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THE RETROSPECTIVE

MAR 12 – MAY 30, 2016

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

Billy Collins and Aimee Mann

Former U.S. Poet Laureate Billy Collins and Indie rock singer-songwriter Aimee Mann come together for a rare evening of poetry, acoustic music, and conversation about the creative process.

April 24
ZELLERBACH HALL

Edgar Oliver
Helen and Edgar

Celebrated raconteur Edgar Oliver spins the hilarious and heartbreaking tale about his and his sister's strange childhood in Savannah, Georgia.

May 5-8
ZELLERBACH PLAYHOUSE

calperformances.org
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Season Sponsor: **WELLS FARGO**

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 an ongoing engagement with our community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff, we embrace our responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent our relationship to the rich theatrical literature and traditions that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of our creative work. Founded by pioneer of the regional theater movement William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967. Since then, we've performed more than 350 productions to a combined audience of more than seven million people. We reach more than 250,000 people through our productions and programs every year.

Rising from the rubble of the catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906 and immediately hailed as the "perfect playhouse," the beautiful, historic Geary Theater has been our home since the beginning. When the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake ripped a gaping hole in the ceiling, destroying the proscenium arch and dumping tons of debris on the first six rows of orchestra seats, the San Francisco community rallied to raise a record-breaking \$30 million to rebuild it. The theater reopened in 1996 with a production of *The Tempest* directed by Perloff, who took over after A.C.T.'s second artistic director, gentleman artist Ed Hastings, retired in 1992.

Perloff's 23-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 "locavore" theater—theater made by, for, and about the San Francisco 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 46-year-old Conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, is at the center of our work. Our three-year, fully accredited Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, our intensive Summer Training Congress attracts enthusiasts from around the world, and our San Francisco Semester welcomes undergraduate students who want a taste of the grad school experience. Other programs include the world-famous Young Conservatory for students ages 8 to 19, led by 25-year veteran Craig Slight, and Studio A.C.T., our expansive course of study for adults. Our alumni often grace our mainstage and perform around the Bay Area, as well as stages and screens across the country.

A.C.T. also brings the benefits of theater-based arts education to more than 10,000 Bay Area school students 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 in-depth study materials to Bay Area schools and community-based organizations.

With our increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood marked by the opening of The Costume Shop theater, the renovation of The Strand Theater across from UN Plaza, and the launch of our mobile Stage Coach initiative, A.C.T. is poised to continue its leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco and the nation.

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American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1965 by William Ball.
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APR 30 – MAY 08

Onegin

Based on Pushkin's classic novel of unrequited love, Cranko's *Onegin* is both thrillingly theatrical and astonishingly human. Gorgeous choreography and masterful storytelling bring us all the color and drama of Imperial Russia in a story that feels remarkably fresh even today.

"Now that is a ballet."

– *San Francisco Chronicle*



Maria Kochetkova and Vitor Luiz // © Erik Tomasson

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DON'T JUST SIT THERE . . .



At A.C.T.'s free InterACT events, you can mingle with cast members, join interactive workshops with theater artists, and meet fellow theatergoers at hosted celebrations in our lounges. Join us for our upcoming production of *The Last Five Years* and InterACT with us!

The Last Five Years

AT THE GEARY THEATER

BIKE TO THE THEATER NIGHT

May 11, 7 PM

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

PROLOGUE

May 17, 5:30 PM

Go deeper with a fascinating preshow discussion and Q&A with a member of the *Last Five Years* artistic team.

THEATER ON THE COUCH*

May 20, 8 PM

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

AUDIENCE EXCHANGE*

May 24, 8 PM; May 29 & Jun 1, 2 PM

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

OUT WITH A.C.T.*

May 25, 8 PM

Mix and mingle at this hosted postshow LGBT party.

WENTE VINEYARDS WINE SERIES

May 31, 7 PM

Meet fellow theatergoers at this hosted wine-tasting event.

PLAYTIME

Jun 4, 12:45 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.

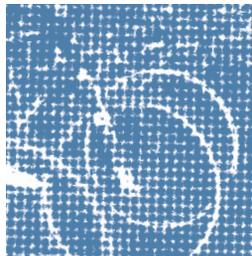
*Events take place immediately following the performance.



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, VISIT: ACT-SF.ORG/VOLUNTEER



EDITOR

Simon Hodgson

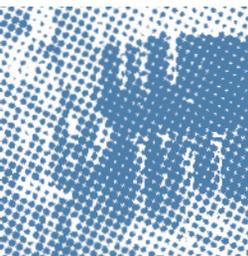
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Carey Perloff



FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Dear Friends,

How do you describe a play about two marriages? It sounds simple. But the harder we try to know the people around us, the more elusive the task becomes. This phenomenon is even more frightening and strange when it's about knowing our own spouses and family members. Is it possible to penetrate the mystery of another person's mind, particularly within the fallible limits of our own language? This question lies at the heart of Will Eno's remarkable theatrical universe. In *The Realistic Joneses*, Eno tells the seemingly ordinary story of two couples living side by side in an American suburb. Both have the last name Jones. Both have husbands who have a neurological issue that affects their speech and their memory, and wives who struggle to cope with their husbands' conditions. Out of these circumstances, Eno creates a story that is both hilarious and incredibly sad, and although the play is absurd in some sense, the behavior of its characters is also completely recognizable and utterly true. It has been said that Eno is the American Beckett, and in terms of his mordant sense of humor and apocalyptic view of the world, that's very true. His vivid language has been startling audiences ever since his famed monologue *Thom Pain (based on nothing)* premiered more than a decade ago, and we are delighted to finally welcome him to A.C.T. in this production directed by our longtime colleague, Magic Theatre Artistic Director Loretta Greco.

The Realistic Joneses features a powerhouse cast, three of whom trained at A.C.T. This is a welcome reminder of the impact of our Master of Fine Arts Program, and a perfect moment to reflect upon 50 years of actor training at A.C.T. It was Bill Ball's founding vision to include training and education at the core of A.C.T.'s theatrical mission, and over those decades, A.C.T. has not only developed major acting talent for the field, it has also nurtured some of the finest leaders in the American theater, including artistic directors and producers such as Ryan Rilette (formerly of Marin Theatre Company and currently at Round House Theatre in Maryland), Lisa Steindler (Z Space), Hal Brooks (The Pearl Theatre Company in New York), and Elizabeth Banks (who, in addition to acting, has become an important film

director and producer), to name a few. As we look toward our 50th-anniversary season next year, we salute the many remarkable students who have come through our programs and have gone on to fertilize the American theater.

While Eno's outrageous comedy is gracing the Geary stage, the heartfelt blues musical *The Unfortunates* is rocking The Strand. It's wonderful to have two such different but complementary pieces playing at A.C.T. at the same time, and there's much more to come later this spring. Right after *The Unfortunates*, we welcome singer-songwriter Benjamin Scheuer to The Strand in his moving, melodious one-man musical *The Lion*. I was lucky enough to see a command performance of this beautiful piece while I was working on my play *Kinship* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival last summer. I was captivated by the story of a young man who is blindsided by illness and by a rancorous relationship with his father but picks his way up from despair through his love for guitars and storytelling. *The Lion* is the kind of intimate yet ambitious work that The Strand was built for.

In a similar vein, we end our spring season with the world premiere of *Chester Bailey*, a new play by Joseph Dougherty about the power of the imagination. Developed through A.C.T.'s New Strands program, *Chester Bailey* tells the complex tale of two men, a doctor and his patient, who are thrown together in the aftermath of an accident in the World War II shipyards and who come to a mysterious understanding that is both shocking and beautiful. Starring A.C.T. alum Dan Clegg and A.C.T. favorite David Strathairn, *Chester Bailey* will be brought to life on the Strand stage by our longtime collaborator Ron Lagomarsino, who hopes to lure audiences right into the heart of this seductive psychological drama. With *Chester Bailey*, we salute New Strands, which just concluded a joyful weeklong investigation of new work on every level of The Strand. From new video to aerial dance to script-in-hand readings to the movement mayhem of dancers and puppeteers, the New Strands Festival was a rollicking free event that brought audiences of all ages together to celebrate the power of the new and the joy of theatrical creation. Many of the pieces performed during New Strands were A.C.T. commissions, some of which you will see fully realized in future seasons. Read more about the festival on page 30 of this program.



This is the time of year when we like to give you a glimpse of what is in store for you in the upcoming season. Imagining next season has been exciting, because it will begin our celebration of A.C.T.'s 50 years in San Francisco, a celebration that will encompass the next two seasons. Bill Ball and his troupe opened their first show at The Geary on January 21, 1967, after being invited to make San Francisco their permanent home by a group of city leaders that included Mortimer Fleishhacker Sr., Cyril Magnin, and Melvin Swig. Fifty years later, we are "renewing our vows," celebrating the iconoclastic spirit that brought A.C.T. to San Francisco. A.C.T. was about reinventing the repertoire, nurturing future artists through rigorous training, and building community through the imagination. It has been so inspiring to read about Ball's early vision for this theater and to realize what a brave idea it was in 1967 to create a permanent theatrical home three thousand miles from New York, a theater built not on celebrity or commercial aspirations but on a long-term love for great stories beautifully told.

In that spirit, we have an extremely ambitious season in store for you, starting with Mike Bartlett's audacious near-Shakespearean drama, *King Charles III*, which we are co-producing with two sister theaters: Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC. *King Charles III* imagines what would happen if Prince Charles actually ascended to the throne and began to exercise his will in a manner to which Parliament is unaccustomed. What would happen, Bartlett speculates, if instead of rubber-stamping the bills brought before him, the new monarch actually had an opinion and exercised it? *King Charles III* reveals the mayhem such behavior would trigger in a brilliant and often hilarious political drama that manages to echo nearly every favorite Shakespeare play while staying utterly true to our current political moment.

Equally ambitious but set in a radically different universe is the A.C.T.-commissioned world-premiere adaptation by Ursula Rani Sarma of Khaled Hosseini's magical novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. This is a thrilling project that we have been nurturing for more than two years, an epic tale of three generations of Afghan women who struggle to love and to survive in a culture torn apart by sectarian violence. Featuring live music by master saw player and

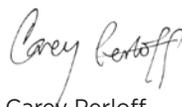
composer David Coulter, *Suns* tells the beautiful story of an unlikely friendship, a hidden love, a secret child, and a violent marriage, set against the backdrop of Afghanistan from 1970 to 2001. It has been a great honor to collaborate with Bay Area novelist Hosseini and London-based Rani Sarma to shape this beloved best seller for the stage.

Continuing the international theme, next season will include the return of the astonishing British director Peter Brook (who enchanted A.C.T. audiences with *The Suit* in 2014) with his acclaimed new piece, *Battlefield*. In this majestic production, the great director returns to *The Mahabharata*, the Indian epic he explored 30 years ago, creating an intimate new staging about love, loss, and the loneliness of power.

Taking stagecraft and adding a little witchcraft is the American playwright Annie Baker, whose hilarious and supernatural *John* will arrive at The Strand next winter. A ghostly tale of paranoia and portents set in a tchotchke-laden bed-and-breakfast near a Civil War battleground, *John* reveals a unique voice in the American theater at the height of her powers.

And that's just the beginning. Throughout the season, you will find pop-up performances by many of your favorite A.C.T. alumni and company members, reunions with beloved artists, and parties for longtime subscribers. There has never been a better time to get involved with A.C.T., and we hope you will come celebrate with us!

Best regards, and enjoy *The Realistic Joneses*!



Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

A SNEAK PEEK AT THE 2016–17

50
YEARS

A.C.T.
AMERICAN
CONSERVATORY
THEATER

KING CHARLES III

by **Mike Bartlett**
Directed by **David Muse**

AT THE GEARY THEATER

**“#1 PLAY OF
THE YEAR!”**

*The New York Times, TIME
Magazine, Entertainment
Weekly, Associated Press*

**“Dazzling!
Flat-out
brilliant”**

The New York Times

WINNER!

*2015 Olivier Award
for Best New Play*

**“Vibrant,
gripping,
and thrilling!”**

Associated Press

With its bold, blank-verse storytelling and 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 once-united kingdom? Flanked by wife Camilla and sons William and Harry, Charles challenges a power-hungry Parliament, but it is his daughter-in-law, ruthless Princess Kate, who shows real ambition for the sceptered isle. Is Charles the man who would be king, or was he born to succeed only in name? Hailed as “fresh, thrilling, and fearlessly comic” (*Entertainment Weekly*), this imaginative glimpse of future history is a theatrical event of crowning achievement.

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**

AT THE GEARY THEATER

**“Inspirational,
outstanding...
a story of hope
and of life”**

The Guardian

**“Brave, honorable,
big-hearted...
powerfully
moving”**

The Washington Post

A.C.T. is thrilled to announce the world-premiere theatrical adaptation of Khaled Hosseini’s best-selling novel *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. The epic story of three generations of Afghan women and their remarkable resilience, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* is set amid the war-torn streets of modern-day Kabul. Beautiful Laila, unmarried and pregnant, is forced to marry her older neighbor when her family and home are torn apart. Forging an extraordinary and unlikely friendship with Mariam, her husband’s first wife, the two women find the hope and strength to raise a new generation. This is a stunning new production featuring live music from renowned composer and saw player David Coulter. “Hosseini’s writing makes our hearts ache, our stomachs clench, and our emotions reel” (*USA Today*).

50th-ANNIVERSARY SEASON

BATTLEFIELD

Based on **The Mahabharata**
and the play by **Jean-Claude Carrière**
Adapted and directed by
Peter Brook and
Marie-Hélène Estienne

AT THE GEARY THEATER

“A production of
stunning beauty”

Le Figaro

“One of the most
influential
directors of the
last century”

San Francisco Chronicle

Following his worldwide success with *The Suit*, which played to sold-out houses at A.C.T. in 2014, legendary director Peter Brook is back. Thirty years after Brook’s groundbreaking adaptation of the Indian saga *The Mahabharata*, the director creates an intimate new staging of this timeless tale in perhaps his finest work. A newly crowned king surveys a battlefield—his army has won him the crown, but at what price? Written 2,500 years ago, *The Mahabharata*’s story of finding tranquility in the midst of war has striking connections to modern times and has inspired some of Brook’s most transformative theatrical moments. “Like a Zen master, Peter Brook refines and concentrates his theater. . . . He offers us a play that resembles a perfect and suspended movement, light as a breath” (*Le Monde*).

JOHN

by **Annie Baker**

AT THE STRAND THEATER

“Haunting and
haunted”

The New York Times

“You can’t take
your eyes off it.”

The Guardian

A ghost 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 bed-and-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—he wants to tour the historic battlegrounds, she wants to be left alone. But in the creaking house, they find something unsettling. Is it the spirits of the Civil War dead? The smiling dolls that line the rooms? Or their curious landlady, Mertis, who switches their bedroom because “the Jackson Room can be a little temperamental”? A delicious nerve-jangler hailed as “a true masterpiece” (*Slate*), this is a visceral ghost story with a millennial twist that will haunt the intimate Strand Theater.

PLUS THREE MORE SHOWS TO BE ANNOUNCED!
Learn more at ACT-SF.ORG/JOIN

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SF OPERA LAB

ANNOUNCING

SF OPERA LAB SEASON ONE

Join us for the inaugural season in the Dianne and Tad Taube Atrium Theater at the Diane B. Wilsey Center for Opera.

WINTERREISE

Franz Schubert
March 11-13 • \$125

Schubert's Romantic song cycle of longing and loneliness is taken to new heights in this multimedia collaboration between South African artist **William Kentridge**, baritone **Matthias Goerne** and pianist **Markus Hinterhäuser**.

ChamberWORKS

April 7 and 20 • \$35

Members of the **San Francisco Opera Orchestra** perform two eclectic and intimate nights of music and song featuring the **2016 Adler Fellows**. Highlights include the premiere of "Bourne to Shelley" by **Shinji Eshima** (April 7), and Adler **Julie Adams** performing works by Previn, Chausson and Ponchielli (April 20).

SVADBA-WEDDING

Ana Sokolović
April 2-10 • \$75

A Serbian bride-to-be and her friends prepare for her wedding day in this a cappella opera with co-music directors **Dáirne Ní Mheadhra** and **John Hess**. **Michael Cavanagh** directs this exuberant new production.

VOIGT LESSONS

May 6 and 8 • \$45

The superstar soprano's one-woman show, developed with playwright **Terrence McNally** and director **Francesca Zambello**, weaves songs and arias into a vivid and moving account of her life and career with music direction by **Kevin Stites**.

THE TRIPLETS OF BELLEVILLE CINE-CONCERT

Benoît Charest
April 14-23 • \$25

Be transported to 1920s Paris and Le Jazz Hot in a live performance of the original score during a screening of this beloved animated film.

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SAN FRANCISCO
OPERA

*Medicine cures the sick. Therapy treats the wounded.
Imagination heals the soul.*

CHESTER BAILEY

STARRING DAN CLEGG AND DAVID STRATHAIRN

Chester Bailey
by Joseph Dougherty
Directed by Ron Lagomarsino

A.C.T. FAVORITE AND ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE

David Strathairn (*Underneath the Lintel* at A.C.T.; film: *Good Night, and Good Luck*; *Lincoln*) and A.C.T. M.F.A. Program alumnus Dan Clegg (*Major Barbara*) return to A.C.T. for a three-week engagement at The Strand. In 1945, in a Long Island hospital, a young man named Chester Bailey (Clegg) has come under the care of Dr. Philip Cotton (Strathairn). Chester is recovering from devastating injuries that have made his imagination the safest haven he has. Wounded by his own disappointments in life and love, Cotton must figure out how to heal this unusual patient and is forced to make an ethical decision that calls into question everything he has ever believed—leading him to new realizations about love, hope, and the saving grace of the imagination. Written by Emmy Award-winning playwright and screenwriter Joseph Dougherty and directed by veteran stage and television director Ron Lagomarsino, *Chester Bailey* is a compelling account of the lies we tell ourselves in order to find wholeness and truth.

MAY 25–JUNE 12, 2016

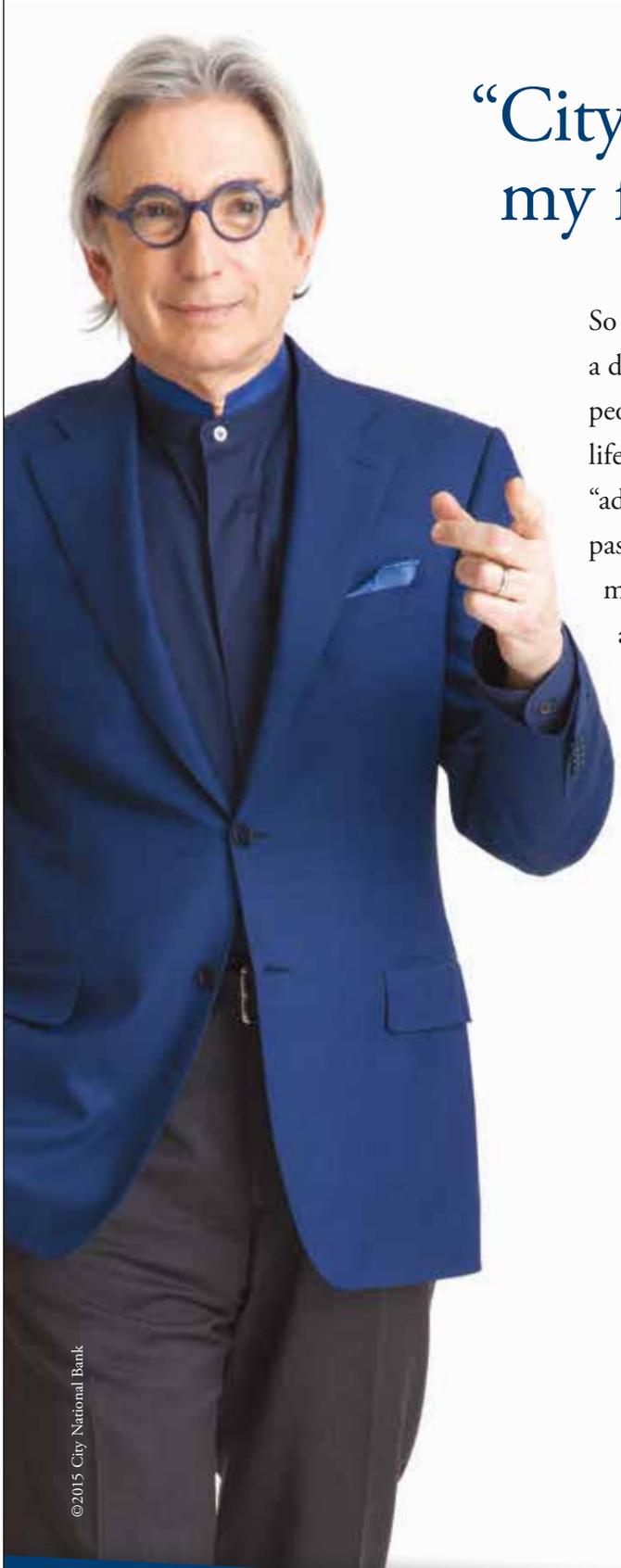
*Limited Three-Week Engagement
at The Strand Theater*

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“City National helps keep my financial life in tune.”

So much of my life is always shifting; a different city, a different piece of music, a different ensemble. I need people who I can count on to help keep my financial life on course so I can focus on creating and sharing the “adventures” of classical music. City National shares my passion and is instrumental in helping me bring classical music to audiences all over the world. They enjoy being a part of what I do and love. That is the essence of a successful relationship.

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Michael Tilson Thomas

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CAREY PERLOFF, *Artistic Director*

PRESENTS

The
**REALISTIC
JONESES**

BY **WILL ENO**
DIRECTED BY **LORETTA GRECO**

SCENIC DESIGN BY **ANDREW BOYCE**
COSTUME DESIGN BY **BRANDIN BARÓN**
LIGHTING DESIGN BY **ROBERT WIERZEL**
SOUND DESIGN BY **DAVID VAN TIEGHEM**
CASTING BY **JANET FOSTER, CSA**
DRAMATURG **ALLIE MOSS**
ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR **LILY SORENSON**

CAST

BOB JONES **ROD GNAPP***
JOHN JONES **JAMES WAGNER***
JENNIFER JONES **REBECCA WATSON***
PONY JONES **ALLISON JEAN WHITE***

UNDERSTUDIES

BOB AND JOHN **ANTHONY FUSCO***
JENNIFER AND PONY **JENNIFER LE BLANC***

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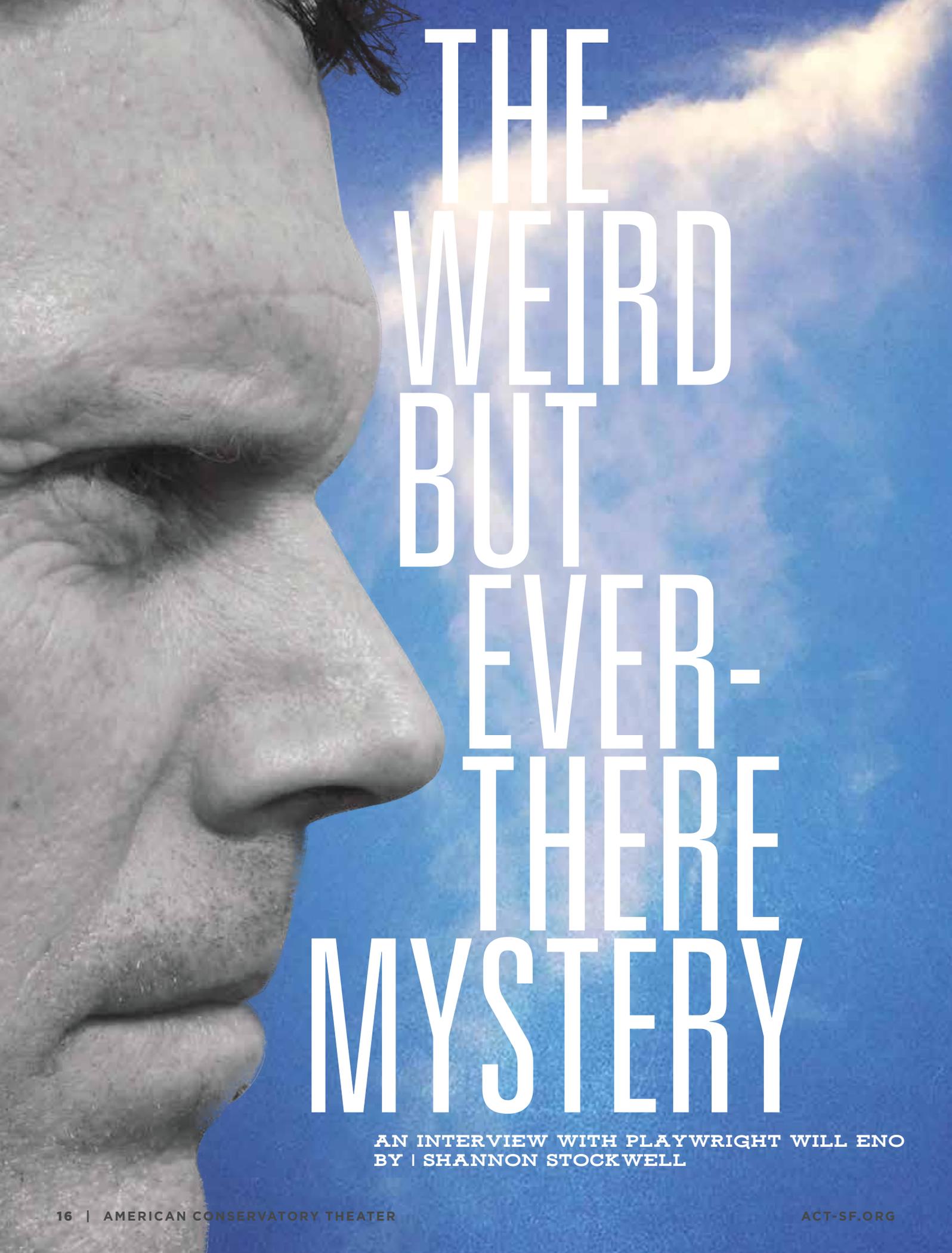
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THE WEIRD BUT EVER- THERE MYSTERY

AN INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT WILL ENO
BY | SHANNON STOCKWELL

Playwright Will Eno has always been writing, “at least in some shy way,” he says. But it wasn’t until he was in his late twenties that he sat down to write a play in earnest. His plays have since won several honors. One—*Thom Pain* (based on *nothing*)—was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Drama.

As for why he writes? He has some theories. “In some plain way, in the early days, I was probably trying to get my dad’s attention,” he says. “Or maybe I had already sublimated him into some general idea of a large, unlistening universe, so I was just trying to get some attention, and I don’t mean in just a needy little-kid way, but just some feeling or response from the universe to prove that I existed or could be seen or heard.”

But, he admits, maybe that’s not quite the reason. “In some ways, I don’t have an answer,” he says, “and I think that’s not uncommon. It’s good to not have a reason why you do something because then no one can give you a reason why you shouldn’t.”

Eno spoke with us over the phone while he was in Los Angeles, preparing for the opening of *Thom Pain* at the Geffen Playhouse.

WHAT DRAWS YOU TO WRITING FOR THE THEATER?

To me, the attraction is the mystery of it, the weird but ever-there mystery of it. It’s thousands of years old, you know? And yet, I’m sitting in a theater right now, getting ready for a 3 p.m. preview of *Thom Pain*. Thousands of years ago, thousands of miles from here, there was a play, and there’s going to be one right here in a couple hours. It’s exciting to feel like you’re even a tiny little part of that long, wide tradition. That all might sound a little dry or academic, but I use the word mystery to mean something exciting, something strongly felt that you don’t quite understand, something real that you feel was waiting for you but you didn’t quite know you were on the lookout for it.

WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION BEHIND *THE REALISTIC JONESES*?

I can’t say there was one single point of inspiration. It takes me a while to write a play, so there are various points of inspiration, over the course of a couple years. Certainly, the play concerns things that I have been thinking about—intimacy and fear of death. The fact that we all die and our fears or anxieties about it are potentially things that we could share and that could make us feel less alone, but I think sometimes we lug that anxiety around and keep it like a dirty secret, and that probably ends up making us feel a little estranged from other people. Almost like we’re ashamed of the fact that we’re going to die. That all sounds sort of morbid. I don’t really mean it to be. People talk about the meaning of life; it seems like if you can get some kind of a handle on the meaning of death, then the life part might be a lot clearer. The point of all these considerations should be, in the end, to have the happiest, fullest life you can imagine.

“IT SEEMS LIKE IF YOU CAN GET SOME KIND OF A HANDLE ON THE MEANING OF DEATH, THEN THE LIFE PART MIGHT BE A LOT CLEARER.”

WHY “REALISTIC,” ABOVE ALL OTHER POSSIBLE ADJECTIVES? WHAT IS REALISTIC ABOUT THESE CHARACTERS? IS THERE ANYTHING THAT ISN’T REALISTIC ABOUT THE PLAY?

My thought was that, in terms of trying to face death, which is an unreal or at the very least surreal proposition, any human response might be called realistic. Also, I like the idea of that word jones, as in craving or need. It’s usually used in relation to drug addiction, but I think of it here in a more innocent way: the real needs and cravings we all have. What we might be able to reasonably expect from life and the world. But more it has to do with these two couples, the Joneses. Though we all might live in the middle of some serious illusions and delusions, from the inside, it probably always feels like reality. I guess that’s practically the definition of a delusion, that it seems like reality to the deluded. I think all the Joneses are doing their best, are living with the maximum amount of reality that each can manage.

“I WAS JUST WRITING A PLAY, NOT ABOUT THE FRAGILITY OR ELUSIVENESS OR FRAILTY OR INSTABILITY OF LANGUAGE. I WAS WRITING ABOUT THE INSTABILITY OF THE PERSON WHO IS USING ALL OF THAT STUFF.”

As for your excellent question, “Is there anything that isn’t realistic?” Hmm. That’s a good one. I wish Plato were here. If “anything” equals all things and ideas and feelings that could possibly exist in the universe or somehow exist in the mind, then maybe there isn’t anything that isn’t realistic. Even the word realistic is not saying “real,” it’s saying “*like* something real.” And it seems that everything in the world—thought or deed or feeling—you could say was *like* something real.

FROM READING YOUR PLAYS, IT SEEMS THAT YOU HAVE A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP WITH WORDS—WHAT THEY MEAN, WHAT THEY CAN DO, WHAT THEY CAN’T DO. HOW DO YOU, WILL ENO, THINK ABOUT WORDS?

Maybe I have a complex or troubled relationship with the inside and the outside, and words just happen to be one of the ways, maybe the chief way, we cross that boundary. They’re how we let people know what’s going on inside of us.

I like words, I like reading the dictionary, I like a good word, but not in some big fetishistic way. Words are very real to me, I use them all the time, but they’re also really mysterious. One of our daughter’s first words was “door,” which is beautiful to hear her say. I thought it was very transcendental of her, to pick that one. And I mean that. I think as the years go on, it will be revealed to be very meaningful and plainly expressive that that was an early word of hers.

HOW DOES YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LANGUAGE MANIFEST ITSELF IN *THE REALISTIC JONESES*?

Well, I used language to write the play. That’s one manifestation. It always cracks me up, those warnings on movies, where it says “Violence and Some Language.” Or, “Adult Situations and Some Language,” which sort of describes most of what happens to you after you turn 21. But, let’s see. I think people are generally sort of brilliant. I think language is an amazing human invention. And I think people in an audience can follow things and flesh things out with incredible speed. So with all that in mind, I just try not to make too many mistakes or use words lazily. I try to use language in a way that is specific enough to satisfy the logical part of the brain, but jagged enough or gentle enough that the heart and the stomach can also get involved.

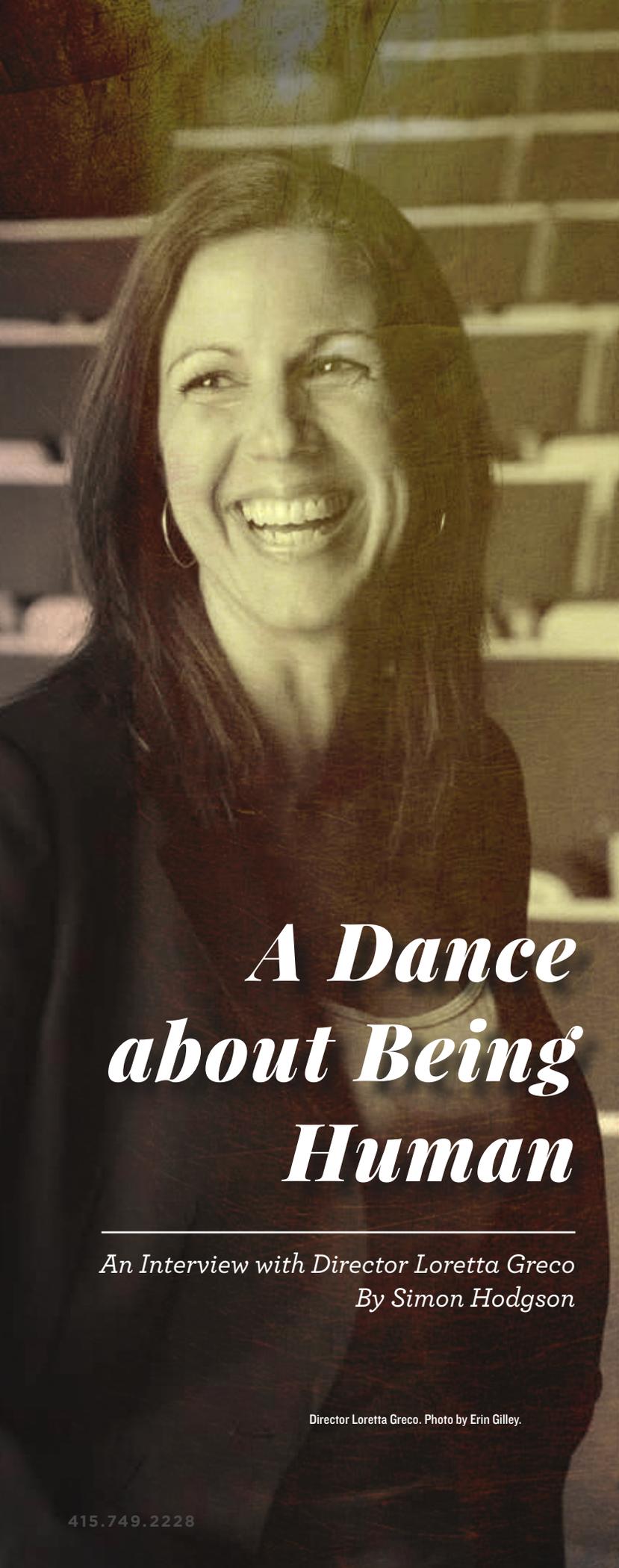
I’ve never really sat down to write a play about language and the instability of language. I’ve just always felt that I was a person who maybe was more *made* out of language than the next guy. So I was just writing a play, not about the fragility or elusiveness or frailty or instability of language. I was writing about the instability of the person who is *using* all of that stuff. I don’t know what you can do to try to make it clear that you’re actually concerned with people as opposed to words. I’m looking for the ways that we *do* communicate and that we *do* help each other and trust each other and love each other. And if you’re looking for that in my plays, you can find it, and if you’re looking for alienation and loneliness, there’s plenty of that to find, too.

WORDS ON PLAYS



Want to know more about *The Realistic Joneses*? *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.’s renowned performance guide series, offers insight into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the subscription season with revealing interviews and in-depth articles. Each purchase of *Words on Plays* directly supports A.C.T.’s educational programs.

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A Dance about Being Human

*An Interview with Director Loretta Greco
By Simon Hodgson*

Director Loretta Greco. Photo by Erin Gilley.

Loretta Greco, the artistic director of Magic Theatre in San Francisco, knows *The Geary* well. She has directed three mainstage A.C.T. productions there: *Lackawanna Blues*, *Blackbird*, and *Speed-the-Plow*. “*The Geary* is huge, gorgeous, and has certain challenges that I love,” she says. “You’ve got the mezzanine, the balcony, and the boxes, so you want the play to be as true for the person that’s under the balcony as it is for the person in the third row. The challenge is delicious because the play is intimate and *The Geary* is bigger than a lot of Broadway stages.” We sat down with Greco to talk about life, laughter, and *The Realistic Joneses*.

WHAT DO YOU THINK *THE REALISTIC JONESES* IS ABOUT?

It’s about four people who have to think about mortality in the most palpable way, prematurely, and without the proper tools. The play speaks to who we are as human beings. Do we ever really know each other? Because if we *know* each other, we should be able to share the most terrifying and the most beautiful things of our lives. The play explores how language isn’t enough and how inexplicable mortality *really* is. It’s a dance about what it is to be human.

WHY DOES WILL ENO’S WRITING RESONATE WITH YOU?

He’s searching for answers to big questions. What does existence mean? Why is it so hard to connect? There’s a beautiful sparseness in his work. I definitely think of great works by Beckett—deep and funny and spare—in the hands of brilliant actors who leave room for the audience to feel the deepest despair and maybe the greatest hope. Eno is one of our more potent observers of human behavior.

WHAT DO YOU BRING TO THIS PRODUCTION?

People who have seen a lot of my work would say that there’s emotional truth in my productions, a desire for rhythm and for the event of coming together. As a director, I try to stay a couple of steps ahead of the audience so that they’re always leaning forward.

In terms of working with writers, I’m always looking for artists who leave some blood on the page. Eno does that. I’m going into my 25th year of working with writers. I give my whole self to serving what’s there on the page. It’s an excavation. I’ve been in rehearsal with new plays that stop short. You stop discovering after day six. Then you polish, and it’s absolutely no fun. With *The Realistic Joneses*, it’s a *dig*. And that excavation is the beauty of it.

The Invention of LONELINESS

A Few Words on Will Eno

BY | SIMON HODGSON

“A SAMUEL BECKETT FOR THE JON STEWART GENERATION”

is how *New York Times* critic Charles Isherwood described Will Eno back in 2005. Some playwrights wilt under such comparisons; Eno has flourished. Since the 2001 premiere of *Tragedy: a tragedy*, he has built a canon of work that includes OBIE Award winner *The Open House*, Broadway hit *The Realistic Joneses*, and Pulitzer Prize finalist *Thom Pain (based on nothing)*.

For audiences who love language, the Beckett analogy is a useful way into Eno's mix of quirky, clever, and compassionate. “I love Beckett's work,” says Eno. “I am always honored by any comparison. Beckett's example has so much to do with finding your own way and forging your own path, and so it's a little funny to talk about influence. I hope that one of the things I've learned from him is the necessity of putting yourself out on a limb.”

Although Eno is interested in exploring some of the same territory as the great Irish writer, he remains very much his own voice. “We may share similar concerns and some themes or preoccupations,” says Massachusetts-born Eno. “But they tend to be pretty general human concerns. Beckett, for all his invention, didn't invent sadness or loneliness.”

Eno investigates these universal themes through small-town American stories. From the generically named *Middletown* (2010) to the suburbs of *The Realistic Joneses* (2012), Eno's plays are populated with characters who are regular people—doctors, nurses, librarians, mechanics, photographers—struggling with life.

“I do paperwork, lawn work, plumbing, sometimes some house painting. I've worked graveyards, regular hours, happy hours. Sure, sometimes, I'll just stare out a window, let a year go by, two years. For instance, right now, I'm kind of between things. I'm between two crappy jobs, I'm sure—I just don't know what the second one is, yet.”

Middletown

In Eno's world, ordinary people struggle to connect with each other, to express what they need or what they fear. They struggle with the fears of getting sick, of getting old, of dying.

“Her breathing got very raspy, or, some adjective. She died, would be the most economical way to put it. Where do you look, in the room? Where do you stand? No corner is corner enough, in certain rooms.”

Title and Deed

Eno picks and pecks at the seams of mortality, and he does it through language that is both witty and poignant. When audiences first encounter his work, they're surprised and entertained. They laugh. Then they pause, and feel the gravity behind the laughter.

JOHN: Look at the sky. (*BOB joins JOHN in looking up.*) No, I'm looking at this part. You look over there.

The Realistic Joneses



From the outside, *The Realistic Joneses* looks like a chamber piece, just two couples in a small town who share the same name. It's funny, ha ha, and we're laughing along with Bob and Jennifer and Pony and John until . . . we're not. And we realize that all four of these characters are grappling with uncertainty, loneliness, dread—some of our deepest anxieties.

BOB: I should head back.

JOHN: Yeah, get off my stupid rented property. It was great broaching the old questions with you.

BOB: It was. I'll see you, John.

JOHN: Later. *(Turns to head inside.)*
Oh, hey, Bob? *(Very brief pause.)*
Pretend I said something really sweet, okay? Like, some gentle, little, good-night sort of thing.

BOB: Okay. *(Brief pause.)* Thanks.

JOHN: Sure. *(BOB exits and JOHN goes inside.)*

The Realistic Joneses

"Eno's writing is actually very emotional, but the emotion is sort of stealthy," says James Urbaniak, who starred in the world premiere of Eno's breakout play, *Thom Pain (based on nothing)*. "The humanity creeps out during the course of the play." A monologue about love, mortality, cowboy suits, and dead dogs (among other things), *Thom Pain* is part rant, part cry for help, in which the title character reflects on his childhood sadness, his lost lover, and the strange miracle of existence.

"What possibilities we all have here, ways and means to live and die. Cancer, for example, or depression. Anxiety, Insecurity, Holes in your knowledge, Spots on your lungs, Total oblivion. More? Financial crisis, Outer space, Inner peace, Shame, Lust, War, Me, Hate, You, Hate, Words, Love, Nothing, More, Migraine, You, God."

Thom Pain (based on nothing)

Thom Pain premiered at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2004 and went on to successful runs in London and New York, announcing Eno as a striking new voice in American theater. Since then, he has made audiences laugh and cry with such plays as *Oh, the Humanity and Other Exclamations* (2007), *Title and Deed* (2011), and *Gnit* (2013).

As he moves into his fifties, Eno continues to dissect challenging subjects with subtlety and wit, building a canon, and an audience, that will last for decades. He has also earned loyalty from critics. Since his review of *Thom Pain* in 2005, Isherwood has continued to champion the playwright's work. "Eno has a voice almost like no other in contemporary American theater," he says. "What's wonderful about his writing is that it's both poetic and accessible. A lot of it is quite colloquial and deadpan funny, and yet at the same time it has a way of tackling big philosophical ideas."



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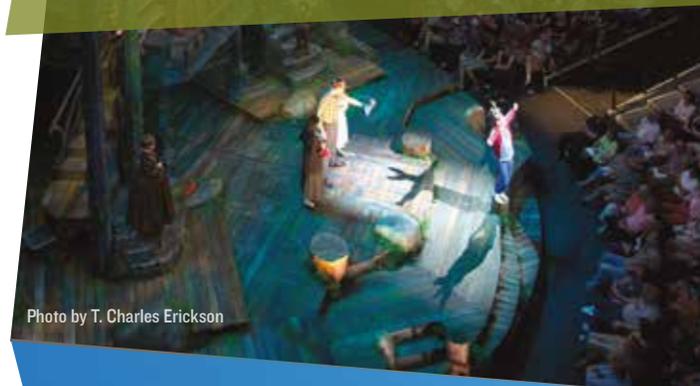


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WHO'S WHO

in THE REALISTIC JONESES



ROD GNAPP*

(Bob Jones) returns to A.C.T., where he was last seen in *Scapin*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and many others. A veteran of

Bay Area stages, Gnapp recently appeared in *The Monster-Builder* at Aurora Theatre Company; *This Golden State*, *Every Five Minutes*, and *Buried Child* at Magic Theatre; and *36 Stories by Sam Shepard* with Word for Word. Theater credits also include work at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, San Francisco Playhouse, the Huntington Theatre Company, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Virginia Playhouse, and Pittsburgh Public Theater. Gnapp can be seen in the Miller brothers' independent feature film *Touching Home* with Ed Harris. He can also be seen in *Valley of the Heart's Delight*, *Calendar Confloption* (Pixar), and *Back to the Streets of San Francisco*. He is the recipient of many San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards and is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.



JAMES WAGNER*

(John Jones) was recently seen as Mike in *A Lie of the Mind* at Magic Theatre. He originated the roles

of Weber in Theresa Rebeck's *What We're Up Against* and Ethan in Steve Yockey's *Very Still & Hard to See*. Other theater credits include *Buried Child* at Magic Theatre; *Seminar* at San Francisco Playhouse; *Other Desert Cities* at Fusion Theatre Company; *New Jerusalem* at L.A. Theatre Works; *Secret Order* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; *Mauritius* at Magic Theatre; *A Christmas Carol* at A.C.T.; *Betrayed* and *The Busy World Is Hushed* at Aurora Theatre Company; *Shiv* at The Theater @ Boston Court; *Bad Evidence* at Elephant Theatre Company; *The Cost of the Erection* at The Blank Theatre; *Beauty and the Beast* at B Street Theatre; *Candida*, *David Copperfield*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, and more. His list of 30 short and feature film credits includes roles in two Antero Alli films and, recently, the lead in the award-winning short film *Share*. Wagner is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts program.



REBECCA WATSON*

(Jennifer Jones) makes her A.C.T. debut with *The Realistic Joneses*. She returns to the Bay Area after

appearing in the world premiere of *To the Lighthouse* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. She has worked on Broadway with Sir Alan Ayckbourn and Andrew Lloyd Webber in *By Jeeves*. Other New York credits include *The Cocomanuts*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and Disney's *Hercules*. She has toured in *Moon Over Buffalo* and was in the world premieres of *And the Curtain Rises* at Signature Theatre and *I'll Be Seeing You* at The Kimmel Center in Pennsylvania. Watson

has worked extensively in regional theaters around the United States, including the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, DC, Barrington Stage Company, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Portland Stage, Arizona Theatre Company, Studio Arena Theater, Goodspeed Musicals, and Paper Mill Playhouse. She can be seen in the Emmy Award-winning film *The Normal Heart* and in the upcoming films *The Foster Portfolio*, based on the Kurt Vonnegut story, and *Rapid Eye Movement*. Other film and television credits include *Indignation* (Sundance Film Festival 2016), Baz Luhrmann's *The Get Down*, *Difficult People*, *Flesh and Bone*, MTV's *One Bad Choice*, *Members Only* (pilot), *Believe*, *The Big C*, *Deception*, *Law & Order*, *Third Watch*, *Cupid*, *Guiding Light*, and *By Jeeves*.



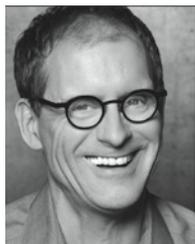
ALLISON JEAN WHITE*

(Pony Jones) returns to A.C.T., where she has been seen in *The Imaginary Invalid*, *The Circle*,

Travesties, *The Real Thing*, and *A Christmas Carol*. She has been seen on Broadway in *Man and Boy* (Roundabout Theatre Company) and off Broadway in *The Shaughraun* (Irish Repertory Theatre). She was also in the national tour of *The 39 Steps*. Other theater credits include *Disgraced* (Arizona Theatre Company); *Orwell in America* (world premiere, Northern Stage); *Uncle Vanya* (Living Room Theatre); *Abigail's Party* (San Francisco Playhouse); *The Odd Couple* (Virginia Stage Company); *Heartbreak House* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *The Crowd You're In With* and *Tir na nÓg* (world premieres, Magic Theatre); *The House of Yes* (Access Theater, New York); *Chez Moi*, *A Clown Cabaret* (Players Theatre, New York); and *Red Light Winter* (Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater). Television and film credits include *The Blacklist*, *The Slap*, *High Maintenance*, *I Love You . . . But I Lied*, *As the World Turns*, *The Family*

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

Fang, and *We're All Gonna Die*. White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.



ANTHONY FUSCO*

(Understudy) has been a member of Actors' Equity Association since 1983 and is an A.C.T. resident artist. A

few favorites from the dozens of A.C.T. productions in which he has appeared are *Indian Ink*, *Clybourne Park*, *The Homecoming*, *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*, *Dead Metaphor*, *Hedda Gabler*, *The Three Sisters*, *Race, November*, and *The Rainmaker*. Fusco most recently appeared in A.C.T.'s productions of *A Christmas Carol* (Ebenezer Scrooge), *Ah, Wilderness!*, and *Love and Information*. Other Bay Area credits include *Sister Play* at Magic Theatre; *Pygmalion*, *Candida*, *Arms and the Man*, *The Tempest*, *King Lear*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest* at California Shakespeare Theater; and *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures* and *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Fusco has appeared in *The Real Thing* on Broadway, in many off- and off-off-Broadway shows, and at regional theaters across America. He trained at The Juilliard School and The Barrow Group, and is an alumnus of College of Marin and Tamalpais High School's drama department.



JENNIFER LE BLANC*

(Understudy) is working with A.C.T. for the first time. Previous credits include *Silent Sky* and *33*

Variations at TheatreWorks, *Fifth of July* at Aurora Theatre Company, *Eurydice* at Artists Repertory Theatre, *The Three Musketeers* and *Love's Labour's Lost* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Our House* at Denver Center Theatre

Company, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The Imaginary Invalid* at Pacific Repertory Theatre, *By and By* at Shotgun Players, *Othello* and *A Message at the Arabian Shakespeare Festival*, *King Lear* at Take Wing and Soar Productions, and *Much Ado about Nothing* and *The Taming of the Shrew* at the Livermore Shakespeare Festival. She is an associate artist with the Arabian Shakespeare Festival. Le Blanc received her M.F.A. from the National Theatre Conservatory.

WILL ENO (Playwright) is a fellow of Residency Five at Signature Theatre Company. His play *The Open House* premiered at Signature in 2014 and received an OBIE Award, the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Play, and a Drama Desk Special Award. His play *The Realistic Joneses* was produced on Broadway in 2014; it was named Best Play on Broadway by *USA Today* and was listed in the *New York Times* "Best Theater of 2014." *Gnit*, an adaptation of *Peer Gynt*, premiered at Actors Theatre of Louisville in 2013. *Title and Deed* premiered at Signature Theatre in 2012. *Thom Pain (based on nothing)* was a finalist for the 2005 Pulitzer Prize and has been translated into many languages. His plays are published by Samuel French, Oberon Books, Dramatists Play Service, and Playscripts.

LORETTA GRECO (Director) returns to A.C.T., where she has directed *Speed-the-Plow*, *Blackbird*, and *Lackawanna Blues*. As Magic Theatre's artistic director, she has directed *Mauritius*; *Oedipus el Rey*; *Or;* *Bruja*; *The Other Place*; *Fred's Diner*, and *Dogeaters*, and has developed and produced the world premiere of Taylor Mac's *Hir* (*New York Times* "Best Theater of 2015"), among many others. Her New York directing credits include premieres of Tracey Scott Wilson's *The Story* (Kesselring Prize), Ruben Santiago-Hudson's *Lackawanna Blues* (OBIE Award), and Nilo Cruz's *Two Sisters and a Piano* (Kesselring Prize), all at The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival; Emily Mann's *Meshugah* at Naked Angels; and Nilo Cruz's *A Park*

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FAMILY LAW

in *Our House* at New York Theatre Workshop. Regional directing credits include *Life Is a Dream* at California Shakespeare Theater and *Romeo and Juliet* and *Stop Kiss* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Greco received her M.F.A. from Catholic University and is a recipient of two Drama League fellowships and a Princess Grace Award.

ANDREW BOYCE (Scenic Designer)

is a designer based in Chicago and New York City, working in theater, opera, film, and television. New York credits include work with Lincoln Center Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Atlantic Theater Company, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, The Play Company, Playwrights Realm, Cherry Lane Theatre, and others. Regional credits include work with Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Alliance Theatre, American Players Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Bay Street Theater, California Shakespeare Theater, the Curtis Opera Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Des Moines Metro Opera, the Geffen Playhouse, George Street Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, the Kirk Douglas Theatre, Magic Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland Center Stage, Syracuse Stage, TheatreWorks, Westport Country Playhouse, and Yale Repertory Theatre, among others. Boyce is a member of Wingspace Theatrical Design and a graduate of Yale School of Drama. He is currently an assistant professor in the Northwestern University Department of Theatre.

BRANDIN BARÓN (Costume Designer)

has designed for The Apollo Theater (Chicago), Asolo Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, The Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, TheatreWorks, San Diego Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Z Space. He is a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group Career Development Program for Directors and Designers. During the

past year, his original artwork has been shown in group exhibitions at Umbrella Arts/Fountain House Gallery (New York), The Studio Door and Art on 30th (San Diego), the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, Orange County Creatives (Laguna Beach), Sacramento Fine Arts Center and Viewpoint Photographic Art Center (Sacramento), the Richmond Art Center (Richmond), The Annmarië Sculpture Garden & Arts Center (Maryland), Meridian Street Gallery (Indianapolis), Spectrum Miami 2015/Miami Photo Salon and Projects Gallery (Miami), and Northgate Studio (Chester, United Kingdom). He is an associate professor of design at UC Santa Cruz.

ROBERT WIERZEL (Lighting Designer)

has designed several productions at A.C.T., including *Indian Ink*, *Napoli!*, *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*, *The Tosca Project*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *Travesties*, and *Happy End*. Wierzel has designed productions with opera companies New York, Paris, Tokyo, Norway, Toronto, Boston, Seattle, San Diego, Houston, Dallas, Virginia, Florida, Atlanta, Chicago, and Washington, DC, as well as numerous productions with The Glimmerglass Festival. Broadway productions include *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill*, starring Audra McDonald; the musical *Fela!* (Tony Award nomination); and David Copperfield's debut, *Dreams and Nightmares*. Other New York City credits include productions at New York Shakespeare Festival, Signature Theatre Company, Roundabout Theatre Company, Playwrights Horizons, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. Wierzel's dance work includes 30 years with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. He has designed at regional theaters across the country, including Hartford Stage, Center Stage in Baltimore, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, the Guthrie Theater, Yale Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Old Globe, and the Mark Taper Forum, among many others.

DAVID VAN TIEGHEM (Sound Designer) has designed sound for many shows on Broadway, including *The Gin Game*, *Doubt*, *The Lyons*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Big Knife*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Normal Heart*, *Reckless*, *An Enemy of the People*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *Inherit the Wind*, *Frozen*, *Arcadia*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Crucible*, *Judgment at Nuremberg*, *Three Days of Rain*, *A Beheading in Spokane*, *The Best Man*, *After Miss Julie*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *Mauritius*, *The Good Body*, and *Uncle Vanya*. Off-Broadway credits include *Heisenberg*, *Wit*, *Too Much Sun*, *Posterity*, *Rasheeda Speaking*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *The Grey Zone*, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter*, *Jack Goes Boating*, *Othello*, *Henry V*, and *The Piano Lesson*. Film and television credits include *Working Girls* and *Buried Prayers*, and work with Penn & Teller and The Wooster Group. Dance credits include work with Twyla Tharp, Pilobolus, Doug Varone, STREB, Michael Moschen, and Elisa Monte. He has been a percussionist for Laurie Anderson, Steve Reich, Brian Eno, and Talking Heads. His CDs include *Thrown for a Loop*, *Strange Cargo*, *Safety in Numbers*, and *These Things Happen*.

ALLIE MOSS (Dramaturg) is the senior artistic fellow at A.C.T. Her previous work at A.C.T. includes serving as the assistant dramaturg on *Ah, Wilderness!* and working as the assistant director for *Let There Be Love* and *Love and Information*. She also directed the 2015 A.C.T. Fellowship Project's production of *Stop Kiss* and was a member of the producing team for A.C.T.'s inaugural New Strands Festival. Upcoming projects include line producing the 2016 A.C.T. Fellowship Project and assistant directing A.C.T.'s production of *Chester Bailey*. Moss holds a B.A. in theater from Goucher College.

JANET FOSTER, CSA (Casting Director) joined A.C.T. as the casting director in the 2011-12 season. On Broadway she cast *The Light in the Piazza* (Artios Award nomination), *Lennon*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and

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

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 worked at 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. Film, television, and radio credits 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 *Monstress*, *Love and Information*, *Testament*, *Major Barbara*, *Underneath the Lintel*, and *Arcadia* at A.C.T. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include *4000 Miles*, *The Normal Heart*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Endgame and Play*, *Scorched*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *Clybourne Park*, *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, *Boleros for the Disenchanted*, *Rich and Famous*, *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.

MEGAN Q. SADA* (Assistant Stage Manager)

has most recently stage-managed A.C.T.'s *Ah*, *Wilderness!*, *Mr. Burns*, a post-electric play (a co-production with the Guthrie Theater), *Testament*, *The Orphan of Zhao*, *Napoli!*,

Underneath the Lintel, *Arcadia*, *Dead Metaphor*, *Elektra*, *Endgame and Play*, *Scorched*, *Once in a Lifetime*, *Clybourne Park*, *Round and Round the Garden*, and *A Christmas Carol*; Magic Theatre's *The Other Place*, *Bruja*, *Annapurna*, *Or*, *The Brothers Size*, *Oedipus el Rey*, and *Goldfish*; and California Shakespeare Theater's *Life Is a Dream*, *Blithe Spirit* (assistant director), *The Verona Project*, *King Lear*, and *Man and Superman*. Other professional credits include *The Velveteen Rabbit* (ODC), *Norman Rockwell's America* (TheatreWorks' New Works Festival), and *Lydia* (Marin Theatre Company). Sada graduated with a B.F.A. in theater from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan.

LESLEY ANN CLEMENT

(Executive Producer) has supported A.C.T. since 1989. Clement joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees in 2004. She co-chaired the 2010 *Crystal Ball* season gala and has served as secretary of the Executive Committee, chair of the Development Committee, and co-chair of the Producers Circle. She was an executive producer on A.C.T.'s productions of *Love and Information*, *The Scottsboro Boys*, *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*, *The Tosca Project*, and many more. Her last role on the A.C.T. stage was a walk-on in the finale of *A Christmas Carol*. By day, Clement prosecutes elder-abuse cases.

CHRISTOPHER AND LESLIE JOHNSON (Executive Producers)

were both born and raised in the Bay Area and have been supporting A.C.T. since 2002. They were executive producers on *A Little Night Music*, *Napoli!*, *Round and Round the Garden*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *Blackbird*, and *Curse of the Starving Class*. Directors of the Hurlbut-Johnson Fund, the Johnsons support many Bay Area organizations and endowed the Hurlbut-Johnson Chair in Diabetes Research at UCSF. Leslie is the co-founder and president of Epic Transitions, a Bay Area-based nonprofit dedicated to providing transformational trek experiences to young adults in need of support with life direction.



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JERI LYNN AND JEFFREY W. JOHNSON (Executive Producers)

have been supporters of the arts in the Bay Area for many years. The Johnsons were executive producers of *Testament* and *Underneath the Lintel* at A.C.T. Jeri has been an A.C.T. season ticket holder since 1974. She credits A.C.T., the San Francisco Symphony, and San Francisco Ballet as her prime motivation for relocating to San Francisco in her twenties. Currently serving as chair of the Education &

Community Programs Committee of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees, Jeri was very involved in education in Marin County, volunteering in the schools, serving on the school board in Tiburon, and finally working as the chief business official for the Tiburon school district for several years. Jeffrey was a real-estate lawyer in San Francisco and a real-estate developer in Silicon Valley. They both retired ten years ago.

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Photo by Karen Goldman, Orange Photography.

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**In Memoriam:
Eva Ramos**



The A.C.T. family mourns the loss of Eva Ramos, one of our most beloved employees, who passed away on Sunday, January 31, at Kaiser Hospital.

Eva had been part of the A.C.T. family since 1975, welcoming generations of Bay Area theatergoers to The Geary with her wonderful, characteristic "hello dahlink" greeting and her huge smile. She adored live theater, and most of all, she adored the patrons who supported it.

We will miss Eva terribly and will strive to keep her welcoming spirit alive always. In future months, look for her photo and a plaque at The Geary commemorating her time at A.C.T.



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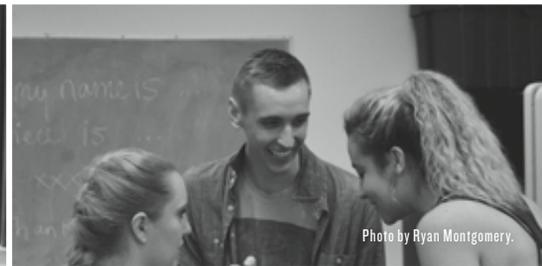
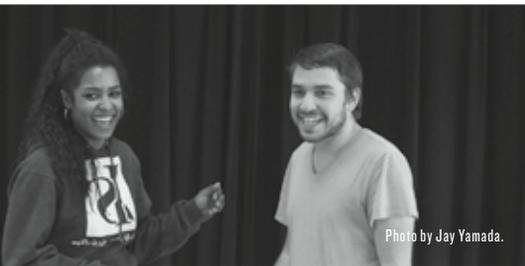
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*The spring 2016 session starts **March 28.***

AN ARTISTIC EXPLOSION

The New Strands Festival at A.C.T.

BY | SHANNON STOCKWELL



FOR FOUR DAYS IN JANUARY, A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER became a hotspot of artistic collaborations, invigorating staged readings, and electrifying performances. The first-ever New Strands Festival, curated by A.C.T. Director of New Work Beatrice Basso, took over our new theater for almost two weeks. For the first week, we hosted a variety of artists working in a multitude of mediums, from animation to music to dance to theater, and invited them to experiment with new ideas and to explore works-in-progress. These workshops culminated in a four-day, free event open to the public. Every house was packed. A resounding success, the New Strands Festival was a chance for A.C.T. to bring artists and the community together to activate our new space. We look forward to the dynamic discoveries of future New Strands Festivals.

FEATURED ARTISTS

Christina Anderson, *playwright* • Byron Au Yong, *composer and musician* • Melia Bensussen, *director* • Stephen Buescher, *choreographer* • Luciano Chessa, *composer and musician* • David Coulter, *composer and musician* • Humaira Ghilzai, *social entrepreneur* • Joanna Haigood, *choreographer* • Keith Hennessy, *performer* • Khaled Hosseini, *author* • Dohee Lee, *composer and musician* • Melinda Lopez, *playwright* • Miwa Matreyek, *animator* • Carey Perloff, *A.C.T. artistic director* • Lachlan Philpott, *playwright* • Dion Reiner-Guzman, *DJ* • Lady Ryan, *DJ* • Ursula Rani Sarma, *playwright* • Sheldon B. Smith, *multimedia artist* • Daniella Topol, *director* • Darron L. West, *sound designer* • and many more!

Made possible by Hewlett Foundation's New Works Endowment, The Edgerton Foundation Fund for New American Theatre, Theatre Forward, Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock, and the Priscilla and Keith Geeslin New Strands Fund.

“

IT WAS A REALLY PRODUCTIVE AND SUPPORTIVE WEEK. IN SUCH A SAFE ENVIRONMENT, I FELT FREE TO TAKE REAL RISKS, WHICH LED TO INSPIRING DISCOVERY.

CHRISTINA ANDERSON, PLAYWRIGHT OF HOW TO CATCH CREATION



Banda Sin Nombre. Photo by Jay Yamada.



After-party for the New Strands Festival. Photo by Alessandra Mello.



Turbulence lab with Keith Hennessy and Turbulence Company. Photo by Jay Yamada.



Dohee Lee (left) and Byron Au Yong in Musical Experiments. Photo by Alessandra Mello.



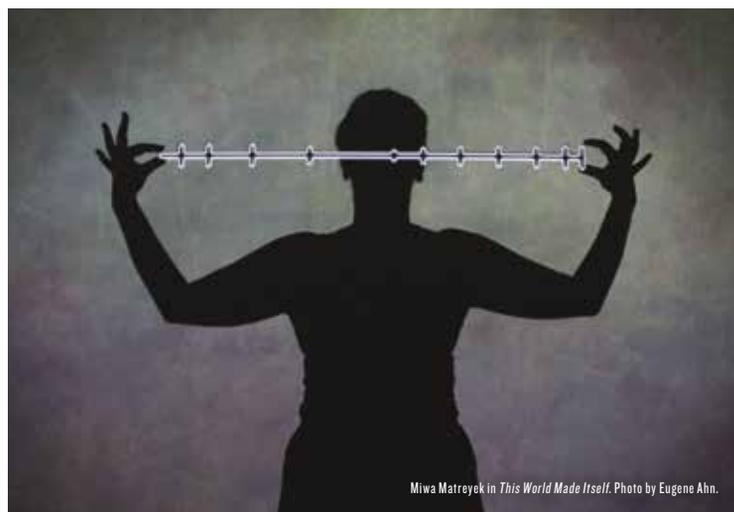
THE NEW STRANDS FESTIVAL PROVIDED
A COMMUNITY OF ADVENTURE
AND DARING. AT NEW STRANDS, THE ENERGY
WAS ONE OF CREATIVITY, GENEROSITY,
AND SHARED POSSIBILITY.

MELIA BENSUSSEN, DIRECTOR OF YERMA, BY MELINDA LOPEZ



TIME IS ALWAYS A PRECIOUS
COMMODITY IN THE THEATER. I WAS
FRANKLY THE MOST INSPIRED BY A THEATRICAL
GIANT LIKE A.C.T. GIVING SO MANY ARTISTS
THE GIFT OF TIME TO PLAY AND TO DREAM.

DARRON L. WEST, SOUND DESIGNER OF FATHERVILLE



Miwa Matreyek in This World Made Itself. Photo by Eugene Ahn.

JUST ANOTHER NIGHT IN SAN FRANCISCO

*Lachlan Philpott and the M.F.A. Program
Class of 2017 Create promiscuous/cities*

BY | SHANNON STOCKWELL

(Left to right) M.F.A. Program actors Emily Brown, Patrick Andrew Jones, and Thom Green performing *promiscuous/cities* at The Ruoff in A.C.T.'s Strand Theater. Photo by Jay Yamada.

AMID A CONSTANT STREAM OF LIKES, SHARES, LEFT SWIPES, and hashtags, a city buzzes full of people desperately seeking connection. A Mormon searches for a long-lost friend in the Castro. An Uber driver's night takes a turn for the worse. A woman on the street dances, yelling that she can free us all.

Just another night in San Francisco.

With tenderness and humor, *promiscuous/cities* explores the diversity, beauty, and challenge of living in San Francisco. The play was created through a unique collaboration between the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program class of 2017 and Lachlan Philpott, A.C.T.'s 2014-15 resident playwright.

Philpott, who is based in Australia, first came to San Francisco in 2010 after winning Aurora Theatre Company's Global Age Project Competition, and he fell in love with the city. It was there that he met A.C.T. Resident Dramaturg Michael Paller. "We clicked," says Philpott. When the playwright was named the inaugural Australian Professional Playwright Fulbright Scholar in 2014, he had no doubt that A.C.T. was the perfect environment in which to continue working on his craft. "I love the unique energy that comes from the mix of a theater company and a conservatory," he says. "For a theater maker who loves to teach and create work for large casts, it seemed like the perfect place to come and play."

One of Philpott's many contributions to A.C.T. was teaching a writing workshop to the M.F.A. Program class of 2017, then in the first year of their three-year course of study. Philpott found that he connected artistically with this particular group of actors, and he suggested a continued collaboration. "That's the essence of how theater gets made," says Conservatory Director Melissa Smith. "When you find somebody whose aesthetic, personality, and work ethic all mesh with yours, you just have to say, 'We should make something together.'" Then it happens. Smith asked Philpott to write a play in collaboration with the class of 2017.

Philpott and the actors began by talking about themselves, and they discovered that most of them had come to San Francisco from elsewhere. They commenced work on a piece inspired by their experiences of coming to the city, particularly about attempts to connect with other San Franciscans.

"San Francisco is an iconic city with a reputation for freedom of expression in so many contexts, but it is also a city of disparity and contradiction," says Philpott. "We decided to look at how living in this city today stacks up to the expectations that come from its reputation."

In doing so, the play confronts many issues faced by San Franciscans: homelessness, gentrification, the tech boom, HIV/AIDS, and the growing income gap. Philpott says, "Like almost

no other city, San Francisco sells the dream to the outside world. With *promiscuous/cities*, we aimed to examine what that dream looks like today."

With these themes in mind, Philpott and the M.F.A. Program actors wrote, discussed, and improvised until they came up with a draft, which was presented as a staged reading at the first-ever New Strands Festival in January. Working with the M.F.A. Program actors was a "real treat for me," says Philpott. "They are talented, hardworking, and spirited. Throughout this process, they came up with ideas, they did collective dramaturgy, and they realized characters that they themselves thought up."

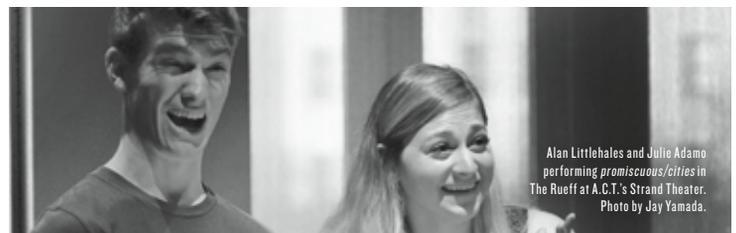
Collaborating with Philpott was just as much of a treat for the M.F.A. Program actors. "His rapport with us was as equals, as valued collaborators and creative minds, which allowed us to contribute in an integral way to the development of the piece," says Emily Brown, a member of the M.F.A. Program class of 2017. Central to the curriculum of the program is the belief that participation in creating new theater pieces strengthens an actor's skill set. "As an actor in training, being involved in the developmental phase of a dramatic work is illuminating because you get a firsthand perspective on the writing process, character development, and dramatic structure from the playwright's point of view," Brown says. "My involvement in this process contributed to my understanding of how to execute clear and complex storytelling, both as it pertains to my job as a performer and as an aspiring dramatic writer."

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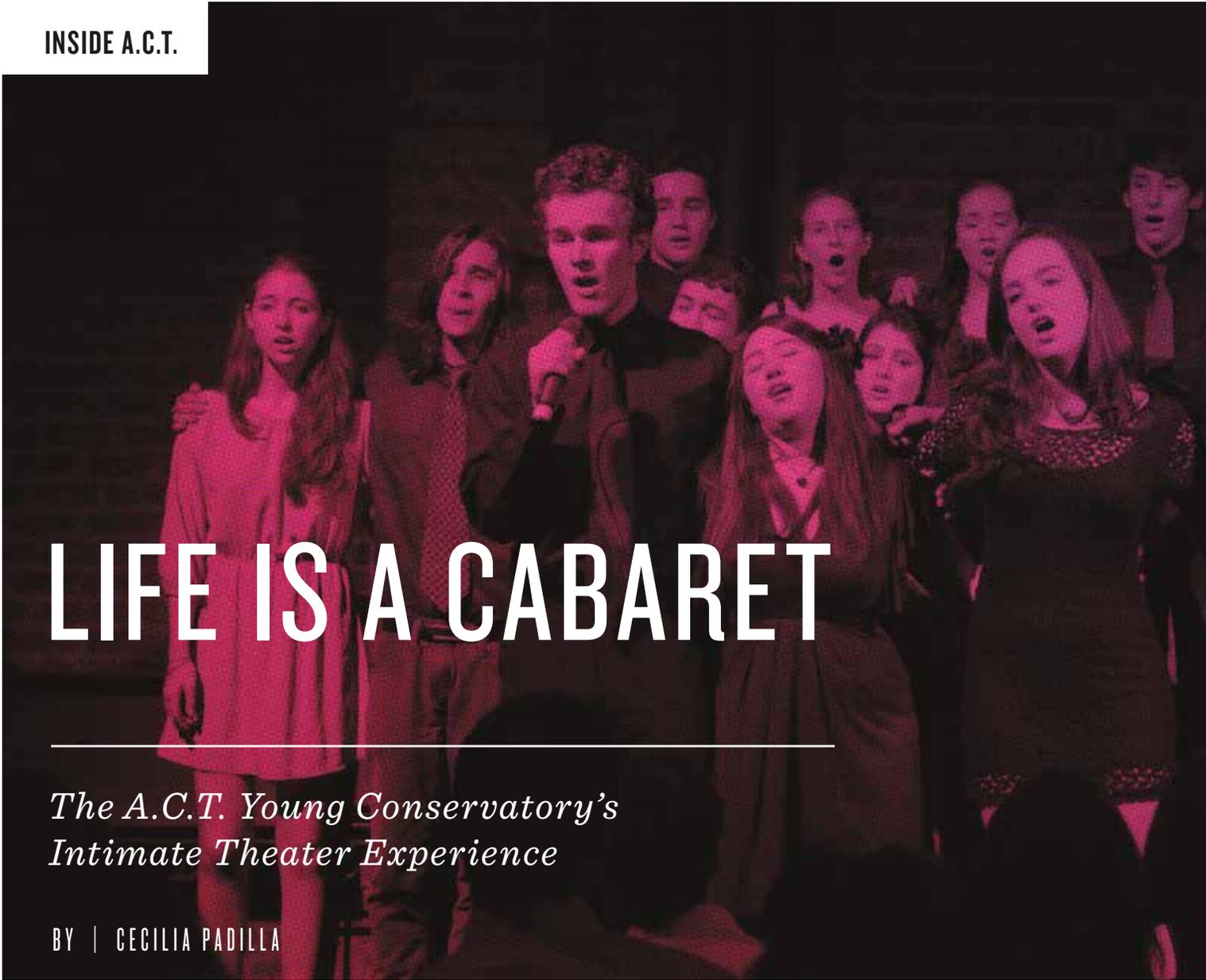
**I LOVE THE UNIQUE ENERGY
THAT COMES FROM THE MIX OF A THEATER
COMPANY AND A CONSERVATORY.**

LACHLAN PHILPOTT

The class of 2017's work with Philpott is an example of why A.C.T. staff love to team up with other theater makers. Think of the results of this particular collaboration: a play, the chance for a playwright to teach, the space for students to learn, and the opportunity for up-and-coming actors to perform. Unexpected discoveries come with every collaboration A.C.T. fosters, which constantly reinvigorates and reaffirms the organization's belief in the power of theater.



Alan Littlehales and Julie Adamo performing *promiscuous/cities* in *The Rueff* at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater. Photo by Jay Yamada.



LIFE IS A CABARET

The A.C.T. Young Conservatory's Intimate Theater Experience

BY | CECILIA PADILLA

EVERY SEPTEMBER, HUNDREDS OF YOUNG ACTORS sign up to audition for the A.C.T. Young Conservatory's (YC) cabaret performances. In these productions, songs are taken out of the context of a larger work and placed in an intimate theater setting, inviting audiences to experience the power of song for an evening. With only a couple dozen spots available each season, the competition can be fierce and the material challenging. But one thing is certain: the cabaret experience is an amazing opportunity for a young actor to grow in an intensive musical theater environment.

In addition to being extremely fun to watch, cabarets are also an essential learning opportunity for the acting student who wants to deepen character work while building vocal techniques. That's why the YC offers students the chance to perform in a wide array of cabarets throughout the year. "These performances allow young actors to cultivate an artistic point of view through the intimate sharing of songs," says YC Director Craig Slaight.

For Elisa Garber, a current student in the YC, the best part of this opportunity is seeing growth in herself and

her castmates. "The first time someone runs through a song in rehearsal, it's often hard to see the emotional arc," she says. "Then, after six weeks of work, the beauty of each song is drawn out in the final performance. I love sitting backstage and watching everyone sing."

The YC has already presented two cabarets this season, and they're excited to invite audiences to two more this spring. The first, titled *Comedy Tonight*, will let you forget your troubles with witty compositions. The second, *Through the Years with Jason Robert Brown*, pays tribute to the songs of the American composer who gave us many gems of musical theater, including the emotionally moving *The Last Five Years*, which will open at The Geary in May.

For the growing actor, a certain beauty lies in the sparseness of the cabaret: there's nothing but a spotlight and a microphone. On the bare stage, these actors have to create everything—setting, circumstance, and emotional arc—with just their singing and their acting.



Students in the 2011 Cabaret Ensemble Performance. Photo by Alessandra Mello.

The YC cabarets also enable young singers to expand their musical repertoire. “The best actor is the one well rounded in musical styles,” says Slaight. Every year, Slaight and co-director Krista Wigle select material ranging from classic American musicals to contemporary pop songs to songs themed around a specific composer. With the opportunity to sing in a variety of styles, each student learns how to be flexible and adaptable in any genre. As a bonus, by the end of the program, students know several songs in many genres that they can use as audition pieces.

The YC provides students with the opportunity to work on material that is more challenging than what they might encounter in their high school theater department. And it’s clear that these students thrive on the challenge. Cabarets show audiences that, when provided the opportunity to train professionally, young Bay Area actors give their Broadway counterparts a run for their money.



YC students Mogumi Nakamura (left) and Peter Scattini. Photo by Kevin Berne.



Photo by Alessandra Mello.

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A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (A.C.T. Artistic Director) is celebrating her 24th season as artistic director of A.C.T. This fall, she directed *Monstress*, adapted by Philip Kan Gotanda and Sean San José from the short stories by Lysley Tenorio. Last season, she staged the New York premiere of Tom Stoppard's *Indian Ink* at Roundabout

Theatre Company (nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award for Best Revival) before bringing the show to A.C.T. Recent A.C.T. productions also include *Testament*, *Underneath the Lintel*, *Arcadia*, *Elektra* (coproduced by the Getty Villa in Malibu), *Endgame* and *Play*, *Scorched*, *The Homecoming*, *Tosca Café* (co-created with choreographer Val Caniparoli; toured Canada), and Racine's *Phèdre* in a coproduction with the Stratford Festival. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has also directed for A.C.T. José Rivera's *Boleros for the Disenchanted*; the world premieres of Philip Kan Gotanda's *After the War* (A.C.T. commission) and her own adaptation (with Paul Walsh) of *A Christmas Carol*; the American premieres of Tom Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink*, and Harold Pinter's *Celebration*; A.C.T.-commissioned translations/adaptations of *Hecuba*, *The Misanthrope*, *Enrico IV*, *Mary Stuart*, *Uncle Vanya*, *A Mother*, and *The Voyage Inheritance* (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; and major revivals of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Government Inspector*, *Happy End* (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), *A Doll's House*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Old Times*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *The Room*, *Home*, *The Tempest*, and Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll*, *Travesties*, *The Real Thing*, and *Night and Day*. Perloff's work for A.C.T. also includes Marie Ndiaye's *Hilda*, the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer* and David Lang/Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, and the West Coast premiere of her own play *The Colossus of Rhodes* (Susan Smith Blackburn Award finalist).



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. She has also taught and directed in the M.F.A. Program, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. Prior to assuming leadership of the Conservatory, Smith was the director of theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught

Perloff is also an award-winning playwright. Her play *Kinship* premiered at the Théâtre de Paris in October 2014 in a production starring Isabelle Adjani and Niels Schneider and was produced at the Williamstown Theater Festival last summer, starring Cynthia Nixon and directed by Jo Bonney. *Waiting for the Flood* has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage and Film, and Roundabout Theatre. *Higher* was developed at New York Stage and Film, won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award, and received its world premiere in February 2012 in San Francisco. *Luminescence Dating* premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. *The Colossus of Rhodes* was workshopped at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, premiered at Lucille Lortel's White Barn Theatre, and was produced at A.C.T. in 2003.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language*, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, CSC won numerous OBIE Awards, including the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

A recipient of France's Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund's 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years, and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. Perloff is on the board of the Hermitage Artist Retreat in Sarasota, Florida, and is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas. Perloff is the author of *Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater* (City Lights, March 2015).

introductory, intermediate, and advanced acting. She has taught acting classes to students of all ages at 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., California Shakespeare Theater, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre; in New York at Primary Stages and Soho Rep; and in England at the Barbican Theatre (London) and Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Smith holds a B.A. from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from Yale School of Drama.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

A.C.T. BOX OFFICE

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

SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION DISCOUNTS

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

SINGLE TICKET DISCOUNTS

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.

GROUP DISCOUNTS

Groups of 15 or more save up to 50%! For more information call Joseph Rich at 415.439.2309.

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.

A.C.T. MERCHANDISE

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 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

A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated before the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval.

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 on site.

LOST AND FOUND

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

AFFILIATIONS

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



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



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



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



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

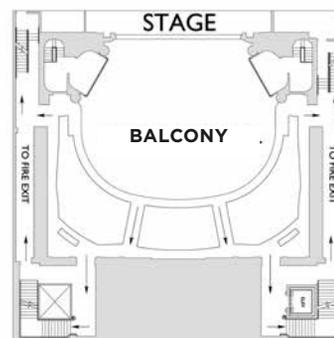
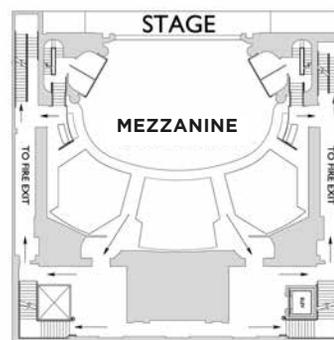
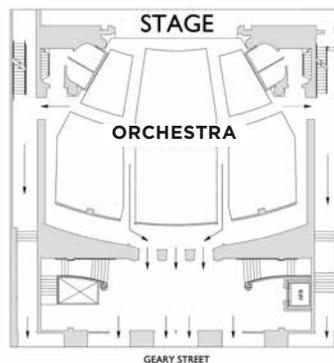


A.C.T. is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.



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

GEARY THEATER EXITS



"Zimmerman remains a superior storyteller"

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FROM THE NOVEL BY ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

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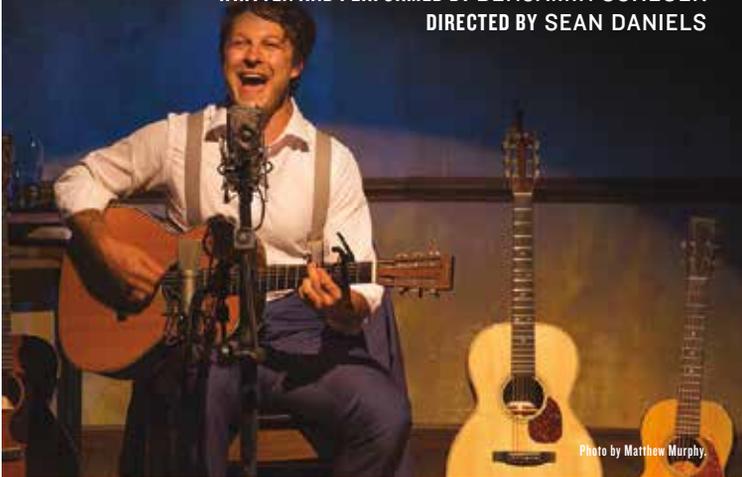


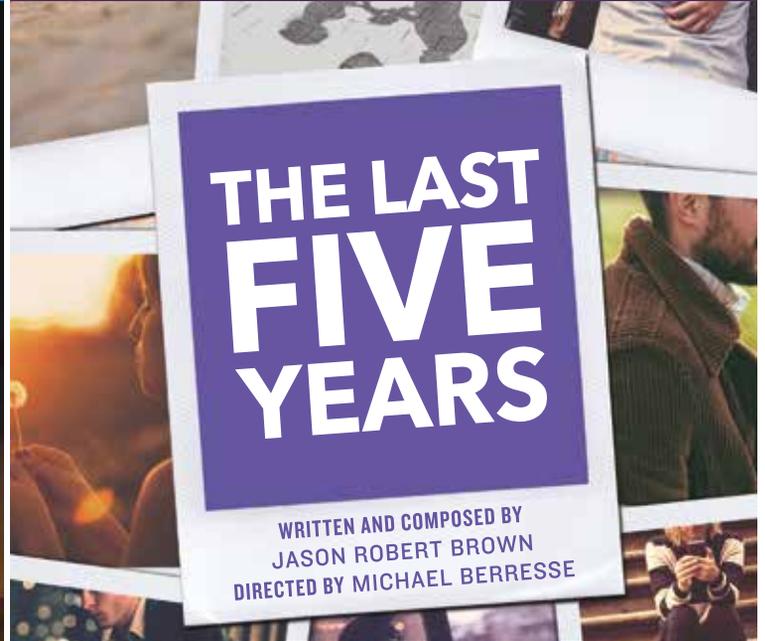
Photo by Matthew Murphy

APRIL 19–MAY 1
A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER

THE CULT-HIT MUSICAL ABOUT FINDING "THE ONE"

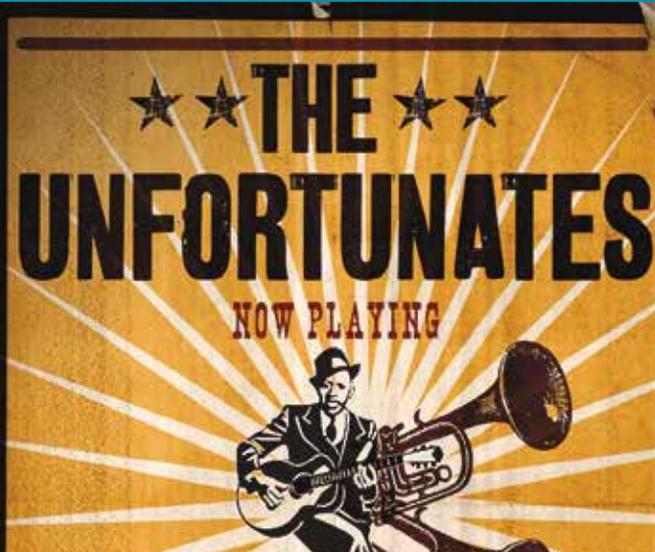
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