

THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

The Gamester

by
Freyda Thomas

Based on *Le Joueur*, by Jean-François Regnard

Directed by
Ron Lagomarsino

 **A.C.T.**
american conservatory theater

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Special Issue!
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2003-04 Annual Report

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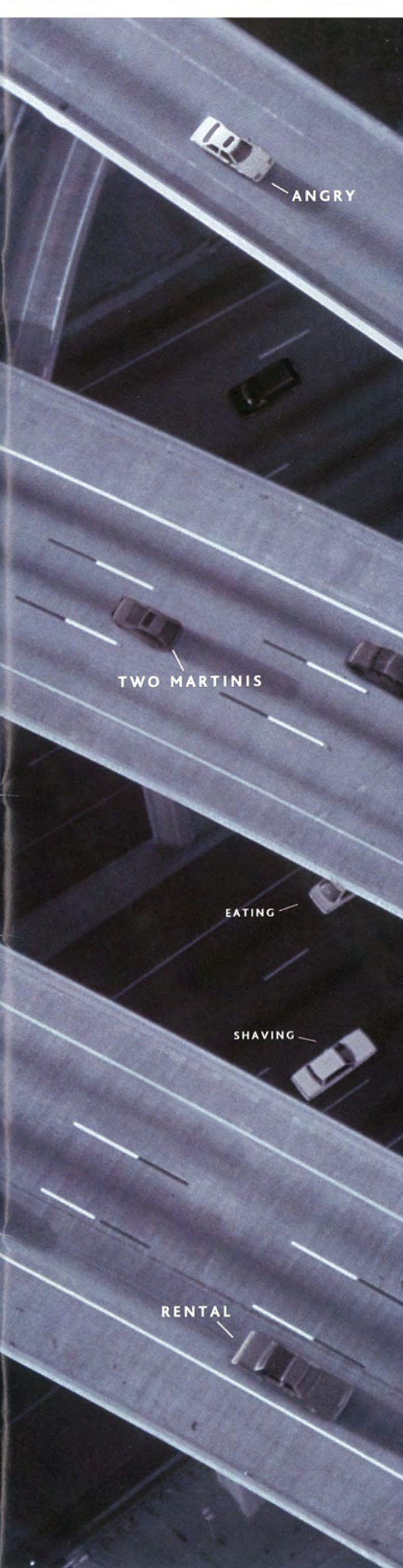
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Casting Announced for U.S. Premiere of *Hilda*



Ellen Karas



Marco Barricelli

Following the sold-out success of last year's *Yohen*, A.C.T. continues its First Look series of new plays with *Hilda*, a taut psychological thriller from leading French writer Marie Ndiaye, translated by Erika Rundle. Carey Perloff will direct A.C.T. favorites Ellen Karas (last seen at A.C.T. as Constance Middleton in the 2003 hit *The Constant Wife*) and core acting company member Marco Barricelli (seen most recently in Stoppard's *The Real Thing*) in this captivating drama.

When a manipulative housewife hires a beautiful woman named Hilda to be her nanny, not everything in her idyllic home is as perfect as it appears to be. As Hilda's own life begins to diminish in the face of her cryptically controlling employer, the play presents a riveting—and shocking—glimpse of the insidious underbelly of domestic life.

***Hilda* plays from January 28 to February 26 at Zeum Theater (located on the corner of 4th and Howard streets).**

Tickets are \$14–\$24.

A.C.T. subscribers receive a discount!

Coproduced with Laura Pels Productions.

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE



FEB 11–MAR 13

Geary Theater

An Excerpt from Lisa Kron's *Well*

Fresh from a hit run at New York's Public Theater, writer/performer Lisa Kron brings her hilarious Obie Award-winning play, *Well*, to the Geary Theater next month. *Well* was singled out by the *New York Times* as "something magical . . . one of the best new plays of the season."

In *Well*—which she has called "a one-person show with other people in it"—Kron and a chorus of actors set out to perform a play about her family's personal and political experiences of healing. But a comedic coup d'état soon breaks out onstage, led by Kron's own mother, Ann. In the following excerpt, Lisa is explaining the premise of the play to the actors—until Ann once again decides to weigh in.

Lisa: Well, it's not meant to be a "well-made" play. It's a "theatrical exploration."

Chorus: Um hmm. . . . oh . . .

Lisa: It's not a simple structure, I'll grant you that, but it's going to . . . come together. I was sick and then I got well . . . the neighborhood was sick and it got well. . . .

(*pause*)

Ann: (*To the chorus*) Would anybody like something to drink?

Lisa: Mom, no. I'm doing a thing here. (*Guides her back to her chair.*) This is where we look more closely at your use of social activities to build the political power of the association.

Ann: Oh yeah. Everybody thought I was kookie about that just like they think I'm kookie about the allergies now. Nobody could figure out why I'd put so much work into a Fourth of July celebration.

Lisa: That's what I'm getting to.
(*To the audience, beginning the next scene.*)
Social activities were the cornerstone of my mother's political methodology. In the beginning, as she says, people thought she was "kookie" but looking back it's clear she was a kind of a housewife savant.

Ann: Housewife savant!? That makes me sound like a halfwit.
(*To the chorus*)
Don't you think?

ABOVE: (l. to r.) Lisa Kron and Jayne Houdyshell in the Public Theater production of *Well* (photo by Michal Daniell).

ABOUT A.C.T.

GEARY THEATER AUDIENCE PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNIE



AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and 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 groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations

of contemporary playwriting. Since the reopening of the Geary Theater in 1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable period of audience expansion and financial stability. In 2001, A.C.T. began producing alternative work at Zeum Theater, which now serves as a venue for student productions and exciting new plays. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, now serves 3,000 students every year. It was the first actor training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory's distinguished former students. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.



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

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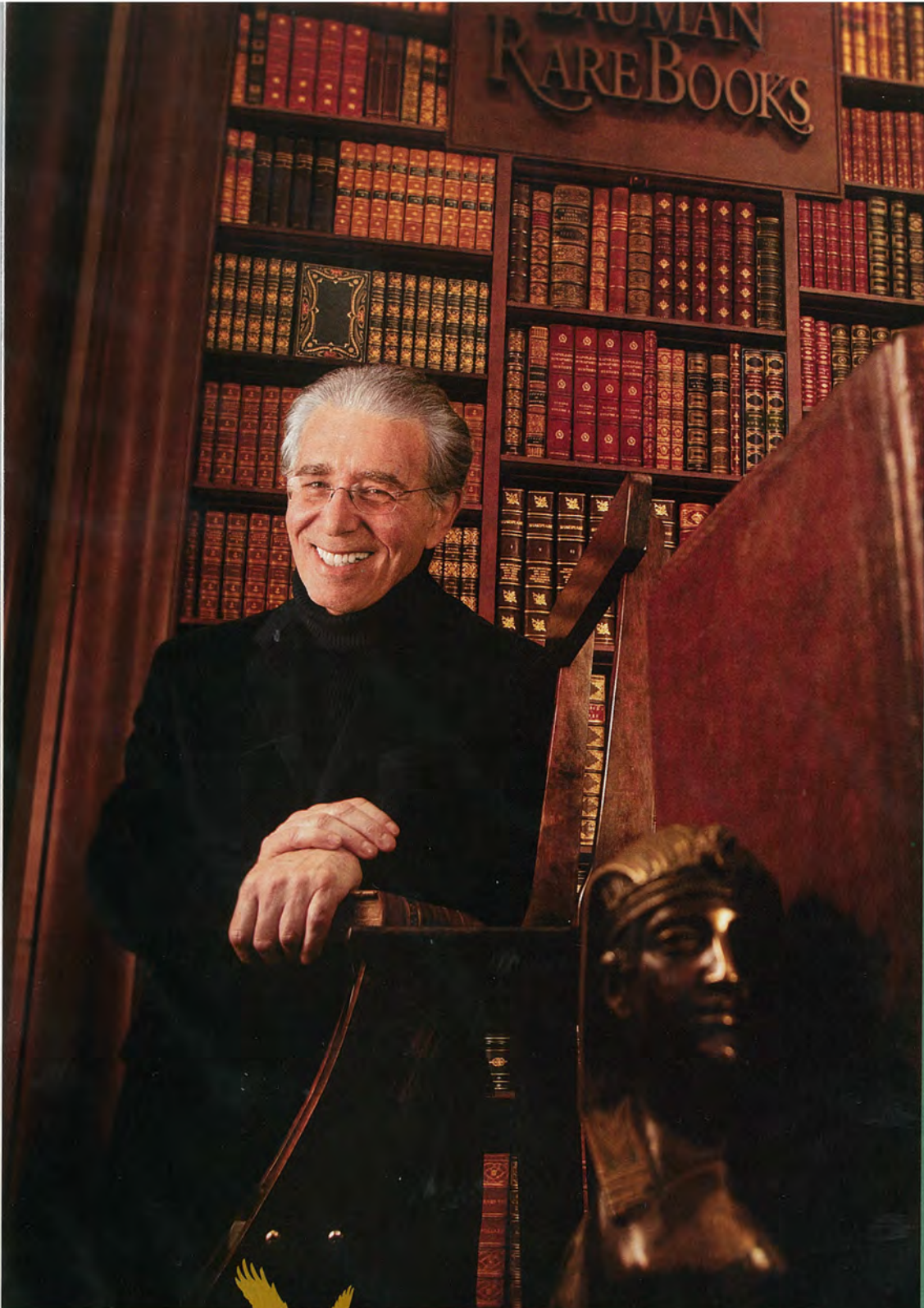
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presents

The Gamester

by Freyda Thomas
(2001)

Based on *Le Joueur* (1696), by Jean-François Regnard

Directed by Ron Lagomarsino

<i>Scenery by</i>	Kate Edmunds
<i>Costumes by</i>	Beaver Bauer
<i>Lighting by</i>	Nancy Schertler
<i>Sound by</i>	Garth Hemphill
<i>Composer</i>	Peter Maleitzke
<i>Casting by</i>	Meryl Lind Shaw

THE CAST

<i>Valère</i>	Lorenzo Pisoni
<i>Angélique</i>	Margot White
<i>Hector</i>	Gregory Wallace
<i>Thomas</i>	Steve Irish
<i>Madame Sécurité</i>	Joan Mankin
<i>Madame Préférée</i>	Stacy Ross
<i>Madame Argante</i>	René Augesen
<i>Dorante</i>	Ron Campbell
<i>Marquis de Fauxpas</i>	Anthony Fusco
<i>Betty</i>	Lianne Marie Dobbs
<i>Croupier</i>	Andy Murray
<i>Ensemble</i>	Nancy Carlin, Gregory Crane, Lianne Marie Dobbs, Andy Murray

UNDERSTUDIES

Valère, Croupier—Gregory Crane; *Angélique*—Lianne Marie Dobbs
Hector, Marquis de Fauxpas—Andy Murray; *Thomas, Dorante, Ensemble*—Steven Anthony Jones
Madame Sécurité, Madame Préférée, Madame Argante, Betty—Nancy Carlin

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Kimberly Mark Webb, *Stage Manager*
Vinly Eng, *Assistant Stage Manager*
Anna Capp, *Intern*

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Brandon Noonan, *Assistant to the Director*
Dave Maier, *Fight Consultant*

TIME AND PLACE

The action is set in Paris in the late 17th century.

There will be one intermission.

The Gamester was originally produced by the Northlight Theatre, Evanston, Illinois.

Jean-François Regnard

Jean-François Regnard was born in Paris on February 8, 1655. His parents came from a long line of established and prosperous French merchants, his father in the salt-fish trade and his mother's family in *mercerie*, which included dress goods, gloves, and hats. From a family of nine children, of whom only Regnard and his four elder sisters survived, Regnard was raised by his mother and sisters after his father died when he was little more than two years old. His mother was a shrewd businesswoman in her own right, and after the passing of her husband she presided over the family fortune competently enough to ensure a comfortable lifestyle for her children.

Most likely educated at one of the better schools available to members of his class, Regnard developed a sound knowledge of Latin, some Greek, and a fairly extensive reading of the classics. At 15 he apprenticed with the wealthy Charpentier dress goods corporation before beginning work with his brother-in-law's firm, which traded in jewelry and exports, as well as dress goods.

At the age of 17 or 18, Regnard came into a sizeable portion of his inheritance and was able for nearly a decade to indulge in a personal passion for travel. Touring to Italy and Turkey, with his respectable upbringing, good looks, and substantial means, he was granted entry into good society throughout his journey.

Regnard was in his early 20s, traveling by ship with a companion through the Mediterranean, when they were pursued, attacked, and taken captive by Algerian pirates. Sold into slavery in Algiers, Regnard suffered under the cruel treatment of his captors—although his promise of a rich ransom guaranteed him minimal labor and the occasional opportunity to bathe. After seven months in captivity, the ransom was paid by his family and he was freed. Less than two years later he embarked on another extensive voyage, this time through the Netherlands, returning via Eastern Europe.

Upon returning to France at the age of 28, Regnard began to think of settling down, and in 1683 he purchased the post of treasurer of France, a profitable position he would hold for 20 years. His occupation was not demanding, however, and allowed him the freedom to hunt, to enjoy the diversions of Paris (including gambling, at which he was rather successful), and to begin writing a series of books about the adventures he had enjoyed during his travels.

Regnard's writing, which began as an amusement for friends, quickly grew into an entertaining and productive endeavor. Among his friends were a group of dilettantes who dallied as playwrights and librettists for the Hôtel de Bourgogne, the Théâtre-Français (Comédie-Française), and the Opéra. Regnard had a gift for comedic writing, and, beginning with collaborations with such friends as Charles Rivière Dufresny, a similarly well-off and pleasant companion (who happened to suffer an incurable, albeit unlucky, passion for gambling), he was soon writing short pieces on his own in French for the Italian *commedia dell'arte* troupe performing at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, an association that would last some ten years.

Regnard's early plays were light, satiric, and lyric comedies written in prose and influenced in style and plot by the classics, Italian comedies, and the work of the great 17th-century French dramatist Molière. Regnard achieved success with his collaborations, primarily those written with Dufresny, and they eventually began writing extensively for the Théâtre-Français, including the early one-act comedies *Attendez-moi sous l'orme* (*Wait for Me under the Elm Tree*, 1694), *La Sérénade* (1694), and *Le Bal, ou le bourgeois de Falaise* (*The Ball, or the Bourgeois from Falaise*, 1696).

First produced on December 19, 1696, the five-act verse comedy *Le Joueur* represents Regnard's most sophisticated and brilliant independent writing. A comedy of manners and character, *Le Joueur* satirizes 17th-century French society's frenzied mania for games of chance and

paints a portrait of a young man from a good family living a shallow and purposeless life, completely under the thrall of his addiction. Regnard continued writing successfully for the Théâtre-Français for the next dozen years, producing such popular works as *Les Folies amoureuses* (1704), *Les Menechmes* (1705), and *Le Légataire universel* (1708).

Little is known of Regnard's personal life, other than that he cultivated the pleasures of society and enjoyed the good things in life. He never married but appears to have taken part in feminine company, though if any lasting relationships were ever made, they remain unknown.

Regnard died unexpectedly and somewhat mysteriously on September 4, 1709. It is speculated that he suffered from acute indigestion, and, after taking inappropriate medication, suffered a fatal seizure, though the actual cause of death will probably never be known. ■



ABOVE: JEAN-FRANÇOIS REGNARD PORTRAIT © LEONARD DE SELVA/CORBIS

A PLAYWRIGHT AND HER MUSE



The *Gamester*—Freyda Thomas's contemporary adaptation of *Le Joueur*, Jean-François Regnard's 17th-century comic sendup of human foibles—is the latest venture in A.C.T.'s ongoing re-imagining of unfamiliar classic works for modern American audiences. Playwright/actor/jazz chanteuse Thomas, largely known for her witty and accessible verse translations of Molière—notably *Tartuffe: Born Again* (1996) and *The Learned Ladies* (1991, produced at A.C.T. in 1992)—has turned her facility with rhyming couplets to the comedies of Regnard, whose plays entertained Parisians at the Comédie-Française in the decades following Molière's reign as France's master satirist. *The Gamester* is Thomas's second "collaboration" with Regnard, following her adaptation of his *Heir Transparent* (1986, its first English-language translation) for the Alabama Shakespeare Festival.

In its first modern American translation (Susannah Centlivre's version was a hit on the London stage in 1705), *The Gamester* comes to A.C.T. following its acclaimed 2001 premiere at Chicago's Northlight Theatre.

The following is an "interview" between Thomas and one of her muses, transcribed by the playwright at 3 a.m. on February 12, 2003. We hope it will serve to answer any questions that may arise regarding the genesis of this work.

MUSE: WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO WRITE *THE GAMESTER*?

FREYDA THOMAS: Revenge.

WOULD YOU ELABORATE?

I had just returned to L.A. from my first Broadway production (as a playwright).

WHICH PLAY?

Tartuffe: Born Again. It was—let me be diplomatic here—somewhat on the dark side of successful. Utterly despondent about my first foray up to the citadel, I applied for several playwriting grants, also for admission to the UCLA graduate playwriting program. Not only did I not receive a single grant, I didn't get into UCLA either. Not even an interview. Obviously, being a Broadway playwright did not offer the perks I had imagined. Teeth gnashing, I decided I would show them all and I wrote *The Gamester* anyway, 20 minutes every night for nine months while I was working full time. I finished Act I right before Christmas and sent it to a director friend whose opinion I valued, to see whether I should continue or not. With unbounded enthusiasm, she assured me that I must finish it. I wrote Act II in four days over Christmas '97.

HOW DID YOU FIND REGNARD'S ORIGINAL TEXT?

Rummaging through the decaying annals of the central library in New York City.

WHO IS REGNARD?

A post-Molière wannabe who wrote plays with good skeletal plots, in verse, the dramatic form of his day. He actually has a

bust in the lobby of the Comédie-Française in Paris, not far from the hermetically sealed chair that Molière sat in to perform *The Imaginary Invalid* on the night he died. He was pretty good looking, Regnard, I mean. So was Molière.

WHAT ATTRACTED YOU TO THIS PLAY?

The subject matter.

GAMBLING?

Compulsive gambling.

WHY?

My father and my grandfather before him suffered from this particular compulsion.

DO YOU GAMBLE?

I enter contests. I get a lot of junk e-mail. But I never gamble with money. If there's a gambling gene, I didn't get it.

LET'S TALK ABOUT *THE GAMESTER*. DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR VERSION TO BE A TRANSLATION OR AN ORIGINAL PLAY?

At a certain point in the adaptive process, depending on the material you're working with, the play may lose so much resemblance to its original source that it becomes a new entity. Molière gave me such great material to begin with that I consider my two Molière adaptations to be just that. From Regnard's *Le Joueur* I took the skeletal plot, which I completely rewrote. None of the language comes from the original version. Regnard also gave me far too many characters for a 21st-century production, most

of them one-dimensional cardboard clowns. So the cast had to be cut down as far as possible, and in some cases two characters were combined into one. I had to do a lot of work fleshing out their personalities.

FOR EXAMPLE?

Valère is totally unlikable in his first incarnation. You have to want him to succeed for the play to work. And I just could not write another crafty servant, we've all seen that, so I created Hector, a naive yet clever foil for his master. Then there is the character of Madame Sécurité. In Regnard's opus, she comes in for her scene, Valère turns her down, and she leaves, never to be heard from again in the play. I thought she was too potentially wonderful a character to be left with a cameo role. As the play evolved she became the spokesperson.

WHY HER?

She is very comfortable in her own skin and can therefore be objective about everyone else's compulsions. Everyone in this play is addicted to something or other.

WHAT ELSE IS DIFFERENT?

Fauxpas is a new entry. Madame Sécurité's monologue in Act I is completely original; it doesn't exist in the Regnard. Also, the ending is different.

IN WHAT WAY?

I don't want to reveal the ending before people have seen the play. Where would the surprise be?

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT STEALING PLOTS?

Molière stole most of his plots from the Romans; if it was good enough for him, it's good enough for me. And he didn't even give them credit! Besides, I haven't heard from Molière or Regnard's lawyers so far. Keep your fingers crossed.

WHAT WAS DISTINCTIVE ABOUT FRANCE IN 1696 THAT'S IMPORTANT TO A PRODUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY?

Well, the hair was bigger then, and the clothes took up more room, at least on the women. They wore a lot of makeup like we do. Even the men. They didn't live as long. They didn't have as many toys to play with as we do—tv and video games—so obviously the leisure class, looking for things to occupy all that extra time, had to rely almost exclusively on sex and lies—no videotape—and *les jeux*. And if you remember the plot of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, those people were so bored they had to make up scandals and dramas to keep themselves entertained. Oh, they also had theater, dance, and music, all three frequently combined in a single evening of entertainment, but mostly they had gambling halls. I suspect that women especially enjoyed this *divertissement* because it helped them forget their pain.

PAIN FROM WHAT?

All that uncomfortable wiry underwear they had to put on every day. I had to wear that stuff a couple of times in a play. I know.

ARE YOU SURE YOU NEVER GAMBLE?

When my father was at the height of his compulsion in 1980 I was working on a cruise ship as a chanteuse. We stopped in Curaçao one morning. Right there in the port there were casinos that opened at 11 a.m. I went in and bought five dollars' worth of quarters to play the slot machines. I wanted to understand what drove my father to do what he did. In five minutes I had won \$40. In ten minutes I had lost all of it, including the five dollars. It took enormous self-discipline, but I walked out.

DID YOU FIGURE OUT THE MYSTERY?

Not really. It is easy to understand why people gamble occasionally, just as it is to understand why they would drink occasionally, go to a movie occasionally, or get together with friends to play bridge occasionally. But as to why some, indeed many, can't stop? If I could answer that, I'd be on the cover of next week's *Time*. I have watched the frozen faces of the hundreds of thousands of people who frequent the casinos, whose arms seem to be welded to the handles of the slot machines. They don't look happy, I'll tell you that, even

when quarters drop out in their laps. But they don't do it for happiness. I think they do it to stop the chattering in their heads that comes from despair, misery, feelings of worthlessness, and pain. There are always a lot of wheelchairs in the room.

BUT THEY ARE NOT THE LEISURE CLASS, LIKE THE GAMBLERS IN 17TH-CENTURY PARIS.

That's right, the high rollers are tucked away in private rooms. However, I used to sing for them with my father's band, and their faces were as expressionless as those of their downstairs neighbors. They didn't look happy, either.

THAT SOUNDS SO SERIOUS.

It's very serious.

AND YET YOU WROTE A COMEDY.

Yes, I did.

WHY?

Laughter is the best medicine. Molière taught me that.

WHAT ABOUT THOSE RHYMED COUPLETS?

Fun, aren't they? Everybody loves rhymes.

*"He who does not
Delight in Regnard
is not worthy of
admiring Molière."*

—VOLTAIRE

FROM WHENCE COMES THIS FACILITY?

I think it is a combination of having a strong musical background and having sung for 30 years with my father's dance band. Gershwin, Porter, Rodgers, Berlin, all the Broadway musical masters of the last century, not one of them ever wrote a lazy rhyme in their lyrics. And I know them all. Plus I can hear the rhythm of the lines, thanks to the music my father provided for me.

SO YOUR LIFE WITH HIM WAS NOT ALL GRIEF, DESPITE THE GAMBLING?

Goodness, no. Most of it was very joyful. I am grateful for the gifts he gave me, for all that wonderful music and for the time we had together. For that matter, I'm grateful to Regnard for providing me with a pretty solid skeleton on which I could build a theatrical body.

WHAT ARE YOU WORKING ON NOW?

A new Molière adaptation, *School for Trophy Wives*, a Hollywood romp. But that's for the next interview. ■

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A.C.T. PROLOGUE

a conversation with Director
Ron Lagomarsino

Tuesday, January 11, 5:30–6 p.m.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

free postperformance discussions
with the cast

directly following *The Gamester*

Tuesday, January 18

(after the 7 p.m. performance)

Sunday, January 23

(after the 2 p.m. matinee)

Wednesday, February 2

(after the 2 p.m. performance)

OUT WITH A.C.T.

a gathering of gay and lesbian theatergoers
immediately following the 8 p.m.
performance

Wednesday, January 19

Geary Theater

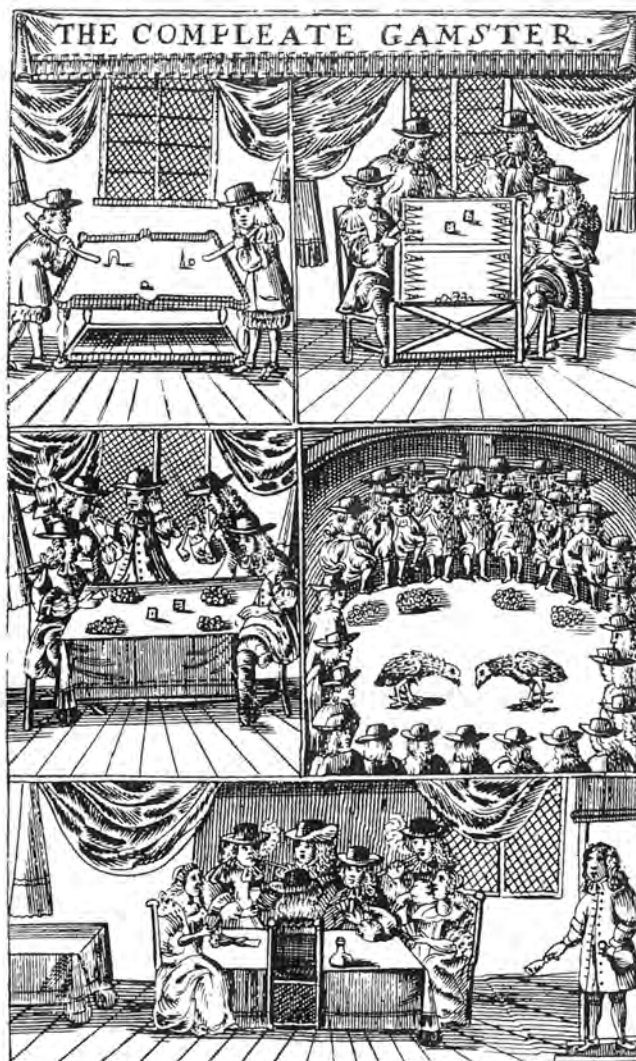
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THE CHARACTER OF A GAMESTER

Some say he was born with cards in his hands, others that he will die so, but certainly it is all his life, and whether he sleeps or wakes he thinks of nothing else. He speaks the language of the game he plays at, better than the language of his own country; and can less endure a solecism in that than this: he knows no judge but the groom-porter, no law but that of the game [at] which he is so expert all appeal to him, as subordinate judges to the supreme ones. He loves Winter more than Summer, because it affords more gamesters, and Christmas more than any other time, because there is more gaming then. He gives more willingly to the butler than to the poor-box, and is never more religious than when he

prays he may win. He imagines he is at play when he is at Church; he takes his prayer-book for a pack of cards, and thinks he is shuffling when he turns over the leaves. This man will play like Nero when his city is on fire, or like Archimedes when it is sacking, rather than interrupt his game. If play hath reduced him to poverty, then he is like one a drowning, who fastens upon any thing next at hand. Amongst other of his shipwracks, he hath happily lost shame, and this want supplies him. No man puts his brain to more use than he; for his life is a daily invention, and each meal a new stratagem, and like a flie will boldly sup at every man's cup. He will offer you a quart of sack out of his joy to see you, and in requital of his courtesie you can do no less than pay for it. His borrowings are like subsidies, each man a shilling or two, as he can well dispend, which they lend him not with the hope to be repaid, but that he will come no more. Men shun him at length as they do an infection, and having done with the aye as his cloaths to him, hung on as long as he could, at last drops off.



The Compleat Gamester, by Charles Cotton (1674)

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A.C.T. HONORS BOARD CHAIRS, PAST AND PRESENT

In November 2004, Cheryl Sorokin stepped down from her role as chair of the A.C.T. board of trustees and passed her responsibilities to Dr. Mary S. Metz. Both women have been closely associated with A.C.T. for many years, giving generously of their time to help ensure the continued vitality of live theater and actor training in the Bay Area. We spoke to Sorokin and Metz as they prepared to make their executive transition.



"My involvement in theater began very early in my childhood," says Sorokin. "I learned movement and improvisation in grade school and continued to pursue my dramatic interests all the way through high school. When I went to college I became a theatergoer instead of an onstage performer, and I have

stayed connected to theater ever since."

Sorokin was introduced to A.C.T. in the 1980s, but it wasn't until 1996 that she had the opportunity to become more involved. At that time A.C.T. Chair Emeritus Alan L. Stein was looking for a new board member with professional expertise who understood the importance of supporting the cultural life of San Francisco. Sorokin's lifelong love of theater and experience as an executive at Bank of America—the bank was instrumental in financing the reconstruction of the Geary Theater following the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake—made her a natural for the part. "It was a pleasure to answer the call," she says.

Sorokin emphasizes the important role A.C.T. plays in her life. "I love the wide variety of theater we produce at A.C.T.," she comments. "Theater enables you to connect with experiences you couldn't connect with in any other way; that sense of connection is so important, especially in these troubled times. Performances at A.C.T. explore the vast range of human emotions, and the artistry and professionalism of A.C.T. productions create the kind of magic you remember for years after. I think A.C.T. is theater at its best!"

Stein was also instrumental in recruiting Dr. Metz to join the A.C.T. board. In 1990 Metz retired from the presidency of Mills College, where she had successfully completed a major capital campaign. Once again the rebuilding of the Geary Theater proved to be a pivotal issue, and Stein asked Metz to contribute her fundraising experience as A.C.T. launched its own campaign to repair the extensive damage wrought by the earthquake.

But it was more than the Geary campaign that made A.C.T. a good fit for Metz. "Why did I say yes to this organization?" she reflects. "I've loved to read plays for as long as I can remember. Growing up in South Carolina I didn't get many chances to see live theater, but I was very interested in plays as literature. When I was in graduate school I studied French drama in Paris and I went to the theater nearly every night. I became completely immersed in the world of the stage. That was very exciting for me."

Metz was familiar with A.C.T. even before her involvement as a board member. She and her husband bought season tickets in 1968, placing them among A.C.T.'s earliest subscribers. "We had seats way up in the balcony," she remembers. "They did a Beckett production [*Endgame*] that year and it tied in with my earlier Paris experience. I was hooked."

Metz is not only proud of the outstanding artistic quality of A.C.T. productions, she also considers the training programs of the A.C.T. Conservatory an extraordinary company asset. "What happens on the mainstage and what happens in the conservatory are integrated, and I think that's wonderful," she comments. "Through the Master of Fine Arts Program, Studio A.C.T., and Summer Training Congress, A.C.T. provides the kind of in-depth training that prepares its students to become successful professionals, while the Young Conservatory provides superb training and performance opportunities for the next generation of actors. Being able to perform in the magnificent setting of the Geary Theater—as many M.F.A. Program and Young Conservatory students do each year in *A Christmas Carol*—as well as in public productions at Zeum Theater, is a unique and valuable opportunity for these young artists."

"Serving as board chair is remarkably satisfying—even fun!—when you have such dedicated people working as a team to ensure the success of the organization," says Sorokin. "I'm honored, and just a little bit saddened, to bequeath that pleasure to my successor." The entire A.C.T. community is grateful to both Cheryl Sorokin and Mary Metz for their part in helping to make A.C.T. one of the foremost theater companies in the country. ■



ABOVE, LEFT: A.C.T. CHAIR EMERITUS ALAN STEIN AND CURRENT BOARD CHAIR MARY METZ AT THE OPENING NIGHT DINNER FOR *A MOTHER* (PHOTO BY KEN FRIEDMAN). ABOVE: (L TO R) A.C.T. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CAREY PERLOFF, A.C.T. BOARD CHAIR (2002–04) CHERYL SOROKIN, AND A.C.T. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HEATHER KITCHEN (PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE).



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ANNUAL REPORT

2003-04



IN GOOD COMPANY



A.C.T.

american conservatory theater

Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director*

Heather Kitchen, *Executive Director*

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.



BELOW: Academy Award winner Olympia Dukakis and Louis Zorich in *A Mother*, Constance Congdon's world-premiere adaptation of Maxim Gorky's *Vassa Zheleznova*. Commissioned by A.C.T., the re-imagined classic was the culmination of four years of development efforts by A.C.T.'s artistic leadership, management team, and benefactors.



DID YOU KNOW?

Ticket sales cover about half of A.C.T.'s annual operating budget; A.C.T. relies on Bay Area theater lovers for the donations that make up most of the balance.

Dear Friends,



CAREY PERLOFF



HEATHER KITCHEN



CHERYL SOROKIN

We are thrilled to share A.C.T.'s annual report this year with you, our audience and our supporters. Many of you know A.C.T. as a dynamic producer of exciting theater for the Bay Area, but how many of you know that we are also one of the most important acting schools in America, as well as an incubator of new plays and a tireless advocate for new generations of theater audiences? We offer you our 2003-04 annual report as a way to give you a glimpse into the incredible richness and surprising breadth that is American Conservatory Theater, as well as to convey our gratitude for your participation. We hope you will become even more involved in A.C.T. in the years to come.

The 2003-04 season was a groundbreaking mix of world premieres and revelatory rediscoveries. We created five completely new pieces of theater: S. M. Shephard-Massat's *Levee James* and Eve Ensler's *The Good Body* and new translations and adaptations of *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *A Doll's House*, and *A Mother*. And we cracked open two astonishing modern classics, *Waiting for Godot* and *The Time of Your Life*, to find the life still pulsing inside. Our repertoire spanned many cultures and time periods, creating an expansive journey for our audience and for our artists.



ABOVE: A.C.T. core acting company member René Augesen and Stephen Caffrey in the world-premiere production of A.C.T. Resident Dramaturg Paul Walsh's new translation of Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, directed by Carey Perloff.

"Night after night, as I stood in the lobby after sold-out performances of *A Doll's House*, I marveled at the intense debate the play was generating, more than 100 years after its creation. This is the power of classical theater: the ability of a great work from the past to awaken us, again and again, to the complexities of our own contemporary lives."

Carey Perloff
A.C.T. Artistic Director

BELOW: A.C.T. core acting company member Gregory Wallace breathes new life into a long-beloved play as Estragon in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*.



DID YOU KNOW?

The world premieres you see on the Geary stage represent only a fraction of the new-play development that occurs at A.C.T.; during the 2003-04 season, 19 different playwrights spent time here developing new works in First Look readings, workshops, and productions and in all branches of the A.C.T. Conservatory.

The halls of A.C.T. are continuously packed with passionate theater artists of every age who are engaged in developing and refining their craft. In the four branches of our nationally ranked conservatory—the Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program, the Summer Training Congress, Studio A.C.T., and the Young Conservatory—artists-in-training explore the huge range of possibilities that the craft of acting opens up for them, in the process gaining the skills and self-confidence that will propel them to success in any career they choose. Whether performing alongside professionals in A.C.T.'s *A Christmas Carol* at the Geary, working on Broadway or in television and film, or founding their own theater companies, our students and alumni are invigorating the theater of today and are truly poised to take commanding roles as the theater artists of tomorrow. The tradition of excellence in our conservatory was recognized again this year when recent M.F.A. Program graduate Anika Noni Rose won a Tony Award® for her performance in *Caroline, or Change*.

In the past season, A.C.T. has also increased our strong commitment to the creation and development of new work, an effort spearheaded by Associate Artistic Director Johanna Pfaelzer. A.C.T. fosters an atmosphere of freedom and rigorous exchange in which writers can test new material at every stage of its development, either as a staged reading in our new First Look series or as a fully mounted production on the Zeum or Geary stage. This season the enormous success of Philip Kan Gotanda's *Yohen* helped launch First Look as a place to discover new talent and to nurture new explorations by major talents.



ABOVE: This season A.C.T. launched First Look, an ongoing exploration of new works at Zeum Theater. Philip Kan Gotanda's *Yohen*, a moving depiction of the challenges facing an African-American World War II veteran and his Japanese wife, met with overwhelming enthusiasm from critics and audiences. Above, A.C.T. core acting company member Steven Anthony Jones portrays James and Dian Kobayashi portrays Sumi.



ABOVE: (l to r) Rob Seitelman '04, Kira Blaskovich '04, and Andrew Fleischer '04 perform in the M.F.A. Program's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Zeum Theater.



ABOVE: At Studio A.C.T., a comprehensive evening and weekend training program for adults, Hector Osorio (left) and Cory Chu-Keenan (right) perform in *The Cherry Orchard*.



ABOVE: Student Emily Iscoff-Daigian in the Young Conservatory's world-premiere production of *Ladies of the Canyon: The Music of Joni Mitchell* at Zeum Theater.



ABOVE: M.F.A. Program alumna Anika Noni Rose thanked A.C.T. in her acceptance speech when she received the 2004 Tony Award® for her performance in Tony Kushner's *Caroline, or Change*.

“A.C.T. gave me the skills to fall back on when instinct wasn’t enough.”

Anika Noni Rose



ABOVE: M.F.A. Program alumna Elizabeth Banks, pictured above in *Spider-Man 2*, is currently shooting her starring role in the upcoming Quentin Tarantino-produced film *Daltry Calhoun*.

“When I was at A.C.T., I remember hearing that the penny drops after you leave. You figure out later how all this comes together. . . . It’s absolutely true. I apply things that I learned here on a daily basis.”

Elizabeth Banks

When people ask us what is unique about A.C.T., the first thing that always springs to mind is our audience. No other theater audience in the country is more engaged, passionate, literate, and alive with curiosity—and it is because of you that A.C.T. is able to take risks, to stretch the boundaries, to introduce new talent, and to fill the Geary Theater with your energy night after night. We thank all of you—our subscribers, our patrons, our students, our friends, and particularly our donors, whose enthusiastic support and inspired generosity make A.C.T.’s very existence possible. We salute you, and we celebrate with you our common belief that live theater can transform our lives and encourage us to be empathetic and imaginative citizens of the world. Thank you!

CAREY PERLOFF, Artistic Director

HEATHER KITCHEN, Executive Director

CHERYL SOROKIN, Chair, Board of Trustees, 2002–04



ABOVE: Students in the Summer Training Congress (STC), an intensive nine-week professional training program for theater artists ages 19 and older.

American Conservatory Theater Statement of Financial Position June 30, 2004

(with comparative totals for June 30, 2003)

Assets

	Unrestricted					2004	2003
	Operating	Board Designated Fund	Capital Fund	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted (Endowment)		
Current Assets							
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 43,855	\$ 211,095	-	\$ 752,266	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,009,716	\$ 1,799,981
Receivables							
Grants and pledges—net	213,296	-	-	360,000	252,000	825,296	782,292
Other	603,455	-	-	87,611	-	691,066	1,794,551
Prepaid expenses	964,693	-	-	-	-	964,693	762,138
Total current assets	1,825,299	211,095	-	1,199,877	254,500	3,490,771	5,138,962
 Property and equipment—net	-	-	\$ 20,036,657	-	-	20,036,657	20,861,960
Investments	165,000	969,767	-	243,950	4,554,875	5,933,592	2,166,644
Long-term grants and pledges	-	-	-	150,000	135,500	285,500	200,000
Other assets	137,207	-	-	-	-	137,207	146,857
Interfund advances	3,933,194	(142,042)	(4,930,084)	1,138,932	-	-	-
Total Assets	\$ 6,060,700	\$ 1,038,820	\$ 15,106,573	\$ 2,732,759	\$ 4,944,875	\$ 29,883,727	\$ 28,514,423

Liabilities and Net Assets

	Unrestricted					2004	2003
	Operating	Board Designated Fund	Capital Fund	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted (Endowment)		
Liabilities and Net Assets							
Current liabilities							
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 1,066,183	-	-	\$ 87,611	-	\$ 1,153,794	\$ 1,356,766
Deferred revenues	4,572,938	-	-	-	-	4,572,938	5,044,289
Total current liabilities	5,639,121	-	-	87,611	-	5,726,732	6,401,055
 Net assets	421,579	\$ 1,038,820	\$ 15,106,573	2,645,148	\$ 4,944,875	24,156,995	22,113,368
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$ 6,060,700	\$ 1,038,820	\$ 15,106,573	\$ 2,732,759	\$ 4,944,875	\$ 29,883,727	\$ 28,514,423

American Conservatory Theater

Statement of Activities

for the Year Ended June 30, 2004

(with comparative totals for June 30, 2003)

	Unrestricted						
		Board	Capital	Temporarily	Permanently		
Support and Revenues	Operating	Designated Fund	Fund	Restricted	Restricted (Endowment)	2004	2003
Support							
Contributions							
Individuals	\$ 2,425,620	\$ 30,300	-	\$ 166,737	\$ 3,020,349	\$ 5,643,006	\$ 3,303,960
Foundations	740,790	-	-	305,000	-	1,045,790	1,858,015
Corporations	270,249	-	-	20,000	-	290,249	178,932
Donated materials and services	119,177	-	-	-	-	119,177	208,520
Revenues							
Box office repertory season	9,290,500	-	-	-	-	9,290,500	8,837,970
Conservatory tuition/fees/productions	1,961,008	-	-	-	-	1,961,008	2,142,235
Government grants and appropriations	517,000	-	-	-	-	517,000	506,861
Investment income	19,044	201,466	-	204,191	-	424,701	113,680
Special events	375,630	-	-	-	-	375,630	413,914
Concessions	236,787	-	-	-	-	236,787	252,768
Lease and space rentals	198,318	-	-	-	-	198,318	217,136
Costume rentals	176,316	-	-	-	-	176,316	189,939
Marketing and publications	163,900	-	-	-	-	163,900	154,886
Other income	93,397	-	-	-	-	93,397	201,249
Interfund transfers	423,706	(423,706)	-	-	-	-	-
	17,011,442	(191,940)	-	695,928	3,020,349	20,535,779	18,580,065
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	613,514	-	-	(613,514)	-	-	-
Total Support and Revenues	17,624,956	(191,940)	-	82,414	3,020,349	20,535,779	18,580,065
Expenses							
Program services							
Artistic	5,014,465	-	\$ 214,240	-	-	5,228,705	4,667,038
Production	6,375,533	-	214,240	-	-	6,589,773	6,595,121
Conservatory	2,882,611	-	218,613	-	-	3,101,224	2,790,552
Supporting services							
General and administrative	2,153,386	-	201,123	-	-	2,354,509	2,501,176
Development	1,191,708	-	26,233	-	-	1,217,941	1,269,871
Total Expenses	17,617,703	-	874,449	-	-	18,492,152	17,823,758
Change in Net Assets	7,253	(191,940)	(874,449)	82,414	3,020,349	2,043,627	756,307
Net Assets, Beginning of Year, as Previously Reported	414,326	728,205	-	19,046,311	1,924,526	22,113,368	21,357,601
Reclassification	-	502,555	15,981,022	(16,483,577)	-	-	-
Net Assets, Beginning of Year (Restated)	414,326	1,230,760	15,981,022	2,562,734	1,924,526	22,113,368	21,357,061
Net Assets, End of Year	\$ 421,579	\$ 1,038,820	\$ 15,106,573	\$ 2,645,148	\$ 4,944,875	\$ 24,156,995	\$ 22,113,368

The financial information as of and for the year ended June 30, 2004, has been derived from American Conservatory Theater's 2004 financial statements, audited by Burr, Pilger & Mayer, LLP, independent auditors. The condensed financial information should be read in conjunction with the 2004 audited financial statements and related notes. Contact American Conservatory Theater's office for copies of the complete audited statements.



ABOVE: Board Chairman Emeritus Alan L. Stein and Artistic Director Carey Perloff at an opening night donor party.

SUPPORTERS 2003-04

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

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ABOVE: (l to r) Julie Cobb, actor James Cromwell, Trustee Sally Rosenblatt, and Toby Rosenblatt at *Starry Starry Night*, the annual auction to benefit the A.C.T. Conservatory.



ABOVE: (l to r) Trustee Priscilla Geeslin, A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith, alumna Elizabeth Banks, and Trustees Rena Bransten and Nancy Livingston raise funds for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program at the 2004 *New Faces* showcase.

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ABOVE: Associate Conservatory Director Peter McGuire and new 2004–05 Trustee Lesley Ann Clement join the bidding frenzy at *Starry Starry Night*.

“A.C.T. is too important to our community, our culture, and our continuing education of ourselves to be left behind. A.C.T. needs our support, just as we need A.C.T., and I am honored to be a patron and board member of this consistently excellent theater company.”

Lesley Ann Clement
Attorney, Clement and Associates



ABOVE: (l to r) Trustee Nancy Livingston, guest star Carol Channing, donor Fred Levin, and Trustee Chris Mattison at *Starry Starry Night*.

“What is particularly striking about the A.C.T. family is the singular lack of egotism. We all take exquisite care to support each other in all we do, and hope that our participation helps the organization soar to even greater heights.”

Nancy Livingston
Community Leader



ABOVE: Trustees Rusty Rueff and Mary S. Metz savor the preshow conversation at an opening night dinner for donors.

“A.C.T.’s commitment to educating the next generation of creative artists remains a beacon of hope for those whose dream it is to perform—and for those of us who will be enriched by their gifts.”

Rusty Rueff
*Executive Vice President of Human Resources,
Electronic Arts, Inc.*



ABOVE: Trustee Barry Lawson Williams and author Lalita Tademy discuss a performance at a donor event.

“Presenting a play like S. M. Shephard-Massat’s *Levee James* in a season that also highlights such masters as Ibsen and Beckett is what dynamic artistic programming is all about. Here was a uniquely powerful story that was absolutely about a universal aspect of human experience. Being involved with art that engages a diverse and multicultural audience at the Geary Theater is both a joy and a privilege.”

Barry Lawson Williams
President, Williams Pacific Ventures, Inc.

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American Conservatory Theater
was founded in 1965 by William Ball.

Edward Hastings
Artistic Director, 1986–92

American Conservatory Theater 2003–04 Season

Geary Theater Productions

World Premiere

Les Liaisons Dangereuses

by Choderlos de Laclos

Adapted and Directed by Giles Havergal

September 11–October 12, 2003

Waiting for Godot

by Samuel Beckett

Directed by Carey Perloff

October 17–November 16, 2003

West Coast Premiere

Roscoe Lee Browne and Anthony Zerbe in

Behind the Broken Words

November 19–23, 2003

A Christmas Carol

Adapted by Laird Williamson

and Dennis Powers

from the novel by Charles Dickens

Directed by Craig Slight

November 29–December 26, 2003

Sandra Reaves-Phillips in

Bold & Brassy Blues

December 27–31, 2003

A Doll's House

by Henrik Ibsen

Translated from the Norwegian

by A.C.T. Dramaturg Paul Walsh

Directed by Carey Perloff

January 8–February 8, 2004

World Premiere

Levee James

by S. M. Shephard-Massat

Directed by Israel Hicks

February 13–March 14, 2004

Bay Area Premiere

Mark Nadler in

Tschaikowsky (and Other Russians)

February 29–March 14, 2004

An Evening with Carol Channing

April 11 and 12, 2004

The Steppenwolf Theatre Company
production of

The Time of Your Life

by William Saroyan

Directed by Tina Landau

Produced in Association with

Fox Theatricals and Michael Leavitt

March 25–April 25, 2004

World Premiere

A Mother

by Constance Congdon

Adapted from Maxim Gorky's

Vassa Zheleznova

Directed by Carey Perloff

May 13–June 13, 2004

World Premiere

Eve Ensler's

The Good Body

Directed by Peter Askin

June 24–July 25, 2004

First Look

A Continuing Exploration of New Works

Presented by A.C.T. at Zeum Theater

PRODUCTION

Yohen

by Philip Kan Gotanda

Directed by Seret Scott

September 6–27, 2003

WORKSHOPS/STAGED READINGS

Slay the Dragon

by Victor Lodato

Directed by Pam McKinnon

January 23–25, 2004

The New Americans

by Cindy Lou Johnson

Directed by Sheryl Kaller

January 30–February 1, 2004

READINGS

Splitting Infinity

by Jamie Pachino

Directed by Joe Calarco

May 26, 2004

Luminescence Dating

Written and Directed by Carey Perloff

May 27, 2004

Freeport, Texas

by Michael Springate

Directed by Leah Gardiner

May 27, 2004

Master of Fine Arts Program Productions at Zeum Theater

A Midsummer Night's Dream

by William Shakespeare

Directed by Giles Havergal

October 9–23, 2003

The Master and Margarita

Directed and Adapted by

Adrian Giurgea

from the novel by Mikhail Bulgakov

February 26–March 13, 2004

Young Conservatory Productions at Zeum Theater

West Coast Premiere

Korczak's Children

by Jeffrey Hatcher

Directed by Dominique Lozano

August 21–30, 2003

World Premiere

War Daddy

Co-commission with Britain's

Theatre Royal Bath

by Jim Grimsley

Directed by W. D. Keith

November 13–22, 2003

Bay Area Premiere

Gray's Anatomy

by Jim Leonard

Directed by Craig Slight

March 19–28, 2004

World Premiere

Ladies of the Canyon:

The Music of Joni Mitchell

Created and Directed by Craig Slight

Musical Direction by Krista Wigle

Musical Arrangements by

Naomi Sanchez

June 5–19, 2004

FRONT COVER: A.C.T. core acting company member René Augesen and Stephen Caffrey in *A Doll's House*. INSETS: (1) Rosalyn Coleman and A.C.T. core acting company member Steven Anthony Jones in *Levee James*; (2) Eve Ensler in *The Good Body*; (3) Mariann Mayberry and Jeff Perry in *The Time of Your Life*; (4) A.C.T. core acting company member Marco Barricelli and Lise Bruneau in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.

BACK COVER: (l to r) Howard Witt and Jeff Perry in *The Time of Your Life*.

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

CHRIS BENNION: Front cover (inset 3); back cover. KEVIN BERNE: Front cover (insets 1, 4); page 3 (bottom); page 4 (top); page 5 (bottom right). MICHAEL DANIEL: Page 5 (top). KEN FRIEDMAN: Front cover (top); page 2 (bottom); page 3 (top); page 4 (middle left); pages 8–10. TOM HAYGOOD: Page 4 (bottom right); page 4 (bottom left). MARCO LORENZETTI: Page 2 (top). JOAN MARCUS: Front cover (inset 2). *Spider-Man* 2 photo on page 5 courtesy of Sony Pictures.



A.C.T.

american conservatory theater

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Administrative Office: 415.834.3200

Box Office: 415.749.2ACT

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WHO'S WHO IN *THE GAMESTER*



RENÉE AUGESEN (*Madame Argante*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in *The Misan-*

thrope; she has appeared in recent seasons in *Celebration* and *The Room*, *The Beard of Avon*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Buried Child*, *Night and Day*, *The Dazzle*, *The Three Sisters*, *A Doll's House*, *A Mother*, and, most recently, *The Real Thing*. New York credits include *Spinning into Butter* (Lincoln Center Theater), *Macbeth* (with Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett, Public Theater), *It's My Party...* (with F. Murray Abraham and Joyce Van Patten, Arc Light Theater), and *Overruled* (Drama League). Regional theater credits include *Mary Stuart* (dir. Carey Perloff, Huntington Theatre Company); several productions, including the world premieres of *The Beard of Avon* and *The Hollow Lands*, at South Coast Repertory; and productions at the Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Baltimore's Center Stage, the Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Stage West. Film and television credits include *The Battle Studies*, "Law & Order," "Guiding Light," "Another World," and Hallmark Hall of Fame's *Saint Maybe*. Augesen is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.



RON CAMPBELL (*Dorante*) received the London Fringe One-Man Show of the Year Award, two Los Angeles Drama Critics' Circle Awards, two

Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards, four *Backstage West* Garland Awards, and 15 *Drama-Logue* Awards, as well

as nominations for the Helen Hayes Award (Washington, D.C.) and the Jeff Award (Chicago). A founder of The Actors' Gang and an associate artist of the California Shakespeare Theater, Campbell has played the eponymous roles in *R. Buckminster Fuller: THE HISTORY (and Mystery) OF THE UNIVERSE*, *The Bone Man of Benares*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Richard III*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Tartuffe*, *The Inspector General*, and Beckett's *Eh Joe*, as well as leading roles in *A Comedy of Errors* and *Waiting for Godot*, a one-man *Tale of Two Cities*, and all 38 characters in *The Thousandth Night* (soon to be at the Aurora Theatre). In film, Campbell appeared in *The Witches of Eastwick*, *Babylon 5*, *Dead Bang*, *Spy Hard*, *Silhouette*, and *Farewell to Flanders Field*.



NANCY CARLIN (*Ensemble*) has appeared in many productions at A.C.T., including *A Lie of the Mind*, *Dinner at Eight*,

The Seagull, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *Twelfth Night*, and *A Tale of Two Cities*. Carlin is an associate artist of the California Shakespeare Theater, where she has been seen in recent seasons in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Julius Caesar*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Love's Labor's Lost*. She has also performed with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Marin Theatre Company, the Aurora Theatre Company, and TheatreWorks. Carlin has directed productions for the Aurora Theatre Company, Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, PlayGround, and Foothill Theatre Company (where she is an affiliate artist). She is featured in the film *Jon Jost's Frameup* and coproduced the film *Haiku Tunnel*. Carlin has a B.A. in comparative literature from Brown University and an M.F.A. in acting from A.C.T.



GREGORY CRANE (*Ensemble*) is a refugee from L.A. making his A.C.T. debut. Theater credits include: Valentine in *The Two Gentlemen*

of Verona at South Coast Repertory; Peter in *The Diary of Anne Frank* and Demetrius in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Hangar Theatre; Monkey in *Wendy's Galaxy* at Lola's Playhouse; and Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice* at the Limelight Theatre. He is the creator of *?Love, 10?*, a solo play about Tennessee Williams. Television credits include "Boston Public," "The Practice," "Any Day Now," and "The Big Easy," and he can be seen in the film *SWAT*. Crane was educated at New York University (B.F.A. with honors), Playwrights Horizons Theatre School, and Experimental Theatre Wing. He is also a professional photographer.



LIANNE MARIE DOBBS (*Betty/ Ensemble*) has appeared at A.C.T. in the world premiere production of *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*

(with the Kronos Quartet), *James Joyce's The Dead*, and a workshop production of *The New Americans*, by Cindy Lou Johnson, at Zeum Theater. Recent regional theater credits include *A Little Princess*, *My Antonia*, *Jane Eyre: The Musical* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award), and *Ragtime* at TheatreWorks; *A Little Night Music* for Post Street Theatre/TheatreWorks; *The Opposite of Sex* at the Magic Theatre; *Evita* at American Musical Theatre of San Jose, and *Wonderful Town* at Marin Theatre Company. She has also appeared at Center REpertory Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, Woman's Will, Lamp-lighters, Willows Theatre Company, and

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Who's Who in *THE GAMESTER*

42nd Street Moon. Dobbs is a graduate of San Francisco State University and the A.C.T. Summer Training Congress.



ANTHONY FUSCO (*Marquis de Fauxpas*) has appeared in A.C.T. productions of *A Mother*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Three Sisters*, *Night and Day*, *The Room* and *Celebration*, *Enrico IV*, *The Misanthrope*, *Edward II*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Arms and the Man* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Cymbeline*, and *The Skin of Our Teeth* for the California Shakespeare Theater; *My Old Lady* at Marin Theatre Company (Dean Goodman Choice Award); and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of *The Chosen*. On Broadway, he appeared in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* and *The Real Inspector Hound*. Fusco's off-Broadway credits include *The Holy Terror*, *Cantorial*, *Danton's Death*, and *A Life in the Theatre*. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School and teaches acting for the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre. Fusco is also slated to appear at A.C.T. this season as Edward Voysey in *The Voysey Inheritance*.



STEVE IRISH (*Thomas*) returns to Bay Area theater after an absence of 23 years to make his A.C.T. debut in *The Gamester*.

He left Jim Dunn's tutelage at the College of Marin for The Juilliard School in 1981 and never looked back. Among Irish's numerous theater credits are productions at La Jolla

Playhouse, The Shakespeare Theatre, and Baltimore's Center Stage. Off Broadway he performed in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, directed by Carey Perloff, at Classic Stage Company and as the Major Domo in Jerome Robbins's *Fanfare* for New York City Ballet. Irish has been featured onstage in *The Scarecrow*, opposite Orson Bean, and with Alfred Molina in *Richard III*, both in Los Angeles. He has worked with Mark Ruffalo and Reese Witherspoon in Mark S. Waters's *Just Like Heaven*, to be released fall 2005. Irish recently completed work on *The Darwin Awards*, Finn Taylor's new film, with Joseph Fiennes and Winona Ryder.



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

A.C.T. in *Levee James*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Yohen*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Dazzle*, *Night and Day*, *Buried Child*, *A Christmas Carol* (Ebenezer Scrooge), *Celebration* and *The Room*, "Master Harold"...and the boys, *The Misanthrope*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Tartuffe*, *Indian Ink*, *Hecuba*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, *Seven Guitars*, *Othello* (title role), *Antigone*, *Miss Evers' Boys*, *Clara*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Saint Joan*, *King Lear*, *Golden Boy*, and *Feathers*. Other local theater credits include *Fuente Ovejuna* and *McTeague* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *As You Like It* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); *The Cherry Orchard*, *Every Moment*, and *The Island* (Eureka Theatre); *Sideman* (San Jose Repertory Theatre); and *Division Street* (Oakland Ensemble Theatre). He originated the role of Private James Wilkie in the original production of *A Soldier's Play* at the Negro Ensemble Company in New York. His many film and television credits include two seasons of "Midnight Caller."



JOAN MANKIN (*Madame Sécurité*) was last seen at A.C.T. in *The Three Sisters* (dir. Carey Perloff). She has been a company member of the

San Francisco Mime Troupe, Pickle Family Circus, and the Dell'Arte Players Company. An associate artist with the California Shakespeare Theater, she has also performed with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, the Aurora Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, Traveling Jewish Theatre, San Jose Stage Company, and the Magic Theatre. Film credits include the upcoming *Bee Season*, *Made in America*, and *Desert Hearts*. She has directed for the Magic Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and the Bricks and Earth Circus of Calgary, as well as performances for the San Francisco New Vaudeville Festival filmed for HBO. Mankin is on the faculty of the Clown Conservatory of the San Francisco Circus Center.



ANDY MURRAY (*Croupier/Ensemble*) appeared in *The Time of Your Life* at A.C.T. and Seattle Repertory Theatre last season. His regional theater

credits also include *Edward II* at A.C.T.; *Macbeth*, *Fall*, and *Much Ado about Nothing* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *Fall* at Baltimore's Center Stage; *Humpty Dumpty*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Twelfth Night*, and *The Matchmaker* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; 14 productions with the California Shakespeare Theater (where he is an associate artist), including Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*, Puck in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Algernon in *The Importance of Being Earnest*; and

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WHO'S WHO IN *THE GAMESTER*

productions with Shakespeare Santa Cruz, the Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and San Jose Stage. He teaches at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre and the California Shakespeare Theater.



LORENZO PISONI (*Valère*) has performed on Broadway in *Henry IV* (Lincoln Center Theater, with Kevin Kline, Ethan Hawke, and Audra McDon-

ald), and off Broadway in the premiere of Marsha Norman's *Last Dance* (Manhattan Theatre Club, with JoBeth Williams), *As You Like It* (dir. Erica Schmidt, The Public Theater, with Bryce Howard), *Troilus and Cressida* (dir. Sir Peter Hall, Theatre for a New Audience), and *Much Ado about Nothing* (New York Shakespeare Festival/The Public Theater, with Jimmy Smits, Kristen Johnston, and Sam Waterston). Other theater credits include: *The Tempest* at the McCarter Theatre (with Blair Brown), *The Illusion* with The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, *The White Devil* with The Directors Company, *Arms and the Man* at Barrington Stage Company, *Romeo and Juliet* with Shakespeare and Co., and *Gardenia* with the Eureka Theatre Company. He has also performed with the Pickle Family Circus (with Geoff Hoyle, Bill Irwin, and Larry Pisoni) and Cirque du Soleil. Film and television credits include *Cirque du Soleil: Journey of Man*, *See Spot Run*, and *All My Children*.



STACY ROSS (*Madame Préférée*) was last seen at A.C.T. as Barbara Fawcett in *The Constant Wife*. Her recent work

also includes productions with San Jose Repertory Theatre (*Major Barbara*), Center Stage in Baltimore (*Misalliance*), the Aurora Theatre Company (*Man of Destiny*, *Hedda Gabler*), TheatreWorks (*Book of Days*), and the California Shakespeare Theater (*Arms and the Man*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Henry IV (Parts 1 and 2)*, and *Hamlet*.



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

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



MARGOT WHITE (*Angélique*) makes her A.C.T. debut in *The Gamester*. Favorite credits include *Bobbi Boland* (understudy) on

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



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WHO'S WHO

Broadway and off-Broadway productions of *Pericles* at The Culture Project, *When They Speak of Rita* (world premiere, dir. Horton Foote) at Primary Stages, and *The Seagull* with The Pearl Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include *The Traveling Lady* with the American Actors Company, *The Shape of Things* at The Studio Theatre in Washington, D.C., *The Illusion* at The Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey, and *Romeo and Juliet* at the Great Lakes Theatre Festival. She has been featured on "Guiding Light" and "All My Children," as well as in the upcoming indie short *Good Night Kiss* and in *A Chronicle of Corpses*, a *New York Times* pick as the "ninth best movie of 2001." White has studied with the New York Shakespeare Festival Shakespeare Lab and the London Academy of Performing Arts.

FREYDA THOMAS (Playwright)

wrote *The Gamester* as her M.F.A. thesis project at Cal Arts; the play was a finalist for the prestigious Susan Smith Blackburn Women's Playwriting Award in 2000, received its world premiere at the Northlight Theatre in Evanston, Illinois, in 2001, and was produced by The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis in 2003. Thomas is also the translator/adaptor of Molière's *The Learned Ladies*, which had its world premiere off Broadway in 1991, starring Jean Stapleton, followed by an A.C.T. production (dir. Richard Seyd) in 1993. In 1996 Thomas's translation/adaptation of Molière's *Tartuffe* (*Tartuffe: Born Again*) had its world premiere on Broadway, starring John Glover. Thomas is also the author of *The Heir Transparent*, produced at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and the Florida Studio Theatre. Both Molière plays are published by Samuel French, Inc. She recently completed a new Molière adaptation, *School for Trophy Wives*. As an actor, Thomas has appeared on sitcoms, in made-for-television movies, on commercials, on and off Broadway, and in regional and dinner theaters in 28 states. As a singer, she has

Who's Who in *THE GAMESTER*

entertained audiences from New York to Bora Bora. Her longest and most satisfying profession was that of vocalist with her father, Eddie Shaw, and his orchestra, which she began at the age of 12 and continued until his death in 1986.

RON LAGOMARSINO (*Director*) has worked extensively at regional theaters, including Hartford Stage, where he served as resident director, and at the Berkshire Theatre Festival, as associate artistic director. He spent three seasons with the O'Neill Playwrights Conference at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Recent productions include *Looking for Normal*, by Jane Anderson, at the Geffen Playhouse (Ovation Award, best play), and *I Am Not Mark Twain*, by Steven Cragg, at the Groundlings Theatre in Los Angeles, selected to participate in the 2005 Aspen Comedy Festival. On Broadway, he directed Alfred Uhry's *Last Night of Ballyhoo* (Tony Award, best play) and *My Favorite Year*. Off Broadway, Lagomarsino staged the premiere of Uhry's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Driving Miss Daisy* (Outer Critics' Circle Award, best direction); that same season he directed Christopher Durang's *Laughing Wild* and Timothy Mason's *Only You*. Other New York theater credits include the premieres of Beth Henley's *Abundance*, John Patrick Shanley's *Women of Manhattan*, Joseph Dougherty's *Digby* (Drama Desk Award nomination), and Christopher Kyle's *Plunge*. He also directed the London, Chicago, and national touring productions of *Driving Miss Daisy*. Lagomarsino received a Directors Guild Award for his direction of the pilot of David Kelley's Emmy Award-winning television series "Picket Fences." Other pilots include "Homefront" (Emmy nominations, best series and best direction), "Courthouse," and "Grapevine." He has also directed episodes of "Joan of Arcadia," "Once

and Again," "thirtysomething," "My So-Called Life," and "Ally McBeal." His most recent films are *The Madam's Family* (CBS) and *Pop Rocks* (ABC Family), and his screenplay *Loaves and Fish Sticks* is in development. He is a graduate of Santa Clara University and NYU's School of the Arts. San Francisco is his hometown, and *The Gamester* is his A.C.T. directorial debut. He dedicates this production in loving memory of his father, Robert George Lagomarsino.

KATE EDMUNDS (*Scenic Designer*) has designed more than 25 productions at A.C.T., including *Angels in America*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *The Tempest*, *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, *The Constant Wife*, and, most recently, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*. She has designed just as many shows at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, most recently Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul*. Over the past 25 years she has designed at many of the country's leading regional theaters, including Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the American Repertory Theatre, and Baltimore's Center Stage, as well as Manhattan Theatre Club and Second Stage in New York. The recipient of many awards, Edmunds also teaches design at UC Berkeley. For the past six years she has designed scenery for dance at St. Joseph Ballet, led by Beth Burns.

BEAVER BAUER (*Costume Designer*) has designed costumes for A.C.T. productions of *A Mother*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Beard of Avon*, *The Misanthrope*, *Edward II*, *Tartuffe*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, *The Royal Family*, *The Matchmaker*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Learned Ladies*, *Good, Twelfth Night*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Feathers*, *A Lie of the Mind*, and *The Floating Light Bulb*. Most recently she designed *Rhinoceros* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and *Blue* at Arena Stage and the Roundabout. She has also designed for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival,

the Eureka Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, the Lamplighters, San Jose Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, the Pickle Family Circus, Classic Stage Company, Theater of Yugen, and the Riviera 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.

NANCY SCHERTLER (*Lighting Designer*) has designed the Broadway productions of Bill Irwin's *Fool Moon* and *Largely/New York* (Tony Award nomination) and off-Broadway productions of *Texts for Nothing*, *A Flea in Her Ear*, *Scapin*, and *Falsettoland*. Regional theater credits include *The Real Thing*, *Levee James*, *The Constant Wife*, Carey Perloff's *The Colossus of Rhodes*, and *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field* at A.C.T.; *The Sisters Matsumoto* at Seattle Repertory Theatre; *Moby Dick* at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; and Ken Ludwig's *Shakespeare in Hollywood* at Arena Stage, where she is an associate artist. Opera credits include *Don Giovanni* and *The Barber of Seville* for Boston Lyric Opera, *Il Trovatore* for Baltimore Opera, and numerous productions with Wolf Trap Opera Company.

GARTH HEMPHILL (*Sound Designer*) is in his eighth season as A.C.T.'s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 150 productions, including, most recently for A.C.T., *The Real Thing*, *A Mother*, *A Doll's House*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Constant Wife*, *The Dazzle*, *American Buffalo*, *Lackawanna Blues*, *Night and Day*, *Buried Child*, *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Blithe Spirit*, *The Beard of Avon*, *Celebration* and *The Room*, "Master Harold"...and the boys, *Enrico IV*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Edward II*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, and *A*

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Who's Who in *THE GAMESTER*

Streetcar Named Desire (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). He has earned Drama-Logue Awards for his work on *Jar the Floor*, *A Christmas Carol* (South Coast Repertory), *The Things You Don't Know*, *Blithe Spirit*, *New England*, *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart*, *Fortinbras*, and the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*.

PETER MALEITZKE (*Composer*) is resident musical director of A.C.T., where he recently composed the original score for Giles Havergal's *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* and music directed a successful run of *Of Thee I Sing* in San Francisco, Napa, and Redwood City. He was also the musical director for world-premiere A.C.T. productions of David Lang and Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer*, Carey Perloff's *The Colossus of Rhodes*, and *The First Picture Show*, as well as for A.C.T.'s acclaimed production of *The Threepenny Opera* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). Before coming to A.C.T., he was the conductor of the first national production of *Phantom of the Opera*. Regional credits include *Gypsy* (Dean Goodman Award), *A Little Night Music*, *Rags*, and *The Most Happy Fella*. Maleitzke earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in piano performance at the University of Michigan. He worked as the musical assistant to Michael Tilson Thomas and was the resident conductor of the Tuscan Music Festival. Maleitzke teaches singing in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program and is writing a book, *Acting and Singing in the 21st Century*.

MERYL LIND SHAW (*Casting Director*) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff as 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 *White Christmas*, *Jitney*, and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, as well as the first workshop of *The Count*

of *Monte Cristo* and the CD-ROM game *Obsidian*. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.'s *Creditors* and *Bon Appétit!* 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 LORT contract (1992 and 1993), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB (*Stage Manager*) is in his 11th season at A.C.T., where he worked most recently on *The Real Thing*, *A Mother*, *A Doll's House*, *The Dazzle*, *Night and Day*, *Buried Child*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Beard of Avon*, and *James Joyce's The Dead*. During 19 years with Berkeley Repertory Theatre he stage-managed more than 70 productions. Other credits include *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* in San Francisco, *The Woman Warrior* for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, *Mary Stuart* and *The Lady from the Sea* at Boston's Huntington Theatre Company, *Hecuba* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, and *The Philanderer* at Aurora Theatre Company. Webb served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

VINLY ENG (*Assistant Stage Manager*) most recently assistant stage-managed *The Real Thing* at the Geary Theater and stage-managed *One, No One...* at Zeum Theater, both for A.C.T. He has also worked on the A.C.T. stage-management teams for Geary Theater productions of *Waiting for Godot*, *A Doll's House*, and *The Time of Your Life*. Additional credits include three seasons at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, most recently as assistant production manager (2003 and 2004). Eng studied at Duke University, where he received a B.A. in economics.

A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF

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

productions of Stoppard's *The Real Thing*, Constance Congdon's *A Mother* (adapted from Gorky's *Vassa Zheleznova*), Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, Stoppard's *Night and Day*, and Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* with A.C.T.'s core acting company. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink* and Harold Pinter's *Celebration* and *The Room*; A.C.T.-commissioned translations of *Hecuba*, *The Misanthrope*, *Enrico IV*, *Mary Stuart*, and *Uncle Vanya*; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; and acclaimed productions of *The Threepenny Opera*, *Old Times*, *Arcadia*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *Home*, and *The Tempest*. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer*, David Lang/Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, and the West Coast premiere of her own play *The Colossus of Rhodes* (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, *Luminescence Dating*, was developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshopped last summer at New York Stage and Film, and will premiere in New York in April at Ensemble Studio Theatre. She spent July at the Sundance Institute developing Philip Kan Gotanda's new play *After the War*. This season at A.C.T. she will also direct a new adaptation by David Mamet of Harley Granville-Barker's *The Voysey Inheritance* and Marie Ndiaye's *Hilda*.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party*, and many classic works. Under Perloff's

leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

Perloff received a B.A. in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.



HEATHER KITCHEN

(Executive Director), since joining A.C.T. in 1996, has strengthened the organization's infrastructure and

overseen the company's expansion to include the development and performance of new work and the addition of a third year to A.C.T.'s acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. Her decision to undertake an M.B.A. degree from the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario followed a 15-year career in stage, tour, and production management ranging across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Credits include the Stratford Festival, Charlottetown Festival, Theatre New Brunswick, New Play Centre, Vancouver, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax.

As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a five-theater performing arts complex and school that annually produced 16 productions, an International Children's Festival, and a Teen Festival. As a member of the executive committee of the Edmonton Performing Arts Consortium, Kitchen authored the benchmark study *Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts in Edmonton*. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the boards and executive committees of the Commonwealth Club of California and the League of Resident Theatres as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund

in New York. She is a past member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, Canada Council of the Arts, and *Forbes* magazine's Business and the Arts Awards. The *San Francisco Business Times* recently named Kitchen one of the 20 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 for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. In 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of *Continental Divide*. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director)

began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theater. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* and *Georgy* (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's *Don't Drink the Water*. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle.

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A.C.T. RESIDENT DRAMATURG PAUL WALSH OFFERS A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT ONE OF THE THEATER'S MOST CRITICAL, YET LEAST UNDERSTOOD, PROFESSIONAL ROLES.



playbills, and still have no idea what it means. Such words are encircled in mystery and confusion, and perhaps that's as it should be.

In general, as senior dramaturg and director of humanities at A.C.T., I have worked closely with other members of the artistic staff to plan upcoming seasons, to commission and develop new work, and to keep an eye on developments around the world to identify artists with whom we may want to work in the future. I also serve as production dramaturg on selected offerings during the season, working with the production team of director, designers, actors, and technicians to ensure that the play remains as rich and complex in production as it is in conception. I read and evaluate new scripts and foster relationships with contemporary playwrights. Finally, I have the great pleasure and responsibility of teaching the drama of the ages to young actors in our Master of Fine Arts Program. In general, I try to contribute in any way I can to the artistic vision and future of A.C.T., lending my voice to furthering A.C.T.'s commitment to nurturing its rich legacy as one of America's leading theaters, and helping to develop the next generation of theater artists.

More specifically, over the past eight seasons, I have had the opportunity to work on dozens of shows, engaging directors, designers, playwrights, actors, and audiences in discussions of the cultural and historical dimensions of plays, providing theoretical and structural analysis and advice, offering textual glosses, emendations, and elucidations, and collaborating on adaptations and translations. For instance, I translated Ibsen's *A Doll's House* from the Norwegian last season for A.C.T. core acting company member René Augesen to tackle Nora in language as up-to-date as her struggle, and some years ago I

“Dramaturgy” is one of those words that makes people uncomfortable. It’s not the word’s fault, nor even the speaker of the word. It’s just that some words, especially strange and foreign-sounding ones, defy easy definition. People may have heard it a dozen times, perhaps, and seen the word in countless

worked closely with director Mark Lamos cutting and adapting Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II*. I was involved in the long development process with playwright Constance Congdon that led to her radical reshaping of Maxim Gorky’s *Vassa Zheleznova*, and then participated in rehearsals last season, offering insights, encouragement, advice, and a willing ear as we put *A Mother* on its feet.

I’ve been called upon to elucidate such historical complexities as the late 19th-century historical and literary context of Anton Chekhov’s *The Three Sisters* and the sociopolitical situation in Quebec in the fifties and sixties that gives particular resiliency to Michel Tremblay’s *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*. Sometimes I’ve served as a sounding board for directors, actors, designers, playwrights, and adapters; sometimes I’ve provided analysis or background research; sometimes I’ve served as a separate set of eyes or ears on a project in development. Frequently I’ve contributed notes to our playbills or to our nationally acclaimed performance guide series *Words on Plays*. All of these are things dramaturgs do, though the sum of the parts does not add up to a definition of “dramaturgy.”

For years I have said that the dramaturg surrounds the work of the theater in talk, and there is a good deal of truth to this. Being a dramaturg means engaging in an ongoing discussion of the wider cultural, historical, and theoretical concerns addressed by plays and their productions. It means cultivating a wide-

ranging dialogue with artists and writers worldwide and keeping in touch with developments in the field. It means keeping abreast of new thoughts and developments and remembering old ones. As new plays are developed and old ones re-examined, as seasons of plays are selected, analyzed, designed, rehearsed, and performed, as productions open and close, the dramaturg strives to keep the conversation going: to engage artists and audiences alike in a continuing dialogue about theater, about life, and about the work we do. In our age, perhaps in every age, people are hungry for a considered conversation, for a discussion of consequence that goes beyond the obvious and the immediate. That conversation *is* dramaturgy. ■



ABOVE: PAUL WALSH IN REHEARSAL FOR *ENRICO IV* (PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNÉ)
LEFT: RENÉ AUGESSEN AND STEPHEN CAFFREY IN WALSH'S TRANSLATION OF *A DOLL'S HOUSE* (PHOTO BY KEN FRIEDMAN)

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14-31

Once in a Lifetime

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Directed by Margaret Booker

mar 10-

apr 2

Lilies

by Michel Marc Bouchard

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nov

12-20

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Geary Theater Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12–8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12–6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12–6 p.m. daily. Call 415.749.2ACT and use your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at www.act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person at the box office.

Discounts

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

Group Discounts

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

AT THE THEATER

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

A.C.T. Merchandise

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

Refreshments

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

Beeepers!

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

Perfumes

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

Emergency Telephone

Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2396 in an emergency.

Latecomers

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

Listening Systems

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performance. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an

A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

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

Rest rooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

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

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

AFFILIATIONS

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



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

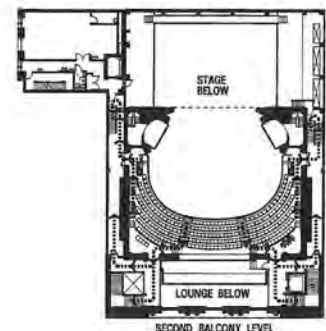
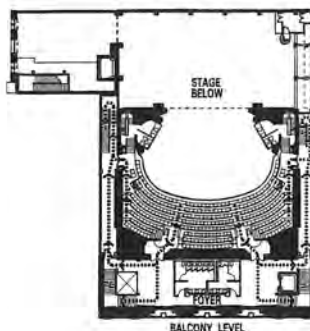
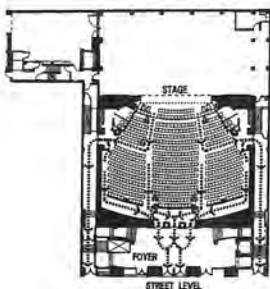


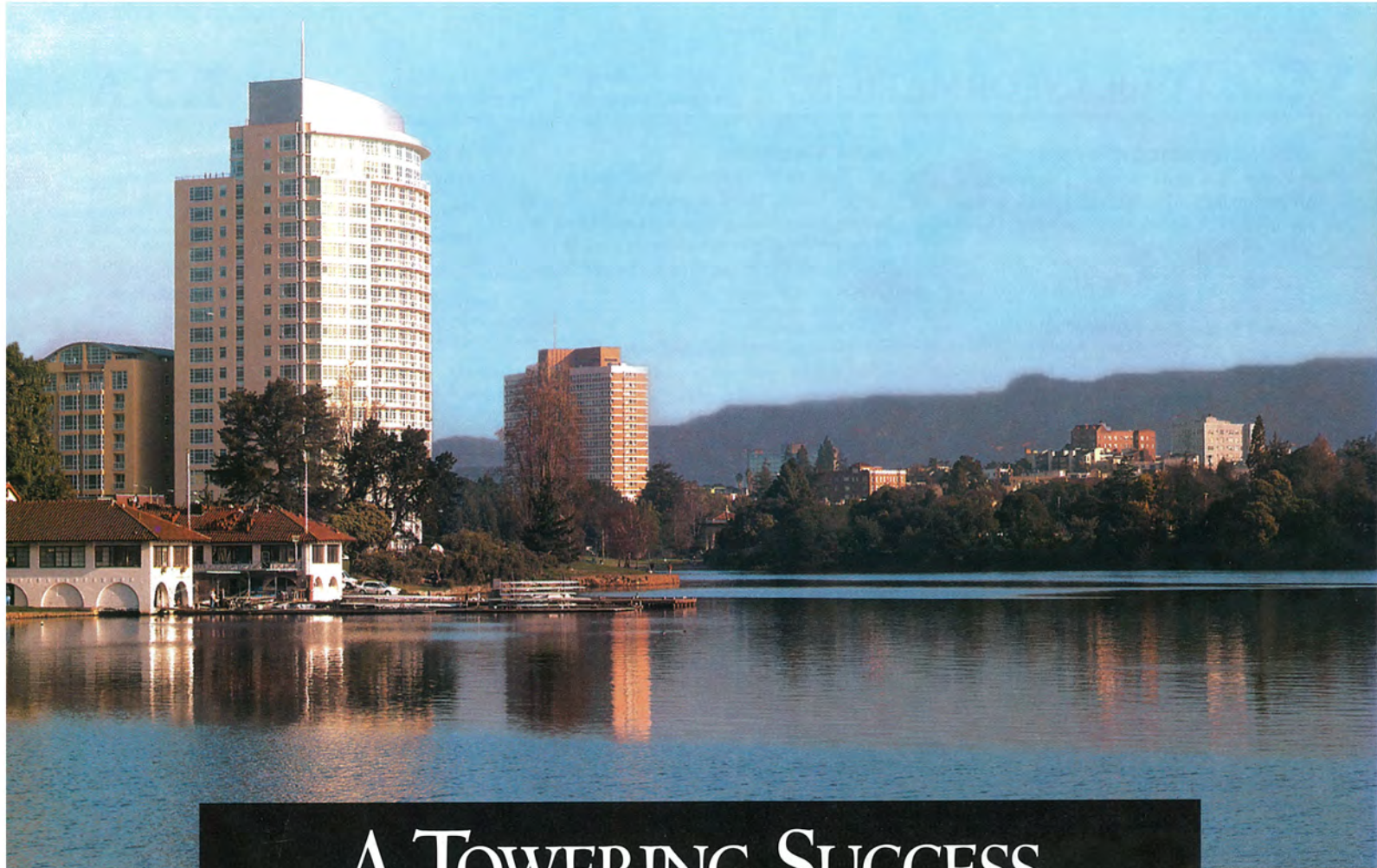
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