

## Sophocles' *Antigone* launches season at CU's Schwartz Center on Sept. 18

You've read the play. Now see the show. Cornell's New Student Reading Project will come to life starting Thursday, Sept. 18, at 8 p.m., with the Department of Theatre, Film and Dance's performance of Sophocles' *Antigone* on the Kiplinger Theatre stage in the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts. The theater's season opener is an exciting adaptation of the classic Greek play, directed by David Feldshuh, Cornell theater professor and Schwartz Center artistic director.

New students at Cornell, many continuing students, faculty members and a good portion of the Ithaca community, including all area 10th-graders, have been reading *Antigone*, one of the three plays written by Sophocles about the ill-fated family of Oedipus. Feldshuh's production is an adaptation and departs in several ways from the Robert Fagles translation distributed at Cornell, Feldshuh said, "to better focus on how the text works in performance."

"I started by studying 11 other translations," said Feldshuh, who consulted on the Greek with Jeffrey Rusten, Cornell professor of classics. "I wanted the choruses set to music and to contribute to the ongoing dramatic action," Feldshuh added. "This demanded that each chorus have a clear structure and point of view. The dialogue episodes are all set in iambic pentameter, in an attempt to give the text a heightened sense of tempo and dynamic."

The play, which describes the struggle between Antigone and the king, Creon, over the burial of Antigone's brother, has inspired dialogue on vital contemporary topics such as: the citizen versus the state, religious belief versus civil law, and the role of civil disobedience in society.

"This production of *Antigone*, like an ancient Greek one, employs masks, music and dance, but of a style completely different from the ancient ones -- what little can be reconstructed of them," said Rusten. "[However] the translation is a more complicated matter. Sophocles' language is famously difficult, bristling with syntactic oddities, and his plots proceed with disorienting speed."

Feldshuh's adaptation, Rusten said, "is faithful in the sense that no character is altered, and no difficulty in the action -- and there are many -- is disguised or omitted."

Sophocles' choral songs are notoriously full of perplexing allusions, said Rusten, and Feldshuh exercised artistic freedom in his treatment of them.

The key things about any script is that it has to work in stage time and it has to make its impact within the time constraints of an actors' line delivery, Feldshuh said. "The line needs immediacy and dramatic clarity. The audience must be able to take in that line and move to the next line. Yet, there needs to be the poetry of the lines as well."



**Produced in collaboration with the New Student Reading Project at Cornell, the Schwartz Center's production of "Antigone" features an original adaptation by David Feldshuh, Cornell theater professor and Schwartz Center artistic director. Performances begin Sept. 18. Thomas Hoebbel**

Actors in *Antigone* will be working with masks created by Norm Johnson, associate professor of acting and movement at Ithaca College. The 10-member Greek chorus in the production will be singing original music composed by Cornell alumnus Andrew Waggoner, DMA '86. Waggoner is the composer-in-residence at the Setnor School of Music at Syracuse University and has composed extensively for orchestras, theater and film.

The Cornell production features both Equity actors -- Cornell resident professional teaching associates (RPTAs) -- and Cornell students. *Antigone* is played by junior Colista Turner, supported by fellow students Lori Parquet as Ismene, Tony Hogrebe as Haemon and Rachel Williamson as Eurydice. RPTAs playing roles include Laurence Drozd as Creon, Godfrey Simmons as Tiresias and Sarah K. Chalmers as the Choral Leader.

To create *Antigone's* world, designers Kent Goetz (set), Richard MacPike (costumes), Ed Intemann (lights) and Warren Cross (sound) have created a post-apocalyptic ambiance complete with auditory and visual effects that will be, perhaps, uncomfortably familiar, yet exciting, to the contemporary audience.

The show opens Thursday, Sept. 18, at 8 p.m. Evening performances continue Sept. 19-20 and Sept. 25-27. One afternoon matinee will be offered Sept. 27 at 2 p.m. Tickets in advance are \$8 for students and seniors, and \$10 for the general public. For tickets and further information, contact the box office at the Schwartz Center for the Performing Arts, 430 College Ave., weekdays, 12:30-5:30 p.m., or call 254-ARTS.

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