

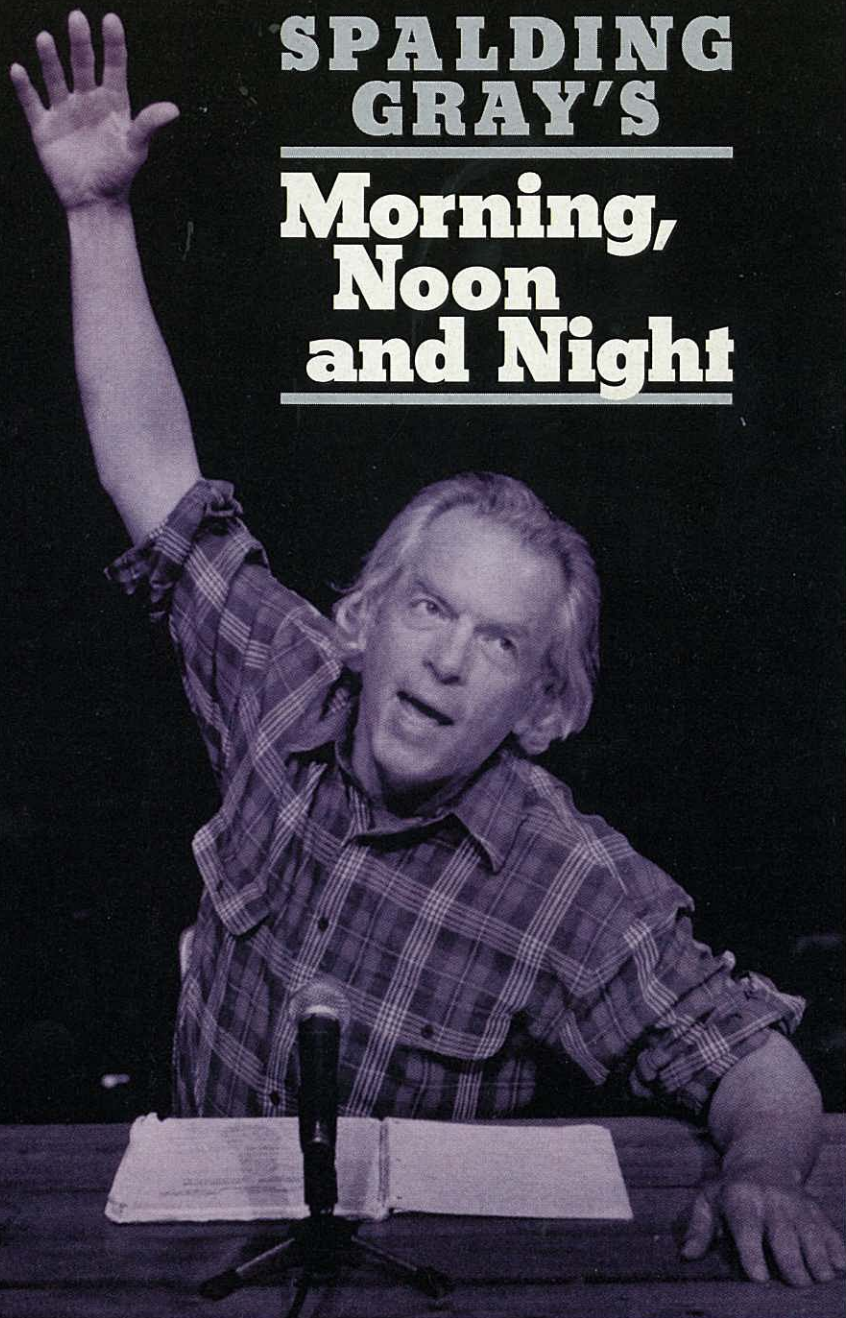


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**Morning,  
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# ABOUT A.C.T.

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A.C.T.'s beautifully restored Geary Theater, originally built in 1909, is one of the finest performance venues in the United States.

**AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER** nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Managing Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national and international reputation, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. During the past three decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.'s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 220,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1996, A.C.T.'s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujameyn Theaters Award.

Since Perloff's appointment in 1992, A.C.T. has enjoyed continued success with groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Guided by Perloff and Kitchen, A.C.T. has expanded its audience base and produced challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, now serving 1,900 students every year, was the first training program not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master

of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory's distinguished former students. With the 1995 appointment of Melissa Smith as conservatory director, A.C.T. renewed its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience. The A.C.T. Advanced Training 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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### THE 1998-99 A.C.T. SEASON

#### FOOL MOON

created by Bill Irwin and David Shiner  
with the Red Clay Ramblers  
September 3-October 4, 1998

#### HECUBA

by Euripides  
translated and adapted by Timberlake Wertenbaker  
directed by Carey Perloff  
original music by David Lang  
October 16-November 22, 1998

#### A CHRISTMAS CAROL

adapted from Charles Dickens's novella by Dennis Powers and Laird Williamson  
directed by Candace Barrett and Raye Birk  
November 28-December 27, 1998

#### MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT

written and performed by Spalding Gray  
December 29, 1998-January 3, 1999

#### JUNG AND THE PAYCOCK

by Sean O'Casey  
directed by Giles Havergal  
January 8-February 7, 1999

#### INDIAN INK

by Tom Stoppard  
directed by Carey Perloff  
February 18-March 21, 1999

#### LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT

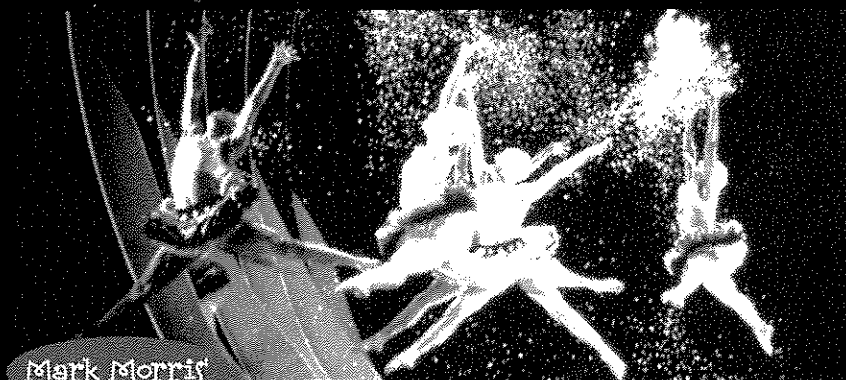
by Eugene O'Neill  
directed by Laird Williamson  
April 1-May 2, 1999

#### THE FIRST PICTURE SHOW

book and lyrics by Ain Gordon and David Gordon  
music by Jeanine Tesori  
directed by David Gordon  
May 6-June 6, 1999

#### TARTUFFE

by Molière  
directed by Charles Randolph-Wright  
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# CONTENTS

Vol. 5, No. 3, December 1998

ABOUT A.C.T.	4
A.C.T. STAFF	10
PROGRAM NOTES	17
A.C.T. NEWS	22
WHO'S WHO	29
A.C.T. PROFILES	34
SPONSOR PROFILES	36
CONTRIBUTORS	39
FOR YOUR INFORMATION	45

**ABOVE**  
Photo of the Geary Theater by Darryl Bush

**ON THE COVER**  
Artwork by Frank Renlie

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**A.C.T.**

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Charles Randolph-Wright  
Albert Takazaukas

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Velina Brown  
Gabriel Carter  
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Melanie Flood\*  
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continued on page 12



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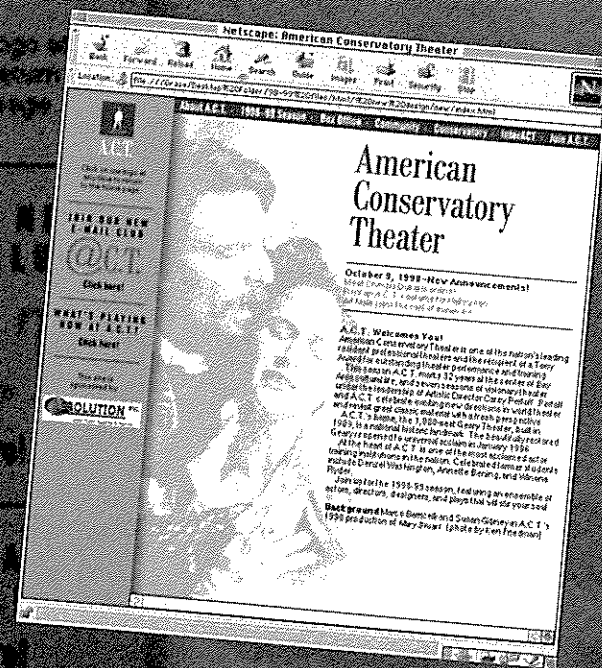
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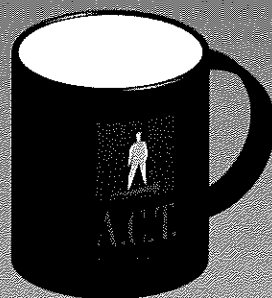
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Rates are subject to a 14% occupancy tax and are based on availability. Prices do not include tickets to the show.

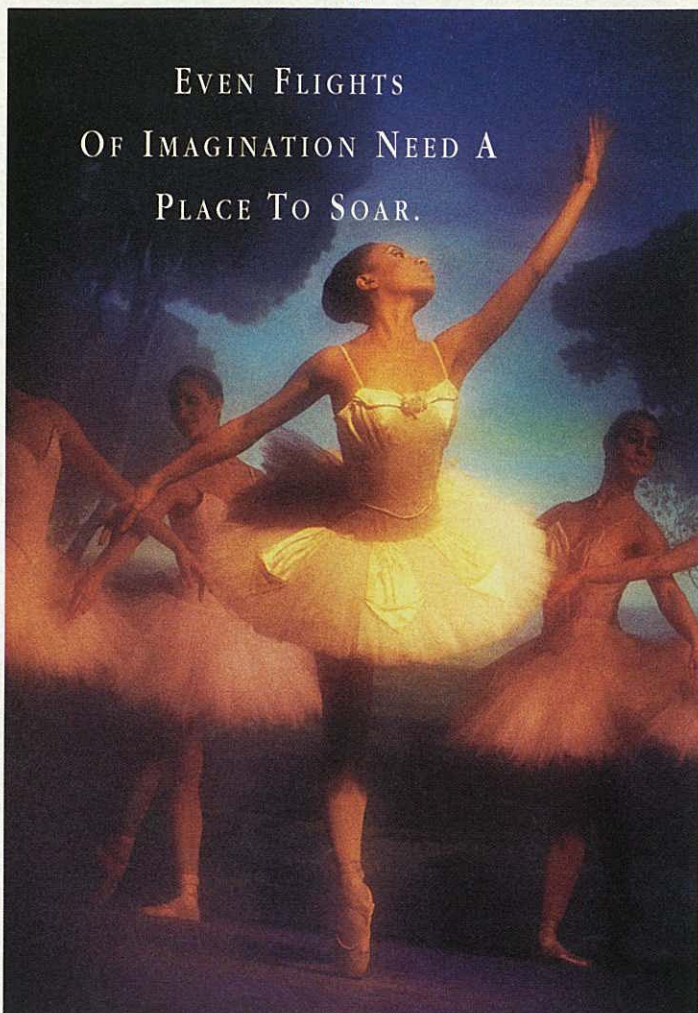


Photo: Paula Court





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# MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT

(A Work in Progress)

Written and performed by

**SPALDING GRAY**

Creative Consultant:  
Paul Spencer

Commissioned by the Raymond F. Kravis  
Center for the Performing Arts

*Morning, Noon and Night* was commissioned by the Raymond F. Kravis Center for the Performing Arts in West Palm Beach, Florida, where it will be performed in the Rinker Playhouse as a work in progress in January 1999.



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# FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

by Jessica Werner

By Spalding Gray's own account, the emotional exhibitionism for which he is famous can be traced back to a pivotal experience he had onstage in 1974, while he was starring as Hoss in the New York premiere of Sam Shepard's *Tooth of Crime* with Richard Schechner's Performance Group. Stripped down to a green cape, boxing shoes, a motorcycle jacket, and a leather jock strap, Gray was directed to step out of character at a specific moment every night and slowly scan the crowd, making eye contact with as many audience members as possible before jumping back into character for the next scene. "That was such a powerful meditation every night," Gray remembers. "My inner voice would start to say, What if you didn't go to the next scene, but just started talking from yourself?"

Gray took his inner voice to heart and began shortly thereafter writing and performing the soul-searching, autobiographical narratives that would become his theatrical trademark. Working without the filter of a playwright's script, using the highs and lows of his own life story as inspiration, Gray has made a career out of playing himself. "I come to know my life through the telling of it," he has said.

Gray's one-man performances have become something of a genre unto themselves. With the blossoming of solo performance art throughout the 1980s and the everyday reality of public confession in the current tabloid culture of the '90s, Gray has many imitators; no one, however, does exactly what he does. The preeminent storyteller and a self-described "poetic journalist," Gray serves as a tour guide through the vicissitudes of his own psyche, with his keen eye for irony somehow managing to illuminate universal truths in the process. Although his stories are often hilarious, they have always had a dark side, a pervasive sadness which manifests in an obsession with his own mortality and, until quite recently, with mourning the loss of his mother, who committed suicide when Gray was 26. Morbidity and an ample dose of skepticism have always been close at hand. ("Good morning," Gray imagines his mirror reflecting back to him. "You are going to die.")

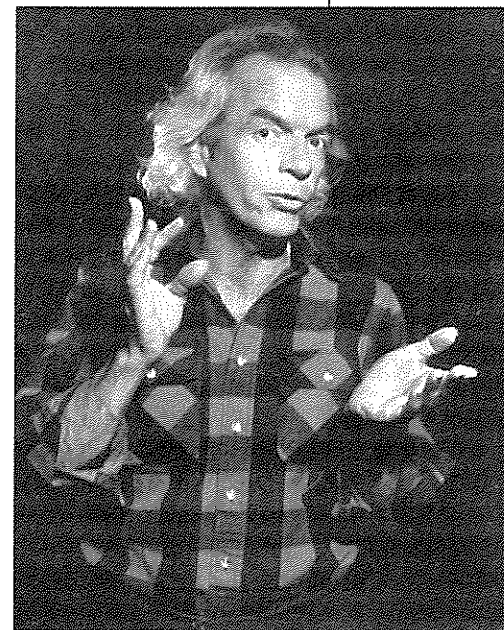
Gray's relentless commentary on the events of his life (which he calls "the ongoing self-opera of Spalding Gray") has seemed inextricably bound to his suffering. Yet he has emerged from the mid-life crisis he chronicled in *It's a Slippery Slope* (performed at A.C.T. last winter) a more content and less detached man, arguably more mature and meditative. His newest work, *Morning, Noon and Night*, introduces audiences to a more sanguine and forward-looking Spalding Gray. After 20 years of tackling subjects from the political

to the overtly sexual, he has taken on fatherhood as a subject, riffing on the major and minor joys of raising three children in the sleepy Long Island town of Sag Harbor. "The monologue is much more morning than it is night right now," says Gray, in uncharacteristic good cheer. "It is a very bright piece. I want to say it is hopeful, but it is really a knock-wood piece. When you're in this comfortable place, this very warm family situation, you have to knock wood, because you never know what the other side of it is."

## YOU ONLY LIVE TWICE

Gray has written and performed 18 autobiographical monologues during the last 18 years and has appeared in numerous feature films, including film versions of his three most popular monologues: the Obie Award-winning *Swimming to Cambodia*, about his experiences as an actor in Roland Joffe's film *The Killing Fields*; *Monster in a Box*, about his struggles to write a novel (*Impossible Vacation*, published in 1993) and his underlying struggle to make peace with the memory of his emotionally disturbed mother; and *Gray's Anatomy*, which recounts the loss of sight in his left eye and his ensuing globe-trotting search for alternative therapies. "I see myself as a Humpty-Dumpty figure," Gray has said. "There's a part [of myself] that is simply pushing the egg off the wall. I would name any of my monologues *All the King's Horses*, had it not already been used as a title. I push myself off and I get down and start picking up the pieces."

The anecdote has become Gray's stock-in-trade, albeit a device he admits has the potential to put his art and his life at cross purposes. The anecdotist's primary pitfall, he realizes, is the temptation to treat the events of his life simply as material for performance, even to cultivate experiences for their re-tell value, rather than let life unfold as a natural process. He has called anecdoting a "hazard of my trade" and is well aware of the risks of blurring the line between his private self and his public persona. "The dangerous part of storytelling is that it becomes a defense against feeling. I was in therapy in Los Angeles many years back, and the therapist asked me to tell a particular story to him. I said, 'Oh, I've told that hundreds of times in *Sex and Death to the Age 14*.' He said, 'No, don't tell it to me as if I were an audience member. Please tell it to me as though you were telling it for the first time.'"



Spalding Gray

"I COME TO  
KNOW MY LIFE  
THROUGH THE  
TELLING OF  
IT."



SPALDING  
GRAY THE  
FATHER SEEMS  
A MAN  
REMARKABLY  
AT PEACE WITH  
HIMSELF.

"I worry sometimes that when I speak an experience [like his description in *Slippery Slope* of conquering a lifelong fear of skiing], and turn it into a story, that I am fueled only by the novelty of the event, and that my pleasure in the experience itself will pass away."

Memory, according to Gray, is the primal act of creativity. "Memory, for all of us, is our first creative act," he says. "Everyone that remembers is creative, is 're-membering.' And I think people don't realize how creative they're being with their memories; they think they're recollecting the actual event. But memory is actually a very structured thing: it's selective, and it's naturally edited through the consciousness and unconsciousness."

Called a "master of the first-person singular," Gray has never had any trouble baring his innermost struggles before an audience of strangers. When asked why he has made "confession as entertainment" (as he describes it) his life's work, he says, "I don't really question that. That's like asking myself why I want to get up in the morning. I'm just happy that I've found this niche and that it works for me." He finds a degree of solace in the fact that capturing his memories and retelling them grants him a kind of double life and allays, at least temporarily, his overwhelming anxiety about death. "Because I have a pretty good sense that I am only going to live once," he says, "life feels like a complete dream, an 'insubstantial pageant faded,' which is my favorite Shakespeare quote [from *The Tempest*]. One way to make life more substantial is to speak it."

"I like to joke that performing my monologues is a way of living twice. Memory is the best I can do at reincarnating myself."

## CHRONICLING THE SELF

Soon after his onstage epiphany during *The Tooth of Crime*, Gray formed the Wooster Group with his longtime friend director Elizabeth LeCompte and a small group of fellow actors from The Performance Group. They began to create performance pieces that LeCompte structured around Gray's personal memories. Gray followed Schechner's advice to be himself first, before taking on a role; the result was Gray's first autobiographical trilogy, *Three Places in Rhode Island*, a docudrama about his turbulent New England childhood with a Christian Scientist mother and alcoholic father. His performance of *Rumstick Road* was the first time Gray took on no outside character and referred to himself onstage by his own name.

After *Three Places* (which he now refers to as "artistic mourning" for his mother), Gray knew he was finished with group collaboration but was unsure exactly what form his yearning for solo performance should take. While teaching a summer performance workshop at UC Santa Cruz in the summer of 1978, he sought the advice of Amelie Rorty, who was teaching a course in "The Philosophy of Emotions." Gray confided in Rorty his fear that western culture was disintegrating and that the world as he knew it was nearing its demise.

continued on page 30

FROM THE ACCLAIMED ADAPTOR AND DIRECTOR  
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Charles Dean and Geoff Hoyle in *Travels with My Aunt* (photo by Ken Friedman)



## CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH A.C.T.

There's fun for the entire family at the Geary Theater this December: A.C.T. kicks off the holiday season on the **Opening Night of *A Christmas Carol***, December 2, with a 7 p.m. Christmas tree lighting featuring cast members and carol sing-alongs.

The merrymaking continues with postperformance **Christmas Caroling Parties**—brought back by popular demand after two seasons of overwhelming success—following matinees on November 29 and December 19, 20, 22, 23, and 24 in Fred's Columbia Room (in the lower lobby of the Geary Theater). Sip a cup of hot cider and sing a few carols while your youngsters pose for photos with *Carol* cast members, collect keepsakes for their stockings, and enjoy a host of holiday activities—including face painting by an A.C.T. makeup artist. For information and tickets (\$9 per person), please call the A.C.T. Box Office at (415) 749-2ACT. A.C.T. Christmas Caroling Parties are supported by generous donations of food, drink, and paper products by Cala Foods/Bell Markets.

The December 3, 7:30 p.m. performance of *A Christmas Carol* is a **Bring What You Can/Pay What You Wish** show, at which patrons may pay any amount for tickets when they bring in peanut butter in plastic jars or canned tuna in water as donations to Project Open Hand's food drive. Tickets for the *Christmas Carol* Pay What You Wish performance go on sale at the Geary Theater Box Office at 6 p.m. on the day of the show and must be purchased with cash.



Patrons are limited to one ticket per donated item, two tickets per show per person. At least 100 tickets will be made available.

A.C.T. also offers an **American Sign Language-interpreted performance** of *A Christmas Carol* on December 12 at 2 p.m. Orchestra seats for Deaf and hearing-impaired theatergoers are available at the special discounted price of \$19. ASL patrons using a TDD should call A.C.T. via the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 for assistance.

## REACH OUT AND READ!



THE SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL  
FOUNDATION

Share your love of literature  
with San Francisco's children!

Thanks to the generosity of A.C.T. patrons who donated more than 500 books during the run of *Fool Moon*, A.C.T. continues its collaboration with Reach Out and Read, the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation's early literacy project. All *Christmas Carol* audience members are encouraged to bring children's books in English and/or Spanish to the Geary Theater (where a collection bin is located in the front lobby), which will be distributed to children receiving pediatric care at SF General. **Each patron who donates a book will receive a free *Christmas Carol* poster (11"x17"), compliments of A.C.T.**

SF General is the principal health care provider for ethnically diverse, economically disadvantaged children in San Francisco, and Reach Out and Read has the potential to reach low-income families nearly 15,000 times each year... so they need all the books they can get! For more information on Reach Out and Read, please call the SF General Foundation at (415) 206-4478.

## A.C.T. WELCOMES 20,000 SUBSCRIBERS!

In October A.C.T.'s subscription base surpassed 20,000 for the first time since 1976, making the current subscription campaign the most successful in the company's history. This season's numbers represent an increase of more than 7,000 subscribers since the 1993-94 season, when subscribers totaled just over 13,000.

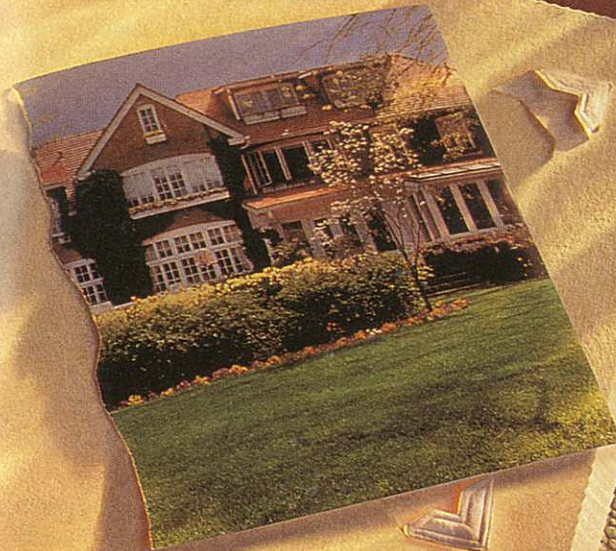
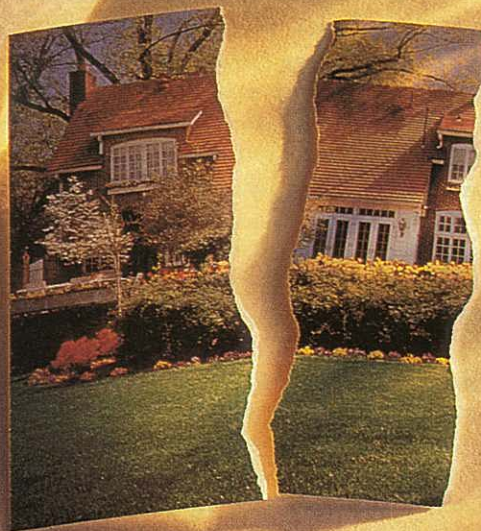
"All of us at A.C.T. are extremely grateful to the Bay Area theater-going community for the extraordinary support it has shown the theater," says A.C.T. Managing Director Heather Kitchen. "This support serves as a wonderful validation of Carey Perloff's artistic vision over the past six years since she joined the company as artistic director, as well as a source of great encouragement for the entire A.C.T. family as we take the company into the next century."

## AT&T BRINGS A.C.T. ONSTAGE

AT&T, through its distinguished *AT&T: OnStage*® program, has honored A.C.T. with a \$75,000 grant to support the world-premiere production of *The First Picture Show*, slated to open at the Geary Theater

*continued on page 26*





25% TO MY DAUGHTER.

25% TO MY SON.

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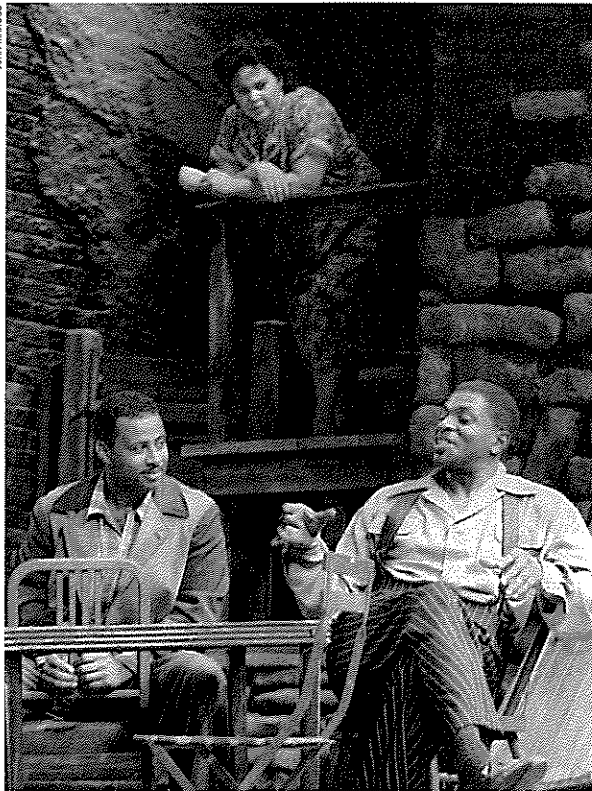
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Michele Shay, Ruben Santiago-Hudson, and Keith David in *Seven Guitars*.

# A.C.T. NEWS

continued from page 23

in May 1999 in a coproduction between A.C.T. and the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. *The First Picture Show*, a theater piece with music about the dawn of silent films and the intrepid women directors who pioneered the art form, features book and lyrics by Ain Gordon and David Gordon (whose *Shlemiel the First* was a huge success at A.C.T. in 1996) and original music by acclaimed theater composer Jeanine Tesori.

A leading corporate sponsor of the arts for more than 50 years, AT&T created the AT&T Foundation in 1984 as the company's principal instrument for philanthropy and its centerpiece for public service in communities where AT&T employees live and work.

*AT&T: OnStage®* is designed to

encourage innovative regional and institutional theater companies to develop and present new works for the American stage. *AT&T: OnStage®* is an important facet of AT&T's philanthropy, which focuses on enhancing communication, bridging differences among people, and stimulating innovation in society, with a special emphasis on helping women and artists of diverse cultures present their work to a wide range of audiences. Past A.C.T. productions supported by AT&T include *Seven Guitars*, the 1995 production of *Hecuba*, *Dark Sun*, and *Good*.

## ANNOUNCING THE 1999 ADVANCED TRAINING PROGRAM AUDITION TOUR

A.C.T. will hold auditions around the country for the conservatory's celebrated Advanced Training Program (ATP) throughout the month of February. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith, accompanied by ATP voice teacher Jeffrey Crockett, leads this year's three-city tour. In New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, hundreds of young actors from all over the country and around the world will interview and audition for the opportunity to become part of the 18-20-member class that will enter the ATP in September 1999 and graduate in the year 2002 with master of fine art degrees.

## 1999 ATP Audition Dates

New York	February 5-7
Chicago	February 9-10
San Francisco	February 13-15 for non-Bay Area residents February 19-22 for Bay Area residents

For ATP details and application materials, please call the conservatory at (415) 439-2350, or check out A.C.T.'s Web site at [www.act-sfbay.org](http://www.act-sfbay.org).

## NEW WINTER COURSES AT STUDIO A.C.T.

Studio A.C.T., the conservatory's weekend and evening program of theater classes for adults, offers several new courses in its upcoming winter session (January 4-March 21): **Eugene O'Neill Scene Study** focuses exclusively on the work of the Nobel Prize-winning American playwright whose masterpiece *Long Day's Journey into Night* transformed 20th-century drama and will be staged at A.C.T. next spring. Back by popular demand, **Chekhov Scene Study** focuses on the work of another fascinating and complex writer through scene work and an historical examination of the great Russian playwright's life and work. **Millennium: A Created Project** is a unique educational opportunity for intermediate- and advanced-level students to explore in dramatic form the mythological and contemporary significance of the approaching millennium. Students will conduct interviews about the year 2000 and shape them into a performance project. Studio A.C.T.'s fall session was fully enrolled with a waiting list of 80 students, so sign up early! For enrollment information call (415) 439-2332.

Studio A.C.T. also continues to offer **A.C.T. Corporate Educational Services**, designed to help professionals develop communication, public speaking, and team-building skills using theater-training techniques. The workshops can be scheduled on site in the client's work place or at A.C.T.'s studios in downtown San Francisco. For more information, or to arrange a consultation, please call (415) 439-2486.

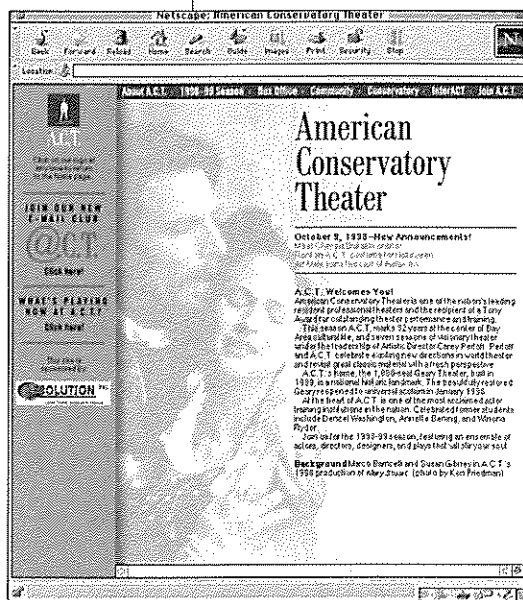


# A.C.T. NEWS

## THE YOUNG CONSERVATORY'S WINTER/SPRING SESSION IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

The young actors appearing in *A Christmas Carol* are all students studying in the Young Conservatory (YC), A.C.T.'s internationally recognized actor training program for young people aged 8 to 18. Young people who want to explore their creative spirit should consider enrolling in the Young Conservatory's winter/spring session (February 22–May 22), which offers more than 30 classes in acting technique, musical theater, improvisation, physical comedy, voice and speech, dialect, and much more. The YC's Performance Workshop offers a unique opportunity to act in a world-premiere studio production of a newly commissioned work by celebrated playwright Constance Congdon. Applications for the winter/spring session are now available—call (415) 439-2444.

## INTERACT WITH A.C.T.



A.C.T.'s award-winning Web site has recently been updated and redesigned to include a multitude of resources for A.C.T. patrons. The entire site has been graphically enhanced with a clean new design and is easier to navigate than ever before.

A.C.T.'s home page now includes expanded information on A.C.T.'s history; easy-to-read performance calendars for the entire 1998–99 season; a comprehensive listing of subscriber benefits; information about auxiliary educational and outreach events (including the A.C.T. Perspectives symposium series, audience exchange discussions, European and New York theater tours, ACT I fundraisers, and donor events); conservatory schedules

and news; online ticketing opportunities; and a brand-new e-mail club for patrons who want up-to-the-minute access to late-breaking A.C.T. news and special offers. The site continues to offer subscription and individual-ticket purchase information, company news from A.C.T.'s *Preview* newsletter, internship and job listings, information on parking for A.C.T. performances, and the opportunity to add your name (or a friend's) to the A.C.T. mailing list.

Following the success of A.C.T.'s first online chat with Olympia Dukakis on November 18 (hosted by the *Contra Costa Times*), the company hopes in the future to expand the Web site's interactive capabilities. Connect to A.C.T. on the Web at: [www.act-sfbay.org](http://www.act-sfbay.org).



**SPALDING GRAY**, a writer, actor, and performer, has created a series of 18 monologues which have been performed throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia, including: *Sex and Death to the Age 14*; *Booze, Cars, and College Girls: A Personal History of the American Theater*; *India and After (America)*; *Monster in a Box*; *Gray's Anatomy*; and the Obie Award-winning *Swimming to Cambodia*.

Gray's appearances on and off Broadway include his portrayal of the Stage Manager in the revival of Thornton Wilder's *Our Town*, directed by Gregory Mosher, and Hoss in the Performance Group's New York premiere of Sam Shepard's *Tooth of Crime*. With the Wooster Group, which he cofounded in 1977, Gray wrote and performed the autobiographical trilogy *Three Places in Rhode Island*.

Gray's film credits include *The Killing Fields* (directed by Roland Joffe), *Swimming to Cambodia* (dir. Jonathan Demme), *True Stories* (dir. David Byrne), *Clara's Heart* (dir. Robert Mulligan), *Beaches* (dir. Gary Marshall), *The Pickle* (dir. Paul Mazursky), *The King of the Hill* (dir. Steven Soderbergh), *The Paper* (dir. Ron Howard), *Beyond Rangoon* (dir. John Boorman), *The Toolshed* (dir. Damian Harris), and *Diabolique* (dir. Jeremiah Chechik).

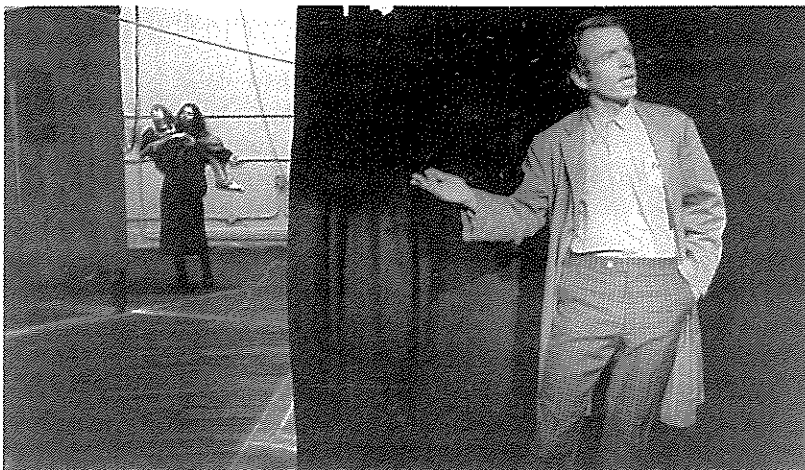
His television appearances include the HBO special *Terrors of Pleasure*, *The Image* (with Albert Finney) for HBO Premiere Films, and *Zelda* (dir. Pat O'Connor).

Gray's publications include a collection of monologues, *Sex and Death to the Age 14*, from Random House; *Swimming to Cambodia* from Theatre Communications Group; *In Search of the Monkey Girl* from Aperture Press; *Orchards*, *Monster in a Box*, and *Gray's Anatomy* from Vintage; and the novel *Impossible Vacation* from Knopf.

Gray has received a Guggenheim Fellowship and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Rockefeller Foundation. He recreated his role in *Our Town* for PBS's Great Performances. His monologue *Gray's Anatomy* was released as a film directed by Steven Soderbergh in the spring of 1997, and *It's a Slippery Slope*, his last monologue, was published by Farrar, Strauss & Giroux in the fall of 1997 and released last spring on a compact disc and audio-book cassette produced by James Taylor and Mercury Records.

**PAUL SPENCER** (*Creative Consultant*) is a writer from New York City. He is best known for his humorous ad campaign for the New York State Lottery and for his work as a voice-over actor. This is his second project with Spalding Gray, following *It's a Slippery Slope*.





continued from page 20

*She took me at my word and said, "Well, Spalding, during the collapse of Rome, the last artists were the chroniclers." And all the bells went off inside me. Of course, I thought, I'll chronicle my life, but I'll do it orally, because to write it down would be in bad faith, it would mean I believed in a future.*

Already a compulsive diarist (he hadn't missed a daily entry for seven years) and a natural storyteller, Gray was perfectly suited to his new medium. He hurried back to New York and began performing monologues, to increasingly larger audiences, at The Performance Garage. He performed *Sex and Death to the Age 14*, his first published monologue, in 1979, and it established the look and feel of his subsequent solo work: "I sat behind that desk with a little notebook containing all I could remember about sex and death up until I was 14 years old."

During *Sex and Death*, Gray also devised his unique process of performance development. Rather than committing his stories to memory, he develops and refines each monologue over many months in front of a live audience. He does not write his monologues in the formal sense; they are never spoken or rehearsed beforehand. Instead, he creates a simple outline of events recollected from his life, jotting down key words to jog his memory while he's onstage. "Then, guided by my outline, I tell you my story," Gray explains. "It's as though I am describing the images of an internal film." In the early stages of the development process, Gray tape records each performance and listens to it the following morning. He works for months in front of audiences in various venues finalizing his editorial decisions and internalizing the rhythms of his performance, during which time each new piece is considered a work in progress. When a monologue is at last finished, Gray explains, "it becomes lyrical. And when I sit down at the table it is totally available to me. It is not something I have to think too much

about. It is a part of me." Because the performances evolve organically, however, the opportunity for change is always there, which gives each monologue its spontaneous feel and often leaves audiences believing Gray is speaking the material for the first time.

Audience reaction and participation are fundamental to all of Gray's work. He has even developed a performance piece, called *Interviewing the Audience*, in which he turns his prodigious curiosity for once on others. Gray invites audience members to join him onstage and asks each one a stream of free-association questions that must resemble the interrogation to which he subjects himself in developing his own work. Life meets art meets life.

## AN ACTOR AT HEART

Although his career has flourished during a time when solo performance has become increasingly popular, Gray distances himself from performance artists who subject audiences to what he calls "post-modern fractured narratives." He continues to define himself first and foremost as an actor:

*For me where acting comes in . . . is when I begin over the course of the monologue's evolution to study myself and my behavior. I begin to observe myself as a sort of character study. . . . I am to some extent an inverted Method actor in the sense that I use autobiographic emotional memory to play myself rather than some other character. When it works, and it has for years, I'm able to transform what might be considered a psychopathology (divided or schizoid personality) into a creative act.*

In *Morning, Noon and Night*, for example, Gray has framed the entire piece within one specific day—October 8, 1997 ("from the time the sun wakes me to the time the son kicks me into sleep"). He gives a dramatic arc to his memories, functioning as "an actor, as well as a playwright and a structuralist, in terms of deciding to act out this particular day and bring particular sensibilities to it."

One remarkable aspect of Gray's work is that audiences have always been able to find aspects of themselves in his very personal despair and irrepressible questioning. The audience, however, has had the pleasure of laughing at it all. "They don't see the enormous amount of pain the humor comes out of," Gray explains. "They laugh right over it. There's a line in one of my monologues. It's funny—but not funny—that my father never went to see

*Scenes from the Wooster Group's production of Gray's trilogy, Three Places in Rhode Island:*

**OPPOSITE**  
Point Judith (1979)

**BELOW**  
Nayatt School (1978)



*Swimming to Cambodia* because he wouldn't miss cocktail hour. That audience would just howl, but that was the truth."

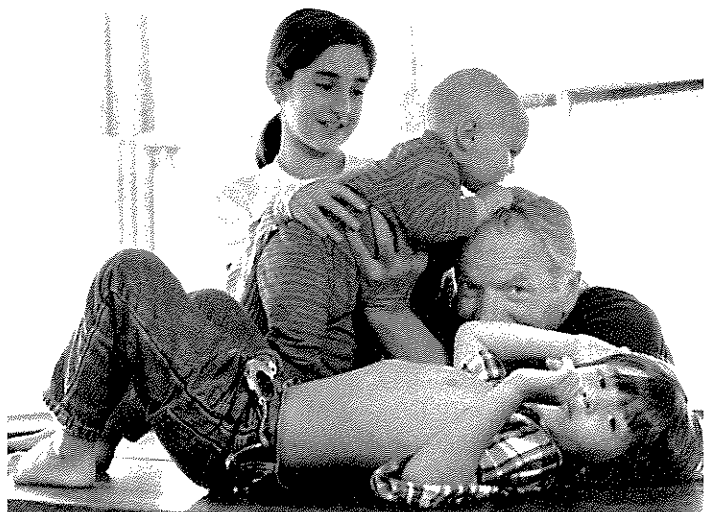
Gray attributes *Morning, Noon and Night's* early success in part to his portrayal of the universally exhausting business of parenthood. "One of my favorite lines in this monologue, because it works so well with anyone who is a parent is, 'I fall into bed at 10:30 and I am wrecked, and I haven't even gone to work!'"

In contrast to Spalding Gray the actor—who once said that "to tell a memory is more fun than to live it"—Spalding Gray the father seems a man remarkably at peace with himself and with the present. He describes parenthood as a "very positive and celebratory thing," yet admits that the experience has been a mixed blessing. When asked whether fatherhood has eased his anxieties about death, he admits, "God, it has, but that reaction is an absurdity, because you see that you are just buying a little more time in someone else's flesh, which too will pass. When I think about the fact that my children are going to be subjected to all the same slings and arrows, I feel a deep sadness and futility. That's when a darker pessimism creeps in, and I think, Oh my God, why did I perpetuate this wheel? I could maybe move toward a more Buddhist attitude, maybe even transcend that pessimism, but at bottom I am really just a doubter."


The recent calm in Gray's life doesn't seem to pose a real threat to his grip on the neurotic. "I haven't really come through anything yet," he admits. "[His five-year-old son] Forrest has asked me about death and whether I was going to die. I tell him over and over again that *everyone* will. Then he'll just pinch me on the cheek and get angry, and the moment will pass.

"I'm still completely freaked out by the fact that I'm going to die forever. I'm trying to deal with that one, *and* with the knowledge that I'm not going to be able to tell a story about it." ■

Spalding Gray the family man with his children Marissa, Theo, and Forrest



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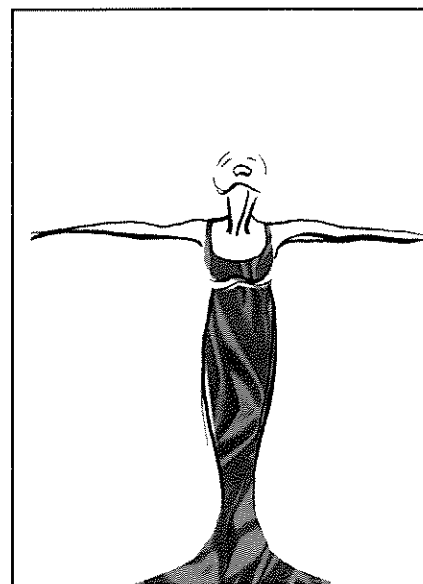
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**CAREY PERLOFF** (*Artistic Director*) assumed artistic leadership of A.C.T. in June 1992. Perloff has since led the company to unprecedented success, including the receipt of the prestigious 1996 Jujameyn Theaters Award and the triumphant reopening of the Geary Theater following its \$28.2 million restoration. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff's work at A.C.T. includes last season's highly acclaimed productions of Friedrich

Schiller's *Mary Stuart* and Harold Pinter's *Old Times*; Timberlake Wertenbaker's new version of Euripides' *Hecuba* with Olympia Dukakis; Tom Stoppard's *Arcadia*; Tennessee Williams's *Rose Tattoo* with Kathleen Widdoes and Marco Barricelli; Sophocles' *Antigone*; August Strindberg's *Creditors*; Paul Schmidt's new translation of Anton Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*; David Storey's *Home*; the world premiere of Leslie Ayzavian's *Singer's Boy*; and the Geary Theater inaugural production of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, which featured David Strathairn and the Kronos Quartet. In 1993, Perloff directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot's opera *The Cave* at the Vienna Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. She recently staged Christoph Gluck's *Iphigénie en Tauride* for the San Francisco Opera Center.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of CSC Repertory (the Classic Stage Company) in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra* with Pamela Reed and Nancy Marchand; the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party* with Jean Stapleton, Strathairn, and Peter Riegert; Bertolt Brecht's *Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* with John Turturro and Katherine Borowitz; and many other classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, CSC won the 1988 Obie Award for artistic excellence, as well as numerous Obies for acting, design, and direction.

Perloff received a B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford University. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and currently teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program.

This season Perloff directs *Hecuba* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and at A.C.T., and the American premiere of Stoppard's *Indian Ink* at A.C.T.



**HEATHER KITCHEN** (*Managing Director*) joined A.C.T. as managing director in November 1996. She has extensive experience in theater management and production, has served as a strategic planning consultant for arts and educational institutions, and has taught for more than 20 years throughout Canada. Most recently she served as general manager of the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, where she was responsible for a five-theater complex which produced up to 16 productions annually.

Prior to her work at the Citadel, she was production manager at Theatre New Brunswick for three years. Her stage management experience includes the Stratford Festival, the Canadian Stage Company in Toronto, the Canadian Opera Company, and the New Play Centre of Vancouver. She was also company manager for the Stratford Festival while on tour. Kitchen received an honors degree in drama and theater arts from the University of Waterloo and earned her M.B.A. from the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario.

**MELISSA SMITH** (*Conservatory Director*), the master acting teacher of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program, has taught acting to students of all ages throughout the United States. Before assuming leadership of the A.C.T. Conservatory in 1995, she was director of the program in theater and

dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, scene study, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-off Broadway plays. 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. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* and *Georgy* (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's *Don't Drink the Water*. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's *Little Eyolf* (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's *Arms and the Man*. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle.

**CRAIG SLAIGHT** (*Young Conservatory Director*) spent ten years in Los Angeles directing theater and television before joining A.C.T. in 1988. An award-winning educator, Slaight is a consultant to the Educational Theater Association and the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and is a frequent speaker and adjudicator throughout the country. He has published ten anthologies for young actors, three of which were selected by the New York Public Library as "outstanding books for the teenager." In 1989, he founded the Young Conservatory's New Plays Program; 11 new works by professional playwrights have been developed, nine of which have been published by Smith & Kraus in *New Plays from A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory*. In January 1998 Carey Perloff awarded Slaight the first Artistic Director's Award for his contributions to A.C.T.

**BRUCE WILLIAMS** (*Director of Summer Training Congress & Community Programs*) has had a 23-year working relationship with A.C.T. where he has taught in the Advanced Training Program (ATP), Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. (which he also administers), directed numerous ATP studio productions, and acted in more than 40 mainstage productions. He has also performed on numerous other West Coast stages and has worked extensively in film, television, and voice-over.

**PAUL WALSH** (*Dramaturg & Director of Humanities*) has extensive experience as a dramaturg, translator, and adaptor, including many years collaborating with the Minneapolis-based Theatre de la Jeune Lune on such projects as *Children of Paradise*, *Germinál*, *Don Juan Giovanni*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. His translation of Strindberg's *Creditors* was directed by Carey Perloff at CSC in New York in 1991 and at A.C.T. in 1992. Walsh received a Ph.D. in drama from the University of Toronto and taught theater history and dramatic literature at Southern Methodist University. His critical writings appear in *The Production Notebooks*, *Re-interpreting Brecht*, *Strindberg's Dramaturgy*, *Theater Symposium*, and *Essays in Theater*.

**MERYL LIND SHAW** (*Casting Director*) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff in 1993. During the previous 17 years, she stage-managed more than 60 productions throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.'s *Bon Appétit!* and *Creditors*. She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for 12 years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She was active with Actors' Equity Association for many years and served on the AEA negotiating committee in 1992 and 1993. Other casting projects include the San Francisco production of *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and the CD-ROM game *Obsidian*.

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Background ATP students Ryan Rilette, Sara Bakker, and Dawn-Elin Fraser in Henry V (photo by Ken Friedman)



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### BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION

#### Geary Theater Box Office

Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12 to 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12 to 6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12 to 6 p.m. daily.

#### BASS

Tickets are also available at BASS centers, including The Warehouse and Tower Records/Video.

#### Online

Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at [www.act-sfbay.org](http://www.act-sfbay.org).

#### Charge by Phone or Fax

Call (415) 749-2ACT and use your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to (415) 749-2291.

#### Purchase Policy

All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. If you are unable to attend at the last minute, you can donate your tickets to A.C.T. The value of donated tickets will be acknowledged by mail. Tickets for past performances cannot be considered a donation.

#### Mailing List

Call (415) 749-2ACT or visit our Web site to request subscription information and advance notice of A.C.T. events.

#### Ticket Prices

Ticket prices range from \$11 to \$55.

#### Subscriptions

Full-season subscribers save up to 29% and receive special benefits including parking, restaurant, and extra-ticket discounts, performance rescheduling by phone, and more. Call the A.C.T. Subscription Hotline at (415) 749-2250 to find out about four- and seven-play packages.

#### Discounts

Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the Geary Theater Box Office 90 minutes before curtain. Matinee senior rush tickets are available at noon on the day of the performance for \$10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

Student subscriptions are also available at half price. Senior citizen discounts are available for full-season and sampler series subscriptions. A.C.T. also offers one Pay What You Wish performance during the regular run of each production: patrons are allowed to pay any amount for tickets when they bring in a donation of canned food for Project Open Hand.

#### Group Discounts

For groups of 15 or more, call Linda Graham, Group Services, at (415) 346-7805.

#### Gift Certificates

A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount by phone, fax, or in person at the Geary Theater Box Office. Gift certificates are valid for three years and may be redeemed for any performance or for A.C.T. merchandise.

### SPECIAL PROGRAMS

#### A.C.T. Extras

For information on A.C.T. Prologues, Audience Exchanges, A.C.T. Perspectives symposia, and *Words on Plays* audience handbooks, please turn to the "A.C.T. Extras" page of this program.

#### Student Matinees

Matinees are offered at 1 p.m. to elementary, secondary, and college school groups for selected productions. Tickets are specially priced at \$10. For information call (415) 439-2383.

#### Conservatory

A.C.T. offers classes, training, and advanced study in a wide range of theater disciplines. The **Advanced Training Program** offers a rigorous three-year course of actor training, culminating in a master of fine arts degree. The **Summer Training Congress** is an intensive program for those with some performing arts background. **Studio A.C.T.** offers evening and weekend classes, including new Corporate Education Services, to theater enthusiasts at every level of background and training. The **Young Conservatory** is a broad-based program for students between the ages of 8 and 18. Call (415) 439-2350 for a free brochure.

#### Costume Rental

More than 10,000 collection of costumes, ranging from handmade period garments to modern sportswear, is available for rental by schools, theaters, production companies, and individuals. For information call (415) 439-2379.

#### Parking

A.C.T. patrons can park for just \$8 at the San Francisco Hilton and Towers for up to five hours, subject to availability. Enter on Ellis Street between Mason and Taylor. Show your ticket stub for that day's performance upon exit to receive the special price. After five hours, the regular rate applies.



# A.C.T./F.Y.I.

## AT THE THEATER

The Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

### A.C.T. Merchandise

Posters, sweatshirts, t-shirts, nightshirts, mugs, note cards, scripts, and *Words on Plays* are available for purchase in the main lobby and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

### Refreshments

Bar service is available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level and in the Sky Lobby on the second balcony level. Reservations for refreshments to be served at intermission may also be made, at either bar or in the main lobby, during the hour before performance. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

### Beepers!

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. Or you may leave it and your seat number with the house manager, so you can be notified if you are called.

### 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 Geary Theater. Please call (415) 749-2ACT in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

## AFFILIATIONS

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

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

A.C.T. logo designed by Landor Associates.



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

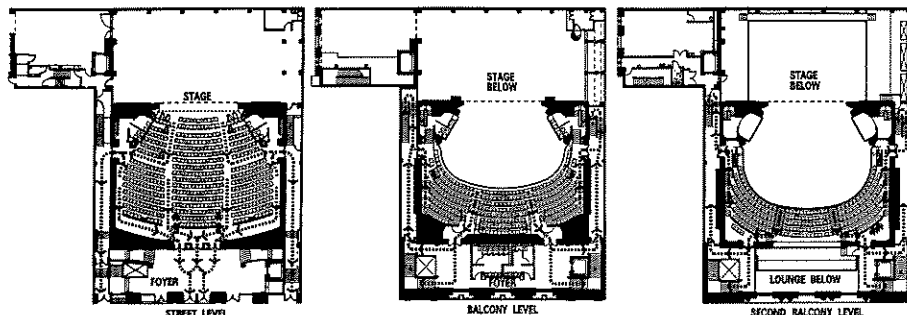


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A.C.T. is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency.

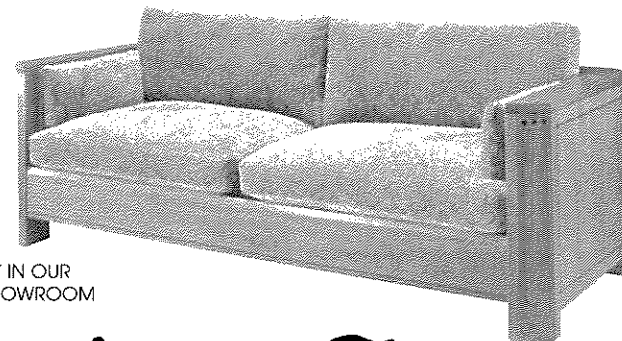
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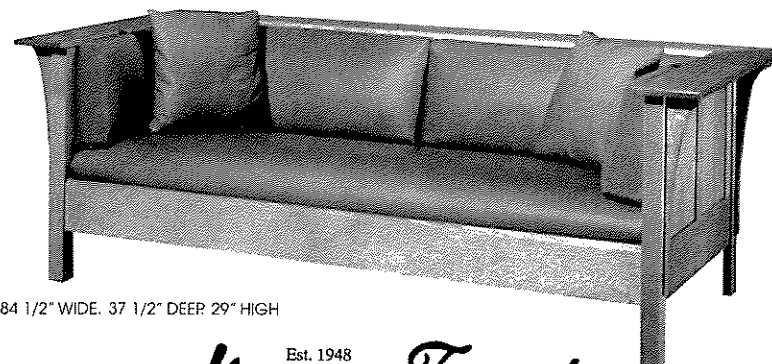
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