When your hearts are in the same place.
We’re not suggesting the all-new Lexus ES 300 should hang in the Louvre. But as an outstanding example of the carmaker’s craft, it’s most certainly worthy of attention.

Artful design is apparent in the sleek new body of the ES 300, which has been totally restyled for improved aerodynamics as well as aesthetics.

Inside the passenger compartment, you will find a whole new world of luxury. The cabin itself is roomier and trimmed in leather* of a quality that’s normally reserved for sedans costing far more. Run your hand along the sculpted contours of the driver’s seat—the seams almost feel hand stitched. Burled walnut accents adorn the dashboard, the console and the door panels.

Sophisticated sound absorption technology creates a hushed atmosphere, in the quietest ES 300 cabin ever. But, with the option of a Mark Levinson® Premium Sound System, one of the finest audio systems possible, you may find quiet moments an all-too-rare occurrence.

In their effort to engage all of your senses, Lexus engineers haven’t overlooked the most important one: your sense of safety. To that end, a new, three-stage driver-side airbag and new full-length side-curtain airbags have been added, which help provide protection in the event of a severe frontal or side-impact collision.

Admittedly, the new ES 300 is not the kind of art you simply want to sit in front of and admire. This automobile calls out to be driven. And with a 210-horsepower V6 engine mated to a new, five-speed automatic transmission, it could certainly qualify as performance art.

But perhaps the question we posed earlier is best answered by yet another question:

What better place to mull over what passes for art these days than behind the wheel of an automobile that has the power to move you?


*Typical. The Lexus driver’s seat, power windows, front seat-mounted side-impact and side-curtain airbags are a Supplemental Restraint System (SRS). The driver and front passenger airbags are designed to deploy from a deploying airbag, always even without, at the moment of the seat, and not by any means in front of or behind the airbag. Do not use Toyota Motor Safety, Inc. Lexus recommends using only auxiliary, serious children in two way.
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The question is no longer why. It's how.

The solutions start here.
**The Arts of the State**

**Music**

**Renée Fleming**

**Vienna Philharmonic**
Bernard Haitink leads one of the world’s greatest orchestras in symphonies by Mozart, Schubert, and Bruckner. March 11-12, Orange County Performing Arts Center, Costa Mesa. (714) 556-2787, wwwopc.org.

**L.A. Philharmonic**

**Debussy Trio**
This Los Angeles-based ensemble is noted for its unusual combination of flute, viola, and harp and its dedication to new American music. The program features works from their just-released CD Three Friends. March 7, Laxson Auditorium, Cal State Chico. (530) 895-6333, www.debussystrio.com.

**Garrick Ohlsson**

**L.A. Jewish Symphony**
A German emigré composer, Ernst Toch won the Pulitzer Prize and received three Academy Award nominations for his film scores. This concert features the first

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**The question is no longer why. It’s how.**

The solutions start here.

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Alvin Alley American Dance Theater

Fri & Sat, Mar 22 & 23, 8 PM
Zellerbach Hall $24, $32, $46

Formally a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Company, Paul Taylor has established himself as one of today’s most original and musical choreographers. For its Bay Area debut, the company will perform two programs, including the complete works of Paul Taylor’s critically acclaimed suite of dances known as The RealProject. The first complete cycle of the suite will be performed in collaboration with this world premiere of The Real Project.

Pascal Rioult Dance Theatre

Fri & Sat, Mar 15 & 16, 8 PM
Zellerbach Hall $24, $32, $46

Formally a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Company, Pascal Rioult has established himself as one of today’s most original and musical choreographers. For its Bay Area debut, the company will perform two programs, including the complete works of Pascal’s critically acclaimed suite of dances known as The Real Project. The first complete cycle of the suite will be performed in collaboration with this world premiere of The Real Project.

Curtain Up! Strike Up the Band

Fri, Sat, Sun, Mar 22 & 23, 8 PM
Zellerbach Hall $24, $32, $46

Tony award-winning musical theater veteran Martin Charnin and celebrated Broadway choreographer-choreographer Scott Levy lead an exciting new look at the most beloved musical comedy of the 20th century. With the Curtain Up! On-Stage, and a cast featuring some of Broadway’s finest rising talent, Strike Up the Band has the sets, the wit, and sex appeal of the classic Broadway show!
San Diego Symphony
Announcing the return of his Violin Concerto specifically for Hilary Hahn. The young virtuoso performs it as part of a program that also features Mozart's Jupiter Symphony.
March 8-9, Copley Symphony Hall, San Diego, (619) 231-1200, copleysymphony.org

Jazz Women
SF Jazz kicks off its spring season with a five-day look at the contributions women have made to jazz. March 19-24, various San Francisco locations, (415) 781-7333, sfjazz.org

Anthony Dean Griffie
The rising young tenor, praised by critics for his technical virtuosity and musicianship, will perform a recital of songs by Schubert, Brahms, Ravel, and Copland. March 2, Sherwood Auditorium, La Jolla, (858) 232-7634, uclaopera.com

Other Minds Festival
The annual showcase of new music sales veteran composer Lois Harrison with performances of two of his keyboard works and a world premiere. March 7-9, Palace of Fine Arts, San Francisco, (415) 646-0760, otherminds.org

Newport Jazz 2002
This year's touring version of the Newport Jazz Festival features an impressive lineup including Terence Blanchard, Cedar Walton, and Joe Lovano. March 8, Royce Hall, UCLA, (310) 205-2101, performingarts.ucla.edu; March 10, Campbell Hall, UC Santa Barbara, (805) 893-2535, artsandfigures.ucsb.edu

TEATER

The Blue Room
Ten couples are linked by a string of sexual encounters in David Hare's controversial contemporary adaptation of Anton Chekhov's 19th-century classic. March 8-24, Pasadena Playhouse, (626) 335-3729, pasadenaplayhouse.org

The Dazzle
Richard Greenberg, author of Eastern Standard and Three Days of Rain, created this show at two neighboring and eccentric brothers—one of whom is a great painter. March 20-28, South Coast Repertory, Costa Mesa, (714) 708-5535, scr.org

The Piano Lesson
Members of an African American family in 1930s Pittsburgh must decide whether to sell a treasured heirloom in this provocative August Wilson drama. Feb. 14-March 10, Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, San Francisco, (415) 474-8800, lorrainehansberrytheatre.com

Alvin Alley American Dance Theater
Alvin Alley American Dance Theater will present a special program filled with excerpts of Alley classics, plus two premieres.

Program A: Feb 19-23 11:30 am & 2:30 pm

Program B: Feb 20 & 22 11:30 am & 2:30 pm

Kiss Me, Kate

Riverdance

Alvin Alley American Dance Theater
TUE-FRI, 19-22, 8 PM; SAT, 23, 2 PM & 8 PM AND SUN, 23, 2 PM & 7 PM
ZELLERBACH HALL $24, $32, $42
Judiith Jamison’s remarkable career evolves with a special program filled with excerpts of Alley classics, plus two premieres.

PROGRAM A (FEB 19-23 11:30 AM & 2:30 PM)

PROGRAM B (FEB 20 & 22 11:30 AM & 2:30 PM)

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FRI & SAT, 15 & 16, 8 PM
ZELLERBACH HALL $24, $32, $42
Formally a principal dancer with the Martha Graham Company, Pascal Rioult has established himself as one of today’s most original and musical choreographers. For his Bay Area debut, the company will perform two programs, including the complete works of Rioult’s critically acclaimed suite of dances known as The Reval Project, the first time all four pieces have been performed together in North America.

PROGRAM A (FRI 10): THE REVAL PROJECT (NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE)
PROGRAM B (SAT 16): ROCHELLE IN REVAL, ROSE IN REVAL, FAITH IN REVAL, NICHOLAS IN REVAL, TO MUSIC BY MOZART, AN EDITION BY STRAVINSKY, WITH TEXT BY W. H. AUDEN

Curtain Up! Strike up the Band
ZELLERBACH HALL $24, $32, $42
Tony award-winning musical theater veteran Martin Charnin and celebrated Broadway conductor/arranger Keith Levenson join forces to bring this semi-staged version of George and Ira Gershwin’s delightful 1927 musical comedy to Zellerbach Hall. With the Curtain Up! Orchestra, and a cast featuring some of Broadway’s rising talent, Strike up the Band has the sells, wit, and sex appeal of the classic Broadway show.
Terpsichore's Treasures

Helgi Tomasson's
17th season at
San Francisco Ballet
pays homage to
two New York City
Ballet masters

BY DONNA PERLMUTTER

T he superb dancer with impeccable taste who is also an exponent of the New York City Ballet style — say, Helgi Tomasson. Give him, in his retirement from performing, a company to build on, like San Francisco's. And just watch it bloom.

The result, in this 17th season of the Icelanders' directorship, highlights what we can expect from any stellar troupe with NYCB bloodlines: the treasures of George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins. But it also rounds out the picture with works by Tomasson himself and significant innovations from new choreographers, some so successful that other companies clamor for their works. Not does the lineup slight potentials like Giuliette, the siren quixot of 19th-century Romantic ballet.

Shortly after Balanchine's death in 1983, critics, unhappy with how NYCB proper was getting along, astonished Tomasson the West Coast keeper of the flame — so impressed were they with the breadth and depth of his artistic vision and his power to infuse performances with Balanchinean style, clan, and virtuosity, as to mention his way with Robbins.

Now he's adding more NYCB repertoire to the agenda, in choices that set up an exceptionally sharp contrast between his alma mater's two masters: the 1967 jewels by Balanchine and the 1969 Dance at a Gathering by Robbins. Whether Tomasson had it in mind or not, he illustrates with these particular works how Balanchine defined neoclassicism and how Robbins did the same for neo-narratnism — two models that countless choreographers everywhere have since wrapped their steps around.

So admire was Dance that when Antony Tudor created his 1975 landmark ballet, The Leaves Are Falling, he said, in his typically self-deprecating, McConnell way: "Imagine me, an old man, finally doing a Jerry Robbins ballet." (The truth is, however, that Robbins learned at Tudor's feet, as it were, and remained the compliment to the British choreographer by giving the Dances characters names like 'The Man in Brown', a device Tudor used to memoritalize them as people without giving away their anonymity.)

Sranovsky was to Balanchine what Chopin was to Robbins. And just looking at "Rubies," the middle section of Jewels, one can feel the chorey irreverence of Stevanovsky's brush but rhythmically ordered Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra. It laughs, it guffaws, it mocks. And so does the movement — women in steling

Continued on page 38
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San Francisco Ballet performs its repertoire varies
February 5 through May 25 at the War Memorial
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667-5000 or visit www.sfbd.org.
A.C.T.

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American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1965 by William Ball. From its beginning, A.C.T. has been dedicated to providing the highest quality productions, with an emphasis on the work of living American playwrights. In 1988, A.C.T. launched its Conservatory Program, offering both training and performance opportunities for students and professional actors in residence. The Conservatory also nurtures the creation of new plays, providing a home for the growth of emerging artists and playwrights. The American Conservatory Theater is a nonprofit theater, supported by the generosity of its subscribers, patrons, and individual donors. A.C.T. is deeply grateful to its Board of Directors for its ongoing support.

The 2001–02 A.C.T. Season

CELEBRATION and THE ROOM
by Harold Pinter
Directed by Carey Perloff
September 13–October 14, 2001

JAMES JOYCE’S THE DEAD
Book by Richard Nelson
Music by Shaun Davey
Lyrics adapted and conceived by Nelson and Davey
Directed by Richard Nelson
October 25–November 25, 2001

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
Adapted by Dennis Pomers and Laird Williamson
Directed by Margo Whitcomb
December 8–29, 2001

SPALDING GRAY’S SWIMMING TO CAMBODIA
December 19–31, 2001

THE BARD OF AVON
by Amy Freed
Directed by Mark Rucker
January 26–February 10, 2002

BLITHE SPIRIT
by Noel Coward
Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
February 21–March 24, 2002

THE GLASS MENAGERIE
by Tennessee Williams
Directed by Laird Williamson
March 29–April 28, 2002

FOR THE PLEASURE OF SEEING HER AGAIN
by Michel Tremblay
Translated by Linda Gaboriau
Directed by Carey Perloff
May 4–June 9, 2002

BURIED CHILD
by Sam Shepard
Directed by Les Waters
June 14–July 14, 2002
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Jean McGuire
Deede McMurtry
Mary S. Meoz
J. Sandor Miller
Michelle Ballard Miller
Howard N. Nemowolski
Jerome D. Oremland

Carey Perloff
Steve Phillips
Shayne P. Pullack
Tim Rembe
James C. Roser
Sally Rosenblatt
Toby Schroeder
Alan B. Snyder
Steven I. Swig
Patrick S. Thompson
Gregory Wendt
Burry Lawson Williams

The 2001–02 A.C.T. Season

Celebration and The Room by Harold Pinter
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September 13–October 14, 2001

James Joyce’s The Dead
Book by Richard Nelson
Music by Shaun Davey
Lyrics adapted and conceived by Janet W. Larkin and Davey
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A Christmas Carol
Adapted by Dennis Pomers and Laird Williamson
Directed by Margo Whitcomb
December 8–23, 2001

Spalding Gray’s Swimming to Cambodia
December 26–31, 2001

The Beard of Avon
by Amy Freed
Directed by Mark Rucker
January 10–February 10, 2002

Blithe Spirit
by Noël Coward
Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
February 21–March 24, 2002

The Glass Menagerie
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American Conservatory Theater

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American Conservatory Theater presents
the world premiere of

by Tennessee Williams
The Glass Menagerie

directed by Laird Williamson
Mar 29–Apr 28
Geary Theater San Francisco

Tennessee Williams's masterpiece is a haunting autobiographical portrait of a disintegrating family—the faded southern belle, her adventure-hungry son, and the daughter who is as fragile as the little glass animals she treasures.

by Noël Coward
BLITHE SPIRIT

1941
Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright

Scenery by Kate Edmunds
Costumes by Beaver Bauer
Lighting by Peter Maravadin
Sound by Garth Hemphill
Music Coach Peter Malcicze
Dialect Coach Deborah Sussel
Wigs and Makeup by Rick Echols
 Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw
Assistant Director Margo Hall

The Cast
(in order of appearance

Edith Jessica Turner
Ruth Condomine Shona Tucker
Charles Condomine Gregory Wallace
Dr. Bradman Tom Blair
Mrs. Bradman Joan Harris-Gelb
Madame Arcati Lori Lansen
Elsa René Augesen

Place and Time
The Condomine's house in Kent, England, in the early 1940s

Understudies
Edith, Ruth Condomine—Margo Hall
Charles Condomine, Dr. Bradman—Michael Gene Sullivan
Mrs. Bradman, Madame Arcati—Maureen McVerry; Eliza—Jessica Turner

Stage Management Staff
Julie Haber, Stage Manager
Francesca Russell, Assistant Stage Manager
Yamini Namjoshi, Intern

There will be one intermission.

Please silence all cellular phones and pagers.

Very special thanks to Rebecca Dines.
Special thanks to Ellen Novack and Robin Garland.

The songs heard in this production are performed by the cast.
American Conservatory Theater presents
the world premiere of
the difficulty of crossing a field
a new opera in seven tellings
performed by kronos quartet

by Tennessee Williams

The Glass Menagerie

directed by Laird Williamson

Mar 29-Apr 28
Geary Theater San Francisco

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music by david lang
libretto by mac wellman
directed by carey perloff

march 22-24
theater at the strand
san francisco

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carey perloff, artistic director  heather kitchen, managing director

BLITHE SPIRIT
(1941)

by Noël Coward

Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright

Scenery by Kate Edmonds
Costumes by Beaver Bauer
Lighting by Peter Maradudin
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by Alan Farley

I'm here for a short visit only
And I'd rather be loved than hated
Eternity may be lonely
When my body's disintegrated
And that which is loosely termed my soul
 Goes whizzing off through the infinite
By means of some vague, remote control
I'd like to think I was missed a bit.

—Noël Coward, in Noisette and Other Verses

Despite the fact that he was largely self-educated, Sir Noël Coward brimmed with self-confidence throughout his life. Many critics have considered Coward's persona his greatest creation. As drama critic Kenneth Tynan said, “Even the youngest of us will know in 50 years’ time what we mean by a very Noël Coward sort of person.”

Coward was particularly confident about Blithe Spirit, writing in his memoir Future Indefinite, “I'll admit it that I knew it was witty, I knew it was well constructed, and I knew that it would be a success.”

How great a success, perhaps even Coward did not imagine—Blithe Spirit opened in London’s West End on July 2, 1941, just two months after it was completed. It proved to be just what the British public wanted during the dark days of World War II. The play ran for 1,997 performances, setting the record for a straight play on the London stage (a record that stood until 1957, when it was surpassed by The Mouse Trap). Today, along with Private Lives (1930) and Hay Fever (1925), Blithe Spirit remains one of the most frequently produced of Coward’s plays and is number one among amateur and stock companies around the globe.

Perhaps best known today as a playwright (and the man who wrote the song “Mad Dogs and Englishmen”), Coward was a man of multiple talents, considered by many to be the greatest all-around entertainer of the first half of the 20th century. Born in 1899 in a middle-class family in Teddington, Middlesex, England, he rose to become an international celebrity on friendly terms with the British royal family. He was knighted in 1970, and died peacefully at his home in Jamaica in 1973.

Coward began his stage career as a child actor at the age of ten. His first great success as actor and playwright came in 1924 with The Vortex, a succès de scandale that dealt with drugs and boy toys and established Coward the playwright as the angry young man of the 1920s. His next hit was the comedy Hay Fever and the operaetta Bitter Sweet (1929). In 1930 he wrote Private Lives for Gertrude Lawrence and himself; they played to sell-out runs in both London and New York. In 1935, he penned Tonight at 8:30 (a collection of nine one-acts, played in repertory), which he and Gertie performed in 1936.

Though Coward wrote more than 50 plays, revues, and musicals, he also created numerous short stories, a best-selling novel, a book of verse, several films, and more than 500 songs. He had a wide range as a composer and lyricist, writing songs that appealed directly to the emotions (“I See You Again”) and others targeted to the intellect (“Mad Dogs and Englishmen”). His preswar song “The Stately Homes of England” dealt with ghosts in a light-hearted way, while at the same time pointedly commenting on the declining conditions of the country’s landed gentry. Of his wartime songs, the patriotic “London Pride” personified the stiff-upper-lip demeanor of the British, while his satirical numbers “Won’t You Please Oblige Us with a Bremen Gun” and “Don’t Let’s Be Beastly to the Germans” captured the continuous “Don’ts” state of affairs.

Coward was also an actor, producer, and director for stage, radio, television, and film. His film projects included Brief Encounter, written and produced by Coward, based on his one-act play Still Life from Tonight at 8:30. The 1945 release was number two on the list of the top 100 British films of all time compiled by the British Film Institute in 1999. And in 1945, he was awarded a special Oscar, for the “outstanding production achievement” of the film In Which We Serve, a patriotic wartime drama he wrote, produced and directed, and in which he starred.

In the 1950s, when postwar critics rejected the wit and charm of Coward’s boulevard comedies in favor of the gritty “low-life” (Coward’s words) drama of Britain’s new generation of “Angry Young Men,” he reinvented himself as a cabaret entertainer, based on his experience playing for troops during World War II. After several successful seasons in London, he brought his act across the Atlantic in 1955, becoming the highest-paid performer to play Las Vegas. With successful British revivals of Private Lives and Hay Fever in 1963-64, the tide turned again in Coward’s favor. In 1970 Sir Noël was awarded a special Tony for his “multiple and immortal contributions to the theatre.”

BLITHE SPIRIT

Blithe Spirit was Coward’s last major success as a playwright. Although he would write more than a dozen plays and musicals over the next twenty-five years, none ran nearly as long as that wartime hit.

Here is how it came about. When war broke out in September 1939, Coward decided to dedicate himself to “important work for the country.” He spent the next two years abroad working on various government assignments.

One evening soon after his return to London in April 1941, he came home from dinner to find that bombs had ripped apart his flat. A few days later, while he was dining in the Grill of the Savoy Hotel (where he had taken up residence while his flat was being repaired), bombs blew in the door of the restaurant. Shaken by the destruction of the Grill, he soon set out for a seaside holiday with his close friend, actress and playwright Joyce Carey (who had met him when her mother played Coward’s mother in The Vortex). Carey was working on a play, and Coward had an idea for a light comedy—“waltzing at the door of [his] mind.” The first day of the holiday they spent several hours talking about his idea.

The following morning, Coward sat down at his typewriter and began: “Blithe Spirit, A Light Comedy in Three Acts.” Six days later the play was finished.

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NOEL COWARD AND BLITHE SPIRIT

by Alan Farley

I'm here for a short visit only
And I'd rather be loved than hated
Eternity may be lonely
When my body's disintegrated
And that which is loosely termed my soul
 Goes whizzing off through the infinite
 By means of some vague, remote control
 I'd like to think I was missed a bit.

—Noël Coward, in Not Yet the Dodo and Other Verses

Despite the fact that he was largely self-educated, Sir Noël Coward brimmed with self-confidence throughout his life. Many critics have considered Coward's persona his greatest creation. As drama critic Kenneth Tynan said, "Even the youngest of us will know in 50 years' time what we mean by 'a very Noël Coward sort of person.'"

Coward was particularly confident about Blithe Spirit, writing in his memoir Future Indefinite, "I'll admit that I knew it was witty, I knew it was well constructed, and I knew that it would be a success."

How great a success, however, even Coward did not imagine—Blithe Spirit opened in London's West End on July 2, 1941, just two months after it was completed. It proved to be just what the British public wanted during the dark days of World War II. The play ran for 1,997 performances, setting the record for a straight play on the London stage (a record that stood until 1957, when it was surpassed by The Mousetrap). Today, along with Private Lives (1930) and Hay Fever (1925), Blithe Spirit remains one of the most frequently produced of Coward's plays and is number one among amateur and stock companies around the globe.

Perhaps best known today as a playwright (and the man who wrote the song "Mad Dogs and Englishmen"), Coward was a man of multiple talents, considered by many to be the greatest all-around entertainer of the first half of the 20th century. Born in 1899 in a middle-class family in Teddington, Middlesex, England, he rose to become an international celebrity, often feared by the British royal family. He was knighted in 1970, and died peacefully at his home in Jamaica in 1973.

Coward began his stage career as a child actor at the age of ten. His first great success as an actor and playwright came in 1924 with The Vortex, a succès de scandale that dealt with drugs and boy toys and established Coward the playwright as the young man of the 1920s. His next hits were the comedy Hay Fever and the operaetta Bitter Sweet (1929). In 1930 he wrote Private Lives for Gertrude Lawrence and himself; they played to sell-out runs in both London and New York. In 1935, he penned Tonight at 8:30 (a collection of nine one-acts, played in repertory), which he and Gertie performed in 1936.

Though Coward wrote more than 50 plays, revues, and musicals, he also created numerous short stories, a best-selling novel, a book of verse, several films, and more than 500 songs. He had a wide range as a composer and lyricist, writing songs that appealed directly to the emotions ("I'll See You Again") and others targeted to the intellect ("Mad Dogs and Englishmen"). His preswar song "The Stately Homes of England" dealt with ghosts in a light-hearted way, while at the same time pointedly commenting on the declining conditions of the country's landed gentry. Of his wartime songs, the patriotic "London Pride" personified the stiff-upper-lip demeanor of the British, while his satirical numbers "Won't You Please Oblige Us with a Brem Gun" and "Don't Let's Be Beasts to the Germans" captured the concurrent "Dad's Army" state of affairs.

Coward was also an actor, producer, and director for stage, radio, television, and film. His film projects included Brief Encounter, written and produced by Coward, based on his one-act play Still Life from Tonight at 8:30. The 1945 release was number two on the list of the top 100 British films of all time compiled by the British Film Institute in 1999. And in 1945, he was awarded a special Oscar, for the "outstanding production achievement" of the film In Which We Serve, a patriotic wartime drama he wrote, produced and directed, and in which he starred.

In the 1950s, when postwar critics rejected the wit and charm of Coward's boulevard comedies in favor of the gritty "low-life" (Coward's words) drama of Britain's new generation of "Angry Young Men," he reinvented himself as a cabaret entertainer, based on his experience playing for troops during World War II. After several successful seasons in London, he brought his act across the Atlantic in 1955, becoming the highest-paid performer to play Las Vegas. With successful British revivals of Private Lives and Hay Fever in 1963–64, the tide turned again in Coward's favor. In 1970 Sir Noël was awarded a special Tony for his "multiple and immortal contributions to the theatre."

BLITHE SPIRIT

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The idea for the subject of the play may have been a result of Coward’s friendship with author Raddcliffe Hall (author of the lesbian classic *The Well of Loneliness*), who, together with her great friend Una Troubridge, had visited a professional medium in hopes of contacting Hall’s late lover, Mabel Batton. In fact, according to Terry Castle in *Noel Coward and Radcliffe Hall*, they contacted Batton through a young Indian girl, who communicated by rapping on a table in response to questions—much as happens in *Blithe Spirit*.

After an enormously successful run in Manchester, the play opened at London’s Piccadilly Theatre. Coward later remembered:

[A] very curious opening night it was. The audience, socially impeccable from the journalistic point of view and mostly in uniform, had to walk across planks laid over rubble caused by a recent air raid to see a light comedy about death. They enjoyed it, I’m glad to say, and it ran from that sunny summer evening through the remainder of the year and out the other side. … Later on the play was produced in New York, … where it ran for eighteen months, and I am prepared to say, here and now, with the maximum of self-satisfaction, that those six days in Port Miron in May 1941 were not wasted.

Early in his career, Coward devised his plays with an eye to performance, and usually wrote what he called a “whacking good part” for himself. This was not the case with *Blithe Spirit*, although he did play Donald Constandine in the West End for two weeks and on tour in the United Kingdom for seven months in 1942-43. He was worried about the part, as Judy Campbell, who played Elvira with him on that tour, remembered in a 1990 KALW interview:

[He] wanted to play Charles Constandine and then when he came to do it, he said, “I had no idea what a bloody awful part it is! It is extremely long, and Cecil Parker (the original Charles) is quite brilliant to have sustained it at that level,” he said, “because I do all the work, and you get all the laughs!” You know, Madame Arcati and the wits all get all the laughs, and he said, “I’m never, ever off the stage, doing all the work! Great mistake!”

Coward produced a film of *Blithe Spirit* in 1944; the movie was directed by David Lean and starred Rex Harrison (Charles), Kay Hammond (Elvira), Constance Cummings (Ruth), and Margaret Rutherford (Madame Arcati). Coward chipped in again on CBS Television in 1956, with Lauren Bacall as Elvira, Claudette Colbert as Ruth, and Mildred Natwick as Madame Arcati.

In 1964, Coward directed *High Spirits*, a musical version of his play, with music and lyrics by Timothy Gray and Hugh Martin. It played 357 performances on Broadway with his long-time friend Beatrice Lillie as Madame Arcati.

ELEGANT IMMORTALITY

An extremely patriotic Englishman, Coward had hoped with *Blithe Spirit* to help his distraught countrymen deal with issues of fear and death by making them laugh. While performing as Constandine in London, Coward found his commitment to the text so strong that he leased the news that his close friend, the duke of Kent, had been killed in an air crash in Scotland:

[My mind] at first refused to believe it, which of course was foolish, because in those dark years we were all of us learning by bitter experience that it was too easy to believe someone young and gay and kind was dead. They were dying all the time. … When I arrived at the theatre for the evening performance I was grateful to Put Crompton for warning me, just before I went on, to be on my guard against certain lines, which might surprise me, by my dreadful opposition, into a betrayal of my feelings. She was right to warn me. Blithe Spirit certainly treats the subject of death lightly, and although I still maintain that death in the abstract is not nearly so solemn and pathetic as many people could have us believe, it is not always possible to treat it with the proper disdain when the personal heart is gripped with a sense of loss.

With a lifetime of extravagant, prolific success, Coward achieved his own kind of immortality, living on in the songs and plays that capture the essence of a wit, more elegant time. “If I had to write my own epitaph,” wrote Coward in 1960, “it would be: He was much loved because he made people laugh and cry.”

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**Historical Note**

Director Charles Randolph Wright and A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff first discussed *Blithe Spirit* in 1999, while exploring possible projects to showcase A.C.T. core acting company member Gregory Wallace. “I know I wanted to direct something in a leading role,” says Randolph Wright, and Charles Constandine seemed perfect for him—he has that debonair sophistication the character requires. Also, because Charles is a writer, he is a person on the outside of society, he fits into society, but he doesn’t at the same time. I realized that the role could be a great fit for someone of color, because Charles is ultimately trying to prove himself in a world where he is unsure that he will ever be approved.”

Among Wallace’s models in preparing for the role of Constandine was writer Eric Walrond. Originally from British Guiana, Walrond spent time in New York during the 1920s, before—like many artists and writers of the Harlem Renaissance who expatriated to Europe—moving to France in 1929. Three years later, Walrond settled in London, where he remained until his death in 1966. A prolific and often political writer of fiction and prose, while in London he contributed several articles to Marcus Garvey’s publication *The Black Man*. Walrond was also known for his extravagent lifestyle, and in 1931 became part of the entourage of British shipping heiress Nancy Coward (who lived with black musician Henry Crowder for several years and was a familiar figure in Noel Coward’s social set).

Wallace’s characterization is also inspired by the story of jazz pianist, singer, and notorious womanizer Leslie “Hutch” Hutchinson. Born in Trinidad, Hutch also began his career in Harlem; he relocated first to Paris in 1934 and then to London three years later. Widely popular with the British swing set, he enjoyed a long string of high-society affairs (while his wife languished, largely ignored, in his home in Hampstead; Hutch’s more famous lovers included Lady Edwina Mountbatten (wife of one of Coward’s close friends), Tallullah Bankhead, film star Merle Oberon, and composer Cole Porter. Hutch appeared, with great success, in several revues written by Coward in the late 1920s, and performed with Coward at parties in the playwright’s home.”
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**ELEGANT IMMORTALITY**

An extremely patriotic Englishman, Coward had hoped with Blithe Spirit to help his distraught countrymen deal with issues of fear and death by making them laugh. While performing as Condomine in London, Coward found his commitment to the text of the play revealed in the news that his close friend, the duke of Kent, had been killed in an air crash in Scotland:

"My mind at first refused to believe it, which of course was foolish, because in those dark years we were all of us learning by bitter experience that it was too easy to believe someone young and gay and kind was dead. They were dying all the time. ... When I arrived at the theatre for the evening performance I was grateful to Play Companions for warning me, just before I went on, to be on my guard against certain lines, which might surprise me, by their dreadful appropriateness, into a betrayal of my feelings. She was right to warn me. Blithe Spirit certainly treats the subject of death lightly, and although I still maintain that death in the abstract is not nearly so solemn and lachrymose as may many people could have us believe, it is not always possible to treat it with the proper disdain when the personal heart is searing with a sense of loss.

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DIFFERENT GIFTS: THE MEDIUM THROUGH THE AGES

by Rod O'Neal

There are different spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them...
To one is given faith, to another healing...
To one is given prophecy, to another discerning spirits...
different ways of serving, but the same God is served.
1 Corinthians 12, 4-11

Ever since the New York Times bestseller Out on a Limb—Shirley MacLaine’s autobiographical romp through the New Age—reincarnated as a hit TV movie in 1987, mediums have been everywhere. Turn on your television almost any night; if you don’t tune directly into the dead with the Sci-Fi channel’s successful medium event, “Crossing Over with John Edward” (appearing five days a week, some days as often as four times), odds are good you’ll encounter a psychic hotline ad. Or visit a major bookstore, where you may likely see Edward’s Crossing Over (now in its 20th week as a New York Times bestseller), one of Sylvia Browne’s many popular books (such as Life on the Other Side: A Psychics’ Tour of the Afterlife), or another by George Anderson (Lessons from the Light: Extraordinary Messages of Comfort and Hope from the Other Side). Edward is so much in demand that the waiting list for a $300 half-hour private session is three years. A private session with Anderson costs $1,000.

Recent movies tell a similar tale. The enormous popularity of 1999’s The Sixth Sense, in which a boy communicates with spirits who don’t know they’re dead, may have prompted Gallup to poll Americans in 2000 about our beliefs regarding the dead. Can they contact the living? Twenty percent believe they can. Another 22 percent think it’s possible. That same year, the re-released Exorcist remained in theaters around the world for months. And in 2001, The Others captivated audiences with the story of a mother sheltering her children from the apparently malevolent intentions of what she concludes are ghosts after a series of bizarre experiences, including a séance with a medium very like Madame Arcati in Noël Coward’s Blithe Spirit.

But Blithe Spirit’s somewhat head-fuddled medium first haunted the stage in 1941, decades before her New Age counterparts dared materialize. Indeed, people able to commune with the dead have appeared throughout history. One of the earliest accounts is from the Bible (1 Samuel 28), written probably in the 6th or 7th century B.C.E. Israel’s King Saul, no longer protected by Yahweh, grew so fearful on the eve of battle that he defies his own decree outlawing all conjurers of the dead (“necromancers”) and demands a séance with the Witch of Endor to raise the ghost of the prophet Samuel to reveal his fate.

A millennium later, the Christian Church followed Saul’s legal example and outlawed necromancy in the First Council of Nicaea (4th century C.E.). Another millennium would pass, however, before the Church actively sought to eradicate this heresy with the Inquisition of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance, in which those found guilty were executed, most often by burning. Hundreds of thousands of so-called witches—overwhelmingly women—found guilty of conversing with the dead were condemned to join them.

But Madame Arcati—you might object—is no Witch of Endor, no medieval hag, no Lady Macbeth bent on murderous schemes, no Salem-cursed devil worshiper doomed to fuel some myth. Or is she? How different is this slightly daft and inept, yet likeable medium conjured by Coward from the heretical necromancer of old? Modern historians would not hesitate to classify Madame Arcati as a medium within the modern Spiritualist movement that began on March 31, 1848, in Hydesville, New York, near Rochester. A rapping noise so persistent that it had driven away the house’s previous owner took on new meaning when sisters Catherine and Margaretta Fox discovered they could communicate with the raps using a simple code of one knock for “yes” and two for “no.” A series of questions produced responses that slowly took the shape of a remarkable tale: that of a wandering peddler murdered by a previous occupant and buried in the cellar, a tale partially confirmed when portions of a skeleton were unearthed. Word got out. Crowds quickly grew too large for the small house, and the sisters, their rapping sessions, and the dead with their raps intact moved first to Rochester, then two years later, to New York City.

Almost as quickly, others—primarily women—discovered their ability to communicate with disregarded, or disembodied, spirits, as the dearly departed were called. As the focus through which these mediums communicated, these women (and a few men) became known as “mediums,” the movement as Spiritualism. Spiritualist mediums gave public demonstrations, lectured on the theological implications of the communications they received, and were soon holding private séances (French for “sitting”) with prominent members of all walks of American life from coast to coast— including First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln, who invited several mediums to the White House. The souls contacted soon advised the formation of “spirit circles” of family and friends to communicate with their beloved dead, and nightly séances became common occurrences in homes across the nation for the rest of the 19th century. Churches were founded. Societies were formed.

As increasing numbers of mediums, spirits, séances, andconverts converged, more elaborate and impressive forms of communication emerged. Tables tilted and rocked, loud noises and disembodied voices filled lecture halls, and a peculiar fluid called “ectoplasm” materialized. Mediums fell into trance to discover that spirits could speak, write, even paint and sculpt, through them (activities known as “automatism”); the most common example, still used today, is “automatic writing”). Eventually, objects appeared out of thin air, spirits became visible to the unaided eye, and mediums floated out of their chairs.
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Almost as quickly, others—primarily women—discovered their ability to communicate with discarnate, or disembodied, spirits, as the newly dead were called. As the focus through which these spirits communicated, these women (and a few men) became known as “mediums,” the movement as Spiritualism. Spiritualist mediums gave public demonstrations, lectured on the theological implications of the communications they received, and were soon holding private séance (French for “sitting”) with prominent members of all walks of American life from coast to coast—including First Lady Mary Todd Lincoln, who invited several mediums to the White House. The souls contacted soon advised the formation of “spirit circles” of family and friends to communicate with their beloved dead, and nightly séances became common occurrences in homes across the nation for the rest of the 19th century. Churches were founded. Societies were formed.

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SPARKS ACROSS THE POND

It was through the second-generation mediums that Spiritualism spread beyond the United States, first to London in 1852 with the arrival of Mrs. Hayden, who advertised her services in the Times. Her sittings may not have been as dramatic as some—she sat quietly, sometimes reading to herself, while rapping and table tilting went on about her—but they were convincing. Her clients ran their fingers down an alphabet board, each rap indicating the next letter of the message, which often contained details of private matters Hayden could not possibly have known.

In 1855, David Dunglas Home arrived in England and eventually became one of the most celebrated Spiritualist mediums, welcomed at the courts of Louis Napoleon and the tsar. His manifestations went far beyond the raps and tables, including phantom hands, self-playing pianos, even bodily levitation. He was once reported to levitate out a third-floor window, hover above the street for several minutes, then return through a different window in the next room.

Within five years after the Fox sisters' discovery in Hydesville, the movement had spread to Germany and France, then quickly spanned the globe. Transmissions from the dead were published as books that became the foundation of a new philosophy and eventually a recognized religion. Much of society, including the scientific world, was fascinated. In 1882, several prominent members of academia founded the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in London to investigate Spiritualist claims. After a rigorous and scientific method, the field of parapsychology was born. William James, the eminent Harvard psychologist and philosopher, was among its many eminent members. His intensive research into psychic phenomena over three decades profoundly influenced his work as well as the development of the fledging field of psychology.

A. R. Wallace, codiscoverer with Charles Darwin of the theory of natural selection, investigated Spiritualism over many years, concluding that its phenomena were as well substantiated as the facts of any other science. In the late 1890s, C. G. Jung held regular séances with his cousin, Holly Penrose, which served as the basis for his Ph.D. thesis and arguably influenced his theories of the archetypes of the unconscious. Author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (creator of Sherlock Holmes) was also a dedicated Spiritualist; he went public with his beliefs in 1918 and until his death was an active international lecturer for the Spiritualist cause, eventually known as the "St. Paul of Spiritualism."

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1. Ectoplasm is a viscous, usually light-colored fluid that was thought to emanate from and to disappear back into, the body of a medium during a séance. Ectoplasm was most commonly used to explain the materialization of spiritual bodies; material objects were thought to levitate as the result of the gradual build-up of columns of ectoplasm beneath them.

2. A contemporary case in point is Linda Polley (wife of "spiritist" medium Gerald Polley), of Fargo, ND, who claims to have helped the spirit of John Lennon write 50 new tunes for a posthumous album, which she says Lennon hopes will raise money for the troubled spirit-world. Their spiritual collaboration is the subject of the recent British documentary Where Has Eternity Gone?, clips of the channeled tunes can be heard at www. justfree.com/music/spiritist/.

The PLEASURE of giving graciously followed by the pleasure of RECEIVING.

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In 1855, David Dugles Home arrived in England and eventually became one of the most celebrated Spiritualist mediums, welcomed at the courts of Louis Napoleon and the tsar. His manifestations went far beyond the usual common raps and tilting tables to include phantom hands, self-playing pianos, even bodily levitation. He was once reported to levitate out a third-floor window, hover above the street for several minutes, then return through a different window in the next room.

Within five years after the Fox sisters’ discovery in Hydesville, the movement had spread to Germany and France, then quickly spanned the globe. Transmissions from the dead were published as books that became the foundation of a new philosophy and eventually a recognized religion. Much of society, including the scientific world, was fascinated. In 1882, several prominent members of academia founded the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in London to investigate Spiritualist claims using the rigorous methods of scientific method, and the field of parapsychology was born. William James, the eminent Harvard psychologist and philosopher, was among its many eminent members. His intensive research into psychic phenomena over three decades profoundly influenced his work as well as the development of the fledgling field of psychology.

A. R. Wallace, codiscoverer with Charles Darwin of the theory of natural selection, investigated Spiritualism over many years, concluding that its phenomena were as well substantiated as the facts of any other science. In the late 1890s, C. G. Jung held regular seances with his cousin, Holly Price, which served as the basis for his Ph.D. thesis and arguably influenced his theories of the archetypes of the unconscious. Author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (creator of Sherlock Holmes) was also a dedicated Spiritualist; he went public with his beliefs in 1918 and until his death was an active international lecturer for the Spiritualist cause, eventually known as the “St. Paul of Spiritualism.”

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Note 1: Ectoplasm is a viscous, usually light-colored fluid that was thought to emanate from, and to disappear back into, a body of a medium during a séance. Ectoplasm was most commonly used to explain the materialization of spiritual bodies; material objects were thought to levitate as the result of the gradual build-up of columns of ectoplasm beneath them.

Note 2: A contemporary case in point is Linda Polley (wife of “spiritist” medium Gerald Polley), of Fargo, ND, who claims to have helped the spirit of John Lennon write 50 new tunes for a posthumous album, which she says Lennon hopes will raise money for the troubled spirit realm. Their spiritual collaboration is the subject of the recent British documentary Where Has Eternity Gone?, clips of the channeled tunes can be heard at www.justrue.com/music/spiritist/.

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Relative values

Two members of the UK's leading theatre family, Vanessa Redgrave and her daughter, Joely Richardson (left), are to appear on the West End stage together for the first time when they star in Oscar Wilde's Lady Windermere's Fan this month. The Redgrave family's talents have now spanned three centuries, writes London theatre critic and author, Sheridan Morley. "They are there to remind us, from generation to generation, that theatre is about something more than making money or having fun, though they are nowadays not entirely averse to that either. Like the Foyles, they are the changing, living, sometimes self-denying essence of showbusiness past, present and future."

Now booking

The hottest selling ticket is sure to be the brand new stage musical, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. London's most expensive show ever, it fields a spectacular cast which includes Michael Ball, as Caractacus Potts, and Richard O'Brien.

One to Watch

Watch out for 22-year-old Lindsay Marshall as the not-so-innocent housemaid who has been having Established stage stars Joel Fildes and Anna Chancellor run for their money in David Waller's Brexit Marriage.

Front of house

West End news: Jerry Hall in Pinter's Women, Martin Clunes as Tartuffe, and Isango Franches McDermid Reading for the UK.

The Flame Kept Alive

While the movement lost a great deal of its energy in the early 20th century in much of the world, including the United States, Spiritualism thrived in Great Britain. In 1937, the Archbishop of Canterbury, alarmed by Spiritualism's rising popularity, formed an investigative committee whose final report estimated 500 societies in the Spiritualists' National Union and nearly twice that number outside the group's ranks. By 1941, when Noël Coward was writing Blithe Spirit, Spiritualism in Britain had reached its high water mark.

As the Archbishop's reaction illustrates, the growth of Spiritualism engendered not only curiosity and conversion, but also serious opposition. Especially after World War II, when its own membership began to decline significantly, the Catholic Church responded to Spiritualism with vigorous hostility, portraying mediums as dangerous, demon-possessed practitioners to sacred communion, and warning that science threatened the spiritual and mental health of participants.

In 1944, a prominent Spiritualist medium, Helen Duncan, was imprisoned, tried, and convicted under the Witchcraft Act of 1735. Her publicly debated ordeal eventually led to the acceptance of Spiritualism as a legitimate religion in Great Britain, the exemption of Spiritualist mediums from the Witchcraft Act, and the passing in 1951 of the Fraudulent Mediums Act, which enabled Spiritualists to practice their religion openly and legally, without fear of imprisonment (or burning).

Some attribute Spiritualism's enormous rise in popularity in Britain during the 1920s and 30s to the movement's ability to inspire the religious imagination of soldiers caught in the nightmarish horror of World War I trenches, many of whom returned from the front with eerily similar stories of ghosts and healing. Others cite the overwhelming grief of innumerable bereaved family members who sought the consolation of Spiritualist rituals, which promised communion with loved ones lost in the war. Whatever the reason, we find in Blithe Spirit Coward's wartime success a British populace flocking to theaters for the peculiar and familiar solace of Madame Arcati's supernatural exploits, finding consolation in the comic relief and subtle hope offered by Coward's comedy.

We sadly know something of the grief and despair that Coward and his Blitz-stricken compatriots experienced when Blithe Spirit was first produced in 1941. It should come as no surprise, then, that the New York Times recently reported that some of the families of the victims of the September 11 attacks have turned for comfort to mediums— as well as to clergy, psychotherapists, and their fellow bereaved.

In this present context, the three thousand years late that Madame Arcati from the Witch of Ecorz amounts to a brief span indeed. ■

1 If this reminds you of the Ouija board, you're right. "Ouija," derived from the French and German words for "yes" (oui and ja), developed as an adaptation of the original Fox sisters' code for interpreting raps supplied to an alphabet board. In 1853 French Spiritualist M. Plancheville refined the idea as a large piece of paper with a heart-shaped wedge (now known as a "planchet"), with a wheel and two ends and a pencil attached to the third. One or more people would place their fingers on the planchet, which would move to draw pictures or form words. The modern Ouija board, which now bears numbers and letters, was developed in 1992 by Eliza J. Bond and Will Hald in Baltimore's Parker Brothers bought all rights to the concept in 1986. The Ouija board has been one of Parker Brothers' most successful properties, exceeded only by the game of Monopoly.
Relative values

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The one and only Janie Dee

Janie Dee’s role as the cross-Channel swimmer who experiences the downside of fame, Edythe Herbert, in My One and Only, reunites her with a long-standing love – the music of Ira Gershwin. The award-winning actress and singer, familiar to audiences on both sides of the Atlantic as Julie Triples in Alan Ayckbourn’s Comic Potential, tells theatregoer "I always go with what my heart tells me to do" – most appropriate in this Valentine month!

Now booking

The hottest spring ticket is sure to be the brand new stage musical, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang. London’s most expensive show ever, it fields a spectacular cast which includes Michael Ball as Caractacus Potts, and Richard O’Brien.

One to Watch

Watch out for 22-year-old Lindsay Marshall as the not-so-innocent housemaid who has been giving established stage stars Joel Warren and Anna Chancellor a run for their money in David Warren’s Bristol Marriage.

Front of house

West End news: Jerry Hall in Pearson’s Women, Marina Cloros as Tartuffe, and Is Angela Frances McDonnell Reading for the UK?

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tion of soldiers caught in the nightmarish horror of World War I trenches, many of whom returned from the front with eerily similar stories of ghostly legions materializing to lend Britain aid in its hour of need. Others cite the overwhelming grief of innumerable bereaved family members who sought the consolation of Spiritualist rituals, which promised communion with lost ones lost in the war.

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In this present context, the three thousand years that separate Madame Arcati from the Witch of Endor amount to a brief span indeed.
GALLERY AT THE GEARY: ABOUT AVAILABLE LIGHT

Find yourself with some extra time before a performance or duration in between? Want to expose yourself to more fine art, but don’t make it to art galleries as often as you’d like? Now you need look no further than the Geary Theater itself. A.C.T. invites you to visit the second floor of the theater (just outside the auditorium doors, along the north bank of windows, and by the elevators) to view original artwork by a diverse range of artists in a series of rotating exhibits throughout the 2001-02 season.

Currently on view is a series of recent photographs by San Francisco-based photographer Diane Boote. Much of Boote’s colorful work is inspired by her extensive travels. It was upon her return from a long European excursion in 1986 that Boote was selected for her first solo exhibit by the Joseph Dior Museum of Photography, which displayed 30 of her travel prints and self-portraits. “I am inspired every day to hunt for the treasures that surround and all too often elude us,” says Boote, whose journey as a photographer has been intimately linked with her personal exploration of the tragedy of great loss and the mystery of impermanence. “By 1992, my two adult sons had passed away. So at a time when some people are wrapping things up, I had to start over, re-examining everything in my life. I experienced the exhilaration of having my first photo exhibit along with the pain in my heart knowing my son was dreadfully ill. The camera and I became close friends, searching together for the hidden delicacies that give one’s life structure and meaning.”

There will be a reception honoring the artist at the Gallery at the Geary on March 7 from 5 to 7 p.m. Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about Diane Boote, please contact Margot Daniels at (415) 683-9922 or visit the artist’s Web site at www.dianebboote.com.

“COOL HOLLYWOOD BLONDES” COMING TO THE GEARY THEATER

Hollywood’s Golden Age produced its share of golden blondes. A.C.T., in conjunction with the Chronicle Film Series, will showcase several of them in “Cool Hollywood Blondes,” a special program that will appear at the Geary Theater on three Monday nights in March and April. Tippi Hedren, legendary star of the Hitchcock classics Marnie and The Birds, kicks off the series March 11. Janet Leigh, unforgettable in Touch of Evil, The Manchurian Candidate and, of course, Psycho, will appear onstage March 18. And on April 8, Cheryl Crane will talk about her mother, Lana Turner, the most dangerous of the Hollywood blondes. Clips will be shown from each artist’s famous roles, followed by onstage interviews conducted by Chronicle film critics Edward Guthmann, Ruthe Stein, and Nick LaSalle.

Each event begins at 7:30 p.m. (Bars open at 6:30). Tickets for each evening’s presentation will be $18; or attend all three events for $45. Student tickets will be available for $10 on the day of the event, subject to availability (valid student ID required). Proceeds from the series will benefit the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. For more information, call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415 749-2ACT or click act-sfbay.org.

A NEW LOOK FOR THE A.C.T. PROGRAM

Last year Stagebill, the publisher of A.C.T.’s acclaimed performance programs since 1995, acquired Performing Arts magazine, a California publisher of programs for the performing arts. As part of Stagebill’s efforts to consolidate its West Coast operations, the company has transferred the production of programs for its California venues, including A.C.T., to Performing Arts’ operation in Los Angeles. We’d love to hear what you think about our program’s new look and content. Drop us a line at A.C.T. Publications, 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, or e-mail us at juvencio@act-sfbay.org.
A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program presents

Peer Gynt  Feb 26–Mar 16
by Henrik Ibsen  translated by Paul Walsh
directed by Susan Fancher

The A.C.T. Young Conservatory presents

Dangling Conversations: The Music of Simon and Garfunkel
Mar 22–31
World Premiere!
directed by Craig Slaight  music director Krista Wigle

Reindeer Soup  Jul 20–30
by Joe Pintauro  directed by Craig Slaight

A New Play by Sarah Daniels  Aug 15–25
World Premiere!
A collaboration with the National Theatre, London by Sarah Daniels  directed by Domenique Bozanic

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A.C.T. Profiles

CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is thrilled to be experiencing her tenth season as artistic director of A.C.T. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has staged for A.C.T., the American premieres of Tom Stoppard's The Invention of Love and Indian Ink, new A.C.T. commissioned translations of Molière, Diderot, and de la Rive; the world premiere of Leslie Ayasian's Singer's Bay; and acclaimed productions of The Dreyemeymoon, Old Times, Arcadia, The Rose Tattoo, Juniper, Antigone, JCaudry, Home, and The Tempest. In the 2001-02 season she directed the first American production of Harold Pinter's Celebration and the world premiere of New York Playwrights' Theater's The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, as well as the world premiere of David Lang and Mac Wellman's The Difficultly of Getting Home at the Kronos Quartet and the A.C.T. Mahaffey Fine Arts Park's world premiere production of Marc Blitzstein's No For A Larger Last. Last summer, her play The Colossus of Rhodes received its world premiere at La Jolla Playhouse as a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff served as director of Classic Stage Company in New York. She oversaw the world premiere of Earnest Pound's Elderado, the American premiere of Pinter's Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBER awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 2001 OBER for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Breih and Rodney's opera The Cave at the Vienna Festivals and the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Perloff received a B.A. in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the 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.

HEATHER N. KITCHEN (Managing Director), now in her sixth season at A.C.T., graduated from New York University in 1996 to begin her partnership with Artistic Director Carey Perloff. Since that time, A.C.T.'s annual budget has grown by 50 percent and staff size has increased dramatically. As managing director, Kitchen has overseen the company's recent expansion and growth instrumental in fortifying the company's infrastructure to better support A.C.T.'s artists and employees. Kitchen began her career as a stage manager at the Yale School of Drama in 1975, and after 15 years in theatrical production became general manager of Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Canada's largest regional theater. She currently serves on the board of the Commonwealth Club of California and is a past member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross. Big Sisters/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the executive committee of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT). She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, the California Arts Council, the Arts and Business Council of the University of Waterloo and the renowned Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory's Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the main acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T., Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, scene study, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-Broadway plays, including work with Max Weinfield and David and Theresa 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.

JAMES RAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theater. He also staged the Broadway productions of And More Round Drinks by Little and George is musical by Carole Bayer Sager, as well as the national tour of WOODY WOODPECKER. Off-Broadway he produced Simeon, and he produced the world premieres of Paul Green's The World at Ten and Black Coal at A.C.T. He was the artistic director of the James and Ann's and the Min. Haine joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Guild's International Award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haine was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle.

Who's Who

RENE AUGesen (Elven), an A.C.T. associate artist and core company member, made her Geary Theater debut at last season's Most Merry in TheatreWorks' production of Boeing Boeing and appeared earlier this season in The Board of Avon and Celebration and The Republicans in the Public Theater, N.Y. This Spring, with F. Murray Abraham and Joy Verey Patten at the Arc Light Theater, and Overseved with the Drama League, as a part of the 61st Annual Drama League Awards. His most recent credits include the Drama Desk Award winning role of Mr. Stuurt (directed by Carey Perloff) at the Huntington Theater Company; several productions, including the world premieres of The Board of Avon and The Hidden Lands, at South Coast Repertory; and productions at the Great Lakes Theater Festival, Baltimore Center Stage, the Los Angeles Theater Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Stage West. His film and television credits include The Battle Studies, “Law & Order,” “Guiding Light,” ‘Another World,’’ and Hallmark Hall of Fame’s Saint Maybe. Augesen is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

TON BLAIR (Dr. Bradwell) has worked extensively in Bay Area theater, including Envision W. The Therapist, Southpaw, The Thirteenth, The Guardsman, The Royal Family, and Odessa at A.C.T.; Holliday and Common, The Host Mortality at San Jose Repertory Theatre; Wilder/Wilder/ Wilder and Molly Sweeney at Marin Theatre Company; and The Tale of Love at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; and Mr. Merry and Sogne at Sacramento Theatre Company. Other regional theater credits include productions at the Kennedy Center, Cleveland Play House, Hartford Stage Company, and 15 years at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre. Blair has also directed many regional theaters and in Japan, and has appeared in feature films and on television. He most recently played Mr. Meyers in Spinning into Butter at TheatreWorks and Cell Park's in My Fair Lady at the Berkeley Theatre Festival.

JOAN HARRIS-GBL (Mrs. Bradman) recently performed in A Christmas Carol at A.C.T. Stage credits include Miranda in the world premiere of David Hirson’s Wyzgown Montagne at A.C.T. and on Broadway, Eleanor Widener in the original Broadway company of The Who's Tommy. She also performed in Big River on Broadway. Gbl has performed her solo show, Mother, Where Were You When I Wake Up Screaming and My Red Bus: Ride on Fire in the United Kingdom and all over New York City. Her television credits include the Lost Day in the Life of Brian Darlin for HBO, Woman About, and “Law & Order.”

LORI LARSEN (Madame ArἙtta) makes her A.C.T. debut in Blithe Spirit. A Seattle native, she has spent most of her 30 years in the Bay Area’s theater stages. She most recently played Elizabeth I in The Board or Avon at San Francisco’s Theatre Rhyme. Other credits include Audra in Any Reed’s The Psychic Life of Starges at Seattle’s Empty Space Theatre and in True West at A.C.T. 1970s and where she has performed in 35 productions. Recent credits include Wit, Indecent, Quills, Cymbeline, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?, and As You Like It, which earned her an Obie Award for Outstanding Actress. She also credits also include productions at the Long Wharf Theatre, Madison Repertory Theatre, and Source Theatre Company, as well as tours to Russia, Switzerland, and Norway with The Draegers. Larsen also worked as an opera director in the 90’s, directing Titus of Hrief, La Boheme, the Barbiere Di Siviglia, and La Boheme for Seattle Opera, as well as operas in the Daughter of the Regiment. The last time she played in San Francisco (1987), she performed in Monster’s A Diary, by Baris Bari, at theureka Theatre. Larsen also played Mrs. LeFleur on Northern Exposure.

SHONA TUCKER (Babs Condominium) has appeared at A.C.T. in West Side, and Jesundation: Holding History, both directed by John Pfohl. Tucker has appeared at the New Victory Theater, where she recently appeared in Knot in Constian (directed by Johnwell Thompson) at A.C.T. Tucker's stage credits include productions at the Public Theater, Circle in the Square, Plummer/Perkins Downtown, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the New York Shakespeare Festival, as well as A Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (OBER) Award and Investigation of the Bay Area theater Workshop. Tucker has worked at many regional theaters, including Eugene Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the American Shakespeare Festival, the Southern Repertory Theatre, the Acting Company, the Goodspeed Opera House, Actors Theatre of Louisville, and Arena Stage. Her credits include "Third Watch,” Rays on the Side, Woody Allen’s Alice, “New York Undercovers,” and “One Life to Live.” Tucker received her B.S. from Northwestern University and M.F.A. from New York University and has been honored with a Fulfillment Scholarship and an ADECO award for excellence in black theater.

JESSICA TURNER (Edith) is a third-year student in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program and made her Geary Theater debut in The Board of Avon. Her regional theater credits include Marina in Pericles and the title role of Sleeping Beauty with Shakespeare in Santa Fe; Celina in As You Like It; Good Angel in Doctor Faustus, and Lady Bona in Shakespeare’s Richard III at the Wisconsin Shakespeare Festival; Belle in A Christmas Carol at Dallas Theater Center; and Helen of Troy in The Trojan Women with

ON B kithe Spirit

A.C.T. PROLOGUE

A lively half-hour presentation introducing the production, sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco Featuring Director Charles Randolph-Wright • 5:30 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.) • Thursday, February 26

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

Informal half-hour post-performance discussions, moderated by A.C.T. staff members and artists from the production March 5 (after the 7:30 p.m. performance) • March 6 (after the 2:00 p.m. matinee) • March 10 (after the 2:00 p.m. matinee)

OUT WITH A.C.T.

A dynamic meet-and-greet for gay and lesbian theater lovers! • Post-performance reception March 13

join us! For more information, call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415-749-2424.
CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is thrilled to be experiencing her tenth season as artistic director of A.C.T. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has staged for A.C.T.; the American premieres of Tom Stoppard's The Invention of Love and Indian Joe; new A.C.T. commissioned translations of Heracle, Oedipus, and Napoli; the world premiere of Leslie Ayastic's Singer's Day; and acclaimed productions of The Dovecote, Open Oil Times, Auden's The River, Satanus, Juggernauts, Crimes, Home, and The Tempest. In the 2001-02 season she directed the first American production of Harold Pinter's Celebration and the national tour in New York of The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, as well as the world premieres of David Lang and Mac Wellman's The Disappearance of Galileo, Jukka Krone's Quadri, and the A.C.T. MacArthur Fund's world premiere production of Marie Bilaniuk's No (Quadrat) for a year. Last summer, her play The Children of Robots received its world premiere at Lucille Lortel's White Barn Theater and was a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was associate director of Classic Stage Company in New York. She has also served on the world premiere juries of Earle Poindexter's Elektra, the American premiere of Peter's Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBER awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 1998 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Brechin and Robert Layton's opera The Cave at the Venice Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Perloff received a R.A. in drama and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the 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 Leslie and Nicholas.

HEATHER M. KITCHEN (Managing Director), now in her sixth season at A.C.T., migrated to the United States from Canada in 1996 to begin her partnership with Artistic Director Carey Perloff. Since that time, A.C.T.'s annual budget has grown by 59 percent and staff size has increased dramatically. As managing director, Kitchen has overseen the company's recent expansion and been instrumental in fortifying the company's infrastructure to better support A.C.T.'s artists and employees. Kitchen began her career as a stage manager. After Perloff and Smith invited her to run the organization in 1975, and after 15 years in theatrical production became general manager of Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Canada's largest regional theater. She currently serves on the board of the Commonwealth Club of California and is a past member of the San Francisco Symphony Leadership Board of the American Red Cross, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the executive committee of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT). She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, the California Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Kitchen is a graduate of the University of Waterloo and the renowned Richard Ivy School of Business at the University of Western Ontario.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory, 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., Smith served as the director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, acting theory, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-Broadway productions, including work with Mac Wellman and David Mamet. 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.

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Elia Kazan's A Streetcar Named Desire. He is also known for his work as a stage manager of the Broadway productions of And Miss Reardon Drinks Coca-Cola and Jesus Christ Superstar. A season director at the Straz Center for the Performing Arts in Tampa, Florida, he produced Arena Stage's Best Plays Award-winning production of Floyd Collins. Smith has also performed in the chorus of Fiddler on the Roof and still performs in regional productions around the country. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia and has worked on numerous television and film productions, including the role of the Mayor in the HBO miniseries The Neanderthal Man.

RENE AUGESEN (Senior), an A.C.T. associate artist and core company member, made her Geary Theater debut in the current season in The Seagull and appeared earlier this season in The Board of Avon and Celebration and The Rose Tattoo. Both productions were directed by Carey Perloff. Previous roles included Maria Streich in Spinning into Butter at Lincoln Center Theater, Macbeth (with Alec Guinness) at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon, and the Queen of Hearts in the Public Theater's Dr. seuss’ how the Grinch Stole Christmas. Augesen's other theater credits include productions at the Long Wharf Theater, Madison Repertory Theater, and Source Theater Company, as well as a guest appearance in The Drought of the Regiment. The last time she played in San Francisco (1987), she performed in Of Mice and Men, as well as in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike at the American Conservatory Theater.

LOUIE LARSEN (Madame) makes her A.C.T. debut in Blithe Spirit. A Seattle native, she has spent most of her 30-year career in regional theater and on Broadway. She appeared in Any F Reid’s The Psychic Life of St方针s at Seattle's Empty Space Theater in the 1970s and has performed in 35 productions. Recent credits include Wits, Indiscretions, Quills, Gaisy, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf, and The Rose Tattoo. Her theater credits also include productions at the Long Wharf Theater, Madison Repertory Theater, and Source Theater Company, as well as a guest appearance in The Drought of the Regiment. The last time she played in San Francisco (1987), she performed in Of Mice and Men, as well as in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike at the American Conservatory Theater.

SHONA TUCKER (Bible Commissary) has appeared at A.C.T. in Duration and Macbeth. She recently appeared in Clearing Star (directed by Jason Zinaman) at A.C.T. and currently plays in The House of Blue Leaves at the Mark Taper Forum. Tucker's other theater credits include productions at the Public Theater, Circle in the Square, Pittsburgh Public Theater, American Repertory Theater, and the New York Shakespeare Festival. As well as a Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (OBER) Award and Insight at the Seattle Opera, she has performed in the New York Theatre Workshop. She has worked at major regional theaters, including Seattle Repertory Theatre, Utah Shakespeare Festival, and the Acting Company, as well as the Classic Stage Company on Broadway. She has also performed on television and in films, including in the series seamless, Third Watch, and in the films Written on the Wind and Witness for the Prosecution.

JESSICA TURNER (Edith) is a third-year student at the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program and made her Geary Theater debut in The Board of Avon. Her regional theater credits include Maria in Pericles and the title role of Elizabethan comedy with Shakespeare in Santa Fe Celli in Jo You Like It, Good Angel in Doctor Faustus, and Lady Bona in the Minnesota Shakespeare Festival's Polonius at the Minnesota Shakespeare Festival. Her television credits include the (Daves) in the Life of Brian, Darla for HBO, Woman, Adult, and “Law & Order.”

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On Blithe Spirit

A.C.T. PROLOGUE

A lively half-hour prelude introducing the production, sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco Featuring Director Charles Randolph Wright • 5:30 p.m. (doors open at 5 p.m.) • Thursday, February 26

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

Informal half-hour postperformance discussions, moderated by A.C.T. staff members and artists from the production

March 5 (after the 7 p.m. performance) • March 6 (after the 2 p.m. performance) • March 10 (after the 2 p.m. performance)

OUT WITH A.C.T.

A dynamic in-town gathering for gay and lesbian theater lovers • Postperformance reception March 13

join us! For more information, call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415-749-2428.

Performing Arts
"That’s American"

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

With the production of his Block Nativity at San Francisco’s Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, we are reminded that this is the 100th anniversary of the birth of Langston Hughes. In honor of the great poet, we reprint an early work of his, written as a theme, or essay, for a class he took while still a student at Columbia University in 1922.

Theme for English B

The instructor said,—
Go home and write
a page tonight.
And let that page come out of you—

Then, it will be true.

I wonder if that simple?
I am twenty-two, colored, born in Westover, Salem.
I went to school there, then Durham, then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.
I am the only colored student in my class.
The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem,
thru a park, then I cross St. Nicholas,
Eighth Avenue, Seventh, and I come to the Y,
then Harlem Branch, Y, where I take the elevator
up to my room, sit down, and write this page:

It’s not easy to know what is true for you or me
at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I’m what
I feel and see and hear. Harlem, I hear you;
you hear me — we two — you, me, talk on this page.

From The Collected Themes of Langston Hughes, by Langston Hughes, copyright © 1994 by The Estate of Langston Hughes. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, a division of Random House, Inc.
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I wonder if it’s that simple?

I am twenty-two, colored, born in Winsted-Salem.

I went to school there, then Durham, then here to this college on the hill above Harlem.

I am the only colored student in my class.

The steps from the hill lead down into Harlem, through a park, then I cross St. Nicholas, Eighth Avenue, Seventeenth, and I come to the Y; the Harlem Branch Y, where I take the elevator up to my room, sit down, and write this page:

It’s not easy to know what is true for you or me at twenty-two, my age. But I guess I’m what I feel and see and hear. Harlem. I hear you hear you hear you hear you hear me — we two, you, me, write this page.

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A New Eye on Hollywood

Hidden Treasures on the Boulevard

TEXT BY NORM CHANDLER FOX
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID DAIGLE

Los Angeles is a megapolis that keeps reinventing itself all the time. Right now, much of the action is focused on Hollywood, where more than a billion dollars is in the pipeline to develop and renovate a world-renowned community that had fallen on hard times.

But like a once-famous actress who succeeds in making a comeback, the 2002 version of Hollywood is indeed ready for a close-up. To paraphrase Marcel Proust, the voyage of discovery is to look at the same place with a new set of eyes.

You can always buy a guidebook and set out on your own, but a much more enjoyable way to do it is a cultural walking tour of Hollywood. Launched last summer, Red Line Tours offers one- and two-hour-long trips and exclusively permits interior glimpses into certain landmark buildings (Hollywood Tour Center at the Stella Adler Theatre, 6773 Hollywood Blvd. [323] 402-1074). Tour patrons receive live audio headsets which pick up the docent’s running commentary and block out the sometimes maddening street noise.

So, whether you’re a visitor to Los Angeles or a longtime resident, whether you’re on a guided walking tour or on your own, spend some time enjoying the glamour of the old and the grandeur of the new Hollywood.

Hollywood’s Evolution

Hollywood was born in 1883 when real estate developer Harvey Wilks bought 120 acres of property, which he named as the site of his studio. The town, although in the early part of the century, as movie companies from the East Coast saw an opportunity to film year-round in the mild climate of Southern California. Besides buying studios and mansions, the community developed a “main street,” Hollywood Boulevard, which from the 1920s through the 1960s was regarded as the “Fifth Avenue of the West” due to its upscale retailers.

As part of the Boulevard’s improvement project of 1938, The Walk of Fame was created to immortalize the names of concrete Hollywood's elite and to unify the town’s entertainment district. As of today, The Walk is the third most visited site in L.A.’s metropolitan area, just behind Universal Studios and Disneyland! There are currently 2,800 stars on the sidewalks of Hollywood and 24 more are added each year. Icons for films, television, radio, recording, and live theater represent each star’s medium. Opera fans like me are proud to note that Plácido Domingo has recently acquired a star under the “live theater” rubric in The Walk.

The Grand Movie Palaces

Built during Hollywood’s Golden Age of the 1920s, these opulent and romantic movie palaces were meant to entice the middle-class away from live theater. Many had five stage shows along with the movie to justify the $1.50 admission price! The first movie palace was the Egyptian Theatre (6712 Hollywood Blvd.), which opened in 1922 with Douglas Fairbanks’ Robin Hood. The motif was inspired by ancient Egypt, and before performances, “Egyptian” guards paraded the rooftop while harum-scarum ushered patrons to their seats. This theater gave birth to the movie premiere, replete with a red carpet, celebrities introduced while alighting from limousines, and searchlights crossing the sky. The American Cinematheque renovated and reopened this theater in 1998. In 1936, the El Capitan (6838 Hollywood Blvd.) opened for live theater. It was designed in the ultra-ornate Churrigueresque style. Over 120 live plays were produced here, including No, No Nanette, Anything Goes, and Ah! Wilderness. In 1942, the theater covered by a sleek modern façade and became the Hollywood Paramount, a movie house. When this theater fell into disrepair, the Walt Disney Company bought it and began a two-year

What do Annie Oakley, The Edmund Fitzgerald and Nine Inch Nails have in common? The same law firm.*

*For the sake of the column, after Wilks, the company was renamed by the Disney's. The Wilks’ Studio was later the home of Fox Studios and ultimately the 20th Century Fox. After being bought by the Disney Company, the studio was rebranded as Disney’s California Adventure. The Hollywood Bowl, a music venue, is also located within the complex.
**A New Eye on Hollywood**

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and Nine Inch Nails have in common?

**The same law firm.**

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Offering many event spaces and can accommodate up to 4,000. The grand lobby and promenades are perfect for seated dinners up to 300 or receptions of 1,000.

LOUISE M. DAVIES SYMPHONY HALL
Comprising four levels, the Symphony Hall is perfect for large seated dinners with a capacity of 500 guests per level.

VETERAN’S BUILDING
The Lobby and Promenade can be utilized for a seated dinner of 350 to 450 and receptions up to 1,000.

THE GREEN ROOM
Can seat 25 guests for dinner, 100 for a theatre-style viewing or 50 for a standing reception.

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PATINA GROUP

$65 million museum-quality restoration. The Capitol re-opened in 1991 as a movie theatre with occasional live entertainment.

Sid Grauman, with partners Mary Pickford and Douglas Fairbanks, opened his Chinese Theatre (6925 Hollywood Blvd.) in 1927. Built as a kind of museum to Chinese arts, architecture, and culture, Grauman’s theatre used imported Oriental antiques, usherettes dressed in ancient Chinese gowns, and incense to perfume the auditorium. After accidentally burning through wet carpet, Grauman conceived the idea of celebrities putting their footprints, handprints, and signatures in cement in the theatre’s forecourt.

REMEMBERING OLD HOLLYWOOD

Just south of Ripleys Believe It Or Not Odditorium on the southeast corner of the intersection of Hollywood and Highland is the exquisite art deco Max Factor Building, which is to be transformed this year into the Hollywood History Museum. Factor coined the term “make-up” and had specially decorated rooms that would complement the complex and hair styles of such stars as Claudette Colbert, Joan Crawford, Lana Turner, and Rita Hayworth.

Across the street, look at the two-story Beaux Arts building with copper arches and the bright awnings of Hollywood Music and Movies (6765 Hollywood Blvd.) The town’s first night club, the Meemister Cafe, opened on the second floor in 1922. It was here that Charlie Chaplin, Marion Davies, and Rudolph Valentino cavorted nightly, and Joan Crawford was discovered after winning a Chauncey dancercise.

A few doors west is the Snow White Cafe (6769 Hollywood Blvd.), which was opened by Walt Disney himself in 1949. After Disney claimed that he couldn’t find a decent cup of coffee in town, look inside to see reproductions of the original murals from the film, Snow White.

NEW REFLECTING OLD

The new Hollywood & Highland complex is a 1.2 million-square-foot, five-level venue with movie theaters, restaurants, boutiques, a live broadcast studio, and containing the 3,500-seat Kodak Theatre — which is bringing the Academy Awards back to Hollywood next month. The Academy Walk entrance is framed with arches containing pendants with the names of every “Best Picture” since inception, and leaving room for future winners up until the year 2071.

The most impressive part of Hollywood
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**The Patina Group**

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The most impressive part of Hollywood

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(FEBRUARY 26, 9, 13, 15, 16, 2002)

**Los Angeles Opera**

Flavio Rommingo
Artistic Director

Ken Noland
Principal Conductor

Experience Johann Sebastian Bach’s inspiring choral, arias and duets in a spectacular theatrical interpretation that brings all their grandeur and passion to life. The Mass in B minor is considered Bach’s greatest musical achievement with its exquisite vocal lines and rich choral writing, which evoke dramatic images of spiritual joy, peace and redemption. This innovative staging of a transcendent musical masterpiece is sure to touch your soul.

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& Highland is the Babylon Court, a monumental pagan temple archway with black and white (and grey) surrounding fountains of ancient deities, facing gigantic columns topped by crowning elephants. It's a reproduction of one of the most famous movie sets of all time, from D.W. Griffith's 1916 masterpiece Intolerance. **WHERE TO STAY**

The Renaissance Hollywood Hotel was not open at press time, but the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel (700 Hollywood Blvd., [323] 467-7788) has a wood-panelled setting and well-seasoned waiters. Try the tuxedo sandubs, juicy grilled lamb chops, and sublime rice pudding. Helped by Musso's enormous martini, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Dorothy Parker, William Faulkner, and Raymond Chandler formed an 'Algonquin Round Table West' at this restaurant in the early '40s. One can only expect that tradition to be revived, too.  

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**2X2: TERPSICHORES' TREASURES**

continued from page 10

red short tunas, red toe shoes, and tight bodices, their insistent legs pacing the tune of social afflante, they are finding in this newfound but elegant anarchy. Here is truly the Balanchine epiphany in action, where an observer can 'see the music and hear the dance.'

The first full-evening abstract ballet, Jovial was inspired by Van Cleef & Arpeil's famous gems. No matter that Balanchine founded a 20th-century aesthetic with an American slant, he never moved far from his roots within the Imperial Maryinsky of Russia; its glitzy tuxas and epaulette ballerinas were inevitably part of the choreographer's tool kit.

But Jewell finds its highest peak in "Rubies", while "Emeralds", to music of Faured, really doesn't boast such definition and coherence, and "Diamonds", to Tchaikovsky, is lossily an example of the recurring Swan Lake ghosts that haunted Balanchine (and which he finally honored in his staging of the second act). In "Diamonds," look for the swooning ballerina on pointe, leaving against her partner, her head curling inside folded arms that undulate like the Swan Queen's protective wings.

While Robbins was a many-faceted dancer, he could arguably go down in dance history for his ingenious settings of Chopin piano music. With Dance he suffused our consciousness with the composer's humanity — his limp grace, veiled melancholy, quiet joy, gentle humor. Indeed, Robbins defined a genre: the piano ballet. Ever afterward it was called by others — any number of whom mimed the same gold, if not with his sensitivity or inspiration.

Set to a group of Chopin études, waltzes, mazurkas, a nocturne, and a scherzo for five women and five men, Dance abounds in elusive grace; its power can hold a spectator rapt. In a fine performance, with the caliber of dancing that projects all manner of poised expression, one often doesn't hear a breath being drawn in the audience. It is these personal, intimate fragments of interaction that tell whole chapters about the human condition — and bequeath Robbins his laurels.

Kudos to Tomasson for spreading the wealth.  

Donna Paretson, a recipient of the ASCAP/Emmy Taylor Award, is a widely published journalist and critic who writes regularly for Performing Arts Magazine.
red short tunas, red toe shoes, and tight bodices, their insistent legs pressurizing the torso of social affront, their feet flitting in this newfound but elegant anarchy. Here is truly the Balanchine epiphany in action, where an observer can ‘see the music and hear the dance.’

The first full-length abstract ballet, Jewels was inspired by Van Cleef & Arpeless famous gems. No matter that Balanchine founded a 20th-century aesthetic with an American slant, he never moved far from his roots within the Imperial Maryinsky of Russia; its glittery tiaras and exquisite boudoirs were inevitably part of the choreographer’s tool kit.

But Jewels finds its highest peak in “Rubies,” while “Emeralds,” to music of Faure, really doesn’t boast such definition and coherence, and “Diamonds,” to Tchaikovsky’s moonlight, is lovely as an example of the recurring Swan Lake ghosts that haunted Balanchine (and which he finally honed in his staging of the second act). In “Diamonds,” for look at the swooning ballerinas on pointe, leaping against her partner, her head covering inside folded arms that undulate like the Swan Queen’s protective wings.

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Donna Perlmutter, a recipient of the ASCAP/Thomson Taylor Award, is a widely published journalist and critic who writes regularly for Performing Arts Magazine.
WINES FROM OUR OWN BACKYARD:
The Best of Southern California

by Dennis Overstreet

For most of the world, California’s fine wines can be summed up in one four-letter word: Napa—as in the Valley. Yet, over the past decades, many splendid wines have arisen from relatively unpretentious viticultural areas of the state, including our own backyard—Southern California. For the purposes of this discussion, that’s a pretty big backyard, extending from the Temecula or Rancho California area southeast of Los Angeles right up to Paso Robles, which is just over 100 miles northwest of Santa Barbara.

Southern California is perceived as a uniformly and almost dowdy-like region whose wines are a precious resource and the only way to grow grenache is to irrigate heavily. In reality, there are plenty of varied microclimates that have proven hospitable to the cultivation of wine grapes.

At the beginning and end of the day, and all through the night, the cool, coastal atmospheric flow off the Pacific Ocean cools with Southern California’s coastal mountain ranges to provide the cool, foggy, lowland conditions favored by such “northern” grapes as Chardonnay, Riesling, and Pinot Noir. Southern California weather, dry, mild climate microclimates are often ideal for ripening not only the classic California Cabernets but also the Rhône varieties, especially Syrah, as well as the Italian Sangiovese. Because Southern California is such a vast area with so many distant microclimates, it’s safe to say that the region is nowhere near fulfilling its wine-growing potential. And that’s an exciting prospect.

The wines of Southern California tend to reflect the area’s wide-open, up-front, media-oriented culture. What it may lack in subtlety, it more than makes up for in personality and style. As a rule, you’ll find ripener, rippler and bolder, more assertive Cabernet, Zinfandel, and Syrah.

Not surprisingly, numerous captains of local industry have taken up the wine baton. One of my favorites is Tim Jones, the former head of Northrop Grumman Corporation. With all the determination and know-how he used to develop the stealth bomber, he started a winery, Mosqua Vineyards, at his Bel Air estate and has created a fabulous Bordeaux-style Cabernet Sauvignon blend and an excellent Sangiovese blanc.

Several prominent Los Angeles restaurateurs have also converted their passion for wine into second careers as viticulturists and winemakers. Michael McCarthy, proprietor of Michael’s of Santa Monica, has his own Malibu vineyard, which produces a Bordeaux blend and other superbly crafted reds. Manfred Krankl, who built the La Brea Bakery and Campanile Restaurant into highly successful businesses, produces very fine Syrah, Pinot Noir, and Chardonnay at his Sine Qua Non Winery in Ventura. And Michael Benacerraf, the sommelier at Wolfgang Puck’s world-famous restaurant Spago, now located in Beverly Hills, began making wonderful Chardonnays, Pinot Noirs, and Syrah in the 1990 vintage with grapes from Santa Barbara County.

Here are a few more of my top Southern California picks: Buena Vista Vineyards & Lompoc. Winemaker Bryan Babcock is considered one of the hottest young tal- ents around. Among his wines are a St. Jeor- gam Blanc called Eleven Oaks, a variety of single-vineyard Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs, a Gewürztraminer as well as Italian (Sangiovese and Pinot Grigio) and Spanish (Tempranillo and Albariño) varietals.

Fess Parker Winery & Vineyard, Los Olivos—Founded by the actor who made famous for his roles as Davy Crocket and Daniel Boone on television and located in the Santa Ynez Valley of Santa Barbara County, this winery features Rhône varieties such as Syrah and Viognier, as well as Sangiovese and Chardonnay grapes grown on the estate and in other vineyards in Santa Maria and the Santa Rita Hills. (A geographical aside: Santa Rita is a quasiquintessential Southern California winegrowing region, situated at the western end of the Santa Ynez Valley close to the Pacific. Another top Southern California locale is the Edna Valley, south of San Luis Obispo. It, too, attributes its cool, viticulturally ideal climate to ocean breezes; hence the excellence of local Chardonnays and Pinot Noirs.)

Justin Winery, Paso Robles—This classy operation features a Meritage (Bordeaux-style blend) called Brooches. The Paso Robles area, warmer and drier than other local viticultural areas, is home to some very fine Zinfandel, Syrah, and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The Malibu Estate, Malibu—The creation of real estate and hotel developer George Rosevich, it’s located at elevations of around 1,500 feet and produces an outstanding Bordeaux-style Cabernet Sauvignon blend.

Other top Southern California producers include Alban Vineyards, Arroyo Grande; Andrew Murray, Los Olivos; A2Bred Cline and Quéné, Santa Maria; and Zaca Mesa, Los Olivos.

Dennis Overstreet is the author of Overstreet’s New Wine Guide (Clarkson Potter/ Publishers, Random House). He has been in the wine business for nearly 30 years as author of The Wine Merchant, Beverly Hills.
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Not surprisingly, numerous captains of industry have taken up the wine business. One of my favorites is Tan Joan, the former head of Napa's Gumpian Corporation. With all the determination and know-how he used to develop the health bomber, he started a winery, Mosage Vineyards, at his Bel Air estate and has created a lushly Bordeaux-style Cabernet Sauvignon blend and an excellent Sauvignon Blanc.

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Here are a few more of my top Southern California picks: Babcock Winery & Vineyards, Lompoc — Winemaker Bryan Babcock is considered one of the hottest young talents around. Among his wines are a Sauvignon Blanc called Eleven Oaks, various single-vineyard Chardonnary and Pinot Noirs, a Gewürztraminer as well as Italian (Sangiovese and Pinot Grigio) and Spanish (Tempranillo and Albarino) varietals.

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California Cuisine

by Norm Chandler Fox

SAN FRANCISCO

SCALA'S BISTRO — Now about to celebrate its seventh anniversary, this lively spot, only a few blocks from the thomson district, continues to be one of our most popular restaurants. I hadn't been here since former chef Donna Scala departed, and I was anxious to sample the cuisine of the current executive chef, Staffan Terje. My worry is that the food is now even better than I remember. Designed with tile floors, mahogany boos, stenciled 20-foot ceilings, mirrors, an arced lighting, and an open kitchen, this establishment has an inviting bistro feel. At peak hours, it can be somewhat noisy, but everyone is having such a good time that they don't seem to notice. Over a dozen wines are offered by the glass, and the list of wines is extremely reasonable. The service is among the city's best, so let them guide you through the large and tantalizing menu.

I start with a giant bowl of garlic mashed potatoes steamed in wine served, as in Europe, with a mound of crisp French fries and lemon aioli. There's also a slab of grilled veal chop with mashed potatoes and a slate of veal marinated in red wine. And for a memory of the Italian Riviera, try the sumptuous potted salt cod with onions and potatoes. Other specialties include a profusion salad with baby greens and candied walnuts or a roasted beet and arugula salad topped with crumbled Roquefort cheese.

The food is so fresh, it actually resembles its appearance. For the main course, I chose the hearty fish stew, an enormous serving of mussels, clams, and shrimp in a rich tomato sauce. To accompany this, I ordered the fettuccine with browned butter and a side of arugula. The fish was perfectly cooked, and the sauce was rich and savory. I also enjoyed the pasta dish, which included a variety of seafood and vegetables.

The service was excellent, and the ambiance was warm and inviting. The restaurant was filled with diners enjoying their meals, and the atmosphere was lively and energetic. Overall, I would highly recommend Scala's Bistro for a delicious and satisfying dining experience.
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I start with a giant bowl of gazpacho broth steamed in wine served, as in Europe, with a mound of crisp French fries and lemon aioli. There's also a slith of garlic bread fried calamari and shrimp with fennel, under grilled octopus with a chilli vinaigrette, and a slab of velvety smoked foie gras. And for a memory of the Italian Riviera, try the sumptuous pastured salt cod with onions and potatoes. Other daily specials include a persimmon salad with baby greens and candied walnuts or a roasted beet and avocado salad topped with creamy Roquefort cheese.

For something completely different, how about a small pizza crowned with a delightful combination of pear, caramelized onion, and Gorgonzola? Perine arrives under a delicious topping of bacon, chilies, and pecorino cheese, while a dish of spinach gnocchi is feathery light beneath a mantle of tomato and basil. There's also rigatoni in a rich duck and olive sauce and sweet squash-filled ravioli in butter and sage. Chef Terje handles fish beautifully, as exemplified by the juicy seared salmon with butternut mash and potatoes or the very zesty sole in brown butter and capers. If you're yearning for fancy flavors, try the garlicy grilled pork chop with artichokes or a great lamb shank with a pomegranate glaze. There's also a memorable braised brisket in burgundy wine accompanied by celery paste.

Save room for dessert like a perfect caramelized apple tart with apple brandy ice cream or a piquant quince sorbet. Unfortunately, the bread pudding is too heavy, but the huckleberry and almond cake is light and wonderful. And if you're an inventive chocoholic, then you must order the chocolate extravaganzas, consisting of dark chocolate cake layered with milk chocolate mousse and chocolate pecan brittle — all topped with chocolate brownie ice cream. What a way to go!

Since the kitchen remains open until quite late, this is a perfect choice for after-theater supper as well.

SCALA'S BISTRO, 343 Powell St. (betw. Post and Sutter), San Francisco, (415) 395-8555. Open for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and Sunday brunch.

Without alcohol, two can dine for $85 including tax and tip.

ASIA DE CUBA — When bootlegger Ian Schrager purchased and remodeled the club Hotel, I knew it would become hip and urban. However, I was unprepared for designer Philippe Starck's truly astonishing rendering of this restaurant. The place is breathtaking with its burnt-red walls, soaring ceilings, ultra sexy lighting, tall curved booths, and dramatic adjoining bar. It looks like one of the places in which the heroes of Sex and the City would congregate regularly. Executive chef Mutsu Maruo has created a vivid menu that crosses Asian and Latino dishes with flair. Huge portions are meant to be shared family-style, which makes it fun to come with a group. The servers couldn't be more amiable, and despite a very nice wine list, I put off the dearly priced drinks like the rum-infused Havana Lord Tea or the vodka and lychee martini.

For appetizers, try a wonderful lobster potsticker, spicy Thai rare beef salad with cucumber and orange, juicy scallop and crab cakes with a fiery chipotle remoulade, and grilled foie gras seasoned with Chinese five-spike and mango salsa atop French toast. My sole disappointment is a rapidly flavored tuna tartare despite the addition of currants, almonds, olives, and coconut. As main courses, don't miss the spicy Peking duck atop vinegar noodles, tender grilled ostrich steak with pate of plantains, rare sweet tuna with garlicy Argentine chimichurri sauce, or the lovely marinated lamb on Japanese eggplant. A whole cauli is stuffed with crabmeat and grilled until crisp, and I enjoy an unusual pork chop marinated in rum and crunchy bok choy. There are two side dishes that are required tasting for the table: flavorful black bean croquettes and the mashed potatoes filled with chunks of lobster.

Desserts are rich fantasies, such as the dark chocolate and espresso flan, coconut sticky bun topped with rum-soaked ice cream and olive sauce, or coconut cake layered with chocolate fudge and rum-flavored bananas served with caramel ice cream. For the truly indulgent, order the appropriately named "Bay of Pigs" which is a ganacheta banana split: bananas topped with ice cream, cake, fudge sauce, cookie, and piles of whipped cream — it can easily serve six.

ASIA DE CUBA, 654 Geary St. (cor. Taylor), San Francisco, (415) 292-2300. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner daily. Without alcohol, two can dine for $120 including tip and tax. □

Norm Chandler Fox is Food & Travel Editor for Performing Arts Magazine.
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