

19/20 SEASON

Wallis Annenberg
Center for the
Performing Arts

Press Release

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**Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
and The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles**

**AL PACINO in
A Benefit Staged Reading of Award-Winning Vietnam Veteran Playwright
David Rabe's
*THE BASIC TRAINING OF PAVLO HUMMEL***

**Sunday, March 8, 7:00 pm, at The Wallis
Sold Out – Wait List is Available**

**Pacino Reprises the Title Role of Pavlo Hummel, which He Played
in the Original 1977 Broadway Production, Winning a Best Actor Tony Award**

**A Portion of Proceeds to Benefit the National Association of Veteran-Serving Organizations
and The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles' Veterans in Art Program**

(Beverly Hills, CA, February 27, 2020) Al Pacino (*The Irishman*, *Scent of a Woman*, *The Godfather*) will participate in a benefit staged reading of award-winning Vietnam veteran playwright David Rabe's *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel*, at the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, in collaboration with The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles, on Sunday, March 8, 2020, 7 pm, in The Wallis' Bram Goldsmith Theater. The Oscar, Emmy and Tony Award-winning actor reprises the title role of Pavlo Hummel, which he played in the original 1977 Broadway production, winning a Best Actor Tony Award. *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel*, the first in Rabe's acclaimed Vietnam War trilogy, follows a naive and directionless young man drafted into the U.S. Army. Alienated from his fellow soldiers and searching for meaning and status, the story of Hummel's life and military experiences unfold backwards after a fateful encounter in a Saigon brothel. Single tickets and VIP ticket packages, which include a post-performance cast reception and other benefits, are sold out, and a wait list is available.

A portion of the proceeds from the reading benefits the National Association of Veteran-Serving Organizations (NAVSO), the only national nonprofit exclusively focused on accelerating the access, impact, reach and capacity of individual veteran-serving organizations nationwide and improving the

lives of veterans and military families, and The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles' Veterans in Art program, a transitional training and employment initiative for chronically unemployed veterans enrolled in vocational rehabilitation programs in technical theatre. Strobe lights, explosions and lighting effects that simulate war conditions are featured in the performance.

The staged reading of *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel* is directed by Robert Allan Ackerman, a two-time Golden Globe and five-time Emmy Award nominee and veteran director of Broadway and London's West End. In addition to Pacino, the cast includes Joel Steingold (Ardell), Anzu Lawson (Yen/Mrs. Sorrentino), Rif Hutton (Sgt. Tower/Parham), Matthew Wolf (Kress/Mickey), Matt Nolan (Pierce/Sgt. Wall), Robert Baker (Parker/Brisbey) Darren Richardson (Corporal/Hinkle), Sheldon Donenberg (Jones/Grennel/Ryan), Karen Strassman (Mrs. Hummel), Chase Fein (Captain/Officer/Burns), Kazumi Aihara (Mamasan). Serving as the "Chorus" are Takuma Anzai, Toru Uchikado, Gavin Lee, Taishi Mizuno and Shin Shimizu.

Additionally, seven production interns from Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles' Veterans in Arts program are involved in the reading, gaining vital professional theater experience: Chad Rowlett, Technical Director Intern, US Navy Seabee Builder & Engineer E-6, 2000-2012; Kevin Lamb, Propsmaster Intern, US Army Infantry E-3, 2003-2005; Joe Casillas, Front of House Intern, Sgt. US Army 2002-2008; Darrell Morrison, Sound Board Operator Intern, US Marines, Infantry E-3, 2008-2012; Derek McGee, Production Management Intern, US Army Security Forces/Element Leader E-4, 1999-2004; Joshua Valdez, Costume Coordination Intern, US Air Force F-15 Crew Chief, 1993-1997.

"The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel has great meaning for me," says Pacino. "The play was the first of its kind to explore the national trauma of Vietnam and has as much relevance today as it did 40 years ago. It's wonderful to be doing this masterwork of David Rabe's in this setting as a reading, especially because it will benefit such a great cause for our Veterans."

"Al Pacino has long been one of our most treasured and talented performers across stage and screen, and it is a distinct honor for The Wallis to partner with him and the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles on this reading of David Rabe's powerful play," says The Wallis' Artistic Director Paul Crewes. "With his passion for theater combined with him revisiting his Tony Award-winning role, it will be a thrilling performance. We are delighted to welcome him into our growing home of local artists."

"We are thrilled that SCLA's Veterans in Art program, has inspired this collaboration on such a seminal play," says The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles Artistic Director Ben Donenberg. "Al Pacino's recognition of this successful signature program shows the value of the training we offer, and the contributions of our veteran students to theatre, and to our community."

"The team at NAVSO is delighted to partner with Mr. Pacino, The Wallis, and the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles as a tribute to our nation's veterans and their families," says Tim Farrell, CEO, NAVSO. "NAVSO is immersed in the greater Los Angeles area, in particular with deep planning and strategy on the county's Veteran Peer Access Network; a \$33 million program that will encourage the most vulnerable in our nation's largest population of veterans to get the help they need, and will be replicable in many areas nationwide. We're privileged to be featured in this impactful platform with Mr. Pacino and our wonderful Southern California partners".

The Wallis and The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles recognize the following performers' unions through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the artists to appear on this program: Actors' Equity Association, American Guild of Musical Artists and SAG-AFTRA.

Reserved admission tickets, \$49 to \$125, are SOLD OUT but a wait list is available through the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts at 310-746-4000 or TheWallis.org/Hummel. VIP packages that

include a post-performance reception with Al Pacino and the cast are SOLD OUT. The Wallis is located at [9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills.](#)

About Al Pacino

Al Pacino (Pavlo Hummel) is a unique and enduring figure in the world of American stage and film. He was born in East Harlem and grew up in New York City's South Bronx. He attended the famed School of Performing Arts until the age of 17, when he moved on to study acting first at the Herbert Berghof Studio (HB Studio) with teacher and coach Charles Laughton, and later, at the legendary Actors Studio with mentor Lee Strasberg. Between 1963 and 1969 he honed his craft working in numerous theatrical productions including William Saroyan's *Hello Out There* for his off-Broadway debut in 1963; *Why is a Crooked Letter* in 1966, for which he won an off-Broadway Obie Award; *The Indian Wants the Bronx*, that earned him another Obie Award as best actor of the 1967-68 season; and *Does a Tiger Wear a Necktie?* for his Broadway debut and first Tony Award in 1969. Pacino continued appearing onstage in the 1970s, receiving a second Tony Award for *The Basic Training of Pavlo Hummel* and performing the title role in Shakespeare's *Richard III*. In the 1980s, he again achieved critical success on the stage while appearing in David Mamet's *American Buffalo*. Since 1990, Pacino's stage work has included revivals of Eugene O'Neill's *Hughie*, Oscar Wilde's *Salome* and Lyle Kessler's *Orphans*. In 2011, he portrayed Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* on Broadway, garnering a Tony Award nomination for Best Leading Actor in a Play and, in 2013, appeared on Broadway playing Shelley Levine in David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*. His first leading part in a feature film was in the 1971 drama *Panic in Needle Park*, and the following year Francis Ford Coppola selected him to take on the breakthrough role of Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*. He was nominated for an Academy Award for his work on *The Godfather* and, within the next six years, he received another four Academy Award nominations for the films *Serpico*, *The Godfather Part II*, *Dog Day Afternoon* and *...And Justice For All*. A long and rich film career has followed with over 45 titles including *Scarface*, *Sea of Love*, *The Insider*, *Donnie Brasco*, *Heat* (where he shared the screen for the first time with fellow film icon Robert DeNiro) and *Any Given Sunday*. He garnered additional Academy award nominations for his performances in *Dick Tracy* and *Glengarry Glen Ross*. His role as Colonel Frank Slade in *Scent of a Woman* won him the Academy Award for Best Actor in 1992. He played Shylock in Michael Radford's film adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*. He directed and stars in the films *Looking For Richard* and *Chinese Coffee*. His television work includes a rich relationship with HBO first as Roy Cohn in the 2003 miniseries *Angels in America* and as Dr. Jack Kevorkian in *You Don't Know Jack* in 2010, both of which garnered Golden Globes and Emmy Awards for his performances. In 2013, he won Golden Globe and Emmy nominations for the title role in David Mamet's film *Phil Spector*. Pacino recently directed the films *Salome* and *Wilde Salome*, in which he stars as King Herod with Jessica Chastain as Salome. *Wilde Salome* received its world premiere at the Venice International Film Festival. Most recently, Pacino can currently be seen as true-life teamster in an Oscar-nominated performance as Jimmy Hoffa in Martin Scorsese's *The Irishman*, starring alongside Robert De Niro and Joe Pesci. *The Irishman* is an adaptation of the 2004 memoir *I Heard You Paint Houses* by Charles Brandt and follows organized crime in postwar American, as told by the infamous hitman Frank Sheeran (De Niro). Pacino can next be seen in Amazon Prime Video's highly-anticipated series *Hunters*. Pacino has been awarded the Golden Globe Cecil B. DeMille Award for Lifetime Achievement in Motion Pictures, the American Film Institute Life Achievement Award and in 2011 he was received the National Merit of Arts from President Obama. He received the Kennedy Center Honor in 2016.

About The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles

The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles has more than 30 years of award-winning history producing plays and programs that reflect and engage the people, landscape, and history of Los Angeles. By producing world-class Shakespeare-inspired plays and offering best practices arts education and award-winning arts-based workforce development programs targeting under-served youth and veterans, the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles demonstrates that high-quality accessible immersive arts engagement builds community and changes lives. SCLA offers outreach programs such as **Will Power to Youth**, an employment and enrichment program that combines hands-on artistic experience with paid job training, specifically created to provide an arts immersion for at-risk youth; **Will Power to Schools**, a program providing free tickets to students to see Shakespeare and professional teacher training; and **Veterans In Art**, which provides employment, training and educational opportunities for underemployed military veterans. SCLA's Veterans in Art provides participants with paid experience in entertainment industry production roles, including venue and scenic technicians, audio engineers, wardrobe assistants, ushers, parking attendants, site specific marketers, technical director, and actors. In 2018, more than 40 Veterans in Art participants were employed by the nationally acclaimed, award-winning SCLA production

of *Henry IV*, directed by Daniel Sullivan with Harry Groener, Tom Hanks, Hamish Linklater, Joe Morton and Rondi Reed, on the West Los Angeles VA Campus. SCLA offers veterans, active military members, their family members and caregivers, free admission to professional theatrical productions and programs. For more information about SCLA and the SCLA development programs, visit www.shakespearecenter.org.

About the National Association of Veteran-Serving Organizations (NAVSO)

NAVSO is exclusively focused on transforming the veteran services marketplace to improve the lives of veterans and military families. NAVSO, founded in 2015, fosters innovation, delivers resources to those who serve this remarkable community, funds their support, studies their needs or employs them. NAVSO offers educational programming, provides direct consultation, hosts summits, commissions research, shares democratized data resources, and facilitates the evaluation of meaningful services and is the only national nonprofit laser-focused on accelerating the access, impact, reach and capacity of the nation's nearly 40,000 veteran-serving organizations, Learn more at www.navso.org

About the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts:

The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is a dynamic cultural hub and community resource where local, national and international artists share their artistry with ever-expanding audiences. The campus, located in the heart of Beverly Hills, CA, is committed to robust and distinctive presentations and education programs curated with both creativity and social impact in mind. Distinguished by its eclectic programming that mirrors the diverse landscape of Los Angeles and its location in the entertainment capital of the world, The Wallis has produced and presented more than 275 dance, theater, opera, classical music, cinema and family programs since its doors opened in October 2013. Hailed as “au courant” (*LaLa Magazine*), The Wallis was lauded by *Culture Vulture*, which proclaims, “If you love expecting the unexpected in the performing arts, you have to love The Wallis.” Its programming has been nominated for 57 Ovation Awards and seven L.A. Drama Critic’s Circle Awards. The campus itself, a breathtaking 70,000-square-foot facility, celebrating the classic and the modern, has garnered six architectural awards. Designed by acclaimed architect Zoltan E. Pali (SPF:architects), the restored building features the original 1933 Beverly Hills Post Office (on the National Register of Historic Places), which serves as the theater’s dramatic yet welcoming lobby, and includes the contemporary 500-seat, state-of-the-art Bram Goldsmith Theater; the 150-seat Lovelace Studio Theater; an inviting open-air plaza for family, community and other performances; and GRoW @ The Wallis: A Space for Arts Education, where learning opportunities for all ages and backgrounds abound. Together, these elements embrace the city’s history and its future, creating a performing arts destination for L.A.-area visitors and residents alike. The Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts is led by Chairman of the Board Michael Nemeroff, Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer Rachel Fine and Artistic Director Paul Crewes.

For more information about The Wallis, please visit: TheWallis.org.

For downloadable photos, please visit: TheWallis.org/Press.

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EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

WHAT:

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles

AL PACINO in

A Benefit Staged Reading of Award-Winning Vietnam Veteran Playwright David Rabe’s

THE BASIC TRAINING OF PAVLO HUMMEL

Directed by Robert Allan Ackerman

CAST:

Pavlo Hummel - Al Pacino

Ardell - Joel Steingold

Yen/Mrs. Sorrentino - Anzu Lawson

Sgt. Tower/Parham - Rif Hutton
Kress/Mickey - Matthew Wolf
Pierce/Sgt. Wall - Matt Nolan
Parker/Brisbey – Robert Baker
Corporal/Hinkel - Darren Richardson
Jones/Grennel/Ryan - Sheldon Donenberg
Mrs. Hummel - Karen Strassman
Mamasan - Kazumi Aihara
Captain/Officer/Burns - Chase Fein
“Chorus” - Takuma Anzai, Toru Uchikado, Gavin Lee, Taishi Mizuno and Shin Shimizu

WHEN:

Sunday, March 8, 7:00 pm

RUN TIME:

Running time is 2 hours, including a 15-minute intermission

WHERE:

Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts
Bram Goldsmith Theater
9390 N. Santa Monica Boulevard
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

NOTE:

Strobe lights, explosions and lighting effects that simulate war conditions are featured in the performance.

TICKET PRICES AND INFORMATION:

General admission tickets \$49 to \$125 (SOLD OUT – wait list is available)

TheWallis.org/Hummel

310.746.4000

Box Office – Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts Ticket Services

9390 N. Santa Monica Blvd, Beverly Hills, CA, 90210

VIP ticket packages (includes post-performance photo reception and other benefits) are SOLD OUT

Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles

www.shakespearecenter.org/al-pacino-2020-pavlo-hummel

213-481-2273

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