

For Immediate Release

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_____ Brings the Classics to _____ with Walden

This _____, _____ returns to _____, with a production of Walden, a one-man performance adapted from Henry David Thoreau's famous reflections on living in the woods, directed by Augustine Ripa, and performed by Bill George and Emma Chong. The show runs _____.

Walden, a lyrical, contemplative presentation, meditates on the simplicity and pleasure of a life without the confines of social constructs and unnecessary financial restraints. It tells the story of a young Henry David Thoreau who, troubled by his times and dissatisfied with many of the assumptions about living that society takes for granted, retreats to the woods, to live in a house of his own construction and earn his living "by the sweat of his brow". In his retreat to Walden Pond, he discovers the sublime beauty of nature and the inherent transcendent power of the individual and creation.

The narrator Thoreau is portrayed by Touchstone co-founder Bill George, who has been performing and adapting this text for nigh unto two decades. "I first performed this piece in 1994," he recalls, "and only recently have I felt that I'm getting to the bottom of it. It's something to truly savor, the search to get to the bottom of things."

George, one of Pennsylvania's finest theatre artists, recipient of the coveted Fringe First Award for outstanding new works at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and the 1995 Pennsylvania Solo Theatre Artist Fellowship, notes also that it is truly Thoreau's text that is at the heart of things. "The key thing for me is the language, the sincerity of it, the uplifting transcendent and youthful honesty—such a great luxury to bask in it, soak in the truth of it."

"How many of us today would be eager to reproduce Thoreau's experiment, if only we dared?" adds director Augustine Ripa. "To shed the burdens of social custom and pressure in order to seek out the essential meaning of life? To discover self-reliance and peace through a harmony with one's natural surroundings? Thoreau did what many of us dream about, and we take vicarious pleasure in his journey of discovery."

The production features flute accompaniment by Emma Chong, the classic story and text of Henry Thoreau’s *Walden*, and the simple but evocative gestural skills of Mr. George as we are taken out “on the pond” or to the wood lot behind his “house” to observe the “war of ants”. Through gesture, sound, music and text, we travel with Thoreau on his journey of discovery—of himself, of the spirit of young America.

Walden, produced by _____, plays ____ at _____ at _____ pm. Regular admission is ____ with ____ tickets available to students and seniors; group rates available. Tickets may be purchased by phone at _____, or online at _____.

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