

For Immediate Release February 17, 2006

Contact: Kati Mitchell 617-495-2668

**American Repertory Theatre
presents the world premiere of
Orpheus X
Music and text by Rinde Eckert
Directed by Robert Woodruff
Designed by Denise Marika
March 25 — April 23, 2006**

Cambridge, MA — Robert Woodruff, Artistic Director, Gideon Lester, Associate Artistic Director, and Robert J. Orchard, Executive Director of the American Repertory Theatre (A.R.T.) present the sixth production of the A.R.T.'s 2005-06 subscription season — the world premiere of Rinde Eckert's **Orpheus X**, directed by Robert Woodruff, and designed by Denise Marika.

Performances begin on Saturday, March 25 at Zero Arrow Theatre, corner of Arrow Street and Massachusetts Ave. Harvard Square in Cambridge, and run through Sunday, April 23, 2006. The production will be available for press viewing beginning Wednesday, March 29 at 7:30pm.

The poet Orpheus risked death to rescue Eurydice from the underworld. They had almost reached the surface when he looked back — and lost her forever. After the wild success of **Highway Ulysses** (which received the Elliot Norton Award for best production of 2003), composer and performer **Rinde Eckert** and director **Robert Woodruff** are joining forces to create another world premiere. A contemporary retelling of the Orpheus and Eurydice legend, this new music-theatre piece will be designed by acclaimed video artist **Denise Marika**, with sets and costumes by **David Zinn**, lighting design by **Christopher Akerlind**, and sound design by **David Remedios**. The cast includes **Rinde Eckert** as Orpheus, **Suzan Hanson** as Eurydice, and **John Kelly** as John/Persephone.

Rinde Eckert is renowned as a composer, writer, director, singer, actor and movement artist. He conceives and writes both the music and libretto, and performs his own staged, full evening works, which have toured extensively both nationally and in Europe. In addition to the Elliot Norton-Winning production of **Highway Ulysses** at the A.R.T., his works include **And God Created Great Whales** (two-person musical opera conceived, with music and libretto written by and performed by Eckert, opened in New York City May 2000 — Obie-Award; remounted in September 2000 for a 6-week off-Broadway run, third run January

2002 at the 45 Bleecker Theatre); **An Idiot Divine**; **Romeo Sierra Tango** (commissioned by The Public Theater); **Quit This House**; **Shoot the Moving Things** (radio musical); **Four Songs Lost in a Wall** (radio opera); **The Gardening of Thomas D** (two-person musical play); **The Navigator** (an opera for children commissioned by California's Opera Piccola and premiered in 1999 (conceived, composed and directed by Eckert). He has worked extensively as a composer and collaborator with choreographer Margaret Jenkins, and won the San Francisco Bay Area's Isadora Duncan Award for his music in **Shelf Life**. Mr. Eckert also writes for instrumental chamber music ensembles, his chamber works have been performed in Portland, Boston, and New York. CDs of Eckert's music, *Finding My Way Home*, *Do the Day Over* and *Story In, Story Out* are available on the Intuition label from Köln, Germany. He received the Marc Blitzstein Memorial Award in 2005 from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, given every 5 years or so to a lyricist/librettist/composer.)

Soprano **Suzan Hanson** premiered Philip Glass's **The Sound of a Voice** (which she also performed at the Court Theatre in Chicago) and **The Fall of the House of Usher** at the A.R.T. She appeared at San Francisco Opera in **The Mother of Us All**, and has performed at Arizona Opera, Connecticut Opera, Sacramento Opera, Mississippi Opera, Virginia Opera, Kentucky Opera, Opera San Jose, the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino in Italy, New Israeli Opera, Spoleto Festivals USA and Italy, among others. She created Raven 1 in **White Raven** at Expo'98 in Lisbon, the Teatro Real in Madrid, and the Lincoln Center Festival, and toured extensively in the National Company of **Master Class**.

John Kelly previously appeared at the A.R.T. as Cupid in **Dido, Queen of Carthage** (Elliot Norton Award for Best Actor). He is a performance artist, whose works have garnered him two Bessie (New York Dance and Performance) Awards, two Obie Awards, the American Choreographer Award, a Guggenheim Fellowship, and the 2001 CalArts Alpert Award in Dance/Performance. He created the role of Bartell D'Arcy in the Broadway production and national tour of **James Joyce's The Dead**; created the role of Mr. Crime in Art Speigleman's **Drawn To Death**; and toured internationally in the role of the Narrator in John Cage's 1982 radio play "Marcel Duchamp, James Joyce, Eric Satie: An Alphabet". He has given three solo vocal recitals at Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, and performed with the San Francisco Symphony. He collaborated and recorded with The Jazz Passengers ("Jazz Passengers In Love"); with composer David Del Tredici (as lyricist and vocalist on "Secret Music"); and Laurie Anderson ("Life On A String"). He recently completed a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study.

Video artist **Denise Marika** has an MFA from the University of California, Los Angeles and is represented by the Howard Yezerski Gallery in Boston. She has exhibited across the US and internationally for over twenty years, including solo exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, MASS MoCA,

Worcester Art Museum, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, and a retrospective at the Pomona College Museum of Art. Works in permanent collections include the Rose Art Museum, the DeCordova Museum and the Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation. She has received grants from the NEA and LEF Foundation and is on the faculty at the Massachusetts College of Art Studio for Interrelated Media.

David Zinn previously created the sets and costumes for Robert Woodruff's productions of **Highway Ulysses** and **Olly's Prison**. Other credits include sets and costumes for Sandra Tsing Loh's **Sugar Plum Fairy** (Seattle Repertory Theater), costumes for **He Hunts** (Geffen Theatre) and **Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** (Children's Theater Company), sets and costumes for Mozart's **La Clemenza di Tito** (Santa Fe Opera), costumes for **The Winter's Tale**, **The Merchant of Venice**, and **Henry IV, Part I** (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), **The Cider House Rules** (Mark Taper Forum, Seattle Repertory Theatre Atlantic Theater, NYC). Other: Atlantic Theater, MCC, Curtis Institute of Music, Juilliard Opera and Drama, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Rep, Alliance Theatre, Spoleto Festival, Children's Theatre Company, Cincinnati Playhouse, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Intiman Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Portland Stage Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz.'

Tony Award-winning designer **Christopher Akerlind** created lighting for the A.R.T. productions of **Desire Under the Elms**, **Olly's Prison**, **Oedipus**, **La Dispute**, **Uncle Vanya**, **Enrico IV**, and **Misalliance**. Recent premieres include **Well** (Joseph Papp Public Theatre), **The Light in the Piazza** (Lincoln Center – Tony Award), **A Midsummer Night's Dream** (Siti Company), **Cymbeline** (Royal Shakespeare Company), **Pericles** and **Don Juan** (Theater for a New Audience). Other premieres: **The Skryker**, **Mad Forest**, **The Dying Gaul**, **Slavs!**, **The Tale of the Allergist's Wife**, **Seven Guitars** (Tony Award nomination). His extensive credits in opera include productions at the Boston Lyric, L.A. Opera, Dallas, Glimmerglass, Hamburg, Houston, Minnesota, New York City, Nissei and Santa Fe Operas and over forty productions for Opera Theater of Saint Louis where he was Resident Lighting Designer for twelve years. Awards: Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Lighting Design, the Michael Merritt Award for Design and Collaboration and numerous nominations for the Drama Desk, Lucile Lortel, Outer Critics Circle and Tony Awards.

Resident Sound Designer **David Remedios** has created twenty-eight productions for the A.R.T., including **Three Sisters**, **The Keening**, **Amerika**, **Olly's Prison**, **Dido**, **Queen of Carthage**, and **The Provok'd Wife** (original music). He has created sound for Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, the 92nd St. Y, Emerson Stage, Boston Theatre Works, New York Theatre Workshop, and Vineyard Playhouse; original music and sound for Boston Playwrights

Theatre; and dance soundscapes for Concord Academy, Snappy Dance Theater Company, and Lorraine Chapman. He is recipient of 2001 Elliot Norton Award for **Mother Courage and Her Children**.

Performances of **Orpheus X** run March 28, 29, 30, April 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, at 7:30pm; March 25, 31, April 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 at 8pm; March 26, April 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 22, 23 at 2pm; April at 10am.

Single ticket prices for Zero Arrow productions range from \$15 (students) to \$48, depending on the day of the week and seat location. Discounts are also available to seniors. The A.R.T. also continues its **Pay What You Can** program, making fifty tickets available for every Saturday matinee performance of the subscription season at the Loeb Drama Center for patrons to purchase at whatever amount they can afford (based on availability). **Group rates** are also available, with extra savings for senior citizens and student groups.

The balance of the A.R.T. 2005-06 Season includes **Island of Slaves** by Pierre Marivaux, directed by Robert Woodruff (May 13 —June 11, Loeb Stage). In addition, at Zero Arrow Theatre the A.R.T. will co-present with World Music The Civilians production of **(I am) Nobody's Lunch**, a merrily unserious vaudevillian romp through the landscape of American public culture (April 24-30); and **Charlie, Victor, Romeo**, a performance derived from the "Black Box" transcripts of six major real-life airline emergencies (May 17-28).

To learn more about the A.R.T. season directly from the artists who create each production, including actors, directors, writers, and designers, connect to the A.R.T. Website at www.amrep.org or call the A.R.T. **InfoLine** at (617) 547-8300. The **InfoLine** is also available 24 hours a day to provide directions to the theatre; to order brochures, calendars, and newsletters; and to allow direct access to the A.R.T. Box Office (hours are noon to curtain time on performance days, noon to 5 pm on non-performance days, closed on Mondays).

The American Repertory Theatre, located at Harvard Square at the Loeb Drama Center at 64 Brattle Street, Cambridge and Zero Arrow Theatre, corner of Arrow Street and Massachusetts Avenue, are accessible to persons with special needs and to those requiring wheelchair seating or first-floor restrooms. Deaf and hard-of-hearing patrons can also reach the Theatre by calling the toll-free N.E. Telephone Relay Center at 1-800-439-2370.

Public transportation and discount parking are available nearby.

AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATRE FACT SHEET

ORPHEUS X

Music and text by	Rinde Eckert
Directed by	Robert Woodruff
Set Design by	David Zinn and Denise Marika
Costume Design by	David Zinn
Lighting Design by	Christopher Akerlind
Sound Designer	David Remedios

Cast:

Orpheus	Rinde Eckert *
Eurydice	Suzan Hanson*
John/Persephone	John Kelly*

BAND

Timothy Feeney, Percussion; Jeff Lieberman, Piano, Guitar; Blake Newman, Bass; Wendy Richman, Viola, Cello

(*) Members of Actors Equity Association.

PERFORMANCE DATES AND TIMES:

March 28, 29, 30, April 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 20, at 7:30pm;
March 25, 31, April 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22 at 8pm; March 26, April 1, 2, 8, 9,
15, 22, 23 at 2pm.; April at 10am.

Production available for press viewing from Wednesday, March 29 at 7:30 pm. To reserve tickets for this performance, contact the press office at 617-496-2000 x 8841 kati_mitchell@harvard.edu

TICKETS:

Price: \$15 to \$74. Tickets may be charged to American Express, Visa, or MasterCard. Senior citizen, group discounts are available.

Box Office Phone and **A.R.T. InfoLine**: (617) 547 8300 or on the website at www.amrep.org

E-mail address: press@amrep.org **Web address:** www.amrep.org

PRODUCTION PHOTOS CAN BE DOWNLOADED FROM

**www.amrep.org/media
effective March 27, 2006**