WAITING FOR GODOT
by SAMUEL BECKETT
directed by CAREY PERLOFF

OCT 17–NOV 16

Also inside...
Roscoe Lee Browne and Anthony Zerbe in
Behind the Broken Words
NOV 19–23
A FILM BY CLINT EASTWOOD
MYSTIC RIVER

we bury our sins, we wash them clean

WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH VILLAGE ROADSHOW PICTURES AND NPV ENTERTAINMENT A MALPASO PRODUCTION
SEAN PENN TIM ROBBINS KEVIN BACON LAURENCE FISHBURNE MARCIA GAY HARDEN LAURA LINNEY "MYSTIC RIVER"

A C T
AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER
nurture 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 and 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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of JOEL COX PETER HENRY BUMSTEAD TOM STERN BRUCE BERNER

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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

GOD, BY DEFERRING OUR HOPE,
STRETCHES OUR DESIRE;
BY THE DESIRING,
STRETCHES THE MIND;
BY STRETCHING MAKES IT
MORE CAPACIOUS . . . . .
LET US THEREFORE DESIRE,
FOR WE SHALL BE FILLED.

St. Augustine

Dear Friends,

Every time one returns to an iconic play like Waiting for Godot, the question inevitably arises: Why? Why go back? What does the play mean to us, or do for us, now? What do we know now that we didn’t know before?

It took many years for the "scandal" generated by Godot’s first productions to die down enough that one could experience the play for what it really is. Its form was so revolutionary and so eccentrically bound up with its content that even the purists were mystified: What do you say about a play with no plot, in which, to repeat the cliché, "nothing happens, twice?"

Fifty years later, we have become so much more accustomed to unusual theatrical forms that the complex yearnings and yearnings of the play are more available to us. The truth is, all of us have spent a good portion of our lives waiting for something to happen. We believe there is a purpose to our existence, but we are not sure what it is; we run around organizing our lives and gathering things around us in order to feel that "meaning" is accruing. Every once in a while, a cataclysm wakes us up to the fact that we have no idea why we're doing what we're doing and that much of what occupies our time is merely filler: distractions, games, routines that help to pass the time. Life's true purpose seems mysterious and hidden. For some people, religion occupies the void, for other people it is art, or children, or any number of other solutions. The reality that Beckett so brilliantly explores in Godot is that, while we're never certain what is ahead of us at any moment, we go on longing for certainty anyway. That is what it means to be human. So we work very hard to believe in the fictions we have created for ourselves.

It doesn't matter in the slightest who "Godot" really is. Perhaps he is God, perhaps he is the Gestapo agent so feared by Beckett. The Resistance fighter in World War II, perhaps he is the boss who looks down upon us with disdain and refuses to tell us what to do. What matters is that Vladimir and Estragon structure their otherwise meaningless day around waiting for him. In the original French this is even clearer; the play is called En attendant Godot, which means "while waiting for Godot." So the play is a series of games, conversations, jokes, exercises, and digressions in which these characters engage while they are waiting for something to happen. Their experience feels so hilarious and true, precisely because that activity is so familiar: we all devise endless and ingenious ways to pass the time, while waiting for the really "big thing" to happen.

Waiting for Godot is also a play about a marriage, or, in fact, two marriages: Didi and Gogo, and Pozzo and Lucky. After a night of separation, Gogo says to Didi: "Don't touch me! Don't question me! Don't speak to me! Stay with me!" A more perfect anatomy of a long-term marriage would be difficult to find. Friends of Beckett remarked when they saw the play that it sounded just like Beckett bicocking with his wife, Suzanne; both these couples, needle and torment each other, equally incapable of living together and of being apart. I love the fact that, like all couples who have been together a long time, these characters have taken on many of each other's characteristics and mannerisms, even though they are extremely distinct and different individuals. They compete, they cajole, they coddle, and in the end, they come together and start all over again. What else can they do? Their salvation lies in each other.

This last point is, I think, an important one. The structure and the characters of Waiting for Godot are extremely symmetrical; Beckett loved the elegance of balance. The famous Augustinian phrase about the Crucifixion ("Do not despair; one of the thieves was saved. Do not presume, one of the thieves was damned.") appealed to him immensely because of its perfect, inductible symmetry. Augustinian's equation of hope and despair, quoted at right, also seems to sum up perfectly the beauty and indeed the necessity of this last point, that desire is an exertion to life. This is what makes the characters in Waiting for Godot so moving: they never give up hope. Indeed, Godot is a play that asks us to stretch our minds to make room for hope in a landscape of despair.

Because it is so alive, so unpredictable, so new, the play itself does what Augustine says about grace: it wakes us up to our own existence, it stretches our minds (hopefully to make them more "capacious") and keeps us focused on the future, in spite of it all.

What better play for this moment in history?

Welcome to Waiting for Godot, and many thanks for being here.

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THESE FREE EVENTS:

A.C.T. Prologue
A conversation with director Carey Perloff
Tuesday, October 25, 5:30-6 p.m.
Geary Theater

Audience Exchanges
at the Geary Theater, directly following Waiting for Godot
Tuesday, October 25 (after the 7 p.m. performance)
Sunday, November 2 (after the 2 p.m. matinee)
Wednesday, November 12 (after the 2 p.m. matinee)

A.C.T. and the San Francisco Public Library present a season-long series of free events designed to offer rare behind-the-scenes looks at A.C.T. productions and the artists who create them. We hope you'll join us for the conversations that make up this exciting new series at the Main Library.

Director Carey Perloff on Beckett and Godot
Wednesday, October 25, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
San Francisco Main Library
Lower Level, Koret Auditorium
100 Larkin Street (at Grove)
For more information, call 415.438.2251 or visit www.sflibrary.org.
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100 Larkin Street (at Grove)
For more information, call 415.438.2251 or visit www.act.org.

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Waiting for Godot
(1953)
by Samuel Beckett
Directed by Carey Perloff

Scenery by J. B. Wilson
Costumes by Beaver Bauer
Lighting by Russell H. Champion
Sound by Garth Hemphill
Dramaturg Paul Walsh
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw

The Cast
(in order of speaking)
Estragon Gregory Wallace
Vladimir Peter Prechtel
Pozzo Steven Anthony Jones
Lucky Frank Wood
Boy Lawrence Pipsko/Jonathan Rosen

Understudies
Vladimir, Pozzo—Andy Murray
Estragon, Lucky—Anthony Fusco

Stage Management Staff
Elisa Guthertz, Stage Manager
Dick Daley, Assistant Stage Manager
Vinny Eng, Intern

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

This production is sponsored in part by

Producers
Mary S. and F. Eugene Metz
Patrick S. Thompson

Sponsor
Hilton San Francisco

Additional Credits
Gregory Hoffman, Fight/Movement Coach
Frank Oritelli, Alexander Technique Coach

Special Thanks to
Ruby Cohn, Ellen Nowack, NeonWorks

The text used for this production includes approved emendations made by the author to the 1953 text and recorded in The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett, eds. Douglas McMillan and James Knowlson (New York: Grove Press, 1993).
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Waiting for Godot

(1953)

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Directed by Carey Perloff

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Costumes by Beaver Bauer
Lighting by Russell H. Champa
Sound by Garth Hempill
Dramaturg by Paul Walsh
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw

THE CAST
(in order of speaking)

Estragon—Gregory Wallace
Vladimir—Peter Frechette
Pozzo—Steven Anthony Jones
Lucky—Frank Wood
Boy—Lawrence Fishbein/Stanley Fishbein

UNDERSTUDIES

Vladimir, Pozzo—Ken Murray
Estragon, Lucky—Anthony Fusco

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

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Presented by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc.
Waiting ...

BY MARJORIE PERLOFF

WE DO [BRECHT] WHEN
WE WANT FANTASY.

WHEN WE WANT REALISM,
WE DO WAITING FOR GODOT.

Jan Kott

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Beckett himself consistently refused to provide explanations of this or any of his plays, even though, paradoxically, he kept close control over the test, refusing directors and actors much bowery as to interpretation. When the director Alan Schneider asked him, “Who or what does Godot mean?” he replied, “If I knew, I would have said so in the play.” Beckett cautioned those who were quick to see Godot as a symbol for God—a démiurge who never reveals himself to the world—that there were “no symbols where none intended,” as he put it succinctly on the last page of his comic novel War, written a few years earlier.

Indeed, in its first version, Beckett’s play was simply En attendant so as to deflect attention from the object of the wait to the process of waiting itself.

But waiting in what sense? Half a century after the first production of Beckett’s extraordinary play—now a classic produced around the world from Korea to Kowloon—what may strike as most forcibly is not its absurdity, although of course the dialogue is full of wonderfully absurd twists and turns, but its realism. The first critic to have understood this was Hugh Kenner, who took a hard, pragmatic look at Beckett’s play within the actual context of its historical moment:

Two men waiting, for another whom they know only by an impassable name which may not be his real name. A ravaged and blasted landscape. A world that was ampler and more open once, but is permeated with pointlessness now. Mysterious dispensers of hostings. A man of property and his servant, in flight. And the anxiety of the two who wait, their anxiety to be as inconspicuous as possible in a strange environment ... where their mere presence is likely to cause remark. It is curious how readers and audiences do not think to observe the most obvious thing about the world of this play, that it resembles France occupied by the Germans, in which its author spent the war years. How much waiting must have gone on in that bleak world; how many times must Resistance operatives ... have kept appointments not known whom they were to meet. ... We can easily see why a Pozzo would be unnerving. ... He may be a Gestapo official cruelly disguised. Here is perhaps the playwright’s most remarkable feat. There existed, throughout a whole country, for five years, a literal situation that corresponded point by point with the situation in this play ... and no spectator ever thinks of it.

I cite Kenner’s passage (from A Reader’s Guide to Samuel Beckett; the emphasis is mine) at length because it makes what it, I think, the crucial point about Waiting for Godot.

The play’s situation is wholly realistic: it takes its subject matter directly from Beckett’s activities in the French Resistance during World War II. But, great artist that he is, Beckett has transmuted this material so fully, has endowed each situation with such profound resonance, that this great war play—so superior to the didactic and ideological “war literature” of the 1940s and 50s—emerges as a parable of the human condition, as well.

First the particulars. When war broke out in Europe Beckett was in Foxtack, visiting his family. As a neutral alien, he could easily have sat out the war in Ireland; but he immediately rushed back to Paris, where he had lived for much of the past decade, and joined the then fledgling Resistance. He later said he felt he had to help his Jewish friends who were already being persecuted. (In the earliest version of Godot, the character now called Estragon was called Levi and was obviously a Jew.) Beckett’s particular cell, “Gloria,” sponsored by the British SOE (Special Operations Executive), was an information network, whose main job was to copy and translate documents about Axis troop movements and relay them to Allied headquarters in London. The messages were transmitted on microfilm (often hidden in the bottom of matchboxes) and were coded, using such bland statements as “Uncle Jacques has lost his umbrella” or extracts from popular songs and classical poems.

An adequate “cut-out” system, as it was called, meant that most individual members of the line knew at most only two telephone numbers or places of rendezvous so that, if they were caught by the enemy, they could not
Waiting...

BY MARJORIE PERLOFF

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WHEN WE WANT REALISM,
WE DO WAITING FOR GODOT.

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What can the great Polish dramatist Jan Kott have meant by this seemingly perverse statement (quoted above)? One usually thinks of Brecht's political theater, with its topical plots, Marxist themes, and historical characters like Galileo or Hitler (Aristos U7) as "realistic," whereas Beckett's "cirque" play, in which, as hostile critics have put it, "nothing happens twice," is known for its abstraction, its verbal repetition, its fantasy and its refusal to make "sense." When Waiting for Godot opened at the Théâtre de l'Odéon in Paris 50 years ago (January 5, 1953), it was primarily viewed as an existentialist, philosophical drama about the incomprehensibility of a universe in which man is a sign that never appears. Even today, Beckett's alternately hilarious and heartbreaking play tends to be read as allegory: the evanescent "plot," in which the two "tramps" Vladimir (Didi) and Estragon (Gogo) argue, reconcile, tell tall tales, contemplate hanging themselves from the tree that is the stage's central scenic element, and eat carrots, all while "waiting" for the mysterious Mr. Godot (if that is in fact his name) to come, is constructed as everything from medieval morality play to Freudian psychodrama about regression and sublimation.

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I cite Kenner's passage (from A Reader's Guide to Samuel Beckett; the emphasis is mine) at length because it makes what is, I think, the crucial point about Waiting for Godot. The play's situation is wholly realistic: it takes its subject matter directly from Beckett's activities in the French Resistance during World War II. But, great artist that he is, Beckett has transmuted this material so fully, has endowed each situation with such profound resonance, that this great war play—so superior to the didactic and ideological "war literature" of the 1940s and '50s—emerges as a parable of the human condition, as well.

First the particulars. When war broke out in Europe Beckett was in Foix, visiting his family. As a neutral alien, he could easily have sat out the war in Ireland; but he immediately dashed back to Paris, where he had lived for much of the past decade, and joined the then fledgling Resistance. He later said he had had to help his Jewish friends who were already being persecuted. (In the earliest version of Godot, the character now called Estragon was called Levi and was obviously a Jew.) Beckett's particular cell, "Gloria," sponsored by the British SOE (Special Operations Executive), was an information network, whose main job was to copy and translate documents about Axis troop movements and relay them to Allied headquarters in London. The messages were transmitted on microfilm (often hidden in the bottom of matchboxes) and were coded, using such bland statements as "Uncle Jacques has lost his umbrella" or extracts from popular songs and classical poems. An adequate "cut-out" system, as it was called, meant that most individual members of the line knew at most only two telephone numbers or places of rendezvous so that, if they were caught by the enemy, they could not...
implicate more than one or two people. Members were referred to only by their pseudonyms, Becker as “Sam” or “Ivanovitch.” Thus, the Didi-estat, named, say, on a particular park bench, would wait for his contact and then make a brief statement in code. But, from the first, the Resistance cells were threatened by double agents, and in August 1942 Gloria was exposed and Becker and his companion Suzanne had to flee to the Unoccupied Zone. After a hair-raising trip south, during which they slept in ditches (rather like Vladimir and Estragon), they settled in the little village of Roussillion in the Vaucluse, where they were to live out the two and a half years until the Armistice. In Roussillon, Becker continued his Resistance activities and, to cover his tracks and make a little money, worked during the day for various farmers harvesting wine grapes and potatoes. One such farmer, named Bonnelly, appears in the French version of Godot, when Vladimir insists to a skeptical Estragon, “Pourtant nous avons été ensemble dans le Vaucluse... Nous avons fait les vendanges, rien, c’est un nommé Bonnelly, Roussillonnais.” (“And yet we were together in the Vaucluse. Yes, we were picking grapes for a man called Bonnelly at Roussillon.”) This passage is changed in the English version, where Vladimir merely refers to “the Mician country” and tells a skeptical Estragon, “But we were there together, and I could swear to it! Picking grapes for a man called...” (be snaps his fingers)... “I can’t think of the name of the man, at a place called...” (be snaps his fingers)... “can’t think of the name of the place, do you not remember?”

The Roussillon years were characterized by the curious mix of danger and boredom known only in wartime. Communication with strangers (and everyone but Suzanne was a stranger to Becker here) was always coded or at least guarded: one could trust no one, even as one worked with cut-outs referred by friends in other places. Mostly, the time was spent waiting—waiting for the war to be over. When it ended in 1945, Becker briefly returned to Ireland to see his family but then returned, not to Paris, which was still out of bounds to aliens at the time, but to Saint-Lô in Normandy, where he worked in a Red Cross hospital and witnessed at first hand the terrible devastation of the French countryside. Only in 1946 did he return to Paris and begin what has been called the “Siege in the room”—the astonishingly fruitful period when Becker shut himself up in his old apartment on the Rue des Favorites and produced, in a few short years, what he had never been able to do as a young man—the great body of work that includes the trilogy of novels Melville, Malone Dies, and The Unnamable, as well as Waiting for Godot.

In revising Godot, Becker kept the basic motive, derived from his daily conversations in Roussillon with Suzanne and various townspeople, but removed the specificity of reference that would limit the drama’s range. We have, then, two “tramps” who, despite their vaudeville antics, aren’t really tramps at all, their speech being stuffed with references to Shelley and Yeats, the Gospels, and St. Augustine, and who, when they want to really insult one another, use scientific nomenclature like Estragon’s “Gomoccius!” “Spiritch” of Godot and Gogo have been together for years, or have they only met recently? Are they close friends or mere working colleagues? We never know for sure, any more than we later know whether they have met Pozzo before or whether the country road and tree of Act I are the same as that of Act I. We only know that the two tramps have been told to wait at a particular spot (but is this the right spot?) for a man called Godot, although they are not even sure of his name. When Pozzo enters, they first take him for Godot, and even when the illusion is dispelled, identities continue to be confused, especially in their second meeting, when Pozzo is revealed to be blind and Lucky mutt. Or was the latter always mute, except for his totally preposterous scholastic disquisition on “divine aphasia” and the “Anthropometry of Eddy-in-Possy?”

Waiting becomes, in Becker’s hands, both the cross the tramps have to bear and their greatest opportunity for amusement and entertainment. When Pozzo and Lucky finally quit the scene in Act I, Vladimir says, “That passed the time.” Estragon responds, “It would have passed in any case.” To which Vladimir replies drily, “Yes, but not so rapidly.” This, one might say, is the audience’s condition as well. What keeps us at the edge of our seats is nothing ever turns out as we thought it would, and so we constantly have to revise our impressions. At the beginning of Act I, Didi seems to be the more aggressive of the two, Gogo more passive and emotional. But later Gogo gets lines that should by all accounts have been Didi’s. Indeed, in keeping with the play’s realism, the two characters have no fixed traits that they exhibit consistently; as in life, their actions and words repeatedly surprise us. Even Pozzo, the slave-master, capitalist landlord, strongman, or bully, sometimes sounds just like Didi or Gogo.

Waiting for Godot provides no answers to the riddle of human existence. It merely asks the hard questions. And yet, paradoxically, this inescapable drama is anything but formulaic or chaotic; it is as tightly structured as a Beethoven sonata. “I take no sides,” Becker once remarked, “I am interested in the shape of ideas even if I do not believe them. There is a wonderful sentence in Augustine... ’Do not despise the one who was saved. Do not despise the one of the thieves was damned.’ That sentence has a wonderful shape. It is the shape that matters.”

It is a shape that requires extraordinary humility on the part of the artist. Over the past half century, Becker has had countless imitators, but Waiting for Godot has remained unique. [11]

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Who’s Who

PETER FRECHETTE* (Vladimir) has performed regionally in productions at the Court Repertory, New York Stage and Film, the Williamsstown Theatre Festival, and Mark Taper Forum. Recent New York credits include Flash and Blood, The Dazzle, Harbors at Last, What the Butler Saw, The Play's the Thing, Raised in Captivity, and Night and Day. Town. Recent television credits include “Law & Order,” “Family Law,” and “Law & Order: Criminal Intent,” as well as four seasons on “Profiler.” He has received Obie, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Theatre World, and I.A. Drama Critics Circle Award nominations, as well as a Lucille Lortel nomination, two Tony nominations (for Eastern Standard and Our Country’s Good), and an Emmy nomination (for “thirteenth”). He is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island.

HOWARD FREDERICKSON (Eugene) is a新鲜man at Saint Ignatius College Preparatory. He has been a student in the A.C.T. Young Conservatory (YC) for the past four years, taking classes in voice, acting, and musical theatre. He made his A.C.T. Geary Theatre debut in 1999, at the age of 11, in A Christmas Carol, performing the role of Nol Cratchit. Papai has been singing and acting in community theatre productions and school musicals, including The Little Sweep, Bugsy Malone, Guys and Dolls, and Bye, Bye Birdie. He recently played the role of Joey in Ty’s world’s prominent production of Conegorgos’s Mounstair Six.

STEVEN ANTHONY JONES* (Pazzo), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in Town School for Boys in San Francisco, he was the 2000 recipient of the Ina and Lenore Genderson Scholarship for Performing Arts.

GREGORY WALLACE* (Estreghin), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in The Three Sisters, The Dazzle, Night and Day, BCRF Spirit, Celebration and The Room, “Master Harold…” and the boys, The Misanthrope, Edward II, A Christmas Carol, Tartuffe, Insurrection: Holding Historyplastic and angels in America (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award). Other theatre 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 Screams (Guthrie Theatre), The Learned Ladies (Guthrie Theatre), Guiltless (Williamstown Theatre Festival), King Lear (Whole Theater), The Queen and the Rebels (Center Stage), and The Beaux’ Stratagem (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Screen credits include The Prince of Tides, The Cabinet of Dr. Rambles, The Beverly Hillbillies, Dark Goddess, Crime Story, and Internal Affairs. Wallace is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

JONATHAN ROSEN (Roy) is 14 years old and a junior at Marin Academy High School. He has been taking classes with A.C.T. Young Conservatory (YC) for seven years. He has twice been featured in A.C.T. Geary Theatre productions of A Christmas Carol and played Pips in the WCFF production of Edgar Allan Poe’s The Raven. He played an orphan in the 2001 Mountain Play production of Oliver. As a graduating eighth grader at Town School for Boys in San Francisco, he was the 2000 recipient of the Ina and Lenore Genderson Scholarship for Performing Arts.

FRANK WOOD* (Lucky) has been an A.C.T. associate artist and featured actor in a play and the Drama League Award for Sidney. He went on to play the role of Gene in London’s West End and Australia. Wood’s film credits include East of Houston, People I Know, Thirteen Days, Pollack, Drama Desk, and the Théâtre de la Falaise. He has performed in several television films, including HBO’s In the Realm of the Senses, and in the Scientology documentary, The Church of Scientology. Wood has been featured in the Théâtre de la Falaise and the Barbados Porter Award for continued creative excellence. Wilson is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University, and a professor at San Francisco State University.

Who's Who

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 13

PETER FRECHETTE (Vladimir) has performed regionally in productions at the Cape Repertory, New York Stage and Film, the Williamsburg Theatre Festival, and Mark Taper Forum. Recent New York credits include Flesh and Blood, The Dazzle, Hurbah at Last, What the Butler Served, The Play's the Thing, Raised in Captivity, and Night and N.Y. Star. Recent television credits include "Law & Order," "Family Law," and "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," as well as four seasons on "Profiler." He has received OBIE, Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, Theatre World, and L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, as well as a Lucille Lortel nomination; two Tony nominations (for Eastern Standard and Our Country's Good), and an Emmy nomination (for "thirty something"). He is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island.

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

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14

FRANK WOOD (Lucky) is a Tony Award-nominated actor who played Walter Black and Pinto in The Cripple of Inishmaan, and the role of Bitzer in The Elephant Man. He has received critical acclaim for his work on stage and screen and is a member of the Order of Ontario. His credits include Much Ado about Nothing, Measure for Measure, and The Comedy of Errors at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival.

Order," and "Law & Order: Criminal Intent." He continues in Hollywood Arena on Broadway and at the Goodman Theatre and has worked at Playwrights Horizons (The Wake), Long Wharf Theatre (Rowan and Choldriden, The Dead), the Williamsstown Theatre Festival (Light Up the Sky), Bay Street Theatre (Our Nixon), and New York Stage and Film. Last summer he completed a leading role in an independent film, The Underwood. Wood acts with the 52nd Street Project in New York whenever he gets the chance. He received his B.A. from Wesleyan University and his M.F.A. from the New York University Graduate Acting Program.

ANTHONY FUSCO (Under-study) was last seen at A.C.T. in The Liar Is Dead and The Three Sisters. Previous A.C.T. productions are Night and Day, Celebration and The Room, Enrico IV, The Misunderstood, A Christmas Carol, and Edward II. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in A Christmas Carol and Oliver Twist. He is a member of the San Jose Repertory Theatre and has been seen at Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

J.B. WILSON (Scene Designer) has designed sets for A.C.T. productions of The Guardman, The Royal Family, Glengarry, The Play's the Thing, and Saturday, Sunday and Monday. His extensive Bay Area credits include designs for American Musical Theatre of San Francisco, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Skin of Our Teeth for the California Shakespeare Theatre and also regionally. His other credits include Much Ado about Nothing, Measure for Measure, and The Comedy of Errors at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and Olve at Marin Theatre Company.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17

Who's Who
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Theatre, the Magic Theatre, Pickle Family Circus, Classic Stage Company, Theatre of Yugen, and the Rivera and Desert Inn Hotels in Las Vegas. From 1972 to 1984 she worked for Angels of Light, a troupe that specializes in cabaret and theater, and in 1995 she designed a circus that traveled to Moscow and Japan. Bauer has won several Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards.

RUSSELL H. CHAMPA (Lighting Designer) recently designed Berkeley Village Idiot at the Zapater Theater in New York City and the Williamsann Theatre Festival, Midsum at Peoples Light and Theater Company in Philadelphia, and The Triumph of Love in Seattle, Kansas City, and New Haven. On Broadway, he designed Julius Caesar’s God Said “Ha” at the Lyceum Theatre. Other New York theaters for which Champan has designed include Manhattan Theatre Club, Classic Stage Company, New York State and Film, the Promenade Theatre, the Union Square Theatre, and La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club. Regionally, he has designed for The Wilma Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, McCarter Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, ACT Theatre/Seattle, The Actors’ Gang, the Kennedy Center, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, The Shakespeare Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, and Seattle Repertory Theatre.


PAUL WALSH (Dramaturg) has worked on more than two dozen productions since coming to A.C.T. in 1996 as dramaturg and director of humanities. Before joining A.C.T., Walsh worked with theater companies across the country as dramaturg and translator, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune in Minneapolis, where he worked on several award-winning productions. Walsh earned his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto. Publications, Articulates articles in The Production Notebook, Re-Interpreting Brecht, Strindberg’s Dramaturgy, Theatre Symposium, Essays in Theatre, and Studio Novelettica.

MERYL LIND SHAW (Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff as a casting director in 1993. She has cast roles for the Huntington Theatre Company, Arizona Theatre Company, the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of Jimeny and Powell at the Lampin Agile, as well as the first workshop of The Count of Monte Cristo by the CD-ROM game Obiwan. Before joining A.C.T. as a casting director, she has stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s Creators and Bon Appetit! She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She has served on the Bay Area advisory committee of Actors’ Equity Association, the negotiating committee for the AORT contract (1992 and 1993), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage Manager) was stage manager for last season’s The Three Sisters. She has worked on numerous A.C.T. productions, including The Misfits, 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 Tintin at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Favorable productions include Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music and The Regina Monologues with Eve Ensler at the Alcatraz Theatre in San Francisco.

DICK DALEY (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked in the Bay Area and beyond on Fits of Reason (Acting at the Theatre Company), Goldilocks, Twelfth Night (Women’s Shakespeare Company, Los Angeles), Macbeth and Henry V (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Boston), the Santaland Diaries (Dance Umbrella’s Boston Moves), Pure Polyester (The Theatre Offensive, Boston), King Lear and Henry V (The Company of Women), and Romeo and Juliet, Duet for One, and Julius Caesar (Shakespeare & Co.). He has also worked on Tongue Dancer, an multimedia production on the life and works of Jaime Gill de Biedma, and on The Reversible Rise of Arsenio Av, Ain’t Misbehavin’, The Night Larry Kramer Remembered, The Seven Year Itch, A Closer Walk with Poe, The Cline, and Nosferatu. He recently completed a seven-year stint as the production manager at Emerson College in Boston.
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Roscoe Lee Browne & Anthony Zerbe

in

BEHIND THE BROKEN WORDS

Act I

15-minute intermission

Act II

The list of selections performed will be distributed after the performance.

"Behind the Broken Words" is presented by arrangement with Poetry In Motion, Inc.
Roscoe Lee Browne & Anthony Zerbe
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Act I
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ROSCOE L. BROWNE, an Obie and Emmy Award winner, a Tony nominee, and narrator of two Oscar-nominated films, launched his theater career with the inaugural season of the New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park. Since then, off and on Broadway and in theater festivals throughout the United States and Europe, he has appeared in plays by a wide range of authors, from Shakespeare, Shaw, Genet, Beckett, Giraudoux, Kaufman, Lowell, Sarrette, and Albee, et al., to such contemporary masters as Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, Pulitzer Prize winner August Wilson, and MacArthur Award winner Lee Breuer (The Gospel of Colonus). Browne has appeared in four of Walcott's works (Dream on Monkey Mountain, Fenix, Remembrance, and The Odyssey). For his performance of Mahak in Dream on Monkey Mountain, he received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for best actor. He has appeared in two of Wilson's works, Joe Turner's Come and Gone and Two Trains Running. For his portrayal of Bynum in Joe Turner, he once again earned the L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award. For his Holloway in Train, he earned his third L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, a Tony nomination, and the Helen Hayes medal for distinguished work in the theater.

While with the Shakespeare Festival (he spent seven seasons there), Browne created and directed A Hand Is on the Gate, a chronicle and celebration of the African-American experience in poetry and song. The actors for the evening were Gloria Foster, James Earl Jones, Cicely Tyson, Moses Gunn, Ellen Holly, Leon Bibb, and Josephine Premice, as well as Browne himself. The true stars of the evening, however, were all the unsung African-American poets. The evening was hailed as a triumph and moved on to Broadway, garnering two Tony nominations and enduring acclaim.

Browne's extensive work in television includes the role of Frederick Douglass in "Steve Allen's Meeting of Minds," as well as guest appearances on "Barney Miller" (Emmy nomination), "A Different World," "Falcon Crest" (Emmy nomination), "The Cosby Show" (Emmy Award), "Law & Order," "Seagull" (DSV), "Spider-Man" (Emmy nomination), "New York Undercover," the new "Cosby," "ER," "The Shield," and HBO's Unchained Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives. Browne's films include Wyler's The Liberation of L. B. Jones (title role), Ruhl's The Cranes (Western Heritage Award), Gleenville's The Comedians, Puijter's Uptown Saturday Night, Hitchcock's Topaz, Glincher's The Mamba King, Noonan's Oscar-nominated Babe (narrator), Miller's Babe: Pig in the City (narrator), and Scott's Hamlet. He is also the narrator of Heyerdahl's Oscar-nominated documentary, The Ra Expeditions, and the Discovery Channel's Galapagos: Beyond Darwin. As a speaker in various symphonic works, he has appeared with the Boston Pops, L.A. Philharmonic, and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and with the St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and New Orleans symphonies. He tours with Anthony Zerbe across the United States annually in Behind the Broken Words.


Zerbe's stage work includes appearances on and off Broadway and with leading resident theaters across the country. Broadway appearances include: The Little Fox, Terra Nova, Solomon's Child, and Moon Besieged. For five summer seasons he was in residence at The Old Globe Theatre, where his roles included Coriolanus, Iago, Richard III, and Macbeth. He also played Iago in the Mark Taper Forum production of Othello (with James Earl Jones). Zerbe's appearances at the Taper also included the American premieres of The Trial of the Cazenovia Nine and Brian Friel's Crystal and Fox. Other residences include two years with Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., a season at the Stratford Festival in Canada, and the Theatre of the Living Arts in Philadelphia. Other appearances in resident theaters include productions at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, and the Huntington Theatre Company in Boston. In the latter two theaters, he played the title role in Cyrano de Bergerac.

Zerbe was the artistic director of REFLECTIONS: A New Plays Festival in Rochester, New York, for five years and is widely respected for his work in developing new plays. He won critical praise for his adaptation of and performance in Prelude to Lime Creek, taken from the prose and poetry of Joe Henry, with singer Greg Barnhill at the Denver Center Theatre. His one-man show It's All Done with Mirrors, an avalanche of E. E. Cummings, has played in over 100 venues, including the Library of Congress and Harvard, New York, Vassar, and Fordham universities. He appeared with Garth Brooks in the Christmas special Lime Creek Christmas, also taken from the works of Joe Henry.
ROSCOE LEE BROWN, an Obie and Emmy Award winner, a Tony nominee, and narrator of two Oscar-nominated films, launched his theater career with the inaugural season of the New York Shakespeare Festival in Central Park. Since then, off and on Broadway and in theater festivals throughout the United States and Europe, he has appeared in plays by a wide range of authors, from Shakespeare, Shaw, Genet, Brecht, Giraudoux, Kaufman, Lowell, Sarrette, and Albee, et al., to such contemporary masters as Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, Pulitzer Prize winner August Wilson, and MacArthur Award winner Lee Blessing (The Gospel of Colonus). Brown has appeared in four of Walcott’s works (Dream on Monkey Mountain, Hanns, Remembrance, and The Odyssey). For his performance of Mahak in Dream on Monkey Mountain, he received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for best actor. He has appeared in two of Wilson’s works, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone and Two Trains Running. For his portrayal of Bynum in Joe Turner, he once again earned the L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award. For his Holloway in Trains, he earned his third L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, a Tony nomination, and the Helen Hayes medalion for distinguished work in the theater.

While with the Shakespeare Festival (he spent seven seasons there), Browne created and directed A Hand Is on the Gate, a chronicle and celebration of the African-American experience in poetry and song. The actors for the evening were Gloria Foster, James Earl Jones, Cicely Tyson, Moses Gunn, Ellen Holly, Leon Bibb, and Josephine Premice, as well as Browne himself. The true stars of the evening, however, were all the unstung African-American poets. The evening was hailed as a triumph and moved on to Broadway, garnering two Tony nominations and enduring acclaim.

Browne’s extensive work in television includes the role of Frederick Douglass in “Steve Allen’s Meeting of Minds,” as well as guest appearances on “Barney Miller” (Emmy nomination), “A Different World,” “Falcon Crest” (Emmy nomination), “The Cosby Show” (Emmy Award), “Law & Order,” “Seagull” (DSV), “Spider-Man” (Emmy nomination), “New York Undercover,” the new “Cosby,” “ER,” “The Shield,” and HBO’s Unchained Memories: Readings from the Slave Narratives. Browne’s films include Wyler’s The Liberation of L. B. Jones (title role), Ridley’s The Color Purple (Western Heritage Award), Glenville’s The Comedians, Puiett’s Upstairs Saturday Night, Hitchcock’s Topaz, Glimcher’s The Mambo Kings, Noonan’s Oscar-nominated Rain (narrator), Miller’s Busy Pig in the City (narrator), and Scott’s Hamlet. He is also the narrator of Heyerdahl’s Oscar-nominated documentary, The Ra Expeditions, and the Discovery Channel’s Galapagos: Beyond Darwin. As a speaker in various symphonic works, he has appeared with the Boston Pops, L.A. Philharmonic, and Hollywood Bowl Orchestra and with the St. Louis, Pittsburgh, and New Orleans symphonies. He tours with Anthony Zerbe across the United States annually in Behind the Broken Words.

ANTHONY ZERBE is recognized as one of the country’s most versatile actors, with extensive credits in film, television, and theater. His major films include Cool Hand Luke, Will Penny, The Melodrome, They Call Me MISTER TIDDL, The Liberation of L. B. Jones, The Omega Man, The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean, Pulpitron, The Parallax View, The Laughing Policeman, Rooster Cogburn, Farewell, My Lovely, The Turning Point, Who’ll Stop the Rain, The First Deadly Sin, The Dead Zone, Mommoch, See No Evil, Hear No Evil, Licence to Kill, The Touch, Star Trek: Insurrection, True Crime, and The Matrix Reloaded (with Keanu Reeves and Laurence Fishburne). He will also be seen in the final sequence of the Matrix trilogy, Matrix Revolutions. Zerbe starred as Teaspoon Hunter in the television series “The Young Riders” and received an Emmy Award for his performance as Lt. K. O. Treach in the popular series “Harry O” (with David Janssen). Zerbe has been a guest star in countless television series, from such vintage classics as Gunsmoke, “Missions Impossible,” Bonanza, “Columbo,” and Murder, She Wrote” to Tales from the Crypt” and “Frazier.” He appeared twice on “Total Recall,” a series for Showtime. He recently completed the television pilot “Century City.” His mini-series and movie-of-the-week appearances include: Asteroid, On Seventh Avenue, Treasure Island: The Adventure Begins, Once an Eagle, “North and South II,” One Police Plaza, Dream West, Omnisic The Richest Man in the World, “How the West Was Won,” and “Centennial.”

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 50 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.854.1200. On the Web: www.act-sf.org.

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION
Geary Theater Box Office
Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, one block west of Union Square. Our box office hours are 12-7 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. on Sunday and Monday. During non-performance 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 a day on our Web site at 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. Senior rush tickets are available at the box office one hour prior to curtain, and cash only. 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.

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

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

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Full bar service, sandwiches, salads, and other savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbus Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third floor. 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 drinks are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beepers!
If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. 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 locations with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2396 on an emergency.

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

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Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available for loan 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.

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