



## **AN ILIAD**

Wednesday, January 22, 2014  
The Broad Stage, Santa Monica

### **AN ILIAD**

Many of you may have read Homer's *Iliad*, or perhaps his *Odyssey*, in high school or college. *An Iliad* is not quite the same as what you read; it's touted as a "modern-day retelling" of Homer's classic, and that means there have been some updates. The setting is simple: the empty theater. The time is now: the present moment. The lone figure onstage is a storyteller. And that's about it.

The performance draws on a 1990 translation of the original Greek epic poem by Robert Fagles. Fagles' translations generally emphasize contemporary English phrasing and idiom, which comes in handy when *An Iliad* goes a little off-script. The overriding tone of the performance is chatty and informal, sometimes finding contemporary parallels to what happened thousands of years ago. As an explanation for why the exhausted Greeks didn't abandon the battle, weary after nine years of fruitless fighting, the narrator compares their attitude to the frustration you feel in a supermarket line: "You've been there 20 minutes, and the other line is moving faster," he says. "Do you switch lines now? No, goddamn it, I've been here for 20 minutes, I'm gonna wait in this line. Look—I'm not leaving 'cause otherwise I've wasted my time."

### **DENIS O'HARE**

The one man in tonight's one-man show is Denis O'Hare, whom you might recognize from his numerous roles on film and TV, including *American Horror Story* and *True Blood*. He won the 2005 Drama Desk Award for Best Featured Actor in a Musical for his performance in *Sweet Charity*, and his Broadway credits include *Assassins*, *Take Me Out*, *Major Barbara* and *Cabaret*. He has also appeared in numerous productions off-Broadway and in London.

### **ILIAD**

Written around the eighth century BCE, the *Iliad* is one of the oldest surviving works of Western literature. It tells the story of a few weeks during the Trojan War, the 10-year siege of the ancient city of Troy. In Greek mythology, the Trojan War was started after Paris of Troy took Helen from her husband, King Menelaus of Sparta.

### **THE BROAD STAGE**

The Eli and Edythe Broad (pronounced bröhd) Stage at the Santa Monica College Performing Arts Center opened in 2008. It seats 499, but manages to feel intimate at the same time. The venue hosts all types of events, including concerts, plays and dance performances.