



American Repertory Theater
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American Repertory Theater
presents
R. Buckminster Fuller:
THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE

WHAT: The American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) continues its 2010/11 Season with ***R. Buckminster Fuller: THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE***, written and directed by **D.W. Jacobs** from the life, work, and writings of R. Buckminster Fuller. The production features **Thomas Derrah** as Bucky Fuller. Set and lighting design is by David Cuthbert, costume design by Darla Cash, projection design by Jim Findlay, and sound/composition by Luis Perez.

WHEN: January 14 — February 5, 2011
Tuesdays through Sundays at 7:30pm
Matinees on Saturdays and Sundays at 2:00pm
PRESS OPENING on Wednesday, January 19 at 7:00pm

WHERE: Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge

TICKETS: Begin at \$25. Student rush \$15.
Seniors \$10 off regular ticket price.
Groups of 10 or more: \$5 off regular ticket price.
Single tickets go on sale to the general public on December 14. Tickets can be purchased on line at <http://www.AmericanRepertoryTheater.org>, by phone at 617-547-8300, or in person at the A.R.T. Box Office, 64 Brattle Street, Cambridge /over

RATING: Recommended for precocious 8 year-olds and above.

DETAILS:

Does humanity have a chance to survive on Spaceship Earth?

Writer/philosopher/mathematician/geometer/poet/architect/designer/
inventor/futurist/environmentalist/sustainability advocate/Renaissance-man
R. Buckminster Fuller explores this question in a dazzling multimedia performance, as embodied by A.R.T. actor **Thomas Derrah**. Inventor of the geodesic dome, Bucky Fuller was a true visionary, and this play provides an expansive look at his life, ideas, and his belief in individual capacities to reinvent both self and environment. His objective was to put our lives back in our own laps, through "thinking-out-loud" personal testimony that helps ground us within the larger flows of time, place, history, and the Universe. Through philosophical riffs, revealing personal stories, geometrical demonstrations, songs, movement, dance, and vivid projections (including historical photos, footage, home movies, artistic sketches, and theoretical drawings), this production takes the audience on a roller coaster ride of ideas, emotions, and critical paths to either utopia or oblivion.

"...as startlingly funny as it is intellectually stimulating...." — *San Francisco Examiner*

"While the play explores serious themes — within Fuller's life as well as the challenges facing the planet — the overall tone of the work is hopeful and joyous." — *Washington Life*

WHO'S WHO:

RICHARD BUCKMINSTER FULLER (1895-1983) was hailed as "one of the greatest minds of our times," renowned for his comprehensive perspective on the world's problems. For more than five decades, he developed pioneering solutions that reflected his commitment to the potential of innovative design to create technology that does "more with less" and thereby improves human lives.

Born in Milton, Massachusetts, on July 12, 1895, Buckminster Fuller entered Harvard University in 1913, but he was expelled after excessively socializing and missing his midterm exams. He returned to Harvard in the autumn of 1915 but was again dismissed. (In later years he received 48 honorary Doctorates, and in 1961-62 was the Charles Eliot Norton Professor at Harvard.) Fuller served in the U.S. Navy, where he demonstrated his aptitude for engineering by inventing a winch for rescue boats that could remove downed airplanes from the water in time to save the lives of pilots. As a result of the invention, Fuller was nominated to receive officer training at the U.S. Naval Academy, where he further developed his ability to study problems comprehensively.

One of Fuller's lifelong interests was using technology to revolutionize construction and improve human housing. In 1927, after inventing an easily built, air-delivered, modular apartment building, he designed the Dymaxion™ House, an inexpensive, mass-produced home that could be airlifted to its location; it was followed by the Dymaxion Car, and Dymaxion Deployment Units (DDUs), mass-produced houses based on circular grain bins. In 1946 Fuller received a patent for another breakthrough invention: the Dymaxion Map, which depicted the entire planet on a single flat map without visible distortion of the relative shapes and sizes of the continents. The map, which can be reconfigured to put different regions at the center, was intended to help humanity better address the world's problems by prompting people to think comprehensively about the planet. In the early 1950's he coined the now familiar phrase "spaceship earth" to describe the integral nature of Earth's "living system."

After 1947, one invention dominated Fuller's life and career: the geodesic dome. Lightweight, cost-effective, and easy to assemble, geodesic domes enclose more space without intrusive supporting columns than any other structure; they efficiently distribute stress; and they can withstand extremely harsh conditions. Today there are more than 300,000 geodesic domes around the world, ranging from shelters in California and Africa to radar stations in remote locations, as well as geodesic structures on countless children's playgrounds.

R. Buckminster Fuller died in Los Angeles on July 1, 1983 (eleven days short of his 88th birthday and preceding his wife by only a few hours), and lies next to her at Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge.

D. W. JACOBS is a playwright, director, actor and teacher. He co-founded San Diego Repertory Theatre in 1976 with Sam Woodhouse, where he served as Artistic Director until 1997. From 1995 to 2000, he wrote *R. Buckminster Fuller: THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE*, and it had its world premiere at San Diego Rep on March 31, 2000. The production has played in San Francisco, Chicago, and at Seattle's Intiman Theatre, performed by Ron Campbell; in Montreal (under the title *R. Buckminster Fuller: MÉMOIRES (et Mystères) DE L'UNIVERS*, translated by Maryse Pelletier); at the Rubicon Theatre in Ventura, with Joe Spano playing Bucky, followed by a tour through the Western States. Recently Portland Center Stage produced the play with Doug Tompos in the title role. Arena Stage produced it earlier this year in Washington, DC with Rick Foucheux as Bucky. Mr. Jacobs appeared as an actor in *The Time of Your Life* (Joe), *Hamlet* (Claudius), Mac Wellman's *A Murder of Crows* (Howard) and *7 Blowjobs* (Senator Bob), Charles L. Mee's *Limonade tous les Jours* (Andrew), and Caryl Churchill's *A Number* (Salter). He is a member of the National Theatre Conference.

THOMAS DERRAH has appeared in 118 productions at the A.R.T., including most recently as Fraulein Schneider in *Cabaret*; as well as *Endgame* (Clov), *The Seagull* (Dorn), *Julius Caesar* (title role), *Oliver Twist* (also at Theatre for a New Audience and Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *The Birthday Party* (Stanley), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Nick Bottom), *Highway Ulysses* (Ulysses), *Uncle Vanya* (Vanya), *Marat/Sade* (Marquis de Sade), *Richard II* (Richard). He was seen on Broadway in *Jackie: An American Life* (23 roles), and Off-Broadway in Dario Fo's one-man show *Johan Padan and the Discovery of the Americas* and *Big Time* (Ted). He toured with the A.R.T. across the U.S., with residencies in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles, and throughout Europe, Canada, Israel, Taiwan, Japan and Moscow. He appeared in several local theater companies, including Boston TheatreWorks, New Repertory Theatre, and Commonwealth Shakespeare Company; London's Battersea Arts Center, Houston's Alley Theatre, and other theaters throughout the U.S. His awards include the 1994 Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence, 2000 and 2004 IRNE Awards for Best Actor, 1997 Los Angeles DramaLogue Award (for title role of *Shlemiel the First*). He appeared on television in Julie Taymor's film *Fool's Fire* (PBS American Playhouse), "Unsolved Mysteries," "Del and Alex" (Alex, A&E Network), and in the films *Mystic River* and *The Pink Panther II*. He is on the faculty of the A.R.T. Institute and is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

ABOUT THE A.R.T.

The American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) is one of the country's most celebrated resident theaters and the winner of numerous awards—including the Tony Award, the Pulitzer Prize and the local Elliot Norton and I.R.N.E. Awards. In 2002 the A.R.T. was the recipient of the National Theatre Conference's Outstanding Achievement Award, and in May of 2003 it was named one of the top three theaters in the country by *Time* magazine.

Founded by Robert Brustein in 1980, the A.R.T. during its 30-year history has welcomed major American and international theater artists, presenting a diverse repertoire that includes new American plays, bold reinterpretations of classical texts and provocative new music theater productions. The A.R.T. has performed throughout the U.S. and worldwide in 21 cities in 16 countries on four continents. It has presented over 200 productions, over half of which were premieres of new plays, translations and adaptations.

The A.R.T. is also a training ground for young artists. The theater's artistic staff teaches undergraduate classes in acting, directing, dramatic literature, dramaturgy, design and playwriting at Harvard University, and in 1987 the A.R.T. founded the Institute for Advanced Theater Training at Harvard University. In conjunction with the Moscow Art Theater School, the Institute provides world-class graduate level training in acting, dramaturgy and voice.

In 2009, the A.R.T. welcomed its new Artistic Director, **Diane Paulus**. Armed with the A.R.T.'s mission to expand the boundaries of theater, Paulus and her team have engaged thousands of new theatergoers at performances of *Sleep No More*, *The Donkey Show*, *Gatz*, *Best of Both Worlds*, *Johnny Baseball*, and *Cabaret* as well as festivals like *Emerging America*. Critics and audiences have embraced the immersive environments that have become hallmarks of A.R.T. productions. The Theater has broadened its focus to include the audience's total experience, providing them with a sense of ownership in the theatrical event. Initiatives like the A.R.T.'s new club theater OBERON, which Paulus calls a "second stage for the 21st century," is an example of one initiative that has not only become an incubator for local artists but also has attracted national attention as a groundbreaking model for programming. Through all of its work, the A.R.T. is committed to building a community of artists, technicians, educators, staff, and audience, all of whom are integral to the A.R.T.'s core mission of expanding the boundaries of theater.

The Loeb Drama Center, located at 64 Brattle Street, Harvard Square, 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 theater by calling the toll-free N.E. Telephone Relay Center at 1-800-439-2370.

Public transportation and discount parking are available nearby.

CALENDAR AND RELATED EVENTS AT A GLANCE

WHAT:

R. Buckminster Fuller: THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE

Written and directed by D.W. Jacobs
From the life, work, and writings of R. Buckminster Fuller
Performed by Thomas Derrah (member of Actors Equity Association)

Set and Lighting Designer David Cuthbert
Costume Designer Darla Cash
Sound/Composition Luis Perez
Projections Design Jim Findlay

WHEN:

Fr Jan 14	7:30pm
Sa Jan 15	7:30pm
Su Jan 16	7:30pm
Tu Jan 18	7:30pm
We Jan 19	7:00pm (PRESS OPENING)
Th Jan 20	7:30pm
Fr Jan 21	7:30pm
Sa Jan 22	2:00pm and 7:30pm
Su Jan 23	2:00pm and 7:30pm
Tu Jan 25	7:30pm
We Jan 26	7:30pm
Th Jan 27	7:30pm
Fr Jan 28	7:30pm
Sa Jan 29	2:00pm and 7:30pm
Su Jan 30	2:00pm and 7:30pm
Tu Feb 1	7:30pm
We Feb 2	7:30pm
Th Feb 3	7:30pm
Fri Feb 4	7:30pm
Sa Feb 5	2:00pm and 7:30pm

WHERE: Loeb Drama Center, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA

RATING: Recommended for precocious 8 year olds and above.

TICKETS: begin at \$25. Tickets may be charged to American Express, Visa, or Master Card.
Group rates are available
Box Office Phone and A.R.T. InfoLine: (617) 547-8300, tickets also available online
at www.AmericanRepertoryTheater.org

RELATED EVENTS:

Sunday, January 16: **Post-performance discussion with Allegra Fuller, daughter of R. Buckminster Fuller**

Tuesday, January 25: **Post-performance discussion with Donald Ingber, Founding Director of the Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering**

For further information and additional events go to
<http://www.americanrepertorytheater.org/events/show/r-buckminster-fuller-history-and-mystery-universe>

MEDIA INFORMATION:

Email Address: press@amrep.org

Production photos of **R. Buckminster Fuller** will be available beginning
1/17/11 at <http://www.americanrepertorytheater.org/media-room/press-kits/r-buckminster-fuller-history-and-mystery-universe>