The Little Foxes

by Lillian Hellman

Directed by Laird Williamson
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About A.C.T.

American Conservatory Theater nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and revitalize 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 210,000 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 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 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 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. Diana Glover, Annette Bening, Derrek 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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American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1965 by William Ball.

Edward Hastings
Artistic Director 1996–1992

A.C.T. Box Office
415.749.2424

A.C.T. Website
www.act.org

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From the Artistic Director

Dear Friends,

I'm not sure Lillian Hellman could ever have imagined how prescient and frighteningly apropos her wicked and beautifully observed play The Little Foxes would seem, 70 years after its creation. We find ourselves yet again at a moment in which American business is struggling to defend itself against an onslaught of charges of corporate malfeasance, so it is perhaps illustrative, and certainly fascinating, to reexamine the infamous, yet strangely familiar, Hubbards and their less-than-moral commercial practices.

In The Little Foxes, Hellman has written a melodrama in the best sense of the word (as director Laird Williamson said in his opening remarks to the cast, a melodrama is really "a play in which you can't wait to find out what happens next"), as we witness the members of a Southern family tearing each other apart in the desperate attempt to expand their financial empire. To my mind, The Little Foxes is not so much a play about the evils of money as it is an exploration of the deep vacuum within certain people that renders money-making their only seemingly viable option in life. This is a play that has meant a great deal to the American theater since its 1939 Broadway debut, and it resonated strongly with San Francisco audiences in its production at a young American Conservatory Theater in 1979.

As I'm sure you know by now, this season marks A.C.T.'s 40th anniversary in San Francisco. One of the wonderful things about an occasion like this is that it allows us to look back at the remarkable achievements of those who came before us, as well as to dream about the future. In selecting plays for this season, I went back through the entire list of A.C.T.'s past repertoire, and it reminded me how deeply committed this theater has always been to three things: great ideas, great language, and great acting. The Little Foxes is an opportunity to exercise all of those values, which is why it feels so uniquely appropriate for this celebratory season. It means a great deal to me that this production is being led by one of the most imaginative and visionary directors in A.C.T.'s history, Laird Williamson, and that it is being designed by the great Robert Blackman, who had an enormous influence on A.C.T.'s legendary work in the company's early years.

It is equally exciting to me that this production features an ensemble filled with A.C.T.'s history: Julia Gibson, who mesmerized audiences as Harper in A.C.T.'s extraordinary Angels in America in 1994-95; Nicholas Hornam, who died so beautifully in Dinner at Eight during my very first season at A.C.T.; Jack Willis, whose Big Daddy (Get a Hoofer Thing) and Sammy Wurtz (Happy End) exploded on this stage last season; Rhonie Washington, who has portrayed both Ebenezer Scrooge and Jacob Marley's Ghost in A.C.T.'s beloved A Christmas Carol; Robert Parsons, who has graced the A.C.T. stage in projects as diverse as The Black Rider, Buried Child, The Colossus of Rhodes, and Good; and two highly talented A.C.T. M.F.A. Program students, John Bull and Grace Held, who are making their A.C.T. mainstage debuts. With The Little Foxes we also welcome the gifted Jacqueline Antoinette to the American Conservatory Theater stage as the powerful Regina, along with ensemble members Margarete Robinson, last seen here in 1992's Young, and Stephan Kuhl, previously at A.C.T. in Frank Loesser's How Christian Andromed. Collectively, the artists in this play spin the history of A.C.T.

Welcome to the veneral world of The Little Foxes.

Yours,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

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Directed by Mark Rucker

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Welcome to the visual world of The Little Foxes.

Yours,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director
The Little Foxes
(1979)
by Lillian Hellman
Directed by Latif Williamson

Scenery and Costumes by Robert Blackman
Lighting by Russell H. Champ
Sound by Steve Schoenbeck
Dramaturgy by Michael Pallar
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)
Addie
Margarette Robinson
Rhomie Washington
Julia Gibson
Robert Parson
John Bull
Jacqueline Antaramian
Stephen Kurn
Jack Willis
Grace Heid
Nicholas Hormann

UNDERSTUDIES
Benjamin—Stephen Kurn; Oscar, Horace, William—Charles Shaw Robinson
Regina, Birdie—Carrie Puff; Alexandra—Allison Jean White
Les, Joel Rainwater, Addie—Dawn-Elle Fraser; Cat—Michael Gene Sullivan

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF
Eliza Guthrie, Stage Manager
Nicole Dickerson, Assistant Stage Manager
Cassandra Phillips, Intern

TIME AND PLACE
The living room of the Giddens House, in a small town in the South, in the spring of 1900.

Act I. Evening
Act II. Morning, one week later
Act III. Late afternoon, two weeks later

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by Lillian Hellman
Directed by Laird Williamson

Scenery and Costumes by Robert Blackman
Lighting by Russell H. Charmpa
Sound by Steve Schoenbeck
Dramaturgy by Michael Paller
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw

THE CAST
(in order of appearance)
Addie Margarette Robinson
Cat Rhonnie Washington
Birdie Hubard Julia Gibson
Oscar Hubard Robert Parsons
Lola Hubard John Bull
Regina Giddens Jacqueline Antaramian
William Marshall Stephen Krum
Benjamin Hubard Jack Willis
Alexandra Giddens Grace Heid
Horace Giddens Nicholas Hornmann

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A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF LILLIAN HELLMAN

Lillian Hellman was born in New Orleans to Julia (Newhouse) Hellman, who came from Alabama, and Max B. Hellman, from New Orleans. After briefly attending New York (1922–24) and Columbia (1924) universities, she began her literary career writing book reviews for the New York Herald Tribune and publishing short stories in The Paris Comer. In 1930 she moved with her husband, screenwriter and pen pal Arthur Koestler, to Hollywood and found work as a script reader for MGM. "When I first went out to Hollywood one heard talk from writers about whitewashing," Hellman once said. "But you are not to be tempted unless you want to be a whore." In Hollywood Hellman met detective fiction writer Dashiell Hammett, who—despite numerous affairs on both sides—would remain her intimate companion and literary mentor until his death in 1961.

Hellman’s marriage to Koestler ended in amicable divorce in 1932, and she returned to New York. At Hammett’s prompting, Hellman adapted a true story about two Scottish schoolteachers charged by a young student with lesbianism into her first play, The Children’s Hour (1934). The play ran for nearly 700 performances and brought Hellman instant recognition. In 1935 Hellman went to work for Samuel Goldwyn as a screenwriter on such films as Dark Angel (1935), The Three Little Girls in Blue (1934), Dead End (1938), and The Adventures of Don Juan (1936). Hellman’s Hollywood success softened the failure of her next play, Days to Come (1936).

In 1936–37 Hellman traveled in Europe. She met Ernest Hemingway and other American writers living in Paris, visited Spain, where she witnessed the horrors of the civil war, and traveled to the Soviet Union. From the mid-1930s, Hellman was frequently involved in liberal and leftist activities and organizations. While she worked on the plays Watch on the Rhine (1941), The Children’s Hour (1944), and Another Part of the Forest (1946), the prequel to The Little Foxes, Hammett stopped writing, started drinking more heavily, and concentrated on working for the American Communist Party. Hellman followed his lead. Both Hellman and Hammett were members of the League of American Writers, the Screen Writers Guild, the American Labor Party, and the American League for Peace and Democracy, all well-known fronts for communist organisations. Although both Hammett and Hellman were later raided by other party members for being more figureheads, both were called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee and both pleaded the Fifth Amendment, refusing to name anyone as a member of a communist organization. Hellman went to jail and Hammett was blacklisted by Hollywood. In a letter to the committee she wrote: "To hurt innocent people whom I knew many years ago in order to save myself is, to me, inhuman and indecent and dishonorable. I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year's fashions." For the rest of her life, however, Hellman would deny that she was ever a communist.

In the 1950s, unable to work in Hollywood, Hellman turned her attention to adapting plays—Memorandum (1950), The Long (1956), based on Jean Anouilh’s play L’Alouette about Joan of Arc, and Voltaire’s Caudet (1957), with music by Leonard Bernstein. She wrote three more original plays: The Autumn Garden (1951), her last collaboration with Hammett; Toys in the Attic (1960); and My Mother, My Father, and Me (1963).

In the 1960s Hellman began teaching and writing her memoir trilogy: An Unfinished Woman (1969), which describes her childhood in New Orleans, years in Hollywood, and her relationship with Hammett; Pentimento (1973), dealing with her youth and early days in New York; and Saved Time (1976), recalling her experiences with HUAC. Her final works included the novel Myyl (1980) and Eating Together, Recipes and Recollections (1984).

Hellman was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, received the Gold Medal for Drama from the National Institute of Arts and Letters, and was awarded the MacDowell Medal. She died on June 30, 1984.

FAME AND FOXES

BY DEBORAH MARTINSON

IN OCTOBER 1937, THEN 32-YEAR-OLD PLAYRIGHT LILLIAN HELLMAN, STILL REELING FROM THE DISAPPROVAL THAT BEFELL HER BEFORE HER SECOND Broadway Play, Days to Come—all the more dismaying since it followed her tremendously successful 1934 Broadway debut with The Children’s Hour—traveled to Spain to support the Spanish Republicans in their civil war. There she was deeply moved by the deprivation and humiliation of the combatants struggling against fascist rule.

Hellman first thought of doing another play coming out of Spain. She didn’t know what spurred her creatively; she “only thought about the play to keep from thinking about the plane ride and to keep from admitting to myself that in a few hours I would be having a fine dinner in Toulouse. I would be so lonesome that I would forget about my friends in Spain who would not eat so much that night or the next one.” She had been afraid to write another play and used politics to avoid it, but she had not lost touch with Broadway drama or Hollywood cinema. Embarrassed by Days to Come, she knew that she would have to write a drama that tapped into her own vision of the world from her own background.

From that premise, she began the six two-inch-thick notebooks of research that gave factual reality to those southern voices from her past. She said she tripped into “a giant tangled time-jungle” of her family history. Then she drew from herself “the half-remembered, half-observed, the half-understood which you need so much as you begin to write.”

Hellman did not invent the carnivorous, sly, comic-civil Hubards as much as expose them. Her script tells the story of the Hubbard family of Alabama, ready to sell out anyone, including their own kin and what is left of their souls, to gain wealth and standing. Through their antics she traced the excesses of capitalists who crush their own history and the “little people” around them, including family and friends. Hellman created a world populated by killers and victims, by eaters and the eaten, by foxes and geese. These characters, not their politics, carried the play and drew on her family connection to the United Fruit Company, notorious for its entrepreneurial interference in the politics and economics of banana republics.

TAKEN FROM THE FOXES, THE LITTLE FOXES THAT SPOIL THE VINES

FOR OUR VINES HAVE TENDER GRAPES.

—Song of Solomon (2:15)

I HAD MEANT THE AUDIENCE TO RECOGNIZE SOME PART OF THEMSELVES IN THE MONEY-DOMINATED HUBBARDS; I HAD NOT MEANT PEOPLE TO THINK OF THEM AS VILLAINS TO WHOM THEY HAD NO CONNECTION.

—Lillian Hellman
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Ilillian Hellman was born in New Orleans to Julia (Newhouse) Hellman, who came from Alabama, and Max B. Hellman, from New Orleans. After briefly attending New York (1922–24) and Columbia (1924) universities, she began her literary career writing book reviews for the New York Herald Tribune and publishing short stories in The Paris Comer. In 1930 she moved with her husband, screenwriter and poet, John A. Kohler, to Hollywood and found work as a script reader for MGM. "When I first went out to Hollywood one heard talk from writers about whoring," Hellman once said. "But you are not thumped to unless you want to be a whore." In Hollywood, Hellman met detective fiction writer Dashiell Hammett, who despite numerous affairs on both sides would remain her intimate companion and literary mentor until his death in 1962.

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In 1935 Hellman went to work for Samuel Goldwyn as a screenwriter on such films as Dark Angel (1935), These Three (her adaptation of The Children's Hour, 1936), Dead End (1937), and The North Star (1943). Hellman's Hollywood success softened the failure of her next play, Days of Care (1936).

In 1936–37 Hellman traveled in Europe. She met Ernest Hemingway and The Little Foxes (1939) is among Hellman's best-known works. The Goldwyn studio purchased the rights for the play and its success on Broadway, Arthur Kohler, Dorothy Parker, and Alan Campbell were hired to do the final work on Hellman's script for William Wyler's film adaptation, which starred Bette Davis, Herbert Marshall, and Teresa Wright.

From the mid 1930s, Hellman was frequently involved in liberal and leftist activities and organizations. While she worked on the plays Watch on the Rhine (1941), The Shadow Box (1944), and An Enemy of the People (1946), the prequel to The Little Foxes, Hammett stopped writing, started drinking more heavily, and concentrated on working for the American Communist Party. Hellman followed his lead. Both Hellman and Hammett were members of the League of American Writers, the Screen Writers Guild, the American Labor Party, and the American League for Peace and Democracy, all well-known fronts for communist organizations. Although both Hammett and Hellman were later ridiculed by other party members for being mere figureheads, both were called to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee and both pleaded the Fifth Amendment, refusing to name anyone as a member of a communist organization. Hammett went to jail and Hellman was blacklisted by Hollywood. In a letter to the committee she wrote:

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To stage the vibrant Fours, Hellman turned again to Herman Shumlin, who had produced and directed The Children's Hour. His intensity was exactly right. At 41 he intoned the 34-year-old Hellman's daily life with great energy pleased to produce and direct The Little Fanes at the National, his lucky theater. With its early-Renaissance-style ravings and gold embellishments in warm Italian walnut, the theater's interior provided a backdrop for southern Old World ambience; its yellow bulbs lighting the gilt ornaments warmed the room—perfect for the cold, steely crispiness marked by southern charm played out within...

Shumlin's chief co-op was casting Tallulah Bankhead had as Regina, one of America's "most cunning female villains." Bankhead epimorized Regina, though Hellman never could say it aloud. Bankhead, delighted by her wild reputation ("It's pure as the driven snow"), drew on her own sins and fragilities to fit the character. The actress called Regina "the best role I ever had in my life--" "Fours opened to packed crowds and rave reviews on February 15, 1939. Time magazine hailed it as "the season's most terse and biting drama," and the all-important New York Times hailed it as vivid theater, with Bankhead giving the finest performance of her career. However, some critics complained that it was too melodramatic or "a sinister play about sinister people." The play originally ran for 410 performances, and it has become an American classic.

The Little Fanes took Hellman "smack-dab before the portals of immortality." The Pulitzer didn't reward her nor the Drama Critics' Circle, though she gathered six votes of twelve and split the committee, forcing a tie. She began to be leery about such prizes. (When Oldham opened in 1943, she wrote exhuband Arthur Kober, "It should get the Critics prize, being far better than the pretentious shit that will get it.") If prizes didn't matter, success did, and reinstatement in the sacred world of Broadway. She asked her literary executors to guard The Little Fanes production after her death, to "be careful" with it. Its success came to mean her. It proved her worth as the "most relentless" of female playwrights—a "species far more deadly than the male." The Little Fanes tautened Sam Goldwyn from the minute he heard of its success as a Broadway play in New York, Goldwyn snapped up the rights to it, despite his story editor Edwin Knoepfle's warning that the story was "too caustic." Rumor had it that Goldwyn blew up: "I don't care what it costs, I want it!" And he got it. Then he asked Hellman to adjust the script for a more conventional audience. Hellman's screenplay begins simply. For simplicity's sake the words on the screen appear: "Little Fanes have lived in all times, in all places. This family happened to live in the Deep South in 1900." The film was afoot, as much as anything made in Hollywood could be. Critics acclaimed it as "a whole new course of motion-picturing making." During its filming, Hellman remained remarkably calm in the Hollywood hoops and ultimately agreed with critics who felt that Wyle's adaptation of the film gave it its greatness. The Little Fanes was nominated for nine Oscars: best picture, director, screenplay, actress (Bette Davis, as Regina), and two for best supporting actress (Patricia Collinge, as Birdie, and Teresa Wright, as Alexandra)—the most Goldwyn ever had ever received for a single production. But there were no winners. Up against Citizen Kane and The Maltese Falcon, the runaway winner in 1941 was John Ford's quintessentially sentimental drama How Green Was My Valley.
The Little Fences has its 1946 prequel, Another Part of the Forest, focused on the Hubbard family drama and community exploitation. The checkerboard of Hellman's wealthy southern family and knowledge of the South created an atmosphere as universal and steaminly southern as Tennessee Williams's later plays. The Hubbards speak their particular southern language: witty, salty, charming, and malicious. Yet Hellman insisted her fuses live everywhere, telling a New Orleans audience years later, "I simply happened to write about the South because I knew the people and I knew the place...but I didn't mean it to be just for the South." In the world of business without ethics "those fictional turn-of-the-century robber barons bear an all too close resemblance" to greedy "fine gentlemen" of any time and place.

In early drafts she made Regina's abysmal treatment of her husband Horace more in keeping with her own extended family history, as she moves him first to an attic, then to a store quarters. Hellman originally wrote in a scene pulled from family legend: Regina rode a horse in circles outside the house as Horace died without his medicine. Retelling some of this family history for Pomegranate, Hellman reflected, "All that seemed fine for the play. But it wasn't; life had been too big, too modulated for writing." So she whittled it down to the more believable act of Regina withholding Horace's medicine. What the audience sees is brutality under the patina of soft southern accents and gruff, appealing humor. The irony simmers beneath.

Money and power, or the desire for it, dominated Hellman's Hubbards. Oscar bears the land and his wife, Birdie. Ben, shrewd and cunning, controls the family business. Sister Regina manipulates and schemes and gets the upper hand over them all, as she disregards her own family in blatant self-interest and exploitation. Tallulah Bankhead later wrote of the character she brought to life, "Regina Giddens was a rapacious bitch, cruel and callous. Enraged in acid by Miss Hellman." So sinfully, so flamboyantly was Regina that Marc Blitzstein wrote Regina, an opera adapted from The Little Fences and produced on Broadway in 1949. Hellman praised it as "the most original of American operas and the most daring." The complexity of the human spirit, the tragedy and comedy of all motivations and actions was Hellman's dramatic subject.

A popular story circulated that after Fences opened, Hellman and her father, Max, stood at the back of the theatre. "Miss Hellman leaned over and whispered into the ear of a mutual friend, 'Ask Papa if he recognizes any of us.'" Years later when an interviewer commented, "Your family is incredible," Hellman replied, "Everybody's family is incredible." Hellman objected to attempts to find exact correspondences that make the play personal rather than universal, though her Uncle Samuel Zemurray's first partner was named Asbell Hubbard, and Regina Marx was part of Hellman's family tree.

After she unearthed her family and set them in motion, she went to her own experts for advice. Most important of all was Dedicated Hammett, her own writing career besmeared by alcoholism, who recovered sobriety long enough to help her do what he could no longer do himself—write a hit.

Hellman maintained that all of her plays, The Little Fences owed most to Hammett. The two had stayed together because their bonds were strong, their ties complicated. They understood each other. Hammett's flair gave her freedom; his rigid codes required her own. But one of the strongest aspects of their relationship was their work together on a play. Hammett loved Hellman and gave her plays more than his editorial talent. He gave himself, knowing she gave credit, too. Her plays became her center and she always credited him for his part, an odd symbiosis. He joked, "You're practically breaking my heart with letters about the play. I think we're going to have to make a rule that you're not to tackle any work when I'm not around to spur, quiet, good, peaceful, and tease you." Work gave Hammett a reason to sober up temporally. He demanded and got from her a disciplined work ethic he could no longer stomach. Whether or not he had a leg up on the screen appears "little fuses have lived in all times, in all places. This family happened to live in the Deep South in 1900."

The film was footloose, as much as anything made in Hollywood could. Critics acclaim it as a "whole new course of motion-picture making." During its filming, Hellman remained remarkably calm in the Hollywood hopefuls and ultimately agreed with critics who felt that Wyler's adaptation of the film gave it its greatness. The Little Fences was nominated for nine Oscars: best picture, director, screenplay, actress (Bette Davis, as Regina), and two for best supporting actress (Patricia Collinge, as Birdie, and Teresa Wright, as Alexandra)—the most Goldwyn ever had received for a single production. But there were no winners. Up against Citizen Kane and The Maltese Falcon, the runaway winner in 1941 was John Ford's quintessentially sentimental drama How Green Was My Valley. The play is nearly half a century old; new, but alas, it has scarcely dated. On, neither, it has dated only in one respect: Hellman underlines her message about the evil of human greed; preaching to us about an upcoming society of Hubbard-style ruthless grasping; and we do not need to hear this message emphasized, the truth of her predictions is all too obvious in today's world. Indeed, during the earlier scenes of the play, the crowd plots and counterplots of the Hubbards get laughed from the audience—it is, a laffter, the laughter of recognition.

Who’s Who in The Little Foxes

Jacqueline Antaramian* (Regina Giddens) was recently nominated for a Barrymore Award for her performance in the one-woman play Nine Parts of Desire. She was also recently seen in Daniel Sullivan’s production of John Casen on Broadway with Denzel Washington. Her extensive theater credits include Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra, Seraphina in The Rose Tattoo, Emirne in Tartuffe, Hannah in Arcadia, Sabina in Skin of Our Teeth, Olivia in Twelfth Night, Portia in Julius Caesar, Elvira in Blithe Spirit, Abbie in Desire under the Elms, Rose in Dancing at Lughnasa, Mahala in Homeward/Katul at Intiman Theatre and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the title roles of Candida, Miss Julie, and Hedda Gabler. Television and film credits include “Law & Order,” “Third Watch,” “Diagnosis Murder,” “The Sopranos,” and “The Sige.”

Julia Gibson* (Brodie Huband) was last seen at A.C.T. as Harper in Angels in America and recently performed in the national tour of The Enronated.

New York credits include Miss Julie (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), Stealing Secrets and Punching People (SPF 04), A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Love’s Labor’s Lost, Henry VIII, and Measure for Measure (New York Shakespeare Festival), The Learned Ladies and Candida (Classic Stage Company), and performances with Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Circle in the Square, Roundabout Theatre Company, Solo Repertory Theatre, and The Irish Repertory Theatre. Regional credits include Talli’s Folly (George Street Playhouse), Helena in All’s Well That Ends Well (Goodman Theatre), and performances with Dallas Theater Center, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Philadelphia Festival Theater, and Long Wharf Theatre. Television and film credits include Changing Lanes, Second Born, “Law & Order,” “Law & Order: Criminal Intent,” “Spin City,” “One Life to Live,” and the upcoming film Michael Clayton. Gibson is a graduate of NYU’s Graduate Acting Program and works as a director and as a voice for Recorded Books.

John Bull (Leo Huband), who grew up in Mountain View and got his start at Los Altos Youth Theatre, is a member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2007. This past summer he was part of the tenth-anniversary Guthrie Experience, which performed Confluence in Minneapolis.

At UC Berkeley, he majored in religious studies, minored in theater, dance, and performance studies, and was seen at Zellerbach Playhouse as Marat in Marat/ Sade, Sac Tissue in Mandarin, and Lucifer (among 11 roles) in Divine Comedy. Denve Project. He also attended Wake Forest University in North Carolina for two years, where he appeared in The Matchmaker and Suddenly Last Summer and won the declamation in the Atlantic Coast Conference Outdoor Track and Field Championships.

Grace Heid* (Alexandra Giddens) is a member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2007. Grace’s roles in the M.F.A. Program include Hero in Much Ado about Nothing, Phoebe in The Lovers of the Little Foxes, Woman B in Three Tall Women, and Annie in Anais Reprogram. Heid worked at The New Harmony Project Playwrights Conference for several years, where she acted in readings of Donnis Daley’s Deeply Stained and Jim Leonard’s Anatomy of Gray. Heid also studied at the Prima Del Teatro in San Miniato, Italy, last summer. She received her B.F.A. in theater performance from the University of Evansville.

Nicholas Horman* (Horace Giddens) last appeared at A.C.T. in Dinner at Eight.

He began his career performing two Broadway repertory seasons at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre under Harold Prince and the New Phoenix Repertory Company. Since then he has appeared on Broadway and off-Broadway in new plays at Second Stage, The Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, and Manhattan Theatre Club. Regional appearances include productions at La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, the Mark Taper Forum, the Ahmanson Theatre, South Coast Repertory, the McCarthe Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, the Kennedy Center Theatre, the Williamsburg Theatre Festival, and the Sundance Theatre Lab. Roles include Cynro de Bergetri, Benedick, Angels, Henry Higgins, Arsenio Finch, Eloy Case, and Lawrence Olivier. Most recently, he performed in the West Coast premieres of The Retreat from Moscou at South Coast Repertory and the New York premiere of Charles Mee’s Winterword. He has made numerous television appearances. Horman is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

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The Little Foxes 15
WHO'S WHO IN THE LITTLE FOXES

JACQUELINE ANTARAMIAN* (Regina Giddens) was recently nominated for a Barrymore Award for her performance in the one-woman play Nine Parts of Desire. She was also recently seen in Daniel Sullivan's production of John Guare on Broadway with Denzel Washington. Her extensive theater credits include Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra, Serafina in The Rose Tattoo, Elmire in Tartuffe, Hannah in Arcadia, Sabina in Skin of Our Teeth, Olivia in Twelfth Night, Portia in Julius Caesar, Elinor in Elton Spirit, Abbie in Desire under the Elms, Rose in Dancing at Lughnasa, Mahala in Homebody/Kabul at Intiman Theatre and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the title roles of Candida, Miss Julie, and Hedda Gabler. Television and film credits include "Law & Order," "Third Watch," "Diagnosis Murder," "The Sopranos," and "The Sige."

JULIA GIBSON* (Bettie Hubbard) was last seen at A.C.T. as Harper in Angels in America and recently performed in the national tour of The Exonerated.

New York credits include Miss Julie (Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre), Stealing Secrets and Punching People (SPF '04); A Midsummer Night's Dream, Love's Labour's Lost, Henry VIII, and Measure for Measure (New York Shakespeare Festival); The Learned Ladies and Candida (Classic Stage Company); and performances with Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Circle in the Square, Roundabout Theatre Company, Soho Repertory Theatre, and The Irish Repertory Theatre. Regional credits include Tallulah's Folly (George Street Playhouse), Helena in All's Well That Ends Well (Goodman Theatre), and performances with Dallas Theater Center, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Philadelphia Festival Theatre, and Long Wharf Theatre. Television and film credits include Changing Lanes, Second Born, "Law & Order," "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," "Spin City," "One Life to Live," and the upcoming film Michael Clayton. Gibson is a graduate of NYU's Graduate Acting Program and works as a director and as a voice for Recorded Books.

NICHOLAS HORMANN* (Horace Giddens) last appeared at A.C.T. in Dinner at Eight.

He began his career performing two Broadway repertory seasons at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre under Harold Prince and the New Phoenix Repertory Company. Since then he has appeared on Broadway and off Broadway in new plays at Second Stage, The Public Theater, Playwrights Horizons, and Manhattan Theatre Club. Regional appearances include productions at La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, the Mark Taper Forum, the Ahmanson Theatre, South Coast Repertory, the McCarter Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, the Kennedy Center Theatre, the Williams Theatre Festival, and the Sundance Theatre Lab. Roles include Cyano de Bergheris, Benedick, Angels, Henry Higgins, Arturo Frisch, Eloy Case, and Lawrence Olivier. Most recently, he performed in the West Coast premiere of The Retreat from Mossw at South Coast Repertory and the New York premiere of Charles Hove's Watermill. He has made numerous television appearances. Hormann is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

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Grace Heid
(Alexandra Giddens) is a member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2007.
Favorite roles in the M.F.A. Program include Hero in Much Ado about Nothing, Phoebe in The Lovers of the Nile, and Woman B in Three Tall Women, and Annie in Anael Fragments.

Heid worked at The New Harmony Project Playwrights Conference for several years, where she acted in readings of Donna DeZee's Dopey Stellina and Jim Leonard's Anatomy of Gray. Heid also studied at the Prima Del Teatro in San Miniato, Italy, last summer. She received her B.F.A. in theater performance from the University of Evansville.
Who's Who

STEPHEN KLUIN* (William Marshall) returns to A.C.T., where previously he sang in the choras and understudied Tony Award-winning actor John Glover in the world premiere of the musical Frank Loesser’s H sanctioned Christmas. Recent credits include Frederick in A Little Night Music and Greg in a “back-by-popular-demand” production of Sylvia, both of which were directed by Bay Area notable Hector Correa. Khan’s Shakespearean credits include Kent (King Lear), Antonio (The Merchant of Venice), and King Alonso (The Tempest) at California Shakespeare Theater and Feste (Twelfth Night), Benedick (Much Ado about Nothing), and Boyet (Lear’s Lear’s Last) at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. Khan has worked regional theater from Seattle to Miami. Favorite roles include Sherlock Holmes, Tartuffe, and Robert in Proof. In New York, he made numerous appearances on “Guiding Light” and “One Life to Live.”

MARGARETTE ROBINSON* (Addie) was last seen at A.C.T. as Fotina in Pygmalion. Other Bay Area credits include the recent production of Permanent Collection at Aurora Theatre Company. Credits at the Marines Memorial Theatre, From the Mississippi Delta (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle (BATCC) Award) and Wilder, Wilder, Wilder (BATCC Award) at Marin Theatre Company, The Trial of One Starved Black Woman vs. Mammy Louise and Sofieeta in Home at the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, and Shub in the Mac Oustia Mystery at TheatreWorks. She also performed in Deuctas in the Garden of Loves, directed by Oskar Eustis, at Actaeon Theatre of Louisville.

ROBERT PARSONS* (Osar Huddahla) is seen at A.C.T. in The Black Rider, Buried Child, The Colossus of Rhodes, and Grist. Regional credits include productions of The Black Rider at the Sydney Festival and the Ahmanson Theatre, Miss Saigon at the Alley Theatre, The Heirs at Arizona Theatre Company, One Flew South at New Repertory Theatre, Cyrano de Bergerac and Two Gentlemen of Verona at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and K at HERE in New York. Bay Area credits include appearances at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Stage Company, Marin Theatre Company, Word for Word, the Willows Theatre Company, Shotgun Players, The Z Space Studio, Sacramento Theatre Company, and TheatreWorks. Film credits include Black August and Almost Famous.

RHONNIE WASHINGTON* (Gail) is part of the Department of Theatre Arts at San Francisco State University. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, majoring in directing with a minor in theater history and criticism. His most recent FSU directing project was The Bestia, by Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter. His recent acting credits include Carl in Rue St. Marie, Theatre Company and Troy Maxon in August Wilson’s Fences. Other roles include Polonius in Hamlet and Aegestus in Men of Tennessee and Aegestus.

Who’s Who

in The Comedy of Errors at Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and both Ebenezer Scrooge and Jacob Marley’s Ghost in A.C.T.’s A Christmas Carol. Washington has been honored twice by the San Francisco Bay Guardian with a Goldie Award.

JACK WILLS* (Benjamin Hubbard) most recently was seen in Gypsy with Patti LuPone at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. He has appeared in more than 175 productions throughout the United States, including recent appearances at A.C.T. in Happy End, Gai on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Black Rider. 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 Theater Center. On Broadway, Wills has appeared in Juliet Caesar, The Crucible, Art, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credits include The Resistible Rise of Arturo U, World of Miracles, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Vanish. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Cradle Will Rock, The Out-of- Towners, Love Hurts, I Came in Peace, Problem Child, “Law & Order,” “Ed,” and “Dallas.” Wills is a co-founder of Arabi Repertory.

DAWN ELIN FRASER* (Understudy) has recently been seen at A.C.T. in the world premiere of The Imaginary Invalid at Stanford as well as Candy Perloff’s Wasting for the Flood in the First Look series last season. In May, she played Jen/Josie Tusca in the West Coast premiere of Craig Lucas’s Small Tragedy at Aurora Theatre Company. Other Bay Area credits include the world premiere of The Hanging of Winchester at San Jose Repertory Theatre, Phoenix at the Latin Agile and Receiving Memories at Center REPertory Company, the world premiere of Charles Grodin’s The Right Kind of People at the Magic Theatre, and as Noree, critically acclaimed production of Betrayal. She has also performed with The Shee Theatre Company, Woman’s Will, Word for Word, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Film credits includeProps in Hotel (Rob Nilsson) and Open Diary (Dina Cirrincione). She also earned a master’s degree in educational theater from New York University and is the co-founder of StageWrite, Building Literacy through Theatre.

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Who’s Who

STEPHEN KLUM∗ (William Marshall) returns to A.C.T., where previously he sang in the chorus and understudied Tony Award–winning actor John Glover in the world premiere of the musical Frank Loesser’s Haun Christian Andersen. Recent credits include Frederick in A Little Night Music and Greg in a “back-by-popular-demand” production of Sylvia, both of which were directed by Bay Area notable Hector Correa. Klum’s Shakespearean credits include Kent (King Lear), Antonio (The Merchant of Venice), and King Alonso (The Tempest) at California Shakespeare Theater and Feste (Twelfth Night), Benedick (Much Ado about Nothing), and Boyet (Lear’s Latest) at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. Klum has worked regional theater from Seattle to Miami. Favorite roles include Sherlock Holmes, Tartuffe, and Robert in Proof. In New York, he made numerous appearances on "Guiding Light" and "One Life to Live."

MARGARETTE ROBINSON∗ (Adèle) was last seen at A.C.T. as Faustina in Poong. Other Bay Area credits include the recent production of Permanent Collection at Aurora Theatre Company. Current at the Marines Memorial Theatre, From the Mississippi Delta (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle [BATCC] Award) and Wilder, Wilder, Wilder (BATCC Award) at Marin Theatre Company, The Trial of One Sherbrooke Black Woman vs. Mammy Louise and Saffronia Muse and Home at the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, and Shabir’s the Moor Outa Misery at Theatreworks. She also performed in Donets in the Garden of Eden, directed by Oskar Eustis, at Actors Theatre of Louisville.


Who’s Who

in The Comedy of Errors at Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and both Ebenezer Scrooge and Jacob Marley’s Ghost in A.C.T.'s A Christmas Carol. Washington has been honored twice by the San Francisco Bay Guardian with a Goldie Award.

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RHONNIE WASHINGTON∗ (Gail) is part of the Department of Theatre Arts at San Francisco State University. He earned his Ph.D. in theater at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, majoring in directing with a minor in theater history and criticism. His most recent SFSU directing project was Betrayal, by Nobel Prize winner Harold Pinter. His recent acting credits include Carl in Rue St. Denis at Theatre Company and Troy Maxson in August Wilson’s Fences. Other roles include Polonius in Hamlet and Aegon.

DAWN-ELIN FRASER∗ (Understudy) has performed with the San Francisco Mime Troupe, A.C.T., the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Chautauqua Theatre Conservatory, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Campo Santo, and many up-and-coming local companies, including Encore Theatre Company (with whom she performed in the long-running production of Adam Rock’s Fueled Flight). Specializing in voice, speech, and dialects, she is currently an associate core faculty member in the A.C.T. Conservatory. She has held residencies and/or taught master classes at Stanford University, the Young California Writers’ Project, San Francisco State University, and the SF Arts Education Project. She has also served as dialect coach for productions at all of the major Bay Area theaters, including Marin Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and TheatreWorks. She is the editor of the zine Pauly Crushed Out and received her master of fine arts degree from A.C.T.

CARRIE PAFF∗ (Understudy) was recently seen at A.C.T. in the workshop of The Imaginary Invalid at Stanford as well as Candy Perloff’s Writing for the Flood in the First Look series last season. In May, she played Jen/Joccasta in the West Coast premiere of Craig Lucas’s Small Tragedy at Aurora Theatre Company. Other Bay Area credits include the world premiere of The Haunting of Winchester at San Jose Repertory Theatre, Piazzola at the Lapis Agile and Reeling Memories at Center REPertory Company, the world premiere of Charles Grodics’s The Right Kind of People at the Magic Theatre, and Aureole’s acclaimed production of Betrayal. She has also performed with The Shee Theatre Company, Woman’s Will, Word for Word, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Film credits include Proose Ida (Rob Nilsson) and Opal’s Diary (Dina Ciraulo). She holds a master’s degree in educational theater from New York University and is a cofounder of StageWrite, Building Literacy through Theatre.

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16 American Conservatory Theater

17 The Little Fools
Who's Who

Joel Rainwater* (Understudy) appeared as a Charitable Gentleman and Alan in A.C.T.'s A Christmas Carol last year. Rainwater was recently seen in Saltine, directed by Mark Jackson, at Aurora Theatre Company. Other credits include productions at California Shakespeare Theater, Kitchen Dog Theater in Dallas, The New Harmony Project in Indiana, the Tihlbits Opera House in Michigan, and CalReP Theatre in Pennsylvania. He is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, where his roles included Oskar in On the Bum, or the Nut Train Through and Georgi Ahashvili and Youssef in The Caucasian Chalk Circle, both at Zazu Theatre.

Charles Shaw Robinson* (Understudy) was last seen at A.C.T. in Edward Albee's The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia? and in Richard Nelson's Goodwright Children Everywhere. He has appeared in New York in The Common Pursuit, written and directed by Simon Gray; John Houseman’s production of The Crucible: Wild Root; and The Crucibles of Mrs. Schuyler, directed by John Pepper. Regional theater credits include the title roles of Hamlet (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park), Pericles (Center Stage, Baltimore), and Suor Eufemia (The Empty Space Theatre, Seattle). Some favorite Bay Area roles include Milton in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s long-running production of Tony Kushner’s Homebody/Kabul, Iago in Othello (California Shakespeare Theater), and Henri in Magic Fire (Berkeley Repertory Theatre/The Old Globe). He was also seen as Robert in Betrayal (Aurora Theatre Company) and Father in Everyly by Sara Ruhl (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Film work includes No One Sleeps, Serial Ward, Bear Market, and the forthcoming Mammoth Falls.

Allison Jean White* (Understudy), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. in Tom Stoppard's Travesties and The Real Thing (both directed by Carey Perloff) and in the 2004 production of A Christmas Carol. She was also seen last spring in A.C.T. First Look presentations of The Shaker Choir, Donna Wanta, Warrant, and Waiting for the Float at Zazu Theater. She appeared in Giza Mii, a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at The Players Theatre in New York and recently played Christina in Red Light Winter at the Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater. She performed with Killing My Lobster in Gussie??? at the Magic Theatre and was seen at Venue 9 and The Marsh in her solo performance piece Whitewash. White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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Michael Gene Sullivan* (Understudy) has performed at A.C.T. in The First Picture Show, Machinal, Prey, Terrors, ‘Master Harold’... and the boys, Incession: Holding History, Bytho Spirit, and five seasons of A Christmas Carol. Other regional theater credits include work with Denver Center Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, the Magic Theatre, the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre, TheatreWorks, and theater festivals in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. He is also a member of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe, where he has performed, written, or directed more than 20 productions, including, most recently, the critically acclaimed GodFails. Sullivan is the author of 1994, the stage adaptation of George Orwell’s dystopic novel. The play, directed by Tim Robbins, premiered at the Actors’ Gang Theatre Los Angeles and is currently touring nationally and internationally.

Inside
A.C.T.

40 Years

Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
Who's Who

JOEL RAINWATER
(Understudy)

appeared as a Charitable
Gentleman and
Alan in A.C.T.'s
A Christmas Carol last year. Rainwater
was recently seen in Saturn, directed
by Mark Jackson, at Aeron Theatre
Company. Other credits include
productions at California Shakespeare
Theater, Kitchen Dog Theater in Dallas,
The New Harmony Project in Indiana,
the Tibilitis Opera House in Michigan,
and CallRep Theater in Pennsylvania.
He is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master
of Fine Arts Program, where his roles
included Oskar in On the Bum, or
the Near Train Through and Georgi
Abashvili and Yussup in The Caucasian
Chalk Circle, both at Zeum Theater.

CHARLES SHAW
ROBINSON
(Understudy) was
last seen at A.C.T.,
in Edward Albee's
The Great, or Who
is Sylvia? and in
Richard Nelson's
Good Kids Children Everywhere. He has
appeared in New York in The Common
Pursuit, written and directed by Simon
Gray; John Houseman's production of
The Crucible with Richard; and The
Crucibles of Mrs. Schuyler, directed by
John Pepple. Regional theater credits include
the title roles of Hamlet (Cincinnati
Playhouse in the Park), Periods (Center
Stage, Baltimore), and War and Peace
(The Empty Space Theatre, Seattle).
Some favorite Bay Area roles include
Milton in Berkeley Repertory Theater's
long-running production of Tony
Kushner's Homebody/Kabul; Iago in
Othello (California Shakespeare Theater);
and Henri in Magic Fire (Berkeley
Repertory Theater/The Old Globe).
He was also seen in Robert in Betrayal
(Aurora Theatre Company) and Father
in Equus, by Sara Ruhl (Berkeley
Repertory Theatre). Film work includes
No One Sleeps, Blood Work, Bear Market,
and the forthcoming Mammoth Falls.

ALISSON JEAN WHITE
(Understudy), an
A.C.T. associate artist
and core acting
company member,
has been seen at
A.C.T. in Tom
Stoppard's Travesties
and The Real Thing
(both directed by Carey Perloff) and
in the 2004 production of A Christmas
Carol. She was also seen last spring in
A.C.T. First Look presentations of The
Shaker Chairs, Donna's Warts, Warts,
and Waiting for the Flood at Zeum
Theater. She appeared in One, A,
a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at
The Players Theatre in New York and
recently played Christine in Red Light
Winter at the Wellfleet Harbor Actors
Theater. She performed with Killing
My Lobster in Gawna?? at the Magic
Theatre and was seen at Venue 9 and
The Marsh in her solo performance
piece Whitewash. White is a graduate of
Brown University and the A.C.T. Master
of Fine Arts Program.

TAKING A LOOK INSIDE
A RETIREMENT LIVING LANDMARK.

St. Paul's Towers, the
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community, offers
comfortable private
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STANDARDS COMPLIANT

"Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of
professional actors and stage managers in the United States"
Welcome to Inside A.C.T. Fall 2006

Dear Friends of A.C.T.: Early in my career, when I was working in Toronto at CanStage (with whom A.C.T. collaborated on last season’s The Overcoat), the technical director of the theater was hired away by A.C.T. I remember the news circulating around the company in whispered and respectful tones because of the high esteem in which A.C.T. was held. I knew that I wanted to work at a theater whose standards were admired internationally and hoped someday A.C.T. would be a part of my life.

More than 20 years later, I, too, had the opportunity to join A.C.T. to form a CEO partnership with Carey Perloff. That was ten years ago and I have been growing with A.C.T. ever since.

Our challenges were very different ten years ago—we had just returned to the Geary Theater after years of nomadic post-earthquake existence, and we had a significant accumulated deficit with which to deal. The economy was booming in the late 1990s, our audience embraced the growth of the company, and because of that support we were able to grow artistically and financially. Today, Carey—who this year celebrates her 15th season with A.C.T.—and I continue to develop our skills and continue to be enthused by you, our extraordinary audience. One of the things I most appreciate about you is your openness in letting us know what you think—whether we have disappointed or been transformational. Please keep letting us know how we are doing!

As we look forward to the season-long 40th-anniversary celebration of A.C.T., I want to thank the many people who have made my tenure here everything I could have wished for, as well as the many patrons, artists, trustees, craftspeople, staff, students, and community members who supported and grew this organization when I was still only dreaming of being here.

I hope that we have guided A.C.T. well, and that 40 years from now this organization is stronger, bolder, and more meaningful to this community than ever.

Enjoy the season and please keep in touch.

Heather Kitchens / Executive Director
American Conservatory Theater

A.C.T. American conservatory theater

A.C.T. DIRECTORY
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Inside A.C.T. Design by Basil & Creative
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A COMMITMENT TO DISCOVERY
Celebrating Carey Perloff’s 15th Anniversary at A.C.T.
by Jessica Werner Zack

Carey Perloff is an excavator at heart—a self-described “cultural archaeologist” whose primary passion has always been exploring and unearthing concealed possibilities. As a high school student, she spent her summers working on archaeological digs in New Mexico and studying 3,000-year-old Anasazi relics. As an undergraduate at Stanford University, she learned Greek and studied classical drama and literature. She discovered a love of language that is not only meaningful, but visceral, mythic, altogether alive. During a year as a Fulbright fellow at Oxford, Perloff came to realize how thoroughly her love of the “find,” and of what the ancient Greeks, she has said, “knew about what it meant to be a citizen—engaged, questioning, connected to one’s community through theater”—could be satisfied in a career as a director.

As we celebrate Perloff’s 15th anniversary this season at the helm of A.C.T. (and the company’s 40th year in San Francisco), it is a fitting occasion to remember that it is this passionate commitment to discovery—of new voices, of forgotten classics, of the dynamic and muscular language that is the beating heart of the world’s great theatrical experiences—that has consistently energized her work as a director and has invigorated and transformed A.C.T. as a whole since she joined the company as its third artistic director in 1992.

Perloff remembers arriving in San Francisco and becoming immediately aware of the drama—and dramatic irony—in the fact that she was stepping into a theater quite literally in ruins. The once-majestic, federally designated landmark, and San Francisco treasure the Geary Theater had been gutted by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. “It was a rain, and it felt so familiar,” Perloff said of her first glimpse of the damaged building. “I just wanted to get in there and excavate.”

The theater’s down-but-not-out condition was a fitting metaphor for the company Perloff signed on to lead. A.C.T., like many companies that had been formed
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In setting the strategy for the reinvigoration of the company, Perloff saw an important opportunity to ask the hard questions that would provide the answers necessary to ensure A.C.T.'s future survival and success. “Everything about the life and identity of this company needed to be rethought,” she says. “Most significantly, we had to rethink the theater's purpose, and our own. We had to ask, 'What does this city want and need from A.C.T.?' And, 'What can we do differently from other theaters?'

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From her inaugural A.C.T. project, a new translation (by Paul Walsh) of Strindberg's Creditor, to this season's opening production of Tartuffe, by longtime A.C.T. favorite Tom Stoppard, Perloff has established her commitment to creating repertories that highlight bold writing, theatrical magic, evocative histories, and new ways of relating to our theatrical and literary traditions. Since 1992, she has directed 32 A.C.T. productions, including 12 world and 4 American premieres. Her programming choices are guided by her belief that great ideas, great acting, and great language should take center stage. "We need to always be encouraging fabulous performances and vivid storytelling," she says.

While nurturing her own creativity as a director and a writer (the West Coast premiere of her third play, Luminous Destiny, will be coproduced by A.C.T. and the Magic Theatre in November), Perloff has overseen A.C.T.'s growth through initiatives she deems central to the life of a vibrant, nationally recognized theater: the establishment of a core company of resident actors; the centrality of training young actors in A.C.T.'s top-ranked conservatory; the development of new writing from a diverse range of authors; and the commitment of her fundraising energies to the creation of an endowment that will ensure the company's long-term fiscal security.

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Working on a production with Carey Perloff is like boarding a sleek silver train, one that goes very fast through the land of the play, somehow finding all the stations on the map, some of them known only to the playwright or not even to the playwright but only to Ms. Perloff, herself. Telegenic intellect, virtuosic directing skills, sense of humor, drive, and deep understanding of any text make her a director with whom I love to work. She's also a great, great editor, one I trust totally with my work.

—Playwright Constance Congdon

To do what Carey does, to accomplish what she does, you have to be a wack job—you have to be crazy—and she is; Carey is out of her mind. How she blends the madness with the meticulous calendar-watch, and the murlaging of relationships, which are also part of her job, that I don't understand. I'm just glad for it.

—Actor/Screen Bill Irwin

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—Director Charles Randolph-Wright

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Continued on page 15
A Jewel of a Theater

In 1967, a group of San Francisco civic leaders, including Cyril Magnin, Melvyn Swig, and Mortimer Fleishhacker, installed recently founded American Conservatory Theater as San Francisco's premier resident theater company. The troupe immediately made its home in the landmark Geary Theater at 415 Geary Street (now known as the American Conservatory Theater; see sidebar), presenting there over the ensuing four decades some 300 productions to a collective audience of more than seven million people. As much a part of the action as any of the performers, the theater's gilded-framed stage has itself been a versatile member of the company, changing its inner workings and its name to support the productions, while remaining constant and steadfast, even when shaken to the ground.

The now 97-year-old building—the only one of the eight theaters built in San Francisco between 1906 and 1911 to continue in full-time operation—has hosted virtually all of America's great theater actors over the last century, from Sarah Bernhardt and Paul Robeson to Bill Irwin and Annette Bening. A fundamental piece of San Francisco history, the building was purchased by A.C.T. in 1974 with the help of the Ford Foundation; it earned a place on the National Register of Historic Places and was named a landmark of the State of California the following year. Largely destroyed by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the theater was reborn with the help of thousands of contributors who raised the $29 million necessary to restore the building to its original glory, while bringing its stage technology up to contemporary standards.

Faced with the loss of the treasured Geary, IATSE Local 16 Vice President Ed Raymond, who was A.C.T.'s scene shop foreman before the earthquake and served as technical advisor during the

Continued on page 11

EXCELLENCE ON THE MAINSTAGE

Over the past four decades, A.C.T. has become known for producing a diverse blend of classical and new work, for the excellence of its performers, and for the visual beauty of its productions. A featured objective of The Next Generation Campaign is the Mainstage Endowment, with a goal of $10 million to support artistic excellence on the mainstage. As patrons of one of the few classical theater companies left in America that produces a wide range of work, from large-scale classics to musicals to ambitious new plays, our audience members have come to rely on us to bring them transformative theatrical experiences featuring our core acting company members and the finest guest actors, directors, writers, choreographers, composers, and designers. Yet too often budget limitations impede our ability to produce large-

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DEAR FRIENDS,

I am deeply honored to serve as committee chair of A.C.T.'s Next Generation Campaign. In accepting this position, I will be continuing the work of Alan Stein who, as chair of the Campaign Cabinet, brilliantly directed the quiet phase of this campaign. Under his leadership, the cabinet raised $15.6 million towards our goal of $25 million to establish a permanent endowment. I am proud to champion a financially stable future for A.C.T. and have every confidence that we can be successful with the help of passionate theater lovers like you.

I am sure you can remember your earliest theater experience, the one that took your breath away and got you hooked forever. Although I can certainly remember mine, nothing stands out as monumentally as the sheer grit, guts, and determination A.C.T. demonstrated when the Loma Prieta earthquake damaged our beloved theater. We performed for more than six years as a diaspora without a permanent home and yet managed to deliver unforgettable and truly compelling theater under the most difficult circumstances. This achievement made an indelible impression on me, and I knew that someday I would do whatever I could to support and sustain that kind of commitment. That someday is now.

We are all grateful for the ways in which A.C.T. continues to transform our lives with provocative new works and eloquent readings of the classics. We have all seen how numerous gifted conservatory students have launched their careers on our stage. Most importantly, we are keenly aware that as donors, subscribers, and dear friends, you have shown your loyalty and support. You have kept the conversation going, and for that we are deeply appreciative. Right now, at this critical juncture in A.C.T.'s history, you can make an even more lasting impact.

It is no accident that we have launched The Next Generation Campaign to coincide with A.C.T.’s 40th anniversary year. The last four decades have earned us well-deserved community affection and admiration as well as national respect. But as we look back, we must also look forward. I am asking you to join me and the members of the campaign committee as together we secure the future of our outstanding theater in San Francisco.

We appreciate your continued support.

NANCY LIVINGSTON
Chair, The Next Generation Campaign Committee

THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN ARTISTIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Nancy Livingston, Chair

Excellence on the Mainstage continued from page 7

scale or risk-taking work, or to engage major national and international artists.

- The Mainstage Endowment will assure enduring artistic brilliance on the American Conservatory Theater stage through the following funds:
  - Mainstage Production Fund—$5 million
  - Core Company Fund—$3 million
  - Visiting Artist Fund—$2 million

MAINSTAGE PRODUCTION FUND

Mainstage productions at the American Conservatory Theater are the heart and soul of A.C.T. In recent seasons, we have produced and presented such large-scale landmark productions as The Time of Your Life, Arcadia, The Threepenny Opera, and The Black Rider. But these large-scale works are more the exception than the rule at A.C.T., due to the tremendous financial resources required to adapt and reinterpret classic scripts, employ and house large casts, and design and build elaborate sets and costumes. To bring these works to the mainstage, A.C.T. embarks upon additional fundraising initiatives that require the time and attention of the artistic team and stretch internal resources to near breaking point.

Artistically, A.C.T. is poised to bring multiple large-scale, adventurous works to the mainstage each season. Only financial capacity holds us back from giving our audience more opportunities to experience such extraordinary artistic projects. The Mainstage Production Fund will enable A.C.T. to bring works of this size and stature to the American Conservatory Theater stage each and every season.

CORE COMPANY FUND

In 2001, Artistic Director Carey Perloff initiated a new core company of four actors at A.C.T., returning the theater to its founding roots as a true actors’ theater. Core company members are also associate artists who serve as master teachers and directors in the conservatory at A.C.T. They are both formal and informal mentors, advising their younger peers regarding career choices, as well as teaching, directing, and coaching in their professional capacity. They also share the stage with Master of Fine Arts Program students and recent graduates who appear in mainstage productions.

The Core Company Fund will ensure that the core acting company—a feature unique to A.C.T. among major California regional theaters and a rare asset at theaters nationwide—can expand to include both veterans and junior members who will provide our audiences and our actors-in-training with richer theatrical experiences in the seasons ahead.

VISITING ARTIST FUND

Thanks to its prominence in American theater, and a strong reputation for providing an unusually nurturing creative environment, A.C.T. is already a much-desired destination for such gifted artists as
DEAR FRIENDS,

I am deeply honored to serve as committee chair of A.C.T.’s Next Generation Campaign. In accepting this position, I will be continuing the work of Alan Stein who, as chair of the Campaign Cabinet, brilliantly directed the quiet phase of this campaign. Under his leadership, the cabinet raised $15.6 million towards our goal of $25 million to establish a permanent endowment. I am proud to champion a financially stable future for A.C.T. and have every confidence that we can be successful with the help of passionate theatre lovers like you.

I am sure you can remember your earliest theatre experience, the one that took your breath away and got you hooked forever. Although I can certainly remember mine, nothing stands out as monumental as the sheer glee, guffaws, and determination A.C.T. demonstrated when the Loma Prieta earthquake damaged our beloved theatre. We performed for more than six years as a diaspora without a permanent home and yet managed to deliver unforgettable and truly compelling theatre under the most difficult circumstances. This achievement made an indelible impression on me, and I knew that someday I would do whatever I could to support and sustain that kind of commitment. That someday is now.

We are all grateful for the ways in which A.C.T. continues to transform our lives with provocative new works and eloquent readings of the classics. We have all seen how numerous gifted conservatory students have launched their careers on our stage. Most importantly, we are keenly aware that as donors, subscribers, and dear friends, you have shown your loyalty and support. You have kept the conversation going, and for that we are deeply appreciative. Right now, at this critical juncture in A.C.T.’s history, you can make an even more lasting impact.

It is no accident that we have launched The Next Generation Campaign to coincide with A.C.T.’s 40th anniversary year. The last four decades have earned us well-deserved community affection and admiration as well as national respect. But as we look back, we must also look forward. I am asking you to join me and the members of the campaign committee as together we secure the future of outstanding theatre in San Francisco.

We appreciate your continued support.

Nancy Livingston
Chair, The Next Generation Campaign Committee
The modernization did not, however, diminish the ancestral beauty of the interior and the surprising intimacy (for a 1,000-seat auditorium) that had made it such a remarkable space in which to work and attend performances. A.C.T. Head Carpenter Maurice Bersley, who has worked at the theater on and off since A.C.T.’s first season in San Francisco and remembers the challenges of working in the Bay Area’s last operational “bunup house” (a theater that relies on a hand-operated system of ropes, pulleys, and sand bags to fly scenery), observes, “With the modernization, backstage became much more efficient. In front of the curtain, the theater has kept its original character—with added amenities, of course—but the technical improvements help us maintain A.C.T.’s past style of production; now it’s just much easier to accomplish.”

With the restoration also came glorious new acoustics, which have encouraged A.C.T. to introduce a significant amount of live music into its repertory. A diverse range of musical ensembles have accompanied A.C.T. productions in recent years, including the Kronos Quartet, the Rova Saxophone Quartet, Kikua, Chanticleer, a klezmer band, The Red Clay Rambler, Britain's outrageous Tiger Lillies, jazz great Bill Sims, Jr., and the eclectic live orchestras of Urinetown, The Threepenny Opera, The Black Rider, and Happy End.

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Mollie Stickney, a former A.C.T. Young Conservatory student and Master of Fine Arts Program graduate who has performed at the theater before and after it was rebuilt, sees the theater as a sanctuary. “Walking into that theater from the craziness of Geary Street is like walking into a hollowed-out jewel,” she says. “It is so quiet, so beautiful. It is truly a magical space.”

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CAN'T WRITE A LARGE CHECK? You can still be a part of The Next Generation Campaign.

A.C.T. supporters who find themselves unable to make large outright gifts to The Next Generation Campaign can still make significant contributions, according to A.C.T. Prospero Society Co-chair Mortimer Fleishhacker. "We hope all those who love A.C.T. and want to help secure our future will participate in The Next Generation Campaign," he said. "No one need be excluded. If you can't make a substantial current gift, consider making a commitment to a future gift."

Bequests, IRA designations, and charitable remainder trusts are just a few ways to participate in the campaign in a significant way. "A.C.T. supporters who join the campaign through a bequest can make surprisingly large gifts," he says. "A gift like real estate, which is transferred to A.C.T. at death, can amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars. A.C.T. is willing to wait."

Bequests need not be complicated or costly. For example, you can ask your life insurance agent for a beneficiary designation form and use it to name A.C.T. to receive all or part of an existing life insurance policy.

He also encourages those who want to be a part of the campaign to consider IRA designations, which will pass to A.C.T. undiminished by income tax or estate tax. "Retirement plan proceeds are usually fully taxed as ordinary income if they pass to individuals and may be hit by estate tax as well. A.C.T. receives them tax free."

In addition, The Next Generation Campaign will count charitable remainder trusts and charitable gift annuities in which A.C.T. is named the irrevocable final beneficiary. "Charitable remainder trusts allow a donor who has need for cash flow now to sell appreciated stock or real estate tax free, get income for life, and make a gift to A.C.T.," explains Prospero Society Co-chair and A.C.T. Trustee Joan Danforth. "The donor also gets an immediate income-tax deduction. For example, longtime A.C.T. supporter Ron Casassa of San Rafael sold a San Francisco apartment house tax free after transferring it to a charitable remainder trust. "Ron receives income for life and A.C.T. gets a magnificent future gift."

"Not every donor can simply sit down and write a large check to the campaign," Danforth says. "But bequests and other planned gifts open the door for them to be Next Generation Campaign supporters."

For confidential information on ways to give to The Next Generation Campaign, contact Tim Whalen at 415.439.2472 or twhalen@act-sf.org.

Excellence on the Mainstage continued from page 9

playwrights Tom Stoppard and David Mamet, directors Robert Wilson and Ruben Santiago-Hudson, and actor, Olympia Dukakis. Currently, however, A.C.T.'s ability to extend such invitations is limited. The Visiting Artist Fund will provide the resources to bring world-class theater artists to San Francisco for extended periods of time to develop and refine their work and produce it on the American Conservatory Theater stage. This investment in the significant writers, directors, and actors of our day will pay dividends to our audiences, who will be afforded new theatrical experiences that will enrich their lives and advance the classic and modern canon of dramatic literature.

Next Issue: Excellence in Actor Training

ON THE ONE HAND, IT'S TRUE THAT A.C.T. IS NOT THE GEARY THEATER; IT IS PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER, A COMPANY OF ARTISTS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GEARY IS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN OUR BEING ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE THINGS THAT A.C.T. WAS FOUNDED TO DO. YOU CAN'T REALLY TALK ABOUT MOVING INTO ANOTHER THEATER LIKE THE GEARY BECAUSE THERE AREN'T ANY.

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TOP: QUENTIN STUCKEY/ACT; BOTTOM: QUENTIN STUCKEY/ACT

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Recognizing that a professional actor (just as any serious artist) must study continuously if s/he is to grow in the art, A.C.T.’s founders based the company’s original format on the classic European model of the “conservatory-theater”—like Molliere’s Comédie-Francaise, but independently American—in which a resident troupe of actors simultaneously performed while continuing their personal training and sharing their wisdom with a younger generation. In the late 1960s it was difficult for an actor to find concentrated training in the United States; A.C.T. was the first American regional theater to be founded on the conservatory concept. A.C.T.’s founders hoped that the institution would eventually become a flagship or model for a uniquely American style of acting.

Thirty-three actors formed the fledgling company, all of whom were expected to be full-time students as well as actors. In its first complete season in San Francisco (1967–68), A.C.T. presented a total of 27 plays in rotating repertory, the actors performing at night in downtown theaters (including the historic Geary) while attending as well as teaching classes during the day.

“...there was a level of excitement that you could cut with a knife,” says Frank O’Neill, who joined the company as an Alexander technique teacher in Pittsburgh in 1965 and is still an active faculty member. “It was a lovefest, but it was work. The entire community was one big family—students, company, secretaries, everybody; all of the actors could be called upon to teach, to engage, and we all were expected to go to class. The theater itself was our home; it was always open to us, and we could and did run in and out, any time of the day or night.”

In addition to resident company actors and apprentices, almost immediately young, aspiring actors from across the country began to be invited to learn alongside the professionals. The first annual Summer Training Congress (STC) was established in the summer of 1967. The conservatory began to take shape as such in 1968, followed by the formal launch of the Advanced Training Program (now the Master of Fine Arts Program) in the 1969–70 season, a significant step toward institutionalizing the training program. Forty-five students were accepted for a first year of training; just half of those were invited to return for a second year of advanced instruction, and three or four of those invited to remain thereafter and work with the professional company. Children joined the Young Conservatory as early as 1970, while the Academy, an evening and weekend program for adults (now known as Studio A.C.T.), was established in 1972; all of these programs are still flourishing.

Early conservatory training, as a whole, was designed to instill qualities that A.C.T.’s founders and the conservatory’s early leadership—who included UC Berkeley educator Robert Goldsby and distinguished director Allen Fletcher—considered essential for the professional actor: a powerful stage presence, a vigorous and agile body, intelligence, endurance, kindness, and an ensemble spirit. Primarily Stanislavsky based, the curriculum emphasized the development of the actor’s physical instrument and technical skills, with classes in voice, movement (the analysis of rhythmic patterns in poetry and dialogue), and dance, as well as such “for-us” subjects as yoga, Alexander technique, fencing, laughter, laughter, and rhetoric. Academy Award-nominated actor Annette Bening, who entered the program in 1980 and went on to become one of A.C.T.’s most illustrious alumni, was inspired to audition for A.C.T. after hearing Ball speak at San Francisco State. “He had that touch of madness about him,” she told A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program students at a Conservatory Hour at A.C.T. in 2002. “He was very compelling. I remember he spoke about the necessity of creating an atmosphere of creativity where everything is accepted and everything is utilized, no matter whose idea it is. It was always about saying ‘yes.’ I think the point he was making is that the creative process is mysterious, and that to get to the best choice in the end, you have to fumble around and try a lot of different things. All ideas must be entertained, and there is a tremendous amount of collaboration.”

Bening remained with A.C.T. for three seasons after completing her training, performing with the mainstage company and even teaching in the STC (where her students included a young Teri Hatcher). “I really wanted to be a theater actress, and I didn’t really watch movies,” remembered Bening. “So I was dying to get on the Geary stage! When I was a student, that was my dream, and the actresses who performed there were my idols. I wanted to be up there, doing the stuff, wearing the dresses, speaking the words, I wanted to be just like them.”

**ARTISTS OF THE FUTURE**

With accreditation in 1984 and the right to confer the M.F.A. degree in acting came increasing formalization of the program. At the same time, as financial pressures mounted with shifting economic conditions in the United States, the large-resident-company model became impossible to maintain. Ball stepped down as artistic director in 1986, followed by Ed Hastings’s tenure (1986–’92). While the A.C.T. actor training program remained one of the most successful and highly respected in the country, with the demise of the resident company it became increasingly distanced from the performing aspects of the institution.

Carey Perloff took A.C.T.’s artistic reins in 1992, and brought in Princeton University theater program head Melissa Smith to lead the conservatory in 1995. Together they worked to rebuild the bridge between performance and pedagogy. Perloff reconstituted a modified resident core acting company by engaging Marco Barricelli (replaced this season by recent M.F.A. Program graduate Allison Jean White), René Augesen, Steven Anthony Jones, and Gregory Wallace to work full time, year round, teaching and directing in the conservatory while performing in a substantial repertory of A.C.T. productions. A third year was added to the Master of Fine Arts Program curriculum in 1997, promising students opportunities to perform publicly in smaller San Francisco venues, as well as on the A.C.T. mainstage.
LIVING AND LEARNING
THE ART FORM
THE A.C.T. CONSERVATORY THEN AND NOW
BY ELIZABETH BRODRICK

“When I began A.C.T.,” said Founding Artistic Director Bill Ball in an interview in 1982, “I wanted to create a company with a dual purpose: resident repertory performance and concurrent and inseparable training, for all members of the company.” An inspiring force in the revolutionary regional theater movement of the 1960s, Ball had the radical idea of creating a permanent home for a passionate company of professional actors who would dedicate their careers to living, learning, and passing on the art of the theater—to preserve the art of live theatrical performance in the literal sense of the word.

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The task of educating actors in today’s media-driven culture has become much more complex, “the training is almost remedial now, in terms of educating young people about the theater,” says Smith. “Young actors don’t grow up on theater anymore; they grow up on television and film, but they come to a theater to train. We have to teach them about what it is they’re trying to do, because they haven’t actually absorbed it. They’ve been doing it without ever seeing anybody do it.”

“So training today is about ‘conversing’ in a different sense; it’s about trying to conserve the classical tradition of the theater, while at the same time preparing young actors for the future of the art form.”

By committing to incoming students that they will perform on the A.C.T. mainstage (in A Christmas Carol) before they graduate, A.C.T. has raised the educational bar, increasing the rigor of the curriculum’s skills training, particularly voice, speech, movement, and singing. “These students are no longer in training for what they dream their career will be, but for something concrete,” says Smith. “It’s something they have to aspire to and prepare for. We commit that they will be on that stage, and they’re committing to be.”

No matter what their ultimate goals might be, Smith says that she tells hopeful applicants, “You are training in a program that is part of a producing theater. The training is therefore very much connected to the life and aesthetic of that theater, which emphasizes heightened language, potent dramatic literature, a vigorous creative process, and commitment to the future of the art form in the development of new writing. Our training is designed to prepare you for all performance media, but you will have a lifetime investment in the theater.”

While the A.C.T. training program has produced some of this country’s finest and best-known artists, including Nicolas Cage, Danny Glover, Harry Hamlin, Anika Noni Rose, Winona Ryder, Carlos Bernard, Elisabeth Banks, Teri Hatcher, and Denzel Washington, over the years thousands of students have gone on to a wide range of careers, including writing, directing, producing, and arts administration. “Today, our task is to develop the artistic and human potential in each individual, preparing him or her to live a creative life,” says Smith. “Something about what we do here should be about building a foundation for the rest of their lives, no matter what they end up doing professionally. Their life in the theater here should change how they function in their lives.”

While A.C.T.’s current training program remains true to the mission established four decades ago, the model is continually being reinvented for its own time. “We continue to look at new models as the field changes,” says Smith. “Being involved with professionals is still where the future lies. That’s what we’re looking at: how we can have more of that, so young actors are in the professional soup, and there’s more of the professional soup spilling onto them in the school.”

Perloff’s 1st show continued from page 5

(To the tune of “The Mandalay Song” from Happy End)

Other theaters do the same old thing.
Perloff picks the new stuff with a string.
Loves to stick her neck out, do a show that’s daring.
Challenges the critics, and the status quo.
Schiller, Gorky, Manet, Wellman, Feingold.
Everything except the thing you know.
Talk faster, Carey, quick!
You know you’ve got the trick.
Keep ideas flying fast and thick.
Theater’s an art form and Perloff adores it.
Others exploit it but Carey explores it.
She’s no fake, even a quack couldn’t take her away.
Cheers for her years in the town by the Bay!

—Theater critic/adaptor Michael Feingold

I think that natural leaders are rare. I consider Carey to be a natural leader. Her love of people, art, and the human process of creating theater is infectious. She has such a beautiful way of expressing her passion about art and making that inevitably draws people into her ever-expanding circle. One has no choice but to believe in her passion because she believes in it so fervently herself. That’s what makes a natural leader: People want to follow her. She has her own unique vision of how theater needs to be made and it’s about people and relationships and learning. Carey never stops learning because she’s curious. She asks questions about things that she doesn’t know and then asks questions about things that she knows just to see if there’s anything else to add. I would work with her anytime because she creates an atmosphere that makes it safe to say, “I don’t know, let’s try it.”

—Music director/conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos

Through the course of six satisfying productions here at A.C.T. [since Carey has been artistic director], I continue to be impressed with her supple intelligence, dynamic energy, indefatigable enthusiasm, and her unfailing powers of persuasion.

—Laurel Williamson

Carey Perloff—director, teacher, writer, administrator, social activist, hiker, and classicist. Oh wonderful, wonderful, and again wonderful and after that, beyond all whooping—

—Olympos Debakla and Bill Shakespeare

I think Carey and I must have been born on the same wavelength. Not every playwright is as lucky as to have a director who is usually slightly ahead of him instead of slightly behind. I think that Carey has always understood, probably in all of her work, the balance between the text and the event. A lot of writers, including myself, like to think that their personal theater is text-led, but of course what we all rely on is a director who adds the magic of sheer theatricality. Perhaps because she is a writer herself, but not a writer who seems to have any desire to correct another writer’s play, Carey represents a kind of ideal.

These elevated sentiments seem to have left out one of the main things about working with Carey, which is that she is a lot of fun, highly intelligent fun, which is the best kind of fun and the best kind of intelligence. She is a theater animal—she behaves towards the writer as if the writer is in charge, the master, but really she is taking the master for a walk.

Give her a hug from me.

—Playwright Tim Stoppard
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“So training today is about conserving in a different sense; it’s about trying to conserve the classical tradition of the theater, while at the same time preparing young actors for the future of the art form.”

By committing to incoming students that they will perform on the A.C.T. mainstage (in A Christmas Carol) before they graduate, A.C.T. has raised the educational bar, increasing the rigor of the curriculum’s skills training, particularly voice, speech, movement, and singing. “These students are no longer in training for what they dream their career will be, but for something concrete,” says Smith. “It’s something they have to aspire to and prepare for. We commit that they will be on that stage, and they’re committing to be.”

No matter what their ultimate goals might be, Smith says that she tells hopeful applicants, “You are training in a program that is part of a producing theater. The training is therefore very much connected to the life and aesthetic of that theater, which emphasizes heightened language, potent dramatic literature, a vigorous creative process, and commitment to the future of the art form in the development of new writing. Our training is designed to prepare you for all performance media, but you will have a lifetime investment in the theater.”

While the A.C.T. training program has produced some of this country’s finest and best-known actors, including Nicolas Cage, Danny Glover, Harry Hamlin, Anika Noni Rose, Winona Ryder, Carlos Bernard, Elizabeth Banks, Teri Hatcher, and Denzel Washington, over the years thousands of students have gone on to a wide range of careers, including writing, directing, producing, and arts administration. “Today, our task is to develop the artistic and human potential in each individual, preparing him or her to live a creative life,” says Smith. “Something about what we do here should be about building a foundation for the rest of their lives, no matter what they end up doing professionally. Their life in the theater here should change how they function in their lives.”

While A.C.T.’s current training program remains true to the mission established four decades ago, the model is continually being reinvented for its own time. “We continue to look at new models as the field changes,” says Smith. “Being involved with professionals is still where the future lies. That’s what we’re looking at: how we can have more of that, so young actors are in the professional soup, and there’s more of the professional soup spilling onto them in the school.”

Perloff’s 12th season continued from page 5
(To the tune of “The Mandalay Song” from Happy End)

Other theaters do the same old thing.
Perloff picks the new stuff with a sting.
Loves to stick her neck out, do a show that’s daring.
Challenges the critics, and the status quo.
Schiiller, Gorky, Manet, Weltsm, Feingold.
Everything except the thing you know.
Talk faster, Carey, quick!
You know you’ve got the trick.
Keep ideas flying fast and thick.
Theater’s an art form and Perloff adores it,
Others exploit it but Carey explores it.
She’s no fake, even a quack couldn’t take her away.
Cheers for her years in the town by the Bay.

—Theater critic/adaptor Michael Feingold

I think that natural leaders are rare. I consider Carey to be a natural leader. Her love of people, art, and the human process of creating theater is infectious. She has such a beautiful way of expressing her passion about art and making that inevitably draws people into her ever-expanding circle. One has no choice but to believe in her passion because she believes in it so fervently herself. That’s what makes a natural leader. People want to follow her. She has her own unique vision of how theater needs to be made and it’s about people and relationships and learning. Carey never stops learning because she’s curious. She asks questions about things that she doesn’t know and then asks questions about things that she knows just to see if there’s anything else to add. I would work with her anytime because she creates an atmosphere that makes it safe to say, “I don’t know, let’s try it.”

—Music director/conductor Constantine Kitsopoulos

Through the course of six satisfying productions here at A.C.T. [since Carey has been artistic director], I continue to be impressed with her supple intelligence, dynamic energy, indefatigable enthusiasm, and her unfailing powers of persuasion.

—Laurel Williamson

Carey Perloff—director, teacher, writer, administrator, social activist, hiker, and classicist. Oh wonderful, wonderful, and again wonderful and after that, beyond all whooping—

—Olypia Dukakis and Bill Shakespeare

I think Carey and I must have been born on the same wavelength. Not every playwright is as lucky as to have a director who is usually slightly ahead of him instead of slightly behind. I think that Carey has always understood, probably in all of her work, the balance between the text and the event. A lot of writers, including myself, like to think that their personal theater is text-led, but of course what we all rely on is a director who adds the magic of sheer theatricality. Perhaps because she is a writer herself, but not a writer who seems to have any desire to correct another writer’s play, Carey represents a kind of ideal. These elevated sentiments seem to have left out one of the main things about working with Carey, which is that she is a lot of fun, highly intelligent fun, which is the best kind of fun and the best kind of intelligence. She is a theater animal—she behaves towards the writer as if the writer is in charge, the master, but really she is taking the master for a walk.

Give her a hug from me...

—Playwright Tom Stoppard
LAIRD WILLIAMSON (Director) has staged for A.C.T. A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Dancer, The Glass Menagerie, "Master Harold..." and the boys, Long Day's Journey into Night, Macbeth, The Matchmaker, Sunday in the Park with George, End of the World with Symposium to Fiddles, The Imaginary Invalid, A Month in the Country, The Visit, Penangalee, and the original production of A Christmas Carol. He has worked extensively with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where he most recently directed productions of Cyrano de Bergerac, Much Ado about Nothing, Julius Caesar, Pericles, and his own adaptation of Life Is a Dream. He has also directed for Western Open Theater, intimates Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. For Denver Center Theatre Company, he has directed Gross Indecency, A Raisin in the Sun, A Christmas Carol, and a new staging of The Skin of Our Teeth, John Brown's Body, and A Lonely Sunday for C Cree Grier at the Denver Center. All's Well That Ends Well and Love's Labour's Lost at the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C.; Othello at the Guthrie Theater; and Two Gentlemen of Verona, Twelfth Night, and The Legacy at the Old Globe.

ROBERT BLACKMAN (Scenic and Costume Designer) received the Spotlight Career Achievement Award in television from the Costume Designers Guild earlier this year. He was the costume designer for four Star Trek series: "The Next Generation," "Deep Space Nine," "Voyager," and "Enterprise." He won an Emmy Award in 1991–92 for "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and has received nine Emmy nominations. His film work includes "Right Muther, The Running Man, Street for Barra, Star Trek VII, Generations," and Star Trek X: Nemesis. His recent theatrical work includes costume design for iWines at the Mark Taper Forum, The Violet Hour and The Lady with All the Answers at The Old Globe, The Royal Family at the Ahmanson Theatre (Ovation Award nomination), and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and Uncle Vanya at the Geffen Playhouse, where he most recently received an Ovation Award nomination for his All My Sons set design. He worked regularly at A.C.T. from 1972 to 1984 and designed the set for the original production of A Christmas Carol. Blackman holds an M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama.

RUSSELL H. CHAMPA (Lighting Designer) has designed A Number, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Voysey Inheritance, and Writing for Godot at A.C.T. Recent designs also include iWines at the Mark Taper Forum, A Safe Harbor for Elizabeth Bishop and The Right Kind of People at Primary Stages, Another Golden Rule and Meritocracy and Morality at the Magic Theatre, The Other Side at Manhattan Theatre Club, I Am My Own Wife at The Wilma Theatre, and The Tricky Part at San Jose Repertory Theatre and Intiman Theatre. On Broadway, Champa designed Julie Sweeney's God Said "Ha!" at the Lyceum Theatre. Other New York credits include productions at the Promenade Theatre, the Union Square Theatre, Classic Stage Company, New York Stage & Film, and La MaMa etc. Regionally, he has designed for Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, California Shakespeare Theatre, the McCarter Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, the Williams Town Theatre Festival, The Actors’ Gang, and the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.
LAIRD WILLIAMSON (Director) has staged for A.C.T. A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Dancers, The Glass Menagerie, "Master Harold)...and the boys," Long Days Journey into Night, Macbeth, The Matchmaker, Sunday in the Park with George, End of the World with Symphony to Fidelio, The Imaginary Invalid, A Month in the Country, The Visit, Penangalee, and the original production of A Christmas Carol. He has worked extensively with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where he most recently directed productions of Cymbeline, Much Ado about Nothing, Julius Caesar, Pericles, and his own adaptation of Life Is a Dream. He has also directed for Western Open Theater, Intiman Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and Brooklyn Academy of Music. For Denver Center Theatre Company, he has directed: Gem In Indecency, Arasda, Gallin, Saint Juan, Coriolanus, Pericles, and Wings, among many others. Recent credits include The Skin of Our Teeth, John Brown's Body, and A Lonely Sunday for oreo Queen at the Denver Center. All's Well That Ends Well and Love's Labour's Lost at the Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C.; Orpheus at the Guthrie Theater; and Two Gentlemen of Verona, Twelfth Night, and The Legacy at The Old Globe.

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STEVE SCHONEBECK (Sound Designer) makes his A.C.T. debut with The Little Foxes. As the associate sound designer for San Jose Repertory Theatre, he has designed numerous productions, including The Immorality, Enchanted April, Red Dust, Wintertime, Cohl’s in the Countryside, Eric Bogosian’s Homestuck, and A Fisa in Her Ear. Other favorite sound design credits include TheatreWorks’ productions of Rat Boy: The Musical, Be Releagious, Harold & Maude: An Intimate Musical, Over the River and Through the Woods, Holiday Memories, and the Assembly Theatre’s production of Finder’s Fee for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. He has also designed sound for short films and animation and has mixed numerous musicals for TheatreWorks and San Jose Rep. He is a graduate of the sound arts program at the Exposition College for Digital Arts and the theater arts department at UC Santa Cruz.

MICHAEL PALLER (Drumming) joined A.C.T. as resident drumming and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a drumming George Street Playhouse, the Berksheir Theatre Festival, Burrellson Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He drummed the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams’ Small Craft Warnings at the Sovremennik Theatre 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, Nordenay, and Mirabelle magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

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, Lyric, and Picasso at the Lapin Agile as well as the first workshop of The Count of Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theatres throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s Creditors and Bon Appetit! She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for the 12 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.

ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage Manager) most recently worked at A.C.T. on Death of Venice at Zuma Theater and on last season’s A Number, by Caryl Churchill. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Cut on a Hot Tin Roof, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Wild, The Good Body, Love, James, Haining for Gudet, The Three Sisters, The Misfits, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Tartuffe, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Rhinoceros, Big Love, Civil Sex, Collected Stories, and Cloud Ten at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include Eve Ensler’s The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre.

NICOLE DICKERSON (Assistant Stage Manager) most recently worked as stage manager for California Shakespeare Theater’s production of The Merchant of Venice. Her previous work in the Bay Area has included stage management for The Colossus of Rhodes and For the Pleasure of Seeing her Again at A.C.T., The Guys, Master Class, and Nine Feet of Desire at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; 3F, 4F, and The Hopper Collection at the Magic Theatre; Intimate Apparel for TheatreWorks; Delphic at Marin Theatre Company; and Times Like These and Windows and Mirrors at Travelling Jewish Theatre. She has also performed light supervision and stage management for the U.S. tour of Stories by Tobias Wolff with Word for Word and assistant stage management and production coordination for Word for Word’s Tour de France 2004–2006 in Paris, France.

SPECIAL THANKS

Erie Washington, Laura Mazzet, Mobile Chamber of Commerce, Dr. Joseph Perkoff, Diane Mott, Trish Daily, Exposition College for Digital Arts David Combs and the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum, Colera, AL

Piano recordings by Steve Sanders and Frank Johnson

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Tune in to KQED 9 on Thursdays, November 2, 9, and 16 at 10:00pm for the San Francisco Symphony’s groundbreaking series Keeping Score: Revolutions in Music. Find out how a few inflammatory notes from the minds of Beethoven, Stravinsky and Copland changed music forever. (Air times subject to change. Check your local listings or visit KQED.org for more information.)

KEEPING SCORE

revolutions in music

SAN FRANCISCO SYMPHONY

MICHAEL THOMAS THOMAS MUSIC DIRECTOR

KQED Presents

Most exciting for Keeping Score is an event we’re calling The Fan: A San Francisco Symphony Revolutions in Music Fan Fair. Stay tuned for more information. We’ll see you at the symphony. This is Michael Thomas, Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony. This is Keeping Score. This is KQED.”
Who’s Who

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MICHAEL PALLER (Dramaturg) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory 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, Harrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams’ Small Craft Warnings at the Sovremennik Theatre in Moscow. Paller is the author of Gentleman Caffeterian: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth-Century Drama (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and has written theater and book reviews for the Washington Post, Village Voice, Newark, and Mirebella 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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David Cossins and the Heart of Dixie Railroad Museum, Culler, AL

Piano recordings by Steve Sanders and Frank Johnson

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States
CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is celebrating her 15th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed acclaimed productions of Tom Stoppard’s Travesties, Bertolt Brecht/Rainer Werner Fassbinder’s Happy End (including a cast recording album), A Christmas Carol (a new adaptation by Perloff with Paul Wilcox), David Mamet’s new adaptation of Gorky’s The Vyapin Inheritance, Stoppard’s The Real Thing, Cervantes’ Cervantes’ Cervantes: Cervantes de Avellaneda (an A.C.T.-commissioned adaptation of Cervantes’ Fama Zelenaeva), 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 Nadal’s Hilda, coproduced at A.C.T.’s second space (Zuma) with Laura Peli Productions, traveled to Washington, D.C.’s Studio Theater and then to New York’s 59E59 Theater in 2005. Last year she was awarded Peixis’ Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new voices for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Pope’s Celebration and The Roof, A.C.T.-commissioned translations of Heseki, The Minotaur, Fronius IP, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya, the world premiere of Milos Forman’s Ringy)’s Ring and acclaimed productions of The Steppenwolf Opera, Old Times, Aradia, The New Tavern, American Universities, Heaven, and The Temple. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s The Anatomy Lesson and Family Reunion, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiers of her own play The Colours of Rasha (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her play Luminous Dating, which will be seen at the Magic Theater in December (in a co-production with A.C.T.), was developed over a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theater/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshoped in the summer of 2004 at New York State & Forum, presented in New York in April 2005 at The Ensemble Studio Theater, and will be published by Playwrights Horizons Play Festival this fall. Her new play, Waiting for the Flood, was directed by Judith Ivey as part of A.C.T.’s First Look Festival in January. She has collaborated with many notable contemporary writers, most recently Philip Kan Gotanda, on his new play After the War at the Sundance Institute in 2004 (an A.C.T. commission that will premiere in 2007), and Robert O’Hara, on Audition 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 Erin Proudfit’s Electric, the American premiere of Platner’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. Phil. Honours in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Rice 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 Leslie and Nicholas.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director), now in her 11th season with A.C.T., has strengthened the organization’s infrastructure and overseen the company’s expansions 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. As 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 part member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers/Bigs Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton and has served three terms 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 Floris 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 (Consulitary Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory’s Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A, in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the Conservatory Festival. Smith joined A.C.T. in 1995, 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 France, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T.’s 2004 tour of London and Edinburgh (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Continental Divide. Smith holds a B.A. in English (with a major in Women’s Studies) 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 Producers’ Theatre as an actor and Stage Manager. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Miss Rumphius, Drood!, The Secret Garden, and Little Women (a musical directed by Cimie Rapi), and an international tour of Little Women, and Bells Are Ringing. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded the Theatre Communications Group’s 2001 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.

THE GALLERY AT A.C.T.
SHARON SHEPHERD: CONTEMPORARY ABSTRACT PAINTINGS

Find yourself with some extra time before a performance or during intermissions? Want to expose yourself to more fine art, but don’t make it to art galleries as often as you’d like? Now you need look no further than A.C.T. We invite you to visit the second floor of the theater (just outside the auditorium doors, along the north bank of windows, and by the elevator) to view original artwork by a diverse range of artists, presented in a series of rotating exhibits throughout the 2006–07 season.

A vibrant collection of recent multilayered abstract paintings by San Francisco artist Sharon Shepherd are on view at A.C.T. September 14–November 26. A San Francisco artist since 1985, Shepherd has shown her work at the Artists Gallery of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, located at Fort Mason, since 1979. She has been an active studio artist for more than three decades, developing her articulate painterly vocabulary and multilayered style of contrasting surfaces, shapes, and patterns. Her mixed-media paintings are held in more than 300 public and private collections in the United States and abroad, and reproductions of her paintings have reached an even wider audience as internationally published posters and greeting cards. Her work has also been featured on film and television in architecture and design catalogs, and as theatrical settings for ballet and modern dance companies.

“I am intrigued by the phenomenon of vanished cultures, ancient architecture, and marks of graffiti,” says Shepherd, explaining her varied and dynamic use of surface writing and visual symbols on her canvases—‘‘sometimes literal, yet mystical.’’

Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about Sharon Shepherd, please contact Kevin Simmers at 415.744.1066 or ksimmers@actsf.com.

TRAVESTIES
by Tom Stoppard
Directed by Carey Perloff
FEB 14–MAR 15

THE LITTLE FOXXES
by Lanford Wilson
Directed by Kim Bumsun
OCT 27–NOV 26

THE CIRCLE
by David Freeman
Directed by Marc Limon
JAN 4–FEB 6

HEDDA GABLER
by Henrik Ibsen
Directed by Richard T. White
FEB 9–MAR 11

WORLD PREMIERE
AFTER THE WAR
by Philip Kan Gotanda
Directed by Carey Perloff
MAR 22–APR 22

BLACKBIRD
by David Harrower
Directed by Loretta Broca
APR 25–MAY 27

THE IMAGINARY INVALID
by Molieres
Directed by Ron Lagomarsino
JUN 1–JUL 8

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THE GALLERY AT A.C.T.

Sharon Shepherd: Contemporary Abstract Paintings

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Producers Circle members make annual gifts of $10,000 or more to A.C.T. Their extraordinary generosity supports season productions, actor training in our conservatory, and arts education in our community. Members enjoy a variety of benefits and are invited to participate in the artistic development of A.C.T.’s season by attending production meetings and taking part in numerous behind-the-scenes opportunities. We are privileged to recognize these members’ generosity during the July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006, period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Kisner at 415.439.2353 or pjkisner@part-c.org.

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Mr. and Mrs. Paul L. Warte, III
Mr. and Mrs. Lisa Woods
Ms. Anita Yu and Mr. Steven Webley

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**directors circle**

Dianne Hoge, Co-chair  *  Jonathan Kitchen, Co-chair

Directors Circle members make annual contributions of $1,500 to $9,999 to A.C.T. Their extraordinary generosity supports production, programming, and instruction costs, and is covered by ticket sales and tuition. Members enjoy a variety of benefits, including invitations to opening night festivities, complimentary parking, access to the VIP ticket line to purchase or exchange premium tickets, and use of the VIP Lounge during performance intermissions. We are privileged to recognize these members' generosity during the July 1, 2005-June 30, 2006, period. For information about membership, please contact Liz Nilson at 415.439.2480 or liz.nilson@act.org.

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Bar and Fred Fifer
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Mr. and Mrs. Sami Halman
Ms. Betty Hoerner
Mr. James C. Horrigan and Mr. Tim Wu
Mr. Robert Hubing
Jeffrey and Jeri Johnson
Mr. and Mrs. Ron Kaufman
Mr. Angelo Kostas

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The Little Fires 25
Annette Bengis, Honorary Chair  Pati Ruoff, Event Chair
In addition to their annual gifts, the following individuals (and corporations) have made generous commitments to A.C.T.'s 40th anniversary celebration. The A.C.T. Ruby Jubilee, which will take place on April 22, 2007, a benefit event in support of A.C.T.'s arts training and youth education programs, The Ruby Jubilee will feature the Bay Area community leaders and philanthropists in celebration of 40 inspiring years of theater in San Francisco. For information on sponsorship and tickets, please call champagne at 415.438.2470 or visit.

**RUBY (50,000)**
Leandra Dean and Doron Sofer
Bush and Dorothy Murphy
Lee and John Finer
Patty and Ruoff

**GARNET**

**THREE GEMSTONES**

**MEMORIAL & TRIBUTE GIFTS**

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

**FOUNDATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES**

The following foundations and government agencies provided vital support for A.C.T. For more information please contact Peter Corrigan at 415.438.2499 or petercorrigan@act-sf.org.

**CORPORATE PARTNERS CIRCLE**

Jack Cotter, Melon Co-Chair  Kenneth B. McNarney, McNarney & Company, Inc. Co-Chair
The Corporate Partners Circle is comprised of businesses that support the artistic missions of A.C.T., including A.C.T.'s investments in the next generation of theater artists and audiences. Corporate Partners Circle members include those that have made an investment to a national level theater company, including extraordinary contributions and membership opportunities, access to unique members and partner programs, complimentary tickets, and tangible brand recognition. For more information about how to become a member of the A.C.T. Corporate Partners Circle, please contact Leslie Benes at 415.438.2473 or Leslieb@act-sf.org.

**CORPORATE MATCHING GIFTS**

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 in A.C.T., magnifying the impact of those contributions.

**CORPORATE GIFTS IN KIND**


**NATIONAL CORPORATE THEATRE FUND**

National Corporate Theatre Fund is a non-profit corporation created to acquire and maintain support for the business community's 11 most distinguished professional theaters. The following foundations, individuals, and corporations support these theaters through their contributions of $1,000 or more to National Corporate Theatre Fund.
A.C.T. WELCOMES
NEW COMPANY
MEMBER ALLISON
JEAN WHITE

The A.C.T. Conservatory would like to welcome M.F.A. Program alumnus Allison Jean White back to the Bay Area, as she joins A.C.T.’s acclaimed core company of actors. The first new ensemble member since 2001, White is a graduate of Brown University, as well as a member of the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program class of 2005, where she was the recipient of the ACT One scholarship. She has already appeared on the A.C.T. mainstage in A Christmas Carol, The Real Thing, and this season’s opening production of Tom Stoppard’s Travesties. “To be chosen to be a part of this incredible group of artists and to have the chance to come back to a company that means so much to me is a great honor,” says White. “As an artist, you never stop learning and honing your craft, and this is a unique opportunity for my own artistic development.”

FAME AND FOXES
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

The Little Foxes made Hellman one of the most successful playwrights and screenwriters in the 1940s and the most famous woman playwright in the world. As Hansardt’s daughter Jo admitted, “My father was a great storyteller, but Lillian was even better.” Hellman—with Hansardt’s help—came of age, became a woman, became a star. As the theatrical saying goes, failure is painful and success is intoxicating. With 410 performances, The Little Foxes blew up her world, for the better this time.

With Foxes selling out box offices on two coasts, Hellman held court at the luxurious Plaza Hotel, borrowing its grace and glamour for herself. Adoring reporters flocked to her rooms, gushing about her elegant legs, her blonde hair, her hospitality, and her “retinue of friends, the main train-bearers being Dashiel Hammett, Ralph Ingersoll, Shumlin, Louis Kronenberger, and Kohler.” One reporter gushed, “Miss Hellman likes people, she likes an occasional drink, a game of poker, a whiff at chem-de-fer. She is, in brief, merry rather than meretricious.” The media broadcast her fame nationally, pushing her to the forefront of national attention.

Drama wasn’t always limited to a theater stage, and her characters weren’t always fictional. Hellman berated the critics for missing the dark comedy of human betrayals and corruption. The characters might have represented the sinners in capitalism, but her relationship with them was intimate. She saw greed, waste, aristocratic posturing, and political scheming as a part of the present comic view of the world.

Excerpted from Lillian Hellman: A Life with Foxes and Scoundrels, by Deborah Martinson (Counterpoint Press, © 2005 by Deborah Martinson).
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**FAME AND FOXES**

Continued from page 13

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_Excerpted from Lillian Hellman: A Life with Foxes and Scoundrels, by Deborah Martinson (Counterpoint Press, © 2005 by Deborah Martinson)._
PLEASE JOIN US FOR THESE FREE EVENTS at American Conservatory Theater . . .

The Little Faves
ACT 1
A Prologue
A conversation with the director before the 7:30 p.m. Tuesday screening (5:30-6 p.m.)
Tuesday 10/31
Tuesday 11/9
A.D. PROLOGUE
A conversation with the director before the 7 p.m. Tuesday screening (5:30-6 p.m.)
AUDIENCE EXCHANGES
Free post-performance discussions with the actors and/or A.C.T. staff members
Tuesday 10/31
Tuesday 11/12
Wednesday 11/15
Tuesday 11/29
Wednesday 11/30
WEDNESDAY 11/10
WEDNESDAY 11/17
WEDNESDAY 11/24
WEDNESDAY 12/1
WEDNESDAY 12/8
WEDNESDAY 12/15
WEDNESDAY 12/22
WEDNESDAY 12/29
ACT ONE
ACT One covers arts events in their 2nd and 3rd to great theater, but events and parties, and each other.
FRIDAY 11/2
THEATER ON THE COUCH
An exciting new collaboration between A.C.T. and The San Francisco Foundation for Psychoanalysis to generate lively dialogue among the audience and a panel of experts in local psychoanalysis. After the show, the panel will discuss psychological topics of the play and take questions from the audience.
Friday 11/3
AND DON’T FORGET . . .
A.M.T. MASTERS OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS
Red Scare on Sunset and Baby with the Batwhisker
1/18-1/19, Zunie Theater
A.M.T. Homecoming Weekend
1/19-1/20, A.C.T.
A.M.T. YOUNG CONSERVATORY PROGRAMS
Clairvoyant’s Love
1/19-1/20, Zunie Theater
A.M.T. January First Look Series
1/19-2/3, Zunie Theater
A.M.T. IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE MAGIC MIKE THEATRE PRESENTS
Lamont White’s Drama
1/19-2/3, Zunie Theater
A.M.T. Baby Bullets
4/2/07, Fourth Season, Hood
For more information, call 415.749.2ACT or visit www.act-sf.org.

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ARTISTIC
John Adams, Artistic Director; Mandy Lee Guest, Casting Director; Michael Plich, Commercial Director; Greg Holberg, Casting Associate; Vicki Ege, Production Associate
Associate Artists
Real Agnew
C. Y. Quong, Associate Producer
Gregg Weller
Gage Walker
Allison Jones
Choreographers
Laurie Green
Gina Hakken
Leslie Lines
Liz Dishman
Michael Alpert
Matthew Watkins
Lori Williams
Choreographer
Ye Calder
Composers
Laure Berezowsky
John Groulx
Karl Lautenberg
Musicians
Lauren Schaefer
PRODUCTION
Jeff Berke, Production Manager; Eric Hand, Assistant Producer; Mike Bailey, Production Manager; Martin Siegel, Production Manager; Joe Segal, Technical Director; Larry Krasner, Artilier Theater Designer
Dramaturgues
John Anawalt
Roderick Koehler
Kathleen Quigley
Ken Schiller, Lighting Manager
Scenic Designer
Colin Finn, Set Designer
Costume Designer
Lisa Font, Costume Designer
David Finlay, Wardrobe Supervisor
Set Designer
Tom Page, Prop Master
Shop Manager
Tinasha McLean, Stage Manager
Lighting Designer
Seth Lerner, Lighting Designer
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PLOT SHT
Denzell Campbell, Stage Manager; David J. Krueger, Assistant Stage Manager; B. J. Rapp, Technical Director
PROPS
Rowan T. Baker, Prop Master
Dirks H. McLean, Prop Master
Stage Manager
D. F. Dyer, Prop Master
Set Designer
Eric Hand, Assistant Architect
T. B. McLean, Assistant Architect
Seth Lerner, Project Manager
J. W. Krueger, Project Manager
Lighting Designer
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Composers
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John Groulx
Karl Lautenberg
Musicians
Lauren Schaefer
When I think back on those early days at A.C.T., the best word I can use to describe them is euphoria. This ecstatic feeling came not only from the thrills of vegetative vapors drifting down from the fifth floor, but also, and more importantly, from the great challenges generated by the work, the world, the work. Having come in as an actor to replace the wonderful Paul Shears, who was then thrust into directing a series of mad, rugged, and fascinating new plays in the Playmols as part of the Playmols in Progress series. My first trial by ceremonial fire came in assembling “An Evening with Tennessee Williams,” a tribute to the playwright in theyrevered and often misunderstood master himself appeared to read from his works and in which a raft of actors got to play scenes from roles they had always dreamed to play before. But the next day in his column, Herb Caen called the ceremony for Mr. Williams “a transmogrification of the arts.” I liked that. That evening remains to this day one of my most cherished theater experiences. Then followed a period of intense and exciting creative activity: The Sweet Matchmaker, starring Elizabeth Huddie and Bill Paterson, which culminated in the life-changing tour to the Soviet Union; then the joyous, haunting, and inspiring experience of the first A Christmas Carol, the delicious romanticism of A Month in the Country; the brutal and brilliant dark comedy of The Visit; and that comic synopsis through PompousWL with the wonderful Raye Birk being brilliant in the title role. This time I spoke of an undeserved high—a high for me, and a high for my associates, a high in the most sacred sense, as it was charged with an intimate outpouring of unadulterated art and love.

A.C.T. MEMORY: LAIRD WILLIAMSON

Laird Williamson in the 1970s

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The Little Fanes
The Circle

A.C.T. PROLOGUE
A conversation with the director before the 7 p.m. Tuesday preview (5:30-6 p.m.)

Tuesday 10/31
Tuesday 11/1

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES
Free performance discussions with the actors and/or A.C.T. staff members

Tuesday 10/17
Tuesday 11/7
Tuesday 11/12
Tuesday 11/13
Wednesday 11/15
Wednesday 11/16

OUT WITH A.C.T.
A gathering of gay and lesbian theatergoers, immediately following the 8 p.m. performances

Tuesday 11/17
Wednesday 11/18
Thursday 11/19
Friday 11/20

ACT ONE
A.C.T. One-acts arts hours in their 2nd and 3rd to great theater, bad events and parties, and each other.

Friday 11/23

THEATER ON THE COUCH
An evening of conversations between A.C.T. and The San Francisco Foundation for Psychoanalysis to generate lively dialogue among the audience and a panel of experts from the local psychoanalytic. After the show, the panel will discuss the psychological and cultural underpinning of the play and take questions from the audience.

Friday 11/30

AND DON'T FORGET . . .

A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS
Red Score on damn as well baby with the bathwater

11/18–11/19, Zinz Fireman

A.C.T. Homecoming Weekend

11/1–11/3, A.C.T.

A.C.T. YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS
Clarence's Aunts

11/10–11/11, Zinn Theater

A.C.T. January First Look Series

11/10–11/13, Zinn Theater

A.C.T. IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE MAGIC MUSICAL THEATRE PRESENTS
Lamont's Dream

11/10–12/3, Magic Theatre

A.C.T. Baby Bash

4/20/2023, Four Seasons Hotel

For more information, call 415.749.2ACT or visit www.act-sf.org.

A.C.T. STAFF

A.C.T. MEMORY: LAIRD WILLIAMSON

When I think back on those early days at A.C.T., the best word I can use to describe them is euphoric. This ecstatic feeling came not only from the whiffs of vegetable vapors drifting down from the fifth floor, but also, and more importantly, from the great challenge and the work, the work. Having come in as an actor to replace the wonderful Paul Shuey in the second season of Othello, I was then thrust into directing a series of mad, rough, and fascinating new plays in The Playhouse as part of the Play’s Progress series. My first trial by ceremonial fire came in assembling “An Evening with Tennessee Williams,” a tribute to the playwright in the weave of the reader and the woven understanding himself aimed to lead from his works and in which a raft of actors get to play scenes from roles they had always dreamed to play and I had a great time. The next day in his column, Herb Caen called the ceremony for Mr. Williams “anatomist to catamorphosis.” I liked that. That evening remains to this day one of my most cherished theater experiences. Then followed a period of intense and exciting creative activity: The sweet Matchmaker, starring Elizabeth Huddle and Bill Paterson, which culminated in the life-changing tour to the Soviet Union; then the joyous, bombastic, and inspiring experience of the first Christmas Carol, the delicious romanticism of A Month in the Country; the brutal and brilliant dark comedy of The Visit; and that ebullient romp through Porgy and Bess with the wonderful Raye Birk being brilliant in the title role. This time I speak of was an undeniable high—a high for me, and a high for my associates, and a high in the most sanctified sense, as it was charged with an intense outpouring of unalloyed art and love.

—Director Laird Williamson, who joined A.C.T. in 1974

ARTISTIC

Johnny Miles, Associate Artistic Director
Sheryl Lee Ralph, Assistant Director
Melvin 'Fuzz' Young, Associate Director
Curt Dodelson, Costume Designer
Greg Golde, Costuming Assistant
Vicki Fries, Production Assistant

Audience Advisor
Real Segovia
Candy McClure
Gregory Winters
Glenn Rose
Allison Jones

Directors
Laurie Greer
Giles Hanahoe
Mark Leach
Mark Frankel
Marc Rykken
Laird Williamson

Choreographers
Ev Camacho

Composers
Andrew Boss
John Giordano
Kip Llewellyn

Musical Directors
Laurie Binyon

PRODUCTION

Jeff Booth, Production Manager
Jason Hrin, Associate Production Manager
Michelle Bedell, Assistant Production Manager
Marie Rehfeldt, Production Administrator
Jeff Prosko, Technical Director
Larry Koner, Assistant Technical Director

Designers
John Arnone, Sewer
Robbin DeLaTorre, Sewer
Rae Donavan, Sewer
Donald Emerson, Sewer
Eric Thaler, Sewer
Doug M. Schiavone, Sewer
Pedro Pena, Sewer
Karen Tanzer, Sewer

Stage Managers
Deborah D’Amico, Stage Manager
Doug Davis, Stage Manager
Randy Vardon, Stage Manager

Publications
Helen Shaver, Editor
Jessica Versaci, Contributing Editor
Maggie Mihalko, Publisher
Publications of Literature

Ticket Services
Richard Bennett, Ticket Services Manager
Marc C. Harris, Administrative Manager
David Englert, End User Support
Jane Yenkoff, Subscription Coordinator
Lynn Smith, SMPF and Group Sales

Vendors
Andrew Yehle, Dorsey Davis, Denis O’Connor, Kevin Sheehy, Dan Redman, David Walls, Directors

Wines
Jon Mckee
Maggie Avo, John Blevins, Jon Unger
Winston Dain, Ben Jorin, Alahines, Bobo Magic, Lindy Mann, Doug McKinnon, Linda Price, Doug Ross, Mary Myer, Scott Mitchell, Arturo Andres

Front of House
Larry Dwyer, Manger
Debra Schon, Assistant Manager
Erik Grossman, Front Desk
Claire Mathews, Collins Rockey, Assistant Manager

Cafes
Colin Slee, Rear

Operations
Lorraine Worm, Manager
Barth Smith, Assistant Cafes/Manager

Comms
Les Eames, Assistant Cafes/Manager

MBA
Jeffery Manor, Executive Chef

ADMINISTRATION
George Thompson, General Manager
Bruce Williams, Director of Summer Performing Arts

Auditor
Nancy hike, Auditor

DEVELOPMENT
Greg Seracchi, Director of Development

Marketing
Chris Phelan, Director of Marketing

CONSERVATORY
George Thompson, General Manager
Bruce Williams, Director of Summer Performing Arts

Mailing
Malcolm Young, Marketing Assistant

Mailing
Janet Creahan, Marketing Manager

The Little Fanes
32

Library Staff
Joseph Tidball, Library Director
G. David Martin, Library Assistant
Joe Quintero, Library Assistant
Mark Keil, Frederick Keil, Library Assistant

Information Technology
Thomas Harlow, Director

Web
Derek Hinson, Web Designer

CONSERVATORY
Joe Creplin, Director

Michael Pfeifer, Head of Photography

Master of Fine Arts Programs
Joe Creplin, Director

Laura Gran, Coordinator

Theater
Sandra Loomis, Assistant

Vicki Fries, Production Assistant

Marketing & Public Relations
Valeska York, Amy Rose, Paul Boyer

Production
John Williams, Free Associate

Production Manager
Andrea Van Tets, General Director
Edward Rachman, Assistant Director

Database
Mandy Mann, Corporate/Party

Guests
Mara Cooper, Publishing Assistant

Publications
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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.

TICKET SERVICES INFORMATION
A.C.T. Ticket Services
Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square. Hours are 12-8 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During non-performance weeks, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily. Call 415.749.2424 and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2391. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our website at www.act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance seating and privileges and for 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.

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 A.C.T. Ticket Services 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 Buschworth at 415.439.2473.

AT THE THEATER
A.C.T. is located at 405 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 merchandise—clothing, jewelry, DVDs, music, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts, and West End Plays, are on sale in the main lobby, at the Ticket Services office, and online.

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 minibar in the main lobby. You can avoid the lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Food and drinks are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beepers
If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarms, 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 415.439.2391 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 Garnet on the uppermost lobby level.

Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the theater. Please call 415.749.2424 in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

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

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

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

The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-629 of the IATSE.

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

A.C.T. is supported in part by grants from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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Cherry Jones
Chris McGarry

John Patrick Shanley
Doug Hughes

Directed by

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