

A Noise Within Returns Live Onstage

The 30th Anniversary Season Begins With:

An Iliad

By Lisa Peterson & Denis O'Hare

Based on Homer's *The Iliad*, translated by Robert Fagles

Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott

Sept. 12 – Oct. 3, 2021

(Press Opening Weekend – Sept. 18 & 19)

Pasadena, Calif. (September 2021) – A Noise Within (ANW), California's acclaimed classic repertory theatre company, announces its reopening for live and in-person performances kicking off its 30th Anniversary Season with Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare's modern-day retelling of Homer's epic *An Iliad*, directed by ANW Producing Artistic Director Julia Rodriguez-Elliott (she/her/hers). *An Iliad* will run from **Sept. 12 through Oct. 3, 2021**, with **press performances** on **Saturday, Sept. 18 at 8 p.m.** and **Sunday, Sept. 19 at 2 p.m.**

"We have always deeply believed that live theatre must be a reflection of our collective experience, that it must be timely and timeless," said Co-Producing Artistic Directors **Geoff Elliott** (he/him/his) and **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**. "*An Iliad* is eerily relevant right now given what is happening in the world—a story of humankind's addiction to rage and conflict—an ancient story playing out now in every news outlet across the globe."

Having originally filmed their stage production of *An Iliad*, ANW is excited to provide theatre goers the experience live. ANW powerhouses **Deborah Strang** (she/her/hers) and **Geoff Elliott** alternate performances as The Poet in *An Iliad*, reliving and recounting bloodshed through hundreds and thousands of years. The lone witness of an ancient and ravaged Trojan battlefield weaves a tale of tragedy and triumph, with an enduring love for every victim of war. The Poet, an eternal being tasked with a passionate examination of deadly conflict, grapples with grief and

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dualities of victory and loss, power and fragility, heroism and hubris in an unforgettable modern take on Homer's classic.

"As a one-person show, *An Iliad* delves into the primal nature of storytelling in a well-crafted and prescient tale of war," said **Geoff Elliott** and **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**. "The Poet in *An Iliad* is trying to shatter the protective chrysalis of the audience, getting people to understand that nothing has changed in warfare since before the Trojan War."

As A Noise Within prepares the facility to re-open to live theater for their new season, the wellness of the patrons, staff, crew, and artists continues to be a top priority. For months, the theatre has developed and refined extensive plans to keep everyone safe. These procedures include but are not limited to: staff and crew certifying as Covid compliance officers, initiating a deep clean of our HVAC system for optimal turnover of fresh air, routinely disinfecting high-touch areas, providing PPE, and following LA Department of Health guidelines.

Before being admitted into the theatre, all audience members must provide full proof of vaccination. Masks are required regardless of vaccination status and will be available on site until such time that LA County stops requiring masks indoors. At that point, masks will continue to be strongly recommended. A Noise Within has required full vaccination for all staff, artists, and volunteers who work onsite. More information is available at anoisewithin.org/covidsafety.

"Since it is a one-person show without an intermission, *An Iliad* is an ideal production to reintroduce yourself to the live theatre experience," said Julia Rodriguez-Elliott. "In the meantime, we are engaging in ongoing conversations with crew, staff, artists, and audiences to ensure that we hear all voices and make everyone feel as safe as possible."

Single ticket prices for *An Iliad* start at \$25 and are available at anoisewithin.org, by phone at 626-356-3121, and at the box office located at 3352 East Foothill Blvd. in Pasadena, Calif.

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Calendar Listing

An Iliad

By Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare

Based on Homer's *The Iliad*, translated by Robert Fagles

Directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott

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

An Iliad Cast and Creative Team

The cast includes

The Poet: Geoff Elliott* (he/him/his) (in alternating performances)

The Poet: Deborah Strang* (she/her/hers) (in alternating performances)

Directed by **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott** (she/her/hers). Lighting design by **Ken Booth** (he/him/his); composer/cellist is **Karen Hall** (she/her/hers); stage manager is **Kayla Hammett*** (she/her/hers); assistant stage manager is **Amber Goebel** (she/her/hers).

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Performances

Sunday, Sept. 12 at 2 p.m. with Geoff Elliott ([Preview](#))

Wednesday, Sept. 15 at 7:30 p.m. with Geoff Elliott ([Preview](#), [Symposium](#), & [Pay What You Choose](#))

Thursday, Sept. 16 at 7:30 p.m. with Deborah Strang ([Preview](#) & [Pay What You Choose](#))

Friday, Sept. 17 at 8 p.m. with Geoff Elliott ([Preview](#))

Saturday, Sept. 18 at 2 p.m. with Deborah Strang ([Preview](#))

Saturday, Sept. 18 at 8 p.m. with Geoff Elliott ([Opening Night](#) & [Press Performance #1](#))

Sunday, Sept. 19 at 2 p.m. with Deborah Strang ([Press Performance #2](#))

Thursday, Sept. 23 at 7:30 p.m. with Geoff Elliott

Friday, Sept. 24 at 8 p.m. with Deborah Strang ([Post-Show Conversation](#))

Saturday, Sept. 25 at 2 p.m. with Geoff Elliott

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Saturday, Sept. 25 at 8 p.m. with Deborah Strang
Sunday, Sept. 26 at 2 p.m. with Geoff Elliott (Post-Show Conversation)
Sunday, Sept. 26 at 7 p.m. with Deborah Strang (Sunday Rush)
Friday, Oct. 1 at 8 p.m. with Geoff Elliott (Post-Show Conversation)
Saturday, Oct. 2 at 2 p.m. with Deborah Strang
Saturday, Oct. 2 at 8 p.m. with Geoff Elliott
Sunday, Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. with Deborah Strang

Ticket and Price Information

Buy Online: 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: Sept. 26 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.

Pay What You Choose: Sept. 15 and Sept. 16 at 7:30 p.m. – Pay What You Choose tickets will become available online starting at 2 p.m. on the day of each performance with the choice to pay \$5, \$10, or \$15.

Symposium and Post-Show Conversations

This run of *An Iliad* includes a pre-show symposium featuring a noted scholar at 6:45 p.m. on Sept. 15 and post-show conversations on Sept. 24, Sept. 26, and Oct. 1.

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ANW's 2020-2021, 30th Anniversary Season - THEY SHATTERED THE CHRYSALIS

“The world is in the midst of extraordinary change,” said **Geoff Elliott** and **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**, “a year of Covid-19; a time of greater awareness of systemic racism, and of confronting violence against people of color; a more aggressive push for women’s and LGBTQ+ rights; and more. The world we once inhabited is shattering. Each of the productions in the **2021-22, 30th Anniversary Season** is a passionate examination of seismic shifts in reality and how special individuals summon extraordinary courage to meet these changes head-on.”

A Noise Within’s shattering new season begins in the fall with Lisa Peterson and Denis O’Hare’s rendition of *An Iliad* (September 12 – October 3, 2021) directed by **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott**. The Spring 2021 filmed production returns live to the stage with alternating performances from **Deborah Strang** and **Geoff Elliott**. *An Iliad* will be followed by another chapter of August Wilson’s 10-play American Century Cycle, the blues opera *Seven Guitars* (October 17 – November 14, 2021). Bursting with musical lyricism and courage, Wilson’s Pulitzer-nominated play richly captures the spirit and heritage of Black Americans in the 20th Century. *Seven Guitars* will be directed by **Gregg T. Daniel**, director of *LA Times* Critic’s Choice *Gem of the Ocean* at ANW in 2019 and a recipient of the 2016 NAACP Best Director award for the International City Theatre’s production of *Fences*.

The Holiday Season brings back Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* (December 2 – 23, 2021) directed by **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott** and **Geoff Elliott**. This timeless classic takes to the stage once more with an **all-new** musical score by Resident Artist Robert Oriol.

The new year will begin with William Shakespeare’s bittersweet comedy *All’s Well That Ends Well* (February 6 – March 6, 2022). Directed by **Nike Doukas**, the rarely seen classic celebrates a young woman as she breaks the man-made chrysalis to follow her heart. Next, Nilo Cruz’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Anna in the Tropics* (March 20 – April 17, 2022), intertwines ritual, tradition, and raw sensuality in the working community of a Cuban-American cigar factory in 1920s Tampa, Florida. *Anna in the Tropics* will be directed by **Jonathan Muñoz-Proulx**, Director of Cultural Programming at ANW.

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Finally, A Noise Within will conclude its triumphant return to the live stage with Mary Zimmerman's *Metamorphoses* (May 8 – June 5, 2022) directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott. Mary Zimmerman (author of ANW's award-winning *Argonautika*) creates this Tony Award®-nominated masterpiece, based on the Myths of Ovid. Be mesmerized with tales of Midas, Orpheus, Aphrodite, and more in a whimsical and heartbreaking meditation on the joys and perils of being human.

ANW Producing Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott conclude, "Change can be joyful or heartbreaking. Change is inevitable. Change is necessary. Change is here! Join us as we celebrate protagonists who each **'Shattered the Chrysalis.'**"

About the Play

By Dr. Miranda Johnson-Haddad

Unlike the poet-narrator of Homer's classical epic poem *The Iliad*, the Poet who relates the tale of the Trojan War in *An Iliad* apparently has firsthand knowledge of the subject matter. Although Homer (if an individual author with that name ever existed) recounts events that happened in the distant past, the Poet of *An Iliad* seems to describe events as an eye witness. Indeed, the Poet's propensity to get carried away by the tale forms the central theme of the play: that we all share the same violent, murderous impulses that led to the battle of Troy and that define the towering figures of that war, Achilles and Hector. The first word of Homer's poem is, famously, "Rage"; and the Poet of *An Iliad* never lets us forget that rage not only lies at the foundation of every war ever fought, but that rage also constitutes the very core of human nature, informing even our most trivial interactions.

Homer's poem as we know it today did not, in all likelihood, begin as a written work at all. Playwrights Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare write in their Introduction to *An Iliad* (first published and performed in 2014) that as they worked on their play, they became convinced that "the staggering tale of the Trojan War really was spoken out loud and passed from storyteller to storyteller for centuries before it was ever written down." Although they note that they had originally studied Homer's poem as literature, they came to conclude that re-imagining this work,

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so profoundly influential of Western civilization, in dramatic form would restore it to its origins in the oral tradition.

As a result, their Poet figure is a performer, who both enacts and embodies the Homeric tradition; and in doing so, also enacts and embodies the bloodthirsty legacy of war that continues to define the human race. The Poet is, as Peterson and O'Hare note, "a compendium of war." And as the Poet observes, near the play's conclusion, "Achilles...is addicted to rage - as so many of us are, really, when it comes right down to it." The Poet may be able to transcend time, but paradoxically the Poet is also trapped by it, and by our own complicity in this theater of war; for the Poet is doomed to perform these tales until people and nations learn better, just as we are doomed to watch Achilles' insatiable rage, and our own, unfold until we make different, and better, choices.

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 is committed to representing the entire community at their state-of-the-art, 324-seat performance space. In addition to producing world-class performances of classic theatre, the organization runs robust education programs with the goal of inspiring diverse audiences of all ages. ANW is striving to be a theatre that better represents our entire community, through ongoing anti-racism initiatives across the organization and by interpreting our mission to fully engage audiences through various creative forms and community and artist-centered work.

Producing Artistic Directors **Julia Rodriguez-Elliott** and **Geoff Elliott**, Managing Director **Michael Bateman**. www.anoisewithin.org

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