



**NEWS RELEASE
CALENDAR LISTING**

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NEW HOUSTON THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS FIRST PUBLIC READING

Classical Theatre Company Unique in Southwestern U.S.

Houston, TX – Houston is now the first city in the southwestern region of the United States to house a theatre company producing classical drama year-round. The Classical Theatre Company, a new non-profit theatre incorporated in 2007, makes its first public appearance in the Houston community with a reading of Colley Cibber's Restoration comedy *Love's Last Shift* on Wednesday, February 13th at 7:00 PM at the Brazos Bookstore. The reading is free and open to the public.

The Classical Theatre Company (CTC) is dedicated to being the preeminent producer of classical theatre in the nation, presenting the classical canon on the stage, in the community, and in the classroom in an engaging, visceral, and visually spectacular way. Founded by Houston actor and artistic director John Johnston, the CTC "indelibly changes the Houston arts community, and will be a cultural force in the region for years to come." Included in the business plan are a new theatre facility in the downtown Houston area, a resident acting company, and extensive education and community outreach programs. Kevin Concardo is the theatre's managing director.

Sidney Berger, former head of the Department of Drama at the University of Houston, founder of the Houston Shakespeare Festival, and co-founder of the Shakespeare Theatre Association of America, has joined CTC's Board of Directors. "What is most notable is that the Classical Theatre Company will be unique in the region in producing classic work garnered from all ages. The classics are our perennials, reminding us that we always need to restore our understanding of universals, be they anxieties and longings, the ambitions, fears and the dreams of Man. In our most troubled times the classics remind us of what it means to be human in a vast and sometimes terrifying universe."

"No longer will Houstonians have to travel to New York or Washington, D.C., to The Shaw Festival or The Stratford Festival in Canada, to the Comedie Francaise in France or the Berliner Ensemble in Germany to see great productions of great plays from the past," said advisory board member, scholar and author of *Shakespeare's Friends* Kate Pogue. "Now we will get to see professional productions of theatre works deemed by time to be the

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best ever created, works that we read in school but only rarely (in this country) get to see the way they were intended to be experienced. For too long Houston has been deprived of excellent productions of the great works of the past. The Classical Theatre Company gives us hope that the drought is over.”

Artistic director John Johnston chose *Love’s Last Shift* as the company’s first public offering. “First and foremost this play for whatever reason has been lost to history. Rarely produced despite being wildly funny, *Love’s Last Shift* examines the very nature of love and virtue...right in time for Valentine's Day.” Written in 1696, the play tells the story of Amanda, a dotting and faithful wife, who reforms her rakish husband Loveless by posing as a woman of intrigue and secretly seducing him. Complete with sex scenes, a daring bed trick, farce, and sentimental reconciliation, the play’s initial run was both a box office success and the talk of the town.

The reading takes place at Brazos Bookstore, an independent bookseller nationally renowned for its author events and locally cherished for its careful, intelligent book selection. Located at 2421 Bissonnet near Rice University, the store maintains an extensive inventory of literary fiction, non-fiction, biography, history, poetry, literary criticism, philosophy, and travel, as well as one of the finest selections of architecture and art books in the region.

For more information on the upcoming event or the Classical Theatre Company, or to arrange interviews with artistic director John Johnston and actors participating in the reading of *Love’s Last Shift*, please email elenac@classicaltheatre.org.



CLASSICAL THEATRE COMPANY FACT SHEET

READING: LOVE'S LAST SHIFT by Colley Cibber

DIRECTOR: John Johnston

CAST:

Sir William Wisewood	William Hardy
Ned Loveless	Andrew Love
Elder Worthy	David Wald
Young Worthy	Robert de los Reyes
Sir Novelty Fashion	Kent Johnson
Snap	Eric Doss
Amanda	Emily Neves
Narcissa	Bree Welch
Hillaria	Patricia Duran
Sly/Lawyer	Caleb George

DATE: Wednesday, February 13, 2008

TIME: 7:00 PM

TICKETS: The event is FREE and open to the public

LOCATION: Brazos Bookstore
2421 Bissonnet
Houston, TX 77005
Tel: 713-523-0701
Fax: 713-523-1829

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Classical Theatre Company
Tel: 713-963-9665
Fax: 713-963-0605
Website: classicaltheatre.org



CLASSICAL THEATRE COMPANY FACT SHEET

The Classical Theatre Company is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization in Houston, TX.

Mission: The Classical Theatre Company is dedicated to being the preeminent producer of classical theatre in the nation through a bold re-envisioning of the classical canon on the stage, in the community, and in the classroom. We endeavor to present these texts in an engaging, visceral, and visually spectacular way that will breathe new life and relevance to the work while maintaining the degree of respect these authors deserve. From our home in Houston, we aspire to provide a forum for important historical voices to speak to today's audiences in a manner that both entertains and challenges through the irreplaceable medium of theatre.

Values: CTC never rests in our pursuit of excellence both on and off the stage
CTC is a leader in the arts community
CTC endeavors to bring both new and established audiences together through our dynamic productions and programming
CTC provides a forum through which a public dialogue regarding the classical works of theatre can begin

Contact Information: Tel: 713-963-9665
Fax: 713-963-0605
Website: www.classicaltheatre.org

Leadership:

John Johnston (Artistic Director)

Raised in Texas, J.J. has come home to Houston as the Founding Artistic Director of the CTC after spending a number of years between Boston, Washington D.C., and New York. Throughout his professional career he has been active in the theatre community locally, nationally, and internationally as an actor, director, and educator. He has appeared in numerous productions around the Houston area with Stages Repertory Theatre, the Alley Theatre, Unity Theatre, Unhinged Productions, the Children's Theatre Festival, and the Great Caruso as well as the International Festival Institute at Round Top, and the Houston Shakespeare Festival. He has also worked in a number of theaters in Washington D.C., Boston, and elsewhere including the Bill W. and Dr. Bob Project, Theater J, the Greenbelt Arts Center, the Source Theatre Festival, and the Keegan Theatre. He has directed around the country at such theaters and universities as the Goddard Players, Creative Arts, Boston College, the Magic Circle Theater, and Tufts University. He has also directed and acted internationally at the National Theatre of Ireland through the Abbey Theatre Program. He has taught at all levels of education including Medford High School in Medford, MA, Tufts University, Boston College, Houston's own YES Prep Academy, and in Washington D.C. at the Catholic University of America. In addition to training at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, he holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater Arts from Boston College, and a Master of Fine Arts degree in Drama from the Catholic University of America.

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Kevin M. Condardo (Managing Director)

Kevin joins the staff of the Classic Theatre Company after spending several years in New York City. A graduate of the Brooklyn College Performing Arts Management Master of Fine Arts program, he has worked with the Signature Theatre Company, New York City Center, the Brooklyn Arts Council, and the producers of the Broadway productions of *Company*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Producers*, and *Hairspray*. Kevin received his undergraduate education at the University of New Hampshire, where he earned his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Performance and his Bachelor of Sciences in Business Management from the University's Whittemore School of Business and Economics. A native New Englander, Kevin has also worked with the Theater at Monmouth in Maine and the Pub Like Players of New Hampshire.

Board members:

President: Don L. Rumer-Rivera, Lawyer, Rumer & Associates, P.L.L.C.

Vice President/Treasurer: Jack W. Massey, Associate Lawyer, Baker Botts L.L. P.

Secretary: Christine Johnston, Executive Vice President of Fragrances and Cosmetics for Macy's East

Members: Sidney Berger, former head of the Department of Drama at the University of Houston, founder of the Houston Shakespeare Festival, and co-founder of the Shakespeare Theatre Association of America
Barbara Ann Radnofsky, attorney, co-owner Brazos Bookstore
Ivar Siem, CEO and Chairman of the Board, Blue Dolphin Energy

Advisory Board:

Bob Boudreaux
Sally Edmundson
Christianne Hagemann
John Johnston
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