday, Aug 24 at 8 pm

Saturday, Aug 25 at 2 pm

Saturday, Aug 25 at 8 pm

Sunday, Aug 26 at 2 pm

Sunday, Aug 26 at 7 pm (*Sunday Rush*)

Thursday, Aug 30 at 7:30 pm

Friday, Aug 31 at 8 pm

Saturday, Sept 1 at 2 pm

Saturday, Sept 1 at 8 pm

Sunday, Sept 2 at 2 pm

Thursday, Sept 6 at 7:30 pm

Friday, Sept 7 at 8 pm

Saturday, Sept 8 at 2 pm

Saturday, Sept 8 at 8 pm

Sunday, Sept 9 at 2 pm

### **Tickets and information:**

**Website:** [www.anoisewithin.org](http://www.anoisewithin.org), Phone: 626-356-3121

**Regular Prices:** Single Tickets from \$25, Student Rush with ID an hour before performance \$20

**Pay What You Can:** Thursday, August 16 at 7:30 pm – all tickets remaining are *Pay What You Can*, cash only, exact change appreciated, at the box office on day of performance after 2pm. Limit two per person.

**Sunday Rush:** August 26 at 7 pm – all tickets remaining are \$25.00, available online after 12am day of performance with the code SUNDAYRUSH or at the box office cash or credit after 2pm day of performance.

**Groups (10 or more):** Adults from \$25 to \$50 a ticket, up to 35% off; Students from \$18/tickets.