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San Francisco's THEATER COMPANY

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER, San Francisco's Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and 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 traditions and literatures 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 together 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 20-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 45-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, and our intensive Summer Training Congress attracts enthusiasts from around the world. Other programs include the world-famous Young Conservatory for students ages 8 to 19, led by 25-year veteran Craig Slaight, 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 tens 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 current 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.

American Conservatory Theater Board of Trustees As of April 2015

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A.C.T. volunteers provide an invaluable service with their time, enthusiasm, and love of theater. Opportunities include helping out in our performing-arts library and ushering in our theaters. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: ACT-SF.ORG/VOLUNTEER

DON'T JUST SIT THERE...



UP NEXT: LOVE AND INFORMATION

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 *Love* and Information and InterACT with us!

BIKE TO THE THEATER JUN 3, 6:30PM

In partnership with the S.F. Bicycle Coalition, 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.

PROLOGUE

JUN 9, 5:30PM Go deeper with a fascinating preshow discussion and Q&A with *Love and Information* director Casey Stangl. Can't make this event? Listen to our podcasts! Visit act-sf.org/interact for details.

THEATER ON THE COUCH*

JUN 26, 7:30PM Take part in a lively discussion in our lower-level lounge with Dr. Mason Turner, chief of psychiatry at SF's Kaiser Permanente Medical Center.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES*

JUN 30, 7PM; JUL 15 & 26, 2PM Join us for an exciting Q&A with the cast following the show.

OUT WITH A.C.T.*

JUL 8, 8PM Mix and mingle at this hosted postshow LGBT party.

WINE SERIES

JUL 14, 6:30PM Meet fellow theatergoers at this hosted wine-tasting event.

PLAYTIME

 ${\rm AUG}$ 1, 12:45PM Get hands-on with theater at this interactive preshow workshop.

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

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In this outrageous new dark comedy about gentrification, faith, and family, an ex-cop desperately tries to hold on to one of the last great rent-stabilized apartments in New York City.



SATCHMO AT THE WALDORF

by **Terry Teachout** *Directed by* **Gordon Edelstein** *Starring* **John Douglas Thompson**

AT A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER

"Extraordinary.... Tour de force would be an understatement." —Boston Globe

This richly imagined biographical tale features a collision between two jazz titans, Louis Armstrong and Miles Davis, who are both magnetically channeled by actor John Douglas Thompson.

JAN 2016



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"A glorious, bluesy, mythical, uplifting paean to the power of music to stir the soul." —*Mail Tribune*, Ashland, Oregon

A wildly surreal romp through uniquely American genres delivers five prisoners to salvation. This rousing new musical was a massive success at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2012 and was developed further through A.C.T.'s New Works program.



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by Philip Kan Gotanda and Sean San José

A Theatrical Adaptation of Short Stories by Lysley Tenorio Directed by Carey Perloff Associate Direction by Sean San José

AT A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER

"Tenorio's characters are zany, witty, and beautifully drawn." *—Slate.com*

Two bittersweet contemporary tales about the rich history of Filipino-American life in San Francisco, adapted by renowned Bay Area artists Sean San José and Philip Kan Gotanda.

SEP 2015

Ah. Wilderness!

by Eugene O'Neill *Directed by* Mark Rucker

AT A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER

"A sensitive tribute to young and middle-aged love and to a beautiful, bygone era." —*The Examiner*, Washington, DC

O'Neill's exquisite coming-of-age classic is a tender comedic portrait of a sensitive young poet and his growing pains, and one family's well-meaning attempts to stay united in the face of misunderstanding.



WEST COAST PREMIERE

THE Realistic Joneses

by Will Eno

Directed by Loretta Greco

AT A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER

"A tender, funny, and terrific new play ... unmatched by anything this season!" —New York Times

In a small American town, two couples who live next door to each other share the same last name—and surprisingly, much more—in this inventive new comedy that had Broadway audiences and critics howling with delight.



THE LAST FIVE YEARS

Written and composed by Jason Robert Brown

AT A.C.T.'S GEARY THEATER

"Graceful, gripping, and break-your-heart beautiful. *The Last Five Years* burrows into your skin by virtue of its very theatricality. It's impossible not to swoon!" —*New York Daily News*

Following the wildly successful concert version at The Geary Theater in spring 2015, this unforgettable musical—packed to the brim with humor, romance, and an exuberant score—takes an imaginative look at two newlyweds' hope that love will endure the test of time.

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A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC / 9

MAY 2016

from the ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It's hard to imagine a more perfect musical for summer in San Francisco than *A Little Night Music*, Stephen Sondheim's lush and endlessly inventive tale about the joys and perils of romance. There is something particular for every generation in this exquisite musical: first love, rediscovered love, rejected love, and rejuvenated love. The endlessly rippling melodic lines of the play remind us that life is perpetually in motion and that feelings that seem fixed can overturn in a heartbeat. Perhaps this is why *A Little Night Music* has remained so fresh and full of surprises; just when we think we can guess where a relationship or a kiss is going to lead, Sondheim takes a left turn and drops us off completely breathless somewhere else.

It's a great joy to bring back our dear friend Mark Lamos, best known at A.C.T. for Christopher Marlowe's *Edward II* and Somerset Maugham's *The Circle*, to direct this lovely new look at Sondheim's jewel. Lamos first directed *A Little Night Music* in

66 JUST WHEN WE THINK WE CAN GUESS WHERE A RELATIONSHIP OR A KISS IS GOING TO LEAD, SONDHEIM TAKES A LEFT TURN AND DROPS US OFF COMPLETELY BREATHLESS SOMEWHERE ELSE.

collaboration with the same remarkable design team at Center Stage in Baltimore in 2008. He will continue his fresh and inventive approach to the piece in this version at A.C.T., and we've assembled a dream cast to collaborate with him. We are delighted that it includes talents new to A.C.T. (including Karen Ziemba, Patrick

Cassidy, Dana Ivey, and Emily Skinner), returning favorites (such as Paolo Montalban, last seen as the Emperor in *The Orphan of Zhao*), and several of our own brilliant M.F.A. Program actors, as well as one of our very talented Young Conservatory students, Brigid O'Brien. We hope that you will surrender to the beauty of this score and the delight of the language, and let yourself get swept away by this midsummer adventure.

While *A Little Night Music* is playing, we are readying our new Strand Theater for its inaugural production, Caryl Churchill's *Love and Information*. (Please note that all Strand performances

begin at 7:30 p.m.!) Opening a new performance venue and education complex is a nail-biting but thrilling experience; I recently biked past The Strand to see that it had suddenly turned gloriously red, as if dipped in color. This theater is certainly not going to be the shy building on the block! We hope that many of you had a chance to participate in the opening ceremonies, or to take a tour. If not, don't worry-there will be many more opportunities to get to know this wonderful new space, composed of so many exciting parts: a stunning 283-seat mainstage, a magical 140-seat flexible upstairs space facing City Hall, and a grand two-story lobby with a giant LED screen ready to welcome all kinds of video and film content and to light up Central Market at night. We hope to keep all of these spaces, as well as our small Costume Shop Theater next door, full of year-round activity, so stay tuned for special programming throughout the year, in addition to two of next season's subscription shows, Monstress and The Unfortunates. We're incredibly grateful to all of you who supported The Strand Campaign and hope we'll make you very proud in the years to come.

The Strand will give us infinitely more flexibility in terms of how we program our season, and it will offer all of you the opportunity to experience work in both epic and intimate ways throughout the year. As I contemplate next season, I have realized that one of its themes is about growing up different, or feeling alienated in one's own home or city. In *Ah, Wilderness!*, a teenage boy longs to be a poet and romances his love with famous works that her father deems pornographic; no one else in his family has literary urges and he wonders why he's different. In *Monstress*, a young Filipino man falls in love with his best friend, while his best friend falls in love with a girl from Wisconsin; he wonders why he is different. In *Satchmo at the Waldorf*, the great Louis Armstrong explodes onto the musical scene, only to realize that, as a black man, his trajectory is limited in the American popular-music world; he wonders why he is different.

Theater often provides a window onto an individual with longings or dreams that set him or her apart, and part of the joy of traveling through a whole season of plays is to realize how various and vast the human experience can be. So it is with great pleasure that I announce the remaining two plays of our 2015–16 season. We open with Stephen Adly Guirgis's explosive new



66 THEATER OFTEN PROVIDES A WINDOW ONTO AN INDIVIDUAL WITH LONGINGS OR DREAMS THAT SET HIM OR HER APART, AND PART OF THE JOY OF TRAVEL-ING THROUGH A WHOLE SEASON OF PLAYS IS TO REALIZE HOW VARIOUS AND VAST THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE CAN BE.

Between Riverside and Crazy, which was recently awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Guirgis is a poet of the theater whose street vernacular, sexuality, and irrepressible humor have set his work apart from the very beginning. His latest play is about an ex-cop living in a rentcontrolled apartment on Riverside Drive in New York City. As we wrestle with displacement here in San Francisco, Guirgis's play asks prescient and

perceptive questions about the nature of "home" in a city faced with unprecedented and rapid change. Irene Lewis, whose elegant and incisive work has been seen at A.C.T. in David Mamet's *Race* and George F. Walker's *Dead Metaphor*, returns to helm this robust comedy of family, faith, and the secrets of desire.

To close our season, we're journeying into the mysteries of love, marriage, and career with *The Last Five Years*, which enjoyed a concert version that sold out at The Geary this spring. This beautifully structured musical moves backward and forward in time to ask how we manage to stay in love when life threatens to pull us apart. The brainchild of the Tony Award–winning composer of *Parade* and *Honeymoon in Vegas*, Jason Robert Brown, this powerful and intimate musical is filled to the brim with humor, romance, and a captivating score.

This all brings us back to *A Little Night Music*. We invite you to turn off your devices and immerse yourself for a little while in a dreamy world of longing, lust, and turn-of-the-twentieth-century elegance. Welcome, and enjoy!

Yours,

Carey Perloff Artistic Director Don't miss A.C.T.'s Summer at The Strand, which includes our final production of the season and offerings from our Conservatory and Education & Community Programs.

Love and Information

June 3–August 9

From iconoclastic playwright Caryl Churchill comes *Love and Information*, an acclaimed play that features a collection of brief yet memorable scenes. We are proud to have this provocative and timely piece from one of the world's boldest theatrical voices as the inaugural production at The Strand.

Neighborhood Open House

June 13

9 a.m.-noon

The Strand's doors are open to the entire community! A.C.T. invites our Central Market neighbors and the San Francisco community to explore the city's newest performance venue and education center.

Young Conservatory Three-Play Festival August 11–30

Our nationally recognized Young Conservatory helps ignite young people's passion for the stage, and our new three-play festival gives them an opportunity to show off their skills. This year's plays include a specially commissioned collaborative project with Oakland's Destiny Arts Center and A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs, an epic musical featuring the songs of Elton John, and a commissioned play that reveals the struggles and triumphs of young people throughout American history. This is a landmark opportunity to showcase work created for and performed by young people.

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THE TIME Turn of the twentieth century

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Christine Capsuto* Annemaria Rajala* Andres Ramirez* Caitlan Taylor[†] **Brigid O'Brien[‡] Dana Ivey* Michael McIntire⁺** Justin Scott Brown* Laurie Veldheer* **Patrick Cassidy*** Marissa McGowan* Karen Ziemba* Paolo Montalban* **Emily Skinner***

THERE WILL BE ONE 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

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

[†] Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2016 and a member of Actors' Equity Association

* Member of the A.C.T. Young Conservatory and a member of Actors' Equity Association

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and INFORMATION

A theatrical newsfeed of experiences—in real time

Love and Information by CARYL CHURCHILL Directed by CASEY STANGL

F rom iconoclastic playwright Caryl Churchill (*Cloud Nine, Top Girls*) comes *Love and Information*, her acclaimed play featuring 57 brief yet memorable scenes that make up a world in which data inspires obsession, and FaceTime conversations and celebrity selfies threaten to replace human contact. Directed by Casey Stangl, who brought us last season's hit *Venus in Fur*, and premiering as the inaugural production at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater located in the heart of San Francisco's tech hub—this sharp yet tender theatrical kaleidoscope plays out like a fragmented newsfeed of moments, examining "our civilization's lust for information, our inability to process it, and our loss of secrecy and privacy" (*Gothamist.com*).

Churchill challenges the audience to consider the fateful, intimate dance between the virtual and the real, and the ways we filter and process data in the Information Age. In this provocative and fast-paced world of mysterious conversations, populated by 140 characters hungry for understanding, Churchill reminds us that no matter what the latest gadgets and hottest Internet memes are, the primary currency of choice will always be connection.

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"Head-spinning" Time Out New York

> "Dizzying" New York Times

"Effervescent"

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MRS. ANDERSSEN	Vicki Shaghoian*	* Member of Actors' Equity Association	n, the union of professional actors and stage managers
MRS. SEGSTROM	Vicki Shaghoian*	 Member of PACOTS Legally Production, the union of projessional actors and stage managers in the United States [†] Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2016 and a member of Actors' Equity Association [®] Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2015 and a member of Actors' Equity Association 	
MRS. NORDSTROM	Danielle Frimer ®		
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MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

"NIGHT WALTZ"	Company
"NOW"	Fredrik
"LATER"	Henrik
"SOON"	Anne, Henrik, Fredrik
"THE GLAMOROUS LIFE"	Fredrika, Desiree, Madame Armfeldt
	Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist
	Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom
"REMEMBER?"	Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist
	Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom
"YOU MUST MEET MY WIFE"	Desiree, Fredrik
"LIAISONS"	Madame Armfeldt
"IN PRAISE OF WOMEN"	Carl-Magnus
"EVERY DAY A LITTLE DEATH"	Charlotte, Anne
"A WEEKEND IN THE COUNTRY"	Company

ACT II

"THE SUN WON'T SET"	Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist
]	Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom
"IT WOULD HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL"	Fredrik, Carl-Magnus
"NIGHT WALTZ II"	Mrs. Anderssen, Mr. Erlanson, Mr. Lindquist
]	Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom
"PERPETUAL ANTICIPATION"	Mrs. Anderssen, Mrs. Nordstrom, Mrs. Segstrom
"SEND IN THE CLOWNS"	Desiree
"THE MILLER'S SON"	Petra
FINALE	Company

MUSICIANS

WOODWIND 1	Dana Bauer
WOODWIND 2	Robert Todd
VIOLIN	Michelle Maruyama
CELLO	Jessica Ivry
FRENCH HORN	Glen Swarts
HARP	Michelle Sell
BASS	Raymond Vargas
CONTRACTOR	Kevin Porter

"WHIPPED CREAM WITH KNIVES"

An Interview With Director Mark Lamos By Nirmala Nataraj

Director Mark Lamos. Photo by Bruce Plotkin

LAUDED AS A "POET OF THE STAGE" BY THE NEW YORK TIMES,

director Mark Lamos was an established actor before it became clear that his theatrical calling was elsewhere. All the same, Lamos's early endeavors as a violinist and actor well prepared him for a kaleidoscopic journey through plays, musicals, operas, and the complexities of building a season from the ground up.

As the artistic director of Hartford Stage for 17 years, Lamos accepted a Tony Award for that regional theater in 1989. There, he garnered a number of accolades for his skill in filling the spacious stage with large casts that performed everything from Greek tragedy to Shakespeare to contemporary works. Since 2009 Lamos has been the artistic director of Westport Country Playhouse, and he is also a freelance musical and opera director. His Broadway work includes *Our Country's Good* (Tony Award nomination for Best Direction of a Play), *The Rivals, Cymbeline*, and *Seascape* (Tony Award nomination for Best Revival). Off Broadway he directed *Tiny Alice* and *Measure for Measure* (he received Lucille Lortel Awards for both), as well as productions at Playwrights Horizons, Primary Stages, Signature Theatre Company, and The Public Theater. His work in opera is equally notable and includes new productions of *I Lombardi*, with Luciano Pavarotti, and *Wozzeck* (both televised for PBS's *Great Performances*).

When Lamos directed *A Little Night Music* at Center Stage in Baltimore in 2008 (35 years after the musical's explosively popular debut), critics lauded his unconventional choices. Critic Michael J. Bandler called Lamos's vision "frothy and acerbic," noting that original director Harold Prince's description of the play as "whipped cream with knives" was perfectly realized in this production, with its energetic physical comedy and unmistakable sexiness. Lamos shared with us his vision for the current production, as well as some insight into Stephen Sondheim's beloved romantic musical.

Tell us about this production of *A Little Night Music*. Are there any elements of the production at A.C.T. that will diverge significantly from the Center Stage version?

The cast, energy, and dynamics are totally different for this production. With more stage space, it can be a classically romantic musical. I would like to have a dreamlike, diaphanous feeling, and with the stage possibilities offered by The Geary, this will be a more magical show. I think it's healthy to keep a blank slate when working. So many choices are already made in the design process, and the one place where I don't have to bind myself to that is in rehearsal, where the creative vision emerges in a more organic way.

How does the musical complexity of *A Little Night Music* affect your direction?

The waltz, for me, is all about flirtation and eroticism. When it was first popularized, it was banned in certain places. It transformed from the minuet, a slow and stately ballroom dance for partners in triple time, which was common in the eighteenth century, into a more lilting style. Many people don't realize how revolutionary the waltz was and how much it liberated men and women, who were encountering a proximity to each other that previously hadn't been possible in other social situations. It is one of the many aspects of pure genius in this piece. Sondheim was the first person to have devised an entire evening in this particular time signature. The play must be fleet of foot and swirl in front of an audience.

In your production at Center Stage, you chose to highlight the comedy of the play over the more bittersweet themes of lost love and middle-aged folly. Was that a conscious decision?

It was not. One of the things I decided to do was make the *Liebeslieder* quintet much younger, although in most productions they tend to be mature, older lovers who have been around the block and are offering songs of remembrance. I wanted them to be younger because I think my approach takes away a certain archness in the writing. I realized that in memory, we are always younger. Also, I didn't want the beginning of the play to be elegiac, but overtly sexual. This is a piece that is about sex—it is about having it, wanting it, missing it, remembering it, and being frustrated by it. In the arena of sexuality, comic elements tend to come to the forefront. Many people don't realize how revolutionary the waltz was and how much it liberated men and women.

How are you engaging with the play's themes of memory, nostalgia, and lost and revived love?

.

In A Little Night Music, there is a backward and forward movement of characters. Fredrik remembers his past with Desiree, while she comments on how different they are today. Charlotte is nostalgic for a better life with her husband, but absurdly, she seems to require the torment she experiences with this man in order to feel passion for him. Anne is practically an old woman at the age of 18, and at the same time, she is completely misguided and nostalgic for her childhood. Desiree is perhaps one of the only pragmatic characters when it comes to thinking about the past. She is the only one who could sing a song as skeptical as "Send in the Clowns," which is basically saying, "Look how ridiculous, how stupid and off we are in our timing. This isn't working!" I think the song works best when it's dry-eyed, when there is the accompanying sense that there is nothing we can do or really be sad about; this is just how it is. And then there is Madame Armfeldt; I'm not sure that what she is saying about her previous life as a courtesan to noblemen is entirely true, but in a way, she provides the nostalgic architecture of the piece. She gives us a glimpse deep into the past, into a former century. This offers tremendous breadth to the musical.

What have you learned from the sheer variety of your work in theater?

I'm extremely catholic in my tastes. That's been a huge help to me in the craft of directing, but also in my work as an artistic director in choosing plays and musicals to produce. I respond viscerally to a wide variety of aesthetic stimuli, which I don't think is unusual in people who call themselves directors.

A Return Home through Memory

A Conversation with Scenic Designer Riccardo Hernandez by Anna Woodruff

RICCARDO HERNANDEZ IS A TONY AWARD-

nominated scenic designer. A graduate of the Yale School of Drama, he has gone on to work in many New York– based theaters, regional stages, and operas. Hernandez has designed sets for such Broadway productions as *Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk* (1996); *Parade* (1998); and *Caroline, or Change* (2004).

Hernandez brings his imagination to The Geary for *A Little Night Music.* He is intimately familiar with Stephen Sondheim's period masterpiece, having worked on Mark Lamos's 2008 production at Center Stage in Baltimore, but a change of venue necessitates a wholly different set of considerations. With the help of Lamos's fluid direction, Hernandez's set relies on natural theatrical elements to tell the story, "creating space for the words and music to be heard."

Just as Madame Armfeldt muses over distant memories of past lovers, and Desiree and Fredrik long for the simplicity of young love, Hernandez's creative process directly engages with memory. In a recent conversation, he told us that his recollection of his 2008 design has informed the choices he made this time around. In fact, Hernandez believes that intentionally evoking memory to create a new set is infinitely more interesting than starting from scratch.

Will the set at The Geary contain elements from the set at Center Stage?

Center Stage has a beautiful, old brick wall. We tried not to impose anything onto that very specific space, so we used the rawness and beauty of the brick wall and built around it. The simplicity of the space, as well as the way that Mark [Lamos] articulated the show with the music and choreography made for a beautiful production.

It would have been very easy for Mark and me to do the same design again. But now we're in a beautiful, large, operatic theater. So we thought, "Let's do it differently this time, while preserving all the things that we know will work." For A.C.T. the design is not a completely new idea, but an extension of what we didn't get to do the first time around.

The play takes place at the turn of the twentieth century in Sweden. Will this setting be significant in your design?

You definitely sensed it was the late 1800s at Center Stage. I think you're going to feel the time period even more at A.C.T., because we're using a vernacular that has to do with old theater. There is a nostalgia, a sadness and longing in both the film [*Smiles of a Summer Night*, by Ingmar Bergman] and in the music, that I think we will be able to achieve just a little bit more than we could at Center Stage. With a bigger stage, we'll be able to see a sunrise, or chandeliers can go up and down.

Settings change quite rapidly in this play; we move from the parlor to the dressing room to the bedroom. How do you design for such a large world?

In a very theatrical way—which is something that Mark has done with the blocking and that is actually written in the piece. In that sense, it's no different from a Shakespearean play, such as *King Lear*, where you are inside a castle and, all of a sudden, you're battling the elements. Scenic design has to be fluid in order to be theatrical. What Mark has done with the quintet—with all the characters moving furniture to set the scene—feels like an homage to theater.

Mark and I are not dependent on theatrical mechanisms or automation, like a brand-new Broadway musical today might be. We're dependent on how theater has worked for centuries, which is by creating a suggestion with very simple means. It's no different from Renaissance or Baroque theater or the theater of Strindberg.

What excites you most about returning to Sondheim's musical?

I am drawn to classics. Even if I were called to do *Hamlet* three or four times, I would say yes. Such plays are so deep and complicated that they leave room for multiple interpretations. And because of the subject matter and the score, *A Little Night Music* is a modern classic. Bergman and Sondheim are tackling amazing subject matter that will never die.

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AN ENGLANTING The Creation of A Little Night Music

by Nirmala Nataraj

nspired by *Smiles of a Summer Night*, filmmaker Ingmar Bergman's romantic comedy of errors, *A Little Night Music* emerged from Stephen Sondheim's vision of a musicalized tale about the games that men and women play in sex and love. With a grand scope that is meant to generate nostalgia for turn-of-the-twentieth-century elegance, the play is a marked departure from Sondheim's previous collaborations with director Harold Prince, such as *Company* (1970) and *Follies* (1971), which feature upper-class New Yorkers in a contemporary setting.

Before librettist Hugh Wheeler came on board, Prince and Sondheim had been toying with the idea of writing a chamber opera since their collaboration on the 1957 musical *West Side Story* (for which Sondheim was the lyricist and Prince the producer). Scandinavia in midsummer (a time of year during which the sun rarely sets throughout the region) provided the ideal backdrop for a play about sexual frustration, perpetual anticipation, and romantic foolishness. After settling on Bergman's film for source material, Sondheim drew the title for the play from an English translation of the German name for Mozart's serenade no. 13 for strings in G major (*Eine kleine Nachtmusik*). In *A Little Night Music*, three-quarter time, counterpoint, and harmonically complex melodies help evoke the grandeur and complex social interactions of a bygone era.

Sondheim's original story for A Little Night Music was comparatively darker than the piece he ultimately developed with Wheeler. An early draft of A Little Night Music relates the story as a parlor-room fantasy with three distinct endings. Wheeler, however, felt that Sondheim's idea was overly bizarre and confusing. As Sondheim explains in his annotated book of song lyrics Finishing the Hat, "[Wheeler's] work had always been linear, not fanciful." Although Wheeler attempted to write the libretto that had been asked of him, he ended up generating a piece that Sondheim found "boring and literal." Wheeler's book had erased all traces of gravity, darkness, and melancholy from Sondheim's initial idea, leaving what the composer called "a graceful but fluffily light comedy version of Bergman's movie." However, he quickly realized that, even if the book was not what he had orignally envisioned, he could still dazzle audiences with a brilliant score, not to mention "verbal dazzle and technical prowess."

Although Sondheim's surreal vision for *A Little Night Music* never came to fruition, the musical that was eventually produced was hardly received as fluffy. In fact, many critics saw through the play's cheery facade; as Richard Watts commented about the characters: "On the surface they appear to be enjoying their sins, except at moments when they are embarrassingly caught in them. But the atmosphere, for all its gaiety, seemed to me that of men and women who are leading hollow lives and are only too aware of it."

The original 1973 Broadway production of *A Little Night Music* secured six Tony Awards (including Best Musical, Best Book of a Musical, and Best Original Score), six drama Desk Awards, and a Grammy for Best Musical Show Album. *New York Times* critic Clive Barnes summed up the show as "heady, civilized, sophisticated and enchanting... the real triumph belongs to Stephen Sondheim ... the music is an orgy of plaintively memorable waltzes, all talking of past loves and lost worlds."

A Little Night Music opened at the Shubert Theatre on Broadway on February 25, 1973. Directed by Harold Prince and starring Glynis Johns as Desiree, Len Cariou as Fredrik, and Hermione Gingold as Madame Armfeldt, the musical closed on August 3, 1974, after 601 performances. The musical went on to enjoy an equally successful run on London's West End in 1975 and a number of revivals throughout Europe, with productions spanning from Paris to Stockholm. In the last four decades, the musical has enjoyed numerous revivals and continues to be a popular selection among opera companies throughout the world. Prince also went on to direct a film adaptation of A Little Night Music in 1977, starring Elizabeth Taylor, Diana Rigg, and Lesley-Anne Down. And of course, the music endures. The nostalgic and wistful "Send in the Clowns" is one of Sondheim's most immediately recognizable songs and has been covered by everyone from Frank Sinatra to Judy Collins, who was nominated for a Grammy Award in 1975 for her rendition, to Grace Jones, Dame Judi Dench, and Megadeath.

Although Sondheim isn't usually sentimental about his own work and has expressed continued befuddlement over the popularity of "Send in the Clowns," it seems that much of his early ambivalence about the play has transformed over the years. In *Finishing the Hat*, Sondheim describes Wheeler's libretto as supple and surprisingly ageless. Although he jokingly admits to feeling dread as an audience member during a major revival or a school production of *A Little Night Music*, he writes:

Once the lights have been dimmed, I have an exhilarating time watching it.... I underestimated Hugh's work shamefully when I first read it. After living with it through numerous productions for more than thirty-five years, I've come to the conclusion that it is one of the half dozen best books ever written for a musical.

WHO'S WHO IN A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC



JUSTIN SCOTT BROWN* (*Henrik Egerman*) is excited to make his debut at A.C.T. Brown originated the role of Marius in the 25th anniversary national

tour of Les Misérables. He also appeared in the first national tour of the Tony Award–winning musical Spring Awakening, as well as off Broadway in Far from Heaven at Playwrights Horizons. He has had the privilege of performing at several premiere regional theaters across the country with such notable roles as Gabe in Next to Normal at Center Stage in Baltimore and Jack in Into the Woods at Westport Country Playhouse. At The Muny in St. Louis, he has appeared in such productions as Miss Saigon, Titanic, and Meet Me in St. Louis. Credits also include America's Got Talent and The 85th Academy Awards. He holds a B.F.A. in musical theater from the Cincinnati College–Conservatory of Music.



CHRISTINE CAPSUTO*

(*Mrs. Nordstrom*) is an accomplished dancer and graduate of both San Jose State University (cum laude) and the

American Musical and Dramatic Academy (Los Angeles and New York). Capsuto has appeared as Musetta in La bohème (Townsend Opera, West Edge Opera, and San Francisco Opera), Clorinda in Cinderella (Townsend Opera), Adina in Elixir of Love (West Bay Opera), Queen of the Night in Die Zauberflöte (Center Stage Opera), Dew Fairy in Hansel and Gretel (Opera San Jose), Desdemona/Cover in Otello (Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theater), Poppea in L'incoronazione di Poppea (San Jose Opera Theatre), Good/ Evil Diva in Vox Lumiere (international tour), Narrator/Cover in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theater), Jasmine in Disney's Aladdin: A Musical

Spectacular (Disneyland), Franca in *The* Light in the Piazza (Los Angeles Theatre Group), and Galinda in *Wannabe Wicked* (Universal Studios Hollywood), among many others.



CASSIDY's* (Fredrik Egerman) Broadway credits include Annie Get Your Gun, The Pirates of Penzance, Leader of the Pack, 42nd Street, and Aida.

PATRICK

Off Broadway, he created the role of Balladeer in Stephen Sondheim's Assassins (Playwrights Horizons); later he recreated "The Ballad of Booth" on PBS for Sondheim: A Celebration at Carnegie Hall. He starred in Annie Get Your Gun (Ravinia Festival) and directed and starred in The Music Man (John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts). National tours include Aida in 2002 and the title role in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat in 2000 and 2006. Select regional theater credits include Conrack (Ford's Theatre), Martin Guerre (Hartford Stage), and The End of the Day (Williamstown Theatre Festival). Cassidy's numerous roles in film include the critically acclaimed Longtime Companion, I'll Do Anything, and I Won't Dance. Select television credits include Major Crimes, Castle, CSI: Crime Scene Investigation, and Perception. He is a guest director and masterclass teacher at Point Park University in Pittsburgh, teaches for Steve Wynn's show La Rêve in Las Vegas, and started Cassidy Acting Company with his wife, Melissa Hurley Cassidy.



BRANDON DAHLQUIST*

(*Mr. Lindquist*) last appeared at A.C.T. as Thomas Jefferson in *1776.* Select theater credits include *Bronx Bombers* at Circle in

the Square Theater; *Oh Coward!* and *A Little Night Music* at Writers' Theatre (Joseph Jefferson Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor); *Knute Rockne All-* American at Theatre at the Center (Joseph Jefferson Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor); Cabaret, Sugar, and Meet Me in St. Louis at Drury Lane Oakbrook; Grand Hotel at Drury Lane Water Tower; Sunday in the Park with George, Assassins, and City of Angels at Porchlight Music Theatre; The Boy Friend at 42nd Street Moon; Lombardi and Murder on the Nile at Peninsula Players Theatre; 1776 at Asolo Repertory Theatre; and Frank Galati's production of Twelve Angry Men at Maltz Jupiter Theatre. Television credits include guest-star roles in Chicago P.D. (NBC) and Difficult People (Hulu). Dahlquist is a graduate of The Conservatory at Second City Chicago in musical improvisation and is a popular headshot photographer.

DANA IVEY*



(*Madame Armfeldt*) has worked in the United States and Canada since 1965. She has received five Tony Award nominations: for

Heartbreak House and Sunday in the Park with George in the same year and for The Last Night of Ballyhoo, The Rivals, and Butley. She received an OBIE Award for creating the role of Daisy in *Driving Miss* Daisy, for Mrs. Warren's Profession, and for Quartermaine's Terms. On Broadway she also appeared in Present Laughter, Waiting in the Wings, Pack of Lies, Henry IV, Sex and Longing, and The Importance of Being Earnest. She played Gertrude to Kevin Kline's Hamlet and was Big Mama at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. In 2008 she was inducted into the Theater Hall of Fame and received an honorary doctorate from Rollins College. Among her films are The Addams Family, Legally Blonde 2, Rush Hour 3, Ghost Town, Sabrina, Two Weeks Notice, The Color Purple, and The Help.



MICHAEL MCINTIRE[†]

(*Frid*) just completed his second year of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. This is his Geary stage debut. Some of

his Conservatory credits include The Cherry Orchard (Lopakhin), Kalos Kai Agathos (Oedipus), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Peter Quince), and Saved (Fred). He also helped create a three-person sketch-comedy/commedia dell'arte piece, A Lady and Two Tramps, for the M.F.A. Program's Sky Festival. Some of his regional credits include Big River, The Boys Next Door, The Pirates of Penzance (Maples Repertory Theatre), Sunday in the Park with George (Musical Theater Heritage), and The Kentucky Cycle (Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre). McIntire received a B.A. from Columbia College Chicago and a B.A. from Truman State University.



MARISSA MCGOWAN*

(*Petra*) has appeared on Broadway in the revival of *A Little Night Music* (original cast recording) alongside Catherine

Zeta-Jones and Angela Lansbury; Les Misérables, in which she performed both the roles of Éponine and Cosette; and Bonnie & Clyde (original cast recording). McGowan was chosen by Marvin Hamlisch to star in the world premiere of his last musical, The Nutty Professor, directed by the legendary Jerry Lewis. Favorite regional theater credits include Guinevere in Camelot at the Goodspeed Opera House, Magnolia in Show Boat at Asolo Repertory Theatre, Maria in The Sound of Music at the Lyric Theatre and Casa Mañana, and Johanna in Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street at Geva Theatre Center. McGowan has been seen on television in Major Crimes (Shampagne) on TNT and Odd Mom Out (Scarlett) on Bravo. Concert work includes Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, and Naples Philharmonic. She has a B.F.A. from Syracuse University.



PAOLO MONTALBAN*

(*Carl-Magnus Malcolm*) returns to A.C.T. after his recent role as the Emperor in *The Orphan of Zhao*

(directed by Carey Perloff, a coproduction with La Jolla Playhouse). He most recently appeared onstage in the reconceived production of The Unsinkable Molly Brown at Denver Center for the Performing Arts Theatre Company. He has been seen on Broadway in Breakfast at Tiffany's, Pacific Overtures, and The King and I, and off Broadway in Two Gentlemen of Verona and The Romance of Magno Rubio. Montalban is best known on television as the Prince in ABC's Cinderella and as series regular Kung Lao in TNT's Mortal Kombat: Conquest. He has also contributed in guest-star and recurring roles on Madam Secretary, Nurse Jackie, One Life to Live, and Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. On film, he can be seen in Just Wright, The Great Raid, and festival favorite Two *Weeks.* He holds a pre-med psychology degree from Rutgers University.



BRIGID O'BRIEN[‡]

(*Fredrika Armfeldt*) is a 14-year-old actor making her debut at A.C.T. Currently an eighth grader, O'Brien recently was

the cover for the role of Young Kim in the San Francisco Opera production of *Show Boat.* She also appeared in the Mountain Play productions of *The Sound of Music* (Marta von Trapp) and *The Music Man*

and a member of Actors' Equity Association



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^{*} Member of the A.C.T. Young Conservatory and a member of Actors' Equity Association



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WHO'S WHO IN A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

(Amaryllis). One of her favorite experiences was playing the role of Scout in the Ross Valley Players' production of To Kill a Mockingbird.



ANNEMARIA

BAJALA* (Mrs. Anderssen) makes her first appearance at A.C.T with A Little Night Music. She was most recently seen by Bay Area audiences as

Mama Sid in The Fourth Messenger at the Ashby Stage and as Hedwig 5 in the Boxcar Theatre production of *Hedwig and the* Angry Inch. Her regional stage credits include over a dozen leading roles, including Joan of Arc in Saint Joan, Imogen in Cymbeline, Portia in The Merchant of Venice, Hermione in The Winter's Tale, Titania in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Meta in Times Like These (Carbonell Award nomination for Best Actress) at New



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Theatre in Miami, Florida, where she was a core company member. She performed with many other Florida companies, including Actors' Playhouse, Women's Theatre Project, Miami Light Project, Mosaic Theatre, and Hollywood Playhouse. Rajala is a native of Finland, and she earned her B.F.A. in musical theater performance from New World School of the Arts.



ANDRES **RAMIREZ***

(Mr. Erlanson) was introduced to performing at an early age and pursued an artistic education at the Los Angeles

County High School for the Arts, Pepperdine University, and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, where he began studying with César Ulloa. Noteworthy roles include the title role in Candide with the Douglas Morrisson Theatre, Borsa in Rigoletto with Livermore Valley Opera, Macheath in The Threepenny Opera with Waffle Opera, the dual roles of Uri/Gabriel in the North American premiere of Anya17, Boy 1/Bill in a double bill of Trouble in Tahiti and A Hand of Bridge with Opera Parallèle, Eisenstein in Die Fledermaus with both the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Pepperdine University, the Baker in Into the Woods at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and Pirelli in Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street at Pepperdine University.

EMILY SKINNER*

(Charlotte Malcolm) was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Actress in the original Broadway production of Side Show. Her other Broadway credits

include Jekyll & Hyde, The Full Monty, James Joyce's The Dead (with Christopher Walken), Dinner at Eight (Outer Critics Circle Award nomination), and Billy Elliot: The Musical (Broadway World Award). Off Broadway she has starred in the New York City Center

Encores! productions of Fiorello!, No Strings, Pardon My English, and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, as well as leading roles at Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons, and Roundabout Theatre Company. Regionally, she has appeared in productions at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Signature Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, The Old Globe, the Alliance Theatre, The Muny in St. Louis, and numerous others. Recently, she originated lead roles in Dame Julie Andrews's new musical, The Great American Mousical, and in Stephen King and John Mellencamp's musical, Ghost Brothers of Darkland County. This fall, she heads to Japan to appear in the first production of Harold Prince's new upcoming Broadway show, The Prince of Broadway.



CAITLAN TAYLOR[†]

(*Mrs. Segstrom*) recently completed her second year in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. Past M.F.A.

productions include The Cherry Orchard (Ranevskaya), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Helena), Our Lady of 121st Street (Marcia), Bad Jews, Kalos Kai Agathos, and Hello from Bertha. Taylor has worked regionally at the College Light Opera Company, Main Street Theatre, and Scotch'n'Soda Theatre in Pittsburgh, where she starred in the company's productions of The Drowsy Chaperone and Me and My Girl. Taylor is a proud alumnus of The High School for the Performing and Visual Arts in Houston, Texas, and Carnegie Mellon University, where she received a B.F.A. in vocal performance with honors. Favorite opera roles include the Countess in Le nozze di Figaro, Fiordiligi in Così fan tutte, and Jessie in Kurt Weill's Mahagonny-Songspiel. This is her Geary stage debut.

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LAURIE VELDHEER* (Anne Egerman) has been seen on

Broadway as Sophie Sheridan in *Mamma Mia!* and as Hannah/ Smalls and

understudy for Katherine Plumber in the original cast of *Newsies the Musical*. Other

credits include Millie in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* at the Maltz Jupiter Theatre and Paper Mill Playhouse, *Newsies* and *Hairspray* at Paper Mill Playhouse, Jane Foster in *Hero: The Musical* at Asolo Repertory Theatre, Natalie in *Next to Normal* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and Brenda in the national tour of *Hairspray*. Veldheer is originally from Grand Rapids, Michigan, but now resides

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WHO'S WHO IN A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

in New York City. She received her B.F.A. in musical theater from Pennsylvania State University. This is her A.C.T. debut.



KAREN ZIEMBA*

(*Desiree Armfeldt*) received Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Circle awards for her performance in *Contact* at Lincoln Center Theater.

Other Broadway, off-Broadway, and regional credits include *Bullets Over* Broadway, Chicago, Curtains (Outer Critics Circle Award, Tony Award nomination), Crazy for You (Joseph Jefferson Award), Never Gonna Dance (Outer Critics Circle Award, Tony Award nomination), And the World Goes 'Round (Drama Desk Award), Steel Pier (Tony Award nomination), I Do! I Do! (Drama Desk Award nomination), Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street, 110 in the Shade, The Most Happy Fella, Hello Dolly!, Boeing-Boeing, Much Ado About Nothing, Brighton Beach Memoirs, Broadway Bound, Heresy, Almost Home, Sylvia, and Six Degrees of Separation. Ziemba has appeared in several episodes of the many Law and Order series; The Kennedy Center Honors in tributes to Angela Lansbury and Julie Harris; and in PBS's Sondheim: A Celebration at Carnegie Hall, My Favorite Broadway: The Leading Ladies, and Ira Gershwin at 100.



DANIELLE FRIMER®

(Understudy) most recently played Nell in *Indian Ink* at A.C.T. Previous mainstage and Conservatory credits

include Ophelia in *Hamlet*, *Old Hats* with Bill Irwin and David Shiner, *A Christmas Carol, Napoli* with Marco Baricelli and Seana McKenna, *The Girl from Maxim's*, *The Country Wife*, *Cloud Nine*, *Niagara Falls*, and the devised piece *Battle for Babylon*. Other regional and New York credits include the Princess in *Love's* Labour's Lost (Post5 Theatre), Olivia in Twelfth Night (Portland Actors Ensemble), Fox on the Fairway, Shrek, and Pirates of Penzance (Summer Repertory Theatre), Wallenberg (White Plains Performing Arts Center), Stop the Virgens (St. Ann's Warehouse, directed by Adam Rapp), and A Midsummer Night's Dream and Julius Caesar (Shakespeare Santa Cruz). Frimer holds a B.A. from Yale University, where she was the recipient of the Branford Arts Prize, and, as of May 2015, an M.F.A. from A.C.T.



ZACH KENNEY* (Understudy) was seen in A.C.T.'s production of 1776 last season. Regional credits include 1776 (Asolo Repertory Theatre); and Red,

Who Am I This Time . . . ?, and Mary's Wedding (Indiana Repertory Theatre). Chicago credits include Hair (American Theatre Company), Hit The Wall (The Inconvenience), Chicago Boys (Goodman Theatre New Stages), It's a Wonderful Life and Waiting for Lefty (American Blues Theater, Artistic Affiliate), The Gospel According to James (Victory Gardens Theater), and The Farnsworth Invention and Not Enough Air (TimeLine Theatre Company). Kenney has appeared on Chicago Fire (NBC) and is from San Francisco.



VICKI SHAGHOIAN*

(*Understudy*) has been critically acclaimed for her versatility as a performer. Opera, concert, and theater

credits include Jenûfa (Sir Charles Mackkeras); Der Rosenkavalier (Sir John Pritchard); and Das Lied von der Erde, L'Enfant et les Sortilèges, and Seven Deadly Sins (Kent Nagano). Other credits include over a dozen libretti with Donald Pippin, Windsor Follies at Laurie Beechman Theatre and Waldorf Astoria, 365 *Plays/365 Days* at Yale Repertory Theatre, *The Cherry Orchard* at Miscreant Theater, and *The Wild Party* at Yale Cabaret. Shaghoian was assistant professor of acting at the Yale School of Drama from 2000-2014 before joining the A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program faculty.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM (Composer

and Lyricist) wrote the music and lyrics for Road Show (2008), Passion (1994), Assassins (1991), Into the Woods (1987), Sunday in the Park with George (1984), Merrily We Roll Along (1981), Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (1979), Pacific Overtures (1976), The Frogs (1974), A Little Night Music (1973), Follies (1971; revised in London, 1987), Company (1970), Anyone Can Whistle (1964), and A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum (1962), as well as the lyrics for West Side Story (1957), Gypsy (1959), Do I Hear a Waltz? (1965), and additional lyrics for Candide (1973). Side by Side by Sondheim (1976), Marry Me a Little (1981), You're Gonna Love Tomorrow (1983), and Putting It Together (1993) are anthologies of his work, as is the musical Sondheim on Sondheim. He composed the film scores of Stavisky (1974) and Reds (1981), and songs for Dick Tracy (Academy Award, 1990). He also wrote songs for the television production *Evening Primrose* (1966); co-authored with Anthony Perkins; the film The Last of Sheila (1973); and, with George Furth, the play Getting Away with Murder (1996). He provided incidental music for the plays The Girls of Summer (1956), Invitation to a March (1961), and Twigs (1971). He won Tony Awards for Best Score for a Musical for Passion, Into the Woods, Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street, A Little Night Music, Follies, and Company. All of these shows won the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, as did Pacific Overtures and Sunday in the Park with George, the latter also receiving the Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Saturday Night (1954), his first professional musical, finally had its New York premiere in 1999 at Second Stage Theatre.

HUGH WHEELER (Librettist) wrote the books for A Little Night Music, revised productions of Irene (with Joseph Stein), Candide, Sweeney Todd: The Demon *Barber of Fleet Street* (based on the play by Christopher Bond), and Meet Me in St. Louis (adapted from the 1949 film). His plays include *Big Fish*, *Little Fish*; Look: We've Come Through; and We Have Always Lived in the Castle (adapted from the Shirley Jackson novel). He contributed additional material to Pacific Overtures and adapted the Kurt Weill opera Silverlake. He received Tony Awards for Best Book of a Musical for *A Little Night* Music, Candide, and Sweeney Toddall collaborations with Stephen Sondheim. Wheeler left unfinished books for Bodo, Fu Manchu, and a new libretto for The Merry Widow at the time of his death in 1987.

MARK LAMOS (*Director*) is currently artistic director of Connecticut's historic Westport Country Playhouse. Previously, as artistic director of Hartford Stage, he accepted the Tony Award for that theater's body of work. His production of Edward Albee's Seascape was also nominated for a Tony Award. His off-Broadway productions of Albee's Tiny Alice and Shakespeare's Measure for Measure won Lucille Lortel Awards. His work for Lincoln Center Theater includes Cymbeline, The Rivals, Big Bill, and The Grand Manner. Other New York credits include productions for The Public Theater, Primary Stages, Signature Theatre Company, Second Stage Theatre, and Roundabout Theatre Company. He works extensively in national opera, including The Metropolitan Opera, New York City Opera, San Francisco Opera, and companies in Santa Fe, St. Louis, Dallas, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, as well as abroad in Toronto, Canada; Bergen, Norway; Gothenberg, Sweden; and the Munich Biennale. His extensive work in American theaters includes productions at A.C.T., Yale Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, The Old Globe in San

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States Diego, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, University of Delaware's Resident Ensemble Players, and California Shakespeare Theater, among many others. He has been awarded three honorary doctorates and was a Frederick W. Beinecke Fellow at Yale University.

VAL CANIPAROLI's (*Choreographer*) versatility has made him one of the most sought-after choreographers in the United States and abroad. Although San Francisco Ballet has been his artistic home for more than 41 years, Caniparoli has also contributed to the repertories of more than 40 companies, including Joffrey Ballet, Boston Ballet, Scottish Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet, and Northern Ballet Theatre. Caniparoli has also choreographed for Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, and The Metropolitan Opera. He has worked extensively with the San Francisco Symphony, most memorably on the Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov operaballet *Mlada*, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Caniparoli has received ten grants for choreography from the National Endowment for the Arts, an artist fellowship from the California Arts Council, and two awards from the Choo-San Goh & H. Robert Magee Foundation. Previous work with A.C.T. includes the staging and creation (with Carey Perloff) of Tosca Café and choreography for A Doll's House, A Christmas Carol, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, and Arcadia.

WAYNE BARKER (*Music Director*) received a Tony Award nomination and a Drama Desk Award for his music for *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Also for Broadway, he composed the music and co-wrote lyrics for *Dame Edna: Back with a Vengeance!* and contributed songs to the farewell tour, as well as her 2004 Royal Variety Performance. His other scores include the world premiere of *Laugh* at Studio Theatre, *The Great Gatsby* and *The Primrose Path* (Guthrie Theater), *Twelfth Night* and *Three Musketeers* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), and Parallel Exit's dance-theater piece *I Love Bob*. He has arranged and conducted a variety of scores for regional theaters, including *Sing for Your Shakespeare* at Westport Country Playhouse and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at La Jolla Playhouse. His symphony pops arrangements have been played by orchestras all over the world. Last fall he made his acting debut as Cosme McMoon in *Souvenir* at Portland Stage Company.

CANDICE DONNELLY (Costume Designer) most recently worked on Indian Ink at A.C.T. and Roundabout Theatre Company (Lucille Lortel Award nomination for Outstanding Costume Design). Other A.C.T. credits include Elektra, Endgame and Play, Race, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, The Circle, and Happy End. Other credits include La novicia rebelde (Teatro Opera Citi in Buenos Aires); Autumn Sonata (Yale Repertory Theatre); Endgame (Brooklyn Academy of Music); Dolley Madison (PBS's American Experience); The Wiz, The Importance of Being Earnest, and Three Sisters (Center Stage in Baltimore); She Loves Me (Westport Country Playhouse); and Edgardo Mine (Guthrie Theater). She has worked on Broadway productions of Our Country's Good, Fences, Hughie, Search and Destroy, and Mastergate. Off-Broadway credits include As You Like It and The Skin of Our Teeth (Shakespeare in the Park), and Haroun and the Sea of Stories and La finta giardiniera (New York City Opera). She has also designed shows for Opera Hong Kong, Minnesota Opera, Flemish National Opera, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, among others.

RICCARDO HERNANDEZ (Scenic

Designer) is an internationally renowned set designer who has been designing Broadway and off-Broadway stages since his graduation from the Yale School of Drama in 1992. Select Broadway credits include The Gershwins' Porgy and Bess; The People in the Picture; Caroline, or Change; Topdog/Underdog; Bells Are Ringing; Parade (Tony nomination); Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk; and The Tempest. Recent off-Broadway credits include

[®] Member of A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts Program Class of 2015 and a member of Actors' Equity Association

WHO'S WHO IN A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC

Grounded, The Library, February House (The Public Theater), The Invisible Hand (New York Theatre Workshop), Much Ado About Nothing (the Duke on 42nd Street), Offices (Atlantic Theater Company), An Oresteia (Classic Stage Company), and Mouth to Mouth (Acorn Theater). He also designed the opera Amistad by Thulani Davis and Anthony Davis at the Lyric Opera of Chicago. Hernandez is a recipient of the 2000 Princess Grace Statuette Award.

ROBERT WIERZEL's (Lighting Designer) prior A.C.T. credits include 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. He has designed productions with opera companies around the world, as well as numerous productions with The Glimmerglass Festival and New York City Opera. New York Broadway productions include Lady Day at Emerson's Bar & Grill, starring Audra McDonald, and the musical Fela! (Tony Award nomination). Other New York City credits include work with the New York Shakespeare Festival/ The Public Theater, Signature Theatre Company, Roundabout Theatre Company, Playwrights Horizons, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. Dance work includes 29 years with the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company. He has designed at several regional theaters across the country, including Hartford Stage, Center Stage in Baltimore, Yale Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, and the Mark Taper Forum. He holds an M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama and serves on the faculty at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

KEVIN KENNEDY's (Sound Designer) credits include Luck Be a Lady, Noah Racey's Pulse, 1776, Deathtrap, and Bonnie & Clyde (pre-Broadway) at Asolo Repertory Theatre; This Wonderful Life at Asolo Repertory Theatre, Cleveland Play House, Syracuse Stage, The Laguna Playhouse, and North Coast Repertory Theatre; The Colored Museum at Huntington Theatre Company; Nilo Cruz's Hurricane for Ringling International Arts Festival and Arca Images/Miami-Dade County Auditorium; Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City and 1776 at A.C.T.; The Rocky Horror Show at The Old Globe; and Mamma Mia!, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and Flashdance the Musical tours. He was also production engineer/assistant designer for Sister Act, Bonnie & Clyde, and Kinky Boots (2013 Tony Award for Sound Design) on Broadway. Kennedy has also toured as the sound engineer with The Alan Parsons Live Project.

JANET FOSTER, CSA (Casting) 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 Taking Sides (co-cast). Off-Broadway credits include Lucy, Brundibar, True Love, Endpapers, The Dying Gaul, The Maiden's Prayer, and The Trojan Women: A Love Story at Playwrights Horizons, as well as Floyd Collins, The Monogamist, A Cheever Evening, Later Life, and many more. 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).

DICK DALEY's* (Stage Manager) stagemanagement credits at A.C.T. include Indian Ink, The Orphan of Zhao, 1776, Gem of the Ocean, Happy End, Travesties, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Waiting for Godot, and the world premieres of A Christmas Carol and After the War. Other regional credits include The Opposite of Sex and Dr. Faustus, written and directed by David Mamet (Magic Theatre); River's End, Bus Stop, Communicating Doors, and The Last Schwartz (Marin Theatre Company); *Macbeth* and *Henry V* (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); Twelfth Night (Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company); King Lear and Henry V (the Company of Women); The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui; Ain't Misbehavin'; and The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me. Past A.C.T. positions include conservatory producer and associate production manager. Prior to moving to San Francisco, Daley was the production manager at Emerson College in Boston for seven years and oversaw the B.F.A. production/stagemanagement program.

MEGAN MCCLINTOCK* (Assistant Stage Manager) most recently assistant stagemanaged Indian Ink at A.C.T. and Rapture, Blister, Burn at Aurora Theatre Company. She often works across the bay at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; favorite Berkeley Rep credits include An Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures, Girlfriend, The Arabian Nights, The White Snake, No Man's Land, Dear Elizabeth, and How to Write a New Book for the Bible. Other local credits include Così fan tutte, L'elisir d'amore, and Postcard from Morocco at the Merola Opera Program and The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby at California Shakespeare Theater. McClintock has a B.A. in theater and history from Willamette University.

BRYAN HUNT's (Associate Director) directing credits include Watson: The Musical at The King's College and West Village Musical Theatre Festival (winner, Best Musical and Best Director); Alien Sex Comedy at New Light Theater Project Dark Room Series; Henry V at the Great River Shakespeare Festival (Shakespeare for Young Actors); As You Like It at Theatre-Hikes Colorado; Pretty, Smart, Poetic (staged reading) at Westport Country Playhouse; and Urinetown: The Musical at Margo Jones Theatre in Dallas, Texas. He has served as associate and assistant director on productions at several regional theaters, including Westport Country Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, Dallas Theater Center,

Center Stage in Baltimore, Arena Stage, Center Theatre Group, and The Old Globe, as well as the world premiere of the Tony Award–winning *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* on Broadway, at Lincoln Center Theater, and at McCarter Theatre. Hunt is also a producing associate with Octopus Theatricals.

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 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 cofounder and president of Epic Transitions, a Bay Areabased nonprofit dedicated to providing transformational trek experiences to young adults in need of support with life direction.

BURT AND DEEDEE MCMURTRY

(Executive Producers) married soon after graduating from Rice University in Houston and have lived on the San Francisco peninsula since they arrived in California in 1957. They recently produced A.C.T.'s productions of 1776, Arcadia, Maple and Vine, Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City, Vigil, Rock 'n' Roll, Happy End, and The Imaginary Invalid. Both Burt and Deedee feel that theater is an important asset to the people of the Bay Area and are pleased to support it. Deedee has played a pivotal role not only as a member of the A.C.T. Emeritus Advisory Board, but also as a former co-chair of the Producers Circle, ensuring that A.C.T. has the funds needed to produce inspiring work onstage each year. An electrical engineer by training and a retired venture capitalist, Burt is an active volunteer at Stanford University and past chair of its board of trustees.

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

NEW STRANDS

New Strands, A.C.T.'s new-works program, is invested in supporting translations, adaptations, and original works from the artists we love. Our current commissions include interdisciplinary projects, San Francisco-inspired stories, and work that has an international lens.

Photo by Ryan Montgomery

Current commissions include:

Monstress

Theater pieces inspired by Lysley Tenorio's *Monstress: Stories*

A team of three writers and a composer journeys through San Francisco-based author Lysley Tenorio's quirky and moving short stories of Filipino immigration, unrealized dreams, loss of youth and place, and generational and cultural clashes.

Be sure to catch *Save the I-Hotel* and *Presenting . . . the Monstress!* at The Strand Theater as part of our 2015-2016 subscription season, and *The Brothers* as a workshop presentation during the show.

Save the I-Hotel Adapted by Philip Kan Gotanda

Presenting . . . the Monstress! Adapted by Sean San José

The Brothers

Adapted by Colman Domingo

The Happiness of Fish by Dave Malloy

The author/composer of the acclaimed plays *Natasha*, *Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812* (OBIE Award Special Citation), and *Ghost Quartet* (Drama Desk Award nomination) explores atheism and theism through the lenses of movement, beauty, and Taoism in this music-theater piece.

How to Catch Creation by Christina Anderson

Named by *American Theatre* magazine as one of the 15 up-and coming artists "whose work will be transforming America's stages for decades to come," the author of *Good Goods* and *Man in Love* is creating an original work inspired by the history, topography, and spirit of San Francisco.

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Ursula Rani Sarma Beloved Bay Area author Khaled Hosseini's (*The Kite Runner*) best-selling, intimate story about the remarkable bond between two Afghani women of different generations, set against an epic background of love and war, is being adapted by Irish-Indian playwright Ursula Rani Sarma.

This program is made possible by Hewlett Foundation's New Works Endowment and by the Edgerton Foundation for New American Theatre. For more information, <u>visit act-sf.org/commissions</u>.

WHEREARE THEY NOW? A.C.T.'S YOUNG CONSERVATORY AND M.F.A. PROGRAM ALUMNI

By Shannon Stockwell

A.C.T. is committed to providing all of the students in our various Conservatory programs with the skills they need to excel in the professional world—in theater and beyond. For our Young Conservatory (YC) students, theater education provides essential experience in teamwork and collaboration, which helps them succeed in any field, while our Master of Fine Arts Program actors get high-caliber training that prepares them for entry into the world of professional theater. Here's what some of the alumni from our acclaimed programs are up to today—their careers are varied, but they were all profoundly influenced by their A.C.T. experience.

> If you are an A.C.T. alum, we want to hear from you! Please email us at alumni@act-sf.org to update us about your contact information and what you are up to now.

YOUNG CONSERVATORY ALUMNI



KIRSTEN POTTER took part in the YC in the early 1990s. Today, aside from being a successful professional actor, Potter is one of the most recognized audiobook readers in the country. She has earned accolades for her performances on such books as *Catch Me*, by Lisa Gardner; *Station Eleven*, by Emily St. John Mandel; and *We've Got Issues*, by Judith Warner.

"The experience of working with Craig [Slaight, YC director] and the YC gave me the confidence to enter a very competitive field," Potter says. "I learned to believe in myself."

LAUREN ROSI was in the YC during her high school years (2000–03), taking part in several classes and two productions. Following high school, she went to Emerson College to study musical theater and education. In addition to performing onstage when she gets the chance, she is now the director of the theater program at St. Joseph Notre Dame High School in Alameda, where she is currently in her third year of teaching.

Rosi says, "The most important lesson I learned from Craig is one that I try to pay forward every day as a teacher: follow your dreams, but know that you are the one who is going to have to make those dreams come true."





NICK BAEFSKY participated in the YC from middle school until the end of high school. After graduation, he attended Deep Springs College, an alternative two-year school in California, where he discovered a passion for ranch management. He is now finishing his undergraduate degree in creative writing at Cornell University. When he graduates, he is planning to work on a ranch in Raton, New Mexico.

"Something that I like about both working in ranching and in theater is the intense collaboration with other people," Baefsky says. "In the YC, at a relatively young age, you're held accountable and asked to perform at a much more professional level."

M.F.A. PROGRAM ALUMNI

LATEEFAH HOLDER graduated from the M.F.A. Program in 2014, and following that, she moved to Los Angeles, where she earned roles on HBO's *Getting On* and the Comedy Central show *Review*. "The M.F.A. Program was amazing," she says. "Because of A.C.T., I had the confidence, the training, and the wherewithal to really do the job and do it well." She is continuing to experience success in television and recently recorded a pilot for a show called *Kevin from Work*.

"I came to A.C.T. thinking, 'I can do this," Holder says. "I left knowing that I could."





ALEX MORF graduated from the M.F.A. Program in 2008. For the next few years, he acted at many regional theaters across the country and was in the National Theatre of London's tour of *War Horse*. When he returned to New York, he was cast in the 2014 Broadway revival of *Of Mice and Men*, starring James Franco and Chris O'Dowd. Morf also has a successful film career, appearing in the television shows *Elementary, Daredevil,* and *Turn,* and the movies *Maggie's Plan* and *In Dubious Battle.* "Going to school for acting is one of the best things I ever did with my life," says Morf. "A.C.T. helped free the artist in me."

ROY CONLI attended A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program in the 1970s, well before it became the M.F.A. Program in 1995. As a producer at Disney Animation Studios, he has worked on the films *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (1996), *Treasure Planet* (2002), and *Tangled* (2010), and he recently accepted the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film for *Big Hero 6* (2014).

"My basic underpinning as an artist has come from my time at A.C.T.," Conli says. "The structural analysis and the dramaturgy I learned there are fundamental in terms of how I understand story and create worlds."



WILL ON WHEELS M.F.A. PROGRAM STUDENTS BRING THE BARD TO SCHOOLS

By Shannon Stoc<mark>kwel</mark>l

FOR THE EIGHTH SPRING IN A ROW, A.C.T.'S

Will on Wheels was a resounding success. In this unique program, our second-year Master of Fine Arts Program actors rehearse a Shakespeare play, shortened for length and designed for flexibility in a variety of spaces. Then, they bring the show to Bay Area schools and community centers, and following each performance, they field questions from their rapt audiences about the performance, the text, and their lives as actors. As part of the M.F.A. Program's Citizen Artist curriculum, M.F.A. students also receive training from and accompany master teaching artists to classrooms for pre- and postshow workshops. Since Will on Wheels began in 2008, A.C.T. has performed for over 15,000 people at high schools, middle schools, and community centers.

This year, the play was *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Shakespeare's romantic comedy about a tangled web of lovers. During March, A.C.T.'s crew and the M.F.A. Program actors brought the show to 19 sites—including Central Market's Canon Kip Senior Center and The Arc, as well as an outdoor performance on our new Stage Coach mobile unit in Bayview's Mendell Plaza—with a total of 2,925 people in attendance.

For students, the opportunity to see live theater can be influential. "Many of the schools we go to don't have the time or resources to leave on a field trip to see a play," says Director of Education & Community Programs Elizabeth Brodersen. Because A.C.T. believes that it is important for students to experience the arts while they are still young, the performances are affordable, and for our ACTsmart partner schools, they are free. "Will on Wheels is often the first time these students get to see live classical theater, and that exposure can awaken an interest in them to continue pursuing the arts," says Brodersen.

Having live theater come to their schools is beneficial for students, but the Will on Wheels tour is also an exceptional educational opportunity for the M.F.A. Program actors, who relish the chance to perform for students. "Youth audiences are so transparent and smart," says actor Christina Liang.





"You have to be on your game and engaged every second, because if you lose focus, they can sense it."

"Will on Wheels allows the M.F.A. Program actors to work with a classical text, which is one of the main tenets of our training program," says Conservatory Director Melissa Smith. But the very nature of working on a touring show is in itself a learning experience. "With multiple shows and a variety of performance spaces, the program promotes the actors' stamina and flexibility," says Smith.

"Will on Wheels provided me with huge artistic growth," agrees actor Thomas Stagnitta. "The constantly shifting spaces and different audiences challenged me to be on my toes every performance."

Overall, Will on Wheels is a transformative experience for the M.F.A. Program actors."The tour really pushed me to be present and flexible in any given environment," says Liang. "Every audience was different, but they all responded so well to the material, which inspired me to be free, take risks, and have fun."

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT BRINGING THE BARD TO YOUR SCHOOL, VISIT:

ACT-SF.ORG/EDUCATION

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CITIZEN ARTIST ASPECT OF THE M.F.A. PROGRAM, VISIT:

ACT-SF.ORG/MFA

BETWEEN RIVERSIDE AND CRAZY 2015 PULITZER WINNER LAUNCHES A.C.T.'S NEXT SEASON by Nirmala Nataraj

WALTER "POPS" WASHINGTON IS DESPERATELY

trying to hold on to a prime piece of real estate—one of the last rent-controlled apartments in New York City. His landlord wants him and his newly paroled son out; his former colleagues are begging him to back down from a lawsuit he filed against City Hall eight years ago; the local liquor store has closed; and a beautiful, mysterious Santeria practitioner promises both seduction and salvation in the midst of it all.

Stephen Adly Guirgis's critically acclaimed play *Between Riverside and Crazy* is an urban dramedy that is as timely as it is thought-provoking. After premiering in New York last year, it secured the 2015 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Now, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, which the Pulitzer jury lauded as a "nuanced, beautifully written play that uses dark comedy to confront questions of life and death," arrives at A.C.T. as the inaugural production of our 2015–16 season.

A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff knew that she wanted to begin the season with a piece that would be "big and muscular and appealing." Much like Guirgis's previous work, the play asks large questions about faith, morality, race, and family. Given its gritty and sometimes controversial themes, critics have described it as a descendant of *All in the Family*. Director Irene Lewis, who returns to A.C.T. after staging David Mamet's politically charged *Race* (2011) and George F. Walker's *Dead Metaphor* (2013), is the perfect choice to bring Guirgis's high-velocity work to life.

"I try to write my plays in such a way that someone's going to want to play every part," Guirgis has said. Among his motley characters is the protagonist, Walter, an African American ex-cop in the middle of a drawnout lawsuit that began when he was shot by a white cop eight years ago. "Walter is fighting to hold onto the family apartment, a place that has become a home for a wildly disparate group of hangers-on looking for solace and comfort," says Perloff. These include Walter's jailbird son, Junior; Junior's spacey but perceptive girlfriend, Lulu; and Junior's volatile friend Oswaldo, who finds an unlikely father figure in Walter.

Guirgis, who describes the work as semiautobiographical, says that the play was spurred by two events: the first was moving into his Riverside Drive apartment the night after his mother died, and the second was an incident in which a white police officer shot a black undercover transit officer. "It was a really sad case, and I knew I wanted to try and write about it," he says. The result is a play that blurs the lines between sacred and profane, ugly and beautiful, tragic and uproariously funny.

As sobering as some of the themes may be, Perloff believes that audiences will be drawn to the comedy and surprised by the sudden left turns: "Every time you think you know where something is going, Guirgis upends you and makes you think again."

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THIS PRODUCTION, VISIT: ACT-SF.ORG
Milton Mosk and Tho

PLAYING A LEADING ROLE AT A.C.1

ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS THOMAS FOUTCH AND MILTON MOSK | By Aliza Arenson

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO BE INVOLVED WITH

A.C.T. throughout the season, and members of A.C.T.'s Directors and Producers Circles at the Associate Producer Level and above get a special seat behind the scenes. Benefits for these donors include the opportunity to sit in on early readings, meet the actors and creative team, view rehearsals, see the technical elements of the show come together, and visit the actors in the green room. As one of our Associate Producers for *A Little Night Music*, Thomas Foutch and Milton Mosk caught a fun and enriching up-close view of the play throughout the creative process.



Foutch and Mosk previously produced Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City and appreciated watching it grow throughout the rehearsal process. They increased their support again to be a part of A Little Night Music, because they love the power of musicals to entertain and educate. One of their favorite memories at A.C.T. was seeing Judy Kaye in Sourenir: A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins (2009). "She was so fantastic that it brought tears to my eyes, and to the eyes of everyone in the theater," says Mosk. More recently, they enjoyed Old Hats and felt it was "absolutely sensational, even though no words were spoken. That's what you get with A.C.T.: always a surprise!" Mosk has been coming to The Geary Theater since before A.C.T. was launched in San Francisco, and he is particularly thrilled about the recent opening of The Strand Theater. As a native San Franciscan, he worked in his family's restaurant across the street from The Strand in his youth and would sometimes sneak away to catch a movie at the theater. Now that we have renovated The Strand, he appreciates that he can "reminisce on old times" while looking forward to all that A.C.T. will offer in our new space.

Supporting A.C.T.'s work and contributing to the development of our plays is a vital role that an associate producer gets to fill. The opportunity to be involved in our productions has enabled Foutch and Mosk to feel more connected to A.C.T. by "helping to keep this fabulous theater company going for our enjoyment and the benefit of the city," says Mosk.

ARE YOU EXCITED ABOUT AN UPCOMING PRODUCTION IN THE 2015–16 SEASON?

WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED FROM THE BEGINNING?

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List Complete September 2014

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A.C.T. thanks the physicians and staff of the Centers for Sports Medicine, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, for their care of the A.C.T. company: Dr. Victor Prieto, Dr. Hoylond Hong, Dr. Susan Lewis, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corpus, Clinic Supervisor.

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A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (*Director, A.C.T. Artistic Director*) is celebrating her 23rd season as artistic director of A.C.T. This past fall, she

staged the New York premiere of Tom Stoppard's Indian Ink at Roundabout Theatre Company 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 (cocreated 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 Voysey 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).

Perloff is also an award-winning playwright. Her play Kinship was developed at the Perry-Mansfield New Play Festival and at New York Stage and Film (2013), and premiered at the Théâtre de Paris this October in a production starring Isabelle Adjani and Niels Schneider. 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 the 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).

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 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 Theater (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. Phone: 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. 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. 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/day on our website at act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current ticket subscribers and those who purchase ticket insurance enjoy ticket exchange privileges. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

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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.

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 lowerand 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 turned off 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 after-shave 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.

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THE SKY BAR

The Sky Bar features a classy backlit lounge and bar overlooking Geary Street, perfect for receptions at which mingling is key. **Capacity: 135**

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Called the "perfect playhouse" when it opened its doors in 1910, The Geary's ornate and magnificent theater will make any event unforgettable. With three levels of seating, a large proscenium stage, and state-of-the-art lighting and sound capabilities, the main theater has been impressing audiences for a hundred years. **Capacity: 1,015**

ACT AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

Fully stocked bars, A/V equiptment and production staff, onsite convection ovens, and ticketing services are just a few enhancements we can add to your event. For more information about any of our spaces or to schedule a tour, please contact A.C.T. Company Manager Amy Hand at **ahand@act-sf.org**.









