

HOTEL

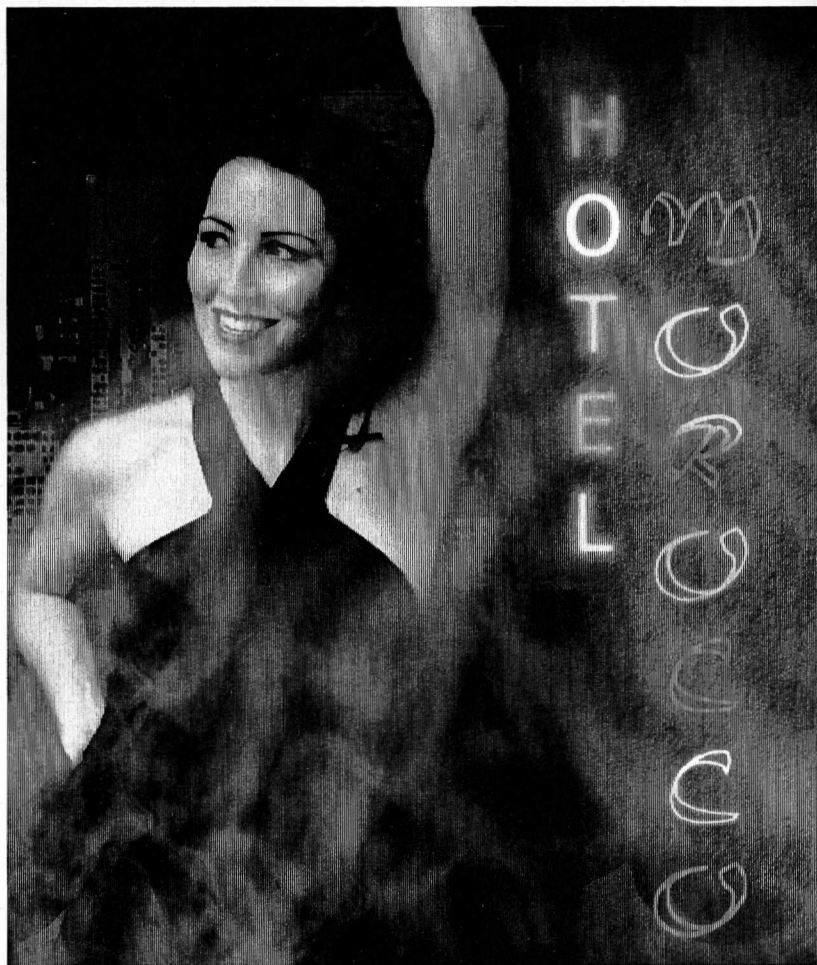
Morocco



ECHO

A Sound Returned

Presents:



Cast

Adam: **Alexander Hall**

Rocco: **John McNeill**

Mario, Thug, Frat Guy 1: **M. Omid Ghorashi**

Shelly, Cop 1: **Karen Alvarado**

Sylvia: **Suzanne Balling**

Peter, Business Man: **Pascal Nicolas**

JP, Frat Guy 2, New Guy: **Clay Avery**

Jan, Cop 2, Dark Figure: **Scot Friedman**

Igor, Angry Latino: **Mike Hinojosa**

Understudy to Ms. Balling: **Leng Wong**

Production Staff

Director: **Shannon Davis**

AD: **Sarah E. Sheffield**

Playwright: **Aaron Black**

Producers: **Aaron Black, Shannon Davis,
Alexander Hall, and Sarah E. Sheffield**

Set: **Aaron Black, Shannon Davis,
Alexander Hall, Sarah E. Sheffield, and John McNeill**

Costumes: **Shannon Davis**
With Assistance from **Noey Peña**

Props: **Sarah E. Sheffield**

Sound Design: **Alexander Hall and Shannon Davis**

Publicity: **Alexander Hall**

Shannon Davis: Director/Producer

A founding member of ECHO, Ms. Davis is a graduate from The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's College of the Arts, where she majored in Theatre Performance/Directing and minored in Vocal Performance. You may have seen her recently, in Austin, as Ophelia in City Theatre's *Hamlet*. Ms. Davis' other credits include numerous Professional and College Theaters in Wisconsin. Her most notable roles include: Bunny in *The Desk Set*, which she received an Irene Ryan nomination for, Elain in *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, and Sally in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*.

Ms. Davis is also no stranger to the art of Direction. She has Directed and Assistant Directed many shows including: *Affections of May*, *Terra Nova*, and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, for which she won the Ken Lempart Directing Scholarship Award.

Sarah E. Sheffield: Assistant Director/Producer

A founding member of ECHO, Ms. Sheffield is a native Austinite and graduate of Concordia University. Her experience both on-stage and backstage includes *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Shadowlands* and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

"Theatre is a sacred and holy endeavor." - Jeffrey Hinkle

Aaron Black: Playwright/Producer

A founding member of ECHO, Mr. Black has performed in New York, Los Angeles, New Jersey, Atlanta, and Oklahoma. He now lives in Austin. Mr. Black holds a Bachelors of Fine Arts from the University of Oklahoma and also a Masters of Fine Arts from The New School, where he studied acting with current lifetime members of the famed Actors Studio. Past Austin credits include Hamlet in City Theatre's production of *Hamlet*, and Benny Locasta in *Touch* for The Vestige Group. This is Mr. Black's first produced play.

Alexander Hall: Adam/Producer

A founding member of ECHO, Mr. Hall is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a Bachelor of Arts in Theater Performance. Mr. Hall has also studied classical and contemporary theatre at the British American Drama Academy in London. He was recently seen in City Theatre's production of *Hamlet* as both Marcellus and Guildenstern. Mr. Hall's most notable roles include: Duwell Early in *Duck Hunter Shoots Angel*, Henry Bowers in *Terra Nova*, Smee in *Peter Pan*, and Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit*.

John McNeill: Rocco

Mr. McNeill recently retired from the software business and has returned to the Austin stage, most recently in the City Theatre production of *Hamlet*. In earlier years, he portrayed the Referee in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, Jacques in *Jacques and his Master*, and Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*.

M. Omid Ghorashi: Mario, Thug, Frat Guy 1

Mr. Ghorashi was last seen as Horatio in the City Theatre production of *Hamlet*. He is a company member of Tongue + Groove Theatre. He will also be appearing in an upcoming production of *The Red Balloon* in May.

Karen Alvarado: Shelly, Cop 1

Ms. Alvarado is a graduate of the theatre program at Texas A&M Corpus Christi. Some of her most noteworthy roles include Magenta in *The Rocky Horror Show*, Antonia in *No Se Paga*, *We Won't Pay*, multiple characters in *The Bible Abridged* and *Vagina Monologues*, and the title role in *Kuka*.

Suzanne Balling: Sylvia

In Austin, Ms. Balling has performed with Different Stages Theater as Maryamma in *Miss Witherspoon* (2009 B. Iden Payne award) and the Stage Manager in *The Skin of Our Teeth*, with Shrewd Productions as Mom/Penny in *The Long Now*, and with Scottish Rite Theatre as Olivia in *Twelfth Night*. She also has numerous credits in New York, Houston, and her home town of Galveston. Look for her next in *The Bawdy Five* at the Curtain Theater and *Sleeping Beauty* at the Vortex.

Pascal Nicolas: Peter, Business Man

After 10 years in the corporate world, Mr. Nicolas recently decided to leave his job to pursue more creative opportunities. Since then, Mr. Nicolas has acted in several short films and played the lead role in the soon to be released *SoulCheckMate*. Mr. Nicolas is also the co-owner of Dolce Vita, Austin's first gelato bar.

Clay Avery: JP, Frat Guy 2, New Guy

Mr. Avery holds degrees from both Texas Christian University in Fort Worth as well as the University of Texas at Austin. A native of Pflugerville, Mr. Avery was most recently seen on the Austin stage as Rosencrantz in City Theatre's Fall production of *Hamlet*.

Scot Friedman: Jan, Cop 2, Dark Figure

Mr. Friedman, a native of Austin and a graduate of the University of Texas, has been featured in independent films, web series, radio and TV commercials, and animation voice-over projects. Mr. Friedman most recently appeared as Kenny in the City Theatre's production of *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*. Look for him next as Frank in *How the Other Half Loves*.

Mike Hinojosa: Igor, Angry Latino

Mr. Hinojosa is originally from the Rio Grande Valley where he was a founding member of the community theatre group Teatro Nuestra Cultura. After studying theatre at Texas State University he came to Austin to pursue an acting career. Besides stage work, Mr. Hinojosa is an active volunteer with the Austin Film Festival, the Austin Asian American Film Festival, Cine Las Americas, and the Texas Motion Picture Association.

Leng Wong: Understudy to Ms. Balling

Ms. Wong is a past B. Iden Payne nominee for her portrayal of Mrs. Winsley in *Stop Kiss*. She was last seen in Different Stages' *What I Want Right Now*, an original play by Tom White, and in Loaded Gun Theory's *Cinco de FlimFlam*.

Music

Dave Jeppsen: "Friend of the Devil", "Blackbird", "Girl from Ipanema", "Strangers", and "Lola" (back up vocals by Ms. Davis).

Mr. Jeppsen is a native of Chicago, currently living in Wisconsin. His unique blend of guitar stylings and excellent vocal quality have combined to create the soundtrack to *Hotel Morocco*.

Lost Controls: "When I Die"

Words and Music by Cody Leitholt

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Pure Ecstasy: "DWLDWD"

www.myspace.com/gracenate

Special Thanks

Jeffrey Hinkle
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Nancy Peterson
Scott George
Peggy Black
The Intelligent Office
FronteraFest
Hyde Park Theatre
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A Note From The Director:

Welcome to the World Premiere of *Hotel Morocco*!

As with every new play, the Director and the Production staff have the daunting task of being completely original. At first this can feel liberating as you are not tied to stage directions from the first director, actor types, or extraneous "prop-age". But with the sweet comes the sour; no prop lists, no set lists, no costume ideas, no character descriptions, minimal lighting and sound queues. The Director and Production Staff have to play a huge part in a new production. We were lucky enough to have the writer, Aaron Black, as a Producer as well, which most plays cannot boast. If there were any questions on "line interpretation" or "stage directions", he was within arm's reach.

For the first production of *Hotel Morocco*, I wanted to invoke the true spirit of New York. I watched old movies set in New York (*Adam's Rib*, *Arsenic and Old Lace*, etc.) and listened to sound clips of the city and its inhabitants. I noticed a rhythm that pervaded their speech, which reminded me of free-form jazz; a fast, Mamet-esque cadence that mirrored the lines in Mr. Black's play. I immediately fell in love with this rapid-fire style. I pushed the actors to reach new speeds in their scenes. I wanted to juxtapose Adam's slow inaction, with an up-tempo force driving all of the scenes.

As a fruit of our endeavors, we have attained a stellar cast and even created a Theatre Company to live on after *Hotel Morocco*. "ECHO... a sound returned" would like to thank you for coming and please enjoy the show.

Shannon Davis

Director



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