

Central Works
THE NEW PLAY THEATER

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CENTRAL WORKS PRESENTS WORLD PREMIERE #45

“Recipe”

A new comedy written by Michael Gene Sullivan and directed by Gary Graves

October 18–November 23

**(Press Night Sat. October 18 8pm,
pay-what-you-can previews October 16 & 17)**

Berkeley City Club

2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley.

Central Works concludes the 2014 season with “Recipe,” a profoundly funny new work by Michael Gene Sullivan, opening with a press Night on Saturday October 18 at 8 pm and running through November 23 at the historic Berkeley City Club. Sullivan serves up the laughs in this delicious take on a circle of sweet old grandmotherly bakers, who just happen to be dedicated to the armed overthrow of the United States government. But baking pies and cakes isn't enough to satisfy these four intrepid refugees from the sixties, and their burning desire to “Up the Revolution!” Directed by Gary Graves, “Recipe” is Central Works 45th world premiere and features Velina Brown* (Diane), Tamar Cohn (Ruth), Phoebe Moyer* (Lillian), Lynne Soffer* (Helen) and Jan Zvaifler (Janice), (*member AEA). It's one thing to say “The government is probably listening to my calls,” but what do you do when you find out it's true? If it seems that the government that you call “a fascist, surveillance state” has specifically targeted you, is specifically watching YOU (it's not paranoia if they really are after you!), then what? How do you live your life knowing that all your fears may, actually, be true?

“I wrote this play for two reasons,” remarks Michael Gene Sullivan, “ we need more roles for women actors “of a certain age” that don't call for them to be widows, nuns, or crazy aunts; and sometimes even the most committed revolutionaries need to remember that revolution is not a dinner party. Or in this case - a baking circle.” An award-winning actor, director, as well as the Resident Playwright for the Tony award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe, **Michael Gene Sullivan's** plays have been performed in theaters throughout the United States.

(more)

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His critically acclaimed stage adaptation of George Orwell's *1984*, directed by Tim Robbins, premiered in 2006 at the Actors' Gang, and went on to tour nationally and internationally for six years. This was the first adaptation of the novel endorsed by the Orwell Estate and published in the U.S. in 50 years.

The Central Works world premiere of "Recipe" is sponsored by Erica Nietfeld with foundation support from the City of Berkeley Civic Arts Grants Program, Fleishhacker Foundation, RHE Foundation, and the Wilder Green Fund.

Michael Gene Sullivan (playwright) is also an award-winning actor and director whose political dramas, musicals, and satires include *1600 Transylvania Avenue*, *Mr. Smith Goes To Obscuristan* (With Josh Kornbluth), *Godfellas*, *Red State*, *Too Big To Fail*, *Posibilidad Or The Death Of The Worker*, this past summer's *Ripple Effect* (With Tanya Shaffer and Eugenie Chan), and his one person show, *Did Anyone Ever Tell You - You Look Like Huey P. Newton?* Michael's plays have been performed in theaters throughout the United States, as well as at the Melbourne International Arts Festival, The International Festival Of Verbal Art (Berlin), The Hong Kong Arts Festival, and in Greece, Spain, Columbia, Argentina, Canada, Mexico. In 2000, Michael became Resident Playwright for the Tony award-winning (and despite its misleading name never, ever silent) San Francisco Mime Troupe, and has since written some of the Troupe's most successful political comedies. *1984*, his critically acclaimed stage adaptation of George Orwell's dystopic novel of the oppressive present/future, had its world premiere in 2006 at the Actors' Gang, directed by Academy Award winning actor Tim Robbins. *1984* was published in English by Playscripts, Inc. in the United States, and in Catalan by Edicions 1984 in Spain.

Gary Graves (director) most recently directed *The Crazy* (a new play written by Sally Dawidoff based on the acclaimed novel by Ha Jin) for Central Works. Some of the other 27 new plays he has directed for the company include *Medea Hypothesis*, *Pitch Perfect*, *Machiavelli's The Prince*, *Reduction in Force*, *Lola Montez*, *Enemy Combatant*, *The Mysterious Mr. Looney*, *Misanthrope*, *Mata Hari*, *Nightingale*, and *Pyrate Story*. He directed the company's first collaboratively developed script, *Roux*, at the City Club in 1997. He currently teaches playwriting year-round at the Berkeley Rep School of Theater.

Principal Performers

Velina Brown* (Diane) is pleased to make her Central Works debut with such a wonderful cast in this important play. She is an award winning actress, singer/songwriter, and co artistic director of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. You may have seen her in SFMT's most recent show *Ripple Effect* this summer at a park near you as well as at the American Conservatory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Magic Theatre, Theatre Rhino, TheatreWorks, Shotgun Players, SF Playhouse, Symmetry Theatre, The Lorraine Hansberry Theatre and The Denver Theatre Center, among others. You can read Velina's monthly advice column in Theatre Bay Area Magazine and on TBA's website named after her coaching practice for actors called The Business of Show Biz. For more info, please visit www.velinabrown.com and Power to the People!

Tamar Cohn (Ruth) is delighted to be on the Central Works stage for the first time. Recently in *The Habit of Art* (Theatre Rhinoceros), and *The Chairs* (Cutting Ball), Tamar also did *The Oldest Profession* (Brava Theater), *Witness for the Prosecution* (CenterREP), *2 x Malamud* (A Traveling Jewish Theatre), and *100 Saints You Should Know* (Theatre Rhino). She's acted in innovative new plays at AlterTheater Ensemble, and performed with 6th St. Playhouse, California Conservatory Theatre, Pacific Alliance Stage Co., Woman's Will, the S.F. Playwrights' Foundation's One-Minute Play Festival and others.

Phoebe Moyer* (Lillian) is delighted to make her debut with Central Works and reprise the role of "Lillian" from an earlier Staged Reading for the Playwright's Foundation. Phoebe is a director, voice-over talent, and acting coach and the recipient of numerous SFBATCC and Dean Goodman Choice Awards. Credits include: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Learned Ladies of Park Avenue*, *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Equus*, *Under Milkwood* (TheatreWorks), *The Foreigner*, *Major Barbara* (San Jose Rep), *The Birthday Party*, *The Entertainer* (Aurora), *On Borrowed Time*, *Blithe Spirit* (Sierra Rep), *Oklahoma* (Woodminster), *She Stoops To Conquer*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Marin Shakespeare), *Over The River And Through The Woods*, *Senior Class* (CenterRep), *Steel Magnolias*, *Master Class* (Willows), *The Spitfire Grill*, *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* (PCPA), *Anton in Show Business*, *Memory of Water* (TheatreFirst), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (A.C.T./U.S.) *Seven Days* (SF Playhouse), *A Perfect Ganesh*, *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Pacific Alliance), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Woman's Will), *The Cripple of Inishmaan*, *Angels in America* (6th Street Playhouse). *On Golden Pond* (Hapgood), *The Trip to Bountiful* (CCT), *Long Day's Journey into Night* (Stanford), to name a few. Film: *THE WINDOW* (to be released Spring 2015). Phoebe received her M.A. in Speech and Theatre from Northwestern University, was an Instructor of Theatre Arts and Dance at the secondary and university levels for 37 years, and has been a proud member of Actor's Equity Association since 2000.

Lynne Soffer* (Helen) is an actor, teacher, director and dialect/textwork coach based in the Bay Area. She has acted with companies including A.C.T., Berkeley Rep., San Jose Rep., Theaterworks, Sacramento Theatre Company, Cal Shakes, Alaska Rep, The Magic, Encore, Word for Word, Golden Thread, Bay Area Playwright's Festival, SF Opera and Arizona Theater Co. She has coached over 260 shows including the World Premiere of *The Laramie Project* in Denver and New York, and for several motion pictures, including *Fruitvale Station* (2013) *Duets* and *Metro*, and will be directing *Hay Fever* for Stanford Repertory Theater in 2015.

Jan Zvaifler (Janice) is Co-director of Central Works along with Gary Graves and a founding member of the company. Earlier this season, Jan directed *Dracula Inquest* and *The Lion and the Fox*, and she was last seen onstage in *Medea Hypothesis*. Her company collaborations over the past two-(plus) decades include acting, directing and producing.

* members Actors Equity Association

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

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Central Works presents:

“Recipe”

Written by Michael Gene Sullivan, Directed by Gary Graves

Oct 18–Nov 23 (Oct 16 & 17) opening press night, Sat. Oct 18 8pm

At: The Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley.

Performances: Thurs., Fri.& Sat. 8 pm, Sunday 5 pm (Post-show Talk-backs on Oct 19 & Nov 9)

Ticket prices: \$28 online at centralworks.org, \$28–\$15 sliding scale at the door.

Pay-what-you-can: Previews and every Thursday, at the door as available

Reservations & information: 510.558.1381 or centralworks.org