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Kentwood Players presents

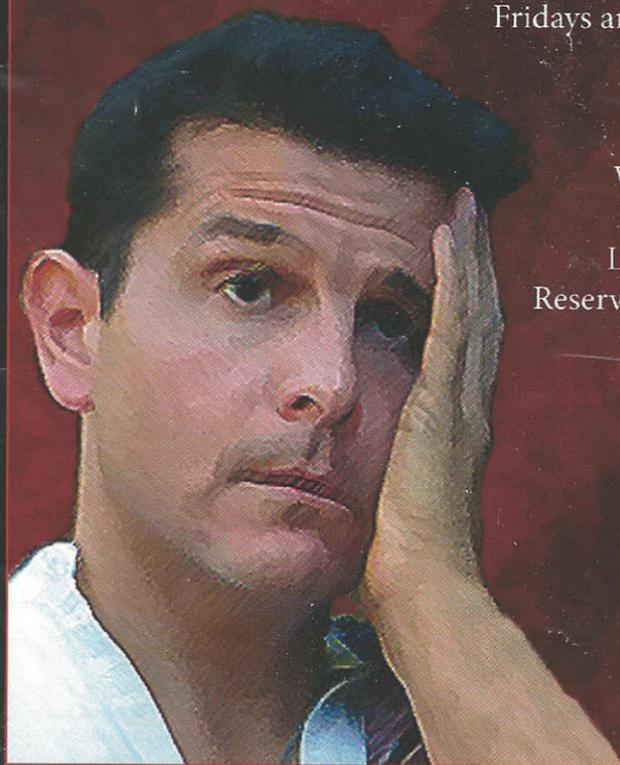
Fortinbras

by Lee Blessing

Directed by Drew Fitzsimmons
Produced by Melodie S. Rivers and Bruce Starrett

November 9 – December 15, 2012
Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m.
and Sundays at 2 p.m.

Westchester Playhouse
8301 Hindry Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90045
Reservations (310) 645-5156



FORTINBRAS

by Lee Blessing

Director

Drew Fitzsimmons

Producers

Melodie S. Rivers and Bruce Starrett

Set Design

Drew Fitzsimmons

Lighting Design

Hollister Starrett

Costume Design

Kathy Dershimer

Cast

(in order of appearance)

Hamlet, Prince of DenmarkJohn Charles Meyer
Osric, member of the Danish court Mark Mayes
Horatio, friend of HamletRowan Russell
Marcellus, a sentinel.....Michael Heidner
Barnardo, a sentinel.....Dylan H. Bailey
English Ambassador.....Andy Kallok
Fortinbras, Prince of Norway..... Brendan Farrell
Captain of the Norwegian ArmySteve Hotz
Polonius, the Court Councillor.....Andy Kallok
Ophelia, Polonius' daughter..... Amanda Majkrzak
First Maiden Jennifer Sperry
Second Maiden..... Janet Lee Rodriguez
Claudius, King of DenmarkTim Forsyth
Gertrude, Queen of Denmark..... Nina Ames-Forbess
Laertes, Polonius' sonMichael Sandidge

Place: The Castle at Elsinore, Denmark

Time: Immediately following the events of *Hamlet*

There will be a 15-minute intermission between Acts I and II.

Decaf coffee will be served at the intermission, courtesy of Kentwood Players

FORTINBRAS

is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

About the Cast



Nina Ames-Forbess (Gertrude) – A Southern California native, Nina has acted on stage and film throughout Los Angeles. Favorite roles include: Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Lisa in *Boy's Life* and performing standup at The Improv in Hollywood. She attended San Diego State University where she earned a BA in Drama and a Masters in drinking games. After a long sabbatical from acting, she is thrilled to be performing with the Kentwood Players for the first time. She would like to thank Greg, Sean and Molly for their support. Best Family Ever!



Dylan H. Bailey (Barnardo) – Previously seen in *Six Degrees of Separation* and *Li'l Abner* here, and fresh off the original play *The Meaning of Life* at Stages Theatre in Fullerton, Dylan is pleased to return to the Kentwood stage as part of this production. A South Bay native who studied theatre at El Camino College, he has often wondered “Then what happened?” after the end of Hamlet. Finally the answer is here!



Brendan Farrell (Fortinbras) – “I’m hungry.” That line got Brendan his first audience laugh as a young boy playing Muk-Muk, the always hungry mystical Eskimo in charge of the Northern Lights. From that moment Brendan knew theatre would always be a part of his life. Brendan is a proud member of The Elephant Theatre Company in Hollywood and LA stage credits as an actor include *1969 – A Fantastical Odyssey Through the American Mindscape*, *100 Saints You Should Know*, *Lovesick*, and *To Kill A Mockingbird*. This is his first production with Kentwood Players. Thanks for coming out to the show!



Tim Forsyth (Claudius) – Tim was born in San Bernardino, attended high school in Torrance, and went to El Camino JC and CSULB, majoring in journalism, then theater arts, and finally radio/television production. He was drafted into the Marine Corps, after which he was married (then widowed) and has two beautiful adult children, Amy and Glen. He has previously appeared at Kentwood in *George Washington Slept Here*, *The Wake* and *The Laramie Project*.



Michael Heidner (Marcellus) – This is Michael’s debut with Kentwood Players. He is thrilled to be a part of such a wonderful and extremely talented cast and crew. He has been a part of multiple musical productions with the Aerospace Players including *The Producers*, *Cabaret*, and *Once Upon A Mattress*. He is extremely eager to show his keen comedic sense and change things up a bit by being a part of a non-musical production. Hopefully he will have the opportunity to become a more permanent fixture with Kentwood Players. Now, just sit back and enjoy.



Steve Hotz (Captain) – Steve is “on stage” 24/7 performing extemporaneous stand-up for whomever he runs across, be it butcher, baker or candlestick maker—much to the embarrassment of his teen daughter and exceptionally tolerant wife. As for the formal stage, Steve was usually found in the pit orchestra or with the backstage crew. But every so often a director—in a moment of dubious judgment—welcomes Steve to take the stage before unsuspecting audiences. Steve is grateful to Drew for being that director, his fellow players for their camaraderie during this production, and his family for their encouragement and support.



Andy Kallok (English Ambassador / Polonius) – Returning to Kentwood Players after seven years, Andy was last seen as Mr. Jordan in 2005’s *Heaven Can Wait*. For ten consecutive years Andy has toured with Shakespeare by the Sea acting in 20 productions and playing everything kings and princes to drunks and fools. Earlier this year he acted in an independent horror/comedy *Love in the Time of Monsters* now in post-production. He has a brief appearance in the film festival short *Far* written and starring his *Heaven Can Wait* co-star Marion Kerr. Between occasional film and theater projects he spends way too much time watching TV.



Amanda Majkrzak (Ophelia) – Amanda Majkrzak- Amanda is thrilled to be part of this wonderful show! You may have seen her on the Kentwood stage recently as Richelle in *Scream Queens!* Amanda hailed all the way from Elgin, Iowa 4 years ago to pursue her love of acting. She grew up in a very musical and theatrical family whom she credits with her love of the musical arts. Her favorite well-known shows to date include *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Something’s Afoot*, *Children of the Night*, *Annie Warbucks*, *Into the Woods* and *Noises Off*. She has also had roles in the original musicals *1904* and *1933*, which were written and directed by her own talented mother! She has also starred in several short films, music videos and the popular webseries *InSight*. Amanda has studied acting for the last 3 years at the prestigious Ivana Chubbuck Studios in Hollywood. Amanda resides in Los Angeles with her wonderfully supportive husband Dave and her 2 dogs Landon and Lesley.



Mark Mayes (Osric) – Mark has recently been seen in Los Angeles productions of *She Stoops To Conquer*, *The Zoo Story* and *The Merchant of Venice*. He appeared as Moulton and Gribbsby in Kentwood Players’ *The Importance of Being Earnest*, as Benvolio *Romeo & Juliet*, and as Geoffrey in *6 Degrees of Separation*. Mark studied acting with Nina Foch



John Charles Meyer (Hamlet) – John Charles Meyer spent his childhood on northeast Ohio theater stages. His twenties found him in Washington DC, working for Democratic political campaigns and touring the US with a rock band. Since his 2006 return to acting, John has landed TV roles in *CSI: NY*, *Mike & Molly*, *Southland*, *The Forgotten*, *iCarly*, and *Zoey101*, and in the pilots *Awakening* and *Gimme Shelter*. Film: *The Millennium Bug*, *Our Boys*, *The Taqwacores*, *Savaged* and more than 40 shorts. Theater favorites: *Bobrauschenbergamerica* at Inside the Ford, *Same-O* at Bootleg, *For the Record: Baz Luhrmann* at Show at Barre, *Escanaba in Da Moonlight* at Little Fish.



Janet Lee Rodriguez (Second Maiden) –Janet has a theater degree from Northern Kentucky University. She was in the Kentwood productions *George Washington Slept Here* and *Bus Stop* and is very excited to be in *Fortinbras*. She’d like to thank Drew, Melodie, Bruce, her dad, and boyfriend Jesse for their support.



Rowan Russell (Horatio) – Rowan Russell is very excited to be making his Kentwood Players debut and LA stage debut. He graduated with a BA in Theatre Arts from Oregon State University and has trained with the Acting Studio at Edgemar in Santa Monica and American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco. In January, he will be going to Mexico to shoot *Alone*, directed by Hugo Corona, playing Mark. He would like to thank his parents for their constant love, understanding and support. Kisses to Mom, Dad, Brennan, Tula Hoop, Kridden, Dionysus and Buster Posey.



Michael Sandidge (Laertes) – Michael has been acting for the last decade. He has starred in a string of musicals and operettas, including: Nathan Detroit in *Gypsy and Dolls*, Col. Pickering in *My Fair Lady*. He also took his first shot at starring and directing with Gilbert and Sullivan's *H.M.S. Pinafore*, a role which earned him an Elly award nomination for Best Actor in a Musical. Soon after, he moved to Louisiana and earned a role after his first college audition as Father O'Reilly in Bossier Parish College's *Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up?*. He won a Best Actor award for playing Papa Bear in his school's children's show *Goldilocks and the Three Heberts* and played Capt. Taylor for Southern University's *A Soldier's Play*. Michael continued to perform in community theater with such roles as Koko in *The Mikado*, and was able to take another swing as

an actor/director with *Arsenic and Old Lace* in which he played Mortimer Brewster. Michael moved to Los Angeles in August. *Fortinbras* is the first play for which he auditioned in L.A. and is very happy to have been given this role and this chance to prove himself.



Jennifer Sperry (First Maiden) – This is Jennifer's debut performance at Kentwood, and she couldn't be more delighted with the experience. The role of Polish Maiden 1 in *Fortinbras* is ridiculously fun to play, though it's not without its challenges. (For one thing, Jennifer didn't know she'd be memorizing so many lines in Polish!) Jennifer discovered Kentwood Players by attending one of the member meetings and participating in the organization's workshops. The Kentwood members are wonderfully diverse, welcoming, creative, funny – Jennifer couldn't help but get drawn in, and she's glad for it.

About the Production Staff

Drew Fitzsimmons (Director/Set Designer/Fight Choreographer) – Drew is truly honored to once again be given the title of Director. The fact that it is here at Kentwood is an added bonus because exactly 10 years ago Drew came through the doors of Kentwood and auditioned for his very first show *Father of the Bride*. Since then, Drew has performed, choreographed, designed, stage managed and assisted in over 150 productions of all types all over Southern California, 40 of them right here at Kentwood. His success and rapid growth can, in large part, be attributed to the incredible amount of support and encouragement he has received from his Kentwood family. In addition to working on and in main stage productions, Drew has, for the last 5 years, been the Kentwood Kids Performing Arts Program Director. This program, that started with 7 children, now circulates over 70 young actors, stage managers and designers. The Kentwood Kids program has an impressive track record of highly successful productions, prestigious class sessions covering all aspects of the theatrical board, and will continue to expand and grow to meet the needs of the students and to benefit the Kentwood Players. Drew has designed most of the Kentwood Kids sets and has designed or been master builder of many mainstage productions here at Kentwood and elsewhere. Recent design credits include *Rockin' Robin Hood*, *Bye Bye Birdie* (TAP), and *Annie*. Drew's fight choreography was seen in *Camelot* (TAP), *Rockin' Robin Hood*, *The Fantasticks* and *Richard III* (SBTS). As a director, some of Drew's favorites include *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Trial of Goldilocks* and *Magic Words*. Co-director credits include *A Grimm Night for Hans Christian Andersen*, *Greece - The Musical*, and *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. Drew thanks the Kentwood Board for giving him the opportunity to bring this incredible piece of theatre to life. A special thank you to his Producers Melodie S. Rivers and Bruce Starrett, without whom none of this would have been possible. Enjoy!

Melodie S. Rivers (Producer) – Melodie is grateful to Liz Reinhardt and to her own son, Logan Russell Hannig, for reintroducing her to the creative and healing world of theater at the end of 2009. She began this new adventure as a specialty make-up artist for her son's first show, *The Wizard of Oz* followed by *Charlotte's Web*. Melodie quickly expanded her theatre involvement by building props and costumes and by providing administrative support for the Kentwood Kids Performing Arts Program. Her co-producer/co-director credits include the Kentwood Kids productions of *A Grimm Night for Hans Christian Andersen*, and *Greece - The Musical*. *A Grimm Night* marked her son Lucas Nathan Hannig's debut on the Kentwood stage and she is proud to announce his dedication to character development and ever-increasing performance skills. Most recently, Melodie co-produced and was scenic artist for *Rockin' Robin Hood*. After first appearing in the main stage production of *As You Like It* in 2010, she has now performed in a few workshops including *Vagina Monologues* (also co-directed), *Chapter Two*, *The Waiting Room*, and *Rondo A La Condo*. Melodie is especially pleased to be co-producing *Fortinbras* with her friend, Bruce Starrett, and to have the opportunity to work with such a talented and cohesive team.

Bruce Starrett (Producer) – See, this is what happens when you show up at Kentwood Players and say, “How can I help?” Bruce did just that in 2009 when his son Hollister was involved in the Kentwood Kids production of *Willy Wonka*. Drew handed him a paintbrush, and he's been handing him a little more each production since. In addition to his involvement in the Kentwood Kids program, Bruce has also worked the booth or acted as Stage Manager for several mainstage productions including *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Annie*, and *Oliver!* Bruce is excited to be working again with his good friends Drew and Melodie, and with the absurdly talented cast and crew of *Fortinbras!*

Hollister Starrett (Lighting Design) – When Hollister arrived at the Kentwood Kids class at the age of 8 and told them that he was more interested in what was happening backstage than in acting, Drew put together a “tech” class for him, and then put him to work as Assistant Stage Manager on the next production. Before long he found his way to the booth, and his calling. At age 13, he has now run lights for several mainstage productions including *As You Like It*, *Annie*, *Rabbit Hole*, and *Oliver!* He has been the Lighting Designer and operator for all the Kentwood Kids productions for the last two years, including *Greece! The Musical* and *A Grimm Night for Hans Christian Andersen*. For the most recent Kentwood Kids production, he designed the lights and then stepped into them, singing and dancing in *Rockin' Robin Hood*. *Fortinbras* is his first mainstage Lighting Design opportunity, and he thanks Drew for putting his trust in him once again.

Kathy Dersheimer (Costume Design) – Kathy has been involved in theater for years; acting, singing and directing. She began her costuming experience with Kentwood's production of *As You Like It*, followed by *Parade*, *Squabbles*, *Candide*, *Oliver*, and *Doubt*. She thanks her wonderful husband, children for their support.

Director's Notes

10 years ago, when I stepped, shakily, onto the stage for the very first time, I was fortunate enough to have been put in a cast which included Jerad Callen. He was 2 years younger than me but I was a lifetime of stage experience younger than him. We became friends instantly because although I was “green”, Jerad recognized an obsession with the stage in me... that and a shared love of Monty Python, horrible puns, spiced rum and chain smoking. Jerad took me under his wing and to supplement the classes I was taking in college, he personally tutored me in script analysis and character breakdown and development. The script that Jerad chose to use for our purposes was *Fortinbras*. I had told him of my dream of one day playing Hamlet and he thought I'd get a kick out of Lee Blessings' incredible wit. We worked this play 'til our scripts were barely held together with tape and staples. Page after page, night after night we would mine this piece for everything it had to offer. Of course Jerad always played *Fortinbras*... a long standing dream role of his...and I got to be everyone else... even Ophelia on occasion. Don't ask. There was so much to discover in the incessant arguments between Horatio and Osric. From sanity-testing differences to deep-rooted emotions that only life-long friends can experience. Within the epic moment when *Fortinbras* and Hamlet finally meet, Blessing has masterfully woven humanity, politics, wit and brilliance together into one conversation between two men.

Truth, I believe, is the focus of this play. What is it, really? When should one use it? How deceptive and difficult it can be. How rare it is in real life. Blessing created a work of art that illustrates truisms through the delusions created by the human experience. Fear, desire, greed and sloth are the greatest enemies the truth has. But they are also a human being's greatest motivators. In today's political climate, I find *Fortinbras* even more relevant than it was 10 years ago when I first read it, which was, sadly, even more relevant than when it debuted in 1991. *Fortinbras* gives the director the freedom to skate the boundaries between "just perfect" and "too much" while staying firmly within the fears, desires, greed and sloth of whatever time it is presented in, from now until oblivion. I have been fortunate enough to have been blessed with a cast and crew that any director could hope to have. I dare anyone to find a "weak link". If I was given the opportunity to direct on Broadway or the West End... it would be this cast... this crew... this play. I can, without hesitation, state that this play is a perfect representation of all that I am and then some. Thanks to all who are involved, it is something greater than myself that I can strive for. Thank you, the audience member, for giving me the eyes and ears and minds to which to tell this story. Thank you, my cast, for bringing your voices, minds and bodies with which to breathe the very life into these words. Thank you, Lee Blessing, for writing this truly remarkable play. And last but certainly not least, thank you Jerad Callen. I know you are with us... at least in spirit. I hear your words in my head every step of the way...whether I ask for it or not. I miss our incessant arguments, the sanity-testing differences and the deep-rooted emotions only shared by life-long friends. This play is dedicated to the friendship, tutelage, brilliance and memory of Jerad Callen.

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Special Thanks

Valerie Ruel, Victoria Miller, Russell Ham,
 The Cast & Crew of *Scream Queens*,
 The Cast & Crew (& Parents) of *Rockin' Robin Hood*,
 Lori Marple-Pereslete, Mike La Stelly, Colleen Okida,
 Maria Pavone, Susan Weisbarth, Michael Allen

During the performance please turn off or silence all electronic devices.
 There is no louder sound in a theatre than the rattle of cellophane.
Please unwrap your candy or cough drops before the play begins.

Kentwood Players is a Member of the
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You are invited to meet and greet cast members
 after the performance in the Lobby.

For up to date info about Kentwood Players visit our website

www.kentwoodplayers.org

Kentwood Players Coming Attractions

The 39 Steps, a Comedy Thriller
 Adapted by Patrick Barlow
 Based on the novel by John Buchan
 Based on the Movie of Alfred Hitchcock
 January 11 – February 16, 2013
 Director: Ben Lupejkis

Ragtime, a Musical
 Book by Terrence McNally
 Lyrics by Lynn Ahrens
 Music by Stephen Flaherty
 Based on the novel, Ragtime, by E.L. Doctorow
 March 15 – April 20, 2013
 Director: Susan Goldman Weisbarth

California Suite
 A Comedy by Neil Simon
 May 10 – June 15, 2013
 Director: Alison Mattiza

About the Upcoming Shows

The 39 Steps, a multiple Tony Award winner, is a spy thriller with a decided comedic bent. The story, told at break neck speed by only 4 actors, follows the adventures of a British diplomat caught up in espionage and intrigue in pre-WWII England. A comic romp of astounding theatrical proportions, this evening at the playhouse should please comedy lovers and mystery aficionados equally, perhaps making one the other in the process.

Based on the 1975 novel by E. L. Doctorow, ***Ragtime*** tells the story of three groups in America, represented by Coalhouse Walker Jr., a Harlem musician; Mother, the matriarch of a WASP family in New Rochelle, NY; and Tateh, a Latvian Jewish immigrant. Historical figures such as Harry Houdini, Evelyn Nesbit, Booker T. Washington, J. P. Morgan, Henry Ford, Stanford White, Harry Kendall Thaw, Admiral Peary, Matthew Henson, and Emma Goldman also appear. The music includes marches, cakewalks, gospel and ragtime.

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A special Theatre Party planned for your organization or group can be a financial success as well as an entertaining evening (or matinee) at the theatre. For further information call:
 Box Office (310) 645-5156

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Charlotte and Arnold

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In 1949, a group of dedicated performers came together to provide quality theatre at an affordable price for the Westchester community. More than 50 years later, the Kentwood Players are still going strong.

From Shakespeare to Simon, from Sondheim to Hammerstein, we have worked diligently, putting in countless volunteer hours, keeping our prices low enough to allow all in our community access to a magical evening or matinee in the theatre.

Now, we need your help. We have some critical improvements that will be beyond what we as a small community theatre can manage. We need a new roof, a new heating and air conditioning system, and most of our facility needs to be updated. For the first time in our history, we are asking our wonderful patrons and dedicated community members to partner with us and become sponsors of our beloved theatre.

There are many ways you can help. Of course, we welcome your contributions no matter how large or small. Together we can keep quality theatre in Westchester at prices that are still affordable for our audiences. Please take a look at our sponsorship opportunities and if we can answer any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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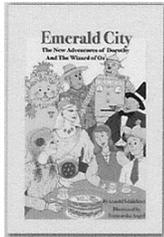
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Emerald City

The New Adventures of
Dorothy And The Wizard of Oz

by Arnold Schildkret

Illustrated by
Franczeska Angel

Emerald City is a modern sequel to the Wizard of Oz novel and film. It is an original story based on the characters of the novels of L. Frank Baum.



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