

ANNENBERG CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

13/14 Season SEP-DEC





Truth Values: One Girl's Romp Through M.I.T.'s Male Math Maze

A solo show written and performed by **Gioia De Cari**
Directed by **Miriam Eusebio**

Executive Producer & General Manager **John Olson**
Production Manager & Associate Producer **Tony Mayes**
Company Manager **Diane Quinn**
Development **Fran Kirmser**
Lighting **Chris Dallos**
Costume **Corina Chase**
Production Assistant **Annabel Chiarelli**

PROGRAM

There will be no intermission.

Tuesday, October 1 at 7:30 PM
Wednesday, October 2 at 7:30 PM
Thursday, October 3 at 7:30 PM
Friday, October 4 at 8 PM
Saturday, October 5 at 8 PM

Harold Prince Theatre



These performances are supported in part by the Penn Forum for Women Faculty.



Media support for these performances is provided by *Philadelphia Weekly*.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Gioia De Cari (Writer/Performer) is an actress, playwright, classical singer and “recovering mathematician.” She began her performance career in experimental opera while a teaching fellow in mathematical logic at Harvard. Since then, she has played numerous leading acting roles in theater, commercials and films, including the award-winning film *Lower East Side Stories*, which screened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Slamdance and many festivals throughout the U.S. and internationally.

De Cari’s first solo play, *The 9th Envelope*, which she wrote and performed, received rave reviews by New York critics. Her second solo production, *Truth Values: One Girl’s Romp Through M.I.T.’s Male Math Maze*, an autobiographical story of her past as a mathematician, has become a national hit. After receiving a Puffin Foundation grant, *Truth Values* premiered in the New York International Fringe Festival in August 2009, winning a FringeNYC Overall Excellence Award for Best Solo Show. *Truth Values* received its regional premiere in September 2009 on the mainstage of the Central Square Theater in Cambridge, MA, where it sold out an extended run and was nominated for an IRNE award. *Truth Values* has continued to be in demand for touring engagements, having been presented at over 30 theatres, universities and performing arts centers throughout the U.S. Tour highlights include sold-out engagements at the La Jolla Playhouse Potiker Theatre and at M.I.T., where the play was presented as part of the Institute’s 150th anniversary celebration.

De Cari has studied acting with the legendary teacher and solo show director Wynn Handman, with whom she did extensive development of *Truth Values*. She studied playwriting with the late Milan Stitt of Carnegie Mellon, and received specialized training in solo show writing with Matt Hoverman in his popular New York “Create Your Own Solo Show Workshop.” After graduating summa cum laude from UC Berkeley, she earned a Master of Science degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. An accomplished singer as well, De Cari released her debut album, *Quiet Songs*, with her husband, classical guitarist John Olson, in 2006. They have toured throughout the U.S. De Cari is a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association, SAG-AFTRA and The Dramatists Guild of America.

Miriam Eusebio (Director) is an award-winning director, playwright and teacher. She is a member of the Lincoln Center Director’s Lab and an Associate Member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. Her work on classic theatre has been lauded by critics, garnering her two OOBRA Awards for Excellence: *Pericles* (Expanded Arts) and *Taming of the Shrew* (New Perspectives). Other classic work includes *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (New Perspectives) and *Oedipus at Colonus* (Brooklyn College).

Previous work includes *The Hard Way* by Gino Dilorio (New Jersey Rep), *Where Have You Been* by Fiona Jones (Manhattan Theater Source), *Schadenfreude! The Asshole Differential Explained* by Moira Cutler (Dixon Place, Wow Cafe Theater), *Mrs. Miller* by Andrea Cirie and Joseph Collins (Sounding Theater), *Private Eyes* by Steven Dietz (Brooklyn College), *The 9th Envelope* by Gioia De Cari (Dumbo Theater Exchange) and *Take Care of Yourself* by Diana Fithian (Estrogenius). Eusebio’s playwriting work has also appeared at Estrogenius with her short play *Avarice Fantasy*, directed by Erin Brindley.

Under her own company, Intentional Theater, she produced an original one-act by Doreen Perrine, *Faces...Voices*. Intentional Theater also presented *Happy Days* by Samuel Beckett, using Beckett's production notebook, having obtained permission to incorporate the changes to the text that Beckett made to his 1979 production. Eusebio and Intentional Theater are members of Wow Cafe Theater, a collectively operated theatre space for women and transgendered people.

Eusebio studied Theater at California State University at Chico (BA Theater Arts) and Brooklyn College (MFA Directing), as well as Drama Studio London at Berkeley summer program and two intensive workshops with Joe Chaikin.

Special Thanks

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PROGRAM NOTES

Notes about *Truth Values* from the Author

I wrote this play without any agenda. It began purely as a writing exercise. I was interested in challenging myself to explore that daunting territory of using one's own personal history to create a work of solo theatre art. There were many reasons I found the project scary. One was that, in case you aren't aware, in the working world of theatre, many would put autobiographical solos at the bottom of the list of pursuits, compared to respectable projects such as re-envisioning the classics.

I also felt scared because, long ago when I was still in math, I got the notion that it was taboo to talk about this stuff. These million tiny struggles with the bizarre and unexpected roadblocks one encounters as a woman were something one keeps to herself. And so, even after having left the math field entirely for many years, I would observe with delight my artist friends' monologues-in-progress about their dating lives or work lives, and still feel that my stories of life in mathematics were somehow not fair game.

And then there was the reaction I was getting in workshop with early versions of the piece. The tone I desired eluded me; I found the women stirred up with the righteous anger of recognition while the men were puzzled. I fell in love with theatre in large part because of its capacity to unite the souls of everyone in the room. This was what I was after if the piece was ever to be performed, and I wasn't finding it.

So at one point, although I had a pretty good draft, I shelved it. Literally. For some reason I felt so done with it that I didn't even want it taking up space on my iMac. I printed the thing out and shoved it to the back of the top shelf above my desk.

Then Larry Summers came along. And what pushed me entirely over the edge was what happened to Nancy Hopkins, who was there in the room when Summers made his now infamous comments suggesting women may be underrepresented in math and science because they are inherently less able than men. Dr. Hopkins got up and left, and was quoted in the *Boston Globe* as saying, had she stayed, "I would have either blacked out or thrown up."

The result was a firestorm in which Summers was ousted from his job as President of Harvard, and Hopkins was criticized severely in the press for her comments.

At that point, while I was still terrified of sharing this story, it also occurred to me that, as an artist and a woman and a “recovering mathematician,” I might have something fresh and unusual to contribute to the conversation. Upon revisiting the work, I finally found the tone I wanted, through the perspective of compassion. Looking back at that time in my life while I was in math, I saw that everyone involved was doing the best they could, even though their efforts came up short sometimes. I was guided by, of all things, something I had learned in Sunday school about the meaning of the eighth commandment. We were to defend our neighbors, speak well of them and explain their actions in the kindest way.

The astonishing result of sharing this story is that it has become so popular throughout the country that by now over 14,000 people have seen it. It has been life changing for me as an artist. My mission as an artist has always been to stir the soul, and it has been incredibly gratifying to greet so many audience members thanking me with laughter and with tears in their eyes for telling this story that they feel is also their story.



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