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American Repertory Theatre
in association with SITI Company
opens the 2006-07 season with
bobrauschenbergamerica
created and performed by the SITI Company
text by Charles L. Mee & directed by Anne Bogart
September 9 — October 7
Loeb Drama Center

Cambridge, MA — Robert Woodruff, Artistic Director, Gideon Lester, Associate Artistic Director, and Robert J. Orchard, Executive Director of the American Repertory Theatre (A.R.T.) begin the A.R.T.'s 2006-07 subscription season with the SITI Company's acclaimed production of **bobrauschenbergamerica**, with text by Charles L. Mee, directed by Anne Bogart. Performances begin on Saturday, September 9 at the Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle Street, Harvard Square in Cambridge, and run through Saturday, October 7. The production will be available for press viewing beginning Wednesday, September 13 at 7:30pm.

"In its combined exuberance of performance, vigor of imagination and boldness of innovation, **bobrauschenbergamerica** is a liberating, life-giving work of art..."

— *Chicago Tribune*

"It was the high point of the 25th annual Humana Festival of New American Plays."

— *The New York Times*

"...a dazzling, prismatic production from Anne Bogart & her ever-extraordinary SITI Company . . . fascinating and luminous . . . combines the enthusiasm of kids with the performance sophistication of old pros. It's a stunner!" — *Variety*

Anne Bogart, SITI Company and Charles L. Mee take us on a wild road trip through the American landscape — written as Robert Rauschenberg, one of America's greatest living artists, might have conceived it had he been a playwright instead of a painter. More than a biographical portrait, **bobrauschenbergamerica** is a tribute to one artist's singular vision. Rauschenberg's work has spanned nearly 50 years and encompassed a breathtaking array of media. From painting to sculpture to set design and photography, Rauschenberg's energy and exuberance have redefined the boundaries between art and life. "What is thrilling about his work," says Mee, "is that he got it from the streets, not only from what other people ignored or neglected but from what they rejected — from garbage. There's a happy, improvisational quality to his art, and that's what I'm trying to do here." The joy that is found in Rauschenberg's expansive pieces, which transform the most mundane objects — Coke bottles, tires, chairs and doorways — into works suffused with life and meaning, is evident in the rollicking series of images and scenes which populate Mee's play. This collage of people and places, music and dancing, love stories and picnics, business schemes and shootings, chicken jokes

and golfing, captures the sheer exhilaration of living in a country where people make up their lives as they go. The result is a portrait of America: a land of endless vistas, heartbreaking disappointments and unbridled optimism.

Traveling easily through time, the play's kaleidoscopic images take us from Rauschenberg's childhood home to a New York cafe to the open road. There is a nostalgic feeling to the piece, a looking backwards fondly, with a tinge of regret. As one character tells us, "You think you see what's present . . . but you don't, you never do. All you can ever see is the past." The past that informs this work is a complex mixture of personal history of Rauschenberg's, Mee's, and SITI's, as well as the history of a nation and culture. Drawing liberally from a variety of sources, Mee and SITI have woven together a tapestry of moments in time that provide us not only with a window on our past, but a glimpse into our future.

The cast includes *Kelly Maurer* as Bob's Mom, *Ellen Lauren* as Susan, *Leon Ingulsrud* as Phil the Trucker, *Akiko Aizawa* as Phil's Girl, *J. Ed Araiza* as Becker, *Will Bond* as Allen, *Barney O'Hanlon* as Carl, and *Danyon Davis* as Wilson. The production premiered at the Actors Theatre of Louisville's Humana Festival of New American Plays, March 2001, with set and costume design by *James Schuette*, lighting design by *Brian H. Scott*, and sound design by *Darron L. West*.

Founded in 1992 by Anne Bogart and Tadashi Suzuki, SITI Company began as an agreement to redefine and revitalize contemporary theater in the United States through an emphasis on international cultural exchange and collaboration. Originally envisioned as a summer institute in Saratoga Springs, New York, SITI expanded to encompass a year-round ensemble company based in New York City with a summer season in Saratoga. The Company is known nationally and internationally as a top-level artistic collective that generates groundbreaking theater while training artists from around the world.

In addition to Artistic Director Anne Bogart, SITI Company is comprised of ten actors, five designers, a playwright, stage manager and managing director. The company represents a change in thinking about the relationships between artists and institutions. SITI Company has formed relationships with theaters and venues around the world who present the Company's work, including the A.R.T., (a co-production of *La Dispute* in 2003), Actors Theatre of Louisville; Brooklyn Academy of Music; Classic Stage Company; the Krannert Center; Magic Theatre; On the Boards; Performing Arts Chicago; UCLA Performing Arts; Walker Art Center; and the Wexner Center for the Arts. SITI affiliations with universities include New York University; The Juilliard School; Columbia University; Princeton University; The Ohio State University; Utah State University and DePaul University. Every June the Company continues to gather for their annual Summer Intensive at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs. Internationally, SITI has performed and led training in Japan, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Wales, the Georgian Republic, Ireland, Turkey, Italy, Australia, Canada, Colombia, Scotland, England, Israel, Denmark and Holland.

Anne Bogart's A.R.T. credits include *La Dispute*, *Life is a Dream*, *Once in a Lifetime*, and *Hot n' Throbbing*. Her recent works with SITI include *Score*, *bobrauschenbergamerica*, *Room*, *War of the Worlds*, *Cabin Pressure*, *War of the Worlds-The Radio Play*, *Alice's Adventures*, *Culture of Desire*, *Bob*, *Going, Going, Gone*, *Small Lives/Big Dreams*, *The Medium*, Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* and *Private Lives*, August Strindberg's *Miss Julie*; and Charles L. Mee's *Orestes*. Other recent productions: *Nicholas and Alexandra* (Los Angeles Opera), *Marina A Captive Spirit* (American Opera Projects), *Lilith* and *Seven Deadly Sins* (New York City Opera), *Gertrude and Alice* (The Foundry Theatre). She is the recipient of two Obie Awards, a Bessie Award, and a Guggenheim Fellowship. Ms. Bogart is Associate Professor at Columbia University, where she runs the Graduate Directing Program.

Performances of *bobrauschenbergamerica* run September 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26, 27, 28, October 1, 3, 4, 5, at 7:30pm; September 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30, October 7 at 8pm; September 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, October 1, 8 at 2pm.

Single ticket prices for Loeb Stage productions range from \$15 (students) to \$76 depending on the day of the week and seat location. Discounts are also available to seniors. The A.R.T. also continues its **Pay What You Can** program, making fifty tickets available for every Saturday matinee performance of the subscription season at the Loeb Drama Center for patrons to purchase at whatever amount they can afford (based on availability). **Group rates** are also available, with extra savings for senior citizens and student groups.

The balance of the A.R.T. 2006-07 Season includes the world premieres of **Wings of Desire**, a stage adaptation of the film *Wings of Desire* by Gideon Lester, Ko van den Bosch, and Ola Mafaalani, directed by Ola Mafaalani (November 25 — December 17, Loeb Stage) and **The Onion Cellar**, featuring the Dresden Dolls, directed by Marcus Stern (December 9 — January 13, Zero Arrow Theatre); **The Importance of Being Earnest** by Oscar Wilde, directed by Jude Kelly, performed by Ridiculusmus (December 21 — January 14, Loeb Stage); **Britannicus** by Jean Racine, directed by Robert Woodruff (January 20 — February 11 Loeb Stage); the US premiere of **Oliver Twist**, based on the novel by Oscar Wilde, adapted and directed by Neil Bartlett (February 17 — March 25, Loeb Stage); the US Premiere of **Elections and Erections: A Memoir of Fear and Fun**, created and performed by Pieter-Dirk Uys (April 4 — May 6, Zero Arrow Theatre); and **No Man's Land** by Harold Pinter, directed by David Wheeler (May 12 — June 10, Loeb Stage). The 2006-07 Season is sponsored by TIAA-CREF.

The A.R.T. is again offering several subscription plans and a host of benefits, including discounts on parking, fine dining, and tickets to other theatres; a *child-care series* (Saturday matinee), and *pre- and post-performance discussion series* (Saturday matinees).

To learn more about the A.R.T. season visit the A.R.T. Website at www.amrep.org or call the **A.R.T. InfoLine** at (617) 547-8300 for directions to the theatre; to order brochures, calendars, and newsletters; and for direct access to the A.R.T. Box Office (hours are noon to curtain time on performance days, noon to 5 pm on non-performance days, closed on Mondays).

The American Repertory Theatre, located at the Loeb Drama Center in Harvard Square at 64 Brattle Street, Cambridge, is accessible to persons with special needs and to those requiring wheelchair seating or first-floor restrooms. Deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons can also reach the Theatre by calling the toll-free N.E. Telephone Relay Center at 1-800-439-2370.

Public transportation and discount parking are available nearby.

**AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATRE
FACT SHEET**

WHAT: *bobrauschenbergamerica*

Written by Charles L. Mee

Directed by Anne Bogart

Created and Performed by SITI Company

Set and Costume Design .James Schuette

Lighting Design .Brian H. Scott

Soundscape Darron L West**

Choreography Barney O'Hanlon*

CAST

Bob's Mom	Kelly Maurer*
Susan	Ellen Lauren*
Phil's Girl	Akiko Aizawa*
Phil, the Trucker	Leon Ingulsrud*
Becker	J.Ed Araiza*
Allen	Stephen Webber*
Carl	Barney O'Hanlon*
Wilson	Danyon Davis*
Bob, the Pizza Boy	Tom Nelis*
Roller Girl	Jennifer Taher*

WHEN:

September 12, 13, 14, 17, 19, 20, 21, 24, 26, 27, 28, October 1, 3, 4, 5, at 7:30pm;

September 9, 15, 16, 22, 23, 29, 30, October 7 at 8pm;

September 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30, October 1, 8 at 2pm.

Production available for press viewing from Wednesday, September 13 at 7:30 pm.

To reserve tickets for this performance, contact the press office at

617-496-2000 x 8841 kati_mitchell@harvard.edu

TICKETS:

Price: \$15 to \$76. Tickets may be charged to American Express, Visa, or MasterCard.

Senior citizen, group discounts are available.

Box Office Phone and A.R.T. InfoLine: (617) 547 8300, or on the website at **www.amrep.org**

E-mail address: press@amrep.org **Web address:** www.amrep.org

**PRODUCTION PHOTOS OF *bobrauschenbergamerica* CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM
www.amrep.org/media**