



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAP UCLA in association with the UCLA School of Theater,
Film and Television presents**

A Pick Up Performance Company(s) Production

217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous

October 11 & 12 at Freud Playhouse, UCLA



“Ain Gordon haunts the margins of history ... conjur[ing] the sort of distant lives that don't make it into textbooks, processed into oblivion by what he calls history's 'ruthless editing machine.'”

—The New York Times

UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance (CAP UCLA) in association with the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television presents A Pick Up Performance Company(s) Production of *217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous* on Friday, October 11, at 8 p.m. and Saturday, October 12 at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m. at Freud Playhouse. Tickets for \$28–\$59 are available now at cap.ucla.edu, 310-825-2101, Ticketmaster and the UCLA Central Ticket Office.

Written and directed by Ain Gordon, *217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous* pulls back the curtain on an overlooked but vital figure in LGBTQ history. In 1972, Dr. John E. Fryer disguised as Dr. Henry Anonymous, complete with rubber mask and voice distorter, addressed his colleagues at the American Psychiatric Association (APA) with these words: "I am a homosexual. I am a psychiatrist." A brave act, as without the costume it would have resulted in the revoking of his license to practice psychiatry.

This testimony resulted in the APA removal of homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, this show honors the LGBTQ civil rights movement and commends Dr. John E. Fryer for his crucial contribution.

Drawn from 217 boxes of Dr. Fryer's personal papers, three-time Obie award winner Ain Gordon re-imagines this historic moment through the eyes of three key figures in Fryer's life. The cast of *217 Boxes* includes Laura Esterman, Derek Lucci and Ken Marks.

Gordon's works have been seen across the country including the BAM Next Wave Festival, The Krannert Center, The Flynn Center and many others. Gordon also wrote for NBC's *Will & Grace*. Gordon was also an original cast member *Spalding Gray: Stories Left To Tell* which ran Off-Broadway and toured extensively including to UCLA.

Funds for the CAP UCLA presentation of *217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous* are provided in part by Diane Levine; Teri Schwartz, Dean UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television; and the James A. Doolittle Endowment.

CAP UCLA's Theater series continues with Michael Keegan Dolan/*Teac Daírsa: Loch na hEala (Swan Lake) (Nov 9, Royce Hall)*, Andrew Dawson: *Space Panorama & Spirit of the Ring (Nov 14-17, Royce Rehearsal Hall)*, Fotini Baxevani: *Lady of Ro (Jan 31 & Feb 1, Freud Playhouse)*, and *Porte Parole: Seeds (Apr 3-4, Freud Playhouse)*.

CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:

CAP UCLA in association with the UCLA School of Theater, Film and Television Presents A Pick Up Performance Company(s) Production

Ain Gordon

[217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous](#)

Friday, Oct. 11 at 8 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 12 at 3 p.m. & 8 p.m.

CAP UCLA at Freud Playhouse, Macgowan Hall, UCLA
245 Charles E. Young Dr. East, Los Angeles, CA 90095

Program: *217 Boxes of Dr. Henry Anonymous* tells the largely unknown story of a courageous gay psychiatrist whose activism made a profound and lasting impact on LGBTQ civil rights. Disguised in a mask and using a voice modulator, John E. Fryer testified as Dr. Henry Anonymous on a homosexuality panel at the 1972 Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association (APA). Facing the loss of his medical license should his identity be discovered, Fryer's testimony resulted in the APA's removal of homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) in 1973. Drawn from 217 boxes of Fryer's personal papers, Obie Award-winning writer/director Ain Gordon re-imagines this historic moment through the eyes of three key figures in Fryer's life, bringing it to UCLA to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots. Featuring Laura Esterman, Derek Lucci and Ken Marks.

Tickets:

Single tickets: \$28–\$59

Online: cap.ucla.edu

Phone: 310-825-2101

UCLA Central Ticket Office: 310-825-2101, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Box office: open 90 minutes prior to the event start time.

Related Art In Action:

Recognizing History: Seeing the Invisible

Join us before the show for a special Pop-Up Library and Reading Room featuring films, archival material and publications surrounding the fight for LGBTQ rights. Each performance will be followed by a discussion and Q&A with Ain Gordon and a special guest from L.A.'s LGBTQ community.

About AIN GORDON

[AIN GORDON](#) is a three-time Obie Award-winning writer/director/actor, a two-time NYFA recipient, and a Guggenheim Fellow in Playwriting. Gordon's work has been seen at BAM Next Wave Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, Soho Rep, The Public Theater, 651 ARTS, Dance Theater Workshop, Performance Space 122, Baryshnikov Arts Center, HERE Arts Center, Kitchen Theatre Company, and Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (all NY); the Mark Taper Forum (CA), the George Street Playhouse (NJ), Vermont Performance Lab, Flynn Center for the Performing Arts (VT), Krannert Center (IL), OnStage at Connecticut College, MASS MoCA, the Baltimore Museum of Art (MD), DiverseWorks (TX), Spirit Square (NC), VSA North Fourth Arts Center (NM), Jacob's Pillow (MA), LexArts (KY), and Dance Space (DC), and more. Gordon's 2003 work *Art Life & Show-Biz: A Non-Fiction Play* is published in Palgrave Macmillan's *Dramaturgy Of The Real On The World Stage*.

About [PICK UP PERFORMANCE CO\(S\)](#)

Is a nonprofit producing organization founded in 1971 and incorporated in 1978 (as Pick Up Performance Co., Inc.) to facilitate projects by David Gordon. The company was expanded in 1992 to include projects by Ain Gordon and renamed **Pick Up Performance Co(s)** in recognition of the dual father/son leadership with independent projects by each artist. PUPC continues to be artist-led with multi-generational NYC roots supporting the wide-roaming interests of both artists in dance, theater, media, social practice, and the fusing of disciplines and many long-term artistic collaborators. This work manifests annually in both New York City and nationally. For nearly 50 years PUPCos has charted a personal aesthetic path.

About DR. JOHN FRYER

Fryer was born in Winchester Kentucky in 1937 and earned his Bachelor's degree from Lexington's Transylvania University. He graduated from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in 1962. After entering a psychiatry residency at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, he was discharged when it was learned that he was homosexual. He completed his residency at a Pennsylvania mental hospital and became a private practitioner and psychiatry professor at Temple University School of Medicine. In the late 1960s, seminal gay pioneers Frank Kameny and Barbara Gittings focused on overturning the federal government's ban on gay and lesbian employees and the APA's classification of homosexuality as a mental illness. Because of societal approbation, risk of loss of medical licensure, and impact on patients and professional standing, Kameny and Gittings could not find a psychiatrist to serve on the panel. Ultimately, Fryer agreed to serve on the panel using the name Dr. Henry Anonymous and disguised with a mask and voice modulator. His testimony was so compelling that the APA convened a special committee to study the classification. At the 1973 Annual Meeting, the membership voted to remove homosexuality as a mental illness. As a result, the treatments for homosexuality were terminated and the classification could not be used to justify government policy. Fryer was also one of the first psychiatrists to treat patients with HIV and those with AIDS related bereavement issues. The APA's highest annual civil rights award is named in John Fryer's memory. There is a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission historic marker for John Fryer in Philadelphia and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania houses the John Fryer archives.

About CAP UCLA

[UCLA's Center for the Art of Performance](#) (CAP UCLA) is dedicated to the advancement of the contemporary performing arts in all disciplines — dance, music, spoken word and theater, as well as emerging digital, collaborative and cross-platforms — by leading artists from around the globe. Part of UCLA's School of the Arts and Architecture, CAP UCLA curates and facilitates direct exposure to artists who are creating extraordinary works of art and fosters a vibrant learning community both on and off the UCLA campus. The organization invests in the creative process by providing artists with financial backing and time to experiment and expand their practices through strategic partnerships and collaborations. As an influential voice within the local, national and global arts communities, CAP UCLA connects this generation to the next in order to preserve a living archive of our culture. CAP UCLA is also a safe harbor where cultural expression and artistic exploration can thrive, giving audiences the opportunity to experience real life through characters and stories on stage, and giving artists an avenue to challenge assumptions and advance new ways of seeing and understanding the world we live in now.

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PRESS REVIEW TICKETS/PHOTO PASSES/INTERVIEW REQUESTS: Contact Geena Russo, Communications Manager at geena@arts.ucla.edu or 310-206-8744.

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