

L. PETER CALLENDER ACTING REVIEWS

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OTHELLO

by William Shakespeare

ROLE

Othello

THEATER

African-American
Shakespeare Company
San Francisco, CA

Directed by:
Carl Jordan

YEAR

2018

REVIEWS

Callender seems born to play this role. The character's explosive emotional life exudes from his very pores. He has an almost animal-like physicality that's electrifying to watch, especially in a scene in which he collapses in an epileptic seizure. This Othello, played with a melodious (presumably North African) accent, is at the mercy of his bodily impulses.

Jean Schiffman - [SF Examiner](#)

[Mr. Callender's] eventual metamorphosis into a full-fledge monster is all the more horrific because [he] is able at first to make us believe that maybe this particular Othello will not be taken in by Iago's outlandish insinuations.... The performance is nothing short of magnificent and horrifying at the same time.

Eddie Reynolds - [Theatre Eddys](#)

L. Peter Callender is an actor of remarkable range. ... [His] Othello is a huge personality, full of romance and rage and possessing a frightening bestiality as well. This Othello is neither entirely gentle or brutal, brilliant or naive, convincing or phony, He is a boiling cauldron of fascinating contradictions.

Charles Kruger - [TheatreStorm](#)

Callender's voice inhabits the role so powerfully that any physical element would seem unnecessary. Still, he has the ability to dramatize his feelings when confronted with his new bride's possible infidelity, or to portray the general who commands his field troops with thunderous authority.

Caroline Crawford, [Local News Matters](#)

Don't miss L. Peter Callender as Shakespeare's Othello.... Callender is physically well suited to play Othello. His face in repose possesses a rare nobility. In anger, his face embodies rage and fierceness; and his commanding voice strikes fear in the unwary. We feel threatened by his Othello's irrational responses to Iago's spool of lies.

Robert M. Gardner, [Theatrius](#)

BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY

by Stephen Adley Guirgis

ROLE

Pops

THEATER

- American Stage,
St. Petersburg,
FL

Directed by:
Benjamin T. Ismail

- San Jose Stage,
CA

Directed by:
Jeffrey Lo

YEAR

2018

REVIEWS

San Jose, CA

L. Peter Callender gives a tremendous performance as Walter Washington...

Sam Hurwitt, [Mercury News](#)

The production at San Jose Stage is centered around a magnificent performance by L. Peter Callender, a truly great actor whose every movement earns our eyes and our admiration.

John Orr, [Regarding Arts.com](#)

St. Petersburg, FL

Callender... gives a performance of a lifetime. This is the stuff of legend. ... But with Callender, it's more than mere acting; it's actual being onstage. Heartbreaking, real, full of pain and love, caring and loss, pride and defeat, anger and grace. His deep, raspy, commanding voice, and his withered body, as if the world was weighted on top of his shoulders, combine to create one of the more fascinating characters of modern drama. They're Guirgis' words, but Callender brings them to life like few others can. It's a towering portrayal of a man wounded by life...

Peter Nason, [Broadway World St Petersburg](#)

The second star in the play is the seasoned Callender. ...[H]is debut [at American Stage] proves to be a potent powerhouse. His Pops is a portrait of pain and anger mixed in with some seductive charm. Pops is Willy Loman with a sense of irony and sly charisma. He spouts off profanity as though he were in a David Mamet play, adding poignant humor to his broken persona. It's a riveting acting lesson in character creation. Hopefully, he will appear in future shows at American Stage.

Peter Balaskas, [Splash Magazines](#)

As Pops, L. Peter Callender plays a man in the center of unimaginable tensions, a black hole of stress he tries to alleviate with drinking. It's a stunning, unforgettable performance.

Andrew Meacham, [Tampa Bay Times](#)

Making an absolutely stellar acting debut at American Stage... A delight to watch start to end, [Callender] plays Walter with just the right grit, restraint and whip-smart charisma.

Julie Garisto, [Creative Pinellas](#)

"MASTER HAROLD"...AND THE BOYS

by Athol Fugard

ROLE

Sam

THEATER

Aurora Theatre
Company,
Berkeley, CA

Directed by:
Timothy Near

YEAR

2016

AWARDS

Theater Bay Area:
▪ Outstanding Male
Actor in a
Principal Role in
a Play
▪ Outstanding
Ensemble in a
Play

REVIEWS

L. Peter Callender's command of his role carries the day. He locates Sam, not only in the text but also in a little lilt of laughter that punctuates what would be throwaway lines were it not for the kernels of wisdom they pretend to impart. The laughter offsets Sam's pedagogy with a stylized insouciance. Callender rolls the rhythm of the Bulawayan accent quite naturally around its quaint lexicon. His body mirrors a soul belonging to the inner ballroom dancer, not the outer collision-generating system that he has navigated warily. There is a practiced economy in his movements, deliberate as they are graceful, attuned to the beats marking the rise and fall of plot twists

Toba Singer, [CultureVulture](#)

One of the Bay Area's most skilled actors, L. Peter Callender is absolutely magnificent as Sam. He manages to somehow hold within him both the pain of life as a black man in South Africa and the hopeful optimism that keeps him going in the constant struggle against the social and political forces arrayed against his race. Every fiber of Callender's being seems to inhabit this role. We never see an actor playing a character, only a proud and powerful human being making his way along a narrow and perilous path. It is a performance that is not to be missed.

Patrick Thomas, [Talkin' Broadway](#)

Callender is the type of performer who, as he calls out Hally's cowardice and hypocrisy at the same time he refers to the boy as "Master Harold," can channel an earlier era in acting, when we looked to the stars of our stages to deliver withering indictments of injustice and heeded their *cris de coeur* sans irony.

Lily Janiak, [SF Gate](#)

L. Peter Callender gives an absolutely brilliant performance...

Emily S. Mendel, [Berkeleyside](#)

Few stage works explore and expose so much with such economy, and few deliver such spellbinding, gut-wrenching power
A magnificent play, magnificently directed, acted and staged.

Leo Stutzin, [The Huffington Post](#)

Throughout the play, but especially in his final scenes, L. Peter Callender is transcendent as Sam, the emotionally generous surrogate father.

Jeffrey Edalatpour, [SF Weekly](#)

The always-formidable Callender rivets as Sam, a man of gravity and grace in a time of ugliness.

Karen D'Souza, [Mercury News](#)

As Hally's friend and father figure Sam, L. Peter Callender creates a touching man who learns quickly, dreams big, and cares more for his relationships than his pride. Not a posture, word, or dance step is out of place.

Illana Walder-Biesanz, [Stark Insider](#)

...a top-notch cast that includes the consummate professional L. Peter Callender whose performance dominates the stage but also blends beautifully...

Kedar Adour, [For All Events](#)

THE CONVERT

by Danai Gurira

ROLE

Uncle

THEATER

Marin Theatre
Company,
Mill Valley, CA

Directed by:
Jasson Minadakis

YEAR

2015

REVIEWS

Shirtless in a top hat and black jacket with tails ..., L. Peter Callender is magnetic as the traditionalist uncle who furiously resents not being able to sell Jekesai into marriage and vows revenge...

Sam Hurwitt, [Marin Independent Journal](#)

Shining particularly bright [is] L. Peter Callender as Uncle, demonstrating yet again his remarkable range and skill...

Charles Kruger, [TheatreStorm](#)

...an elderly villager (L. Peter Callender, comically menacing perfection).

David Templeton, [North Bay Bohemian](#)

L. Peter Callender is a tempest of outraged dignity – in a top hat and native skirt – as the uncle robbed of the bride price he'd negotiated for his niece. He leaves vowing vengeance.

Robert Hurwitt, [SF Chronicle](#)

...L. Peter Callender, representing Shona men who resent the European influence and are preparing to do something about it, provides complex human beings rather than cardboard historical cut-outs.

Chad Jones, [TheaterDogs](#)

In a small but masterful turn, with a sartorial tip of the top hat to Baron Samedi, the redoubtable L. Peter Callendar as Uncle needs no skeletal make-up to play menace laced with charm, wreaking a vengeful resistance to the oppression of his rights.

Robert Sokol, [SF Examiner](#)

L. Peter Callender gives a wonderful animated performance as the drunken uncle of Jekesai/Ester.

Richard Connema, [Talkin' Broadway](#)

ROLE

Robert

THEATER

TheatreWorks
Mountain View, CA

Directed by:
Leslie Martinson

YEAR

2015

REVIEWS

Callender has found the secret to distracting us from the script's weaknesses. Not only does he bring a nuanced energy to the role, but shows an exceptional talent for physicalizing Robert's duality, so that we see him as agile of body, yet lost in the confusion of the "machine" mind that is failing him.

Toba Singer, [CultureVulture](#)

Peter Callender travels the biggest distance as Robert, moving between living and dead, from compulsively filling notebooks with meaningless drivel to one who arrives from the hereafter, moving with a generous slowness and clarity that reads as wisdom, in a way that only Callender can.

Cy Ashley Webb, [Stark Insider](#)

Callender rivets as a man afire with brilliance and ambition, chasing after a theory of everything boiled down into a single glorious equation. His nuanced performance most fully embodies the play's embrace of enigma and the elusive nature of genius.

Karen D'Souza, [San Jose Mercury News](#)

Callender is a wonderfully loving and self-absorbed father as a professor teetering between absent-minded and just plain losing it.

Robert Hurwitt, [SF Gate](#)

L. Peter Callender, even as a memory of Robert, captures in his portrayal the professor (and father) anyone might want to have. His eyes twinkle as a new idea is discovered or an encouragement is passed on to waiting ears. Every word is spoken with an exactness and clarity to engender attention and awe. The sheer excitement that he brings to a detailed, poetic description of the academic world coming alive every September in bookstores full of browsing students is contagious. Yet the pain of a life of mental illness and the pathos of years lost after one moment of early brilliance are always close to the surface and ready to cloud over Mr. Callender's Robert.

Eddie Reynolds, [Talkin' Broadway](#)

BREAKFAST WITH MUGABE

by Fraser Grace

ROLE

Robert
Mugabe

THEATER

Aurora Theatre
Company,
Berkeley, CA

Directed by:
Jon Tracy

YEAR

2014

REVIEWS

Peter Callender is one of most arresting actors in the bay area. He draws you in and keeps you there, leaving you to hang on every flicker of expression. Once he has you, he unwraps his characters so slowly that you're still trying to figure them out the next morning.

Cy Ashley Webb, [Stark Insider](#)

Callender inhabits Mugabe with a nerve-rattling intensity, channeling the tyrant with an unsettling verisimilitude. His smile, in particular, has an almost demonic charge. Suffice it to say that the orange juice is not the only thing that is chilled in this encounter.

Karen D'Souza, [San Jose Mercury News](#)

There's always Mugabe. The invaluable L. Peter Callender gives us a dictator-president as an old, perhaps infirm man who may brook no opposition but knows how to bide his time and play his cards close to his chest. ...

Callender's commands are made with a dangerously subdued understatement, a calm containing implications of frightening storms. The combination of a level voice and the twitching fingers at the end of a limp arm tells us more than the script about the inner turmoil of Mugabe's hatred of remnants of colonial power in conflict with his need for this white man's services.

Robert Hurwitt, [SF Chronicle](#)

L. Peter Callender morphs into Robert Mugabe not only in voice but in the facial and body movements of the tyrant. He occupies the role with a bold intensity. This is a brilliant tour de force of acting.

Richard Connema, [Talkin' Broadway](#)

L. Peter Callender's performance reaches toward those of Shakespeare's tragic kings

Emily S. Mendel, [BerkeleySide](#)

Callender's performance as Mugabe is a stunning achievement. His psychotherapy sessions provide the audience with a glimpse into the deteriorating mind of a man who has not yet reckoned with his lingering hatred and guilt over the events that marked his rise to power. Reflecting shades of both Lear and Chinua Achebe's Okonkwo, Callender's Mugabe embodies both the quintessential African "strong man" of anti-colonial literature and the Shakespearean villain corrupted by power and driven mad by grief.

Grace Culhane, [The Daily Californian](#)

Mugabe (played with uncanny precision by a steely-eyed, charming and frighteningly convincing L. Peter Callender)...

Jean Schiffman, [The Examiner](#)

L. Peter Callender is absolutely transformed into Mugabe, from his defiant, proud posture to his calculated speech. The moment he steps onstage, we know there is something different about this man.

Noemi Berkowitz, [The Stanford Daily](#)

THE WHIPPING MAN

by Matthew Lopez

ROLE

Simon

THEATER

- Marin Theatre Company
Mill Valley, CA
- Virginia Stage Company
Richmond, VA

Directed by:
Jasson Minadakis

YEAR

2013

REVIEWS

Bay Area, CA

[The Whipping Man] provides many extraordinary opportunities for a trio of highly skilled actors, particularly L. Peter Callender as the elderly, recently emancipated slave, Simon. Callender is called upon to play scene after scene of extreme emotional intensity and he rises to it over and over again in a performance of operatic grandeur. It is a career highlight performance for this always excellent Bay area actor.

Charles Kruger, [TheatreStorm](#)

All three actors are superb, but Callender just ignites the play in Act 2. His Simon conducts the Seder as if it's the first time such a service has ever been held, with every word and gesture infused with meaning and spiritual connection. It's a beautiful performance.

Chad Jones, [Theatredog](#)

L. Peter Callender provides the rock-solid dramatic center as Simon... Callender's homage to Lincoln, with its up-close description of "Father Abraham," is enough to ensure the standing ovation Tuesday's performance rightfully received.

Robert Hurwitt, [SF Gate](#)

Amongst the tribulations and sordidness Lopez has woven poetry and beauty with Callender almost stealing the show with his initial display of loyalty to the Master, love of God and reverential belief in prayer. His description of meeting Abraham Lincoln that he dubs as the black man's Moses is a thing of beauty that is a spectacular contrast to baring his back displaying the damage inflicted by the Whipping Man.

Kedar Adour, [For All Events](#)

L. Peter Callender outdoes himself in this play. He carries the action and he is breathtaking every moment he is on that stage.

Lynn Ruth Miller, For All Events

The cast is stellar: L. Peter Callender plays Simon with dignity and compassion as he makes for freedom and sheds the past.

Cate Lecuyer, [Patch](#)

Richmond, VA

As Simon, L. Peter Callender fills the role with an assured swagger that allows the character to believably lead not only Caleb and Tobie through their domestic crisis, but also the audience through some epic plot devices.

Jerome Langston, [Style Weekly](#)

As Simon, Callender is completely convincing, eliciting empathy, compassion, laughter, and anger, all with a masterfully underplayed fervor that draws you in fully.

Terrance Afer-Anderson, The New Journal and Guide, Norfolk, VA

L. Peter Callender has the right degree of sympathetic grandeur in his creation of Simon, the faithful. We are torn with emotion when he proclaims his commitment to his family, the missing Sarah and Elizabeth, who have been sold and are lost in a horrendous and unknown outside world.

Mal Vincent, [The Virginian-Pilot](#)

MY CHILDREN! MY AFRICA!

by Athol Fugard

ROLE

Mr. M

THEATER

Marin Theatre
Company
Mill Valley, CA

Directed by:
Josh Costello

YEAR

2009

REVIEWS

L. Peter Callender embodies that complexity [of trying to right social wrongs] with every paternalistic utterance and sidelong glance he casts as the prematurely aging black teacher called Mr. M. Even as he lectures his "unruly" students on decorum, his eyes glow with pride and a genial tolerance softens without undermining his stern voice. Having successfully engineered the first debate between his best students and a team from a nearby white school, Callender projects a feeling of triumph that turns the corrugated metal and salvaged timber classroom of Eric Sinkkonen's fine set into a palace. The appreciative joy Callender's M takes in the debate captains' arguments seems to elevate their performances as well.

Robert Hurwitt, [SF Chronicle](#)

L. Peter Callender is brilliant as Mr. M. He gives one of his most triumphant performances of his distinguished career.

Richard Connema, [Talkin' Broadway](#)

L. Peter Callender's mesmerizing voice and dynamic stage actions creates a shattering theatrical evening.

Kedar K. Adour, [For All Events](#)