

**SAM SHEPARD'S**

★ ★ **COURSE**  
OF ★ ★ **THE**  
**STARVING**  
**CLASS** ★ ★

Directed by  
**PETER DUBOIS**



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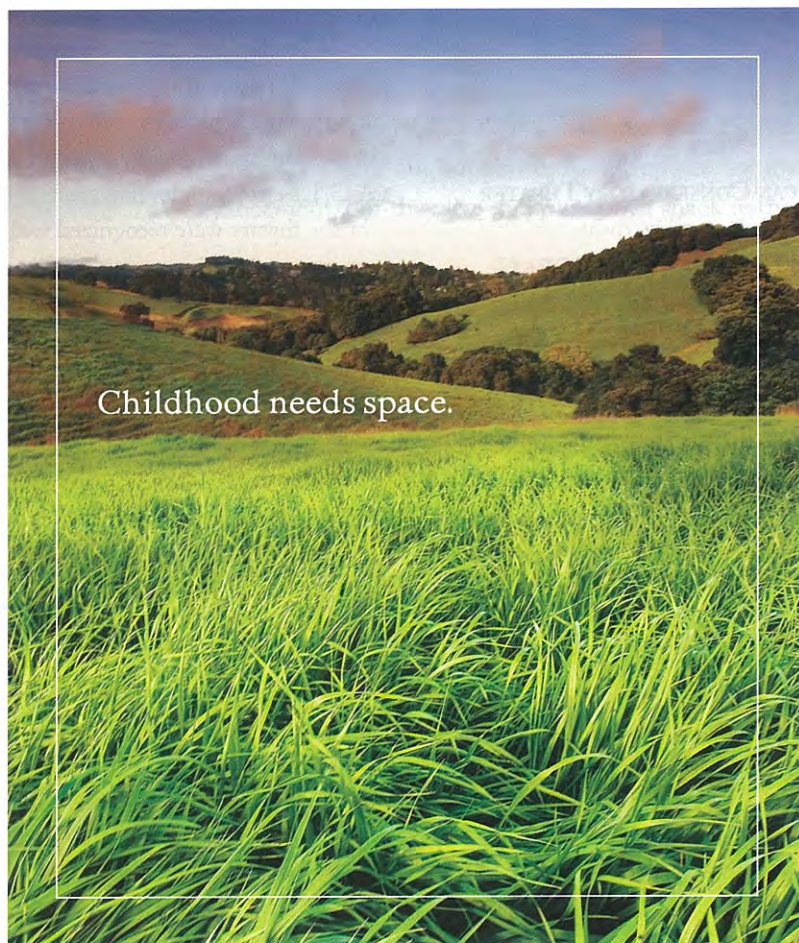
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# ABOUT A.C.T.



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**AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER** nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and

new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national and international reputation, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. During the past four decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.'s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 250,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1996, A.C.T.'s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award. In 2001, to celebrate A.C.T.'s 35th anniversary and Perloff's 10th season, A.C.T. created a new core company of actors, who have become instrumental in every aspect of its work.

Today A.C.T. is recognized nationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Since the

reopening of the Geary Theater (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. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel 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.



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

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# FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

KEVIN BERNE



## Dear Friends,

The first thing that leapt off the page when I reread *Curse of the Starving Class* prior to rehearsals was Weston's speech to his son, Wesley:

"I remember now. I was in hock. I was in hock up to my elbows. See, I always figured on the future. I banked on it. I was banking on it getting better. It couldn't get worse, so I figured it'd just get better. I figured that's why everyone wants you to buy things. . . . Why not borrow if you knew it's coming in. Why not make a touch here and there. They all want you to borrow anyhow. Banks, car lots, investors. The whole thing's geared to invisible money. You never hear the sound of change anymore. It's all plastic shuffling back and forth. . . . So I figured if that's the case, why not take advantage of it? Why not go into debt for a few grand if all it is is numbers? . . . I just played ball."

There is something heartbreaking about that speech in the context of the American economic landscape today, in which more homes are being foreclosed on than at any time since the Depression. With mythic precision, Sam Shepard has always tapped into the relentless American belief in the future. Even in the face of mounting debt and limited job prospects, America continues to be a place where people dream of staking out new ground, conquering new frontiers, inventing new devices, creating new opportunities for their families. When Shepard wrote *Curse of the Starving Class* in 1977, the country was in a very different place, but the restless struggle of this particular family to grab a piece of the future for themselves feels completely of our time. The promise of potential riches encourages us to borrow way

beyond our means, and when we can't repay the loans, we question where we went wrong.

As actor Pamela Reed has pointed out, the refrigerator is the tenth character in the play. It is the gaping mouth in the center of the kitchen, waiting to be filled up. The characters in Shepard's play are constantly opening the fridge and staring into its light, hoping to uncover bounty inside, but for the most part discovering only an empty void. "No one's starving!" Emma shouts at her mother early on in the play. "We don't belong to the starving class!" to which her mother replies, "We're hungry, and that's starving enough for me!" Shepard's characters are both literally and metaphorically hungry; they have huge appetites for adventure, for love, for advancement, but they live in a run-down shack without a front door on a stretch of land where nothing will grow. When the father finally returns with a bag of groceries, it contains nothing but artichokes. Their situation is both hilarious and tragic, and we feel for them precisely because the gap between the characters' desires and their reality is so enormous.

Exactly 30 years ago this month, *Curse* opened at The Public Theater in New York with a young Pamela Reed playing Emma, the daughter, and Olympia Dukakis playing her mother, Ella. Today at A.C.T., we are thrilled to present Pamela as Ella, alongside our remarkable core acting company members Jack Willis and Jud Williford as her husband and son; we are also delighted to welcome Nicole Lowrance to A.C.T. and to welcome back the rest of this extremely talented ensemble, under the direction of Peter DuBois. Shepard has taken this opportunity to rework sections of the script and to transform the play from a three-act to a two-act structure, thereby tightening the suspense and highlighting certain character choices in fascinating new ways. It is a great honor to revisit this astonishing play, and to know that, as he has matured, this great American playwright has kept an eye on this beloved early play of his, and continued to wrestle with its meaning and its structure. Get ready for a wild adventure!

Yours,

Carey Perloff, *Artistic Director*

*presents*

**SAM SHEPARD'S**

★ ★ CURSE  
OF ★ ★ THE  
STARVING  
CLASS ★ ★

Directed by  
**PETER DUBOIS**

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*Costumes by* Lydia Tanji  
*Lighting by* Japhy Weideman  
*Original Music and Sound by* Fabian Obispo  
*Dramaturg* Michael Paller  
*Casting by* Meryl Lind Shaw  
*Dialect Coach* Deborah Sussel  
*Assistant Director* Matthew Graham Smith

**THE CAST**

*Wesley* Jud Williford  
*Ella* Pamela Reed  
*Emma* Nicole Lowrance  
*Mr. Taylor* Dan Hiatt  
*Weston* Jack Willis  
*Ellis* Rod Gnapp  
*Malcolm* Craig Marker  
*Emerson* T. Edward Webster  
*Slater* Howard Swain



**UNDERSTUDIES**

*Wesley, Malcolm*—T. Edward Webster; *Ella*—Jeri Lynn Cohen; *Emma*—Maya Lawson  
*Taylor, Weston, Ellis*—Howard Swain; *Emerson, Slater*—Craig Marker

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Christine Plowright, *Lamb Wrangler*

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*Curse of the Starving Class*, by Sam Shepard, is presented by arrangement with  
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# CURSE, THEN AND NOW

BY MARGOT MELCON

Sam Shepard is as iconic as America itself. He is our rebel poet, rugged hero, and sensitive cowboy. Crossing artistic disciplines before it was fashionable, he has been a rock musician, poet, novelist, film star, director, and actor, as well as arguably the most important American playwright of his generation. Existing at the core of all these occupations is a steadfast determination to chronicle the devolution of the American Dream with a ferocious honesty. Shepard cuts a recognizable silhouette: the hard-working loner, turning a critical eye on our culture as it inches inexorably away from the promise it once held. Although more than 40 years have passed since he began to stretch his imaginative reach across the cultural landscape, Shepard's observations have an eternal quality and an unflinching integrity that keep his work fresh and frighteningly relevant.

When *Curse of the Starving Class* premiered in New York in 1978 at Joseph Papp's Public Theater, it was described by the *New York Times* as a savage play about hunger. "For Mr. Shepard," wrote critic Richard Eder, "the common people—white-collar, blue-collar, or whatever—is one great starving class. Its hungers, its ambitions, its wants are artificially stimulated; and what it strives for is phony food that doesn't bring satisfaction, only a new voracity. Ultimately, the message goes, American life is controlled by crooks and swindlers who delude the people and end up stripping them." Whether this voracious hunger is for food, emotional connection, or some kind of spiritual longing, America's appetite has still not been satisfied, as those words continue to ring true.

HAMISH REID



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## ORIGINAL CURSE

After a decade of working successfully in New York's off- and off-off-Broadway experimental theaters in the 1960s and early '70s, Shepard said in 1974: "I'd like to try a whole different way of writing now, which is very stark and not so flashy and not full of a lot of mythic figures and everything, and try to scrape it down to the bone as much as possible." *Curse of the Starving Class* represents Shepard turning toward realism for the first time, though it remains rooted in an extraordinary style that the *New York Times* described as "oscillat[ing] between realism and savage fantasy." Written in 1977, *Curse* is the first in what is considered Shepard's "family trilogy"—with *Buried Child* (1978) and *True West* (1980)—and his first full-length play that could be described as domestic drama.

As Shepard was writing *Curse*, he also began to really mine the depths of his own family history. In a 2000 interview, he remarked, "The one thing that keeps drawing me back to [writing about my family] is this thing that there is no escape from the family. . . . It



started with a little tiny one-act play I wrote way back when called *Rock Garden* (1964), where there was, for the first time in my work, a father, a mother, and a son. It was a very simple one-act little play, but it keyed off into *Curse of the Starving Class* (1977), and that keyed off into *Buried Child* (1979). . . . It initiated something that I didn't even see, I didn't even recognize that this was going to be the impulse toward other things, and I certainly didn't see myself spending my whole life on it. . . . The amazing thing to me is that, now, in this time, for some reason or another, the disaster inherent in this thing called the American Family is very, very resonant now with audiences."

The character of Weston in *Curse of the Starving Class* is largely based on Shepard's own father, Samuel Rogers, Jr., a veteran of the Army Air Corps who, though a warm and charismatic man, had a severe drinking problem that drove him into heated battles with his son and periods when he would disappear from his family completely. Shepard acknowledges his father's influence in his life and work: "I grew up in a condition where the male influences around me were primarily alcoholics and extremely violent and, at the same time, like lost children, not knowing how to deal with it. . . . Slowly they began receding further and further away—receding from the family, receding from society."

#### A NEW CURSE FOR A NEW GENERATION

In much of his work, Shepard explores the timelessness of generations repeating mistakes and returning to or trying to escape from homes that are falling to pieces. Many of his best-known plays were written almost three decades ago, but he continues to revisit his work for succeeding generations of actors and audiences. Though early in his career Shepard eschewed the idea of rewriting his plays, he has since embraced the value of revision to reflect the ever-changing realities of making live theater. In an interview in 1974 he said, "I think I'm too flippant about what I write—it's too easy to dash something off and say, okay, now act it; because when it comes down to the flesh-and-blood thing of making it work, it's a different world. I think that's where rewriting comes in—if it seems that the angle that the actor has to come at is too impossible or difficult."

In anticipation of a revival of *Curse of the Starving Class*, Shepard recently took a new look at the script, making minor but precise changes that bring the sweeping themes of the play into graphically sharp focus. He has taken *Curse* from a three-act to a two-act structure and has tailored a word or phrase here and there to streamline the text. "The rewrites pull out the mythic quality of the play, and enhance its themes," says Peter DuBois, director of the A.C.T. production. "It's not big surgery. There aren't major changes to characters. There are small changes that have great impact. Sam is one of the great American masters and having him

revisit his first full-length play has been incredible to witness."

Changing the play's structure means that the audience learns things about the Tate family on a slightly different timeline. For the actors telling the story, it makes a big difference. "The changes aren't massive amounts of writing," says Pamela Reed, who plays the mother, Ella, in the current A.C.T. production and played the daughter, Emma, in the play's 1978 New York premiere, "but because of where the act break is, now you know things that you didn't know when we did the play the first time. You weren't sure. It causes one to play things differently."

Embracing his roots in the experimental theater, Shepard writes with one foot in the real world, and the other planted firmly in a realm that is slightly absurd, pushed just past the ordinary. *Curse of the Starving Class* walks the fine line in between. When asked about the play crossing the line of realism, DuBois counters, "Sam stretches the

rubber band without snapping it. He takes the real situation and he stretches it so tight that it's right about to break, but it doesn't. I'm treating the play in a very real way, but there are a handful of moments that dip toward something surreal. We're consciously building those moments into the play, which I feel Sam has built into the language."

Shepard's script also walks the line between comedy, an aspect of his style that is often overlooked, and the dark family drama for which he has become known. *Curse of the Starving Class* is mired in the drunken desperation of a family incapable of connecting to one another, but floating above the darkness in the Tate family

**"NOBODY HAS ACTUALLY EVER  
SUCCINCTLY DEFINED 'THE MYTH OF  
THE AMERICAN DREAM.' . . . I DON'T  
KNOW WHAT THE AMERICAN DREAM  
IS. I KNOW IT DOESN'T WORK.  
NOT ONLY DOESN'T IT WORK, THE  
MYTH OF THE AMERICAN DREAM  
HAS CREATED EXTRAORDINARY  
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ALWAYS PREFER THE FANTASY OVER  
THE REALITY."**

—SAM SHEPARD

kitchen is an irreverent absurdity that transforms the play into something infinitely more layered and complex.

DuBois discussed the rewrites with Shepard in Ireland last spring while at the Abbey Theatre during the premiere of Shepard's new play, *Kicking a Dead Horse*. "I've always found this play so funny, and Sam's rewrite has made the situations more absurd and more extreme. The comedy doesn't leap out at you on the page. The combustibility and the bleakness of the story are what is first apparent when you read the script, but the comedy really comes alive when the actors bring Sam's language to life. It's when all the different elements get pulled together that the comedy really emerges." Reed agrees, adding, "I think he's made it tighter, made it a little bit cleaner. He's brought a little more humor to it. It's a very funny piece."

### THE AMERICAN DREAM UNFULFILLED

Shepard's changes did not, however, alter a story that is still profoundly current. Says DuBois, "When the audience watches this show written about a family in the mid 1960s, they will recognize the current state of America as if the play was written a month ago." About a family struggling under increasing debt, *Curse* is centered around a father fighting a battle with alcoholism, weighed down by his disappointment in America's failure to deliver on its postwar promise, and is based on Shepard's own father's experience returning from World War II. DuBois remarks, "I think the play is clearly deeply personal, and the story is a deeply personal story that Sam is telling. At the same time, he's telling a larger American story."

Shepard once recalled, "This happened all across the country of course, but my dad came from an extremely rural farm community—wheat farmers—in Illinois, and next thing he knows he's flying B-24s over the South Pacific, over Rumania, dropping bombs and killing people he couldn't even see. And then from that into trying to raise a family and growing up in white America."

"From this country's earliest roots, it's been about this big American Dream of the icebox on the porch and home ownership and barbecues," says DuBois, "and that dream has been built on the back of war. The men fighting the war come back and they don't know what to do with that pain; they drink and that turns into violence. The culture pushes us to buy and consume and go into debt. Sam puts dynamite under the post-World War II vision of America that emerged in the '50s. The larger truth of the play is calling out the postwar vision of the beauty and simplicity of this country and unlimited opportunities for the nuclear family."

For DuBois, it is this fantasy of the American Dream that represents the "curse" of the play's title. "The curse has a lot of implications. Part of it is very much referring to this invisible force that is bigger than government that blows through history and sucks people into it, and once they're sucked into it, they can't break free of it. It's in the blood. It's in the air. It's fate. It's what our behavior accumulates into, and in the play, it's this thing that becomes larger than the characters executing that behavior."

Reed adds, "What he's talking about, the sale of America and the breaking down of what makes us a family, is more profound today than it was when we first did *Curse* in 1978. Shepard was a visionary in many ways. Unfortunately what he's talking about has become so true."

As much as Shepard makes use of the Tate family to explore his own personal history, he also uses them as a way of revealing the extent to which the larger American Dream has remained unfulfilled. That the story of *Curse* remains potent to us is a testament to his unique ability to capture and render theatrical enduring truths. Reed, once the rebellious daughter of the Tate family, and now its escape-driven matriarch, nods with something like a mixture of admiration and despair. "I think this play has real legs. Long, long legs." ■

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

**SAM SHEPARD** was born Samuel Shepard Rogers III on November 5, 1943, in Fort Sheridan, Illinois. The son of a career Army father, Shepard spent his childhood on military bases in the United States and Guam before his family settled on a farm in Duarte, California.

Shepard worked as a stable hand on a ranch in Chino from 1958 to 1960 and studied agriculture for a year at Mount San Antonio Junior College. After leaving college, he joined the Bishop's Company Repertory Players, a touring theater group.

In 1963, Shepard moved to New York City, where he worked as a busboy at the Village Gate in Greenwich Village and began to write plays for the emerging experimental underground theater scene. He made his debut at Theatre Genesis on October 10, 1964, with the double-billed *Cowboys* and *Rock Garden*. In 1965 he presented *Up to Thursday* and *4-H Club* at Theatre 65, *Dog and Rocking Chair* at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club, *Chicago* at Genesis, and *Icarus's Mother* at Caffè Cino. Although many mainstream critics were baffled by his raw, chaotic, almost Beckettian pieces, he was soon hailed by the *New York Times* as "the generally acknowledged 'genius' of the [off-off-Broadway] circuit."

In 1966, *Red Cross*, *Chicago*, and *Icarus's Mother* earned Shepard a trio of *Village Voice* OBIE Awards. In 1967 and 1968, Shepard wrote *La Turista*, his first full-length play, *Melodrama Play*, and *Forensic and the Navigators*, all of which also won OBIEs, and *Cowboys #2*, which premiered in Los Angeles.

In 1969, Shepard began a stint playing drums and guitar with the cult "amphetamine rock band" the Holy Modal Rounders, later telling an interviewer that he would rather be a rock star than a playwright. He nevertheless continued to write plays, completing *Holy*

*Ghostly* and *The Unseen Hand* in 1969, *Operation Sidewinder* and *Shaved Splits* in 1970, and *Mad Dog Blues*, *Back Bog Beast Bait*, and *Cowboy Mouth* (written with poet/musician Patti Smith) in 1971. He left the Rounders in 1971 and moved to England, where he lived for the next three years. Two notable plays of this period—*The Tooth of Crime* (1972, OBIE Award) and *Geography of a Horse Dreamer* (1974)—premiered in London. In 1973 he published his first book of essays and poems, *Hawk Moon*. Two similar collections followed in 1977 and 1982.

In 1974 Shepard returned to the United States and became the playwright-in-residence at the Magic Theatre in San Francisco, a position he held until 1984. Plays from this period include *Action* (OBIE Award, 1974), *Killer's Head* (1975), *Angel City* (1976), and *Suicide in B-Flat* (1976),

Beginning in the late 1970s, Shepard applied his unconventional dramatic vision to a more conventional dramatic form, the family tragedy, producing *Curse of the Starving Class*, which premiered at the Royal Court in London in 1977, and *Buried Child* in 1978 (both of which won OBIE Awards) and *True West* in 1980. Shepard achieved his warmest critical reception with *Buried Child*, which also won the Pulitzer Prize for drama. *Washington Post* theater critic David Richards wrote, “Shepard delivers a requiem for America, land of the surreal and home of the crazed. . . . The amber waves of grain mask a dark secret. The fruited plain is rotting and the purple mountain’s majesty is like a bad bruise on the landscape.”

Shepard began a new career as a film actor in 1978, appearing in *Renaldo and Clara* and Terrence Malick’s *Days of Heaven*. He also began collaborating with Joseph Chaikin on *Tongues*, a stage work with music that was heavily dependent on the theories of Antonin Artaud. Shepard and Chaikin would also collaborate on *Savage/Love* (1979), *War in Heaven* (1985), and *When the World Was Green (A Chef’s Fable)* (1996).

Throughout the 1980s and into the '90s, Shepard continued to write plays—*Fool for Love* (1983) won OBIEs for best play as well as direction, and *A Lie of the Mind* (1985) garnered the New York Drama Critics Circle Award and Outer Critics Circle Award for outstanding new play—and expand his work in film. He appeared as an actor in *Resurrection* (1980), *Raggedy Man* (1981), *Frances* (1982), *The Right Stuff* (Academy Award nom., 1983), *Country* (1984), his own *Fool for Love* (dir. Robert Altman, 1985), *Crimes of the Heart* (1986), *Baby Boom* (1987), *Steel Magnolias* (1989), *Voyager* (1991), *Thunderheart* (1992), and *The Pelican Brief* (1993). He also worked on several screenplays, including *Paris, Texas*, with Wim Wenders (Palme d’Or, Cannes Film Festival, 1984). As writer/director, he filmed *Far North* and *Silent Tongue*, in 1988 and 1992, respectively.



Shepard’s play *Stages of Shock* premiered at the American Place Theatre in 1991, and *Simpatico* transferred to the Royal Court Theatre after its premiere in 1994 at the New York Shakespeare Festival. A revised *Buried Child*, under the direction of Gary Sinise, opened on Broadway in April 1996 and earned a Tony Award nomination. *Eyes for Consuela*, based on a short story by Octavio Paz, premiered at Manhattan Theatre Club in 1998. San Francisco’s Magic Theatre premiered *The Late Henry Moss*, starring Sean Penn and Nick Nolte, before it was moved to the Signature Theatre in New York in 2001.

Shepard’s recent projects include the short story collection *Great Dream of Heaven* (2002); the plays *The God of Hell* (2004) and *Kicking a Dead Horse*, which premiered in Dublin, Ireland in March 2007 and will have its New York premiere in July 2008 at The Public Theater; and the films *Black Hawk Down* (actor, 2001), *Don’t Come Knocking* (his second collaboration with Wenders, writer/actor, 2006), *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford* (actor, 2007), and the upcoming *Descending from Heaven* (actor, with Pamela Reed).

Shepard is considered one of the foremost modern American playwrights. The Signature Theatre devoted its entire 1996–97 season to his plays. In 1985 he was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, which awarded him the Gold Medal for Drama in 1992. In 1994 he was inducted into the Theatre Hall of Fame.

# ANNOUNCING A.C.T.'S 2008–09 SEASON

**A**C.T. is thrilled to announce the lineup of the company's 42<sup>nd</sup> subscription season. From smart, edgy pieces to wildly innovative theatrical events, the upcoming 2008–09 season offers full-impact theater—plays that leap off the stage and lure you away from a culture of distractions into new realms of time, language, and thought. At A.C.T. we strive to engage the mind, excite the senses, and elevate the discourse as only theater can.

The season opens in September with the West Coast premiere of **Tom Stoppard's** latest and most personal work, **Rock 'n' Roll**, which recently finished hugely successful runs in London and on Broadway. "Tom's latest play is very sexy and very personal," says A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, a longtime friend and collaborator of Stoppard, who will direct the production. "*Rock 'n' Roll* draws us into the lives of individuals who are trying to carve out a little place for themselves amid the bureaucracy and horror of Soviet-dominated Czechoslovakia. This play testifies powerfully to the fact that art can change a culture and change history."

The season continues with Emmy Award winner **Jane Anderson's** quirky drama *The Quality of Life*. The show's star-studded cast features Dennis Boutsikaris alongside Laurie Metcalf and JoBeth Williams, who play cousins confronting loss and survival in the aftermath of the fires in the Oakland hills. *The Quality of Life* comes to A.C.T. following its world premiere production at Los Angeles' Geffen Playhouse.

A.C.T. ushers in the new year with the first major revival of legendary playwright **John Guare's** *Rich and Famous*, a "wacky funhouse ride" through the disturbed unconscious of an ambitious playwright as he struggles against hilarious odds to make his 844<sup>th</sup> play a success. From the inspired mind of John Guare—who brought *Six Degrees of Separation* and *The House of Blue Leaves* to the American stage—*Rich and Famous* springs to life with twisted humor, rapid-fire dialogue, and outrageous plot twists.

The momentum gathers with the season's next offering, *Souvenir*, showcasing Broadway

star **Judy Kaye** (A.C.T.'s *Sweeney Todd*) in a role that earned her a 2006 Tony Award nomination. A heartfelt portrait of Florence Foster Jenkins as told by her accompanist, played by Donald Corren, Steven Temperley's play depicts a wealthy socialite with all the ambition and means to succeed as a classical soprano—except a decent voice. "This piece—which is based on historical fact—about a woman's indomitable will to be an artist, even when she's not, both amuses and rings true," says Perloff. Ben Brantley of the *New York Times* praised *Souvenir* as "a sweet...love letter of a play...an unexpectedly gentle and affecting comedy."

As spring comes around, A.C.T. turns its gaze simultaneously to the past and the future, re-enlivening the company's classical heritage while putting **Homer's** timeless tale of the conquest of Troy in a new theatrical form. *War Music*, in a world premiere production commissioned by A.C.T., is the union of distinguished poet **Christopher Logue's** modern take on the *Iliad* with director and adaptor **Lillian Groag's** irrepressible theatricality. Aligned with A.C.T.'s commitment to fusing movement, music, and language in new theatrical forms, Groag has turned Logue's adaptation of Homer into a groundbreaking work of interdisciplinary art, with an original score by up-and-coming composer John Glover. "Lillian has created a wonderful work that is in keeping with the sense of the theater of war," says Perloff. "*War Music* is a pungent meeting of the ancient Greek and modern worlds."

A.C.T.'s embrace of powerful new writing closes with new works by two of America's most important contemporary playwrights. On the heels of A.C.T.'s hugely successful world premiere of **José Rivera's** *Brainpeople*, the theater is proud to host Rivera's newest play, *Boleros for the Disenchanted*, a decades-spanning, ravishing tale of two generations of Puerto Ricans. Rivera's play examines the life cycle of a marriage—its beginnings and its end—and embraces the comedy and tragedy in between.

A.C.T. closes the season with the West Coast premiere of master playwright **Edward Albee's** *Peter and Jerry*. A work that dares to reimagine and reframe *The Zoo Story*, *Peter and Jerry* rocked

TOP TO BOTTOM: TOM STOPPARD (PHOTO BY AMIE STAMP), JANE ANDERSON, JOHN GUARE (PHOTO BY PAUL KOLNICK), JUDY KAYE, LILLIAN GROAG, JOSÉ RIVERA (PHOTO BY ADENA RIVERA-DUNDAS), EDWARD ALBEE (PHOTO BY JERRY SPEIER).

*continued on page 20*



# Announcing A.C.T.'s EXCITING 0809 SEASON

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Directed by CAREY PERLOFF

## THE QUALITY OF LIFE

Written and directed by JANE ANDERSON

## RICH AND FAMOUS

by JOHN GUARE

Directed by JOHN RANDO

## SOUVENIR

A Fantasia on the Life of Florence Foster Jenkins

by STEPHEN TEMPERLEY

Directed by VIVIAN MATALON

WORLD PREMIERE

## WAR MUSIC

Adapted and directed by LILLIAN GROAG

Based on the book by CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

## BOLEROS FOR THE DISENCHANTED

by JOSÉ RIVERA

Directed by CAREY PERLOFF

WEST COAST PREMIERE

## PETER AND JERRY

by EDWARD ALBEE

Directed by REBECCA TAICHMAN



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# Illuminate the Night

A SPOTLIGHT ON  
OUR SHINING STARS

Sunday, April 6, 2008

In a sparkling night of entertainment led by co-chairs Chandra Gordon, JaMel Perkins, and Patti Rueff, with their stellar

Gala committee, A.C.T. and friends celebrated *Illuminate the Night*:

*A Spotlight on Our Shining Stars*, benefiting actor training programs in A.C.T.'s renowned conservatory. Over 380 loyal supporters, community leaders, alumni, students, and theater artists joined together at the Four Seasons Hotel to raise more than \$725,000 to support the future of American theater.

The evening dazzled with A.C.T. artistic collaborators and bright stars like Adrian Pasdar, Milo Ventimiglia (A.C.T. Young Conservatory alumnus), and Masi Oka (Studio A.C.T. alumnus), all current cast members of the hit TV show *Heroes*, who graciously acknowledged A.C.T. training programs for contributing to their successful acting careers.

During the program, A.C.T. celebrated YC Director Craig Slaughter's 20<sup>th</sup> season with A.C.T. by announcing the establishment of **The Craig Slaughter Young Conservatory New Plays Fund**, an endowed fund that will support the commission and production of new plays with a youthful point of view. The fund has raised more than \$157,000 to date.

Energizing the evening were the remarkable musical talents of students from the M.F.A., YC, and Studio A.C.T. programs. They were joined by the incomparable, Tony Award-winning Christine Ebersole, accompanied by Billy Stritch and Daniel Fabricant.

These performances made it a night to remember, but the spotlight really belongs on the generous donors listed here, who will always be our "shining stars."

Thank you!



Tom Angstadt • Andi and David Arrick • Carolyn Atherton • Bruce and Martha Atwater • Gerson and Barbara Bakar • Don and Julie Baldocchi • Lynn Barr • Michelle and David Benjamin • Alexandria and Luke Bergstrom • Jane Bernstein • Kimberly and Simon Blattner • James Bostwick • Carter Bostwick • Jeff and Kate Brown • Diane Budd • Barbara Callow • Tim Campbell • John and Joan Campodonico • William Carmen • Ronald Casassa • Charles and Joan Caviness • Joey and Deborah Chait • Ralph and Rebecca Clark • Lesley Clement and Doron Drexler • Ellen and John Clement • Lloyd and Janet Cluff • Jack and Susan Cortis • Rosemary Cozzo • David and Carla Crane • Dennis and Eileen Dancause • Joan Danforth • Peter and Melinda Darbee • Richard T. Davis • Patrick and Francie Devlin • Jerry Dodson • Thao Dodson • Ray and Dagmar Dolby • Jean and James Douglas • Peter Dubois • Caroline Emmett and Russell Rydel • Christian and Jacqueline Erdman • Robert Erzen • Robert and Elizabeth Fisher • Ora and Joseph Fisher • Frannie and Mort Fleishhacker • Ceseli and Hugh Foster • Franciscan Winery • Martha and Anthony Fusco • Janette Gallegos • Marilee Gardner • Judy and Mike Gaulke • Keith and Priscilla Geeslin • Nicholas Perloff Giles • John and Marcia Goldman • Chandra and Leonard Gordon • Geoffrey and Marcia Green • Ann and David Green • Claire Greene • Kaatri and Douglas Grigg • Scott Harkonen • Jeanne and Kent Harvey • Nancy and Kirke Hasson • Bill and Ginger Hedden • Cecilia and Jim Herbert • Carolyn and Wilbur Hobbs • Dianne and Ron Hoge • Leslie and George Hume • Robert and Ann Hunter • Jo and Jed Hurley • David ibnAle • Richard J. and Susan K. Idell • Charlotte Ito • Cheryl and Richard Jacobs • Jeri and Jeff Johnson • The Very Rev. Alan Jones • Pamela Joyner and Fred Guiffreda • Ann Mary and Jack Keenan • Sheila and Mark Kenney • Jonathan Kitchen and Nina Hatvary • Heather Kitchen • Tony Kline • Maribelle and Steve Leavitt • Chuck Leitzell • Marilyn Levinson • Jim and Marcia Levy • Nancy Livingston and Fred Levin • Marty Low • Jackie Lockett • Carter and Maggie Mack • Jim and Anne Magill • Naomi and Bruce Mann • Christine and Stan Mattison • Julie McHenry • John and Jacqueline McMahan • Sue and Ken Merrill • Mary and Gene Metz • Leslye Louie and David Miller • Lou and Kristy Miramontes • Stephen and Mary Mizroch • Susan Moldaw and Bob Stallings • Avery Taylor Moore • Maura and Bob Morey • Grant Morris • Lane Murchison • Iain Newton and Pink Pasdar • Jan O'Brien and Craig Hartman • Nancy Olson • Phil Otto • Douglas Ousterhout • Bill and Betsy Pace • Gabriela and Stephen Papale • Adrian Pasdar • Payroll Resources • JaMel and Tom Perkins • Alec and Serena Perkins • Carey Perloff • Rich Peterson • Piedmont Piano • Brad Pleimann • Patrick and Laura Pohlen • Eva and Bill Price • Lisa and John Pritzker • Larry and Nancy Probst • Tom Proehl • Anne Riley • Susan Rosen • Toby and Sally Rosenblatt • Pamela Routh • Patti and Rusty Rueff • Corazon and Martin Sanders • Teveia Barnes and Alan Sankin • Freda Scott and Jason Danielson • Lynn and Paul Sedway • Ruth Ann and Lee Seward • Gene and Abby Schnair • Michelle Shonk • Anne Shonk • Doug and Lydia Shorestein • Ruth Short • Larry Sikon • Janine and David Simerly • John and Carol Simon • Glen and Lana Skidmore • Craig Slaughter • Bill and Susan Smart • DeAnn and Donne Smith • Solstice Press • Gideon and Cheryl Sorokin • Stuart and Carrie Spiegel • Alan L. and Ruth Stein • John and C. Augusta Stewart • Fran and Cleo Streets • Mary and Steven Swig • Roselyne Swig • Patrick S. Thompson • Laney and Pasha Thornton • Ann Thornton • Joe and Terri Tiffany • Ruthellen and Monte Toole • Jeff and Laurie Ubben • Lawrence Varellas • Jerome and Mary Vascellaro • Milo Ventimiglia • Jack and Susy Wadsworth • Catherine Weis • Tim Whalen • Tim and Sally White • Curt Wilhelm and Michael Glover • Barry Williams and Lalita Tademy • Carlie Wilmans • Jane and Douglas Wolf • Art and Janet Wong • Susan Woodall-Mascal and Bob Mascal • Vladimir and Julia Zagatsky • Susan Zetzer

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# WHO'S WHO IN *CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS*



**ROD GNAPP** (*Ellis*) is a graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program and a long-time veteran of Bay Area stages. He has appeared at

A.C.T. in *The Government Inspector*, *The Rainmaker*, *Happy End*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Time of Your Life*, and others. He was recently seen in the Magic Theatre production of *Territories*, Marin Theatre Company's production of *Frozen*, and in TheatreWorks's production of *The Elephant Man*. Film credits include the principal bad guy in the independent feature *Valley of the Heart's Delight* and the mechanic in Pixar's live action short *Calendar Confloption*.



**DAN HIATT** (*Taylor*) has been seen at A.C.T. as the Magistrate in *The Government Inspector*, Bob Acres in *The Rivals*, Rosencrantz in

*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*, Cornelius Hackl in *The Matchmaker*, Yepikhodov in *The Cherry Orchard*, Roderigo in *Othello*, Mell in *The Play's the Thing*, and Smith in *The Threepenny Opera*. Other Bay Area credits include *Dinner with Friends* and *Menocchio* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *The Life and Times of Nicholas Nickleby* and many others at California Shakespeare Theater; *This Wonderful Life*, *The Immigrant*, and *A Flea in Her Ear* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; *Spinning into Butter* at TheatreWorks; *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* at Theatre on the Square; *Noises Off* at Marine's Memorial Theatre; and *The Real Thing* and *Lifex3* at Marin

Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include work with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, the Huntington Theatre Company, Pasadena Playhouse, Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., Studio Arena Theatre, the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and Stage West in Toronto.



**NICOLE LOWRANCE** (*Emma*) makes her A.C.T. debut with *Curse of the Starving Class*. New York credits include Horton Foote's

*Dividing the Estate* (dir. Michael Wilson) at Primary Stages (moving to Broadway this fall in association with Lincoln Center); *The Merchant of Venice* (dir. Darko Tresnjak, also performed at the Royal Shakespeare Company in Stratford-upon-Avon, England); *All's Well That Ends Well* (dir. Darko Tresnjak), *Engaged* (dir. Douglas Hughes), and *Don Juan* (dir. Bartlett Sher), all with Theatre for a New Audience; *Columbinus* (dir. PJ Paparelli) with New York Theatre Workshop; and *Tatjana in Color* (dir. Will Pomerantz) with Culture Project. Regional credits include the world premiere of *The Learned Ladies of Park Avenue* (dir. Michael Wilson) at Hartford Stage; *David Copperfield* (dir. Joanne Woodward) at Westport Country Playhouse; *Romeo and Juliet* (dir. PJ Paparelli) at Folger Theatre; and *Hamlet* (dir. Gale Edwards) and *The Little Foxes* (dir. Douglas Hughes), both at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C. Television credits include *Whoopi*, *Guiding Light*, and *American Masters* (PBS). Lowrance is a graduate of The Juilliard School.



**CRAIG MARKER** (*Malcolm*) last appeared at A.C.T. as Teddie Luton in *The Circle*. Other credits include the world premiere of *First Person Shooter*

(SF Playhouse); *Third*, *Theophilus North*, *Brooklyn Boy*, *Dolly West's Kitchen*, and *Shakespeare in Hollywood* (TheatreWorks); *The Mousetrap* and *The Marriage of Figaro* (Center Repertory Company); *Iphigenia at Aulis* (San Jose Repertory Theatre); *Bus Stop* (Marin Theatre Company); *Love's Labor's Lost* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); *The Shape of Things* and *The Persians* (Aurora Theatre Company, each earning him a Dean Goodman Choice Award); *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow* (Portland Center Stage and San Jose Repertory Theatre); and David Edgar's *Continental Divide* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Barbican Theatre (UK), and La Jolla Playhouse).



**PAMELA REED** (*Ella*) originated the role of Emma at the New York Shakespeare Festival and is honored with the opportunity to

revisit the play in the role of Ella. She made her A.C.T. debut in Pinter's *Old Times* (dir. Carey Perloff) in 1998 and later appeared in Edward Albee's *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* She has performed on Broadway in *Fools* and *The November People* and off Broadway in *Elektra* at Classic Stage Company (dir. Carey Perloff); *Getting Out* at the Lucille Lortel Theatre (Drama Desk Award); *Curse of the Starving Class*, *Aunt Dan & Lemon*, *Fen*, *All's Well That Ends Well*, and *The Sorrows of Stephen* at The Public Theater; *Mrs. Warren's Profession* at the

\*The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.



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## WHO'S WHO

Roundabout Theatre; *Standing on My Knees* at Manhattan Theatre Club; and *Horse Heavens* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival; among others. Her extensive film credits include the upcoming *Descending from Heaven* (with Sam Shepard), *Proof of Life*, *Standing on Fishes*, *Why Do Fools Fall in Love?*, *Bean*, *Santa Fe*, *Junior*, *Passed Away*, *Kindergarten Cop*, *Cadillac Man*, *Chattahoochee*, *Rachel River*, *The Best of Times*, *Melvin and Howard*, *The Goodbye People*, and *The Right Stuff*. She has appeared in the made-for-television movies *Carriers*, *Deadly Whispers*, *Critical Choices*, *Born Too Soon*, *A Woman with a Past*, and *The Man Next Door*. Other television credits include the network series *Jericho*, *The Kennedys*, *Grand*, and *The Home Court*; the Hallmark Hall of Fame special *Caroline*; the miniseries *Hemingway*; and Robert Altman's series *Tanner '88* (Ace Award for Best Actress) and *Tanner on Tanner*. She received an OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence of Performance.



### HOWARD

**SWAIN** (*Slater*) has appeared at A.C.T. in *The Seagull*, *The Learned Ladies*, *Taking Steps*, *A Lie of the Mind*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*,

*Feathers*, *Saint Joan*, and *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*. He has also worked at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, TheatreWorks, Word for Word, Magic Theatre, SF Playhouse, Post Street Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Marines Memorial Theatre, Eureka Theatre Company, and San Jose Stage, as well as the Oregon, California, Berkeley, Santa Cruz, and

Marin Shakespeare festivals and the New York Theatre Workshop, Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., and the Pasadena Playhouse. Film and television work includes *Teknolust*, *Just One Night*, *Night of the Scarecrow*, *Cherry 2000*, *Frameup*, *Miracle Mile*, *Metro*, *Nash Bridges*, *Midnight Caller*, *Kiss Shot*, *Mrs. Lambert Remembers Love*, *Lying Eyes*, *Hill St. Blues*, and *Valley of the Heart's Delight*.



### T. EDWARD WEBSTER

(*Emerson*) most recently appeared in Rebecca Gilman's *The Crowd You're in With* at Magic Theatre. He has

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

*The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.*

"WHO'S WHO" CONTINUES AFTER  
INSIDE A.C.T. SPECIAL SECTION



AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER'S  
MAGAZINE  
SPRING 2008

*inside*  
A.C.T.

# WELCOME TO INSIDE A.C.T. SPRING 2008



Dear Friends,

As chair of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees, I have the unique opportunity to observe the behind-the-scenes work necessary to realize the extraordinary theatrical productions we are accustomed to seeing at A.C.T. These productions spring from the collaborative efforts of hundreds of people working to produce great art and the next generation of great theater artists. Looking to the future, A.C.T.'s senior staff and trustees have developed a comprehensive strategic plan containing several new initiatives designed to take A.C.T. to an even higher level of excellence. I would like to recognize the individuals who provide the leadership—under the direction of the inspired executive partnership of Heather Kitchen and Carey Perloff—that makes these plans reality.

It is Director of Marketing and Public Relations Janette Gallegos who leads the strategically essential work of obtaining ongoing feedback from our audience—a fundamental part of who A.C.T. is and why we exist. Ensuring that A.C.T.'s productions continue to unfold onstage at the highest possible level of artistry is A.C.T. Producing Director James Haire. Development of new

theatrical writing and forms is the monumental task that Associate Artistic Director Pink Pasdar has undertaken. Making sure that all of A.C.T.'s strategic efforts are executed in a fiscally responsible way is newly installed Administrative Director Tom Proehl. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith and Conservatory General Manager George Thompson spearhead programs to bring our acclaimed actor training program and its students closer to our audience. Communication of A.C.T.'s goals to our donors and the “heavy lifting” of fundraising are managed by Director of Development Tim Whalen.

At the board level, specialized committees—headed by Conservatory Committee Chair Patrick Thompson, Development Chair Lesley Clement, Marketing Committee Chair Abby Schnair, and New Works Committee Chair Prisca Geeslin—support the staff by providing direction and feedback and communicating trends and results to the full board. A.C.T.'s 40 trustees provide their individual talents and insight in these and other areas to make A.C.T. the theater it is today and will be in the years to come.

Thank you for joining us on A.C.T.'s ambitious journey into the future. Read on to find out more about the people who will guide us on our way.

Sincerely,

Jack Cortis / *Chair, A.C.T. Board of Trustees*



*Inside*  
A.C.T.

Carey Perloff  
*Artistic Director*

Heather M. Kitchen  
*Executive Director*

Elizabeth Brodersen  
*Publications Editor*

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*Publications & Literary Associate*

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*Inside A.C.T.* design by Basic 8 Creative

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**FRONT COVER:** (ON THE LADDER) A.C.T. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HEATHER KITCHEN; (STANDING, L TO R) ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR TOM PROEHL, ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PINK PASDAR, PRODUCING DIRECTOR JAMES HAIRE, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CAREY PERLOFF; (SEATED, L TO R) DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR TIM WHALEN, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS JANETTE GALLEGOS, CONSERVATORY DIRECTOR MELISSA SMITH, CONSERVATORY GENERAL MANAGER GEORGE THOMPSON. PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE.

## A.C.T.'s SENIOR TEAM

# Leads the Way

As the San Francisco Bay Area's flagship theater, A.C.T. is guided on its dramatic course by a leadership ensemble of talented and creative professionals. These nine individuals—representing the heads of the primary departments of the organization—are responsible, in conjunction with the board of trustees, for charting a thrilling and productive course for the organization on its theatrical travels.

In addition to pursuing their daily mission of ensuring that the 800+ artists, artisans, faculty, staff, and crew members who work at A.C.T. each season do so in creative harmony and fiscal responsibility, A.C.T.'s senior management team is responsible for creating and executing the long-term plans and policies that will carry the theater forward. Over the past two years, working with the board, the senior team spent hundreds of hours examining all aspects of the organization to determine what is working, what needs improvement, and, above all, what the future would and could hold for A.C.T.

These are the people without whom A.C.T. productions would never make it to the stage. They are each an integral part of the organization's artistic life, professional, trustworthy, creative, diligent, and fiercely dedicated to the continued success of A.C.T.

### CAREY PERLOFF *Artistic Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Washington, D.C.

**HOMETOWN** I grew up in D.C. and Philadelphia and lived 15 years in New York City.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** June 1992.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Opening *After the War* after four years of development; creating the new *A Christmas Carol*; recording *Happy End* at Skywalker; *A Doll's House* with René Augesen and Paul Walsh; blessing the Geary Theater the night it reopened.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** Huge adoring audiences willing to take risks on vigorous theatrical outings of classics and new plays, a full second stage season, and spectacularly talented students performing everywhere!

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I trained to be an archaeologist and majored in ancient Greek in college. I did 13 years of ballet and was a mean Toy Mouse in *The Nutcracker*.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: Gao Xingjian, *Soul Mountain*; all of Michael Chabon's novels; Orhan Pamuk, *My Name Is Red* and *Snow*. Listen to: Bonfire Madigan, Nico Muhly, David Lang.



CAREY  
PERLOFF



HEATHER  
KITCHEN

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Opening the restored Geary Theater with *The Tempest*, featuring the Kronos Quartet in the pit; collaborating with Harold Pinter and Tom Stoppard; opening *Luminescence Dating* in New York; directing Steve Reich's *The Cave* in Vienna.

## HEATHER KITCHEN *Executive Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

**HOMETOWN** I grew up in Toronto, lived in eight provinces of Canada, and now consider San Francisco my home.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** 1996.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** The process of producing *After the War*. So many people collaborated on and supported its journey, and the whole company worked to support Philip and Carey's vision.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** Producing transformative art that is central to the lives of our audience.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I study classical guitar and I participated in the 545-mile AIDS/Lifecycle 6 ride last June. I am riding again this June in AIDS/Lifecycle 7, from San Francisco to L.A.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: Alex Ross, *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the 20th Century*. Listen to: Stan Rogers, Manuel Barrueco, John Williams, Andres Segovia, Louis Armstrong. Watch: your step.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Beginning my career at the Stratford Festival; doing turnaround management as production manager of Theatre New Brunswick; managing Canada's largest regional theater, The Citadel. And, of course, my work at A.C.T., where I found an artistic home.

## JAMES HAIRE *Producing Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Phoenix, Arizona.

**HOMETOWN** Phoenix.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** 1971.

**FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Having my handwriting analyzed prior to my first meeting with William Ball. I guess I passed.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Bill Ball's "up, up, and away" lecture at the start of each season; the annual "walk down" following the final performance of the season, where each play from that year took a final curtain call followed by a grand finale staged by Bill.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** Onward and upward.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I played triangle in the Emerson Grade School rhythm band alongside Barry Goldwater, Jr. I wonder if he has kept it up. My career as a professional bullfighter in Nogales was cut short: my parents found out.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** My years spent stage-managing on Broadway at the start of my career; *Cyrano de Bergerac* with Peter Donat, staged by Bill Ball at A.C.T.; after the Loma Prieta earthquake, rebuilding the theater and experiencing a new A.C.T.

## THOMAS C. PROEHL *Administrative Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Hastings, Minnesota.

**HOMETOWN** Moorhead, Minnesota.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** February 18, 2008.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Getting hired!

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** To support and inspire the next generation of actors, authors, audience members, and administrators.

**LITERARY CHARACTER OR HISTORICAL FIGURE YOU MOST RELATE TO** William Shakespeare. We share the same birthday. He wrote plays, I write contracts.

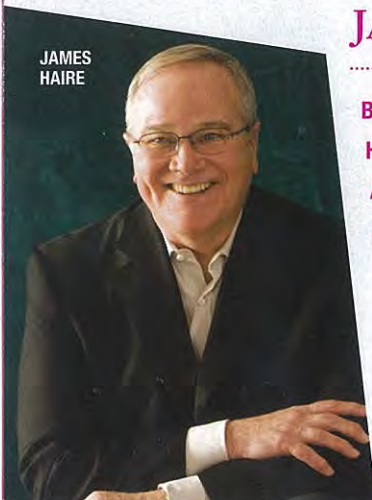
**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I used to be an actor.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: classic novels. Watch: *Boston Legal* and *The Office* and Percy Adlon's film *Bagdad Cafe*. Listen to: classical music on public radio.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Founding member and first managing director of Signature Theatre Company in New York



THOMAS C. PROEHL



JAMES HAIRE

City with James Houghton. Oversaw the construction of the new \$125 million Guthrie Theater, which was completed on time and on budget. Most recently served as the executive director of the Minnesota State Arts Board and secured a 19% increase in funding for the arts.

## GEORGE THOMPSON

*Conservatory General Manager*

**BIRTHPLACE** Port Chester, New York.

**HOMETOWN** Greenwich, Connecticut.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** August 2005.

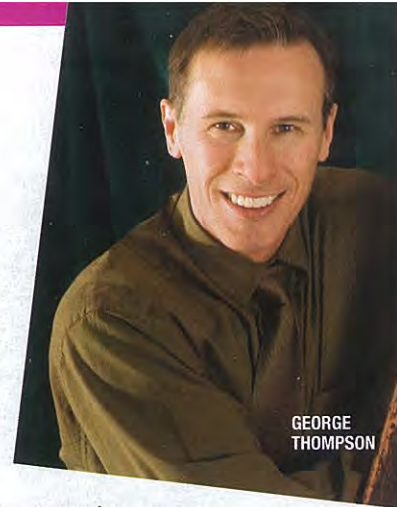
**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** The incoming M.F.A. class's monologue presentation at the start of each school year.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** We acquire the Curran Theatre in a hostile takeover!

**LITERARY CHARACTER OR HISTORICAL FIGURE YOU MOST RELATE TO** Jonny Quest, because I love adventure, challenge, and mystery.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I was a visual artist in high school and won best in show. Sold a few pieces, as well!

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: *A World Lit Only by Fire*, by William Manchester. Watch: *Mad Men*. Listen to: Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto. See/experience/walk: the Pont du Gard.



## MELISSA SMITH *Conservatory Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Louisville, Kentucky.

**HOMETOWN** Louisville, Kentucky.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** June 1995.

**FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Auditioning for A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program (the precursor to the M.F.A. Program) in 1979. I was accepted into the program but didn't attend—perhaps I was waiting to run it?

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** Seeing actors we've trained succeed brilliantly in featured roles on the A.C.T. stage.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** An extraordinary confederation of professional artists—directors, writers, designers, and above all, actors—who are as invested in training the next generation of actors as they are in doing their own work.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I love baking pies. I miss competitive swimming.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: *Learning to Drive*, by Katha Pollitt; *By the Lake*, by John McGahern. Watch: *2046*, *Pan's Labyrinth*.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Launching the third year of A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program in 2000; performing in London at the Barbican in David Edgar's *Continental Divide*; teaching Sam Shepard scene study to Italian and Danish actors (without understanding a word they said) in San Miniato, Italy, at Teatro del Pisa.



## PINK PASDAR *Associate Artistic Director*

**BIRTHPLACE** Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**HOMETOWN** I spent my childhood in Media, Pennsylvania. Rural bliss. Never had a key to my front door.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** June 2007.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** There was a pretty big earthquake opening night of *The Rainmaker*. It started as the curtain was rising.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** Chaos, thunderstorms; I've drawn the knave of pentacles . . . I see bringing more new works to A.C.T. and expanding our new works program into our M.F.A. Program. We have amazing students, and I can't wait to get them together with great playwrights.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I gave birth to my daughter in the back of an ambulance





JANETTE A. GALLEGOS

on Euston Road in London.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Read: *Music for Torching*, *Desperate Characters*, *Emily's Balloon*, and *Frankenstein Makes a Sandwich*. Watch: *Jack's Big Music Show*. Listen to: Pandora radio.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** When I was

offered the job as general manager of the Gate Theatre in London, the producer was interrupted midway through our phone call: there was a flood in the theater and the lead actress's bra had broken ten minutes before curtain. I took the job, fixed the leak, invested in some spare brassieres, and had a great time.

## JANETTE A. GALLEGOS

*Director of Marketing and Public Relations*

**BIRTHPLACE** Dallas, Texas.

**HOMETOWN** Austin, Texas, but I spent a significant portion of my youth overseas—England, Tunisia, Egypt.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** December 2006.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** The marketing and PR team gets together for an hour each Thursday to write notes to subscribers. It has been a great way for us to get to know *way* too much about each other.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** To creatively and innovatively promote the art, artists, process, and experience at A.C.T. I see A.C.T. developing bold, inspirational new work and artists that enrich the artistic community in and beyond the Bay Area.

**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** My great-grandfather (maternal) was executed by Pancho Villa, and my grandfather (fraternal) was the head architect of the Aswan Dam and an advisor to King Farouk.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** See: any country outside the United States. Read: *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Fierce Invalids Home from Hot Climates*, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, *The Art of War*, *The Story of Ferdinand*, and *Where the Wild Things Are*. Listen to: Prince, Nina Simone, Kings of Leon, and anything produced by Rick Rubin.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** Working with the passionate, smart, committed, and totally quirky folks at A.C.T.

## TIM WHALEN *Director of Development*

**BIRTHPLACE** South Dakota.

**HOMETOWN** Rapid City, South Dakota.

**AT A.C.T. SINCE** January 2005.

**FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE** There are so many, I can't pick just one . . . at the top of the list are *The Overcoat*, *Happy End*, *After the War*, and *Sweeney Todd*.

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF A.C.T.?** My vision is for a \$30 million+ endowment to be in place by December 2009 supporting each new season in a significant way, and for our annual fundraising capacity to increase to a level that allows the artistic team to do the work they want without being held back by financial restraints.

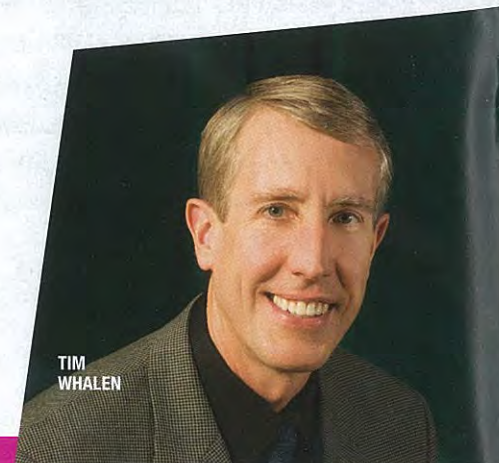
**LITTLE-KNOWN FACT** I was a captain in the U.S. Army for four years.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** See: any dance choreographed by Mark Morris and theater directed/produced by Robert Lepage. Listen to: music played or orchestrated by Yo-Yo Ma.

**CAREER HIGHLIGHTS** A.C.T., of course. I have had the immense privilege of working with several really stellar organizations, among them KQED, The Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, and Cal Performances at UC Berkeley.

**For more information about A.C.T.'s senior management team, please visit [www.act-sf.org/management](http://www.act-sf.org/management).**

PHOTOS BY KEVIN BERNE



TIM WHALEN

# THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN



## STAGING THE FUTURE OF GREAT THEATER FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

In addition to providing vital annual support for this season's programming, when you make a gift to A.C.T. this year, you will be helping the theater establish its first-ever endowment. With a goal of \$30 million, this permanent, growing asset will give A.C.T. the financial wings to soar to new artistic heights in the years ahead.

Thanks to loyal audience members like you, A.C.T. has become a San Francisco Bay Area cultural treasure and a nationally respected leader in actor training. Now A.C.T. has the very real opportunity to move to a new level of excellence—to stage more ambitious productions featuring distinguished visiting artists, to attract a greater number of top-tier students and faculty to our conservatory, and to strengthen our ability to commission and develop provocative new work that keeps theater vibrant.

To take this major creative leap forward, we will need everyone's help. All gifts to *The Next Generation Campaign*, large and small, will make a difference as we strive to build the financial foundation for A.C.T. to commit to the bigger artistic challenges it is so eminently capable of meeting. In hopes of encouraging greater participation in *The Next Generation Campaign*, close friends of the theater Jeff and Laurie Ubben

have issued a challenge to our audience: they will match all new or increased gifts to A.C.T. this season dollar for dollar up to \$1 million!

As you make plans to renew your 2008–09 season subscription this month, please consider a tax-deductible contribution to A.C.T. and join us in this historic effort to create an endowment for the theater. Not only will you be supporting the work we enjoy on the stage and in the classroom today, but you will be helping A.C.T. stage the future of great theater for the next generation. Thank you!



(L TO R) THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE MEMBERS JONATHAN KITCHEN, NANCY LIVINGSTON (CHAIR), FRED LEVIN, A.C.T. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HEATHER KITCHEN, DIANNE HOGE, AND RUSTY RUEFF

# By the Numbers

## THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN

- \$30 million** – Overall Campaign Goal
- \$10 million** – Excellence on the Mainstage
- \$10 million** – Excellence in Actor Training
- \$10 million** – Excellence in New Works
- \$25 million** – Total Raised to Date
- \$11.2 million** – Total Contributed by A.C.T. Trustees
- \$5 million** – Largest Gift
- 1,750** – Total Number of Gifts to Date
- 3,000+** – Total Number of Gifts Projected to Reach Goal
- 2** – Number of Years Projected to Complete Campaign

### THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Mortimer Fleishacker,  
Ellen Magnin Newman,  
Steven L. Swig, *Honorary Co-chairs*  
Nancy Livingston, *Chair*

Lesley Ann Clement · Marilee K. Gardner  
Dianne Hoge · Jonathan S. Kitchen  
Fred M. Levin · Sally Rosenblatt  
Rusty Rueff · Cheryl Sorokin  
Jeff Ubben · Carlie Wilmans

### THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN ARTISTIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Annette Bening, *Chair*

Rene Auberjonois · René Augesen  
Elizabeth Banks · Marco Barricelli  
Carlos Bernard · Raye Birk  
Benjamin Bratt · Betty Lynn Buckley  
Olympia Dukakis · Eve Ensler  
Philip Kan Gotanda · Giles Havergal  
Bill Irwin · Judith Ivey  
Steven Anthony Jones · Lisa Kron  
Matt McGrath · Omar Metwally  
Pamela Reed · Peter Riegert  
Anika Noni Rose · Ken Ruta  
Ruben Santiago-Hudson · Tom Stoppard  
David Strathairn · Tom Waits  
Gregory Wallace · Laird Williamson  
Robert Wilson · Charles Randolph-Wright

## CAMPAIGN DONORS SHARE A PASSION FOR LIVE THEATER

Donors to *The Next Generation Campaign* have many reasons for supporting this historic effort to establish an endowment for A.C.T., but central to their participation in the campaign is a shared passion for the live theater experiences they have enjoyed over the years. Their personal stories are testimony to the transformative role A.C.T. plays in entertaining and inspiring the members of our community.

### JO AND JED HURLEY

Jo and Jed Hurley have been coming to A.C.T. ever since Bill Ball brought the company to San Francisco in 1967. They have fond memories of the days of rotating repertory, when, as Jo recalls, “An actor would have the lead role in one production and a supporting role in another, and would run from one venue to the other on the same night! Somehow the actors would never be out of breath,” she laughs.

When Carey Perloff became artistic director, the Hurleys felt the quality and depth of productions became even better. “Carey has taken the theater to a whole new level artistically,” Jed says. “The productions at A.C.T. are not only entertaining, but they are thought provoking,” adds Jo. “They expand your mind.”

The Hurleys are members of A.C.T.’s Directors Circle and Prospero Society and have made a generous gift to *The Next Generation Campaign*. “If you care about something, you need to support it beyond buying tickets. That alone is not going to keep an arts organization around,” Jo explains. “And I truly hope A.C.T. will be here for the next generation—and many future generations beyond that!”

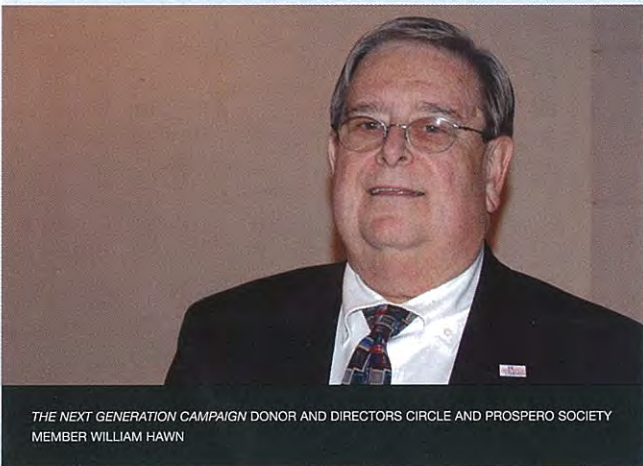
Jo also contributes her time by serving on the event committee for *Illuminate the Night*, A.C.T.’s annual gala that benefits the A.C.T.



THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN DONORS AND DIRECTORS CIRCLE AND PROSPERO SOCIETY MEMBERS JO AND JED HURLEY



Conservatory. Her volunteer experience has given her new insights into the important role A.C.T. plays in training young actors. “I didn’t realize that there was so much more to the conservatory than the M.F.A. Program. What A.C.T. does to engage young people, not to mention adults, in theater is truly amazing,” explains Jo. “We are pleased that our gift to *The Next Generation Campaign* will not only support the wonderful work on the stage, but also the training of the next generation of theater artists,” adds Jed.



THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN DONOR AND DIRECTORS CIRCLE AND PROSPERO SOCIETY MEMBER WILLIAM HAWN

**WILLIAM HAWN**

Despite the fact that he lives 90 miles away in Cloverdale, Bill Hawn makes time to see every A.C.T. production each season. He and his late wife, Linda, first subscribed in 1969, and, although they skipped a couple of seasons when Bill was serving in the U.S. Air Force overseas, they have been loyal subscribers ever since. “My wife and I shared a passion for great theater,” Bill says. “We’d go to Ashland, New York, and London, but it was so exciting to have an important cultural resource like A.C.T. right here in the Bay Area.”

Today Bill, a member of A.C.T.’s Directors Circle and Prospero Society, enjoys coming to A.C.T. and participating in donor events because of the opportunities to socialize, meet new, interesting people, and get an inside look at the creative process. “I love getting that insight into a play,” Bill explains. “It engages you quicker when you see it onstage.”

*“It means a lot to me to support this endowment because of what it will mean for A.C.T.’s future. I take personal pleasure giving back for all the wonderful moments A.C.T. has given me.”* — Bill Hawn

Bill has dedicated his generous gift to *The Next Generation Campaign* to Linda’s memory. “I was happy to be asked and given an opportunity to assist,” says Bill. “I’m retired and live on a fixed income, so it was a little scary at first to consider making this gift. But it means a lot to me to support this endowment because of what it will mean for A.C.T.’s future. I take personal pleasure giving back for all the wonderful moments A.C.T. has given me.”

**ANNE AND RICK RILEY**

Although they have been coming to A.C.T. for more than 20 years, Anne and Rick Riley are relative newcomers to the theater compared to the Hurleys and Bill Hawn. Friends introduced them to A.C.T. in the early 1980s, and they soon became subscribers. They kept their subscription even while raising their two children because, as Anne puts it, “A.C.T. provided us with a special place to spend time together.” The Rileys appreciate the variety of plays A.C.T. produces each season, and the



THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN DONORS AND DIRECTORS CIRCLE MEMBERS RICK AND ANNE RILEY

PHOTOS BY JAMIE VALLE

continued on page 10

**CAMPAIGN DONORS** continued from page 9

quality of the acting, sets, and costumes. "When it all clicks, it's so powerful," says Anne. "Each time we leave a play, we have a great conversation on the way home and often during the days following."

Anne, a nurse, and Rick, a remodeling contractor, have shared their love of theater with their children, who participated in drama in school. In addition to being members of A.C.T.'s Directors Circle, they recently made a commitment to *The Next Generation Campaign* because of the impact theater has had on their children's lives, and because their gift will allow other children to experience theater in the A.C.T. Conservatory. "What kids learn from theater is truly unique," says Anne. "It allows them to find a creative outlet and requires discipline and tenacity."

The Rileys were further inspired by others who have made significant gifts to *The Next Generation Campaign*. Rick explains, "It's great to see so many giving back to A.C.T., an organization that gives so much to this community, and to know that our gift is making a difference."

## WHAT IS THE UBBEN CHALLENGE?

Because every gift to *The Next Generation Campaign* matters, Jeff and Laurie Ubben have promised to match all new and increased gifts this season dollar for dollar up to \$1 million. If you did not make a contribution to A.C.T. last year, the entire amount of your gift will be matched by the Ubbens—essentially doubling the impact of your gift. If you did make a contribution to A.C.T. last year (thanks!), the amount of your gift today that is above and beyond last year's gift will also be matched dollar for dollar by the Ubbens. There has never been a better time to make a new tax-deductible contribution to A.C.T. or to increase your contribution from last year. Thanks for helping us meet the Ubben challenge!



A.C.T. gratefully acknowledges the following donors to *The Next Generation Campaign*, whose gifts to A.C.T.'s endowment are already supporting the productions and programs we are enjoying this season. Space limitations prevent us from listing all those who have generously supported *The Next Generation Campaign*. For more information, contact Jamie Valle at 415.439.2464 or [jvalle@act-sf.org](mailto:jvalle@act-sf.org).

### 2 MILLION & ABOVE

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation  
Burt and Deedee McMurtry  
Bernard Osher Foundation

### \$1 MILLION—\$1,999,999

James and Jean Douglas  
Ruth and Alan L. Stein  
Jeff and Laurie Ubben  
Anonymous

### \$500,000—\$999,999

Doris Duke Charitable Foundation  
Frannie and Mort Fleishhacker  
Priscilla and Keith Geeslin  
Mimi and Peter Haas Fund  
Ms. Toni Rembe and Mr. Arthur Rock  
Patti and Rusty Rueff  
Sylvia Coe Tolk  
Anonymous

### \$250,000—\$499,999

Barbara and Gerson Bakar  
S. H. Cowell Foundation  
Ray and Dagmar Dolby Family Fund  
Mr. and Mrs. William Draper III  
Douglas W. and Kaatri Grigg  
Jonathan S. Kitchen and Nina Hatvany  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert McGrath  
Mr. and Mrs. John Osterweis  
Ms. Carlie Wilmans

### \$100,000—\$249,999

Kenneth Berryman  
Rena Bransten  
Lesley Ann Clement and Doron Dreksler  
Susan and Jack Cortis  
Ms. Joan Danforth  
Dana and Robert Emery  
The Estate of Mary Gamburg

Ms. Marilee K. Gardner  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Green  
Kirke and Nancy Sawyer Hasson  
Dianne and Ron Hoge  
Heather M. Kitchen  
Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation  
Nion T. McEvoy  
F. Eugene and Mary S. Metz  
Byron R. Meyer  
Mr. Steven C. Phillips and Ms. Susan Sandler  
Toby and Sally Rosenblatt  
Gene and Abby Schnair  
Rita Schreiber  
Dr. Gideon and Cheryl Sorokin  
Bert W. Steinberg and Lucia Brandon  
Roselyne C. Swig  
Mr. and Mrs. Steven L. Swig  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul L. Wattis III

Barry Lawson Williams and Lalita Tademy

### \$50,000—\$99,999

Cathy and Sandy Dean  
Laura and John Fisher  
Mr. and Mrs. Kent Harvey  
Michael and Laura Lazarus  
Philip Schlein  
Bruce and Adrienne Mitchell  
Mr. Russ Selinger

### \$25,000—\$49,999

Teveia Rose Barnes and Alan Sankin  
Nancy and Joachim Bechtle  
Kimberly and Simon Blattner  
Jacqueline and Christian Erdman  
Victoria and David Fleishhacker  
Fred and Nancy Fritsch  
Chandra and Leonard Gordon  
Marcia and Geoffrey Green

William E. Hawn  
Jo and Jed Hurley  
Betty Hoener  
Claiborne S. Jones  
Sue Yung Li and Dale Ikeda  
The Marclad Foundation  
The Marmor Foundation, Drs. Michael and Jane Marmor  
Christine and Stan Mattison  
J. Sanford Miller  
Carey Perloff and Anthony Giles  
Pikake Foundation  
Anne and Richard Riley  
Drs. Caroline Emmett and Russell E. Rydel  
Dr. F. Stanley Seifried  
Patrick S. Thompson  
Deborah Romer and William Tucker  
Larry and Robyn Varellas  
Anonymous

# ALUMNI

# Notebook

Graduates of the A.C.T. Conservatory grace stages and screens across the country. Here's what some of our illustrious alumni have been up to recently.



**IN NEW YORK:** Heidi Armbruster '02 appears in *Fifth Column* at The Mint. Alexandra Wilson '05 plays the lead in Aaron Sorkin's *The Farnsworth Invention* at the Music Box Theatre. David Ryan Smith '97 is understudying *Passing Strange* at the Belasco Theatre. Chris Fitzgerald '97 performs in *Young Frankenstein* at the Hilton Theatre. Tony Award winner Anika Noni Rose appears in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* at the Broadhurst Theatre. Derek Cecil '97 performs in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* at the American Airlines Theatre. Jody Flader '07 is featured in the world premiere of *The Slug Bearers of Kayrol Island* at The Vineyard Theatre. Claire Brownell '06 is understudying *39 Steps* at the American Airlines Theatre. Albert Jones '00 appears in *Oroonoko* at the Theatre for a New Audience. Stafford Clarke Price '01 plays Robert Graves in *The Oxford Roof Climber's Rebellion* at Urban Stages. Peter Bretz '83 performed on

Broadway in Tolstoy's *The Power of Darkness*. Davis Duffield '04 appeared in the Broadway revival of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Hal Brooks '93 is a recipient of the 2007–09 NEA/TCG Career Development Program for directors. His production of Nilaja Sun's *No Child...*, which won an OBIE Award last year, is on its national tour; he recently directed the New York premiere of Ariel Dorfman's *Widows* at 59E59 Theaters. Daniel Beaty '01 completed a sold-out extended run of his OBIE Award-winning one-man play, *Emergence-SEE!* at The Public Theater. Jacob Ming-Trent '01's recent credits include *Richard II* in *Dick 2* with Theater of the Expendable, *Widower's Houses* with Epic Theater Ensemble off Broadway, the role of Gerry Mitchel on *Law & Order*, and a new play by Marcus Gardley. Marc Stuart Weitz '96 directs two pieces in the Long Island City One-Act Festival and the premiere of *Time Is the Mercy of Eternity* for Six Figures Theatre Company in Manhattan. The show *Days and Nights*, which he created with Purple Man Theater for the New York International Fringe Festival, was highlighted in the *New York Times* and *New York* magazine as one of five shows to check out in the festival. Patrick McNulty '00 directed and produced the world premiere of *Goodbye April, Hello May* at HERE and appeared in several episodes of *The Naked Brothers Band* on Nickelodeon. D.J. Lapité '04 is in *Body Parts*, by Ishmael Reed, at The Nuyorican Poets Cafe.

ABOVE: ANIKA NONI ROSE IN THE BROADWAY REVIVAL OF *CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF*. RIGHT: ALEXANDRA WILSON '05 AND JIMMI SIMPSON IN *THE FARNSWORTH INVENTION* ON BROADWAY. PHOTOS BY SARA KRULWICH/THE NEW YORK TIMES.

NOTEBOOK *continued on page 12*



**ELSEWHERE:** The A.C.T. mainstage production of *The Government Inspector* featured performances by **Raife Baker '08**, **Alex Morf '08**, **Shannon Taing '08**, **Amanda Sykes '08**, **Jud Williford '04**, **Andrew Hurteau '93**, and **Rod Gnapp '87**, while Williford, Gnapp and **T. Edward Webster '02** are featured in *Curse of the Starving Class*. **Ryan Rilette '97** completed a six-year tenure as artistic director of Southern Repertory Theater in New Orleans to take up a new position as managing director of Marin Theatre Company; he also recently completed filming *In the Electric Mist*. **Andrew Kelsey YC** performs in *As Much As You Can* at the Celebration Theatre in Los Angeles. **Neil Hopkins '02** recently performed guest-starring roles on *Dirty Sexy Money* and *Shark* and has a recurring role on *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles*. He also completed the short film *Hit Factor*, a script read at A.C.T.'s 2007 Alumni Weekend, with James Cromwell. **Alex Moggridge '00** appears on *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. **Matthew Nicklaw '07** is featured on *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*. **Alan Blumenfeld '77** completed a new film with Robert De Niro and Al Pacino, *Righteous Kill*, and has filmed guest-starring roles on *Dirty Sexy Money* and the HBO show *12 Miles of Bad Road*, with Lily Tomlin; Blumenfeld also continues his recurring role as Maury Parkman, the Nightmare Man, on *Heroes*. Academy Award winner **Denzel Washington** stars in the

film *American Gangster*. Tony Award nominee **Omar Metwally '97** can be seen in the leading role of the James Ivory film *The City of Your Final Destruction*, with Anthony Hopkins. **Rachel Black '01** and **Heidi Armbruster '02** appear with George Clooney in the Academy Award-nominated film *Michael Clayton*. **Andrew McClain '06** appears in *The History Boys* at The Ahmanson Theatre. **Drew Hirshfield '06** is in *Amadeus* at The Wilma Theater in Philadelphia.



**Matt Blair YC** appeared in *Wit* with Emma Thompson and *Twelfth Night* in Stratford-upon-Avon. **Lucas Rocco Alifano '07** stars in *The Other Side*, an award-winning internet spin-off of the CBS television series *Ghost Whisperer*. He also plays the lead in *The Lost Coast*, an independent film premiering at the SXSW Film Festival. **Darren Modder-Kelley '93** finished the original short film *From Insult to Intimacy*. **Sara Kathryn Bakker '98** plays Portia and Calpurnia in *Julius Caesar* at the American Repertory Theatre and has appeared on *Law & Order*. **Jane Jones '81** directs *Twelfth Night* at Portland Center Stage in Oregon. **Lauren Lane '89**, after ten years and three television series, is still a member of Tim Robbins's Actors Gang. She teaches acting at Texas State University and is an original cast member of *The Dick Monologues*, which plays once a month at the Hyde Park Theatre in Austin. **Nancy Carlin '83**'s recent credits include directing *The Clean House* for The B Street Theatre in Sacramento and acting in *Man and Superman* at California Shakespeare Theater and *Hysteria* at Aurora Theatre Company. She is writing, with composer Michael Rasbury, *Max Understood: The Surreal Adventure of a 7-Year-Old Autistic Boy*. **Art Manke '84** recently received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Direction of *Bach at Leipzig* at South Coast Repertory; recent credits also include directing the world premiere of *The Ice-Breaker* for the Magic Theatre and the Laguna Playhouse, *The Constant Wife* for the Pasadena Playhouse, and an episode of *Hannah Montana* for the Disney Channel. **Naomi Peters '01** played Cordelia in *King Lear* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre. She can also



be seen in *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull* doing utility stunts; *Company Retreat*, directed by Campbell Scott; as stunt double for Lindsay Sloane in *The Six Wives of Henry LeFay*; and as stunt double for Nealla Gordon in *Push*. **Jamison Jones '94** can be seen in the film *He Was a Quiet Man*, directed by Frank Cappello. **Richard Garner '82** is in his 22nd year as cofounder and producing artistic director of Georgia Shakespeare in Atlanta. **Deontay Wilson '06** has won a Wallace Gerbode Foundation/William and Flora Hewlett Foundation grant to fund the commission by A.C.T. of a sequel to his play *American Limbo*.

**If you are an alumnus/a of an A.C.T. training program (Advanced Training Program, Master of Fine Arts Program, Studio A.C.T., Summer Training Congress, or Young Conservatory), we'd love to know what you're up to. Please write to Ashley Forrette at [aforette@act-sf.org](mailto:aforette@act-sf.org) and tell us about your recent accomplishments.**

BOTTOM LEFT: JODY FLADER '07 AND MATT PEARSON IN *THE SLUGBEARERS OF KAYROL ISLAND* AT THE VINEYARD THEATRE. PHOTO BY CAROL ROSEGG. LEFT: LUCAS ALIFANO '07 IN *THE LOST COAST*. PHOTO BY GABRIEL FLEMING. BELOW: CAITLIN TALBOT '08 AND DAN MORRISON '08 IN *THE A.C.T. M.F.A.* PROGRAM PRODUCTION OF *ORLANDO*, DIRECTED BY RYAN RILETTE '97. PHOTO BY DAVID WILSON.

## Alumni Spotlight

A STUDENT OF THE BUSINESS: A.C.T. MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM ALUMNUS RYAN RILETTE '97



Ryan Rilette is an artist who, after nearly two hectic decades working in the theater, can not be pinned down. Depending on the day, he can be branded accurately as an actor, director, artistic director, producer, managing director, champion of new playwrighting, proud father, and good guy.

After graduating from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program in 1997, Rilette moved to New York, joining with other A.C.T. alumni to form Rude Mechanicals Theater Company. Carving out an innovative niche for themselves in the competitive New York theater scene, Rude Mechanicals thrived by applying the training they received at A.C.T. to reimagining classical works and presenting premiere productions of bold contemporary plays. Rilette recently returned to his alma mater to direct members of the A.C.T. class of 2008 in Sarah Ruhl's adaptation of Virginia Woolf's gender-bending *Orlando*. He commented, "After coming through [A.C.T.], the shorthand you have with the people you work with means you can work so much faster. The cast of *Orlando*

has such a great language for working together. That's what Rude Mechanicals had and that's why we wanted to continue to work together after we graduated."

Rilette directed *Orlando* while tying up his six-year tenure as artistic director at Southern Repertory Theater in New Orleans and preparing for his new gig as managing director of Marin Theatre Company. He adamantly encourages actors to create their own opportunities. "Producing your own work is a really smart thing for actors to do, to remind yourself that you're not just a chair waiting in a prop shop to be used. You can be in control of your own career. Just because you are an actor doesn't mean you shouldn't be a student of the business."



# FINDING SYNERGIES

GENERATIONS WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE FUTURE OF AMERICAN THEATER

In crafting a plan for the future of A.C.T., the theater's leadership focused on finding strategic synergies among the three primary areas of A.C.T.'s creative life: mainstage producing, actor training, and the development of new work for the American stage. The students in A.C.T.'s M.F.A. Program and Young Conservatory, led by Conservatory Director Melissa Smith, are an essential part of that process, serving as a kind of "research-and-development" lab for readings and workshops of mainstage-bound classic plays and increasingly getting involved with the development of new work.

Several A.C.T. mainstage productions have found their footing in workshops and studio productions involving M.F.A. Program students, including this season's *The Rainmaker*, *The Government Inspector*, and *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Each January, the graduating class of the M.F.A. Program participates in a new works festival, reading roles—often together with veteran professional actors—in workshops of new plays by established and emerging theater artists. This year, the class of 2008 turned its talents to exploring brand-new plays by up-and-coming young writers Deontay Wilson (himself a 2006 A.C.T. M.F.A. Program graduate), Francine Volpe, and Noah Haidle.

"We have our new works program, and it made sense to develop an association with the school," says Associate Artistic Director Pink Paskar, who oversees A.C.T.'s First Look program of new-play development. "Our students will go on to work on new plays with living writers, and we wanted to expose them to that experience with the resources of the school still behind them."

Kevin Dedes, a member of the M.F.A. Program graduating class of 2008 who participated in one of the January workshops, agrees. "I started to realize where in a playwright's process actors are actually useful, and where we're maybe not so useful." Dedes was surprised to discover how well his classical training prepared him for work on new plays that are living texts, subject to revision and reconstruction.

Paskar and Smith are particularly excited to look for new plays that suit the M.F.A. Program students, while also identifying artists for future collaboration on one of A.C.T.'s stages. "Melissa and I realized that we have similar taste in new work, and bringing new plays into the M.F.A. Program is a great way to engage playwrights and directors we hope to have long-term relationships with," says Paskar.

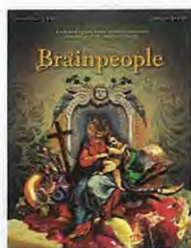
Smith and Young Conservatory Director Craig Slaughter are also working to find synergy within the conservatory itself. Over the last 18 years, the Young Conservatory's acclaimed New Plays Program has successfully commissioned and premiered many new plays for children by distinguished playwrights. This year the YC and M.F.A. Program are pooling resources on a coproduction of Amy Herzog's *The Wendy Play*, a new work that includes roles for teenage and adult actors.

Smith adds, "I'm excited because I've seen the way that mentoring the YC has changed the M.F.A. Program students, who perform with YC students each year on the mainstage in *A Christmas Carol* and teach in the YC during the summer. On the one hand the YC actors develop relationships with actors who aren't adults to them, and on the other hand, when the M.F.A. Program actors teach, they solidify the things that they've been learning themselves. When the students work on contemporary plays, new plays, it triggers in them more questions about their own aesthetic and what they want to say in theater.

"We have natural resources here. I think organizations really succeed when they work effectively with what they have, and I think that's what's happening here."

KEVIN DEDES '08 WITH JAHMELA BIGGS '08 (BACKGROUND) AND YOUNG CONSERVATORY STUDENT LEENA CULHANE IN A REHEARSAL OF *THE WENDY PLAY*. PHOTO BY ASHLEY FORRETTE.





## HONORING A.C.T.'s OWN

Each January, A.C.T. staff and friends gather to celebrate two auspicious moments in the history of the theater: the birthday of A.C.T.'s glorious home, the American Conservatory Theater (formerly known as the Geary), which originally opened on January 10, 1910; and its rebirth in January 1996, after undergoing extensive reconstruction to repair damage caused by the Loma Prieta earthquake. At the same time, A.C.T. takes the opportunity to honor staff members who have made exceptional contributions to the theater's success in the preceding calendar year.

The recipient of this year's Artistic Director's Award is Senior Graphic Designer Amelia Nardinelli, who is responsible for creating a wide variety of A.C.T. promotional pieces and collateral, including season brochures, advertisements, second and mainstage performance posters, the annual report, and the M.F.A. Program bulletin. "It is a tremendous challenge to visualize the material we're working on," says Perloff, "to evoke a complex piece of theater in a way that's true to the play but at the same time is rich enough visually that people will want to come see the piece. Amelia is imaginative, has humor and patience, and is a pleasure to work with. I think she's really raised the bar in terms of how we represent our work."

The Executive Director's Award went this year to Joseph Tally, head librarian of A.C.T.'s Allen Fletcher Theater Collection. Boasting 12,000 theater-related titles and staffed by 24 volunteers, the library serves the entire A.C.T. community and is an invaluable resource for staff and students. While Tally has been at A.C.T. for just over a year, he has already overseen a major library renovation. "We hired Joe when we were expanding and reconfiguring our library space to better serve the conservatory and staff, and he shepherded that process beautifully," says A.C.T. Executive Director Heather Kitchen. "This award is really about Joe's selflessness and kindness, and the extraordinary amount of extra effort he puts into what he does." Kitchen adds that she looks for people who represent a certain spirit of mentorship and continuity: "Joe has built on the shoulders of those who came before him, which I think is an important part of who we are as an organization, and continuing to build resources for the next generation."

Perloff and Kitchen also recognized A.C.T.'s longest-term staff members, among them M.F.A. Program faculty members Frank Ottiwell and Deborah Sussel, Box Office Manager Richard Bernier, Company Manager Dianne Prichard, Producing Director Jim Haire, House Manager Eva Ramos, Security Staff Member Curtis Carr, and actor/director Ken Ruta. Joining this august group is Operations Manager Lesley Pierce, who this year marks her 25th season with A.C.T. "We always celebrate the additions to the 25-year club," Perloff says, "but we especially salute in Lesley her dedicated service as A.C.T.'s owner's representative during the reconstruction of the Geary, juggling everyone's needs while helping us return safely to this incredibly gorgeous building."



ABOVE: A.C.T. SENIOR GRAPHIC DESIGNER AMELIA NARDINELLI. PHOTO BY ASHLEY FORRETTE. RIGHT: A.C.T. HEAD LIBRARIAN JOSEPH TALLY. PHOTO BY SU EVERS.

BACK COVER: (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP) AMANDA SYKES '08, SHARON LOCKWOOD, AND ASSOCIATE ARTIST GREGORY WALLACE IN THE A.C.T. PRODUCTION OF *THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR*. PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE.

## THE A.C.T. 2007-08 SEASON

AT THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER  
**SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET**  
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Book by Hugh Wheeler | From an Adaptation by  
Christopher Bond | Directed and Designed by  
John Doyle | Aug 30-Sept 30

**THE RAINMAKER** by N. Richard Nash  
Directed by Mark Rucker | Oct 25-Nov 25

**SPEED-THE-PLOW** by David Mamet  
Directed by Loretta Greco | Jan 4-Feb 3

**THE BLOOD KNOT** by Athol Fugard | Directed by  
Charles Randolph-Wright | Music composed and  
recorded by Tracy Chapman | Feb 8-Mar 9

**THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR** by Nikolai Gogol  
Directed by Carey Perloff | Mar 20-Apr 20

**CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS** by Sam Shepard  
Directed by Peter DuBois | Apr 25-May 25

**'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE** by John Ford  
Directed by Carey Perloff | Music composed and  
performed by Bonfire Madigan Shive | Jun 5-Jul 6

**A CHRISTMAS CAROL** by Charles Dickens  
Adapted by Carey Perloff and Paul Walsh  
Music by Karl Lundeberg | Choreography by  
Val Caniparoli | Directed by Dominique Lozano  
Based on the original direction by Carey Perloff  
Dec 5-Dec 23

AT YERBA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS  
**THE TOSCA PROJECT** A movement-theater project  
created by Carey Perloff and Val Caniparoli | Oct 26-28

AT ZEUM THEATER  
**BRAINPEOPLE** by José Rivera  
Directed by Chay Yew | Jan 30-Feb 16

**FIRST LOOK** | A series of new play  
workshop readings | Apr 11-26

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**JUD WILLIFORD** (*Wesley*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in *The Government Inspector*, *The*

*Imaginary Invalid*, *Happy End*, *The Rivals*, *The Time of Your Life*, and six seasons of *A Christmas Carol*. Other theater credits include Mark Jackson's *American Suicide* with Z Plays and Encore Theatre Company; *The Imaginary Invalid* at The People's Light Theatre; *All's Well That Ends Well*, *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, and Trinculo in *The Tempest* at California Shakespeare Theater; Sergius in *Arms and the Man* at Chautauqua Theatre; and Rufus Oakwood in *Saturn: The Musical*. Film credits include *Wrong Time*, *Rite Spot* with Olympia Dukakis and *The Tripper*, directed by David Arquette. He received his B.F.A. in theater from the University of Evansville and his M.F.A. in acting from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.



**JACK WILLIS** (*Weston*) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent

performances at A.C.T. in *Blood Knot*, *The Rainmaker*, *Hedda Gabler*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Little Foxes*, *Happy End*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, and *The Black Rider*. An A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, he is also 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, Willis has appeared in *Julius Caesar*, *The Crucible*, *Art*, and *The Old Neighborhood*. His off-Broadway credits include *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *World of Mirth*, *The Iphigenia Cycle*, and *Valhalla*. He appeared in *Gypsy* with Patti LuPone at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, *The Cradle Will Rock*, *The Out-of-Towners*, *Love Hurts*, *I Come in Peace*, *Problem Child*, *Law & Order*, *Ed*, and *Dallas*. Willis is a cofounder of Aruba Repertory.



**JERI LYNN COHEN**

(*Understudy*) has appeared at A.C.T. in *A Mother* and *The Time of Your Life*.

She is a charter member of Word for

Word Performing Arts Company, where she has originated roles in more than a dozen critically acclaimed productions. She has worked at theaters throughout the Bay Area, including Aurora Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, BRAVA Theatre, Campo Santo, Encore Theatre Company, Eureka Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, San Jose Stage Company, and Traveling Jewish Theatre. She has toured internationally with the San Francisco Mime Troupe.



**MAYA LAWSON**

(*Understudy*) returns to her native San Francisco, where she was once a student in the A.C.T. Young Conservatory.

Favorite roles

include Katherine Bennet in Book-It Repertory's *Pride and Prejudice* at Portland Center Stage, Queen Elizabeth in *Notorious Women*, Hermia in *A*

*Midsummer Night's Dream*, Françoise in *Museum*, Narcissus in *Metamorphosis*, Frau Griebel in *The Brecht Project* (dir. Richard E. T. White), and, most recently, *The Vagina Monologues* at The Hudson Theatre in Los Angeles. Film credits include *Brand upon the Brain!* with Isabella Rossellini (dir. Guy Maddin). Lawson received her B.F.A. in acting from Cornish College of the Arts.

**PETER DuBOIS** (*Director*) has served as a director, associate producer, and resident director at The Public Theater over the past five years. He most recently directed the world premiere of *Becky Shaw*, by Gina Gionfriddo, at the Humana Festival of New American Plays. Directing credits at The Public include Adrienne Kennedy's *Mom*, *How Did You Meet the Beatles?*, Bob Glaudivi's *Jack Goes Boating* (with LAByrinth Theater Company), *Measure for Pleasure* (SSDF Callaway Award for Excellence in Direction; Drama League Award nom. for Distinguished Production of a New Play), *Richard III* (*Newsday* top-ten New York production of 2004), *Biro*, and Glaudivi's *A View from 151<sup>st</sup> Street* (also with LAByrinth). He was previously the artistic director of Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, Alaska. For Perseverance, selected directing credits include *The Seagull*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *The Glass Menagerie*, as well as the West Coast premiere of Suzan-Lori Parks's *In the Blood* and the world premiere of Chay Yew's *The Long Season*. Other regional credits include productions at Trinity Repertory Company and California Shakespeare Theater. Prior to his work at Perseverance, DuBois lived and worked in the Czech Republic, where he cofounded Asylum, a multinational squat theater in Prague. He will begin his new position as artistic director of the Huntington Theatre Company in Boston this summer.

# WHO'S WHO

**LOY ARCENAS** (*Scenic Designer*) has designed *The Invention of Love*, *Indian Ink*, *Levee James*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, and *The Matchmaker* for A.C.T. He has also designed scenery for the premieres of *Love! Valour! Compassion!*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *Once on This Island*, *Spunk*, *Dessa Rose*, *Blue Window*, *Corpus Christi*, *A Man of No Importance*, and the off-Broadway and national tours of *The Vagina Monologues*. Directing credits include Lonnie Carter's *The Romance of Magno Rubio* (OBIE Award); Warren Leight's *No Foreigners beyond This Point*; Carlyle Brown's *A Big Blue Nail*; Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas's *Blind Mouth Singing*; Han Ong's *Middle Finger*, *Swoony Planet*, and *Watcher*; and Philip Kan Gotanda's *Floating Weeds*. For his design work, he has received Drama Desk Award nominations, an L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, a Jeff Award, Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards, and an OBIE for Sustained Excellence of Set Design. He is from the Philippines.

**LYDIA TANJI** (*Costume Designer*) recently designed *Brainpeople*, *The Rainmaker*, and the world premiere of Philip Kan Gotanda's *After the War* for A.C.T. She has designed Berkeley Repertory Theatre productions of *The Glass Menagerie*, *Our Town*, *Honour*, *Master Class*, *Homebody/Kabul*, and *Slavs!* Recently, she designed *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at California Shakespeare Theater and *Pygmalion* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Tanji has designed for many of Gotanda's plays, including *Sisters Matsumoto* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), *The Wind Cries Mary* (San Jose Repertory Theatre), and *Ballad of Yachiyo* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). She has also designed for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, The Laguna Playhouse, Portland Center Stage, Geva Theatre Center, East-West Players, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, Asian American

Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Children's Theatre, The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Huntington Theatre Company, Syracuse Stage, and Arena Stage. She has received five Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards and two Drama-Logue Awards. Film credits include *The Joy Luck Club*, *Hot Summer Winds*, *Dim Sum*, Gotanda's *The Wash*, *A Thousand Pieces of Gold*, and *Life Tastes Good*.

**JAPHY WEIDEMAN** (*Lighting Designer*) recently designed lighting for Brett C. Leonard's *Unconditional* and Stephen Adly Guirgis's *Little Flower of East Orange* (both at LAByrinth Theater Company/The Public Theater). Other notable projects include Bob Glaudini's *Jack Goes Boating*, directed by Peter DuBois (The Public Theater; 2007 Drama Desk Award nom. and Lucille Lortel Award nom.); Sophocles' *Electra*, directed by Peter Stein at the ancient theater of Epidaurus in Greece and at The National Theater of Korea in Seoul; Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* (Opéra de Lyon); Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* (Royal Shakespeare Company, Edinburgh International Festival); David Harrower's *Blackbird* (West End, London); Guirgis's *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (LAB/The Public); Warren Leight's *No Foreigners beyond This Point* (Ma-Yi Theater Company/Culture Project); and The Flying Machine's *Frankenstein* at Soho Rep (Drama Desk Award nom.). Upcoming projects include *Bluebeard's Castle* and *Il Prigioniero* at La Scala in Milan.

**FABIAN OBISPO** (*Original Music/Sound Designer*) worked at A.C.T. on *The Imaginary Invalid*. Other musical theater credits include *The Long Season*, *Black No More*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Yerma*, *Mother Courage and Her Children*, *Nothing Forever*, *The Romance of Magno Rubio*, *Yellow Moon*

*Rising*, and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. Off-Broadway credits include *Durango* and *Two Sisters and a Piano* at The Public Theater; *Grace*, *A Very Common Procedure*, *What of the Night*, *Last Easter*, *Bright Ideas*, *Intrigue with Faye*, and *Sueño* at MCC Theater; *La Terrasse*, *Neat*, and *Seeking the Genesis* at Manhattan Theatre Club; *Oroonoko* at Theatre for a New Audience; *Servicemen* at The New Group; *Clean* at Atlantic Theater Company; *The Batting Cage* at The Vineyard Theatre; *Phaedra in Delirium* at CTC Theatre; *The Right Kind of People* and *When They Speak of Rita* at Primary Stages; and Ma-Yi Theater Company's *No Foreigners beyond This Point*; among others. Regionally, he has composed and designed for Arena Stage, Goodman Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Cincinnati Playhouse, the Huntington Theatre Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Hartford Stage, the Kennedy Center, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz, to name a few. His work has been recognized by the American Theatre Wing's Hewes Design Award, as well as Helen Hayes, Barrymore, NAACP, and Jackie awards.

**MICHAEL PALLER** (*Dramaturg*) 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, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams's *Small Craft Warnings* at the Sovremennik Theater in Moscow.

*The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.*

# WHO'S WHO

Paller is the author of *Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth-Century Drama* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and *Tennessee Williams in Context* (Smith & Kraus, 2009) and has written theater and book reviews for the *Washington Post*, *Village Voice*, *Newsday*, and *Mirabella* magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T. in 2005, 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*, *Jitney*, and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, as well as the first workshop of *The Count of Monte Cristo* and the CD-ROM game *Obsidian*. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.'s *Creditors* and *Bon Appétit!* She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She has served on the Bay Area advisory committee of Actors' Equity Association, the negotiating committee for the LORT contract (1992 and 1993), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

**ELISA GUTHERTZ** (*Stage Manager*) most recently worked on *Speed-the-Plow* and *The Rainmaker* at the American Conservatory Theater and on the A.C.T. production of *Death in Venice* at Zeum Theater. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include *Blackbird*, *The Little Foxes*, *A Number*, *Sexual Perversity in Chicago*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Well*,

*The Good Body*, *Levee James*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Misanthrope*, *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 Tectonics* 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.

**KAREN SZPALLER** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) has worked with A.C.T. on *A Christmas Carol* (2006 and 2007), *The Imaginary Invalid*, *Blackbird*, and M.F.A. Program productions. Favorite past shows include *Eurydice*, *Fêtes de la Nuit*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Brundibar*,

and *Comedy on the Bridge* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *Urinetown, The Musical* at San Jose Stage Company; *Striking 12* at TheatreWorks; *Salomé* at Aurora Theatre Company; and *Ragtime* and *She Loves Me* at Foothill Music Theatre. She recently worked on *Satellites* at Aurora Theatre Company and is the production coordinator at TheatreWorks in Menlo Park.

**GERSON AND BARBARA BASS BAKAR** (*Executive Producers*) have been involved with A.C.T. for three decades. A New York native and former CEO of I. Magnin and Emporium-Weinstocks, Barbara has served as a member of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees since 1992. Gerson and Barbara have produced numerous A.C.T. productions, including *Urinetown: The Musical*, *Levee James*, *Gem of the Ocean*, and *After the War*. Gerson, an award-winning Bay

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San Francisco Towers resident Joan Tayler with Lizzie

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# WHO'S WHO

Area developer, currently serves on the board of San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Barbara also serves as a director and former chair of the UCSF Foundation board and directs the Achieve program, which offers high school enrichment and scholarships.

## **WILLIAM (BILL) AND PHYLLIS**

**DRAPER** (*Executive Producers*) are longtime A.C.T. subscribers. Bill served as chairman of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees during Bill Ball's tenure as artistic director in the early 1980s, before moving to Washington to serve as president and chairman of the Export-Import Bank of the United States. Also former undersecretary general of the United Nations, Bill is a venture capitalist who currently serves on the boards of the World Affairs Council of Northern California, United Nations Association of the United States of America, Atlantic Council of the United States, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies at Stanford University, and Hoover Institution. Phyllis moved to the Bay Area after graduating from Smith College. She was a founding member of the board of Charles Armstrong School, now in Belmont, and has served on numerous community boards.

## **MORT AND FRANNIE**

**FLEISHHACKER** (*Executive Producers*) are both longtime A.C.T. volunteers. The son of one of A.C.T.'s founding trustees and a San Francisco native, Mort is a member of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees and serves on several A.C.T. committees. He is co-chair, with Joan Danforth, of the Prospero Society, which honors individuals who include A.C.T. in their estate plans. Frannie serves as co-chair of the Producers Circle with Deedee McMurtry. She enjoys working to build this critical organization and plan the annual dinner. Mort and Frannie also recently produced *The Circle* and *The Rivals*. Mort serves as a trustee

of Greenbelt Alliance, treasurer of the Fleishhacker Foundation, and a member of the Advisory Council of the San Francisco Planning and Urban Research Association. Frannie is president of The Francisca Club and serves on the board of That Man May See at UC San Francisco.

## **PRISCA AND KEITH GEESLIN**

(*Executive Producers*) recently produced *The Rivals* and the workshop production of *The Tosca Project* at A.C.T. A member of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees since 2003, Prisca serves on the board's executive committee and champions the creation of new plays as chair of the new works committee. A principal of Francisco Partners, Keith also serves on the board of trustees of The Hill School, the high school he attended in Pennsylvania. Prisca also volunteers her time serving on the boards of San Francisco Arts Education Project, the San Francisco Symphony, and Grace Cathedral.

## **STEVEN AND MARY SWIG**

(*Executive Producers*) have supported A.C.T. and attended productions since the company's arrival in San Francisco. A member of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees since 1986 and the president of Presidio World College, Steven also serves on numerous community boards, including the boards of his alma mater, the University of Oregon, and Americans for Cures Foundation (stem cells). The president and CEO of Mary Green/Mansilk, Mary also serves on the board of the Solar Electric Light Fund, among others. Together Steven and Mary also produced recent A.C.T. productions of *The Rivals* and *Hedda Gabler*.

**CARLIE WILMANS** (*Executive Producer*) joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees in 2005 and, with a passion for developing new, multidisciplinary works, lends her time to *The Next Generation*

*Campaign* committee and the new works committee. Born and raised in San Diego County, Wilmans is a director of the Phyllis C. Wattis Foundation. With bachelor's and master's degrees in art history, she devotes her time to the boards of several other arts organizations, including San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California College of the Arts, and the San Francisco Ballet Auxiliary.

## **A.C.T. 2008-09 SEASON, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12**

Broadway last season. "In this revealing, smart, and disturbing look at a marriage, Albee has managed to make us understand what drives Peter to that infamous park bench," says Perloff. "In doing so, he has revived one of the great American classics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century."

Bold ideas, movement, music, and rich language—A.C.T.'s 42nd subscription season promises to deliver everything you expect from A.C.T. We are grateful for your continued support, and invite you to step inside the theater, grab a seat, and join us for one exciting ride.

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*WORDS ON PLAYS*, A.C.T.'s in-depth performance guide series, offers insights into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the A.C.T. subscription season. Each entertaining and informative issue contains a synopsis, advance program notes, study questions, and additional background information about the historical and cultural context of the play.

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# A.C.T. PROFILES



**CAREY PERLOFF** (*Artistic Director*) is celebrating her 16th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed acclaimed productions of Gogol's *The Government*

*Inspector*, Philip Kan Gotanda's *After the War* (an A.C.T. commission), Tom Stoppard's *Travesties*, Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill's *Happy End* (including a critically acclaimed cast recording), and *A Christmas Carol* (a new adaptation by Perloff with dramaturg Paul Walsh). Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard's *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink* and Pinter's *Celebration* and *The Room*; A.C.T.-commissioned translations of *Hecuba*, *The Misanthrope*, *Enrico IV*, *Mary Stuart*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *A Mother*; David Mamet's new adaptation for A.C.T. of Granville-Barker's *The Voyage Inheritance*; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's *Singer's Boy*; and major revivals of *A Doll's House*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Old Times*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *Home*, *The Tempest*, and Stoppard's *The Real Thing*, *Night and Day*, and *Arcadia*. Her production of Marie Ndiaye's *Hilda*, coproduced with Laura Pels Productions, traveled to Washington, D.C.'s Studio Theatre and then to New York's 59E59 Theater in 2005. Perloff's work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's *No for an Answer*, David Lang/Mac Wellman's *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, and the West Coast premiere of her own play *The Colossus of Rhodes* (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). She is currently developing a new dance-theater piece, *The Tosca Project*, with choreographer Val Caniparoli. Her play *Luminescence Dating* was developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshopped at New York Stage & Film, premiered in New York at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and the Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her new play *Waiting for the Flood* was directed by Judith Ivey as part of A.C.T.'s First Look festival and workshopped at Roundabout Theater Company, directed by Chay Yew. Her latest play, *Higher*, was developed at New York Stage & Film. Perloff has also collaborated as a director with many notable contemporary writers, most recently Philip Kan Gotanda,

on his new play *After the War* at the Sundance Institute; Robert O'Hara, on *Antebellum* for the O'Neill Playwrights Conference; and Irish playwright Lucy Caldwell, on *Guardians*, also for the O'Neill conference.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party*, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

A recipient of France's Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund's 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.

LISA KOHLER



**HEATHER KITCHEN** (*Executive Director*), now in her 12th season with A.C.T., has strengthened the organization's infrastructure and overseen the company's

expansion to include the development and performance of new work and the addition of a third year to A.C.T.'s acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. Her decision to undertake an M.B.A. degree from the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario followed a 15-year career in stage, tour, and production management ranging across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Credits include the Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage Company, Charlottetown Festival, Theatre New Brunswick, New Play Centre, Vancouver, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax. As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a five-theater performing arts complex and school that annually produced 16 productions, an International Children's Festival, and a Teen Festival. As a member of the executive committee of the Edmonton Performing Arts Consortium, Kitchen

authored the benchmark study *Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts in Edmonton*. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the board and executive committee of the Commonwealth Club of California, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton and has served three terms on the executive of the League of Resident Theatres. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, Canada Council of the Arts, and *Forbes* magazine's Business and the Arts Awards. The *San Francisco Business Times* named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past four years.

**MELISSA SMITH** (*Conservatory Director*) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory's Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. 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 Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. In 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of *Continental Divide*. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

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



## producers *circle*

Frannie Fleishhacker, *Co-chair* \* Deedee McMurtry, *Co-chair*

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 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 February 1, 2007–February 29, 2008, period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Knudsen at 415.439.2353 or pknudsen@act-sf.org.

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The following members of the A.C.T. community made gifts in memory and in honor of friends, colleagues and family members during the February 1, 2007–February 29, 2008 period.

Ruth J. Allen in honor of Helen I. Palmer  
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The following foundations and government agencies provide vital support for A.C.T. For more information please contact Carol Eggers at 415.439.2449 or ceggers@act-sf.org.

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The Corporate Partners Circle is comprised of businesses that support the artistic mission of A.C.T., including A.C.T.'s investment in the next generation of theater artists and audiences and its vibrant educational and community outreach programs. Corporate Partners Circle members receive the full benefits of collaborating with a nationally acclaimed theater company, including extraordinary entertainment and networking opportunities, unique access to renowned actors and artists, premium complimentary tickets, and targeted brand recognition. For information about how to become a member of the A.C.T. Corporate Partners Circle, please contact Leslie Bires at 415.439.2477 or lbires@act-sf.org.

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National Corporate Theatre Fund is a nonprofit corporation created to increase and strengthen support from the business community for 11 of this country's most distinguished professional theaters. The following foundations, individuals, and corporations support these theaters through their contributions of \$5,000 or more to National Corporate Theatre Fund.

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

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## Providing a Legacy for A.C.T.

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Prospero Society members are loyal patrons who have made an investment in the future of A.C.T. by providing for the theater in their estate plans. Prospero gifts include wills and living trusts, charitable remainder trusts, beneficiary designations, IRAs, and life insurance policies. The Prospero Society is pleased to include members in appreciation events throughout the season. For information about membership, please contact Tim Whalen at 415.439.2472 or twhalen@act-sf.org.

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# PLEASE JOIN US FOR THESE EVENTS . . .

## InterACT

From free parties to in-depth discussions with the artists, A.C.T. offers events for all—at no additional cost.

### KORET PROLOGUE

A conversation with the director before the preview performance

- Tuesday, 4/29, (5:30–6 p.m.)
- Tuesday, 6/10, (5:30–6 p.m.)

### KORET AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

Free postperformance discussions with the actors and/or A.C.T. staff members

- Tuesday, 5/6
- Sunday, 5/11\*
- Wednesday, 5/14\*

- Tuesday, 6/17
- Wednesday, 6/18\*
- Sunday, 6/29\*

\*indicates matinee performance

### ■ CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS

### ■ 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

### OUT WITH A.C.T.

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

- Wednesday, 5/7
- Wednesday, 6/25

### THEATER ON THE COUCH

An exciting collaboration between A.C.T. and The San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis. After the show, the panel will discuss the psychological aspects of the play and take questions from the audience in Fred's Columbia Room.

- Friday, 5/2
- Friday, 6/13

## AND DON'T FORGET . . .

KORET VISITING ARTISTS SERIES  
A.C.T., 5/18

A.C.T. YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS  
*I'm Still Standing:*  
A Celebration of the Music of Elton John  
written and directed by Craig Slight  
ZEUM THEATER  
5/31–6/21

## A.C.T. Donor Events

### PROP AND SCENE SHOP TOUR

Take a tour of the prop shop and scene shop, where A.C.T. productions are built from the ground up.  
Thursday, 5/1



annualfund

### AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER TOUR

Take a backstage tour of A.C.T.'s historic home  
Saturday, 5/3, 10:30 a.m. [SOLD OUT]



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### PROSPERO SOCIETY BRUNCH

This annual thank you event for those who have provided for A.C.T. in their estate plans features a presentation by scenic designer Erik Flatmo.  
Sunday, 5/4, 11:00 a.m.



PROSPERO SOCIETY

### DESIGN PRESENTATION

Hear the director's vision at the first meeting of the company of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.  
Monday, 5/5, 11 a.m.



producerscircle

### COSTUME SHOP TOUR

Take a tour of the costume shop, and see where artisans create the gorgeous costumes worn on A.C.T. stages.  
Thursday, 5/8



annualfund

### MEET THE CAST

Following the performance, enjoy a conversation with the cast of *Curse of the Starving Class*.  
Thursday, 5/15



directorscircle



producerscircle

### OPENING NIGHT DINNER

A dinner with the director before the opening night performance of *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*.  
Wednesday, 6/11, 5:30 p.m.



directorscircle



producerscircle

To support A.C.T. and receive invitations to Annual Fund, Directors Circle, and Producers Circle events, please contact Paul Knudsen at [pknudsen@act-sf.org](mailto:pknudsen@act-sf.org) or 415.439.2353.

Due to the spontaneous nature of live theater, all times are subject to change.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 415.749.2ACT OR VISIT WWW.ACT-SF.ORG.

# THE GALLERY AT A.C.T.



CLAIRE MAIRE BY BARBARA RAVIZZA © 2008

Find yourself with some extra time before a performance or during intermission? 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 2007–08 season.

## FRIDAY MORNING DRAWING GROUP

Figurative art has a long and rich history in the Bay Area, even during the periods when nonrepresentational art dominated popular taste. Supporting that tradition is the ritual of drawing from live models. Since 1996, Tom Mogensen has held Friday life-drawing sessions in his Church Street studio. The seven artists represented in this show meet to paint or draw from a professional model, chosen for his or her unique qualities. There's no jostling for vantage points among the group, as all of the artists recognize that every view of the model offers something exciting to work with.

Seven artists represent the core of the group. Mogensen, Susan Trubow, Nancy Baughman, and Barbara Ravizza made up the original group, later joined by Diana Howard, Serge Kogan, and Greg Lynch. They work in various media—charcoal and ink, oil and gouache—using different techniques and seeing color differently. They live different lives, and travel from San Mateo and Oakland, but each Friday assemble again and again to be inspired by the most compelling subject there is: the human form.

**A reception celebrating the work of the Friday Morning Drawing Group will be held at the theater on Thursday, May 1, from 5 to 7:30 p.m.** The current show runs from April 25 through July 6, 2008.

Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For sales inquiries, please contact Kevin Simmers at 415.474.1066 / krscreativeoptns@aol.com. Visa, Mastercard, and Discover cards accepted.

June 5 – July 6

# 'Tis Pity She's a WHORE

by  
**John Ford**

Directed by  
**Carey Perloff**

Music composed and performed by  
**Bonfire Madigan Shive**

**“As keen and fatal as a  
stiletto hit to the heart”**

*The Guardian (London)*

**“Explosive . . . positively  
reeking of decadence”**

*The Daily Telegraph*

**TICKETS FROM \$14**

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WORLD PREMIERE

# I'M STILL STANDING

A CELEBRATION OF THE MUSIC OF  
**ELTON JOHN**

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

**Craig Slaight**

MUSICAL DIRECTION BY

**Jane Hammett**

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

**Christine Mattison**

MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS AND PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT BY

**Robert Rutt**



Tickets: \$15<sup>50</sup> — \$20<sup>50</sup>

MAY 31 — JUN 21

 **A.C.T.**  
american conservatory theater  
Carey Perloff, artistic director | Heather Kitchen, executive director  
Groups of 10+, call 415.439.2473.

A.C.T. Young Conservatory  
performing at Zeum Theater

**ZEUM** YERBA  
BUENA  
GARDENS  
at 4<sup>th</sup> and Howard streets

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## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

### Summer Training Congress

Students, teachers, and professional actors from around the world gather in San Francisco each summer for these rigorous and rewarding five- and two-week programs.

**5-Week Session:** June 16–July 18

**Final Application Deadline:** May 1

**2-Week Session (Classical Acting):** July 21–August 1

**Final Application Deadline:** June 2



Photo by Kevin Berne



Photo by David Wilson

### Studio A.C.T. and Young Conservatory Summer Sessions

**Learn a new skill, sing a new song, and push your theater skills farther than you thought they could go.**

Sign up for Studio A.C.T. or the Young Conservatory today and experience the highest-quality training in a wide range of theatrical disciplines. Taught by established theater professionals, A.C.T. classes are open to adults and children at all levels of experience, and are held on evenings and weekends in downtown San Francisco.

**Studio A.C.T.:** June 2–August 16

**Young Conservatory:** June 16–August 22

(YC offering four-, two-, and one-week sessions)

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

Carey Perloff, artistic director  
Heather Kitchen, executive director  
Melissa Smith, conservatory director  
George Thompson, conservatory general manager

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# A.C.T. STAFF

Carey Perloff  
Artistic Director

Heather Kitchen  
Executive Director

Melissa Smith  
Conservatory Director

James Haire  
Producing Director

Thomas C. Proehl  
Administrative Director

## ARTISTIC

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

## Associate Artists

René Augesen  
Anthony Fusco  
Giles Havergal  
Steven Anthony Jones  
Domenique Lozano  
Craig Slaughter  
Gregory Wallace  
Jud Williford  
Jack Willis

## Directors

John Doyle  
Peter DuBois  
Loretta Greco  
Domenique Lozano  
Carey Perloff  
Charles Randolph-Wright  
Mark Rucker  
Chay Yew

## Choreographers

Val Caniparoli

## Composers/Orchestrations

Tracy Chapman  
Karl Lundeberg  
Bonfire Madigan Shive  
Stephen Sondheim  
Sarah Travis

## Musical Directors

Laura Burton  
Andy Einhorn  
David Loud

## First Look Playwrights

Marcus Gardley  
Lillian Groag  
Noah Haidle  
Presnyakov Brothers  
José Rivera  
Francine Volpe  
Deontay Wilson

## PRODUCTION

Jeff Rowlings, *Production Manager*  
Dick Daley, Jared Hirsch, *Associate Production Managers*  
Marion Bechthold, *Production Administrator*

## Designers

Loy Arcenas, *Scenery*  
John Arnone, *Scenery*  
John Doyle, *Scenery*  
Erik Flatmo, *Scenery*  
Robert Mark Morgan, *Scenery*  
G. W. Mercier, *Scenery*  
Alexander V. Nichols, *Scenery*  
Daniel Ostling, *Scenery*  
Douglas W. Schmidt, *Scenery*  
Walt Spangler, *Scenery*  
Beaver Bauer, *Costumes*  
Robert De La Rose, *Costumes*  
Candice Donnelly, *Costumes*  
John Doyle, *Costumes*  
Alex Jaeger, *Costumes*  
Lydia Tanji, *Costumes*  
Sandra Woodall, *Costumes*  
Don Darnutzer, *Lighting*  
James F. Ingalls, *Lighting*  
Richard G. Jones, *Lighting*  
York Kennedy, *Lighting*  
Alexander V. Nichols, *Lighting*  
Kathy A. Perkins, *Lighting*  
Nancy Schertler, *Lighting*  
Japhy Weideman, *Lighting*  
Paul Whitaker, *Lighting*  
Robert Wierzel, *Lighting*  
Cliff Caruthers, *Sound*  
Jeff Mockus, *Sound*  
Fabian Obispo, *Sound*  
Jake Rodriguez, *Sound*  
Dan Moses Schreier, *Sound*  
Darron L. West, *Sound*

## Design Associates

Martin Flynn, *Scenic*  
Robert J. Hahn, *Lighting*  
Jake Rodriguez, *Sound*

## Coaches

Dave Maier, *Jud Williford, Fights*  
Deborah Sussel, *Vocal and Dialects*  
George Thompson, *Répétiteur*

## Stage Management

Elisa Guthertz, *Head Stage Manager*  
Newton Cole, Nicole Dickerson, June Palladino, Joseph Smelser, Kimberly Mark Webb, *Stage Managers*  
Heath Belden, Danielle Callaghan, Stephanie Schliemann, Karen Szpaller, *Assistant Stage Managers*

## Scene Shop

Mark Luevano, *Shop Foreman*  
Jonathan Young, *Assistant Shop Foreman*  
Qris Fry, James Gernand, *Mechanics*  
Anne Kendall, *Purchasing Agent*

## Paint Shop

Demarest Campbell, *Charge Scenic Artist*  
Jennifer Bennes, B. J. Frederickson, *Scenic Artists*

## Prop Shop

Ryan L. Parham, *Supervisor*  
Rebecca Helgeson, *Assistant*  
Eric Cripe, *Artisan*

## Costume Shop

David F. Draper, *Manager*  
Emily Horton, Mark Nagle, *Design Assistants*  
Keely Weiman, *Draper*  
Thiem Ma, *Tailor*  
Amy Knight, *First Hand*  
Maria Montoya, *Head Stitcher*  
Kelly Koehn, *Accessories and Crafts Artisan*

## Wig Shop

Jeanna Hurd, *Wig Master*

## Stage Staff

Suzanna Bailey, *Sound Head*  
Miguel Ongpin, *Head Carpenter*  
Jane Henderson-Shea, *Properties Head*  
Mark Pugh, *Flyman*  
Tim Wilson, *Head Electrician*  
Kristen Ross, Tim Tunks, Uwe Willenbacher, *Stagehands*

## John Karr, *Wardrobe Supervisor*

Mary Mantijo, *Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor*  
Julia Wing Krafft, *Hair and Makeup*

## Conservatory/Second Stage

Joel Frangquist, *Technical Director*  
Larry Krause, *Assistant Technical Director*

## Costume Rentals

Callie Floor, *Supervisor*  
Jef Valentine, *Rentals Assistant*

## Interns

Stephanie Agron, Gillian Confair, Laura Osburn, Danielle C. Thomsen, *Stage Management*  
Lacey Johnson, *Properties*  
Julia Lodman-Slater, *Costume Shop*  
Maggie Long, *Wig Shop*  
Jessica Peter, *Costume Rentals*

## ADMINISTRATION

Dianne Prichard, *Company Manager*  
Caresa Capaz, *Associate Company Manager*  
Kate Stewart, *Human Resources Manager*  
Vivien Baldwin, *Executive Assistant/Board Liaison*  
Margery Bailey, *Receptionist*

## Development

Leslie Bires, *Director of Corporate and Community Partnerships*  
Carol Eggers, *Manager of Foundation and Government Relations*  
Paul Knudsen, *Director of Individual and Foundation Relations*  
Mindy Lechman, *Donor Stewardship Coordinator*

Leslie McNicol, *Donor Systems Coordinator*  
Liv E. Nilssen, *Individual Gifts Coordinator*  
Carrie Spiegel, *Special Events Manager*  
Jamie Valle, *Campaign Manager*  
Tim M. Whalen, *Director*

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Jim Neuner, *Controller*  
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James Sheerin, *Database Applications Manager*  
Joone Pajar, *PC IT Associate*  
Conchita Robson, *Macintosh IT Associate*

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Randy Taradash, *Marketing Events and Promotions Manager*  
Edward Budworth, *Group Sales Representative*  
Audra Davis, *Web Content Manager*  
Amelia Nardinelli, *Senior Graphic Designer*  
Brett Elliott, *Graphic Designer*  
Jennifer K. Weaver, *Writer/Copy Editor*  
Martin Schwartz, *Press Representative*  
Eliza Leoni, *Intern*

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Margot Melcon, *Publications & Literary Associate*  
Ariel Franklin-Hudson, *Publications & Literary Intern*

## Ticket Services

Richard Bernier, *Box Office Manager*  
Mark C. Peters, *Subscriptions Manager*  
David Engelmann, *Head Treasurer*  
Doris Yamasaki, *Subscriptions Coordinator*  
Lynn Skelton, *SMAT and Group Sales Treasurer*  
Andrew Alabran, Peter Davey, Jim Donovan, Johnny Moreno, Joey Rich, Sam Kekoa Wilson, *Treasurers*

## Teleservices

Stephanie Arora, *Manager*  
Maggie Alpar, Izzy Brownlie, Ian Caporali, Winifred Elam, Ben Johnson, Alicia Kenny, Jackie Major, Lloyd Margoit, Don McPhee, Lynda Price, Doug Ross, Mary Townsend, Molly Viebrock, *Agents*

## Front of House

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

## Operations

Lesley Pierce, *Manager*  
Burt Smith, *Assistant Facilities Manager/American Conservatory Theater*  
Len Lucas, *Assistant Facilities Manager/30 Grant*  
Jeffrey Warren, *Facilities Crew*  
Curtis Carr, Jr., Jamie McGraw, *Security*

## CONSERVATORY

George Thompson, *Conservatory General Manager*  
Craig Slaughter, *Young Conservatory Director*  
Andrew Hurteau, *Interim Director of Studio A.C.T.*  
Christopher Herold, *Director of Summer Training Congress 2008*  
Jack Sharrar, *Director of Academic Affairs*  
Jerry Lopez, *Director of Financial Aid*  
Thuy-Tu Tran, *Financial Aid Assistant*  
Ashley Forrette, *Associate Manager of Conservatory Administration*  
Stephanie DeMott, *Conservatory Associate*  
Sarah Scharf, *Conservatory Assistant*  
Matt Jones, *Bursar/Payroll Administrator*

## Master of Fine Arts Program

### Core Faculty

René Augesen, *Acting*  
Jeffrey Crockett, *Voice*  
Dawn-Elin Fraser, *Speech, Verbal Action*  
Anthony Fusco, *Director*  
Steven Anthony Jones, *Acting*  
Francine Landes, *Movement*  
Domenique Lozano, *Acting*  
Frank Ottiwell, *Alexander Technique*  
Michael Paller, *Director of Humanities*  
Jack Sharrar, *Culture and Text*  
Melissa Smith, *Acting*  
Deborah Sussel, *Speech, Verbal Action*  
Gregory Wallace, *Acting*  
Jud Williford, *Director*  
Jack Willis, *Acting*

### M.F.A. Program Adjunct Faculty

Bonita Bradley, *Character Embodiment*  
Leslie Felbain, *Clown and Mask*  
Jane Hammett, *Singing*  
Giles Havergal, *Director*  
Gregory Hoffman, *Combat/Weapons*  
Frank Johnson, *Singing*  
Lisa Anne Porter, *Voice*  
Karl Ramsey, *Combat/Weapons*

## Studio A.C.T.

Letitia Bartlett, *Dynamic Movement, Physical Acting, Clowning*  
Mike Carroll, *Acting*  
Laura Derry, *Improvisation*  
Frances Epsen Devlin, *Singing*  
Jeffrey Draper, *Voice and Speech, Acting*  
Paul Finocchiaro, *Acting*  
Dawn-Elin Fraser, *Acting*  
Marvin Greene, *Acting*  
Christopher Herold, *Acting*  
Andrew Hurteau, *Acting*  
Mark Jackson, *Acting*  
Rose Adams Kelly, *Alexander Technique*  
Drew Khalouf, *Voice and Speech, Acting*  
Francine Landes, *Acting*  
Domenique Lozano, *Acting*  
Trina Oliver, *Acting*  
Marty Pistone, *Acting*  
Regina Saisi, *Improvisation*  
Naomi Sanchez, *Singing*  
Barbara Scott, *Improvisation*  
Lynne Soffer, *Speech, Acting*  
Ava Victoria, *Singing*

## Young Conservatory

Christine Anselmo, *Acting*  
Michele Leary, *Acting*  
Nancy Gold, *Physical Character, Acting*  
Cindy Goldfield, *Acting*  
Jane Hammett, *Musical Theater, Directing, Acting*  
W. D. Keith, *Director*  
Domenique Lozano, *Director*  
Christine Mattison, *Dance, Choreographer*  
Pamela Rickard, *Acting*  
Robert Rutt, *Musical Arranger, Accompanist*  
Vivian Sam, *Musical Theater, Dance*  
Craig Slaughter, *Director, Acting*  
Amelia Stewart, *Director, Acting*

## YC New Plays Program

Horton Foote, *Advisor, Playwright*  
Sarah Daniels, *Playwright*  
Brad Slaughter, *Playwright*

## YC Accompanist

Thaddeus Pinkston

## Library Staff

Joseph Tally, *Head Librarian*  
G. David Anderson, Elena Balashova, Joan Cahill, Barbara Cohrsen, William Goldstein, Rich Henry, Connie Ikert, Martha Kessler, Barbara Kornstein, Ines Lewandowitz, Franco Mancini, Soubarna Mishra, Ann Morales, Patricia O'Connell, Roy Ortopan, Dana Rees, Beverly Saba, Roger Silver, Marianne Sullivan, Carol Summer, Sam Thal, Jean Wilcox, Nancy Zinn, *Library Volunteers*

# FOR YOUR INFORMATION

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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

## 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. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12–6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12–6 p.m. daily. Call 415.749.2ACT and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our website at [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. Subscriptions available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

### 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 \$12. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID. **Student and senior citizen subscriptions** are also available. A.C.T. offers one **Pay What You Wish** performance during the regular run of each production.

### Group Discounts

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

### AT THE THEATER

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

### A.C.T. Merchandise

A.C.T.-branded merchandise—clothing, jewelry, DVDs, music, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts and *Words on 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 long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

### Beeper!

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

### Perfumes

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

### Emergency Telephone

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

### Latecomers


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

### Listening Systems

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

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

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

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

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

### AFFILIATIONS

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



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



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.

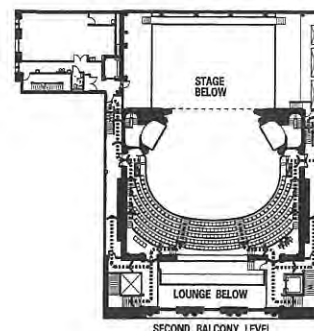
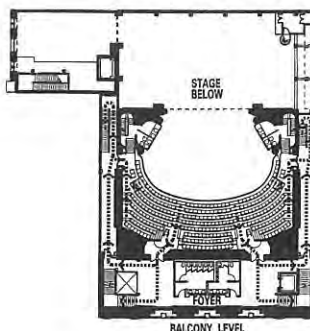
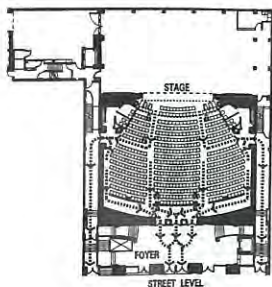


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A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the Grants for the Arts/ San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER EXITS



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