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ABOUT A.C.T.

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 Executive 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 ground-breaking 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, Dennis 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.

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American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1965 by William Ball.

Edward Hastings
Artistic Director 1966–92

The Good Body 5
Dear Friends,

Welcome to Eve Ensler’s *The Good Body! I remember the morning that Eve first told me about her vision for this show: we were having breakfast at the Fairmont Hotel, and the dining room was filled with tired accountants attending a business conference. I remember that the room got quieter and quieter as Eve began regaling me with stories about her wild around-the-world adventures in search of a way to tame her fractious middle-aged tennis racket. By the time she got to the Indian section of the piece with her jahdi (‘fair’) friends at the gym in Mumbai fighting for time on the treadmill, Eve was practically standing on her chair, the eyes of the tired accountants were wide with curiosity, and I knew we had to bring this piece to A.C.T.

Eve Ensler is a force of nature. She has single-handedly changed the way we think about, and talk about, women’s sexuality and women’s bodies, and she’s done it with a grace, wit, and theatricality all her own. This piece is the culmination of a journey around the world, asking women everywhere how they feel about their own bodies. Eve has always been sure that if women could harness the energy spent despising their own physiques and turn it towards more positive endeavors, the world might tilt in a different direction. Perhaps *The Good Body will be a first step.

It has been a great joy to be part of the development of this piece, and to watch Eve and her director, Peter Askin, sculpt the many stories Eve has collected into a theatrical whole that is wise and witty, surprising and sexy, unique and totally universal. New work always takes enormous courage to launch, and the real discoveries begin when an audience walks into the room for the first time and shares the experience. So, as always, we thank you for being here, and for being part of the inception of this remarkable new adventure.

Many of you took part in our exciting new play readings this year, came to our workshops and discussions, shared the world premieres of *A Mother and Less James* on the Geary stage, watched talented teenagers create new work in our Young Conservatory, and observed with delight as we launched a remarkable new crop of actors into the world through our Master of Fine Arts Program. A.C.T. is deeply invested in the future of the art form, and we hope you will look back on your experiences at A.C.T. as a time in which you watched precious seeds be planted and beautiful buds begin to grow. We could never do it without you!

Have a wonderful time at *The Good Body*, and we’ll see you this fall at our spectacular season-opening production, Robert Wilson and Tom Waud’s *The Black Rider*.

Yours,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

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**PLEASE JOIN US FOR THESE FREE EVENTS ABOUT THE GOOD BODY:**

**at the Geary Theater**

- **A.C.T. Prolouge**
  - A conversation with director Peter Askin
  - Tuesday, June 29, 5:30-6:00 p.m.

- **Audience Exchanges**
  - directly following *The Good Body*
  - Tuesday, July 6 (after the 7 p.m. performance)
  - Sunday, July 11 (after the 2 p.m. matinee)
  - Wednesday, July 21 (after the 7 p.m. performance)

**Out with A.C.T.**
- A gathering of gay and lesbian theatergoers, immediately following the performance July 14.

For more information, please call 415.749.2ACT or visit www.act-sf.org.
Dear Friends,
Welcome to Eve Ensler’s The Good Body! I remember the morning that Eve first told me about her vision for this show: we were having breakfast at the Fairmont Hotel, and the dining room was filled with tired accountants attending a business conference. I remember that the room got quieter and quieter as Eve began regaling me with stories about her wild around-the-world adventures in search of a way to tame her fractious middle-aged tummy. By the time she got to the Indian section of the piece with her jaath (‘fat’) friends at the gym in Mumbai fighting for time on the treadmill, Eve was practically standing on her chair, the eyes of the tired accountants were wide with curiosity, and I knew we had to bring this piece to A.C.T.
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Yours,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

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presents

EVE ENSLER’S
The Good Body
(2004)

Directed by Peter Askin

Scenery by Robert Brill
Costume by Susan Hillerby
Lighting by Kevin Adams
Original Music & Sound by David Van Tieghem
Video Designer Wendall K. Harrington
A.C.T. Resident Sound Designer Garth Hemphill
Dramaturgy Priya Parmar

STAGE MANAGEMENT
Arabella Powell, Stage Manager
Elisa Gothertz, Assistant Stage Manager

The Good Body is performed without an intermission.

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Gary Sunshine
and deep thanks to Ariel O’Jordan

EVE ENSLER’S

The Good Body

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and deep thanks to Ariel O’Jordan

Body Language
AN INTERVIEW WITH EVE ENSLER
BY JESSICA WERNER

Eve Ensler’s conversation style is not unlike her performance style: bold, frank, compassionate, persuasive, free-ranging, and, perhaps most remarkably, radically optimistic that the world can and will become more peaceful—one body at a time. Even while discussing the serious subjects she explores in The Good Body, namely, our culture’s insidious prescription with an unyielding feminine ideal and the tyranny of women’s ‘deep, deep, programming to be good’—Ensler radiates the genuine belief in personal, and global, transformation that has infused all of her work since she first started writing plays more than 25 years ago.

Inspired by the phenomenal popularity of The Vagina Monologues (her boundary-breaking play about women’s sexual triumphs and traumas which ran off Broadway from 1999 to 2003 and has since been staged by women in more than 1,500 cities worldwide), Ensler spoke with women in more than 40 countries about their complex feelings about their bodies as she traveled on behalf of V-Days, the international movement launched by Ensler to eradicate violence against women and girls. Framing these cross-cultural conversations within her own personal journey is come to terms with her ‘less-than-flat, post-40s stomach,’ Ensler has transformed her groundbreaking exploration of the female form into The Good Body, which she calls her most personal—and challenging—work to date. Among the play’s most salient messages is the notion that personal self-criticism and physical obsession have effectively distracted many women from engaging with the world in significant and tangible ways. “Can you imagine the energy that would be unleashed if women stopped obsessing about their bodies?” says Ensler. The Good Body was workshopped at Seattle Repertory Theatre in April and is scheduled to open on Broadway in September. Ensler spoke with us in June as she prepared for the play’s world premiere at A.C.T.

JESSICA WERNER: I wanted to start by asking you about the title of this play, about what it has meant for women to strive to be “good,” as well as the corollative that if you’re not good enough, if you fall short of the ideal, then YOU MUST BE BAD. I wonder how that concept of “being good” has played out in your life and if it’s changed at all. Have you worked on the GOOD BODY?

Eve Ensler: I think there is an underlying force that affects all of us, men and women, that has to do with the nature of pure purity and controls all of us to some degree, gets us to behave and to be good in general. But I do think it’s different for women. I think that from the time we’re born this underlying theme—this ongoing brainwashing, really—to be good is powerfully present. I mean, we say, “She’s a good baby” if the doesn’t cry. I hear people say this all the time: “She’s good,” meaning she’s quiet and she doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that good? So you begin then, and then you start working on all the many ways this culture trains women to be quiet, to be polite, and to be thin—and being thin is a huge piece of it, because I believe it’s really about making women disappear, becoming lesser and lesser versions of themselves.

Ultimately, it is all about control. A power structure is set up dictating the way your body is supposed to look, the way you’re supposed to walk, the way you’re supposed to talk, and you’re never supposed to speak up too much.

Each woman you portray in THE GOOD BODY seems to define a facet of what the ideal of being “good” currently means: thin, withholding, quiet, controlled. Yes. It also means not messy. And absolutely not living in ambiguity. There can be no mess, no darkness, no acceptance of the shadow side. Good doesn’t allow much leeway. It doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that means either this or that, right or wrong, perfect or not perfect. And capitalism plays quite a role. I don’t know which is the chicken and which is the egg, as far as capital and body issues, but in order to be good we have to consume more. In order to be perfect, we have to buy certain products.

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO POLE OUT THAT, WHILE THIS FEMININE IDEAL MAY HAVE BEEN POSTED BECAUSE OF PATRIARCHY AND CONSUMERISM, WOMEN ARE NOT INNOCENT IN THE PROCESS? WE’RE BUYING THE MAGAZINES....

We are absolutely complicit in it.

YOU’RE DESCRIBED THE GOOD BODY AS YOUR MOST PERSONAL PIECE TO DATE. DO YOU THINK THE OVERALL MESSAGE OR RESPONSE YOU RECEIVED TO THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES GAVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO WRITE THESE ISSUES NOW?

Definitely. In a way I think doing The Vagina Monologues gave me courage, and I felt like after doing all the work on that play I had scratched the surface of this. But what was fascinating is that after having done that show for a while, I thought, OK, I’ve got this. I’m home free. I like my vagina, I feel good about myself. And then of course it just traveled up. One day I looked down and it had just all moved up to my stomach. And I realized, Oh no, this is a virus. This is deeper than I knew. In some ways, this really is the hardest thing I have ever reckoned with. It is so scary how deep this programming is. People can say whatever they want about this issue, but it is the deepest propaganda, the deepest conditioning, it is so much more insidious than anything I have ever reckoned with in my entire life, and how much harm countries, I have seen so much and there is just nothing that has had me like this fundamental self-hatred for not being good and for not measuring up. And it is so amplified in the West.

WAS IT DURING THE MONOLOGUES THAT YOU STARTED KEEPING THE JOURNAL THAT BECAME THE GOOD BODY WITH YOUR STOMACH?

I started keeping the journal near the end of The Vagina Monologues, but it really got clear to me shortly after I stopped performing that piece that I had become aware of my stomach. I was in my 40s, and suddenly had this thing. And I believe every single woman has something. I was just spending hours thinking about it and I thought, Can this really be real? You are doing this? I mean, come on, you know better!

There is a huge amount of shame around this stuff. When I started working on this I thought, Eve, you can’t write a piece about this. And then, you know what I thought, You have to! Because this is the truth. It doesn’t matter who you are, your age or political orientation, it just gets you. It’s funny, sometimes women say to me, “Oh, I don’t have body issues.” And I say, “Really? Don’t you really like your body?” And they say, “Well, I like everything... but my face.” [laughs] Oh, OK.

I was so encouraged by [the recent workshops of The Good Body in Seattle. Nearly every single woman identified. There were a few women who said, “There are many women who love our bodies, and why aren’t you focusing on them?” And I just said, “Because I haven’t met them!” [laughs] “Please introduce me! I’d love to meet them.”

SO HOW DID YOUR INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN FOLLOWING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES EVOLVE INTO THE MONOLOGUES IN THE GOOD BODY?

I spoke to women as I traveled all over the world and heard so many stories, and in many cases the monologues are composites of things I’ve heard from different women. There are a couple of real interviews, with [actress/model] Isabella Rossellini, and with [Cosmopolitan magazine editor] Helen Gurley Brown, but it was really that I had started this dialogue with my stomach. That became the leap-off point, because I would think, How can I really feel this way? What do other women think? And then I’d start talking to women.

WERE YOU SURPRISED TO FIND JUST HOW PERVERSE AND COMMON THESE ISSUES ARE CROSS-CULTURALLY?

Yes. I was surprised by how common image has traveled this planet. Look, every culture has its own mishigas, there’s no doubt about it. But there is something so potent about this Western ideal. I asked people all over the world, “Who do you think is beautiful?” And I cannot tell you how many people said [model] Claudia Schiffer, she’s perfect.” Instead of The Good Body, I was going to call this Claudia Schiffer. Because she’s perfect. Because it didn’t matter if I was in South Africa or India. That was the answer: “Claudia Schiffer, because she’s perfect.”

IN THE FACE OF SOMETHING THAT POWERFUL, HOW DO YOU REMAIN HOPEFUL? YOU ONCE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT WE ARE DOING A GREAT JOB OF “EXPORTING BODY HATRED,” AND I DON’T SEE OUR MEDIA, OUR LARGEST COMMODITY, CHANGING ANYTIME SOON.

Well, I think part of it is that women have to demand that it changes, and part of that is changing ourselves. I think that if we start feeling differently about our bodies, then we will stop buying into this. And I do think it’s possible. I really do. We just

“I wanted to be great. It’s much more interesting than being good.”

American Conservatory Theater

The Good Body

10

11
Body Language

AN INTERVIEW WITH EVE ENSLER

BY JESSICA WERNER

Eve Ensler’s conversation style is not unlike her performance style: bold, frank, compassionate, persuasive, free-ranging, and, perhaps most remarkably, radically optimistic that the world can and will become more peaceful—one body at a time. Even while discussing the terrible subjects she explores in The Good Body—namely, our culture’s incessant preoccupation with an unattainable feminine ideal and the tyranny of women’s deep, deep programming to be good—Ensler radiates the genuine belief in personal, and global, transformation that has informed all of her work since she first started writing plays more than 25 years ago.

Inspired by the phenomenal popularity of The Vagina Monologues (her boundary-breaking play about women’s sexual triumphs and traumas which ran off Broadway from 1999 to 2003 and has since been staged by women in more than 1,500 cities worldwide), Ensler spoke with women in more than 40 countries about their complex feelings about their bodies as she traveled on behalf of V-Day, the international movement launched by Ensler to eradicate violence against women and girls. Framing these cross-cultural conversations within her own personal journey, she concludes with these “less-than-flat, post-40 stomach,” Ensler has transformed her gripping exploration of the female form into The Good Body, which she calls “her most personal—and challenging—work to date. Among the most salient messages is the notion that ever-present self-criticism and physical obsession have effectively distracted many women from engaging with the world in significant and tangible ways. “Can you imagine the energy that would be unleashed if women stopped obsessing about their bodies?” says Ensler. The Good Body was workshops at Seattle Repertory Theatre in April and is scheduled to open on Broadway in September. Ensler spoke with us in June as she prepared for the play’s world premiere at 56th Street.

JESSICA WERNER: I wanted to start by asking you about the title of this play, about what it has meant for women to strive to be “good,” as well as the correlative that if you’re not good enough, if you fall short of the ideal, then you must be bad. I wonder how that concept or “being good” has played out in your life and if it’s changed at all. You’ve worked on The Good Body.

Eve Ensler: I think there is an underlying force that affects all of us, men and women, that has to do with the nature of pure authority and controls all of us to some degree, gets us to behave and to be good in general. But I do think it’s different for women. I think that from the time we’re born this underlying theme—this ongoing brainwashing, really—to be good is powerfully present. I mean, we say, “She’s a good baby” if she doesn’t cry. I hear people say this all the time: “She’s good,” meaning she’s quiet and she doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that good? So you begin there, and then you start working on all the many ways this culture trains women to be quiet, to be polite, and to be thin—being thin is a huge piece of it, because I believe it’s really about making women disappear, becoming lesser and lesser versions of themselves.

Ultimately, it is all about control. A group is set up dictating the way your body is supposed to look, the way you’re supposed to talk, the way you’re supposed to talk, and you’re never supposed to speak up too much.

Each woman you portray in The Good Body seems to define a facet of what the ideal of being “good” currently means: thin, withholding, quiet, controlled.

Yes. It also means not messy. And absolutely not living in ambiguity.

There can be no mess, no darkness, no acceptance of the shadow side. Good doesn’t allow much leeway. It doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that and which is the eggs, as far as capitalism [and body issues], but in order to be good we have to consume more. In order to be perfect, we have to buy certain products.

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO POINT OUT THAT, WHILE THIS FEMININE IDEAL MAY HAVE BEEN POSTED BY PATRIARCHY AND CONSUMERISM, WOMEN ARE COMPLICIT IN THE PROCESS? WE ARE BUYING THE MAGAZINES…

We are absolutely complicit in it.

YOU’VE DESCRIBED THE GOOD BODY AS YOUR MOST PERSONAL PIECE TO DATE. DO YOU THINK THE OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE RESPONSE YOU RECEIVED TO THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES GAVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO EXPLORE THESE ISSUES NOW?

Definitely. In a way I think doing The Vagina Monologues gave me courage. And I felt I had been doing all the work on that play that I had scratched the surface of this. But what was fascinating is that after having done that show for a while, I thought, OK, I’ve got this. I’m home free. I like my vagina, I feel good about myself. And then of course it just traveled up. One day I looked down and it had just all moved up to my stomach. And I realized, Oh no, this is a virus. This is deeper than I knew. In some ways, this really is the hardest thing I have ever reckoned with. It is so scary how deep this programming is.

People can say whatever they want about this issue, but it is the deepest propaganda, the deepest conditioning, it is so much more insidious than anything I have ever reckoned with in my entire life. How do I know? Because I have been watching it all over the world. I have watched countries, I have seen so much and there is just nothing that has had me like this fundamental self-hatred for not being good and for not measuring up. And it is so amplified in the West.

WAS IT DIFFICULT TO GET THE ICONIC MONOLOGUES OF THE BODY TO START KEEPing THE JOURNAL THAT BECAME [A 30+ PAGES] THAT GOES WITH YOUR STOMACH?

I started keeping the journal nearing the end of The Vagina Monologues, and it really got clear to me shortly after I stopped performing that piece that I had become aware of my stomach. I was in my 40s, and suddenly I had this thing. And I believe every single woman has this thing. I was just spending hours thinking about it and thought, Can this really be you? You are doing this? I mean, come on, you know better!

There is a huge amount of shame around this stuff. When I started working on this I thought, Eve, you can’t write a piece about this. And then, you know what? I thought, You have to! Because this is the truth. It doesn’t matter who you are, your age or political orientation, it just gets you. It’s funny, sometimes women say to me, “Oh, I don’t have body issues.” And I say, “Really? You don’t really like your body?” And they say, “Well, I like everything... but my face.” [laugh] Oh, OK.

I was so encouraged by [the recent workshops of The Good Body in Seattle. Nearly every single woman identified. There were a few women who said, “There are many women who love our bodies, and why aren’t you focusing on them?” And I just said, “Because I haven’t met them!” [laugh] “Please introduce me, I’d love to meet them.”

SO HOW DID YOUR INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN FOLLOWING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES EVOKE THE MONOLOGUES IN THE GOOD BODY? I spoke to women as I traveled all over the world and heard so many stories, and in many cases the monologues are composites of things I’ve heard from different women. There are a couple of real interviews, with [actress/model] Isabella Rossellini, and with [Cosmopolitan magazine editor] Helen Gurley Brown, but it was really that I had started this dialogue with my stomach. That became the learning-off point, because I would think, How can I really feel this way? What do other women think? And then I’d start talking to women.

WERE YOU SURPRISED TO FIND JUST HOW PERSUASIVE AND COMMON THESE ISSUES ARE CROSS-CULTURALLY?

Yes, I was surprised. By how women’s image has traveled this planet. Every culture has its own mideye, there’s no doubt about it. But there is something so potent about this Western idea. I asked people all over the world, “Who do you think is beautiful?” And I cannot tell you how many people said [model] Claudia Schiffer, she’s perfect.” Instead of The Good Body, I was going to call this Claudia Schiffer. Because she’s perfect. Because it didn’t matter if I was in South Africa or India. That was the answer: Claudia Schiffer, because she’s perfect.

IN THE FACE OF SUCH SOMETHING POWERFUL, HOW DO YOU REMAIN HOPPERS? You ONCE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT WE ARE DOING A GREAT JOB OF “EXPORTING BODY HATRED,” AND I DON’T SEE OUR MEDIA, OUR LARGEST COMMODITY, CHANGING ANYTIME SOON.

Well, I think part of it is that women have to demand that it changes, and part of that is changing ourselves. I think that if we start feeling differently about our bodies, then we will stop buying into this. And I do think it’s possible. I really do. We just

“I wanted to be great. It’s much more interesting than being good.”
have to be vigilant about it. It’s kind of like giving up alcohol. It’s withdrawing from some fundamental addiction to self-hatred.

THAT’S AN APT METAPHOR, BECAUSE IT IS REALLY SEDUCTIVE SOMETHING, ISN’T IT?
So seductive, and familiar, and even comforting. You know, in the U.S. we consume 60% of the world’s resources. The numbers are frightening. One-third of all Americans are now obese, and yet we export the fantasy of anorexia. That, to me, is just mind-blowing.

IT’S A HORRIBLE PARADOX, THAT WE ARE LITERALLY OVERCONSUMING OURSELVES TO DEATH, ANOTHER SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION IS STARVING MYSELF INTO OBLIVION.
Yes, well, because of death at the bottom of it, is self-hatred.

THE GLOBAL POPULARITY OF PUBLICATIONS LIKE COSMOPOLITAN (Which now has 45 EDITIONS WORLDWIDE) IS BAFFLING, SINCE I THINK A LOT OF WOMEN HAVE A LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH WOMEN’S MAGAZINES. IT CAN FEEL LIKE SELF-FLAGELLATION TO READ THEM, BUT THEN YOU CAN’T GET THROUGH AN AIRPORT AND NOT PICK ONE UP.
I think it’s great when you don’t. I know the areas where I’m addicted to the self-flagellation, and those things that just don’t make me feel good. You don’t learn from them, you don’t grow from them, you just feel like shit when you’re done. So why don’t we read what makes us feel good?

YOU STARTED THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES IN THE EARLY 1990S, DOING IT OUT OF A PERSONAL PLACE, BE TALKING TO WOMEN ABOUT THEIR SHARED SEXUALITY AND ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR DESIRES, AND IT GREW INTO A GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. THE GOOD BODY ALSO STARTS FROM A PERSONAL PLACE; DO YOU SEE IT LEADING TO A GREATER POLITICAL AGENDA?
I really see it as a continuation. I see the next wave of V-Day moving toward women really loving and owning their bodies, and feeling good in whatever bodies they have so they can literally not be distracted anymore and start running the world. I hope the next stage of V-Day is that women choose to be great instead of good. That would mean living with ambiguity, living with not being approved of, living with your voice, living with your originality, living with the mess, and living with your power.

I DON’T THINK MOST PEOPLE MAKE THAT CONNECTION, WHICH YOU DO IN THE PLAY, THAT IT’S NOT JUST DAMAGING TO WOMEN’S PERSONAL WELL-BEING TO OBSESS ABOUT THEIR BODIES, BUT

THAT IT’S LITERALLY STUNTING OUR GROWTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY, IF WE COULD JUST FREE UP ALL THE MENTAL SPACE WE USE DESPISING OURSELVES.
I know, it’s just so consuming. I say in the play, women are body piercing, perming, waxing, lightening, covering, cutting, lifting, lightening, flattening, starving... when we could be running the world. We need to look at what happens to us when we don’t play the rules. Let me tell you something: If you can stand up and say, “I love my body,” you can do anything, I really mean it.

If you can walk in whatever body you own in the world and feel good, you can stand up to anyone. I think that when we truly internalized the internalized self-violence, when women actually live in their bodies, actually love their bodies as they are, feel safe and empowered in them, then the world will change.

TO TALK MORE SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THEATER, DO YOU SEE YOUR WORK AS A THEATER ARTIST AS AN OFFSHOOT OF YOUR WORK AS AN ACTIVIST, OR DID THEY SORT OF DEVELOP IN TANDEM?
That’s one of those questions I don’t really know the answer to anymore. I think that I have always been a writer and considered myself a writer, but I have been an activist my entire life. For me, it was performing as the art and you feel the intensity of the world in the marrow of your bones. You are receptive and responsive to what is around you, so if [poet] Adrienne Rich’s theory is right—that “the moment a feeling enters the body is political”—then all of us are artists are political. It’s just a question of what your politics are. I’ve never separated them, politics and art. I actually began writing poetry, and I had no desire to act. I didn’t really perform until The Vagina Monologues. But things have always come to me in very dramatic terms, and those are the things we call “drama.” I think the world lives in a very tiny tiny way, and that we are scared of the bigness of our feelings and the depth of our passions and the hugginess of our hearts. So I think we have created “Drama” as this place where we get to express what we really feel. But I’m not convinced that if we were really living in our authentic, actualized, full selves we would have drama anymore.

YOU THINK WE MIGHT EVOLVE OUT OF THE NEED FOR THEATER?
I think we would just call it “life.” Who knows?

JOANNE WOODWARD WAS AN EARLY MENTOR FOR YOU IN THE THEATER, WHO ELSE HAS INFLUENCED YOU?
I was very influenced by Beckett. His interior monologues had a huge impact on me.

THAT’S INTERESTING, SINCE PEOPLE OFTEN THINK OF BECKETT AS TERRIBLY CEREBRAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL, YET HIS WORK RESIDES IN THE BODY, AND IT’S VERY PHYSICAL.
Fry physical. And I would say that Beckett had an enormous impact on me, Mother Courage for example. And I was very influenced by rock ‘n’ roll people, like Tina Turner and Grace Slick, women who found their way and their voice through their bodies. And in terms of writers, the stream-of-consciousness monologues of Virginia Woolf and Toni Morrison, and Pinter. The Greeks also had a huge impact on me.

SINCE THERE’S SO MUCH OF YOUR OWN STORY IN THIS PLAY, DO YOU SEE IT EVOLVING INTO A PIECE LIKE THE SINGERS MONOLOGUES THAT’S PERFORMED BY OTHER ACTRESSES?
Yes, I do. I think someone will be able to play the Me-part, as well as the others. I’m just a character like everybody else.

IT’S GOING TO BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHERE THE GOOD BODY LEADS.
Because the content is more global—since it’s [set in] India, Afghanistan, Iran, Kenya—I think it will have a more global reach and people everywhere will own it more. But first, I’m just so excited about opening in San Francisco. I love San Francisco, and I really wanted to premiere it there because of the city’s incredible support and reception of The Vagina Monologues. I feel safe there, and I feel emboldened to take risks because of the people there.

HOW IMPORTANT IS HONOR IN YOUR WORK, FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN THE VERY SERIOUS AND THE COMIC? I IMAGINE YOU REALIZED DOING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES THAT IF THEY WERE ALL VAGINA MONOLOGUES NO ONE WOULD WANT TO KEEP LISTENING.
Exactly. I remember when I first worked with Joanne Woodward she said to me, “I don’t care what you do, it has to be funny.” At the time I was writing a play about nuclear war, and I said, “It is not funny.” And she said, “Yes, it is, you’ll make it funny.” I thought, Funny! Nuclear war! All I want to be now is funny, because I know when people are laughing some part of them opens. Humor is the key. It lets people hear things they can’t hear otherwise.

THERE’S CERTAINLY PLENTY TO LAUGH AT IN OUR BODY OBSESSIONS.
Oh yes, it is just absolutely insane what we do to our bodies, what we think, and what we’re doing inside ourselves. It’s hysterical! And it’s completely embarrassing.
have to be vigilant about it. It's kind of like giving up alcohol. It's withdrawing from some fundamental addiction to self-hatred.

THAT'S AN ART METAPHOR, BECAUSE IT IS REALLY SEDUCTIVE SOMEHOW, ISN'T IT? So seductive, and familiar, and even comforting. You know, in the U.S. we consume 60% of the world's resources. The numbers are frightening. One-third of all Americans are now obese, and yet we export the fantasy of anorexia. That, to me, is just mind-blowing.

It's a horrible paradox, that as we are literally over-consuming ourselves to death, another segment of the population is starving itself into oblivion. Yes, well, because of death, at the bottom of it, is self-hatred.

The global popularity of publications like Cosmopolitan (which now has 45 editions worldwide!) is baffling, since I think a lot of women have a love/hate relationship with women's magazines. It feels like self-flagellation to read them, but then you can't go through an airport and not pick one up. I think it's great when you don't. I know the areas where I'm addicted to the self-flagellation, and those things that just don't make me feel good. You don't learn from them, you don't grow from them, you just feel like shit when you've done it. So why don't we read what makes us feel good?

You started the vagina monologues from a very personal place, in talking to women about their shared sexuality and acknowledging their desires, and it grew into a global movement to eradicate violence against women. The body also starts from a personal place; do you see it leading to a greater political agenda?

I really see it as a continuation. I see the next wave of V-Day moving toward women really loving and owning their bodies, and feeling good in whatever bodies they have because they can literally not be distracted anymore and start running the world. I hope the next stage of V-Day is that women choose to be great instead of good. That means living with ambiguity, living with not being approved of, living with your voice, living with your originality, living with the mess, and living with your power.

I don't think most people make that connection, which you do in the play. That's not just damaging to women's personal well-being to obsess about their bodies, but that it's literally stunting our growth politically and economically and socially. If we could just free up all the mental space we use despising ourselves...

I know, it's just so consuming. I say in the play, women are busy "screwing, perming, wraping, lighting, covering, cutting, lifting, tightening, flattening, starving..." when we could be running the world. We need to look at what happens to us when we don't play the rules. Let me tell you something: If you can stand up and say, "I love my body," you can do anything. I really mean it. If you can walk in whatever body you own in the world and feel good, you can stand up to anyone. I think that when we truly internalized the internalized self-violence, when women actually live in their bodies, actually love their bodies as they are, feel safe and empowered in them, then the world will change.

To take more specifically about theater, do you see your work as a theater artist as an on-the-cut of your work as an activist, or did they sort of develop in tandem?

That's one of those questions I don't really know the answer to anymore. I think that I have always been a writer and considered myself a writer, but I have been an activist my entire life. For me, to be an artist means that you feel the intensity of the world in the marrow of your bones. You are receptive and responsive to what is around you, so if [poet] Adrienne Rich's theory is right—that "the moment a feeling enters the body is political"—then all of us are political. It's just a question of what your politics are. I've never separated them from politics, and I actually began writing poetry, and I had no desire to act. I didn't really perform until The Vagina Monologues. But things have always come to me in very dramatic terms, and those are the things we call "drama." I think the world lives in a very tiny way, and that we are scared of the bigness of our feelings and the depth of our passions and the hugginess of our hearts. So I think we have created "drama" as a place to get to express what we really feel.

But I'm not convinced that if we were really living in our authentic, actualized, full selves we would have drama anymore.

You think we might evolve out of the need for theater? I think we would just call it "life." Who knows?

Joanne Woodward was an early mentor for you in the theater. Who else has influenced you?

I was very influenced by Beckett. His interior monologues had a huge impact on me.

That's interesting, since people often think of Beckett as terribly cerebral and philosophical, yet his work resides in the body, and it's very physical.

Fry physical. And I would say that Beckett had an enormous impact on me, Mother Courage for example. And I was very influenced by rock 'n' roll people, like Tina Turner and Grace Slick, women who found their way and their voice through their bodies. And in terms of writers, the stream-of-consciousness monologues of Virginia Woolf and Toni Morrison, and Pinter. The Greeks also had a huge impact on me.

Since there's so much of your own story in this play, do you see it evolving into a piece like The Eagles Monologues that's performed by other actresses?

Yes, I do. I think someone will be able to play the Me-part, as well as the others. I'm just a character like everybody else.

It's going to be interesting to see where the good body leads.

Because the content is more global—since it's set in India, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kenya—I think it will have a more global reach and people everywhere will own it more. But first, I'm just so excited about opening in San Francisco. I love San Francisco, and I really wanted to premiere it there because of the city's incredible support and reception of The Vagina Monologues. I feel safe there, and I feel emboldened to take risks because of the people there.

How important is humor in your work, finding a balance between the very serious and the comic? I imagine you realized doing the vagina monologues that if they were all vagina monologues no one would want to keep listening.

Exactly. I remember when I first worked with Joanne Woodward she said to me, "I don't care what you do, it has to be funny." At the time I was writing a play about nuclear war, and I said, "It is not funny." And she said, "Yes, it is, you'll make it funny." I thought, funny? Nuclear war? All I want to be now is funny, because I know when people are laughing some part of them opens. Humor is the key. It lets people hear things they can't hear otherwise.

There's certainly plenty to laugh at in our body obsessions.

Oh yes, it is just absolutely insane what we do to our bodies, what we think, and what we're doing inside ourselves. It's hysterical! And it's completely embarrassing.

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Body Language continued from page 13

YOU’VE SAID THAT YOU THINK BEING A TEENAGE GIRL IN AMERICA HAS TO BE ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS IN THE WORLD. I do, it’s just hell.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO ANY TEENS AND THEIR PARENTS ATTENDING THE GOOD BODY?
That’s always a hard one for me because I don’t want to shock anyone, but a part of me thinks three kids know more than we do. Why are we pretending they don’t? Don’t want girls to be aware that people molest girls, so they are protected. Don’t want girls to see what other women do to themselves so they don’t do it. Don’t want them to get this consciousness early on so they can protect themselves.

I am actually working on a new series of monologues based on interviews with teenage girls, titled I Am an Emotional Creature. The Secret Life of Girls around the World.

DO YOU EVER JUST PINCH YOURSELF IN DISBELIEF ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT’S HAPPENED WITH THE JIVING MONOLOGUES AND WHAT YOU’VE CREATED?
I am absolutely in awe. I just can’t believe what is happening with the movement. We had 2,300 [V-Day] events last year, in places as varied as Nairobi and a Methodist church in Idaho. It’s just incredible! Unbelievable. I sometimes think the kindness I have been shown by women around the world is so overwhelming that one day I ever let it all in I would just throw myself on the ground and wail. Because people are so kind, in spite of everything.

WELL, YOU’RE GIVING SO MUCH BACK, TOO.
I see it as a privilege.

Who’s Who

EVE ENSLER
(Playwright/ Performer/Activist) in the acclaimed winner of the OBIE Award-winning play The Vagina Monologues and the founder and artistic director of V-Day, a global movement to end violence against women and girls. In six years, V-Day has raised more than $25 million for grass roots groups around the world. The Vagina Monologues has been translated into more than 33 languages and has run in theaters worldwide, including sold-out runs at both off-Broadway’s Westside Theater and on London’s West End (2002 Olivier Award nomination, best entertainment). Her play Necessary Targets, set in a Bosnian refugee camp, opened off Broadway at the Theatre Arts Theater in February 2002, following a hit run at Hartford Stage Company. Enslers other plays include: Corridors, Lemonade, The Deuce, Floating Rhoda and the Glue Man, and Extraordinary Measures. The Vagina Monologues and Necessary Targets have both been published by Villard/Random House, who will also publish The Good Body (August 2004) and Enslers upcoming books I Am an Emotional Creature and V-World. Enslers is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship Award in playwriting, the 2002 Amnesty International Media Spotlight Award for leadership, and the Matrix Award (2002). She is chair of the Women’s Committee of PEN American Center and is an executive producer of What I Want My Work to Do is to You, a documentary about the writing group she has led since 1998 at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women; the film had its world premiere at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, where it received the “Freedom of Expression” Award; the film premiered nationally on PBS “POV” last December.

PETER ASKIN (Director) recently directed Trombone—starring (at different times) Ed Harris, Richard Dreyfuss, Tim Robbins, Chris Cooper, Alec Baldwin, Eddie Izzard, Nathan Lane, Bill Irwin, Aidan Quinn, F. Murray Abraham, and Brian Dennehy—and will direct Paul Newman in Trombone in July. Other recent productions include Mike O’Malley’s Searching for Certainty, John Leguzmano’s record-breaking Sensualina, Spic-O-Rama (Drama Desk Award), and Mambo Mouth (OBIE, Outer Critics’ Circle awards). Askin has also directed the New York, London, and Los Angeles productions of Houdini and the Angry Inch (OBIE, Outer Critics’ Circle awards), and Pulitzer Prize finalist Dael Orlandersmith’s Monster and Beauty’s Daughter (OBIE Award), as well as her play The Gimmick, which he conceived and directed at Sundance and the McCarter Theatre Center. Other New York credits include Dinner with Demons, How It Hangs, Linda Hart, Beautiful Martha, Oedipus, Blues, The Reality Ranch, and Down an Alley Filled with Cats. He has written (or cowritten) several screenplays, including Smithsonian and Paramount Classic’s Company. More recently he has directed for HBO, FOX, and the Comedy Channel. Askin is also the director of New York’s Westside and Jane Street theaters, home of David Mamet’s The Cryptogram and...
Body Language
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TEENAGE GIRL IN AMERICA HAS TO BE ONE
OF THE HARDEST THINGS IN THE WORLD.
I do, it’s just hell.

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of me thinks these kids know more than
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the World.

DO YOU EVER JUST PINCH YOURSELF IN
DISBELIEF ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT’S
HAPPENED WITH THE FEMALE MONOLOGUES
AND WHAT YOU’VE CREATED?
I am absolutely in awe. I just can’t believe
what is happening with the movement.
We had 2,300 [V-Day] events last year, in
places as varied as Nairobi and a Methodist
church in Idaho. It’s just incredible! Unbelievable. Sometimes I think
the kindness I have been shown by women
around the world is so overwhelming
that one day if ever let it all in I would
ever throw myself on the ground and walk.
Because people are so kind, in spite of
everything.

WELL, YOU’RE GIVING SO MUCH BACK,
TOO.
I see it as a privilege.

WHO’S WHO

EVE ENSLER
(Playwright/ Performer/Activist)

in the acclaimed OBIE Award-winning
play The Vagina Monologues and the
founder and artistic director of V-Day, a
global movement to end violence against
women and girls. In six years, V-Day
has raised more than $25 million for
grass roots groups around the world.
The Vagina Monologues has been translated
into more than 35 languages and has
run in theaters worldwide, including
sold-out runs at both off-Broadway’s
Westside Theater and on London’s
West End (2002 Oliver Award
nomination, best entertainment).
Her play Necessary Targets, set in a
Bosnian refugee camp, opened off Broadway
at the Variety Arts Theater in February
2002, following a hit run at Hartford
Stage Company. Enslser’s other plays
include: Convenience, Lemonade, The
Dope, Flaming Rhoda and the Glue
Man, and Extraordinary Measures.
The Vagina Monologues and Necessary
Targets have both been published by
Villard/Random House, who will also
publish The Good Body (August 2004)
and Enslser’s upcoming books I Am
an Emotional Creature and V-World.
Enslser is the recipient of a Guggenheim
Fellowship Award in playwriting, the
2002 Amnesty International Media
Spotlight Award for leadership, and the
Matrix Award (2002). She is chair of
Women’s Committee of PEN American
Center and is an executive producer of
What I Want My Word to Do in You, a
documentary about the writing group
she has led since 1998 at the Bedford
Hills Correctional Facility for Women;
the film had its world premiere at the
2003 Sundance Film Festival, where it
received the “Freedom of Expression”
Award; the film premiered nationally on
PBS’s “POV” last December.

PETER ASKIN (Director) recently
directed Trumbo—starring (at different
times) Ed Harris, Richard Dreyfuss,
Tim Robbins, Chris Cooper, Alec
Baldwin, Eddie Izzard, Nathan Lane,
Bill Irwin, Aidan Quinn, F. Murray
Abraham, and Brian Dennehy—and will
direct Paul Newman in Trumbo in July.
Other recent productions include Mike
O’Malley’s Search for Certainty, John
Leguizamo’s record-breaking Sensualités,
Spic-O-Rama (Drama Desk Award),
and Mambo Mouth (OBIE, Outer Critics’
Circle award). Askin has also
-directed the New York, London, and
Los Angeles productions of Hedwig and
the Angry Inch (OBIE, Outer Critics’
Circle award), and Pulitzer Prize
finalist Dael Orlandersmith’s Monster
and Beauty’s Daughters (OBIE Award),
as well as her play The Gimmick, which
he conceived and directed at Sundance
and the McCarther Theatre Center.
Other New York credits include Dinner
with Desire, How to Hang a Lady, lined by
Beauty Marks, Dozens, Atonement, The
Reddy Ranch, and Down the Alley
Filled with Cats. He has written (or cowritten)
several screenplays, including Smithsonian
and Paramount Classics’ Company
Most Wanted. He has directed for
HBO, FOX, and the Comedy Channel.
Askin is also the director of New York’s
Westside and Jane Street theaters, home of
David Mamet's The Cryptogram and

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Fine Italian Dining
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SUMMER AT THE CLAREMONT

ROBERT BRILL (Scenic Design) designed The First Picture Show for A.C.T. His designs include the recent Broadway revival of Assassins (Tony Award nomination), as well as the set and costume designs for the revival of Cabaret at the KuKluxKlub and Studio 54 in New York and for all U.S. and international tours. Other designs for Broadway include Anna in the Tropics, Design for Living, One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Buried Child, and The Rehearsal. Credit also include Fair and Square (Radio City Music Hall), American in Paris (Bolshoi Ballet), A Clockwork Orange (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), The Laramie Project (New York, Denver, Berkeley, La Jolla), L’Innommable de Peppe (Chicago Opera Theatre), and The House of Martin Guerre (Goodman Theatre). A founding member of Siddelhammer Theatre, he has also designed for the Festival of Ear Entertainment, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Lincoln Center Theater, the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Stage and Film, New York Theatre Workshop, Classic Stage Company, Vineyard Theatre, the Atlantic Television Company, and regionally at the McCarter Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and South Coast Repertory.

Upcoming projects include On the Razzle for Disney Theatrical and the Broadway revival of The Producers.

SUSAN HILFERTY (Costume Designer) includes among her recent credits Broadway productions of Wicked (2005 Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk awards), Assassins, Into the Woods (Tony and Drama Desk nominations; News Award), Dirty Blonde, Jitney, and How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. With Richard Nelson she has designed My Life with Albertine, Lof, The General from America, Frenzy’s Way, Madame Melville, and Goodnight Children Everywhere. She has designed over 300 productions with such well known directors as Athol Fugard (with whom she has worked as codirector and set and costume designer since 1980), Joe Mantello, James Lapine, Robert Falls, Tony Kushner, Robert Woodruff, JoAnne Akalaitis, the late Garland Wright, Mark Lamos, Frank Galati, Den McAulay, Sharon Ott, David P感兴趣， Chris Ashley, David Warren, Marion McLinton, Laurie Anderson, Carol Rothman, Garry Hynes, David Jones, Gordon Edelstein, and Emily Mann. Hilferty also designs for opera, film, television, and dance and is chair of the department of design at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. She has been awarded many awards, including a 2000 OBIE for sustained excellence.

KEVIN ADAMS (Lighting Designer) has designed lighting and scenery for Broadway, off Broadway, West End (London, and Tokyo productions, regional theatre, opera, ballet, pop acts, music videos, and museum performances and installations. He has designed solo shows featuring Anna Deavere Smith, John Leguizamo, Eric Bogosian, Kevin Bacon, David Mors, Chris Leachman, Kate Mulgrew, Sandra Tling-Tobin, Sandra Bernhard, Rinde Eckert, Jonathan Reynolds, Rachel Rosenthal, Hsu Chien, and John Fleck, among others. "NEA 4.1: For his extensive work off..."

WHO’S WHO

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WHO’S WHO

BROADWAY, which includes the original production of How to Succeed and the Angry Inch, he received an OBIE Award for his sustained excellence. Pop acts include Janet Jackson, the Indigo Girls, and the Magnetic Fields. Recent work includes Osvaldo Golijov’s opera Amadamar, with Dawn Upshaw (Tanglewood and Frank Gelley’s new Disney Hall in Los Angeles); I Never Sang for My Father, with John Mahoney (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); and Candide, with Patti Lupone, Kristin Chenoweth, and the New York Philharmonic.


SUSAN HILFERTY (Costume Designer) includes among her recent credits Broadway productions of Wicked (2005 Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk awards), Assassins, Into the Woods (Tony and Drama Desk nominations; News Award), Dirty Blonde, Jitney, and How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying. With Richard Nelson she has designed My Life with Albertine, Lof, The General from America, Frenzy’s Way, Madame Melville, and Goodnight Children Everywhere. She has designed over 300 productions with such well known directors as Athol Fugard (with whom she has worked as codirector and set and costume designer since 1980), Joe Mantello, James Lapine, Robert Falls, Tony Kushner, Robert Woodruff, JoAnne Akalaitis, the late Garland Wright, Mark Lamos, Frank Galati, Den McAulay, Sharon Ott, David P感兴趣， Chris Ashley, David Warren, Marion McLinton, Laurie Anderson, Carol Rothman, Garry Hynes, David Jones, Gordon Edelstein, and Emily Mann. Hilferty also designs for opera, film, television, and dance and is chair of the department of design at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. She has been awarded many awards, including a 2000 OBIE for sustained excellence.

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**Who's Who**

Jonathan Larson’s tick, tick ... BOOM!, among many others.

**ROBERT BRILL (Set/Scene Designer)** designed The First Picture Show for A.C.T. His designs include the recent Broadway revival of Assassins (Tony Award nomination), as well as the set and club designs for the revival of Cabaret at the Kravis/Jubilee Studio 54 in New York and for all U.S. and international tours. Other designs for Broadway include Anna in the Tropics, Design for Living, One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest, Buried Child, and The Rescuers. Credit also include Sinatra: Across Town Radio City Music Hall), The American in Paris (Boston), A Clockwork Orange (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), The Laramie Project (New York, Denver, Berkley, La Jolla), L’Ommazzione di Poppea (Chicago Opera Theatre), and The House of Martin Guerre (Goodman Theatre). A founding member of Sledgehammer Theatre, he has also designed for Feld Entertainment, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Lincoln Center Theatre, the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Stage and Fil, New York Theatre Workshop, Classic Stage Company, Vineyard Theatre, the Atlantic Theatre Company, and regionally at the McCarthe Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, the Denver Centre Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and South Coast Repertory. Upcoming projects include: On the Razzle for Disney Theatrical and the Broadway revival of The Wiz.

**SUSAN HILFERTY (Costume Designer)** includes among her recent credits Broadway productions of Wickeds (2007, Outer Critics Circle and Drama Desk award nominations), Assassins, Into the Woods (Tony and Drama Desk nominations, Hewes Award), Dirty Blonde, Jitney, and How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying. With Richard Nelson she has designed My Life with Albertine, Lefly, The General from America, Francess Way, Madame Melvilles, and Goodchildren Everywhere. She has designed more than 300 productions with such well-known directors as Athol Fugard (with whom she has worked as codirector and set designer since 1980). Joe Mantello, James Lapine, Robert Falls, Tony Kushner, Robert Woodruff, JoAnne Akalaitis, the late Garland Wright, Mark Lamos, Frank Galati, Denis McAnuff, Sharon Ott, David Petrucci, Chris Ashley, David Warren, Marion McClinton, Laurie Anderson, Carol Rothman, Garry Hynes, David Jones, Gordon Edderington, and Emily Mann also credit her. Hilferty also designs for film, television, and dance and is chair of the department of design at New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. She has received many awards and nominations, including a 200 OBIE for sustained excellence.

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**Who's Who**

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**DAVID VAN TIEGHEM (Original Music & Sound Design)** has composed and designed on Broadway: Frozen, The Crucible, Judgment at Nuremberg, Uncle Vanya, and Night Must Fall. Off-Broadway credits include: Wig!, The Grey Zone, The Board of Avon, The Stendhal Syndrome, The Christmas Ride Home, How I Learned to Drive, The Dying Gaul, Stop Kiss, The Glory of Living, Pich and Blood, As Bad as Henry Dows, A Question of Mercy, The Late Henry Moss, A Free From Individuals, The Merry Sue, and The Minna Twins. Regional theater credits include: Norvane (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), Houda Gohar (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), King John (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), and Romeo and Juliet (Old Globe Theatre, San Diego).

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**WENDALL K. HARRINGTON (Video Designer)** received Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and American Theatre Wing awards for the original design of The Who’s Tommy. Broadway credits also include Ragsie, Putting It Together, Company, Ravens Demons, The Capeman, Frank, Yip’s Yips, The Will Rogers Follies, My One and Only, The Heidi Chronicles, and They’re Playing Our Song. Opera credits include Nesin in China at St. Louis Opera, A View from the Bridge for the Metropolitan Opera, The Photographer at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Mannen Leonca at D.C. Opera. She has also designed Anna Karenina for Royal Danish Ballet, Ballet Milanese for Doug Varone and Dancers, and Cahaba for American Ballet Theatre. Harrington, a founding member of The Drama Department, is the former design director of Esquire magazine. She created player introductions for the New York Knicks, Liberty, and Rangers and two fine daughters. Recently she directed and designed Arjen’s Dilemma, a new opera by Doug Yama, and Snapshots, an evening of string quartets and imagery.

**GARTH HEMPHILL (A.C.T. Resident Sound Designer)** is in his seventh season as A.C.T’s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 150 productions, including most recently for A.C.T. A Mother, A Doll’s House, Waiting for Godot, Los Luiganos, Tiresias, The Three Sisters, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), and Romeo and Juliet (Old Globe Theatre, San Diego). Film and television credits include: Working Girls, “Penn & Tell,” and videos by The Wooster Group. Dance credits include work for Twyla Tharp, Michael Moschen, and Boston Ballet. He has also performed as a percussionist with Steve Reich, Laurie Anderson, Talking Heads, Brian Eno, and David Byrne. His CDs also include: These Things Happen, Safety in Numbers, and Strange Cargo.

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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 Israel Horovitz's A Doll's House, Sumner Norzke's Ride for Guad, Tony Steppen's Night and Day, and Chilean'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. Perlloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Steppen's The invention of Love and Indund Ind and Harold Pinter's Celebration and The Room, A.C.T.'s productions of Hamlet, The Misallotbre, Ernica IV, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya, the world premiere of Louise Averyan's Singer's Boy, and acclaimed productions of The Three Penny Opera and Elzheines, The Rise Tate, Artigale, Credebon, Home, and The Tempest. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein, N.Y. for an American, David Lang/ Mac Wellman's The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colours of Rhodes (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, Luminance Dating, is being developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project and will be workshopped this summer at New York Stage and Film's Writer's Week. Before joining A.C.T., Perlloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Emma Fords Elblitha, the American premiere of Pinter's Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perlloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, design and, as well as the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Koos's opera The Great at the Vienna Festival and at the Academy of Music at Oxford. Perlloff received her B.A. in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fullbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Leice and Nicholas.

HEATHER M. KITCHEN (Executive 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. In April, 2002, Kitchen was inducted into the San Francisco Business Times' list of San Francisco's 50 Most Influential Women in the Bay Area public arena.

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. Since joining A.C.T., Smith has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-off-Broadway plays, including work by Mac Wellman and Douglas Kenyon. South 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 HAIRES (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 Georgette (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 Bierens Little Elopé (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 Theater Critics Circle.
Who's Who

ARABELLA POWELL* (Stage Manager) has worked on Broadway with the productions Sexual...a Love Story, Rat and the Kings, and The Lion King. Her off-Broadway credits include Trumbo, Crisis Angel Mindbreak, Minnesota, Tabletop, Wake Up and Smell the Coffee, and Tap Dogs, including tours of North America, Europe, the West End, and the Edinburgh Festival. She has also participated in the workshops of Eve Ensler's The Good Body (at Seattle Repertory Theatre), King Island Christmas, and Doshvoryb, the Musical. Powell is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art, Sydney.

ELISA GUTHERTZ** (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on numerous A.C.T. productions, including Lever James, Healing the Gator, The Three Sisters, The Misfits, Tarantula, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has stage-managed numerous productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, including The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Big Love, Civic Sea, and Cloud Tortex. Other credits include Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre in San Francisco.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS
Allison Pouyat, Associate Producer Carol Fox Prescott, Voice Coach Deborah Hoch, Dialist Coach Lisa Lugoallalo, Movement Consultant Jill B. C. Di Boff, Associate Sound Designer Hope Hall, Associate Video Designer David Biedel, Bo Erickson, Video Graphics Tony Monteneri, Assistant to M. Eudler

ADDITIONAL THANKS TO
Kim Roeker, Tom Brennan, Foghouse Productions, Bob Fennell

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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, Summer and Smoke, A Streetcar Named Desire, 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 Indamor and Harold Pinter's Celebration and The Box. A.C.T.'s annual productions of Hamlet, Macbeth, and Macbeth: The Difficulty of Crossing a Field and the West Coast premieres of her own play The Colomons of Rhode Island (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, Luminous Distance, is being developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project and will be workshopped this summer at New York Stage and Film.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Eaton's Elision, 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, design, and the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Streisand and Brey's Koost's opera The Great at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

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MELISSA SMITH (Consortium 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. 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 Theatre. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of A Little Night Music Drinks at Little Italy and Grease (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.
“I was floored,” she recently explained. “To think that one of the world’s most famous directors, who has sold out entire runs at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, who has received more honors than he can probably count—to think that he’d never directed here was simply shocking.” After ten years of planning, San Francisco audiences will finally have a chance to discover Wilson and his unique brand of theater when A.C.T. presents The Black Rider this August.

The Black Rider combines Wilson’s Expressionist-influenced theatrical aesthetic with composer Tom Waits’s gritty, rock-twisted songcraft and writer William S. Burroughs’s witty, staccato prose. It premiered in 1990 at Hamburg’s Thalia Theater, the current production, the first in English, is coproduced by A.C.T., London’s Barbican Theatre, and the Sydney Festival in Australia.

Resuming Wilson and Waits (Burroughs died in 1997) and featuring British rock icon Marianne Faithfull as the titular devil, The Black Rider opened in London in May. It will receive its only North American engagement at A.C.T. in August and then travel to Sydney.

Perloff calls The Black Rider “one of the most ambitious productions A.C.T. has ever launched.” Indeed, the technical obstacles involved in the production are numerous—from transporting finely crafted sets and costumes overseas, to securing visas for performers and personnel from six different countries, to following an implausibly tight production schedule (a visual artist as well as a director, Wilson is known to spend epic amounts of time honing every visual detail of his productions, from the exact angle of an actor’s arm, to the precision of minutely subtle lighting cues). But, says Perloff, minor administrative headaches are a small price to pay for giving A.C.T. audiences the exclusive chance to see Wilson’s heralded piece.

The U.K. run has already generated tremendous transatlantic buzz. London’s Daily Telegraph declared The Black Rider “an extraordinary piece of music theater... Enough to make the cool drool.” The production plays A.C.T. from August 26 to September 26.
Easy Rider: A.C.T Stages International Hit

When A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff discovered that maverick theater artist Robert Wilson had never staged a major piece in San Francisco, she knew what she had to do.

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"Enough to Make the Cool Drool."

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with Marianne Faithfull and Matt McGrath

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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: 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, box office hours are 12–6 p.m. Daily. Call 415.749.2477 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 a day on our Web site at www.act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance reseating privileges and seat-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 a Pay What You Wish performance during the regular run of each production.

Group Discounts
For groups of 15 or more, call Edward Bushworth at 415.439.2243.

AT THE THEATER
The Geary Theater is located at 405 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 Ward at Play, 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.

Beepers
If you enjoy 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 while out of the house, 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.

Restrooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Gertrude on the uppermost lobby level.

Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call 415.749.2477 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 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.

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

A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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

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Restrooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level lobby, the Balcony Lobby, and the Carpet on the uppermost lobby level.

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