A note from New York City Council Member, Ben Kallos

I’m so glad to see NY Classical still getting these special events done as our City battles COVID-19. I am proud of the support my office has provided through City Council budget allocations and looking forward to getting even more later this year. Visit BenKallos.com/Events for the latest information on our offices' monthly events targeted for our communities.

Original Production Acknowledgements

This program is supported, in part, by public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

NY Classical’s performances of *The Importance of Being Earnest* adapted and directed by Stephen Burdman are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Support provided by the Fund for the City of New York
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Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
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Online Encore Reading
July 16 to 20, 2020

Made possible with a grant from the Alice Scovell Charitable Fund
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NY Classical is celebrating our 21st season! Our mission is to create and reinvigorate audiences for the theatre by presenting all-free productions of popular classics and forgotten masterpieces in public spaces throughout New York City.

We believe that everyone—regardless of social, economic, or educational background—should have the opportunity to enjoy live professional theatre together as a community. Since 2000, NY Classical has presented over 700 free performances for more than 250,000 New Yorkers. We have produced extensively in non-traditional settings: outdoors in Central Park, The Battery, Carl Schurz Park, and Brooklyn Bridge Park and indoors in Brookfield Place, Roosevelt Island’s Tata Innovation Center, and the Church of the Epiphany.

By producing at no direct cost to our audiences, we reach every demographic in our urban community. To date, we have staged 42 all-free productions by classical playwrights including Shakespeare, Molière, Chekhov, Shaw, and Wilde.

The Cast

Ademide Akintilo* ................................ Algernon
Kristen Calgaro* ....................................... Gwendolen
Connie Castanzo* ...................................... Cecily
Kate Goehring* ...................................... Lady Bracknell
John Michalski* ...................................... Merriman
Jed Peterson* ......................................... Jack
Tina Stafford* ......................................... Miss Prism
Clay Storseth* ......................................... Chasuble

Production Team

Stephen Burdman, Adaptor and Director
Yetti Steinman*, Reading Stage Manager

*member of Actors’ Equity Association
member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

Original Casting Director: Stephanie Klapper
Original Voice/Speech Coach: Joan Melton
Original Movement Coach: Andrea Andresakis

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers’ Unions:
ACTORS’ EQUITY ASSOCIATION
AMERICAN GUILD OF MUSICAL ARTISTS
AMERICAN GUILD OF VARIETY ARTISTS
SAG-AFTRA
through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the Artists to appear on this program.
**Ademide Akintilo** (Algernon): NY Classical Theatre debut. Hailing from Lagos, Nigeria, Ademide has recently performed on screen in “Law and Order: SVU” and “Madame Secretary,” as well as onstage in *Our Country’s Good* (Connecticut Repertory Theater), *The Merchant of Venice* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey), *Beyond the Oak Trees* (National Black Theatre Festival), and *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre). He is a graduate from the Interlochen Arts Academy and a BFA graduate from the Rutgers University: Mason Gross School of the Arts.

**Kristen Calgaro** (Gwendolen): NY Classical Theatre (Associate Artist): *The Rivals, Malvolio’s Revenge, Playing Moliere, Much Ado About Nothing*. New York: *Mourning Becomes Electra* (Target Margin Theater); *Brigadoon* (Broadway workshop). National Tour: *Dr. Dolittle* (with Tommy Tune). Selected Regional: *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Barnstormers); *Boeing-Boeing* (Totem Pole Playhouse); *The Understudy* (Cape May Stage); *And the Curtain Rises* (Signature Theatre); Broadway: *3 Generations* (The Kennedy Center); *The Glass Menagerie* (Bay Theatre). Film/TV: “Kumare” (SXSW Audience Award), “Exeunt”(HBO's NYFF), “Law and Order: Criminal Intent.” BA Religious Studies/Spanish, University of Virginia. kristencalgaro.com

**Connie Castanzo** (Cecily): NY Classical Theatre (Associate Artist): *The Importance of Being Earnest, Romeo & Juliet, The Rivals, As You Like It*. New York: *Gigi* (Storm Theatre); *Diaspora* (The Gym at Judson); *Time Stands Still* (Theatre for the New City); *City Girls & Desperadoes, Much Ado About Nothing* (The Secret Theatre); *My Report To The World* (The Karski Project); *Some Are More Human* (NYC Fringe). Regional: *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Capital REP); *Boeing Boeing* (Millbrook Playhouse); *Lost Boy Found in Whole Food’s, Confluence of Dreaming* (Pittsburgh REP); *Ramona Quimby* (Two Beans). TV/Film: “Hack My Life,” “Creep,” “Cauliflower,” “The Raft.” BFA in Acting from Point Park Conservatory of Performing Arts.

**Kate Goehring** (Lady Bracknell/Merriman): NY Classical Theatre debut. Theater: *King John* (Folger); *Angels in America* (National Tour: Carbonell/LA Pride Awards); *Orpheus Descending* (Arena); *Heartbreak House* (Intiman); *The Cherry Orchard* (McCarter); *Slaves!* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Fairytale Lives of Russian Girls* (Alliance); *Wit* (NC Theatre: Broadway World Award); *Underneath the Lintel, The Blonde, The Brunette and the Vengeful Redhead* (Triad Stage); *The Rover* (Goodman); *How I Learned to Drive* (AZ Theatre); *Collected Stories* (A Contemporary Theater: Footlights Award); *Mrs. Warren’s Profession, The Glass Menagerie* (Huntington); *Saint Joan, The Syringa Tree* (KC Repertory); *Measure for Measure* (Court Theatre); *Laughing Wild* (Bailiwick: After Dark Award/Jeff Citation). Screens: BBC, Comedy Central, “ER,” “Gossip Girl,” “Law and Order” (all three), “Grand Theft Auto V.”

**Clay Storseth** (Dr. Chasuble): NY Classical Theatre (Associate Artist): Romeo & Juliet, Macbeth, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Measure for Measure, As You Like It, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, Henry V, Richard III, Hamlet, King Lear, Cymbeline, Love’s Labour’s Lost. New York: Moscow (Chekhov Now/NY Original Cast CD). Regional: Corpus Christi (I Am Love Tour); Measure for Measure, Oh! Pioneers (A Noise Within); Joined at the Head (Laguna Playhouse); Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (Musical Theatre West); Song of Singapore (ICT). LA: Richard III, Cymbeline (Will & Co.); Sea Change (LA Weekly Award Nom.); King Lear (dir. Patsy Rodenburg); Into The Woods (Actor’s CoOp); All Souls Day (Playwright’s Arena); Chess (Blank). Edinburgh: Dierdre (Queen’s Hall); Moscow (Assembly, Fringe First & Audience Favorite Award); Macbeth (Greyfriar’s Kirkyard); Riffs & Credos, Whale Watchers, Weho (French Institute). TV: “Star Trek: Voyager.” MFA Cal Arts.

**Stephen Burdman** (Adapter/Director/Artistic Director): Stephen has directed and produced over half of Shakespeare’s canon for NY Classical Theatre. Favorite productions include: The Importance of Being Earnest (Two Ways), Romeo & Juliet, The Rivals, Measure for Measure, A 15-Min! Christmas Carol, The Seagull, Playing Moliere, Henry V (New York Times Critic’s Pick), Hamlet, King Lear, Misalliance, and Mary Stuart. MFA University of California, Irvine; National Theater Institute. Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society since 1994. Stephen is the former Chair of the Artistic Committee of the Shakespeare Theatre Association. He has also been a panelist with the National Endowment for the Arts, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, ART/New York, and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation.

**Jed Peterson** (Jack): NY Classical Theatre debut. National Tour of CHEERS: Live On Stage. New York: Maverick (Cliplight Theater); Deconstruction (Storm Theatre); Hard Times: An American Musical (The Cell); The Man of the Hour (Metropolitan Playhouse). Regional: Rudolf Nureyev in World Premier of Nureyev’s Eyes (American Stage, Delaware Theatre Company, Blue Barn); The 39 Steps (American Stage); Zorro! (East Lynne); King Lear, Fiddler On The Roof, The Taming Of The Shrew (Utah Shakespeare Festival); A Christmas Carol (McCarter Theatre). TV: “Madam Secretary,” “Elementary.” Training: Moscow Art Theatre School, Princeton University, LaGuardia H.S. of Performing Arts, NYC. jedqpeterson.com

**Tina Stafford** (Miss Prism): NY Classical Theatre: Richard III. Tina is thrilled to collaborate on this classic gem with this daring company, bringing relevance, and challenging audiences to think outside the box. She spent two years on the road with the first national tour of the Broadway musical Once. Leading roles around the country: York Theatre, 59E59, Soho Rep, Prospect Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, Bucks County Playhouse, Paper Mill Playhouse, Goodspeed Musicals, Cleveland Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse, Westport Country Playhouse, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Arena Stage, Geva Theatre Center, Kansas City Rep, and the Utah, Texas and Maine Shakespeare Festivals, among many others. Proud AEA member.