

Production Staff

Project Director.....Lurana Donnels O'Malley
Stage Manager.....Hannah Schauer Galli
Light Board Operator.....M.J. Matsushita
Staff Technical Director.....Gerald R. Kawaoka
Staff Assistant Technical Director.....M.J. Matsushita
Staff Costume Shop Manager.....Hannah Schauer Galli
Staff Theatre Manager..... Marty Myers
Staff Facilities Manager.....Mark Boyd
Box Office Supervisors.....Jeni Kido, Michael S. Lee
Box Office Staff..... Karen Isozaki, Kaitlyn Ma, Jennifer
Norton, Cherry Ann Rivera, Melissa Teodoro
Publicity Director..... Kristy Miller
Publicity Assistant.....Christy Zehr
Graphic Designer.....Lauren Forsythe
House Manager & Program Editor..... Kelly Williams
Assistant House Managers.....Eva Hang, Tim Wiler

Coming Events

Prime Time Theatre

Fall Footholds

October 18 - 21 at 8pm, October 22 at 2pm

Mainstage

La Bête (The Beast/The Fool)

November 10, 11, 16, 17 & 18 at 8pm, November 19
at 2pm

Late Night

A Way Home

November 10, 11, 17 & 18 at 11pm

Printed on recycled paper



KENNEDY THEATRE 2000-2001 SEASON MAINSTAGE

The African Tragedian

*A Dramatic Montage on
the Celebrated African-American Actor*

Ira Frederick Aldridge



Written, Directed and Performed by
Robin Scott Peters

October 7

Department of Theatre and Dance
College of Arts and Humanities
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

This docudrama was developed from actual letters, reviews and photographs detailing the life and times of one of the earliest African-American actors.

About Mr. Peters

Robin Scott Peters has acted, written, and directed theatre for 25 years. He received his Ph.D. from UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television. He has taught at major universities such as USC and UCLA, and has directed for major theatre companies like the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival and Royal Caribbean LTD. Robin has recently opened a nonprofit multimedia production company in Westwood, California called the Cathartic Art Center, where he is the Artistic Director of theatre, film and website projects.



Co-sponsored by the President's Diversity and Equity Initiative

Special Thanks

Teresa Peters, Tanya Montgomery, The Cathartic Art Center, Brian Bozanich, Kathryn Takara, Craig Howes, Center for Biographical Research, Bridget Kelly, Amy Agbayani

For information regarding performances, scripts or other publications, please direct your requests to:

Robin Scott Peters
700 W. Sierra Madre Blvd. #8
Sierra Madre, CA 91024

or call (818) 257-4378

There will be no intermission. The audience is invited to stay for a post-show discussion with Mr. Peters.

In consideration of the performer and your fellow audience members, please turn off or silence all pagers, cell phones or digital watches. Smoking, eating or drinking are not permitted in the auditorium. For large print programs or program information in alternative forms, please contact the House Manager, or call the Kennedy Theatre Box Office at 956-7655 (v/t).

Director's Note

At the end of summer, 1994, I was contacted by the University of California, Santa Cruz. They had read an article in the *San Francisco Chronicle* concerning an outreach program that I headed in Oakland, California. This program brought Shakespeare to at-risk youth.

I was commissioned by UC Santa Cruz to develop a presentation for their Black History Month celebration. At the time of the commission I was completing class work on my doctorate at UCLA, and had recently been introduced to the 19th century African American Shakespearean actor and historical figure Ira Frederick Aldridge. I was mesmerized by this young man's quest to find freedom--not only the freedom from racial hatred--but also freedom to express himself artistically.

I call this piece a historical docudrama because through my research on Aldridge I gathered actual accounts detailing the type of productions he was involved with and actual reviews concerning his abilities and his race--all of which are poignant and some horrific. My purpose was to use the actual accounts and develop a fictitious situation so as to delineate the strength and courage Aldridge possessed. This docudrama is to be presented as a message of hope, not as condemnation of the Eurocentric community.

This piece was originally produced as a solo performance which I both acted and directed. It also was designed as an acting exercise of sorts. I chose the solo performance of multiple characters because as an actor I believed it would strengthen my practical, as well as theoretical, approach to acting. Ultimately this piece is meant to be fun, dramatic, creative, but most of all it expresses Ira's life long theme--Freedom is worth whatever it takes to create it.

--Robin Scott Peters

About Mr. Aldridge

Ira Frederick Aldridge was born in New York in 1807, the son of a preacher. However, another version states that Ira was born in Senegal, a son of a king, and was kidnapped and brought to the U.S. at the age of eight. Regardless of how he came to be in the USA, Ira was involved with the first African American theatre company, the African Grove Theater, from 1821-1824. At the age of 17 (around 1824 or 1825), Ira left America for Liverpool, England. His first major appearance was at the Colburg Theater, later know as the Old Vic, in 1825. Ira toured England for over 18 years honing his craft. In the 1840s, he began to tour greater Europe and found Germany and Russia to be supportive of his talent. Ira finally played the famous West End theater district of London in 1858 when he appeared at the Lyceum Theater. In 1867, Ira, convinced by his childhood friend, James Methune, returned to America to tour his work there. Ira Frederick Aldridge died on August 7th, 1867, in Lodz, Poland during his final European tour.

