

50
YEARS

A.C.T.
AMERICAN
CONSERVATORY
THEATER

SAN FRANCISCO'S PREMIER
NONPROFIT THEATER COMPANY



NEEDLES_{AND}OPIUM

encore
arts programs

MAR-APR 2017
SEASON 50, ISSUE 6

LOOKING FOR A UNIQUE SAN FRANCISCO SPACE FOR YOUR UPCOMING EVENT?

HOST YOUR GATHERING AT A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER!

Whether you are planning a board meeting or a social mixer, a wedding or a product launch, we have an event space that is right for you! Centrally located in San Francisco's vibrant Union Square district, A.C.T.'s hundred-year-old Geary Theater is an exciting destination, rich with personality and versatility.

With four venues to choose from—suited for intimate parties, corporate conferences, and everything in between—we're ready to make your upcoming event one to remember.

OUR SPACES INCLUDE:



THE GARRET ROOM

This charming, private space tucked away on the top floor of the theater is ideal for dinner parties, cocktail receptions, and meetings.

Capacity: 110



THE SKY BAR

The Sky Bar features a classy backlit lounge and bar overlooking Geary Street, perfect for receptions at which mingling is key.

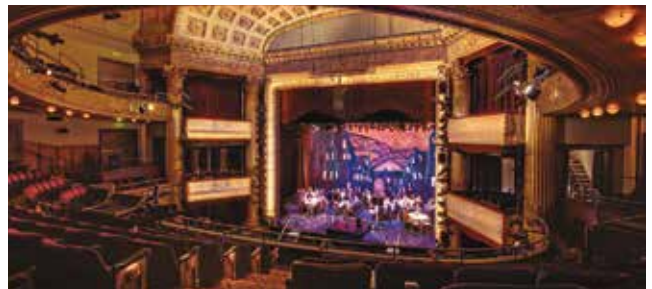
Capacity: 135



FRED'S COLUMBIA ROOM AND NANCY'S BAR

With a full bar, couches, and table seating that can be configured for any occasion, this is a comfortable and elegant option with versatile possibilities.

Capacity: 228



THE MAIN THEATER

With three levels of seating, a large proscenium stage, and state-of-the-art lighting and sound capabilities, the main theater has been impressing audiences for a hundred years.

Capacity: 1,015

Fully stocked bars, A/V equipment and production staff, onsite convection ovens, and ticketing services are just a few enhancements we can add to your event.

For more information about any of our spaces or to schedule a tour, please contact A.C.T. Associate General Manager Amy Hand at ahand@act-sf.org.

A.C.T. AMERICAN
CONSERVATORY
THEATER

A.C.T. PRESENTS

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THE BRIGHT LIGHTS OF BROADWAY IN NEW YORK CITY

JULY 11-17



EXPLORE ASHLAND AND THE OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

THE CHARMING OREGON SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

JULY 19-24



RELISH THE LEGACY OF EUROPEAN DRAMA IN DUBLIN

NEW COMBO TOUR THE BEST OF BRITISH AND IRISH THEATER

OCTOBER 3-12



ALL THEATER TOURS ARE LED BY A.C.T. ARTISTIC STAFF AND INCLUDE:

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- Discussions with guest artists led by A.C.T. staff
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- Travel companions who love theater

For more information visit act-sf.org/theatertours or contact Helen Rigby at 415.439.2469 or hrigby@act-sf.org

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Saving the places that make the East Bay special



jmlt.org

San Francisco Opera Orchestra musicians Janet Popesco Archibald, Emil Miland and pianist Margaret Fondbertasse are generously donating proceeds from the sale of their new CD to John Muir Land Trust. Now available at jmlt.org.

March 2017
Volume 15, No. 6

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ACT-SF.ORG

CalPerformances
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

music dance theater

2016/17
SEASON

Tennessee Williams' *A Streetcar Named Desire* Scottish Ballet

Nancy Meckler, *director*
Annabelle Lopez Ochoa, *choreographer*
Peter Salem, *music*

Dance. Desire. Despair.

Scottish Ballet's award-winning take on Tennessee Williams' Southern melodrama draws audiences into the darkly alluring and tragic world of Blanche DuBois, her sister, Stella, and her brutish brother-in-law, Stanley.

★★★★★

"A new ballet of truly tragic proportions."

—*The Daily Telegraph*

★★★★★

—*The Independent*

May 10-12
ZELLERBACH HALL

calperformances.org

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 Carey Perloff and Executive Director Peter Pastreich, we embrace our responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent our rich theatrical traditions and literatures, while exploring new artistic forms and new 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 350 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 Perloff, who took over in 1992 after the retirement of A.C.T.'s second artistic director, gentleman artist Ed Hastings.

Perloff's 24-season tenure has been marked by groundbreaking productions of classical works and new translations creatively colliding with exceptional contemporary theater; cross-disciplinary performances and international collaborations; and theater made by, for, and about the Bay Area. Her fierce commitment to audience engagement ushered in a new era of InterACT events and dramaturgical publications, inviting everyone to explore what goes on behind the scenes.

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 the world-famous Young Conservatory for students ages 8 to 19, led by 28-year veteran Craig Slight; 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 12,000 Bay Area students and educators each year. Central to our ACTsmart education programs, run by Director of Education & Community Programs Elizabeth Brodersen, is the longstanding Student Matinee (SMAT) program, which 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 our increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood marked by the renovation of The Strand Theater and the opening of The Costume Shop Theater, A.C.T. plays a leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco and the nation.

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BATTLEFIELD

Battlefield

Based on *The Mahabharata*
and the play by Jean-Claude Carrière

Adapted and directed by
Peter Brook and **Marie-Hélène Estienne**





“BREATH-taking!
A dazzling piece
of theater”
THE GUARDIAN



“A production of
**STUNNING
BEAUTY**”
LE FIGARO

LEGENDARY DIRECTOR **PETER BROOK** RETURNS TO A.C.T.

In 1985, Peter Brook shook the theater world with his production of *The Mahabharata*—an epic adaptation of a Sanskrit poem first told thousands of years ago. “The play was the event of the New York theater season,” says *New York Times* theater critic Ben Brantley.

Now, more than 30 years later, Brook has returned to this rich material to create *Battlefield*. This magical story of finding tranquility in the midst of conflict and destruction has striking connections to modern times and has inspired some of Brook’s most beautiful images and most transformative theatrical moments.

“At age 92, Peter Brook remains one of the greatest master directors in the world,” says A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff. “His inclusive and imaginative theatrical vision changed the way we’ve all made theater for more than 50 years, so it’s particularly moving to have his stunning work represented as part of A.C.T.’s 50th-anniversary season. *Battlefield*’s poetic, magical form takes us to the essence of theatrical storytelling. All it takes is a good story on a bare stage to captivate an audience and help them imagine a whole world.”

APR 26–MAY 21 | A.C.T.’S GEARY THEATER
415 GEARY STREET

act-sf.org/battlefield | 415.749.2228

A portrait of a middle-aged man with glasses and a dark sweater, smiling slightly. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

My wealth. My priorities. My partner.

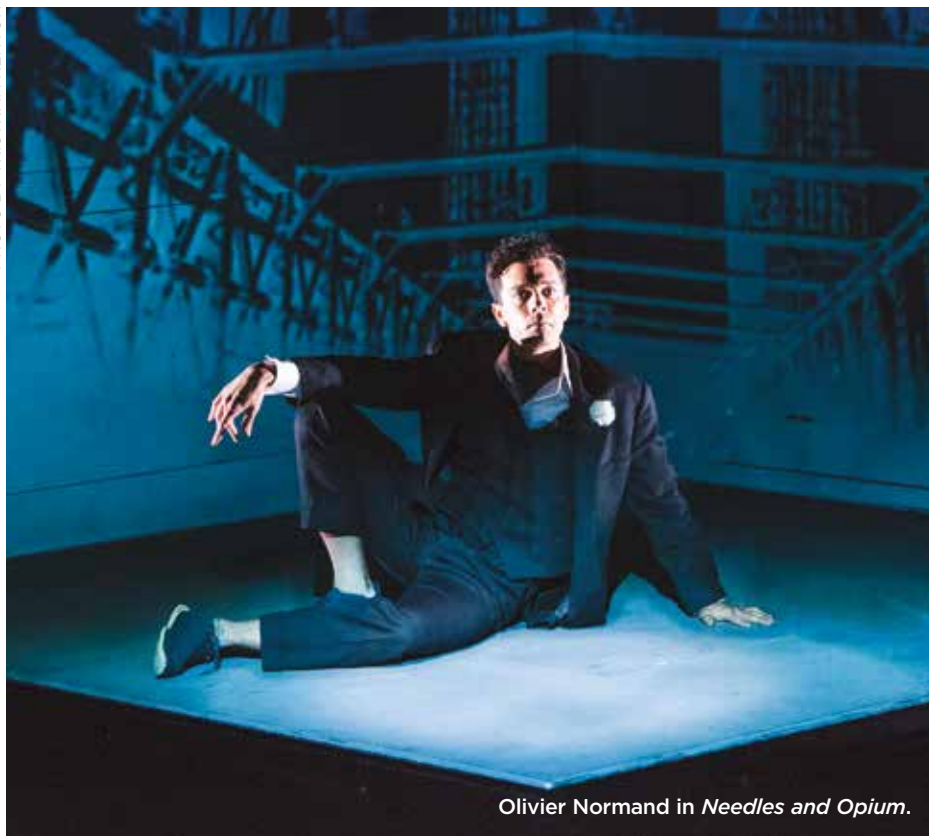
You've spent your life accumulating wealth. And, no doubt, that wealth now takes many forms, sits in many places, and is managed by many advisors. Unfortunately, that kind of fragmentation creates gaps that can hold your wealth back from its full potential. The Private Bank can help.

The Private Bank uses a proprietary approach called the LIFE Wealth CycleSM to find those gaps—and help you achieve what is important to you.

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Olivier Normand in *Needles and Opium*.

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SHANNON STOCKWELL

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ELSPETH SWEATMAN

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 our upcoming production of *Battlefield* and InterACT with us!

BATTLEFIELD

AT THE GEARY THEATER

BIKE TO THE THEATER NIGHT

APR 26, 7 PM

Ride your bike to A.C.T. and take advantage of secure bike parking and low-priced tickets at our preshow mixer, presented in partnership with the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition.

KDFC PROLOGUE

MAY 2, 5:30 PM

Go deeper with a fascinating preshow discussion with a member of the *Battlefield* artistic team.

THEATER ON THE COUCH*

MAY 5, 8 PM

Take part in a lively conversation in our lower-level lounge with Dr. Mason Turner, chief of psychiatry at Kaiser Permanente San Francisco Medical Center.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGE*

MAY 9, 7 PM; MAY 14 & 17, 2 PM

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

OUT WITH A.C.T.*

MAY 10, 8 PM

Mix and mingle at this hosted postshow LGBT party.

WENTE VINEYARDS WINE SERIES

MAY 16, 7 PM

Meet fellow theatergoers at this hosted wine-tasting event.

PLAYTIME

MAY 20, 12:30 PM

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

To learn more and order tickets for InterACT events, visit act-sf.org/interact.

*Events take place immediately following the performance

CONNECT!



VOLUNTEER!

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.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

ACT-SF.ORG/VOLUNTEER

LISTEN!

Check out A.C.T.'s new podcast, *Theaterology*, and listen to InterACT events online!

VISIT:

ACT-SF.ORG/PODCASTS

UP NEXT IN **THE CONSERVATORY**

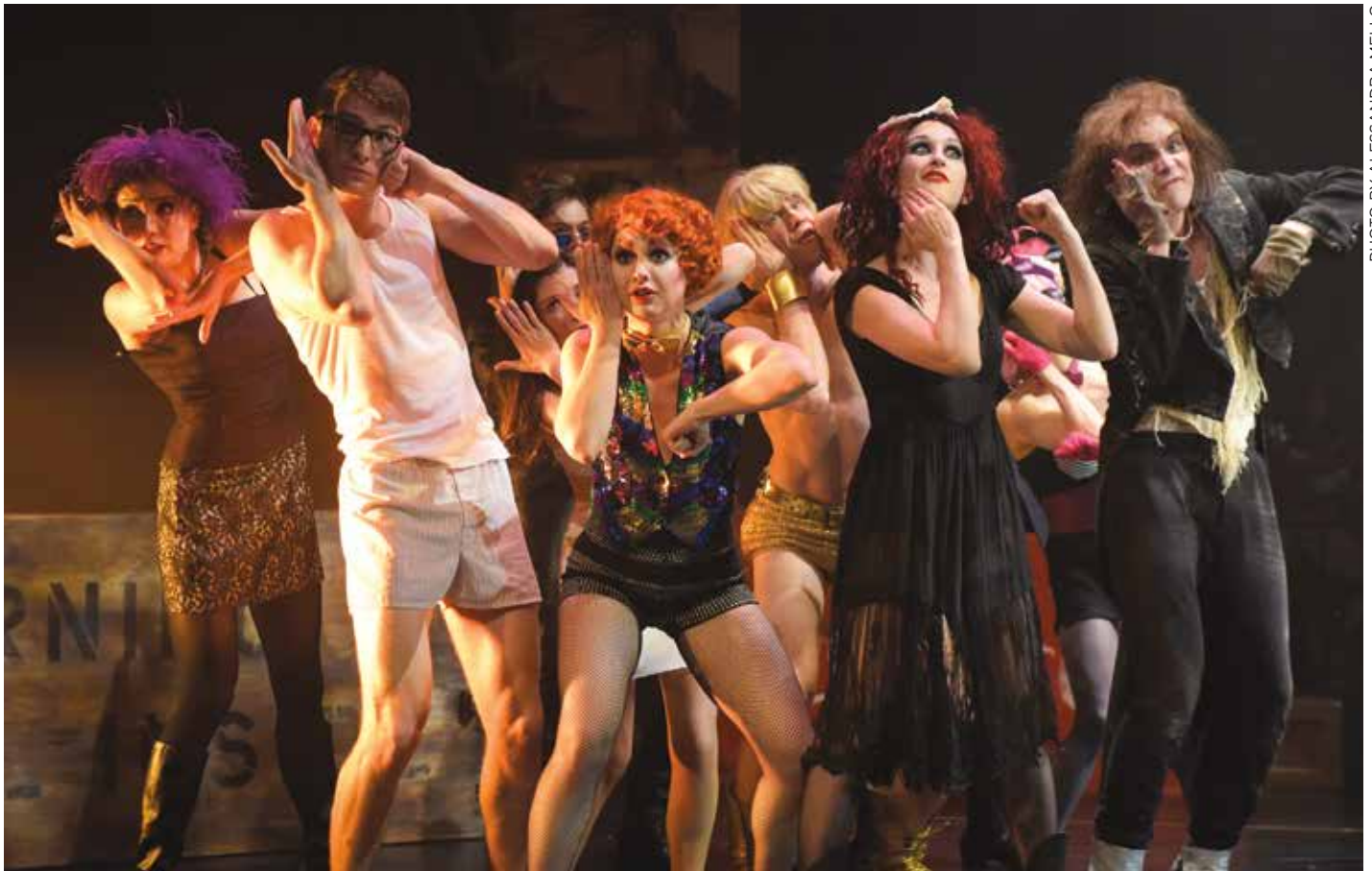


PHOTO BY ALESSANDRA MELLO

A.C.T.'S MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS

promiscuous/cities

By **Lachlan Philpott**
Directed by **Becca Wolff**

MAY 10-13
THE COSTUME SHOP

A smart, darkly comic reflection on contemporary San Francisco, created by Australian playwright Lachlan Philpott and developed in collaboration with A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts Program.

THE GOOD WOMAN OF SETZUAN

Written by **Bertolt Brecht**
English Version by **Eric Bentley**
Directed by **Domenique Lozano**

MAY 10-13
**THE RUEFF
A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER**

Kindhearted prostitute Shen Te opens a store but runs into trouble when her neighbors take advantage of her. Brecht's morality play pits cold-bloodedness against kindness, examining the struggle to earn money versus living a virtuous life.

LAS MENINAS

By **Lynn Nottage**
Directed by **Nicole Watson**

MAY 10-14
**THE RUEFF
A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER**

In the gilded French palace of Louis XIV, spoiled queen Marie-Thérèse begins a hesitant friendship with Nabo, a tiny African from Dahomey. A powerful drama from Pulitzer Prize winner Lynn Nottage about race and tolerance, loneliness and power.

PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE



A.C.T.'S YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS

TOMORROW

Two One-Act Plays

By **Horton Foote**

Directed by **Craig Slight**

APRIL 18-22

THE RUEFF

A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER

The A.C.T. Young Conservatory collaborates with the Master of Fine Arts Program to bring us two short plays by Academy Award-winning writer Horton Foote.

COMEDY TONIGHT

MAY 12-15

THE GARRET

A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER

A highlight each year for both performers and audiences, *Comedy Tonight* features an array of hilarious songs in a number of styles from throughout the years.

OPPOSITE

The cast of *The Rocky Horror Show*.

ABOVE

Sierra Stephens and Nathan Correll in *Punk Rock*.

BUY TICKETS

FOR MFA SHOWS, VISIT
act-sf.org/mfashows

FOR YC SHOWS, VISIT
act-sf.org/ycshows

A SNEAK PEEK

AT THE 2017–18 SEASON

VITAL, BRAVE, AND IMAGINATIVE STORYTELLING

FATHER COMES HOME FROM THE WARS PARTS 1, 2 & 3

by Suzan-Lori Parks
Directed by Liz Diamond
A.C.T.'s Geary Theater

"Thrilling . . . a masterpiece"
NEW YORK MAGAZINE

From Pulitzer Prize winner Suzan-Lori Parks (*Topdog/Underdog*) comes an explosively powerful and lyrical new play set against the backdrop of the Civil War. In this epic American take on the *Odyssey*, Southern slave Hero faces a terrible choice: to seek his freedom by fighting for the Confederacy alongside his master or to stay home with the woman and people he loves. A poignant and compelling journey in three succinct acts, Parks mixes contemporary wit, folk ballads, and classical traditions to tell a timeless story of freedom, heroism, and belonging. By turns comic and heartbreaking, *Father Comes Home from the Wars* is a mythic journey through the American soul from one of our most accomplished modern playwrights.

VIETGONE

by Qui Nguyen
Directed by Jaime Castañeda
A.C.T.'s Strand Theater

"Hip, high-wire theatricality . . . sultry sexiness . . . quirky playfulness"
THE SEATTLE TIMES

A hit off Broadway and at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, *Vietgone* is a contemporary twist on the classic story of boy meets girl. In this irreverent new comedy, three young Vietnamese immigrants leave a war-torn country for an eye-opening journey across the bewildering and foreign landscape that is 1970s America. A vibrant mash-up of pop-culture references and audacious dialogue, this action-packed road trip that instantaneously moves from hilarity to heart-wrenching drama played to sold-out houses at OSF in 2016 and New York's Manhattan Theatre Club. This sexy, sassy, freewheeling ride, backed by its hip-hop and Motown rhythms, will roll into The Strand this spring in an all-new production.

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

by Harold Pinter
Directed by Carey Perloff
Featuring Marco Barricelli, Judith Ivey, and Scott Wentworth
A.C.T.'s Geary Theater

"Delicious, impalpable and hair-raising"
THE SUNDAY TIMES

A.C.T. returns to the world of Harold Pinter for our first staging of his classic comedy *The Birthday Party*. In an undisturbed English seaside town, the inhabitants of a ramshackle boarding house react to the arrival of two unsettling strangers. Where do Goldberg and McCann come from? Who sent them? And why do they keep asking about the sole boarder, piano player Stanley? As the party guests, including flighty Lula and flirty landlady Meg, gather for Stanley's birthday, the desperate pianist is forced to confront a surreal interrogation. Seething with mystery, danger, and sudden humor, this is signature Pinter, a play of "tantalizing theatricality" (*The New York Times*).

PLUS FOUR MORE SHOWS TO BE ANNOUNCED!

LEARN MORE AT ACT-SF.ORG/JOIN

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the visionary world of Robert Lepage. When we chose *Needles and Opium* for the 2016-17 season more than a year ago, we had no idea how crucial global exchange was going to be at this point in American history. As we enter a moment of rabid isolationism, I am reminded of what I learned at my first job in the theater, when I was a secretary at the International Theater Institute in New York. The ITI's far-sighted leader, Martha Coigney, insisted that theater transcend international divisions and that artists build bridges across cultures, particularly in times of jingoism and misunderstanding. Her words come back to me now with particular urgency.

The next two offerings at A.C.T., Robert Lepage's *Needles and Opium* and Peter Brook's *Battlefield*, represent powerful opportunities to connect to the world around us in beautiful and imaginative ways. Lepage, who hails from Quebec, is the latest illustration of A.C.T.'s longstanding commitment to thrilling Canadian collaborations, from Morris Panych's *The Overcoat* to Kim Collier's *No Exit* to coproductions with the Stratford Shakespeare Festival and Theater Calgary (where our production of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* just played to great acclaim). It is my profound hope that these cross-border projects will flourish in spite of current attempts to shutter our borders to immigration and exchange.

Lepage is a magical artist whose astonishing visual imagination upended world theater, from his mesmerizing *Seven Streams of the River Ota* to his intensely personal solo work. His *Needles and Opium* has long been a favorite production of mine, in part because it deals with Miles Davis, an artist close to the heart of this jazz-loving city, and in part because it deals with Davis's relationship to Jean Cocteau, whose work is known and loved by the large francophone audience in the Bay Area. But mostly I love the piece because Lepage uses the basic tools of theater in such breathtaking new ways. In bringing Lepage back to the Bay Area, we extend gratitude to our colleagues at Cal Performances, who have long championed the imagination of this seminal international artist.

Meanwhile we are hard at work creating our 2017-18 season. Needless to say, current political events have made the decision-making extremely difficult, as the theater community clearly feels the imperative to produce work that truly

matters. For each theater and each artist, that mandate will mean something different. For me, it has led me to the great playwrights across the classical and contemporary canon who look for the deepest and most nuanced explorations of justice, terror, pluralism, and democracy.

For the first time next season, A.C.T. will be coproducing with Yale Repertory Theater, when we join forces on Suzan-Lori Parks's magnificent new *Father Comes Home from the Wars Parts 1, 2 & 3*. One of the great linguistic geniuses of American theater, Parks has crafted a play of enormous moral complexity in which an enslaved man named Hero is offered a shot at freedom if he fights on the Confederate side with his master. Loosely based on the *Odyssey* and featuring a hilariously prescient talking dog (to be played by Gregory Wallace), *Father Comes Home* displays Parks's singular and audacious imagination in a truly epic way.

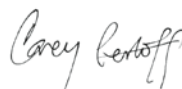
Also included in next season will be my favorite play by another audacious playwright, Harold Pinter. *The Birthday Party* is a vivid comedy and a chilling cautionary tale about what happens when we confront terror head-on. In a run-down bedsit by the seaside in England, two men turn up looking for a room. But what they're really interested in is interrogating the sole border, a mysterious man named Stanley. Using laser precision and lacerating wit, Pinter anatomizes the use of language to coopt and coerce, and the power of love, even at its most bizarre, to deflect danger. This production will star A.C.T. favorite Marco Barricelli in a welcome return to The Geary, alongside the great comedienne Judith Ivey and Stratford Festival star Scott Wentworth.

Over at The Strand, we are delighted to introduce the delicious comedic world of Qui Nguyen's *Vietgone*, a play that explores the immigration story of Nyugyen's parents to America after the Vietnam War. Many of you were introduced to this moving and hilarious piece of writing at Oregon Shakespeare Festival last season, and we are particularly delighted to be producing it near San Francisco's vibrant Vietnamese community in an all-new production at The Strand, directed by Jaime Castañeda.

And these are only the beginning. We are exploring a wide range of work that we hope will truly resonate with these chaotic times, both plays that challenge our thinking and plays that soothe our souls, plays from the American psyche and plays from around the world. Stay tuned for more!

Meanwhile, thank you for coming to *Needles and Opium*—enjoy!

Warmly,



Carey Perloff
Artistic Director





A NIGHT WITH janis joplin

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY RANDY JOHNSON

THE EVENTS THAT MADE THE WOMAN.
THE WOMAN WHO MADE THE MUSIC.
THE MUSIC THAT CHANGED HISTORY.

JUN 7–JUL 2

LIKE A COMET THAT BURNS FAR TOO BRIGHTLY TO LAST, Janis Joplin exploded onto the music scene in 1967 and, almost overnight, became the queen of rock 'n' roll. The unmistakable voice, filled with raw emotion and tinged with Southern Comfort, made her a must-see headliner from Monterey to Woodstock. Now, you're invited to share an evening with the woman and her influences in the new Broadway musical *A Night with Janis Joplin*. Fueled by such unforgettable songs as "Me and Bobby McGee," "Piece of My Heart," "Mercedes Benz," "Cry Baby," and "Summertime," a remarkable cast, and breakout performances, *A Night with Janis Joplin*, written and directed by **Randy Johnson**, is a musical journey celebrating Janis and her biggest musical influences—icons like **Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Odetta, Nina Simone, and Bessie Smith**, who inspired one of rock 'n' roll's greatest legends.

ARTWORK BY ADAM LARSON

A.C.T.

CAREY PERLOFF, *Artistic Director*
PETER PASTREICH, *Executive Director*

PRESENTS

NEEDLES AND OPIUM

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY **ROBERT LEPAGE**

AN EX MACHINA PRODUCTION

CREATIVE TEAM

ENGLISH TRANSLATOR	JENNY MONTGOMERY
SCENIC DESIGNER	CARL FILLION
PROPS DESIGNER	CLAUDIA GENDREAU
MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGNER	JEAN-SÉBASTIEN CÔTÉ
LIGHTING DESIGNER	BRUNO MATTE
COSTUME DESIGNER	FRANÇOIS ST-AUBIN
IMAGES DESIGNER	LIONEL ARNOULD
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	NORMAND BISSONNETTE

CAST

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

OLIVIER NORMAND**
WELLESLEY ROBERTSON III**

THIS PRODUCTION MADE POSSIBLE BY

PRODUCERS
LLOYD AND JANET CLUFF
RODMAN AND ANN MARYMOR
DAVID AND CARLA RIEMER

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS
RICK AND ANNE RILEY
DR. MARTIN AND ELIZABETH TERPLAN
BEVERLY AND LORING WYLLIE

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT BY

CLARKSBURG
WINE COMPANY



Produced by Ex Machina, in coproduction with Théâtre du Trident, Quebec; Canadian Stage, Toronto; Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, Montreal; Adelaide Festival; New Zealand Festival; Le Grand T, théâtre de Loire-Atlantique; Les Quinconces-L'Espal, scène conventionnée, théâtres du Mans; Célestins, Théâtre de Lyon; Le Volcan, Scène nationale du Havre; Festival de Otoño a Primavera, Madrid; ArtsEmerson: The World On Stage, Boston; NAC English Theatre with le Théâtre français du CNA and the Magnetic North Theatre Festival; Setagaya Public Theatre, Tokyo; LG Arts Center, Seoul; the Barbican, London; La Comète, scène nationale de Châlons en Champagne; La Comédie de Clermont-Ferrand scène nationale; Les Salins, scène nationale de Martigues; John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; and A.C.T.

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

**Appearing with the permission of Actors' Equity Association



ACROBATIC MINDS

THE LIFE AND WORK OF ROBERT LEPAGE

BY SHANNON STOCKWELL

Robert Lepage was born in 1957 and grew up in Québec City. He was a small, shy, quiet, even depressed child. His reserved nature was exacerbated by early struggles with his sexuality and a diagnosis of alopecia at age six that caused him to permanently lose all his hair. But when he was in high school, he found solace in theater. He dropped out and enrolled in the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Québec in 1975. He graduated in 1978 and did some of his own work for a while until he was invited to join a new company, Théâtre Repère, in 1982.

All the while, Lepage was teaching himself how to devise theater collaboratively. He was beginning to realize the limitations of text-based theater in a Canadian province where audiences spoke either French or English, but rarely both.

Lepage was one of the few Québécois who was bilingual; he understood the divisions caused by language, and he wanted to create theater that transcended words.

His first big show with Théâtre Repère was *The Dragons' Trilogy* (1985), a six-hour exploration of the experiences of Japanese and Chinese Canadians. The show was in four languages: French, English, Chinese, and Japanese. But because of the arresting stage visuals, audiences weren't deterred by what they didn't understand. The production used projections, an unusual technique in the mid-'80s. Taking up the entire floor of the stage was a large sandbox, representing a parking lot that had been built over a razed Chinatown neighborhood somewhere in Québec.



PHOTO BY CLAUDEL HUOT. COURTESY EX MACHINA.

LEFT
Robert Lepage in the 1991
production of *Needles and Opium*.

With *Ex Machina*, Lepage has devised, directed, and performed in a number of new productions, all of them utilizing technology in innovative and transformative ways. Some critics have claimed that there is not enough intellectual or emotional substance behind the spectacle. But for Lepage, the spectacle is the substance. Form is content and content is form.

In his theater, Lepage is interested in transformation because it harkens back to ancient human rituals, when people would gather around fires, tell each other stories, and watch each other change and be changed. "It's incredible to be able to travel through time and place, to infinity, all on a single stage," he says. "It's the metamorphosis brought about onstage that makes this kind of travel possible. . . . I think that if I remain fully aware of the stage as a place of physical transformation, I make it possible or can try to make it possible for the audience to really feel the direction in which the action and the characters are being hurtled."

Lepage's creative imagination and versatility have made him a sought-after director beyond *Ex Machina*. He directed two shows for Cirque du Soleil in 2004 and 2010. He also staged Wagner's *Ring Cycle* at the Metropolitan Opera in 2012.

Lepage has also worked in cinema, directing six films over the course of his career. He embraces the interplay between theater and film, understanding that film and other modern media have changed the way people view theater. "If I play in front of an audience in a traditional theatre, the people who are in the room have seen a lot of films, they've seen a lot of television, they've seen rock videos, and they are on the [Internet]," he says. "They are used to having people telling stories to them in all sorts of ways. . . . People have extraordinary, acrobatic minds."

Lepage also made creative use of props. A sheet of white fabric became laundry, a screen for the projections, sails on a ship, and, when bloodied, the symbol of a character's death. Over the years, these transformative props turned into the extravagant kinetic contraptions for which Lepage is now famous, such as the large rotating cube in *Needles and Opium*.

When Lepage left Théâtre Repère in 1989, he was an in-demand freelance director and staged several shows internationally, mostly Shakespeare. But he always returned to devising his own work. In 1994, he founded *Ex Machina*, the multidisciplinary production company behind this production of *Needles and Opium*.

WORDS ON PLAYS

Want to know more about *Needles and Opium*? *Words on Plays* is full of original essays and interviews that give you a behind-the-scenes look at *Needles and Opium*—perfect for reading before the play, during intermission, or when you get home! Proceeds from sales of *Words on Plays* benefit A.C.T.'s education programs.

AVAILABLE IN THE BOX OFFICE AND LOBBY, AT THE BARS, AND ONLINE AT ACT-SF.ORG/WORDSONPLAYS.

FLYING HIGH

INSIDE THE WORLD OF *NEEDLES AND OPIUM*

BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

South of the Seine River, nestled between the Sorbonne and the bohemian Montparnasse district, is the Parisian neighborhood of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. During the summer of 1949—when jazz trumpeter Miles Davis first came to the city with the Tadd Dameron Quintet—these streets were the domain of singer Juliette Gréco, musician and writer Boris Vian, philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, and author Simone de Beauvoir. These great thinkers and artists gathered at Café de Flore and in the cramped, smoke-filled underground nightclub Le Tabou. Over cups of coffee and serenaded by jazz, they shared their ideas for a better, more socially conscious world.

For the 22-year-old Davis, Paris was a revelation. In this city, it wasn't his race that mattered, but his talent. "I had never felt that way in my life," said Davis. "It was the freedom of being in France and being treated like a human being, like someone important." Everywhere he went, he was revered; every journalist wanted to interview him, and everyone wanted to meet him. Here in Paris, he was a superstar.

During a rehearsal, Davis spotted singer Juliette Gréco across the room. The two were smitten. Communicating through gesture, touch, and body language—Davis didn't speak French, and Gréco didn't speak English—they fell deeply in love. "Juliette and I used to walk down by the Seine River together, holding hands and kissing, looking into each other's eyes, and kissing some more, and squeezing each other's hands," said Davis. "It was like magic, almost like I had been hypnotized, was in some kind of trance."

After a whirlwind two weeks in Paris, Davis arrived in the US still heady with love for Gréco. Hoping to get over his loneliness by working, he set about getting a gig in a jazz club or a recording session. But there was no work to be had—at least, not for him. This only added to Davis's despair. In Paris, he had tasted what it was like to be treated as the great artist he knew he was, but in the US he found





PHOTO BY TRISTRAM KENTON

LEFT
Wellesley Robertson III (left) and
Olivier Normand in *Needles and Opium*.

he was still a second-class citizen. Depressed and frustrated, Davis turned to one of the most prevalent drugs in the jazz community at that time—heroin. The drug destroyed his relationships, his health, and his musical creativity. His productivity only returned after he detoxed in 1954.

In Paris was another man struggling with addiction and love: writer, film director, and visual artist Jean Cocteau. In 1919, when he was almost 30 years old, Cocteau fell in love with poet Raymond Radiguet, a prodigy 14 years his junior. He took the boy under his wing, financially supporting him, giving him feedback on his work, and enduring the torments of unrequited love.

When Radiguet suddenly died in 1923, Cocteau was inconsolable. The only balm for his pain was opium. But as the addiction took hold, he became sickly and anxious. Despite entering a clinic to detox in 1928, he continued to take opium periodically for the rest of his life. Unlike Davis—who found that his addiction curtailed his creativity—Cocteau believed that the drug helped him work. “Shall I take opium or not?” he asks in *Opium: The Diary of His Cure*. “I will take it if my work wants me to.” Then, acknowledging the power of the drug: “And if opium wants me to.”

When we meet Cocteau in *Needles and Opium*, he is returning from New York City, where his film *The Eagle with Two Heads* had just premiered to mixed reviews. Although he had met a few celebrities and had been photographed for *Life* magazine, he felt that Americans had not understood his work. In Lepage’s play, as Cocteau’s plane glides through the night, he composes a letter admonishing Americans for their contradictions—for being bold and yet afraid of boldness.

Robert Lepage has been inspired by Cocteau since he was in college. He originally wanted to stage only “Letter to Americans” but then learned of how Davis and Cocteau crossed paths over the Atlantic in 1949. This led to discoveries about other similarities in their lives: addiction, lost love, isolation. Against the backdrop of Cocteau’s words and Davis’s music, Lepage explores the experience of a more personal heartbreak, bringing the stories of two larger-than-life artists to a viscerally human level.

THE COINCIDENCE OF THE HAUNTED ROOM

AN INTERVIEW WITH ROBERT LEPAGE

BY SHANNON STOCKWELL



PHOTO BY TRISTRAM KENTON

Olivier Normand in *Needles and Opium*.

Needles and Opium premiered in 1991 at the Palais Montcalm in Québec City, with Robert Lepage playing all three characters. More than 20 years after the production's premiere, Lepage returned to the material to rework it. As A.C.T. prepared to put this reimagined production on the Geary stage, we spoke with Lepage over the phone about mythology, migration, and haunted hotel rooms.

When devising new work, you often start with a concrete object to inspire you. What was that object for *Needles and Opium*?

There's a picture of Juliette Gréco that she had taken for Miles Davis, with whom she had a love affair in Paris. That picture ended up in a movie by Jean Cocteau—*Orphée* [1949], which starred Gréco. Somebody told me that, supposedly, Cocteau was aware when he shot the film that she had just had this affair with Miles Davis, and she insisted that the picture of her be somewhere on the set. I thought that was so interesting, that the two worlds of Miles Davis and Jean Cocteau coexisted. That photo became a resource, but I didn't know what it meant at that moment. I just felt like it was a rich object. I started to develop from that.

But the main coincidence of all this was the fact that, 40 years later in 1989, I was going through a very painful breakup, and I was in Paris in a small hotel room—room number nine at the Hotel La Louisiane. I was working on a project in the city, and then I would have late nights crying in my room. Later, I discovered that it was that exact room where Davis and Gréco had their love affair. I thought, "I *have* to do something with this." The thing that really triggered the dramaturgical development of the whole story was that incredible coincidence in this haunted room.

In your theater, form and content are one and the same. What are some ways in which that's true in *Needles and Opium*?

In the show, there's a moment where Cocteau explains the euphoria of opium. He does kind of an apology of opium. But at the same time, we start playing around with the rotating cube and we have Davis's experience of heroin (which is a form of opium). The cube rotates, and the form imposes a certain lack of gravity. We depict what happens to the body when it's unconscious, how it rolls and falls from the bed. We put the two side by side—Jean Cocteau's words and the visual of the cube rotating.

We tell one story with words, but the speaking is actually set in an environment where the form contradicts what is being said.

As an artist, you're very interested in mythology. Where does your interest come from?

Mythology always shows up. If you use the mechanisms of mythology in your storytelling, chances are you'll be able to reach a wider audience. The success of many great artists often depends on the universality of their work, and you can only attain universality if you can recognize mythology within a contemporary story.

A lot of your work touches on themes of feeling like an outsider, feelings of belonging, and migration.

Why are you passionate about these concepts?

When you're brought up in Québec, you're isolated. First of all, we're way up north and far from everything. But we're also isolated by our culture. We're French speakers, but the culture isn't similar to France. It's its own thing. I've never felt that I was European *or* American. We're kind of a cross between. When you're Canadian or Québécois, it's very difficult to identify one hundred percent with the American culture or the British culture or the French culture. So we're constantly trying to define our identity. And the only way to understand who you are is to take a little bit of distance. You have to travel. You have to go to New York or Paris or wherever.

That's common in a lot of work from Québec. You'll find many Québécois playwrights that are very much obsessed by that question of, Who are we exactly? It's always a recurring theme, and I don't think it's there by chance. I was raised in that general feeling.

That feeling is very personal to you, but it's got resonance for people all around the world. Why do you think that is?

It's always the Iranian film that wins the Palme d'Or. [*Laughs*] It's always a movie in which we all recognize ourselves, but at the same time, there's nothing that we see on screen that resembles our society. We're radically different. We think differently. We have different values. But at the same time, we all have families. We all fall in love. I hope my work is strange and exotic to people, but at the same time, I hope they recognize themselves.

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WHO'S WHO IN *NEEDLES AND OPIUM*



OLIVIER NORMAND**

(Robert, Jean Cocteau) is a graduate of the Conservatoire d'art dramatique de Québec and has

performed on all of Québec City's stages. Most notably, he has had roles in *Les feluettes* (*Lilies*), by Michel Marc Bouchard; *L'école des femmes* (*The School for Wives*) and *Le misanthrope* (*The Misanthropist*), by Molière; *La nuit des rois* (*Twelfth Night*), by Shakespeare; and *Britannicus*, by Racine. Normand also had a lead role in *Playing Cards: SPADES* by Robert Lepage and Ex Machina, and he reprised the famous role created by Lepage in *Vinci* during a revival in 2015. He cofounded the Théâtre des 4 Coins, a youth theater company. Their first show, *Le fantôme de Canterville*, has been played more than 300 times and won the 2006 Critics' Award. Interested in movement, Normand teaches at L'école de cirque de Québec. As a stage director, Normand created *Insomnia* for the 2013-14 Carrefour international de théâtre de Québec, and designed Flip FabriQue's first show, a circus show that has toured in ten countries. He has staged *Crépuscule*, another circus show seen by more than 110,000 people. A new version of this show was presented in 2016. Next year, he will be directing *Le songe d'une nuit d'été* (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) in coproduction with Théâtre du Trident and Flip FabriQue.



WELLESLEY ROBERTSON III** (Miles Davis)

was first bitten by the performance bug when he was very young. With a background in

gymnastics, breakdance, and acrobatics, he has performed on stages across

North America and the world. He is a member of the Toronto-based performance group Abstract Breaking Systems (ABS Crew), and has toured with such groups as Cirque Sublime on their cross-Canada tour of their show *Adamo* and Circus Orange on their tour to Bahrain. *Needles and Opium* is his third project with Ex Machina. The previous two include *Le rossignol* (Québec City, Amsterdam, and Lyon, 2011-12) and *The Tempest* (Québec City, 2012), both of which were directed by Robert Lepage.

ROBERT LEPAGE (Writer and Director)

is versatile in every form of theater craft and is equally talented as a director, playwright, actor, and film director. His creative and original approach to theater has won him international acclaim and shaken the dogma of classical stage direction to its foundations, especially through his use of new technologies. Among his most noticed work for the stage are *The Dragons' Trilogy* (1985), *Needles and Opium* (1991), *The Far Side of the Moon* (2000), *The Andersen Project* (2005), *Lipsynch* (2007), his solo performance *887* (2015), and his most recent production, *Quills* (2016). His multimedia creations include *The Image Mill* (2008) and *The Library at Night* (2015). At the opera, his work includes *The Damnation of Faust* (1999), *The Nightingale and Other Short Fables* (2009), Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (2010), and *L'amour de loin* (2015).

JENNY MONTGOMERY

(English Translator) is a stage director who focuses on plays that explore transcultural connection. Originally from the United States, she has lived in Québec since 2009 when she moved to Montreal with a Fulbright Grant to create a bilingual play from interviews with immigrants, Quebecois, and people in between cultures. The resulting project, *Déraciné/Uprooted*,

explored cultural belonging, identity, and concepts of "home." These themes continue to inform her work. Before living in Québec, Montgomery spent seven years directing and assistant directing in Chicago. She has also written three plays: *When All Other Lights Go Out*, *Stain*, and *Raining Season*. Her assistant-directing credits include the world premieres of Arthur Miller's *Finishing the Picture*, directed by Robert Falls (Goodman Theatre), and Joanna McClelland Glass's *Trying*, directed by Sandy Shinner (Victory Gardens Theater). Montgomery was the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation Observer for Tina Landau and assistant to Tracy Letts on the world premiere of his *Superior Donuts* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). Her projects in Québec include the English translations of *Needles and Opium* and *The Library at Night*, a virtual-reality experience by Alberto Manguel and

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Robert Lepage. In 2015, she assistant directed Kevin McCoy's *Norge* (Théâtre du Trident). She is currently developing a new dance-based play called *L'envol*. Montgomery is an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and the Dramatists Guild.

EX MACHINA (Producer) is a multidisciplinary company bringing together actors, writers, set designers, technicians, opera singers, puppeteers, graphic designers, video artists, contortionists, and musicians. Ex Machina's creative team believes that the performing arts—dance, opera, music—should be mixed with recorded arts—filmmaking, video art, multimedia; that there must be meetings between scientists and playwrights, between set painters and architects, and between artists from Quebec and the rest of the world. New artistic forms will surely emerge from these gatherings. Ex Machina wants to rise to the challenge and become a laboratory, an incubator for a form of theater that will reach and touch audiences from this new millennium.

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION, founded in 1913, is the US labor union that represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers. Actors' Equity Association seeks to foster the art of live theater as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, working conditions, and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity Association is a member of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations and is affiliated with the International Federation of Actors, an international organization of performing arts unions.

EX MACHINA STAFF

Julie Marie Bourgeois, Production Manager

Michel Gosselin, Pierre Gagné, Technical Directors

Charlotte Ménard, Tour Manager

Adèle Saint-Amand, Stage Manager

Jesse Ash, Sound Manager

Thomas Payette, Video Manager

Jean-François Piché, Lighting Manager

Marilou Nadeau, Costumes and Props Manager

Pierre Gagné, Head Stagehand

Jean-Félix Labrie, Julien Leclerc, Stagehands

Maxime Bouchard, Rigger

Tobie Horswill, Automation Consultant

Catherine Guay, Video Consultant

Jean Bégin, Makeup

Carl Bezanson, Julie Sauriol, Costumes

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Craig L. Pedersen, Trumpeter

Epidemic (Richard Castelli, assisted by Chakra Skiadelli, Florence Berthaud, and Claire Dugot), Associate Production in Europe and Japan

Menno Plukker Theatre Agent (Menno Plukker, assisted by Dominique Sarrazin and Isaïe Richard), Associate Production in the Americas, Asia (except Japan), Australia, and New Zealand

Michel Bernatchez, assisted by Vanessa Landry-Clavierie, Ex Machina Producer

Ex Machina is funded by the Canada Council for the Arts, Québec's Arts and Literature Council, and the city of Québec.

ADDITIONAL TEXT

Needles and Opium contains excerpts from Jean Cocteau's "Letter to Americans" and *Opium: The Diary of His Cure*.

ADDITIONAL MUSIC

"Générique"

By Miles Davis

Album: *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud*
Warner Chappell Music France/Bloc Notes Publishing

Courtesy of Universal Music Canada

"Riff Tide"

Words and music by Coleman Randolph Hawkins

© (ASCAP)

"Tune Up (When Lights Are Low)"

By Miles Davis

Performed by Miles Davis Quintet

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"Je suis comme je suis"

Written by Joseph Kosma and Jacques Prévert

Courtesy of Universal Music Canada

"My Funny Valentine"

Music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart

Performed by Craig Pederson

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"The Way You Look Tonight"

Written by Dorothy Fields and Jerome Kern

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Bernstein o/b/o Aldi Music Company

Interpreted by Marie Gignac

"L'assassinat de Carala"

By Miles Davis

Album: *Ascenseur pour l'échafaud*

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Composed by Georges Auric

Performed by Adriano, Axios Chorus,
Moscow Symphony Orchestra & Sergei Krivobokov

Album: *La belle et la bête*

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Broadway Follies de Ray Davies

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ADDITIONAL IMAGES

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LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

THE SUPPORT OF A.C.T.'S PROSPERO SOCIETY

BY SIMON HODGSON

In 1967, A.C.T. came to San Francisco because the city welcomed it. For the last 50 years, Bay Area audiences have continued to support this theater, and none more lastingly than the members of the Prospero Society. This organization, named after the magician in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, is made up of theater lovers who have included A.C.T. in their estate plans.

Prospero Society members contribute funding that supports A.C.T. in dozens of ways, laying the groundwork for onstage productions and behind-the-scenes operations; for example, Prospero Society member Rosemary Cozzo's recent bequest financed the repaving of the Geary sidewalk last summer. Throughout the year, Prospero Society members are invited to a range of activities: thought-provoking Scripts readings at The Strand, theater festival tours, M.F.A. Program performances, cocktail receptions in Sky Bar, and special events with guest artists, not to mention the annual Prospero Society brunch at The Geary.

Andrea Rouah, who was part of the group that enjoyed a Prospero brunch in The Garret, joined the Society this January. "I joined to show my appreciation and my commitment to the broad spectrum of drama that I've enjoyed here," she says. "A.C.T. is my number-one charity." Rouah, who was director of development for ten years at San Francisco State University, broadened her own education by studying theater there at the graduate level. "I'm a behind-the-scenes person," she says, "a stage manager and a costume designer." She has been coming to A.C.T. since the William Ball era (1967-86), and her favorite shows at A.C.T. include last season's *Satchmo at the Waldorf* and *1776* back in 2013. "The way *1776* was produced was spellbinding," says Rouah. "It was provocative, which is one of the things I like most about A.C.T. Challenging productions add meaning to our lives."

For members like Neil and Elsa Pering, the Prospero Society represents yet another way to make A.C.T. part of their lives. The Perings have been subscribers for 40 years and associate producers for A.C.T. shows including *Old Hats*, *Major Barbara*, and *The Hard Problem*. "Outstanding productions that come to mind are *The Taming of the Shrew*," says Neil. "*Cyrano de Bergerac* with Peter Donat and anything by Tom Stoppard. And *A Thousand Splendid Suns* was wonderful. We always like to see classic plays—Molière, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, George Bernard Shaw—shows that make us laugh." For these theater lovers, A.C.T. is one of several nonprofit organizations that they have chosen to support; others include KDFC, San Francisco Opera, and Lamplighters Music Theatre.



OPPOSITE

Left to right: Robert Beadle, David Anderson, Bill Lowell, Janet Cluff, Richard Davis-Lowell, Judy Anderson, and Lloyd Cluff at the Prospero Society Brunch at The Geary in 2015.

LOWER LEFT

Nelda Kilguss and Jane Taber.

All Prospero Society members share the desire to preserve theater in San Francisco for generations. "I have loved theater my whole life," says Mary Metz. "I joined Prospero ten years ago because I wanted to continue supporting one of the nation's greatest nonprofit theaters." Metz has been at The Geary from the very start. As a young professor, she came out to work at UC Berkeley in 1967 with her husband. When she heard about A.C.T. coming to San Francisco, she called her dad to ask for two season subscriptions as an early birthday present.

Following stints at universities in Louisiana and Maryland, Metz returned to the Bay Area in 1981 as the president of Mills College, reviving her love affair with The Geary. After retiring in 1990, she joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees, bringing the

fundraising expertise she gained at Mills to A.C.T.'s Geary renovation campaign. Today she continues to serve on the Emeritus Advisory Board. Favorite shows? "*The Black Rider*. Many musicals. And many of the original creations, with which we've reached out to different Bay Area communities, such as *Stuck Elevator* and *After the War*."

For more information on membership benefits and how to plan your legacy gift to A.C.T., visit act-sf.org/prospero or contact A.C.T. Director of Legacy Giving Helen Rigby at 415.439.2469 or hrigby@act-sf.org.



PHOTO BY ELAINE MAYES. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

THEN AND NOW

A.C.T. AND THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SUMMER OF LOVE

BY SHANNON STOCKWELL

The Summer of Love was the defining moment of a generation, and its epicenter was right here in San Francisco. Even today, the city still has the reputation of being the land of peace and free love, even though city dwellers know that more computer coders than hippies roam the streets today.

In the early '60s, the Bay Area attracted young freethinkers and outcasts of all kinds. Beatniks flocked to City Lights, Lawrence Ferlinghetti's bookstore in North Beach. Students at San Francisco State University romanticized the lawless Barbary Coast red-light district of the late nineteenth century. And those who found spiritual enlightenment in LSD congregated in Berkeley, where chemists at the university reportedly made

the purest acid. The more young folks that came, the more the culture evolved, and soon the Bay Area was a hotbed of social consciousness, spirituality, and music. They all eventually gravitated toward Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco.

By early 1967, the country felt as though it was in chaos. The Vietnam War was raging and young men were being drafted to fight. Members of the Civil Rights movement were branching off to become the Black Power movement. Second-wave feminism was in full swing. In San Francisco, the cultural revolution in the air was as thick as the fog, and a group of activists held a Human Be-In on January 14, drawing more than 20,000 people to the polo fields in Golden Gate Park to celebrate love and peace. The event garnered much attention from the media, and suddenly the country's eyes were on Haight-Ashbury.

After the success of the Be-In, some Haight-Ashbury community organizers announced the Summer of Love in newspapers they printed and distributed themselves, inviting the youth of the country to celebrate peace, freedom, and togetherness in San Francisco. Come they did, with San Francisco residents inviting the masses of strangers arriving by the busload to stay in their



OPPOSITE

Fantasy Fair, Mill Valley, 1967. Collection of the California Historical Society. To be featured in *On the Road to the Summer of Love*, on view at the California Historical Society beginning May 12, 2017.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

San Francisco Mime Troupe, c. 1966. Collection of the California Historical Society; Barbara Dane, Vietnam Protest, 1964. Both photos to be featured in *On the Road to the Summer of Love*, on view at the California Historical Society beginning May 12, 2017.

apartments. Throughout the summer, art flooded the streets and music filled the air, culminating in the three-day Monterey Pop Festival in June.

Now in 2017, San Francisco is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love with events throughout the year, from concerts to museum exhibitions. Alongside the California Historical Society's photography exhibition featuring the work of '60s snapper Jim Marshall currently running at San Francisco's City Hall, there are hippie bus tours (Magic Bus Tours) running throughout the spring on a specially tricked-out bus and an exhibition called *Hippie Modernism* curated by Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive.

During its own 50th anniversary, A.C.T. is joining in the Summer of Love festivities with *A Night with Janis Joplin*, which celebrates one of the era's most distinctive voices. Joplin had come to San Francisco in 1966 to audition for the band Big Brother and the Holding Company. "Janis was not attractive," said Dave Getz, the band's drummer, "She had bad skin and was wearing funky sandals and cutoffs." But when she opened her mouth, her singing "knocked us out, instantaneously."

Fifty years after her voice wowed the crowds at the Monterey Pop Festival, *A Night with Janis Joplin* brings audiences into the singer's world as she tells us the story of where she came from and where she hoped to go—as well as a few performances of her greatest hits. The night is punctuated with songs by women that inspired Joplin's unique sound—icons like Aretha Franklin, Etta James, Odetta, Nina Simone, and Bessie Smith. Running from June 7 through July 2, *A Night with Janis Joplin* is a show that is sure to keep the summer of 2017 full of music and love.

***A Night with Janis Joplin* runs June 7 to July 2 at The Geary Theater. To buy tickets, visit act-sf.org/janis. For more information about other Summer of Love celebrations, visit summerof.love.**

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James Haire

Producing Director Emeritus

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Janet Foster, *Director of Casting and Artistic Associate*
Allie Moss, *Artistic Administrator*
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Jessica Katz, *Artistic Fellow*

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Annie Baker; Mike Bartlett; Jean-Claude Carrière, Peter Brook, and Marie-Hélène Estienne; Randy Johnson; Robert Lepage; Carey Perloff and Paul Walsh; Ursula Rani Sarma; Tom Stoppard

Directors

Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne; Randy Johnson; David Mused; Carey Perloff; Ken Rus Schmoll

Choreographers

Val Caniparoli

Composers/Orchestrators

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Daniel Feyer

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PETER PASTREICH

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A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director)

is celebrating her 25th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she has overseen a huge growth in the quality and scope of A.C.T.'s work, helped to rebuild the earthquake-damaged Geary Theater and the new Strand Theater in Central Market, and has forged

collaborations between A.C.T. and theaters across the United States and Canada. Known for innovative productions of classics and championing new writing and new forms of theater, Perloff has directed classical plays from around the world, 10 plays by Tom Stoppard (including the American premieres of *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink*, also at Roundabout Theatre Company, and two productions of *Arcadia*), and many productions by favorite contemporary writers such as Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, José Rivera, and Philip Kan Gotanda. Favorite productions include *Hecuba*,

Mary Stuart, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Tosca Café*, *The Voyage Inheritance*, *Scorched*, and *Underneath the Lintel*.

Perloff is also an award-winning playwright. Her recent play *Kinship* premiered at the Théâtre de Paris in 2014; *Higher* won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award; and *Luminescence Dating* premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre. Perloff's book, *Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater* (City Lights Press), was selected as San Francisco Public Library's One City One Book read for 2016.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language*, and many classic works. Named a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government, Perloff received a BA Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford.



PETER PASTREICH (Executive Director)

joins A.C.T. after a 50-year career in arts management. He spent 21 years as executive director of the San Francisco Symphony, a period that included the tenures of music directors Edo De Waart, Herbert Blomstedt, and Michael Tilson Thomas, and during which

the orchestra increased its endowment from \$12 million to \$120 million. Pastreich was the chief administrator responsible for the construction of Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, and for its acoustical renovation.

Before coming to San Francisco, he spent 12 years as executive director of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and

six years as managing director of the Mississippi River Festival. In addition, Pastreich has done management consulting for the Berlin Philharmonic, Southbank Centre in London, Detroit Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia. He has also served as mediator in orchestra and opera union negotiations in Detroit, Louisville, Milwaukee, Phoenix, Sacramento, Seattle, and San Antonio.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1938, Pastreich received a BA in English literature from Yale University in 1959. In 1999, he was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government and was named an honorary member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees by Local 16 of the Stagehands Union.



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 designed to deepen students' well of acting experience, broaden their knowledge of dramatic literature, and sharpen their technical skills—all while immersing them in the multifaceted 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, where she also taught introductory, intermediate, and advanced acting. 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, 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.

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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 for details. 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.

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Groups of 15 or more save up to 35%! For more information visit www.act-sf.org/groups.

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.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDINGS of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

RESTROOMS are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.



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.

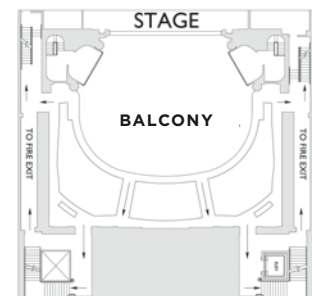
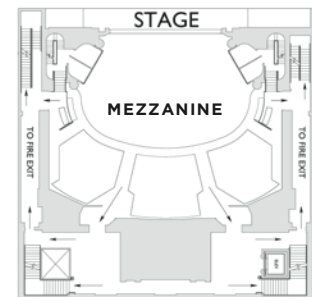
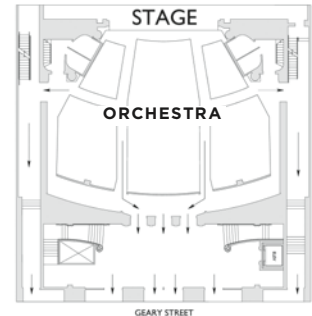


The scenic shop, prop shop, and stage crew are represented by Local 16 of the IATSE.



A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

GEARY THEATER EXITS



LIMITED ENGAGEMENT!

HERSHEY FELDER AS IRVING BERLIN

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in your heart at the same time."**

—SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

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