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THE HONECSING

^{by} HAROLD **PINTER**

Directed by CAREY **PERLOFF**





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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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ON THE COVER PHOTO OF RENÉ AUGESEN BY KEVIN BERNE



Connie Marvin, joined in 2007

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Dear Friends,

arold Pinter died on Christmas Eve two years ago; since that moment I have been longing to celebrate this extraordinary writer with a production of one of his great plays on the A.C.T. stage. The happy occasion of René Augesen's tenth anniversary at A.C.T. made me gravitate immediately to The Homecoming, for Ruth has been on René's list of favorite roles since the day she arrived here. It has been a thrill to match this peerless actress with her fine cohorts: core acting company members Jack Willis and Anthony Fusco, A.C.T. favorite Andrew Polk, and two brilliant newcomers to A.C.T., Kenneth Welsh and Adam O'Byrne. For me, directing this play has felt like a true homecoming, because it was Pinter who made me fall in love with the theater to begin with, when I was a freshman at Stanford and took Martin Esslin's class entitled "Theater of the Absurd."

Many years later I had the good fortune to work with Pinter himself in rehearsal, which was an amazingly invigorating and illuminating experience, because to the playwright, his plays were anything but absurd. Pinter took his characters incredibly seriously and conceived of them not as symbols or metaphors but as passionate, sexual, often violent individuals trying to protect themselves and their territory from outside danger. He was an ineffably generous writer who never forced his characters into a box but respected their mystery: "Between my lack of

biographical data about [my characters] and the ambiguity of what they say lies a territory which is not only worthy of exploration but which it is compulsory to explore," he once commented. What fascinated him about human beings was not psychology but behavior-the complicated and often hilarious strategies we employ every day as we wrestle with desire, betrayal, family warfare, humiliation, and death.

As a Jewish child in London during the Blitz, Pinter was weaned on a certain kind of violence as well as a vigorous tribalism: *family* was everything to him, and being sent away into the countryside to escape the bombing was a terrifying and lonely experience. The family in The Homecoming may not resemble what we in America like to think of as the archetypal happy nuclear unit, but it is a fierce tribe, and its leader is aging fast. In a sense, this play is Pinter's Lear, following the trajectory of the patriarch who is too old to hold on for long and will soon have to yield this particular kingdom, bounded by the four slablike walls of his North London home. It is also the remarkable story of a marriage that gets upended by returning to its roots. What is so satisfying to me about entering the world of Pinter is that everything is absolutely present tense-as Beckett famously said about Joyce, Pinter's work is not "about the thing, it is the thing itself." At every moment, the only reality is what is happening onstage between the individuals who are flirting with a glass of water or fighting over a cheese roll. There is no outside world, no easy escape, no agreement about the past, no plan for the future-what we see is the game of life being played for all it's worth, right before our eyes.

Indeed, Pinter adored games-he loved renaming characters halfway through a play to keep everyone on their toes; he loved chess and cricket and seduction and surprise. When watching a Pinter play you must free yourself from the obligation to attach meaning or to interpret and simply enter into the game being played. It is usually an immensely dangerous game, with extremely high stakes, but it is pleasurable to watch because it is so alive, so real, so unpremeditated, so sexy, and so surreal.

continued on next page

As part of our celebration of Harold Pinter, we are hosting a symposium entitled "Pursuing Pinter," in which we will explore the nature of his work with noted Pinter experts, while distinguished actors read scenes from his greatest plays. We hope this production of *The Homecoming* will pique your interest enough to join us in honoring this great man of the theater.

And of course we hope all of you who are A.C.T. subscribers have already received your "sneak preview" of the 2011–12 season, which includes a startling new Mamet play, a wildly theatrical celebration of the rise of talking pictures, and a true journey into the heart of a young clown. Much more news about next season will arrive shortly, as well as updates about the explosive conclusion of our 2010–11 season, which features the riveting U.S. premiere of The Virtual Stage and Electric Company Theatre's production of Jean-Paul Sartre's *No Exit* and the world premiere of our new musical, *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*. You'll also hear more details about our dream of building a new arts campus in the mid-Market section of San Francisco, which many of you have been reading about in the press.

But for now, welcome to the butcher's lair, the home of Max and his sons. "They're very warm people, really," Teddy reassures his wife. "Very warm. They're my family. They're not ogres." Indeed.

Thank you for being with us.

Yours,

Gleff

Carry Perloff Artistic Director



Join us for a discussion about the legacy of Harold Pinter. Panelists include A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff; Austin Quigley, former dean of Columbia College and author of *The Pinter Problem* and *The Modern Stage* and Other Worlds; and NPR's Michael Krasny.

Then stick around for readings from Pinter's great works, brought to life by **A.C.T. core acting company members**; Bay Area favorites **Marco Barricelli**, **Giles Havergal**, and **Ken Ruta**; and Emmy Award winner **David Strathairn**. Sunday, March 20, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. Following the matinee performance of *The Homecoming*

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by Harold Pinter Directed by Carey Perloff

Scenery by Costumes by Lighting by Sound Design by Dramaturg Fight Director Assistant Director Fight Captain

Daniel Ostling Alex Jaeger Alexander V. Nichols Cliff Caruthers Michael Paller Jonathan Rider Michael Schwartz Adam O'Byrne

THE CAST

(in order of appearance) Lenny Max, Lenny's father Sam, Max's younger brother Joey, Max's youngest son Teddy, Max's eldest son Ruth, Teddy's wife

Andrew Polk Jack Willis Kenneth Welsh Adam O'Byrne Anthony Fusco René Augesen

UNDERSTUDIES

Lenny, Joey, Teddy-Robert Parsons; Max, Sam-Howard Swain; Ruth-Nancy Carlin

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Kimberly Mark Webb, Stage Manager Karen Szpaller, Assistant Stage Manager Dana Gal, Stage Management Fellow

SETTING

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"IT'S GONE. IT NEVER EXISTED. IT REMAINS."

BY MICHAEL PALLER

APART FROM ANY OTHER CONSIDERATION, WE ARE FACED WITH THE IMMENSE DIFFICULTY, IF NOT THE IMPOSSIBILITY, OF VERIFYING THE PAST. I DON'T MEAN MERELY YEARS AGO, BUT YESTERDAY, THIS MORNING. WHAT TOOK PLACE, WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF WHAT TOOK PLACE, WHAT HAPPENED? IF ONE CAN SPEAK OF THE DIFFICULTY OF KNOWING WHAT IN FACT TOOK PLACE YESTERDAY, ONE CAN I THINK TREAT THE PRESENT IN THE SAME WAY. WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW? WE WON'T KNOW UNTIL TOMORROW OR SIX MONTHS' TIME, AND WE WON'T KNOW THEN, WE'LL HAVE FORGOTTEN, OR OUR IMAGINATION WILL HAVE ATTRIBUTED QUITE FALSE CHARACTERISTICS TO TODAY. A MOMENT IS SUCKED AWAY AND DISTORTED, OFTEN EVEN AT THE TIME OF ITS BIRTH.

-Harold Pinter, "Writing for the Theatre"

When the second second

Since Aeschylus, the most durable convention of the theater has been exposition: the narrated summary of events that occurred before the action of the play begins, or between its scenes, about which we and the characters are reliably informed by someone who witnessed or heard about them. The characters take this information to be true, and the audience, unless given a good reason to think otherwise, does, too. The Greeks, who inherited the idea of exposition from Homer and other Greek epic poets, as well as the hymnal sung in honor of Dionysus, transformed it into a powerful dramatic tool: Oedipus Rex is a master class of exposition-it consists almost entirely of information about the past revealed at just the right moment for maximum dramatic impact. Beginning in the 19th century, entire first acts of plays were devoted to the narration of past events that audiences needed to know about and which they took to be true. The main action of the play was delayed until the following three or four acts, where plot complications ensued, a crisis was reached, and a resolution attained. Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw, and Chekhov each had their reasons for ringing significant variations on this model,

called the well-made play, but they held in common a belief in a knowable, stable past. For confident Victorians, the past was one more territory to conquer, and these visionary artists pressed on it their own meanings in order to change the future of drama.

The well-made play still enjoys good health in television and film, but it has been vanishing from theater for the last 60 years. Exposition relies on an agreement between playwright and audience in order to work: if the characters are going to talk about a common past that created their present conditions and sets them in motion, then there must be a common past to talk about. There must be an agreement that the past is, first, knowable and, second, shared among a number of people. In a play with a stable, knowable past, we can all agree on what happened yesterday, and we can all agree that yesterday occurred. Characters may differ about who ate, wore, or said what, but usually there is a general consensus on the shape of what happened.

In the 20th century, playwrights began arguing with this proposition. Pirandello began by asking, "What is appearance and what is reality, and where can truth be found?" After World War II, this and similar questions were taken up by many others, among them Beckett, Ionesco, and Genet in Europe and Albee, Kopit, and Gelber in America. The critic Martin Esslin put them and others in the category of theater of the absurd. Although each of them had his own concerns and viewed the world in his own way, none took such a thing as a knowable or single past—or even a universe behaving according to the logic and rules that pertain to the surface of everyday life—for granted.



THE CAST OF THE 2001 A.C.T. PRODUCTION OF CELEBRATION, DIRECTED BY CAREY PERLOFF: (L TO R) ANTHONY FUSCO (STANDING), PETER RIEGERT, RENÉ AUGESEN, MARCO BARRICELLI, DIANE VENORA, GREGORY WALLACE (STANDING), JASON BUTLER HARNER, AND JOAN MCMURTREY.

There is no single reason why playwrights began dispensing with the past. Scholars often point to the development of the atomic bomb: suddenly, we were all living in the position of knowing that at any moment the planet might be destroyed, and therefore of what use was the past or even action in the present? Perhaps the horror of World War II and of the bloodsoaked decades preceding it made the past too unbearable to contemplate—better to just start with a clean slate, today, at this moment.

Most playwrights, however, don't respond to abstract propositions, but to what they observe and experience in a specific and visceral sense. Harold Pinter was born in 1930 and grew up in Hackney, just beyond the traditional border of London's East End, which was heavily bombed during the Blitz. Like thousands of other children, Pinter was evacuated to the countryside in 1940 during the so-called Phony War. The nine-year-old boy who was the cosseted, only child of a Jewish family found himself uprooted and anxious on the Cornish coast. There was, he said later of his existence there, "no fixed sense of being ... of being ... at all." Back in London for the worst of the Blitz, Pinter experienced not only the falling bombs but the fear that the world might be obliterated at any moment: with that is bound to come a heightened awareness of the present, and that the present is over as soon as you pronounce its three syllables. The experience provided, he said, "a real sense of an extreme and perilous life."

Compared to some of his other plays, the past in *The Homecoming* seems, at first glance, fairly dependable and

straightforward (even the title suggests a knowable past: there was a home, someone went away and now has come back). Unlike The Birthday Party, all the characters have a single name and an agreed-upon identity inside and outside the house: Max is a retired butcher, Sam a limo driver, Joey a demolition worker and amateur boxer, and Lenny a pimp. Teddy is a college professor and Ruth his wife and the mother of his children. It is as close to the surface workings of our everyday world as Pinter gets. But cracks in that world begin to appear whenever Max talks about his late wife, Jessie. He remembers her "rotten stinking face," that she was the backbone of the family who taught their sons "every single bit of the moral code they live by" and "a slutbitch of a wife" whom he treated as a queen. Even allowing for the mask that Pinter's characters wear to hide their deepest feelings, one is allowed to ask, "Who was Jessie, anyway?" The answer is that to Max she was all these women, and whatever he says about her is true in the moment that he says it.

In *The Homecoming*, as in most of Pinter's plays, the past exists more potently in the minds of the characters than as a set of independent, objective, verifiable facts. It is the act of remembering that makes a memory real, and something happened because someone said that it did. "There are some things one remembers even though they may never have happened," says Anna in *Old Times*, written five years after *The Homecoming*. "There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I recall them so they take place." As they may exist differently in different characters' minds, the past is multiple and not necessarily



(L TO R) PAMELA REED, MICHELLE MORAIN, AND GRAHAM BECKEL IN A.C.T.'S 1998 PRODUCTION OF HAROLD PINTER'S OLD TIMES, DIRECTED BY CAREY PERLOFF. A.C.T. CORE ACTING COMPANY MEMBERS RENÉ AUGESEN AND ANTHONY FUSCO IN THE 2001 A.C.T. PRODUCTION OF THE ROOM, DIRECTED BY CAREY PERLOFF.

consistent from one character to the next, or even within a single character from one moment to another. This means that the past is a malleable, endlessly usable thing and—like sex, and indeed like words in Pinter's work—can be wielded as a weapon. The past belongs to the person who can use it most persuasively or most aggressively.

In *The Homecoming*, Lenny regales Ruth with the story of a dockside encounter between himself and a woman who made him a certain proposal: a proposal, he explains, that under normal circumstances he would have entertained. But, "as she was falling apart with the pox," he declined the offer in a particularly definitive way. When Ruth asks, "How did you know she was diseased?" a pause ensues, after which Lenny responds, "I decided she was."

With his answer, Lenny is forced to admit (without apology) that he has constructed this bit of the past at the minimum; with her challenge, Ruth suggests that she's unwilling to let him control it. This exchange is only the beginning of a battle for supremacy between Ruth and *The Homecoming*'s men that will take up the balance of the play.



If the past is a mist and the future has yet to arrive, what is left to a play besides the present, and what does that mean for its production? Where there is only the present, everything we see takes on added size and importance, so it becomes incumbent on the playwright, director, actors, and designers to reduce everything to the barest essentials: each movement must be clean, precise, and necessary; furniture, costumes, props, and words must be pared to the bone. Whatever isn't fundamental becomes clutter to be removed; otherwise we won't sense the play's mysteries with clarity. The more that is taken away, the more room there is for meanings to emerge.

EVIN BERNE

When Pinter's plays were first seen, critics and audiences accused them of being obscure, in part because of his refusal to anoint a single version of past, or even current, events. Since then, we've come to accept this as a convention of Pinter's theater. Isn't it also, though, the way that *we* view the past? Don't we also have multiple versions of at least parts of it, versions that change from year to year, day to day, even moment to moment, depending on whom we're talking to, how we're feeling, or what just happened? Perhaps it's those earlier plays, the ones that insist on a more fully knowable past, that are less like life, while Pinter's, which admit more complexity about the way we perceive the past, are examples of realism.

"I certainly feel more and more that the past is not the past, that it never was past. It's present," Pinter told Mel Gussow of the *New York Times*. Present not in the Faulknerian sense that we'll never escape the past's weight so that the sins of the fathers will be forever visited on the sons, but rather in the way that Pinter's characters invent and reinvent it, and in the act of doing so make it true. Or, as Hirst, the well-off man of letters in *No Man's Land* says, "It's gone. Did it exist? It's gone. It never existed. It remains."

RENÉ AUGESEN (LEFT) AND DIANE VENORA IN THE ROOM

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The Homecoming MAR 8 PROLOGUE A free preshow discussion with the director and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team before the final

preview performance.

MAR 11 THEATER ON THE COUCH

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MAR 15 & 23 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!

MAR 16 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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MAR 9



MAR 19 SATURDAY SALON

Enjoy lunch with a member of the artistic team before a matinee of The Homecoming.

APR 14



and Executive Director Ellen Richard.

Take a tour of A.C.T.'s prop and scene shop, where productions are built from the ground up.

APR 16 PROSPERO SOCIETY

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HAROLD PINTER (1930–2008)

IF I COULD HAVE DEFINED IT, I WOULDN'T HAVE WRITTEN IT. THIS REALLY APPLIES TO EVERYTHING I WRITE.

-Harold Pinter to Mel Gussow, The New York Times, 2001

B orn in London in 1930, Harold Pinter was once called "the greatest living contemporary playwright" by Tennessee Williams. Today he is universally considered among the most influential, provocative, and poetic playwrights of the second half of the 20th century.

Success in school plays and his first positive review ("Master Harold Pinter made a more eloquent, more obviously nerveracked Macbeth than one or two professional grown-ups I have seen in the part") directed young Pinter towards a career on the stage. After two stints in drama school, he spent several years touring Britain with various repertory companies as an actor. In 1957, a friend asked him to write a play for Bristol University's drama department. Writing between afternoon rehearsals and evening performances, Pinter completed his first play, The Room-a masterful blend of comedy and terror-in four days. The production was a success and brought Pinter to the attention of London critics and producers. The 1958 production of his next play, The Birthday Party, was a disaster but earned the playwright praise in the Sunday Times as "the most original, disturbing, and arresting talent in theatrical London." The Birthday Party brought Pinter a series of commissions, including The Dumb Waiter (1957), A Slight Ache (1958), and A Night Out (1959) for BBC Radio, and revue sketches for West End shows. His real breakthrough, however, came in 1960 with The Caretaker, which brought him fame and his first financial security. Writing prolifically over the next several years, he produced such works as Night School (1960), The Collection (1961), The Lover (1963), and The Tea Party (1965), earning a reputation as a daringly innovative playwright. He also began working in film, writing screenplays for The Servant (1963) and The Pumpkin Eater (1965), which both won major awards.

Pinter's third full-length play, *The Homecoming*, was first produced at the New Theatre in Cardiff, Wales, in 1965, directed by Peter Hall. Under the auspices of the Royal Shakespeare Company, it moved to London later that year and made its American debut on Broadway in 1967, with Ian Holm, Paul Rogers, John Normington, Michael Craig, Terence Rigby, and Pinter's then wife, Vivien Merchant, as Ruth. After initially confounding critics, the production turned out to be a huge success, hailed for its "ultimate, breathtaking nastiness" (*The Daily Telegraph*) and earning four Tony Awards, including Best Play.

Pinter's subsequent plays became increasingly distilled, poetic, and enigmatic, including Landscape (1969), Silence (1969), Old Times (1971), No Man's Land (1975), and Betrayal (1978). Although he had always been profoundly interested in politics and power, in the mid 1980s he began to express his strong feelings about human rights and foreign policy in theatrical form, including such plays as One for the Road (1984), Mountain Language (1988, directed in its U.S. premiere by Carey Perloff in 1989), Party Time (1991), and Ashes to Ashes (1996). He continued, however, to write provocative dramas exploring the darkly unsettling sides of family and social dynamics, including Moonlight (1993) and Celebration (2000, directed in its U.S. premiere by Perloff at A.C.T. in 2001).

In total, Pinter wrote 29 plays and more than 20 screenplays (including *Sleuth* [2007], *The Trial* [1993], *The Comfort of Strangers* [1990], *The Handmaid's Tale* [1990], and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* [1981]), as well as hundreds of poems and an autobiographical novel, *The Dwarfs* (published in 1990). He also directed numerous theater productions and continued to perform on stage and screen until quite late in life.

Pinter earned the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2005; he was appointed a Commander of the British Empire and Companion of Honour and awarded France's highest honor, the Légion d'honneur. He died of cancer on December 24, 2008, survived by his second wife, author Lady Antonia Fraser, and son, Daniel Brand.

No other dramatist of his generation has proved as durable as Pinter. He mapped out his own country with its own distinctive topography—a place haunted by the shifting ambivalence of memory, flecked by uncertainty, reeking of sex and echoing with strange, mordant laughter. It was, in short, Pinterland, and it will induce recognition in audiences, and ensure his classic status, for as long as plays are staged.

-Pinter biographer Michael Billington

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L to R: Shinelle Azoroh, Richard Prioleau, Jenna Johnson, Richardson Jones, and Brian Jansen in $\it Hotel Paradiso.$ Photo by Alessandra Mello.

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GIVING BIRTH TO PETER SINN NACHTRIEB'S LITTER

In the summer of 2009, A.C.T. presented Bay Area playwright **Peter Sinn Nachtrieb** with a challenge: write an

ensemble-based play for the 12 actors



in our master of fine arts program's class of 2011. "When you write for professional theater, usually you get to work with five actors, tops, so this was a challenge I wanted to take," remembers Nachtrieb. He considered a number of ideas for 12-character plays (including one with "a jury, but that has

PLAYWRIGHT PETER SINN NACHTRIEB

already been done," he says with a wink), but finally settled on a tale about 12 siblings. Not just siblings, but dodecatuplets. And not just dodecatuplets, but the Framingham Dodecatuplets, childhood stars who have watched their fame fade along with their cuteness as they transitioned into young adulthood. *Litter*, as the play became titled, receives its world premiere this month under the direction of **A.C.T. Associate Artistic Director Mark Rucker**.

"We approached Peter because he has the perfect spirit for this collaboration with this company of actors," explains Rucker. "His voice is completely unique. He's young. He's a product of the Bay Area. And he could be in the room with us." The 35-year-old playwright grew up in Mill Valley and attended A.C.T. productions throughout high school. "A Christmas Carol at A.C.T. was probably one of the first plays I ever saw," he remembers. He got his M.F.A. in playwriting from San Francisco State University in 2005 and has been earning a national reputation as a darkly witty new voice since his ferociously funny 2007 play Hunter Gatherers debuted at Killing My Lobster in San Francisco. His 2008 endof-the-world comedy, boom, received 16 U.S. productions last season-making it the most-produced play in the country (other than holiday shows and Shakespeare)-and BOB, one of his most recent works, is being produced at the Humana Festival at the Actors Theatre of Louisville this spring.

During A.C.T.'s 2009–10 academic year, Nachtrieb observed classes and attended performances to get to know the performers he was writing for. A series of day-long workshops gave him the opportunity to interact and improvise with the students. "He devised a series of exercises, and with the feedback he got he started to sketch scenes," says **A.C.T. Artistic Consultant Beatrice Basso**, who spearheaded the collaboration. "This has been a very naked process. There was really nothing to start with other than the mandate to create an ensemble piece." Third-year M.F.A. Program student **Jenna Johnson** adds, "It has been a unique experience to work on a play that has roots in who you are. So often you're trying to take parts of yourself *out* to fit a character." Nachtrieb, who is also a performer, says that this was one of his goals. "I hope I've written parts that play to their strengths. I think I got something good for everybody, something that fits."

Nachtrieb has not only created a piece that plays to his cast's strengths, he has also hit upon some interesting parallels between his play and the graduate school experience. Johnson explains: "Grad school can get difficult sometimes when you're thought of as part of a class. We are an ensemble, and we work really well together, but we're definitely individuals. This play showcases our ensemble work, but also our unique individuality. We've all felt heard and seen." Basso adds, "Coincidentally, Peter decided to write about a claustrophobic family—tightly wound together for so long—at the brink of breaking apart. That mirrors the experience of spending three years together in an M.F.A. program. A true relationship of siblinghood develops by necessity, and now these students are about to take flight into the real world when they graduate in May. At some level, I think *Litter* will be a cathartic experience."



STUDENTS AND FACULTY SOAR DURING SKY FESTIVAL

During the month of January, the 28 students in all three years of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, side by side with members of the faculty, core acting company, and Bay Area professional theater community, joined together for the first annual Sky Festival—a three-week whirlwind event in which 13 one-hour productions were rehearsed, and then presented in a two-day performance marathon, throughout A.C.T.'s studios. The projects ran the theatrical gamut from classical drama to contemporary plays, solo performances, docudrama, translations, and even one student's theatrical adaptation of a beloved comic strip series. Each student participated in two projects (selected in a proposal process last autumn), many doubling as directors. Some even tripled as writers. The joyful two days of in-house presentations had a true festival vibe: "It's like Edinburgh. It's like Cannes," people exclaimed as they walked out of one showing directly into another.



THE THIEVES OF EASTCHEAP RAISE A TOAST WHILE KING HENRY IV STARES ON DISAPPROVINGLY THROUGH THE WINDOW IN *THIEVES*, SECOND-YEAR A.C.T. M.F.A. PROGRAM STUDENT MATT BRADLEY'S SKY FESTIVAL PRODUCTION OF HIS OWN ADAPTATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S *HENRY IV, PART 1*: (L. TO P) JASON FRANK, JESICA KITCHENS, TYEE J. TLGHMAN, ZACHARY MOULL, TITUS TOMPKINS, REBEKAH BROCKMAN, DAN CLEGG, AND MATT BRADLEY.

"What was amazing," rejoices **A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith**, who herself performed in one of the projects, "was that every single M.F.A. actor shone with the values we are trying to instill in them: they were authentic, they were full, they were transformational, they were professional. That was born out of a collaborative process of which they sat in the driver's seat. These are the cornerstones of 'A.C.T. readiness,' but instead of us trying to inculcate them with these values, they seized them on their own. The inspiration for Sky was a simple question: What are you passionate about? We teach that performers have to fall in love with anything they undertake. Well, they were *already* in love with these projects. The Sky Festival had the spirit of a celebration, but it had all the bones of real work. Nothing was glossed over. Everyone was really in the work."

"It was a blessing for the entire school," says third-year student Marisa Duchowny, who directed and acted during the festival. "To witness so many stories that people felt passionate to tell was an incredible experience. It was some of the most moving theater I have ever seen."

MEET ALLEGRA ROSE EDWARDS 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 **Allegra Rose Edwards**.

NICKNAME Legs.

BIRTHPLACE Palo Alto, California.

HOMETOWN Denver, Colorado.

FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE My parents bought me front-row tickets for the national tour of *Les Misérables*. I was six. I have a very vivid memory of the urchins reaching their hands out, grasping at the air, begging for pity. The little boy playing Gavroche looked me right in the eye. It was thrilling.



FAVORITE THEATER EXPERIENCE In the summer of 2008, I took *The Kentucky Cycle*, by Robert Schenkkan, to the Edinburgh Fringe Festival with a group of artists from my school and our director, Cathy Thomas-Grant (an A.C.T. alum!). I remember feeling surrounded, *engulfed* by theater. Companies produced shows in broom closets, basements, street corners, bathrooms; truly, all the world was a stage. We had several musicians with us who brought banjos and mandolins, so every day we'd head to the Royal Mile to publicize our show by singing songs of Appalachia and rye whiskey—very coal-miner-well-digger-little-sparrow-esque songs—feeling very American while standing under a Scottish sky.

IF I COULD PLAY ANY ROLE, I WOULD WANT TO PLAY Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*.

My STORY My dad said he found an entry in his journal from when I was eight. It reads, "Today Allegra told me she was going to be an actress." From third grade through high school I stayed as theatrically active as I could, booking commercials, flying to L.A. for pilot season, and performing in as many school and community productions as I could. Several of the faculty members at Pepperdine University, where I went for undergraduate, had gone through A.C.T.'s M.F.A. program. These people were bright, accomplished, talented, and passionate leaders, so I followed their example to continue my training.

RANDOM FACT My parents have an affinity for unique names. I have a brother named Skye and a sister named Banjo.

EDUCATION B.A. in theater/television, Pepperdine University.

RECOMMENDATIONS Plays: *The Kentucky Cycle*. Films: *Quiz Show*, *City of God*, *That Thing You Do*. Music: Alison Krauss and Union Station, Mumford & Sons, Guster. TV: *Mad Men, Damages*.



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ALUMNI AT A GLANCE

Katherine James '75 presented a staged reading of her show Play for Jimmy, directed by Alan Blumenfeld '75, at The Road Theatre Company in L.A. Wynn Harmon '86 performed

in God of Carnage at TheaterWorks in Hartford, Connecticut,

before journeying to the Orlando Shakespeare Theater for A Midsummer Night's Dream and Pride and Prejudice. Nancy Carlin '91 directed Lost in Yonkers for The Jewish Theatre San Francisco; it will run at the Oshman



WYNN HARMON AND CANDY BUCKLEY IN GOD OF CARNAGE AT THEATERWORKS

Family Jewish Community Center in Palo Alto in April. Michael Shipley '91 completed a sold-out run playing Dr. Dysart in Equus at Boxcar Theatre in San Francisco. Jamison Jones '94 played the title role in the world-premiere production of Doctor Cerberus at South Coast Repertory; he reprised the role for L.A. Theatre Works' Radio Theatre Series, heard on public radio stations across the country. Jonathan Sale '97 appeared in the awardwinning ScreenPlay with Badlands Theater Company in New York. Darby Stanchfield '98 appeared on a recent episode of CSI: Miami. Julie Fitzpatrick '02 appeared in In Quietness, a new play by Anna Moench, at The Ensemble Studio Theatre in



New York. Claire Brownell '06 performs in An Ideal Husband with the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, D.C. Drew Hirschfield '06 recently left on the 70+-city tour of Madagascar Live!, DreamWorks Theatricals's first live family touring show. Jody Flader '07 can be seen in national commercials for Ally Bank and Boar's Head. She sings with the band Blue Bottle Collection, which

JAMISON JONES IN DOCTOR CERBERUS AT SOLITH COAST REPERTORY

just released its debut album, Summer of the Soda Fountain Girls; she also played Masha in The Three Sisters with Brooklyn-based Glass Bandits Theater Company. Sophia Holman '10 plays Margot Wright, wife of Orville, in the world-premiere production of The Center of Gravity at Maine's Portland Stage. Mairin Lee '10 appeared in episode 213 of The Good Wife and performs in In the Next Room at the Wilma Theater. Kyle Shaefer '10 appeared in The Light Inside with New York's Examined Man Theatre and toured as Fred in TheatreworksUSA's A Christmas Carol; he also joined Raife Baker '08 and Amanda Sykes '08 in a reading of Beyond Measure—Raife's adaptation of Shakespeare's Measure for Measure-with Slant Theatre Project.

WHO'S WHO IN THE HOMECOMING



RENÉ AUGESEN (*Ruth*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in *The Misanthrope*; she has since appeared in

almost two dozen productions, most recently Clybourne Park, Scapin, The Tosca Project, Round and Round the Garden, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, A Christmas Carol, November, Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo, War Music, Brainpeople, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, and Rock 'n' Roll. New York credits include Spinning into Butter (Lincoln Center Theater), Macbeth (with Alec Baldwin and Angela Bassett, The Public Theater), It's My Party . . . (with F. Murray Abraham and Joyce Van Patten, ArcLight Theatre), and Overruled (Drama League). Regional theater credits include Mary Stuart (dir. Carey Perloff, The Huntington Theatre Company); several productions, including the world premieres of The Beard of Avon and The Hollow Lands, at South Coast Repertory; and productions at the Great Lakes Theater Festival, Baltimore's CENTERSTAGE, the Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Stage West. Film and television credits include The Battle Studies, Law & Order, Guiding Light, Another World, and Hallmark Hall of Fame's Saint Maybe. Augesen is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.



ANTHONY FUSCO (*Teddy*), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in *Clybourne Park*, *Round and*

Round the Garden, The Caucasian Chalk

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

Circle, November, Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo, War Music, Rock 'n' Roll, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, The Government Inspector, The Rainmaker, The Imaginary Invalid, Hedda Gabler, Travesties, The Rivals, The Voysey Inheritance, The Gamester, A Mother, Les Liaisons Dangereuses, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Enrico IV, The Misanthrope, Edward II, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles at Marin Theatre Company, Traveling Jewish Theatre, and California Shakespeare Theater, where he will appear this summer in Candida. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The Holy Terror, Cantorial, Danton's Death, and A Life in the Theatre. He trained at Juilliard and The Barrow Group School. Next up at A.C.T.: As You Like It.



ADAM O'BYRNE

(*Joey*), a native of Toronto, spent two seasons at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival in Canada, where his credits included *Henry IV*,

Part 1, London Assurance, Measure for Measure, Orpheus Descending, The Brothers Karamazov, and The Winter's Tale. Last summer he made his Bay Area debut playing Berowne in Shakespeare Santa Cruz's critically acclaimed production of Love's Labor's Lost. Other theater credits include being part of the original cast of The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow and playing Calhoun in the world premiere of Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson at Center Theatre Group. Film and television credits include Cold Case, NCIS, Yeti, The United States of Tara,





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Who's Who

and *Kitten vs. Newborn*. He is a graduate of Yale College and Yale School of Drama.



(*Lenny*), a Bay Area native, returns to A.C.T., where he has appeared in *November* and

Speed-the-Plow. He

ANDREW POLK

has appeared in New York in Mouth to Mouth (The New Group), The Accomplices (2007 Drama Desk Award nom.), Walmartopia (Minetta Lane Theatre), The Green Zone (Lincoln Center Directors Lab), Flight (Lucille Lortel Theatre), Critical Darling (The New Group), Vick's Boy (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), and The Truth Teller (Circle Repertory Company), among many others. He appeared in the Broadway tour of Biloxi Blues (Carbonell Award, Helen Hayes Award nom.). Regionally, he has been seen at the Alliance Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Arena Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Trinity Repertory Company, and Philadelphia Theatre Company (Edward Albee's At Home at the Zoo), among many others. Film and television credits include Loverboy, Private Parts, Entropy, Lights Out, 30 Rock, Law & Order, Law & Order: SVU, Law & Order: CI, and Third Watch. Polk trained at London's Webber-Douglas Academy under a Fulbright scholarship. He is artistic director of The Cape Cod Theatre Project.



KENNETH WELSH (Sam) began his career at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, where he played the title role in *Hamlet*. In New

York he starred in the North American premieres of *The Real Thing*, *Social*

Who's Who

Security, Curse of the Starving Class, Ride a Cock Horse, Virginia, Treats, and Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune; a revival of The Little Foxes at Lincoln Center Theater; and his own cabaret piece Standup Shakespeare off Broadway. With the Soulpepper Theatre Company in Toronto, Welsh starred in Leaving Home, Of the Fields, Lately, and a one-man performance of Under Milk Wood, and he recently appeared as Max in Rock 'n' Roll for The Canadian Stage Company. His many film and television credits include Survival of the Dead, The Last Templar, Grey Gardens, Empire Inc., And Then You Die, Loyalties, Twin Peaks, Hiroshima, Adrift, The Aviator, Heartburn, The Day After Tomorrow, Four Brothers, Absolute Power, Legends of the Fall, and Crocodile Dundee II. Welsh holds an honorary doctorate from the University of Alberta; received the Gascon-Thomas Award from his alma mater, National Theatre School of Canada; and is a Member of the Order of Canada.



JACK WILLIS (*Max*) most recently appeared

recently appeared in *Elektra* (dir. Carey Perloff) at the Getty Villa in Malibu. He has appeared in more

than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in *The Tosca Project, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, War Music, Philistines, Rock 'n' Roll, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, Curse of the Starving Class, Blood Knot, The Rainmaker, Hedda Gabler, A Christmas Carol, The Little Foxes, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof,* and *The Black Rider.* An A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. member, he has been a company member at Arena Stage, American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Theater Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in *Julius Caesar, The Crucible, 'Art'*, and *The Old Neighborhood*. Off-Broadway credits include The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, *World of Mirth, The Iphigenia Cycle*, and Valhalla. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Cradle Will Rock, The Out-of-Towners, Love Hurts, I Come in Peace, Problem Child, Law & Order, Ed, and Dallas. Willis was a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow in the inaugural year of the fellowship at Ten Chimneys Foundation and is a cofounder of Aruba Repertory.

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Who's Who



(Understudy) is an associate artist at California Shakespeare Theater and a member of PlayGround. A former longtime

NANCY CARLIN

company member of A.C.T., she has also performed with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, SF Playhouse, The Jewish Theatre San Francisco (formerly Traveling Jewish Theatre), and TheatreWorks. Carlin has directed productions for Aurora Theatre Company, Center REPertory Company, The Jewish Theatre San Francisco, the Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival, The Foothill Theatre Company, B Street Theatre, and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is coauthor of a new musical, Max Understood, which was developed at The Eugene O'Neill Theater Center and performed at The New York Musical Theatre Festival last year. She holds a B.A. in comparative literature from Brown University and an M.F.A. in acting from A.C.T. In addition to Actors' Equity Association, she is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and the Dramatists Guild.



ROBERT PARSONS

(Understudy) has been seen at A.C.T. in Rock 'n' Roll, The Little Foxes, The Black Rider, Buried Child, The Colossus of

Rhodes, and Good. Regional and international credits include The Rivalry (Ford's Theatre), Rock 'n' Roll (Huntington Theatre Company), The Black Rider (Sydney Festival; Ahmanson Theatre), Misalliance (Alley Theatre), The Heiress (Arizona Theatre Company), One Flea Spare (New Repertory Theatre), and K(HERE, New York)—as well as two seasons at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Bay Area credits include appearances at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theatre Company, Word for Word, the Shotgun Players, the Z Space Studio, and TheatreWorks. He received the 2009 Metro West award for outstanding performance in IAm My Own Wife and a 2010 DC Theatre Scene award for outstanding performance in The Rivalry. Film credits include Black August and Almost Famous.



HOWARD SWAIN

(Understudy) has appeared at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol, Curse of the Starving Class, The Time of Your Life, The

Seagull, The Learned Ladies, Taking Steps, A Lie of the Mind, The Doctor's Dilemma, Diamond Lil, The Pope and the Witch, The Imaginary Invalid, Judevine, Golden Boy, Marco's Millions, King Lear, Feathers, Saint Joan, and A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum. He most recently appeared in Superior Donuts at TheatreWorks. He has worked locally at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Aurora Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Word for Word, Magic Theatre, SF Playhouse, Marin Theatre Company, Eureka Theatre, and San Jose Stage Company, among others, as well as the California, Berkeley, Santa Cruz, and Marin Shakespeare theaters. Regional work includes shows with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C., B Street Theatre in Sacramento, and The Laguna Beach Playhouse. Film and television credits

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

Who's Who

include Teknolust, Just One Night, Night of the Scarecrow, Cherry 2000, Frameup, Miracle Mile, Metro, Nash Bridges, Midnight Caller, Kiss Shot, Mrs. Lambert Remembers Love, Lying Eyes, Hill St. Blues, and Valley of the Heart's Delight.

DANIEL OSTLING (Scenic Designer) is a San Francisco- and New Yorkbased scenic designer. Recent designs include the world premieres of War Music and Brainpeople (A.C.T.); Ethan Frome and Trust (Lookingglass Theatre Company); Arabian Nights (Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Arena Stage); The *How and the Why* (McCarter Theatre Center); Candide (Goodman Theatre; Shakespeare Theatre Company); Becky Shaw (South Coast Repertory); Macbeth and Much Ado About Nothing (California Shakespeare Theater); Death of a Salesman (Dallas Theater Center); The Adventures of Tom Sawyer

(Hartford Stage); The Merry Widow (Lyric Opera of Chicago); Lucia di Lammermoor and La Sonnambula (The Metropolitan Opera); and Lookingglass Alice (Lookingglass, Actors Theatre of Louisville, McCarter Theatre Center, and The New Victory Theater in New York). Other theater credits include work at Brooklyn Academy of Music, La Jolla Playhouse, the Mark Taper Forum, the New York Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, and Steppenwolf Theatre Company. An ensemble member of Lookingglass, he has worked extensively with Mary Zimmerman, including Metamorphoses (Tony Award nomination for Best Scenic Design). Ostling is an associate professor at Northwestern University in Chicago.

ALEX JAEGER (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for November, Speed-

the-Plow, and Rock 'n' Roll for A.C.T.; What We're Up Against, Or, Oedipus el Rey, Goldfish, Mrs. Whitney, and Mauritius for Magic Theatre; Two Sisters and a Piano for The Public Theater in New York; Skylight, All My Sons, True West, Nostalgia, Play Strindberg, and others for South Coast Repertory; August: Osage County, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, Romeo and Juliet, Handler, Stop Kiss, Fuddy Meers, and Dead Man's Cell Phone for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; The Paris Letter and Eclipsed for the Kirk Douglas Theatre; Doubt, Tally's Folly, and Looped for the Pasadena Playhouse; and several productions for The Studio Theatre in Washington, D.C. Other credits include productions with the Geffen Playhouse, The Theater @ Boston Court, and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Jaeger is the recipient of many design awards, including an L.A. Ovation Award, three Back Stage





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WHO'S WHO

Garland Awards, four Drama-Logue awards, and an NAACP nomination.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOL's (Lighting Designer) theater credits include the Broadway production of Wishful Drinking and off-Broadway productions of Los Big Names, Horizon, Bridge and Tunnel, Taking Over, Through the Night, and In the Wake. Regional theater credits include 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 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 Clybourne Park, Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet, and November 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.

CLIFF CARUTHERS (Sound Designer)

has created soundscapes and music for more than a hundred theatrical productions. Recent projects include The Caucasian Chalk Circle, November, and Brainpeople for A.C.T. (where he is the sound design associate); Happy Days for the Guthrie Theater; Crime and Punishment and TRAGEDY: a tragedy for Berkeley Repertory Theatre; The Tempest and Bone to Pick for The

Who's Who

Cutting Ball Theater (where he is an artistic associate); 9 Circles for Marin Theatre Company; Bug for SF Playhouse; The Creature for Black Box Theatre; and Auctioning the Ainsleys for TheatreWorks. He is also cocurator of the San Francisco Tape Music Festival and has performed his compositions at the Prague Quadrennial, 964 Natoma, Deep Wireless, Noise Pancakes, the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, the San Francisco Tape Music Festival, and the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States. Future theater projects include Troilus and Cressida for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Pelleas and Melisande for The Cutting Ball Theater, and Lolita Roadtrip for San Jose Stage Company.

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 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.

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB (Stage

Manager) is in his 17th season at A.C.T., where his recent credits include *Scapin, Phèdre, Rock 'n' Roll, 'Tis Pity She's a Whore,* and *Sweeney Todd.* In addition to a long association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, his other work includes productions for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, Boston's Huntington Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Aurora Theatre Company. He served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

KAREN SZPALLER (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked with A.C.T. on A Christmas Carol (2006–10), The Tosca Project, Brief Encounter, Curse of the Starving Class, Blackbird, and The Imaginary Invalid. Favorite past shows include the national tour of Spamalot in San Francisco; Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West, The Lieutenant of Inishmore, Eurydice, Fêtes de la Nuit, The Glass Menagerie, Brundibar, and Comedy on the Bridge at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Urinetown: The Musical at San Jose Stage Company; Striking 12 at TheatreWorks; Salomé at Aurora Theatre Company; and Ragtime and She Loves Me at Foothill Music Theatre. She is the production coordinator at TheatreWorks in Menlo Park, California.

MORT AND FRANNIE

FLEISHHACKER (*Executive Producers*) are both longtime volunteers with A.C.T. The son of one of A.C.T.'s founding trustees and a San Francisco native, Mort is a trustee of A.C.T. and serves on the conservatory committee. He is co-chair, with Joan Danforth, of the Prospero Society, which honors individuals who include A.C.T. in their estate plans. Frannie serves as a co-chair of the Producers Circle with Deedee McMurtry. She enjoys working to build this critical organization and plan the annual dinner. The Fleishhackers have also produced A.C.T. productions of *The Tosca Project*, *The Quality of Life*, *The Circle*, *Curse of the Starving Class*, and *The Rivals*. Mort also serves as a trustee of the Greenbelt Alliance, treasurer of the Fleishhacker Foundation, and a member of the Advisory Council of SPUR. Frannie is the immediate past president of the Francisca Club and serves on the board of That Man May See at UC San Francisco.

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT *THE HOMECOMING*?



Pick up Words on Plays, the smart souvenir! WORDS ON PLAYS, A.C.T.'s in-depth performance guide series, offers insight

into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the A.C.T. subscription season. Each entertaining and informative issue contains a synopsis, advance program notes, study questions, artist interviews, and additional information about the cultural context of the play.

Individual issues of *Words* on *Plays* for each production are available in the theater lobby and online at act-sf.org, where you can also buy digital versions of this season's editions. Subscriptions to *Words on Plays* are also available at a discounted price that includes postage for mailing each issue to your home.

For more information, visit **act-sf.org/words on plays** or call **415.749.2250**.

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

A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is celebrating her 19th 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 presented at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum last 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.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MEMBER OF THE A.C.T. DIRECTORS CIRCLE



(L TO R) TOM STOPPARD, PAUL ANGELO, AND CAROLYN ALEXANDER AT A RECEPTION FOR *ROCK 'N' ROLL* PRODUCERS AND ASSOCIATE PRODUCERS

Directors Circle member Paul Angelo was introduced to A.C.T. in the 1980s by a friend who was then training in the conservatory, and he has been an A.C.T. subscriber ever since. Angelo first joined the Directors Circle in 1991. He is one of 350 members who collectively choose a production to sponsor each season; this year they overwhelmingly elected to support *The Homecoming* and have

been invited to numerous events throughout the development of the production. They will also be honored guests at "Pursuing Pinter", A.C.T.'s celebration of the playwright and his legacy, on March 20, 2011.

Angelo's most memorable moments at A.C.T. have all involved Tom Stoppard, who has called A.C.T. "his artistic home." "Everything I know and love about Stoppard I learned at A.C.T.," Angelo says. "And no one knows and understands Stoppard better than Carey Perloff." In 2008 Angelo decided to make a special gift to become an associate producer of Stoppard's *Rock 'n' Roll*, which gave him the opportunity to meet the playwright at the reception for associate producers and producers.

This season, Angelo joined **The** *Tales of the City* **Circle** to support this spring's world premiere production of *Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City*. An avid chorister, he was drawn to the project not only out of his appreciation for Maupin's iconic tales but also out of a love for the music:

I moved here in 1978 when the *Tales of the City* books were just coming out, so they were part of my San Francisco orientation—or indoctrination. I was intrigued from the start by a project that would bring together these two great San Francisco icons, *Tales of the City* and A.C.T. I became a believer in the project when I heard its great songs with their great lyrics (as a singer I'm partial to lyrics). I knew that this project was a stretch for A.C.T. because they've decided not to involve a big New York City producer in order to maintain artistic freedom, so I felt I needed to answer the call for support. When *Tales* wins the Tony for Best Musical, I can say, "I knew them when!"

Angelo's love of theater began when he sang top tenor in the barbershop quartet in his Columbus, Ohio, high school production of *The Music Man*. He is now in his 29th season in the San Francisco Symphony Chorus. He has also performed for many years in a church choir in Pacific Heights and a big chorus on the peninsula, with which he toured France, Germany, China, and Spain—where they gave midnight performances of *Carmina Burana* in a bullring. When he is not singing or at A.C.T., Angelo is working with an employee benefits consulting firm as a pension actuary. With his focus on public pension plans in California (suddenly a hot topic), his public speaking skills, first honed onstage, are in great demand.

For information about the Directors Circle or The Tales of the City Circle, contact Associate Director of Development, Individual Giving Paul Knudsen at 415.439.2353. More information is available online at act-sf.org/donorlevels.

A.C.T.'S DIRECTORS CIRCLE IS A PROUD SPONSOR OF *THE HOMECOMING*

Directors Circle members will have several opportunities to experience the development of A.C.T.'s production of *The Homecoming* and will be the honored guests at "Pursuing Pinter," a celebration of Harold Pinter and his legacy, on March 20, 2011, as a thank you for sponsoring *The Homecoming* and playing a leading role in the artistic success of A.C.T.

A.C.T. Directors Circle members make annual contributions of \$1,500 to \$9,999, demonstrating their passion for live theater. By bringing innovative, groundbreaking productions to the Bay Area, producing compelling reinterpretations of classical works, and providing Bay Area students with educational experiences and exposure to live theater, Directors Circle members know they are actively strengthening the future of the theatrical art form.

Each season, Directors Circle members collectively choose a production to sponsor; this year they overwhelmingly elected to support *The Homecoming* and honor A.C.T. core acting company members René Augesen (who this season celebrates ten years with the company), Anthony Fusco, and Jack Willis, as well as Artistic Director Carey Perloff. In addition to being the honored guests at "Pursuing Pinter," members will be welcomed at a **Technical Rehearsal** in the theater, the **Opening Night Dinner**, and a **Saturday Salon** with Carey Perloff.

For more information about these events and the other benefits of Directors Circle membership, please contact Mindy Lechman at 415.439.2482 or mlechman@act-sf.org, or visit www.act-sf.org/donorlevels. (Background, L to R) A.C.T. core acting company members Gregory Wallace, René Augesen, and Jack Willis with A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey

Perloff (foreground), director of The Homecoming



Playwright Harold Pinter as a young man



directorscircle



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 December 1, 2009-January 31, 2011, period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Knudsen at 415.439.2353 or pknudsen@act-sf.org.

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Directors Circle members make annual contributions of \$1,500 to \$9,999 to A.C.T. Their exceptional generosity supports production, programming, and instruction costs not covered by ticket sales and tuition. Members enjoy a variety of benefits, including invitations to Saturday Salons and opening night festivities, complimentary parking, access to the VIP ticket line to purchase or exchange premium tickets, and use of the VIP Lounge during performance intermissions. We are privileged to recognize these members' generosity during the December 1, 2009-January 31, 2011, period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Knudsen at 415.439.2353 or pknudsen@act-sf.org.

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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, Fellow

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 Ry Buffington, Assistant Technical Director

Costume Rentals Callie Floor, Supervisor Jef Valentine, Assistant Chelsea Brown, Fellow

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

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

Finance

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

Development

Joanna Copley, Assistant to the Director of External Affairs Libbie Hodas, Grantwriter Paul Knudsen, Associate Director of Development Mindy Lechman, Donor Stewardship Coordinator

Tobias Paige, Donor Systems Coordinator Luz Perez, Special Events Manager

Information Technology

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

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 and SMAT

Representative Audra Davis, Web Content Manager Jack Lloyd, Revenue Manager Hilary Davis, Marketing Associate Sharon Rietkerk, Marketing Project Manager Amy Krivohlavek, Copywriter Amelia Nardinelli, Senior Graphic Designer Nina Fujikawa, Graphic Designer Harrison Pollock, Graphics Fellow Christine Miller, Marketing Fellow Judy Chi, Web Development Fellow

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, Acting, Director Jack Willis, Acting, Director Jill Walmsley Zager, Co-Head of Voice and Dialects

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

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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 (10 a.m.-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.

Restrooms 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 \mathbf{N} 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.

Lost and Found

If you've misplaced an item while you're still at the theater, please look for it at our merchandise stand in the lobby. Any items found by ushers or other patrons will be taken there. If you've already left the theater, please call 415.439.2471 and we'll be happy to check our lost and found for you. Please be prepared with the date you attended the performance and your seat location.

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.

LORT A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.



The Director is a member of the STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY, a national theatrical 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.

ART WORKS.

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grantsi

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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