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CONSERVATORY
THEATER

SAN FRANCISCO'S
PREMIER NONPROFIT
THEATER COMPANY



SWEAT

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SEP-OCT 2018
SEASON 52, ISSUE 2



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A Fuel, National Theatre, and West Yorkshire Playhouse co-production

by Inua Ellams; Directed by Bijan Sheibani; Designed by Rae Smith

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Jordi Savall

Directed by Jordi Savall

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Nov 3 ZELLERBACH HALL



Big Dance Theater 17c

Conceived and directed by Annie-B Parson
 Co-directed by Paul Lazar
 Choreographed by Annie-B Parson and the company

Obie Award-winning Big Dance Theater's latest effort is a portrait of Samuel Pepys, the outlandish 17th-century politician whose obsessive, tell-all diaries are a startling precursor to our own social media culture. The ensemble weaves music, dance, video, and text in an exploration of the moral murkiness of Pepys' legacy as statesman and notorious philanderer, juxtaposing his own writings with the radical feminism of his contemporary, the playwright Margaret Cavendish.

"Deeply brilliant...an amazing company... See the work of Annie-B Larson and Paul Lazar whenever possible."

—*The New York Times*

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SAN FRANCISCO'S THEATER COMPANY

American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco's Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and ongoing engagement with our community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, we embrace our responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent our rich theatrical traditions and literatures, while exploring new artistic forms and communities. Founded by William Ball, a pioneer of the regional theater movement, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967. We have since performed more than 250 productions to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Every year we reach more than 250,000 people through our productions and programs.

Rising from the wreckage of the earthquake and fire of 1906 and hailed as the "perfect playhouse," the beautiful, historic Geary Theater has been our home since the beginning. When the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake ripped the roof apart, San Franciscans rallied together to raise a record-breaking \$30 million to rebuild the theater. The Geary reopened in 1996 with a production of *The Tempest* directed by Carey Perloff, who took over as A.C.T.'s third artistic director in 1992 after the retirement of gentleman artist Edward Hastings.

Perloff's 25-season tenure was marked by groundbreaking productions and translations of classical works; cross-disciplinary performances and international collaborations; and theater made by, for, and about the Bay Area. These traditions of exploring powerful stories by celebrated artists and introducing audiences to extraordinary emerging voices in American theater continue under A.C.T.'s current artistic director, Pam MacKinnon, who took the helm in July 2018.

A.C.T.'s 50-year-old Conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, is at the center of our work. Our three-year, fully accredited Master of Fine Arts Program is at the forefront of America's actor training programs. Meanwhile, our intensive Summer Training Congress attracts students from around the world, and the San Francisco Semester offers a unique study-abroad opportunity for undergraduates. Other programs include Studio A.C.T.—our expansive course of theater study for adults—and the Professional Development Training Program, which offers actor training for companies seeking to elevate their employees' business performance skills. Our alumni often grace our mainstage and perform around the Bay Area, as well as on stages and screens across the country.

A.C.T. also brings the benefits of theater-based arts education to more than 17,000 Bay Area students and educators each year. Director of Education & Community Programs Elizabeth Brodersen oversees the world-famous Young Conservatory (for students ages 8 to 19) and our ACTsmart education programs, including the Student Matinee (SMAT) program that has brought hundreds of thousands of young people to A.C.T. performances since 1968. We also provide touring Will on Wheels Shakespeare productions, teaching-artist residencies, in-school workshops, and study materials to Bay Area schools and community-based organizations.

With the appointment of Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, our continuing commitment to the development of new work and new artists, and A.C.T.'s increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood with The Strand and The Costume Shop theaters, A.C.T. plays a leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco and the nation.

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UP NEXT

MEN ON BOATS

by
Jaclyn Backhaus

Directed by
Tamilla Woodard



"A thrilling, gender-flipped slice of Manifest Destiny"

Time Out New York

Steady! Oars up! Oars out! Pack your gear for a non-stop adventure along America's iconic Green and Colorado rivers. Join one-armed 19th-century explorer John Wesley Powell and his band of brawny Civil War vets, trappers, and mountain men as they "discover" and chart the Grand Canyon.

Inspired by Powell's actual travel log from 1869, this subversive tale of ten men, four boats, and two rivers contains *none* of the above. Spinning historical, theatrical, and gender conventions on their heads, playwright Jaclyn Backhaus's nimble and ingenious script is provocative, laugh-out-loud theater, performed by a diverse cast of female-identifying actors who infuse America's historic myths of male conquest with a sly blast of subtext.

"Men on Boats is off-the-canyon-walls funny!"

Chicago Tribune

OCT 17–DEC 16, 2018

A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER

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DON'T JUST SIT THERE . . .



At A.C.T.'s free InterACT events, you can mingle with cast members, join interactive workshops with theater artists, and meet fellow theatergoers at hosted celebrations in our lounges. Join us for *Men on Boats* and InterACT with us!

MEN *on* BOATS

BIKE TO THE THEATER NIGHT

OCT 17, 6:30 PM

Take advantage of secure bike parking, low-priced tickets, and our preshow mixer, presented in partnership with the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition.

PROLOGUE

OCT 30, 5:30 PM

Go deeper with a fascinating preshow discussion with a member of the *Men on Boats* artistic team.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGE*

**NOV 6, 7 PM; NOV 25, 2 PM;
NOV 28, 2 PM**

Join us for an exciting Q&A with the cast following the show.

OUT WITH A.C.T.*

NOV 7, 7:30 PM

Mix and mingle at this hosted postshow LGBTQ+ party.

WENTE VINEYARDS WINE SERIES

NOV 20, 6:30 PM

Meet fellow theatergoers at this hosted wine-tasting event.

PLAYTIME

DEC 8, 12:45 PM

Get hands-on with theater at this interactive preshow workshop.

*Events take place immediately following the performance.

To learn more about our InterACT events, visit **act-sf.org/interact**.

A.C.T.'S YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS



Your new favorite cult-comedy
about best friends...

with a killer hook.

PHOTO BY XXXXXXXX

HOOKMAN

By **Lauren Yee**

Directed by **Allie Moss**

OCT 24-27, 2018

The Rueff at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater
act-sf.org/hookman



WHAT'S INSIDE

Actors Kadeem Ali Harris, Chiké Johnson, and Tonye Patano, who play a steel-working family, get to know each other at the first rehearsal for A.C.T.'s production of *Sweat*.

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A.C.T. volunteers provide an invaluable service with their time, enthusiasm, and love of theater. Opportunities include helping out in our performing arts library and ushering in our theaters.

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SEE A SHOW TAKE A CLASS

There's lots to do and even more to look forward to at A.C.T.'s Conservatory this year!

STUDIO A.C.T.

Interested in acting? Playwriting? Clowning? Studio A.C.T. offers exciting, rewarding classes for adults of all backgrounds and experience levels.

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MASTER of FINE ARTS PROGRAM

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Oct 18-20
The Garret at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater

The School for Scandal

by Richard Brinsley Sheridan
Adapted and directed
by Christine Adaire

Nov 8-17
The Rueff at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater

For more information on the M.F.A. Program's coming productions, see page 34.

YC YOUNG CONSERVATORY

Hookman

by Lauren Yee
Directed by Allie Moss

Oct 24-27
The Rueff at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater

The Last 100 Years: Musical Theater Through the Decades

Nov 2-10
The Garret at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater

For tickets, visit act-sf.org/csv or call **415.749.2228**.

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Taught by acting professionals from A.C.T., our program develops workshops customizable to clients' needs. Whether you're preparing for the next pitch, motivating your team, or answering post-presentation questions, our program will give employees the techniques to engage any audience.

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FROM THE ARTISTIC AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Welcome to A.C.T.,

When I was 24, I spent a summer in Madrid researching for my PhD dissertation in comparative politics. I was interested in how the organizational memory and structures of trade unions—illegal under authoritarianism—helped political parties reemerge after the death of General Franco. Shortly after that summer, after much soul-searching, I dropped out of graduate school, in large part because I realized that I wasn't interested in the answerable questions of political science. The questions I was interested in were messy and big—questions for theater.

Today's playwright, Lynn Nottage, knows all about messy and big questions. In 2011, she asked herself, how could so many Americans suddenly be living below the poverty line? She came across a *New York Times* article about Reading, Pennsylvania, a small city that had been a prosperous railroad hub and factory town, but suddenly had a poverty rate of 41 percent. How? Why?

Over many months, Lynn went to Reading and listened to people in job training centers, City Hall, and support groups. She amplified the stories she heard, and gradually, in collaboration with other theater-makers and arts organizations, she wrote *Sweat*. Her play focuses on a group of loyal friends and family, who work hard, play hard, and love hard. It's about what happens when economic insecurity blossoms into fear and shatters a community. It's about the precariousness of the American Dream.

Johanna Day, a dear friend and actor who originated the role of Tracey, told me that a woman from Reading came to a performance of *Sweat* on Broadway. Through tears afterward, she said that she was happy that her town was now no longer a punchline or a Monopoly property, but a *play*. Her town had been heard.

While I never wrote my PhD dissertation, Lynn Nottage has written a play that I believe will be produced 50 years from now. I am very excited for A.C.T.'s production, helmed by the wonderful Loretta Greco, on loan from the Magic Theatre. I have known Loretta for 20 years. She is now one of my guides into artistic director-ing in the Bay Area. Her smarts and heart are a perfect fit for this messy and big American story.

Thank you for coming to The Geary and for supporting A.C.T. in my inaugural season. Get ready for *Sweat*. Enjoy the show!



Pam MacKinnon
Artistic Director

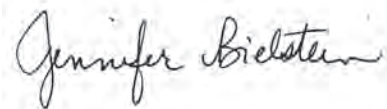
Dear Friends,

What a remarkable time to be joining A.C.T.

As I step into the role of executive director this fall and take in the breadth of work this organization charges itself with creating month after month, it is exhilarating to be a part of it all. My lure to San Francisco and A.C.T. lies not just in becoming part of this incredible family of artists, artisans, students, educators, and staff—but also in the opportunity to sit alongside you and be among a community of theatergoers and supporters who thrive on live storytelling.

In the weeks surrounding the opening of *Sweat*, A.C.T. will launch a new session of more than two dozen classes—ranging from clowning to playwriting to beginning acting—as part of our Studio A.C.T. program; rehearse Jaclyn Backhaus's hysterical and game-changing *Men on Boats* for its October 17 opening at The Strand Theater; welcome artists from as far away as Australia, Asia, and Europe for our revolutionary study-abroad program, the San Francisco Semester; engage and train young actors through the acclaimed Young Conservatory, including those preparing for the premiere of *Hookman*, the existential comedy thriller from San Francisco's Lauren Yee (whose basketball drama *The Great Leap* will be seen at The Geary in March); transform the lives of young adults and children, for whom theater has not been readily available, through our dynamic Education & Community Programs; engage an array of leading business professionals to explore how actor training can transform work-group dynamics and improve live-presentation delivery through our Professional Development series; mentor emerging theater pre-professionals in our career-building Fellowship Program; and welcome back 37 students to the internationally recognized, three-year Master of Fine Arts Program. Yes, all of this is happening at A.C.T. *right now*.

None of these would exist if there wasn't an audience and community to support and engage these incredible programs and productions. *Your* thirst for theater and this truly great institution was significant in my decision to come to A.C.T. My career has been dedicated to furthering opportunity for all communities to experience theater, because—like you—I'm a fan. I look forward to meeting you, and sharing with you all that A.C.T. has to offer. Thank you for welcoming me to your home.



Jennifer Bielstein
Executive Director



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It's an important moment of transition for A.C.T.
Experience it. Participate in it. Celebrate it.

Your support enables us to:

- Provide access to the transformative power of live theater for 17,000 young people and adults across the Bay Area, providing many of them with their first theatrical experience
- Strengthen the relationship between Conservatory and mainstage productions to further explore playwrights' voices
- Bring world-class guest artists into our classrooms and onto our stages
- Continue to build upon the successes and legacies established by our former artistic and executive leaders
- Maintain a leadership role in our Bay Area theater community through collaboration with other arts organizations

To make a gift, visit act-sf.org/support or call Donor Relations and Memberships Manager Hillary Bray at 415.439.2353.



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CONSERVATORY
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MACKINNON**
Artistic Director

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Executive Director

A.C.T.

AMERICAN
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PRESENTS

SWEAT

by **LYNN NOTTAGE**

Directed by
LORETTA GRECO

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A HILTON HOTEL

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Tracey
LISE BRUNEAU*

Jason
DAVID DARROW*

Stan
ROD GNAPP*

Chris
KADEEM ALI HARRIS*

Jessie
SARAH NINA HAYON*

Brucie
CHIKÉ JOHNSON*

Oscar
JED PARSARIO*

Cynthia
TONYE PATANO*

Evan
ADRIAN ROBERTS*

UNDERSTUDIES

Stan
ANTHONY FUSCO*

Oscar
RUDY GUERRERO*

Jason
**WILLIAM
HOESCHLER†**

Jessie, Tracey
SUSAN LYNKEY*

Cynthia
**LEONTYNE
MBELE-MBONG***

Brucie
ADRIAN ROBERTS*

Chris, Evan
**ANTHONY
ROLLINS-MULLENS***

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ELISA GUTHERTZ*

Assistant Stage Manager
CHRIS WATERS*

Stage Management Fellow
NOAH USHER

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ANDREW BOYCE

Costume Designer
ULISES ALCALA

Lighting Designer
ALLEN LEE HUGHES

Sound Designer
JAKE RODRIGUEZ

Projection Designer
HANA S. KIM

Dramaturg
JOY MEADS

Casting Director
JANET FOSTER, CSA

Vocal Coach
CHRISTINE ADAIRE

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Associate Artistic Director
ANDY DONALD

General Manager
LOUISA BALCH

Production Managers
ROBERT HAND
JACK HORTON

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States

†Member of A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program class of 2019

Co-commissioned by Oregon Shakespeare Festival's American Revolutions: The United States History Cycle and Arena Stage. World premiere produced by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

Sweat was first presented in New York by The Public Theater (Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director; Patrick Willingham, Executive Director).

Originally produced on Broadway by Stuart Thompson and Louise L. Gund.

Sweat is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

ONSTAGE NOW



PHOTO BY TESS MAYER. COURTESY LYNN NOTTAGE.

RETHINKING IDENTITY

AN INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT LYNN NOTTAGE

BY SIMON HODGSON

Playwright Lynn Nottage has always raised up the voices of the forgotten, the unsung, and the marginalized. Years before winning her second Pulitzer Prize for *Sweat* (her first Pulitzer was for the searing *Ruined* in 2008), she worked for Amnesty International. We spoke with Nottage about the common threads of her storytelling, her connection with steelworkers, and the months she spent researching *Sweat* in Reading, Pennsylvania.

Which voices really resonated when you went to Reading?

What stood out in Reading was not the individual stories but the collective story. These were, by and large, middle-aged white guys who had invested in the American Dream and had assumed they would work in their jobs until they were ready to retire, and have these fabulous pensions and health plans. They were broadsided when they woke up one morning to be told, “The life that you knew is no longer going to exist.” It forced them to rethink their identity and their relationship to the Horatio Alger myth [that hard work leads from rags to riches].

Your plays’ settings range from a 21st-century steel town to 18th-century Paris to 1930s Hollywood. What links your storytelling?

They’re all stories about people who are marginalized. People who are struggling with identity. People whose identities have been erased. They’re about working people who feel incredibly marginalized and unseen, and about how they can assert themselves in a landscape that refuses to recognize their dignity.

“THEY’RE ALL STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE WHO ARE MARGINALIZED. PEOPLE WHO ARE STRUGGLING WITH IDENTITY.”

Like how Cynthia, Jessie, and Tracey assert themselves in the male-dominated landscape of the steel industry.

There is this misunderstanding culturally that only men are steelworkers. There are a lot of women who are working in the steel industry. They may not be on the floor of the foundry but

particularly in metal tubing plants, they’re packing tubes and they’re in other roles. I felt it was really important to show the full range of life on the floor.

What inspires this focus on working people?

Growing up in a family of working people. Those are the stories that are close to home. My mom was a schoolteacher, my dad was a social worker, and I’m a worker myself. Someone asked me about my relationship to the steelworkers, and I said, “No one understands insecurity more than artists; we are always right there on the edge of insolvency.”

Sweat premiered at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in the pre-election year of 2015. Did you notice any difference in audience reactions after the 2016 election?

I’ve only seen it in Oregon, New York, and Washington, DC. When we did it at OSF, the stagehands were in the midst of a strike. So the play certainly had internal resonance. By and large the OSF audience tends to be somewhat removed from the issues discussed in the play because it tends to be more affluent. But they leaned into the story and were open to hearing it. It was before the election and before Trump was even on the landscape.

How about the DC audience?

In Washington, DC, I felt the audience was much more resistant to the narrative and a little standoffish, like, “We don’t need to be told this.” But clearly they did! [Laughs] By the time we got to New York, it became abundantly clear that the play was telling a story that needed to be told. What the play did was reflect back what I heard when I did the research—a level of frustration and desperation that our politicians were not listening to.

What do you hope the Geary audience takes away from *Sweat*?

When I was done in Pennsylvania, one of my goals was to bridge a divide and get people to see that we all share one narrative. In Reading, you have people—all suffering in isolation—blaming each other, not recognizing that they share responsibility for the dismantling of the culture. At the end of the play, I didn’t want to draw any conclusions. I don’t think of myself as a moralizing playwright who wants the audience to leave with a specific lesson. What I do hope is that at the end, the audience will go off to some bar and enter into a robust conversation about the issues raised.

ONSTAGE NOW

BOOM AND BUST IN THE RUST BELT

THE STORY OF AMERICAN STEEL

BY SIMON HODGSON

Geology was destiny for 19th-century Pennsylvania. In the 1860s, when the process of making steel out of iron ore, coal, and limestone was refined, the state had all of the raw materials necessary for the production of steel at scale. Combining minerals, river transport links, manufacturing experience, and access to investment from Pittsburgh financiers, the Keystone State was poised to create a material that was strong, durable, and versatile: the metal of the future.

As the United States rebuilt infrastructure shattered by the Civil War, steel companies across Pennsylvania grew into major national corporations. The greatest of these, U.S. Steel, was formed in 1901 by a merger between three steel companies. Aided by favorable government oversight in the 1920s and fueled by military contracts

during World Wars I and II, it became a virtual monopoly. By 1943, the company employed 340,000 people nationwide. One year after World War II ended, America was manufacturing more than half of the world's steel.

All around the Great Lakes, cities such as Buffalo, Chicago, Cleveland, and Milwaukee were prospering thanks to the steel industry. The labor was both physically demanding and dangerous, but for thousands of working-class Americans, including people of color and Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, Slovak, and Hungarian immigrants from Eastern Europe, the well-paid union jobs at the mill represented a path to higher standards of living. For many—such as Chris in *Sweat*, who followed his mother and grandfather into Olstead's mill, the rhythms of steel work became a part of family life.

"Rosie the Riveter" working on an A-31 dive bomber, Tennessee, 1943.

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Workers in hard hats and lab coats in a U.S. Steel mill.

Joining the union was a sign of security for many: it represented health benefits, unemployment pay, and someone to protect steelworkers' interests. Unions, however, did not favor everyone. The structures and inner workings of unions often kept workers of color in the worst paid and most dangerous jobs. In *Sweat*, Colombian American Oscar remembers his father sweeping floors for years, hoping for a good job in the steel factory.

Despite some inequity within unions, America's steel industry was so successful in the first half of the 20th century that, to many of its employees and executives, its dominance seemed inevitable. But the foundations of America's booming steel industry were rotten. Whereas early steel magnates such as Andrew Carnegie had invested in new technology that reduced the price of steel and increased competitiveness, by the 1950s, America's steel executives were more interested in keeping profits high than in finding the next technological advance.

This lack of innovation opened the door to international competitors. Postwar steel companies in Germany, Austria, and Japan—desperate to rebuild their countries' devastated economies—refined the basic oxygen furnace (BOF) process: a technique that resulted in fewer impurities, faster production, and reduced labor costs. Not till the late 1960s did US mills incorporate that technology in their own factories. By then it was too little, too late. By 1980, Japan controlled 16 percent of world steel output; the US share had dropped to 14 percent.

While American steel manufacturers were being overtaken internationally, the hardworking cities of the Great Lakes also confronted major technological shifts across the US, as steel was replaced by new materials such as ceramics, plastics, and aluminum. Using these manufacturing substitutes,

American cars became lighter, requiring less steel. Aluminum replaced steel in canned drinks. Canned food was replaced by frozen meals. Lower demand for steel meant reduced prices for mills and fewer jobs for US steelworkers.

America's declining market share in steel may have looked stark on Wall Street balance sheets, but on Main Street, the picture was worse. As US mills' competitiveness dwindled, they laid off workers and closed plants. The result was a downturn in manufacturing hubs around the Great Lakes that continues to affect not only steelworkers, but also thousands of auxiliary and steel-related businesses. Schools closed due to lack of funding. Unemployment rose. "You wipe that mill out and you aren't just wiping out eight or nine hundred jobs," says former steelworker and Chicago resident Ken Wychocki, "you're wiping out a whole lot more."

Not only do many people in the Rust Belt feel stunned at the permanent closure of the mills and the devastation of their communities, but they also feel disenfranchised. No one in the media or the local, state, or federal government seems to be listening to them. They see other industries get bailed out—the auto plants, the banks—and wonder why steel wasn't saved. "I run the full mile, I put in the time, do the right thing," says Brucie in *Sweat*, "But, dude, tell me what I did wrong, huh?"

While the return of the major manufacturing plants to America's Rust Belt is uncertain, many communities are rebuilding. There are newer "mini-mills"—smaller companies that produce steel by using electricity to superheat scrap metal. An influx of new people—in many instances immigrants from Central and South America—into cities such as Reading have revitalized the communities, bringing the energy of start-ups as well as the tax dollars needed to fund local schools. As the silent mills slowly rust, these former company towns are discovering a new rhythm of life.

WORDS ON PLAYS



Want to know more about *Sweat*? *Words on Plays* is full of interviews and original essays that give you a behind-the-scenes look. Proceeds from sales of *Words on Plays* benefit A.C.T.'s education programs.

Available at the box office and lobby, at the bars, and online at act-sf.org/wordsonplays.

EYES WIDE OPEN

AN INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR LORETTA GRECO

BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

When A.C.T.'s new artistic director, Pam MacKinnon, asked Loretta Greco—artistic director of the Magic Theatre—to direct playwright Lynn Nottage's *Sweat*, Greco immediately said yes. She had felt the power of the Pulitzer Prize-winning drama when it premiered at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2015, and knew she wanted to explore it further. We sat down with Greco as design plans were being finalized to discover what it is about Nottage's work that excites her.

***Sweat* will be your fifth play for the Geary stage. What is it about this space that keeps bringing you back?**

The thing about The Geary is there are plays where you want to take advantage of the pomp and circumstance, and then there are plays where you really need the immediacy. The characters in *Sweat* are a family, and that bar is like those characters' living room. We want to extend that so the audience feels that they're in that bar, too.

Scenic designer Andrew Boyce and I also wanted to capture the beauty of Reading. With the glory of The Geary—that depth of field—we can really create the sense of context, of the city moving on through images and video projected on these billboards above the bar.

You've directed a number of plays that explore what the American Dream means to people today. What is it that fascinates you about this topic?

I'm interested in class. We so rarely have genuine pieces of work in our culture that deal with the working class, that recognize the beauty and the dignity of what it is to really believe in hard work and your piece of that bigger American Dream. I've directed a lot of [playwright] Sam Shepard, who was interested in the broken promise of the American Dream. He's at the opposite end of the spectrum from Lynn; Sam wasn't a researcher, but he viscerally followed the emotional terrain of this country, the promises and the hope that the country was built on. That fascinates me.

Like Sam, Lynn is looking at identity. We're tied to this promise of, "If you work hard, you'll be rewarded." Provisions will be there for you and the next generation will have even more bounty; they will do better. Lynn's looking at what's broken, at these

beautiful people who feel incredibly disenfranchised, and asking what do we do to regain the dignity of the working class when the one percent is so intent on making the gap wider and wider.

Yet *Sweat* isn't trying to provide answers.

I don't think Lynn is interested in that. She came into Reading with eyes wide open. She learned, listened, and then conjured these characters; she's asking us not to look away, to keep our eyes wide open and to see what she sees. She leaves us with the work ahead. She's asking big questions. How do we retain our best selves even when everything around us is falling apart? Can there be hope? I think that's a fair question right now.

Why do you think that this play will resonate with a Bay Area audience?

In San Francisco, we're aware that the state of California is looking more and more like the rest of the country will look in 25 years; we understand that it is going to be a majority-minority [minorities will make up the majority of the population] very soon and there is an embracing of that. Our cultural makeup is shifting hugely, quickly, and for the better. So it's interesting to look at a spot in the US where people didn't see this coming. They didn't see what NAFTA was going to do. They didn't see that the breaking down of the unions was even a possibility. So there is that panic and that tragedy of being bereft both of literal livelihood and of identity.

The Geary audience is always hungry for real stories about social conundrums. They are really gonna dig this play, and I hope that it spurs incredibly deep, rich conversations about what is to be done, where are we headed, and what will happen to this enormous section of our workforce. How are people seen, how is dignity restored? How do we stop being OK with living in a country where so many people are living in poverty? How are we responsible for one another as citizens, as human beings?

Too many people are looking away right now. I hope the power of the play and the humanity of it will allow people to keep their eyes wide open, just as Lynn has, in order to be altered in a way and to think about something anew and their place in what the future's going to look like.



PHOTO COURTESY ANDREW BOYCE.



PHOTO BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN.

TOP Set model, by scenic designer Andrew Boyce, of A.C.T.'s 2018 production of *Sweat*. **BOTTOM** Director Loretta Greco and stage manager Elisa Guthertz at the first rehearsal of *Sweat*.



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PHOTOS BY VINCENT AMELIO

WHO'S WHO IN SWEAT



LISE BRUNEAU*

(Tracey) is beyond thrilled to return to A.C.T. and the beautiful Bay Area, where she was last seen in *Angels in America* and *Les*

Liaisons Dangereuses (A.C.T.) and *The Triumph of Love, Pentecost, and An Ideal Husband* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). On the East Coast, she's performed on Broadway in *The Cherry Orchard* (Roundabout Theatre Company); *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Legacy of Light*, and *Watch on the Rhine* at Arena Stage; *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *The Winter's Tale* at Shakespeare Theatre Company; and *This* at Round House Theatre, among others. Bruneau has performed regionally at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Cleveland Play House, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Wilma Theater, and many Shakespeare festivals. As a director, she's helmed *Savage in Limbo* (MetroStage) and *The Riot Grrrls' Titus Andronicus*, *Oxygen*, *Bloody Poetry*, and *The Devil in His Own Words* (Taffety Punk Theatre Company). Bruneau trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.



DAVID DARROW*

(Jason) is a Brooklyn-based actor, writer, and composer.

Performing credits include *Twelfth*

Night and *Lookingglass Alice* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *South Pacific*, and *Juno and the Paycock* (the Guthrie Theater); and *Spring Awakening* and *Into the Woods* (Theater Latté Da). He has written several musicals, including *The Passage*, which was featured in both the National Alliance for Musical Theatre Festival of New Musicals and the Village Theatre's Festival of New Musicals. He is a

graduate of Albright College and a former acting apprentice at Actors Theatre of Louisville.



ROD GNAPP*

(Stan) returns to A.C.T., where he was last seen in *The Realistic Joneses*, *Scapin*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and many

others. A veteran of Bay Area stages, Gnapp recently appeared in *The Eva Trilogy* and *Fool for Love* (Magic Theatre), *Seared* (San Francisco Playhouse), and *The Monster-Builder* (Aurora Theatre Company). Theater credits also include work at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, Word for Word Performing Arts Company, Huntington Theatre Company, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Virginia Playhouse, and Pittsburgh Public Theater. Gnapp can be seen in the Miller brothers' independent feature film, *Touching Home*, with Ed Harris. He can also be seen in the films *Valley of the Heart's Delight*, *Calendar Conflortion* (Pixar), and *Back to the Streets of San Francisco*. He is the recipient of many San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards and is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.



KADEEM ALI HARRIS*

(Chris) is a recent graduate from A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts Program and made his Geary debut this past December with

A Christmas Carol. His favorite roles in M.F.A. productions include Zak in *Clickshare*, Romeo/Tybalt in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Yusef El-Fayoumy in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*. Regional credits include *Fences* (California Shakespeare

Theater) and *Love and Information* (Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati). Harris has appeared in readings with the Bay Area Playwrights Festival and Shotgun Players. He's a committed teaching artist who has taught in New York City, Cincinnati, and the Bay Area. He is a recipient of the Bratt Family Diversity Scholarship and the Litfin Performing Arts Scholarship.



SARAH NINA HAYON* (Jessie)

is a bicoastal actress now based in her hometown, San Francisco. A three-time Drama Desk Award

nominee, she makes her debut at A.C.T. where she studied in the Young Conservatory and first fell in love with theater. She is a proud member of LABYRINTH Theater Company, Partial Comfort Productions, and Rising Phoenix Repertory. Recent theater highlights include *The Gangster of Love* (Magic Theatre, directed by Loretta Greco), *Swimmers* (Marin Theatre Company, directed by Mike Donahue; Theatre Bay Area Award nomination), and *Water by the Spoonful* (The Old Globe, directed by Edward Torres). Her television and film credits include Netflix's *13 Reasons Why*, *Succession*, *Pose*, Danny DeVito's *Curmudgeons*, *Heirloom*, *Unforgettable*, *Parker & Maggie*, *Are We There Yet?*, *The Green*, *Sex and the City*, *Law & Order*, and *Avatar*.



CHIKÉ JOHNSON*

(Brucie) recently appeared as Dr. Gibbs in *Our Town* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater). Other recent

productions include *A Raisin in the Sun* (Indiana Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage); *Three Sisters*, *Cyrano de*

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Bergerac, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (American Players Theatre); *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* (Indiana Rep, Geva Theatre Center); *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Rep); and *Of Mice and Men* (Milwaukee Rep, Arizona Theatre Company). He has appeared in *A Time to Kill* and *Wit* on Broadway, and off Broadway in *Lost in the Stars* (New York City Center's Encores!) and *Ruined* (Manhattan Theatre Club, Goodman Theatre). Regional credits include *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Goodman Theatre); *Sizwe Banzi Is Dead* (Court Theatre); *The Unmentionables* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Topdog/Underdog* (Renaissance Theaterworks); *The Crucible*, *The Unmentionables*, and *Huck Finn* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *King Lear* (Milwaukee Rep); *Home* (In Tandem Theatre); *"Master Harold"...and the Boys* (Milwaukee Chamber Theatre); and *Smoldering Fires* (First Stage Children's Theater).



JED PARSARIO* (Oscar)

makes his A.C.T. debut with *Sweat*. Recent Bay Area credits include Tanner in *White at Shotgun Players* and Voltaire/Benny in

the world premiere of *The Gangster of Love* at Magic Theatre. Parsario was also the understudy for Claudio/Pompey for *Measure for Measure* at California Shakespeare Theater. Other recent credits include *Kano + Abe: A Daly City Bible Story* (PlayGround), *Cymbeline* and *Don Quixote* (Marin Shakespeare Company), *The Oldest Boy* (Marin Theatre Company), and *Dogeaters* (Magic Theatre). Parsario is a company member of PlayGround and is a resident artist at Bindlestiff Studio. He recently trained with Shakespeare & Company in Lenox, Massachusetts and holds a BFA from Academy of Art University.



TONYE PATANO*

(Cynthia) is thrilled to make her A.C.T. debut with *Sweat*. Patano has garnered accolades on both stage—the San

Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Performance by a Female Actor in a Principal Role in *Ruined* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and an Ovation Award nomination for *Father Comes Home from the Wars (Parts 1, 2 & 3)* (The Public Theater, Center Theatre Group, and American Repertory Theater)—and screen, notably as Heylia James on Showtime's *Weeds*. Film credits include *A Vigilante*, *Roxanne Roxanne*, *Time Out of Mind*, *Every Secret Thing*, *Diving Normal*, and the upcoming *Friendly Neighborhood Coven*. Television credits include *The Americans*, *Ray Donovan*, *SMILF*, *Younger*, *Sneaky Pete*, *Elementary*, *The Blacklist*, *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, *County*, and *Brooklyn Animal Control*. Theater credits include *Legends!* (national tour), *45 Seconds from Broadway* (Broadway), *Skeleton Crew* and *The Last Goodbye* (The Old Globe), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (Actors Theatre of Louisville), *The Blood Quilt* (Arena Stage), *Seven Guitars* (Arizona Theatre Company), and *Fences* (Virginia Stage Company).



ADRIAN ROBERTS*

(Evan) was last seen at A.C.T. as David McComber in *Ah, Wilderness!* His most recent Bay Area credits include

Steve Daniels in *A Lesson from Aloes* at Z Space, James T in *Barbecue* at San Francisco Playhouse, Basilio in *Life Is a Dream* (directed by Loretta Greco) and Claudius in *Hamlet* at California Shakespeare Theater, Nsikan Disciple Ufot in *runboyrun* and Charles Boyd in *pen/man/ship* at Magic Theatre, Willie in *"Master Harold"...and the Boys* and

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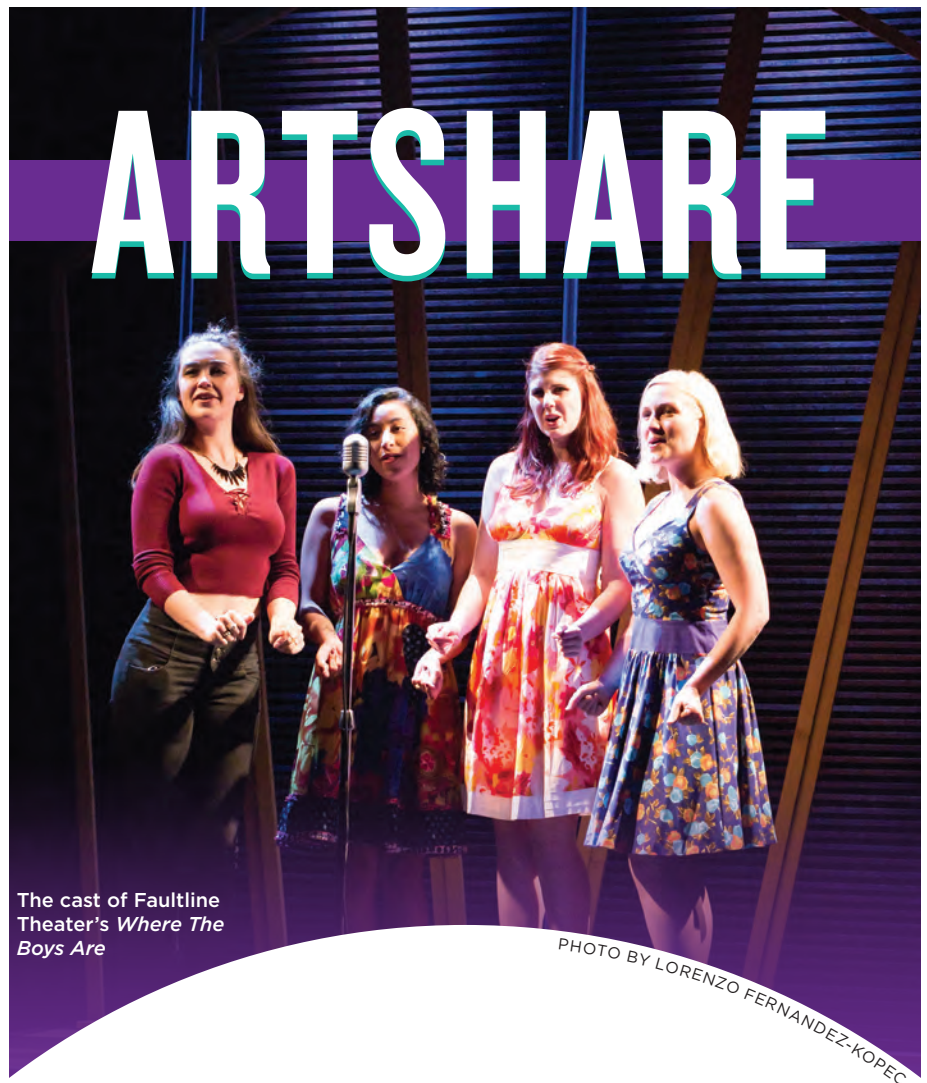
Gabriel in *Breakfast With Mugabe* at Aurora Theatre Company, Gabriel in *Fences* at Marin Theatre Company, Martin Luther King Jr. in *The Mountaintop* at TheatreWorks, and Commander Osembenga in *Ruined* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other regional credits include three seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and *Playboy of the West Indies* at Lincoln Center Theater, among many others. Roberts has been on such television shows as *Scrubs*, *Criminal Minds*, and *Brothers & Sisters*. He is a graduate of A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program.



ANTHONY FUSCO*

(Understudy), an A.C.T. Resident Artist, has appeared in dozens of productions here, most recently as

Horatio in *Hamlet* with John Douglas Thompson. Other A.C.T. credits include *Ah, Wilderness!*; *Clybourne Park*; *The Homecoming*; *At Home at the Zoo*; *Dead Metaphor*; *Hedda Gabler*; *The Three Sisters*; *Race*; *November*; and *Love and Information*. Bay Area credits include *Marjorie Prime* (Marin Theatre Company), *Born Yesterday* and *The Christians* (San Francisco Playhouse), *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures* and *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *Sister Play* (Magic Theatre), and 12 plays for the California Shakespeare Theater, including *The Tempest*, *Pygmalion*, *Candida*, and *King Lear*. Fusco has performed on, off-, and off-off-Broadway, and at many of America's major regional theaters. He trained at Juilliard and The Barrow Group School. Next up: Scrooge in A.C.T.'s *Christmas Carol*.



The cast of Faultline Theater's *Where The Boys Are*

PHOTO BY LORENZO FERNANDEZ-KOPEC.

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RUDY GUERRERO*

(Understudy) is an actor whose previous A.C.T. credits include Valère in *Tartuffe* and the Ghosts of

Christmas Past and Future in *A Christmas Carol*. Guerrero recently won the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Best Principal Actor in a Musical for his performance as Tick in *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* at Theatre Rhinoceros. Other theater credits include performances at 42nd Street Moon, Alcazar Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Central Works Theater Company, Connecticut Repertory Theater, Foothill Music Theater, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, Magic Theatre, Marin Shakespeare Company, Marin Theatre Company, Pacific Alliance Stage Company, Playwrights Foundation, San Francisco Playhouse, TheatreWorks, Willows Theatre Company, and Word for Word Performing Arts Company. Guerrero has a BFA in musical theater from the Boston Conservatory and an M.F.A. in acting from American Conservatory Theater.



WILLIAM HOESCHLER†

(Understudy) is in his final year of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program and makes his Geary Theater debut with

Sweat. He was most recently seen as Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and Florizel in *The Winter's Tale* at the Livermore Shakespeare Festival. Some of his favorite Conservatory credits include Iago in *Othello* for the A.C.T. Sky Festival, Pentheus in *The Bacchae of Euripides*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night*, and Lollo in *The Changeling*. Other regional credits include Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the

Shakespeare Theater of New Jersey's Shakespeare LIVE. Hoeschler holds a BS in theater from Skidmore College.



SUSAN LYNKEY*

(Understudy) is an award-winning actor fresh from starring as young Margaret Thatcher in the US premiere of the UK's

Handbagged (Round House Theatre). A recent transplant from Washington, DC (where she is a longtime stage favorite and was a faculty member of Georgetown University), Lynskey's left coast work includes the world premieres of Lisa Loomer's *Roe* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arena Stage, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre), Daniel Handler's *Imaginary Comforts* (Berkeley Rep), and developing new plays at Magic Theatre, Z Space, and The Ground Floor at Berkeley Rep. This season, Lynskey will direct and act in Barbara Hammond's *Enter the Roar* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; join the A.C.T. family in *Sweat*; perform the role of Menke in Paula Vogel's *Indecent* (Arena Stage, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Baltimore Center Stage); and bring Thatcher to 59E59 Theaters off Broadway. Lynskey deeply thanks her parents, Janet Foster, Amy Potozkin, Tony Taccone, Loretta Greco, Susie Lampert, and all the Bay Area artists who have so warmly welcomed her here.



LEONTYNE MBELE-MBONG*

(Understudy) makes her A.C.T. debut with *Sweat*. Recent projects include *Richard III*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *The Merry*

Wives of Windsor, *Much Ado about Nothing*, the title role in *Medea* (Theater Bay Area Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female Actor in a Principal Role), and Cleopatra in *Antony & Cleopatra* (TBA Award finalist) at

African-American Shakespeare Company, where she is also the production manager. Select credits include *Watch on the Rhine* (the Guthrie Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *Breakfast With Mugabe* (Aurora Theatre Company); *Top Girls* (Shotgun Players); *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Aluminous Collective); *Fences* (Altarena Playhouse); *Andromache* (Central Works Theater Company); *Candide* (Lamplighters Music Theatre); *Richard III*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Macbeth* (Woman's Will Theatre Collective); *World Music* (TheatreFIRST); and Lynn Nottage's play *Intimate Apparel* (Solano College; ARTY Award for Best Supporting Actress).



ANTHONY ROLLINS-MULLENS*

(Understudy) is a native San Franciscan performer of both stage and

independent film for many years. His theatrical credits include Louis in *Sunday in the Park with George* (San Francisco Playhouse); Caractacus Potts in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *TYA*; Duppy in Bob Marley's *Three Little Birds* and Toad in *A Year With Frog and Toad* (Bay Area Children's Theatre); Louis Armstrong in *Ella the Musical* (Center REpertory Company); Tom Collins in *Rent* (The Royal Underground Theatre Company); Fred in *Smokey Joe's Café* (Broadway by the Bay); Willie in *"Master Harold"...and the Boys* (Off Broadway West Theatre Company); Jafar in *Aladdin* and Aslan in *Narnia* (Berkeley Playhouse); Waymon as Hunter Priestess in the West Coast premiere of *Good Goods* (Crowded Fire Theater); Eddie Mackrel in the West Coast premiere of Michael John LaChiusa's *The Wild Party* (The Blank Theatre Company); and Belize in the 20th-anniversary production of *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (Theatre Shark).

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†Member of A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program class of 2019



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LYNN NOTTAGE (Playwright) is a playwright and screenwriter, and the first woman in history to win two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama. Her plays include *Sweat* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie Award for Playwriting), which moved to Broadway after a sold-out run at The Public Theater; *Mlima's Tale* (Outer Critics Circle Award nomination); *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Lilly Award in Playwriting, Drama Desk Award nomination); *Ruined* (Pulitzer Prize, Obie Award for Best New American Play); *Intimate Apparel* (American Theatre Critics Association and New York Drama Critics' Circle awards for Best Play); *Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine* (Obie Award for Playwriting); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; *Las Meninas*; *Mud, River, Stone*; *Por'Knockers*; and *POOF!* Nottage is a member of the Dramatists Guild of America, an associate professor at Columbia University's School of the Arts, and the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship, Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, Doris Duke Artist Award, and PEN/Laura Pels Master American Dramatist Award, among others.

LORETTA GRECO (Director) returns to A.C.T., where she has directed *The Realistic Joneses*, *Speed-the-Plow*, *Blackbird*, and *Lackawanna Blues*. As Magic Theatre's artistic director, Greco has proudly developed, premiered, and championed the work of Taylor Mac, Mfoniso Udofia, Barbara Hammond, Lloyd Suh, Jessica Hagedorn, Linda McLean, and Luis Alfaro, among many others. Her directing credits at Magic include *Fool for Love*, *Mauritius*, *Oedipus el Rey*, *The Eva Trilogy*, and *The Gangster of Love*. Greco's New York directing credits include the premieres of Tracey Scott Wilson's *The Story* (Kesselring Prize), Ruben Santiago-Hudson's *Lackawanna Blues* (Obie Award), and Nilo Cruz's *Two Sisters and a Piano*, all at The Public Theater; and Cruz's *A Park in Our House* at New York Theatre Workshop. Regional credits include *Life Is a Dream* at California Shakespeare Theater and *Stop Kiss* and *Romeo and Juliet* at the

Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Greco is the recipient of two Drama League fellowships and a Princess Grace Award.

ANDREW BOYCE (Scenic Designer) is a Chicago and New York City-based designer working in theater, opera, film, and television. Past A.C.T. credits include *The Realistic Joneses* and *The Hard Problem*. New York credits include productions with Lincoln Center Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Atlantic Theater Company, The Play Company, The Playwrights Realm, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, and Cherry Lane Theatre. Regionally, Boyce has worked with Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alliance Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, Dallas Theater Center, Geffen Playhouse, George Street Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Magic Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, TheatreWorks, Westport Country Playhouse, and Yale Repertory Theatre, among many others. Boyce is a graduate of Yale School of Drama, and is currently an assistant professor in the Northwestern University theater department.

ULISES ALCALA (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for theater and opera at various companies in the Bay Area for the last 15 years. Recent engagements include *White* at Shotgun Players, *Quixote Nuevo* at California Shakespeare Theater, *The Gangster of Love* at Magic Theatre, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and the Bay Area Children's Theatre national tours of *Strega Nona*. His opera credits include *L'Elisir d'Amore*, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, *Don Pasquale*, and *La Finta Giardiniera* for the San Francisco Opera Center; and *Don Giovanni* for the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. His designs for *Tongues* have been seen at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' American College Theater Festival. Upcoming productions include *The Abduction*

from the Seraglio at Opera San José. Alcala is a professor of design at California State University, East Bay.

ALLEN LEE HUGHES (Lighting Designer) is a designer whose Broadway work includes *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *Clybourne Park*, both directed by Pam MacKinnon; *Having Our Say*; *Mule Bone*; *Once on This Island*; *K2*; *Strange Interlude*; *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*; and *Quilters*. His work has been seen at major theaters including McCarter Theatre Center, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, and the Mark Taper Forum. New York designs include work at Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, New York Shakespeare Festival, and Lincoln Center Theater. He is proud to have been honored with three Tony Award nominations, Audelco Award and Ovation Award nominations, an Outer Critics Circle Award, the Joseph Maharam Award in Design, the United States Institute for Theatre Technology's Distinguished Achievement Award in Lighting Design, the Michael Merritt Award for Excellence in Design and Collaboration, and two Helen Hayes Awards and eight nominations. Hughes teaches at New York University and is proud that Arena Stage's fellowship program bears his name.

JAKE RODRIGUEZ (Sound Designer) is a sound designer and composer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. His recent credits include *Everybody* (California Shakespeare Theater); *Angels in America* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *we, the invisibles* (Actors Theatre of Louisville); *Vietgone* (A.C.T.); *An Octoroon* (Berkeley Rep); *The Events* (Shotgun Players); *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (A.C.T., Theatre Calgary, Grand Theatre, The Old Globe); *The Christians* (Playwrights Horizons, the Mark Taper Forum); *Girlfriend* (Kirk Douglas Theatre); and *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* (A.C.T., the Guthrie Theater). Rodriguez is the recipient of a 2004 Princess Grace Award.

HANA S. KIM (Projection Designer) is a Los Angeles-based projection designer for live performances and events. Her recent design credits include *The Untranslatable Secrets of Nikki Corona*, directed by Jo Bonney (Geffen Playhouse); *The Gangster of Love*, directed by Loretta Greco (Magic Theatre); *Little Black Shadows*, directed by May Adrales (South Coast Repertory); *Weightless*, directed by Becca Wolff (Z Space); *Wonderful Town*, directed by David Lee (Los Angeles Opera); and *The Christians*, directed by Hana S. Sharif (Baltimore Center Stage). A member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, she is the recipient of the 2018 Richard E. Sherwood Award from Center Theatre Group and a Princess Grace Award for theater design. Her designs have won San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards, a Helen Hayes Award, Stage Raw Theater awards, and StageSceneLA awards.

CHRISTINE ADAIRE (Vocal Coach) is head of voice at A.C.T. She is a Designated Master Linklater Voice Teacher, trained by the world-renowned voice teacher Kristin Linklater. She has worked as an actor, voice coach, and director in many American regional theaters, including The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Goodman Theatre, Lyric Opera, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Court Theatre, American Players Theatre, Theatre for a New Audience (NYC), Santa Cruz Shakespeare, La Jolla Playhouse, and Shakespeare & Company. Adaire has taught at DePaul University, National Theatre School of Canada, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Roosevelt University. She's taught workshops in Shanghai, Barcelona, London, Australia, and New Zealand. Her current area of research and writing is transgender voice. She works with transgender/gender-diverse individuals so they can modify their voice to more fully express their gender identity.

JOY MEADS (Dramaturg), a native of Oakland, comes to A.C.T. from Center Theatre Group, where she served as literary manager/artistic engagement strategist. Her CTG dramaturgy credits include *Archduke*, by Rajiv Joseph; *Good Grief*, by Ngozi Anyanwu; *Appropriate*, by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins; *Forever*, by Dael Orlandersmith; *Marjorie Prime*, by Jordan Harrison (2015 Pulitzer Prize finalist); *A Parallelogram*, by Bruce Norris; *The Royale*, by Marco Ramirez; *Radiate*, by Daniel Alexander Jones; and *SLEEP* by Naomi Iizuka (a co-commission with Ripe Time, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Yale Repertory Theatre). Previously, Meads was literary manager at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and associate artistic director at California Shakespeare Theater. She has also developed plays with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Portland Center Stage, South Coast Repertory, and Campo Santo, among others. Meads is a proud member and co-founder of The Kilroys.

JANET FOSTER, CSA (Casting Director) has cast for A.C.T. for seven seasons, including *Hamlet*, *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, *The Hard Problem*, *King Charles III*, *John*, *Arcadia*, *Stuck Elevator*, *The Orphan of Zhao*, *Napoli*, *Elektra*, *Scorched*, and *Endgame* and *Play*. On Broadway, she cast *The Light in the Piazza* (Artios Award nomination), *Lennon*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *Taking Sides* (co-cast). Off-Broadway credits include *True Love*, *Floyd Collins*, *The Monogamist*, *A Cheever Evening*, and *Later Life*. Regionally, she has worked at Intiman Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, The Old Globe, and American Repertory Theater. Film, television, and radio credits include *Cosby*, *Tracey Takes On New York*, *The Deal*, *Advice from a*

Caterpillar, *The Day That Lehman Died* (Peabody, SONY, and Wincott awards), and *"T" Is for Tom* (Tom Stoppard radio plays, WNYC and WQXR). She also cast *LifeAfter*, a GE Theater podcast.

ELISA GUTHERTZ* (Stage Manager) has been a Bay Area stage manager for over 25 years. Her most recent A.C.T. credits are *Heisenberg*, *The Birthday Party*, and *Hamlet*. She stage-managed *A Thousand Splendid Suns* at A.C.T., The Old Globe, and Theatre Calgary. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include *A Night with Janis Joplin*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *Monstress*, *Love and Information*, *Testament*, *Major Barbara*, *Underneath the Lintel*, *Arcadia*, *The Normal Heart*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Clybourne Park*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *The Rainmaker*, *A Number*, and *Eve Ensler's The Good Body*, among others. She has also stage-managed *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Rhinoceros*, *Big Love*, *Collected Stories*, and *Cloud Tectonics* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *The Good Body* (Broadway); *Big Love* (Brooklyn Academy of Music); and *The Vagina Monologues* (Alcazar Theatre).

CHRIS WATERS* (Assistant Stage Manager) is delighted to be a part of the A.C.T. family with *Sweat*. Favorite regional credits include *Fire in Dreamland* at The Public Theater; *Office Hour*, *Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of The Temptations*, and *Hand to God* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *As You Like It*, *Othello*, and *King Lear* at California Shakespeare Theater; *Safe House*, *Talley's Folly*, and *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* at Aurora Theatre Company; *James and the Giant Peach* with Bay Area Children's Theatre and Shanghai Children's Art Theatre; *Orlando* at TheatreFIRST; *pen/man/ship* at Magic Theatre; and *A House Tour of the Infamous Porter Family Mansion with Tour Guide Weston Ludlow Londonderry* at Z Space. Waters holds an MA in theater management from UC Santa Cruz and is a proud member of Actor's Equity Association.

KEITH AND PRISCILLA GEESLIN (Season Presenter)

Priscilla is a civic leader, active arts patron, and community volunteer in the Bay Area. She is a vice chair of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees and chairs the Development Committee. She serves on the boards of the San Francisco Symphony (vice chair), Grace Cathedral, and NARAL Pro-Choice America (board chair). A principal of Francisco Partners, Keith is the president of the San Francisco Opera's board of trustees.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Karina Fox, *Assistant Director*
Dave Maier, *Fight Director*
Jake Rodriguez and
Jason Stamberger, *Original Music*

PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDINGS

Audience members may take photos in the theater before and after the performance and during intermission. If you post photos, on social media or elsewhere, you must credit the production's designers by including the following names:

Andrew Boyce, Scenic Designer,
Instagram: @andrewcboyce
Ulises Alcala, Costume Design
Allen Lee Hughes, Lighting Design
Jake Rodriguez, Sound Design
Hana S. Kim, Projection Design
Instagram: @hana.s.kim

Please note: Photos are strictly prohibited during the performance. Photos of the stage are not permitted if an actor is present. Video recording is not permitted in the theater at any time.

@ACTSanFrancisco #ACTSweat



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PRESENTING HOST



LEAD SUPPORTER





At the first rehearsal for A.C.T.'s production of *Sweat*, Director of Dramaturgy and New Works Joy Meads speaks with actor Kadeem Ali Harris. In the background, Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon talks with Costume Shop Fellow Nina Bice.

SPARKING THE CONVERSATION

MEET A.C.T.'S DIRECTOR OF DRAMATURGY AND
NEW WORKS JOY MEADS

BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

For Joy Meads, becoming A.C.T.'s director of dramaturgy and new works is a homecoming. She first discovered the magic of theater at a performance of *A Christmas Carol* and in Young Conservatory classes. "The YC classes were great for me," says Meads. "I was an awkward teenager and they gave me confidence. I built a friend group and found my voice."

It was her experiences in these YC classes that spurred her towards a career in directing and dramaturgy. After graduating from New York University, Meads directed at small theaters in New York and in the Bay Area. She served as the associate artistic director at California Shakespeare Theater, literary manager at Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and literary manager and artistic engagement strategist at Center Theatre Group. She is also a co-founder of The Kilroys, a gang of playwrights and producers described by *Backstage* magazine as "the superheroines of the theater," who work to increase the production of plays by female and transgender playwrights. We spoke with Meads about her new position and what she's looking forward to this season.

What does it mean to be the director of dramaturgy and new works?

I'm the resident dramaturg for our mainstage productions and I teach two classes in the M.F.A. Program. I'm also a core part of the season planning process; I put forward plays that we might want to do—both classical and contemporary—and respond to others' ideas. I'm really excited about the idea of creating conversations between contemporary playwrights and classic work. Who are the contemporary playwrights who are writing on the epic scale of *The Geary*, and how are they in conversation with ancient plays?

How do you find and foster those conversations?

I listen to the rhythms of a time and a place. What are the stories that the Bay Area community needs to hear right now in 2018? What conversations are waiting to be unlocked? What is vital right here in this moment to help us understand ourselves as individuals and as a society? Who are the voices that are going to unlock that? I'm reading widely, looking for those playwrights who will write those stories, and working with those artists to develop them. And then I'm thinking, "How do I create the most productive collisions of story and audience? How are our audiences encountering this work, and how am I making that encounter as rich and fruitful as possible?" I couldn't feel more passionate about this work.

What do you look for in a play?

I've read 500 plays a year for 12 years now, so I'm pretty quick at picking up a playwright's level of craft. But, beyond that, I'm interested in plays that help me see something new or

experience something familiar as though it's new, plays that help me encounter the human condition with fresh eyes. I'm looking for plays that use form to express content and engage the audience both intellectually and experientially. I'm looking for plays that are delicious for actors to act: characters who have strong needs, multiple conflicting objectives, and internal and external conflicts.

"I LISTEN TO THE RHYTHMS OF A TIME AND A PLACE . . . WHAT IS VITAL RIGHT HERE IN THIS MOMENT TO HELP US UNDERSTAND OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUALS AND AS A SOCIETY?"

It's important to me that the stories we tell reflect the place in which we live. When we produce a play, it's a way of saying, "This story matters. This is worth your attention." It's important that the diverse communities of San Francisco can come into our theaters and think, "This is a place where we matter. This is a place where we are seen." You can't understand the world we live in today without bringing all of those voices to the table. We live in an age that requires that we understand our shared humanity, appreciate our differences, and discover our shared values.

What are you most excited about this season?

I love this season. It's an exciting vision of what a regional theater can be: how it can be in conversation with its audience, how it can bring together thrilling emerging voices and brilliant plays from generations past to spark a conversation, all of which speaks to this moment in profound ways. Funnily enough, I just pitched *Rhinoceros* at my last job, so of course I was delighted to see that Pam programmed it here. It's disturbingly relevant. Bay Area native Lauren Yee is a playwright who will soon be one of the more important voices in American theater. *The Great Leap* has deep roots here in San Francisco and brings an under-told story to our stage. *Men on Boats* is another play I love. Playwright Jaclyn Backhaus is an incredible talent. The creativity of staging that this play asks for is joyful. It asks vital contemporary questions about how we imagine ourselves, where we see leadership, and what it means to lead.

I CAN'T WAIT TO EXPLORE

INTRODUCING THE M.F.A. PROGRAM'S 2018-19 SEASON

BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

This year, A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts Program is serving up classics with a twist. Shakespeare, Sheridan, and Austen are getting a makeover through contemporary translations, commissioned world premieres, and diverse voices—both onstage and off. “I’m excited to dive into shows that have been so beautifully selected,” says third-year student actor Jerrie R. Johnson. “I’m even more excited that so many of our directors—Lavina Jadhvani, Mina Morita, Dawn Monique Williams—are women of color.”

“Our vision for every M.F.A. Program season is to find a mix of classical and contemporary plays that will suit our actors and test their training in acting, movement, voice, and speech,” says Conservatory Director Melissa Smith. For the 12 first-year program actors, the year is all about building their acting toolkit: dialects, movement, scene study. “We focused heavily on settling into ourselves so we are able to bring our entire beings to each character, each performance,” says second-year actor Kimberly Hollkamp.

“The first year of the M.F.A. Program was learning about yourself: your body, your habits, and what’s hindering you as an actor,” says second-year Summer Brown. “In the second year, you hone the mess that you cracked open in your first year and use it in your performances.” This year, Brown and her fellow second-year actors will embrace the intrigue, gossip, and wit of Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *School for Scandal* and the physical comedy and verse of Shakespeare’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream*. These all-new contemporary adaptations, by directors Christine Adaire and Dawn Monique Williams, will put the 13 actors’ comedic and linguistic abilities to the test. “With elevated language, you have to trust that the story is in the text,” says second-year actor

Emma Van Lare. “The words have to become part of your being. You try to fully embody the words and use them to drive the story.”

In the spring, the first- and second-year M.F.A. Program actors will join together for *Sense and Sensibility*—adapted by Kate Hamill (*Vanity Fair*)—and another production to be announced soon, directed by A.C.T.’s new associate conservatory director, Peter J. Kuo. These productions will test the young actors’ skills at playing multiple characters in a single production.

In the third and final year of the M.F.A. Program, the season takes on a new form and meaning. The 13 actors audition for mainstage productions, perform in A.C.T.’s seasonal favorite *A Christmas Carol*, and collaborate on a world-premiere production, commissioned for them. This year’s play—*Both Your Houses*, by Susan Soon He Stanton—is set backstage during the final performance of a regional production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Exploring the #MeToo movement in theater and the tensions between local and out-of-town artists, the play was also sparked by the student actors’ own experiences. “Our workshop with Susan and director Mina Morita during last year’s New Strands Festival was exciting,” says third-year Adam Donovan. “We would mention an experience we’d had and then it would come out of one of our characters’ mouths the next morning.”

“What excites me most about *Both Your Houses* is that we’re being invited to bring together everything we have learned in our time at A.C.T. and say, ‘This is who I am as an artist. This is what I value, this is what makes me different,’” says third-year actor Caleb Lewis. “M.F.A. Program productions are the spaces in which the transition from ‘student’ to ‘actor’ takes place. I can’t wait to explore.”

To learn more about the M.F.A. Program season, visit act-sf.org/csv.

“THE FIRST YEAR OF THE M.F.A. PROGRAM WAS LEARNING ABOUT YOURSELF: YOUR BODY, YOUR HABITS, AND WHAT’S HINDERING YOU AS AN ACTOR. IN THE SECOND YEAR, YOU HONE THE MESS THAT YOU CRACKED OPEN AND USE IT IN YOUR PERFORMANCES.”

—SUMMER BROWN, SECOND-YEAR M.F.A. PROGRAM ACTOR



PHOTO BY ALESSANDRA MELLO.

M.F.A. Program actor Jerrie R. Johnson and the cast of *The Bacchae of Euripides* (2018).

THE 2018-19 M.F.A. PROGRAM SEASON

THIRD-YEAR CABARET

Songs in Living Color

Directed by Milissa Carey

October 18-20

SECOND-YEAR PLAY

The School for Scandal

by Richard Brinsley Sheridan

Adapted and directed by

Christine Adaire

November 8-10 & 15-17

SECOND-YEAR REVUE

Fascinating Rhythms: Jazz and Blues on Broadway

Directed by Darryl V. Jones

December 13-15

THIRD-YEAR PLAY

Both Your Houses

by Susan Soon He Stanton

Directed by Mina Morita

A co-commission with

Crowded Fire Theater

February 21, 22, 23, 27; March 1-2

FIRST- AND SECOND-YEAR PLAYS

Sense and Sensibility

by Kate Hamill

Based on the novel by Jane Austen

Directed by Pirronne Yousefzadeh

May 8-11

Another show to be announced soon!

A.C.T.'S FALL CELEBRATION

A.C.T. BOARD MEMBER KEN FULK CELEBRATES NEW LEADERS IN LANDMARK PARTY

BY RANDY TARADASH

Join us for a special celebration welcoming **new Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** and **new Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein** to San Francisco!



PHOTO COURTESY OF KEN FULK

St. Joseph's Arts Society at 1401 Howard Street, San Francisco.

Tastemaker, provocateur, award-winning designer, and A.C.T. Board Member Ken Fulk couldn't let the arrival of A.C.T.'s powerhouse leadership team, Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, just *happen*. So the James Beard Award nominee—whose iconic style is behind famed San Francisco hotspots The Battery and Leo's Oyster Bar—invited A.C.T. to christen the St. Joseph's Arts Society, his latest destination, with a Fall Celebration to welcome our two new SF residents. This one-night-only event to open the restored 1913 landmark building—in disrepair since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake—is shaping up to be *the* party of the season.

Joining Fulk as event chairs are fellow A.C.T. trustees Robina Riccitiello and Jeff and Laurie Ubben. Serving as honorary chairs are Uma Thurman and Josh Lucas, who both made their Broadway debuts in MacKinnon's recent hit, *The Parisian Woman*. They are joined by Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom and Jennifer Siebel Newsom in an honorary capacity and a sizzling Artistic Committee, including Ellen Burstyn, Olympia Dukakis, Bill Irwin, John Lithgow, Kate Mulgrew, David Strathairn, and BD Wong.

"Laurie and I are excited to welcome Pam and Jennifer to San Francisco," says Ubben. "We couldn't think of a more fun way to do it than at Ken's latest landmark. It's an auspicious way to celebrate A.C.T.'s next chapter with this tremendous new leadership team."

"Ken Fulk is a design icon!" says Riccitiello. "A.C.T.'s Fall Celebration will be the coming-out party for his new space that's glamorous, distinctive, and sexy, but honors its origins as the old St. Joseph's Church. He's orchestrating an evening that will shake up the expectations of the traditional gala-type event, and it's happening in the city's hottest new venue."

The evening will include a gourmet tasting experience with Paula LeDuc, wines provided by DuMOL Winery, and a dance party with live music. Event proceeds support A.C.T.'s artistic, professional training, and Education & Community programs, which benefit more than 250,000 Bay Area residents each year.

So save the date of November 15 and glam up—A.C.T.'s Fall Celebration is going to be the party of the year! For tickets and more information, email **Jody Price** at jprice@act-sf.org.

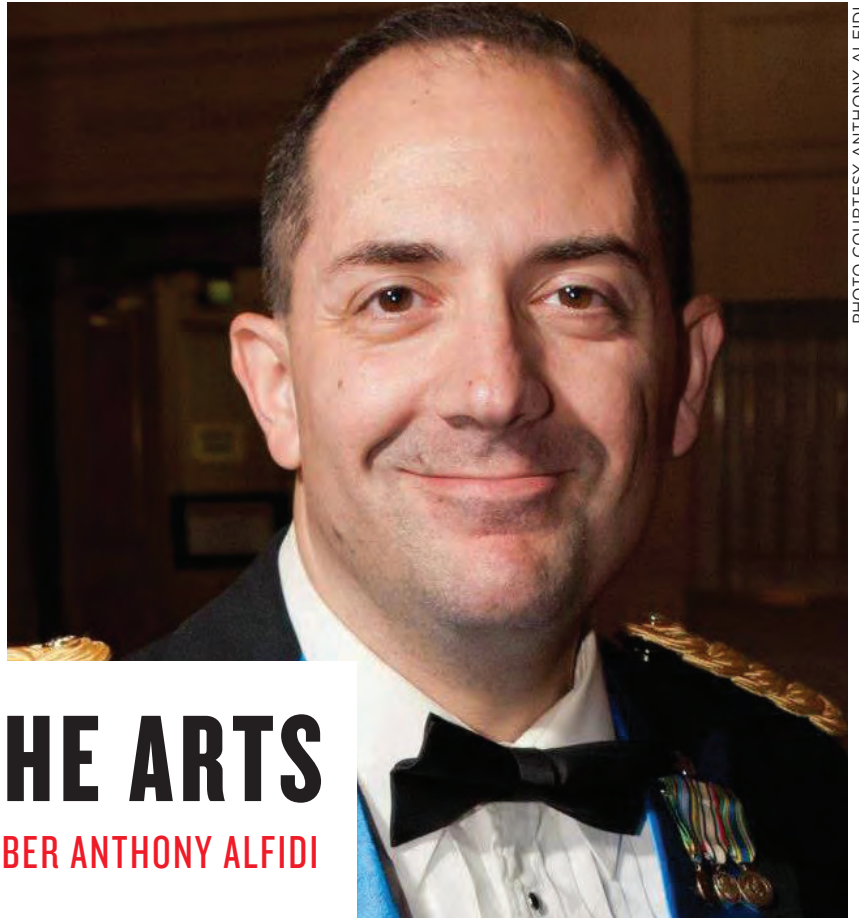


PHOTO COURTESY ANTHONY ALFIDI.

INSPIRED BY THE ARTS

MEET A.C.T. PROSPERO SOCIETY MEMBER ANTHONY ALFIDI
BY A.C.T. PUBLICATIONS STAFF

A call to action, to most magazine readers and television watchers, is a familiar sales technique—inspiring people to take the next step toward supporting a cause or campaign. But for 45-year-old US Army Reserve officer Anthony Alfidi, the call to action was literal.

It came in early 2009, when Alfidi was called up by the US Army for action in Iraq. Before being mobilized for nine months in the Middle East in a military logistics unit, the army officer put his affairs in order. The process prompted him to consider the organizations he valued most, including A.C.T.

Alfidi wrote A.C.T. into his will, becoming a member of the Prospero Society—a special group of theater-lovers whose members have committed to support A.C.T. either through a bequest or a living trust. “I’d like my estate to benefit as many people as possible,” he says.

For arts lover Alfidi, adding A.C.T. to his planning was natural. Born and raised in Sacramento, he was inspired by the performing arts he experienced on public television as a child, including the Boston Pops orchestra. After graduating from the University of Notre Dame on a US Army scholarship, he served tours in South Korea, Kuwait, and Germany during the 1990s.

The following decade, he returned to the US, moved to San Francisco for its cultural scene, and became an A.C.T. subscriber and a Geary regular. “Tom Stoppard’s *Travesties* was a particular highlight,” he says. “A very interesting take on the Dada era with a really creative set design.”

Today, Alfidi is a self-employed financial analyst, enjoying frequent trips to the ballet, opera, and symphony in San Francisco, as well as to A.C.T. He knows, however, that whenever Uncle Sam’s call next comes, he will continue to answer. Last year, he completed an 11-month stint in Afghanistan, where he was an intelligence officer. “I believe in the American constitution as the greatest product of the Enlightenment era,” he says. “It is worth my life.”

For more information about membership benefits and how to plan your legacy gift to A.C.T., visit act-sf.org/prospero or contact A.C.T. Deputy Director of Development Tiffany Redmon at **415.439.2482** or tredmon@act-sf.org.

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JEROME L. AND THAO N. DODSON*

Jerry is president of Parnassus Investments and serves on the boards of San Francisco Opera and A.C.T. Thao and Jerry have established scholarships for music education at the San Francisco Symphony, undergraduate education at UC Berkeley, and high school education for 125 girls in Vietnam.

PRISCILLA AND KEITH GEESLIN*

Priscilla is a vice chair of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees and chairs the Development Committee. She serves on the boards of SF General Hospital Foundation, the SF Symphony, Grace Cathedral, and NARAL Pro-Choice America. A principal of Francisco Partners, Keith is the president of San Francisco Opera's board of trustees.

JAMES C. HORMEL AND MICHAEL P. NGUYEN-HORMEL*

James, the first openly gay US ambassador, founded the James C. Hormel Gay & Lesbian Center at the San Francisco Public Library (SFPL). Michael works alongside James on their charitable giving foundation, and has served on the SFPL Commission for two terms. A trustee of A.C.T., Michael is profoundly passionate about the arts and humanities.

FRED M. LEVIN AND NANCY LIVINGSTON*

Nancy is the chair emeritus of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees. She serves on the boards at the College of Fine Arts at Boston University and the National Council for the American Theatre. Fred serves on the boards of the SF Symphony, the Asian Art Museum, and the SF Film Society.

TONI REMBE AND ARTHUR ROCK*

Past chair of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees, Toni is a retired partner at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman. Arthur was one of America's first venture capitalists. Along with other community endeavors, they are cofounders of the Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock Center for Corporate Governance at Stanford Law School.

ROBINA RICCITIELLO*

Robina is communications director for the Million Person Project, a company that helps people identify their core values to tell their personal story. She is involved with the UCLA Depression Grand Challenge, an effort to cure depression by the end of this century, and with NARAL Pro-Choice America.

JEFF AND LAURIE UBBEN

Jeff is a founder of ValueAct Capital and a director of 21st Century Fox Inc. and Willis Towers Watson PLC. He serves on the boards of Duke University, Northwestern University, and the E. O. Wilson Biodiversity Foundation. Laurie founded San Francisco's Bird School of Music.

KAY YUN AND ANDRE NEUMANN-LORECK*

President of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees, Kay is a partner at private equity fund Health Evolution Partners. She is a trustee of Parnassus Funds and a board member of San Francisco University High School. Andre, the founder of On Tap Consulting, has held executive roles in startups and Fortune 500 companies.

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Artistic Director Emerita

Carey Perloff

Producing Director Emerita

James Haire

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Janet Foster, *Director of Casting and Artistic Associate*

Joy Meads, *Director of Dramaturgy and New Works*

Allie Moss, *Literary Manager and Artistic Associate*

Ken Savage, *Associate Producer*

Ariana Johnson, Kayla Minton Kaufman, *Artistic Fellows*

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Christine Adaire, Lisa Anne Porter, *Voice and Text*
Dave Maier, Danielle O'Dea, Jonathan Rider, *Fights*
Daniel Feyer, *Music*

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Executive Director

The Strand:

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Accreditation

A.C.T. is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education.

A.C.T. PROFILES



PAM MACKINNON (Artistic Director)

is celebrating her inaugural season as A.C.T.'s fourth artistic director. She is a Tony, Drama Desk, and Obie Award-winning director, having directed upwards of 70 productions around the country, off-Broadway, and on Broadway. Her Broadway credits include Beau Willimon's

The Parisian Woman (with Uma Thurman), *Amelie: A New Musical*, David Mamet's *China Doll* (with Al Pacino), Wendy Wasserstein's *The Heidi Chronicles* (with Elisabeth Moss), Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance* (with Glenn Close and John Lithgow), Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (Tony Award, Drama Desk Award, and Outer Critics Circle nomination),

and Bruce Norris's *Clybourne Park* (Obie Award for Excellence in Direction, Tony and Lucille Lortel nominations). After five years as board chair of Clubbed Thumb, a downtown New York theater company dedicated to new American plays, she sits on its advisory board. She is an artistic associate of the Roundabout Theatre Company, a Usual Suspect of New York Theatre Workshop, and an alumna of the Drama League, Women's Project, and Lincoln Center Theater's Directors' Labs. She is also the executive board president of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). She grew up in Toronto, Canada, and Buffalo, New York, acted through her teens, but majored in economics and political science at the University of Toronto and briefly pursued a PhD in political science at UC San Diego, before returning to her true passion: theater.



JENNIFER BIELSTEIN (Executive Director) joins A.C.T. with more than 25 years of theater management experience. She is currently president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT)—an organization that represents 74 theaters nationwide—having previously served as LORT's vice president; chair of its

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee; secretary; and on multiple union negotiating teams. Before relocating to the Bay Area, Bielstein was the managing director of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, managing director of Actors Theatre of Louisville, and executive director of Writers Theatre in Chicago. She has also worked for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, About Face Theatre, Northlight Theatre, and the

Lincoln Park Zoo, as well as serving on the boards of the League of Chicago Theatres, Theatre Forward, the Arts and Cultural Attractions Council, and other civic boards. She has received the Center for Nonprofit Excellence's Pyramid Award of Excellence in Leadership, and has been recognized as one of Louisville's *Business First's* 40 Under 40. In 2017, Bielstein was named by *Twin Cities Business* as a Person to Know, and, in 2018, *Minnesota Business* magazine named her as a Real Power 50 member. Bielstein is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, attended Stanford's Graduate School of Business Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders in the Arts, and earned an MBA from Bellarmine University, where she received the MBA Faculty Merit Award and was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma, the honor society for business programs.



MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director, Head of Acting) has served as Conservatory director and head of acting in the Master of Fine Arts Program at A.C.T. since 1995. During that time, she has overseen the expansion of the M.F.A. Program from a two- to a three-year course of study and the further

integration of the M.F.A. Program faculty and student body with A.C.T.'s artistic wing, while also teaching and directing in the M.F.A. Program, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. She also successfully launched the San Francisco Semester, a semester-long intensive that deepens students' acting, broadens knowledge of dramatic literature, and sharpens technical skills, while immersing actors in the cultural

landscape of the Bay Area. Prior to assuming leadership of the Conservatory, Smith was the director of the Program in Theater and Dance at Princeton University. She has taught acting classes to students of all ages in various colleges, high schools, and studios around the continental United States, at the Mid-Pacific Institute in Hawaii, New York University's La Pietra campus in Florence, and the Teatro di Pisa in San Miniato, Italy. She is featured in *Acting Teachers of America: A Vital Tradition*. Also a professional actor, she has performed regionally at the Hangar Theatre, A.C.T., the California Shakespeare Festival, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre; in New York at Primary Stages and Soho Rep.; and in England at the Barbican Centre in London and Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Smith holds a BA from Yale College and an MFA in acting from Yale School of Drama.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the web: act-sf.org.

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

A.C.T. BOX OFFICE

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square; or at 1127 Market Street at 7th Street, across from the UN Plaza. Walk-up hours are Tuesday-Sunday (noon-curtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (noon-6 p.m.) and Saturday-Sunday (noon-4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. (For Strand Box Office walk-up hours, please visit act-sf.org.) Phone hours are Tuesday-Sunday (10 a.m.-curtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (10 a.m.-6 p.m.) and Saturday-Sunday (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Call 415.749.2228 and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard; or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours a day on our website at act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current ticket subscribers and those who purchase ticket insurance enjoy ticket exchange privileges. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION DISCOUNTS

Full-time students, educators, and administrators save up to 50% off season subscriptions with valid ID. Visit act-sf.org/educate for details. Seniors (65+) save \$40 on 8 plays, \$35 on 7 plays, \$30 on 6 plays, \$25 on 5 plays, and \$20 on 4 plays.

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Joining our eClub is the best—and sometimes only—way to find out about special ticket offers. Visit act-sf.org/eclub to sign up. Find us on Facebook and Twitter for other great deals. Beginning two hours before curtain, a limited number of discounted tickets are available to seniors (65+), educators, administrators, and full-time students. For matinee performances, all seats are just \$20 for seniors (65+). Valid ID required—limit one ticket per ID. Not valid for Premiere Orchestra seating. All rush tickets are subject to availability.

GROUP DISCOUNTS

Groups of 15 or more save up to 35%! For more information, call Anthony Miller at 415.439.2424.

AT THE THEATER

A.C.T.'s Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The lobby opens one hour before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour before curtain. The theater opens 30 minutes before curtain.

ABOUT OUR PLAYS

Copies of *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.'s in-depth performance guide, are on sale in the main lobby, at the theater bars, at the box office, and online at act-sf.org/wordsonplays.

REFRESHMENTS

Full bar service, sweets, and savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third level. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Bar drinks are now permitted in the theater.

CELL PHONES

If you carry a pager, beeper, cell phone, or watch with an alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. Text messaging during the performance is very disruptive and not allowed.

PERFUMES

The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented aftershave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe physical reactions in some individuals. As a courtesy to fellow patrons, please avoid the use of these products when you attend the theater.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE

Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2317 in an emergency.

LATECOMERS

Performances begin promptly, and late seating is at the house manager's discretion. Latecomers may have to watch the performance on a video monitor in the lobby until intermission. Latecomers and those who leave the theater during the performance may be seated in alternate seats (especially if they were in the first few rows) and can take their assigned seats at intermission.

LISTENING SYSTEMS

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performances. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

RESTROOMS

Gender diversity is welcome at A.C.T. We invite audiences to use the restroom that best fits your gender identity or expression. If preferred, a single-user restroom can be found on the 5th floor.



Wheelchair Seating is located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

A.C.T. is pleased to announce that an **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is now available in the house management closet in the lobby of The Geary.

LOST AND FOUND

If you've misplaced an item while you're still at the theater, please look for it at our merchandise stand in the lobby. Any items found by ushers or other patrons will be taken there. If you've already left the theater, please call 415.439.2471 and we'll be happy to check our lost and found for you. Please be prepared with the date you attended the performance and your seat location.

AFFILIATIONS

A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of Theatre Bay Area, the Union Square Association, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.



A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.



The Director is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



The scenic shop, prop shop, and stage crew are represented by Local 16 of the IATSE.

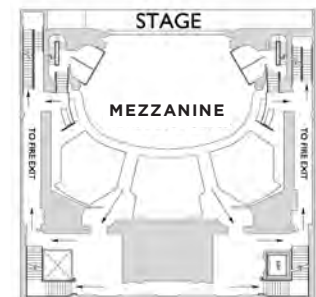
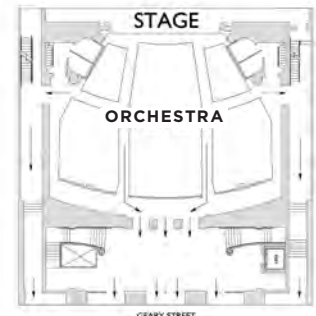


A.C.T. is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from Grants for the Arts.

GEARY THEATER EXITS



"SMART, FUNNY AND UTTERLY ENGROSSING"

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