

*Einstein's Gift* received its world premiere at the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, in February 2003. It was performed on the MacLab Stage with the following cast and creative team:

Albert: James MacDonald

Haber: Michael Spencer-Davis

Otto: Julien Arnold

Clara/Cabaret Singer: Stephanie Wolfe

Peterson/Soldier/Rust: Philip Warren Sarsons

Deacon/Deimling/Gestapo: Paul Morgan Donald

Lotta: Daniela Vlaskalic

Live music: Paul Morgan Donald and the Company

Assistants, Train Porter, Guests, etc.: the Company

Director: David Storch

Set and lighting designer: Bretta Gerecke

Costume designer: Narda McCarroll

Composer/sound designer: Paul Morgan Donald

Assistant to sound designer: Aaron Macri

Stage manager: Gina Moe

Assistant stage manager: Tracey Byrne

Apprentice stage manager: Kristopher Heuven

Science advisor: Dr. Mike Joyce

Research dramaturges: Ben Unterman and Sarah Polkinghorne

For the Citadel Theatre:

Artistic director: Bob Baker

Managing director: Tammy Fallowfield

Director of production: John Raymond

## 2 ■ VERN THIESSEN

*Einstein's Gift* received its US premiere by Epic Theatre Center at the Acorn Theatre on Theatre Row, New York, New York, on October 6, 2005. It was produced by Zak Berkman, Melissa Friedman, Teri Lamm, Ron Russell, Godfrey L. Simmons Jr., James Wallert and Sarah Winkler, and featured the following cast and creative team:

Albert Einstein: Shawn Elliott

Deimling/Rust: Glenn Fleshler

Clara: Melissa Friedman

Fritz Haber: Aasif Mandvi

Deacon/Peterson: Godfrey L. Simmons Jr.

Soldier/Singer: Nilaja Sun

Otto: James Wallert

Lotta: Sarah Winkler

Director: Ron Russell

Producer/director of play development: Zak Berkman

Set designer: John McDermott

Lighting designers: Elizabeth Gaines and Jeremy Morris-Burke

Costume designer: Margaret Weedon

Fight director: Rick Sordelet

Production stage manager: Jana Lynn

Stage manager: Karin J. Ivester

Production manager: Shannon Nicole Case

Casting: Vince Liebhart

*Einstein's Gift* received a special workshop presentation by Epic Theatre Center in association with Ensemble Studio Theatre / Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science and Technology Project's 2005 First Light Festival in May of that year.

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### STAGING AND CONVENTIONS

*Einstein's Gift* is a memory play of sorts, and Albert should be present on stage for the entire performance, leaving only for the most practical reasons. In the original production, Albert became a kind of puppet master, assisting characters with props and occasionally reacting to the scenes being played out. Individual producers/directors are encouraged to experiment with this convention without detracting from the “present” scene being played. Although Albert is seen in two different guises (i.e., the older Albert as narrator and the younger Albert who actively participates in scenes) only one actor should play both “parts” of Albert.

In the “fencing scene” and the “sidewalk scene,” I have tried (to the best of my abilities) to chart out the formulas for the actors. I recommend directors/producers consult with a local chemist for more information.

The original production featured live music, inventive staging and a highly theatrical design that never detracted from the rather straightforward story of Haber and his compatriots. In the spirit of the scientists portrayed, I encourage actors to be as passionate as possible and directors/designers to be as imaginative as they wish.

The play should flow from scene to scene with few—if any—blackouts. The play should run no longer than two hours and fifteen minutes, plus intermission.

## PRONUNCIATIONS

Outside the pronunciations below, German dialects are *not* to be used:

Jena: YAY-na

Deimling: DIME-link

Bernard: BAIRN-hart

Reichstag: RYKS-tog

Haber: “a” as in father

Charlotta: Shar-LOTT-a

Peterson: PAYTER-soan

Karlsruhe: KARLS-roo-ih

Rust: “u” as in “oo” in book

Clara: “a” as in father

Immerwahr: IMMER-vahr

Ludwig: LUDE-veeg

Jacob: YA-kob

Charlottenburg: shar-LOTTEN-berg

Delphinus: Del-FY-nus

Knorr: Nor

## SUGGESTED MULTIPLE CASTING

Actor 1 (Haber)

Actor 2 (Albert)

Actor 3 (Clara, Singer)

Actor 4 (Lotta, Soldier in Act One)

Actor 5 (Otto)

Actor 6 (Deimling, Rust)

Actor 7 (Deacon, Peterson, Gestapo, Soldier in Act Two)

The Company plays all smaller roles

## **CHARACTERS**

Albert Einstein: a physicist

F.J. Haber: a chemist

Otto: Haber's assistant

Deacon Auffarth: a Lutheran minister

Clara Immerwahr: Haber's first wife

Peterson: a commander in the German army

Deimling: a general in the German army

Soldier in the Ypres trenches

Singer at the German Club

Lotta Haber: Haber's second wife

Bernhard Rust: Minister of Education

Gestapo: guard to Rust

Assistants, train porters, guests, etc.

## **SETTING**

Act One: USA, 1945; Germany, 1905–1915

Act Two: Germany/Switzerland, 1919–1934; USA, 1945

## ACT ONE

*An explosion of light and sound. ALBERT, sixty-six years old, shields his eyes. Then, he speaks to the audience.*

**ALBERT** *(smiles)* Was a time. . .

Was a time women spoke music. And men thought poetry. When hope equalled work, and work equalled faith and the world's equation balanced.

Was a time I thought the world was a watch, its hands smooth as a symphony, its workings well-oiled, its balance poised and true.

Was a time I thought I could do no wrong. When every colleague coddled my mind. When every prize was draped in pomp and platitudes. When every country honoured me. When every word I spoke, every oath I

**8 ■ VERN THIESSEN**

swore, every thought I formed was recorded for ages to come, for all time.

Was a time. . . I believed.

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**HABER** Otto!

**OTTO** Haber!

**HABER** Catch!

*HABER throws OTTO a foil. Both men begin stretching. ALBERT watches.*

**ALBERT** *(to audience, indicating)* An ambitious young man. A faithful friend. The turn of a century.

**HABER** Otto, my friend, did I ever tell you the story of my dear uncle Ludwig?

**OTTO** Which one?

**HABER** I have only one Uncle Ludwig.

**OTTO** No, which story.

**HABER** Uncle Ludwig was in Japan. Eighteen hundred and seventy-four. At tea with a samurai, he was, when the topic of the world's pre-eminent warriors arose. The