


THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER PERFORMANCE PROGRAM



# The Rivals

by  
Richard  
Brinsley Sheridan

Directed by  
Lillian Groag

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american conservatory theater

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Inside:  
Announcing the 40<sup>TH</sup>  
Anniversary Season!

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# ABOUT A.C.T.



GEARY THEATER AUDIENCE PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE

**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 four 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 and George Thompson, 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 Teri Hatcher 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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American Conservatory  
Theater was founded in  
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Warren Knapp

# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

JOCK McDONALD



**Dear Friends,**  
Welcome to *The Rivals*! This is a show that combines many of the things we hold most dear at A.C.T.: marvelous language, enormous wit, juicy roles for actors, and a huge theatricality. It has been many years since A.C.T. produced a play from this period, and it has been a joy to

go back and revisit such a delicious moment in English drama. Like many great plays, *The Rivals* centers on the theme of illusion versus reality: Do we fall in love with someone because of who they truly are or because of the image they concoct, and is it entirely possible to tell the two apart? If part of the delight of life is the game-playing that goes on between the sexes, how can one ever be certain who one's true love really is? If one reads too many romance novels, must life inevitably pale by comparison? And, How do we find a language for love that matches the heat of our emotions, without degenerating into trivial clichés and "malapropisms"?

This production of *The Rivals* is a true "family" show for A.C.T. It features the work of three of our favorite designers: Donald Eastman (*Hilda*), Nancy Schertler (*A Christmas Carol*, *The Real Thing*, *Levee James*), and Beaver Bauer (*The Gamester*, *Carol*, and many more), as well as our beloved core company

acting members Gregory Wallace and René Augesen. In addition, *The Rivals* welcomes to the Geary stage three of our remarkable Master of Fine Arts Program students, Claire Brownell, Ann Farrar, and Mark Watson. The presence of these enormously talented young actors serves as a potent reminder of the fundamental mission of A.C.T.: with every production we do, we are not only serving our audience and stretching our professional artists, we are introducing the next generation to the incredible repertoire we have inherited. *The Rivals* itself is a play about generations, about fathers and sons, aunts and nieces, mature love and young love, all colliding in one hilarious stew. So it is fitting that some of our best young talent will have the opportunity to perform with the finest actors in the Bay Area and in our company, as they prepare to finish this part of their training and embark upon their own professional careers.

As I write this, we are deep in the throes of preparing our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary season, and I keep being reminded that of the many things to celebrate in A.C.T.'s longevity, surely the most important is the growth and commitment of the finest audience in America. Thank you so much for all you bring to us, and enjoy *The Rivals*.

Yours,

Carey Perloff  
Artistic Director

Please join us for

## A CELEBRATION OF THE BECKETT CENTENARY

In honor of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Samuel Beckett, A.C.T. invites you to celebrate the life and work of the great Irish playwright, poet, and novelist with an evening of dramatic readings and lively discussion. This event is cosponsored by Grove-Atlantic Press, publisher of the just-released *Grove Centenary Editions of Samuel Beckett*: an extraordinary four-volume hardcover collection of the author's novels, plays, stories, poems, and criticism that brings together nearly every word Beckett published during his lifetime.

Friday, May 5, 2006

Geary Theater

5:30–6:30 p.m.

Featuring readings from Beckett's plays by Bay Area actors, as well as a panel discussion by A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, Beckett scholar Marjorie Perloff, and Irish novelist Colm Toibin.

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presents

# The Rivals

by **Richard Brinsley Sheridan**

Directed by **Lillian Groag**

*Scenery by* Donald Eastman  
*Costumes by* Beaver Bauer  
*Lighting by* Nancy Schertler  
*Sound by* Jake Rodriguez  
*Hair and Makeup by* Jeanna Hurd  
*Dramaturg* Michael Paller  
*Fight Director* David Maier  
*Dialogue Coach* Deborah Sussel  
*Movement and Dance Coach* Christine Mattison  
*Casting by* Meryl Lind Shaw  
*Assistant Director* Mike Ward

## THE CAST

*(in order of speaking)*

*Thomas* Mark D. Watson  
*Fag* T. Edward Webster  
*Lucy* Claire Brownell  
*Lydia Languish* René Augesen  
*Julia* Stacy Ross  
*Mrs. Malaprop* Jill Tanner  
*Sir Anthony Absolute* Charles Dean  
*Captain Jack Absolute* Anthony Fusco  
*Faulkland* Gregory Wallace  
*Bob Acres* Dan Hiatt  
*Errand Boy* Ann Farrar  
*Sir Lucius O' Trigger* Andy Murray  
*David* Jud Williford  
*Princess* Django

## UNDERSTUDIES

*Thomas, Fag, David, Bob Acres, Errand Boy*—Nicholas Pelczar  
*Lydia Languish*—Claire Brownell; *Lucy, Julia*—Ann Farrar; *Mrs. Malaprop*—Wanda McCaddon  
*Faulkland*—Mark D. Watson; *Captain Jack Absolute*—Jud Williford  
*Sir Anthony Absolute, Sir Lucius O' Trigger*—James Carpenter

## STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Joseph Smelser, *Stage Manager*  
Heath Belden, *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Phoebe Weiss, *Intern*

## TIME AND PLACE

Bath, England, in the late 18th century

*There will be one 15-minute intermission.*

*This production is sponsored in part by*

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# A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY LILLIAN GROAG

All good plays have to do with the conduct of life, and they last because the fundamental problems of existence don't change. For some two hundred years now we have prized the English comedies of the century between the Restoration and the last Georges for a glittering artifice that we have, perhaps too hastily, called "artificiality," since our deeply earnest and laconic times have bred an implicit distrust of florid language. We seem to have similar reservations regarding polysyllabic leaders. It is as if expression that is precise and articulate were inherently suspect—true emotion and therefore Truth Itself being assumed to reside exclusively with the inarticulate, and all products of the mind appearing chilly propositions compared to the effusions of what it pleases us to call The Heart. In fact the heart is a muscle that pumps blood, and we can now identify specific sections of the brain in which particular "emotions" originate.

Is it because of this basic distrust of words, coupled with the assumption that people in wigs sporting fans and walking sticks could not possibly have anything to do with us, that we now traditionally approach these comedies with caution and diminished expectation?

I contend that *The Rivals* addresses us regarding the question of how to love as urgently as it did two centuries ago, and that the

conflict between the illusion of Romance and the warning signs of common sense in the interests of the longevity of the couple is as vivid now as it was then. Lydia believes that Love conquers all adversity; Faulkland, in the fog of a severe Tristan Complex, would like his beloved to become himself, thereby obliterating intrinsic human separateness; Mrs. Malaprop hopes Love will restore lost youth; Bob Acres expects it to give him "style" and courage.

And yet, even in the throes of terminal absurdity, not one of Sheridan's characters appears petty, mean-hearted, or small. We laugh at them with warmth and recognition and wish we could be rescued from dire disaster as they are, at the last possible moment, by the love of the levelheaded Jacks and Julias of this world.

It is said that at the core of British humor can be found the brilliant Irishmen who shaped it: Congreve, Farquhar, Sheridan, Beckett, Wilde, Shaw. Who can not hear the stirrings of Gwendolen, Lady Bracknell, and that "other Jack" in Lydia Languish, Mrs. Malaprop, and Captain Absolute?

*The Rivals*, wise as it is delicious, celebrates and announces the wit, incisive thought, and sharp satire hidden beneath this dazzling tradition. It's not the flick of the fan—essential as it is to the shape of this world—that elicits laughter and the movement of the heart; it's the turn of the spectacular, illuminating word.



WELL-KNOWN CHARACTERS IN THE PUMP ROOM, BATH, TAKING A SIP WITH KING BLADUD, BY ISAAC ROBERT CRUIKSHANK (PUBLISHED BY SHERWOOD & CO., 1825)



# A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN

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RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN (1751–1816), BY JOHN HOPPNER



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MRS. RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN (C. 1785–86), BY THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH

Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816) was born in Dublin. His father was an actor, theater manager, and teacher of elocution, his mother a writer of sentimental novels. Sheridan was educated at Harrow, where he quickly learned the disadvantages of a nonaristocratic, theatrical, Irish-Protestant family background. Indeed, this heritage was the fulcrum on which his life turned, even as it never ceased hindering him socially and politically.

The action of *The Rivals* (1775), his first play, is based largely on Sheridan's own adventurous courtship of Miss Elizabeth Linley, a popular singer, a notorious beauty, and "the siren of Bath." To rescue her from the scandal of a broken engagement and the unwanted attentions of an overzealous married suitor, Sheridan spirited Miss Linley away to France, where they married in a secret ceremony, against both their fathers' wishes. After returning to England, he was forced to fight two duels with the rejected suitor; the first Sheridan won, and the second, being drunk, he lost.

Sheridan fashioned these events into a satirical skewering of the characters and caprices of Bath society, which would ultimately become one of his best-loved plays. When *The Rivals* premiered at London's Covent Garden Theatre on January 17, 1775, however, the reception was anything but favorable. Critics objected to the play's length and the dubious morals of some of its characters, while the public, weary of the bawdiness of Restoration comedies, yearned for more sentimental storytelling. Sheridan reworked and cut the play,

keeping the titillating content but crafting an ending that rewarded virtue and true love. When *The Rivals* reopened 11 days later, it was an immediate success and established Sheridan's career.

Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan fled their continuing notoriety in Bath to settle in London, where Sheridan for a time concentrated on playwriting. *The Duenna* soon followed *The Rivals*. In 1776, he became part owner of the Drury Lane Theatre, which he managed until it burned down in 1809. There he staged *The School for Scandal* (1777), *The Critic*, and *Pizarro* (both 1779).

In 1780, Sheridan was elected to Parliament, where he served until 1812, and the theater played an increasingly minor role in his life. As a Whig in an era of Tory political dominance, Sheridan was never in the majority and never served in the government. His unmatched skills as an orator earned him immense respect, however, and his unflinching defense of such causes as the American Revolution and Irish and Catholic emancipation resulted in a brilliant series of speeches that rarely have been equaled in English political history.

Sheridan's marriage was marred by infidelity on both sides, and in 1790 the couple separated. Elizabeth died of tuberculosis in 1792, while Sheridan succumbed to debt and dissolution before dying, destitute, in 1816. Mourned by many, he was honored with an extravagant funeral and respectfully buried in Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner.

# SHERIDAN IN AMERICA

BY MICHAEL PALLER

Today, some tend to view Richard Brinsley Sheridan's two major comedies, *The Rivals* and *The School for Scandal*, as trivial affairs with the single purpose of providing audiences with a couple of hours of carefree amusement. In his own day, however, Sheridan was considered by many to be a dangerous revolutionary. His friend and admirer Lord Byron was the one called, "mad, bad, and dangerous to know," but to Sheridan's political opponents, the description fit Sheridan even better. In his 32 years as a member of Parliament, he championed, among other causes, the American and French Revolutions and Irish and Catholic emancipation. He was a democrat in an institution and country firmly run by aristocrats, and his background as the son of Protestant/Irish parents, one an actor and one a novelist, led him to view with a jaundiced eye the privileges and conventions of the elite. Indeed, on at least one occasion, his actions on behalf of the Catholic cause came perilously close to landing him in jail on charges of treason.

So it is fitting that the story of the performance of his works in America is accompanied at almost every turn by revolts against authority. It begins long before Sheridan's birth with the overthrow of a monarch and features the outrage of a prime minister, the resourcefulness of London theater managers, the survival instinct of a company of actors in colonial America, the condemnation of the Continental Congress, the appreciation of a future president, the artistic ambitions of a Vermont jurist, and the thirst for freedom of a black slave in Baltimore.

In 1642, the Puritan-dominated Parliament overthrew the Stuart king Charles I and, in their zeal to stamp out all forms

of secular entertainment, tore down the country's theaters and banned performances of plays. When the monarchy was restored in 1660, the new king, Charles II, reestablished theatrical activity and supported with great enthusiasm the appearance of women on the English stage for the first time in history. (One of them, Nell Gwyn, retired from the stage in 1669 to become his mistress and bore him two children.) The Restoration theater was not the wide-open, hurly-burly affair the Elizabethan theater had been, however. Now it was tightly controlled; only two theaters were given royal licenses, or patents, to operate in London.

As the years passed, enforcement of the patents became lax. By 1733, there were at least four unlicensed and illegal theaters operating in London in addition to the two legal ones, the Covent Gardens and the Drury Lane. Worse, from the point of view of the government—which controlled the content of plays by controlling the theaters where they were produced—these unlicensed theaters were making a good deal of money by making a good deal of savage fun of the royal family (now headed by George II and Queen Caroline) and the prime minister. That prime minister, Robert Walpole, was growing outraged at being mercilessly satirized in such works as John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* (1728) and Henry Fielding's *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* (1737). In response to Fielding's brutal satire, Walpole pushed through Parliament what became known as the Licensing Act of 1737. It had two important provisions: any stage work had to be approved by a censor before it could be performed, and the only place in London where plays could be legally performed was in the district of Westminster—meaning the Covent Garden and Drury



AN AUDIENCE AT DRURY LANE THEATRE, BY THOMAS ROWLANDSON (1756-1827)

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Lane theaters, which were the only playhouses in the district, and the holders of the two royal patents. All other theaters would be shut down.

This did not stop resourceful theater managers, however. Since the law applied to plays that were produced for “gain, hire, or reward,” operators of illegal theaters charged audiences a fee for a cup of tea or chocolate, or an exhibition of pictures displayed before the show, and presented their plays for free. Wriggling through loopholes like these, the most inventive managers contrived to stay open for years. One such was Lewis Hallam, Sr., manager of the Wells Theatre. In 1752, the law caught up with him, however, and the Wells was closed. So Hallam and his family packed their bags and migrated to America. By 1763, the family, now called The American Company of Comedians, was performing up and down the Eastern seaboard and, according to historian Kenneth Silverman, practically monopolizing the theater in the North American colonies.

Their success was not entirely a result of their abilities, which by most accounts were modest. What they did possess was a remarkable ability to persevere, and for actors in colonial America, this was more valuable than talent. The descendants of the English Puritans who had outlawed the theater in 1642 were now residing in the American colonies and were determined to stamp it out here, too. Theater was popular in the South and in New York, but it found little encouragement elsewhere. In 1682, Pennsylvania passed a law calling for the public condemnation, fine, and imprisonment of anyone presenting plays, bull-baiting, cock-fighting, or other morally suspect practices. By 1750, Boston and other New England cities had banned theater, and in 1774 the Continental Congress took time out from the looming crisis with Great Britain to make the prohibition general. The Congress passed a law stating, in part:

We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts, and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibition of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments.



THE EXPLANATION (GEORGE TIERNEY DUELING PRIME MINISTER WILLIAM PITT), BY JAMES GILLRAY (PUBLISHED BY HANNAH HUMPHREY, 1798)

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By now, the American Company had improved its standards and built handsome brick theaters in New York and Philadelphia, which it was suddenly unable to use. Faced with its new outlaw status, the American Company decamped to Kingston, Jamaica, where it produced Sheridan’s *The Duenna* in 1779, *The Rivals* in 1780, and *The School for Scandal* in 1781. These were the first professional productions of Sheridan in the New World.

As a vocal supporter of the American cause, Sheridan might have been amused had he known that *The School for Scandal* had already been performed in New York by members of the redcoat army that occupied the city during the war. Clinton’s Thespians, as they were known, produced *Scandal* in 1778, three years after its premiere at the Drury Lane in London. They produced it again in 1782, billing it—in a ploy Sheridan might have appreciated—as “never performed here.” The British evacuated New York a year later, but the Sheridan tradition on the American mainland had just begun.

The American Company returned to North America in 1785, now under the direction of Lewis Hallam, Jr., and John Henry, who had studied with Sheridan’s father, Thomas, who was not only an actor but also an acclaimed teacher of elocution. In December 1785, the American Company produced the first civilian, professional production of *The School for Scandal*, in New York.

The troupe returned to Philadelphia during the Constitutional Convention in 1787, hoping that the large number of sophisticates in town would turn out to see them. Theater was still illegal in Philadelphia, so the company resorted to some of the same time-tested tactics that unlicensed theaters in London had used years earlier, announcing a “Concert” to be held at the “Opera House,” which was actually the Southwark Theatre, which they had built

many years earlier. “Between the parts of the Concert,” the ads in the press announced, “will be introduced a comic LECTURE in five parts on the PERNICIOUS VICE OF SCANDAL . . . Written by R. B. Sheridan, esquire.” The five-part “lecture” was, of course, the five-act *School for Scandal*.

Later that year, they repeated the production in New York for audiences that included, on more than one occasion, George Washington. Washington had long been a fan of the American Company, and had attended often when it played Williamsburg before the war. His frequent laughter during *The School for Scandal* in New York caused much distress to one of his companions, the more puritanically minded Senator William Maclay of Pennsylvania, who was outraged that the future president could so enjoy “such an indecent representation.”

Royal Tyler, a Vermont lawyer, was also at one of those performances, and within weeks, he wrote a play called *The Contrast*. Its plot owed more than a little to *The School for Scandal*, and in Act III Tyler’s chief comic character, the country bumpkin Jonathan, mistakenly wanders into a New York theater to see a play called *The School for Scandalization*—and asks for his money back. Over the years, Tyler would write a handful of other plays when not presiding, as chief justice, over the Vermont Supreme Court. In time, *The Contrast* would become known as the first play written by an American to be performed by a professional company in the United States.

The American Company also presented *Robinson Crusoe or Harlequin Friday*, an elaborate spectacle written by Sheridan’s wife, Elizabeth, with some assistance from him. The company’s 1786

production was, as the advertisement said, “for the entertainment of the Indian Chiefs of the Oneida nation, now in this city.” The play’s first half followed the story of Daniel Defoe’s novel; the second told of the adventures of his black servant Friday and his love, Columbine, concluding with, as Sheridan’s most recent biographer, Fintan O’Toole tells us, a “Grand Dance of Savages.” There is no record of the Oneida chiefs’ reaction.

Sheridan’s revolutionary sympathies continued to reverberate in America in the 19th century. Ira Aldridge, an African-American actor who spent most of his career in Europe playing Shakespeare to great acclaim, chose for his American debut in 1822 the part of Rolla the Incan leader in Sheridan’s *Pizzaro*, the story of the tragic clash between the Incas and Spanish conquerors. Not surprisingly, in Sheridan’s version the Incas are the heroes, the Spanish invaders the villains.

Fifteen years after Sheridan’s death, another American was moved by Sheridan’s cry for freedom and democracy. About 1830, Frederick Douglass was a young house slave in Baltimore when he heard about a writer named Sheridan. With money he’d earned from shining shoes, Douglass acquired a book of Sheridan’s parliamentary speeches; in his autobiography, Douglass recalled the effect the book had: “I met with one of Sheridan’s mighty speeches . . . on behalf of Catholic emancipation. These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. . . . What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery and a powerful vindication of human rights.”

Not until later in the century would Sheridan’s revolutionary politics gradually be separated from his writing for the theater.

So it’s well to keep in mind while watching *The Rivals* that, for all its humor, it is a story about a revolution in thinking, about steering one’s own course. Jack Absolute will go his own way in romance, following neither the conventional matchmaking ways of his father’s and Mrs. Malaprop’s generation, nor the faddish modes in the popular sentimental novels so thoroughly imbibed by Lydia. Julia, too, will do her best to free Faulkland from the outlandish course he slavishly believes lovers must run before they can prove themselves worthy of love. Mrs. Malaprop believes that, above all, a young woman “should be mistress of orthodoxy.” She seems to mean “orthography,” the study of correct spelling, but her mistake is telling. It is her misfortune, alas, to miss the joke—and the revolution that’s happening right under her nose. ■

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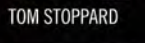
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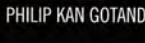
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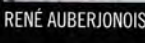
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# THE ART OF ARTICULATION

On the first day of rehearsal of *The Rivals* in February, director Lillian Groag introduced the play by sharing her enthusiasm for what she calls “the lavishly entertaining and extremely articulate language” in Sheridan’s 1775 text. To make sure this production of *The Rivals* strikes all the right vocal notes and accents in Sheridan’s linguistically intricate dialogue, Groag and the cast worked with longtime A.C.T. Speech and Dialect Coach Deborah Sussel to explore and refine the unique speech patterns of each character in the play—from Lydia Languish’s romanticized verbal flourishes to Mrs. Malaprop’s infamous bungling. The head of Speech in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, Sussel has worked on hundreds of A.C.T. productions since joining the A.C.T. acting company in 1967, helping actors and directors discover the most precise verbal choices.

“The world of *The Rivals* centers primarily on people’s relationships to language,” says Sussel. “A play’s text doesn’t always state just how a character should speak or in what accent. It’s something you investigate, along with all the other circumstances of a character’s life. In *The Rivals*, we found there are characters speaking four different dialects: Rural, Cockney, Standard British, and Irish.”

The choice of Cockney for all of the servants was made to give a linguistic uniformity to these working-class characters,” says Sussel. “On the other end of the class spectrum, Captain Absolute, Lydia, Faulkland, and Mrs. Malaprop are all of the same aristocratic social class, so they speak with the highest sort of accent in their world, commonly referred to as ‘Standard British.’ The one character who stands apart from the rest is Sir Lucius O’Trigger, whom Sheridan cast as an Irishman like himself. One challenge in

such a linguistically complex production is making sure all of the accents are as precise as possible, without being so authentic that they’re not understandable.”

Discovering such telling details is Sussel’s stock in trade, and she is renowned in the theater and film industries for helping actors make the most of their vocal abilities. As with *The Rivals*, Sussel is often involved with an A.C.T. production from the first rehearsal to opening night. During this process, she works individually with actors,

providing them with taped recordings of native dialect speakers, helping them identify sound changes, bring out figures of speech, and enunciate with enough clarity and volume that every word is understood by audiences members in all seating levels at the Geary Theater.

“The Geary is interesting because on the one hand it feels, maybe to the audience and certainly to the actors, very intimate,” says Sussel. “On the other hand, it requires great clarity of utterance, strong articulation, and a lot of ‘imaging up,’ by which we mean making sure you’re sharing your language with the upper reaches of the second balcony. This takes great skill and training, and it explains why actors who have been exclusively doing television or film work (media which allow an actor to relax his or her vocal muscles) have a rough time filling such a large space.”

Although we live in a so-called “communication age,” Sussel sees the irony in the fact that clear verbal expression is increasingly undervalued in our informal, sound-bite culture. “I guess it’s a statement about the time we live in, that it doesn’t seem to matter so much anymore how well people speak because we live in such a visual environment. We have to remember that in the 18th-century world of *The Rivals*, there was no television, no video, no radio, none of the myriad sensory experiences and distractions we have. Instead, you had to rely on verbal banter and your own wit for entertainment and intrigue, so those verbal skills would be highly developed. Lillian [Groag] is right, articulation is becoming more rare among us,” she says—everywhere, that is, except on the Geary stage, as long as Sussel continues to have her say.

—Jessica Werner



A.C.T. SPEECH AND DIALECT COACH DEBORAH SUSSEL WORKING WITH A.C.T. M.F.A. PROGRAM STUDENT MATTHEW NICKLAW '07

PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNIE



A.C.T. IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE ON STAFF ONE OF THE THEATER WORLD’S EMINENTLY TALENTED SCENIC PAINTERS, CHARGE SCENIC ARTIST DEMAREST CAMPBELL. FOR *THE RIVALS*, CAMPBELL AND A.C.T.’S OTHER TALENTED SCENIC DEPARTMENT ARTISANS CREATED THIS BEAUTIFUL LIKENESS OF AN EARLY-18<sup>TH</sup>-CENTURY ENGLISH WATERCOLOR FOR *THE RIVALS* SET. A LARGER-THAN-LIFE-SIZE REPLICA OF *A VIEW AT STOURHEAD*, BY FRANCIS NICHOLSON (BRITISH MUSEUM, LONDON), THE PAINTING SERVES AS THE BACKDROP FOR *THE RIVALS*’S DRAMATIC DUELING SCENE IN ACT V.



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# WHO'S WHO IN *THE RIVALS*



**RENÉ AUGESSEN\*** (*Lydia Languish*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in *The Misanthrope*; 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*, *The Real Thing*, *The Gamester*, *The Voyage Inheritance* (also at Kansas City Repertory Theatre), and, most recently, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. 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.



**CLAIRE BROWNELL** (*Lucy*), recently seen as Mary in this year's production of *A Christmas Carol*, hails from Polson, Montana. Her

acting career began in Helena, Montana,

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

with the Montana Shakespeare Company (as Viola in *Twelfth Night*) and with the Masquers of Mimeprov improvisation troupe. A member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2006, she has appeared in a number of M.F.A. Program productions, including *Hair* (Sheila), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Grusha), and *Richard III* (Margaret) at Zeum Theater, *The Crucible*, *The Serpent Woman*, *Oedipus Tyrannos*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Titania). Last summer she was with the Guthrie Experience in Marcela Lorca's *Bring Love to My Doorstep*. She has also trained with Shakespeare and Company in Lenox, Massachusetts.



**CHARLES DEAN\*** (*Sir Anthony Absolute*), has appeared at A.C.T. in *The Constant Wife*, *The Beard of Avon*, *The House of Mirth*, *The Invention of*

*Love, Juno and the Paycock*, *Travels with My Aunt*, and *The Rose Tattoo*. A 20-year company member and associate artist at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, he acted in more than 80 productions, including *Menocchio* and *The Magic Fire* (both by Lillian Groag), *The Tooth of Crime*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Tartuffe*, *Speed-the-Plow*, *The Illusion*, *The Night of the Iguana*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, and *Hydriotaphia*. He also played General Waverly in the recent holiday hit *Irving Berlin's White Christmas: The Musical*. Other regional theater credits include leading and supporting roles at the Alley Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Dallas Theater Center, the Guthrie Theater, The Old Globe, California Shakespeare Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, and Aurora Theatre Company. He has received numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle and *Drama-Logue* awards.



**ANN FARRAR** (*Errand Boy*) recently appeared as Beth in A.C.T.'s new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol* at the Geary Theater. She also was seen in

A.C.T. M.F.A. Program productions as Jessie May Burst in *On the Bum or, The Next Train Through* and Peasant Mother in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, both at Zeum Theater. She spent last summer at PCPA Theaterfest in Santa Maria, California, performing in Steven Dietz's *Inventing Van Gogh*. Previously based in New York, Farrar appeared in productions at Atlantic Theater Company, The Culture Project @ 45 Bleecker, and HERE. She received a B.A. in theater from Indiana University.



**ANTHONY FUSCO\*** (*Captain Jack Absolute*) has appeared at A.C.T. in *The Voyage Inheritance*, *The Gamester*, *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 Tempest*, *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 California Shakespeare Theater (where he is an associate artist); *My Old Lady* at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of *The Chosen*. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing* and *The Real Inspector Hound*. Fusco's many 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.



# WHO'S WHO



**DAN HIATT\***  
(*Bob Acres*) has been seen at A.C.T. as Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Cornelius Hackl in *The*

*Matchmaker*, Yepikhodov in *The Cherry Orchard*, Roderigo in *Othello*, Mell in *The Play's the Thing*, and Smith in *The Threepenny Opera*. Other Bay Area credits include *Dinner with Friends* and *Menocchio* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *The Life and Times of Nicholas Nickleby* and many others at California Shakespeare Theater; *Enchanted April*, *The Immigrant*, and *A Flea in Her Ear* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; *Spinning into Butter* at TheatreWorks; *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* at Theatre on the Square; *Noises Off* at Marine's Memorial Theatre; and *The Real Thing* and *Lifex3* at Marin Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include work with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, the Huntington Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse, Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., Studio Arena Theatre, the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and Stage West in Toronto.



**ANDY MURRAY\***  
(*Sir Lucius O'Trigger*) has appeared in *The Voyage Inheritance*, *The Gamester*, *The Time of Your Life*, and *Edward II* at

A.C.T. Other regional theater credits include work at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Baltimore's Center Stage, California Shakespeare Theater, the Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. He teaches at the Berkeley Rep School

of Theatre and California Shakespeare Theater.



**STACY ROSS\***  
(*Julia*) has appeared at A.C.T. as Madame Préfêrêe in *The Gamester* and Barbara Fawcett in *The Constant Wife*.

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



**JILL TANNER\***  
(*Mrs. Malaprop*) was last seen in San Francisco with the touring company of *Lettice and Lovage* (starring Julie Harris) at the Curran

Theatre. In the mid 1970s she took over Ruth Kobart's roles in A.C.T. productions of *National Health* and *Hotel Paradiso*. Broadway credits include *Enchanted April*, *Rose, My Fat Friend*, and *No Sex Please, We're British*. Off Broadway she appeared as the Countess in *The Golden Bowl* with Pilobolus Dance Company. She was a company member at the McCarter Theatre and at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, where she played such diverse roles as Paulina in *The Winter's Tale* and Mildred in the world premiere of Horton Foote's *Vernon Early*. She created the role of Mrs. Graves in the premiere of Matthew Barber's *Enchanted April* at Hartford Stage Company. Tanner has played leading roles in almost every regional theater in the United States. She recently finished a successful production of *Retreat from Moscow*, directed by James

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# WHO'S WHO

Warwick, at the Miniature Theatre of Chester in the Berkshires. In addition to acting, she has recorded many books for the American Foundation for the Blind and Recorded Books.



**GREGORY WALLACE\***  
(*Faulkland*) an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in *Gem of*

*the Ocean*, *The Gamester*, *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 Fox Fellow and a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.



**MARK D. WATSON**  
(*Thomas*) appeared as a Businessman and Giles the Fiddler in A.C.T.'s new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*. He

has also performed in A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program productions as Simon Chachava in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* at Zeum Theater, Friar Laurence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Callimacho in *The Mandrake*, and Kreon in *Oedipus Tyrannos*. Other credits include Anne Bogart's production of *War of the Worlds* (24th Humana Festival) and Adam Rapp's *Nocturne*. Watson has appeared at the Colorado and Texas Shakespeare festivals, The Vital Theatre Company, and the New York International Fringe Festival. He is an alumnus of The Actors Theatre of Louisville Acting Apprentice Company.



**T. EDWARD WEBSTER\***  
(*Fag*) most recently appeared in Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa's *The Mystery Plays* at the SF Playhouse.

He has been seen

at A.C.T. in Tom Stoppard's *Night and Day*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Edward II*, *The Time of Your Life*, and the world premiere of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer* at Zeum Theater (dir. Carey Perloff). Bay Area theater credits also include *Our Town*, *Eurydice*, and *Suddenly Last Summer* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *Two Gentlemen of Verona* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; *Cymbeline*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, *Measure for Measure*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *Othello* at California Shakespeare Theater; and *Blue/Orange*, *Lobby Hero*, and *The Man of Destiny* at Aurora Theatre Company. He is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.



**JUD WILLIFORD\***  
(*David*) most recently was seen as Bob Cratchit in A.C.T.'s new adaptation of *A*

*Christmas Carol*. He has also been seen at the Geary Theater in *The Time of Your Life* and in three other seasons of *A Christmas Carol*. A graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, he has also performed in M.F.A. Program productions as The Master in *The Master and Margarita*, Snug in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* at Zeum Theater. Other theater credits include *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, and Trinculo in *The Tempest* at California Shakespeare Theater, Sergius in *Arms and the Man* at Chautauqua Theatre, and Rufus Oakwood in *Saturn: The Musical*. Film credits include *Upside Out* with Olympia Dukakis and *The Tripper*, directed by David Arquette. He received his B.F.A. degree in theater from the University of Evansville.



**JAMES CARPENTER\***  
(*Understudy*) most recently appeared at A.C.T. as Doctor Baugh in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Other A.C.T. credits

include *A Doll's House*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Tempest*, *Mary Stuart*, *Full Moon*, and *The Royal Family*. Bay Area credits also include work at San Jose Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, Marin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and Thick Description. Carpenter has performed at Berkeley Repertory Theatre in more than 30 productions, most recently in *The Peoples Temple*. He is an associate artist with California Shakespeare Theater, where he appeared recently as Ralph Nickleby in *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*. Out-of-town credits include productions at Arizona Theatre Company, Dallas Theater Center, and the Huntington Theatre Company. Film and television

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# WHO'S WHO

credits include *The Rainmaker*, *Metro*, *Singing*, *The Sunflower Boy*, and appearances on "Nash Bridges."



**WANDA McCADDON\***  
(*Understudy*) has appeared at A.C.T. as Vanya's mother in *Uncle Vanya* and the Queen in *Rosencrantz and*

*Guildestern Are Dead*. She performs frequently with Bay Area theaters and was seen most recently as Myrna in *3F4F* at the Magic Theatre, the Stage Manager in *Our Town* at San Francisco Playhouse (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award nomination for best actress), and Gabrielle in *Visions of Kerouac* at Marin Theatre Company. She has also appeared at San Jose Repertory Theatre (Monica in *By the Bog of Cats*), the Santa Cruz Shakespeare Festival (Mrs. McFarlane in *Engaged*, by W. S. Gilbert), and the B Street Theatre in Sacramento (Mag in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*), California Shakespeare Theater, and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. McCaddon is also a well-known audio book reader with more than 600 titles to her credit and is the recipient of 13 Earphones Awards for her narrations.



**NICHOLAS PELCZAR\***  
(*Understudy*) most recently appeared in Word for Word's production of Daniel Handler's *4 Adverbs* at the

Project Artaud Theater. Other Bay Area credits include *Marius* (Brun/Piquoiseau) and *Dublin Carol* (Mark) for Aurora Theatre Company, as well as *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* (Lenville/Frank), *Othello* (Cassio), *All's Well That Ends Well* (Parolles), and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Ensemble),

all for California Shakespeare Theater. Pelczar trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London and at Michael Howard Studios in New York and is a graduate of the University of Virginia.

**LILLIAN GROAG** (*Director*) works in the theater as an actress, writer, and director. Her acting credits include work on and off Broadway and at regional theaters across the country. She has directed for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Old Globe, Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Mark Taper Forum's Taper Too, New York City Opera (NYCO), Chicago Opera Theatre, the People's Light and Theatre Company, California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Glimmerglass Opera, The Juilliard School of Music,

Florentine Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, the Sundance Institute Playwrights Lab, Virginia Opera, Opera San Jose, and the Company of Angels. Her plays *The Ladies of the Camellias*, *The White Rose* (AT&T: *OnStage*® Award for new American plays), *The Magic Fire* (The Kennedy Center Fund for New American Plays), *Menocchio*, and *Midons* have been produced variously by The Old Globe, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Kennedy Center, the Guthrie Theater, Berkeley Rep, Yale Repertory Theatre, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Northlight Theatre, The WPA Theatre, Seattle Rep, the Asolo Theatre Company, The Wilma Theater, People's Light, the Junges Theater Bonn, the Landesbühne Sachsen-Anhalt in Eisleben, the Schauspielhaus in Wuppertal, the Hessisches Landestheater in Marburg, and in Tokyo and Mexico City. She has

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# WHO'S WHO

written translations and adaptations of Lorca, Feydeau, Musset, Marivaux, and Molnar, produced at the Guthrie, the Taper Too, and Missouri Rep. She is an associate artist of The Old Globe. *The Ladies of the Camellias*, *Blood Wedding*, *The White Rose*, and *The Magic Fire* have been published by Dramatists Play Service. Upcoming projects: *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Orfeo ed Euridice* at Glimmerglass, *Dido and Aeneas* and *The Padlock* at Chicago Opera Theatre, *Pirates* at NYCO, *Agrippina* and *Il Trovatore* at Virginia Opera, and *The Imaginary Invalid* at People's Light.

**DONALD EASTMAN** (*Scenic Designer*) designed *Hilda* and *The Creditors* at A.C.T. He has designed for the New York Shakespeare Festival, the Lincoln Center Festival, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and numerous productions with Carey Perloff at Classic Stage Company, including Ezra Pound's *Elektra*. Premiere productions include *On the Open Road*, by Steven Tesich, *Les Trois Dumas*, by Charles Smith, *The Gimmick*, by Dael Orlandersmith, *Such Small Hands*, by Tina Howe, *Constant Star*, by Tazewell Thompson, and the plays of Maria Irene Fornes. Eastman received an OBIE Award for sustained excellence and the 2005 Barrymore Award for outstanding design and is a grantee of the NEA/National Opera Institute. Upcoming productions include *The Turn of the Screw* for Seattle Opera, *On the Verge* at Arena Stage, *The Marriage of Figaro* at Wolf Trap, and *Death in Venice* for New York City Opera.

**BEAVER BAUER** (*Costume Designer*) designed the costumes for A.C.T.'s new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, as well as for A.C.T. productions of *The Goat or, Who is Sylvia?*, *The Gamester*, *A Mother*, *Waiting for Godot*, *Blythe 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*. She is the resident costume designer at Teatro ZinZanni and has designed the Brian Boitano Skating Spectacular for four years. She has also designed for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, 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 *A Christmas Carol*, *The Gamester*, *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; *A Christmas Carol* at Milwaukee Repertory Theater; and last season's *Born Yesterday* at Arena Stage, where she is an affiliated artist. Opera credits include *Il Viaggio a Reims* for Portland Opera, *Don Giovanni* and *The Barber of Seville* for Boston Lyric Opera, *Il Trovatore* for Baltimore Opera, and numerous productions with Wolf Trap Opera Company.

**JAKE RODRIGUEZ** (*Sound Designer*) has carved out sound and music for California Shakespeare Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, A.C.T., Marin Theatre Company, Shotgun Players, and Art Street Theatre. Recent credits include A.C.T.'s new adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* and *The Tempest* at California Shakespeare Theater, and the world premieres of *The Peoples Temple* and *Fêtes de la Nuit* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other credits include: music and design for CalShakes's 2004 productions of *A Comedy of Errors* and *Henry IV*; design for Marin Theatre Company's *Lifex3*; sound design for Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* for Berkeley Rep; and sound for the Shotgun Players and Studio Theatre (D.C.) productions of *The Death of Meyerhold*. Rodriguez won the 2003 Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award in sound design for *The Death of Meyerhold* and a 2004 Princess Grace Award.

**MICHAEL PALLER** (*Dramaturg*) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club and has since been a dramaturg or literary manager at Phoenix Theatre Ensemble (Cleveland), George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams's *Small Craft Warnings* at the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow. Paller is the author of *Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth-Century Drama* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and has written theater and book reviews for the *Washington Post*, *Village Voice*, *Newsday*, and *Mirabella* magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

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

# WHO'S WHO

**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.

**JOSEPH SMELSER\*** (*Stage Manager*) returns to the Bay Area, where he formerly served as resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (favorite productions include Heather MacDonald's *An Almost Holy Picture* and Mary Zimmerman's *Journey to the West*), production manager for Aurora Theatre Company, and production stage manager for the California Shakespeare Festival. For the last eight years, Smelser worked at Seattle Repertory Theatre, where he has been the production stage manager, staff producer, and, most recently, associate artistic director for Sharon Ott. He was also the stage manager for the regional theater tour of Anna Deavere Smith's *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992* and for the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue at Harvard University. This is his first production with A.C.T.

**HEATH BELDEN\*** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) recently worked on A.C.T.'s production of *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*. Belden has stage-managed *A Streetcar Named Desire* for Pacific Alliance Stage Company, *Once Upon a Mattress*, starring Lea DeLaria, for 42nd Street Moon, five operas with Donald Pippin's Pocket Opera, and two seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl's *Eurydice*, Ken Weitzman's *Spin Moves*, and Charles L. Mee's *Wintertime*. He has also been the stage manager for noted directors including Les Waters, Barbara Damashek, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Barricelli. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program.

APR 28–MAY 28

# a number

BY  
**Caryl Churchill**

DIRECTED BY  
**Anna D. Shapiro**

FEATURING  
**Josh Charles AND  
Bill Smitrovich**




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DIRECTED BY Carey Perloff

JUN 8–JUL 9



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# A.C.T. PROFILES



**CAREY PERLOFF** (*Artistic Director*) is celebrating her 14th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed A.C.T.'s acclaimed productions of *A*

*Christmas Carol* (a new adaptation by Perloff with dramaturg Paul Walsh), David Mamet's new adaptation of Granville-Barker's *The Voyage Inheritance*, Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*, Constance Congdon's *A Mother* (an A.C.T.-commissioned adaptation of 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*. Her production of Maria Ndiaye's visionary new work *Hilda*, coproduced at A.C.T.'s second space (Zeum) with Laura Pels Productions, traveled to Washington D.C.'s Studio Theater and then to New York's 59E59 Theater last fall. She was recently awarded France's Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

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 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 premiered in New York in April 2005 as the mainstage offering of the First Light Festival at the Ensemble Studio Theatre. She has collaborated with many notable contemporary writers, most recently Philip Kan Gotanda on his new play *After the War* (an A.C.T. commission) at the Sundance Institute in July 2004 and Robert O'Hara on

*Antebellum* for the 2005 O'Neill Playwrights Conference.

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.



LISA KOHLER

**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, Canadian Stage Company, 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, 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 and has served three terms on the executive committee of the League of Resident Theatres. 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 15 most influential women in the Bay Area nonprofit 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. She has worked with people of all ages in venues around the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. 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.

# GALLERY AT THE GEARY

HANS MAULI: URBAN SCENES IN BLACK AND WHITE



WRAPPED THINKER (LEGION OF HONOR, SAN FRANCISCO, 2000)

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**Black-and-white photographs spanning three decades of work by renowned Swiss photographer Hans Mauli are on view at the Geary, February 10–April 23.** A Bay Area resident, Mauli studied art at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zürich and worked as a graphic designer in Aarau, Copenhagen, London, Paris, and New York. In the late 1960s he worked for the celebrated Herb Lubalin in New York and for the advertising agency Young & Rubicam in Paris. Though graphic design was his profession, he has had an enduring interest in photography ever since taking his earliest photos in the public spaces of Swiss cities and towns. He continued to take pictures, although, without access to a darkroom, didn't make prints of his pictures until many years later.

In 1971, Mauli made a professional switch and established himself in Paris as a successful advertising photographer. After 20 years working in that capacity, he moved to the United States, settling in the Bay Area in 1992, and focused his attention on fine art photography. He rediscovered his old negatives and contact sheets and made the first prints of his early work in the 1990s. Mauli's fine art prints were exhibited by the Mill Valley Art Commission in 1995 and 1996. He participated in the Hotel Triton Contemporary Art Fair in San Francisco in 1996 and had a one-man show at the Consulate General of Switzerland in San Francisco in 2005. One of his prints, *Window Dressing* (Copenhagen, 1960) was acquired by the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art in 1997.

Each Gallery at the Geary artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about Hans Mauli, please visit [www.galleryatthegeary.com](http://www.galleryatthegeary.com) or contact Kevin Simmers at 415.474.1066 / [krscreativeoptns@aol.com](mailto:krscreativeoptns@aol.com). ■

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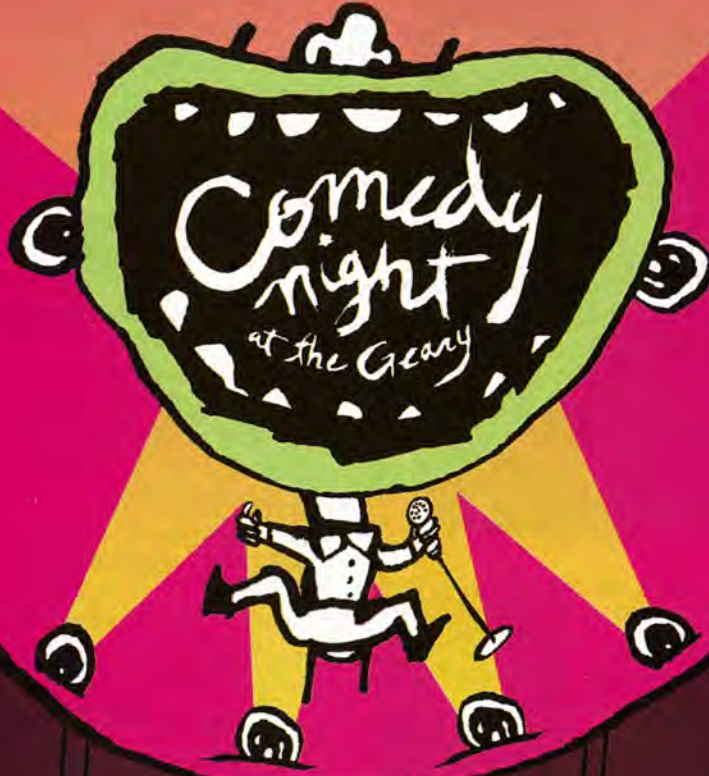
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## A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM

The Class of 2007 presents

### **MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**

by William Shakespeare

Directed by Giles Havergal

Zeum Theater

One of Shakespeare's most delightful, sophisticated, and deeply felt comedies, *Much ADO* features a sparkling battle of wits between dueling lovers Beatrice and Benedick, a love affair between hotheaded young Claudio and Hero that runs anything but smooth, and the bumbling efforts of the hilarious nitwit watchmen who, led—and misled—by the malaprop-spouting Constable Dogberry, accidentally save the day. Join the second-year M.F.A. Program students in a workshop staging directed by A.C.T. favorite Giles Havergal (director of acclaimed A.C.T. productions of *Travels with My Aunt* and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, among others).

April 27, 28 & 29 @ 8 p.m. ■ Tickets: \$10

The Class of 2006 presents

### **NEW FACES '06: SHOWCASE CELEBRATION**

Directed by Dominique Lozano

Zeum Theater

You may have seen members of this year's graduating class perform on the Geary Theater stage in A.C.T.'s new production of the holiday classic *A Christmas Carol*, or on the Zeum stage in last fall's production of Brecht's *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*—and at today's performance class members Claire Brownell, Ann Farrar, and Mark D. Watson enliven the hilarious world of *The Rivals*. At the *New Faces '06 Showcase Celebration*—a benefit performance for the A.C.T. Conservatory—you will have the opportunity to see them all perform together one last time in a diverse program of drama, comedy, and music chosen to highlight each graduate's individual talents. Following this sole public San Francisco performance, the students will head to Los Angeles and New York to present their showcase to theater and film directors, agents, and casting directors. Please come help us launch the careers of these talented young artists.

April 21 @ 8pm ■ Tickets: \$100

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## A.C.T.

### CONSERVATORY PERFORMANCES

#### MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS

##### 2<sup>ND</sup>-YEAR STUDENT WORKSHOP

### *Much ADO About Nothing*

APR 27–29

by William Shakespeare • Directed by Giles Havergal

#### YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS

##### WORLD PREMIERE

A COLLABORATION WITH THEATRE ROYAL BATH

### *Nightingales*

MAR 24–  
APR 2

by Constance Congdon • Directed by Dominique Lozano

##### WORLD PREMIERE

A COLLABORATION WITH THE BIRD SCHOOL OF ROCK

### *Across the Universe: The Music of Lennon and McCartney*

JUN 2–25

Created and Directed by Craig Slaughter  
and Christine Mattison  
Musical Direction by Krista Wigle

All performances at Zeum Theater,  
unless otherwise noted.



Caroline Shauman '06 and G. Kinsale '06 in *Much ADO*. Program production of *Rivals* (photo by Kevin Brown)



## A.C.T.

american conservatory theater

Carey Perloff, artistic director | Heather Kitchen, executive director

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Heather Kitchen  
*Executive Director*

Melissa Smith  
*Conservatory Director*

James Haire  
*Producing Director*

Jeffrey P. Malloy  
*General Manager*

## ARTISTIC

Johanna Pfaelzer, *Associate Artistic Director*  
Meryl Lind Shaw, *Casting Director*  
Michael Paller, *Dramaturg*  
Greg Hubbard, *Casting Associate*  
Vinly Eng, *Producing Associate*

## Associate Artists

René Augesen  
Steven Anthony Jones  
Craig Slaughter  
Gregory Wallace

## Directors

Wendy Gorling  
Lillian Groag  
Israel Hicks  
Morris Panych  
Carey Perloff  
Peter Riegert  
Ruben Santiago-Hudson  
Anna D. Shapiro

## Choreographers

Val Caniparoli  
Luis Perez

## Composers

Karl Lundeberg  
Broderick Santiago  
Bill Sims, Jr.

## Musical Directors

Laura Burton  
Constantine Kitsopoulos

## PRODUCTION

Jeff Rowlings, *Production Manager*  
Jared Hirsch, *Associate Production Manager*  
Miesha Brodsky, *Assistant Production Manager*  
Marion Brechthold, *Production Administrator*

## Designers

John Arnone, *Scenery*  
Michael Carnahan, *Scenery*  
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Donald Eastman, *Scenery*  
Ralph Funicello, *Scenery*  
David Korins, *Scenery*  
Ken MacDonald, *Scenery*  
Walt Spangler, *Scenery*  
Beaver Bauer, *Costumes*  
Nancy Bryant, *Costumes*  
Candice Donnelly, *Costumes*  
Christine Dougherty, *Costumes*  
Callie Floor, *Costumes*  
Karen Perry, *Costumes*  
Sandra Woodall, *Costumes*  
Alan Brodie, *Lighting*  
Russell H. Champa, *Lighting*  
Jane Cox, *Lighting*  
Alexander V. Nichols, *Lighting*  
Nancy Schertler, *Lighting*  
Robert Wierzel, *Lighting*  
Michael Bodeen, *Sound*  
Garth Hemphill, *Sound*  
Lindsay Jones, *Sound*  
Rob Milburn, *Sound*  
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Jake Rodriguez, *Sound*

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James J. Fenton, *Scenery*  
Robert J. Hahn, *Lighting*

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Shaw, *Assistant Stage Managers*

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Jane Henderson-Shea, *Properties Head*  
Miguel Ongpin, *Flyman*  
Tim Wilson, *Head Electrician*  
Mark Pugh, Tim Tunks, Uwe Willenbacher  
*Stagehands*  
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Tavissa Quillyn Granger, *Wardrobe Assistant*  
Robert Marzik, *Hair and Makeup Supervisor*

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Angie Wilson, *Rentals Assistant*

## Interns

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Jeremy Parr, *Costume Rentals*  
Adriane Sherburn-Zimmer, *Properties*

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Debra Selman, *Assistant Theater Manager*  
Eva Ramos, *House Manager*  
Claudia Martinez, Colleen Rosby, *Assistant House Managers*  
Colleen Rosby, *Door Person*  
Oliver Sutton, *Security*

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Lesley Pierce, *Manager*  
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Len Lucas, *Assistant Facilities Manager/30 Grant*  
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Jan Wilcox, *Library Coordinator Volunteer*

## Master of Fine Arts Program

Core Faculty  
René Augesen, *Acting*  
Jeffrey Crockett, *Voice*  
Steven Anthony Jones, *Acting*  
Francine Landes, *Movement*  
Frank Ottiwell, *Alexander Technique*  
Michael Paller, *Director of Humanities*  
Priscilla Regalado, *Modern Dance*  
Jack Sharrar, *Culture and Text*  
Melissa Smith, *Acting*  
Deborah Sussel, *Speech, Verbal Action*  
Gregory Wallace, *Acting*

## Associate Core Faculty

Glen Canin, *Alexander Technique*  
Dawn-Elin Fraser, *Speech, Verbal Action*

## Adjunct Faculty

Mary Baird, *Voice*  
Bonita Bradley, *Character Embodiment*  
Leslie Felbain, *Clown and Mask*  
Gregory Hoffman, *Combat/Weapons*  
Warren David Keith, *Acting*  
Debra Lambert, *Singing*  
Domenique Lozano, *Acting*  
Peter Maleitzke, *Singing*  
Karl Ramsey, *Combat/Weapons*

## Studio A.C.T.

Letitia Bartlett, *Dynamic Movement/Physical Acting/Clothing*  
Cynthia Bassham, *Voice & Speech*  
Kate Brickley, *Acting*  
Mike Carroll, *Acting*  
Laura Derry, *Improvisation*  
Frances Epsen Devlin, *Singing*  
Jeffrey Draper, *Voice & Speech/Acting*  
Paul Finocchiaro, *Acting*  
Dawn-Elin Fraser, *Acting*  
Marvin Greene, *Acting*  
Christopher Herold, *Acting*  
Andrew Hurteau, *Acting*  
Rose Adams Kelly, *Alexander Technique*  
Drew Khalouf, *Voice & Speech/Acting*  
Francine Landes, *Acting*  
Domenique Lozano, *Acting*  
Trina Oliver, *Acting*  
Regina Saisi, *Improvisation*  
Naomi Sanchez, *Singing*  
Barbara Scott, *Improvisation*  
Lynne Soffer, *Speech, Acting*  
Ava Victoria, *Singing*  
Bruce Williams, *Audition Techniques, Acting*

## Young Conservatory

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Dawn-Elin Fraser, *Voice & Speech, Dialects*  
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Domenique Lozano, *Director*  
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Pamela Ricard, *Acting*  
Craig Slaughter, *Director, Acting*  
Krista Wigle, *Musical Theater*  
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## New Plays Program

Constance Congdon, Timothy Mason  
*Resident Playwrights*

## Accompanists

John Conway  
Robert Rutt

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the Web: [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org).

## BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION

### Geary Theater Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12–8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12–6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12–6 p.m. daily. Call 415.749.2ACT and use your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. Subscriptions available by calling 415.749.2250. 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. The lobby opens one hour before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour prior to curtain.

## A.C.T. Merchandise

A.C.T.-branded souvenirs—clothing, jewelry, DVDs, music, 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, sweets, and savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third level. There is also a mini-bar in the main lobby. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

## Beeipers!

If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. Text messaging during the performance is very disruptive and not allowed.

## Perfumes

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

## Emergency Telephone

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

## Latecomers


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

## Listening Systems

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

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

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

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

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

## AFFILIATIONS

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



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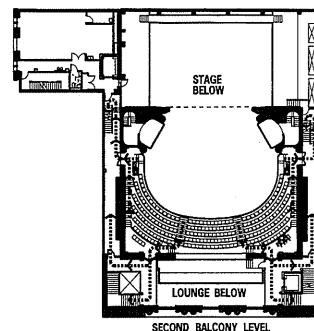
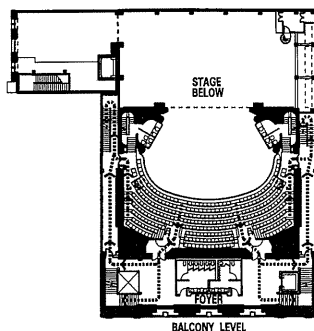
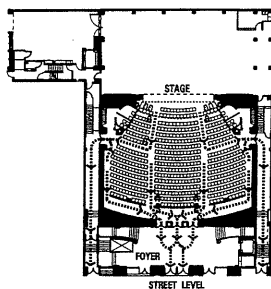


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