

MAY 25-JUNE 12, 2016, AT A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER

THE A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM

A.C.T. is renowned for nurturing and producing daring productions of plays like *Chester Bailey*. But that's just the beginning of what A.C.T. does. We're also fiercely committed to providing worldclass actor training, which includes the acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. This intensive three-year course of study provides training for actors who are serious about pursuing professional theater.

The A.C.T. M.F.A. Program has produced many illustrious alumni, including Elizabeth Banks (The Hunger Games), Anika Noni Rose (Dreamgirls, Broadway's Caroline, or Change), and Dan Clegg, who stars in this world premiere of Chester Bailey. "The A.C.T. M.F.A. Program prepares you for a creative life that is totally fulfilling," says Clegg. "Immersing yourself in the study of story and character for three years sets you up not only to have a great career in theater and television and film. but also to have a great career in any creative field."



Marisa Duchowny and Dan Clegg star in A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program production of *Once in a Lifetime* in 2010. Photo by Kevin Berne.

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START THINKING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE. For more information about the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program, visit act-sf.org/mfa.

From the **ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the world premiere of Joseph Dougherty's *Chester Bailey*. This project represents a homecoming of sorts, bringing back to A.C.T. one of our favorite directors, Ron Lagomarsino, along with actors David Strathairn and Dan Clegg. The play is structured like a ghost story, as we endeavor to discover the truth about an injured young man and the doctor charged with caring for him. It was Ron Lagomarsino who first brought *Chester Bailey* to A.C.T., having collaborated with Dougherty numerous times both onstage and in television. We have had the pleasure of developing this fascinating play with the whole creative team over the past two years as part of New Strands, A.C.T.'s new works program. With the opening of The Strand, we finally had the perfect space in which to present it.

Designed by our ace team of Nina Ball, Jessie Amoroso, Robert Hand, and Brendan Aanes, *Chester Bailey* is our first fully produced non-subscription show at The Strand, and as such it represents a wonderful opportunity for A.C.T. to experiment with a new and flexible producing model. With each new production, we learn more about working in this extraordinary venue, and we are so thrilled at the opportunities it gives us to invest in new artists, new forms, and new audiences. I want to particularly thank our brave and intrepid board and donors for helping to bring work like *Chester Bailey* to life.

Welcome and enjoy,

Carey Perloff Artistic Director

2016–17 SEASON

King Charles III by Mike Bartlett Directed by David Muse A coproduction with Seattle Repertory Theatre and Shakespeare Theatre Company Sep 14-Oct 9, 2016, at The Geary

2016 Tony Award nominee for Best Play "#1 Play of the Year!"—*The New York Times*

With its witty echoes of Shakespearean drama, Mike Bartlett's brilliant contemporary work of speculative history blurs the boundaries of truth and tragedy. Queen Elizabeth is dead. Prince Charles ascends to the throne, but what kind of ruler will he make for this onceunited kingdom? Hailed as "fresh, thrilling and fearlessly comic" (*Entertainment Weekly*), this imaginative glimpse of future history is a theatrical event of crowning achievement.

The Hard Problem by Tom Stoppard Directed by Carey Perloff Oct 19-Nov 3, 2016, at The Geary

"Characteristically sleek, humorous, acute and urbane"—*The Guardian*, London

Tom Stoppard returns to A.C.T. with his first new play in nearly a decade, *The Hard Problem*, a provocative drama of sex, science, and supercomputing. Razor-sharp psychology grad Hilary wins a prestigious brain research position that forces her to confront her lover (and math tutor) in a fight to defend the soul, altruism, and even God from modern science. This is a compelling conflict of mind versus matter from one of theater's greatest voices. A Thousand Splendid Suns

Based on the novel by Khaled Hosseini Adapted by Ursula Rani Sarma Original music written and performed by David Coulter Directed by Carey Perloff A coproduction with Theatre Calgary Feb 1–26, 2017, at The Geary

"Brave, honorable, big-hearted . . . powerfully moving!"—*The Washington Post*

In war-torn Kabul, unmarried and pregnant Laila is forced to marry her older neighbor after her family and home are torn apart. She forges an extraordinary friendship with her husband's tfirst wife, and the two women find the hope and strength to raise a new generation. The world-premiere theatrical adaptation of Khaled Hosseini's bestselling novel is a stunning new production featuring live music from renowned composer and saw player David Coulter.

John by Annie Baker Directed by Ken Rus Schmoll Feb 22-Apr 23, 2017, at The Strand

"Revolutionary! A true masterpiece"-Slate

A haunting story that took off-Broadway by storm, *John* is the latest hit from American theater's hottest new voice—2014 Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Baker (*The Flick*). Jenny and Elias show up at an old bedand-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. But in the creaking house they find something unsettling. This is a delicious nerve-jangler with a millennial twist that will haunt the intimate Strand Theater.



A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

Needles and Opium Written and directed by Robert Lepage Mar 30-Apr 23, 2017, at The Geary

"Super-visionary!"—The New York Times

Jazz legend Miles Davis travels to Europe in 1949 to discover the pleasures of Paris, unlock his creativity, and find his heroine in Juliette Gréco. At the same time, French filmmaker Jean Cocteau embarks on his own opium-fueled journey to New York. In this breathtaking dive into art and exile, renowned director Robert Lepage mounts his set around a vast suspended cube to create a spellbinding mix of stagecraft and storytelling.

Battlefield

Based on *The Mahabharata* and the play by Jean-Claude Carrière Adapted and directed by Peter Brook and Marie-Hélène Estienne Apr 26–May 21, 2017, at The Geary

"One of the most influential directors of the last century"—*San Francisco Chronicle*

Following his stunning success with *The Suit*, which played to standing ovations at A.C.T. in 2014, legendary director Peter Brook is back. A newly crowned king surveys a post-war battlefield—his army has won him the crown, but at what price? Written 2,500 years ago, *The Mahabharata*'s magical story of finding tranquillity in the midst of destruction has striking connections to modern times and has inspired some of Brook's most transformative theatrical moments.

Here Lies Love

Concept and lyrics by David Byrne Music by David Byrne and Fatboy Slim Additional music by Tom Gandey and J Pardo Choreographed by Annie-B Parson Directed by Alex Timbers A coproduction with Seattle Repertory Theatre Begins June 2017 at The Geary

"Terrific! It's impossible not to be swept away."—*New York Post*

From a pretty country girl to the consort of a dictator, Imelda Marcos was the star who came with her own soundtrack. *Here Lies Love* is the visionary musical smash about the infamous Filipina leader who married controversy with karaoke. Created by pop icon David Byrne of Talking Heads and award-winning music producer Fatboy Slim, this is a theatrical event that's going to rock the house, transforming The Geary in a musical theater revolution.

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Please note that theaters, artists, and plays are subject to change.

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Carey Perloff, Artistic Director

presents

CHESTER BAILEY

by Joseph Dougherty Directed by Ron Lagomarsino

CAST

CHESTER BAILEY DAN CLEGG* DR. PHILIP COTTON DAVID STRATHAIRN*

STAGE MANAGEMENT

STAGE MANAGER ELISA GUTHERTZ* ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER DEIRDRE ROSE HOLLAND* STAGE MANAGEMENT FELLOW CYNTHIA MOORE

CREATIVE TEAM

SCENIC DESIGN BY	NINA BALL
COSTUME DESIGN BY	JESSIE AMOROSO
LIGHTING DESIGN BY	ROBERT HAND
SOUND DESIGN BY	BRENDAN AANES
CASTING BY	JANET FOSTER, CSA
DRAMATURGY BY	MICHAEL PALLER
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR	ALLIE MOSS

A hospital on Long Island. 1945. *Chester Bailey* will be performed without an intermission.

THIS PRODUCTION MADE POSSIBLE BY

The Priscilla and Keith Geeslin New Strands Fund

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

STORYTELLING CREATURES

An Interview with Playwright Joseph Dougherty BY | CECILIA PADILLA

When asked what he thought his play Chester Bailey was about, playwright Joseph Dougherty responded with a quote from Harold Pinter's Old Times: "There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I recall them so they take place." This is the undercurrent of Chester Bailev's vivid imaginings while recovering from a tragic shipyard accident that has left him blind and without the use of his hands. "But he copes with it through imagination and what he chooses to remember," says Dougherty. "I believe part of what makes us who we are is what we remember."

We had the opportunity to speak with Dougherty about the mysteries of the play, the imagination, and the fine line between memory and reality.

How did you come up with the premise of *Chester Bailey*?

I saw a short article in the newspaper about someone who experienced cataclysmic injuries, including loss of sight. Although doctors confirmed that the person was blind, the patient was in denial about it. I wondered what that would feel like. I began by writing some dialogue in response to that article. What I'm about to say may sound very flaky, but I just waited around for the characters to show up and start talking. Then I wrote down what they said. I think it started with Dr. Cotton telling me about the case.

Imagination plays a big role in *Chester Bailey*. Why is imagination an important theme for you?

There's a hunger for narrative in every human being. We're storytelling creatures. It's the only thing we have over any other animal on the face of the planet. We use narrative to understand ourselves and what we experience. And sometimes we base our narratives on fiction without realizing it.

Do you think that Chester's imagination is a positive or negative force?

In Chester's situation, his imagination is a matter of life and death, much more so than it is for most people. It's the thing that is sustaining him. Chester takes his own version of the story and builds a private reality. That's why Chester carefully repeats the same details of the accident. His story may not be entirely true, but it's exactly what he needs to hear in the moment. And he knows he has to hang on to it.

Why did you choose to set the play in 1945?

There's an assumption that World War II united the country under one national identity. But while it affected every American, each person experienced the war in their own way. I wanted to set the play at a time when there was more assumed clarity about who we were as a people and as individuals. Back then, there was less ambiguity in how a person was supposed to feel about themselves and their surroundings. It was not necessarily a simpler time, but the means of communication were more direct, more deliberate. We looked each other in the eve. and if you wanted to talk to me, you had to find me. If someone saw you in a bar, they had to reach out to you; they couldn't text you or swipe right.

I wanted to take away this cocoon of communication that we have right now—cell phones, wireless contact. So much of the play is about face-to-face communication. I wanted audiences to be able to concentrate on a language they might not hear on the street or read online.

Setting *Chester Bailey* in 1945 turns down the noise and allows the audience to sit and have an intimate experience with two characters, to lean in and hear their stories. We're all creatures telling stories by the fire. Maybe I'll understand what you're telling me now, or maybe I'll remember it later and it will be of value to me long after we've parted.

AN EXERCISE IN IMAGINATION

An Interview with Actor David Strathairn BY | SIMON HODGSON



David Strathairn has been a firm favorite of A.C.T. audiences right from his first appearance at the newly renovated Geary Theater in The Tempest. Since that 1996 production, he has starred in A.C.T.'s productions of Scorched in 2012 and Underneath the Lintel in 2013. Challenging plays seem to bring out the best in this Bay Areabased performer, which is partly why he was drawn to Chester Bailey. "This is one of the most moving and exacting plays I've read," says Strathairn. We caught up with the Academy Awardnominated actor to talk about his preparation for Chester Bailey.

What was it about *Chester Bailey* that interested you?

It offers some truly exciting challenges for all concerned. The first is how to weave together the strands of its nonlinear narrative structure-direct address of recollected moments versus direct engagement in present timeso that the audience won't feel as if they've lost any pertinent information and will be able to fully experience the emotional impact of the play. The second and more daunting challenge is how to create the best environment within which to answer the question playwright Joseph Dougherty so boldly asks: What is the purpose of the imagination?

How do you go about building a character?

You always have to start with what the author has written, so I try to hold fast to my initial thoughts and feelings I had when I first read the play. There is often something pure and untainted there. And when the scaffolding of a character is as sturdy and as evocative as Dougherty's Dr. Cotton, much of the work is already done.

THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST MOVING AND EXACTING PLAYS I'VE READ.

Based on those givens, building a character is a hodgepodge collection of what many actors call the "Outside-In/Inside-Out." The Outside is all the things that make up the physical presence of the character-how he moves, how he sounds, what he wears, and how he relates to the physical elements in the world of the play. It's important to note that these characteristics will be the audience's first indication of who this person is. Then, as the play progresses, the Inside is revealed—everything that contributes to the emotional and psychological life of the character. It is a process of discovery as infinite in scope as there are people in this world, and yet as finite as one's own story, and, in the end, it is almost entirely dependent on the relationships with the other characters in the play.

ARTIST BIOS



DAN CLEGG* (Chester Bailey) was last seen at A.C.T. as Snobby Price in Major Barbara and Young Scrooge in A Christmas Carol (2010). Other Bay Area credits include Tribes at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; King Lear, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, Lady Windermere's Fan, The Taming of the Shrew, and The Verona Project at California Shakespeare Theater: Blue/Orange at Lorraine Hansberry Theatre; and a number of productions with the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, from which he graduated in 2011. Before moving to San Francisco, Clegg lived in Montreal where he performed at Théâtre Olympia (The Rocky Horror Show) and McGill University's Players' Theatre (Equus, The Merchant of Venice, The Woman in Black). He is also a writer and voice actor for PullString, an entertainment company based in San Francisco.



DAVID STRATHAIRN* (Dr. Philip Cotton) returns to A.C.T. for the third time since playing Prospero in the production of The Tempest, which celebrated the reopening of The Geary Theater in 1996, followed by Wajdi Mouawad's Scorched and Glen Berger's Underneath the Lintel. All three productions were directed by Carey Perloff, who also directed him in Harold Pinter's The Birthday Party when she was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, which, coincidentally, was the first play Strathairn performed in in San Francisco at the Eureka Theatre in 1975. Since then, he has acted in the plays of Henrik Ibsen, Anton Chekhov, Samuel Beckett, August Strindberg, Oscar Wilde, Sam Shepard, Richard Nelson, Tom Stoppard, Russell Davis, David Gow, and now Joseph Dougherty. His work in film includes, among others, the films of John Sayles (City of Hope, Matewan, Eight Men Out), Mike Nichols (Silkwood), John Madden (The Second Best Exotic Marigold Hotel), Philip Kaufman (Hemingway & Gelhorn), Julie Taymor (The Tempest), and George Clooney (Good Night, and Good Luck).

JOSEPH DOUGHERTY (Playwright) received Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle award nominations for his play *Digby*, produced at Manhattan Theatre Club. He wrote the libretto for the Tony Award-winning musical *My Favorite Year* presented at Lincoln Center Theater. An Emmy Award and Humanitas Prize winner for his work on the groundbreaking series *thirtysomething*, he has written several movies for HBO, including the Emmy Award-winning *Cast a Deadly Spell*, with Fred Ward and Julianne Moore, which was nominated for the Ray Bradbury Award by the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, and the remake of *Attack of the 50 Ft. Woman*, starring Daryl Hannah and directed by Christopher Guest. He has contributed as a writer and director to several popular television series, including *Once and Again*; *Judging Amy*; *Saving Grace*, starring Holly Hunter; and the current Freeform hit *Pretty Little Liars*. He is the creator of Handwritten Theatre, a podcast of downloadable drama. His books— *Psychopomp*, *Trunk Piece*, *Comfort and Joi*, and the published edition of the Handwritten Theatre plays—are available on Amazon.

RON LAGOMARSINO (Director) returns to his hometown and to A.C.T., where his previous productions include November, The Imaginary Invalid, and The Gamester. Broadway credits include The Last Night of Ballyhoo (Tony Award for Best Play) and My Favorite Year. Off-Broadway credits include the world premiere of Driving Miss Daisy (winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Outer Critics Circle Award, Drama Desk Award nomination), Joseph Dougherty's Digby (Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle award nominations), Abundance, Laughing Wild, and Women of Manhattan. Recently, he staged Buyer & Cellar at The Old Globe. He has developed many new works at New York Stage and Film, the Sundance Institute Theatre Lab, the Ojai Playwrights Conference, and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference, where his own play, Jerome, was selected as a finalist last year. Television credits include the pilots of Picket Fences (Directors Guild of America Award), Homefront (Emmy Award nomination), and Ravenswood (director/co-executive producer). Movies for television include My Sister's Keeper (Hallmark Hall of Fame, National Alliance for the Mentally III Award) and Running Mates. Episodic TV credits include thirtysomething, My So-Called Life, and Pretty Little Liars. He is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts directing fellowship and a graduate of New York University Tisch School of the Arts.

NINA BALL (Scenic Designer) has designed productions at A.C.T. (*Monstress*, *Underneath the Lintel*), California Shakespeare Theater, Shotgun Players, San Francisco Playhouse, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Santa Cruz Shakespeare, Center REPertory Company, and Z Space, among many others. Recent honors include San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for *My Fair Lady* at San Francisco Playhouse and *Metamorphosis* at Aurora Theatre Company; a BroadwayWorld San Francisco Award for *Care of Trees* at Shotgun Players, and a Shellie Award for her design of *Mirandolina!* at Center REPertory Company. Ball is also a company member of Shotgun Players. In addition to theater, she works as a production designer in film and television. Upcoming projects include *Anne Boleyn* at Marin Theatre Company, *Othello* at California Shakespeare Theater, and Shotgun Player's full season of plays in repertory.

JESSIE AMOROSO (Costume Designer) is in his seventh season at A.C.T. and is currently the costume director for the company. Bay Area theater design and styling credits include work at the California Theatre Center, New Conservatory Theatre Center, the Julia Morgan Theatre, Solano College Theatre, the Berkeley City Club Theater, Marines' Memorial Theatre, the Herbst Theatre, Herbst Pavilion, and the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre. A.C.T. credits are last fall's *Ah, Wildernessl*; *Love and Information; Testament,* with Seana McKenna; and *Underneath the Lintel,* with David Strathairn. Other highlights include designing two world premieres for Brad Erickson at New Conservatory Theatre Center, most recently *American Dream.* At Project Artaud he designed *Caligula,* featuring Nancy Carlin, and at Z Space he designed *A Round-Heeled Woman,* starring Sharon Gless. He is a graduate of California State University, Hayward (now California State University, East Bay).

ROBERT HAND (Lighting Designer) celebrates his third season at A.C.T. as the design associate. Prior to his work at A.C.T., he spent 11 seasons as the lighting director and resident lighting designer for Atlanta Ballet, where he designed more than 25 new works, many of which remain in their permanent repertoire. Other design credits include original lighting designs for Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, English National Ballet, North Carolina Theatre, Milwaukee Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Anchorman 2: The Legend Continues, and Scary Movie 5.

BRENDAN AANES (Sound Designer) has designed sound for a variety of performances. Recent productions include *The Unfortunates* at A.C.T.; *Triangle* (Theatre Bay Area Award for Outstanding Sound Design), *Fire on the Mountain, The Lake Effect,* and *Peter and the Starcatcher* at TheatreWorks; *The Way West* at Marin Theatre Company; *Rapture, Blister, Burn* at Aurora Theatre Company;

The Hundred Flowers Project (Will Glickman Award for best new play) at Crowded Fire Theater; *Mutt* at Impact Theatre; and *Abigail's Party*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, and *The Aliens* at San Francisco Playhouse. He also worked as the associate designer on *Old Hats* at Signature Theatre Company and Kneehigh Theatre's *Tristan & Yseult* (national tour).

MICHAFL PALLER (Dramaturg) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005, and since then he has dramaturged more than 50 productions and workshops. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams's Small Craft Warnings at the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow. Paller is the author of Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth Century Drama (Palgrave Macmillan) and Williams in an Hour (Smith & Kraus). He has also written theater and book reviews for the Washington Post, Village Voice, Newsday, and Mirabella magazine. He recently adapted the text for the San Francisco Symphony's multimedia presentation of *Peer Gynt*. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

JANET FOSTER, CSA (Casting Director) joined A.C.T. as the casting director in 2011. 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 *Lucy, Brundibar, True Love, Endpapers, The Dying Gaul, The Maiden's Prayer, The Trojan Women: A Love Story, Floyd Collins, The Monogamist, A Cheever Evening, Later Life*, and many more at Playwrights Horizons. Regionally, she has cast for Intiman Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Yale Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, The Old Globe, Center Stage in Baltimore, Westport Country Playhouse, and the American Repertory Theater. Her credits across film, television, and radio include *Cosby* (CBS), *Tracey Takes On New York* (HBO), Lewis Black's *The Deal, Advice from a Caterpillar, The Day That Lehman Died* (BBC World Service and Blackhawk Productions; Peabody, SONY, and Wincott awards), and *"T" Is for Tom* (Tom Stoppard radio plays, WNYC and WQXR). **ELISA GUTHERTZ*** (Stage Manager) most recently worked on *The Realistic Joneses, Monstress, Love and Information,* and *Testament* at A.C.T. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include *Major Barbara, Underneath the Lintel, Arcadia, The Normal Heart, The Scottsboro Boys, Endgame* and *Play, Scorched, Clybourne Park, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, November, Boleros for the Disenchanted, 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; Civil Sex; Collected Stories;* and *Cloud Tectonics* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include *The Good Body* at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, *Big Love* at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and *The Vagina Monologues* at the Alcazar Theatre.

DEIRDRE ROSE HOLLAND* (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on many regional theater projects and productions, including the 2016 New Strands Festival, *Ah, Wilderness!*, and *Let There Be Love* at A.C.T.; *The Liar* at Santa Cruz Shakespeare; *Twelfth Night* and *Lady Windermere's Fan* at California Shakespeare Theater; *Cyrano* and *2 Pianos 4 Hands* at TheatreWorks; *The Big Meal, Game On, Next Fall, Next to Normal, A Christmas Carol* (2011 and 2012), and *Spring Awakening* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; *The Laramie Project: 10 Years Later* and the world premiere of *Bonnie & Clyde* at La Jolla Playhouse; and the Shakespeare Festival 2011, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* (2010), and *The Mystery of Irma Vep* at The Old Globe. Holland holds an M.F.A. in stage management from UC San Diego.

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

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