



For Immediate Release:

Explosive Political Farce
ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST
Coming to Live Arts



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Charlottesville, VA — Live Arts Theater's 2021/22 reIGNITE Season closes with Dario Fo's hilarious political farce **ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST** in a translation by Jon Laskin and Michael Aquilante, directed by Live Arts Artistic Director Susan E. Evans. **ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST** will have 12 performances, May 20 through June 5,

at Live Arts Theater, 123 E. Water Street, in Charlottesville.

Live Arts will host two special events: An opening night reception following the May 20 performance; and a post-show audience talkback on Thursday, June 2 (7:30pm curtain). Live Arts welcomes audiences to enjoy the bar and concessions one hour prior to showtime and during intermission.

“A potent reminder that leftwing theatre should be an affirmation of joy ... [a] hair’s-breadth combination of political exposé and pungent vaudeville ...” *The Guardian*

In 1969 an anarchist railway worker in Milan named Giuseppe Pinelli “accidentally” plummeted to his death from a fourth-floor window in a police interrogation room. Pinelli was being questioned over a bombing at the Piazza Fontana which had happened three days earlier, killing 17 people and wounding 88. He was finally completely absolved of the crime; 32 years later a new investigation found three members of a Neo Fascist far-right group responsible for the bombing. Based on this actual case, **ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST** is a fiercely funny exposé of the rampant (and thoroughly institutionalized) corruption of the Italian police force.

Called a “grotesque farce” by the playwright, **ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST** tells the story of a self-proclaimed “madman” who infiltrates central police headquarters. Using an increasingly absurd set of disguises, the madman exposes a labyrinth of lies and contradictions and manipulates his bumbling interrogators into truth-telling.

“Dario Fo is subversive; he can be controversial, and savagely satirical, and his comic philosophy was no-holds-barred,” says Evans. “As he said, his goal was to ‘provoke laughter with anger.’ In **ANARCHIST** farce and politics are inseparable.”

This production of **ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST** showcases seven super-charged local performers: Nick Hagy as the Madman, Julia Robertson as Sporty Inspector, Johnny Butcher as Inspector Bertozzo, Eric Ramírez-Weaver as the Commissioner, Elizabeth Rose as the Reporter, and Cecilia Huang and David Johnson as the Officers. The Live Arts production also features a dynamic creative team: Khadijah Williams (production stage manager); Jackson Key (scenic and lighting designer); Becky Brown (sound designer); Amy

Goffman (costume designer); Sam Flippo (properties designer); and Heather Hutton (master electrician).

“With a blend of laughter and gravity he opens our eyes to abuses and injustices in society and also the wider historical perspectives in which they can be placed,” according to the 1997 Nobel Prize in Literature, awarded to Dario Fo by the Swedish Academy.

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST (Morte accidentale di un’anarchico) premiered on December 10, 1970, by Dario Fo’s company La Comune. Nobel Prize-winning playwright Dario Fo’s political farce was seen by more than half a million people in the first two years after its 1970 premiere. It has since been performed in more than 40 countries and is considered a classic of twentieth century theater.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Playwright, actor, storyteller, director, satirist, artist, and activist Dario Fo (1926-2016) was born in a small town on the shores of Lake Maggiore in Northern Italy. After training as an architect, Fo began working in theater as a radio monologist. He met his wife, actress Franca Rame, in 1951 while they were performing in the same show. The couple became long-time partners and collaborators. In 1968, Fo and Rame joined a surging movement of students, workers, and revolutionary groups and began performing a new kind of political theater for working class audiences in non-conventional theaters. The couple’s controversial farces tackle ideologies of the government and the church. Through the years they were censored, personally attacked, arrested, imprisoned, and charged with everything from obscenity to blasphemy to subversion. Fo is the author of more than 25 full-length and one-act plays, including *Archangels Don’t Play Pinball*, *Mistero Buffo*, *About Face*, and *We Won’t Pay! We Won’t Pay!* The dramatist’s plays have been staged in more than 30 countries.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Susan E. Evans joined the talented Live Arts team in June 2021. Prior to that, she held several positions in the San Francisco Bay Area. She served as artistic director at Eastenders Repertory Company (directing work included *We Won't Pay, We Won't Pay*, *Frozen*, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* (co-director), the World Premieres of Charles Polly's *Twyla Trilogy*, and many others), the Douglas Morrisson Theatre (*Private Lives*, *Dividing the Estate*, *All My Sons*, *Eurydice*, *An Ideal Husband* - Scott Munson adaptation), *The Skin of Our Teeth* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession*) and Town Hall Theatre (*The Revolutionists*, *Sense & Sensibility*, *The Cherry Orchard*). She also directed at Contra Costa Civic Theatre and with Actors Reading Writers, and has collaborations with solo artist Carolyn Doyle, and with playwright Scott Munson (*The Brecht Project*). She is a proud graduate of the Drama Studio London @ Berkeley and associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. www.susaneevansdirector.com

ABOUT LIVE ARTS

Live Arts is a volunteer-powered, nonprofit community theater in Downtown Charlottesville. Founded in 1990, Live Arts is celebrating 31 years of forging theater and community. The 2021/22 reIGNITE Season is made possible by Season Sponsors Elizabeth and Joe LeVaca, Media Sponsors C-VILLE Weekly and WTJU 91.1FM, Pay-What-You-Can Sponsor Ting, IT Partner PJ Networks Computer Services, Website Design and Development Partner Convoy, and philanthropic gifts by hundreds of theater lovers in our community.

Live Arts is also supported by grants from Albemarle County, the Bama Works Fund of Dave Matthews Band at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, the DN Batten Foundation, and Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

For More Information

Please contact Marketing & Design Coordinator Katie Rogers at katie@livearts.org or visit livearts.org.

Calendar Information on ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST:

WHO: LIVE ARTS presents

WHAT: ACCIDENTAL DEATH OF AN ANARCHIST by Dario Fo

CAST: Johnny Butcher, Nick Hagy, Cecilia Huang, David Johnson, Eric Ramirez-Weaver, Julia Robertson, and Elizabeth Rose

DATES: May 20 to June 5, 2022

SHOWTIMES:

Wednesdays and Thursdays @ 7:30pm

Fridays and Saturdays @ 8pm

Sundays (May 29 and June 5) @ 2pm

WHERE: Live Arts Theater, 123 East Water Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Friday, May 20: Opening Night Reception

Thursday, June 2: Post-Show Audience Talkback

TICKETS: \$25 for adults, \$20 for students and senior citizens. Pay-What-You-Can tickets available on Wednesday night performances or the first Saturday night performance. Free tickets to the preview night performance on Thursday, May 19 can be reserved through livearts.org/tix.

BOX OFFICE: 434-977-4177 x123 or online at livearts.org/tix

INFO: katie@livearts.org or visit livearts.org.

SAFETY: Live Arts prioritizes the health and safety of our volunteers, patrons, and staff by requiring indoor masks and full vaccinations for all. Please visit livearts.org/covid for our current COVID policies.