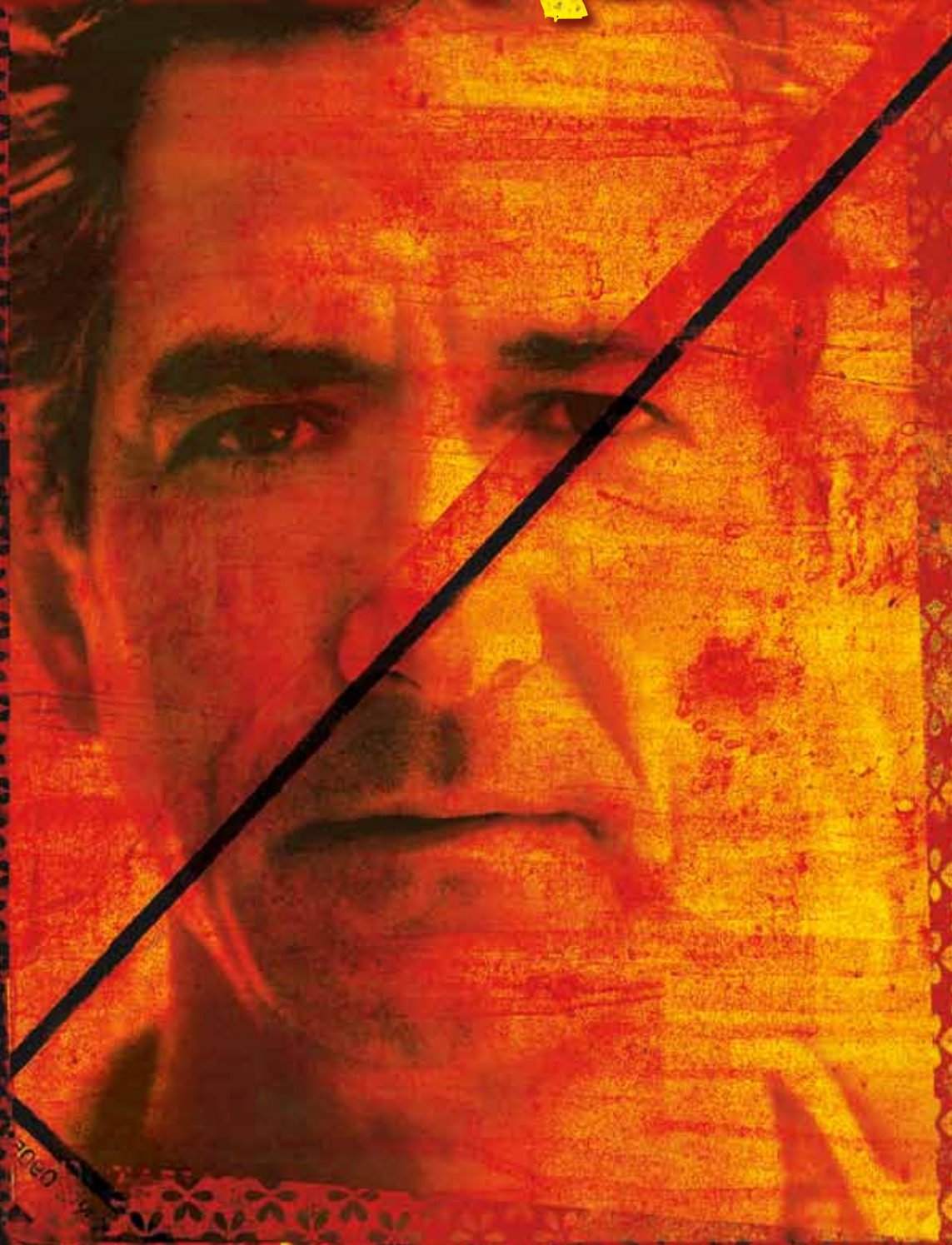


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# About A.C.T.

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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 FLEISHACKER OUTSIDE THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

GANSEN 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 long-range strategic planning process, the introduction of an 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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Clockwise from top left: The American Conservatory Theater (photo by Gene X. Hwang/Orange Photography); The Costume Shop (photo by Orange Photography); A.C.T. core acting company member René Augesen and A.C.T. M.F.A. Program student Alexandra Crowther in *Higher* (photo by Kevin Berne); A.C.T. M.F.A. Program student Christina Elmore performs in *The Garret* (photo by Alessandra Mello); A.C.T. M.F.A. Program students Ben Kahre and Allegra Rose Edwards with Titus Tompkins in the background in *The American Clock* (photo by Alessandra Mello).

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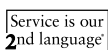
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# From the Artistic Director

ORANGE PHOTOGRAPHY



Dear Friends,

Early in the rehearsal process for Wajdi Mouawad's beautiful *Scorched*, it became clear to me that the play is all about the vulnerability and beauty of real bodies in space. Mouawad created *Scorched* in collaboration with a group of actors who brought their own fears and fantasies, histories and hopes to the rehearsal room every day; over eight months, the material they generated was cultivated in the playwright's fertile imagination to generate the script we now have before us. In an essay about the play, Mouawad talks about the stage as "the scene of ruthless consolation." Consolation for what? For terrible dreams and terrible realities; for the reprisals and vendettas of his native Lebanon; for the torment of twins growing up unloved.

*Scorched* is a thriller, a mystery, a search for identity that sends two Canadian twins on a frightening journey of discovery into their mother's past in the Middle East. I am always fascinated when Americans explore refugee stories, because if we go back far enough, each of us has one. That's what it is to be an American (or indeed a Canadian!). Our company for *Scorched* has roots in many different parts of the world: Armenia, Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Greece, Nigeria, Portugal, Ireland, and the Pacific Islands. During the first day of rehearsal, we all went around the table and told our family stories—stories of escape and suffering, of rescue and survival. One theme emerged immediately: that of *silence*.

As in the play, the actors said again and again that their parents had never told them about the conflicts that had led to their emigration. Civil war and tribal violence are the most difficult to reconcile, so the postrefugee generation often has to learn his or her family history from textbooks rather than from parents. Mouawad has said he had no real understanding of the brutal conflict in Lebanon until he began to study it in books and newspapers. In *Scorched*, a mother who has been severely traumatized remains silent for the last five years of her life. Her

children are the victims of this silence, and the journey of the play is the journey of finally cracking that silence open.

Rehearsing *Scorched* has been like staging a dreamscape in which many threads are kept in motion at the same time, as fragments of the past keep intruding on the present. The play is extremely Greek in its structure and preoccupations: as in Greek tragedy, children must avenge the disasters of their parents, oracles are consulted and discredited, twins are separated and then reunite, and the truth hides out in the open where no one wants to see it. Mouawad knows the setting is his native Middle East, yet never names it as such, because it is both specific and universal, just as Sophoclean drama is both about a specific moment in fifth-century BCE Greece and about something larger and eternal. I love this kind of play, because it is pure theater: it doesn't fully yield its secrets on the page, but finds its form when the visual world, the music, the language, and the physical life of the actors all weave together into a single theatrical tapestry. The specific faces and bodies of the nine actors in the room have been our guides: physical beings whose bodies are vulnerable and strong, Western and Middle Eastern, alone and together, funny and heartbreaking.

*Scorched* has been rendered from Quebecois French into English by a remarkable translator, Linda Gaboriau, with whom we have had the pleasure of collaborating several times before, notably on Michel Tremblay's *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again* in 2002. What she has accomplished with *Scorched* is no mere translation: it is truly a feat of cultural transplantation.

This play is the product of an amazing cultural collision. It is both a Middle Eastern play and a Canadian play, a product of a Lebanese-Quebecois theater artist who is obsessed with Greek tragedy and who has a wicked sense of humor. As such, *Scorched* continues A.C.T.'s ongoing dialogue with our North American colleagues (I first encountered the play while directing *Phèdre* at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Ontario), while introducing the complex world of the Middle East to the American Conservatory Theater for the first time. It is a strange coincidence that while I was rehearsing *Scorched*, Associate Artistic Director Mark Rucker was directing my play *Higher* down the hall, a play that is also set in the Middle East, although in a very different time and place.

We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work on this remarkable play and are thrilled to share it with you today. Thank you for coming!

Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director*

ABOVE A.C.T. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CAREY PERLOFF (LEFT) WITH SAN FRANCISCO MAYOR ED LEE AND A.C.T. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ELLEN RICHARD AT THE OPENING CELEBRATION OF A.C.T.'S NEW MID-MARKET THEATER, THE COSTUME SHOP

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# SCORCHED

by Wajdi Mouawad

Translated by Linda Gaboriau

Directed by Carey Perloff

Scenery by Scott Bradley  
Costumes by Sandra Woodall  
Lighting by Russell H. Champa  
Sound Design by Jake Rodriguez  
Projection Design by Alexander V. Nichols  
Dramaturg Beatrice Basso  
Assistant Director Emily Hoffman

## THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

<b>Alphonse Lebel, Doctor</b>	David Strathairn
<b>Simon, Guide</b>	Babak Tafti
<b>Janine</b>	Annie Purcell
<b>Ralph, Antoine, Militiaman, Photographer</b>	Manoel Felciano
<b>Nawal at 14–40</b>	Marjan Neshat
<b>Wahab, Nihad</b>	Nick Gabriel
<b>Jihane, Nawal at 60, Abdessamad</b>	Jacqueline Antaramian
<b>Nazira, Janitor, Malak, Chamseddine</b>	Apollo Dukakis
<b>Elhame, Sawda</b>	Omozé Idehenre

## UNDERSTUDIES

Anthony Fusco for *David Strathairn* and *Apollo Dukakis*; Alexander Alioto for *Babak Tafti*, *Manoel Felciano*, and *Nick Gabriel*  
Aysan Celik for *Annie Purcell* and *Marjan Neshat*; Sharon Lockwood for *Jacqueline Antaramian* and *Omozé Idehenre*

## STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Elisa Guthertz, *Stage Manager*  
Megan Q. Sada, *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Jaime McKibben, *Stage Manager Fellow*

## SETTING

Canada and the Middle East; 1950s to the present

**Scorched will be performed with one 15-minute intermission.**

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# The Price of Memory

BY EMILY HOFFMAN

As soon as the dust had settled on the final skirmishes of the 15-year Lebanese Civil War, which left over 100,000 dead and a million displaced, rebuilding began in Beirut, the country's capital and the birthplace of playwright Wajdi Mouawad. Mouawad's family had fled the country soon after the war's outbreak in 1975; by the time it ended in 1991, he was finishing his final year at the National Theatre School in Montreal.

Mouawad's parents told him nothing about the war they had fled; what he learned, he learned from books. He found, though, that war began to enter his plays, and with it, Lebanon, though never by name. *Scorched* takes place in a Middle Eastern no place, as much Sophocles' Greece as it is anywhere ravaged by the relentless logic of violence and revenge. And yet the play's treatment of war, its focus on silence and buried memory, is particular to the psychic aftermath of the Lebanese Civil War.

In 1991, the Beirut of Mouawad's childhood, once known as the Paris of the Middle East and crowded with ornate French and Ottoman architecture and busy cafés, lay in ruins, a reminder of the years of carnage that had overtaken the country and erased the line between combatant and civilian. For then-prime minister Rafik Hariri, if the country was to move forward, the city needed to be rebuilt, and immediately. Solidère, the government-backed company in charge of reconstruction, called the new Beirut the "ancient city of the future": a mix of the kind of sleek-faced luxury apartment buildings and office towers found in cities like Dubai and Hong Kong and nostalgic structures that hearken back to the French mandate era, the Phoenicians, and even the Roman empire. The only period notably absent was the immediate past. Without monuments, museums, plaques, or memorials, the war slipped further and further out of view each time another bullet-riddled building was demolished.

If Beirut's landscape is a metaphor for the immediate postwar Lebanese consciousness, then it is not extreme enough. Despite the push for development, the wreckage of the war was still visible in Beirut in the '90s; outside the capital city, it dominated, with crumbling buildings and graveyards strewn across the countryside. But the war could not be mentioned in polite conversation—if it was, it was referred to as "the events," or sometimes "the war of the others" (namely: Syria, Israel, and the Palestinians, who used Lebanon as a stage for their own proxy wars). In the decade following the war, it was not taught in school; it was glossed over in university history courses. According to Lebanese film director Randa Chahal Sabbag, whose films have been banned in her home country, "There

has been a huge national effort to erase and forget all traces of the war." In 1999, Lee Hockstader, foreign correspondent for the *Washington Post*, called this phenomenon "an officially sanctioned amnesia." Historian Sune Haugbølle's book *War and Memory in Lebanon* begins, "When the war ended in Lebanon, it was like it never happened."

The era of amnesia was ushered in with a law passed by the Lebanese parliament in 1991 that granted a general amnesty for nearly all war-related crimes committed between 1975 and 1991, making it impossible to try or condemn those responsible for the scores of massacres committed during the war, even those responsible for the infamous slaughter of almost 3,000 Palestinians at the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps. Amnesty laws are not uncommon in countries where complicated long-lasting conflicts leave most of the population (and those capable of governing) implicated. In South Africa after the fall of the apartheid government, a special Amnesty Committee was established in 1996 to grant pardons for crimes committed during the apartheid era—so long as the crimes were politically motivated and proportionate, and so long as those seeking amnesty fully disclosed the details of the crime to the committee. Disclosure was key: the "amnesty for truth" bargain was struck to avoid punishing an entire outgoing regime and its affiliates, while ensuring that the regime's crimes were not simply covered up and forgotten. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the leader and spiritual guide of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, explained the guiding principle:

None of us has the power to say, "Let bygones be bygones" and, hey presto, they then become bygones. Our common experience in fact is the opposite—that the past, far from disappearing or lying down and being quiet, is embarrassingly persistent, and will return and haunt us unless it has been dealt with adequately. Unless we look the beast in the eye we will find that it returns to hold us hostage.

Many victims concluded at the end of the painful and grueling 244 days of testimony that the trials were a sham to protect the war criminals of apartheid; even so, the model of truth-seeking as a necessary precursor to peace has taken hold globally, and has been used in Argentina, Chile, Guatemala, and Germany, to name only a few postconflict arenas.

By issuing a universal amnesty *without* conditions, the Lebanese government evaded the question of truth-seeking from the get-go. Without official encouragement to process

OPPOSITE MOURABITOUN SOLDIERS DURING LEBANESE CIVIL WAR (MARCH 22, 1984), © JACQUES LANGEVIN/SYGMA/CORBIS. "A SUNNI MOURABITOUN SOLDIER HOLDS HER POSITION IN BEIRUT, LEBANON, SHORTLY BEFORE THE 1984 WITHDRAWAL OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCES. IN 1975, LEBANON FELL INTO A VIOLENT CIVIL WAR BETWEEN CHRISTIAN, MUSLIM, AND PALESTINIAN FACTIONS, WHICH GREW INTO AN INTERNATIONAL CRISIS AS SYRIAN TROOPS INTERVENED, ISRAELI FORCES INVADED, AND MULTINATIONAL FORCES ATTEMPTED PEACEKEEPING."



DAILY LIFE IN BEIRUT (OCTOBER 1, 1982), © ALAIN NOGUES/SYGMA/CORBIS. "BEIRUT CHILDREN PLAY AND SLIDE ON THE ROOF OF A COLLAPSED HOUSE. THE RUINS TESTIFY TO THE INTENSE FIGHTING GOING ON IN THE CITY SINCE JUNE 1982 AS A RESULT OF OPERATION PEACE FOR GALILEE, WHEN ISRAELI FORCES INVADDED WEST BEIRUT IN RESPONSE TO REPEATED CEASE FIRE BREACHES BY THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION (PLO). THE UNITED NATIONS INTERVENED IN SEPTEMBER OF THE SAME YEAR TO FORCE THE WITHDRAWAL OF PLO AND SYRIAN FORCES AND RESTORE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT, BUT NOT BEFORE MANY PARTS OF THE CITY HAD BEEN REDUCED TO DESOLATE STRETCHES OF RUBBLE AND DEBRIS."

the devastation of the war—and often in the face of active discouragement—traumatic memories of the war turned in on themselves. Haugbolle writes,

When there is no echo of (often traumatic) personal war memories to be found in collective memory, the reality of those memories are liable to be put in doubt. . . . In the frenzy of getting on with their lives, many people left the rupture from their past selves of the war years unaddressed, and to establish a sense of connection with that reality was held to be so outlandish that the past simply appeared unreal.

Silence pervaded the Lebanese diaspora as well. “The younger generation as well as those who spent the war years outside the country may not have felt the same sense of trauma as those who lived through the war,” Haugbolle writes, “but they suffered nonetheless from a sense of alienation from an amnesic society, which did not let them know about the events that they were obliged to accept as formative of contemporary Lebanon.” Mouawad explained in a 2008 interview with CBC News why his parents were silent on the subject: “It was a very shameful war, where fathers killed sons, where sons killed their brothers, where sons raped their mothers. . . . They didn’t want to explain to my generation what had happened. . . . Strangers

had to tell me my own story.” This disconnect is not uncommon in refugee and immigrant families, where the first generation often withholds not only traumatic stories but sometimes even a native language so their children can begin with a clean slate in their new country.

The argument for suppression and silence—promoted by the Lebanese government and welcomed by a large portion of the populace—went like this: the war was too long and too destructive, the sectarian allegiances too convoluted and shifting, the number of the responsible too large, the tear in the social fabric too gaping, for any commemoration to happen that would not incite division and anger and destroy the tenuous peace. Best move forward with the things we *can* agree on—development, houses, shopping malls.

This logic may be hard to stomach for anyone steeped in the common wisdom of philosopher George Santayana, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it,” or the powerful post-Holocaust warning, “Never again.” And yet, what is the perennial problem of the Middle East but an *excess* of memory? Beginning with the Zionist claim over an ancient homeland, the citing of past grievances has spurred the region’s conflicts, seemingly without end. Every single massacre committed during the Lebanese Civil War was an act of reprisal. Might not the country, then, and its neighbors, benefit from a good dose of forgetfulness?



But memory is often the only tool of the disenfranchised. The ruling class dictates which memories the nation may hold on to and which memories must be dispelled for a group to be accepted into the body politic. The celebrated Palestinian Lebanese author Mahmoud Darwish has chided the entire Middle East for the unreasonable demand to forget it has placed on Palestinian refugees: “Why then should those whom the waves of forgetfulness have cast upon the shores of Beirut be expected to go against nature? Why should so much amnesia be expected of them? And who can construct for them a new memory with no content other than the broken shadow of a distant life in a shack made of sheet metal? Is there enough forgetfulness for them to forget?”

The question, then: does there exist a healthy middle-ground of memory? A type of memory that shames us with its horrors, gives voice to the disenfranchised, but does not spur us to revenge? Artists in postwar Lebanon and the Lebanese diaspora, Haugbolle argues, have tried to answer this question with their work. He points to Hassan Saouli’s installation piece *13<sup>th</sup> of April*, which consists of a bus of exactly the same make as the famous Dodge passenger bus that set off the war when it was attacked in 1975, filled with video, text, and images concerned with memories of the war and questions of guilt and forgiveness. When asked why he did not use the actual bus—which still exists—Saouli responded, “The bus is a symbol of the civil war, but I am trying to show it in an artistic manner. I avoided using graphical images and items that are disturbing—photos of those killed, blood, violence. The actual bus in its poor condition could be considered a disturbing image. Therefore, I used a bus of the same model so I could put an artistic twist to it and lessen its bitterness.”

Not all artists have tried to soften their representations of the war. Haugbolle also cites Sabbag’s film *Civilisés (Civilized People)*, which juxtaposes the humorous and the grotesque in a searing indictment of the Lebanese people’s participation in “the war of the others.” Haugbolle describes: “Here are militiamen killing themselves while attempting to tie dynamite to a cat, Muslim militias fighting it out over a refrigerator, small kids imploring their parents to kidnap foreigners and so on. . . . The intent is clear: to show that the Lebanese, in Sabbag’s own words, ‘participated in everything. . . . We’ve been criminals and now we’ve forgotten, which is the worst moment since it’s so false. Then our children will come and ask us why we did what we did.’”

Though Mouawad has rejected the characterization of *Scorched* as a Lebanese play, deeply concerned as it is with questions of memory and trauma, it cannot but be a part of the postwar Lebanese dialogue about *how* to remember. And his very refusal to name the country in his play as Lebanon, or to name any of the groups in the conflict, might be seen as the partial articulation of an answer.

As time passed, and the war receded a decade into history, attitudes about discussing it began to relax. The events of 2005 brought a major resurgence of war memory to Lebanon: the

prime minister was assassinated, and the Lebanese blamed their Syrian occupiers, who had gained enormous control over Lebanese politics after the war. Suddenly, as hundreds of thousands of Lebanese took to the streets in what became known as the Cedar Revolution, war memories—in the form of political posters, slogans, and news media—were mobilized and reoriented into a narrative of us versus them: us, the collective nation of Lebanon; them, the Syrians. The Cedar Revolution was successful, and the Syrians ended their 30-year occupation.

But unified nationalism did not last. Memory is fickle, after all, especially when it is distorted to political ends. The simplified narrative fractured again into its constituent parts—and has, in the years since 2005, been exploited by the radical Shia group Hezbollah to gain ascendancy. Sectarianism with its selective memory is on the rise, even as cosmopolitan Beirut looks blindly towards the future, and artists try to find a more universal meaning in the past.

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work and the unique characteristics of Quebecois theater. Articles about the Lebanese Civil War and its aftermath give context to Mouawad’s haunting mystery, and a biography of Soha Bechara introduces the female prisoner-of-war who inspired the play.

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# Wajdi Mouawad

## At Home with Words

BY DAN RUBIN



WAJDI MOUAWAD BY JEAN-LOUIS FERNANDEZ

Over the last decade, playwright, director, and performer Wajdi Mouawad has gained an international reputation as a major force in Quebecois theater. He graduated from the National Theatre School of Canada in 1991 and by 1999 had solidified a reputation as one of Quebec's rising stars, with numerous celebrated productions and the artistic directorship of Montreal's Théâtre de Quat'Sous, where he served until 2004, to his credit. In 2002,

the government of France named him a Chevalier de l'Ordre National des Arts et des Lettres. He spends much of his time in Paris, despite the fact that in 2007 he began a five-year term as artistic director of the National Arts Centre French Theatre (NAC) in Ontario. "In his writing as in his directing," states the NAC in the press release announcing his appointment, "Mr. Mouawad investigates the tension between the importance of individual resistance and the no less essential renunciation of the self. On this subject he is fond of quoting Kafka: 'In the struggle between yourself and the world, back the world.'"

Mouawad has lived with the tension between personal agency and unstoppable world forces since his childhood, which he has summarized as "one war, two exiles, and a death." Born in Beirut, he was six when the Lebanese Civil War erupted in April 1975. Hundreds of thousands fled the country, including Mouawad and his family, who emigrated to Paris. In 1983, unable to renew their French visas, they moved again, this time to Quebec. Mouawad's mother died from cancer a year later.

"What was hard [about growing up] was the silence," Mouawad told Canada's *Globe and Mail* in 2002. His parents did not talk about the home they had left behind, or why they had left it. For Mouawad, Lebanon was "a little garden behind the house in the mountain. It's the sun and a strangely happy time." Later, he learned about the horrors his family escaped—not from his parents but from reading French and U.S. historians. "My parents weren't people with the emotional armor to deal with a civil war," said Mouawad. "It was this silence that I have tried to name."

Mouawad's penchant for antinaturalistic storytelling—starting with his love of Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and the works of

Sophocles—set him apart from his English-speaking classmates when he attended the National Theatre School. He watched with amusement as they lugged in real fridges and couches to use in their sets. Mouawad was more attracted to productions like that of Quebecois multidisciplinary innovator Robert Lepage, which taught him "that one could do anything in the theater." Mouawad's work has often been compared to that of Lepage, but Mouawad is quick to point out the difference: "The plays of Robert are about Quebecois trying to discover the world, in Japan, Russia, France, London. In all my plays, there is the story of someone who discovers his origins are different from what he thinks, and he tries to get back to those origins."

Like his characters, Mouawad is trying to unearth his own origins—to name the silence of his parents. When he wrote *Journée de nocés chez les Cro-Magnons* (*Wedding Day at the Cro-Magnons*) in the mid 1990s, memories of Lebanon were unlocked for him. In this absurdist play, a family attempts to conduct a groomless wedding as a relentless bombing campaign rocks their apartment. "I understood then that I had experienced war," Mouawad remembered in 2010. "For me, until that moment, war was only for those who stayed in Lebanon. The memories came back. It was a shock."

After *Cro-Magnons* came *Littoral* (*Tideline*, 1997), a metaphysical play centered around a young Montreal man's attempts to bury his father in their unnamed homeland. It was the first play of what would become *The Blood of Promises* cycle, a tetralogy that also includes *Incendies* (*Scorched*, 2003), *Forêts* (*Forests*, 2006), and *Ciels* (*Skies*, 2009). *Incendies* (which was adapted into an Academy Award-nominated film with the same name) was inspired by the experiences of perhaps the most famous prisoner of the Lebanese Civil War, Soha Bechara, who spent ten years in the brutal Khiam prison for her attempted assignment of a head general of the South Lebanon Army; but it was with *Littoral* that war first entered Mouawad's plays, he explained in 2010: "War is where the collective and the intimate collide. My question is how to be happy personally when the collective isn't working. The history of our inner lives is as complex as our collective history. In the stories that I tell, I ask the questions: How far can we go? How do we console? How do we find safety?"

What does one do once suffering arrives? This is the question Mouawad explores most in his plays. "More often than not," he has said, "you have to integrate suffering into your life. Become it. And let it move you into another country, so that it can become something else." For him, suffering has become theater. But while he transforms it into drama, grief is not the basis of his art:





CIVIL WAR IN LEBANON (AUGUST 19, 1976), © CLAUDE SALHANI/SYGMA/CORBIS. "PHALANGIST CHRISTIANS INVADE THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF QUARANTINA, ONE OF THE MUSLIM NEIGHBORHOODS OF BEIRUT. THOUGH THE INHABITANTS HAD FLED IN THE DISORDER, THE PHALANGISTS BURNED THE BUILDINGS AND SHOPS."

I prefer to think that poetry comes from itself. . . . I don't write plays because I saw war, I write plays because I saw plays. War is one of the elements that I work with because I have it at hand, but it's not what formed me. What formed me was school, art, other people, talking with my friends about changing the world when I was 20 years old.

Mouawad often wonders what kind of man he would have become if he had stayed in Lebanon. Far from considering himself above the fray, he is convinced that he would have been consumed just as the rest of the country was. In 2006 he wrote:

I belong, as a whole, to all this violence. I look at the land of my father and mother and I see myself, me: I could kill and I could agree with both sides, six sides, twenty sides. I could invade and I could terrorize. I could defend myself and I could resist and to top it all off, if I were one or if I were the other, I would know how to justify each one of my actions, and justify the injustice that fills me, I would find the words with which to express how they slaughter me so, how they remove all possibility for me to live.

Even in his painful fantasies of a life that could have been, Mouawad eventually chooses words as his weapon of choice, but he questions, "If my parents didn't leave Lebanon, would I be making theater?"

His parents did leave, however, and Mouawad found in the theater an outlet for their silence—and a home for his words. Since the 1990s, he has been dramatizing the experience of first-generation exiles in a series of epic dramas. Forever haunted by what his parents left unsaid, he has tried to create a forum in which ideas, pain, and joy can be shared, because theater has the power to connect people:

The theater is a live place, where everyone—actors, audience members—are alive. It's not like the movies, where some are dead, maybe, and where those that you watch no longer look like what you are seeing. In the theater, everyone is there. There are people who are going to die, in front of other people who are going to die, but who are alive at the same time. Moreover, these people are gathered around this very particular thing, which is the word. From the beginning, this word is not trying to sell me something, to convince me to vote for someone or believe an idea. This word exists apart from all desire for profit. It uses the fundamental notion of being together: I listen to someone who speaks to me. Theater brings together people who have come to listen to a cry that will upset them. This freedom seems fundamental to me today.

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**IMAGES (TOP TO BOTTOM):** WIG SHOP INTERN NICOLE RICCIO SHARES THE SECRETS OF WIG MAKING DURING A.C.T.'S 2010 LANDMARK CELEBRATION; THE CAST OF *ARMISTEAD MAUPIN'S TALES OF THE CITY*; AN A.C.T. VOLUNTEER TAKES TICKETS AT THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER.



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L to R: Christina Elmore, Mergel Leigh, and Courtney Thomas in *The Rover*. Photo by Kevin Berne.

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On December 7, the A.C.T. community, joined by local luminaries and representatives from several Bay Area arts organizations, came together to celebrate the opening of our new Market Street performance venue, **The Costume Shop**. Leading the festivities, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee (pictured, right; photos by Orange Photography) hailed the venture as “a wonderful example of the spirit that has taken hold on Central Market to transform and infuse the area with art, performance, and gathering spaces.”

The event also featured remarks by A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, Board of Trustees Chair Nancy Livingston, and Board of Trustees President Rusty Rueff, as well as a rousing musical performance by the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2013.

In addition to solidifying a storefront presence for A.C.T. in the rapidly developing and artistically vibrant Mid-Market neighborhood, The Costume Shop will enable us to partner with local artists and performing arts companies to present a wide variety of projects, propelling the creation of community-based, transformative new work for years to come.

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# Who's Who in Scorched



**JACQUELINE ANTARAMIAN** (*Jibane/Narwal at 60/ Abdessamad*) was last seen at A.C.T. as Regina in *The Little Foxes*. Her Broadway credits include

*Master Class, Mary Stuart, Coram Boy, and Julius Caesar* (with Denzel Washington). Other New York theater credits include Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, The Public Theater, and The Metropolitan Opera, where she played Clytemnestra in *Iphigénie en Tauride* with Plácido Domingo and Susan Graham. Regionally she has performed primarily leading roles in more than 70 productions, including Williams's *Serafina*, Ibsen's *Hedda*, Shaw's *Candida*, Stoppard's *Hannah*, Kushner's *Mahala*, Chekhov's *Masha*, Strindberg's *Miss Julie*, O'Neill's *Abbie*, Wilder's *Sabina*, Coward's *Elvira*, Molière's *Elmire*, and Shakespeare's *Gertrude*, *Emilia*, *Portia*, *Olivia*, *Sylvia*, *Adriana*, *Titania*, *Cleopatra*, *Lady Percy*, and *Lady Macbeth*. In 2006 she won a Barrymore Award for best actress for the one-woman play *9 Parts of Desire*. Film and television credits include *Law & Order*, *Third Watch*, *Fringe*, *Lipstick Jungle*, *Diagnosis Murder*, *The Sopranos*, and *The Siege*.



**APOLLO DUKAKIS** (*Nazira/ Janitor/Malak/ Chamssedine*), last seen at A.C.T. in *Hecuba* with his sister Olympia Dukakis (dir. Carey

Perloff), has been a professional actor for over 40 years. He has performed extensively in regional theaters across the country, including Actors Theatre of Louisville, Trinity Repertory Company, Cleveland Play House, the Mark Taper Forum, the Williamstown Theatre

*The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.*

Festival, Dallas Theater Center, The Pasadena Playhouse, Denver Center Theatre Company, the Hollywood Bowl, the Getty Villa, and Arizona Theatre Company. He was a cofounder, associate artistic director, actor, director, and teacher with the Tony Award-nominated Whole Theatre of New Jersey for 15 years. In Los Angeles, as a resident artist with the award-winning A Noise Within (founded by A.C.T. alumni), he recently appeared as Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, Selsdon in *Noises Off*, and Dewis in *Buried Child* (Back Stage Garland Award). As a member of The Antaeus Company, Los Angeles's classical theater ensemble, he appeared in *Pera Palas* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award nomination), *Exit the King*, and *Rhinoceros*. Film and television credits include *Seinfeld*, *ER*, *Last Action Hero*, and *American Heart* with Jeff Bridges.



**MANOEL FELCIANO** (*Ralph/Antoine/ Militiaman/ Photographer*), a member of A.C.T.'s core acting company, has

appeared at A.C.T. in *A Christmas Carol*, *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*, *Clybourne Park*, *Round and Round the Garden*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, *Rock 'n' Roll*, *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*, and Carey Perloff's *Elektra* at the Getty Villa. Broadway credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Tony Award nomination), *Brooklyn*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *Cabaret*. Off-Broadway credits include *Trumpery*, *Shockheaded Peter*, and *Much Ado About Nothing* (New York Shakespeare Festival). Regional theater credits include *Ragtime* (The Kennedy Center), *Three Sisters* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), and *Sunday in the Park with George* (Reprise Theatre Company). Film and television credits include *Uncertainty*, *Trauma*, *The*



# Who's Who

*Unusuals, Life on Mars, One Life to Live, and All My Children.* He has appeared in concert in *The World of Nick Adams* (San Francisco Symphony) and the world premiere of Nathaniel Stookey's *Zipperz* (Oakland East Bay Symphony). Act I of his original musical *St. Joan of the Tenderloin* was recently part of A.C.T.'s Sky Festival.



**NICK GABRIEL** (*Wahab/Nihad*), last seen here as Miss Leighton in *Once in a Lifetime*, is a Sadler Award-winning graduate of the A.C.T. Master

of Fine Arts Program and a member of A.C.T.'s core acting company. He received his B.F.A. in musical theater from the University of Michigan. He has played Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at South Coast Repertory, the Emcee in *Cabaret* at Center REPeritory Company, Frog in *A Year with Frog and Toad* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Orpheus in *Metamorphoses* and Vincent in *Beast on the Moon* at Capital Repertory Theatre, Marchbanks in *Candida* at California Shakespeare Theater, and Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* at Saratoga Shakespeare Company. He originated the role of Warren in the West Coast premiere of *Ordinary Days* and was a principal vocalist for the San Francisco Symphony in *A Celebration of Leonard Bernstein*, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas.



**OMOZÉ IDEHENRE** (*Elhame/Sawda*), a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program and a member of A.C.T.'s core acting

company, has appeared on the A.C.T. mainstage in *A Christmas Carol* (Ghost of Christmas Present), *Clybourne Park*, *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet, Scapin*, and *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*. She was

recently seen in *Seven Guitars* at Marin Theatre Company. Other credits include California Shakespeare Theater's *Macbeth* (Lady MacDuff), A.C.T. M.F.A. Program productions of *Her Naked Skin*, *Sweet Charity*, *The Critic*, or *a Tragedy Rehearsed*, *The Increased Difficulty of Concentration*, *Macbeth*, *The Mutilated*, and *Blues for an Alabama Sky*. Idehenre earned her B.F.A. from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where she appeared in such productions as *Our Lady of 121<sup>st</sup> Street*, *Macbeth*, *Death and the King's Horseman*, and *Home*. She received the Polly McKibben Award, an A.C.T. scholarship fund supported by Maureen McKibben.



**MARJAN NESHAT**'s (*Narwal at 14-40*) recent theater credits include Hermia in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at

Shakespeare on the Sound, Aiesha Ghazali in *The Near East* at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Masha in *The Seagull* with Dianne Wiest at Classic Stage Company, *Girl Blog from Iraq: Baghdad Burning* (Best Ensemble nomination, Edinburgh Fringe Festival), and *365 Days/365 Plays* at Barrow Street Theatre and The Public Theater. She was last seen at A.C.T. as Deborah in *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*. She recently starred in the independent film *Almost in Love* with Alan Cumming, which premiered at the Abu Dhabi International Film Festival. Other film and television credits include *Sex in the City 2*, *Funny in Farsi* (dir. Barry Sonnenfeld), *First Person Singular*, *Blue Bloods*, *Fringe*, *Mercy*, *Law & Order*, and *A Season of Madness*, among others. She is a member of the Workshop Company at The Actors Center in New York City.

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## Who's Who



**ANNIE PURCELL's** (Janine) Broadway credits include *The Coast of Utopia: Voyage, Shipwreck, and Salvage* (Lincoln Center Theater),

*Dividing the Estate*, and *Awake and Sing!* Off-Broadway credits include *Cycling Past the Matterhorn* (Theatre Row), *Twelfth Night* (Fiasco Theater Company), and *What May Fall* (Fordham Alumni Theatre Company). Regional credits include *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Elektra* (Getty Villa, dir. Carey Perloff), *Mary's Wedding* (Portland Stage Company), *The House in Hydesville* (Geva Theatre), and *Uncle Vanya* (California Shakespeare Theater). Purcell has participated in workshops of *The Band's Visit* (Hartford Stage's Brand New Festival), *The Cherry Sisters Revisited* (Actors Theatre of Louisville at Louisiana State University), *Six* (Cape Cod Theatre Project), and *This Bloody Mess* (Lincoln Center Theater's Directors Lab). She can be seen in the film *The Private Lives of Pippa Lee* and in episodes of *Louie* and *The Black Donnellys*. Purcell received her B.A. from Fordham University at Lincoln Center and her M.F.A. from New York University. Purcell has taught at the National High School Institute/Cherub Program at Northwestern University. As a member of A.C.T.'s core acting company, she recently appeared in *A Christmas Carol* after returning from *Tosca Cafe's* Canadian tour (Theatre Calgary, Vancouver Playhouse).



**DAVID STRATHAIRN** (Alphonse Lebel/Doctor), a San Francisco native, comes to A.C.T. after working on

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# Who's Who

Steven Spielberg's yet-to-be-titled film about the creation and adoption of the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment, starring Daniel Day-Lewis as Abraham Lincoln and Sally Field as Mary Todd, with a screenplay by Tony Kushner. *Scorched* is the second time Strathairn has performed at A.C.T., the first as Prospero in Carey Perloff's 1996 production of *The Tempest*, which celebrated the reopening of the American Conservatory Theater and marked his third collaboration with Perloff. Strathairn played Stanley in two consecutive productions of Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, directed by Perloff when she was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York. He also performed the role at the Eureka Theatre in San Francisco in 1974. Other Bay Area projects include the films *Twisted* and *Hemingway & Gellhorn*, both directed by San Francisco resident Philip Kaufman. Other credits include playing Edward R. Murrow in *Good Night, and Good Luck.*, cowritten, directed, and costarring George Clooney, and seven films with novelist and filmmaker John Sayles.



**BABAK TAFTI** (*Simon/Guide*) is making his A.C.T. debut. His film and television credits include *Blue Bloods*, *Crash* (television series), *In the Valley*

*of Elah*, and *Terminator Salvation*. He received his M.F.A. from Yale School of Drama and B.A. in theater from the University of New Mexico.



**ALEXANDER ALIOTO'S** (*Understudy*) Bay Area theater credits include *Reborn* at the SF Playhouse and *Restoration Comedy* (dir. Sharon

Ott) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (dir. Peter DuBois) at California Shakespeare Theater. In New York, Alioto has

appeared in *Brack's Last Bachelor Party* (59E59 Theaters), *The Main(e) Play* (dir. Robert O'Hara, Partial Comfort Productions at The Lion Theatre), *Waiting for Mert* and *The War Zone Is My Bed* (La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club), *Lights Rise On Grace* (dir. Robert O'Hara, Culture Project), *Nelson* (Partial Comfort Productions at The Lion Theatre), *Havana Bourgeois* (59E59), *Benten Kozo* (dir. Jim Simpson, The Flea Theater), *Cellophane* (dir. Mac Wellman, The Flea), *Irregulars* (Soho Rep), and *Piecework* (Performance Space 122). Regional credits include *Finding the Sun* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company) and *Shakespeare's R&J* (Vermont Stage Company). Film credits include *The Oh in Ohio* and *The Upsidedown Club*. Alioto holds a B.F.A. in theater from the University of Michigan.



**AYSAN CELIK'S** (*Understudy*) off-Broadway credits include the world premiere of *The Black Eyed* at New York Theatre Workshop, *Pericles*

with Red Bull Theater, *Faust* at Classic Stage Company, *The Turn of the Screw* and the world premiere of *Murder by Poe* with The Acting Company, *Paris Commune* at The Public Theater's LAB Series, and the U.S. premiere of *Attempts on Her Life* at Soho Rep. Her regional highlights include the world premiere of Peter Sinn Nachtrieb's *BOB* at the 2011 Humana Festival of New American Plays, *This Beautiful City* at The Studio Theater, the title role in *Antigone* at the American Repertory Theater, and *9 Parts of Desire* at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Celik made her feature film debut to critical acclaim in *The Brooklyn Heist* with Danny Masterson. She is an associate artist of the OBIE Award-winning troupe The Civilians and is a founding artistic associate of Theater Mitu, which recently debuted the first theater production ever performed in Abu Dhabi.



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# Who's Who



**ANTHONY FUSCO** (*Understudy*), a member of A.C.T.'s core acting company, has appeared at A.C.T. in *Race*, *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 most recently directed *The Mandrake Root* with the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program students. Fusco trained at Juilliard and The Barrow Group School.



**SHARON LOCKWOOD** (*Understudy*) recently appeared as Rose in *The Last Romance* at San Jose Repertory Theatre. She has also appeared in numerous A.C.T. productions, most

recently *Philistines*, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Government Inspector*, *Hedda Gabler*, and *A Christmas Carol* (2005–11). She originated the role of the 200-year-old woman in the Berkeley Repertory Theatre/La Jolla Playhouse coproduction of *Culture Clash's Zorro in Hell*, which she also performed in Los Angeles (San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award). Lockwood appeared at the Mark Taper Forum in the world premiere production of *Nickel and Dime* as Barbara. Other theater credits include a 22-year association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre and work with The Old Globe, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, the Alley Theatre, Missouri Repertory Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Pacific Alliance Stage Company, Intiman Theatre, and California Shakespeare Theater. She was also a longtime member of the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Film and

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# Who's Who

television work includes *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Midnight Caller*, *Vonnegut Stories*, and *The Long Road Home*.

**WAJDI MOUAWAD** (*Playwright*) is Lebanese in his childhood, French in his way of thinking, and Quebecois in his theater. When he was a boy, his family fled war-torn Lebanon for a life in Paris before settling in Montreal. He received training at the National Theatre School in Canada and has since worked as an actor (*Seuls* in France, Montreal, and Ottawa; *Les justes* in Paris), writer (*Alphonse*, *Littoral*, *Incendies*, *Forêts*, *Ciels*, among others), director (*Macbeth*, *The Trojan Women*, *Three Sisters*, among others), and producer. He was the artistic director of Montreal's Théâtre de Quat'Sous (2000–04), and in 2007 he became the artistic director of the National Arts Centre French Theatre in Ottawa. Accolades include the 2000 Governor General's Literary Award for Drama for *Littoral* (*Tideline*); appointment to the Ordre National des Arts et des Lettres in 2002; the 2004 Prix de la Francophonie, awarded by the international Société des Auteurs et Compositeurs Dramatiques (SACD); Artists for Peace's 2006 Artist for Peace Award; the Grand Prix du Théâtre, awarded by the Académie Française; and appointment to the Order of Canada in 2009. Mouawad served as the *artiste associé* of the prestigious Festival d'Avignon in France and received a Doctorat Honoris Causa from École Normale Supérieure Lettres et Sciences Humaines, Lyon. Mouawad has directed a feature-length film based on his play *Littoral*. A film version of his play *Incendies*, directed by Denis Villeneuve, was a 2010 Academy Award nominee for Best Foreign Language Film. He has also written a novel (*Visage retrouvé*).

**LINDA GABORIAU** (*Translator*) has translated some one hundred plays, including the works of some of Quebec's

most prominent playwrights. Her drama translations have been published and widely produced across Canada and abroad and have garnered many awards. Notably, she has twice won Canada's Governor General's Award for Literary Translation (in 1996 for her translation of *Stone and Ashes* by Daniel Danis and in 2010 for *Forests* by Wajdi Mouawad). *Scorched*, her translation of *Incendies* by Wajdi Mouawad, was first produced

by Tarragon Theatre in Toronto and toured to theatres across Canada. The U.S. premiere of *Scorched* took place at the Wilma Theatre in Philadelphia in March 2009. Most recently, her translations of plays by Michel Tremblay have been seen at the Shaw Festival, the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, and the National Arts Centre in coproduction with Canadian Stage. Gaboriau has also worked as a freelance journalist and

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# Who's Who

broadcaster, and from 2002 to 2007 she was the founding director of the Banff International Literary Translation Centre.

**SCOTT BRADLEY's** (*Scenic Designer*) recent credits include *How to Write a New Book for the Bible* for Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *Italian American Reconciliation* for Long Wharf Theatre, *All My Sons* and *Prelude to a Kiss* for Huntington Theatre Company, *She Loves Me* for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and *Rich and Famous* for A.C.T. On Broadway, he designed the premieres of *Joe Turner's Come and Gone* (Drama Desk Award) and *Seven Guitars* (Drama Desk Award and Tony Award nomination). Off-Broadway credits include *Lidless* for Soho Rep, *Incident at Vichy* at The Beckett Theatre, and *Eurydice* at Second Stage Theatre (Lucille Lortel Award nomination). He is currently designing *Clybourne Park* for Seattle Repertory Theatre and the world premiere of Theresa Rebeck's *Dead Accounts* for Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He designed sets for *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci* (Lucille Lortel Award), *Silk* (Joseph Jefferson Award), and *Journey to the West* (Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award), all adaptations written and directed by Mary Zimmerman. Film production design work includes *Pushing Hands*, written and directed by Ang Lee.

**SANDRA WOODALL** (*Costume Designer*) has designed costumes for A.C.T. (*Boleros for the Disenchanted*, *Blood Knot*, *Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *A Doll's House*, *The Dazzle*, *The Duchess of Malfi*, *Light Up the Sky*, and *Saint Joan*, among others), San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Stuttgart Ballet, Singapore Ballet Theatre, and Magic Theatre. Recent productions include *Cinderella* for the Bolshoi Ballet, sets and costumes for *Don Quixote* and *Sleeping Beauty* for the Norwegian National Ballet, and *Fifth Season* for San Francisco Ballet. She was visual director for the eight-hour world premiere of

Stan Lai's *Dream Like a Dream* at Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and designed sets and costumes for *Don Giovanni* at the Taiwan National Symphony and for Rimsky-Korsakov's opera ballet *Mlada* for the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Other design credits include the Eureka Theatre Company's original production of *Angels in America*. Her work has been shown in numerous gallery exhibitions, and she is the recipient of numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for costume design.

**RUSSELL H. CHAMPA** (*Lighting Designer*) previously worked at A.C.T. on *War Music*, *Blackbird*, *Luminescence Dating*, *A Number*, *The Little Foxes*, *The Voyage Inheritance*, and *Waiting for Godot*. Current and recent projects include *Captors* (Huntington Theatre Company), *Water by the Spoonful* (Hartford Stage), *Completeness* (Playwrights Horizons), *Timon of Athens* (The Public Theater), and *The Grand Manner* (Lincoln Center Theater). On Broadway, Champa has designed *In the Next Room or the vibrator play* and Julia Sweeney's *God Said "Ha!"*, both at the Lyceum. Other New York credits include work at Manhattan Theatre Club, Second Stage Theatre, Classic Stage Company, New York Stage and Film, and La MaMa E.T.C. Regionally, Champa has designed for CENTERSTAGE, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, Wilma Theater, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, California Shakespeare Theater, McCarter Theatre, Campo Santo, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Actors' Gang, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

**JAKE RODRIGUEZ** (*Sound Designer*) has carved out sound and music for multiple theaters across the Bay Area and beyond. Recent credits include *Clementine in the Lower 9* at TheatreWorks, *The Taming of the Shrew* at California Shakespeare Theater, *Care of Trees* at Shotgun Players, *The*

*Companion Piece* at Z Space, *Scapin* at A.C.T., *Girlfriend* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *Annapurna* and *Oedipus el Rey* at Magic Theatre; *Salomé* at Aurora Theatre Company, and *Eurydice* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. Rodriguez is the recipient of a 2003 Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award and a 2004 Princess Grace Award.

**ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS** (*Projection Designer*) is returning to A.C.T. for his 12<sup>th</sup> production. Theater credits include the Broadway productions of *Wishful Drinking* and *Hugh Jackman Back on Broadway* and off-Broadway productions of *Los Big Names*, *Horizon*, *Bridge and Tunnel*, *Taking Over*, *Through the Night*, and *In the Wake*. Regional theater credits include designs for Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arena Stage, the Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. Dance credits include resident designer for Pennsylvania Ballet, Hartford Ballet, and American Repertory Ballet. He was the lighting supervisor for American Ballet Theatre and has been the resident visual designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. His designs are in the permanent repertory of San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, and Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, among others. Recent projects include the museum installation *Circle of Memory*, presented in Stockholm, and video and visual design for *LIFE: A Journey Through Time*, presented at the Barbican Center.

**BEATRICE BASSO** (*Dramaturg*) serves as artistic associate at A.C.T., focusing on season planning, new work development, and production dramaturgy (recently *Clybourne Park* and *The Tosca Project*). She previously served as dramaturg and literary manager at Long Wharf Theatre, where she collaborated

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# Who's Who

on new works by David Cale, Julia Cho, Noah Haidle, Craig Lucas, and Dael Orlandersmith, among others. As a freelance dramaturg, she has collaborated on new-play festivals, including The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference, the Summer Play Festival, and the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, as well as with a number of theaters, including ACT (A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle) and Theatre Calgary. Basso's translations have been produced by the Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Basso graduated summa cum laude in classics and theater studies from the University of Padua in Italy after studying acting at Royal Holloway, University of London.

**ELISA GUTHERTZ** (*Stage Manager*) most recently worked on *Once in a Lifetime*, *Clybourne Park*, *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet*, and *Round and Round the Garden* at A.C.T. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *November*, *Boleros for the Disenchanted*, *Rich and Famous*, *The Rainmaker*, *A Number*, and Eve Ensler's *The Good Body*, among others. She has also stage-managed *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Suddenly*, *Last Summer*, *Rhinoceros*, *Big Love*, *Civil Sex*, *Collected Stories*, and *Cloud Tectonics* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include *The Good Body* at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, *Big Love* at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and *The Vagina Monologues* at the Alcazar Theatre. Guthertz is a member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

**MEGAN Q. SADA's** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) most recent credits include A.C.T.'s *Once in a Lifetime*, *Clybourne Park*, *Round and Round the Garden*, and *A Christmas Carol*; Magic Theatre's *Annapurna*, *Or, The Brothers Size*, *Oedipus el Rey*, and *Goldfish*; and California Shakespeare Theater's *The Verona Project*. Other

professional credits include *Lydia* (Marin Theatre Company), *Culture Clash's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show* (Brava Theater Center), and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Jewish Ensemble Theatre). Sada graduated with a B.F.A. in theater from Wayne State University in Detroit, Michigan, where she often stage-managed and directed.

**NANCY LIVINGSTON** and **FRED LEVIN** (*Executive Producers*) are directors of the Shenson Foundation and lifelong theatergoers who have subscribed to A.C.T. together for 27 years. A San Francisco native, Fred attended A.C.T. performances as a student while Nancy developed her passion for theater at her hometown Cleveland Play House. Nancy, a former advertising copywriter, is chair of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees and also serves on the executive board of the National Alumni Council at Boston University. Nancy was recently tapped for the board of the National Council for the American Theatre (NCAT). A former importer from the Pacific Rim, Fred serves on the governing boards of the San Francisco Symphony, the Asian Art Museum, and the San Francisco Film Society (which his father founded). He is a past chair of the San Francisco Performances board. Both Nancy and Fred serve on the Council of Advocates of the Boston Arts Academy and on the National Advisory Board of Washington D.C.'s National Museum of Women in the Arts (NMWA).

**CARLIE WILMANS** (*Executive Producer*) joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees in 2005. With a passion for enriching the cultural and civic life of the Bay Area, she serves on the Board's education and community programs committee and enthusiastically supports A.C.T.'s actor training programs through its world-class Conservatory. Born and raised in San Diego County, Wilmans is a director of the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation. Having earned bachelor's and master's degrees in art history, she is a founder of the 500

Capp Street Foundation and devotes her time to the boards of several other arts organizations, including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and California College of the Arts.

## ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Jonathan Rider, *Fight Director*

Elham Mudawar,

*Arabic Language Specialist*

Elias Lammam, *Arabic Music Coach*

*Scorched* received its world premiere in 2007 in a coproduction by Canada's National Arts Centre English Theatre (Ottawa) and Tarragon Theatre (Toronto). *Scorched*, the English language version of *Incendies*, was commissioned and developed by the NAC English Theatre and with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official-Language Communities (IPOLC), an initiative of the Department of Canadian Heritage. *Scorched* received public readings in 2005 at the NAC English Theatre / Canadian High Commission 4play Canada showcase (London, UK) and the NAC English Theatre On the Verge festival (Ottawa). *Scorched* is published by Playwrights Canada Press; first edition July 2005.



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## A.C.T.'s Season Gala 2012 . . . Expect the Unexpected

After hearing what Executive Director Ellen Richard had in mind for A.C.T.'s Season Gala, Pattie Rueff couldn't resist returning as chair of this important event that supports A.C.T.'s conservatory and theater arts education programs. Following last season's spellbinding gala (which coincided with the opening night performance of the hit musical *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City* and took place in a tented Union Square) will be a tall order, but Rueff is unfazed: "We are totally stepping out of the box with this gala," she explains. "I decided to chair it because it won't be your run-of-the-mill fundraiser. It is going to be interactive, fun, and different from anything we've ever done before. We need to keep things fresh and new—it's one of the ways we'll attract the next generation of theatergoers."

In that spirit, this year's gala—appropriately named *Expect the Unexpected*—will feature an original production written by A.C.T.'s artistic team and starring A.C.T. students, alumni, board members, local personalities, and special guest Darren Criss, an alumnus of A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory, who is currently starring on the hit television series *Glee*. "Darren Criss is one of the many success stories of the marvelous conservatory the gala supports," Rueff says.

Darren came to A.C.T. at age 8 and stayed through his senior year of high school, gaining the confidence and the tools he would need to develop a professional career. And what a professional career it is. It's hard to imagine anyone hotter than him right now—from his role on *Glee*, to his stellar lead performance on Broadway in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, to the release of his upcoming movie, *Imogene*, with costar and fellow A.C.T. alumna Annette Bening. But what makes him so special is his desire to give back, and we are so fortunate that he's fit our gala into his increasingly busy schedule. I don't think anyone will want to miss this!

The gala will take place on Sunday, April 15, at the newly renovated Regency Center.

Rueff's leadership and passion are an inspiration to the A.C.T. staff and event-planning committee. With an invaluable background in international meeting planning, Rueff has already either chaired or co-chaired three A.C.T. galas, including the Ruby Jubilee 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala, which raised more than a million dollars for our conservatory—far surpassing its goal.

Rueff loves the variety of productions that each A.C.T. season offers: there's something for everyone. She says, "I like that the plays are not cookie-cutter. A.C.T. takes risks. It's a bit edgy. But most of all I love the people in this

DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY



PATTIE RUEFF (LEFT) WITH A.C.T. ALUMNA ANNETTE BENING AT THE 2012 CONSERVATORY AWARDS, AT WHICH BENING WAS HONORED WITH THE EDWARD HASTINGS CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

organization. Being near so many creative individuals is very infectious." Another highlight, she admits, is hobnobbing with our accomplished alumni: "I'm a bit of a groupie!"

In addition to her work with A.C.T., Rueff is active with Peninsula Family Service of San Mateo County and recently finished a two-year term as president of the Hillsborough Auxiliary. She is also the department head for the preschool children's ministry program at her church. Her husband, Rusty, joined A.C.T.'s board nine years ago and currently serves as its president.

For information about the 2011-12 season gala, contact Special Events Manager Luz Perez at 415.439.2470 or [lperez@act-sf.org](mailto:lperez@act-sf.org). More information is available online at [act-sf.org/gala](http://act-sf.org/gala).



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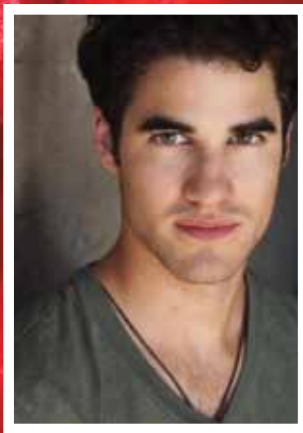


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# A.C.T. Profiles



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

*Homecoming*, *Tosca Café* (cocreated with choreographer Val Caniparoli and recently toured 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*, *A Mother*; and *The Voysey Inheritance* (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayzavian'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 in 2010; it won the 2011 Blanche and

Irving Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award and received its world premiere in February 2012 in San Francisco. 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

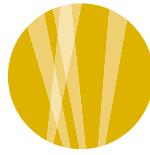
off Broadway's nonprofit Second Stage Theatre in New York City. During her tenure at Second Stage, she was responsible for the purchase contract of the Helen Hayes Theatre and substantial growth in subscription income and growth in individual giving. Under Richard's leadership, Second Stage provided 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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A.C.T. gratefully acknowledges the Prospero Society members listed below, who have made an investment in the future of A.C.T. by providing for the theater in their estate plans.

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The following members of the A.C.T. community made gifts in memory and in honor of friends, colleagues, and family members during the November 1, 2010–December 31, 2011, period.

- Memorial and tribute gift list including: Ruth J. Allen in memory of Helen L. Palmer; Danforth, Lucy B. Dobson, Dodge & Cox, Ann Eliaser; and Osborn, Toni Inman Palter, Dvora Parker, Ms. Lois B. Pomeroy.



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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](http://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](http://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 noon 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 is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical labor union.



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



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

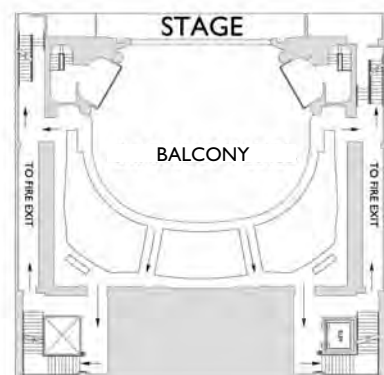
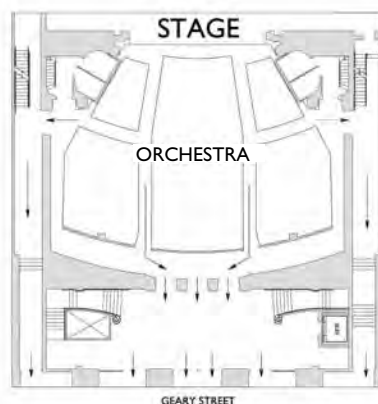


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