TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
CULTURAL EVENTS

presents

THE MYSTERIES AND WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

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THE MYSTERIES AND WHAT'S SO FUNNY?

Music By
Philip Glass

Visual Design by
Red Grooms

Written and Directed by
David Gordon

Music Director: Alan Johnson
Lighting Designer: Dan Kotlowitz
Sound Designer: David Meschter
Casting: Vince Liebhart and Judy Dennis

Produced by Jedediah Wheeler
in association with:
THE PICK UP PERFORMANCE COMPANY, INC.
June Poster, Managing Director

Commissioned by Spoleto Festival U.S.A. and Lincoln Center's *Serious Fun!* Festival!

The principal sponsor of this project is The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

The development of this project was made possible by a generous grant from the Ford Foundation.

The Mysteries And What's So Funny? was developed in workshops at the Guthrie Theater, American Repertory Theatre, and Playwrights Horizons.

Additional project support has been provided by: Jerome Foundation, John and Sage Cowles, AT&T Foundation, Foundation for Contemporary Performance Arts, Greenwall Foundation, and the Harkness Foundations for Dance.

The commission fees for this composer/choreographer collaboration were made possible by a grant from Meet the Composer's Composer/Choreographer Project, a national program funded by the Ford Foundation and the PEW Charitable Trusts.

These performances are made possible, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Residency activities and performances in Philadelphia are supported in part by a grant from the PEW Charitable Trust.

The piece is 90 minutes in length. There is no intermission.

CAST:

Scott Cohen: Young Sam
Scott Cunningham: Anger I
Norma Fire: Detective, Only Oldest Child
Karen Graham: Young Rose
Jane Hoffman: Fanny
Alan Johnson: Pianist
Bill Kux: Mr. Him
Jerry Matz: Old Sam
Dean Moss: Young Artist
Lola Pashalinski: Old Rose
Alice Playten: Actor, Grandfather, Father, etc.
Adina Porter: Anger II
Tisha Roth: Mrs. Him
Valda Setterfield: Marcel Duchamp

Chuck Finlon: Assistant Director

DAVID GORDON (Writer, Director) performed in the companies of James Waring and Yvonne Rainer in the 1960's. He showed work at the Living Theater and in the first Judson Church performances. In the early 1970's he was a founding member of the improvisational ensemble, Grand Union. In 1978 he formalized the process of making work for varying numbers of performers by establishing the Pick Up Company as a legal entity. Since that time a core company has been established with whom he rehearses and tours regularly. Mr. Gordon has been commissioned to make work for dance companies in the United States and Europe, including the American Ballet Theatre, Dance Theater of Harlem, Groupe de Recherche Choreographique de l'Opera de Paris, the Rambert Dance Company, and Mikhail Baryshnikov's White Oak Dance Project. His work was seen at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in 1984 when he constructed the movement for the NEXT WAVE Festival's presentation of the Philip Glass work **The Photographer.** The Pick Up Company has since been presented in the NEXT WAVE Festival in both 1986 and 1988. Mr. Gordon is a Guggenheim Fellow (1981 and 1987), has served as a panelist for the Dance Program for the New York State Council on the Arts and as a Panelist and Chairman of the Dance Program Panel of National Endowment for the Arts. In 1984, he received a New York Performance Award (Bessie) for Sustained Choreographic Achievement. Mr. Gordon's dance/music/theatre work, **The Mysteries And What's So Funny?** was honored in 1991 with a Bessie Award and in 1992 with an Obie Award. Mr. Gordon is profiled in Sally Banes' book **Terpsichore in Sneakers** and by Arlene Croce in the November 29, 1982 issue of The New Yorker. In May 1980, David Gordon's work was included in the **Dance in America** broadcast **Beyond the Mainstream,** and he is one of the seven artists featured in Michael Blackwood's film **Making Dances.** His ten minute TV videotapes produced by the Pick Up Company have been shown by Channel 4/Great Britain. They were selected for the 1984 Olympic Arts Festival and were aired in August 1986 on an episode on the national PBS series **Alive from Off Center** devoted to Gordon's work. In October of 1987 **David Gordon's Made in U.S.A.** aired nationally on **WNET/Great Performances** and later received three Emmy nominations. The program featured Mikhail Baryshnikov and Valda Setterfield in three of Gordon's works for the Pick Up Company and American Ballet Theatre. In 1989 the Company completed a video work titled **My Folks** which aired on BBC-TV in October of that year. A new work for television, **Punch and Judy Get Divorced** was created in 1992 and received its broadcast premiere on KTCA/Alive TV in June. The script for **The Mysteries And What's So Funny?** is being published this year by Grove Press in an anthology of contemporary American plays edited by Michael Feingold.

PHILIP GLASS (Composer) was born in Baltimore on January 31, 1937. He discovered music in his father's radio repair shop. In addition to servicing radios, Ben Glass carried a line of records and, when certain ones sold poorly, he would take them home and play them for his three children, trying to discover why they didn't appeal to customers. These happened to be recordings of the great chamber works, and the future composer rapidly became familiar with Beethoven quartets, Schubert sonatas, Shostakovich symphonies and other music then considered "offbeat." It was not until he was in his upper teens did Glass begin to encounter more "standard" classics.

Glass began the violin at six and became serious about music when he took up the flute at eight. But by the time he was 15, he had become frustrated with the limited flute repertory as well as with musical life in post-war Baltimore. During his second year in high school, he applied for admission to the University of Chicago, passed and, with his parents' encouragement, moved to Chicago where he supported himself with part-time jobs waiting tables and loading airplanes at airports. He majored in mathematics and philosophy, and in off hours practiced piano and concentrated on such composers as Ives and Webern.

At 19, Glass graduated from the University of Chicago and, determined to become a composer, moved on to New York and the Juilliard School. By then he had abandonded the 12-tone techniques he had been using in Chicago and preferred American composers like Aaron Copeland and William Schuman.

By the time he was 23, Glass had studied with Vincent Persichetti, Darius Milhaud and William Bergsma. He had rejected serialism and preferred such maverick composers as Harry Partch, Ives, Moondog, Henry Cowell, Virgil Thomson, but he still had not found his own voice. Still searching, he moved to Paris and two years of intensive study under Nadia Boulanger.

In Paris, he was hired by a film-maker to transcribe the Indian Music of Ravi Shankar in notation readable by French musicians and, in the process, discovered the techniques of Indian music. Glass promptly renounced his previous music and, after researching music in North Africa, India and the Himalayas, returned to New York and began applying Eastern techniques to his own work.

By 1974, he had composed a large collection of new music, much of it for use by the theater company Mabou Mines (Glass was one of the co-founders of that company), and most of it composed for his own performing group, The Philip Glass Ensemble. This period culminated in **Music in 12 Parts,** a 3-hour summation of Glass' new music, and reached their apogee in 1976 with the Philip Glass/Robert Wilson opera **Einstein on the Beach**, the 4½ hour epic now seen as a landmark in the 20th century music-theatre.

Glass's output since **Einstein** has ranged from opera (**Satyagraha, Akhnaten, The Making of the Representative for Planet 8, The Fall of the House of Usher, The Juniper Tree**) to film (**Koyaanisqatsi, Mishima, The Thin Blue Line, Powaqqatsi** and currently **A Brief History of Time**) to dance (**A Descent into the Maelstrom** and **In The Upper Room**), and such unclassifiable theatre pieces as **The Photographer,** and **1000 Airplanes on the Roof.** Among his recently completed works are **Itaipu**, a large-scale work for chorus and orchestra, commissioned by the Atlanta Symphony, and **Hydrogen Jukebox**, an opera with the poetry by Allen Ginsberg, which received its world premeire at Spoleto U.S.A. His current projects include **Orphee**, a chamber opera based on the film by Jean Cocteau, **White Raven**, a collaboration with Robert Wilson and **The Voyage**, commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera, World Premiere October 12th, 1992.

RED GROOMS (Visual Design) was born in Nashville, Tennessee. He has previously created commissioned set designs for plays by Kenneth Koch and Kenward Elmslie, as well as dances by Jacques d'Amboise. He is the recipient of many commissions and awards including: a public billboard for the Contemporary Museum of Art, Chicago, IL; a permanent environmental commission for the Hudson River Museum, Yonkers, NY; an outdoor sculpture for Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY; and a permanent environmental commission with Lysiane Luong for the American Museum of the Moving Image, Astoria, NY. His awards include an Artists of the Year Award (1983), Art Teachers of New York, NYC, Brickie Award (1983), Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, NYC; Rhode Island School of Design President's Award (1985); National Arts Club Award (1986), Gold Medal Honor; New York Times Ten Best Illustrated Children's Books Award (1986); Governor's Award in the Arts (1986), State of Tennessee; and The Mayor's Awards of Honor for Art and Culture (1988), New York City. His work has been widely exhibited and is in public collections from Denver, Colorado to Little Rock, Arkansas and from Stockholm, Sweden to Caracas, Venezuela in such prestigious institutions as The Art Institute of Chicago, The Brooklyn Museum, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. His work has been the focus of numerous one-man and group exhibitions from 1958 through 1992, including most recently a one-man show at New York's Marlborough Gallery. He has created live performances and films, and acted in films by Rudy Burckhardt and Mike Kuchar. His latest projects include the set design for **Chakra: A Celebration of Inda; Agricultural Building**, a permanent environmental commission for the Des Moines Art Center; a revival presentation of **The Burning Building** and the premiere of **Hot Water** at Cabaret Voltaire in Torino, Italy

SCOTT COHEN (Young Sam) Was last seen in **Mississippi Crossing** at Alice's Fourth Floor. Other New York credits include **The Crucible** directed by Gerald Freedman at the Roundabout, **Lady and The Clarinet** at River Arts Repertory, **Servy N Bernice 4 Ever** at the Provincetown Playhouse directed by Terry Kinney, **Don't Blame Me** at Angel Theatre directed by the late Ralph Marrero, **Black-Eyed Brothers** by Seth Rosenfeld at the Westbank Cafe and the John Houseman Theatre and **Cavalleria Rusticana** directed by John Turturro. Williamstown Theatre Festival—**The American Clock, Henry IV** directed by Austin Pendleton, **Passion** directed by Arvin Brown, **Mother Courage** directed by Gerald Freedman and **Oedipus** directed by Nikos Psacharopoulos. Films include **Many Wonders, Jacob's Ladder, The Mambo Kings** and the upcoming **Mac** directed by John Turturro.

SCOTT CUNNINGHAM (Anger I) grew up in Needham, MA and developed an interest in music and athletics at an early age. Scott earned a B.A. in English, worked in many aspects of the theater, and studied dance while at U Mass/Amherst. After dancing in Boston, he moved to New York where he danced with Elisa Monte and Mark Morris. Scott joined the David Gordon Pick Up Company in 1986 and has worked with Mr. Gordon in dance, television and theater. Most recently he appeared in David Gordon's **Punch and Judy Get Divorced** for PBS TV. Scott has an interest in recreation, the martial arts, and contact improvisation.

NORMA FIRE (Detective and Only Oldest Child) most recently played The Clown in David Gordon's **Punch and Judy Get Divorced** for PBS TV. Previously, she played Gertrude in **Hamlet**, Lady Sneerwell in **The School for Scandal**, and Abbess in **The Comedy of Errors** for North Carolina Shakespeare Festival. She played Hippolyta, Puck and Peter Quince in **A Midsummer Night's Dream** for Southern Theatre, Minneapolis. In four seasons at Actors Theatre of St. Paul she performed major roles in eighteen plays including **Noises Off!, Joe Egg, Uncle Vanya, Peg O' My Heart, Sherlock's Last Case, I Love You, I Love You Not, Interrogating the Nude, Not I, The American Dream,** and **Maria and the Angels.** Her New York credits include roles in **The Taming of the Shrew, Henry V** and **The Merry Wives of Windsor** for Riverside Shakespeare, three understudies at New York Shakespeare Festival, and **Macbeth** at York Theatre.

KAREN GRAHAM (Young Rose) has been performing with the Pick Up Company since the fall of 1986. Recently she performed with the White Oak Dance Project. She also performs in the works of Dean Moss.

JANE HOFFMAN (Fanny) was most recently seen at Lincoln Center in **Some Americans Abroad**. She has done everything from nightclubs, to musicals, Off-Broadway, Broadway and films. A graduate of the University of California, and a charter member of the Actor's Studio and The Ensemble Studio Theatre, she created the roll of "Mommy" in Edward Albee's **The Sandbox** and **The American Dream**. On Broadway she originated roles in **Murder Among Friends, Rhinoceros, Mother Courage, The Crucible,** and **The Rose Tatoo**. She has also appeared at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in Robert Wilson's **The Golden Windows**, Off-Broadway in Tina Howe's **The Art of**

Dining at the Public Theatre, Wendy Wasserstein's **Isn't It Romantic?** at the Phoenix, **Alterations** at WPA among others not so notable. Her films include **Batteries Not Included, Day of the Locusts, Up the Sandbox,** with Barbara Streisand, and **They Might Be Giants.** In television, she has worked on every network from daytimes series, **Love of Life** (for 2½ years) to Marlo Thomas' Specials. Most recently, she has appeared on **Grand, Law and Order,** and on **The Tracy Ullman Show** with her son, Sam McMurray.

ALAN JOHNSON (Music Director and Pianist) pursues a wide-ranging career as a music director, pianist, and vocal coach in fields stretching from new muisic to dance to music theatre and opera. He has served as music director for some of the most adventurous productions of recent years, including The Manson Family by John Moran, produced at the Serious Fun! Festival at Lincoln Center; the New York Shakespeare Festival productions of **Henry IV, Parts I and II,** and **Cymbeline** directed by JoAnne Akalaitis with music by Philip Glass; and the Spoleto Festival premiere of **The Mysteries And What's So Funny?** His association with Philip Glass has included premieres with the Spoleto Festival U.S.A. and Italy (**Hydrogen Jukebox**), Houston Grand Opera (**The Making of the Representative for Planet 8**) and Molissa Fenley (**Provenance Unknown**). His skills as a vocal coach, accompanist, and performer were utilized in the premiere of **Tania**, an opera by Anthony Davis and Michael John LaChiusa at the American Music Theater Festival; **The Juniper Tree** by Philip Glass and Robert Moran at Tulsa Opera; **Nixon in China** by John Adams at the Brooklyn Academy of Music; and **West Side Story** at the Festival de Lille in France. His work with other composers has led to premieres at Tulsa Opera, Circle Rep Theatre, and the Phyllis Lamhut Dance Company.

BILL KUX (Mr. Him) has appeared Off-Broadway in **Loose Ends** at Second Stage, **Absent Friends** and **The Philanthropist** at Manhattan Theatre Club and **Baby with the Bathwater** at Playwrights Horizons. Regionally he has been seen in **The Film Society** at Baltimore's Center Stage, **The Foreigner** at the St. Louis Repertory Theatre, **Taking Steps** at Louisville's Actors Theatre, **Streamers** at Los Angeles' Westwood Playhouse and **The Philanderer** at the Yale Repertory Theatre. He has appeared on television in **Hothouse, As the World Turns** and **M.A.S.H.** and in the films **California Suite** and **Bonfire of the Vanities.** He is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

JERRY MATZ (Old Sam) was seen most recently this season off-Broadway at The John Houseman Theatre where he created the role of Zalman in **Shmulnik's Waltz.** On Broadway, he has performed in **Fiddler on the Roof, Ghetto,** and **Roza** (with Georgia Brown). Other Off-Broadway credits include **A Day Out of Time** and **The Last Danceman** (New Federal Theatre), **A Mad World, My Masters** (Off-Center) **The Rise of David Levinsky** (American Jewish Theatre), and **My Three Sons** (Playwrights Horizons). Regionally he has performed in **Roza, Waiting for Godot, Mother Courage, Little Shop of Horrors,** and **Wonderful Town** at the Mark Taper Forum, Baltimore Center Stage, Virginia Museum Theatre, Pennsylvania Stage Company and Goodspeed Opera House. Feature film credits include **The Gig, The Luckiest Man in the World, Histoires D'Amerique, etc., Chronicles of the Lodz Ghetto** and **The Chosen.** TV audiences have seen him on **Law and Order, Kate and Allie, All My Children, As The World Turns,** and in the film **The Day the Ladies Got Even.**

DEAN MOSS (Young Artist) is a performer, choreographer and videomaker and a longtime member of the David Gordon/Pick-Up Company. His own choreography has been presented by Danspace Project, Dance Theater Workshop and Performance Space 122. His tape, **Adventures in Assimilation**, is distributed internationally by The Kitchen. Moss's current video and performance work focuses on elements of individual identity through portraiture and solo dance.

LOLA PASHALINSKI (Old Rose) Recent regional theater appearances inlcude: **Twelfth Night** at The Goodman Theatre (as Toby Belch), **Reckless** at the Hartford Stage Co., at The Wilma Theatre in American premiere of Thomas Bernhard's **The President**, and at the Guthrie Theatre in JoAnne Akalaitis' production of **The Screens.** In New York: Kent in Mabou Mines' gender reversed production of **Lear.** Best known as a founding member of Charles Ludlam's Ridiculous Theatrical Company, she received two OBIES for her performances in Ludlam's **Corn** and **Der Ring Gott Farblonjet**, as well as originating roles in fifteen other Ridiculous plays. In films and television she has appeared on **The Equalizer, Molly Dodd,** and soap operas, and can be seen in Peter Sellars' **The Cabinet of Dr. Ramirez.** She just completed work on Leslie Lyles' film **Fanny** directed by Don Scardino.

ALICE PLAYTEN (Actor, Grandfather, Father, Critic, Gaston, Raymond, Mme. Duchamp, Vendeuse, Ida, Mickey, Molly, Pauline, Yetta, Irene, Ruth, Alfred, Minister, Waiter, Baby, Doctor, Salesperson) As a child Alice sang at the Met in the premiere of the opera **Wozzeck.** She made her Broadway debut in **Gypsy** starring Ethel Merman, followed by original Broadway productions of **Oliver, Hello Dolly, George M, Henry Sweet Henry** (Theater World & Drama Critics Awards, Tony Nomination), **Rumors,** and **Spoils of War** (Drama Desk Nomination). Off-Broadway shows include **Promenade, The Last Sweet Days of Isaac, Lemmings,** (Obie Award), **The Pirates of Penzance, The Hotel Play, Sister Mary Ignatius..., That's It Folks, Up From Paradise,** and the E.S.T. 1990 Marathon. Films include Ridley Scott's **Legend.** In addition, Alice appeared on Broadway (and now CD) in **Sondheim, A Musical Tribute** and performs with

Garrison Keillor's **American Radio Company.** Recently she appeared in David Gordon's **Punch and Judy Get Divorced** on PBS TV.

ADINA PORTER (Anger II) is a graduate of the High School of Performing Arts and has a BFA from S.U.N.Y. Purchase. Her theater work around New York includes **The Debutante Ball** at Manhattan Theatre Club, **Loose Knit** at New York Stage and Film, and **Jersey City** at Second Stage. Regionally she has worked at Hartford Stage in **Peer Gynt,** Stage West in **Visions of an Ancient Dreamer,** and Yale Rep in **Democracy in America.** Her film credits include **Trust, Swoon,** and **Baby on Board** and on television she has appeared in series such as **Working It Out, Law and Order,** and PBS's **American Masters.** She lives in Brooklyn, New York and has recently married.

TISHA ROTH (Mrs. Him) is pleased to be working with David Gordon again. She recently appeared in Gordon's **Punch and Judy Get Divorced** for PBS TV. Regionally she has worked with Robert Wilson on a production of **When We Dead Awaken** at American Repertory Theatre; with Robert Woodruff on **A Man is a Man** at La Jolla Playhouse; and in **Hamlet** and **The Seagull** with Gerald Freeman at Great Lakes Theatre Festival; **Three Sisters** and **As You Like It** at Syracuse Stage. In New York she performed in Brian Mertes' **Woyzek** at Naked Angels, and in Mertes' **Girl Gone,** a play by Jacquelyn Reingold, as part of the 1991 annual Mortality Project at Manhattan Class Company, of which she is a member. Other New York credits include Sally in **The Early Girl** at Circle Rep, and Clare in Peter Hedges' **Andy and Clare,** performed by The Edge Theater, of which she is a member.

VALDA SETTERFIELD (Marcel Duchamp) is from England where she performed in pantomimes and with Ballet Rambert. In 1958, she came to America and joined the companies of James Waring (1958-62) and Merce Cunningham (1965-74). She has appeared on stage with Grand Union and in works of Katherine Litz, Yvonne Rainer, Robert Wilson, Richard Forman, JoAnne Akalaitis and on film in works of Ms. Rainer and Brian de Palma. She performed in the works of David Gordon at the Living Theater and the Judson Church and has been a featured member of the Pick Up Company since its inception. In September 1984, she received a New York Performance Award (Bessie) as an outstanding performance artist. In 1987, she co-starred with Mikhail Baryshnikov in **David Gordon's Made in U.S.A.** for **WNET/Great Performances,** and in May, 1988, returned as a guest artist to the Rambert Dance Company in Gordon's **Mates.** Most recently she toured Europe and Japan with the White Oak Dance Project. She studies acting with Michael Howard.

CHUCK FINLON (Assistant Director) was David Gordon's assistant on the recent PBS production, **Punch and Judy Get Divorced.** He has studied the Alexander and Feldenkrais techniques, choreographed and taught both in and out of New York City, danced with the companies of Kenneth Rinker, David Gordon (1984-1990), Jane Comfort and Robert Kovich. He has a BFA with High Honors from the University of Wisconsin and presently studies ballet with Janet Panetta.

DAN KOTLOWITZ (Lighting Designer) Off-Broadway credits include: **Reno Once Removed, The Wash, Yankee Dawg You Die, The Perfect Party, Second Chance, Money Talks, The Second Hurricane,** and **Ladies and Gentlemen, Jerome Kern.** Mr. Kotlowitz recently designed the New York production of **Plague Mass** by Diamanda Galas at Cathedral Saint John the Divine. He has designed for numerous regional theatres including: Milwaukee Rep, Berkeley Rep, The Huntington, Virginia Stage, Northlight, Studio Arena, and The Players Theater. He has also served as Lighting Director for the Serious Fun! Festival at Lincoln Center, Carlton Dance Festival in Brazil, the Leningrad Music Hall, Lyon Opera Ballet at City Center, and the Donestk ballet of the USSR.

DAVID MESCHTER (Sound Designer) composer, sound designer, and audio consultant, received a degree in Audio Technology from American University in Washington, DC. He was the sound consultant and repertory musician with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company from 1981 to 1988, and has since designed and engineered for a variety of artists, including the Kronos Quartet, David Behrman, John Cage, Philip Glass, Meredith Monk, Pandit Pran Nath, La Monte Young, and The American Ballet Theater. He is currently sound designer for the Houston Grand Opera's 1991-1992 season of musicals. His most recent sound designs include Meredith Monk's **Atlas, An Opera in Three Parts,** which was presented at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in May of 1992, and HGO/Dodger production of **Annie Get Your Gun** running in Houston in the summer of '92. He has also designed interactive computer systems such as a Tap-to-Midi converter for Charles Moulton's dance **Tapnology,** and a Flute-to-Haiku computer speech system for composer Yasunao Tone. From 1988-1990 he was the Sound Designer/Supervisor for **Serious Fun! at Lincoln Center.**

JEDEDIAH WHEELER (Producer) is the producer of **1000 Airplanes on the Roof** by Philip Glass and David Henry Hwang, **Hydrogen Jukebox** by Philip Glass and Allen Ginsberg, **The Knee Plays** by Robert Wilson and David Byrne, **We Keep Our Victims Ready** by Karen Finley, **Reno Once Removed** by Reno, and the annual **Serious Fun! at Lincoln Center** festival. He is President of International Production Associates, Inc., a booking and management company based in New York City which represents contemporary artists worldwide.

PRODUCTION STAFF:
Production Manager: Todd Randall
Stage Manager: Ed Fitzgerald
Assistant Stage Manager: Jessica Rhines
Associate Costume Designer: Mary Myers
Company Manager: Amanda Burroughs

Sets and Props by Atlantic Scenic Studios, Inc.
Costume Construction by Schneeman Studios, Ltd.
Assistants to Mary Myers: Elizabeth Gulczynski and Lorraine Andersen

Thanks to: Andre Bishop, Robert Brustein, Alyce Dissette, Paul Draper, Tim Hadel, Heidi Michel, Cynthia Oliver, Robert Orchard, Madeline Puzo, Nigel Redden, Richard Riddell, Jedediah Wheeler, Garland Wright, and John Wulp.

Special thanks to Scott Cunningham, Karen Graham, Dean Moss and Valda Setterfield who have been with this project since its beginning and who have contributed mightily to its formation.

Questions concerning **The Mysteries And What's So Funny?** can be addressed to:

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This program made possible in part through a grant from the Lubbock City Council, as recommended by the Lubbock Cultural Affairs Council.