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American Repertory Theater
presents
Amy Brenneman
in
MOUTH WIDE OPEN
A journey through Hollywood, hospitals and holy hotspots
directed by Sabrina Peck
May 24-29
Loeb Drama Center

Cambridge, Mass — The American Repertory Theater is pleased to welcome actress Amy Brenneman back onto the Loeb Stage, with her autobiographical show **Mouth Wide Open**, created with longtime collaborator Sabrina Peck. The limited run is presented May 24 through 29, with performances Tuesday-Friday at 7:30pm, Saturday at 2:00pm and 7:30pm, and Sunday at 2:00pm.

Soulful, transcendent, laugh-out-loud funny, Amy Brenneman (*Private Practice*, *Judging Amy*, *Heat*) returns to her theatrical roots in this exuberant theater piece drawn from her own life experience that juxtaposes a hunger for the spiritual with the externalized pressures of celebrity. From a Tibetan temple in Kathmandu to an evangelical church in the Mississippi Delta, from the hype of the red carpet to the cold reality of a hospital room, Brenneman is our guide on an epic journey that takes us to the place where illness and spirituality collide. This fearless look at the ecstatic, irreverent, and sometimes excruciating dance between the sacred and the profane harnesses the intimacy of a confessional and the heightened theatricality of the stage as Brenneman tells her story with dazzling candor.

Amy Brenneman was one of the original cast members of *NYPD Blue*, for which she received two Emmy Nominations and a SAG award (Best Ensemble) for her role as Janice Licalsi. She also had a recurring role on *Frasier* portraying Faye Moscovitz. Amy created, produced and starred in *Judging Amy*, based on the work of her mother, the Honorable Frederica S. Brenneman. Her six-year role as Judge Amy Gray garnered her two TV Guide Awards, three Golden Globe Award nominations, a Producer's Guild Nomination, three Emmy Award nominations, a People's Choice Award nomination and a nomination for a Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a

Female Actor in a Drama Series. She currently stars in the ABC drama *Private Practice* as Dr. Violet Turner.

She appeared at the A.R.T. in *Measure for Measure*, and on the Loeb Stage in *Yerma* and *Working* while she was an undergraduate at Harvard, majoring in comparative religion. At this time she also teamed up with director Bill Rauch to form the Cornerstone Theater Company, collaborating with residents in towns across rural America on such productions as *Romeo and Juliet*, *Three Sisters*, *The Oresteia*, and *Peer Gynt*. Other credits include *The Learned Ladies* for CSC Repertory, *Saint Joan of the Stockyards* at Yale Repertory Theatre, *A Nervous Smile* at the Williamstown Theater Festival, the Lincoln Center production of Craig Lucas' *God's Heart*, directed by Joe Mantello, and several productions at LA Theaterworks.

Film credits include Michael Mann's *Heat*, Neil LaBute's *Your Friends and Neighbors*, *Nevada*, *Fear*, *Casper*, *Bye Bye Love*, *88 Minutes*, *Downloading Nancy*, and *The Jane Austen Book Club*. With writer-director Rodrigo Garcia (Harvard '81) she has acted in *Things You Can Tell Just By Looking at Her*, *Nine Lives*, and most recently *Mother and Child* opposite Naomi Watts.

Amy created and stars in the first scripted series for Yahoo, entitled "The Procrastinator", directed by Brad Silberling, premiering fall 2011.

Sabrina Peck conceives and directs theater infused with movement and music, taking personal narrative and transforming it into theatrical experience. Credits include *Blood Cherries* by Dawn Akemi Saito (New World Theater, Dance Theater Workshop), *Wants*, by Lenora Champagne (New Georges), and *The Antigone Project*, co-conceived with playwright Chiori Miyagawa, by Miyagawa, Lynn Nottage, Karen Hartman and Caridad Svitch (The Women's Project). With diverse communities here and abroad, she has created *Speaking our Streets*, with former tobacco workers in Durham, NC; *Odakle Ste* with Bosnian Muslim refugees in Croatia; *Commodities*, with pit traders on Wall Street; and *Common Green/Common Ground*, with community gardeners from across New York City. She has directing staged readings of new plays at New Dramatists, The Public Theater and The Vineyard Theater.

Peck's choreography for theater includes *The Clean House* by Sarah Ruhl at Lincoln Center Theater, *Medea/Macbeth/Cinderella* at Yale Rep, *Henry VIII* at the New York Shakespeare Festival, *A Community Carol* at Arena Stage, *The Good Person of New Haven* at Long Wharf and many productions for Cornerstone Theater Company.

While a student at Harvard University, she created *CityStep*, now in its 27th year, a program that brings undergrads into city public schools to teach a year-long curriculum of self-expression through dance theater, culminating in an annual original production featuring hundreds of kids. She presented the first *CityStep* production on the Loeb mainstage. She returned to Harvard as the Peter Ivers Visiting Artist where she created *The Garden in Winter*, about coming of age during college years. She has taught community-based performance at Duke University and NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Her work is detailed in the books, *Local Acts: Community-Based Performance in the United States* by Jan Cohen-Cruz and *Staging America: Cornerstone and Community-Based Theater* by Sonja Kuffinec.

Sabrina Peck and Amy Brenneman first collaborated as Harvard undergrads with the production of *Working* on the Loeb Stage, followed by several productions for

Cornerstone Theater, and they developed together the original piece *Interstates*, about a young woman's search for a sense of place, at So Grand Theater, New York. They developed **Mouth Wide Open** during a residency at The Yard on Martha's Vineyard in the summer of 2010.

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 regional 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 regional theaters in the country by *Time* magazine.

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. 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, designers, technicians, administrators and audience.

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.

Tickets for **Mouth Wide Open** begin at \$25. For further information about this production and the A.R.T.'s current and future programming, log on to <http://www.americanrepertorytheater.org>

Production photos for **Mouth Wide open** will be available at www.americanrepertorytheater.org/media-room