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ABOVE

Photo of the Geary Theater by Darryl Bush

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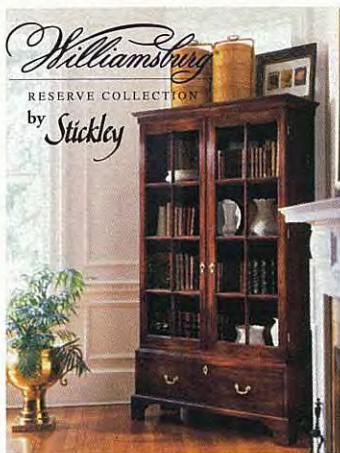
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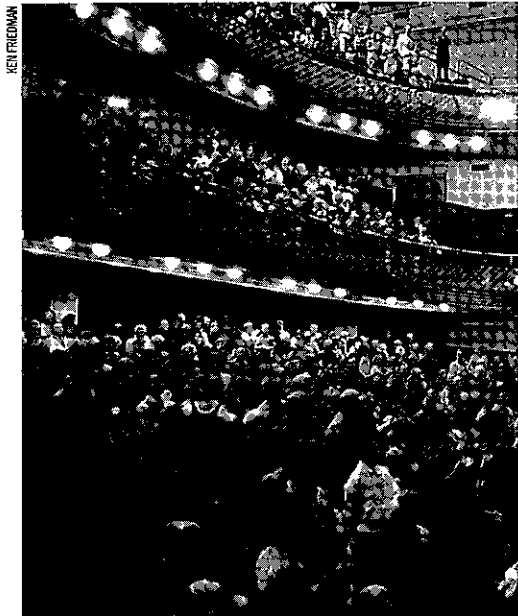
Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national and international reputation, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. During the past three decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.'s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 250,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1996, A.C.T.'s efforts to develop creative talent for the

theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award.

Today A.C.T. is recognized nationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Since the reopening of the Geary Theater in 1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable period of audience expansion and renewed financial stability. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, now serves 3,000 students every year. It was the first training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree. Danny

Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, Benjamin Bratt, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory's distinguished former students. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large. ■



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Music by Shaun Davey
Lyrics adapted and conceived by Nelson and Davey
Directed by Richard Nelson
October 25–November 25, 2001

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Adapted by Dennis Powers and Laird Williamson
Directed by Margo Whitcomb
December 8–29, 2001

SPALDING GRAY'S SWIMMING TO CAMBODIA

December 26–31, 2001

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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

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

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by Maxim Gorky
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SWIMMING TO CAMBODIA

Written and performed by

SPALDING GRAY

Set Design
Ken Kobland

In 1985, I first performed *Swimming to Cambodia* at the Performing Garage in New York City as a three-hour, two-part monologue. It was then condensed into one part for Jonathan Demme's film version in 1987. Since that time, I've not performed the piece live. For me, it was my most political and complex monologue to date. It is not only a very humorous look "behind the scenes" of the making of a major motion picture, but a vivid retelling of a gruesome genocide that should never be forgotten.

In these troubled times, this story deserves to be retold as a live event performed by me at the age of sixty. The program will consist of the one-part version.

— *Spalding Gray*

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A.C.T.

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

by Jessica Werner

By Spalding Gray's own account, the emotional exhibitionism for which he is famous can be traced back to a pivotal experience he had onstage in 1974, while he was starring as Hoss in the New York premiere of Sam Shepard's *The Tooth of Crime* with Richard Schechner's Performance Group. Stripped down to a green cape, boxing shoes, a motorcycle jacket, and a leather jock strap, Gray was directed to step out of character at a specific moment every night and slowly scan the crowd, making eye contact with as many audience members as possible before jumping back into character for the next scene. "That was such a powerful meditation every night," Gray remembers. "My inner voice would start to say, What if you didn't go to the next scene, but just started talking from yourself?"

Gray took his inner voice to heart and began shortly thereafter writing and performing the soul-searching, autobiographical narratives that would become his theatrical trademark. Working without the filter of a playwright's script, using the highs and lows of his own life story as inspiration, Gray has made a career out of playing himself. "I come to know my life through the telling of it," he has said.

Gray's one-man performances have become something of a genre unto themselves. With the blossoming of solo performance art throughout the 1980s and our current fascination with the intimate memoir, Gray has inspired many imitators; no one, however, does exactly what he does. A self-described "poetic journalist," Gray serves as a tour guide through the vicissitudes of his own psyche, with his keen eye for irony somehow managing to illuminate universal truths in the process. Although his stories are often hilarious, they have always had a dark side, a pervasive sadness which manifests in an obsession with his own mortality and, until several years ago, with mourning the loss of his mother, who committed suicide when Gray was 26. Morbidity and an ample dose of skepticism have always been close at hand. ("Good morning," Gray imagines his mirror reflecting back to him, "You are going to die.")

Gray's return to San Francisco this year marks his third performance run at the Geary Theater, and a new episode for A.C.T. audiences in the series of confessional work he calls "the ongoing self-opera of Spalding Gray." In *It's a Slippery Slope* in 1997, Gray chronicled his survival of a messy mid-life crisis, from which he emerged a more content and less detached man, arguably more mature and meditative. Then, in 1998, he introduced audiences of *Morning, Noon and Night* to a more sanguine and forward-looking self. After 20 years of tackling subjects from the political to the overtly sexual,

"I COME TO
KNOW MY LIFE
THROUGH THE
TELLING OF
IT."

Gray finally took on fatherhood as his subject, riffing—with previously uncharacteristic good cheer—on the major and minor joys of raising three children in the sleepy Long Island town of Sag Harbor.

Gray decided last year to revisit what is perhaps his best-known piece, *Swimming to Cambodia*, about his experiences as an actor in Roland Joffe's film *The Killing Fields*. The monologue introduced a broad audience to his unique style and roller-coaster delivery and solidified his reputation as an unparalleled self-dramatist. Gray won an OBIE Award for *Swimming to Cambodia*'s New York premiere in 1985; the film version, directed by Jonathan Demme, was released in 1987 and has since achieved a kind of cult-classic status.

YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE

Over the last 21 years, Gray has written and performed 18 autobiographical mono-

logues and appeared in numerous feature films, including film versions of his three most popular monologues: *Swimming to Cambodia*; *Monster in a Box*, about his struggles to write a novel (*Impossible Vacation*, published in 1993) and his underlying struggle to make peace with the memory of his emotionally disturbed mother; and *Gray's Anatomy*, which recounts the loss of sight in his left eye and his ensuing globe-trotting search for alternative therapies. "I see myself as a Humpty-Dumpty figure," Gray has said. "There's a part [of myself] that is simply pushing the egg off the wall. I would name any of my monologues *All the King's Horses*, had it not already been used as a title. I push myself off and I get down and start picking up the pieces."

The anecdote has become Gray's stock-in-trade, albeit a device he admits has the potential to put his art and his life at cross purposes. The anecdotist's primary pitfall, he realizes, is the temptation to treat the events of his life simply as material for performance, even to cultivate experiences for their re-tell value, rather than let life unfold as a natural process. He has called anecdoting a "hazard of my trade" and is well aware of the risks of blurring the line between his private self and his public persona. "The dangerous part of storytelling is that it becomes a defense against feeling. I was in therapy in Los Angeles many years back, and the therapist asked me to tell a particular story to him. I said, 'Oh, I've told that hundreds of times in *Sex and Death to the Age 14*.' He said, 'No, don't tell it to me as if I were an audience member. Please tell it to me as though you were telling me for the first time.'"



PAULA COURE

Spalding Gray

**SPALDING
GRAY THE
FATHER SEEMS
A MAN
REMARKABLY
AT PEACE WITH
HIMSELF.**

Memory, according to Gray, is the primal act of creativity. "Memory, for all of us, is our first creative act," he says. "Everyone that remembers is creative, is 're-membering.' And I think people don't realize how creative they're being with their memories; they think they're recollecting the actual event. But memory is actually a very structured thing: it's selective, and it's naturally edited through the consciousness and unconsciousness."

Called a "master of the first-person singular," Gray has never had any trouble baring his innermost struggles before an audience of strangers. When asked why he has made "confession as entertainment" (as he describes it) his life's work, he says, "I don't really question that. That's like asking myself why I want to get up in the morning. I'm just happy that I've found this niche and that it works for me." He finds a degree of solace in the fact that capturing his memories and retelling them grants him a kind of double life and allays, at least temporarily, his overwhelming anxiety about death. "Because I have a pretty good sense that I am only going to live once," he says, "life feels like a complete dream, an 'insubstantial pageant faded,' which is my favorite Shakespeare quote [from *The Tempest*]. One way to make life more substantial is to speak it."

Surprisingly, he has no real qualms about relinquishing his innermost secrets and personal revelations. "I have to say there is nothing that I have consciously thought that I haven't shared with someone—but it's not necessarily the audience. I like to joke that performing my monologues is a way of living twice. Memory is the best I can do at reincarnating myself."

CHRONICLING THE SELF

Soon after his onstage epiphany during *The Tooth of Crime*, Gray formed the Wooster Group with his longtime friend, director Elizabeth LeCompte, and a small group of fellow actors from The Performance Group. They began to create performance pieces that LeCompte structured around Gray's personal memories. Gray followed Schechner's advice to be himself first, before taking on a role; the result was Gray's first autobiographical trilogy, *Three Places in Rhode Island*, a docudrama about his turbulent New England childhood with a Christian Scientist mother and alcoholic father. His performance of *Rumstick Road* (the second part of the trilogy, based on a series of audiotapes Gray had made of his family) was the first time Gray took on no outside character and referred to himself onstage by his own name.

After *Three Places* (which he now refers to as "artistic mourning" for his mother), Gray knew he was finished with group collaboration but was unsure exactly what form his yearning for solo performance should take. While teaching at UC Santa Cruz in the summer of 1978, he sought the advice of Amelie Rorty, who was teaching a course in "The Philosophy of Emotions." Gray confided in Rorty his

continued on page 30

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A.C.T. NEWS

GET IN THE A.C.T.

Act One kicked off its seventh season in September with a swinging party at San Francisco's Paragon restaurant, and there are still plenty of ways to get involved with the popular young professional league of A.C.T. Act One offers its members a unique perspective on the theatrical experience and has become an integral part of the A.C.T. community through special events and fundraising. Each season proceeds from Act One membership and events support the next generation of theatrical talent by contributing to the Act One merit scholarship for actor training in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

In addition to specially priced A.C.T. subscriptions, Act One members receive invitations to private receptions and unique special events, opportunities to go behind the scenes at A.C.T. with backstage tours and cast receptions, and a place to meet and mix with other people who love theater.

This season's Act One special events include a Shakespearean winter costume ball scheduled for February 9 at the Regency Center in San Francisco, and A.C.T.'s annual *Comedy Night at the Geary*, scheduled this season for April 21.

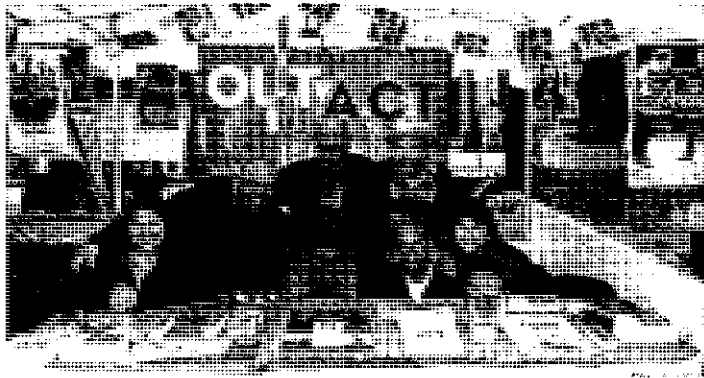
To get in on the act, and for party specifics, call the Act One hotline at (415) 439-2402.

STEPPING OUT WITH A.C.T.

Out with A.C.T. is a dynamic new gathering for gay and lesbian theater lovers. Special performances of three of A.C.T.'s upcoming plays—*Blithe Spirit* (March 13), *The Glass Menagerie* (April 24), and *The Mother* (May 22)—are available at a discounted rate to Out with A.C.T. patrons, who will enjoy postperformance parties following each show, complimentary wine and port, and an opportunity to meet the artists.

To order tickets please call the A.C.T. Box Office at (415) 749-2ACT and mention the "Out with A.C.T." events when purchasing your tickets.

Out with A.C.T. at the Castro Street Fair in October. Staff and friends include: (l to r) Cynthia Quiroga, Randy Yaradash, Brad Lublin, Chris Rader, Jon Retsky, and Caroline Quiroga.



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Give the gift of A.C.T.!

Share the thrill of live theater with a special someone.

A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount and are valid for any play or for merchandise in the Geary Theater or at the box office. To give the gift of great theater, call 415.749-2ACT.

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Thunderbird

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continued from page 22

For a chance to win two free tickets to an Out with A.C.T. performance, and to receive more information about upcoming festivities, send your e-mail address to out@act-sfbay.org. The deadline for entry is February 20.

Out with A.C.T. is sponsored by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian*, Beaulieu Vineyards, and Graham's Six Grapes Port.

TAKE A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

For theater lovers who want to know what really goes on backstage, A.C.T. offers guided tours of the Geary Theater from 10:30 a.m. to noon on most Wednesday and Saturday mornings throughout the season. Tours are \$8 for the general public, \$6 for subscribers and seniors, and \$4 for students. All tours are ticketed and can be purchased through the A.C.T. Box Office. For specific tour dates and other information, call (415) 749-2ACT or visit A.C.T. online at act-sfbay.org.

IN MEMORIAM

A.C.T. announces with great sadness the passing of Eric Landisman, who died October 3 after being struck by a car during a visit to Southern California. We miss him terribly and send our prayers to his family and his many friends both inside and outside the Bay Area theater community. A distinguished scenic designer, Eric embarked this fall on his second season as supervisor of the A.C.T. Properties Shop. Before joining A.C.T., he had worked in Bay Area theater for many years, including serving as properties master for TheatreWorks and the California Shakespeare Festival.

Eric, who was 47, attended Berkeley High School and San Francisco State University. He joined the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival in 1980 and remained with that company in various capacities for 15 years before going on to teach and design scenery at the College of Marin. He had a lifelong love not only of theater but of world historical style, ranging from Louis XIV to the art of Disney. Eric was on one of his many research trips to Disneyland when he was hit in a crosswalk. The sensitivity and good humor he brought to his work at A.C.T. was an inspiration to many.

Eric is survived by his parents, Joseph and Jeanne Laudisman of Berkeley, and his brother and fellow theater designer, Kurt, of San Francisco. Mr. and Mrs. Landisman have been A.C.T. subscribers since 1967, and held four seats for the family at the Geary Theater during many of Eric's formative years. At the memorial service held at the Geary Theater on October 29, A.C.T. named an orchestra seat for Eric.

To memorialize Laudisman and the hard work he put into his career, the Landisman family has set up the Eric Landisman Fund



Eric Landisman

to support emerging stage designers and technicians. Tax-deductible contributions, made out to "A.C.T.-Eric Landisman Fund," may be mailed to A.C.T., 30 Grant Ave., 6th floor, San Francisco, CA 94108. The fund will be administered by Theatre Bay Area, the local support organization of the Bay Area's resident theater companies.

GALLERY AT THE GEARY

Find yourself with some extra time before a performance or during intermission? 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 elevator) to view original artwork by a diverse range of artists in a series of rotating exhibits throughout the 2001-02 season.

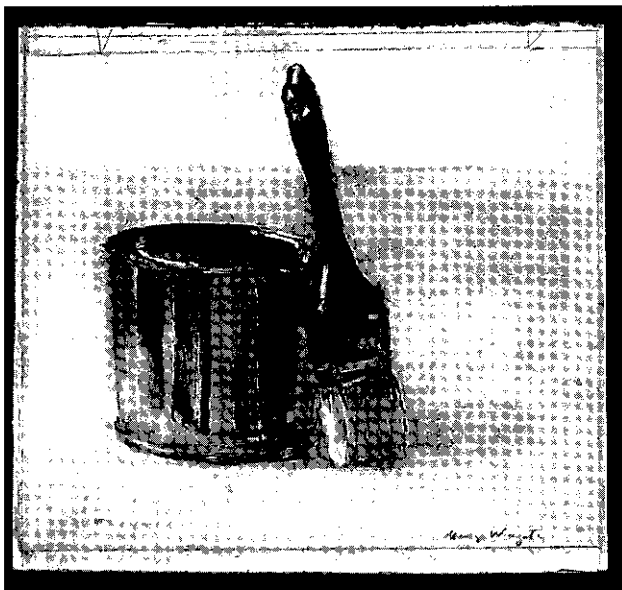
Currently on view are a recent series of small-scale paintings by George Wingate, a New York artist currently making his home on Boston's North Shore. Wingate has exhibited extensively for the past 20 years on the east and west coasts, as well as more recently in Europe. Many of Wingate's paintings are executed on mahogany panels only 4 x 5 inches in size. Within this limited frame, Wingate has found a scale perfectly suited to his gestural style of recording everyday objects and scenes, capturing the visual richness and inner stillness inherent in the world around us. His paintings celebrate the beauty of the commonplace and position everyday objects and landscapes in the context of our busy lives.

"I believe there is more to life than meets the eye," says Wingate. "I am delighted to move paint around and make something that other people will recognize. However, my preoccupation has not been with picture-making, but with expression. I try to show my response to a time and a place and my excitement about the act of painting."

There will be a reception honoring the artist at the Gallery at the Geary on January 11. Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about George Wingate, please contact Kevin Simmers at (415) 474-1066.

A.C.T. NEWS

Artist's Props
(5½" x 6¼", oil)

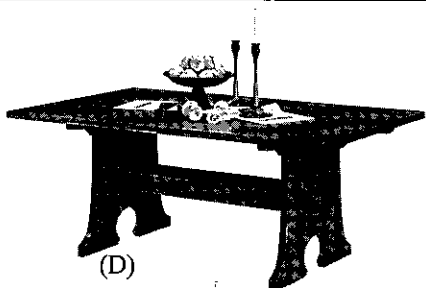


Stickley

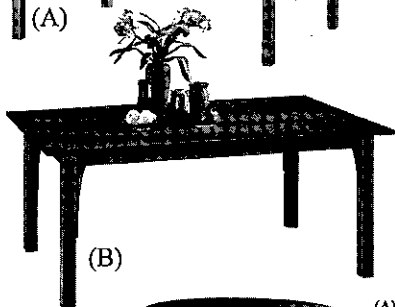
The Mission Oak Collection



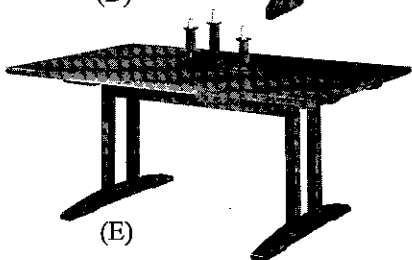
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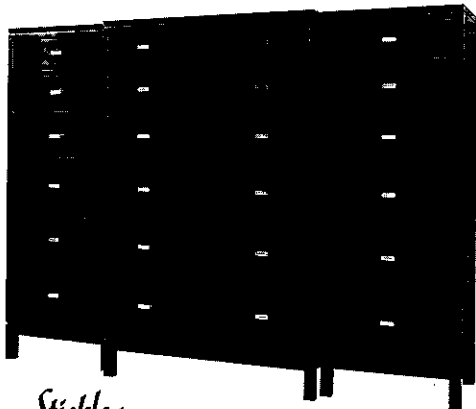
(C)

- (A) DINING TABLE 40x62 = 2-15" LEAVES
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SPALDING GRAY, a writer, actor, and performer, has created a series of 18 monologues which have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia, including: *Sex and Death to the Age 14*; *Booze, Cars, and College Girls*; *A Personal History of the American Theater*; *India and After (America)*; *Monster in a Box*; *Gray's Anatomy*; *It's a Slippery Slope*; *Morning, Noon and Night*; and the OBIE Award-winning *Swimming to Cambodia*.

Gray performed the leading role of Secretary William Russell in last year's Broadway production of Gore Vidal's *The Best Man*. Other appearances on and off Broadway include his portrayal of the Stage Manager in the revival of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, directed by Gregory Mosher; Hoss in the Performance Group's New York premiere of Sam Shepard's *The Tooth of Crime*. With the Wooster Group, which he cofounded in 1977, Gray wrote and performed the autobiographical trilogy *Three Places in Rhode Island*.

Gray's film credits include *Kate and Leopold* (directed by James Mangold), *How High* (dir. Jesse Dylan), *Drunks* (dir. Peter Cohn), *The Killing Fields* (dir. Roland Joffe), *Swimming to Cambodia* (dir. Jonathan Demme), *Gray's Anatomy* (dir. Steven Soderbergh), *True Stories* (dir. David Byrne), *Clara's Heart* (dir. Robert Mulligan), *Beaches* (dir. Gary Marshall), *The Pickle* (dir. Paul Mazursky), *The King of the Hill* (dir. Steven Soderbergh), *The Paper* (dir. Ron Howard), *Beyond Rangoon* (dir. John Boorman), and *Diabolique* (dir. Jeremiah Chechik).

His television appearances include the HBO special *Terrors of Pleasure*, *The Image* (with Albert Finney) for HBO Premiere Films; *Zelda* (dir. Pat O'Connor), and a recurring role on "The Nanny." He recreated his role in *Our Town* for PBS's Great Performances.

Gray's publications include a collection of monologues, *Sex and Death to the Age 14* (Random House); *Swimming to Cambodia* (Theatre Communications Group); *In Search of the Monkey Girl* (Aperture Press); *Orchards*, *Monster in a Box*, and *Gray's Anatomy* (Vintage); and the novel *Impossible Vacation* (Knopf). *It's a Slippery Slope* was published by Farrar, Strauss & Giroux in 1997 and released on a CD by Mercury Records in 1998.

Gray has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation. His most recent monologue, *Morning, Noon and Night*, published by Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, premiered at the Goodman Theatre in September 1999 and opened at Lincoln Center for a three-month run in the fall of 1999. He is at work on a new monologue.



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fear that western culture was disintegrating and that the world as he knew it was nearing its demise. "She took me at my word and said, 'Well, Spalding, during the collapse of Rome, the last artists were the chroniclers.' And all the bells went off inside me. Of course, I thought, I'll chronicle my life, but I'll do it orally, because to write it down would be in bad faith, it would mean I believed in a future."

Already a compulsive diarist (he hadn't missed a daily entry for seven years) and a natural storyteller, Gray was perfectly suited to his new medium. He hurried back to New York and began performing monologues, to increasingly larger audiences, at The Performance Garage. He performed *Sex and Death to the Age 14*, his first published monologue, in 1979, and it established the look and feel of his subsequent solo work: "I sat behind that desk with a little notebook containing all I could remember about sex and death up until I was 14 years old."

During *Sex and Death*, Gray devised his unique process of performance development. Rather than committing his stories to memory, he develops and refines each monologue over many months in front of a live audience. He does not write his monologues in the formal sense; they are never spoken or rehearsed beforehand. Instead, he creates a simple outline of events recollected from his life, jotting down key words to jog his memory while he's onstage. "Then, guided by my outline, I tell you my story," Gray explains. "It's as though I am describing the images of an internal film." In the early stages of the development process, Gray tape records each performance and listens to it the following morning. He works for months in front of audiences in various venues finalizing his editorial decisions and internalizing the rhythms of his performance. When it is at last finished, Gray explains, "it becomes lyrical. And when I sit down at the table it is totally available to me. It is not something I have to think too much about. It is a part of me."

Audience reaction and participation are fundamental to all of Gray's work, as well as central to his method of ordering his thoughts both on and off stage. "I have been working in front of a live audience for three decades and this can't help but influence the way that I shape my world. The way that they are silent, the way that they laugh. I have my feelers out for [audience reactions], so my audience is almost like an editor, a live editor."

He has even developed a performance piece, called *Interviewing the Audience*, in which he turns his prodigious curiosity for once on others. Gray invites audience members to join him onstage and asks each one a stream of free-association questions that must resemble the interrogation to which he regularly subjects himself. Life meets art meets life.

AN ACTOR AT HEART

Although his career has flourished during a time when solo performance has become increasingly popular, Gray distances himself from performance artists who subject audiences to what he calls "post-modern fractured narratives." He continues to define himself first and foremost as an actor—albeit one whose life's work consists primarily of playing himself:

For me where acting comes in...is when I begin over the course of the monologue's evolution to study myself and my behavior. I begin to observe myself as a sort of character study....I am to some extent an inverted Method actor in the sense that I use autobiographic emotional memory to play myself rather than some other character. When it works, I'm able to transform what might be considered a psychopathology (divided or schizoid personality) into a creative act.

Gray has played significant film and theater roles in recent years, including the title character of Gore Vidal's *The Best Man* on Broadway last season. ("He was an existential New Englander....It fit like a perfect Cinderella slipper.") Yet he acknowledges feeling less interested of late in mainstream theater. "I am not very keen on playing other people anymore," Gray said recently.

One remarkable aspect of Gray's work is that audiences have always been able to find aspects of themselves in his very personal despair and irrepressible questioning. The audience, however, maintains the pleasure of laughing at it all. "The audience doesn't see the enormous amount of pain

Scenes from the Wooster Group's production of Gray's trilogy, *Three Places* in Rhode Island:

OPPOSITE
Point Judith (1979)

BELOW
Nayatt School (1978)



CLEM FROD

the humor comes out of,” Gray explains. “They laugh right over it. There’s a line in *Swimming to Cambodia*. It’s funny—but not funny—that my father never went to see [the show] because he wouldn’t miss cocktail hour. The audience can just howl, but that was the truth.”

A NEW VOICE

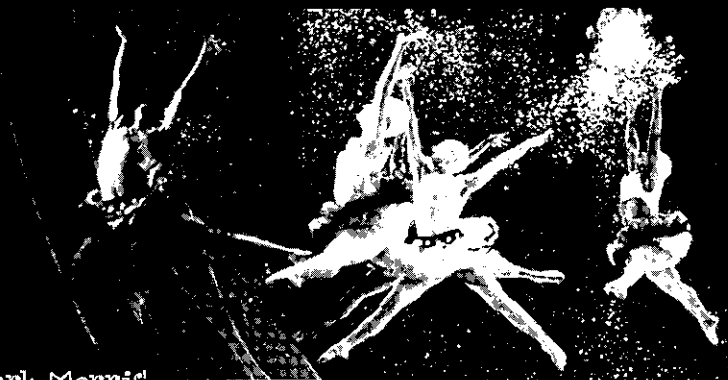
Other, darker truths have revealed themselves to Gray in revisiting *Swimming to Cambodia*. In New York in November, he performed the piece for the first time since its inception. He became acutely aware of the fact that he is no longer the man who first described, with a kind of manic fervor, his outlandish experiences in Thailand’s red-light district and the gruesome realities of reliving, as an actor, “the worst auto-homo-genocide in modern history.”

“When I first performed *Swimming to Cambodia*, I think I was much more adolescent in a way. Now I see that the piece was originally a wake-up call to an adolescent who had been reeducated and sprung from his complacency by the experiences he had in Asia.”

Gray’s artistic mission has always been to speak the moment-to-moment truths of his life just as he has lived them, an imperative that has proved particularly challenging given recent difficult experiences in his personal life, as well as in the world at large since September 11. Gray sustained serious injuries last summer in an auto accident while driving with his wife in the Irish countryside. After three weeks of recovery in the hospital, he has endured months of rehabilitation and is still coping with the physical and psychological challenges of healing. “It has slowed me down physically, but, perhaps more interesting to what I do, I have felt a new voice emerging, one that is more humble, less ironic. I feel the issues surrounding the accident riding beneath whatever else I’m working on, pushing up and wanting to be told. It was actually hard at first to find inspiration again in *Swimming to Cambodia*, but I have been surprised by just how much has resonated for audiences.”

In fact, as we all cope with the daily news of a world fractured by opposing ideologies, Gray’s questioning of 15 years ago seems remarkably immediate: “How does a country like America begin to find a language to negotiate with a country like Russia or Libya if I can’t begin to get it together with my neighbors?”

In contrast to Spalding Gray the actor—who once said that “to tell a memory is more fun than to live it”—Spalding Gray the 60-year-old father finds a kind of meditative release in telling his life just as he has lived it. He seems to know that sometimes we can bear to hear what we cannot bear to see. “I continue to find a much greater power in real stories than in any kind of fictive retelling. I believe there is a kind of masking in the metaphors of fiction, whereas the well-told story about the self in the world is very gratifying, for the author as well as for others. I see it as both artistic and therapeutic. Raymond Carver said late in his life, ‘Why not tell what really happened?’ Well, why not tell what really happened, and tell it *well*?” ■



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A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (*Artistic Director*) is thrilled to be entering 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 *Hecuba*, *The Misanthrope*, *Enrico IV*, *Mary Stuart*, and *Uncle Vanya*; and the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; as well as acclaimed productions of *The Threepenny Opera*, *Old Times*, *Arcadia*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *Home*, and *The Tempest*. In the 2001-02 season she directs the first American production of Harold Pinter's *Celebration* and *The Room* and Maxim Gorky's *The Mother*, as well as the world premiere of David Lang and Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* (featuring the Kronos Quartet) and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program's world premiere production of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer*. Last summer, her play *The Colossus of Rhodes* received its world premiere at Lucille Lortel's White Barn Theater in Westport, Connecticut.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party*, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and 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 Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.



HEATHER M. KITCHEN (*Managing Director*), now in her sixth season at A.C.T., emigrated 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 50 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 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 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 Canada Council of the Arts, and *Forbes* magazine's Business and the Arts Awards. Kitchen is a graduate 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 master 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-off Broadway plays, including work by Mac Wellman and David Greenspan. 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 Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theater. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* and *Georgy* (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's *Don't Drink the Water*. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle.

HONORING A.C.T.'S VOLUNTEERS

Do you enjoy working with diverse people and learning more about the theater? A.C.T.'s volunteer auxiliary offers many opportunities for people interested in contributing their time and talent. Volunteers assist with mailings and work with administrative departments, help at selected performances, staff the library, and more.

Volunteers do so much for A.C.T. throughout the year that we can never thank them enough for the critical support they provide. We would like to recognize the individuals listed below who have volunteered during recent months:

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amy hengerer '00 and chris ferry '00 in *pains of youth*, by ferdinand bruckner (photo by ken friedman)

WAYS OF GIVING

AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE PROSPERO SOCIETY

A.C.T. is pleased to announce the formation of the Prospero Society. Named after the wise and benevolent magician in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, the society has been established to honor those who wish to help sustain the future of A.C.T. by including the organization in their estate plans.

Your bequest will have a profound effect on A.C.T.'s future. It can be used to:

- Support mainstage productions
- Encourage new translations and innovative productions of classical work
- Support the creation of new plays and musicals for the American theater
- Enhance the A.C.T. Conservatory by providing first-class professional actor training through student scholarships and endowed faculty chairs
- Build younger and more diverse audiences for A.C.T. by providing subsidized tickets to schools and community groups.

If you would like more information,
please contact Michele Casau at (415) 439-2451,
or send an e-mail to mcasau@act-sfbay.org.
All inquiries will be held in strictest confidence.



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The following corporations have generously matched gifts made by their employees to A.C.T., doubling the impact of those contributions. A.C.T. extends its gratitude to these companies and invites all their employees to join in supporting theater in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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NATIONAL CORPORATE THEATRE FUND

The National Corporate Theatre Fund is a nonprofit corporation created to increase and strengthen support from the business community for 11 of this country's most distinguished professional theaters. A.C.T. receives the support of the following foundations, individuals, and corporations through their contributions of \$1,000 or more to the National Corporate Theatre Fund:

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, (415) 834-3200. On the Web: act-sfbay.org.

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION

Geary Theater Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12-8 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily.

Online

Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at act-sfbay.org. Seating quality is consistent with that available by phone or in person. A.C.T.'s popular E-mail Club (accessible through the Web site) offers members reminders of upcoming shows, special offers and last-minute ticket discounts, and the latest company news.

Charge by Phone or Fax

Call (415) 749-2ACT and use your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to (415) 749-2291.

Purchase Policy

All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. If you are unable to attend at the last minute, you can donate your tickets to A.C.T. The value of donated tickets will be acknowledged by mail. Tickets for past performances cannot be donated.

Mailing List

Call (415) 749-2ACT or visit our Web site to request subscription information and advance notice of A.C.T. events.

Ticket Prices

Ticket prices range from \$11 to \$61.

Subscriptions

Full-season subscribers save up to 29% and receive special benefits including performance rescheduling by phone, and more. Call the A.C.T. Subscription Hotline at (415) 749-2250 or visit A.C.T. online.

Discounts

Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the box office 90 minutes before curtain. Matinee senior rush tickets are available at noon on the day of the performance for \$10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID. Student and senior citizen subscriptions are also available. A.C.T. also offers one Pay What You Wish performance during the run of each production.

Group Discounts

For groups of 15 or more, call Edward Budworth at (415) 439-2473.

Gift Certificates

A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person at the box office.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Geary Theater Tours

A.C.T. offers guided tours (\$8, \$6 subscribers and seniors, \$4 students) of the Geary Theater on selected Wednesday and Saturday mornings. For information, call (415) 749-2ACT or visit A.C.T. online.

Student Matinees

Matinees are offered at 1 p.m. to elementary, secondary, and college school groups for selected productions. Tickets are \$10. For information call (415) 439-2383.

A.C.T. Extras

For information on A.C.T. Prologues, Audience Exchanges, and *Words on Plays* audience handbooks, please turn to the "A.C.T. Extras" page of this program.

ASL

American Sign Language-interpreted performances are offered to selected productions throughout the season for Deaf audience members. For performance dates and times, visit act-sfbay.org/community or subscribe to A.C.T.'s Deaf community e-mail list by sending an e-mail to deafcommunity@act-sfbay.org. Deaf patrons may purchase tickets by calling (415) 749-2ACT or via TTY at (415) 749-2370.

Conservatory

A.C.T. offers instruction in a wide range of theater disciplines. The Master of Fine Arts Program offers a rigorous three-year course of actor training, culminating in a master of fine arts degree. The Summer Training Congress is an intensive program for those with some performing arts background. Studio A.C.T. offers evening and weekend classes, including Corporate Education Services, to enthusiasts at every level of experience. The Young Conservatory is a broad-based program for students 8-19. Call (415) 439-2350 for a free brochure.

Costume Rental

More than 10,000 costumes, from hand-made period garments to modern sportswear, are available for rental. For information call (415) 439-2379.

Parking

A.C.T. patrons can park for just \$9 at the Hilton San Francisco for up to five hours, subject to availability. Enter on Ellis Street between Mason and Taylor. Show your ticket stub for that day's performance upon exit to receive the special price. After five hours, the regular rate applies.

A.C.T./F.Y.I.

A.C.T./F.Y.I.

AT THE THEATER

The Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

A.C.T. Merchandise

Posters, sweatshirts, t-shirts, note cards, scripts, and *Words on Plays* are available for purchase at the Geary Theater Box Office.

Refreshments

Bar service is available one hour before the performance in the main lobby, Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level, and the Sky Bar on the third level. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beepers!

If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. Or you may leave it and your seat number with the house manager, so you can be notified if you are called.

Perfumes

The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented after-shave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe physical reactions in some individuals. As a courtesy to fellow patrons, please avoid the use of these products when you attend the theater.

Emergency Telephone

Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call (415) 439-2396 in an emergency.

Latecomers

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

Listening Systems

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performance. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

Photographs and recordings of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

Rest rooms are located in the lower lobby, the balcony lobby, and the uppermost lobby.



Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call (415) 749-2ACT in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

AFFILIATIONS

A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theaters and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of the League of Resident Theaters, Theatre Bay Area, Union Square Association, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau. A.C.T. is a participant in the National Theatre Artist Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American theater, and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

A.C.T. logo designed by Landor Associates.



The director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.



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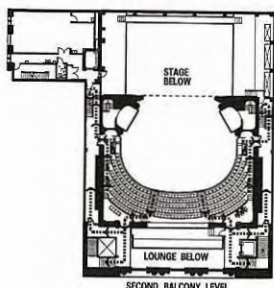
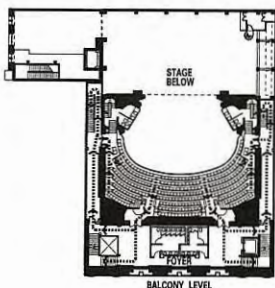
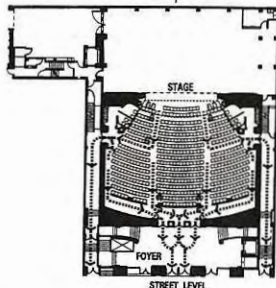
A.C.T. is sponsored in part by a grant from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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A.C.T. is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency.

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