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## Classical Theatre of Harlem Presents

# KING LEAR

Written by William Shakespeare

Directed by Alfred Preisser

Performances Begin on September 29

At The Harlem School of the Arts Theatre, 647 St. Nicholas Avenue

August 30, 2006

The OBIE and Drama Desk Award-winning Classical Theatre of Harlem (CTH) will begin their 8<sup>th</sup> season with a new production of *KING LEAR*, directed by Alfred Preisser. Performances will be at the HSA Theatre, 647 St. Nicholas Avenue, and will begin on September 29<sup>th</sup> and run through the 5<sup>th</sup> of November.

*KING LEAR* is widely considered to be Shakespeare's greatest dramatic work. Tony Award nominee André De Shields returns to the Classical Theatre of Harlem to play the title role; this will be his third collaboration with CTH Artistic Director Alfred Preisser. *KING LEAR* is a co-production with the Folger Theatre in Washington, DC; *LEAR* will move to Miami in November, and then will travel to Washington, DC for a 6-week engagement at the Folger Theatre in January of 2007.

Director Alfred Preisser is the Co-Founder and Artistic Director of The Classical Theatre of Harlem and the director of the Theatre Division at The Harlem School of the Arts. His work with the company includes *Ain't Supposed to Die a Natural Death* and *Macbeth*, which recently toured Germany at the Bonn Biennial and Globe-Neuss Shakespeare Festival. His original adaptations of Euripides' *Trojan Women* and *Medea* were performed at CTH in 2002 and 2004, and he is the co-author of 2005's *Caligula*, which featured André De Shields in the title role.

André De Shields made his Classical Theatre of Harlem debut as Makak in the 2003 production of Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (2004 AUDELCO AWARD-Leading Actor in a Play). Other critically acclaimed dramatic roles include Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, Sheridan Whiteside in *The Man Who Came To Dinner*, Vladimir in *Waiting for Godot*, Henry Drummond in *Inherit The Wind* and Graham, the Gorilla, in Mark Medoff's *Prymate*. He is best known for appearing on Broadway in *The Wiz* (title role), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Drama Desk nomination), *Play On!* (Tony Nomination) and *The Full Monty* (Tony nomination).

The cast of *KING LEAR* also includes OBIE winner Ty Jones, John Douglas Thompson, Jerome Preston Bates, Robyne Landiss Walker, Zainab Jah, Ken Schatz, George C. Hosmer, Sean Patrick Reilly, Christina Sajous, Jaime Carrillo, Duane Allen, Alex Sovronsky, Noshir Dalal, and Shayshahn MacPherson.

The Classical Theatre of Harlem is a dynamic and unique theatre company dedicated to producing the classics for a new, young, and culturally diverse audience. Their numerous awards and honors include a 2004 Drama Desk Award (as well as several nominations), 12 AUDELCO Awards (along with 77 nominations) for Excellence in Black Theatre, and five OBIE Awards, off-Broadway's most prestigious honor. Their production of *Funnyhouse of a Negro* was nominated for three 2006 Lucille Lortel Awards, the first year they were eligible. CTH's production of *Ain't Supposed To Die A Natural Death* was picked up by an outside producer and enjoyed a successful run at the nightclub T New York.

*KING LEAR* will begin performances on Friday, September 29<sup>th</sup> and will run through Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. The schedule will be Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8PM and Sundays at 3PM. Tickets are \$35 and can be purchased by calling smarttix at (212) 868-4444 or by visiting their web site at [www.smarttix.com](http://www.smarttix.com). For more information about The Classical Theatre of Harlem, visit their web site at [www.classicaltheatreofharlem.org](http://www.classicaltheatreofharlem.org).

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## **KING LEAR**

Written by William Shakespeare

Directed by Alfred Preisser

At The HSA Theatre, 645 St. Nicholas Ave. (near 141<sup>st</sup> Street) in Upper Manhattan

SCHEDULE:

September 29<sup>th</sup> through November 5<sup>th</sup>

Wednesdays through Saturdays at 8PM and Sundays at 3PM.

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