

**The third production of A Noise Within's  
2019-2020 Season: THEY PLAYED WITH FIRE**

***Buried Child***  
By Sam Shepard

**Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**

**Oct. 19 – Nov. 23, 2019**

**Pasadena, Calif. (Oct. 19, 2019)** – A Noise Within (ANW), California's acclaimed classic repertory theatre company, is proud to present Sam Shepard's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Buried Child*, directed by ANW Producing Artistic Director Julia Rodriguez-Elliott. Shepard's remarkable masterpiece *Buried Child* will run Oct. 13 through Nov. 23, 2019 with **press performances** on **Saturday, Oct. 19 at 8 p.m.** and **Sunday, Oct. 20 at 2 p.m.**

Set in America's heartland, Sam Shepard's powerful Pulitzer Prize-winning play details, with wry humor, the disintegration of the American Dream. When 22-year-old Vince unexpectedly shows up at the family farm with his girlfriend Shelly, no one recognizes him. So begins the unraveling of dark secrets. A surprisingly funny look at disillusionment and morality, Shepard's masterpiece is the family reunion no one anticipated.

"*Buried Child* is wickedly funny," said Producing Artistic Director Julia Rodriguez-Elliott. "Sam Shepard has an uncanny way of bringing out the humor in dysfunction. There's something familiar, yet not familiar about this family. It's at once disconcertingly recognizable and inexplicably strange."

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In *Buried Child*, comedy meets the absurd in a bizarre twist on the family drama that scorches with a **powerful commentary on the “American Dream”** and what happens when a community simmers in neglect, resentment, and disowned memory.

“What happens when we don’t process trauma, and it hangs over our heads?” continued **Rodriguez-Elliott**. “I don’t know of a play that handles the notion of secrets and collective suffering in a more profound way.”

Written in the 1970s during a time of economic, political, and social turmoil, *Buried Child* feels more relevant than ever as it uproots all that America claims to value. Shepard’s groundbreaking drama is gritty, yet comical, traditional, yet subversive – plunging deep into the psyche of a family consumed by the past and desperately clinging to an ideal that they lost long ago.

“During the time that Shepard wrote *Buried Child*, the country was wounded. The rural economy collapsed, which devastated farming communities. The recognition of addiction and mental illness was becoming more prevalent, with not enough treatment options or support to those who needed it most,” explained **Rodriguez-Elliott**. “The national problems of the 70s have an eerie resemblance to what we’re seeing today.”

Like Tom Stoppard’s *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot*, Shepard’s *Buried Child* follows the style of **Theatre of the Absurd** as it plays with logic and the natural order, while also incorporating dreamlike imagery, existentialism, and word games. *Los Angeles Times* describes *Buried Child* as “a masterpiece of comedic counterpoint,” and *Variety* calls it “a gut-slashing scalpel of a play that deserves its reputation and one of Shepard’s greatest achievements.”

**Director Julia Rodriguez-Elliott** concluded, “We are excited to bring back to the stage a play that is significant to our time. At this moment in our country, the broken promises of the American Dream and the palpable anger of our rural citizens have never been greater. It is important for us to be having these conversations.”

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Single ticket prices for *Buried Child* start at \$25 and are available at [anoisewithin.org](http://anoisewithin.org), by phone at 626-356-3121, and at the box office located at 3352 East Foothill Blvd in Pasadena, Calif.

## Calendar Listing

### *Buried Child*

By Sam Shepard

Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott

at A Noise Within, 3352 E. Foothill Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107

## The Cast and Creative Team

The cast includes (\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States)

**Dodge:** Geoff Elliott\*

**Halie:** Deborah Strang\*

**Tilden:** Michael Manuel\*

**Bradley:** Frederick Stuart\*

**Vince:** Zach Kenney\*

**Shelly:** Angela Gulner\*

**Father Dewis:** Apollo Dukakis\*

Directed by **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**. Scenic design by **Sibyl Wickersheimer**†; costume design by **Angela Balogh Calin**†; lighting design by **Ken Booth**; sound design by **Jeff Gardner**†; assistant scenic designer is **Yuri Okahana-Benson**; wig/make-up design by **Shannon Hutchins**; props master is **Erin Walley**; stage manager is **Samantha Sintef**\* and assistant stage manager is **Grace Gaither**. † Designer is represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

## Performances

Saturday, Oct. 19 at 8 p.m. (Opening Night & Press Performance #1)

Sunday, Oct. 20 at 2 p.m. (Press Performance #2)

Sunday, Oct. 27 at 2 p.m. (Post-Show Conversation)

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Sunday, Oct. 27 at 7 p.m. (Sunday Rush)  
Friday, Nov. 1 at 8 p.m. (Post-Show Conversation)  
Saturday, Nov. 2 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, Nov. 2 at 8 p.m.  
Thursday, Nov. 7 at 7:30 p.m.  
Friday, Nov. 8 at 8 p.m. (Post-Show Conversation)  
Wednesday, Nov. 13 at 7:30 p.m. (Wine Down Wednesday)  
Thursday, Nov. 14 at 7:30 p.m.  
Sunday, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m.  
Sunday, Nov. 17 at 7 p.m. (Sunday Rush)  
Friday, Nov. 22 at 8 p.m. (Post-Show Conversation)  
Saturday, Nov. 22 at 2 p.m.  
Saturday, Nov. 23 at 8 p.m.

## Ticket and Price Information

**Buy Online:** [www.anoisewithin.org](http://www.anoisewithin.org) **Buy Via Phone:** 626-356-3121

**Purchase at Box Office:** 3352 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107

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

**Groups (10 or more):** Adults from \$25 to \$50 a ticket, up to 35% off; Students from \$18/tickets.  
Call 626-356-3121 for more information and ask for Subscriber Services Manager Deborah Strang.

**Sunday Rush:** Oct. 27 and Nov. 17 at 7 p.m. – all tickets remaining are \$25, available online after 12 a.m. day of performance with the code **SUNDAYRUSH** or at the box office, cash or credit, after 2 p.m. day of performance.

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## Wine Down Wednesdays

Get a **free glass of wine** with your ticket when attending the Wednesday evening performance on Nov. 13 at 7:30 p.m.

## ANW's 2019-2020 Season – THEY PLAYED WITH FIRE

“THEY PLAYED WITH FIRE indeed! A Noise Within’s 2019-20 season embraces the incandescent power of change,” said ANW Producing Artistic Director **Geoff Elliott**. “Our upcoming titles are peopled with formidable characters – torches in hand – willing to either burn down the house or build a mansion of possibility.”

ANW’s fiery 2019-2020 season began with the California Premiere of Nick Dear’s stage adaptation of Mary Shelley’s 200-year-old gothic novel, *Frankenstein* (directed by Michael Michetti; ran Aug. 11 – Sept. 8, 2019). *Frankenstein* will be followed by the first chronologically in Pulitzer Prize winner August Wilson’s celebrated American Century Cycle, *Gem of the Ocean* (directed by Gregg T. Daniel; Sept. 22 – Nov. 16, 2019), which will run in rotating repertory with Sam Shepard’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play, *Buried Child* (directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott; Oct. 13 – Nov. 23, 2019). The first half of the season will close with family holiday favorite Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* (directed by Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott; December 4 – 23, 2019).

The second half of ANW’s explosive new season will open with a stirring production of William Shakespeare’s emotional romance, *The Winter’s Tale* (directed by Geoff Elliott; February 9 – April 11, 2020), and will run in rotating repertory through the spring with Eva Le Gallienne and Florida Friebus’ classic adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland* (directed by Stephanie Shroyer; March 1 – April 18, 2020). Stephen Sondheim’s Tony Award®-winning musical thriller *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott; May 10 – June 7, 2020) will fan the flames before closing out ANW’s most ambitious season yet.

ANW Producing Artistic Director **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott** said, “Whether they are teetering on the precipice of redemption (*Gem of the Ocean; The Winter’s Tale*) or revenge (*Sweeney Todd*), or haunting revelation (*Frankenstein; Buried Child*), or even an outrageous romp down a rabbit hole

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(*Alice in Wonderland*), they are all staking their lives on a chance to transform the world around them.”

“We invite you to join us as we venture with these risk-takers, revolutionaries, and game changers. We will see you at the theatre,” said ANW Producing Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott.

### About Sam Shepard

**Sam Shepard** was born on November 5, 1943 at Fort Sheridan, a military base just outside of Chicago, Illinois, as Samuel Shepard Rogers. Shepard’s mother, Jane Rogers, was a schoolteacher and his father, also named Samuel Shepard Rogers, was serving in the United States Army Air Corps during World War II when Shepard was born. When the war ended, Shepard’s father continued to serve in the U.S. Air Force. His service took the family all over the United States and out to Guam before the family eventually settled in Duarte, Calif.

As he grew up, Shepard’s family life proved to be rather dysfunctional. Shepard said, “I was born into this family of cranky men.” These men were his father’s brothers: one who lost a leg when he was ten, one who married into the Chicago mob, and one who raised dogs. In fact, Shepard traces a lot of the anxieties and insecurities he felt later in his life back to his childhood, particularly back to his father’s alcoholism and abuse. In a 2010 interview, Shepard describes the men who were present during his childhood: “The male influences around me were primarily alcoholics and extremely violent.”

Shepard graduated from high school in Duarte in 1961. While he was in high school, Shepard became involved with theatre and with writing. After graduating from high school, Shepard attended Mount San Antonio Junior College to study agriculture. However, he left the school after a year to join the Bishop’s Company Repertory Players, a Christian touring troupe of actors, in 1962. Shepard toured the US with this troupe for eight months before moving to New York City, where he became fascinated with jazz music and the works of Irish existentialist playwright, Samuel Beckett.

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As the Off-Off-Broadway scene was just starting to take off in New York, Shepard began to write a series of avant-garde one-act plays that premiered in the Off-Off-Broadway circuit, which received warm receptions from audiences. In 1966, Shepard made history when three of his short plays, *Chicago*, *Icarus' Mother*, and *Red Cross* won Obie Awards in the Distinguished Play category in the same year. These were the first of many Obie Awards Shepard would win. After his success with short plays, Shepard wrote his first full-length play, *La Turista*, in 1967.

In 1969, Shepard married O-Lan Jones Dark, and in 1970, the two had a son, Jesse Mojo Shepard. Around this time, Shepard began to try his hand at writing for the screen. His first teleplay, *Fourteen Hundred Thousand*, was broadcasted on television in 1969.

In 1971, after having a high-profile affair with singer and poet, Patti Smith, Shepard and his family moved to London. Shepard stayed there for three years, writing for the stage before taking a position as playwright in residence at the Magic Theater in San Francisco in 1974—a position he held for ten years. Shepard spent the late 1970s writing what have become some of his most revered family dramas such as *Curse of the Starving Class*, *True West*, and *Buried Child*, which won a Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1979. It was at this time that Shepard also returned to acting. In 1978, he appeared in the feature film, *Days of Heaven*. His performance in that film led to other roles, and soon, Shepard was acting on the big screen with great regularity. His tall, lanky, brooding, and weathered appearance served him well in his career on the screen. In 1983, Shepard's appearance in *The Right Stuff* as Chuck Yeager earned him an Academy Award nomination.

Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, Shepard's career as a film actor flourished. He appeared in films ranging from *Steel Magnolias* in 1989 to *Pelican Brief* in 1993, from *Black Hawk Down* in 2001 to *The Notebook* in 2004. However, his work on films left little time for writing, and during this period, his work as a playwright came to a pause. Beginning around 2004, Shepard began to focus once again on writing for the stage. By this point, Shepard's writing had become darker and more complex, reflecting the political change and turmoil he saw in the country at the time.

For the next 13 years, Shepard continued to act in films and write for the stage. In February of

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2017, Shepard published his last work titled, *On the Inside*, a quasi-memoir in the form of a collection of vignettes and short stories. On July 27, 2017, Shepard passed away at the age of 73 on his farm in Kentucky. He died of complications with ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. In his death, Shepard leaves behind an impressive legacy of work, earning him a spot among the most important American dramatists in the last half-century.

### About A Noise Within

**A Noise Within** has been called "an oasis for those who love classic stories" by *Los Angeles Times* and is a leading regional producer based in Pasadena, Calif. ANW's award-winning resident company practices a rotating repertory model at their state-of-the-art, 324-seat performance space. This venue, established in 2011, has allowed ANW to expand its audience, surpassing its previous box office, subscription, and attendance records year after year.

In addition to producing world-class performances of classic 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 renowned American Conservatory Theatre (A.C.T.), A Noise Within truly delivers **CLASSIC THEATRE, MODERN MAGIC**. <http://www.anoisewithin.org>

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