**PRESS CONTACT: Nancy Richards – 917-873-6389 (cell)/nancy@northcoastrep.org**

**MEDIA PAGE:** [**www.northcoastrep.org/press**](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE:**

***‘THE ILLUSION’* by TONY KUSHNER**

**FREELY ADAPTED FROM PIERRE CORNEILLE’S *L’ILLUSION COMIQUE***

 **TRANSPORTS AUDIENCES ON A WONDROUS JOURNEY**

**OF LOVE AND MAGIC AT NORTH COAST REP**

**Performances Beginning Wednesday, February 22, 2017**

**Running Through Sunday, March 19, 2017**

**Directed by David Ellenstein**

Solana Beach, Calif. North Coast Repertory Theatre proudly presents ***THE ILLUSION,*** hailed by The New York Times as “Fantastical…takes your breath away.” Legendary playwright Tony Kushner ***(Angels in America)*** displays his brilliance in this wildly inventive tour de force, which celebrates the magic and illusory nature of theatre. Employing crackling, contemporary language and sheer artistry, Kushner creates this most joyfully theatrical play: a supremely entertaining tale of passion, regret, love and magic. Freely adapted from Pierre Corneille’s ***L’Illusion Comique, THE ILLUSION*** was praised by Chicago Theatre Beat as ”hilarious, dreamlike and startlingly poignant”.

David Ellenstein directs Andrew Ableson\*, Kandis Chappell\*, Christina L. Flynn, John Greenleaf\*, John Herzog\*, Michael Polak\*, Sharon Rietkerk\*, and Paul Turbiak\* The design team includes Marty Burnett (Scenic Design), Matthew Novotny (Lighting), Melanie Chen (Sound), Elisa Benzoni (Costumes), Andrea Gutierrez (Props) and Peter Herman (Wig & Hair), and Abby Caywood (Costume Design Assistant). Christopher Williams\* is the Stage Manager.

\*The actor or stage manager appears through the courtesy of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. For background information and photos, go to [www.northcoastrep.org/press](http://www.northcoastrep.org/press).

***Busy director David Ellenstein and his talented cast are available for interviews by phone, in person, and in- studio. For more information and to arrange interviews or press tickets, please contact Nancy Richards at nancy@northcoastrep.org, or 917-873-6389 cell.***

***THE ILLUSION*** previews begin Wednesday, February 22. Opening Night on Saturday, February 25, at 8pm, includes a post-show reception. There will be a **special talkback on Friday, March 3,** with the cast and artistic director. It will play Wednesdays at 7pm, Thursdays through Saturdays at 8pm, Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2pm with Sundays at 7pm, through March 19, 2017. (See Schedule below.) North Coast Repertory Theatre is located at 987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive, Solana Beach, CA 92075. Tickets: Previews - $42, Week Nights - $49; Sat. Eve. & Sun. Mat.- $53; Sat. Mat. & Sun. Night - $46. Student Rush tickets available 15 minutes before curtain at $15 tickets, Military - $20 with active Military ID & Seniors $3 off admission. Call 858-481-1055 or visit [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org) to purchase tickets.

**FACT SHEET**

**WHAT: NORTH COAST REPERTORY THEATRE presents**

 ***THE ILLUSION***

**By Tony Kushner**

 **Freely adapted from Pierre Corneille’s *L’Illusion Comique***

 **Directed by** **David Ellenstein**

**CAST: Andrew Ableson\*, Kandis Chappell\*, Christina L. Flynn, John Greenleaf\*, John Herzog\*, Michael Polak\*, Sharon Rietkerk\*, and Paul Turbiak\*.**

**WHERE:** North Coast Repertory Theatre

987 Lomas Santa Fe Drive

 Solana Beach, CA 92075

**SCHEDULE** **Previews:** February 22-24, 2017

 **Opens: February 25, at 8 pm**

 **Closes: March 19, 2017**

 **Wed. @ 7pm, Thurs-Sat @ 8PM; Sat & Sun @ 2PM, Sun @ 7pm**

 **Talkback with cast & director: Friday, March 3, 2017**

**PRICES:** Previews $42.00

 Week Nights $49.00

 Sat. Matinees & Sunday Nights $46.00

 Sat. Nights & Sunday Matinees $53.00

**DISCOUNTS:**  Seniors, Students, Military $3.00 off admission

**BOX OFFICE** (858) 481-1055 or [www.northcoastrep.org](http://www.northcoastrep.org)

| **FEBRUARY** |
| --- |
| **SUN** | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|  |  |  | 22Preview8pm | 23Preview8pm | 24Preview8pm | 25OPENING8pm |
|  262pm & 7pm | 27 | 28 | **MARCH 1**7pm | 28pm | 38pmTalkback | 42pm & 8pm |
| 52pm & 7pm | 6 | 7 | 87pm | 98pm | 108pm | 112pm & 8pm |
| 122pm & 7pm | 13 | 14 | 157pm | 168pm | 178pm | 182pm & 8pm |
| 192pm  |  |

**BACKGROUND:**

Coming next, audiences are invited to take an entertaining, offbeat journey with ***Travels With My Aunt,*** a New York Times Critic’s Pick in 2015 (April 12-May 7, 2017). ***The Spitfire Grill,*** an emotional, all-American musical, is certain to win hearts with its compelling story and engaging melodies (May 31-June 25,2017). Season 35 concludes with a second San Diego premiere, a gut-busting, uproarious backstage farce*,* ***At This Evening’s Performance*** (July 12-Aug. 6, 2017).

**About the North Coast Repertory Theatre**

North Coast Repertory Theatre is a professional Equity theatre founded in 1982, currently celebrating its 35th season, North Coast Rep has received critical acclaim from media and audiences alike, and has evolved into one of the area’s leading performing arts organizations. North Coast Rep prides itself on employing the majority of its actors from Actors’ Equity Association for its high quality, award-winning productions, and staging works by established and emerging playwrights. Throughout its history, North Coast Rep has created a platform where artist and audience thrive through the intimacy of live theatre, recognizing the power of theatre to challenge complacency, revitalize the imagination, nurture the unexpected and embrace the variety and diversity in our lives.

**#####**

**BIOS:**

**TONY KUSHNER** (Playwright) Born in New York City in 1956, and raised in Lake Charles, Louisiana, Tony Kushner is best known for his two-part epic, *Angels In America: A Gay Fantasia On National Themes.* His other plays include: *A Bright Room Called Day, Slavs!, Hydrotaphia, Homebody/Kabul*, and *Caroline, Or Change*, the musical for which he wrote book and lyrics, with music by composer Jeanine Tesori. Kushner has translated and adapted Pierre Corneille’s *The Illusion*, S.Y. Ansky’s *The Dybbuk,* Bertolt Brecht’s *The Good Person Of Sezuan* and *Mother Courage And Her Children*, and the English-language libretto for the children’s opera *Brundibár* by Hans Krasa. He wrote the screenplays for Mike Nichols’ film of “*Angels in America”* and Steven Spielberg’s “*Munich”*. In 2012 he wrote the screenplay for Spielberg’s movie “*Lincoln”*. His screenplay was nominated for an Academy Award, and won the New York Film Critics Circle Award, Boston Society of Film Critics Award, Chicago Film Critics Award, and several others*.* In addition, a revival of *Angels In America* ran Off-Broadway at the Signature Theater and won the Lucille Lortel Award in 2011 for Outstanding Revival. Kushner is the recipient of a Pulitzer Prize for Drama, an Emmy Award, two Tony Awards, three Obie Awards, an Arts Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, a PEN/Laura Pels Award, a Spirit of Justice Award from the Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, a Cultural Achievement Award from The National Foundation for Jewish Culture, a Chicago Tribune Literary Prize for lifetime achievement, and the 2012 National Medal of Arts, among many others. Tony Kushner became the first recipient of the Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, the largest theatre award in the US. He lives in Manhattan with his husband, Mark Harris.

**DAVID ELLLENSTEIN** (Director) Born into a theatrical family, David has worked in theatres across the country. Before joining North Coast Rep in 2003 he served as Artistic Director for the Los Angeles Repertory Company and the Arizona Jewish Theatre Company (AJTC). A veteran of over 250 theatrical productions, directorial favorites include: North Coast Rep *– Hedda Gabler, Way Downriver: William Faulkner’s ‘Old Man’, Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Great Nome Gold Rush (*World Premiere*), Freud’s Last Session, Side by Side By Sondheim, Words By Ira Gershwin, Faded Glory* (World Premiere)*, Mandate Memories*(World Premiere), *Becoming Cuba* (World Premiere), *Time Stands Still*, *Words by: Ira Gershwin and the Great American Songbook* (World Premiere), *Two by* *Pinter: The Lover and The Dumb Waiter, HENRY IV Part 1, Heroes, My Name is Asher Lev, The Drawer Boy, Becky’s New Car, Ghosts, The Tempest, Talley’s Folly, Over the Tavern, Old Wicked Songs, The Dresser, Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris, Madagascar, A Shayna Maidel, The Honky Tonk Angels, Rashomon, A Moon for the Misbegotten; Tuesdays With Morrie; Collected Stories; Halpern and Johnson; Romeo and Juliet; Amy’s View; Einstein Comes Through (also co-author); The Chosen; A Life in the Theatre; Story Theatre and Charley’s Aunt*. Other theatres: Coconut Grove Playhouse, Papermill Playhouse, Portland Stage. Renaissance Theatre, Actor’s Theatre of Phoenix, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Laguna Playhouse, Southwest Shakespeare Company, AJTC, Meadow Brook Theatre, Portland Rep and Gaslamp Quarter Theatre**.**

**ANDREW ABLESON\*** (Matamor) is a U.S. TV regular, and English native. Resume highlights include: TV: *“Great News”,* *“NCIS Los Angeles”, “The Shield”, “Kickin’ It”, “Will & Grace”, “Joan of Arcadia”* and *“Las Vegas.”* Theatre includes: West Coast award-winning premieres of *End Days, Shopping & Fucking*, Pulitzer-nominated *Orsons' Shadow*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *The Beastly Bombing,* *This, The Big Bang,* and *Haywire!* Film: “By The Soles Of Our Feet”, “Dirty Girl”, "Caffeine", "The Gymnast”, "The Polar Express”, “How To Train Your Dragon 2*”.* Voice: Valmont in“Jackie Chan Adventures*"*, initial voicing of Gnomeo, in Disneys’ *“*Gnomeo & Juliet”, “Speed Racer”, “Thor”, “Pirates Of The Caribbean 4”, “Get Smart*,”* also numerous games, and commercials. Commercial: Emmy-award winning spot for NFL Fox, National spots for Mini, Arby’s, Jack In the Box, Ford, Microsoft, Lexus, and the award-winning Cingular spot with Chewbacca.

**KANDIS CHAPPELL\*** (Alcandre) has previously appeared at North Coast Rep in *Collected Stories*, *King o' the Moon*, and *The Lion in Winter*.  She is an Associate Artist of the Old Globe, where she has performed in more than 30 productions. Ms. Chappell has done extensive work just north of North Coast Rep, at South Coast Rep, as well as at theatres across the country.

**CHRISTINA L. FLYNN** (Elicia, Lyse, Clarina)is thrilled to be working with North Coast Repertory Theatre again. Credits include: North Coast Rep - *Who Am I This Time?* New Village Arts - *Emilie: La Marquise Du Chatelet Defends Her Life Tonight*, *Stage Kiss*. Other regional theatre credits include: *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Tipping Point Theatre), *Tartuffe*, *The Winter’s Tale*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (Michigan Shakespeare Festival), *Sonia Flew* (Jewish Ensemble Theatre and Performance Network Theatre), *Born Yesterday*, *All My Sons*, *The Seagull*, *The Fantasticks*, *Servant of Two Masters*, *Hamlet* (Hilberry Repertory Theatre), *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (Utah Shakespeare Festival Tour). [www.christinaflynn.com](http://www.christinaflynn.com/)

**JOHN GREENLEAF\*** (The Amanuensis) Theatre: North Coast Rep: Oriole in *Now You See It.* Four years with John Houseman’s The Acting Company, Four years with Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival, shows with Steppenwolf, South Coast Rep; Northlight Rep; Victory Theatre, Dayton; PCPA; Players Theatre, Columbus. First American production of *Nicholas Nickleby* at the Blackstone Theatre, Chicago. New York and Washington DC Fringe: *Alternative Methods*. Theatre Row, New York: Doc in *Small Craft Warnings,* directed by Austin Pendleton. Dickens Museum, London, Christmas Eve 2014: Marley in my adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. TV: PBS Theatre in America: Christy in “The Playboy of the Western World”. Thank you, David. www.johngreenleaf.net

**JOHN HERZOG\*** (Pridamant of Avignon) North Coast Rep: Warden in *Way Down River*, Case in *Broken Glass*, Worcester in *Henry IV Pt1*, Manders in *Ghosts*, Walter in *King o’ the Moon*, Stephano in *The Tempest,* Kelekian in *Wit*, Duncan in *Leading Ladies.* Broadway and National Tours: *Hair, Crimes Of The Heart*. Regional: Laguna Playhouse, Fullerton Civic Light Opera, Portland Stage Co., Indiana Repertory Theatre, Delaware Theatre Co., Arizona Theatre Co., Mark Taper Forum, Los Angeles Repertory Co. are just a few. Roles: Prospero in *The Tempest*, Petruchio in *‘Shrew,* Malter in *The Chosen,* Marc in *Art*, Macheath in *Threepenny Opera*, Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*, Ben Stark in *Rocket to the Moon* and dozens more. Visit his website for a full resume at [www.johnherzog.com](http://www.johnherzog.com). Proud member of Actors Equity since 1969.

**MICHAEL POLAK\*** (Calisto, Clindor, Theogenes) is making his debut at North Coast Repertory Theatre in *The Illusion*. New York credits include *Soldier’s Wife* at the Mint Theatre. Regional Credits: *Doubt* (ICT) *The* *Best Brothers* (Ensemble Theatre) *Rabbit Hole* (La Mirada Theatre) as well as work atPioneer Theatre Company, Delaware Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare, Philadelphia Theater Company, Northern Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, Hartford Stage, Playmaker’s Repertory Theatre, A.C.T., among others. T.V & Film Credits*: “*The Young and the Restless”, “All My Children”, “Guiding Light”, “Sticks & Stones” and “Compossibility Theory”. Michael received his M.F.A. from Pennsylvania State University and his B.A. from California State University, Fullerton.

**SHARON RIETKERK\*** (Melibea, Isabelle, Hippolyta, beloved wife of C/C/T) was last seen at North Coast Rep as the Blonde in *Gunmetal Blues*. Regional credits include: Elinor Dashwood in *Sense and Sensibility* (Old Globe Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Triangle*(Bay Area Critics Award), *Emma, Marry Me A Little* (Theater Bay Area Award), *Little Women*, *The Secret Garden* (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley); Candida in *A Minister’s Wife* (San Jose Repertory Theater); *Triangle* (Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma); Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* (San Francisco Opera Guild); Billie Dawn in *Born Yesterday*(Theatre Bay Area Award), Lois in *Life Could Be a Dream*, Cassie in *Rumors*, Erato in *Xanadu*(Center Repertory Theatre); Marian in *The Music Man* (South Coast Symphony);  Belle Poitrine in *Little Me*, Evangeline in *Nymph Errant,*Anne Draper in*Strike up the Band* (42nd Street Moon). Ms. Rietkerk has also performed in concert with the Grammy-nominated Bay Brass, South Coast, and Bear Valley Symphonies.

 **PAUL TURBIAK\*** (Adraste) has appeared onstage all over Los Angeles and beyond—including The Geffen Playhouse, LATC, the Colony Theatre, the Bootleg, Rogue Artists Ensemble, Actors Co-op, Sacred Fools, Not Man Apart, A Noise Within, Theatre of NOTE, Son of Semele, Highways, and REDCAT. He is a company member at the Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum, including appearances in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream, The Three Musketeers, Hamlet, Tartuffe, The Merry Wives of Winsor, Measure for Measure, The Taming of the Shrew,*and*Equivocation*. MFA in Acting—California Institute of the Arts, BA in Theater—Gordon College.  [http://www.paulturbiak.com/](http://www.paulturbiak.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)

**CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS\*** (Stage Manager) is an actor, director, producer and stage manager.  He has worked for such theaters as North Coast Repertory Theatre, AZ Theatre Company, Phoenix Theatre, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Southwest Shakespeare Company, among others.  He was the Artistic Director and one of the founding members of Oceanside Theatre Company, now in its fifth season.  Christopher is a published graphic designer and film producer, as well.  He produced the WWII feature film, "Walking with the Enemy," starring Jonas Armstrong and Ben Kingsley, and created the key art for the project.

**DESIGN TEAM:**

**MARTY BURNETT** (Resident Scenic Designer) Marty is in his 25th season as Resident Designer/Technical Director at North Coast Rep. He has designed the last 175 shows. Other venues include Laguna Playhouse, Portland Stage Company, Drury Lane (Chicago), Claridge Hotel (Atlantic City), Union Plaza, Sahara Hotel, Hacienda in Las Vegas, Coronado Playhouse, Scripps Ranch Theater, Harrah’s Lake Tahoe. Marty is a proud alumni of Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska.

**MATTHEW NOVOTNY** (Light Design) is pleased to be designing another show for North Coast Rep, where he has designed close to 40 shows over the past seven years.  Matthew is currently the Lighting Designer in Residence for San Diego Musical Theatre as well as North Coast Rep, and his work can be seen at a wide variety of theatres across San Diego.  Matthew holds a BA in Technical Theatre from San Diego State, and a Masters Degree in Lighting Design from Boston University. Matthew is married to his beautiful wife Amanda, with 3 gorgeous children: Ragan, Harper and Heston.

**MELANIE CHEN** (Sound Design) is thrilled to be working with North Coast Rep again! She is a freelance sound designer who has designed over 50 productions in San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Past North Coast Rep credits include: *Marjorie Prime, Laughter on the 23rd Floor, The Cocktail Hour, Ain’t Misbehavin’, Hedda Gabler, Way Downriver; William Faulkner’s ‘Old Man’, Now You See It, Side by Side by Sondheim, Betrayal, Unnecessary Farce, Freud’s Last Session, Romance/ Romance, Faded Glory, Mandate Memories,* and *Becoming Cuba.* Melanie holds an M.F.A. in Sound Design for Theatre & Dance from UC San Diego. For more info, visit her website at www.melaniesound.com

**ELISA BENZONI** (Costume Design) is thrilled to be working with North Coast Rep again. Previous work with North Coast Repertory Theatre includes: *Marjorie Prime, Laughter on the 23rd Floor, The Cocktail Hour, Hedda Gabler, Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Great Nome Gold Rush, Chapatti, The Fox on the Fairway,* for which she was nominated for a Craig Noel Award; Other select credits: *Sex with Strangers* (Geffen Playhouse), *Constellations* (Old Globe) *Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Reckless, Much Ado About Nothing, Measure for Measure* (Old Globe/USD); *The Who and The What, Our Town, Tall Girls, Brahaman/I, Sam Bendrix at the Bon Soir* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Emilie, Sylvia, Much Ado About Nothing* (New Village Arts), *Snakeskin, Lifeblood Harmony, Chagall, A Man Found Wanting* (Malashock Dance); *The Storm, The Threepenny Opera, A Man, His Wife, and His Hat* (UCSD). Assistant costume credits: *Dialogues des Carmelites* (Teatro Petruzzelli, Bari), *Paradise Found* (Menier Chocolate Factory, London), *Milk Like Sugar* (La Jolla Playhouse), *As You Like It, A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (The Old Globe). Elisa holds a costume design MFA from UCSD. [www.elisabenzoni.com](http://www.elisabenzoni.com).

**ANDREA GUTIERREZ** (Prop Design) has been working at North Coast Rep since 2012, beginning as the Stage Manager and Prop Master for our theatre school. She worked as backstage crew for the 32nd and the beginning of the 33rd Season, before taking over as Supervising House Manager and Volunteer Coordinator. Her previous prop credits include: *Marjorie Prime, Laughter on the 23rd Floor, The Cocktail Hour, Ain’t Misbehavin’, Hedda Gabler, Way Downriver; William Faulkner’s ‘Old Man’, Now You See It, Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Great Nome Gold Rush, Chapatti,* and *The Fox on the Fairway,* as well as two seasons as Properties Assistant at Starlight Theatre. She received her B.A. in Theatrical Design and Production from UCLA’s School of Theatre, Film & Television, and a M.A. from Johns Hopkins University.

**PETER HERMAN** (Hair & Wig Design) has previously designed wigs for over 30 North Coast Rep productions including: *Laughter on the 23rd Floor, The Cocktail Hour, Way Downriver; William Faulkner’s ‘Old Man’, Now You See It, Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Great Nome Gold Rush, Fallen Angels, Romance Romance, Faded Glory, Mandate Memories, The School For Lies, Honky Tonk Angels, Travesties, I Love You Because, Little Women, My Name is Asher Lev* and *Five Course Love.* He has also designed costumes for past North Coast Rep productions: *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Big Bang, Madagascar,* and *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris.* Peter teaches wig and makeup design at San Diego State University. He is glad to be part of the creative team on this show.

**ABBY CAYWOOD** (Costume Design Assistant) received her B.A. in Drama from the University of California, Irvine, where she was awarded Honors in Design. Professional costume design credits include: *Our Great Tchaikovsky* (San Diego Rep)*, MAESTRO: The Art of Leonard Bernstein* (San Diego Rep and 59E59 Off-Broadway), *An American Story* (Pasadena Playhouse), *Marry Me a Little* (Theatre Out), and *The Iliad* (UC Irvine). Her University credits include *Hay Fever* (set and costume design)*, Ghosts*, *The Tempest*, *The Fifth of July*, and *Yerma*. Abby has assistant designed two seasons at New Swan Shakespeare Festival and has interned in the costume shop at the La Jolla Playhouse.

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