



American Repertory Theater

64 brattle street, cambridge, massachusetts 02138

617.495.2668 TEL

617.495.1705 FAX

617.547.8300 TICKETS

www.americanrepertorytheater.org

For Immediate Release February 17, 2012

Contact: Kati Mitchell 617-495-2668

kati_mitchell@Harvard.edu

**American Repertory Theater
Presents the World Premiere of
FUTURITY: A MUSICAL BY THE LISPS
Music by César Alvarez with the Lisps • Lyrics by César Alvarez
Book by Molly Rice and César Alvarez
Directed by Sarah Benson
March 16 — April 15, 2012
OBERON**

Cambridge, Mass. — American Repertory Theater (A.R.T.) begins performances of the world premiere production *FUTURITY: A MUSICAL BY THE LISPS*, with music and lyrics by **César Alvarez** with The Lisps; book by **Molly Rice** and **César Alvarez**; directed by **Sarah Benson**. Performances run from Friday, March 16 through Sunday, April 15, 2012 at the A.R.T.'s second space, OBERON, at 2 Arrow Street, Cambridge.

As the Civil War rages around him, the Union soldier Julian Munro dreams of bringing peace to the world and an end to human suffering. Under the guidance of Lord Byron's brilliant daughter, Ada Lovelace, Julian attempts to invent an omnipotent steam-powered brain designed to save humanity before it destroys itself. Featuring the indie-rock band, The Lisps, this quirky new musical melds science fiction, historical narrative, and the sounds of American folk music to explore Julian and Ada's epic fantasy of a utopian future.

The company includes **César Alvarez** as Julian Munro, **Sammy Tunis** as Ada Lovelace, **Edwin Lee Gibson** as the General, **Anne Gottlieb** as Lady Byron, **Aaron Schroeder** as the Sergeant, and **Chelsey Donn** as Vincent. The ensemble of soldiers, musicians, and scientists will be played by **Eric Farber**, **Ben Simon**, **Lorenzo Wolff**, and A.R.T. Institute actors **Milia Ayache**, **Matthew Christian**, **Liza Dickinson**, **Teri Gamble**, **Rose Hogan**, **Carl James**, **Michael Kane**, and **Lindsey Liberatore**. The production design is by **Emily Orling**, Set and Costume Design by **David Israel Reynoso**, Lighting Design by **Austin R. Smith**, Sound Design by **Matt Tierney**, Choreography by **Annie-B Parson**, and Music Direction by **Debra Barsha**.

About the principal cast members and Creative Team:

César Alvarez is a New York-based composer, lyricist, performer, writer and saxophonist, founding member of The Lisps. He is also the co-founder and resident composer of LA-based dance company Contra-Tiempo. His recent composition credits include *Damned Beautiful* for Helix Dance (Edinburgh

Fringe), *3 2's or AFAR* by Mac Wellman (Dixon Place), *Full Still Hungry* for Contra-Tiempo (Ford Amphitheater). He was a 2004 Meet The Composer/Van Lier Fellow and attended Interlochen Arts Academy 1997-99. Alvarez holds a Bachelor of Music from Oberlin Conservatory and a Master of Fine Arts from Bard College.

Chelsey Donn participated in the *FUTURITY* Workshops (with Michael Cerveris) at Ars Nova, HERE, and Joe's Pub; appeared in *When in Disgrace* at Theatre at St. Clements; *The Demon, A What?* at Ensemble Studio Theater; and *Sighting V* at Union Square Theater. Regional credits include *The Corn is Green* and *Mommy Says I'm Pretty on the Inside* at the Williamstown Theater Festival; *David and Lisa* at Walnut Street Theater; and *Accomplice: Hollywood* (produced by Neil Patrick Harris). Films: *Arthur*, *Loving Leah*, *Orenthal: The Musical*. Television: "Onion News Network."

Eric Farber plays a soldier and is the drummer of the production, and the creator of the *Steam Brain*, a behemoth percussion contraption — integrated with his traditional drumset — comprising a vast network of hand-cranked, belt-driven, spring-loaded kinetic mechanisms, made from found relics of the industrial age, furnishing both a visual and sonic representation of the machine that creates peace. He participated in the *FUTURITY* Workshops at Ars Nova, The Rudyard Ripling, HERE, Joe's Pub, Ars Nova, Joe's Pub, and Bard College. He is a member of The Lisps (Extropian), The Ladybug Transistor (Merge, Fortuna Pop!), The Fisherman Xylophonic Burlesque Orchestra (TikiJive). Farber holds a Bachelor of Arts with Honors from The New School University with a degree in Philosophy of Technology and Ontology.

As a writer and performer, over the past 30 years **Edwin Lee Gibson** has been involved with over 84 productions. He is a 2006 OBIE Award recipient and his play, *Five 'Til* received a National Endowment for the Arts Commission in 2009. Edwin is also a frequent guest lecturer/artist on "Theatre & Race" and "Acting." Edwin recently completed an academic work, titled *Freedom Initiative*, which utilizes the canon of August Wilson as a means for revisiting the American African experience in the United States.

Anne Gottlieb was recently seen in *My Name is Asher Lev* at Lyric Stage, *In the Next Room or The Vibrator Play* (Elliot Norton Award 2011) at SpeakEasy Stage Company, *Frankie and Johnny in the Claire De Lune* (Elliot Norton Award 2011 and IRNE Award 2011) at New Repertory Theatre, and *The Goat* at Gloucester Stage). Other productions include *Betrayal*, *Crave*, *Not Enough Air*, (Nora Theatre Company), and *The Women* at SpeakEasy Stage. Anne is the founder of FortyMagnolias Productions. She co-created and co-produced the world premiere of *The Wrestling Patient* in collaboration with SpeakEasy Stage and Boston Playwright's Theatre and played the role of ETTY Hillesum. Anne is a Resident Scholar in Collaborative Theatre at the Women's Studies Research Center at Brandeis and resides in Boston and New York.

Aaron Schroeder's off-Broadway credits include *El Gato con Botas* (directed by Moisés Kaufman), New Victory Theatre; *Dance Dance Revolution* (Directed by Alex Timbers), The Ohio Theatre; *FUTURITY* workshops (with Michael Cerveris), HERE Arts Center, Ars Nova, and Joe's Pub; *From the Fire* (Joseph Zito), Judson Church; *Spellbound* (Greeme), Ellen Stewart Theatre; *Box Theory* (Writer/Performer), Ars Nova; *The Secret of Our Souls* (Bal Shem Tov), Minetta Lane Theatre. International: *Waxing West* (Elvis), Dramalabbat, Stockholm; *Hatful of Rain* (Polo), Teatre Studio, Warsaw. Webseries: *Next Time on Lonny* (Garrett).

Sammy Tunis is a founding member of The Lisps, and has helped develop and has performed in *FUTURITY* Workshops at Ars Nova, The Rudyard Ripling, HERE, Joe's Pub, and The Zipper Factory. New York credits include *Walking Down Broadway*, The Mint Theater; *People Like You*, Theater for the New City; *1984*, Godlight Theater; *School for Salomé's*, Collapsable Hole; *A Nasty Story*, Fine Feathered Friends; *Please Let Me Love You*, Dixon Place; *The Ninja Cherry Orchard*, The Brick Theater; *Kuutnu* and *Waltz*, Bring a Weasel and a Pint of Your Own Blood Festival. Tunis has recently been in workshops of Corina Copp's *Tell No One*, Kristen Kosmas' *There There*, Scott Adkins' *Kioskers* and Gary Winter's *Daredevil*.

Playwright **Molly Rice**'s credits include *The Saints Tour*, at Lower Manhattan Cultural Council; *Canary, a Musical* (with Ray Rizzo & Rachel Chavkin), developed by Rattlestick, Playwrights Horizons and NYTW; *Safeword*, commissioned and produced by NYU Tisch Graduate Acting; *Don't Stop*, Weston Award for Playwriting; *Line*, Women's International Playwriting Festival winner; *The Mercury Sloop, a Musical* (finalist, Princess Grace Award). Upcoming: *The Agee/ Walker Project* (with dir. Rachel Chavkin and composer Stephanie Johnstone), dev. by Montclair University New Works Initiative.

Sarah Benson directed the A.R.T.'s production of **Ajax** last season. She has been the Artistic Director of Soho Rep since 2007, where her credits include David Adjmi's *Elective Affinities*, (site-specific); Gregory Moss' *Orange, Hat & Grace*; Sarah Kane's *Blasted*, for which Benson received a Drama Desk nomination and OBIE award. Other credits include Polly Stenham's *That Face* (Manhattan Theatre Club) and Gregory Moss' *House of Gold* (Woolly Mammoth in Washington, DC). She has also worked on new plays at the O'Neill Playwrights Conference, New York Stage & Film, and New Dramatists. Upcoming: World premiere of Richard Maxwell's *Samara*. At Soho Rep, Benson has commissioned and produced work by artists including David Adjmi, Annie Baker, Dan LeFranc, Thomas Bradshaw, Cynthia Hopkins, Jomama Jones, Young Jean Lee, John Jesurun, Nature Theatre of Oklahoma and Anne Washburn. This work has been recognized with six OBIE awards, three Drama Desk nominations, and The New York Times Outstanding Playwriting Award. Benson moved to New York from London on a Fulbright for Theatre Direction. She is editing the upcoming anthology: *The Methuen Drama Book of New American Plays* (summer 2012).

Annie-B Parson is co-artistic director of the OBIE and Bessie award winning company Big Dance Theater; their most recent work, *Supernatural Wife*, was commission by The Walker Art Center, The Anticodes Festival in France, and was seen at BAM and Le Theatre National Chailot in Paris. Parson is currently choreographing David Byrne's *Here Lies Love*, Public Theater. Other recent work: Sarah Ruhl's *Orlando*, CSC; *The Broken Heart*, TFNA; Nico Muhly's opera *Dark Sisters*, David Byrne's world tour. She received a *Guggenheim Fellowship* in 2007 and a Lucille Lortel nomination in 2011.

The **American Repertory Theater** (A.R.T.) is one of the country's most celebrated theaters and the winner of numerous awards, including the Tony Award, the Pulitzer Prize and Elliot Norton and I.R.N.E. Awards. In May of 2003 it was named one of the top three regional theaters in the country by *Time* magazine. The A.R.T. was founded by Robert Brustein in 1980, who served as Artistic Director until 2002, when he was succeeded by Robert Woodruff. In 2008, Diane Paulus became the A.R.T.'s Artistic Director. During its 31-year history, the A.R.T. has welcomed many major American and international theater artists, presenting a diverse repertoire that includes premieres of 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. Since becoming Artistic Director, Diane Paulus has programmed innovative work that has enhanced the A.R.T.'s core mission to expand the boundaries of theater. Productions such as **Sleep No More**, **The Donkey Show**, **Gatz**, **Porgy and Bess**, **Prometheus Bound** and **Death and the Powers: The Robots' Opera** have immersed audiences in original theatrical experiences. The A.R.T.'s club theater, OBERON, which Paulus calls a "second stage for the 21st century," has become an incubator for local artists and has also attracted national attention for its 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 who are integral to the A.R.T.'s mission.

The balance of the A.R.T.'s 2011-12 Season **WOODY SEZ**, with words and music by Woody Guthrie, devised by David M. Lutken with Nick Corley (Loeb Drama Center • May 5 – May 26).

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.

For further information call 617-547-8300 or visit americanrepertorytheater.org

CALENDAR AND RELATED EVENTS AT A GLANCE

WHAT:

FUTURITY; A MUSICAL BY THE LISPS

Music by	César Alvarez with The Lisps
Lyrics by	César Alvarez
Book by	Molly Rice and César Alvarez
Directed by	Sarah Benson
Production Design	Emily Orling
Set and Costume Design	David Israel Reynoso
Sound Design	Matt Tierney
Lighting Design	Austin Smith
Choreographer	Annie-B Parson
Musical Supervisor	César Alvarez
Musical Director	Debra Barsha
Stage Manager	Katie Ailinger
Additional Casting	Jack Doulin

CAST

JULIAN MUNRO	César Alvarez *
ADA LOVELACE	Sammy Tunis*
THE GENERAL	Edwin Lee Gibson*
LADY BYRON	Anne Gottlieb*
THE SERGEANT	Aaron Schroeder*
VINCENT	Chelsey Donn*
SOLDIERS/MUSICIANS	Eric Farber*, Ben Simon*, Lorenzo Wolff*
ENSEMBLE	Milia Ayache, Matthew Christian, Liza Dickinson, Teri Gamble, Rose Hogan Carl James, Michael Kane, Lindsey Liberatore

(*) Members of Actors Equity Association

WHEN:

Fr Mar 16	7:30pm
Sa Mar 17	7:30pm
Su Mar 18	7:30pm
Tu Mar 20	7:30pm
We Mar 21	7:00pm PRESS OPENING
Th Mar 22	7:30pm
Fr Mar 23	7:30pm
Su Mar 24	2:00pm & 7:30PM
Mo Mar 25	7:30pm
Tu Mar 26	7:30pm
We Mar 27	7:30pm
Th Mar 28	7:30pm
Fr Mar 29	7:30pm
Su Apr 1	7:30pm

Mo Apr 2	7:30pm
Tu Apr 3	7:30pm
We Apr 4	7:30pm
Th Apr 5	7:30pm
Fr Apr 6	7:30pm & 10:30pm
Su Apr 8	2:00pm & 7:30PM

Tu Apr 10	7:30pm
We Apr 11	7:30pm
Th Apr 12	7:30pm
Fr Apr 13	7:30pm
Sa Apr 14	2:00pm & 7:30PM
Su Apr 15	2:00pm & 7:30PM

WHERE: OBERON, 2 Arrow Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge, MA

RATING: Recommended for 10 and older.

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

MEDIA INFORMATION: Press opening invitations will be sent under separate e-mail.

Email Address: press@amrep.org

Production photos of **FUTURITY** will be available from 3/17 at

<http://www.americanrepertorytheater.org/media-room/press-kits/futurity-musical-lisps>