



CenterStage

Late Fall 2009

Widows

A dramatic political allegory

Widows is a smoldering political allegory, co-written by Ariel Dorfman and Pulitzer prize winner Tony Kushner, that dramatizes, in a semi-mythical way, the consequences of human rights abuses in Chile during the ruthless regime of dictator Augusto Pinochet. Although the play's setting is Chile, the strong political message applies to countries around the world where severe human rights abuses are an ongoing way of life. Ariel Dorfman, Chilean novelist, playwright, and human rights activist, served as the cultural advisor to democratically elected leftist president Salvador Allende but was forced into exile following the military coup led by General Augusto Pinochet and covertly supported by the United States CIA. This experience profoundly influenced his life and his writing. The horrors of tyranny and the trials of exile are themes present in *Widows* and his most famous play, *Death and the Maiden*.

Widows is set in a small Chilean town, gripped by oppression and completely peopled by women and children who await the return of their men. All the men have been forcibly recruited into the army or abducted for political reasons.

Sofia, an old woman thought to be crazy by some and a shaman by others, forecasts a change on the horizon. True to her word, the river on the edge of town begins delivering up unidentifiable corpses of men. This gradually stirs the village women into a revolt against the military. The women demand the return of their men, alive or dead, and if dead, accountability for their killers.

Widows explores diseased societies where conflict between the few in the ruling classes who control land, money and the military and the many who are oppressed finally leads to resistance at the risk of loss of life in the demand for fundamental human rights. Although the abuses inflicted on the Chilean people are past and Pinochet is long gone, "forced disappearances", torture and political repression continue to be a way of life in many locations in the world. Americans seem too often blind to this fact. Dorfman contends "there is an innocence, a very dangerous innocence about Americans". This play "is an attempt to jar audiences into thinking about their own history, their own amnesia about history, their incapacity to see what is happening outside their borders, almost the incapacity . . . to understand evil".

Directed by AU Theatre Professor Steve Crosby, *Widows* opens in the C. D. Smith III Theatre in the Miller Performing Arts Center, on Wednesday, November 18th and runs through Saturday, November 21st. Show time is 8 p.m. Members of the production team include design faculty member Marketa Fantova, technical director Zach Hamm, video imagery by Zach Grosser and costume designer Sophie Schneider. For ticket information and reservations, please call 871-2828 or reserve online by clicking "Events" and the date you wish to attend at <http://las.alfred.edu/performing-arts>.



David and Elizabeth Miller Guest Artist **Guitarist Neil Jacobs**

The Alfred community will once again have the opportunity to hear one of the world's truly unique guitarists, Neil Jacobs, master of the 12-string guitar. A free concert will take place on Friday, October 16th at 8 p.m. in Holmes Auditorium. With his own style of playing that the St. Louis Riverfront Times calls "mesmerizing" and the Austin Chronicle describes as "the rockin'est since early Leo Kottke", Neil covers the full spectrum of styles and dynamics. Touching on music as diverse as gypsy, world, Balkan, jazz, and finger-style guitar, Neil maintains his own refreshing and energetic style. A self-taught musician, Neil draws inspiration from his world travels and experiences.



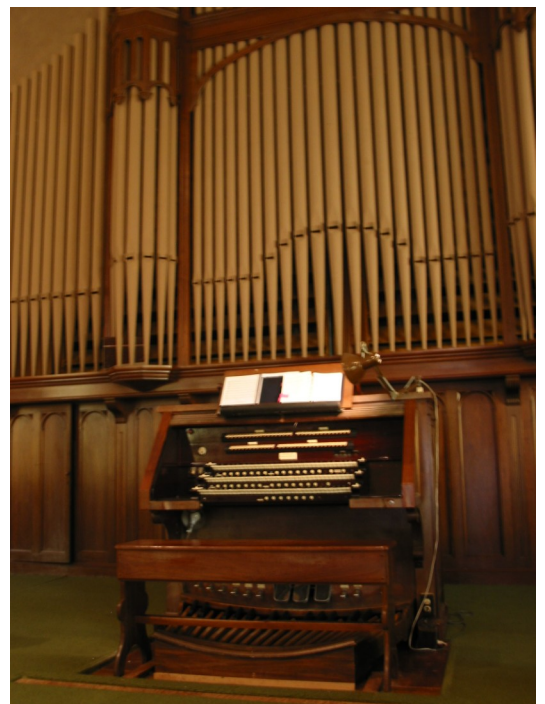
Most recently, his focus has been the gypsy music of Eastern Europe and the folk music of the Balkans. In 1996, Neil returned to the war-ravaged Balkans on an extended bus tour performing for refugee camps and orphanages throughout Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, culminating in an emotional concert with Zivili in Central Sarajevo. Upon completion of his third CD, "American Gypsy", Neil began a whirlwind tour performing at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and the Capitol steps in Washington D.C.. He then toured Italy and the Czech Republic and accompanied "Zivili" on UNESCO's Balkan Youth Reconciliation Seminar in Plodiv, Bulgaria. Neil's most memorable performance was at the gypsy camp at Plodiv, a community of over 30,000. Neil has just released his fifth CD, which has been nominated as "Best Solo Guitar Album" for 2009.

This concert is generously funded by the David and Elizabeth Miller Performing Arts Fund and the Division of Performing Arts' Department of Music.

Organ and Brass Spectacular

On Sunday, November 1st, the Music Department will present a sequel to last year's very successful Organ Spectacular. The program will feature the AU Brass Choir, director and trumpet soloist Dr. Chris Foster, and organist Laurel Buckwalter performing some spectacular literature including Aaron Copland's "Fanfare for the Common Man" for brass and percussion and Marcel Dupre's "Poeme Heroique" for brass, organ and field drum. Organ solos include J. S. Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor, arguably his most famous organ piece, and a Calvin Taylor arrangement of the spiritual "Soon I Will Be Done".

The event starts at 3 p.m. and is free. All are invited. A free will offering will be taken to benefit the Organ Restoration Fund for the community's 23 rank 1930 Moller organ which is often used by the AU Music Department.



David and Elizabeth Miller Guest Artists

Diaspora Drumming

In residence October 22-23

The three member group, Diaspora Drumming, will be coming to AU for two days of workshops and a performance. The group will be teaching African drumming techniques in two of Luanne Crosby's classes, World Music and Music Appreciation. A concert will be presented at 8 p.m. on Friday, October 23 in Holmes Auditorium. The concert is free, and the community is invited to attend.

Diaspora Drumming is dedicated to studying, teaching, and performing percussion music of the African Diaspora. Members Ringo Brill, Tiffany Nicely, and Gabriel Gutierrez study with masters in various styles, traveling whenever possible to learn styles on the soil where they were created.

Tiffany Nicely holds bachelor degrees in Percussion Performance and Music Theory/Composition from the University of New Mexico. She received Masters Degrees in Music Theory and Music Composition from SUNY Buffalo. Nicely continues her musical education by studying percussion of Brazil, Cuba, West Africa, and Mexico. In 2005 she traveled to Brazil where she studied *Bloco Afro*, *Candomble*, and *Samba Duro* styles of drumming. In 2006, Nicely studied marimba in the country of its origin, traveling to several cities in Mexico. The winter of 2007-2008 took her to Guinea, West Africa to study *balafon*, *djembe* and *doun doun* music.



An active performer, Nicely belongs to groups such as Maelstrom Percussion Ensemble (jazz fusion), Diaspora Drum & Dance (traditional percussion and dance of the African Diaspora), Lake Affect (music composed around text and visual art), and The Twelve Eight Path Band (New Orleans-style street band). Her CD credits include: *La Musica de Silvestre Revueltas*, *Playing Guitart*, *Lou Harrison: Labyrinth*, *The Word Underneath*, *Diaspora Drumming: Brazil, Cuba and West Africa*, and *Between Breathing*. Nicely has taught percussion and music theory at SUNY Fredonia since 2002. She also teaches World Music Cultures at Buffalo State College. She has been a music teaching artist with MUSE since 1999, and with the Arts in Education Institute of Western New York since 2001. She is a frequent school performer through Young Audiences of Western New York.

Ringo Brill's travels to study percussion have taken him several times to Cuba to study *Rumba* and *Batá* drumming, to Brazil to take lessons with master drummers in several different styles and to Mexico and Guinea, West Africa. Brill teaches weekly drumming classes, gives workshops in school and community settings, and makes and tunes his own animal-skin drumheads. Brill is a member of noted Buffalo area groups *Diaspora Drumming*, *One World Tribe*, *The Biocentrics*, *Heather Connor Quartet*, *Abundance*, *Eulipion*, and *The Twelve Eight Path Band*.

Gabriel Gutierrez, originally from Las Cruces, New Mexico, has played trumpet and cornet since middle school. Gutierrez studied American Studies in college, where he worked with ethnomusicologist Dr. Charles Keil. He has performed with *Protozoan Improvisational Ensemble*, *Buffalo Suicide Prevention Unit*, *Panjandrum*, and *Musicworks Project*. In the past few years, Gutierrez has begun to pursue his love of percussion, studying Afro-Latin rhythms and playing percussion with groups such as *The Twelve Eight Path Band* and *Diaspora Drumming*.

The concert and residency are generously funded by the David and Elizabeth Miller Performing Arts Fund.

Symphonic Band presents multi-cultural concert

The Alfred University Symphonic Band under the direction of Dr. Christopher Foster will perform a concert on Saturday, December 5, at 8 p.m. This free program celebrates diversity in America by featuring music from or influenced by various cultures such as Latin American, Hebrew, and Chinese. A second theme of equality in America will be highlighted by music motivated by the civil rights movement and music composed by females. Enjoy an evening of superb music as the group performs music from a broad range of styles and cultures.

For a ghoulish good time...

The AU Orchestra will present a Halloween Concert on Friday, October 30 at 7 p.m., featuring a return visit from our local Monster of Ceremonies, Brook Harris. Please note the earlier start time. Come as you are or as you aren't . . . that is, *you can dress up!* You and your family are in for a frightfully good time!

Student recitals offer great variety

The music department will offer two student recitals this semester. The first on Sunday, November 15 in Howell Hall will feature singers and pianists. The second, on the next Sunday, November 22, in Miller 301, will feature brass players, string player and pianists. Both recitals are free and start at 3 p.m.

Chamber Singers to perform in West Chester, PA

On October 30, the 26 members of the AU Chamber Singers will travel to West Chester, PA to rehearse and perform with two community choirs and a full orchestra. The Chester County Choral Society under the direction of Gary Garletts and the West Chester Ecumenical Choir, directed by Joe Buglio, will join with the AU students for a performance of the Requiem by John Rutter on Sunday, November 1 at 3 p.m. in the West Chester United Methodist Church.

Former Alfred resident and long time member of the University Chorus, Sue Davies is a member of Garletts' group. Garletts' son is currently a student at AU. Those two connections led to an invitation from Garletts to join forces for a performance. The Alfred connection will go even further as harpist Hannah Lash has agreed to perform with the orchestra. Hannah is the daughter of Barry and Martha Lash of Alfred and is now a freelance musician/composer living primarily in New York City.

This exchange/collaboration fits well with AU Professor of Voice Luanne Crosby's educational goal of life-long involvement in music and singing. The college students will see first-hand that many people choose to find outlets for choral singing even if they don't graduate with a major in music. The Chamber Singers will be housed by members of the PA choirs and will be featured on the first half of the concert.



Informal Dance Showing features classes and clubs

Informal showings of what the dancers on the AU campus have been working on this semester will be presented Thursday, Friday and Saturday, December 3, 4 and 5 at 7 p.m. in the CD Smith III Theatre located in the Miller Performing Arts Center. There will be performances by AU dance classes including the composition class taught by D. Chase Angier, new and existing repertory taught by Robert Bingham and contemporary dance classes taught by Angier and Bingham. Dance clubs such as the Alfred Steppas, Hip Hop, Dance Team, and the Middle Eastern Dancers will be performing. Pieces by independent student choreographers will also be featured.

Each night will present a different program; the admission is free. For further information, contact D. Chase Angier at angierc@alfred.edu.

Festifall features Chamber Singers, Chorus and Jazz Band

Festifall, the annual crowd pleasing pops/jazz concert, will be held on Friday, November 6. This year's program, which begins at 8 p.m. in Holmes Theatre, will feature the AU Chamber Singers and University Chorus under the direction of Dr. Luanne Crosby and the Jazz Band under the direction of Dr. Christopher Foster. Chamber Singers will start off the evening with songs by Billy Joel, the Manhattan Transfer and a song about making great "Chili Con Carne". University Chorus will keep the energy flowing with "Celebration", the jazz standard "Come Rain or Come Shine" and a Latin piece made famous by Brazil 66. Piano accompanist will be University Carillonneur Laurel Buckwalter.

The Alfred University Jazz Band will perform a wide variety of bebop, Latin, swing, ballads and funk pieces! Selections include Dizzy Gillespie's "Groovin' High," Charlie "Bird" Parker's "Now's the Time," and Bill Chase's "Get It On." All are invited to this free event.

Chorus and Chamber Singers present Rutter Requiem

The AU Chorus and Chamber Singers under the direction of Luanne Crosby will be joined by organist Laurel Buckwalter and soprano Rebecca Weaver for John Rutter's exquisite setting of the Requiem. The multi-movement work, scored for chorus, soloist, organ and small ensemble, will be performed in the Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church at 8 p.m. on Saturday, November 14. The Requiem includes movements in both the traditional Latin and English and features beautiful obbligato lines in the cello, oboe and flute, as well as powerful and bombastic moments with timpani and full ensemble. An Alfred native, the soprano soloist Rebecca Weaver is currently in her last year of doctoral studies in voice performance at the Eastman School of Music where she studies with Carol Webber. Weaver is in her third year as an adjunct instructor in voice at Alfred University.

The Chorus and Chamber Singers will also perform other works including the jubilant "Festival Sanctus" by John Leavitt; "Elohim Hashivenu", a 16th century madrigal in Hebrew; and "Amor de Mi Alma", a gorgeous setting by Z. Randall Stroope of a 15th century Spanish poem. It promises to be an evening of great choral music.

The concert is free, and all are encouraged to attend.

2009-2010 SEASON

OCTOBER

- 16 Neil Jacobs, 12 string guitarist.** Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 8 pm.
- 23 Diaspora Drumming.** Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 8 pm.
- 30 Halloween Concert** presented by the AU Orchestra and a Monster of Ceremonies. Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 7 pm.

NOVEMBER

- 1 Organ & Brass Spectacular** with AU Brass Choir and organist Laurel Buckwalter. Free admission. Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church, 3 pm.
- 6 Festifall** with the AU Chorus, Chamber Singers and Jazz Band. Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 8 pm.
- 14 Requiem by John Rutter** with AU Chorus and Chamber Singers. Free admission. Alfred Seventh Day Baptist Church, 8 pm.
- 15 Student Recital.** Singers and pianists will perform for your listening pleasure. Free admission. Howell Hall, 3 pm.
- 18-21 Widows by Ariel Dorfman and Tony Kushner.** Reservations required. CD Smith III Theatre, 8 pm.
- 22 Student Recital.** Free admission. Miller 301, 3 pm.

DECEMBER

- 3-5 Informal Dance Showing.** Free admission; limited seating. CD Smith III Theatre, 7 pm.
- 5 AU Concert Band.** Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 8 pm.

FEBRUARY

- 7 Ithaca Wind Quintet.** The Ithaca College School of Music resident faculty quintet is composed of Wendy Herbener Mehne on flute; Paige Morgan on oboe; Michael Galván on clarinet; Lee Goodhew Romm on bassoon; and Alexander Shuhan on horn. Free admission. Holmes Auditorium, 3 pm.
- 18-20 AU Dance Theatre** featuring original choreography and performances by AU faculty, students, and the Marlin and Ginger Miller Guest Artist. Tickets required. CD Smith III Theatre, nightly 8 pm with 2 pm Saturday matinee.

Division of Performing Arts
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