

**World Premiere Production  
of 'Medea'**  
**with Annette Bening**  
**Coming to UCLA Live**  
September 18 – October 18, 2009

**For Immediate Use**

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*'What anger worse, or slower to abate/than lovers' love when it has turned to hate.'*  
— Euripides' *Medea*

LOS ANGELES — Acclaimed actress **Annette Bening** will star in a towering world premiere production of "**Medea**" running at UCLA Live's Freud Playhouse Sept. 18-Oct. 18. The opening night will be Sept. 23. Tickets for all performances of "Medea" are on sale at [www.uclalive.org](http://www.uclalive.org) or at the UCLA Central Ticket Office (310-825-2101).

The radical new staging of Euripides' classic was proposed by international theater and opera director Lenka Udovicki, who brought the concept to UCLA Live. Working from a 1994 translation, Udovicki is crafting a "Medea" that is both timeless and contemporary, complete with choreographed Greek chorus, Persian-influenced live music and stunning visual effects. Her interpretation finds Medea a more sympathetic character, a woman driven to the unthinkable by her lover's abandonment and her impending exile. "Medea" represents the first theater production created entirely by UCLA Live.

Annette Bening, an American Conservatory Theater-trained stage actress, saw her Hollywood fame blossom with each portrayal of an unlikable yet unforgettable character in "The Grifters," "American Beauty," "Being Julia," "Mrs. Harris" and more. She has riveted Los Angeles' theater audiences with similarly complex portraits twice before. In 2006 her turn as Ranyevskaya in the Mark Taper Forum's "The Cherry Orchard" embodied the character's "supercharged sensibility, which can turn from laughter to tears to haughty irritation in seconds," wrote The Los Angeles Times. When she played the title role of "Hedda Gabler" at the Geffen Playhouse in 1999, The New York Times said she delivered, "lightning flashes that illuminate the shadowy interior of Ibsen's most compellingly ambiguous heroine in new and unexpected ways."

It was meeting Bening that inspired Udovicki to revisit "Medea," which she had directed years before at the Ulysses Theatre, a company she co-founded in Croatia. "I am interested in how someone born to love becomes a murderer," Udovicki said. "Annette has something inside of her that is very noble and yet warm. She has the inner and outer beauty. Things are not black and white, or shallow. There is a depth. She really defends her characters."

Scottish film, television and stage actor **Angus Macfadyen** will play Jason, the man who has shattered Medea by leaving her to marry into the royal family of Corinth. Macfadyen, who got his start on the stage in Edinburgh, got his breakthrough with the leading role in the landmark British television film, "The Lost Language of Cranes." He quickly made his mark in movies with his portrayal of Robert the Bruce in the Oscar-winning best picture "Braveheart."

For the creative team, Udovicki has lured the talents of many people who worked on her productions in Europe. Composer **Nigel Osborne**, whose opera and symphonic works have been performed as music festivals around the world, is collaborating on an original score with Los Angeles-based Persian music group **The Lian Ensemble**, who will perform on stage during the play. The costumes are being designed by **Bjanka Adzic Ursulov**, who worked with Udovicki on “The Tempest” at Shakespeare’s Globe Theater in London as well as at the Ulysses Theatre. **Mladen Vasari**, who was a leading student of the French movement master Jacques Lecoq, will be the choreographer.

Award-winning scenic designer **Richard Hoover** has created the starkly powerful set. Hoover, who won a Tony for “Not About Nightingales” at Circle in the Square in 1999, is also known for “Bat Boy” at the Union Square Theater, as well as for TV’s “Twin Peaks,” the HBO’s “Entourage” pilot and the films “Ed Wood” and “Dead Man Walking.” The lighting designer is **Lap Chi Chu**, whose work has been seen at theaters from Orange County’s South Coast Rep to New York’s Public Theater. Executive producer is **Menno Plukker**. **David Sefton**, UCLA Live’s artistic and executive director, is producer.

“Medea” leads off UCLA Live’s Eighth International Theatre Festival. The festival continues through early December, with productions by globally renowned companies, including Druid Ireland, Italy’s Societas Raffaello Sanzio, Poland’s TR Warszawa and Teatr Zar and Belgium’s Ontroerend Goed.

## TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for “**Medea**” are available for **\$110** or **\$80** (\$50 or \$30 for previews, Sept. 18-20 and 22). They can be purchased online at [www.UCLALive.org](http://www.UCLALive.org), by phone at **310-825-2101**, in person at the UCLA Central Ticket Office at the southwest corner of the James West Alumni Center, and at all Ticketmaster outlets. UCLA students may purchase tickets in advance for \$20 (\$15 for previews).

## CALENDAR LISTING — THEATER

“**Medea**” — Annette Bening stars in Euripides’ classic about the destructive collapse of the passionate affair between the Greek hero Jason and the exotic Medea. Director Lenka Udovicki, who has staged theater and opera around the world, incorporates classical elements, such as a Greek chorus and live music, into this stylized modern production created by UCLA Live. Freud Playhouse (in UCLA’s Macgowan Hall), 245 Charles E. Young Drive East, Los Angeles (Westwood). Previews Sept. 18, 19 and 22 at 8 p.m. and Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. \$30-\$50. Opens Wed., Sept. 23, continuing Tues.-Sat. at 8 p.m. and Sun. at 7 p.m. Ends Oct. 18. \$80-\$110. (310) 825-2101, [www.uclalive.org](http://www.uclalive.org).

## PHOTOGRAPHS

High-resolution images can be downloaded at: <http://files.performingarts.ucla.edu/uclalivepress/>

*UCLA Live is an internationally acclaimed producer and presenter of music, dance, theater and spoken word, bringing hundreds of outstanding and provocative artists to Los Angeles each year.*

*UCLA Live's production of "Medea" is generously supported by the International Theatre Festival Host Committee. The Committee's Honorary Chair is Brindell Gottlieb and consists corporations, foundations and more than 20 members of the Royce Center Circle who provide considerable ancillary support for the extraordinary costs associated with producing and presenting exceptional international theatre performances.*