THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

# WEST COAST PREMIERE MARCUS or THE SECRET OF SWEET

by TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY
Directed by MARK RUCKER







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## ABOUT A.C.T.



AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing engagement with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Ellen Richard, 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.

A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater (now known as the American Conservatory Theater) in 1967; more than 320 A.C.T. productions have since been performed to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Today A.C.T. is recognized internationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting, honored with a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training (1979) and the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award (1996). In 2001, A.C.T. began producing alternative work at Zeum Theater, which serves as a venue for conservatory productions and exciting new plays.

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, A.C.T.'s conservatory, led by Melissa Smith,

serves 3,000 students every year. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America's actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.

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Dear Friends,

O ne of the most exhilarating things about working in the Bay Area is that it's a small enough community to allow

for a great deal of collaboration, across disciplines, geography, and institutions. Last spring we had the enormous pleasure of engaging in a deep way with the local dance community (and a great San Francisco neighborhood and bar!) in *The Tosca Project*. With Tarell Alvin McCraney's *Brother/Sister Plays*, we are honored to be part of a consortium of three Bay Area theaters who have joined together to introduce this formidable young writer to Northern California audiences. The first two parts of the trilogy have already played at Marin Theatre Company and at Magic Theatre, and we are thrilled to be concluding this epic adventure with what is perhaps McCraney's most personal play, *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet*.

Although these three plays were originally written as separate plays and only later put together as a trilogy, they share many of the same characters and together create a remarkable sweep of language, magical realism, and self-discovery. Set in the fictional town of San Pere, Louisiana, McCraney's trilogy wrestles with questions of identity, sexuality, spirituality, ambition, and entrapment in a contemporary American context that is simultaneously poetic and very real. Each of the three Bay Area theaters involved in this historic collaboration chose the play that best suited its space and interests and has shared artists wherever possible. Of course here at A.C.T. we are proud that our remarkable M.F.A. Program has provided a great deal of the acting talent for all three productions: recent graduates Lakisha Michelle May, Tobie L. Windham, and Alex Ubokudom had leading roles in In the Red and Brown Water and The Brothers Size, and Marcus adds current M.F.A. Program students Richard Prioleau and Shinelle Azoroh to the mix, as

well as recent graduate Omozé Idehenre, who has become a familiar face on our stage after her extraordinary work in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Scapin*. The mission of A.C.T.'s training programs is to create vigorous, passionate artists of the future who will give voice to the stories of their own time, and nowhere is the success of that mission better illustrated than in the Bay Area's presentations of McCraney's trilogy.

This production is helmed by our beloved colleague Mark Rucker (The Rainmaker, The Beard of Avon), who recently became A.C.T.'s associate artistic director. One of Mark's great gifts is his ability to tackle new work and the classics with equal dexterity, making him an ideal director for a new piece with the scope of language and scale of classical reference of Marcus. As we found when we produced Robert O'Hara's Insurrection: Holding History in 1998, the articulate confluence of gay and African American themes in the theater is rare and exciting and brings together audiences that don't often share the same work. As a gay man, Mark was deeply moved by Marcus's search for identity, revolving around the mysteries of his father. As McCraney so beautifully delineates, there are many kinds of love, among them the love of a son for a distant father who has imprinted his being on a sensitive and openhearted child but is no longer there to guide him through the thickets of adolescence and maturity. We hope that Marcus will resonate with audiences of all ages, and we're incredibly grateful to our producing partners at the Magic and MTC for joining with us to tell this richly imagined and unique tale. To those of you who have followed the entire trilogy, we welcome you to Part 3. And to those of you joining the story for the first time, you're in for a beautiful adventure!

Yours,

Carey Perloff Artistic Director

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## MARCUS "THE SECRET OF SWEET

by Tarell Alvin McCraney Directed by Mark Rucker

Scenery byLoy ArcenasCostumes byLydia TanjiLighting byJames F. IngallsSound Design byAndre PluessProjection DesignAlexander V. NicholsDramaturgMichael PallerAssistant DirectorZachary Moull

#### THE CAST

Osha Shaunta Iyun Oba/Shun/Elegua Terrell Marcus Ogun Size Oshoosi Size/Shua

Shinelle Azoroh<sup>†</sup> Omozé Idehenre<sup>\*</sup> Margo Hall<sup>\*</sup> Jared McNeill<sup>\*</sup> Richard Prioleau<sup>†</sup> Gregory Wallace<sup>\*</sup> Tobie L. Windham<sup>\*</sup>

#### UNDERSTUDIES

Marcus, Terrell, Ogun Size—Jon Joseph Gentry\*; Oshoosi Size, Shua—Jared McNeill\* Osha, Shaunta Iyun, Oba, Shun, Elegua—Nicol Foster\*

#### STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Elisa Guthertz<sup>\*</sup>, Stage Manager Stephanie Schliemann<sup>\*</sup>, Assistant Stage Manager Dana Gal, Stage Management Intern

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States \*Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2011

SETTING

San Pere, LA. Late August (Distant Present).

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

SPECIAL THANKS TO Marin Theatre Company—Jasson Minadakis, Artistic Director; Ryan Rilette, Producing Director Magic Theatre—Loretta Greco, Producing and Artistic Director

This production is made possible at A.C.T. by

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The Brother/Sister Plays is supported by a generous grant from



The world premiere of *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet* was produced by The Public Theater (Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director; Andrew D. Hamingson, Executive Director) and McCarter Theatre Center (Emily Mann, Artistic Director; Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director). *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet* was originally produced at McCarter Theatre Center with support from the NEA New Play Development Program hosted by Arena Stage.

## **AMERICAN BAYOU**

#### An Interview with Playwright Tarell Alvin McCraney

#### BY DAN RUBIN

arell Alvin McCraney is not a household name—yet. If the meteoric rise of this 30-year-old playwright's career is any indication, however, it's only a matter of time. Just three years out of Yale School of Drama, he is only the third playwright to become the International Playwright in Residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company in England. The three plays that make up his Brother/Sister cycle-In the Red and Brown Water, The Brothers Size, and Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet-have received major productions in New York, London, and Chicago (among other places) and have earned numerous prestigious awards, including the inaugural New York Times Outstanding Playwright Award. Closer to home, San Francisco officials designated September 10, 2010, Tarell Alvin McCraney Day in recognition of his talents and the three-theater joint venture established among Marin Theatre Company (MTC), Magic Theatre, and A.C.T. to produce The Brother/Sister Plays.

Despite the recent flood of accolades, McCraney is adamant that he did not simply appear out of nowhere: "My journey as an artist hasn't just begun," he corrected an interviewer in November 2009. "I've been doing theater all my life. I've been working hard at it and trying new things and continuing to do so. For me the awards are signposts saying, 'We see you. Keep walking, working, going.' Sometimes the signposts stop coming, [and] I look closer at the road and figure out which way to go. And that's okay, because there was a time when there were no signposts and very few paths. I had to make my own."

McCraney grew up in Liberty City—a tough neighborhood in Miami, Florida's urban center named after the Liberty Square Housing Project, built in the late 1930s for low-income African Americans. The area remains impoverished, with its residents struggling to make ends meet, but McCraney objects to the notion that the projects are only populated with "baddies": "They're people trying to step in the right direction." It is on behalf of this demographic that he writes, giving, as he says, a theatrical "voice to the voiceless."

McCraney's appreciation for theatricality dates back to childhood experiences watching his grandfather preach; his own first performances were in front of his elementary school class, for whom he recited (and critiqued) the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution. McCraney began writing specifically with an audience in mind as a teenager, when he joined Teo Castellanos's community theater group, which performed in youth rehabilitation and detention centers to spread awareness about HIV. He remembers: "[Simply saying] 'Don't do drugs,' is a bad way of telling someone who has lived a life of crime and drugs not to do drugs. We had to perform from what we knew, from the places



TARELL ALVIN MCCRANEY

we grew up. We told stories that were about our own parents and about the brothers and sisters that we lost, the cousins that we saw get shot or OD." He continues:

Exploring how we sometimes fall victim to our surroundings, how our parents had sometimes guided us into risky behavior—all of those sharing moments helped us feel not so alone. This is where I began my life as a theater artist. I began to write from myself as a source for people who would understand me instantly. That is where and why I began to write.

McCraney did not go to school for writing, however, but for acting. He attended Miami's New World School of the Arts High School and then DePaul University in Chicago. While living in the Windy City, he met legendary director Peter Brook, who cast the undergraduate in Can Themba's South African fable *The Suit*. McCraney learned many things from Brook—including that a career performing onstage was not for him. Instead, with Brook's encouragement, McCraney entered Yale's graduate program in playwriting.

As a writer, McCraney's inspirations are eclectic. There is no kind of theater that does not excite him, and he is particularly captivated by modern dance, his first true passion, especially the work of Alvin Ailey: "I love dance," he confesses. "I watch more dance than I do plays. I try to write how I see dance-in moves, in body language that doesn't lie, in syncopation." More literary heroes include the poet/editor/activist Essex Hemphill (Earth Life, Brother to Brother: New Writings by Black Gay Men), the Cuban novelist Reinaldo Arenas (Singing from the Well), and playwrights August Wilson, Federico García Lorca, and Caryl Churchill. McCraney's work is infused with lessons learned not only from the ancient Greeks and Shakespeare, but also from the speeches of Ronald Reagan, the songs of Marvin Gaye, the Yoruba legends of West Africa, and the oral traditions of the American South. As a practiced observer, he retains everything. His poetry, he humbly claims, is simply the result of mashing together everything he has heard, read, or seen: "You've got to learn from all kinds of performance how to keep theater valid, to keep it real, to keep it palpable."

*Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet* came out of a trip to post-Katrina New Orleans. Considering the despair surrounding its origins, *Marcus* is not what you might expect, admits the playwright: "It is such an odd little play. It's not a tragedy, as the other two [*Brother/Sister Plays*] seem or feel to be. It definitely has a funny bone through it that runs really fast and furious." He continues, "I wrote it in such a different state of mind. The elfish, trickster part of me was totally in charge."

McCraney visited the Bay Area in September to see the previews of MTC's production of *In the Red and Brown Water* and Magic's production of *The Brothers Size*. While he was in town, we were fortunate to be able to speak to him about growing up in Miami's inner city, writing *Marcus*, and the importance of self-determination.

#### WHEN DID YOU GET THE IDEA FOR SETTING *MARCUS* RIGHT BEFORE KATRINA HAPPENED, AND HOW DID THAT DEVELOP?

It was when I was in New Orleans working on *The Breach* [at Southern Repertory Theatre with MTC Producing Director Ryan Rilette]. While I was down there I met this guy who was about my age, and he was leading me through New Orleans and talking to me about his experience there. . . . [*Marcus* became] about this highly buried family history, which had a lot to do with magic and a lot to do with sexuality—things that people just don't talk about—how a person really has to go through a journey to sift through all of that. Walking through places like Tremé and the Ninth Ward, stories wanted to be told. And when I got the stories, there would be so much humor in them. People in New Orleans have this way of telling you something with such vigor and such life that you're laughing so hard you forget to cry.

So *Marcus* became a poem about people who have such a humor that, even if they're in tears, they got you about to bust a gut. It's about that exploration, especially for that young man that I met, of growing up and taking on a complicated legacy. Just as this guy was about to get everything he thought he was going to get, the storm came and just shook everything up. I was so in love with that, that I had to create something from it.

#### COULD YOU DESCRIBE WHAT MARCUS IS ABOUT?

That's pretty simple: it's a coming-of-age play. The older I get, the more convinced I am that there are very few actually original stories. There are like 90,000 coming-of-age stories, and this is just one of them. The new thing about *Marcus* is Marcus. We don't often hear from the type of person that Marcus represents. Some people's coming-of-age stories are left out of the canon, especially in the theater. [For example,] I'd like to hear a coming-of-age story from a woman in Juárez. What's important is that, on an American stage, we allow for the people in the margins, on the fringes, to explore every human condition: to come of age, to marry, to give birth, to die—those many threshold rituals that everybody shares.

I don't know that there is a message, per se. I think that coming of age is different for everyone. My coming of age was different from yours, and so the day I said to myself, "I'm a man today," is different from the day that you said whatever you said when you hit up against the identity that society gives you.



DANCING ON BASIN STREEET, NEW ORLEANS, 1994

That's essentially what we have to do. Society says, "You are these things. This is how we see you." And at some point, you have to say to society, "F--- you on these things," or, "I agree with you on these things." I have a younger brother, who is about six-foot tall, and he's attractive and he's straight. He's very average and he knows it. He subscribes to the checklist absolutely, because that's where he feels comfortable. I was never comfortable in that way. I never felt average, so when people tried to put me in an average place, I couldn't subscribe to it because it didn't feel right to me.



FRENCH QUARTER SCHOOL, NEW ORLEANS, 1994

And that's what is important about *Marcus*: it is a moment in which someone is saying, "I will say 'yes' to these things and 'no' to those things." The revolutions, as well as the accommodations, are important. There's no message in that, except that in this free society here is a description for what can and cannot happen.

#### WHEN DID YOU START FEELING LIKE YOU WEREN'T AVERAGE?

There are things learned and there are things felt, and I *learned* that I wasn't average first. I was in fifth grade and I was 5'11" and I didn't want to play basketball [*laughter*], so automatically I was weird. I was black and I was really tall and I didn't want to play sports, so clearly there must be a problem.

All young kids demonstrating traits that are different from the mainstream, displaying some queerness, are sexualized really early. People see a young girl who is very tomboyish and say, "Oh, she's very mannish." She gets a little older, and they say, "Oh, I think she might be a lesbian." Saying those things is like saying to a heterosexual girl, "Oh, I think you're going to like dick when you get older." They begin the conversation about sexuality before a person has clearly even had these thoughts. Sexuality in our country, I will add, is not based on who you love but on who you have sex with. It's a very clear distinction. It's whose penis, or not, you put in where.

When you begin to say things like, "You're gay. I think you're a fag," it makes a child instantly begin to think, "Sex must be something that I want. Even though it's not on my mind, even though I'm really just interested in learning how to write cursive, something about me must be sexual—and in a way that is different from everyone else." Those ideas are learned and are introduced at an early age, especially to kids who demonstrate some queer identity. I think the introduction of said ideas that early on is very harmful and unfair to children.

#### WAS YOUR ATTRACTION TO THE ARTS PART OF THAT NARRATIVE? INSTEAD OF PLAYING BASKETBALL, YOU GRAVITATED TOWARDS THE ARTS, SO YOU MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

I was always a good observer and listener. I know I'm talking a lot now, but I'm really very quiet. In school I would sit quietly until someone asked me, "What's the answer to this?" and then, of course, I had a four-page answer, repeating things my grandfather, the Reverend, had said, or things I had picked up listening to what Ronald Reagan said on the news. [At first] I wouldn't say anything, and then they couldn't get me to shut the hell up. There were already performative qualities, a sort of call and response, to what I was doing. Professed teachers thought it best to hone in on that by putting me in front of the class to talk. That's how I got involved in the arts.

But my first understanding of what theatricality was came from church. I watched how [the congregation] reacted to my grandfather, and I realized, "Oh, his pitch rises *here* in order to



RAISING THE CASKET, 2008

induce *this*." The call and response; the use of the dramatic pause; the use of positioning, when the actor comes off the stage and stands in the audience and then goes back on the stage. I could see how music played a part. How the dwindling of time played a part. Waiting and waiting and waiting until the final three minutes of church service to say the important messages, and how that spurs the ebb and flow of the afternoon. Those rules apply to everything.



2ND LINE, 2008

I didn't wake up one morning and think, "The stage!" There are parts of me that are painfully shy. Acting was actually killing me for a while. The last time I was onstage, I was literally thinking, "I've got to get the hell off of here." Acting and the theater and what we do is so important. Sometimes I think I take it too seriously, my job to reach out, to convey something. But if I am not doing it well, especially in the moment . . . I can be distracted by 90 things—the light hit me in this eye, or that woman just sneezed, and now I'm not focused—and then I go offstage and think, "You didn't do your job. You were so terrible."

#### IS WRITING SAFER FOR YOU THAN ACTING?

No, writing isn't safer, because I still have to go to that place. I have to find people in my life who will let me go there. It's hard to have a relationship. I need a large, empty room so I can walk around. I act out all the plays. I read the plays for every director. I'm every character. Tina [Landau, who directed *The Brother/Sister Plays* in Chicago and New York] jokes all the time, "If one

of the actors goes down, you're in." And I'll know how to do it, because for me that's just part of what it is to write for the stage. It's different from writing for anything else.

I think other writers work differently. Other writers are much more literary. They're poets. My friends at school are so smart and their way with language and their grammatical structure is formidable. I'm not like that. I have to understand how this character is moving and what they need: "No he needs a line *here* that's going to help him transition *there*. He can't get to *that* emotional place just by saying *this*. There's a rev that goes up *here*. There's a turn that has to happen that's not happening *here*. You need *this* line, you need *this* word, you need *this* thing to get *there*." That's my talent more than anything else: to be able to write how I can act.

#### WOULD YOU SAY MARCUS IS A GAY PLAY?

It's definitely a gay play, in the way that it is about identity. You could essentially call *Brothers Size* a queer play (a play with queer politics), but it's not about identification. *Marcus* is, and that's why it is a gay play. That's why it's a black play as well, because it is about figuring out how that identity works.

## IT'S INTERESTING THAT YOU'VE SAID YOU DON'T THINK OF *MARCUS* AS A TRAGEDY, BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT HURRICANE KATRINA IS COMING.

Oskar Eustis said at The Public [Theater]: "Listen, you've got a few references in the play that really push it towards Katrina. Could you cut those?" And I told him, "Nobody's going to think about that. It's been five years." Because, for me, I don't necessarily mean Katrina. But enough people went there, so I decided to cut those moments out [of the trilogy version of *Marcus*].

I lived through [Hurricane] Andrew. And in my mind, there's Before Andrew and there's After Andrew. For anybody who's lived through a natural disaster, there will always be that marker, because when the sky falls, or when the earth moves, when something that you are sure is going to be there just isn't, you submit to the idea that you are just *this* and not in control of all of *that*. Something shifts in your mind-set. You can make all of the decisions you want to about who you are and where you're going to go, and then all of a sudden the sky rains down on you. Then what do you do?

After Andrew, my mother came into the room and started sweeping, and I didn't understand why. But it's about that courage to say, "I'm going to continue to live, or try to live, in some way, shape, or form." That step forward, even if it doesn't make any sense—because certainly sweeping up in the middle of the rubble made no sense to me (and probably to no one around us), but my mother felt like that would help somehow.

For me, that's why *Marcus* isn't a tragedy—because I think that life does go on.

## PLAYWRIGHT TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY ON THE BROTHER/SISTER PLAYS

here were days I thought I was born into a third-world country. Partly from overzealous imagination, but also from the scarce ability to keep running water in our home coupled with the battle to keep the rampant rodents that plagued our project from chomping into my baby sister. I was not in Port au Prince nor a slum outside Rio de Janeiro, but the languages and songs and foods outside my doorstep were of French Creole cadence and Afro-Spanish malaise. I was still in an American city. I was brought up near the tropic of Capricorn, hurricanes common as mosquito bites. Sea breezes strong enough to send you sailing and starry nights that made the voyages of Columbus seem distant and not yet present. Yet there in the midst of that beauty were drug lords who ran the street corner like Wall Street and Beirut combined.

I lived in the other America; the America that doesn't always get depicted in the cinema. The America that we are told to pretend isn't there. And in an attempt to create theater that told untold stories, that gave voice to another half of America, I created *The Brother/Sister Plays*.

#### THEATER AS COMMUNITY

My first building block of theatrical understanding came from watching my grandfather preach. It was the way the crowd hollered at my granddaddy when he would pause. When he would tell them they didn't want to hear the rest, they would shout, "Preach on!" The drums and the organs of the church began to catch his rhythm, my grandfather acting out portions of the piece and the church re-seeing what he described and singing and moaning and crying until they all were on the same accord.

This is theater as community. It is holy theater not because it exalts something on high, but because for the hour or so onstage the audience and actor are one, and all those people, though each seeing it slightly differently, are believing—following the same course or going on a journey together. In *The Brother/Sister Plays*, I have tried, through language, content and format, to invigorate the communal portion of the plays. The actors speak stage directions that invite the audience to remember that they are in a theater and that the story that is being told is for them and to feel free to call and respond back. Truly, in a world where stories are told in many beautiful and spectacular ways, the live theater still has the powerful construct of communal journey, communal belief, community.

#### THEATER AS RITUAL

When the slaves of the New World were forced into Christianity, many—especially in places such as Haiti, Brazil, Cuba, and New Orleans—mixed in their home religion and kept practice of their old ways with the European new. Their stories are complex, not good versus evil, but good and evil at the same time. Life is good, but so is death. Radiantly beautiful is bad, but so too is ugly. The archetypes of these deities were worn on my friends like sleeves. I began to investigate how to use ancient myths, stories, to tell urban ones. I found that the stories are all still there. So I began taking old stories from the canon of the Yoruba and splicing them, placing them down in a mythological Housing Project in the South. This made the stories feel both old and new, as if they stood on an ancient history but were exploring the here and now. I mixed in lore and theatrical devices from the Greeks, from Spanish Lorca, from Jacobean England.

This ritual is not new. In order to make the pyramids that still stand today, slaves were made to mix the mortar of old shards of pots, clay bowls in with the new hay, water, and sand because that mixture of old and new created something stronger. Something else. The ritual onstage is taking these very old stories, archetypes, myths, and even rumors, and playing them out with new voices, new bodies, set in new and present times. Hoping to create evenings that make something powerful, something distant yet present, something ... else.

#### THEATER AS REMEMBRANCE

The Yoruba believe that when evoking the spirit of the Gods in the space, the goal is not to fully become the deity and lose self, but rather to become oneself more fully and therefore evoke the god in you. It is a great practice of mine that actors never forget that they are actors always, creating theater, telling stories for an audience, and that they themselves must become their most vulnerable in order to become that character. Then we the audience will see them at their core and begin to watch them move in these extraordinary and sometimes foreign circumstances but understand and relate to them. The actors in the trilogy are asked to play multiple roles, sometimes inside one play, sometimes between plays. This allows for a certain amount of reminding: that we are in a theater space, that something formal and holy is happening, that you the audience are most important and we cannot go on this journey of belief without your approval, help, and willingness to go. As the man from Madagascar reminds Oshoosi [in The Brothers Size], "C'mon, let's go!"

"Artist Statement," reprinted from the audience guide to the McCarter Theatre Center production of The Brother/Sister Plays, http://www.mccarter.org/tarell/.

## PLACE: SAN PERE, LA TIME: LATE AUGUST (DISTANT PRESENT)

"IF YOU TELL A STORY YOU'RE ALREADY TELLING IT IN THE PAST TENSE. IT'S ALREADY HAPPENED, SO IT'S IN THE DISTANCE. BUT YOU'RE TELLING IT RIGHT NOW, SO IT'S, THEREFORE, THE PRESENT. YOU'LL NEVER BE IN SAN PERE BECAUSE, ONE, IT DOESN'T EXIST AND, TWO, YOU'LL ACTUALLY BE ONSTAGE. EVEN IF SAN PERE DID EXIST, IT WOULDN'T EXIST ANYMORE BECAUSE THE STORM CAME UP AND PRETTY MUCH MADE SURE NOTHING IS THERE ANYMORE."

—Tarell Alvin McCraney

an Pere, the community in which *The Brother/Sister Plays* take place, is an invention of Tarell Alvin McCraney's imagination, but if it were a real place it would, according to him, lie near the town of Buras, Louisiana. The cultural world of the play, though, is a mashup of the Liberty Square Housing Projects in Miami, where he grew up, the infamous Magnolia Projects in New Orleans, and the more rural environment that surrounds Buras. When asked about San Pere, McCraney says, "It's like when they ask Alice Walker where the tribe she wrote for *The Color Purple* was: 'There is none. I made it up.'"

McCraney has nevertheless placed his imaginary town in a very specific landscape with a very particular history. That place is Plaquemines Parish, an area south of New Orleans

at the very end of the Mississippi River delta, where a thin strip of land juts out into the Gulf of Mexico like a big toe testing the water. The Plaquemines Parish government states on its website: "During the summer months, expect the daily rumble of thunder in the afternoons. Hurricane season is from June 1 to November 30, and Plaquemines Parish does occasionally have threats from tropical systems, including hurricanes."

Hurricane Katrina made its landfall at Buras in Plaquemines Parish on August 29, 2005. Though in the play Marcus's dreams augur a storm of Katrina's proportions, McCraney has made it clear in interviews that the play's impending deluge is not meant to evoke Katrina exclusively. There are five major pre-Katrina hurricanes on record for Buras—1893, 1901, 1915, 1965, and 1969—the last of which leveled all but six structures in the town of 6,000. McCraney's personal experience is with Hurricane Andrew. A category five hurricane with 165 mph winds, a death toll of 61 people, and damage estimated at near \$27 billion, Andrew became the most costly natural disaster in U.S. history (to that point) when it roared across south Florida in August 1992. Hurricane Katrina was a strong category three at landfall, with winds clocking in at 127 mph. It displaced more than 250,000 people (more than the Dust Bowl of the 1930s); the death toll was more than 1,800 people; and estimated costs have to date reached \$125 billion, transferring to Katrina the distinction of most expensive natural disaster in U.S. history.



## **AFRICAN ECHOES**

The Brother/Sister Plays draw from the cosmology of the Yoruba people of West Africa. Yoruba culture first spread across the Atlantic when West Africans were sold in the slave trade. Today its influence is felt throughout the African Diaspora, which includes countries ranging from Brazil (candomblé) to Haiti (vodun) to Cuba (santería) to the United States. Practiced in various forms by millions today, Yoruba religious traditions embrace a rich pantheon of orisha, or deities, whose life forces animate and inspire their followers. Like Greek and Roman gods, each orisha corresponds to a particular element of life, such as war, marriage, or justice. Many of the characters in *The Brother/ Sister Plays* share qualities with their Yoruba namesakes.

Tarell Alvin McCraney explains: "It's about seeing those archetypes in your neighborhood. I could have easily named people Venus and Ares and Hephaestus. It's about taking classic archetypes and seeing them in a contemporary setting and watching as those roles play out today....

"I didn't learn about the Yoruba from any African directly; I learned about them from Puerto Ricans and Cubans [in Miami]. ... I found it interesting that these stories of an oral tradition had lasted so long. So, for me, it is more about the retention of that oral tradition. These stories are not a direct reflection of the West African cosmology; they are what has been passed down and retained in the Americas for so long. They are essentially American stories, because they, like any Germanic story you would hear, like any Norse story you would hear in Minnesota, have been in the bedrock of the American culture from day one and have been passed around in an oral way." **ELEGBA/ELEGUA/ESHU** (Marcus Eshu) Orisha of the crossroads; the divine messenger of the gods who guides the fate of humans through divination and dreams; the trickster, the shape-shifter. He takes pleasure in chaos, but his transgressive exploits are essential for change and renewal.

**OGUN** Orisha of warfare and iron; the blacksmith; the pathmaker who clears away spiritual and psychological obstacles; a dependable god who rewards his the faithful worshipers; Oshoosi's brother.

**OSHOOSI** Orisha of the hunt; the tracker, the wanderer; a repentant god dear to those accused of crimes or imprisoned; Ogun's brother.

**OBA** Orisha of marriage, motherhood, and domesticity; long-suffering wife of the philandering Shango.

**OSHUN** (Shun, Osha) Orisha of the Oshun River, sensuality, beauty, love; the most beautiful of Shango's mistresses.

SHANGO Orisha of thunder and lightning, virility, male fertility; dispenser of justice; husband and/or paramour of Oya, Oshun, and Oba.

**YEMOJA** Orisha of the oceans, mother goddess who gave birth to all life, including the other orishas.

Excerpted and adapted from the audience guide to the McCarter Theatre Center production of The Brother/Sister Plays, http://www.mccarter.org/tarell/.



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Top to bottom: Manoel Felciano in *Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo*; René Augesen in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*; Lucia Frangione, Andy Thompson, and Jonathon Young in *No Exit* (photo by Michael Berz); Jocelyn Michel/fstop/Corbis. Photos by Kevin Berne, unless otherwise indicated.

#### TALES IN THE HOUSE

Throughout the month of October, while Marcus; or The Secret

of Sweet rehearsed on the sixth floor of A.C.T.'s studios at 30 Grant Avenue, two floors up the creative team of A.C.T.'s upcoming season finale, the world premiere of a new musical version of *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*, busily worked with a remarkable cast to develop the book, music, lyrics, and choreography for what promises to be *the* event of the Bay Area theater season. The production features a libretto by Tony Award–winning writer **Jeff Whitty** (Avenue Q) and music and lyrics by

Jake Shears and John Garden of the glam-rock band Scissor Sisters; it is directed by Tony Award winner Jason Moore (*Avenue Q* and *Shrek: The Musical*) and is choreographed by Larry Keigwin.

Unlike rehearsals, theater workshops are not intended to culminate in a fully staged production; instead the goal is to help the creators develop a piece of writing, such as a script or score, that is still in draft form. The plan for A.C.T.'s *Tales* workshop was to get the libretto and music ready for next spring, so that the cast and creative team can begin rehearsals for the world premiere production—which begins performances at A.C.T. in May—with a nearly finished text and score.

"A new musical is one of the hardest things in the world to create," says director **Jason Moore**. "Having the time to be together and to try stuff out with actors who interpret the writing is such an important process for any musical, but particularly for one that has this scope." A.C.T. is committed to developing original large-scale, multidisciplinary productions, especially projects that are immediately relevant to San Francisco—like 2007's *After the* 

YAN MONTGOMERY



(L TO R) WRITER JEFF WHITTY, DIRECTOR JASON MOORE, AND A.C.T. ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CAREY PERLOFF DISCUSS THE PROGRESS OF THE *TALES* WORKSHOP.



THE CAST OF THE WORKSHOP OF ARMISTEAD MAUPIN'S TALES OF THE CITY AT A.C.T.'S SAN FRANCISCO STUDIOS

War and last season's dance-based *The Tosca Project*. "A big part of what we do here," says A.C.T. Artistic Director **Carey Perloff**, "is celebrate our community. We believe that gorgeous things locally become gorgeous things globally. It is an incredible honor for us to work on this material—which was born in San Francisco—and launch it with this potent combination of artists."

Armistead Maupin, author of the original *Tales of the City* newspaper series in the San Francisco *Chronicle* and the beloved novels it inspired, was himself in attendance for the first day of the three-week developmental workshop. "Thirty-seven years ago," he told the assembled *Tales* team and A.C.T. staff, "I was working as a mail boy at Hoefer, Dieterich & Brown down on the Barbary Coast, the ad agency that became the model for Halcyon Communications in *Tales*. I was desperate to get out of there, and I had heard through the grapevine that there was a job opening in the promotions office of A.C.T. I was just over the moon because I thought, 'Oh you would get to work in an office, but it's theater. It would be perfect for me!' I didn't get the job, so I had to go out and write a book to find a way to bring myself back to A.C.T."

"It is thrilling to be at this institution," continued Maupin. "It is the perfect place for *Tales of the City*, because it did grow from this little, local thing that was laughed at and protested. To think that it has lasted all this time. I'm hearing from people who are coming from Paris to see the show. It's very exciting."

The world premiere production of *Tales* is scheduled for May 17–June 19, 2011. Single tickets go on sale in January 2011. To lock the best tickets and the best prices, subscribe to A.C.T.'s 2010–11 season.

Support *Tales of the City* by becoming a member of the *Tales of the City* Circle. For more information, visit act-sf.org/ TalesCircle or call 415.439.2353.

For exclusive first looks, presale ticket info, and special offers, join *Tale* Chasers, A.C.T.'s email fan club, by visiting **www.act-sf.org/TaleChasers**.

#### **YEARNING FOR MOSCOW**

The A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program classes of 2011 and 2012 came together this month to present Anton Chekhov's masterpiece *The Three Sisters*, translated by Carol Rocamora

and directed by Shakespeare Santa Cruz Artistic Director Marco Barricelli, a longtime member of the A.C.T. artistic family. A core acting company member at A.C.T. for more than a decade, Barricelli most recently appeared on the A.C.T. stage in *Vigil*, alongside Olympia Dukakis.

Chekhov's enduring exploration of the lost hopes and loves of the Prozorov sisters, who dream of escaping their barren existence in a provincial Russian town to return to the thrill of life in urban Moscow, is one of the playwright's most popular and accessible works. A fixture in the international canon, the play presents a formidable challenge even to seasoned actors including Barricelli, who made a memorable Vershinin in the 2002 production of *The Three Sisters* on the A.C.T. mainstage—and represents a kind of artistic Everest for young actors just starting their artistic careers. Barricelli says: "This is one of the greatest plays in dramatic literature and provides actors with a profound



(LTO R) JESSICA KITCHENS, COURTNEY THOMAS, CHRISTINA LORENN ELMORE, AND BEN KAHRE IN THE THREE SISTERS

opportunity to work on characters that will demand the deepest kind of revelation of their own souls as people and artists. It is my hope that every student involved in this piece closed this production a slightly better actor than they were at the first readthrough. It's all about the journey."

A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith agrees: "This is a tremendous play of character. I know that in Marco's capable hands, this production gave a great opportunity to both our second- and third-year students to delve into these rich characters to create full and complete arcs."

#### A.C.T. M.F.A. AND YC GO ON A WILD RIDE

A.C.T.'s Master of Fine

Arts Program and Young

Conservatory (YC) have

world premiere of Wild

award-winning American

(Girl Under Grain, Goldie,

playwright Karen Hartman

Max & Milk). Four members

of the M.F.A. Program class

YC actors to tell the story of

a semester-at-sea program

that goes terribly awry when

a vengeful captain, named

Wild Kate, tries to set right

of 2011 appear alongside

Kate, a new work by

teamed up to present the



GRACE PHILIPS IN THE M.F.A. PROGRAM/YC PRODUCTION OF *RIOT* LAST SEASON

the damage done by the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Hartman's story of an obsessed captain is largely inspired by Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, says the playwright, who first came across the novel in high school, though she admits she didn't finish it then. "At the time, I thought it was just really boring," she confesses. "It has all of these digressions, like 'How Whales Were Diagrammed from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> Century." When she finally read *Moby Dick* in its entirety, however, Hartman fell in love with the story's slow meanderings, finding them "particularly moving, especially given where it all ends up." Moby Dick was the perfect springboard for Hartman to create a meaty piece for young actors. "I thought of a kid saying, 'Call me Isabel,'" says Hartman, playing on *Moby Dick*'s famous opening line, "Call me Ishmael." "I was interested in a coming-of-age story about a young woman encountering an obsessed, vengeful adult. People in their teens are really quick to see hypocrisy: compromise looks very hypocritical to them, and holding fast to a mission can look very admirable. There's something about being a grownup that involves certain contradictions: We drive a car to a protest for environmental justice, for instance. There's something immature but also truthful about being the person who says, 'This is bullshit. You say this, but you do this.'"

Wild Kate, directed by W. D. Keith, is the fourth new work jointly commissioned by the M.F.A. Program and the YC in a collaboration that allows students access to the process of play development on a level rarely seen in young actor training. "The average teen sees plays in published books, and has no real sense of the writer's role in the theater," says YC Director Craig Slaight. "I've never seen teens more excited than they are when working with an author to develop a new play—eyes wide open, with such unconditional reverence for the playwright. In our experience training young actors at A.C.T., it is more than obvious that working on new plays is at the heart of the seminal urge to create."

*Wild Kate* runs through November 6 at Zeum Theater (221 Fourth Street, San Francisco). Tickets are \$20 and available at www.act-sf.org or by calling the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228.

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NOV 2 PROLOGUE A free preshow discussion with the director and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team before the first

preview performance.

#### NOV 5 THEATER ON THE COUCH

Members of the San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis explore the minds, motives, and behaviors of the characters in the play after the 8 p.m. performance.

#### NOV 9, 14 & 17 AUDIENCE **EXCHANGES**

Lively Q&A sessions with the cast and A.C.T. staff after the performance. A ticket to any performance grants you entry!

#### **NOV 10** OUT WITH A.C.T. A.C.T.'s popular LGBT-night party features free cocktails

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and catered treats directly following the 8 p.m. performance.

Actor Joseph Alessi (center) with A.C.T. audience members: patrons on the A.C.T. stage: guests at A.C.T.'s Sky Bar (photos by Timothy Faust)

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#### NOV 3

#### **OPENING NIGHT DINNER**

Dine with Artistic Director Carey Perloff, Executive Director Ellen Richard, and Associate Artistic Director (and director of Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet) Mark Rucker before the show.

#### NOV 6

#### **BACKSTAGE THEATER TOUR**

Take an up-close look at the American Conservatory Theater and learn about its 100-year history.

#### NOV 9 **COSTUME SHOP TOUR**

Visit the bustling area where every beautiful A.C.T. costume comes to life.

#### **NOV 13** SATURDAY SALON

Enjoy lunch with a member of the artistic team before a matinee of Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet.

#### **DEC 13**

DESIGN PRESENTATION Get an exclusive sneak peek at the director's vision for Clybourne Park at the first company meeting.

To support A.C.T. and receive invitations to donor events, contact Liv Nilssen at Inilssen@act-sf.org or 415.439.2450.

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#### A.C.T. AND CJM PRESENT HIGHER

On November 4 and 7, A.C.T. presents a staged reading of *Higher*, a play by A.C.T. Artistic Director **Carey Perloff**, in the Contemporary Jewish Museum's

iconic Yud Gallery. The play—directed by A.C.T. Associate Artistic Director (and director of *Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet*) **Mark Rucker**—examines what happens when two architects with very different visions (who also happen to be lovers) are drawn into a competition to build a major memorial in Israel. "This is an exciting part of our ongoing programming with the Contemporary Jewish Museum, in which we bring together audiences for projects that highlight what both institutions do best," explains A.C.T. Dramaturg and Director of Humanities **Michael Paller**. "It makes perfect sense to hear *Higher*, a provocative play about architecture, competition, and love, in the Yud, itself a provocative space in a building designed by Daniel Liebeskind, one of the world's best known—and most provocative—architects." Tickets can be purchased on the CJM website, thecjm.org. For more information, email info@thecjm.org.

#### A.C.T. ALUMNI AT A GLANCE: WHAT THEY'RE DOING NOW

Kevin Berne



Denzel Washington '78 appears in the feature film *Unstoppable*. Mary Jo McConnell '89 performs in the world premiere

of *Wallenberg* at the White Plains Performing Arts Center. **Davis Duffield '04** performs in *The Story of My Life* for Chicago Muse Theatre. The CHILDREN'S theatre company, a producing collective in New York founded and fueled by

NICK CHILDRESS AND EMILY KITCHENS IN MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING AT CALIFORNIA SHAKESPEARE THEATER

A.C.T. graduates, presents David Lindsay-Abaire's *Wonder of the World*, directed by **Brian Stevens '07** and featuring an all-A.C.T.alumni cast; the company's "artistic core" is made up of **Ann Farrar '06, Drew Hirshfield '06**, Stevens, **Kevin Dedes '08**, and **Caitlin Talbot '08. Kaliswa Brewster '08** will play the tragic heroine of The Acting Company's *Romeo and Juliet* at the Guthrie Theater. New York's SOUL PROductions—founded by **Erin Michelle Washington '09**—presents a staged reading of *Verses*, a new play by **Mfoniso Udofia '09**. California Shakespeare Theater's recent production of *Much Ado About Nothing* featured **Andrew Hurteau '93**, **Nicholas Pelczar '09**, **Nick Childress '10**, and **Emily Kitchens '10**.

For information about A.C.T.'s Alumni Association or to submit alumni news, contact Liv Nilssen at 415.439.2450 or Inilssen@ act-sf.org.

#### MEET TYEE TILGHMAN, A.C.T. M.F.A PROGRAM CLASS OF 2013

In each program of the A.C.T. mainstage season, we are pleased to introduce to you one of A.C.T.'s remarkable first-year M.F.A. Program students. In this issue, meet **Tyee Tilghman**.

NICKNAME Tizzle, or Tizz for short.

BIRTHPLACE Kaua'i, Hawaii.

HOMETOWN I'm a military brat, so I don't really have one.

FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE Telling a nonverbal story about an engagement ring in Drama 1 at Eleanor Roosevelt High School.



**FAVORITE THEATER EXPERIENCE** Performing an excerpt from *Ameriville* with Universes at the D.C. Hip-Hop Theater Festival.

**IF I COULD PLAY ANY ROLE, I WOULD WANT TO PLAY** Aaron in *Titus Andronicus* or Gamal in *Ameriville*.

**My story** I was blessed with the opportunity to work at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and after understudying the role of Eugene in *Yellowman* there I was given the chance to play the role at Curious Theatre Company in Denver. The company environment that I was a part of in Denver brought me to a new level as an artist, and I decided to audition for grad school in search of a similar company-driven experience. And so . . . here I am at A.C.T.

**RANDOM FACT** I sometimes purposely choose the opposing side in arguments to see how well people defend their position.

**EDUCATION** I got my B.F.A. in drama from West Virginia University. GO MOUNTAINEERS!!! And I learned that I like my theater with a cup of social relevance while working in the Living History program at the Denver Center Theatre Academy with Daniel Renner . . . who is an A.C.T. grad, might I add.

**SPECIAL SKILLS** I bake a mean cheesecake, and I rock the house doing "Under the Sea" from *The Little Mermaid* at karaoke.

**HOBBIES** Basketball, volleyball, reading sci-fi and fantasy novels, and karaoke.

**RECOMMENDATIONS** Books: *Ender's Game*, by Orson Scott Card, and *The Dark Tower* series, by Stephen King. Films: *Seven Samurai*, Berry Gordy's *The Last Dragon*, and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* TV: *Breaking Bad*, *Fringe*, and *Castle*. Music: The Roots, Atmosphere, Hello Kavita, and Curtis Brothers Quartet. **DEC 2-24** 

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## WHO'S WHO IN MARCUS; ... SWEET



SHINELLE AZOROH<sup>†</sup> (*Osha*), a native of Huntsville, Alabama, is a founding member of Renovation Theater Company, which most recently produced her

one-woman show, *Cinnamon*. Azoroh was most recently seen in the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program cabaret production of *The Full Monty*; other M.F.A. Program credits include *Once in a Lifetime, Romeo and Juliet, Hotel Paradiso, Vieux Carré, A Month in the Country*, and *Life Under Water*. Azoroh received her B.A. in theater at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, where her performance credits included *The Tempest, In the Blood* (Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival), *Intimate Apparel, The Piano Lesson*, and *The House of Bernarda Alba*.



OMOZÉ IDEHENRE\* (Shaunta Iyun), a recent graduate of the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program, has appeared on the mainstage in Scapin,

The Caucasian Chalk Circle, and A Christmas Carol. She was recently seen as Lady MacDuff in California Shakespeare Theater's Macbeth. Other credits include A.C.T. M.F.A. Program productions of Her Naked Skin, Sweet Charity, The Critic, The Increased Difficulty of Concentration, Macbeth, The Mutilated, and Blues for an Alabama Sky. Idehenre earned her B.F.A. from The University of North Carolina, Greensboro, where she appeared in such productions as Our Lady of 121st Street, Macbeth, Death and the King's Horseman, and Home. She received the Polly McKibben Award, an A.C.T. scholarship fund supported by Maureen McKibben.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS FOR MARCUS; OR THE SECRET OF SWEET Processional Staged by Stephen Buescher Projections Assistant Jon Lowe Projections Technician Lloyd Murphy

MARGO HALL\*

(*Oba/Shun/Elegua*) is an actor/director/ playwright who was last seen in Aurora Theatre Company's *Trouble in Mind*. Before that she

performed in Chinaka Hodge's Mirrors in Every Corner for Campo Santo, where, as a founding member, she has directed, performed, and collaborated with Naomi Iizuka, Philip Kan Gotanda, Jessica Hagedorn, the late Luis Saguar, and Octavio Solis, among others. She most recently directed The Story, by Tracey Scott Wilson, an SF Playhouse/Lorraine Hansberry Theatre coproduction. Hall has performed for Arena Stage and Olney Theatre Center in Washington, D.C.; the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis; and locally at A.C.T., Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, Brava! for Women in the Arts, Shotgun Players, and Word for Word Performing Arts Company.

#### JARED McNEILL\*



(*Terrell*) was most recently seen in Marin Theatre Company's production of *In the Red and Brown Water*, part one of *The* 

Brother/Sister Plays, as Elegba. Other regional theater credits include Cory in August Wilson's Fences at Geva Theatre Center in upstate New York and Oshoosi Size in Tarell Alvin McCraney's The Brothers Size at City Theatre in Pittsburgh. He recently returned from a year-long tour performing alongside an international company of actors in director Peter Brook's latest collaboration, 11 and 12. McNeill obtained a B.A. in theater and visual arts from Fordham University at Lincoln Center.

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States

<sup>†</sup>Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2011

## Who's Who



#### RICHARD PRIOLEAU's<sup>†</sup>

(Marcus Eshu) theater credits include Othello and Love's Labor's Lost (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); American Buffalo (Renovation

Theater Company); The Full Monty, Once in a Lifetime, Romeo and Juliet, Hotel Paradiso, Fool for Love, A Month in the Country, and Almost, Maine (A.C.T. M.F.A. Program); The Soldier's Tale (A.C.T. M.F.A. Program/San Francisco Conservatory of Music New Music Ensemble); Six Degrees of Separation (The Gallery Players); the national tour of *The* Color of Justice (Theatreworks USA); norway.today (Thalatta! Theatre International); Abandon (La MaMa E.T.C.); and Man-Made (Ohio Theatre, New York City). Television and film credits include As the World Turns and Three and a Half Thoughts (winner of Best Short at the Harlem International Film Festival). Prioleau is a graduate of Fordham University at Lincoln Center. He is a recipient of the Polly McKibben Award, an A.C.T. scholarship fund supported by Maureen McKibben.



GREGORY WALLACE\* (*Ogun Size*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member for 11 years, has been seen at A.C.T. in more than

two dozen productions, including Scapin, The Tosca Project, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, Rich and Famous, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, Travesties, The Rivals, Gem of the Ocean, Waiting for Godot, The Dazzle, Blithe Spirit, Celebration and The Room, Lilies, or The Revival of a Romantic Drama, "Master Harold"... and the boys, Insurrection: Holding History, and Angels in America (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). Other theater credits include Our Country's Good (Broadway), A Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (New York Theatre Workshop), As You Like It (The Public Theater), Much Ado About Nothing (Alliance Theatre), The Screens (Guthrie Theater), The Learned Ladies (Williamstown Theatre Festival), King Lear (Whole Theater), The Queen and the Rebels (CENTERSTAGE), and The Beaux' Stratagem (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). Screen credits include Peter Sellars's The Cabinet of Dr. Ramirez, The Beverly Hillbillies, Dark Goddess, Crime Story, and *Internal Affairs*. He is a Fox Fellow and a graduate of Yale School of Drama.



TOBIE L. WINDHAM\*

(Oshoosi Size/Shua) was most recently seen in Magic Theatre's production of *The Brothers Size*, part two of *The* 





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## **Who's Who**

Brother/Sister Plays, as Oshoosi Size, and in California Shakespeare Theater's production of The Pastures of Heaven as Tularecito. He was last seen on the A.C.T. mainstage in A Christmas Carol. As a member of the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program Windham performed in many shows; among his favorites are Macbeth, Blues for an Alabama Sky, and O Lovely Glowworm, or Scenes of Great Beauty. Other credits include performances in American Buffalo with City Equity Theatre and Renovation Theatre Company, Of Mice and Men with South City Theatre, and Romeo and Juliet with Birmingham's Park Players. He earned a B.A. in theater performance from the University of Alabama at Birmingham.



NICOL FOSTER\* (Understudy) was last seen in Marin Theatre Company's production of In the Red and Brown Water as Mama Moja, Nia, and Woman Who

Reminds You. Other credits include Schoolhouse Rock Live! at the Alcazar Theatre, Lucinda in Into the Woods and Toinette in Josephine at TheatreWorks, Juliet in Romeo and Juliet at the African American Shakespeare Company, and Charlaine in Ain't Misbehavin' at The Western Stage, to name a few. Foster has appeared at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival as Bebe in Idiot's Delight, Ivy in Playboy of the West Indies, and Ruby in Oo-Bla-Dee. She holds a B.A. in broadcast communications with a minor in theater arts from San Francisco State University.



#### JON JOSEPH GENTRY\*

(Understudy), a recent graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, most recently appeared in Aurora

Theatre Company's production of *Trouble* 

\*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States in Mind. He was seen last year on the A.C.T. mainstage in A Christmas Carol. Other credits include Asian American Theater Company's world premiere of Fayette-Nam, in which he originated the role of Jerome Dupree. As a Shakespeare Santa Cruz company member, he was seen in Romeo and Juliet and All's Well That Ends Well. A.C.T. M.F.A. Program credits include O Lovely Glowworm; or Scenes of Great Beauty, Her Naked Skin, The Critic; or A Tragedy Rehearsed, Macbeth, Winter Under the Table, Clothes for a Summer Hotel, and Blues for an Alabama Sky. Other favorite credits include The Dutchman, Julius Caesar, In the Blood, Ma Rainey's Black Bottom, Sweet Bird of Youth, The Colored Museum, and Amen Corner. He received his B.A. in English from Harvard University.

#### TARELL ALVIN McCRANEY's

(Playwright) plays include Wig Out! (Sundance Theatre Lab, Vineyard Theatre, and the Royal Court Theatre) and The Brother/Sister Plays: In the Red and Brown Water (Kendeda Graduate Playwriting Competition; premiered at the Alliance Theatre), The Brothers Size (premiered at The Public Theater in association with the Foundry Theatre and in London at the Young Vic), and Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet (premiered in a coproduction by McCarter Theatre Center and The Public Theater). Other productions of The Brother/Sister Plays include those by Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, and The Studio Theatre, among others. McCraney's other plays include Without/ Sin; Run, Mourner, Run; and The Breach, written with Catherine Filloux and Joe Sutton (commissioned and premiered by Southern Repertory Theater in New Orleans). McCraney is currently under commission by Manhattan Theatre Club, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Donmar Warehouse, Steppenwolf, and McCarter and is a member of the Steppenwolf ensemble, New Dramatists, and Teo Castellanos/D-Projects in Miami. He

## Who's Who

is the international writer in residence at the Royal Shakespeare Company, where his commissioned play American Trade will premiere in 2011. He was nominated for London's Olivier Award for The Brothers Size and has received the Evening Standard Award for Most Promising Playwright, a 2009 GLAAD Award for Outstanding Play, the Paula Vogel Playwriting Award, the Whiting Award, the first Steinberg Distinguished Playwright Award, the inaugural New York Times Outstanding Playwright Award, and a Hodder Fellowship at Princeton University. McCraney attended the New World School of the Arts High School in Miami, Florida, receiving the Exemplary Artist Award and the Dean's Award in Theatre. He holds a B.F.A. in acting from DePaul University and an M.F.A. in playwriting from Yale School of Drama.

MARK RUCKER (Director), recently appointed associate artistic director of

A.C.T., has directed The Rainmaker and The Beard of Avon at the American Conservatory Theater and A.C.T.'s production of Luminescence Dating at Magic Theatre. He is an associate artist at South Coast Repertory, where he has directed more than 20 productions, including world premieres by Richard Greenberg, Christopher Shinn, Annie Weisman, and Culture Clash. Other regional theater credits include work at Yale Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Arena Stage, Intiman Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage, The Old Globe, Ford's Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, The Acting Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, and Asolo Repertory Theatre. Rucker's feature film, Die, Mommie, Die! won a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.

LOY ARCENAS (Scenic Designer) has designed The Invention of Love, High

Society, Celebration, Indian Ink, Curse of the Starving Class, and Glengarry Glen Ross for A.C.T. He has designed for Broadway, off Broadway, off-off Broadway, and most of the major regional theaters in the country. For his design work he has received four Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, Chicago's Jeff Award, two Drama Desk Award nominations, the Michael Merritt Award for design collaboration, and an OBIE for Sustained Excellence of Set Design. His extensive directing credits include Lonnie Carter's The Romance of Magno Rubio (OBIE); David Henry Hwang's Golden Child (four Gawad BUHAY! PHILSTAGE Awards in Manila, including best direction); Warren Leight's No Foreigners Beyond This Point; and, most recently, Michi Barall's Rescue Me and Rody Vera's Filipino adaptation of Chekhov's The Three Sisters, Tatlong Maria. He is from the Philippines.



## Wно's Wно

LYDIA TANJI (Costume Designer) also designed the costumes for Marin Theatre Company's production of In the Red and Brown Water and Magic Theatre's The Brothers Size. For A.C.T. she has designed costumes for Round and Round the Garden, The Quality of Life, Curse of the Starving Class, Brainpeople, The Rainmaker, After the War, and Woman in Mind. For Berkeley Repertory Theatre she has designed costumes for Crime and Punishment, The Glass Menagerie, Our Town, Master Class, Homebody/Kabul, and Slavs!, among others. Other regional theaters with which she has worked include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Syracuse Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, Pasadena Playhouse, East West Players, California Shakespeare Theater, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Children's Theatre Company, The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, The Huntington Theatre Company, Geva Theatre Center, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, and Arena Stage. She has received six Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards and two Drama-Logue Awards. Film credits include The Joy Luck Club, Hot Summer Winds, Dim Sum, The Wash, Thousand Pieces of Gold, and Life Tastes Good.

**JAMES F. INGALLS** (Lighting Designer) returns to A.C.T., where he has designed Phèdre, The Tosca Project at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, A Mother, The Three Sisters, Buried Child, For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, Goodnight Children Everywhere, Glengarry Glen Ross, The Invention of Love, and The Duchess of Malfi. For Berkeley Repertory Theatre he has designed after the quake, Yellowman, and How I Learned to Drive. Other work in San Francisco includes San Francisco Ballet's 75th Anniversary New Works Festival; Mark Morris's Sylvia, Maelstrom, Pacific, and Sandpaper Ballet; Silver Ladders, choreographed by Helgi

Tomasson (San Francisco Ballet); John Adams's Doctor Atomic and The Death of Klinghoffer, both directed by Peter Sellars (San Francisco Opera); and Kafka Fragments, Platée, The Hard Nut, and L'Allegro, il penseroso ed il moderato (Cal Performances/Zellerbach). Recent projects include Brief Encounters for the Paul Taylor Dance Company and The Tales of Hoffman at The Metropolitan Opera. He often collaborates with Melanie Rios Glaser and The Wooden Floor dancers in Santa Ana.

ANDRE PLUESS (Sound Designer) most recently designed Macbeth at California Shakespeare Theater, where he is an associate artist and has also designed A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, and Twelfth Night. He is based in Chicago, where he has worked with Lookingglass Theatre Company, Court Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, About Face Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Northlight Theatre, among others. His Broadway credits include Metamorphoses, IAm My Own Wife, 33 Variations, and The Clean House. Pluess has received 11 Joseph Jefferson Awards and citations, an LA Stage Alliance Ovation Award, a Barrymore Award, a Drama Critics' Circle Award, and Lucille Lortel and Drama Desk award nominations for composition and sound design. Recent projects include 33 Variations (Arena Stage/La Jolla Playhouse); after the quake (Long Wharf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theatre); Argonautika (Lookingglass, McCarter Theatre Center, Berkeley Rep, Shakespeare Theatre Company); Lost Boys of the Sudan (The Children's Theatre Company); Thyestes (Court); Kafka on the Shore and Endgame (Steppenwolf); Arabian Nights (Berkeley Rep, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Lookingglass); Our Town (Lookingglass); Crime and Punishment (The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis); Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare Santa Cruz); and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof and Merchant of Venice (Oregon Shakespeare Festival).

#### ALEXANDER V. NICHOL's (Projection

Designer) theater credits include the Broadway production of Wishful Drinking (Carrie Fisher), originally presented at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Off-Broadway productions include Los Big Names, Horizon, Bridge and Tunnels, and Taking Over. He has also created production designs for Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Arena Stage, The Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. Dance credits include several seasons as resident designer for Pennsylvania Ballet, Hartford City Ballet, and American Repertory Ballet. He was the lighting supervisor for American Ballet Theatre at the Metropolitan Opera House and is the resident visual designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company. His designs are in the permanent repertory of San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, Royal Winnipeg Ballet, Hong Kong Ballet, Singapore Dance Theatre, and ODC. Recent projects include Round and Round the Garden at A.C.T.; the museum installation Circle of Memory, in collaboration with Eleanor Coppola, presented in Salzburg, Austria; and video and visual design for LIFE: A Journey through Time, with photographer Frans Lanting and composer Philip Glass, presented at Alice Tully Hall.

MICHAEL PALLER (*Dramaturg*) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, 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

## Who's Who

Theater in Moscow. Paller is the author of Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and Mid-Twentieth-Century Drama (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and Williams in an Hour (Smith & Kraus 2010); he has also written theater and book reviews for the Washington Post, Village Voice, Newsday, and Mirabella magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

ELISA GUTHERTZ\* (Stage Manager) most recently worked on Round and Round the Garden at A.C.T. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include The Caucasian Chalk Circle, November, Boleros for the Disenchanted, Rich and Famous, The Rainmaker, A Number, and Eve Ensler's The Good Body, among others. 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 The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre.

#### STEPHANIE SCHLIEMANN\*

(Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on The Tosca Project, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, November, Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo, War Music, Blood Knot, The Circle, and A Christmas Carol at A.C.T. Other local stage-managing credits include Flower Drum Song, Guys and Dolls, The King and I, Gypsy, and The Wizard of Oz at American Musical Theatre of San Jose; Orson's Shadow at Marin Theatre Company; Le nozze de Figaro and The Magic Flute at Opera San Jose; and Ain't Misbehavin', Hannah and Martin, Bad Dates, and Tuesdays with Morrie, among others, at San Jose Repertory Theatre. She has also worked with TheatreWorks, Teatro ZinZanni, the Mexican Heritage Corporation, and the San Francisco School of Circus Art. She has been a proud member of Actors' Equity Association since 2005.

#### DAVID AND SUSAN WEEKS

**COULTER** (*Executive Producers*) are longtime A.C.T. subscribers and recently produced for A.C.T.'s productions of *Phèdre* and *Rock 'n' Roll.* A former nonprofit director and marketing executive, Susan is currently chair of The Global Film Initiative, which promotes crosscultural understanding through cinema. David, a managing director and senior advisor at Warburg Pincus, serves on the boards of Asia Society, MENTOR/ National Mentoring Partnership, the Fritz Institute, and the Foreign Policy Association.

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## A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is celebrating her 19<sup>th</sup> season as artistic director of A.C.T., where

she most recently directed The Tosca Project (cocreated with choreographer Val Caniparoli) and Racine's Phèdre. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has also directed for A.C.T. José Rivera's Boleros for the Disenchanted; the world premieres of Philip Kan Gotanda's After the War (A.C.T. commission) and her own adaptation (with Paul Walsh) of A Christmas Carol; the American premieres of Tom Stoppard's The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter's Celebration; A.C.T.commissioned translations/adaptations of Hecuba, The Misanthrope, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, Uncle Vanya, and A Mother; The Voysey Inheritance (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's Singer's Boy; and major revivals of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, The Government Inspector, Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), A Doll's House, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Creditors, The Room, Home, The Tempest, and Stoppard's Rock 'n' Roll, Travesties, The Real Thing, Night and Day, and Arcadia. Perloff's work for A.C.T. also includes Marie Ndiaye's Hilda, the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's No for an Answer and David Lang/Mac Wellman's The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colossus of Rhodes (Susan Smith Blackburn Award finalist). Her play Luminescence Dating premiered in

New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her play Waiting for the Flood has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage & Film, and Roundabout Theatre Company; her latest play, Higher, was developed at New York Stage and Film and will be presented at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum in November. Her one-act The Morning After was a finalist for the Heideman Award at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Perloff has collaborated as a director on new plays by many notable writers, including Gotanda, Nilo Cruz, and Robert O'Hara. She most recently directed a new *Elektra* for the Getty Villa in Los Angeles.

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 many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, CSC won numerous OBIE Awards, including 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.

ELLEN RICHARD

(*Executive Director*) joined A.C.T. as executive director in August 2010. She served previously as

executive director of off Broadway's nonprofit Second Stage Theatre in New York City. During her tenure at Second Stage, she was responsible for the purchase contract of the Helen Hayes Theatre and substantial growth in subscription income and growth in individual giving. Under Richard's leadership, Second Stage provided the initial home for the Broadway productions *Everyday Rapture*, *Next to Normal*, and *The Little Dog Laughed*.

From 1983 to 2005, Richard enjoyed a rich and varied career with Roundabout Theatre Company. By the time she departed as managing director, Roundabout had been transformed from a small nonprofit on the verge of bankruptcy into one of the country's largest and most successful theater companies of its kind. Richard is the recipient of six Tony Awards as producer, for Roundabout productions of Cabaret (1998), A View from the Bridge (1998), Side Man (1999), Nine (2003), Assassins (2004), and Glengarry Glen Ross (2005). Producer of more than 125 shows at Roundabout, she had direct supervision of all general and production management, marketing, and financial aspects of the theater's operations. She conceptualized and oversaw the redesign of the three permanent Roundabout stages-Studio 54, the American Airlines Theatre, and the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre. She directed the location search for Cabaret and supervised the creation of that production's environmental Kit Kat Klub.

Prior to her tenure at Roundabout, Richard served as business manager of

#### A.C.T. PROFILES, continued

Westport Country Playhouse, theater manager for Stamford Center for the Arts, and business manager for Atlas Scenic Studio. She began her career working as a stagehand, sound designer, and scenic artist assistant.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of A.C.T.'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 stagemanaged the Broadway productions of And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little and Georgy (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's Don't Drink the Water. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's Little Eyolf (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's Arms and the Man. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle.



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## WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A Commissioning Sponsor

Ambassador James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen join friends Nancy Livingston and Fred Levin as commissioning sponsors of this spring's world premiere production of *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*. Like so many San Francisco residents, Hormel and Nguyen connect very personally to this powerful story of finding in San Francisco a wonderful, open-hearted place to call home. They also recently produced A.C.T.'s world premiere production of *The Tosca Project*.

Armistead Maupin's *Tales* delightfully reveal various aspects of the unique character of San Francisco, portrayed in a period that is now a celebrated part of our history. Our city is lovingly shown as a port of welcome for the many diverse venturers who settle here, wishing to maintain their individuality. The message is as poignant today as it was three decades ago. We are eager to see the story come to life on the stage of the American Conservatory Theater, recreating for new audiences the heartwarming modern saga that has meant so much to millions of readers around the world. —James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen

Appointed U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg by President Bill Clinton, Jim Hormel was the first openly gay man to represent the United States as an ambassador. A graduate of Swarthmore College and the University of Chicago Law School, Hormel later served as dean of students and director of admissions at the law school. He was a member of the 1995 U.N. Commission on Human Rights and the 1996 U.S. delegation to the U.N. General Assembly. In 1981 he was one of the founders of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). He funded the creation of the James C. Hormel Gay & Lesbian Center at the San Francisco Public Library in 1995. He is a member of the board of managers of Swarthmore College, the board of governors of the San Francisco Symphony, the board of trustees of the San Francisco Foundation, the board of directors of People for the American Way, the board of governors of the Commonwealth Club of California, and the board of trustees of Grace Cathedral.

Michael Nguyen also graduated from Swarthmore College, with degrees in sociology/anthropology and dance. Committed to public service and civic and social justice, he works closely with Hormel on numerous educational, artistic, and political nonprofit initiatives and efforts. In February 2010, Mayor Gavin Newsom appointed Nguyen to the San Francisco Public Library Commission. An aspiring performing artist, Nguyen is currently further developing his skills in dance, piano, and voice. He has been a veteran ensemble member of the Albany Park Theater Project in Chicago, studied chamber music at the European American Musical Alliance in Paris, choreographed numerous dance pieces, and advanced his training in contemporary ballet and modern dance at the San Francisco Conservatory of Dance, New York University's Tisch Dance Festival, the Bates Dance Festival, and several other acclaimed dance programs around the country.

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#### 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 September 1, 2009-September 30, 2010, period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Knudsen at 415.439.2353 or pknudsen@act-sf.org.

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Rachael Adler, *Acting* Frances Epsen Devlin, *Singing* Paul Finocchiaro, *Acting* Nick Gabriel, Acting Christopher Herold, Acting Greg Hubbard, Acting Andrew Hurteau, Acting Mark Jackson, Movement W. D. Keith, Audition Technique Drew Khalouf, Voice and Speech, Acting Domenique Lozano, Shakespeare, Acting Trina Oliver, Acting Marty Pistone, Acting Lisa Anne Porter, Acting, Shakespeare, Voice and Speech Mark Rafael, Acting Regina Saisi, Improvisation Vivian Sam, Dance Naomi Sanchez, Singing Barbara Scott, Improvisation Lynne Soffer, Speech, Acting, Text Work Damon Sperber, Acting Matthew Graham Smith, Movement

#### Young Conservatory

Christina Anselmo, Acting Pearce Brandt, Musical Theater Nancy Gold, Physical Character, Acting Cindy Goldfield, Acting Jane Hammett, Musical Theater, Directing, Acting W. D. Keith, Director Emily Kitchens, Off-Campus Programs Domenique Lozano, Director Christine Mattison, Dance, Choreographer Pamela Rickard, Acting Robert Rutt, Musical Arranger, Accompanist Vivian Sam, Musical Theater, Dance Betty Schneider, Musical Theater Summer Serafin, Acting Craig Slaight, Director, Acting Amelia Stewart, Director, Acting

#### New Plays Program

Karen Hartman, Craig Slaight, Playwrights YC Resident Composer

Creighton Irons

#### YC Accompanists

Susan Davis, Thaddeus Pinkston

Joseph Tally, *Head Librarian* G. David Anderson, Elena Balashova, Laurie Bernstein, John Borden, Helen Jean Bowie, Joan Cahill, Barbara Cohrssen, William Goldstein, Paula Heaney, Jennifer Henry, Pat Hunter, Connie Ikert, Martha Kessler, Nelda Kilguss Barbara Kornstein, Ines Lewandowitz, Richard Maggi, Ann Morales, Patricia O'Connell, Roy Jane Taber, Sam Thal, Jean Wilcox, Nancy Zinn, Library Volunteers

Centers for Sports Medicine, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, for their care of the A.C.T. company: Dr. James Garrick, Dr. Victor Prieto, Dr. Minx Hong, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corpus.

#### ARTISTIC

Mark Rucker, Associate Artistic Director Michael Paller, Dramaturg Beatrice Basso, Artistic Programming Consultant Carly Cioffi, Artistic Associate Vinly Eng, Producing Associate

#### Associate Artists

René Augesen, Manoel Felciano, Anthony Fusco, Giles Havergal, Domenique Lozano, Craig Slaight, Gregory Wallace, Jack Willis

#### Directors

Marco Barricelli, Stephen Buescher, Kim Collier, Barbara Damashek Giles Havergal, Bill Irwin, Mark Jackson, W. D. Keith, Domenique Lozano, Michael Mohammed, Jason Moore, Jonathan Moscone, Carey Perloff, Mark Rucker, Craig Slaight, Amelia Stewart

#### Choreographers

Val Caniparoli, Larry Keigwin

#### Composers/Orchestrators

Randy Craig, John Garden, Karl Lundeberg, Andre Pluess, Jake Shears, Keith Terry

Musical Directors Robert Rutt, Stephen Oremus

#### Coaches

Dave Maier, Fights Jeffrey Crockett, Voice and Text Nancy Benjamin, Jill Walmsley Zager, Voice, Text, and Dialect

#### **First Look Playwrights**

Christina Anderson, Ping Chong, Eisa Davis, James Magruder, Peter Nachtrieb

#### Interns

Jonathan Carpenter, Artistic Administration Zachary Moull, Dramaturgy

#### PRODUCTION

Jeff Rowlings, Production Manager Dick Daley, Amanda J. Haley, Associate Production Managers Dora Daniels, Intern

#### Designers

John Arnone, Loy Arcenas, Erik Flatmo, Ralph Funicello, Dan Ostling, Douglas W. Schmidt, Jay Gower Taylor, Scenerv

Beaver Bauer, Alex Jaeger, Kirsten McGhie, Katherine Roth, Lydia Tanji, Costumes James F. Ingalls, Alexander Nichols,

Nancy Schertler, John Webber, Robert Wierzel, Lighting Cliff Caruthers, Brian Linds, Jeff Mockus,

Andre Pluess, Jake Rodriguez, John Shivers, Sound Alexander Nichols, Andy Thompson,

Projections

#### **Design Associates**

Kevin Macpherson, Scenery Robert J. Hahn, Lighting Cliff Caruthers, Sound

#### Stage Management

Elisa Guthertz, Head Stage Manager Jan Hodgson, Karen Szpaller, Kimberly Mark Webb, Stage Managers Danielle Callaghan, Megan Sada, Stephanie Schliemann, Karen Szpaller, Assistant Stage Managers Sarah Bingel, Production Assistant Dana Gal, Whitney Grace Krause, Jenna Stuart, Interns

#### Scene Shop

Mark Luevano, Foreman Russel Souza, Assistant Foreman Qris Fry, Jonathan Young, Mechanics Tim Heaney, Purchasing Agent

#### Paint Shop

Jennifer Bennes, Charge Scenic Artist/ Supervisor Demarest Campbell, Charge Scenic Artist B. J. Frederickson, Letty Samonte, Scenic

#### Artists **Prop Shop**

Ryan L. Parham, Supervisor Jeavon Greenwood, Assistant Eric Cripe, Artisan Shannon Walsh, Intern

#### **Costume Shop**

David F. Draper, Manager Jessica Hinel, Jessie Amoroso, Design Assistants Keely Weiman, Draper/Foreperson Thiem Ma, Tailor Maria Montoya, Head Stitcher Kelly Koehn, Accessories & Crafts Artisan Amy Knight, First Hand Allison Chan Wa, Intern

#### Wig Shop

Jeanna Parham, Wig Master

#### Stage Staff

Suzanna Bailey, Sound Head Miguel Ongpin, Head Carpenter Jane Henderson-Shea, Properties Head Tim Wilson, Head Electrician Mark Pugh, Flyman John Karr, Wardrobe Supervisor Mary Montijo, Wardrobe Assistant Erin Hennessy, Hair and Makeup Supervisor Tom Blair, Stage Door

#### **Conservatory/Second Stage**

Mark Robinson, Technical Director

**Costume Rentals** Callie Floor, Supervisor Ief Valentine, Assistant Chelsea Brown, Intern

#### ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

Dianne Prichard, Company Manager Kate Stewart, Human Resources Manage Caresa Capaz, Executive Assistant and Board Liaison

#### Finance

Jason Seifer, Director Sharon Boyce, Matt Jones, Linda Lauter, Associates

#### Development

Paul Knudsen, Associate Director of Development Libbie Hodas, Grantwriter Mindy Lechman, Donor Stewardship Coordinator Liv E. Nilssen, Manager, Individual & Alumni Relations Tobias Paige, Donor Systems Coordinator Luz Perez, Special Events Manager Kiele Stewart-Funai, Assistant to the Director of External Affairs

#### Information Technology

Thomas Morgan, Director Joone Pajar, Network Administrator Conchita Robson, Macintosh & Telecom Administrator

#### **Marketing & Public Relations**

Janette Andrawes, Director of Marketing and Public Relations Randy Taradash, Associate Director of Marketing and Promotions Evren Odcikin, Public Relations Manager Edward Budworth, Group Sales Representative Audra Davis, Web Content Manager Jack Lloyd, *Revenue Manager* Hilary Davis, *Marketing and Annual Fund* Associate

Sharon Rietkerk, Marketing Project Manager Amy Krivohlavek, Copywriter Amelia Nardinelli, Senior Graphic Designer Nina Fujikawa, Graphic Designer Harrison Pollock, Graphics Intern Christine Miller, Marketing Intern

Elizabeth Brodersen, Editor

Emily Hoffman, Intern

Ticket Services

Teleservices

Publications

Maggie Alpar, Chris Johnson, Miriam Korpi, Lloyd Margoit, Tim Renstrom, Doug Ross, Ki Spurr-Gaines, Caroline Turton, Kevin Valentine, Reg Vaughn, James Wagner, Agents Front of House Tim Hilyard, Theater Services Manager Karl Hanover, Eva Ramos, House Managers Christie Call, Head Bartender Oliver Sutton, Security

Susan Allen, Eric Anderson, Margaret Cahill, Shelley Carter, Natalia Cellini, Kathy Dere, Sarah Doherty, Larry Emms, Tim Faust, Doris Flamm, Linda Gentile, Sabrina Houshmand, Mark Hueske, Kirk Johnson, Kristen Jones, Corey Lappier, Mitsuo Matsuda, Leontyne Mbele-Mblong, Jane Pendrey, Tuesday Ray, Kristin Reyda, Audrey Sluiter, Chane Wilson, Ushers Max Barnaby, Daron Jennings, Max Rosenblum, Angie Wilson, Bartenders

#### Operations

Lesley Pierce, Manager Len Lucas, Jeffrey Warren, Assistant Facilities Managers Joe Vigil, Facilities Crew

Curtis Carr, Jr., Jamie McGraw, Security

#### CONSERVATORY

Craig Slaight, Young Conservatory Director Andrew Hurteau, Director of Studio A.C.T. Christopher Herold, Director of Summer Training Congress Jack Sharrar, Director of Academic Affairs Jerry Lopez, Director of Financial Aid Hannah Cohen, Conservatory Coordinator Rebecca Nestle, Project Coordinator Eliza Leoni, Lauren Rosi, Conservatory Associates

Matt Jones, Bursar/Payroll Administrator

#### Master of Fine Arts Program Core Faculty

René Augesen, Acting Nancy Benjamin, Co-Head of Voice and Dialects Stephen Buescher, Head of Movement, Director Jeffrey Crockett, Head of Voice Manoel Felciano, Acting, Director Anthony Fusco, Acting Steven Anthony Jones, Acting Domenique Lozano, Acting, Director Frank Ottiwell, Alexander Technique Michael Paller, Director of Humanities, Director

Jack Sharrar, Ph.D., Theater History Melissa Smith, Head of Acting, Director Gregory Wallace, Director, Acting Jack Willis, Acting, Director Jill Walmsley Zager, Co-Head of Voice and Dialects

#### Library Staff

Ortopan, Dana Rees, Beverly Saba, Roger Silver, Marianne Sullivan, Carol Summer,

A.C.T. thanks the physicians and staff of the

#### 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: **act-sf.org**.

## BOX OFFICE INFORMATION A.C.T. Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square. Walk-up hours are Tuesday-Sunday (nooncurtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (noon-6 p.m.) and Saturday-Sunday (noon-4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Phone hours are Tuesday-Sunday (10 a.m.-curtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (noon-6 p.m.) and Saturday–Sunday (10 a.m.–4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Call 415.749.2228 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 act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy ticket exchange privileges and ticket insurance. Packages are 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.

#### **Special Subscription Discounts**

**Educators, administrators, and students** receive a 50% discount with valid ID. **10UP subscribers** get priority access to Balcony seats at certain performances for just \$10 each. **Seniors** (65+) save \$35 (full-season subscription), \$25 (five-play subscription), or \$20 (four-play subscription) on Saturday and Sunday matinee packages.

#### Single-Ticket Discounts

**10UP** (world-class theater at happy-hour prices) offers \$10 Balcony seats during select performances. **Half-price student and senior rush tickets** are available at the A.C.T. Box Office two hours before curtain. **Matinee senior rush tickets** are available at noon on the day of the performance for \$20. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

#### **Group Discounts**

Get free tickets for group leaders and incredible discounts! For groups of 15 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.439.2473.

#### AT THE THEATER

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

#### A.C.T. Merchandise

A.C.T.-branded merchandise, as well as books, scripts, and *Words on Plays*, are on sale in the main lobby, at the box 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. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Bar drinks are now permitted in the auditorium.

#### Cell Phones!

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 415.749.2228 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. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of Theatre Bay Area, the Union Square Association, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.



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.



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.

The scenic shop, prop shop, and stage crew are represented by Local 16 of the IATSE.



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



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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UCSF made it passible for me to watch my kinds grow up. - Walter

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To learn more about UCSF or Walter's story: missionbayhospitals.ucsf.edu