



Contact: Tim Choy, David Barber 323-954-7510
t.choy@dcpublicity.com, d.barber@dcpublicity.com

**Second production of A Noise Within's 2018-2019 Season: LET ME IN
Presented by the S. Mark Taper Foundation**

A Picture of Dorian Gray

Based on the novella by Oscar Wilde

Adapted and Directed by Michael Michetti

September 23 – November 16, 2018 (Press Opening September 29)

Pasadena, CA (September 18, 2018) – A Noise Within (ANW), the acclaimed classical repertory theatre presents ***A Picture of Dorian Gray***, based on the novella by Oscar Wilde and adapted and directed by Michael Michetti. *A Picture of Dorian Gray* performs September 23 – November 16, 2018 (Press Opening September 29).

Entranced by the beauty of his own portrait, Dorian Gray sells his soul to preserve his youth and pays a price. This haunting and seductive adaptation lets Wilde's language and wit sparkle, but strips bare the themes of hedonism and the insatiable pursuit of pleasure.

"As Gray descends into debauchery, those around him are drawn to their own ruin like moths to a flame," says Geoff Elliott, Co-Producing Artistic Director at ANW. Michetti's adaptation, first produced at Boston Court Pasadena in 2006, explores the idolization of beauty and youth in an intimate, psychological journey that avoids the Gothic horror approach to the tale and instead follows the consequences of Dorian's hedonistic lifestyle. "We're thrilled to have Michetti's vision come to life at ANW in a fresh, gripping take on Wilde's story," says Elliott.

"What draws me to this tale is its psychological truth," says Michetti, who adapted the original novella and directs. "This is not the story of a rotting portrait; it is the story of a rotting soul." In describing the production's sensual and audacious aesthetic, Michetti says: "This adaptation uses elements of Greek Chorus and narrative dance, and the Victorian setting is filtered through a very modern sensibility, allowing us to tell this familiar story in a way that's highly theatrical and has a distinctive style and point of view."

In its original 2006 run, *A Picture of Dorian Gray* received 2 LA Drama Critics Circle Awards and was praised by critics: "beautifully composed" (Los Angeles Times); "stunning theatre... a beautiful thing" (Pasadena Star News); "Michetti has brought Dorian to breathtaking life over 100 years later and Wilde himself would surely be thrilled" (*Entertainment Today*).

"Wilde's homosexuality was an integral part of his expression – publicly, privately and in his work. This adaptation restores the homoerotic aspects of the novella which have been conspicuously missing in most adaptations," says Michetti. "Dorian, while clearly attracted to women, displays his most lasting and intimate relationships with the men who adore him. Indeed, anyone who will worship Dorian seems to be fair game, and those who he leaves in his wake include more men than women."

“Many are more familiar with the story’s 1945 film adaptation, or the Showtime series ‘Penny Dreadful.’ Both of those take huge liberties with what Wilde wrote. But those who *do* think they know the story think of it as a Gothic horror story. That’s not entirely true of Wilde’s novella, and definitely not true of this adaptation.”

The cast of *A Picture of Dorian Gray* includes Colin Bates* as Dorian Gray, Frederick Stuart* as Lord Henry Wotton, Amin El Gamal* as Basil Hallward, Deborah Strang* as Lady Brandon/Lady Narborough/Ensemble, Justin Lawrence Barnes as Adrian Singleton/Ensemble, Daniel Lench* as Lord George Fermor/Thornton/Ensemble, Tania Verafield* as Lady Henry/Gladys/Ensemble, Chelsea Kurtz* as Sibyl Vane/Ensemble, Amy Tolsky* as Mrs. Vane/Prostitute/Ensemble, José Angel Donado as James Vane/Ensemble, Dale Sandlin as “Romeo”/Sir Geoffrey Clouston/Ensemble, and Abe Martell as Alan Campbell/Ensemble.

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage

Scenic design is by Michael Michetti[§] and James Maloof; costume design by Garry Lennon[†]; lighting design by Rose Malone; sound design by Robert Oriol; choreography by John Pennington; assistant director is Rhonda Kohl; wig/make-up design by Shannon Hutchins; props master is Erin Walley; dialect coach is Tracy Winters; select casting is Victoria Hoffman.

† Designer is represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829 of the IATSE

§ The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

Tickets for *A Picture of Dorian Gray* starting at \$25 are available online at www.anoisewithin.org and by phone by calling 626-356-3121.

SYMPOSIUMS, CONVERSATIONS, SPECIAL EVENTS

The run of *A Picture of Dorian Gray* includes a symposium at 6:45 pm on September 26, 2018, October 19, 2018, and November 3, 2018 and a post-show conversation with the cast on October 19, 2018, November 2, 2018, November 11, 2018, and November 16, 2018.

De Profundis

Thursday Oct. 18 at 7 pm at The Redmond Stage at A Noise Within
Directed by Michael Michetti

Join us for our Words Within free reading series in a performance of a letter written by Oscar Wilde during his imprisonment for “gross indecency.”

Community Conversation: ONE Archives

Friday Oct. 19 at 6:45 pm in The Lawrence Rehearsal Room at A Noise Within

Written by the openly gay Oscar Wilde in the repressive Victorian era, *Dorian Gray*’s history is one of censorship and persecution. Hear speaker Erik Adamian of USC’s ONE LGBT Archives discuss the dominant viewpoints in which *Dorian Gray* was written and received, and its ongoing importance in LGBT history. This event is open to all patrons viewing *A Picture of Dorian Gray*, regardless of date of tickets. No reservation required.

Paint & Sip with Dorian Gray

Saturday Oct. 20 at 5 pm in A Noise Within’s lobby

Join us for a wine and painting event at our space, inspired by *A Picture of Dorian Gray*. Taught by Art on the Run, tickets will be \$25 for all *A Picture of Dorian Gray* ticket holders or \$30 for additional guests.

A Picture of Dorian Gray with ASL Interpretation

Friday Nov. 2 at 8 pm

A Noise Within is pleased to present *A Picture of Dorian Gray* with American Sign Language interpretation on Friday November 2 during the 8 pm performance. Best view of interpreters will be available in the Center Left seating section. Please direct any questions or reservations to Dean Grosbard at dgrosbard@anoisewithin.org.

Community Conversation: Decay in A Picture of Dorian Gray

Saturday Nov. 3 at 6:45 pm in The Lawrence Rehearsal Room at A Noise Within

Join us for a conversation with Caltech professor Julia Greer exploring the topic of aging in organic materials (like flesh) and inorganic materials (like paint). This scientific analysis of the process of decay will complement the tale of the “ageless” Dorian Gray—a man who would give everything to stop the inevitable course of nature. This event is open to all patrons viewing *A Picture of Dorian Gray*, regardless of date of tickets. No reservation required.

ABOUT OSCAR WILDE

Oscar Wilde once explained that *Dorian Gray*'s three central characters are all aspects of himself: “Basil Hallward is what I think I am: Lord Henry what the world thinks me: Dorian is what I would like to be – in other ages, perhaps.”

Wilde was born on October 16, 1854 in Dublin to Sir William Wilde and Lady Jane Francesca Elgee Wilde. His father was a successful surgeon, and his mother was a writer. Thanks in large part to his mother, Oscar Wilde grew up surrounded by writers and artists. Lady Wilde wrote popular poetry under the pseudonym “Speranza” and often hosted salons for other writers, poets, and other creatives to discuss key questions of the time.

At the age of ten, Wilde began attending the exclusive Portora Royal School. When he was sixteen, Wilde attended Trinity College in Dublin, where he began to develop an interest in classics and was awarded the Berkeley Gold Medal for his achievements in studying the classics. After attending Trinity College, Wilde was granted a scholarship to continue his education at Magdalen College in Oxford, England. While at Magdalen, Wilde was particularly inspired by his professor, Walter Pater, who stressed the importance of art in life. Wilde's exposure to Pater's ideas of art as essential to life eventually led Wilde to become a key player in the Aesthetic Movement in literature.

Aestheticism is an artistic movement in the late 19th century that emphasized the creation of “art for art's sake” and claimed that art should not be created to uphold morals. This was a revolutionary idea in Victorian society, which was concerned with the appearance of strict morality and propriety. Wilde discusses the role of art in society in his essay “The English Renaissance of Art”: “Art never harms itself by keeping aloof from the social problems of the day: Rather, by doing so, it more completely realizes for us that which we desire. For to most of us the real life is the life we do not lead.”

In 1882, Wilde travelled from England to New York City to lecture about Aestheticism. He toured the United States and delivered 140 lectures in the course of about nine months. After his American tour, Wilde entered the English and Irish lecture circuit. In his lectures, he established himself as a staunch supporter of the Aesthetic Movement.

Wilde married Constance Lloyd in 1884. They had two children together: Cyril and Vyvyan. It was only in the last decade of his life that Wilde began to write and publish the works for which he is now known. While *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was met with criticism for its apparent lack of morality, Wilde had the

greatest success with his comedies that satirized Victorian society: *Lady Windermere's Fan*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Salomé*, *A Woman of No Importance*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, which is his most popular work.

In 1891, Wilde met Lord Alfred Douglas, and the two became romantically involved. In 1895, Lord Douglas's father, the Marquess of Queensberry, discovered the affair and called Wilde a sodomite. Wilde decided to sue the Marquess of Queensberry for criminal libel. However, the lawsuit led to disaster for Wilde. The libel case fell through when his lawyers brought up evidence of Wilde's homosexuality, and Wilde was then arrested for indecency and sentenced to two years of hard labor.

During his last year in prison, he wrote *De Profundis* (published posthumously in 1905), a long letter which discusses his spiritual journey through his trials. Upon his release, he immediately left for France, never to return to Ireland or Britain. There he wrote his last work, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898), a long poem commemorating the harsh rhythms of prison life, before he died of acute meningitis on November 30, 1900 at the age of 46.

ABOUT WILDE'S *THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY*

The Picture of Dorian Gray was originally published in the July 1890 issue of *Lippincott's*, a popular literary magazine. After the *Lippincott* publication, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* received scathing reviews from critics. The *Daily Chronical* dismissed it as "unclean," "poisonous," and "heavy with the mephitic odours of moral and spiritual putrefaction." The *Scots Observer* claimed *Dorian Gray* dealt in "matters only fitted for the Criminal Investigation Department or hearing in camera" and would only interest "outlawed noblemen and perverted telegraph-boys." Later on, this review was used as evidence against Wilde in his trial for "gross indecency." Wilde received enough criticism for *Dorian Gray's* homoerotic allusions that he removed the more explicit "purple" passages, such as Basil's affection for Dorian, before he published it as a novella in 1891.

"LET ME IN" 2018-2019 SEASON

A Picture of Dorian Gray plays in rotating repertory with Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, directed by Geoff Elliott (October 7 – November 18, 2018). Then ANW's holiday tradition continues with Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, adapted and directed by Geoff Elliott (December 1 – 23, 2018). Playing in rotating repertory in spring 2019 are Shakespeare's *Othello*, directed by Jessica Kubzansky (February 10 – April 28, 2019), Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, directed by Geoff Elliott (February 24 – April 26, 2019), and Mary Zimmerman's *Argonautika*, directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott (March 20 – May 5, 2019). The season closes with the return of Michael Frayn's *Noises Off*, directed by Julia Rodriguez-Elliott and Geoff Elliott (May 21 – June 9, 2019).

This season's theme is *Let Me In*. "All of our 2018-19 offerings feature characters who are outliers – people who have blazed their own trail but nevertheless struggle for acknowledgement and acceptance," says Geoff Elliott. "*Let Me In* isn't about a physical space, it's about the deeply human passion to be understood for who we are." KCET is a 2018-19 season media sponsor. A Noise Within's repertory theatre season is presented by the S. Mark Taper Foundation.

ABOUT A NOISE WITHIN

A Noise Within has been called "an oasis for those who love classic stories" by *Los Angeles Times* and is a leading regional producer based in Pasadena, CA. ANW's award-winning resident company practices a rotating repertory model at their state-of-the-art, 283-seat performing space. This venue, established in 2011, has allowed ANW to expand its audience, surpassing its previous box office, subscription, and attendance records each year.

In addition to producing world-class performances of classical theatre, the organization runs robust education programs committed to inspiring diverse audiences of all ages. Helmed by Producing Artistic Directors Geoff Elliott and Julia Rodriguez-Elliott, who hold MFAs from San Francisco's American Conservatory Theatre, A Noise Within truly delivers CLASSIC THEATRE, MODERN MAGIC.

<http://www.anoisewithin.org>

Calendar Listing: A Picture of Dorian Gray

Based on the novella by Oscar Wilde
Adapted and Directed by Michael Michetti
At A Noise Within, 3352 E Foothill Blvd, Pasadena, CA 91107

Performances:

Sunday, Sept 23 at 2 pm	Sunday, Oct 28 at 7 pm
Wednesday, Sept 26 at 7:30 pm (<i>Symposium</i>)	Friday, Nov 2 at 8 pm (<i>Post-Show Conversation</i>)
Thursday, Sept 27 at 7:30 pm (<i>Pay What You Can</i>)	Saturday, Nov 3 at 2 pm
Friday, Sept 28 at 8 pm	Saturday, Nov 3 at 8 pm (<i>Symposium</i>)
Saturday, Sept 29 at 8 pm (<i>Opening</i>)	Sunday, Nov 11 at 2 pm (<i>Post-Show Conversation</i>)
Sunday, Sept 30 at 2 pm	Sunday, Nov 11 at 7 pm
Friday, Oct 19 at 8 pm (<i>Post-Show Conversation</i>)	Thursday, Nov 15 at 7:30 pm
Saturday, Oct 20 at 2 pm	Friday, Nov 16 at 8 pm (<i>Post-Show Conversation</i>)
Saturday, Oct 20 at 8 pm	
Sunday, Oct 28 at 2 pm	

Tickets and information:

Website: www.anoisewithin.org, Phone: 626-356-3121

Regular Prices: Single Tickets from \$25, Student Rush with ID an hour before performance \$20.

Pay What You Can: Thursday, September 27 at 7:30 pm – all tickets remaining are *Pay What You Can*, cash only, exact change appreciated, at the box office on day of performance after 2 pm. Limit two per person.

Sunday Rush: October 28 at 7 pm and November 11 at 7 pm – all tickets remaining are \$25, available online after 12 am day of performance with the code SUNDAYRUSH or at the box office cash or credit after 2 pm day of performance.

Groups (10 or more): Adults from \$25 to \$50 a ticket, up to 35% off; Students from \$18/tickets.