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About A.C.T.

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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER, a nonprofit organization in the heart of San Francisco, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and an ongoing engagement with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Ellen Richard, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its 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 A.C.T.'s creative work.

A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967; more than 320 A.C.T. productions have since been performed to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Today A.C.T. is recognized internationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting, honored with a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training (1979) and the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award (1996).

The first actor training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree, A.C.T.'s conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, serves 3,000 students every year. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.

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WILLIAM BALL (LEFT) AND MORTIMER FLEISHHACKER OUTSIDE THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

GANSLER STUDIOS

San Francisco's Theater Company

American Conservatory Theater Founding General Director William Ball, at the forefront of the regional theater movement, wanted to create a company outside New York that would have a significant national impact while providing an alternative to commercial theater. After a group of San Francisco civic leaders attended A.C.T.'s West Coast debut at Stanford University in 1966, they invited Ball and his company to settle in San Francisco, which was without a resident theater company. A.C.T. has been dedicated to bringing the power of live theater to San Francisco audiences since the company's first rousing performance of Ball's *Tartuffe* in the Geary Theater (now called the American Conservatory Theater) on January 21, 1967.

A.C.T.'s majestic stage opened January 10, 1910, rising from the rubble of the catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906. It was immediately hailed as one of the grandest playhouses in the United States. In 1975 the Geary was awarded a place on the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places and named a landmark of the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco. In 1989 the Loma Prieta earthquake ripped a gaping hole in the ceiling, destroying the proscenium arch and dumping tons of equipment and debris on the first six rows of orchestra seats. Nevertheless, A.C.T.'s second artistic director, Edward Hastings (who succeeded Ball in 1986), never considered canceling the season. For the next six years, A.C.T. performed in seven different venues around the city. "We had to encourage people to come back to this devastated, ravished, magical place called San Francisco," remembered Hastings. "And what they found in the theater were a lot of other people who were shook up. So there we were, all together in a theater, helping bring the city back together again."

With the support of a community that contributed to a record-breaking \$28.5 million capital campaign, the Geary

reopened in 1996 with a production of *The Tempest* directed by A.C.T.'s current artistic director, Carey Perloff, who took over after Hastings retired in 1992. Committed to proving that theater is still "a place where language is kept alive and functional and muscular and breathing," Perloff reconfirmed A.C.T.'s mission to expose San Francisco to exceptional works from across our rich theatrical tradition. She reintroduced the core acting company (which had been disbanded decades earlier) to keep top-quality local actors working, and she committed herself to "locavore" theater—theater made by, for, and about the community that supports it—with San Francisco-centered productions like *After the War*, *The Tosca Project*, and the much-beloved 2011 hit *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*.

Since the company's founding, A.C.T. has infused the Bay Area with some of the best young acting talent in the nation. The company first began training outside actors in the summer of 1967, and by 1969, the conservatory had expanded to include a year-long course of study, which has since evolved into the three-year, fully accredited, top-ranked Master of Fine Arts Program. M.F.A Program students often grace the mainstage and return to perform at A.C.T. as alumni; they are also regulars on stages around the Bay Area and beyond. Other programs include the Young Conservatory, which offers training and performance opportunities for students ages 8 to 19; Studio A.C.T., which offers acting classes for adults; and the Summer Training Congress, which attracts students from around the world.

With the arrival of distinguished Executive Director Ellen Richard, the recent conclusion of a new long-range strategic planning process, the introduction of a new education department, and the opening of a new performance space (The Costume Shop, located in the Mid-Market neighborhood across from UN Plaza), A.C.T. is poised to continue its leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco—and the nation.



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In 2010, the Koret Foundation made an overall philanthropic investment of \$23 million.



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Systems Administrator

Corporate Office

425 North 85th Street Seattle, WA 98103

p 206.443.0445 f 206.443.1246

adsales@encoremidiagroup.com

800.308.2898 x105

www.encoremidiagroup.com

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From the Artistic Director

KEVIN BERNÉ



Dear Friends,

Welcome to *Race*! As is the case with most of David Mamet's work, this provocative play is sure to punch you in the gut. Despite the fact that the pundits have told us we are living in a "postracial" era, there are few things as complex and polarizing in American culture as discussions about race. In our attempt to find a language to address past inequities, we have created a culture of euphemism in which the "truth" lies hidden behind a veil of subterfuge and politesse. When the explosive ingredient of gender is thrown into the mix, all bets are off.

In writing about the play, Mamet says, "Race, like sex, is a subject on which it is near impossible to tell the truth. In each, desire, self-interest, and self-image make the truth inconvenient to share not only with strangers but with members of one's own group, and, indeed, with oneself." He sees his play as a way to add to America's endless and constantly changing dialogue about these issues, and indeed A.C.T.'s production of *Race* continues an exploration of race and contemporary American culture that we began last season with *Clybourne Park* and continue later this season with *Maple and Vine* and *The Scottsboro Boys*.

Mamet's pugilistic, tough-talking lawyers challenge our notions of justice and vendetta, and ask us to question the way we arrive at decisions about culpability and "honor." It is telling that *Race* was written well in advance of the Dominique Strauss-Kahn scandal that enveloped New York this year—further evidence that the issues and circumstances raised in the play are frighteningly apropos.

To helm this production of *Race*, we are delighted to welcome back to the Bay Area director **Irene Lewis**, who ran Baltimore's CENTERSTAGE so brilliantly for 20 years. Irene is known for championing new plays, playwrights, and audiences, and had extraordinary success developing a broad African American audience at CENTERSTAGE through her landmark productions of major black plays. For A.C.T., Irene has assembled a remarkable company that includes core acting company member **Anthony Fusco** and three brilliant newcomers to A.C.T.: **Chris Butler**, **Susan Heyward**, and **Kevin O'Rourke**. As with *Clybourne Park*

and other provocative A.C.T. productions, we will host many postplay discussions and online chats so that the conversation can continue long after the curtain comes down.

With the start of our new season, we have also welcomed to A.C.T. an extraordinary new casting director, **Janet Foster**. Janet has had a long and distinguished career in New York and throughout regional theater and has been wise enough to cast many A.C.T. alums over the years in a wide array of productions. She is also a close colleague of Cal Shakes's artistic director, Jonathan Moscone, and a beloved teacher, having been part of the faculties of Rutgers, Fordham, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, among many other important actor-training programs. In our conservatory, she will teach audition techniques to our M.F.A. Program students. We very much look forward to introducing Janet to you this season.

Speaking of our M.F.A. students, we wanted to tell you about an important venture we are undertaking with our students and company members in collaboration with **Theater of War Productions**, a nonprofit group out of New York that uses classical Greek tragedy as a springboard to engage both veterans and civilians in discussions about the effects of war on the military and their families. In partnership with University of San Francisco, A.C.T. will present two staged readings (on November 13 and 14 at USF's Presentation Theater) of Sophocles' *Ajax*, which will be followed by moderated discussions with distinguished mental health specialists skilled in handling posttraumatic stress syndrome and other combat-related issues. Our readings will include M.F.A. Program alum **Timothy Hull**, who spent six years in the U.S. Army—including 16 months in Iraq—after graduating from A.C.T. and is now dedicated to using the power of theater to address traumatic issues of societal and cultural relevance.

Finally, I wanted to take a moment to personally salute San Francisco Film Society Executive Director **Graham Leggat**, one of the most passionate and visionary arts administrators I've ever met, who passed away in August after a long battle with cancer. Graham and I had many memorable conversations and encounters over the years; he taught me an enormous amount about the intersection of art and society, about the need to fight for each individual artist's voice, and about how to maintain a healthy sense of humor about the vagaries of our crazy business. His death is a terrible loss. I miss him already, and I salute his extraordinary legacy to the Bay Area.

Welcome, and enjoy *Race*!

Yours,

Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director*

ABOVE CAREY PERLOFF TEACHING IN THE A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM (JOSHUA ROBERTS, CLASS OF 2011, LEFT)

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L to R: Josh Breckenridge, Derrick Cobey, Kendrick Jones, and Julius Thomas III in *The Scottsboro Boys*. Photo by Paul Kolnik.

presents

RACE

by David Mamet
Directed by Irene Lewis

Scenery by Chris Barreca
Costumes by Candice Donnelly
Lighting by Rui Rita
Sound Design by Cliff Caruthers
Dramaturg Michael Paller

THE CAST

(in alphabetical order)

Henry Brown	Chris Butler*
Jack Lawson	Anthony Fusco*
Susan	Susan Heyward*
Charles Strickland	Kevin O'Rourke*

UNDERSTUDIES

Henry Brown—Michael Gene Sullivan*; *Jack Lawson* and *Charles Strickland*—Kevin Rolston*; *Susan*—Courtney Thomas†

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Stephanie Schliemann*, *Assistant Stage Manager*
Jaime McKibben, *Stage Management Fellow*

*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 2012 and an Equity Professional Theater Intern

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Mamet, Race, and the Right

BY DAN RUBIN

When David Mamet moved to Santa Monica, California, in 2003, he joined Ohr HaTorah, the synagogue of Rabbi Mordecai Finley. Finley is a rare creature: a conservative shepherding a congregation of Hollywood liberals. In a 2011 interview with Andrew Ferguson, a reporter with the *Weekly Standard*, the rabbi recounts an early conversation with Mamet, when the playwright asked which democratic presidential candidate Finley and his wife intended to vote for in the 2004 primary. “We said, ‘None of them,’” Finley recalls. “Dave said, ‘Oh no—you’re not going to vote for Nader!’ I said, ‘No.’ And then you could see it hit him. ‘Not Bush!’ ‘Well, yes. Bush.’ Dave was apologetic. He thought he’d embarrassed us. He said, ‘Oh I’m so sorry! I didn’t mean to pry! I shouldn’t have asked!’ I said, ‘No, no, it’s really not a problem. It’s not like we try to keep it a secret.’” It was Mamet’s first conversation with a conservative.

At the time, Mamet was still “addicted” (his word) to the liberalism he had been raised on growing up in Chicago. His parents were first-generation American Jews: his father was a labor lawyer who represented more than 300 unions; his mother was a former schoolteacher. “Jews of my day were Democrats, were Liberals,” he writes. “Everyone in the acquaintance of my parents’ generation supported the NAACP and the ACLU, knew the Rosenbergs were innocent and Whittaker Chambers guilty; no one would cross a picket line; and for a Jew, a vote Republican would have been as for him to endorse child sacrifice.” It was a mentality that was never challenged during Mamet’s career in the famously liberal entertainment industry. He tried to convert Finley to the Left; the rabbi, in turn, gave him works from his collection of conservative theorists. Mamet was stunned by what he read.

Over the course of G. W. Bush’s second term, Mamet studied. Ten months before the 2008 election, he debuted *November*, his first overtly political play, which, beneath its fast-paced lampooning of government in general, was his farewell to the Left. Months after the play opened on Broadway, he wrote the controversial essay “Why I Am No Longer a ‘Brain-Dead Liberal’” for the *Village Voice*, and earlier this year, he released *The Secret Knowledge: On the Dismantling of American Culture*, his 200-page pledge of allegiance to conservatism.

Rabbi Finley’s curriculum on conservative thought introduced Mamet to the works of Shelby Steele, to whom the playwright has dedicated his play *Race*. Steele is an award-winning senior fellow at Stanford’s Hoover Institution, where he has specialized in the study of race relations, multiculturalism, and affirmative action since 1994, focusing on the consequences of contemporary social programs. He’s written numerous books on race in America, most recently *White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era* (2006) and *A Bound Man: Why We Are Excited About Obama and Why He Can’t Win* (2007).

Like Finley, Steele is an oddity: a “black conservative,” which he begrudgingly describes as “one who votes against one’s people.” Like Mamet, Steele did not join the Right until the middle of his life. Born in the 1940s, he was raised in a liberal household in segregated Chicago. He watched his parents “struggle against an unapologetically racist America,” and by the time he reached college he was hungry for the “black rage” preached by comedian and social activist Dick Gregory, whose “raise your consciousness” campaign shaped Steele’s young political identity.

During his senior year, Steele led black students into the college president’s office with a list of demands (which Steele read as he dropped cigarette ash on the carpet), and, upon graduation, he worked in Great Society programs: post-civil rights efforts aimed at correcting years of oppression by injecting money into blighted communities. He saw these well-meaning attempts fail to do “little more than engender a kind of upscale corruption.” When he entered graduate school for literature in the 1980s, his politics remained intact: “Despite all the corruption and incompetence I had seen in those programs . . . I was still politically very far to the left. If I was not as intensely ‘black’ (by then a term of political identity) as I had been in college, I nevertheless wore my blackness on my sleeve even as I read Proust and Kafka and Dostoyevsky.”

Ultimately, it was the expectation “to be black”—to champion minority issues that he did not necessarily support, like affirmative action and “ethnic literature” courses—that made him weary of the Left. He writes, “White racism had made my race the limit of my individuality. But now the new black consciousness . . . wanted me to voluntarily, even proudly, do the same thing that racism had done: make my race more important than my individuality. . . . I simply couldn’t take the schizophrenia required to stay in the cultural and political world that I had always belonged to.”

Since moving to the right, Steele has argued that American society missed an opportunity in the years between the victories of the civil rights movement and the onset of the black power movement. “For Martin Luther King and the older civil rights generation, racism was simply a barrier, a tragic aberration in an America that was otherwise essentially open and fair,” he writes. They banked black freedom on “democratic principles and black advancement on individual responsibility.”

But for the leaders of the generation that followed,

Racism was not a mere barrier but the all-determining reality in which we lived. . . . Ugly human prejudices like racism did not just remain isolated in the hearts of racists. These dark passions worked by an “invisible hand” to generate societal structures that *impersonally* oppressed.

This belief in social determinism has hobbled America, Steele believes. It excused black America from responsibility for its own troubles, while white America fell into a “vacuum of moral authority that comes from simply *knowing* that one’s race is associated with racism.” White America forfeited its ability to speak on matters of race—any race. For making any racial criticism, a white person or institution could be branded as racist, “threatened with a stigmatization that can gravely injure businesses and ruin careers,” Steele argues. And so, the conversation has stalled.

Race is Mamet’s first play since his conversion. *November*, written less than two years earlier, captures the playwright’s man-behind-the-curtain revelations about politics (especially his native liberalism): there is no secret knowledge, no magic power that the government possesses that prepares it to meet the country’s challenges. *Race*, which opened on Broadway in December 2009, is also a play about America, but, as the title suggests, it zeroes in on race and, Mamet writes in his 2009 *New York Times* article “We Can’t Stop Talking about Race in America,” “the lies we tell each other on the subject”:

What has our 230-year national experience been but a dialogue about race? . . . [*Race*] is intended to be an addition to that dialogue. It is a play about lies. All drama is about lies. When the lie is exposed, the play is over. . . . For just as personal advantage was derived by whites from the defense of slavery and its continuation as Jim Crow and segregation, so too personal advantage, political advantage, and indeed expression of deeply held belief may lead nonwhites to defense of positions that, though they may be momentarily acceptable, will eventually be revealed as untenable.

Mamet agrees with Steele that Americans’ inability to speak openly and honestly about matters of race infects what should be our most impartial civil sector: the judiciary. O. J. Simpson went free, Steele suggests, because his lawyers pitted empirical evidence against “the *reputation* of racism for distorting and manipulating fact.” O. J. was found not guilty, in other words, because he once would have been found guilty. Mamet—whose father, even after the career-making debut of *American Buffalo*, asked his son, “When are you going to chuck all this nonsense and go to law school?”—writes in *The Secret Knowledge* that freedom cannot exist without objective law:

Justice is corrupted by consideration, not of whether or not the accused committed the crime, but of supposedly mitigating factors of his childhood, race, or environment. If weight is given, in extenuation, to his supposed goodness to animals or to his mother, he is then liable to leniency based not upon the needs of the citizenry (protection), but upon the criminal’s ability to dramatize his plight. If he may

entertain, and play upon the emotions of the judge and jury, if he and his defenders may flatter the ability to “be compassionate,” and call it courage, society is weakened. Laws, then, decided upon in tranquility, without reference to the individual, and based upon behaviors, are cast aside or vitiated by reference to merit, fairness, or compassion, all of which are inchoate, subjective, and nonquantifiable.

Democracy is put at risk when fears and bias influence legal proceedings. And yet, that is the world in which we live—it is the world in which *Race* lives—and the world in which lawyers work.

“Some people say that the client’s gotta pay you to do your best,” Mamet’s father told him. “The client’s not paying me to be best, the client’s paying me to win.” It is a line Mamet put in his 1991 movie *Homicide*; it is a concept he has held onto and dramatized in *Race*. The play gives us three lawyers who know courtrooms are never places of tranquility. They are flooded with emotion—especially when race is involved. It is not their job to mitigate those emotions so “the truth” will out. They manipulate our emotions to win.

This article was excerpted from “Mamet, Race, and the Right,” which appears in its entirety in Word on Plays. See below for details.

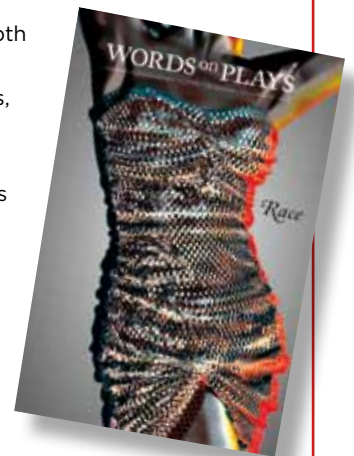
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Pick up *Words on Plays*, the smart souvenir!

Words on Plays, A.C.T.’s in-depth performance guide series, offers insight into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the A.C.T. subscription season. *Words on Plays* for *Race* includes interviews with director Irene Lewis and scholar Shelby Steele, articles about David Mamet and the history of race in America, and a glossary of references you’ll hear in today’s show.

Individual copies are available for purchase in our lobby, at the bars, and online, where you can also buy digital editions. Subscriptions to *Words on Plays* are also available at a discounted price that includes postage for mailing each issue to your home before the performance.

Each purchase of *Words on Plays* helps support A.C.T.’s **Theater in Schools** programs, which distribute *Words on Plays* and student study guides to teachers and students around the Bay Area free of charge. Extend the love of theater to future generations, while learning more about *Race*.



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Prologue*

OCT 25, 5:30PM

Come early for a preshow discussion with director Irene Lewis and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

Audience Exchanges*

NOV 1, 7PM/NOV 6, 2PM/NOV 9, 2PM

Stick around for a lively Q&A session with the cast and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

OUT with A.C.T.

NOV 2, 8PM

The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy drinks and treats at this popular afterparty.

Theater on the Couch*

NOV 4

Explore the minds of the characters with the chief of psychiatry from San Francisco's Kaiser Permanente Medical Center.

*All discussions are free for *Race* ticket holders. Please note that performance times vary.



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Scene Shop Tour **NOV 10**

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Backstage Tour **NOV 12**

Take an up-close look at the American Conservatory Theater and learn about its 100-year history.

Technical Rehearsal of *A Christmas Carol* **NOV 29**

Watch the director, designers, cast, and crew prepare for the opening of San Francisco's most beloved holiday tradition.



DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

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ASHLEY FORRETT



A.C.T. M.F.A. PROGRAM GRADUATE TIMOTHY HULL (FAR LEFT) WITH THE 172ND STRYKER BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM FROM FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA, AFTER ARRIVING AT CAMP DIAMONDBACK ON THE SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS OF MOSUL IN IRAQ IN THE LATE SUMMER OF 2005. THEIR FINAL DESTINATION: FORWARD OPERATING BASE (FOB) COURAGE, LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF MOSUL.

Theater of War

This November, A.C.T. partners with **Theater of War Productions** and **University of San Francisco** to bring Sophocles' powerful ancient war drama *Ajax* to San Francisco. Developed by Theater of War's visionary founder, **Bryan Doerries**, the program's unique structure features the staged reading of a Greek classic, followed by an expert panel and audience discussion, intended to bring together military service members, families of service members, and civilians to reflect on the universal human experience of war.

First staged at military bases in 2008 in an effort to destigmatize combat trauma and promote conversation about the life-changing effects of service, Theater of War quickly grew into a progressive public health campaign. To date, Doerries has mounted more than 150 Theater of War performances at sites that include the Pentagon, Guantanamo Bay, and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After receiving a generous grant from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation in collaboration with the USO, Theater of War opened the project up to include regional theaters and universities across the country, encouraging service members and civilians to dialogue in ways that otherwise might not be possible.

Each Theater of War experience begins with a play by Sophocles. The panel and intimate town-hall discussion that follows (facilitated for A.C.T. by Doerries on November 13 and USF Associate Professor Roberto Gutierrez Varea on November 14) aims to empower individuals to speak openly about their experiences of war—whether they are active service members, veterans, family members of those who serve or have served, caregivers, or civilians. *Ajax*'s story, and the theatrical experience the audience shares witnessing it, serve as a powerful point of reference from which to begin this conversation.

Doerries's adaptation of *Ajax* begins with the heroic soldier's return from the Trojan War. Denied the decorations he feels he is owed for years of impressive service as a skilled killer, Ajax becomes enraged. Blinded by the gods, he brutally slaughters

a field of cattle, under the delusion that he is in fact murdering his commanding generals. Upon regaining his sanity, Ajax sees that his honor has been destroyed. Doerries's depiction of Ajax's suicidal mental and emotional trauma, and his family's desperate attempts to understand him, is crucial to modern audiences recognizing themselves in the play.

Doerries maintains that *Ajax* and *Philoctetes*, another Sophocles text produced by Theater of War, were written in the fifth century B.C. as more than mere exercises in storytelling: they were rituals intended to aid in the reintegration of soldiers after battle. Sophocles, himself a general in the Athenian army, wrote for an audience of citizen-soldiers, who knew that the damages of war can never be entirely left on the battlefield. Staging *Ajax* today with that fact in mind unlocks the play's original and intended power. Doerries calls his experience with modern military audiences a complete revelation: "It is as if we, as actors and a director . . . had no idea what these plays were about. It's as if they were written in a code we didn't understand, that the military had to explain to us."

A.C.T. Artistic Director **Carey Perloff**, who will direct *Ajax* with a cast that features A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program graduate **Timothy Hull**, who spent six years with the Army, including 16 months in Iraq, agrees: "One of the most valuable aspects of classical theater is its ability to illuminate in startling ways the issues we are wrestling with in our own time." She continues, "A.C.T. is honored to participate in this extraordinary national project as part of our effort to bring the power of live theater to a broader community, and to engender dialogue and discussion around the critical issues facing our country at this time."

A.C.T.'s Theater of War presentations take place November 13 and 14 at 7 p.m. at USF's Presentation Theater (2350 Turk Boulevard, San Francisco, CA). They are free to the public. Reservations are recommended and can be made by contacting the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or act-sf.org.

Alumni Spotlight on Peter Friedrich: Theater Not War

In 2008, **Peter Friedrich**, A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 1994, was working as an actor in Los Angeles when he read a *New York Times* article about **American University in Iraq**. A couple of months later, he was in Sulaimani, 150 miles northwest of Baghdad, teaching acting and directing *Macbeth*. “It was fantastic,” Friedrich remembers. “I don’t know which is better—to see Shakespeare for the first time, or to watch an audience seeing Shakespeare for the first time. It’s like discovering the Grand Canyon. There were parents from Baghdad who didn’t speak a word of English, watching their children perform onstage, who said it was the proudest they’d ever been.” He had planned to stay only a year; he is now entering his fourth.

Friedrich’s students come from all over Iraq to this selective school, and he has been surprised by how much his students have in common with American actors: “Something about the pressure of being onstage releases certain character types: the tough guy, the tortured intellectual, the flirty one. It was true in New York, it was true in L.A., it is true in Stanislavski’s *An Actor Prepares*, and it is true in Iraq.”

The environment is, of course, different. Sulaimani has long suffered sectarian violence, and students from opposing factions attend the university together. Friedrich uses theater to smooth over those tensions. “Discussing problems doesn’t seem to do much good, I’ve found,” Friedrich reports. “It’s better just to embark on projects together and learn things about each other through the process.”

The stage can be a sanctuary for some students, but it’s not necessarily an escape: “Theater is the most dangerous *safe* thing you can do. No one’s going to die from doing a show, but it is so absolutely terrifying. These guys are basically performing in front of every single person they know—just think about the stakes of that and what it brings out in people. Afterwards, everyone’s in tears: that’s pretty cool.”

Friedrich is called on to use the skills he learned at A.C.T. every day. “My most enduring memory of A.C.T. is of learning to start over and rebuild, from scratch, something heartfelt that only I can deliver onstage. It is important to hold on to that when you’re out of school. There are plenty of people who will want to turn you cynical. Fortunately, there are infinitely more who pine for something true to transport and inspire them.” Friedrich inspired plenty of audiences as an actor, touring with Wendy Wasserstein’s *The Sisters Rosensweig* right after graduation; as a teacher, he inspires his students with the lessons he learned at A.C.T.

More than just a teacher, Friedrich is an ambassador of both American and Iraqi culture. “More important than any single success story would be the creation of a bridge between Iraqi and U.S. theater artists. So much of what is accomplished here [in Iraq] can’t escape the inevitable isolation. We need American productions and workshops to come here, our students to go to the U.S., or some fantastic combination. We need to show how shockingly alike we are.”



TOP PETER FRIEDRICH WITH THE CAST OF *WHAT'S IN A NAME*, WHICH PERFORMED IN A 600-SEAT PUBLIC THEATER. MIDDLE STUDENTS WORKING IN FRIEDRICH'S IMPROVISATION CLASS. BOTTOM FRIEDRICH'S STUDENTS REHEARSE *MACBETH*.

OCT 19–NOV 5

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or The Banish'd Cavaliers

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Clockwise from top (l to r) Dan Clegg, Marisa Duchowny, and Patrick Lane in a Lifetime; Jessica Kitchens in a movement class; Richard Prioleau and Omoze Idehenre in *Marcus*; or *The Secret of Sweet*; M.F.A. Program alum Elizabeth Banks (photo by Kimberley French)
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“An Exercise in Versatility”: A.C.T. M.F.A. Program Students Perform Contrasting Classics in Rotating Rep

This fall 11 A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program students team up to bring Aphra Behn’s *The Rover* and Arthur Miller’s *The American Clock* to Hastings Studio Theater. For the first time ever, the program’s second- and third-year students are performing in a traditional repertory schedule: rehearsing and performing the shows in rotation, rather than consecutively, the more common contemporary practice. The actors will test their talents, flexibility, and stamina as they perform roles in both plays—seemingly unrelated scripts with different tones and challenges, but both classics of the dramatic form—sometimes presenting a matinee of one piece just hours before an evening performance of the other.

The Rover, directed by A.C.T. Co-head of Voice and Dialects **Nancy Benjamin**, follows the bawdy adventures of a group of men—and the women they woo—in Naples during the raucous Carnival season. Written by Aphra Behn—the English language’s first professional female writer—in 1677, the play embodies the spirit of the Restoration, a time, according to Benjamin, “of and for women.” The show, rife with mistaken identities, prideful duels, and dizzying love affairs, poses questions about gender equality and sexual politics. Benjamin is excited to present the play because it “busts everything wide open,” smashing stereotypes about period plays and challenging actors and audiences alike.

While *The Rover* is a comedy, *The American Clock* concerns itself with the somber and disillusioned America of the 1930s. Directed by A.C.T. core acting company member **Manoel Felciano**, Arthur Miller’s personal and comprehensive account of the Great Depression features the actors in more than 40 roles. The story centers on the Baums, who are based on Miller’s own family: the playwright was 14 years old when the stock market crashed and his father lost his clothing business. Miller connects



MAGGIE RASTETTER (CLASS OF 2012) DURING REHEARSAL OF *THE ROVER*

his own history to the struggles of the rest of the nation by integrating material from Stud Terkel’s *Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression*, a collection of interviews. *Clock* is “stitched together,” Felciano explains, by popular music of the era. Like the play, the songs are about “having no money and still being able to find happiness.”

Both directors have found that the rep’s extended rehearsal process (in which actors alternate the show they rehearse from day to day) has been liberating for everyone involved. Benjamin says, “The actors have more cooking time, more incubation time. And I don’t feel as pressured to get down and get going in each rehearsal. It’s allowed more time for reflection.”

Second-year **Raymond Castelán**, who plays Lee Baum (“the surrogate of Arthur Miller”) and multiple roles in *The Rover*, says that, although the schedule is sometimes grueling, he has discovered “a pleasant side effect”: “I don’t have time to be as prepared as I like to be going into each rehearsal, so I’m discovering a fearless sense of ‘play’ through this process. It’s a sense I hope to bring to all my work as I move forward.”

Maggie Rastetter, a third-year student playing three parts between the two shows, including Florinda in *The Rover*, finds the rehearsal schedule efficient. “The buzz of creativity carries over from one play to the other, and, certainly, a character from one play can greatly influence a character in the other. It’s really an exercise in versatility, and what actor wouldn’t be giddy at the prospect of that?”

The Rover and *The American Clock* open October 19 and 20, respectively, at Hastings Studio Theater, 77 Geary Street. For tickets, visit act-sf.org.



RAYMOND CASTELÁN (CLASS OF 2013) WITH CHRISTINA LORENN ELMORE (CLASS OF 2012) REHEARSING *THE AMERICAN CLOCK*

A.C.T. Preview: Humor Abuse

Some people fantasize about running away to join the circus; **Lorenzo Pisoni** was born and raised in one. And not just any circus—Pisoni spent his formative years as the youngest member of San Francisco's beloved Pickle Family Circus, cofounded in 1974 by his mother and father, Peggy Snider and Larry Pisoni. In January, A.C.T. audiences will get a tantalizing peek at behind-the-big-top life when Lorenzo brings his solo show, *Humor Abuse* (cocreated with college friend and longtime collaborator **Erica Schmidt**), to his hometown. With touching reminiscences and hilarious virtuoso clowning, Pisoni offers an insightful and wildly entertaining look at his childhood—and his coming of age as an artist.

"*Humor Abuse* is about growing up in the circus and having a clown for a father," Pisoni says. "But it's mostly about a relationship between a child and a parent—a parent that the child doesn't know very well." He continues, "I've always wanted to do this show in San Francisco. The Pickle Family Circus was always so familial, and now this show has taken on some of those same qualities. In coming to A.C.T., I get to be part of bringing this show back to so many people for whom my parents' circus was a big part of their lives."

Pisoni developed the show with Schmidt over several years, beginning with workshop productions on the East Coast that led to the show's world premiere at Manhattan Theatre Club in 2009. That production amassed accolades from both audiences and critics—the *New York Times* called Pisoni's performance "breathtaking"—and won Drama Desk, OBIE, and Outer Critics Circle awards, among others.

Unlike many stage memoirs, *Humor Abuse* is filled with intensely physical staging that balances Pisoni's poignant memories with the daring acrobatic and vaudevillian feats that shaped his childhood. He opens a window onto his relationship with his father, while showing off many of the tricks he learned at his knee (and in his stage trunk)—proving his prowess in juggling, backflips, and beyond.

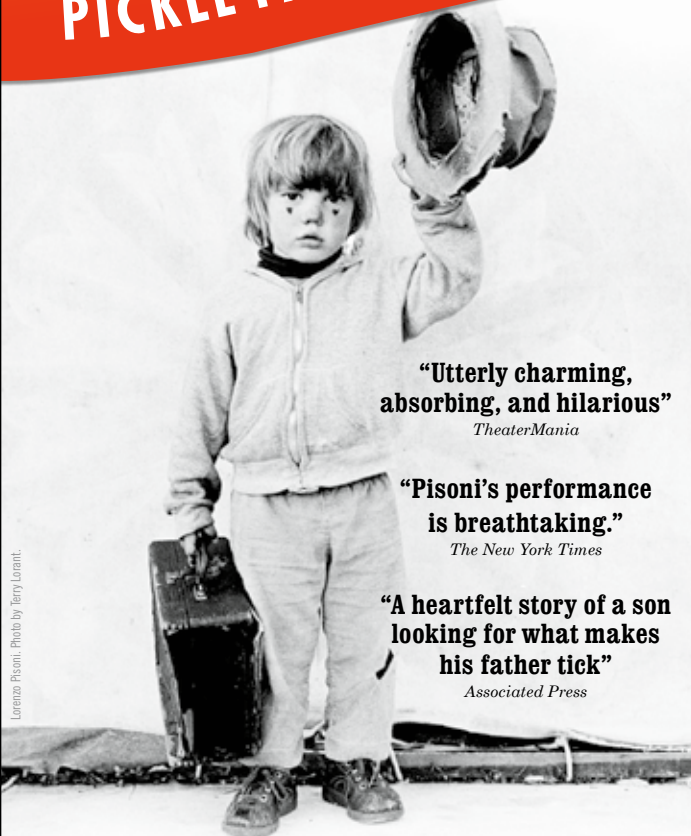
A dynamic and versatile performer whose credits span 17th-century English classics (*All's Well That Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure* at The Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park and *The Gamester* at A.C.T.), contemporary drama (Broadway's *Equus* opposite Daniel Radcliffe, of *Harry Potter* fame), film and television, and, of course, circus work, Pisoni channels all of his skills and experience into *Humor Abuse* to take audiences on a full-throttle journey into his past.

"The ride that this play has been has taught me a great deal," Pisoni says. "I can't really think of anything better—to have successes and failures, and now to bring the show to an apex at the American Conservatory Theater is a wonderful story unto itself."

Humor Abuse runs January 12 to February 5. For more information—including Pisoni's series of video blogs chronicling the creation of the production—visit act-sf.org/humorabuse.

JAN 12–FEB 5

THE "FUNNY, POIGNANT, AND INSPIRED"
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PICKLE FAMILY CIRCUS



Lorenzo Pisoni. Photo by Terry Loran.

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absorbing, and hilarious"
TheaterMania

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is breathtaking."
The New York Times

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looking for what makes
his father tick"
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Who's Who in Race



CHRIS BUTLER*
(*Henry Brown*) has won two Ovation Awards, NAACP Theatre Awards, Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards, and

Garland Awards for his performances in *Yellowman* (The Fountain Theatre) and *Stick Fly* (The Matrix Theatre Company). Other notable theater credits include the Broadway revival of *110 in the Shade* (Roundabout Theatre Company); *Much Ado About Nothing* (Kirk Douglas Theatre); *Julius Caesar* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (Rubicon Theatre Company); *A Raisin in the Sun* and *The Piano Lesson* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *Blue* (Pasadena Playhouse); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Globe Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet* and *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles); and *The School for Wives* (La Jolla Playhouse). Butler's television credits include *The Good Wife*, *True Blood*, *Hound Dogs*, *Criminal Minds*, *Rizzoli & Isles*, *Harry's Law*, *24*, and *Boston Legal*. On film, he has appeared in *The Longshots*, *Rescue Dawn*, and *Cradle 2 the Grave*. Butler received his M.F.A. in theater from UC San Diego and a B.A. in dramatic arts from University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



ANTHONY FUSCO* (*Jack Lawson*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in *The Homecoming*,

Clybourne Park, *Round and Round the Garden*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*, *War Music*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Government Inspector*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Travesties*, *The Rivals*, *The Voyage Inheritance*, *The Gamester*, *A Mother*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The*

Three Sisters, *Night and Day*, *The Room and Celebration*, *Enrico IV*, *The Misanthrope*, *Edward II*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in *Candida*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arms and the Man*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth* for California Shakespeare Theater; *My Old Lady* at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of *The Chosen*. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* and *The Real Inspector Hound*. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include *The Holy Terror*, *Cantorial*, *Danton's Death*, and *A Life in the Theatre*. He trained at Juilliard and The Barrow Group School.



SUSAN HEYWARD*
(*Susan*) New York credits include *Ruined* (Manhattan Theatre Club), *Nathan the Wise* and *The Oedipus Cycle*

(The Pearl Theatre Company), *I Have Before Me a Remarkable Document Given to Me by a Young Lady from Rwanda* (The Phoenix Ensemble), and *The Snow Queen* (Urban Stages), as well as readings at The Public Theater and Red Bull Theater. Regional credits include *Sabrina Fair* (Ford's Theatre), *The Master Builder* (Yale Repertory Theatre), *You Can't Take It with You* (Peterborough Players), and numerous plays with the American Shakespeare Center, including, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Pericles*, and *As You Like It*. Film and television credits include *Ma'George*, *The Big Date*, *Oedipus*, *Revelations*, *30 Rock*, *Law & Order*, and *Michael and Michael Have Issues*. She received her training at Carnegie Mellon University and the Moscow Art Theatre School of Acting.

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

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Who's Who



KEVIN O'ROURKE*

(Charles Strickland)
has appeared on
Broadway in *Cat on
a Hot Tin Roof* with
Kathleen Turner,
Spoils of War, and

Alone Together. His other New York and regional credits include work at Manhattan Theatre Club, The Public Theater, Second Stage Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Roundabout Theatre Company, Primary Stages, Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Baltimore's CENTERSTAGE, Long Wharf Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival. Onscreen credits include *Vice Versa*, *Turbulence*, *Tattoo*, *The Aviator*, and the television series *Law & Order*, *The Good Wife*, *Blue Bloods*, *Damages*, and *The Sopranos*. O'Rourke received a Screen Actors Guild Award nomination for the AMC series *Remember WENN* and is currently appearing as Mayor Edward Bader on the HBO series *Boardwalk Empire*. He has directed at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, West Bank Cafe, New Dramatists, and Acadia Repertory Theatre. He also staged the New York premiere of Abi Morgan's *Tender* at the Michael Weller Theatre. Since 2004 he has served as the artistic director of the Williams College Summer Theatre Lab.



KEVIN ROLSTON'S*

(Understudy) recent
A.C.T. credits
include *Once in a
Lifetime* and 'Tis
Pity She's a Whore.

Other regional credits include *Opus* and *Snow Falling on Cedars* at TheatreWorks; *What the Butler Saw*, *Sunlight*, and *Happy Now?* at Marin Theatre Company; *Doubt* and *Noises Off* at Center REP; and *The Glass*

Menagerie and *Enrico IV* at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey. His theater work also includes three world premieres at Magic Theatre, including Rebecca Gilman's *The Crowd You're In With*, two tours with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and productions with New Federal Theatre, Pulse Ensemble Theatre, Word for Word, foolsFURY Theater Company, PCPA Theaterfest, and the SF Playhouse. This fall Rolston will play Kilroy in *Camino Real*, directed by Matthew Graham Smith, as part of The Cutting Ball Theater's Hidden Classics Reading Series.



MICHAEL GENE SULLIVAN*

(Understudy) has
appeared at A.C.T.
in *The First Picture
Show*, *Machinal*,
Pecong, *Tartuffe*, and
four seasons of *A*

Christmas Carol. An actor, director, and resident playwright of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe, Sullivan has performed in, written, or directed more than 20 SFMT plays. Other theaters include Denver Center Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Magic Theatre, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, TheatreWorks, and theater festivals in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. A two-time Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award nominee for best original script for his work with the Mime Troupe, his one-person show *Did Anyone Ever Tell You—You Look Like Huey P. Newton?* was awarded the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* Upstage/Downstage Award and a best solo performance nomination. His adaptation of George Orwell's *1984*, directed by Tim Robbins, premiered at Los Angeles's Actors' Gang theater.

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Who's Who



COURTNEY THOMAS†

(Understudy)

appeared most recently in Lorraine Hansberry Theatre's production of *Trouble in Mind*

(Millie) as part of Project1Voice and the A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts Program production of *The Rover* (Valeria). Other M.F.A. Program credits include *Ion*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Archangels Don't Play Pinball*, *The Three Sisters* (Irina), *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* (with the San Francisco Conservatory of Music), *A Lie of the Mind* (Beth), and *Gruesome Playground Injuries* (Kayleen). Thomas earned a B.F.A. in theater arts from Howard University, where she performed in such productions as *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Hamlet*, and *Oedipus Rex*.

DAVID MAMET (Playwright) has been a force in American theater since 1976, when his first staged plays, *Sexual Perversity in Chicago* and *American Buffalo*, opened in New York. In 1978, he received the Outer Critics' Circle Award for his contribution to American theater. In 1984, *Glengarry Glen Ross* won Mamet the Pulitzer Prize; it was made into a major motion picture in 1992 and won the Tony Award for Best Revival of a Play in 2005. Other plays include *Edmond*, *The Cryptogram*, *The Water Engine*, *The Woods*, *Reunion*, *A Life in the Theatre*, *Lakeboat*, *Speed-the-Plow*, *Oleanna*, *The Old Neighborhood*, *Boston Marriage*, *Romance*, and *November*. Mamet's translations and adaptations include *Faustus*; Pierre Laville's *Red River*; Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Three Sisters*, and *Uncle Vanya*; and Harley Granville-Barker's *The Voysey Inheritance* (commissioned and premiered by A.C.T. in 2005). Films on which Mamet served as writer and director include *House of Games*, *Homicide*, *Oleanna*, *The Spanish Prisoner*, *Heist*, *The Winslow Boy*, *Spartan*, and *State and Main*. His screenplays

include *The Verdict* and *Wag the Dog* (both nominated for the Academy Award for Best Screenplay) and *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *The Untouchables*, *We're No Angels*, *Hoffa*, and *The Edge*. He has also written children's plays and books, numerous volumes of essays, and a book of poems, and he is the creator and writer of the television series *The Unit*.

IRENE LEWIS (Director) was artistic director of Baltimore's CENTERSTAGE for 20 seasons. While there, she directed a wide range of musicals, classics, and contemporary dramas: from *Sweeney Todd* to *H.M.S. Pinafore*; from Shakespeare to Schiller; and from *The Investigation* to *Trouble in Mind*. She premiered, produced, or commissioned many plays, including *Miss Evers' Boys*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Police Boys*, *Elmina's Kitchen*, and *Thunder Knocking at the Door*, and earned a number of Best of Baltimore awards. Her proudest achievement at CENTERSTAGE was the racial diversification of her board, staff, repertoire, and audience. Before CENTERSTAGE, she was associate artistic director of Hartford Stage. Her film, *Ives!*, commissioned by the Hartford Symphony, won an award from PBS. She has directed for the Mark Taper Forum, Berkeley Repertory Theatre (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award), the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Sundance Institute Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera, the New York Shakespeare Festival, and the national theater of Yugoslavia in Macedonia. She has taught and directed at New York University, Cornell University, and Juilliard and was awarded an honorary doctorate from McDaniel College in 2011.

CHRIS BARRECA (Scenic Designer) has designed more than 200 productions for theater, opera, and dance nationally and internationally. His Broadway credits include *Marie Christine* and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold* (American Theatre Wing Award)—both for Lincoln Center Theater; *The Violet Hour*, *Our Country's Good* (Prague

†Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2012 and an Equity Professional Theater Intern

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Quadrennial Selection); and *Search and Destroy* (Drama-Logue Award). Off-Broadway credits include *Everett Beekin*, *Three Days of Rain* (Drama Desk nomination), the musical *Bernarda Alba*, *Roberto Zucco*, *Burning Patience*, and *In Perpetuity throughout the Universe*. Regionally he has designed *In a Garden*, *What They Have*, *The Studio*, *Vesuvius*, *The Birds*, *L'universe*, *Dark Rapture*, *The Heliotrope Bouquet*, *Hedda Gabler*, *Wolf at the Door*, the new musicals *Herringbone* and *Captains Courageous*, and Anna Deavere Smith's tour of *Twilight: Los Angeles*. In 1990 Barreca was awarded an NEA visiting artist grant to work with artists in Calcutta, India. He is currently the head of scenic design at California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles.

CANDICE DONNELLY (*Costume Designer*) previously worked at A.C.T. on *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Circle*, and *Happy End*. Other credits include *La*

novicia rebelde (Buenos Aires); *Autumn Sonata* (Yale Repertory Theatre); *Endgame* (BAM); *Dolley Madison* (PBS's *American Experience*); *The Wiz*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Three Sisters* (CENTERSTAGE); *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 *Skin of Our Teeth* (Shakespeare in the Park); *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and *La finta giardiniera* (New York City Opera); *Fires in the Mirror* and *The Skin of Our Teeth* (The Public Theater); and *No Strings* (Encores!). She has also designed shows for Hong Kong Opera, Minnesota Opera, Flemish National Opera, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, the A.R.T., and Huntington Theatre Company, among others.

RUI RITA (*Lighting Design*) has designed Broadway productions of *Present Laughter*, *Dividing the Estate*, *Old Acquaintance*, *Enchanted April*, *The Price*, and *A Thousand Clowns*. His off-Broadway premieres include Horton Foote's *The Orphans' Home Cycle* (Hewes Design Award, Signature Theatre Company); *Nightingale* and *Moonlight and Magnolias* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Big Bill*, *The Carpetbagger's Children*, *Far East*, and *Ancestral Voices* (Lincoln Center Theater); and *The Day Emily Married* (Primary Stages). Other off-Broadway revivals include *The Milk Train Doesn't Stop Here Anymore* (Roundabout Theatre Company), *Engaged* (OBIE Award, Theatre for a New Audience), and *Dinner with Friends* (Variety Arts Center). Additional off-Broadway and regional credits include work at Second Stage Theatre, New York Shakespeare Festival/The Public Theater, the Alley Theatre, Arena Stage,

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A.C.T., CENTERSTAGE, Ford's Theatre, the Goodman Theatre, Hartford Stage, Huntington Theatre Company, The Kennedy Center, the Mark Taper Forum, The Old Globe, Westport Country Playhouse, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

CLIFF CARUTHERS (*Sound Designer*) has created soundscapes and music for more than 200 productions, including *Once in a Lifetime*, *The Homecoming*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, and *Brainpeople* for A.C.T.; *Happy Days* for the Guthrie Theater; *Crime and Punishment* and *TRAGEDY: a tragedy* for Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *...and Jesus Moonwalks the Mississippi*, *The Tempest*, and *Pelleas and Melisande* for The Cutting Ball Theater; *9 Circles* for Marin Theatre Company; *Bug*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, and *Reborn* for the SF Playhouse; *On the Waterfront* for San Jose Stage Company; *The Creature* for Black Box Theatre; and *Opus* for TheatreWorks. He is also cocurator of the San Francisco Tape Music Festival and has performed his music at the Prague Quadrennial, 964 Natoma, Deep Wireless, Noise Pancakes, the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, the San Francisco Tape Music Festival, and the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States. Future theater projects include *Troilus and Cressida* for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and *Julius Caesar* at the Guthrie.

MICHAEL PALLER (*Dramaturg*) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams's *Small Craft Warnings* at the Sovremennik

Theater in Moscow. Paller is the author of *Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth-Century Drama* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and *Williams in an Hour* (Smith & Kraus 2010); he has also written theater and book reviews for the *Washington Post*, *Village Voice*, *Newsday*, and *Mirabella* magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB* (*Stage Manager*) is in his 18th season at A.C.T., where his recent credits include *The Homecoming*, *Scapin*, *Phèdre*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, and *Sweeney Todd*. In addition to a long association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, his other work includes productions for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, Boston's Huntington Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Marin Theatre Company. He served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

STEPHANIE SCHLIEMANN* (*Assistant Stage Manager*) has worked on *Marcus*; or *The Secret of Sweet*, *The Tosca Project*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*, *War Music*, *Blood Knot*, *The Circle*, and *A Christmas Carol* at A.C.T. Other local stage-managing credits include *Flower Drum Song*, *Guys and Dolls*, *The King and I*, *Gypsy*, and *The Wizard of Oz* at American Musical Theatre of San Jose; *Orson's Shadow* at Marin Theatre Company; *Le nozze de Figaro* and *The Magic Flute* at Opera San Jose; and *Spring Awakening*, *Love in American Times*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Hannah and Martin*, and *Bad Dates*, among others, at San Jose Repertory Theatre. She has also worked with TheatreWorks, Teatro ZinZanni, the Mexican Heritage Corporation, and the Circus Center of San Francisco.

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A.C.T. Profiles



CAREY PERLOFF
(Artistic Director) is celebrating her 20th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed *The*

Homecoming, *The Tosca Project* (cocreated with choreographer Val Caniparoli and currently touring Canada), and Racine's *Phèdre*. 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*, and *A Mother*; *The Voysey Inheritance* (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayzarian'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*, *Night and Day*, and *Arcadia*. 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).

Her play *Luminescence Dating* premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her play *Waiting for the Flood* has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage & Film, and Roundabout Theatre Company. Her latest play, *Higher*, was developed at New York Stage and Film and presented at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum last November; it will receive its world

premiere in January 2012 at The Theater at Children's Creativity Museum. Her one-act *The Morning After* was a finalist for the Heideman Award at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Perloff has collaborated as a director on new plays by many notable writers, including Gotanda, Nilo Cruz, and Robert O'Hara. She also recently directed a new *Elektra* for the Getty Villa in Los Angeles.

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. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.



ELLEN RICHARD
(Executive Director) joined A.C.T. as executive director in August 2010. She served previously as executive director of off Broadway's

nonprofit Second Stage Theatre in New York City. During her tenure at Second Stage, she was responsible for the purchase contract of the Helen Hayes Theatre and substantial growth in subscription income and growth in individual giving. Under Richard's leadership, Second Stage provided the initial home for the Broadway productions *Everyday Rapture*, *Next to Normal*, and *The Little Dog Laughed*.

From 1983 to 2005, Richard enjoyed a rich and varied career with Roundabout

Theatre Company. By the time she departed as managing director, Roundabout had been transformed from a small nonprofit on the verge of bankruptcy into one of the country's largest and most successful theater companies of its kind. Richard is the recipient of six Tony Awards as producer, for Roundabout productions of *Cabaret* (1998), *A View from the Bridge* (1998), *Side Man* (1999), *Nine* (2003), *Assassins* (2004), and *Glengarry Glen Ross* (2005). Producer of more than 125 shows at Roundabout, she had direct supervision of all general and production management, marketing, and financial aspects of the theater's operations. She conceptualized and oversaw the redesign of the three permanent Roundabout stages—Studio 54, the American Airlines Theatre, and the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre. She directed the location search for *Cabaret* and supervised the creation of that production's environmental Kit Kat Klub.

Prior to her tenure at Roundabout, Richard served as business manager of Westport Country Playhouse, theater manager for Stamford Center for the Arts, and business manager for Atlas Scenic Studio. She began her career working as a stagehand, sound designer, and scenic artist assistant.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. in 1995, Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in venues around the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. In 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of *Continental Divide*. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

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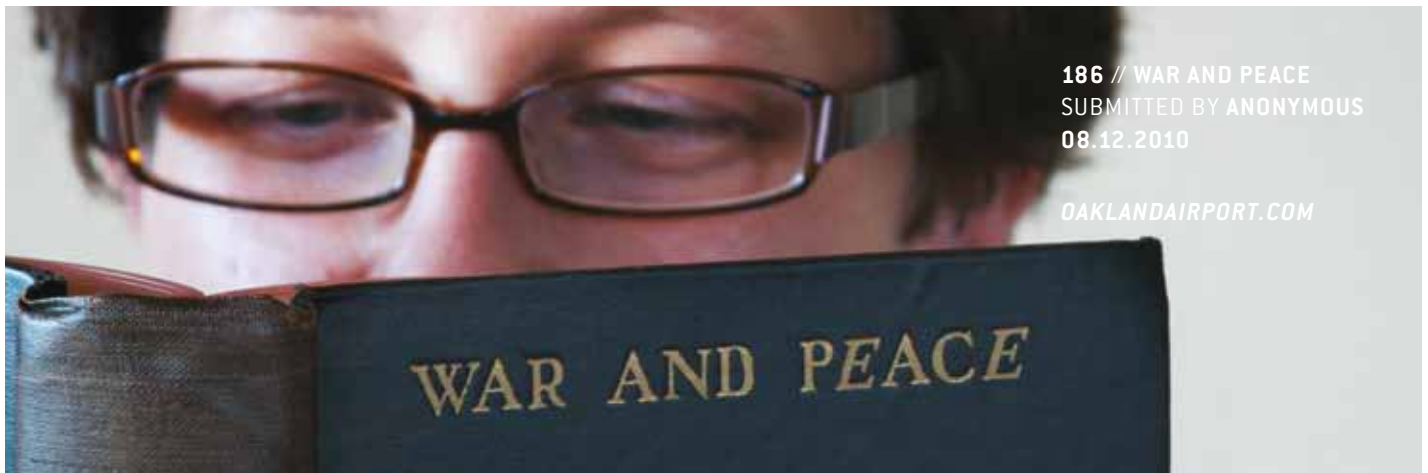
Doug has had countless memorable experiences at A.C.T. His favorite productions include recent hits from the past three seasons: *Rock 'n' Roll*, *The Tosca Project*, and *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*. Last June, he had the pleasure of sitting with the author of the famed *Tales of the City* series at the Opening

Night Gala in Union Square. Doug appreciates that A.C.T. develops ambitious new works like *Tales* and has a strong tradition of presenting Bay Area stories like *Tales*, *Tosca*, *After the War*, and this season's *Humor Abuse*.

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Doug is also an amateur archaeologist and serves on the board of the Archaeological Institute of America. Last summer he took a youth group from Florida and South Carolina to Belize, where they participated in an archaeological excavation, repaired a school, and learned about the local culture. In addition to his involvement with A.C.T., he sits on the boards of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco and World Savvy.

For information about A.C.T. company sponsorship, contact Associate Director of Development, Individual Giving Jonathan Frappier at 415.439.2353 or jfrappier@act-sf.org. More information is available online at act-sf.org/donorlevels.



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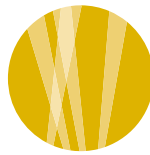
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Amanda Angott, *Rentals Fellow*

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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. James Garrick, Dr. Victor Prieto, Dr. Minx Hong, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corpus.

For Your Information

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

A.C.T. Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square.

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 subscribers enjoy ticket exchange privileges and ticket insurance. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

Special Subscription Discounts

Educators, administrators, and students receive a 50% discount with valid ID. **10UP subscribers** get priority access to Balcony seats at certain performances for just \$10 each. **Seniors** (65+) save \$40 on eight plays, \$35 on seven plays, \$30 on six plays, \$25 on five plays, or \$20 on four plays for Saturday and Sunday matinee packages.

Single Ticket Discounts

10UP (world-class theater at happy-hour prices) offers \$10 Balcony seats for select performances.

Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the A.C.T. Box Office two hours before curtain. **Matinee senior rush tickets** are available at the box office on the day of the performance for \$20. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

Group Discounts

The bigger the group, the bigger the savings—save up to 50%! For groups of 10 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.439.2473.

AT THE THEATER

The American Conservatory 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 auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

A.C.T. Merchandise

A.C.T.-branded merchandise, as well as books, scripts, and *Words on Plays*, are on sale in the main lobby, 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 lower- and third-level bars. Bar drinks are now permitted in the auditorium.

Cell Phones!

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

Perfumes

The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented 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 available on all levels of the theater. Please call 415.749.2228 in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

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 and Choreographer are members 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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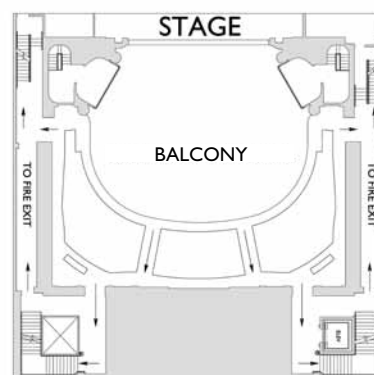
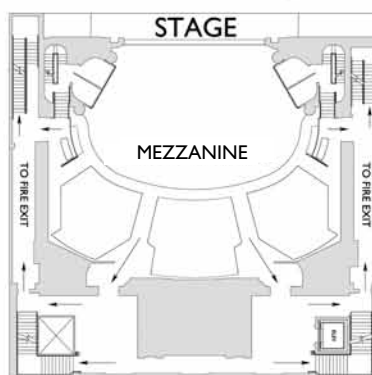
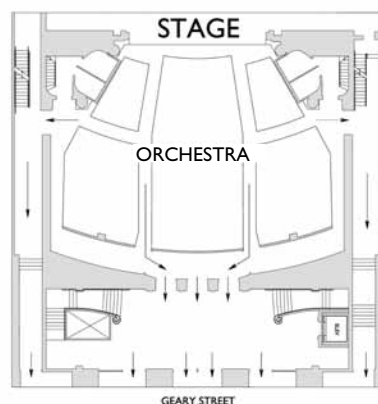


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