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Press Room



Images of Schaubühne are available for download from the Cal Performances [press room](#).

CAL PERFORMANCES AT UC BERKELEY PRESENTS
IBSEN'S AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE
PERFORMED BY SCHAUBÜHNE BERLIN,
DIRECTED BY THOMAS OSTERMEIER
FRIDAY–SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12–13

**Performances launch Berkeley RADICAL 2018–19 *Citizenship* programming strand,
in which artists explore issues of belonging and place
in the context of current conversations about immigration and nationalism.**

***An Enemy of the People* kicks off a diverse and ambitious international theater season
featuring adventurous works that address the most pressing issues of our time. Productions
originate in Warsaw, London, Brittany, New York, and Toronto.**

Berkeley, September 21, 2018 — Cal Performances at UC Berkeley kicks off its 2018–19 season of

international theater with a rare West Coast appearance by Berlin's esteemed **Schaubühne** company in the ensemble's radically revised adaptation of Henrik Ibsen's 1882 drama, *An Enemy of the People*. Directed by renowned maverick European theater artist **Thomas Ostermeier**, resident director of the Schaubühne for 19 years, in his highly anticipated California debut, the play explores themes of social and civic responsibility, individual morality, and the perils of democratic capitalism. *An Enemy of the People* will be performed Friday–Saturday, October 12–13 in Zellerbach Hall. The production is performed in German, with English supertitles.

Ostermeier, for decades an influential and audacious figure in European theater, is known for his “capitalist realism aesthetic”—staging works that challenge the status quo, exposing the powerful contemporary political resonances of historical dramas, and adding a bold and gritty pop-culture sensibility to iconic plays by the likes of Shakespeare and Ibsen. His provocative production of *An Enemy of the People* incorporates contemporary cultural and political references, and breaks the fourth wall by implicating the audience in the drama. Schaubühne has not visited the West Coast for more than 17 years, when Cal Performances last presented the group. While the company has toured this production of Ibsen's play in Europe, Asia, and South America to critical acclaim, the performances in Berkeley provide a rare opportunity to see it in the US. While in China in early September, where the company has toured many times, performances of *An Enemy of the People* in Nanjing were abruptly canceled after members of the Beijing audience, who were invited to participate in the play, shouted criticisms of the current Chinese government.

Schaubühne's appearance at Cal Performances anchors an expansive season of international, innovative theater programming on the UC Berkeley campus, a rare opportunity for Bay Area audiences to experience the work of a diverse group of artists—from Berlin, Warsaw, London, Brittany, New York, and Toronto—committed to exploring the most pressing and relevant issues of our time.

Schaubühne's performances are part of the 2018–19 season's Berkeley *RADICAL Citizenship* programming strand at Cal Performances, which explores the human need for belonging, and connects the performing arts to our society's current sense of urgency around issues such as immigration and nationalism. The artists in this strand share their unique perspectives on the responsibilities of citizenship and the forces that threaten it. More information about *Citizenship* programming can be found at calperformances.org/berkeley-radical.

An Enemy of the People follows the story of a whistleblower in a small town, whose efforts to speak truth to power are shut down by his self-interested neighbors. The protagonist, Dr. Stockmann, has discovered that his city's water is contaminated, and making people sick. But that water is also the source of the town's wealth, through a robust tourism industry centered on the town's restorative baths. The town's government, journalists, and citizens initially support him, but Stockmann's brother urges a cover-up to protect the town's financial interests. Under great duress, Stockmann must decide whether to go public with his discovery, and confront the town and its mayor in the final act of the play. In this production, the actors wear modern clothes and play indie-rock; the incidental music includes songs by David Bowie and Gnarnls Barkley. The set is a series of blackboard walls, with furniture drawn on them in chalk.

Cal Performances' robust 2018–19 theater season features a diverse selection of acclaimed international companies in rare US appearances. Nigerian-born, UK-based poet and playwright **Inua Ellams** explores male identity in the African diaspora in *Barber Shop Chronicles*, a co-production of **Britain's Fuel Theatre, National Theatre, and West Yorkshire Playhouse** (Oct. 26–28) that has sold out multiple runs in London. **Big Dance Theater's** *17c* was conceived, choreographed, and co-directed by **Annie-B Parson**, and uses the diaries of Samuel Pepys, the outlandish 17th-century politician, as a springboard to explore the erasure of women's voices in historical texts (Dec. 13–16). **Amy Nostbakken** and **Norah Sadava**, co-founders of Toronto's **Quote Unquote Collective**, are the creators of *Mouthpiece*, a two-woman show about the loss of one's mother that incorporates movement, spoken text, and *a cappella* music in a highly innovative performance technique. (Mar. 22–24).

Polish troupe **Song of the Goat Theater** performs two celebrated works, *Songs of Lear* and *Hamlet: A Commentary* (May 11–12), with its signature technique of blending folk music and polyphony with innovative staging to reimagine and comment on historic theatrical works. French director **Arthur Nauzyciel** revives his stylish JFK-era production of *Julius Caesar*, with the **Théâtre National de Bretagne**, highlighting the continuing relevance of Shakespeare's great political tragedy (April 26–28). And *This American Life* radio host **Ira Glass** presents his *Seven Things I've Learned* (Mar. 23).

Public programs are planned in conjunction with the Schaubühne performances. Post-performance Catharsis Café discussions and receptions after each performance will take place in the Lobby Mezzanine of Zellerbach Hall, and are free to ticket holders. Bay Area theater maker **Mark Jackson**

will join the discussion as a special guest following the performance on Saturday, October 13. In addition, Thomas Ostermeier will deliver the annual **Weisinger Lecture**, co-hosted by the UC Berkeley Departments of Comparative Literature and German, on Friday, October 12 at 5pm in Stephens Hall on the UC Berkeley campus. The Weisinger Lecture is held annually in honor of former professor of German and Comparative Literature Kenneth Dean Weisinger, who was known for his research on Weimar classicism as well as his work on the poetry of Goethe and Hölderlin. The talk is free and open to the public, with a reception to follow.

Ticket Information

Tickets for *Schaubühne, An Enemy of the People* on Friday–Saturday, October 12–13 at 8pm in Zellerbach Hall range from \$30–98 (prices subject to change). Half-price tickets are available for UC Berkeley students. Tickets are available through the Ticket Office at Zellerbach Hall, at (510) 642-9988, at calperformances.org, and at the door. For more information about discounts, go to calperformances.org/discounts.

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CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAL PERFORMANCES PRESENTS

Friday, October 12, 8pm
Saturday, October 13, 8pm

Zellerbach Hall
Bancroft Way at Dana Street
UC Berkeley campus

Theater
Schaubühne
An Enemy of the People
by **Henrik Ibsen**
Directed by **Thomas Ostermeier**
In a version by **Florian Borchmeyer**

Program: Berlin's Schaubühne theater company presents a radically revised adaptation of *An Enemy of the People*, Ibsen's potent 1882 drama about individual and social responsibility. The story of a whistleblower in a small town whose efforts to speak truth to power are shut down by his self-interested neighbors, the play both implicates and exhilarates its audience in a conversation about the perils of democratic capitalism. Directed by Thomas Ostermeier, for decades a leading creative voice and provocateur in European theater, the production has received strong reactions from audiences and critics alike, largely because of its controversial handling of the play's climactic scene.

Berkeley RADICAL: These performances are part of the *Citizenship* thematic strand, which spotlights the human side of the current debate on immigration and nationalism. By sharing unique perspectives on the threats to—and responsibilities of—citizenship, the artists included in this series illustrate the universal need for belonging and home, and invoke the very real sense of urgency and peril that pervades the world today.

Tickets: \$30–98 (prices subject to change)

Residency

Artist Talk: Thomas Ostermeier

Friday, October 12 at 5pm

Geballe Room, Stephens Hall, UC Berkeley campus

Cal Performances presents an artist talk with Thomas Ostermeier, director of Schaubühne Berlin's production of Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* in association with the UC Berkeley Departments of Comparative Literature and German, as the Annual Weisinger Lecture. Free and open to the public. A reception will follow.

Post-performance Discussion

Catharsis Café

Friday, October 12 and Saturday, October 13

Zellerbach Hall Lobby Mezzanine

Ticket holders are invited to a (free) post-performance discussion and reception.

Refreshments will be served.