



# LEVEE JAMES

by S. M. SHEPHARD-MASSAT

directed by ISRAEL HICKS

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**Mark Nadler in *Tschaikowsky*  
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# ABOUT A.C.T.

GEARY THEATER AUDIENCE PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNIE



**AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER** nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Managing Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring

new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work.

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 270,000 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. In 2001, to celebrate A.C.T.'s 35th anniversary and Perloff's 10th season, A.C.T. created a new core company of actors, who have become instrumental in every aspect of its work.

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 financial stability. In 2001, A.C.T. began producing alternative work at Zeum Theater, which now serves as a venue for student productions and exciting new plays. 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 actor 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, 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.



Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director* • Heather Kitchen, *Managing Director*

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Elizabeth Brodersen, *Publications Editor*  
Jessica Werner, *Associate Publications Editor*

**A.C.T. Box Office**  
415.749.2ACT

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# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE



**Dear Friends,**

There is nothing more thrilling than watching a new theatrical voice emerge. Two summers ago, while I was at the O'Neill Playwrights Conference in Waterford, Connecticut, working on my play *The Colossus of Rhodes*, I went one evening to sit under a very beautiful beech tree at the center of the O'Neill campus and listen to a reading of a new play by Sherry Shephard-Massat. True magic happened under that tree. The spirited characters, the gorgeous language, and the potent love story of *Levee James* leapt off the page and into the night air, and everyone who watched it was electrified.

The director of that reading was Israel Hicks, and the female lead was the inimitable Rosalyn Coleman, and we are delighted that both of them have come to A.C.T. to help create our world premiere production of *Levee James*. This production represents Israel's long-overdue debut at A.C.T.; audiences here will surely remember the extraordinary Rosalyn from *Pecong* and *Seven Guitars*. *Levee James* also excited me because it held out the promise of two extraordinary roles for our core acting company members Steven Anthony Jones and Gregory Wallace. One of the joys of having a core company is seeking out work that is particularly suited to their unique talents, and *Levee James* fits that bill perfectly.

In this difficult economic climate, doing brand-new work on this scale is a risky and, some would say, foolhardy proposition. But it is also a deeply exhilarating one. A.C.T. is deeply invested in the future of the art form, since we are not only a theater but also a training program for young artists. It is critical for the next generation of artists to see us making a commitment to new work and to the unique tales of the writers of our time. We are so grateful to you for your support of this adventure, and hope that you find it as satisfying and eye opening as we have.

Yours,

Carey Perloff  
Artistic Director

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Sunday, February 29  
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### Launching New Work: A Look at *Levee James* and the Importance of New Plays to Bay Area Theater

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# "I Remember You"

An Interview with Playwright S. M. Shephard-Massat

BY JESSICA WERNER

**B**y playwright S. M. Shephard-Massat's own account, a writer's greatest source of inspiration and self-knowledge is often found by mining the depths of one's own family, and racial, history—"knowing where you've been so you know where you're going." It's a fitting admission from a writer who has rapidly made her mark on the American theater scene with the lush southern vernacular and entirely personal and poetic language in which she relates stories and secrets from her own Georgia family's past.

Shephard-Massat explained some of the real-life inspirations for the characters she brings to life in *Levee James* in an e-mail exchange shortly before rehearsals began at A.C.T.

JESSICA WERNER: YOU HAVE SPOKEN OF THE IMPORTANCE YOU PLACE ON KNOWING ONE'S RACIAL AND FAMILY HISTORY—YOUR FIRST PLAY, *WAITING TO BE INVITED* (2000) WAS BASED ON YOUR GRANDMOTHER'S LIFE, AND *SOMEPLACE SOFT TO FALL* (2001) ON YOUR UNCLE'S. WHAT WAS YOUR INITIAL INSPIRATION FOR WRITING *LEEVE JAMES*?

**S. M. Shephard-Massat:** I did initially see an "in," while writing *Waiting to Be Invited*, for creating another full-length piece. The white character [in *Waiting to Be Invited*] recounts a brutality she witnessed as a child, and that speech was the original connection to *Levee James*. It was a true incident, and it was the reason my great-great-aunts and great-grandmother had to give up a rural world for Atlanta. It was forced upon them, and I wanted to explore that incident, which led to exploring them (my great-great-aunts) and that time in history, which led to my deeper interest in why they never migrated north, and why they never did a lot of things. They were the kind of women who could have made it anywhere. Real Hell-of-a-Woman types.

WHO WERE YOU THINKING OF IN DEVELOPING WES? LIL? FITZHUGH?

Wes is my great-great-grandfather, Mr. Wesley Slaton. I say "Mister" because I give him that grace, that respect. He looked like Anwar Sadat and smiled a lot. He outlived all of his children. In fact, I knew him as a child when he had to have been nearly ninety. We called him "Grandpa Baldhead" and he surely did hang in there 'til the sweet end. Can you imagine being around long enough to witness your great-great-grandchildren smiling up at you? Swingin' 'round you? Slapping your bald head with their 'lil

baby hands and laughing 'lil baby giggles? What an incredible journey for him, sad and sweet at the same time. How many decades of babies' faces would you see in those little ones? His children, his children's children, his children's children's children.

Lil is a more complicated soul, a woman searching for her way, her true love, seeking an escape to the place in the world where she can put her feet up, and say nothing, and still be somebody's everything—or even just be some grown man's something besides a kitchen mechanic, or a domestic animal. She seeks to have open conversation. Even though two out of the four of my great-great-aunts had been married at some time in their lives, and three of those sisters had children, none of them ever married, or coupled, for long. They seemed like wild, beautiful, pure, fierce horses—untamable. Big Indian women with huge hands and feet, who walked putting foot to the ground the way they chose to.

Unfortunately, they worked so hard and long that nobody noticed they were searching and lacking for true love, and then they were gone. Worked themselves to death at early ages.

Fitzhugh is just one of those characters based on a friend who died young and you never got over it. A face that slides through your senses for just a second from time to time and you say, "Hey, I remember you." They become a part of your maturation because they are a part of your memory.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR OWN FAMILY, OR FROM LIVING IN THE SOUTH, ABOUT THIS LESSER-KNOWN SIDE OF THE AFRICAN-AMERICAN EXPERIENCE: THE STORIES OF PEOPLE WHO DID NOT TAKE PART IN THE GREAT MIGRATION AND INSTEAD CHOSE TO STAY PUT, ON THEIR OWN LAND?

Well, I think about [my own] journey sometimes—about growing up in the South, spending summers in Harlem with family members who did choose to leave and stay gone. I volunteered to be a part of the first bussing of black children across town to predominantly white high schools in the '70s. I think about being in the military, stationed in Florida in the early '80s, then moving back to New York (I was born there) as an adult to attend NYU, then moving to England for a year, then going back home, volunteering again to go back south because it calls to you again and again. I think about the defiant music I listened to in the '60s, which my preteen brain picked up on even if I didn't know what I was listening to. I look at the kids I played with, danced with, fought with—young black people





who had the first opportunities to dress as they chose, and speak and travel like they wanted to. I think about the office secretary who came into my fourth-grade classroom, and whispered to my teacher, Mrs. Mason, "Somebody just shot Martin Luther King." I think of these things, and I say to myself, *We stayed*.

**AUDIENCES MIGHT BE SURPRISED TO SEE BLACK CHARACTERS FROM THIS PERIOD WHO HAD ACTUALLY ACHIEVED SOME DEGREE OF PROSPERITY, WHO OWNED LAND AND DECENT CARS IN THE SOUTH. HOW REALISTIC IS WES'S SUCCESS?**

You would be surprised at the number of blacks who had acquired things of value at that time. Because of misunderstandings and misinformation, only the "have-not rule" has carried any weight. For instance, [the assumption is that] if you were black in the South, then of course you had nothing. In fact, Wesley Slaton had his own land at the turn of the century, and he had a home, the same house my cousins and I slept in when we visited some 70 years later. Now, he had to be mean as a snake to keep it, and probably as sly as a fox, but the world doesn't really wonder about these people, does it? Doesn't really consider the real horrors of slavery and Reconstruction, and why blood still screams up to us from the ground and drips down upon us from the air a mere 140 years later.

**YOUR FIRST DRAFT OF THE PLAY HAD ONLY TWO CHARACTERS, WES AND LIL. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO ADD FITZHUGH? ARE THERE OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE STORY THAT HAVE CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY AS YOU'VE DEVELOPED THE SCRIPT?**

The first draft of the play actually had five or six characters, and you did see the two daughters and [Wes's farmhand] Big O, and a character who was the beginning of Fitzhugh but with a different name. But I cut them out after I asked Israel for his opinion of what I'd started. He said that it sounded like a love story, and why didn't I just concentrate on Wes and Lil? It's always been easier

for me to put everything into two characters instead of figuring out how to make 15 folks interesting, so I embraced that idea immediately. Then, we got to the O'Neill Playwrights Conference two summers ago, and in our production meeting Israel suggested bringing Fitzhugh back to life instead of just talking about him. Again, I felt immediately that that was the right road to take. Israel has been an incredible sounding board. The ending has changed many times, and it was Israel again who made a suggestion that flipped it, a major turnabout for the ending. Now, if I told you what it was, it would be like somebody telling you the ending of a movie, before you've even had a chance to open the box of Raisinets, or twirl a Twizzler 'round your tongue.

**OTHER THAN YOUR FAMILY'S OWN HISTORY, DID YOU DO ANY HISTORICAL RESEARCH ABOUT WHAT SENOIA, GEORGIA, WAS LIKE IN THE 1920S? IS YOUR WRITING EXPERIENCE ANY DIFFERENT WHEN YOU'RE RELYING ON HISTORY, AS OPPOSED TO YOUR IMAGINATION? DO YOU FEEL ANY RESPONSIBILITY TO BE FAITHFUL TO THE FACTS WHEN YOU KNOW THEM?**

No, I've never thought about what Senoia was like in the 1920s. The play is not about the town. The characters never leave the vicinity of the house. I do know, and am faithful to, the fact that my great-aunts were sent away by their father from their home in Senoia, in the mid 1910s, to save their lives. I didn't go to Senoia for that information, or look it up on a map, or take a trip to the old county seat of someplace 600 miles away. When I was a child, we went to Senoia like we were taking a monthly trip downtown. We arrived in the dark. It had a deep, deep, off-the-main-road existence. You had back-woods liquor houses, and what passed for residences were separated one from another by great patches of forest one had to travel through just to get a neighbor's attention. There were poisonous snakes one had to be careful of at all times. The only reason I would go to Senoia now is to see those old

*continued on page 10*





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# LEVEE JAMES

(2004)

*by S. M. Shephard-Massat*

*Directed by Israel Hicks*

<i>Scenery by</i>	Loy Arcenas
<i>Costumes by</i>	Michael J. Cesario
<i>Lighting by</i>	Nancy Schertler
<i>Sound by</i>	Garth Hemphill
<i>Dialect Coach</i>	Deborah Sussel
<i>Casting by</i>	Meryl Lind Shaw
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## THE CAST

<i>Lily Grace Hoterfield</i>	Rosalyn Coleman
<i>Wesley Slaton</i>	Steven Anthony Jones
<i>Fitzhugh Marvin</i>	Gregory Wallace

## UNDERSTUDIES

*Lily Grace Hoterfield*—Margo Hall  
*Wesley Slaton, Fitzhugh Marvin*—Rhonnie Washington

## STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Elisa Guthertz, *Stage Manager*  
Katherine Riemann, *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Alice Hsiung, *Intern*

## TIME AND PLACE

The action takes place at Wesley Slaton's farmhouse in Senoia, Georgia, in the spring of 1923.

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sisters' graves with their names and dates on them. We don't go around smilin' at used-to-be jacked-up, segregated townships, exploring the landscape, walking the streets before and after dark to prove we've arrived, puffed up 'n' proud, and ain't goin' for the junk no mo'. When my family members go to Senoia, it's on business of buryin' somebody. We go to Piney Grove Baptist Church for the service, ashes to ashes and back up to the city before nightfall because we remember why and how we left in the first place. We don't stay for lunch or dinner. Not out of fear, but because we ain't goin' fo' the junk no mo'.

GEORGIA HAS AN ESPECIALLY BRUTAL PRE-CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT PAST, WITH PARTICULARLY HARSH JIM CROW LAWS AND A HORRIFYING PREVALENCE OF RACIAL VIOLENCE, EVEN COMPARED TO OTHER SOUTHERN STATES. HOW DOES THIS BACKGROUND OF VIOLENCE AFFECT THE LOVE STORY AT THE CENTER OF THE PLAY? DO YOU SEE LIL AND WES'S ROMANCE AS A SYMBOL OF HOPE?

No art without a purpose, right? W. E. B. Du Bois felt that way. It's no good unless its message is about uplifting the race. Period. Well, I would be a disappointment to the man and his mission because I just sat down to write a story. I didn't think, Let's do a story about hope, and love. I prefer to see Wes and Lil as just two people trying to understand and get along in life with as much dignity and integrity as they can. Although people are welcome to see Wes and Lil anyway they so choose. I don't ask for widespread acceptance of them. I only ask that they be allowed to speak for once. The background of violence was a monkey that *did not* stop the show, and never has. Black folks just kept falling in love, and still do. Yes, those were harsh days, but I liken it to something my grandmother said to me once when I asked her about how they made it through the Great Depression. She said that they took in washing, and they just kept taking in washing. In other words, they didn't even

notice times being so hard because times had always been hard. That's all they knew. Hard times. It's not like my mom and her brother and sister and my grandmother were sitting in the lap of comfort before the Movement came to town and then jumped up and started taking cover when the talking got too loud outside. There were plenty of bread—Brer Rabbit syrup—and—water nights, with nothing left over.

I'M CURIOUS ABOUT THE TITLE OF THE PLAY, *LEEVE JAMES*, AND LILY'S DESCRIPTION OF IT: "MY DADDY, HE WORKT ON THE LEEVE ALL HIS LIFE. GOT KILT WORKIN' ON THE LEEVE...GIVE HIS LIFE IN A FLOOD." IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SHARE ABOUT THIS STORY, AND THE POWER OF THE METAPHOR IT SUGGESTS?

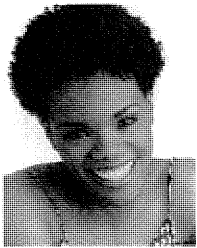
Levee James worked until the absolute end of his life. His pride in his work, his character, his integrity, his unselfish caring for others in the town is debatable. His wife would have thought his choice to stay and work against the flood waters was totally selfish because now she's without, facing a lifetime of longing and wondering, Why didn't she come first? Why didn't the support of his family come first? Well, people make those kinds of decisions, don't they? In the heat of the moment, would I try to save a drowning child, or would I not make the attempt, thinking instead of what my own children would do if I drowned also? I knew a boy almost 30 years ago who made that choice. He drowned—but he saved the [drowning] child. He unselfishly dived in and gave his life. I don't think he knew he was going to that extreme, that that would be the last thing he ever did on this earth and was leaving his family that day. I see his face too every now and again, and in my mind, I say, I remember you.

ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL SCENES OF THE PLAY IS WHEN THE NAMES ARE RECITED, AND THEREBY REMEMBERED, OF THE ACTUAL PEOPLE WHO DIED AT THE HANDS OF LYNCH MOBS. WHAT INSPIRED THAT SCENE?

The truth. ■

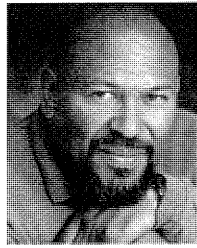


# Who's Who



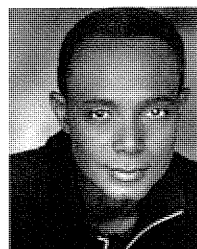
**ROSALYN COLEMAN\*** (*Lily Grace Hoterfield*), a 2003 Fox Fellow Award winner, has been seen at A.C.T. in *Seven Guitars* and *Pecong*. Broadway

credits include August Wilson's *Seven Guitars* and *The Piano Lesson*, as well as *Mule Bone* and *The Bitter Tears of Petra von Kant*. Recent off-Broadway credits include the world premiere of *Whose Family Values*, originating the role of Ethel Waters in *Carson McCullers (Historically Inaccurate)*, and *Breath Boom*. Among Coleman's numerous regional theater appearances is the role of Bernice in *The Piano Lesson* at San Jose Repertory Theatre. She has appeared in more than 20 feature films, including *Vanilla Sky*, *Brown Sugar*, *Hook'd Up*, *Everyone's Depressed*, and *Music of the Heart*. Television appearances include "Oz," "NYPD Blue," "New York Undercover," and "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit." Coleman is also an accomplished filmmaker; her writing and directorial debut, the short film *Driving Fish*, was an official selection at the 2003 San Francisco Black Film Festival and a finalist in the Hollywood Black Film Festival. She has also written and directed the short films *Broken*, *The Starter Marriage Project*, and *Layla's Mourning*, and directed *Allergic to Nuts*, *Twisted*, *Scrambled Softly*, *Ends & Beginnings*, and *Three Weeks in Hell* (all written by her husband and partner, Craig T. Williams). She is currently producing, with her company Red Wall Productions, the film *Faydra* (a retelling of the Cinderella story, by Sandra Daley). Her next film directing assignment is the thriller *Powerless*.



**STEVEN ANTHONY JONES\*** (*Wesley Slaton*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in

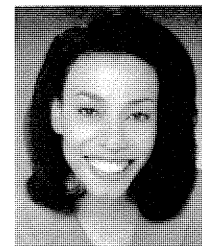
*Waiting for Godot*, *Yohen*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Dazzle*, *Night and Day*, *Buried Child*, *A Christmas Carol* (Ebenezer Scrooge), *Celebration* and *The Room*, "Master Harold"...and the boys, *The Misanthrope*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Tartuffe*, *Indian Ink*, *Hecuba*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, *Seven Guitars*, *Othello* (title role), *Antigone*, *Miss Evers' Boys*, *Clara*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Saint Joan*, *King Lear*, *Golden Boy*, and *Feathers*. Other local theater credits include *Fuente Ovejuna* and *McTeague* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *As You Like It* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); *The Cherry Orchard*, *Every Moment*, and *The Island* (Eureka Theatre); *Sideman* (San Jose Repertory Theatre); and *Division Street* (Oakland Ensemble Theatre). He originated the role of Private James Wilkie in the original production of *A Soldier's Play* at the Negro Ensemble Company in New York. His many film and television credits include two seasons of "Midnight Caller."



**GREGORY WALLACE\*** (*Fitzhugh Marvin*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in *A Doll's*

*House*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Dazzle*, *Night and Day*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Celebration* and *The Room*, "Master Harold"...and the boys, *The Misanthrope*,

*Edward II*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Tartuffe*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, and *Angels in America* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). Other theater credits include *Our Country's Good* (Broadway), *A Light Shining in Buckinghamshire* (New York Theatre Workshop), *As You Like It* (Public Theater), *Much Ado about Nothing* (Alliance Theatre), *The Screens* (Guthrie Theater), *The Learned Ladies* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *King Lear* (Whole Theater), *The Queen and the Rebels* (Center Stage), and *The Beaux' Stratagem* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Screen credits include Peter Sellars's *The Cabinet of Dr. Ramirez*, *The Beverly Hillbillies*, *Dark Goddess*, "Crime Story," and *Internal Affairs*. Wallace is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.



**MARGO HALL\*** (*Understudy*) has appeared at A.C.T. in *Hecuba* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* and performed in *Oak and Ivy* (dir. Charles

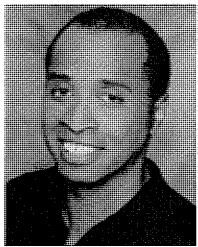
Randolph-Wright) at Arena Stage. She is an original member of Campo Santo, where she was last seen in the world premiere of Philip Kan Gotanda's *Floating Weeds*. Acting credits also include *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*, by Jose Rivera; *Polaroid Stories*, by Naomi Iizuka; and *Hurricane*, by Erin Cressida Wilson. She debuted as a director with the world premiere of *Joyride* (from the novel *Grand Avenue*, by Greg Sarris) and is currently directing Sarris's new play, *Mission Indians*, with Nancy Benjamin. Directing credits also include productions for Campo Santo, *Word for Word*, and *Intersections Directions*, codirecting (with Rhodessa Jones) Wilson's *The Trail of Her Inner Thigh*, and serving as assistant director to

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States



# Who's Who

Charles Randolph-Wright on the A.C.T. productions of *Blithe Spirit* and *Tartuffe*. Hall received her M.F.A. from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.



**RHONNIE WASHINGTON\*** (*Understudy*) was last seen as Ebenezer Scrooge in A.C.T.'s production of *A Christmas Carol*. A member of the

department of theater arts at San Francisco State University, he earned a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, majoring in directing, with a minor in theater history and criticism. His last directing project, Peter Nachtrieb's *Multiplex*, was invited to the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival regional finals. His most recent roles include Polonius in *Hamlet* and Aegeon in *The Comedy of Errors* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Washington has been honored twice by the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* with Goldie (*Guardian* Outstanding Local Discovery) Awards.

**S. M. SHEPHARD-MASSAT** (*Playwright*) attended New York University's Tisch School of the Arts as a dramatic writing major, interned at London's Royal Court Theatre in 1991, and has worked with several small American film and theater companies. Her first full-length play, *Waiting to Be Invited*, has been produced by theater companies across the United States, including the Denver Center Theatre Company (dir. Israel Hicks) and Chicago's Victory Gardens Theatre. She has received the Adrienne Kennedy

Society's Young Dramatist's Award (1996), Delaware Theatre Company's Connections Award for best original play (1997), the Roger L. Stevens Award from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (1999), the *Westword* Best of Denver Award for best new play, the American Theatre Critics' Association's M. Elizabeth Osborn Award (2001), and the Black Theatre Alliance Award (Chicago, 2002) for best playwriting. *Waiting to Be Invited* has been published by Smith & Kraus in *Woman Playwrights: The Best of 2000*. Her second full-length play, *Someplace Soft to Fall*, received a 2001 Francesca Primus Award and was produced by St. Paul's Penumbra Theatre Company in March 2002, while Shephard-Massat was in residence at the University of Minnesota as playwriting instructor. She has participated in theater festivals across the United States, including the Denver Center Theatre Company's US West Theatre Fest in 1999 and 2001; Geva Theatre Center's Winter Festival in 2001; and Ensemble Studio Theatre's Taking It to the River series in 2001. Her work was also featured in 2000 in staged readings in New York at the New Federal Theatre and Urban Stages Theatre Company and in 2001 at Theatre in the Square in Marietta, Georgia. *Levee James*, Shephard-Massat's third play, was developed in July 2002 at the O'Neill Playwrights Conference and was nominated for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize.

**ISRAEL HICKS** (*Director*) has been an associate artist for the past 15 seasons at the Denver Center Theatre Company (DCTC), where he last directed *A Streetcar Named Desire* and August Wilson's *King Hedley II*. Directing credits at DCTC also include the world premieres of *Pork Pie: A*

*Mythic Jazz Fable*, *Waiting to Be Invited*, *Kingdom*, *Coming of the Hurricane*, and *Evil Little Thoughts*, as well as *Jitney*, *Dream on Monkey Mountain*, *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *Seven Guitars*, *Two Trains Running*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Fences*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, and *Home*. In addition, he has directed at regional theaters throughout the country, including the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Milwaukee Repertory Theater. He has directed films for the National Film Board of Canada, Universal Studios, NBC, and CBS. Hicks is currently the artistic director and chairman of the Theater Arts Program at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts.

**LOY ARCENAS** (*Scenic Designer*) has designed *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Invention of Love*, *Indian Ink*, *Singer's Boy*, *The Matchmaker*, and *High Society* for A.C.T. Recent work includes David Ives's *Polish Joke* for Manhattan Theatre Club, *A Man of No Importance* at Lincoln Center, and *The Vagina Monologues* and *Trumbo* off Broadway. World and/or New York/American premieres include *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Corpus Christi*, *Once on This Island*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Three Hotels*, *Spunk*, *Spic-o-Rama*, *Cry the Beloved Country*, *Nomathemba*, *Blue Window*, *Simpatico*, *Blown Sideways through Life*, *The Baltimore Waltz*, and *Ballad of Yachiyo*. His design work has received the Bay Area and Los Angeles Theatre Critics' Circle awards, two Drama Desk Award nominations, and an OBIE Award for sustained excellence of set design. Directing credits include *The Romance of Magno Rubio* (OBIE citation), *Middle Finger*, *Flipzoids*, and *Swoony Planet* in New York City; *Stop Kiss* for Brava! and

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# Who's Who

*Hedda Gabler* for the Aurora Theatre. Arcenas is from the Philippines.

**MICHAEL J. CESARIO** (*Costume Designer*) is known for his work on Broadway, television, and repertory stages across the country, including Pittsburgh's Public Theater, Princeton's McCarter Theatre Center, Houston's Alley Theatre, Cleveland's Great Lakes Theater Festival, Stratford's American Shakespeare Theatre, and New York's Playwrights Horizons and Lincoln Center. Respected as an educator, he served as director of design/technology for the graduate programs in design at New York's Purchase College Conservatory of Theatre. He has been a lecturer and teacher at The Juilliard School and New York's School of Visual Arts, Bennington College, and the University of Illinois. His work has been featured in numerous gallery shows and is prominent in two texts for the training of designers: *The Magic Garment*, by Rebecca Cunningham, and *The Costumer's Handbook*, by Rosemary Ingham and Elizabeth Covey. Named to the Drum Corps International Hall of Fame, Cesario is responsible for creating the trademark uniforms of America's finest bands, drum corps, and color guards.

**NANCY SCHERTLER** (*Lighting Designer*) has designed the Broadway productions of Bill Irwin's *Fool Moon* and *Largely New York* (Tony Award nomination) and off-Broadway productions of *Texts for Nothing*, *A Flea in Her Ear*, *Scapin*, and *Falsettoland*. Regional theater credits include *The Constant Wife*, Carey Perloff's *The Colossus of Rhodes*, and *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* at A.C.T., *The Sisters Matsumoto* at Seattle Repertory Theatre, *Moby Dick* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and Ken Ludwig's *Shakespeare in Hollywood* at Arena Stage,

where she is an associate artist. Opera credits include *Don Giovanni* and *The Barber of Seville* for Boston Lyric Opera, *Il Trovatore* for Baltimore Opera, and numerous productions with Wolf Trap Opera Company.

**GARTH HEMPHILL** (*Sound Designer*) is in his seventh season as A.C.T.'s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 100 productions, including, most recently for A.C.T., *A Doll's House*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Constant Wife*, *The Dazzle*, *American Buffalo*, *Lackawanna Blues*, *Night and Day*, *Buried Child*, *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Beard of Avon*, *Celebration* and *The Room*, "Master Harold"...and the boys, *Enrico IV*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Edward II*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). He has earned Drama-Logue Awards for his work on *Jar the Floor*, *A Christmas Carol* (South Coast Repertory), *The Things You Don't Know*, *Blithe Spirit*, *New England*, *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart*, *Fortinbras*, and the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*. Hemphill is a principal partner of GLH Design, Inc., a local design firm.

**ELISA GUTHERTZ\*** (*Stage Manager*) has worked on numerous A.C.T. productions, including *Waiting for Godot*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Misanthrope*, *Long Day's Journey into Night*, *Tartuffe*, *Mary Stuart*, *The Rose Tattoo*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire*. She has also stage-managed *Suddenly Last Summer*, *Rhinoceros*, *Civil Sex*, *Let My Enemy Live Long!*, *Collected Stories*, and *Cloud Tectonics* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Favorite productions include *Big Love* at Brooklyn Academy of Music and *The Vagina Monologues* with Eve Ensler at the Alcazar Theatre in San Francisco.

**KATHERINE RIEMANN\*** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) has worked on several productions in the Bay Area over the last few years: *A Christmas Carol*, *Wrong Mountain*, *The Invention of Love*, *The House of Mirth*, *Shockheaded Peter*, *Frank Loesser's Hans Christian Andersen*, *Fool Moon*, *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, *American Buffalo*, and *The Constant Wife* for A.C.T.; *The Oresteia*, *Culture Clash in America*, and *Cloud Nine* for Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *Serious Money*, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, and *No for an Answer* for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program; and *Much Ado about Nothing* for California Shakespeare Theater.

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# A.C.T. PROFILES



**CAREY PERLOFF**  
(Artistic Director),  
who recently  
celebrated her  
eleventh season as  
artistic director of  
A.C.T., most recently  
directed acclaimed

productions of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Tom Stoppard's *Night and Day*, and Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* with A.C.T.'s core acting company. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink* and Harold Pinter's *Celebration* and *The Room*; A.C.T.-commissioned translations of *Hecuba*, *The Misanthrope*, *Enrico IV*, *Mary Stuart*, and *Uncle Vanya*; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; and acclaimed productions of *The Threepenny Opera*, *Old Times*, *Arcadia*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *Home*, and *The Tempest*. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer*, David Lang/Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, and the West Coast premiere of her own play *The Colossus of Rhodes* (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, *Luminescence Dating*, is being developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project. This season at A.C.T. she also directs the world premiere of Constance Congdon's *A Mother*.

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 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)  
joined A.C.T. in  
1996. Since that  
time, Kitchen has  
overseen the  
company's expansion

and been instrumental in fortifying the organization's infrastructure and increasing support for A.C.T.'s artists and employees. After earning her B.A. in drama and theater arts at the University of Waterloo in 1975, Kitchen began her career in stage management at the prestigious Stratford Festival. Other career highlights include four seasons as production manager of Theatre New Brunswick, a regional touring company located in Eastern Canada, and as general manager of The Citadel Theatre, then Canada's largest regional theater. Following 15 years of stage and production management, Kitchen received her M.B.A. from the internationally renowned Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario. She is an active member of the larger San Francisco community, currently serving 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 and of

Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula. Kitchen is serving her third term on the executive committee of the League of Resident Theatres and serves on the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund. 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.

**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.





Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director* • Heather Kitchen, *Managing Director*

by arrangement with AAAArtistes International Ltd

*presents*

# MARK NADLER

## TSCHAIKOWSKY

### (and Other Russians)

*All musical arrangements by*  
**MARK NADLER**

Fazioli Concert Grand Piano provided by Piedmont Piano Company.

Tour Direction  
AAAArtistes International Ltd/Arthur Shafman, President  
163 Amsterdam Ave #121  
New York, New York 10023  
Phone: 212.799.4814 • Fax: 212.874.3613 • E-Mail: Ashafman@aol.com

THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION AT THIS PERFORMANCE.

Running Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

# THE SONGS

(in alphabetical order)

## “Homeward”

by Robert Wright and George Forrest, based on a theme by Sergey Rachmaninoff (from *Anyà*)

## “I Can’t Get Started”

music by Vernon Duke, lyrics by Ira Gershwin (from *Ziegfeld Follies of 1936*)

## “Icarus”

by Adam Guettel (from *Myths and Hymns*)

## “I Concentrate on You”

by Cole Porter (from *Broadway Melody of 1940*)

## “I’m a Stranger Here Myself”

music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Ogden Nash (from *One Touch of Venus*)

## “Manhattan Blue”

by John Wallowitch

## “Next”

by Stephen Sondheim (from *Pacific Overtures*)

## “Only a Broken Heart”

by Carol Hall

## “On the Shoulders of Freaks”

by Henry Phillips

## “The Ugly Duckling”

by Frank Loesser (from *Hans Christian Andersen*)

## “Too Good for the Average Man”

music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Lorenz Hart (from *On Your Toes*)

## “Tchaikowsky (and Other Russians)”

music by Kurt Weill, lyrics by Ira Gershwin (from *Lady in the Dark*)

## “Very Soft Shoes”

music by Mary Rodgers, lyrics by Marshall Barer (from *Once Upon a Mattress*)

# THE COMPOSERS

(in alphabetical order)

Feodor Akimenko • Nikolay Artcibousheff • Antony Arensky • Mily Balakirev • Aleksandr Borodin  
Dmytro Bortnyansky • César Cui • Aleksandr Dargomyzhsky • Nikolay Dimitrieff • Vladimir Dukelsky  
Aleksandr Glazunov • Reinhold Glière • Mikhail Glinka • Leopold Godowsky • Aleksandr Grechaninov  
Aleksandr Ilyinsky • Vassily Kalinnikov • Yanuary Karganov • P. Khvoshchinsky • Nikolay Klenovsky  
Aleksandr Kopylov • Arsemy Korestchenko • Ivan Kryjanowsky • Anatoly Lyadov • Witold Malleschevsky  
Igor Markievitch • Nikolay Medtner • Stanislaw Moniuszko • Modest Mussorgsky  
David Nowakowsky • S. W. Pantchenko • Sergey Prokofiev • Sergey Rachmaninoff • Vladimir Rebikov  
Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov • Anton Rubinstein • Joseph Rumshinsky • Vassily Sapelnikoff  
Nikolay Stcherbatcheff • Dmitry Shostakovich • Aleksandr Scriabin • Aleksandr Sokolov • Nikolai Soloviev  
Igor Stravinsky • Alexander Tcherepnin • Nikolay Tcherepnin • Dimitri Tiomppkin  
Peter Ilyich Tchaikowsky • Sergey Vasilenko • Alexander Winkler • Vassily Zolotareff



# ABOUT MARK NADLER



HEATHER SULLIVAN

**MARK NADLER** starred in and cowrote the off-Broadway Gershwin revue *American Rhapsody*, which was nominated for a Drama Desk and two Lucille Lortel awards and received the Manhattan Association of Cabarets (MAC) Award for outstanding musical revue. Additionally, he received the MAC Award three years in a row for outstanding musical comedy performer and in 1990 earned a MAC Award for his performance of five interacting characters in his one-man show "*Opera in Honky-Tonk*," *Red Light*, cowritten with Dawn Hampton. For his show *Tschaikowsky (and Other Russians)*, Nadler was awarded the 2003 Bistro Award for "continuing to raise the standards of cabaret performance." He also won the 1994 Bistro Award for outstanding singer/instrumentalist and the 2000 Bistro Award for outstanding revue for directing, conceiving, and music directing *Hard Candy: The Songs of Carol Hall*. He created and costars in *Something Wonderful: A Richard Rodgers Celebration in Song*, with which he has been touring since 2001, and *Come on and Hear: The Love Story of Irving Berlin*, which he created and performs with

KT Sullivan and for which he received the 2004 Nightlife Award for outstanding revue. He has performed at Carnegie Hall with Skitch Henderson and the New York Pops Orchestra and has been a soloist with the Baltimore Symphony, Portland Symphony, Schenectady Symphony, and others. He has played at New York's Town Hall and in almost every significant nightclub in New York City and Los Angeles, notably four seasons at Sardi's, the Village Gate, the Blue Angel, the Oak Room at the Algonquin Hotel, the Cabaret at the Russian Tea Room, two years of Thursdays at the Cinegrill in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, the Ballroom, Maxim's, and the West Bank Cabaret, where he was, at the age of 19, the house master-of-ceremonies and musical director.

Abroad, Nadler has performed in England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Australia.

On Broadway Nadler has appeared as The Fingers on the Keys in *Dame Edna: The Royal Tour* and as Pinky Pickles in *The Sheik of Avenue B*. At Lincoln Center, he cowrote, directed, and starred in *Schnozzola*, a tribute to Jimmy Durante for the Reel to Real series. Other New York theatrical credits include Nicky in Noël Coward's *The Vortex* for New Directions Theatre and leading roles in John Glines's productions of Robert Patrick's *Untold Decades* and *To Dinner with Friends*, directed by Peter Pope. Favorite regional roles include Tony Whitcomb, the outrageous hairdresser in the Ft. Lauderdale and San Francisco companies of *Shear Madness*; the octogenarian piano-, yukelele-, and chimes-playing, dancing, and singing Miss Mabel in *Radio Gals* (a role he reprised for the cast album); Lucky in *Dames at Sea*; Linus in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; and the Leading Player in *Pippin*.

On television Nadler played Freddie Martini on, and was the musical director of, "Café DuArt." He has been presented on "The Phil Donahue Show," "A Current Affair," and "Live with Regis and Kathie Lee." He has entertained at parties for the likes of Katharine Hepburn, Shirley MacLaine, Donald Trump, and others. Nadler was the miming ringmaster of the international Cirque du Monde. As a vocal coach, he has worked with many artists, including Tony Award winner Glenn Close, Tony Award nominee Donna Theodore, and Heather Mac Rae. Nadler arranged and coached Close's performance of "Bye Bye Blackbird" for the film *Maxie*. He is a graduate of the Interlochen Arts Academy.



At this performance Mark Nadler plays on the remarkable **FAZIOLI F308**, the world's largest piano at ten feet, two inches. Fewer than 70 Fazioli pianos are handcrafted each year in Sacile, Italy, just outside of Venice. The company began in 1980 when Paolo Fazioli, a pianist and engineer, set out to design and build a piano to equal or surpass the time-honored instruments of Steinway, Bechstein, and Bösendorfer in the concert halls of the world. It was a daunting task, but he has clearly succeeded, as the Fazioli has been enthusiastically received by such venerable artists as Alfred Brendel, Angela Hewitt, Aldo Ciccolini, and Garrick Ohlsson. At the heart of the Fazioli is its soundboard, made of red spruce from the Val di Fiemme, the same forest where Stradivarius gathered wood for his violins. This unique tonewood creates the striking clarity for which the Fazioli has become famous. Tonight's piano has been provided by Piedmont Piano Company in Oakland, the exclusive Fazioli dealer for Northern California.

# A.C.T. CONTRIBUTORS

*American Conservatory Theater is deeply grateful for the generous support of the individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies whose contributions make great theater possible.*

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# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the Web: [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.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 through Saturday, and 12–6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12–6 p.m. daily. 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. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person at the box office.

### 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 two hours 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. offers one **Pay What You Wish** performance during the regular run of each production.

### Group Discounts

For groups of 15 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.439.2473.

## AT THE THEATER

The Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour prior to curtain.

## A.C.T. Merchandise

A.C.T.-branded souvenirs—clothing, jewelry, videos, travel mugs, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts and *Words on Plays*, are on sale at the souvenir desk in the main lobby and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

## Refreshments

Full bar service, sandwiches, salads, and other savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third level. There is also a mini-bar in the main lobby. 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.

## Beeipers!

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 the first intermission *only* if there is an appropriate interval.

## Listening Systems

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before 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 Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

**Wheelchair seating** is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call 415.749.2ACT in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

A.C.T. is pleased to announce that an **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is now available on site.

## 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 and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.



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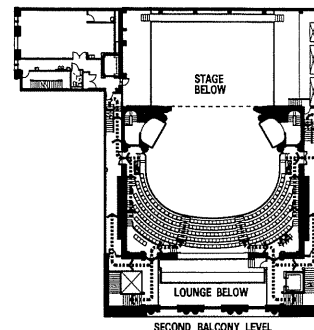
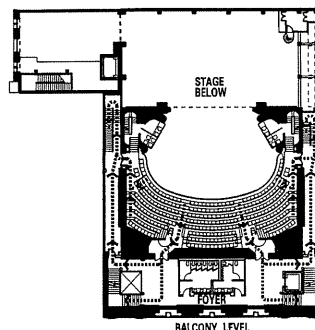
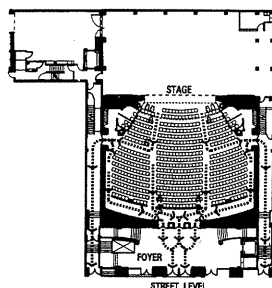



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