HEDDA GABLER

by HENRIK IBSEN
Translated from the Norwegian by
PAUL WALSH
Directed by
RICHARD E. T. WHITE
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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 1963 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 250,000 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 Theater Awards. 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 playwrighting. Since the reopening of the Geary Theater (now the American Conservatory 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 Zatta 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, Desdemond Washington, and Elizabeth Banks are among the conservatory’s distinguished former students. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America’s actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.

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Edward Hastings
Artistic Director 1986-1992

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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Perhaps the most humbling and fascinating thing about getting older is discovering which of your most closely held opinions turn out to be wrong. In my theatrical career, I had always been a Strindberg fan, while the brilliance of Ibsen eluded me.

I responded so strongly to Strindberg’s messiness, his chaos, his heat. Ibsen, by contrast, seemed too careful, too schematic. Then, four years ago, I commissioned Paul Walsh to translate A Doll’s House for our own René Augesen to star in at A.C.T., and my feelings changed completely. Paul’s vivid translation made Ibsen seem visceral and funny and surprising; the play revealed itself to be filled with secrets and charged with eroticism and longing. René brought such artistry, compassion, and sheer presence to the role of Nora that the experience was thrilling for all of us. I realized that there was nothing remotely predictable or careful about Ibsen; his work had simply been obscured by Victorian performance practice into something far rarer than it wanted to be.

So—having watched Paul Walsh and René Augesen tackle A Doll’s House with such passion, it seemed only right to let them lose on Hedda Gabler. Hedda is one of Ibsen’s most mysterious and maddening heroines; she is like a race horse who is forced to live in a corral that is too small and pinched for her own spirit, so she lives in terror of becoming small and pinched herself. We long for Hedda to break loose and fulfill herself even as we question what form that fulfillment could possibly take in a world as circumscribed as hers. What has made the play eternally relevant is not just its examination of the ways in which a culture can suppress individual spirits, but how quickly

we kill off our own best instincts because we are terrified to follow our own passions. Ibsen constantly asks us to question whether it is possible to find meaning in the seeming trivialities of the “everyday,” and if not, how to survive the disjunction between one’s private longings and public persona.

We are delighted to welcome back Richard E. T. White with this production of Hedda Gabler, almost two years after his memorable staging of Albee’s The Goat, or Who’s Been Sleeping, Richard has been an invaluable collaborator with Paul, René, and the entire creative team of Hedda for many months now and has assembled a remarkable company, which includes the protean Jack Willis as Brulé, our beloved Anthony Pisco as Torvald, Stephen Barker Turner (who played so beautifully into archaeological mysteries in last month’s Luminance Duing) as Lovborg, remarkable A.C.T. graduate Flinntre Stevens, returning to us as Thea, and the Bay Area’s esteemed Barbara Oliver and Sharon Lockwood as Berthe and Aunt Juley respectively. What you will hear onstage is a vivid new translation of a play as surprising and fascinating and dangerous as when it was first penned more than a hundred years ago. In presenting this play, we honor the incredible legacy of Ibsen productions begun by Bill Ball and Allen Fletcher at A.C.T. 40 years ago, as we hope to carry that torch into the future.

Welcome!

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

The A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program presents

THE CIDER HOUSE RULES

PART 1: HERE IN ST. CLOUD’S

Adapted by Peter Parnell
From the novel by John Irving
Conceived for the stage by Tom Hale, Jane Jones, and Peter Parnell
Directed by Craig Slaght
March 1–March 17, 2007
Zeum Theater
Tickets | www.act-sf.org | 415.749.2250

“In its brashness, its zest, and its humane alertness... THE CIDER HOUSE RULES IS AN UNEXPECTED WINDFALL.” —THE VILLAGE VOICE

Adapted from the bestselling novel, The Cider House Rules centers on Homer Wells, a boy growing up in a boarding orphanage in rural New England in the early 1900s. As the precocious Homer becomes a skilled (yet unlicensed) physician under the guidance of Dr. Larch, the orphanage’s founder, the pair quickly develop a father-son kinship. But when he develops moral misgivings about the illegal medical procedures Dr. Larch performs, Homer must decide for himself exactly whose rules he wants to break.
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Haynie Gabler
by Henrik Ibsen (1891)
Translated from the Norwegian by Paul Walsh (2007)
Directed by Richard E. T. White

Scenery by Kent Derrey
Costumes by Sandra Woodall
Lighting by Alexander V. Nichols
Original Music and Sound by John Gromada
Dramaturgy by Michael Paller
 Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw
Assistant Director by Dylan Russell

THE CAST
Hedda
René Augesen
Jorgen Tooman
Anthony Fusco
Miss Juliane Tooman
Sharon Lockwood
Mrs. Toon Elstrod
Finnerty Streeses
Commissioner Brack
Jack Willis
Effi Larby
Stephen Barker Turner
Berte
Barbara Oliver

UNDERSTUDIES
Hedda, Mrs. Elstrod—Allison Jean White, Jorgen Tooman, Effi Larby, Commissioner Brack—Andrew Hurteau
Miss Juliane Tooman, Berte—Trish McHolland

STAGE MANAGEMENT TEAM
Elisa Guthertz, Stage Manager
Heath Belden, Assistant Stage Manager
Cassandra Phillipps, Intern

There will be one intermission.

SPECIAL THANKS TO
Christine Sumption, Cornish College of the Arts, Constance Anne Hoffman, Laura Brahnamer
Stan Kramer, Department of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies, UC Berkeley

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Hedda Gabler
7
HENRIK IBSEN, REVOLUTIONARY

BY MICHAEL PALLER

I n 1884, six years before Hoda Gableh, Henrik Ibsen wrote to a young poet, "I do not believe any of us can do anything either or anything else than realize ourselves in truth and spirit." A radical notion, that—that each person's highest duty was to become his own authentic self. It was radical in conservative late-19th century Europe, and, in the largely reactionary theater of the day, revolutionary.

It's still a radical notion. But then Ibsen, in almost every way, was a theatrical radical, even if it's a century of calling him a classic has distanced some of us from that truth. This was a man who, in a poem called "To My Friend Who Talks of Revolutions," calls for wiping the human slate clean with a new Flood: "You unleash the waters to make your mark. I set a torpedo under the Ark." Mere political revolutions he had no use for: "What's really wanted," he wrote, "is a revolution of the spirit of man." He fought his own revolution to break free from much of the convention and constraint of the moral thought of his time; this forced him to reject conventional dramatic thought, as well. He looked at the dominant dramatic forms of his day (and he was intimately familiar with them, having spent a decade running two Norwegian theaters) and turned them from occasions for the display of expert playwrighting craft into vessels deep and flexible enough to contain art.

When Ibsen turned from poetic plays such as Brand and Peer Gynt in the mid 1870s to writing exclusively in prose, two forms of drama dominated Europe: melodrama and the well-made play. Melodrama, popular since the beginning of the 19th century, posited a simple universe consisting of two types of people: the Virtuous and the Evil. The Virtuous were good at the beginning of the play, the middle of the play, and the end; the Evil were similarly unchanged. Since characters never changed, all the conflict between the Virtuous and the Evil was external; the attraction for the audience lay in the deliciously visceral shocks to their nervous systems as the villains murdered the heroine or the hero was falsely accused of a heinous crime. The cliches we know from silent films or from their parodies, of virtuous characters about to be sliced in half by the advancing buzzsaw or the charging locomotive only to be rescued at the last moment by their beloved, were exact recreations of the thrills of 19th-century melodrama.

Melodrama also insisted that the universe was just: the Virtuous were always rewarded, the Evil always punished. Although the great novelists of the era insisted it was to be manifestly absurd, the soothing falsehood, "Just Be Good and you'll be rewarded, in heaven if not on earth," predominated in the theater. It was no coincidence that tyrannical governments across Europe loved melodrama and its soporific, conservative message.

The other form of popular theater was the well-made play. As a reaction against the Romantic drama that predominated it with its emphasis on character above plots that were often distractingly and proudly incoherent, well-made plays stressed plausibility and structural coherence. By Ibsen's time, characters in these plays were so richly developed, so subtly defined that they barely existed in two dimensions, let alone three. They were there to move the plot along and not to interfere with it; their function was largely as a mechanism, not a human being in the world. Indeed, the less messy human psychology they displayed the better. Nothing was meant to disturb the smooth ticking of the plot machine. Nor was anything meant to upset the ideas or prejudices of the audience. By the time Ibsen embarked on his great cycle of prose plays, the well-made play, like the melodrama, presented the image of a static world in which there was one correct way to behave and believe, to—be—the way upheld by the majority—and any antisocial behavior would be rooted out and punished.

This was possible because well-made plays tended to revolve around the revelation of a secret. As the themes in these plays grew more conservative, reflecting the increased political and social conservatism in Europe, the secret became darker and more sinful. When it was inevitably revealed there would be no forgiveness and the character harboring it would be in one way or another removed from the world. Often, this character was a woman, and her secret a sexual one; she had given birth to an illegitimate child, or had been secretly married and divorced before marrying the man who in the play is her husband. In any event, her sin was a transgression of the moral law as understood by the community, and a transgression that would kill her or die a painful tubercular death, with her sacrifice, the community's health and balance would be restored.

The community's moral law was usually represented by a male character who belonged to a respected profession. He was a doctor, a lawyer, or a political figure who, through advice and behavior, demonstrated to people on both sides of the pros/cons the best, most moral way to live. He was the model citizen, as the ironic title of an Ibsen play puts it, he was one of The Pillars of the Community.

Ibsen took melodrama and the well-made play and turned them on their heads. Where they showed a simple moral universe he insisted that the world was complex. If their moral was that social conformity was every person's duty, he would show that the goal was to become the person you truly are, regardless of what the community thought. For a character like Nyn in A Doll's House, there is more than one way to realize one's humanity; for Doctor Stockmann, the community's way is not the wrong way, it's literally the way to death: so he becomes An Enemy of the People. The tragedy for some characters such as Teeman (née Gableh) is that she lacks the courage to become her own authentic self. She is smothered by the community's narrowness and lack of imagination and by her own inability to defy its restraints and make a place for herself in the world as wild and as large as her dreams had been.

The model citizen of her community is Commissioner Brack: a known and respected figure in the town—but whom we come to see as an opportunistic, loathsome blackmailer. That is what Ibsen does to these male exemplars of civic virtue: he kicks them off their pedestals and shows us that no one, not even the most respected pillar of society, has the inherent moral authority to tell another person how to live. In A Doll's House, the traditional model citizen is Dr. Rank. Doctor Dorn was perfect in these roles: they had good reason to be constantly at the main characters' house (a seemingly good middle-class house in which the moral rot has yet to be exposed), their knowledge and good deeds were admired, and the medical metaphor was obvious. Dr. Rank, however, is in love with another man's wife, and that love is the cause of the death of the day, he tells her. Worse still, he carries within him a veneered disease that will kill him soon after the play is over. While audiences were outraged by the sight of a sane middle-class woman leaving her husband and children, many were just as shocked by the notion of a veneered community figure—and the values he represented—so fatally compromised.

Ibsen paid for his boldness by seeing his plays banned across Europe. For many years, only the small "private" theaters, which played just to their members (and thus operated beneath the censorship to which all public European theaters were subject) could produce his plays. When Glueck was produced by such a theater in London in 1891, one paper declared it "as foul and filthy a conceit as has ever been allowed to disgrace the boards of an English theatre."

Yet, in his last years, when he returned from self-imposed exile to Norway, Ibsen was showered with medals and honors (some of which he eagerly solicited), and by World War II he had become one of the most frequently performed playwrights in Europe. As his prime plays became increasingly familiar, he became known as a writer of realistic plays about social problems, which he never considered himself to be.

In fact, Ibsen was the first major playwright since the Romantics to champion individuals over their community—but then, Ibsen, despite the realistic trappings of his prose plays, always remained the Romantic visionary of his early poetic ones. Ibsen showed that even within a single play there was more than one way to be, for in his work, realism is forever bumping up against poetic imagery that resonates beyond our ability to give it a simple meaning. He also invented subtext—the idea that a line of dialogue could have one meaning to the person speaking it, another to the person hearing it, and a third one, contradictory to the other two, to the audience. In doing so, he exposed the deep
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BY MICHAEL PALLER

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It's still a radical notion. But then Ibsen, in almost every way, was a theatrical radical, even if a century of calling him a classic has distorted some of us from that truth. This was a man who, in a poem called "To My Friend Who Talks of Revolutions," calls for wiping the human slate clean with a new flood: "You unleash the waters to make your mark. / I set a torpedo under the Ark." Mere political revolutions he had no use for: "What's really wanted," he wrote, "is a revolution of the spirit of man." He fought his own revolution to break free from much of the convention and constraint that he saw in the moral thought of his time; this forced him to reject conventional dramatic thought, as well. He looked at the dominant dramatic forms of his day (and he was intimately familiar with them, having spent a decade running two Norwegian theaters) and turned them from occasions for the display of expert playwriting craft into vessels deep and flexible enough to contain art.

When Ibsen turned from poetic plays such as Brand and Peer Gynt in the mid-1870s to writing exclusively in prose, two forms of drama dominated Europe: melodrama and the well-made play. Melodrama, popular since the beginning of the 19th century, posited a simple universe consisting of two types of people: the Virtuous and the Evil. The Virtuous were good at the beginning of the play, the middle of the play, and the end; the Evil were similarly unchanged. Since characters never changed, all the conflict between the Virtuous and the Evil was external; the attraction for the audience lay in the deliciously visceral shocks to their nervous systems that the villainous character elicited from the hero or heroine. The horror was accused of being inhuman.

This was possible because well-made plays tended to revolve around the revelation of a secret. As the themes in these plays grew more conservative, reflecting the increased political and social conservatism in Europe, the secret became darker and more sinister. When it was inevitably revealed there would be no forgiveness and the character harboring it would be in one way or another removed from the world. Often, this character was a woman, and her secret a sexual one: she had given birth to an illegitimate child, or had been secretly married and divorced before marrying the man who is in play her husband. In any event, her sin was a transgression of the moral law as understood by the community, and the audience for whom the characters were killed herself or die a painful and tubercular death, with her sacrifice, the community's balance would be restored.

The community's moral law was usually represented by a male character who belonged to a respected profession. He was a doctor, a lawyer, or a political figure who, through advice and behavior, demonstrated to people on both sides of the proscenium the best, most moral way to live. He was the model citizen; as the ironic title of an Ibsen play puts it, he was one of The Pillars of the Community.

Ibsen took melodrama and the well-made play and turned them on their heads. Where they showed a simple moral universe he insisted that the world was complex. If their moral was that social conformity was every person's duty, he would show that the goal was to become the person you truly are, regardless of what the community thought. For a character like Nunn in A Doll's House, there is more than one way to realize one's humanity; for Doctor Stockmann, the community's way is not only the wrong one, it's literally the wrong one to do so: he becomes An Enemy of the People. The tragedy for someone like Telemann (née Gabler) is that she lacks the courage to become her own authentic self. She is smothered by the community's narrowness and lack of imagination and by her own inability to defy its restraints and make a place for herself in the world as wild and as large as her dreams had been.

The model citizen of her community is Commissioner Brack: a known and respected figure in the town—but whom we come to see as an opportunistic, lecherous blackmailer. That is what Ibsen does to these male exemplars of civic virtue: he kicks them off their pedestals and shows us that no one, not even the most respected pillar of society, has the inherent moral authority to tell another person how to live. In A Doll's House, the traditional model citizen is Dr. Randel. Doctor's were popular in these roles; they had good reasons to be constantly at the main characters' house (a seemingly good middle-class house in which the moral not yet to be exposed), their knowledge and good deeds were admired, and the medical metaphor was obvious. Dr. Rank, however, is in love with another man's wife, and is eventually confined to the morally dead. Thus, he tells her. Worse still, he carries within him a veneered disease that will kill him soon after the play is over. While audiences were outraged by the sight of a same middle-class woman leaving her husband and children, many were just as shocked by the notion of a person—be it a model citizen figure—and the values he represented—to be so fatally compromised.

Ibsen paid for his boldness by seeing his plays banned across Europe. For many years, only the small "private" theaters, which played just to their members (and thus operated beneath the censorship to which all public European theaters were subject) could produce his plays. When Gliese was produced by such a theater in London in 1891, one paper declared it "as foul and filthy a concoction as has ever been allowed to disgrace the boards of an English theatre.

Yet, in his last years, when he returned from self-imposed exile to Norway, Ibsen was showered with medals and honors (some of which he eagerly solicited), and by World War II he had become one of the most frequently performed plays worldwide. As his prime roles became increasingly familiar, he became known as a writer of realistic plays about social problems, which he never considered himself to be.

In fact, Ibsen was the first major playwright since the Romans into champion individuals over their community—but then, Ibsen, despite the realistic trappings of his prose plays, always remained the romantic visionary of his early poetic ones. Ibsen showed that even within a single play there was more than one way to be, for his work, realism is forever bumping up against poetic imagery that resonates beyond our ability to give it a simple meaning. He also invented subtext—the idea that a line of dialogue could have one meaning to the person speaking it, another to the person hearing it, and a third one, contradictory, to the other two, to the audience. In doing so, he exposed the deep

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By Edvard Munch

I would far rather be an outcast
upon the bosom of the great world
than be an accomplice to
a moral nothingness
rather a bloody spark that
no hand will shield
that glows wildly and is extinguished
and obliterated with no trace
than glow as a lamp
with a calm measured flame
evening after evening
in that eternal sitting-room
where the corner slumsers
in its blanket-covered cage
and time is slowly counted
by the old sitting-room clock
no spark has the power to light the fire
and to know that it was responsible
for the sound of the fire's roar
was known to responsible for the sea of flames
that broke with tradition
and turned the hourglass upside down.

Munch in His Own Words,
by Poul Erik Tojner
(Prestel Publishing, 2001)

continued on page 12
Hedda Gabler
HEDDA GABLER: MOMENTS OF CHOICE

In 1893, Henrik Ibsen wrote: “Everything I have written has the closest possible connection with what I have lived through inwardly—even if I have not experienced it outwardly. In every new poem or play I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification—for no man can escape the responsibilities and the guilt of the society to which he belongs.” Ibsen was to put that statement into practice less than a decade later, when he—to his joy—published his first major play, "A Doll’s House." The novel was an immediate success, and Ibsen’s fame spread quickly throughout the world. But the success was not without its consequences. The novel was seen as a challenge to the traditional roles of men and women, and Ibsen was attacked by critics and foes alike. But he was not deterred. He continued to write, and his works continued to gain in popularity. In 1955, according to Ibsen biographer Michael Meyer, the intensity of Ibsen’s failed relationship with Emilie was to bring “a new glory, but also a new darkness” into his work. The theme of finding the courage to go against accepted norms of behavior, to “commit a madness,” can be found in "Rosmersholm" and "A Doll’s House." The novel has been translated into over 100 languages and is one of the most frequently performed plays in the world. Ibsen’s legacy lives on, and his works continue to be studied and performed by generations of students and actors. 

A SON OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

A SON OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

BY PAUL WALSH

Born in 1828 to a prominent merchant family in the shipping town of Skien, south of modern-day Oslo on the east coast of Norway, Henrik Ibsen was the eldest of five children. When he was eight, however, his father's business failed and he was left to his own devices. At sixteen he became an apothecary’s apprentice and dreamed of going to university. While he never did attend university, he did start writing plays: nationalist romantic history plays in the grand style popular at the time.

In 1850 Ibsen moved to Christiania (now Oslo), where he met the famous violinist and nationalist Ole Bull, who brought him to the west coast city of Bergen to work in Bull’s Norwegian national theater as playwright-in-residence and stage manager. Ibsen owes his education in the craft of the theater to the years he spent working for Bull and later as artistic director of the Norwegian Theater in Christiania, a position he held from 1857 to 1862 with limited success. During these years he met, courted, and married the spirited Suzannah Trehoven and enjoyed his first modest successes as a playwright. In 1864, Ibsen left Norway for the European continent, where he stayed for 27 years, living in Germany and Italy. From abroad, he focused on Norwegian provincial life, recreating his abandoned home in his mind, turning it over and examining it in all its offensiveness. Out of his observations with a play that achieves a new reach of modernity, he created the modern drama. All but two of his plays are set in Norway, and they are an impressive collection: the philosophical verse drama "Brand" (1866), the picturesque "Peer Gynt" (1867), and the world historical drama "Emperor and Galilean" (1873) about Julius the Apostate, were followed by plays of contemporary content: "The凤凰 of Josef" (1879), "Pillars of Society" (1877), and the “problem plays” that incited such public outcry, including "Doll’s House" (1879), "Ghosts" (1881), and "An Enemy of the People” (1882). As he was vilified in the press for attacking the sanctity of marriage and the family, Ibsen grew in stature and importance, becoming the most famous Scandinavian of his day.

Contemporary accounts give the impression of a man of meticulous temperament—elegant, finicky, and particular in his habits, with a surprising ability to empathize with strangers. It is this quality that sustains his writing. Even as he saw the shortcomings and guessed at the hidden contradictions in the hearts of those he met on the street, he was able to feel their humanity and give expression to it. In doing so, Ibsen created a style that still strikes us today as direct, fresh, and surprisingly conversational. His characters sound like real people facing real problems. He lets him face these problems with emotional complexity and ambiguity. Behind a strikingly modern façade of bravado and evasion lurk subtle intimations of doubt and self-loathing. This is the third of Ibsen’s plays of modern life that I have had the opportunity to translate. In each case, my task in translating Ibsen’s plays for the contemporary stage has been to find the same freshness and emotional directness in English that these plays have in Norwegian and to allow these surprisingly modern characters to once again give voice to contemporary issues without losing sight of the contradictions inherent in modern life.

As the two plays he wrote soon after meeting Emilie, "Hedda Gabler" and "The Master Builder," "Why has he chosen this woman with whom he is not nearly so much in love?" he wondered at the time. "And how is it that we hurt those we love although no one will follow?" His whole being is nothing but a fight against the dark forces within ourselves.

Many have seen the character of Hedda Gabler as Ibsen’s attempt to wrestle with his own failure of will in choosing to reject Emilie. "One reason Hedda stays with us as a character," says director Richard E. T. White, "why we return to her, is that each of us faces those moments in our life when the possibility presents itself of mutating, evolving into something rich and strange, into the person we are meant to be—and what do we do? Ibsen has presented Hedda (and the other fierce and complicated characters in this play) with a set of speculative choices: we participate with them in the struggle to make the right choices."

—Elizabeth Bradson

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SANDY "LADY" GABLER

Hedda Gabler

American Conservatory Theater

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SANDY "LADY" GABLER

Hedda Gabler
HEDDA GABLER: MOMENTS OF CHOICE

In 1891, Henrik Ibsen wrote: “Everything I have written has the closest possible connection with what I have lived through inwardly—even if I have not experienced it outwardly. In every new poem or play I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification—for no man can escape the responsibilities and the guilt of the society to which he belongs.” Ibsen was to put that statement into practice less than a decade later, when he—by then 41 years old and a famous author—met and fell in love with the engaging, charismatic, 19-year-old Emilie Borchardt while visiting the small Tyrolean town of Gosensen. Over the course of several weeks in the summer of 1899, Ibsen and Emilie spent countless hours in conversation together, as Ibsen questioned her endlessly about her hopes and dreams and apparently found in her a revitalizing inspiration for his own work. Although Emilie told an interviewer many years later that Ibsen never so much as kissed her, the actor of their emotional and intellectual connection, as described in her personal journal and her letters to each other, was obviously profound. Ibsen even talked to Emilie about divorcing his wife to travel the world with her, but both were painfully aware of the constraints placed on them by Ibsen’s family obligations and their conventional social environment. Emilie wrote in her journal at the time: “Passion has come when it cannot lead to anything, when both of us are bound by so many ties. Eternal obstacles! Are they in my will? Or are they in their circumstances?”

The frustrating affair came to a head in September in a particularly explosive manner, after which Borchard described Ibsen as a “volcano, so terribly beautiful!” “Oh, the world! If only they could have stamped themselves on my heart more deeply and distinctly! All that has been offered me before was only the pretence at love. This is the true love, the ideal, he says, to which unknowingly I gave myself in his art. At last he is a true poet through pain and renunciation. And yet he is glad of having known me—the most beautiful the too late!”

A SON OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

BY PAUL WALSH

Born in 1828 to a prominent merchant family in the shipping town of Skien, south of modern-day Oslo on the east coast of Norway, Henrik Ibsen was the eldest of five children. When he was eight, however, his father’s business failed and he was left to his own devices. At sixteen he became an apothecary’s apprentice and dreamed of going to university. While he never did attend university, he did start writing plays nationalist romantic history plays in the grand style popular at the time.

In 1850 Ibsen moved to Christiania (now Oslo), where he met the famous violinist and nationalist Ole Bull, who brought him to the west coast city of Bergen to work in Bull’s Norwegian national theater as playwright-in-residence and stage manager. Ibsen owes his education in the craft of the theater to the years he spent working for Bull and later as artistic director of the Norwegian Theater in Christiania, a position he held from 1857 to 1862 with limited success. During these years he met, courted, and married the spirited Susannah Troowen and enjoyed his first modest success as a playwright.

In 1864, Ibsen left Norway for the European continent, where he stayed for 27 years, living in Germany and Italy. From abroad, he focused on Norwegian provincial life, recreating his abandoned home in his mind, turning it over and examining it in all its softness and obsolescence with a play of beauty and a touch of laughter, he created the modern drama. All but two of his plays are set in Norway, and they are an impressive collection: the philosophical verse drama Brand (1866), the picturesque Peer Gynt (1867), and the world historical drama Emperor and Galilean (1873) about Julian the Apostate, were followed by plays of contemporary life: The League of Youth (1881), Pillars of Society (1887), and the “problem plays” that incited such public outcry, including A Doll’s House (1879), Ghosts (1881), and An Enemy of the People (1882). As he was vilified in the press for attacking the sanctity of marriage and the family, Ibsen grew in stature and importance, becoming the most famous Scandinavian of his day. contemporary accounts give the impression of a man of meticulous temperament—elegant, finicky, and punctilious in his habits, with a surprising ability to empathize with strangers. It is this quality that suffices his writing. Even as he saw the shortcomings and guessed at the hidden contradictions in the hearts of those he met on the street, he was able to feel their humanity and give expression to it. In doing so, Ibsen created a style that strikes us today as direct, fresh, and strikingly conversational. His characters sound like real people facing real problems. He has given them the means of constructive action, with emotional complexity and ambiguity. Behind a strikingly modern façade of bravado and evasion lurk subtle intimations of doubt and self-loathing. This is the third of Ibsen’s plays of modern life that I have had the opportunity to translate. In each case, my task in translating Ibsen’s plays for the contemporary stage has been to find some freshness and emotional directness in English that these plays have in Norwegian and to allow these suprisingly modern characters to once again give voice to contemporary issues without losing sight of the contradictions inherent in modern life.

By locating the great moral questions of his day square in the center of the middle-class drawing room and daring to delve into the individual psyche of mortal creatures drowning in a morass of social lies and self-deceptions, Ibsen brought metaphysical profundity to the domestic drama. In this he fathered not only the new drama but also a new morality of individual freedom and desire. But even as these characters speak for change, they find themselves caught in a web of duties and obligations. This is what makes these plays dramatically rather than didactic. Speaking out can destroy as well as liberate; often the rewards of self-discovery are less tangible than the suffering it causes. In plays like The Wild Duck (1884), A Doll’s House (1879), The Lady from the Sea (1888), and Hedda Gabler (1890), Ibsen dug deep into the troubled psyche of the modern world, uncovering its propensity for easy truths and deadly deceptions, diagnosing the crisis of individual faith, and searching unsuccessfully at the despair of contemporary guilt.

In 1891 Ibsen returned to Norway after nearly three decades abroad. Here he wrote his final four plays—The Master Builder (1892), Little Eyolf (1894), John Gabriel Borkman (1896), and When We Dead Awakes (1899)—pushing beyond the limits of stage realism and the problems of social life into a dark and tormented realm of psychological anguish and isolation precipitated by the terror of his own failing creative energy. As a new century dawned, he fell ill and never really recovered. He died in 1906. ■
“Razor Dance”
Written by Richard Thompson

After the death of a thousand kisses Comes the catacomb of tongues Who can split the meanest venom From the poison of their lungs Cruelest dance is the razor dance Circle in and circle around He said, she said, she said, she said Thrill to put the other one down The razor dance, the razor dance This time, gone too far This time, can’t heal the scar I want to break out of this spin But gravity’s pulling me in

The razor dance, the razor dance What flies straighter than an arrow What cuts deeper than a lance Your will may shine on the withering line
Cruelest dance is the razor dance The razor dance, the razor dance Blood boils, tears burn Some people never learn If time could crawl back in its shell And mischievous tongues could untie But that’s not the meaning of hell Take your partners for the razor dance Take your partners for the razor dance Take your partners for the razor dance The razor dance, the razor dance you? me? us? (1996)

A.C.T.
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Koret Visiting Artist Series
In a generous new three-year partnership with A.C.T., Koret is now supporting its popular visiting artist series. As part of its commitment to promoting organizations that contribute to the Bay Area’s diverse cultural landscape, Koret is sponsoring the following exciting new series of talks with acclaimed theatre artists, as well as A.C.T.’s regularly scheduled Audience Exchanges and Provocateurs.

WHAT I LEARNED IN ACTING SCHOOL
Saturday, March 5, 7:30 p.m.
A.C.T. Conservatory alumni discuss lessons in life, art, and “making it” after A.C.T.

Moderator: Steven W. Bailey, Gary Sinyor, and Katya Grant (Director, Pacific Conservatory), Jon Favreau (Producer, Frasier), Marketa Irglová, Sinead O’Connor, and Frances McDormand (A.C.T.’s stagehands)

Free event. Seating: RERVED. Please use promo code ‘KORET’ when making your reservation

HOMETOWNS / THEATER TOWNS
Sunday, April 14, 7:30 p.m.
Artistic directors from leading regional theaters across the country discuss their relationships with their respective communities and how the lift of a community affects the theater.

Guest artists: To be announced.
Moderator: A.C.T. Executive Director Cary Kriloff

Free event. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Hedda Gabler
"Razor Dance"
Written by Richard Thompson

After the death of a thousand kisses
Comes the catacomb of tongues
Who can spit the meanest venom
From the poison of their lungs
Cruelest dance is the razor dance
Circle in and circle around
He said, she said, she said, he said
Thrill to put the other one down
The razor dance, the razor dance
This time, too far
This time, can’t heal the scar
I want to break out of this spin
But gravity’s pulling me in
The razor dance, the razor dance
What flies straighter than an arrow
What cuts deeper than a lance
Your will may shine on the withering line
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Blood boils, tears burn
Some people never learn
If time could crawl back in its shell
And mischievous tongues could untie
But that’s not the meaning of hell
Take your partners for the razor dance
Take your partners for the razor dance
Take your partners for the razor dance
The razor dance

"HENRIK IBSEN, REVOLUTIONARY,”
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

gulf between the words we utter and the ones we actually mean. Now irony is perhaps too much with us, a cheap and easy tool for playwrights who lack the confidence to affirm anything. When Ibsen employed it, however, it was far more than mere words; he brought to theater: it was revolutionary.
RENÉ AUGESEN (Hedda Tenman), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in Hedda Gabler.

Barbara Oliver (Berta), a resident of Berkeley since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, Lady Macbeth in An Ideal Husband, Mrs. Malaprop in The Rivals, and Miss Helen in The Road to Mecca. She has also performed on the stages of Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, Berkeley Stage Company, and the One-Act Theatre. She has received two Drama League and four Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle awards for performance. Also a director, she staged more than a dozen plays during her tenure (1992–2004) as founding artistic director of Berkeley’s Aurora Theatre Company, including Saint Joan, The Penitent, and The Master Builder. She performed with Aurora Theatre as George Sand in Dear Martin and as The Woman in The Chairs, among others. Oliver is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University of Technology.

ANTHONY FUSCO (Jorgen Teeman) has appeared at A.C.T. in Travestis, The Revolt, The Vespers, Fiddlers Green, A Master, Los Licios Dangereux, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Enrica IV, The Minstrelboy, 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, 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. Fusc’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 and is on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

SHARON LOCKWOOD (Miss Juliana Tenman) has appeared at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol (2005 and 2006), The Rose Tattoo, Juno and the Paychquel, The Royal Family, The Changeling, The Threepenny Opera, Galspot, The Marriage of Figaro, and Saturday and Sunday and Monday. She recently returned from La Jolla Playhouse, where she portrayed the 200-year-old woman in Culture Clash’s Zer0 in Hold (San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award)—a role she originated at Berkeley Repertory Theatre last year. Lockwood also originated the role of Barbara in the world premiere at Seattle’s Intiman Theatre of Night of Nixon and Nixon (dir. Bartlett Sher), which recently moved to the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. Locally, Lockwood appears frequently at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and California Shakespeare Theater and was a long-time member of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe. Regional theater credits include productions at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Missouri Repertory Theatre, and the Alley Theatre in Houston.

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FINNERTY STEEVES (Thea Elstvedt) was last seen as Bella in Lost in Venice at the Guthrie Theatre, where she was named outstanding actress of 2006 by the Minneapolis Star Tribune. New York credits include Almaiti, Main at the Daryl Roth Theatre, Martian Bridge at Urban Stages, Tamar at Lincoln Center’s Directors Lab, and Diary of a Chambermaid for Dramahaus N.Y. Regionally, she has appeared in the Wonder of the World at Barrington Stage, Picasso at Baltimore’s Centerstage, The Garden of Hannah List and Private Eyes at Florida Stage, A Christmas Carol at A.C.T., The Heirs and The Diary of Anne Frank at Caldwell Theater Company, and two seasons with the Summer Shorts Festival at City Theatre in Miami. Her film and television credits include The Great New Wonderful, Filmic Achievement, Water under the Bridge, "Law & Order," and "The Sopeanos." Steeves is a proud member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program graduating class of 2002.

STEPHEN BARKER TURNER (Evert Lockwood) was recently seen in Luminous Daunting at the Magic Theatre. He has appeared with California Shakespeare Theatre, where he is an associate artist, as Orlando in As You Like It, Niccolò Nicchieli in The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and Posthumus in Cymbeline. Off-Broadway credits include productions with the New York Shakespeare Festival, Classic Stage Company, Roundabout Theatre Company, MCC Theatre, and Primary Stages. Other theater credits include premieres of Theresa Rebeck’s The Scene and Gina Gionfriddo’s After Ashby, both at The Humana Festival of New American Plays. Film and television credits include Satellite (2005 Tribeca Film Festival), The Warrior Class, Frommmeur (FBS), "Sex and the City," "Law & Order," and the upcoming Red State Project.

JACK WILLIS (Commissioneer Bliss) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol, The Little Foxes, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The BEST Black. He is an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, Art, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credit include The Restorable Rise of Artaud Us, World of Mirrors, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Foolproof. He recently appeared in Gypsy with Patri LaPone at the Recinta Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Crucil Will Rock, The Out of Towners, Leave Home in Peace, Problem Child, "Law & Order," "Ed," and "Dallas." Willis is a cofounder of Araba Repertory.

JACK WILLIS (Commissioneer Bliss) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol, The Little Foxes, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The BEST Black. He is an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, Art, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credit include The Restorable Rise of Artaud Us, World of Mirrors, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Foolproof. He recently appeared in Gypsy with Patri LaPone at the Recinta Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Crucil Will Rock, The Out of Towners, Leave Home in Peace, Problem Child, "Law & Order," "Ed," and "Dallas." Willis is a cofounder of Araba Repertory.

ANDREW HURTEAU (Unidentified) was last seen as Count Almaviva in Michael Butler’s production of The Marriage of Figaro at Center REPertory Theatre, where he also appeared as Max Prince in Neil Simon’s Laughter on the 23rd Floor, directed by Barbara Damashek. Hurneau’s previous Charles Chevelre and 12 other roles in California Shakespeare Theatre’s The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. He has worked at theaters throughout the Bay Area over the past 13 years, including Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Word for Word, and Napa Valley Repertory Theatre. At the Magic Theatre, he appeared in Nino Rota’s Golden Rain, The Rules of Charity, Shroderfin’s Girlfriend, Summertime, and Bronz. At Berkeley Repertory Theatre, he has appeared in A Million Miles for the Milestone and Rincisneco. He is a company member of Playground.

TRISH MULHOLLAND (Understudy) was last seen at A.C.T. in W. Somerset Maugham’s The Circle and The Constant Wife. She has appeared in theaters throughout the Bay Area, most recently at Aurora Theatre Company in Oscar Wilde’s Salome. Mulholland is a graduate of the National Theatre of Australia, was a...
RENE AUGESEN

A associate artist and core acting
company member, made her A.C.T.
debut in The Misfits and has appeared in recent seasons in Celebration.

BARBARA OLIVER

Berta, a resident of Berkeley, since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, being a graduate of The Juilliard School and on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

SHARON LOCKWOOD

Miss Julietta Tanzer, who has appeared at A.C.T. in

ANTHONY FUSCO

Joyce Teasman) has appeared at A.C.T. in
Travesties, The Reels, The Vagabond, The Old Lady of

FINNERTY STEEVES

Thea Eulster, was last seen at Bells in Lost in Venice at the Guthrie Theatre, where she was

Who's Who in Hedda Gabler

RENE AUGESEN (Hedda Tamson), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in The Misfits and has appeared in recent seasons in Celebration. She is an associate artist of the Berkeley Repertory Theatre Company and has appeared in The Diary of Anne Frank at the Rep. She has also appeared inThe Grapes of Wrath, The Rehearsal, and The City of Women.

BARBARA OLIVER (Berta), is a resident of Berkeley since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, being a graduate of The Juilliard School and on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

SHARON LOCKWOOD (Miss Julietta Tanzer) has appeared at A.C.T. in Christmas Carol (2005 and 2006), The Rehearsal (2007), and the Paycock, The Royal Family, The Changeling, The God of Carnage, The Mountaintop, and The City of Women. She recently returned from the Julliard Playhouse, where she portrayed the 200-year-old woman in Women in the City. She is also a founding artistic director of Berkeley's Auroa Theatre Company, including Saint Joan, The Penitent, and The Master Builder. She performed with Aurora Theatre as George Sand in Dear Master and as The Woman in The Chairs, among others. Oliver is a graduate of Carnegie Institute of Technology.

FINNERTY STEEVES (Thea Eulster), was last seen at Bells in Lost in Venice at the Guthrie Theatre, where she was

Who's Who

Tribune. New York credits include

BARBARA OLIVER (Berta), is a resident of Berkeley since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, being a graduate of The Juilliard School and on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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The actor and stage manager employed to this production are members of Actors Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

14 American Conservatory Theater

15 Hedda Gabler
top-rated radio announcer in Australia and Europe, and has appeared in various television roles. She is a core member of Berkeley's Shotgun Players and has received Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award nominations and a Peter Award (Australian radio). Favorite roles include Mother Courage, Agave, Marion (the predatory reader in Caryl Churchill's first play, Owners), and Woman in the West Cast premiere of Edward Albee's The Play about the Baby.

ALLISON JEN WHITE (Student/Assistant, an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in The Circle, 1989). She is also a new addition to the company. She has been seen at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and the 2004 production of A Christmas Carol. She was also seen last spring in A.C.T. First Look presentations of The Shaker's Chorus, Dream With, and Waiting for the Flood at Zero Theatre. She appeared in Chez Mzi, a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at The Players Theatre in New York and played Christin in a Light Winter at the Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theatre. She performed with Killing My Lobster in Gussied Up at the Magic Theatre and was seen at Venue 9 and The Marsh in her solo performance piece Whiteness. White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

RICHARD E. T. WHITE (Director) is chair of the theater department at San Francisco's Commonwealth of the Arts. He joined the department in 1995 after a three-year residency in Japan, where he taught at Toin and Gakushuin universities and was resident director at Tokyo's Theatre Company Saburos. In addition to serving as artistic director of San Francisco's Eureka Theatre and the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, White has directed theatrical productions throughout the United States, including A.C.T. (The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, The Marriage of Figaro, Taking Steps), Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Northlight Theatre and Court Theatre in Chicago, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the California Shakespeare Festival, and ACT Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, Instanam Theatre, and Seattle Repertory Theatre in Seattle. In collaboration with a live performer, Sid Weckler, and a composer, Paul Densmore, he designed and directed the electronic opera Stom Flur, which has been performed at venues throughout the United States and Europe and will be presented at Project Artaud Theater in March 2007. White has received two Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards and eight Drama-Loge Awards for outstanding direction.

PAUL WALSH (Translated) is head of dramaturgy and director of graduate programs at the University of Massachusetts. For nine years (1996–2005), he was dramaturg and director of humanities at A.C.T., where he collaborated on dozens of productions, including his own translations of August Strindberg’s Creations (1992) and Henrik Ibsen’s Doll’s House (2004). His translation of Ibsen’s The Master Builder was produced to acclaim last February by Aurora Theatre Company in Berkeley, and his translation of Strindberg’s Ghost Sonata was read as part of Cutting Ball Theatre’s “Hidden Classics Reading Series” at the Modern Times Bookstore last November. Last year, Walsh was named artistic director of the New Harmony Project, a new play development residency program dedicated to serving writers who celebrate the human spirit. Walsh has worked as dramaturg, translator and co-author with theater companies across the country, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune, with whom he collaborated on such award-winning productions as Cities of Benediction and A Dream, Don Juan Giovanni, Germinale, and The Hunchback of Notre Dame. Walsh serves on the board of directors of Literacy Managers and Dramaturges of the Americas. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto.

KENT DORSEY’s (Scene Designer) scenic design has been seen at A.C.T. in South Pacific in Chicago, The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, Light Up the Sky, Ragtime, The Pope & the Witch, and The Marriage of Figaro. Lighting designs at A.C.T. include The Pope and the Witch, Bon Appetit! and The Late Great Ladies of Blue and Jazz. He has designed scenery and/or lighting for most of the major regional theater companies in the United States, including the Kennedy Center, The Ahmanson Center Theatre Group, The Old Globe (more than 95 productions), La Jolla Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Geffen, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, and the Cleveland Play House. His New York theater productions include All About Tom, Alligators Take Another Design, The Cocktail Hour, Silence, Soid, and Yen Yen Do You Die. Dorseym designed the scenery and lighting for Silent/Chromatic, a world premiere in Tokyo by The Subact Acting Company.

SANDRA WOODALL (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for A.C.T. (Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Doll’s House, The Danish, The Daughters of Maifi, Light Up the Sky, and Sister Joan), San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Stuttgart Ballet, Singapore Ballet, and the Magic Theatre. Recent productions include Cinderella, Sona's Swan, and The Little Dream for the Bolshoi Ballet, Sleeping Beauty for the Norwegian National Ballet, and Fifth Season for San Francisco Ballet. She was visual designer for the eighth- and ninth-anniversary productions of Sun A-Sun, and designed Like a Dream at Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and designed sets and costumes for Don Giovanni at The National Taiwan Symphony and for Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera ballet Antar for the San Francisco Symphony. Conducted by Michael Tilson Thorton. Other design credits include the Eureka Theatre Company’s original production of Angels in America. Her work has been shown in numerous gallery exhibitions, and she is the recipient of numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards for costume design.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS’s (Lighting Designer) design works span from lighting and projections to scenery and costumes for dance, theater, opera, and art installations. His designs have been set on the stage of such companies as Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, the Alley Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Huntington Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, the National Theatre of Taiwan, San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, ODC/SE, Hubbard Street Dance, and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and have supported the work of the Kuros Quartet, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, and Roze Ecker. Nichols has served as resident designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Pennsylvania.

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ALLISON JANE WHITE
(Surgeon/Actor), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in "The Circle," "The Real Thing" (both directed by Carey Perloff), and the 2004 production of "A Christmas Carol." She was also seen last spring in A.C.T. First Look presentations of "The Shaker Chair," "Drama Queens," and "Waiting for the Fiddler at Zuma Theater." She appeared in "Chen Mai," a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at The Players Theatre in New York and played Christin in "Red Light Winter" at the Owl Theatre. She performed with Killing My Lobster at the Magic Theatre and was seen at Venue 9 and The Marsh in her solo performance piece "Whiteness." White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

RICHARD E. WHITE (Director) is chair of the theatre department at Sarah's College of the Arts. He joined the department in 1995 after a three-year residency in Japan, where he taught in Toin and Gakushuin universities and was resident director at Tokyo's Theatre Company Suburu. In addition to serving as artistic director of San Francisco's Eureka Theatre and the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, White has directed numerous theatrical productions throughout the United States, including A.C.T.'s "The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?" American Buffalo, "The Marriage of Figaro, Taking Steps," Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the National Light and Court Theatre in Chicago, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the California Shakespeare Festival, and ACT Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, Irinmar Theatre, and Seattle Repertory Theatre in Seattle. In collaboration with Libertine/performer Rinde Eckert and composer Paul Dresher, he developed and directed the electronic opera "Stair Fire," which has been performed at venues throughout the United States and Europe and will be presented at Project Artaud Theatre in March 2007. White has received nine Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards and eight Drama-Logue Awards for outstanding direction.

PAUL WALSH (Translator) is head of dramaturgy and director of graduate programs at the University of Massachusetts. For nine years (1996–2005), he was dramaturg and director of humanities at A.C.T., where he collaborated on dozens of productions, including his own translations of August Strindberg's "Creditor" (1992) and Henrik Ibsen's "A Doll's House" (2004). His translation of Ibsen's "The Master Builder" was produced to acclaim last February by Aurora Theatre Company in Berkeley, and his translation of Strindberg's "Ghost Sonata" was read as part of Cutting Ball Theatre's "Hidden Classics, Reading Series" at the Modern Times Bookstore last November. Last year, Walsh was named artistic director of the New Harmony Project, a new-play development residency program dedicated to serving writers who celebrate the human spirit. Walsh has worked as dramaturg, translator, and co-author with theater companies across the country, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune, with whom he collaborated on such award-winning productions as "Cones of Dunwich," "The Dream," "Don Juan Giovannini, Geronimo," and "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." Walsh serves on the board of directors of Literary Managers and Dramaturges of the Americas. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto.

KENT DORES'S (Scenic Designer) scenic design has been seen at A.C.T. in "Sonnets from the Balcony," "The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?" American Buffalo, "Light Up the Sky," "Pygmalion," "The Play and the Whole," and "The Marriage of Figaro." Lighting designs at A.C.T. include "The Play and the Whole," "Pygmalion," and the "Late Great Ladies of Blues and Jazz." He has designed scenery and/or lighting for most of the major regional theater companies in the United States, including the Kennedy Center, The Alhambra Center Theater Group, The Old Globe (more than 95 productions), La Jolla Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Griffin, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, and the Cleveland Play House. His New York theatre productions include "Abente," "Alligator Tales," "Another Dream," "The Cocktail Hour," "Silence, Smoke," and "Yangzey Deng Xian You." Dories designed the scenery and lighting for "Silence/Chromes," a world premiere in Tokyo by The Sobute Acting Company.

SANDRA WOODALL (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for A.C.T. ("On a Hot Tin Roof," "A Doll's House," "The Dazzle," "The Deuce of Mafi, Light Up the Sky," and "Sundown, Suzie Joon," and most recently for San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Stuttgart Ballet, Singapore Ballet, the Magic Theatre. Recent productions include "Cinderella" for the Bolshoi Ballet, "Sleeping Beauty" for the Norwegian National Ballet, and "Fair" for San Francisco Ballet. She was visual director for the eight-hour world premiere of Stan Lai's "They Come Like A Dream at Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and designed sets and costumes for "Don Giovanni" at the National Taiwan Symphony and for Rimsky-Korsakov's "opera ballet" "Midas" for the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Other design credits include the Eureka Theatre Company's original production of "Angels in America." Her work has been shown in numerous gallery exhibitions, and she is the recipient of numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards for costume design.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS's (Lighting Designer) design works span from lighting and projections to scenery and costumes for dance, theater, opera, and art installations. His designs have been set on the stages of such companies as Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, the Alley Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Huntington Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, the National Theatre of Taiwan, San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alvin Alley American Dance Theater, ODC/SF, Hubbard Street Dance, and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and have supported the work of the Kurosawa Quartet, the Paul Dresher Ensemble, and Rinde Eckert. Nichols has served as resident designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Pennsylvania.
Who's Who

Ballet, and Hartford Ballet and as lighting director for American Ballet Theatre. Other dance credits include designs for choreographers Christopher d’Amboise, Ann Carlson, Val Caniparoli, Sonya Delavade, Bill T. Jones, Jean Grand Maitre, Mark Morris, Milda Nissen, Kevin O’Day, Kirk Peterson, Stephen Petronio, Dwight Rhoden, Michael Smuin, and Brenda Way. Other projects include the exterior lighting of the Sentinel Building, Francis Ford Coppola’s historic headquarters in San Francisco, and structural and lighting design for the traveling art installation Circle of Memory.

JOHN GROMADA’s (Composer and Sound Designer) work has been heard on Broadway, including original music for Hauntedhouse, House, Hail, Hail, A Streetcar Named Desire, Theater Angy Mens, Proge, Sigh Unsum, Eighteen Wounded, The Retreat from Moscow, Enchanted April, Summer and Smoke, Holiday, and A Few Good Men. At The Public Theater, Gromada has worked on Henry V, Julius Caesar, Tartuffe, The Skirt, Macbeth, The Swan, and many others. Other New York credits include Pig Farm, Bath at Leipzig, Godspell at Palm Springs, On the Mountain, Small Tragedy, Denny and the Deep Blue Sea, Lizard’s Tail, August, and many others. Regional credits include more than 200 productions at leading theaters here and abroad. Gromada has received numerous awards, including Drama Desk, OBIE, Eddy, Drama League, and ASCAP awards, and is an NEA Opera Music Theatre Fellow.

MICHAEL PALLER (Drumstagram)

joined A.C.T. as resident drumstagram and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre, the primary hotel tells a story.

Who’s Who

THEATRE (Cleveland), then worked as a playwright and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. His dramaturgic work on the premiere of Tennessee Williams’s Small Craft Warnings at the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow. Paller is the author of Gentlemen Callers; Tennessee Williams, Humanism and the Lost Literary Century Drama (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). AND has written theater and book reviews for the Washington Post, Village Voice, Newsday, and Milwaukee magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage Manager) most recently worked at A.C.T. on The Little Foxes and On Death in Venice at Zuanz Theatre. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include A Number, Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf, The Good Body, Lecoz James, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Misalliance, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Tartuffe, Mary Stuart, The Revue, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Rhinoceros, Big Love, Civil Suit, Collapsed Stories, and Cloud Tactons at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include Ice Tender’s The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Village Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre.

HEATH BELDEN (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of The Rivers and 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 three seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weitzman’s Spin Move, and Charles L. Mee’s Winterstice. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Lee Waters, Barbara Damashek, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Baricelli. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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Steve Gubser
WHO’S WHO

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MICHAEL PALLER (Director) joined A.C.T. as assistant director and director of humanities in August 2003. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre.

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Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for 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 Sovietmenisk Theatre in Moscow. Pallier is the author of Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homenagem, 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.

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HEATH BLEDEN (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of The Roths and Sensual Perversion in Chicago. Bleden has stage-managed A Streetcar Named Desire for Pacific Alliance Stage Company, Once Upon a Mattress, starring Lea DeLaria, for 48th Street Moscow, five operas with Donald Pippin’s Pocket Opera, and three seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Bleden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weisnar’s Spin Move, and Charles L. Mee’s Winterstein. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Lee Waters, Barbara Damashek, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Marcelli. Bleden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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Saint Mary’s College of California
CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is celebrating her 15th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she succeeded six acclaimed productions of Tom Stoppard's Travesties, Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill's Happy End (including a cast album recording), a Christmas Carol (a new adaptation by Perloff with Paul Weihs), David Mamet's adaptation of George Bernard Shaw's Mrs. Warren's Profession, Thaddeus King's The Liberty Irene, Stoppard's The Real Thing, Constance Congdon's A Mother (an A.C.T.-commissioned adaptation of Gertrude Stein's The Second Skeleton), Rolf Harris' A Doll's House, Beckerman's Writing for Gruber, Stoppard's Night and Day, and Beckett's Krapp's Last Tape. Her production of Maria Nika's Nile, coproduced at A.C.T.'s Fordham space (Zuum) with Laura Poh Productions, traveled to Washington, D.C.'s Studio Theatre and then to New York's 59-Eight Theatre in 2005. Last year she asked the famous Chevalier de l'Ode des Arts et des Lettres.

Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theatre, Perloff has directed three nominations of American Theatre's A.C.T. the American prizes of Stoppard's The Invention of Love and Ismet Inok and Pirandello's亲戚 and the Room, A.C.T.-commissioned translations of Hisoca, The Misunderstood, Euvra IV, Mary Stuart, and Ucie Keyes, the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's singer's Bag and acclaimed productions of The Thompson Opening, Old Times, Aradia, The Red Tavern, Antigone, Creditor, Hons, and the Tropes. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premiere of Marc Blitzstein's As for Anansi, David Lang/MacWellman's The Difficulty of Flying a Field, and the west coast premiere of her own play The Calumet of Rhodes (a finalist for the Saulo Smith Blackburn Award). Her play Luminance: Dating, which will be seen at the Magic Theatre in December (in a coproduction with A.C.T.), was developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshoped in the summer of 2004 at New York Stage & Film in New York in April 2005 at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, and will be produced by Dramatists Play Service this fall. Her new play about the flood, which was directed by Jeanie Jolly as part of A.C.T.'s First Look festival in January. She has collaborated with many notable contemporary writers, as recently Philip Kan Gota and, on his new play after The War at the Sundance Institute in 2004 (in an A.C.T. commission that will premiere in 2007), and Robert O'Hara, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of 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 San Francisco, and has served on the executive 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 named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past three years.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director), now in her 11th season with A.C.T., has strengthened the organization's infrastructure and expanded on the company's expansion to include the development and performance of new work and the addition of a third season to A.C.T.'s acclaimed Main Stage 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, the New Black & White, New Play Centre, Vancouver, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax. As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a free-theatre 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 Performing Arts in Edmonton. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the boards and executive committees of the Commerical Club of Calgary, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of 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 San Francisco, and has served on the executive 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 named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past three years.

MELISSA SMITH (Consortium Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory's Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. in 1995, Smith served as director of the program in theatre and dance at Stanford University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in various around the country, including teaching in Hawai'i and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-Broadway plays as well as in regional theatres, including A.C.T. in 2004 the toured London and Birmingham (UK) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of Continuum Divine Smith holds a B.A. in English and theatre from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale Drama School.

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theatre as an actor and Stage Manager. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of Theatre: Read! Drinks a Little and Curry (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 Booth's Little Eddy (directed by Matthew W. Mason) and Shaw's Arms and the Man. Hain joined A.C.T. in 1973. He and his department have produced over 60 theater / arts events, including the first production of the A.C.T. Performing Arts Concerts. Kitchen authored the benchmark study Economic Impact of the Performing Arts in Edmonton. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the boards and executive committees of the Commerical Club of Calgary, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of 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 San Francisco, and has served on the executive 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 named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past three years.

producers circle

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Producers Circle members make annual gifts of $500 or more to A.C.T. Their extraordinary generosity supports season productions, acts起到在 our conservatory and art education in our community. In addition to supporting the rigorous and art in the artistic development of A.C.T.'s seasons by attending production meetings and taking part in various behind-the-scenes opportunities. We are privileged to recognize those members' generosity during the December 1-31, 2005 period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Knaub at 415.439.2335 or membership@artstheatre.org.

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on this year’s After the War at the Sundance Institute in 2004 (an A.C.T. commission that will premiere here in 2007), and Robert O’Hara, on 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 San Francisco, and has served three terms on the executive of the League of Resident Theatres. She has also participated in 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 named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past three years.

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A.C.T. PROFILES

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A.C.T. proudly acknowledges the following donors to The Nor'West Generations Fund who are helping to secure our future for the next generation of theater artists and audiences. The Nor'West Generations Fund will enable us to double our endowment as a foundation for the support of our artistic endeavors and the development of new media. We invite all our loyal partners to join us in singing the great theater generations for to come. For more information, contact Janet Johnson at 415-441-8196 or janetjohnson@act-sf.org.

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The Corporate Partner Circle is comprised of businesses that support the artistic missions of A.C.T., including A.C.T.’s investment in the next generation of theater artists and audiences and its vital educational and community outreach programs. Corporate Partner Circle members receive the full benefits of collaborating with a nationally recognized theater company, including exclusive entertainment and networking opportunities, unique access to respected artists and performers, complimentary tickets, and targeted brand recognition. For information about how to become a member of the A.C.T. Corporate Partner Circle, please contact Leslie Rice at 415-441-2477 or believe@act-sf.org.

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As A.C.T. is both a cultural and an educational institution, many employers will match individual employee contributions to the company. The following corporations have generously matched gifts made by their employees to A.C.T., multiplying the impact of those contributions.

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The following members of the A.C.T. community were remembered or honored with gifts made in their names.

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The following foundations and government agencies provide vital support for A.C.T. For more information please contact Leslie Rice at 415-441-2477 or believe@act-sf.org.

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