

texts for nothing

# STAGEBILL

directed and performed  
by bill irwin

a prose work  
by samuel beckett

June 14-July 15



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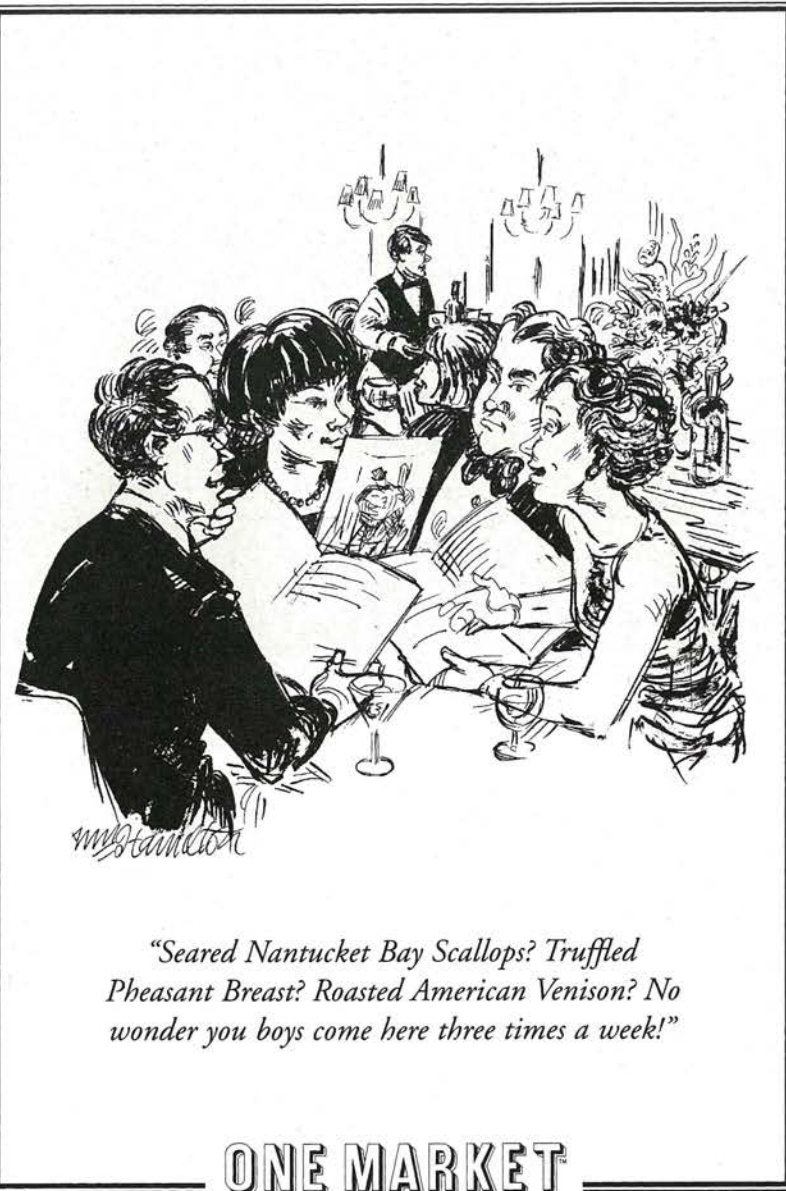


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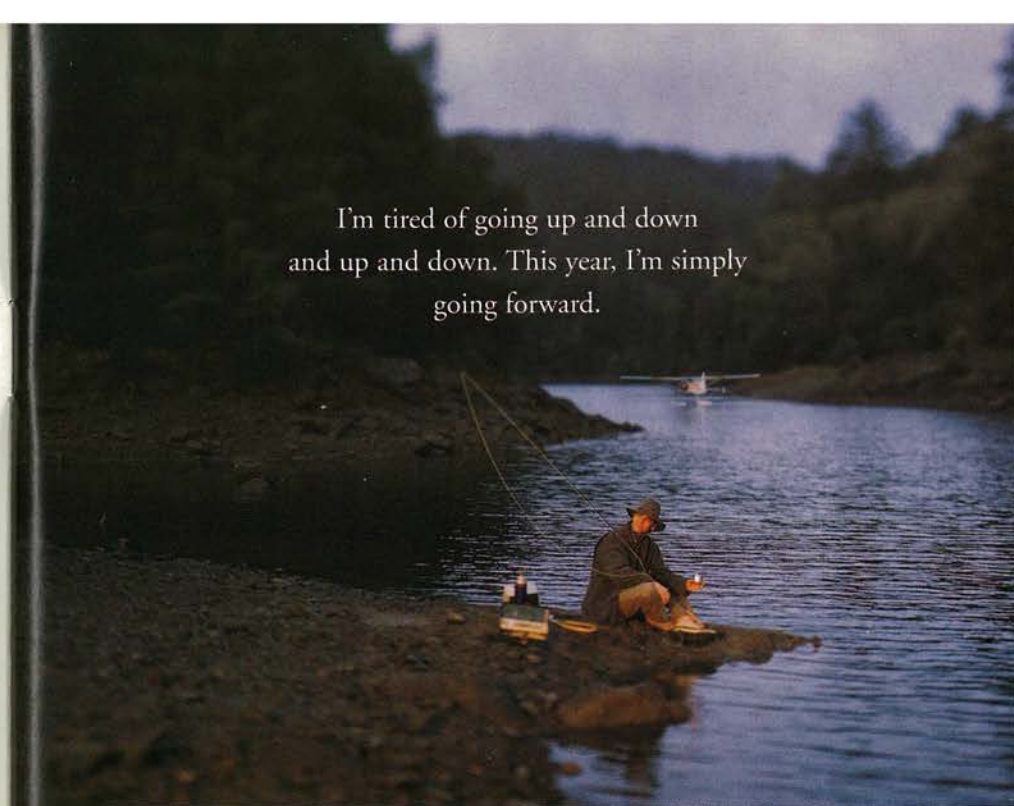
Vol. 7, No. 8, June 2001

ABOVE

Bill Irwin in *Texts for Nothing*



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THE MISANTHROPE  
by Molière

*A new verse version by  
Constance Congdon  
Directed by Carey Perloff  
October 19-November 19, 2000*

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

*Adapted by Dennis Powers and  
Laird Williamson  
Directed by Candace Barrett in  
association with Raye Birk  
November 27-December 26,  
2000*

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS

*by David Mamet  
Directed by Les Waters  
January 4-February 4, 2001*

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EVERYWHERE

*Written and directed by  
Richard Nelson  
February 15-March 18, 2001*

ENRICO IV

*by Luigi Pirandello  
Translated by Richard Nelson  
Directed by Carey Perloff  
March 29-April 29, 2001*

"MASTER HAROLD"  
...AND THE BOYS

*by Athol Fugard  
Directed by Laird Williamson  
May 4-June 3, 2001*

TEXTS FOR NOTHING

*A prose work by Samuel Beckett  
Directed and performed  
by Bill Irwin  
June 14-July 15, 2001*

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# texts for nothing

A prose work by  
**Samuel Beckett**

Directed and performed by  
**Bill Irwin**

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*Costumes by* Anita Yavich  
*Lighting by* Nancy Schertler  
*Sound by* Garth Hemphill

### Stage Management Staff

Kimberly Mark Webb, *Stage Manager*  
Francesca Russell, *Assistant Stage Manager*  
Elizabeth Murray, *Intern*

Please silence all cellular phones and pagers.

*Texts for Nothing* will be performed  
without an intermission.

■  
*Texts for Nothing* was originally produced at  
Classic Stage Company, New York;  
Barry Edelstein, Artistic Director;  
Beth Emelson, Producing Director.

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**Heather Kitchen**  
Managing  
Director

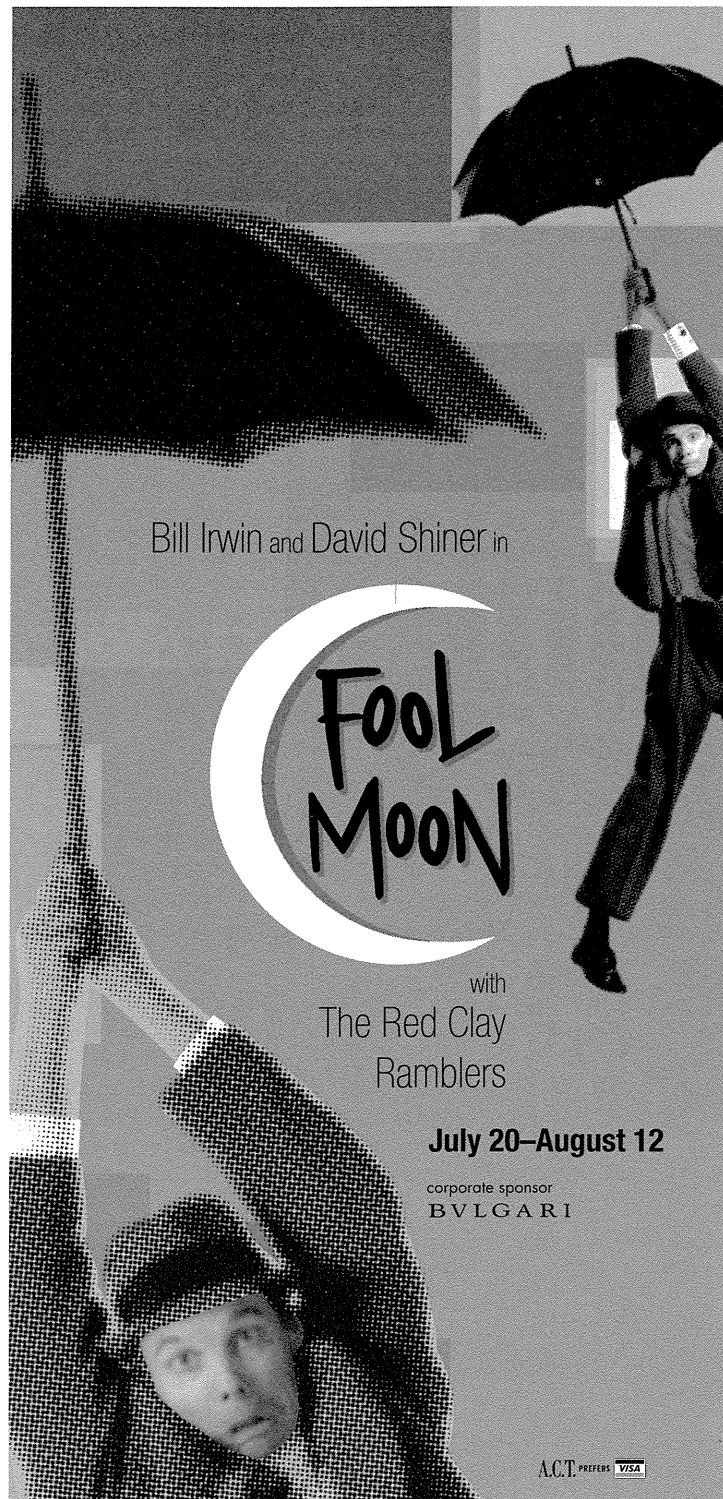
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July 20–August 12

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# texts for nothing

*Waiting for Godot* may be Samuel Beckett's best-known work, while *Texts for Nothing*—written 18 months later—may be one of his least known or discussed.

One is the most famous play of the 20th century, the other is a prose piece sometimes not even mentioned in surveys of Beckett's work. In my mind they are companion pieces. They are bound together in ways I wouldn't try to explain or defend, and they are pieces of writing, each of them, that I hope to work with again and again.

I will be forever grateful to Joseph Chaikin for introducing me to *Texts for Nothing* years ago; I'll always thank him for this great gift. I'm grateful also to the estate of Samuel Beckett for granting me permission to perform four of the *Texts* (numbers 1, 9, 11, and 13) in their entirety.

The *Texts* were not written for the stage, but it's as an actor and a clown that I approach them. That's the angle from which I view the world. So with American Conservatory Theater, and the designers, stage managers, and scenic artists who've helped realize this production, I offer up my take on some of the world's strangest and most beautiful prose.

Bill Irwin

## Special Thanks to

Don Bill  
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Original Sound Design by Aural Fixation

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The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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Director

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# SO MUCH TOIL AND PLAY

Familiar to A.C.T. audiences from Fool Moon, the wildly popular show he created with David Shiner and the Red Clay Ramblers (which they will reprise at the Geary Theater in July), Bill Irwin has over the past 25 years turned physical clowning into high theatrical

art. One of the most physically expressive actors working on stage and film today, Irwin has most recently turned his remarkable talents to the extraordinary language of Samuel Beckett's *Texts for Nothing*. In staging four selections from Beckett's mid-century collection of short prose, Irwin has created a haunting and humorous portrait of the quintessentially Beckettian clown—everyman struggling to find his way across the slippery slope of life.

Irwin has been described by critics as “America’s clown prince” and “this generation’s most purely physical comic.” He himself claims to be equal parts actor and clown, with an abiding passion for the impulse to make people laugh (which, he is quick to point out—in a sentiment with which Beckett would surely agree—“is not the same

thing as making people happy”). Irwin’s unique dexterity with movement and language make him perfectly equipped to grapple with the lyrical rhythms and existential uncertainty at the heart of Beckett’s *Texts*.

Irwin has been fascinated by Beckett’s work for more than a decade. He first tackled *Waiting for Godot* (with Robin Williams, Steve Martin, and F. Murray Abraham) in the acclaimed Lincoln Center production of 1988. In 1991, Irwin was tapped by experimental theater director and writer Joseph Chaikin—who had adapted, with Beckett’s permission, all 13 of the *Texts for Nothing* into a single monologue—to bring the *Texts* to life onstage. Irwin performed a five-week run of Chaikin’s adaptation of *Texts* at the Public Theater, and then embarked on his own personal exploration of Beckett’s prose, deciding ultimately to perform four of the pieces in their entirety,

exactly as they were published. Irwin’s *Texts for Nothing* premiered to wide acclaim in October 2000 at the Classic Stage Company in New York, where Irwin spoke with Classic Stage Artistic Director Barry Edelstein about Beckett and developing *Texts* for the stage. Below are excerpts from their conversation:

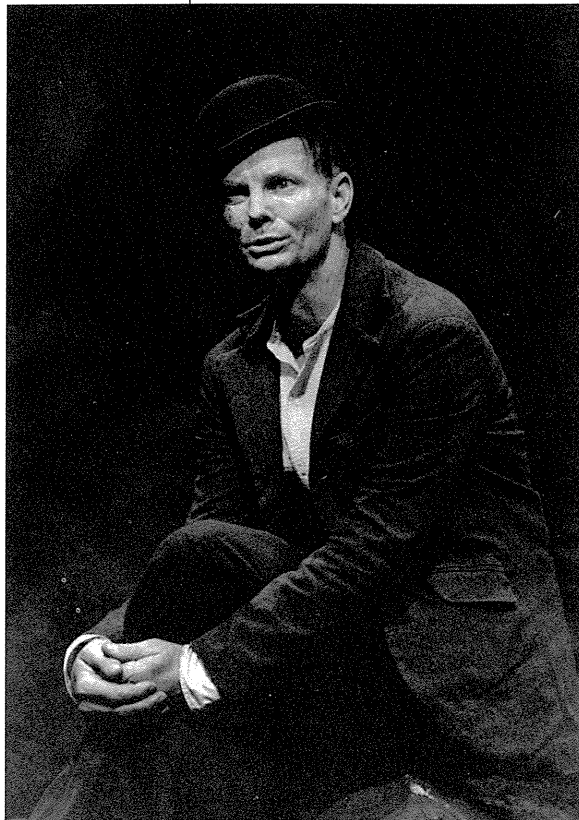
**Barry Edelstein:** Has Beckett always been on your radar screen?

**Bill Irwin:** Yes. The first piece I ever read was *Act without Words*; I read it in college. It stayed with me—the economy of language—and has always influenced the way I describe physical action, the way I write stage directions, for instance. In the end, though, as a play it doesn’t speak to me. *Texts for Nothing*, *Waiting for Godot*, and *Endgame*, on the other hand, just won’t leave me alone. They are some of the most important written words in the world to me.

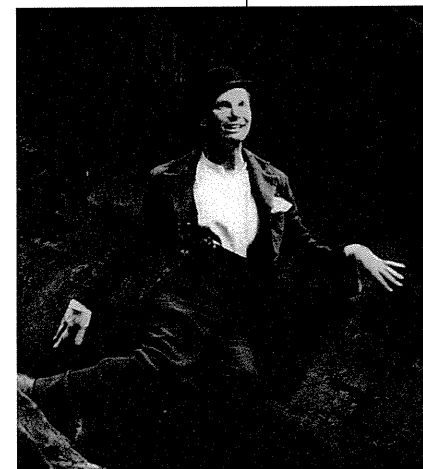
*What is it about them that speaks to you?*

I’m not sure I could even say, but they won’t let me alone. They address the fundamental questions with a simplicity and a wit and an earnestness, but layered with such beautiful irony. That’s one of the things I love about them: the nexus of irony and earnest inquiry, and of course poetry. Solipsistically, I often think, Wow, these were written right around the time I was born. And lo these many years later I’ve stumbled onto them, and have been so affected by them. Beckett wrote the *Texts* as a middle-aged man, as I am now. I think that’s in here. In *Text 11*—I have a deep crush on *Text 11*—he talks about body parts. He says, “I’m not there, nor anywhere else, what is more. Neither as head nor as voice nor as testicle, what a shame I’m not appearing anywhere as testicle.” It sounds the first time you read it like a writer invoking taboo body parts just for effect. But it’s so specifically chosen: “what a shame I’m not appearing anywhere as testicle.” Among many other things, that’s a man foreseeing his never being part of procreation. Toward the end of his life Beckett was known for asking after people’s children.

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**ABOVE AND OPPOSITE**  
Bill Irwin in the 2000 Classic Stage Company production of *Texts for Nothing*





(l to r) Robin Williams,  
Steve Martin,  
F. Murray Abraham,  
and Bill Irwin in the  
1988 Lincoln Center  
Theater production of  
Waiting for Godot

*What is Texts for Nothing about for you now? Different things than it was about ten years ago?*

I'm only really beginning to get what *Texts for Nothing* is about, but I certainly have a better handle on it than I did ten years ago. Then, it was about amazing turns of phrase in the writing. I still close my eyes and see the way they were typed in Joe's 1981 adaptation. Now, I'm almost ten years older, I like to think I'm a touch wiser, and more prepared for it as an actor—to do it justice, to wrestle with it intellectually, to deliver it in front of an audience. When I was doing Joe's adaptation, we had a really lovely set design by Christine Jones, which was a sort of wall of bare wood. But even at that time, and certainly since, I've thought of wanting to make this piece with earth present, and really look into the relationship between the actor's body—my body—and an actual earth surface. These words in relation to earth: that is one of the instinctive theatrical actions I feel in the piece. A guy wants to get up off the ground, wants to walk around, wants to go someplace, and he also wants to sit and sink into the earth. Beckett captures that basic human desire to go somewhere, to get up a mountain, and at the same time to lie down in the grass and never get up.

*Now, 12 years after Beckett's death, people are re-evaluating his reputation and emphasizing his Irishness more and his French intellectualism a bit less.*

I just think of him subjectively as an Irish writer. I've never known how to wrap my mind around the fact that he left Ireland, moved to France, and then proceeded to write incredible work in French, which he himself then translated into his own Irish-inflected English. At the beginning of *Texts* he says, "I'll describe the place, that's unimportant...Quag, heath up to the knees, faint sheep-tracks, troughs scooped deep by the rains. It was far down in one of these I was lying, out of the wind. Glorious prospect, but for the mist

that blotted out everything, valleys, loughs, plain and sea." I'm sorry, but that's not French countryside. The first psychic locale is Ireland.

*The Texts really are an explosion of words, especially compared to Godot, where almost all of the dialogue is made up of quick, staccato exchanges.*

You can get lost in the squinting modifier effect, it's infinite almost, like looking at snowflakes. You can read the same clause three, four, five different ways sometimes. But onstage you have to make a clear choice. It's the old jazz question: if every chord is composed of every note that could possibly go into that chord, then you just have mud all the time. That's one of the challenges onstage. You have to come up with a clear reading of each phrase—at least for that night. A few can sit and squint two or three ways at once, but not every phrase. And of course there are no stage directions in it, because it's not written for the stage. The irony is that the first Beckett I knew, *Act without Words*, is only stage directions.

*Rehearsing must be a heady experience. What is the process? Do you memorize it first, get up on your feet?*

What I'm doing first is seeing how this clause relates to that clause, just parsing it from a speaker's point of view. There's a lot of intellectual enterprise, and at the same time, there has to be some intuitive play with these words. The last words of *Text 1* are "Sleep now, as under that ancient lamp, all twined together, tired out with so much talking, so much listening, so much toil and play." So much play. It reminds you of the responsibility to play, and that you really won't be doing anyone any favor by getting up and reading these words in some sort of drone, or trying to be responsible to them by not inflecting them at all. The audience can read them themselves (and I hope they will), but picking specific actions is always best in the theater.

*Your reputation and your renown are tied to your amazingly acrobatic and gymnastic body and your prolific physical gifts. And now you decide to get onstage and for 80 minutes talk a nonstop tornado of words.*

I love language, and the irony is that while doing *Fool Moon* with no words, on a two-show day, as I would come off from the matinee, I'd think, I've got to get dinner, and I've got to read the *New Yorker* for 30 minutes. You know—got to read some good written word! The language of the body and written language are equally rich, and often not so mutually exclusive as we might think. They are both complex, or clear, or difficult, and in that they're not so different from one another. You read a great sentence in the newspaper, and it's like a well-built house, or you read a bad sentence and you think, Ouch! Same with a gesture. And you appreciate this in *Texts for Nothing*. It's like gorgeous motion, made awkward sometimes. That's what I think about Beckett, he's like one of the really great clowns, like Chaplin or Keaton. It's grace chosen to frame human awkwardness. And vice versa. ■

*Excerpted and adapted from the fall 2000 issue of CLASSIC, the newsletter of Classic Stage Company, Roger Oliver and Barry Edelstein, Editors.*



# “YOU MUST GO ON”

by Elizabeth Brodersen

Samuel Beckett is arguably the most influential playwright of the 20th century. Tom Stoppard, Harold Pinter, Athol Fugard, Edward Albee, David Mamet, and Sam Shepard are just a few of the contemporary dramatists whose boundary-breaking work must be counted among the theatrical progeny of Beckett's most famous play, *Waiting for Godot*, first produced in 1953 and today one of the most widely recognized titles in western literature. Yet Beckett himself came to playwriting relatively late in life, and considered his prose writing to be “the important work.”

Abandoning conventional techniques of plot, character, setting, and dialogue, while distilling life and art to their very essence, Beckett created in all of his work a mysterious alchemy of farce and tragedy that focuses squarely on the central issue of modern existence: the struggle of each individual simply to “go on,” despite the inescapable awareness of our own fundamental meaninglessness. Like the unnamed hero who speaks the *Texts for Nothing*—and like Didi and Gogo, *Godot's* familiar clowns—we all wait in a curious suspension of hope and despair for a salvation that never comes, passing our brief time in this world distracted by the griefs, joys, and traffic jams of everyday life. Beckett's singular gift, as scholar Linda Benzvi writes, was to create for us characters uniquely adept “at sidestepping despair—singing, joking, dancing, walking, adding, thinking, and above all, talking to forestall the gloom they feel about the conditions of life they cannot control.”

## EARLY LIFE

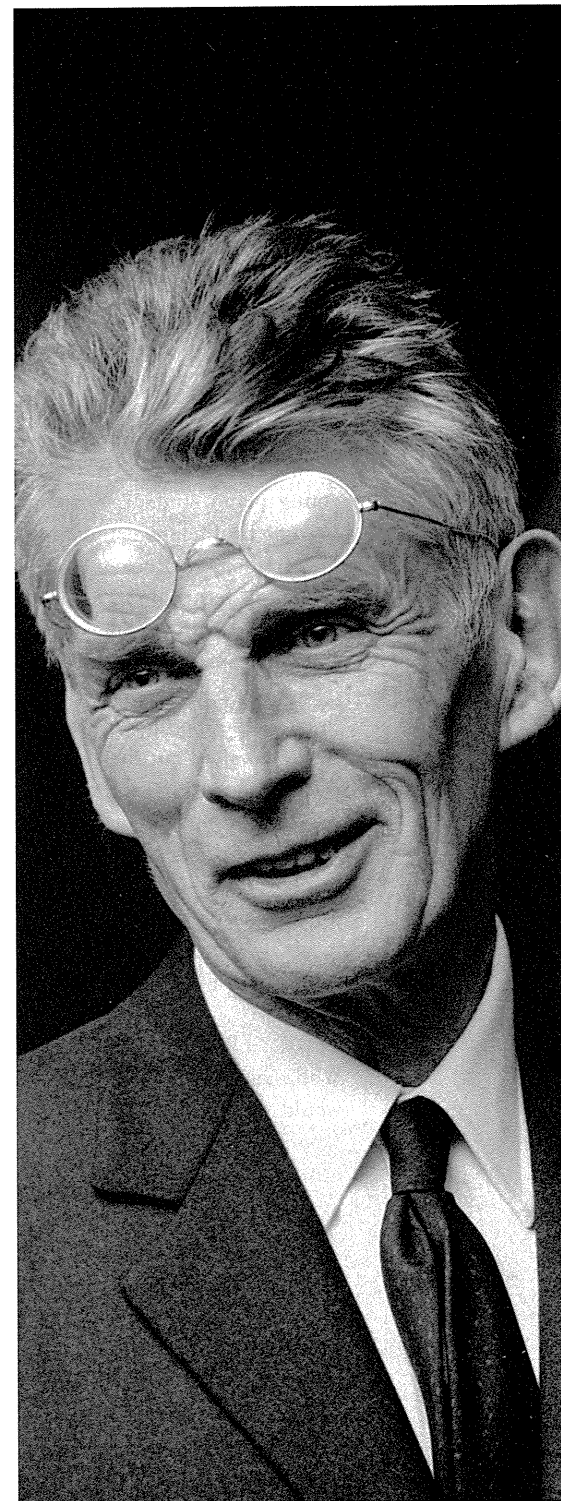
Samuel Barclay Beckett was born in Foxrock, near Dublin, on Good Friday, April 13, 1906, the second son of an Anglo-Irish middle-class Protestant family. Beckett's father was a hearty fellow who loved going to the races, swimming with his sons in Dublin Bay, and hiking the nearby mountains for hours on end. His mother, on the other hand, was a sternly critical, straitlaced woman prone to violent outbursts of temper and bouts of dark depression. Beckett was close to his family, and their deaths would later have a profound impact on the evolution of his views on life, love, and art.

Although shy and occasionally solitary, young Sam Beckett enjoyed an active, happy childhood. At 14 he left home to attend Portora Royal School, where he excelled at sports, chess, music, and the execution of practical jokes. At 17 he went up to Trinity College, Dublin, where he studied French and Italian and developed a love for literature. His free time was often spent at the Abbey Theatre, where he particularly enjoyed Sean O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*

and *The Plough and the Stars*, as well as all of John Millington Synge, who Beckett later claimed to have been the dramatist who most influenced his own work. He also appreciated the lighter fare of the music hall and circus and the silent films of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin, whose physical comedy and humor-tinged pathos (and archetypal bowler hats) would so indelibly mark Beckett's later characters. Despite his apparently lively social life, however, he became increasingly withdrawn and depressed, disturbed by the suffering he saw around him on the streets of Dublin.

In 1928 Beckett took a post as lecturer in English at the École Normale Supérieure in Paris, where he joined the circle of fellow expatriate Irishman and lover of words James Joyce, who became his friend and mentor and inspired much of Beckett's early prose. Beckett's first published work began to appear, including essays on Joyce and Proust, as well as his first poem, “Whoroscope,” a brilliant 98-line deconstruction of Descartes, written on a whim over dinner for a poetry contest.

In 1930, Beckett returned briefly to Ireland to teach, but soon discovered that he hated the academic life. Deeply depressed by a bitter argument with his mother, who threw him out of the house in disgust after reading his writing, he quit his post to travel across Europe. When his father died in June 1933, Beckett was devastated by the loss of his closest companion: “I can't write



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NOTHING IS  
MORE REAL  
THAN NOTHING  
—DEMOCRITUS

OPPOSITE  
Playwright  
Samuel Beckett  
in 1970

WHERE YOU  
ARE NOTHING,  
THERE YOU  
SHOULD WANT  
NOTHING.

—17TH-CENTURY  
FLEMISH  
METAPHYSICIAN  
ARNOLD GEULINCX

about him, I can only walk the fields and climb the ditches after him.”

After two years in London undergoing intensive psychotherapy, and one last terrible row with his mother, Beckett left the United Kingdom for good, and in 1937 he settled in Paris, where he became a familiar fixture on the literary and artistic scene. By 1938 he had published *More Kicks Than Pricks*, a collection of 10 stories (1934); followed by the poetry collection *Echo's Bones* (1935), and his first novel, *Murphy* (1938). In January of that year, however, he was deeply shaken by the random cruelty of a vicious assault: one night while walking with friends, he was stabbed by a pimp, whose knife narrowly missed Beckett's heart. When he later visited the assailant in prison to ask him why he had attacked him, the man could only reply, “I don't know, monsieur. I'm sorry.”

While recuperating in the hospital, Beckett became friends with a young piano student, Suzanne Deschevaux-Dumesnil, who would become his lifelong companion (and, in 1961, his wife). As the threat of war loomed, Beckett decided to remain in Paris with Suzanne instead of returning to neutral Ireland; appalled by the Nazis' treatment of Jews, they joined an underground Resistance cell, for whom Beckett translated smuggled intelligence reports. In 1942, betrayed by a mercenary French priest, they fled Paris just minutes ahead of the Gestapo. Settling in the hill town of Roussillon in the Vaucluse, Beckett waited out the rest of the war working as a farmer, helping the Resistance, and working on the novel *Watt* (published in 1953).

With the cessation of hostilities in Europe in 1945, Beckett visited Ireland briefly before returning to France as a volunteer in a military hospital in Saint-Lô, where he was shocked by the devastation and misery caused by the war. In the winter of 1945, he finally returned to his beloved Paris, where the most creatively productive period of his life was about to begin.

### FROM “FRENZY” TO “IMPASSE”

While visiting his mother in 1946, Beckett had a “revelation” that would utterly transform the way he looked at his life and work. Standing in her room, he became suddenly, glaringly aware of his own stupidity: “*Molloy* and the other [volumes in the ‘trilogy’] came to me the day I became aware of my own folly. Only then did I begin to write the things I feel.” Struck by an overwhelming compulsion to simplify, he determined to explore his own inner world as the source of his writing, to focus on universal explorations of human poverty, failure, exile, and loss.

At the same time, he decided to write only in French, as a way to “cut away the excess, to strip away the color,” to experiment with language with a greater simplicity and objectivity. Galvanized by these decisions, Beckett commenced upon a “frenzy of writing,” producing between 1946 and 1949 his greatest prose works—the narra-

tives known as “the trilogy,” *Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable*—as well as the novel *Mercier et Camier* and several stories.

With the completion of *The Unnamable* in 1949, however, the brief spurt of productivity had been spent, and Beckett found himself inexplicably unable to write. In *Three Dialogues*, his famous 1949 text on painting, Beckett describes the profound frustration of this period in terms of the artist's existential dilemma: “There is nothing to express, nothing with which to express, nothing from which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express.”

Beckett attempted to break through his “celebrated impasse” by turning his hand to dramatic writing. “In search of respite from the wasteland of prose,” he soon produced the plays *Eleutheria* and *Waiting for Godot*.

In 1950, Beckett's mother succumbed to Parkinson's disease. Stricken with grief while watching her downward slide into dementia and death, and still lost “in the doldrums that followed the ‘trilogy,’” he worked sporadically at several short texts, struggling to record the antithetical desire for cessation and continuation that was to plague his thoughts, and illuminate his writing, throughout his life. Picking up the ending of *The Unnamable* (“I don't know, I'll never know, in the silence you don't know, you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on”) virtually uninterrupted, he began the first *Text*: “Suddenly, no, at last, long last I couldn't any more, I couldn't go on. Someone said, You can't stay here. I couldn't stay there and I couldn't go on.”

### NOTHING DOING

Often overlooked by biographers and critics, the *Texts for Nothing* have only recently been recognized as fundamental clues to under-

*The Dublin mountains, where young Sam Beckett hiked with his father*



D. DANISON

STUDENT: I HAVE BEEN ASKING AND ASKING, "WHO AM I?" UNTIL I FEEL THERE IS JUST NO ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION. ROSHI: YOU WON'T FIND AN ENTITY CALLED "I." STUDENT [HEATEDLY]: THEN WHY AM I ASKING THE QUESTION? ROSHI: BECAUSE IN YOUR PRESENT STATE YOU CAN'T HELP YOURSELF. THE ORDINARY PERSON IS FOREVER ASKING, "WHY?" OR "WHAT?" OR "WHO?" —THE THREE PILLARS OF ZEN, BY ROSHI PHILIP KAPLEAU

standing the evolution of their author's work. With their inventive technique and lack of defined subject matter, the *Texts* redefined the possibilities of the short story itself. Ignoring the conventional notion of a complete story centered on a single, coherent, integrated character, Beckett instead created shards of continuous, unfolding narrative in an attempt to capture the very essence of being itself—as critic Martin Esslin writes, "rais[ing] the problem of the identity of the human self from, as it were, the inside."

The 13 individual *Texts*, each complete in itself and only tangentially related, comprise just 65 pages. (Some critics, noting Beckett's fondness for the number 13, claim the *Texts* represent the final 13 days in the womb of a being born on Friday the 13th.) Written in French, the *Texts* are nevertheless infused with the rhythms and performative quality of the oral storytelling tradition of Beckett's Irish roots. Although he rigidly enforced adherence to the published stage directions of his plays, Beckett in fact encouraged directors to interpret his prose in performance, and often offered staging advice. For Joseph Chaikin's 1981 adaptation of *Texts for Nothing*, for example, Beckett suggested the use of external voices to suggest the disintegration of character and fragmentation of the speaker's monologue.

In 1955, Beckett published these "very short abortive texts" with several longer stories under the title *Nouvelles et textes pour rien*, taken from the phrase conductors use for the silent ghost measure used to set the orchestra's tempo before commencing to play. Written in the first person, the *Texts* fill the silence of the void out of which artistic creation, even life itself, emerges with the constant stream of thought and observations of an unnamed speaker, who reviews images and memories of the past, mountainscapes of Beckett's Dublin childhood and characters from his earlier fiction and plays, while trying to make sense of his own existence.

Simultaneously author and subject, the speaker struggles in vain to identify the disembodied voices that run through his imagination, defiantly proclaiming the anthem of Beckett's favorite philosopher: "I think; therefore, I am." But just who exactly is the "I" who thinks and, therefore, exists? In Beckett's art, as in life, there is no easy answer.

#### GODOT ARRIVES

By 1951, at the age of 45, Beckett's work remained little known outside a circle of avant-garde artists. Eventually picked up by Jérôme Lindon's Éditions de Minuit, the trilogy appeared between 1951 and 1953; English editions, painstakingly translated by Beckett himself, soon followed in the United States and caught the attention of American academics.

Encouraged by his nascent success, Beckett became preoccupied with trying to get his dramatic work produced. Eventually the French

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amy hengerer '00 and chris ferry '00 in *pains of youth*, by ferdinand bruckner (photo by ken friedman)

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(l to r) Chris Ferry, Douglas Nolan, Tommy A. Gomez, Marco Barricelli, and Benton Greene in *Enrico IV*. Photo: Kevin Berne

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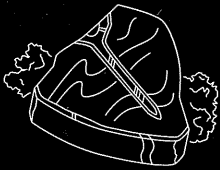
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"You Must Go On," continued from page 20

actor-director Roger Blin agreed to produce *Godot*, and in 1953 the premiere production at Paris's Théâtre de Babylone was a *succès de scandale*, prompting fistfights among perplexed audience members waiting for a plot and not entirely certain they weren't the victims of some elaborate theatrical hoax. Similar controversy followed the London, Miami, and New York productions. Beckett found himself an instant international celebrity, and *Godot* and entered the theatrical canon as an existential classic.

Discomfited by the attention and in despair over his continuing inability to write, he built a small home in Ussy, about 60 miles outside Paris, to create a haven where he could work undisturbed. "I feel very tired and stupid, more and more so, in spite of my often resting in the country," he wrote to a friend, "and I feel more and more that I shall perhaps never be able to write anything else. . . . I can't go on and I can't get back. Perhaps another play someday."

## THE END

More plays did follow, notably *Endgame* (1957), *Krapp's Last Tape* (1958), *Act without Words I & II* (1959), *Happy Days* (1961), and *Play* (1963), as well as the prose narrative *How It Is* (1961), a film, radio and television plays, and a few pieces of short prose. By his death in 1989, Beckett had become such an avant-garde icon that every one of his nondramatic works had also been adapted for the stage, with and without his permission. Yet he never felt that he had conquered what he called the "agonies of galloping speechlessness."

In his life as in his writing, Beckett stripped down to the bare essentials of human existence, living out his days in modest simplicity. Even when honored with the Nobel Prize in 1969, he refused to attend the award ceremony and gave the prize money away to needy artists. Although he flatly refused to grant interviews or public appearances throughout his life, he graciously agreed to meet anyone interested enough to show up at his neighborhood café for an espresso—including a nervous Bill Irwin in 1987.

Despite—or perhaps because of—the mountains of words written about him, Beckett persistently resisted analysis of his life and work. "If people want to have headaches among the overtones, let them," he wrote. "And provide their own aspirin." Beckett's work *was* his life. "Nothing matters but the writing," he insisted. "There has been nothing else worthwhile."

Acutely aware of the brevity and ultimate meaninglessness of human existence, Beckett nevertheless struggled on, completing his last work, the short prose text *Stirrings Still*, in 1986, at the age of 80. "I couldn't have done it otherwise," he once said. "Gone on, I mean. I could not have gone through the awful wretched mess of life without having left a stain upon the silence." ■

WHERE WOULD I  
 GO, IF I COULD  
 GO, WHO WOULD  
 I BE, IF I COULD  
 BE, WHAT  
 WOULD I SAY, IF  
 I HAD A VOICE,  
 WHO SAYS THIS,  
 SAYING IT'S ME?

—TEXTS FOR  
 NOTHING

Material for this article was drawn from: *Conversations with and about Beckett*, by Mel Gussow; *Damned to Fame*, by James Knowlson; Samuel Beckett, by *Deirdre Bair*; "Samuel Beckett," by Martin Esslin, *Britannica.com*; Samuel Beckett, by *Linda Ben-Zvi*; Samuel Beckett: *The Complete Short Prose 1929-1989*, edited by S. E. Gontarski; *A Reader's Guide to Samuel Beckett*, by Hugh Kenner.

## A.C.T. WELCOMES NEW TRUSTEES

A.C.T. is thrilled to announce that five prominent Bay Area professionals have recently dedicated their expertise and enthusiastic support for A.C.T. by joining the company's board of trustees. As the governing body of A.C.T., the board is responsible for the overall artistic, educational, and financial integrity of the institution. Each trustee's enthusiasm for theater and unique professional and personal perspective on the complicated process of nonprofit-theater production prove incalculable assets to the company and help ensure A.C.T.'s ongoing fiscal stability and success. Introducing the newest members of The American Conservatory Theatre Foundation:



Teveia R. Barnes



Janet Lamkin



Thomas A. Larsen

**Teveia R. Barnes** is the executive director and general counsel of Lawyers for One America, a Bay Area-based collaboration of lawyers and organizations in the legal profession that works to ensure that the legal profession reflects the diversity of the society at large and to provide service to communities in need so they can enjoy equal access to justice. Barnes's professional commitment to inclusiveness also informs her eagerness to attract ever broader audiences to A.C.T. "I have always loved theater and attended plays," says Barnes, "but A.C.T. really got my attention when I went to the reading of Robert O'Hara's *Insurrection: Holding History* [at San Francisco's First Congregational Church] a few years ago. I definitely felt that A.C.T. reached out to me with that event. A.C.T. in fact reached out to the community, and I am part of that community. So I began to think of A.C.T. as a place to go, not just to be entertained, but to

grow. I decided then that I want to help A.C.T. continue to do that with everyone. Theater can speak to all of us."

**Janet Lamkin** is senior vice president for public policy at Bank of America, which includes state-government relations and the development and analysis of public policy issues affecting the company. She has also served on the boards of several state-level organizations, including the California Bankers Association, California Foundation on the Environment and the Economy, Professional Businesswomen of California, and State Government Affairs Council. Lamkin was appointed by former Governor Wilson to the California Advisory Council on Economic Development. "I have long been a fan of live theater," says Lamkin. "My involvement with A.C.T. dates back to my junior high school days in the Central Valley. Our school participated in A.C.T.'s wonderful Student Matinee Program, which brings children from all over Northern California to A.C.T. I've been a fan ever since!"

**Thomas A. Larsen** heads the real estate practice of law firm Howard, Rice, Nemerovski, Canady, Falk & Rabkin. In addition to serving as an A.C.T. trustee, Larsen also serves on the board of the

Presidio Heights Association of Neighbors. He has served on the faculty of the Practicing Law Institute and was president of the board of trustees of the Bay Area Discovery Museum. Currently, he is leading an effort to develop affordable housing in San Francisco for a coalition of nonprofit groups. "My 14-year-old daughter and my wife have taken many terrific classes at A.C.T., and my 11-year-old son has acted in plays due to A.C.T.'s inspiration," says Larsen. "A.C.T. is a unique and significant educational force in the community, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to be more involved in its mission."

## THE PROSPERO SOCIETY

A.C.T. invites you to include A.C.T. in your future plans by joining the recently formed Prospero Society. Named after the wise and powerful magician in William Shakespeare's *Tempest*, the society was established last winter to honor those who wish to help sustain the future of A.C.T. by including the organization in their estate plans.

There are a number of ways to join the Prospero Society, many of which may provide you or your estate with significant tax benefits. The most popular way to join is by making a bequest to A.C.T. in your will or living trust. You can bequeath a specific item or dollar amount, or a percentage of the residue of your estate. Your bequest may be

A.C.T.

## Join the Stars

### Starry Starry Night 2001

benefiting a.c.t.'s conservatory of actor training

Sunday, October 7, 2001

Imperial Suite, The Westin St. Francis  
6-10 p.m.

Event Chair, **Frannie Fleishhacker**

A dual celebration of A.C.T.'s 35th-anniversary season and Carey Perloff's 10th season as artistic director

Elegant cocktail reception, sit-down dinner, live auction, and cabaret performances. Tickets are \$500 and \$350. Individual and corporate sponsorships available.

For more information or to receive an invitation, please call A.C.T. Special Events Coordinator Amy Kirk at (415) 439-2308 or e-mail your address to: [akirk@act-sfbay.org](mailto:akirk@act-sfbay.org).

unrestricted, or earmarked for a specific program. There is no minimum bequest amount required for membership.

You may also designate A.C.T. as a beneficiary of your retirement plan or life insurance policy, or make a life-income gift by establishing a charitable remainder trust. Each of these arrangements provides different benefits to the donor. Your accountant, attorney, or estate planner can help you decide which planned gift will work best for you.

As a member of the Prospero Society, you are eligible for benefits specifically designed for this special group of donors. Benefits include: acknowledgment in *Stagebill* and *Preview* (A.C.T.'s subscriber magazine), invitations to behind-the-scenes events with A.C.T. artistic staff, and invitations to special events created just for society members.

If you would like to make a planned gift or receive more information, please contact Michele Casau in the development department at (415) 439-2451, or send an e-mail to [mcasau@act-sfbay.org](mailto:mcasau@act-sfbay.org). All inquiries will be held in the strictest confidence.

## THE GALLERY AT THE GEARY

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

Currently on view are paintings and mixed-media works by Boston painter Deborah Barlow, whose work has been influenced by her frequent travels to the coasts of Wales, Scotland, and Ireland and the American Southwest.

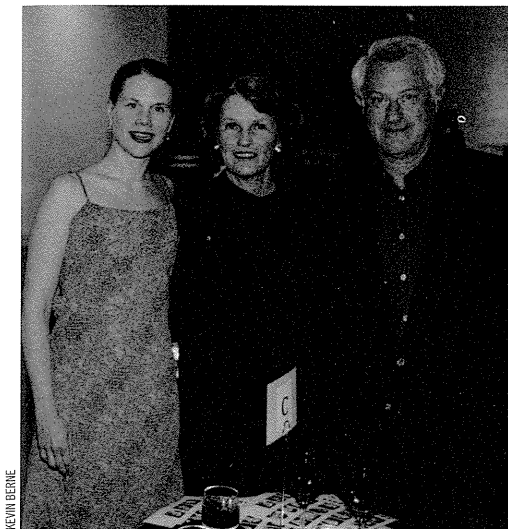
Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. Barlow is represented locally by Kevin Simmers, (415) 474-1066. Her work can also be viewed online at [www.deborahbarlow.com](http://www.deborahbarlow.com).

## HELLOS AND GOODBYES

A.C.T. bid bon voyage to the Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2001 at graduation ceremonies held May 12 in the Geary Theater. Honorary M.F.A. degrees were conferred on consummate clown/actor Bill Irwin and director Laird Williamson.

Before graduation, the third-year class traveled to New York and Los Angeles to perform their audition showcase for invited audiences of agents and casting directors. The class also performed an impressive cabaret to an invited audience of A.C.T. donors who contributed funds specifically to support actor training at A.C.T.

To the class of 2001: Hearty congratulations, a tearful farewell, and a joyful welcome to the A.C.T. family of professional artists.



KEVIN BERNIE



KEVIN BERNIE



KEVIN BERNIE



KEN FRIEDMAN



KEN FRIEDMAN

**CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP LEFT:** Kerry Sullivan '01 with Toby and Sally Rosenblatt (parents of James Rosenblatt '01); Atosa Babaoff '01; Managing Director Heather Kitchen (far left) and Conservatory Director Melissa Smith with honorary M.F.A. recipients Bill Irwin and Laird Williamson; the M.F.A. Program graduating class of 2001; Kenneth Lee '01

**BILL IRWIN** was an original member of KRAKEN, a theater company directed by Herbert Blau, and spent five years as an original member of San Francisco's Pickle Family Circus. He has also appeared locally as a guest with the Oberlin Dance Company (ODC), which first produced his original work. He has developed original theater works with David Shiner, Doug Skinner, Michael O'Connor, Nancy Harrington, Margaret Eginton, Leon Chesney, Steve Clemente, Jeff Gordon, and other collaborators. He is an associate artist with the Roundabout Theatre Company; Broadway credits include *Fool Moon*, *Largely New York* (which received five Tony Award nominations and won Drama Desk, Outer Critics' Circle, and New York Dance and Performance awards), *Accidental Death of an Anarchist*; and *5-6-7-8 Dance!* Off-Broadway work includes *Not Quite/New York*, *The Courtroom*, *The Regard of Flight* (seen on PBS's Great Performances), his own adaptation of Molière's *Scapin*, *Waiting for Godot* with Steve Martin, Robin Williams, and F. Murray Abraham at Lincoln Center (directed by Mike Nichols), *The Tempest* in Central Park (directed by George Wolfe), *The Garden of Earthly Delights* (directed and choreographed by Martha Clarke), *Texts for Nothing* (adapted and directed by Joseph Chaikin), and his own direction of *A Flea in Her Ear* for the Roundabout Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include *The Seagull* (directed by Des McAnuff), *A Man's a Man* (directed by Robert Woodruff), and *Three Cuckolds* (codirected with Michael Grief) at the La Jolla Playhouse. He has also had a longstanding relationship with Seattle Repertory Theatre, where *Largely New York* and *Scapin* were developed. Irwin's numerous television appearances include: "Third Rock from the Sun," "Northern Exposure," "Sesame Street," "Elmo's World," "Saturday Night Live," "The Tonight Show," "Late Night with David Letterman," "Bette Midler: Mondo Beyondo," "The Closing Ceremony of the 1996 Olympic Games," PBS's "Great Performances 20th-Anniversary Special," and "The Cosby Show." Music video performances include Bobby McFerrin's "Don't Worry, Be Happy" and Mary Chapin Carpenter's "Let Me into Your Heart." Feature film credits include *Popeye*, *Eight Men Out*, *Silent Tongue*, *Illuminata*, *My Blue Heaven*, *A New Life*, *Hot Shots*, *Scenes from a Mall*, *Stepping Out*, and *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. Irwin is the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts choreographer's fellowship and a Guggenheim fellowship, and in 1984 he became the first performing artist to receive a five-year MacArthur fellowship.

**DOUGLAS STEIN** (*Scenic Designer*) has designed Broadway productions of *Falsettos*, *Our Town*, *Largely New York*, *Fool Moon*, *Timon of Athens*, *The Government Inspector*, *The Molière Comedies*, John Leguizamo's *Freak*, and *Dirty Blonde*. Off-Broadway credits include *Texts for Nothing* (OBIE Award) and *Arturo Ui* (with John Turturro; directed by Carey Perloff) at Classic Stage Company, *The Regard of Flight*, Bill Irwin and Mark O'Donnell's adaptation of *Scapin*, *March of the Falsettos*, *Through the Leaves* (OBIE Award), *Happy Days*, *The Devils*, *Dirty Blonde*, and *King John*. Recent regional theater work includes *The Darker Face of the Earth* by Rita Dove (a Penumbra and Guthrie Theater coproduction) and *Blood Wedding* at La Jolla Playhouse. Opera and dance designs include Philip Glass and Susan Marshall's adaptation of *Les Enfants Terribles* at Brooklyn Academy of Music and *The Most Dangerous Room in the House* and *The Descent Beckons*, both choreographed by Susan Marshall.

**ANITA YAVICH** (*Costume Designer*) recently designed the costumes for *Big Love* at A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle and *The Oresteia* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Her New York credits include *Kit Marlowe*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Civil Sex*, and *Pericles* at the New York Shakespeare Festival; *Texts for Nothing* at Classic Stage Company; *Geography-Tree*, by Ralph Lemon, at Brooklyn Academy of Music; *Forgiveness*, by Chen Shi Zheng, at

Asia Society; *Sueño* at Manhattan Class Company; *Red* at Manhattan Theatre Club; *Mere Mortals and Others* at John Houseman Theatre; *Trojan Women*, *A Love Story* with En Garde Arts; and *The Universe* at the Ontological Hysterics. She has designed for many regional theaters across the United States, including the McCarter Theatre Center, Center Stage, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, and Williamstown Theatre Festival. Her opera credits include *Madame Butterfly* at Houston Grand Opera and the Grand Théâtre de Genève; *The Silver River* (written by David Henry Hwang and composed by Bright Sheng) at the Spoleto Festival, Prince Music Theatre, and Lincoln Center Festival; and *Arsace II*, directed by Francesca Zambello, at San Francisco Opera. Upcoming projects include *Three Tales*, composed by Steve Reich, at the Vienna Festival.

**NANCY SCHERTLER** (*Lighting Designer*) designed the Broadway productions of *Abbey's Song* and Bill Irwin's *Fool Moon* and *Largely/New York* (for which she earned a Tony Award nomination). Off-Broadway credits include *Texts for Nothing* at Classic Stage Company, *The Brides of the Moon* at New York Theatre Workshop, and *Falsettoland* at Playwrights Horizons. She has also worked extensively at regional theaters throughout the United States, including the Huntington Theatre Company, McCarter Theatre Center, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Roundabout Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Shakespeare Theatre, and Arena Stage, where she is an associate artist. Her opera work includes *Don Giovanni* and *The Daughter of the Regiment* for Boston Lyric Opera and *Così fan tutte*, *La Cenerentola*, and *Julius Caesar*, among others, at Wolf Trap Opera Company. Schertler has received numerous Helen Hayes Award nominations and an American Theatre Wing Design Award nomination.

**GARTH HEMPHILL** (*Sound Designer*) is in his fourth season as A.C.T.'s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 100 productions, including, for A.C.T., "*Master Harold*"...and the boys, *Enrico IV*, *Goodnight Children Everywhere*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Misanthrope*, Frank Loesser's *Hans Christian Andersen*, *Edward II*, *2 Pianos*, *4 Hands*, *The House of Mirth*, *The Invention of Love*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Insurrection: Holding History*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Mary Stuart*, *The Guardsman*, *Old Times*, and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award). He has earned Drama-Logue Awards for his work on *Jar the Floor*, *A Christmas Carol* (South Coast Repertory), *The Things You Don't Know*, *Blithe Spirit*, *New England*, *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart*, *Fortinbras*, and the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*. Hemphill is a principal partner of GLH Design, Inc., a local design firm.

**KIMBERLY MARK WEBB** (*Stage Manager*) is in his seventh season at A.C.T., where he worked most recently on *Enrico IV*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Misanthrope*, *Edward II*, *The Invention of Love*, and *The Threepenny Opera*. During 19 years with Berkeley Repertory Theatre he stage-managed more than 70 productions. Other credits include *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* in San Francisco, *The Woman Warrior* for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, *Mary Stuart* and *The Lady from the Sea* at Boston's Huntington Theatre Company, *Hecuba* at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, and *The Philanderer* at Aurora Theatre Company. Webb served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

**FRANCESCA RUSSELL** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) has worked at A.C.T. on the 1996, 1999, and 2000 productions of *A Christmas Carol*, as well as "*Master Harold*"...and the boys, *Goodnight Children Everywhere*, *2 Pianos*, *4 Hands*, *High Society*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, *The Royal Family*, *Machinal*, and *Shlemiel the First*. Last summer she stage-managed Danny



Scheie's production of *Cymbeline* for Shakespeare Santa Cruz, followed by *The Philanderer* at the Aurora Theatre Company. She also worked on *Ravenshead* and Mabou Mines' *Peter and Wendy* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and has spent seasons with San Jose Repertory Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, the California Shakespeare Festival, and La Jolla Playhouse. Russell is a graduate of UC San Diego.

**CLASSIC STAGE COMPANY** (*Original Producer*) is the award-winning off-Broadway theater that reimagines the classics for contemporary audiences. Now in its 34th season, the third under the direction of Artistic Director Barry Edelstein and Producing Director Beth Emelson, Classic Stage believes the works of the past are meaningful, relevant, and indeed essential to the world of today. Taking the broadest view of what constitutes a classic, Classic Stage explores the literature of many periods and cultures. Celebrating the living impulses that make classic stories endure, Classic Stage creates vibrant contemporary theater that speaks vividly and directly to today, allowing audiences to understand in striking new ways how the shared human experience resonates across time. Emphasizing directorial innovation, boldness in design, and the visceral thrill of American classical acting at its best, Classic Stage's progressive approach to classic works is committed to advancing American theater art. Classic Stage invites the best established and emerging artists in all disciplines of theater to create works for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. Classic Stage productions have been cited repeatedly by all the major off-Broadway theater awards: Drama Desk, Outer Critics' Circle, Drama League, the 1999 Lucille Lortel Award for outstanding body of work, and three 2001 OBIE Awards. Visit Classic Stage Company on the Web at [www.classicstage.org](http://www.classicstage.org).

## HARSCH INVESTMENT PROPERTIES LLC DOWNTOWN CENTER GARAGE CORPORATE SPONSOR

The Downtown Center Garage has had a close relationship with A.C.T. for more than 25 years. Located at the corner of Mason and O'Farrell streets, just footsteps away from the Geary Theater, the garage provides convenient parking for A.C.T. audiences.

Built in 1955 with a thousand stalls on 11 floors, the garage received accolades for its innovative space utilization, which has since been copied by major garages throughout the world.

Donors who contribute \$1,500 or more to A.C.T. enjoy free parking at the garage during all subscription performances. Other A.C.T. audience members can take advantage of the Downtown Center Garage's evening special to park after 5:30 p.m. and out by 9:30 a.m. for just \$12.50. The garage operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

General Manager Pete Demos welcomes all A.C.T. patrons to the Downtown Center Garage.



**CAREY PERLOFF** (*Artistic Director*) assumed artistic leadership of A.C.T. in 1992. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has staged for A.C.T. acclaimed productions of Euripides' *Hecuba*, the American premieres of Tom Stoppard's *Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink*, *The Threepenny Opera*, *Mary Stuart*, *Old Times*, *Arcadia*, *The Rose Tattoo*, *Antigone*, *Creditors*, *Uncle Vanya*, *Home*, the world premiere of Leslie Ayzavian's *Singer's Boy*, and the Geary Theater inaugural production of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. This season she directs new translations of Molière's *Misanthrope* and Pirandello's *Enrico IV*.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language* and *The Birthday Party*, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, 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 the Brooklyn Academy of Music.

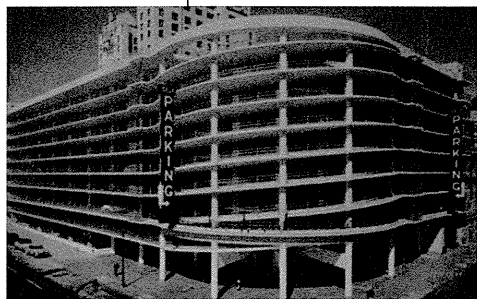
Perloff received a B.A. in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.



**HEATHER M. KITCHEN** (*Managing Director*), now in her 26th year of professional theater, joined A.C.T. as managing director in 1996. She currently serves as a member of the executive committee of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) (the national consortium of regional theaters), the board of governors of the Commonwealth Club of California, the board of directors of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the leadership board of the San Francisco chapter of the American Red Cross. Before joining A.C.T., she served as general manager of the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, where she was responsible for a five-theater complex that produced up to 16 productions annually. A native of Canada, Kitchen received an honors degree in drama and theater arts from the University of Waterloo and earned her M.B.A. from Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario.

**MELISSA SMITH** (*Conservatory Director*), oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory's Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T., Smith served as 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, including work by Mac Wellman and David Greenspan. 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.



# A.C.T. EXTRAS

Come to A.C.T. for the most entertaining education in town. A.C.T. offers several ways for you to learn about the season's productions and to express your views on the issues they raise:

## A.C.T. PROLOGUES

These lively half-hour presentations are conducted by each show's director and are open to the public regardless of whether you are seeing the performance that evening. Prologues, sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco, are a perfect way to get a look at the creative process behind each production. Prologues are held before the Tuesday preview of every production, at 5:30 p.m., in the Geary Theater. Doors open at 5 p.m.

## AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

These informal sessions are a great way to share your feelings and reactions with fellow theatergoers. Audience Exchanges take place in the Geary Theater for 30 minutes immediately after selected performances and are moderated by A.C.T. staff members and artists.

## WORDS ON PLAYS

Each entertaining and informative audience handbook contains advance program notes, a synopsis, and additional background information about the play. A subscription for seven handbooks is available by mail to full-season subscribers for \$42; limited copies for individual plays are also available for purchase at the Geary Theater Box Office, and at the merchandise stand in the Geary Theater, for \$8 each.

## ON TEXTS FOR NOTHING

### A.C.T. PROLOGUE

Tuesday, June 19, 2001, 5:30 p.m.

### AUDIENCE EXCHANGES

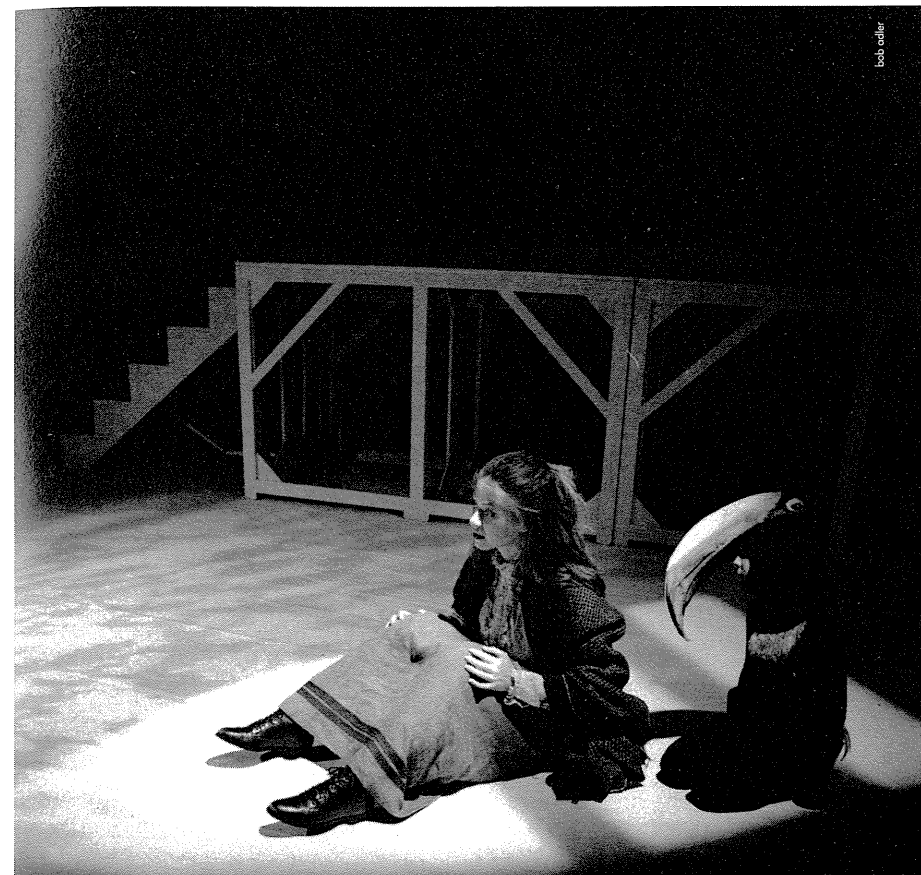
June 26

July 1 (matinee)

July 11 (matinee)



For more information, call (415) 749-2ACT  
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bob osher

## young conservatory

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# A.C.T.

**american conservatory theater**

carey perloff, artistic director heather kitchen, managing director

melissa smith, conservatory director craig slaight, young conservatory director

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**To find out more about ways to give to A.C.T., please contact:**

A.C.T. Manager of Individual Giving Michele Casau  
30 Grant Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94108  
(415) 439-2451

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, (415) 834-3200. On the Web: [www.act-sfbay.org](http://www.act-sfbay.org).

## 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 12-8 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During nonperformance weeks, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily.

### Online

Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at [www.act-sfbay.org](http://www.act-sfbay.org). Seating quality is consistent with that available by phone or in person. A.C.T.'s popular **E-mail Club** (accessible through the Web site) offers members reminders of upcoming shows, special offers and last-minute ticket discounts, and the latest company news.

### 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.

### BASS

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

### 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 donated.

### 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 \$61.

### Subscriptions

Full-season subscribers save up to 29% and receive special benefits including performance rescheduling by phone, and more. Call the A.C.T. Subscription Hotline at (415) 749-2250 or visit A.C.T. online.

### 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 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 and senior citizen subscriptions** are also available. A.C.T. also offers one **Pay What You Wish** performance during the run of each production.

### 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 online, by phone or fax, or in person at the box office. Gift certificates are valid for three years and may be redeemed for any performance or A.C.T. merchandise.

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

### Geary Theater Tours

A.C.T. offers guided tours (\$8, \$6 subscribers and seniors, \$4 students) of the Geary Theater on selected Wednesday and Saturday mornings. For information, call (415) 749-2ACT or visit A.C.T. online.

### Student Matinees

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

### A.C.T. Extras

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

### ASL

American Sign Language-interpreted performances are offered throughout the season for Deaf audience members. For performance dates and times, visit [www.act-sfbay.org/community](http://www.act-sfbay.org/community) or subscribe to A.C.T.'s Deaf community e-mail list by sending an e-mail to [deafcommunity@act-sfbay.org](mailto:deafcommunity@act-sfbay.org). Deaf patrons may purchase tickets by calling (415) 749-2ACT or via TTY at (415) 749-2370.

### Conservatory

A.C.T. offers instruction in a wide range of theater disciplines. The **Master of Fine Arts 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 Corporate Education Services, to enthusiasts at every level of experience. The **Young Conservatory** is a broad-based program for students 8-19. Call (415) 439-2350 for a free brochure.

### Costume Rental

More than 10,000 costumes, from handmade period garments to modern sportswear, are available for rental. For information call (415) 439-2379.

### Parking

A.C.T. patrons can park for just \$9 at the Hilton SF for up to five hours, subject to

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

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.

## 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 at the Geary Theater Box Office.

### Refreshments

Bar service is available one hour before the performance in the lower lobby and 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 that time. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

### Beeepers!

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.

### 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 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 the lower lobby, the balcony lobby, and the uppermost lobby.



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. is a participant in the National Theatre Artist Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American theater, and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.



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.

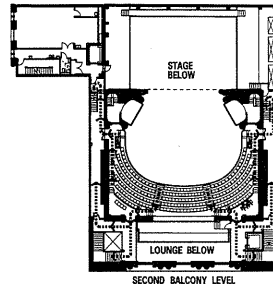
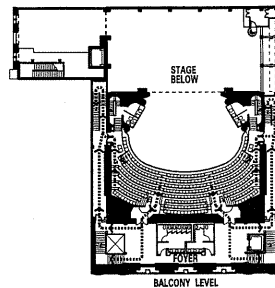
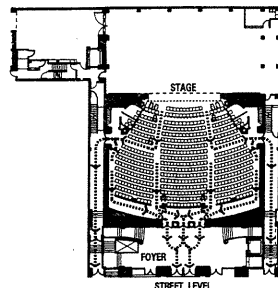


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A.C.T. is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency.

## GEARY THEATER EXITS



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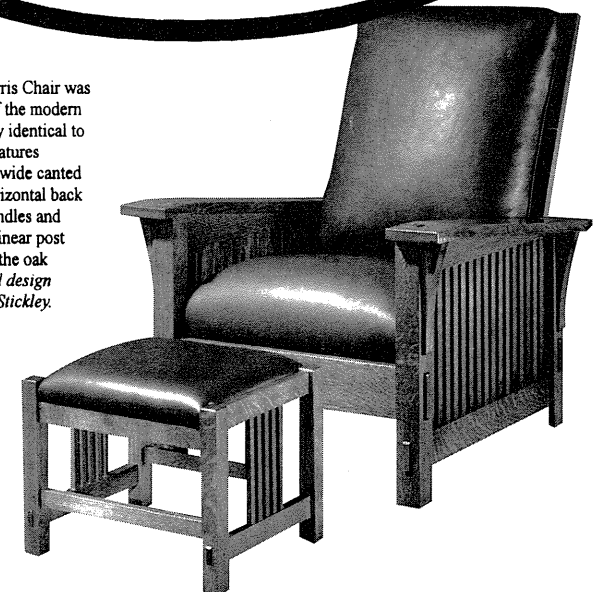
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