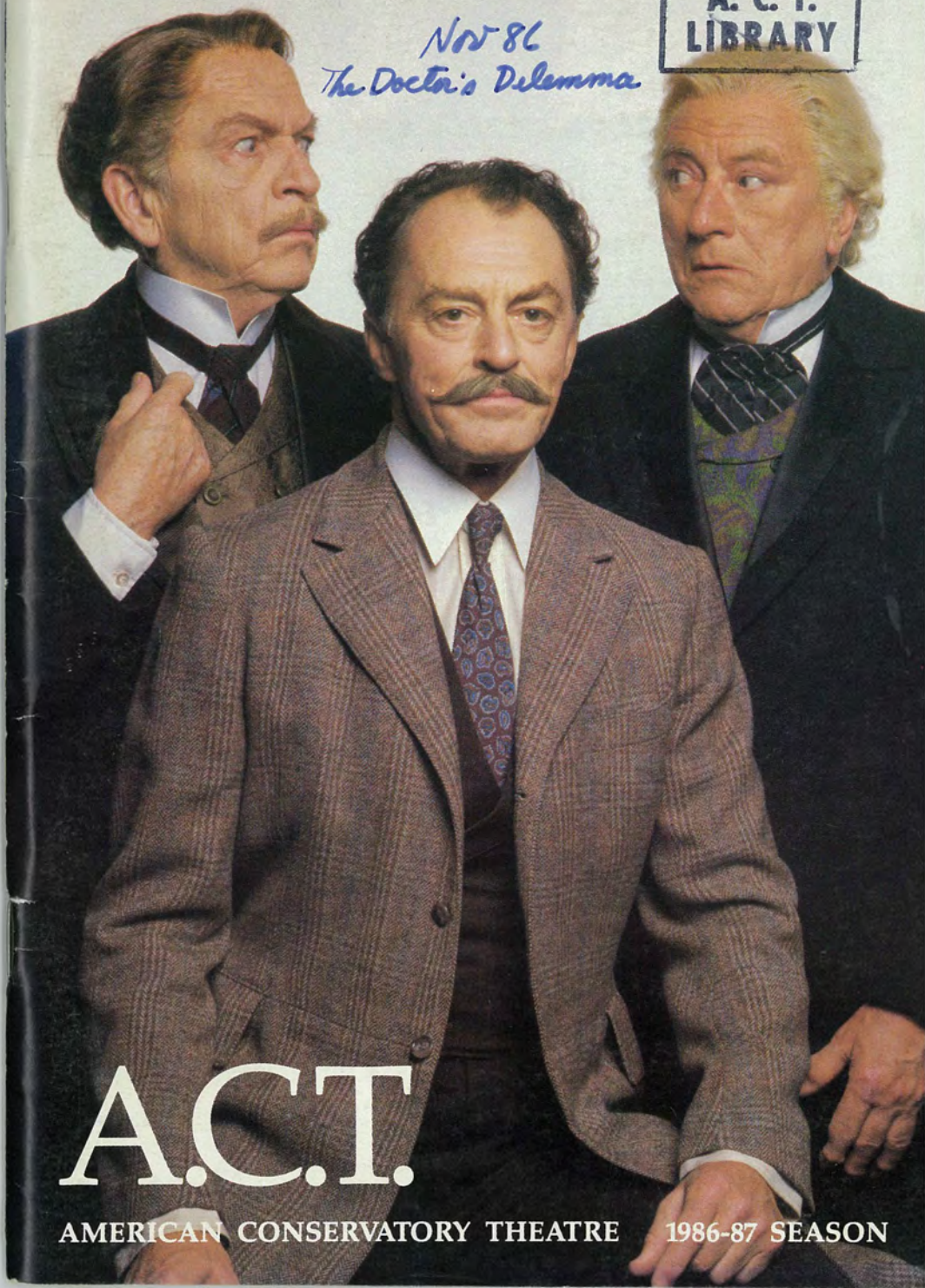


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The Theatre & Music Magazine
for California & Texas

NOVEMBER 1986



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Cover: Featured in the A.C.T. production of Bernard Shaw's
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Donat and Sydney Walker.

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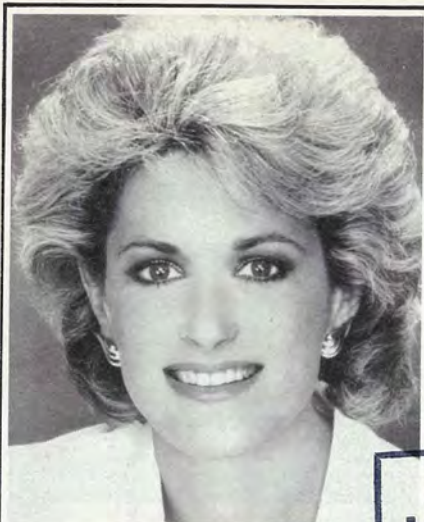
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A Question of Commitment

A report on the heady doings at a recent conference hosted by Theatre Communications Group on the occasion of its 25th anniversary — a conference which brought together administrators, directors, playwrights, actors and others prominently identified with the American nonprofit theatre movement.

by Jim O'Quinn

THE American nonprofit theatre movement is 25 years old this year, roughly speaking, and its leaders have been taking stock. At Theatre Communications Group's recent National Conference in Northampton, Mass., nearly 400 theatre professionals from across the United States marked the quarter-century by taking a hard look at their art-form and its institutions. Some saw an adolescent movement only now on the threshold of maturity; others suggested

that the years had brought with them certain afflictions—political amnesia, artistic timidity, social and ethnic insensitivity—that need to be set right before the nation's theatre can be said to have genuinely come of age.

The anniversary dates back to 1961, when the Ford Foundation appropriated an initial \$9 million to begin "strengthening the position of resident theatre in the U.S.," and concurrently provided seed money to establish a national profes-



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sional organization, TCG. Already there were major resident theatres in Cleveland, Chicago, Houston, Dallas, Washington and San Francisco, a lively Off-Off Broadway scene in New York and a number of Shakespeare festivals dotting the American landscape. From these beginnings, the non-commercial theatre proliferated through the '60s and '70s, buoyed by the creation in 1965 of the National Endowment for the Arts. TCG convened the first of its biennial National Conferences at Yale in 1976. By then resident theatres numbered in the hundreds.

Five conferences and a decade later, there are some new faces among the theatrical leadership, some old and per-



JESSICA KATZ

John Hirsch: "The great plays from the past can help us make sense of what is going on now."

haps unanswerable questions still being asked, and an urgent sense that the theatre must find strategies to deal with the bewildering complexities of contemporary life. "New Challenges and Visions for the American Theatre" was the theme of the Northampton meeting. Trekking across the ivy-draped, century-old campus of Smith College, artistic directors, managers and trustees from U.S. theatre mixed with international guests, traded ideas and opinions, applauded a slate of extraordinary performances, and kept pace with a rigorous, four-day conference agenda. In session after session,



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covering topics as varied as Latin American writing, the effects of television on drama and the development of new theatrical forms, the theatre's ability to confront and transform today's social and political realities was called for—and called into question.

Canadian director John Hirsch blamed "political amnesia" for the theatre's inability to adequately reflect the modern world on stage. "We forget history. We're not interested in the past," Hirsch admonished, settling his thicket of beard sternly against his chest and waving his big, expressive hands in a gesture of dismissal and loss. "And, even more horrendous, we're not interested in what's happening now. That means we're not going to be prepared for what's going to happen in the future."

His up-to-the-minute rhetoric notwithstanding, Hirsch's subject was the classic theatre. The conference listeners were well aware of the eminent director's longstanding love affair with classic plays—conducted most recently (until his replacement last year by John Neville) as artistic director of Ontario's Stratford Festival—and with his passionately held conviction that the centuries need not erode their pertinence or their power. "The specific, the immediate—that's what we should be pursuing," he emphasized. "These things are present in a very clear way in the classics. These great plays from the past can help us make sense of what's going on now."

"I look around and see millions of people rushing headlong without questioning, without considering, into answers which come from fundamentalist religions," Hirsch observed from the lectern he shared with Hartford Stage Company artistic director Mark Lamos in the college's 460-seat Theatre 14. "They do it because the other side—people like us—are not providing them with some of the ingredients which they absolutely need to survive," Hirsch asserted. Those ingredi-

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G A L A N T



Lloyd Richards, of Theatre Communications Group and the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Center, opened the conference by noting that "the institutions of family, religion, government, social interaction, racial relations and global survival" are issues to be confronted by the arts.

ents—such things as spiritual nourishment and metaphysical reflections—are more likely to be found in popular films, he suggested, than in most contemporary plays.

If political amnesia makes theatre art less potent, political repression can silence its voice altogether, testified expatriate Argentine novelist Luisa Valenzuela in a session on Latin American writing chaired by playwright Arthur Giron and also featuring playwright/critic Alberto Minero. Valenzuela, subject to censorship by her government since her first novel appeared when she was 21, and Minero, now director of the theatre department of New York's Center for Inter-American Relations, described Argentina's harrowing roller-coaster course from artistic and personal freedom to brutal repression and back again in a single generation.

A lively and creative theatre and arts scene in Buenos Aires in the 1950s and '60s gave way to "all-pervading terror" when the military dictatorship assumed power in 1968, Valenzuela recalled. "The worst thing that happened to my country

and to my people was silence—the complicity of silence," she said.

The experience of such repression gives Latin American writing "a sense of advancing in the marshlands," according to Valenzuela, "of trying to deal in a metaphoric way—an open-minded but at the same time blindfolded fashion—with what we know." The power of the tradition of theatre in Argentine life was confirmed, she said, when the military regime fell in 1983 and "the first thing that appeared again in Buenos Aires was theatre—impromptu, free theatre of the streets."

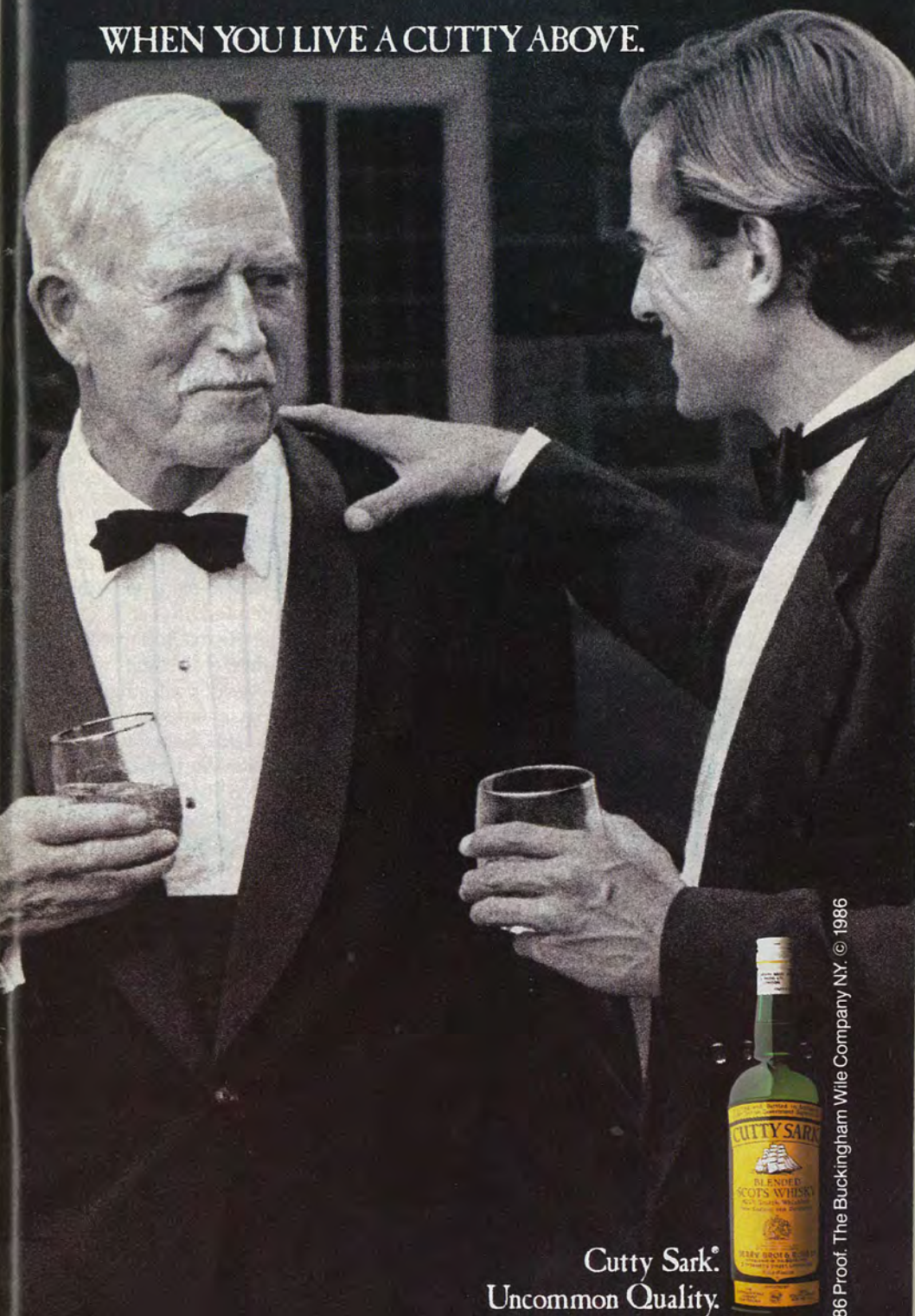
Playwright Keith Reddin, during a vivid and controversial session on theatre as a social forum, joined Hirsch and Valenzuela in calling for a theatre of political immediacy. Reddin's *Rum and Coke*, which was given its world premiere production by South Coast Repertory during the 1984-85 season and was recently staged by the New York Shakespeare Festival, takes a satiric look at the 1961 CIA-backed Bay of Pigs invasion (an event often confused, he wryly pointed out, with the subsequent Cuban missile crisis), and was an attempt to open audi-

Colleen Dewhurst read from the works of Eugene O'Neill during one of several evenings of performances at TCG's sixth biennial conference.



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ences' eyes, he said, to "parallels in our foreign policy now."

Joining Reddin were playwright/actor Wallace Shawn, who referred to his own fascist-populated drama *Aunt Dan and Lemon* as "an exploration of the essence of American conservatism at this moment"; Anthony Taccone, artistic director of San Francisco's Eureka Theatre Company, who traced the widely divergent reactions to Emily Mann's docudrama about the Dan White murders, *Execution of Justice* ("Outside San Francisco it was a play, a removed reality; in San Francisco it was the rehashing of a psychic wound"); and moderator Jack Gelber, whose 1959 play *The Connection* broke new ground in its frank treatment of drug addiction.

Taccone advocated a brand of theatre that deals with audiences' own lives in a direct way, and called the audience "the living component in the dialogue of the present." He contended that it is the responsibility of theatre institutions (not just of playwrights) to "deal with content" in the process of selecting the developing plays. His remarks prompted an observation from the floor by Long Wharf Theatre of New Haven's artistic director Arvin Brown that, because of Americans' lack of political awareness, the Vietnam conflict and the AIDS epidemic are "the two events of my generation to genuinely move politics into our living rooms, into our personal lives."

Mark Taper Forum artistic director Gordon Davidson took a less iconoclastic view—"We trap ourselves if we start blaming the audience," he cautioned, and cited as evidence of the theatre's willingness to "talk tough" in a long history of well-received, socially relevant plays undertaken by the Taper and other theatres in the Los Angeles community.

Shawn, who deadpanned that he only considers a play of his finished "when I really get sick reading it," both amused and agitated listeners with his self-deprecating view of the writer's role.

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"Every writer writes out of his political feeling, how he senses the world and the society around him," Shawn reasoned. "But so many aspects of our society are so hidden, so mysterious, that we—at least those of us who could be called the upper classes—are really a group of killers and murderers, but we aren't aware of it. I've always written out of a desire to increase my self-awareness as a member of this powerful class, and to increase the awareness of the audience."

In the discussion that followed, some hastened to deny they were part of Shawn's killer elite, and Jennifer Nelson, a black woman and associate director of the Living Stage in Washington, D.C. asked why a panel on social concerns was made up solely of white males. The question galvanized the conference and turned attention to the concerns of women and minorities.

That undercurrent of discontent surfaced most strongly at an evening session featuring two of the resident theatre movement's pioneers, Zelda Fichandler, longtime producing director of Washington's Arena Stage, and Robert Brustein, artistic director of American Repertory Theatre in Cambridge. Their conversation began with some not altogether ungenerous remarks about critics and the state of criticism, then turned to audience-theatre relations, prompting Brustein to observe: "I'm concerned with theatre's not doing plays out of commitment and conviction. Shaping the theatre to audience expectations will kill it faster than anything else."

But Brustein's estimation that we will look back on this period in American theatre as a "golden age" of playwriting, directing and design met with resistance from some in the assembly who saw instead a lack of sufficient job opportunities for artists, particularly minority artists. The dichotomy between what Brustein termed theatre as a talent-based "meritocracy" and theatre as a social in-

stitution with a responsibility to society touched off a bristling, and ultimately unresolved, debate that at times made the room crackle with dissension.

The potency of theatre as an artform was attested to from very different quarters in two sessions devoted to other media — author and communications scholar Joshua Meyrowitz explored the many-faceted challenges that television presents to the theatre, and the master

BOBBI HAZELTINE



Italian master satirist Dario Fo performed scenes from his solo show "Mistero Buffo" for conference audiences.

documentary filmmaker Frederick Wiseman (equipped with some startling extracts from his powerful and controversial films) drew parallels between the purposes and possibilities of drama and documentary art.

Wiseman referred to his 17 documentaries about American social institutions as "dramatic natural histories" and

contended, to a disbelieving audience who had sat riveted by the hard-hitting social implications of the extracts they had seen, that none were made to prove a preconceived thesis. "Each is an adventure, a report on what I've learned," he said, adding that the same open-ended approach will be applied to his first venture into live theatre, a production to be co-directed with Robert Brustein of Pirandello's *Tonight We Improvise*, scheduled this season at American Repertory Theatre.

An adventurous approach to the creation of new work was also advocated by

MARTHA SWOPE



Playwright/actor Wallace Shawn (here in a scene from his own *"Aunt Dan and Lemon"*) amused and agitated listeners with his self-deprecating view of the writer's role.

experimental director Anne Bogart: "Using whatever's available leads you to your obsessions, which leads you to new experiences, which leads you to better theatre." In a dialogue with multidisciplinary artist Ping Chong, moderated by critic Ross Wetzstein, Bogart described the evolution of such pieces as her recent 1951, an investigation of the effect of McCarthy era blacklisting on socially concerned artists. Bogart said part of her working method is to zero in on her own most "abrasive and contradictory" re-

sponses to events and issues—"The truest things that one needs to work on are unfortunately the least clear, the least comfortable," she ventured. Chong told an anecdote about a Burmese-Jewish restaurant menu to evoke his own multicultural background and the eclectic mix of artforms and influences, Eastern and Western, that comes into play in his imagistic, mixed-media theatre pieces.

East and West converged again in a lecture demonstration by director/designer Julie Taymor, who traced the course of her theatrical education through several influential years in Bali, Indonesia, and seemed to share the stage with at least a dozen other beings as she donned her magically expressive masks to offer snippets of performances. Taymor disclosed the mechanics of a gaunt double-jointed, four-foot-high rod puppet (a wise hermit from *The Transposed Heads*, her rendering of a Thomas Mann story which opened the 1986 American Music Theatre Festival in Philadelphia in September and runs through Nov. 2 at Lincoln Center), and the cloud-smooth prancing of the titular puppet in Gozzi's *The King Stag* (to be revived this fall at American Repertory Theatre).

Diversification was John Faulkner's subject, as the associate producer of Britain's National Theatre engagingly described the process of creating and juggling five separate companies—all, he said "designed by artists for audiences, rather than by managers for profit"—under the giant institution's umbrella on London's South Bank.

In the tradition of TCG National Conferences of previous years, lunchtime roundtables served as daily forums for participants to talk with colleagues in smaller groups about special interests they share. This year's 14 box-lunch gatherings, some planned by TCG in advance and others suggested by participants as the conference progressed, ranged over such subjects as bringing youth into the theatre, training directors, the role of trustees, and



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the special problems of smaller theatres.

In one of two spirited noon-hour roundtables devoted to TCG's landmark Hispanic Translation Project (aimed at creating stageworthy English versions of old and new plays from the theatrically rich Hispanic cultures of the Americas and Europe), Milwaukee Repertory Theatre artistic director John Dillon recounted the process of discovering, translating, casting and presenting the works of Mexican playwright Felipe Santander; Dennis Ferguson Acosta of New York's INTAR compared his theatre's version of Mario Vargas Llosa's *La Chunga* to a class-sensitive production of the play staged simultaneously in Peru; playwright Eduardo Machado suggested that "it's a kind of racism" to insist on casting Hispanic actors in Hispanic plays; and Los Angeles Theatre Center artistic producing director Bill Bushnell, conceding that the question of casting is more complex in areas like his with large Hispanic populations, said he believed in finding "the best actors to fill the roles," regardless of ethnic background.

In a plenary report-back session on the roundtables, the conference heard summaries from Lee Richardson, artistic director of Crossroads Theatre Company of New Brunswick, New Jersey, on the special qualities of smaller theatres; Edward Stanton III, board president of Houston's Chocolate Bayou Theatre Company, on the role of trustees; designer Ming Cho Lee on training directors; Julie Taymor on music theatre; actor Kathleen Chalfant on actor's issues; Milwaukee Rep resident director Kenneth Albers on the emergence of associate artistic directors; and, representing a roundtable entitled "Women, Myth and Theatre," a panel of speakers led by director Glenda Dickerson.

"I would love it if the white men in the audience would relax," Dickerson began, referring to the issue of minority representation that had emerged earlier. "I just want to ask you to listen to what may be

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■ Nov 1, 7, ■ Evenings at 7pm.

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Puccini • in Italian

NEW PRODUCTION Miricioiu, Gustafson; Cupido (11/4), Lima (11/6,
9, 12, 15); Krause, Pendergraph, Langan, Del Carlo, Gudas,
Harper, Pederson, Coles ■ Arcna/Freedman/Mitchell/Button*/
Munn ■ Nov 4, 6, 9, 12 (SOLD OUT), 12 (7:30pm),
15 (SOLD OUT) ■ Evenings at 8pm, matinee at 2pm.

EUGENE ONEGIN

Tchaikovsky • in Russian

NEW TO SAN FRANCISCO Freni, Walker, C. Cook, Donna Petersen;
Allen* Gulyás* Ghiaurov, Tate, Skinner, Delavan ■ Bradshaw/
Copley/Don/Stennett/Munn/Sulich ■ Nov 8 (SOLD OUT), 11,
16, 21, 26 (7:30pm), 30 (1pm), Dec 5 ■ Evenings at
8pm, matinees at 2pm.

MANON

Massenet • in French

Greenawald, Chen, S. Patterson, Cowdrick; Araiza, G. Quilico*
Paul* Corazza, Malis, Pederson ■ Fournet/Mansouri/
Mitchell/George/Munn ■ Nov 14, 20 (7:30pm), 23, 28,
30, Dec 3, 6 (SOLD OUT) ■ Evenings at 8pm, matinee at 2pm.

MACBETH

Verdi • in Italian

NEW PRODUCTION Verrett, Voigt; Noble, Tomlinson, Popov* Harper,
Skinner, Potter, Coles ■ Kord/Pizzi/Pizzi/Munn ■ Nov 19,
22, 25, 29, Dec 2, 4 (7:30pm), 7 ■ Evenings at 8pm,
matinee at 2pm.

1986 FALL TICKET PRICES	Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays	Weekdays
Orchestra	\$59.00	\$54.50
Grand Tier	\$59.00	\$54.50
Dress Circle	\$43.00	\$39.50
Balcony Circle	\$36.50	\$32.50
Balcony Front	\$26.50	\$24.50
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M Matinee Performance.
* San Francisco Opera debut



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another side of the visionary coin." Joining her in behalf of minorities, women and smaller, more isolated theatres were playwright Romulus Linney, INTAR's Ferguson Acosta and Caron Atlas, development director for Roadside Theatre of Whitesburg, Kentucky. Linney outlined three major concerns—the disenfranchisement of smaller theatres and the "lurking monsters" of sexism and racism. "The role of minorities in the American theatre today," he said, "is not something that can be pushed back in our consciousness, but must be continually addressed, continually thought about, never out of our minds for very long."

"We're here to reflect on our theatre's artistic life and find new areas to explore," TCG director and conference host Peter Zeisler had said at the meeting's outset, and whatever the topic under scrutiny, it was the theatre's grasp of contemporary reality—John Hirsch's need to "make sense of what's going on now"—that flowed beneath the surface.

Even the conference performances seemed to reiterate the theme, from Czech clown Bolek Polivka's patchwork meditation on the power of art, *The Jester and the Queen*, performed with French actress Chantal Poullain; to solo actor Fred Curchack's startling stream-of-consciousness adaptation of *The Tempest*; to the incomparable comic gusto of Italian satirist Dario Fo's *Mistero Buffo*. Other performers included Swiss mime Andres Bossard, who evoked in word and gesture the work of Mummenschanz, the three-member troupe he co-founded in 1972 and which is now appearing on Broadway; actress Colleen Dewhurst, who spoke eloquently about her life as an actress and performed scenes from the work of Eugene O'Neill; and the distinguished poet/translator Richard Wilbur, who read stirringly from his own work. □

Jim O'Quinn is the editor of *American Theatre*. This article is an expanded version of a report which appeared in the magazine's September 1986 issue.

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Letters to the Literary Manager

by Susan LaTempa

ILLUSTRATIONS BY JESUS PEREZ



Mr. Roland Dexter
Literary Manager
The California Theatre
Cultural Center Bldg.
Los Angeles, CA 90099

Dear Mr. Dexter:

It was a privilege to hear you speak on the panel at the Dramatists Guild Symposium, "Getting Your Play Produced: The Whys and The How," and I was struck by your forthrightness and honesty. In fact, if I may say so, something about the way you express yourself makes me think that you and I are kindred souls. Your use of the words "ubiquitous" and "furbelow," for example, reminded me of myself!

Needless to say, this makes me hope you'll find my enclosed play, "Agrippa," to be as astonishing, dramatic, and

timely as I know it to be. Please call me as soon as you've read it. I'll be home all week.

Yours in kinship,
Adam Drake

Dear Mr. Dexter:

Enclosed please find my one-act play, "Hard Time in Middle Age," about a talented actor who finds himself at a "crisis" point when he discovers he can no longer audition for young leading man roles due to his new "maturity." I must confess that I had a "particular" actor in mind for the leading role—myself (picture and resume enclosed)! and I hope I will be allowed to "audition" for the part if you should decide to "produce" the play.

Respectfully yours,
James "Jim" Black





"There's something about the way you express yourself that makes me think that you and I are kindred souls."

Dear Roland:

Ed suggested I send you this script. It's a four character comedy about sex and religion. Not necessarily in that order. Ed knows me, of course, as head writer for the "Nights Aflame" TV series. They pay me \$50,000 per episode for writing that drek, but theatre is my true love (I started out in New York back before you were in grade school) and this play is really close to my heart. I think you could make big bucks on it, too—if that means anything to a literary idealist like yourself.

Best,
Chuck Rose

Dear Mr. Dexter:

I'm a young playwright, with, if I may say so, more than a modicum of talent. Not to toot my own horn, but when my verse epic about Susan B. Anthony, Joan of Arc, and Aimee Semple McPherson was read at the New Plays for Tomorrow series, Jane Alden called it "powerful." And, though I hate to sound immodest, the late Heinrich Holmes, who was my mentor, read the first draft of my study of the psychological hell endured by a secretary whose marriage is breaking up, and he commented that it was "gripping... sheer drama."

All this by way of introduction. What I'm really writing to tell you about is my new play: "In Heaven—Or Are We?," a parable in which the emanances (eminences?) of James Dean, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix meet in the netherworld. They are introduced to the customs of this new space by the spirits of Socrates, Virgil and Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim. Sound intriguing? I'd love to have you read it. I think it would be just right for your theatre. You did such a serviceable production of *Charley's Aunt* that I know this is something your company would enjoy sinking their teeth into.

Please return the self-addressed, stamped postcard to me indicating your interest or (though I prefer being optimistic) lack of same.

Sincerely,
Susan C. Taylor



...The 17 Hawaiian dancers can be represented by cardboard cut-out figures or dolls (except the ones with lines, of course!)



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Education Fund was able to improve the quality of education at Visitation Valley Middle School by helping young people learn to express themselves.

Out of Wells Fargo's \$10,000 grant, \$1,000 was put towards the development of the *Viking Review*. This literary magazine enabled more than a hundred kids to assume the roles of editor, illustrator, writer, proofreader and paste-up artist. That comes down to as little as \$10 a student.

Now, there's no guarantee your money will educate the child who grows up to write the great American novel. Then again, there's no guarantee it won't. So please, send whatever you can. And keep this program, and hundreds of others, successful.

If you'd like more information on how you can help make San Francisco's public schools even better, call us at 415 621-4878. Or write: 1095 Market Street, Suite 719, San Francisco, CA 94103.



San Francisco Education Fund

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Dear Roland—

I bet you never thought when we were in Miss Williams' class together at Redhill Elementary School that someday I'd be submitting a play to you. I never did. I thought I'd be a fireman or something... ha, ha. But, as things turned out, I'm pursuing this crazy, glorious business of writing plays (while supporting myself as a waiter on the side) and you're busy as a big-shot literary manager (though I hear you don't earn as much as I do). I just about choked when I saw your name in the *Playwright's Guide*, but then I said to myself—hey—what are old friends for?

So here's the script. It's called "A Dream of Love." I haven't enclosed a return envelope—you can keep the script, whatever you decide about producing it.

Bye now,
Stan Hope

Dear Mr. Dexter,

Enclosed please find my play, "Friendship." It has a cast of 33, but several of the parts can be played by the same people, and the 17 Hawaiian dancers can be represented by cardboard cut-out figures or dolls (except the ones with lines, of course!). There are 15 scenes, each taking place at a different location, but sets can be minimal and many things (like the volcano and the ocean liner) can be merely suggested with judicious use of lights and the actors miming such environmental considerations as heat, sea breezes, etc.

I am really not sure about the facilities at your theatre, but if you have a revolving stage and an orchestra pit, I'm sure you'll find that "Friendship" will be a snap to produce.

Sincerely yours,
John Brentley, M.D.

Dear Mr./Ms. Literary Manager:

Please excuse this use of a form letter, but since so many of you respond to so many of us with form letters, I figured you couldn't object.

I have the following plays available for



— enclosed please find my one-act play "Hard times in Middle Age" —

production. Simply check the one(s) that interest you, fold this pre-gummed form so that my address is on the outside, and drop it into your outgoing mail. I'll dispatch the appropriate script immediately.

- A DREAM OF LOVE (2m, 2f, 1 set)
a small play about small people and their big troubles.
- RED WINE OR WHAT? (7m, 1 set)
Set in the kitchen of a posh French restaurant, this poignant piece examines men's relationships.
- DON'T CALL US GIRLS (7w (?), 1 set)
Set in the dressing room of a strip club, this poignant play examines women's relationships, with a contemporary twist—some of the women are men!

Thank you for your kind attention. I hope to hear from you soon. Please help me keep my costs down by letting me know if you receive more than one copy of this mailer.

Andy Larkin
Playwright

Dear Mr. Dexter:

I sent you my script—a very good script—three weeks ago. Since then... silence.

What's up? I don't mind if you take your time, but three weeks?

Adam Drake

Dear Mr. Dexter:

I sent you my play, "Lost in the Forest" three months ago and I haven't heard a word. Have you (a) read it? (b) lost it? (c) fed it to your dog? (d) all of the above?

An irate playwright

Dear Mr. Dexter:

I sent you my play, "A Dream of Love," three years ago. Three years is too long for even the most patient, humble playwright to have to wait. Please send it back.

Norman Lisbon Cook

P.S. If you are passing on "A Dream of Love," I have recently completed a play called "Sing, Canary, Sing" which may be more to your liking. I am submitting it under separate cover.

Dear Roly,

I guess you thought you'd never hear from me again. I'm sorry, but when things started to go so badly between us,

I couldn't think of anything to do but cut and run. I couldn't see us being "just friends" after such a stormy, tumultuous romance. I hope you understand.

Anyway, I'm living in Berkeley now, and I've made some friends and have a great job and I've even met a guy I think I'm in love with (but it's too soon to tell). This has given me the distance to have some perspective on *us* and the strength to write about those crazy, glorious months we spent together. They were special. *We* were special. And my play, based on our story, is special. I know you have the professionalism to know how a writer metamorphosizes the raw material of life into the universal truth of the stage, and I hope you aren't going to be hung up or defensive about a version of what happened that is, after all, from *my* point of view.

Let me know what you think about "He Done Her Wrong." You know you can be honest with me. That's one thing we always were with each other—honest.

Love (I can say that now),

Theresa

Let me know what you think about "He Done Her Wrong". You know you can be honest with me.





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Coming of Age — The National Endowment for the Arts



The National Endowment for the Arts' chairmen since its inception, l. to r., Livingston Biddle, the late Nancy Hanks, current chairman Frank Hodsoll, Roger Stevens.

It's been assailed by critics, threatened with dismantling by Presidential advisers, and warned by Cassandras that it would never survive. But this year the National Endowment for the Arts — a Federal agency that has achieved a national presence out of all proportion to its size and budget — is celebrating its 20th birthday in fairly robust health.

Lasting through 10 Congresses and more than four Administrations, the

endowment has grown from a handful of employees and six programs to 16 programs administered by a staff of 260. Its budget has fattened from a mere \$2.5 million in 1965, the year of its founding, to \$163 million for fiscal year 1985. Where its first grants went to 159 organizations and individuals, mainly in urban centers, so far this year it has handed out \$145.5 million to 4,688 recipients, covering every part of the country and an enormous vari-

continued on page 35

by Grace Glueck

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE

1986-87 Repertory Season

SUNDAY IN THE PARK WITH GEORGE

by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine

September 29 through November 1

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

by George Bernard Shaw

November 6 through December 5

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

by Charles Dickens

December 3 through December 27

THE FLOATING LIGHT BULB

by Woody Allen

December 30 through January 31

THE REAL THING

by Tom Stoppard

January 28 through March 6

THE SEAGULL

by Anton Chekhov

February 18 through April 4

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

by August Wilson

March 11 through April 25

FAUSTUS IN HELL

by Nagle Jackson

April 15 through May 16



A MESSAGE TO OUR PATRONS

A warm welcome to the second production of our 1986-87 season. As you may know, this year marks the most significant turning point in A.C.T.'s history since the company found a home in San Francisco nearly twenty years ago and opened its first production, *Tartuffe*, at the Geary on January 21, 1967, under William Ball's direction.

Now A.C.T. is moving forward into its third decade under the new leadership of Edward Hastings as Artistic Director. So far, the current season shows every promise of being among the most exciting in many years. In addition to outstanding productions on the Geary stage, the company is in the process of revitalizing our program for the development of new theatre writing, Plays-in-Progress, which produced so many fine plays during the nineteen seventies, including outstanding works by Mark Medoff, Buriel Clay, Frank Chin, Anne Commire, Mary Gallagher, Robert Gordon and Patrick Meyers.

Concurrently, the Board of Trustees is undergoing a reexamination of its scope and function and an expansion in membership to make it more truly representative of the Bay Area community. Recent additions include Anthony M. Frank of Belvedere, Phillip Larson and Albert Moorman of Atherton, and Howard Nemerovski and Philip Schlein of San Francisco. One of our top priorities is to continue the strengthening of A.C.T.'s ties to the community.

In the meantime, the other members of the Board join me in expressing our gratitude to you for being with us at this performance and for your support of the American Conservatory Theatre.

I look forward to seeing you at the Geary throughout the season.

Best Wishes,

Frank Ottiwell
President, A.C.T. Board of Trustees

IN THE A.C.T.

News of the American Conservatory Theatre

NEW S.F. ARTS FUND

The City's Voluntary Arts Contribution Fund is tapping a new source of potential donors to A.C.T. and other non-profit arts groups. San Francisco property owners will find a notice in their property tax bills for this December advising them that by simply checking a box on their tax bills and adding a few dollars to their tax total, they can help the City's artists and arts organizations in a convenient, relatively painless way.

During a recent twelve-month period, the Fund distributed some \$60,000 to arts groups, with the money helping one improve its lighting, another to purchase a new sound system, others to bring their facilities up to code.

"Working together," says Chief Administrative Officer Roger Boas, "we can keep San Francisco a haven for creative experiment, diverse ethnic expression and neighborhood dynamism."

MONDAYS AT A.C.T.

Continuing the series of post-performance "conversations" that began with *Sunday in the Park with George*, Artistic Director Edward Hastings announces three more Monday night talks during the engagement of *The Doctor's Dilemma*.

On November 17, Alan Jones, Dean of Grace Cathedral, will talk informally about the play in the Lower Lounge right after the performance.

On November 24, Dr. William Dement, Professor of Psychiatry at Stanford, will be the speaker.

On December 1, Diane Johnson, the novelist and screenwriter, will lead the conversation and answer questions from the audience. All A.C.T. playgoers are invited to join the sessions.

The Lower Lounge is at the bottom of the stairs off the Geary lobby. Refreshments are available during the talks.



Anthony M. Frank

BOARD EXPANSION

Joining the A.C.T. Board of Trustees this fall is Anthony M. Frank, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of First Nationwide Savings and its parent company, First Nationwide Financial Corporation. Mr. Frank, who makes his home in Belvedere, joined First Nationwide as President in 1971 and was elected Chairman of the Board in 1975.

We welcome him to our Board of Trustees.

THEATRE PARTY TIME

Theatre parties offer the perfect way for clubs, organizations and service groups

to enjoy live theatre together and save money at the same time. You need a minimum order of twelve tickets to qualify for an across-the-board discount of twenty percent. The discount applies no matter what price seats you select. For all the details, including information on how you can use A.C.T. theatre parties as fundraising events for your group, call Rita M. Zeichner at (415) 771-3880. Party bookings are available now for all seven new productions on the season schedule as well as the annual holiday entertainment, *A Christmas Carol*.

A WORD ABOUT OUR SPONSORS

Simpson Paper Company, which is sharing the production sponsorship of *The Doctor's Dilemma* with the Connecticut-based Xerox Foundation, has a history that goes back nearly a century. Since 1969, the company has had its corporate headquarters in San Francisco.

Headed by President John Fannon of Hillsborough, Simpson Paper Company is a major producer of high quality coated, printing, writing and technical papers. The company employs some 2,000 people nationwide.

Simpson Paper Company takes a progressive view of the corporate-community relationship. As Vice-President Ken Perkins points out, "We're well aware of the role that a company such as ours should play in the life of a city, including the arts. We are proud to be headquartered in a city that has a real commitment to the arts, as does San Francisco."

Perkins, who makes his home in Danville, notes that "Simpson Paper Company has been associated as corporate donors with A.C.T. for the past ten years. We feel that A.C.T. is unique and that it's making a valuable contribution to a great city. We are interested in having that contribution nurtured and continued." Simpson Paper Company also supports the San Francisco Symphony, Ballet and ACT-4

other arts. "And we're pleased to be able to do so," says Perkins.

By a happy coincidence, the two corporate co-sponsors of *The Doctor's Dilemma* also share a business relationship of long standing. "We have a relationship that goes back many years," Perkins explains. "Simpson Paper Company is a major producer of Xerox copy paper."

A.C.T. extends its thanks to both Simpson Paper Company and the Xerox Foundation for their enlightened support of the arts.



A.C.T. Friends (l. to r.) Roger and Sandra Dobbel, Irving and Shirley Loube and Marijke Donat.

A.C.T. NEEDS YOU

Friends of A.C.T., the volunteer organization supporting the American Conservatory Theatre, is seeking new members as the season continues. Members work behind the scenes in a variety of creative activities that provide important help for A.C.T. in many phases of the company's operation.

An enthusiastic network of volunteers representing diverse age groups and backgrounds, the Friends of A.C.T. prides itself on supporting a theatre whose work enhances life in the Bay Area. For information about joining, call (415) 771-3880.

YOUR TABLE IS READY

The Lower Lounge, A.C.T.'s downstairs lobby, adds food service to its beverage complement for the first time this season.

A light pre-theatre plate is now available, offering cold cuts, cheeses, baguette and fresh fruit or vegetable garnish. It can serve as an hors d'oeuvre tray when shared by several people or a more substantial snack for one or two. Pastries are also on sale.

In addition, cocktail service, beers, wines, soft drinks and coffee drinks are on the menu.

The Lower Lounge will open at 7 p.m. prior to evening performances and at 1 p.m. on matinee days, with service continuing through the last intermission.

For convenient intermission service, the staff recommends ordering and paying for drinks prior to curtain time. When you return at intermission, your drinks will be waiting for you on a reserved table bearing your name.



Joy Carlin

PROLOGUE TO A 'DILEMMA'

Director Joy Carlin will be featured in the Prologue to *The Doctor's Dilemma* at 5:30 p.m., Monday, November 10. Co-sponsored by A.C.T. and the Junior League of San Francisco, Prologues offer an open forum on plays in the repertory and an opportunity for artists and audience members to exchange views. Carlin will talk about her new production of Bernard Shaw's comedy about the medical profession's private practices and answer questions from the audience. Pro-

logues are usually about an hour in length. They are held in the Geary Theatre, and all are welcome to attend.

THE A.C.T. '400'

This season, for the first time, San Francisco's Cleo Faulkner and the Friends of A.C.T. are offering a premium subscription plan called The A.C.T. 400. The plan offers subscribers the opportunity to attend four special parties during the 1986-87 season, in addition to their subscription performances, as part of a special Thursday evening series. Each of the pre-theatre parties will be held at a different and unusual locale, to encourage subscribers to make new theatregoing friends while they enjoy the new shows on the season schedule.

Serving as Executive hosts, along with Mrs. Faulkner, are Mr. and Mrs. M. Caesar Belli. The Executive Committee includes Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Davies Lewis, Maureen Love, Michael T. Jackson, Professor Thanasis Maskaleris, Ann Furbush and Marguerite Heiser. Nicole Lambo is serving as assistant to the committee.

Complete information, including prices and schedules, is available from Cleo Faulkner, (415) 567-6110, or 771-3880.

HALF-PRICE TIX FOR STUDENTS

Students may purchase available seats in advance at half-price for all regular A.C.T. repertory performances at the Geary this season. With valid current student identification, the bearer is entitled to buy two tickets at the special price.

Student tickets may be purchased (1) at the Geary box office; (2) by mail, if the check or money order is accompanied by a clear photocopy of valid student ID in the same name that appears on the check; or (3) charged to Visa, MasterCard or American Express cards, in which case valid student ID must be shown at the box office when the tickets are picked up.



Richard Carreon (l.) and Gala Chairman Nancy Ream, both members of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees, look on as design intern Bruce Hill sketches the opening night party in progress.

A.C.T. TURNS TWENTY-ONE

Opening Night, 1986

A.C.T. alumnus Harry Hamlin (l.) congratulates "Sunday in the Park with George" leading lady Melanie Chartoff and director Laird Williamson at the post-performance party.



If your kids think
all heroes have to be
as tough as Rambo,
it's time they discovered

A.C.T.'s
A Christmas Carol



See Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim and the Ghosts of Christmas come alive in this highly acclaimed production of the Charles Dickens' classic by the American Conservatory Theatre. Bring the whole family to enjoy the warmth and cheer of one of San Francisco's great holiday traditions. Performances run Dec. 3-27. Call now for preferred seating.

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	1	2	3	4	5	6
December			*8:00			*2:00 8:00
7 2:00 7:00	8	9 8:00	10 8:00	11 8:00	12 8:00	13 2:00 8:00
14 2:00 7:00	15	16 8:00	17 8:00	18 8:00	19 8:00	20 2:00 8:00
21 2:00 7:00	22 8:00	23 2:00 8:00	24 1:00	25 8:00	26 2:00 8:00	27

*Indicates Low Priced Preview

Preview Prices: Dec. 3, 6 (mat.)-18.00, 14.00 & 7.00
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WHO'S WHO AT A.C.T.



TONY AMENDOLA is best known to Bay Area audiences as a resident artist at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, where he recently performed the roles of Jack Henry Abbott in *In the Belly of the Beast* and Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* and directed the current production *Night of the Iguana*. For the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival last summer he appeared as Coriolanus and directed *The Tempest*. He also directed *All's Well That Ends Well* for Ashland's Oregon Shakespearean Festival. As a resident actor with Berkeley Rep for the past six seasons, he has been seen in *Otherwise Engaged*, *American Buffalo*, *The Margaret Ghost*, *Awake & Sing!*, *A Lesson From Aloes*, *The Glass Menagerie*, and *Chekhov in Yalta*, for which he received a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award. He was also the recipient of awards from the Critics Circle and Drama-Logue Magazine for his direction of *Savages* at Berkeley Rep in 1982. In 1984, he directed Berkeley Rep's *Filumena* as well as *The Merchant of Venice* for the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival. Mr. Amendola has worked with the Seattle Repertory Theatre, A Contemporary Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre and San Jose Repertory Company. He was recently featured in NBC's 'Partners in Crime.'

PETER BRADBURY is a third year student in the advanced training program. While a student at A.C.T., he performed the roles of Lear in *King Lear*, Moe Axelrod in *Awake and Sing*, Oscar Wolfe in *The Royal Family*, Andrei in *The Three Sisters*, Tartuffe in *Tartuffe*, and Feste in *Twelfth Night*. Most recently, he has performed the roles of Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Trebonius in *Julius Caesar* at the Utah Shakespearean Festival. In addition to his ACT-8



training at A.C.T., Mr. Bradbury received an A.B. in drama at Vassar College, where he appeared as Bo Decker in *Bus Stop* and the title roles in *Oedipus Rex* and *Scapino*. He also studied at the National Theatre Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theatre Centre and with Morris Carnovsky. He will appear in *A Christmas Carol*, *The Seagull* and *Faustus in Hell* later this season.



RICHARD BUTTERFIELD who appeared as the soldier in *Sunday in the Park with George*, has recently worked with the San Jose Rep and performed the role of Franklin Shepard in Sondheim's *Merrily We Roll Along* last Spring with Theatreworks of Palo Alto. He has worked in the Bay Area with the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, where he was seen as Navarre in *Love's Labours' Lost*, Thisby in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Catesby in *Richard III* among other roles. He has also performed with the Berkeley Jewish Theatre in their productions of *Firstborn* and *Good*. Mr Butterfield is a graduate of Stanford University; A.B. International Relations. He also appears in *A Christmas Carol* and *Faustus in Hell* this season.



NANCY CARLIN returns to A.C.T. for her second season. She performed most recently with the Oregon Shakespearean Festival, where she played Ariel in *The Tempest*, Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus* and Celia in *As You Like It*. A graduate of A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program, she joined the company in 1984 to play Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Frida Foldal in *John Gabriel Borkman*. Other Bay Area credits include the Jailer's Daughter in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and Helena in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, Griselda/Kit/Shona in *Topgirls* and Eve in *The Danube* at the Eureka Theatre Company and the Nurse in *Kabuki Medea* at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre. She has also worked at the Summer Repertory Theatre in Santa Rosa and the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts in Santa Maria where she played Myrtle Mae in *Harvey*. Miss Carlin received her B.A. in Comparative Literature from Brown University.



PETER DONAT joined A.C.T. in 1968. He was born in Nova Scotia, attended the Yale Drama School, toured extensively and recently completed his 7th season with Canada's Stratford Shakespeare Festival, playing the Mayor in Ronald Eyre's production of *The Government Inspector*. In New York, he has performed both off-and on Broadway, where he received the Theatre World Award for Best Featured Actor

of 1957, and with Ellis Rabb's legendary APA Repertory Company. At A.C.T., he has appeared in many productions, including *The Merchant of Venice*, *Hadrian VII*, *A Doll's House*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Equus*, *Man and Superman*, *The Little Foxes*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Sleeping Prince*, *The School for Wives*, *Macbeth*, *Our Town*, and, last season, in *Opera Comique* and *The Lady's Not For Burning*. Mr. Donat starred in the NBC-TV series, *Flamingo Road*. His film credits include *The Hindenburg*, *The China Syndrome*, *A Different Story*, *Godfather II* and *The Bay Boy*, opposite Liv Ullmann.



DREW ESHELMAN attended A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program in 1973-74, and first appeared with the company in *The Ruling Class*, as well as in numerous student productions. He was seen in the extended local run of *Cloud Nine* at the Eureka, Marines' Memorial and Alcazar theatres, played a featured role in films *The Right Stuff* and *Magnum Force*, and made television appearances on *Shannon* and *Partners in Crime*. Other major stage productions in which he appeared are *Hamlet* at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival and *The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew* at San Diego's Old Globe Theatre. Additionally, Mr. Eshelman was a member of the original cast and in the Los Angeles revival of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Previous A.C.T. credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Macbeth*, *You Never Can Tell* and *The Lady's Not for Burning*.

GINA FERRALL is a graduate of A.C.T.'s advanced training program and appeared on the Geary Theatre stage in productions of *Cat Among the Pigeons*, *A Christmas Carol*, *I Remember Mama* and *The Admirable Crichton*, in addition to appearing as Lizzie in the Plays-in-Progress production of *Lizzie Borden in the Late Afternoon*. Miss Ferrall was seen most recently in Berkeley Rep's production of *The Art of Dining*. She has also appeared in numerous roles with the Santa Rosa Summer Repertory



Theatre and Montana's Shakespeare in the parks. Performing on the New York stage, she was Emily in *All Nighters* at the New Arts Theatre and, while in New York, also engaged in fashion modeling, a pursuit she has continued on a freelance basis since her return to the Bay Area. With her parents, director/teacher Mike Ferrall and actress Marrian Walters Ferrall, she is co-owner of the Josef Robe Co. of San Francisco.



TIMOTHY GREER joins the company this year to appear in *Sunday in the Park With George*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Faustus in Hell*. A third-year student in the Advanced Training Program, his studio performances include the roles of Angelo in *Measure for Measure*, Friar Lawrence in *Romeo and Juliet*, Seton in *Holiday* and Jude Emerson in *Lydie Breeze*. While a member of the Texas-based Park Boulevard Players, he appeared in *Black Comedy*, *Godspell*, *Once Upon a Mattress* and *The Misanthrope*. Mr. Greer holds B.F.A. in acting from the University of Texas/Austin.

RUTH KOBART was a company member during A.C.T.'s first San Francisco season in 1967. Now in her sixth season with A.C.T., she appeared in *Tartuffe*, *Thieves' Carnival*, *House of Bernarda Alba*, *Threepenny Opera* and the 1978 production of *Hotel Paradiso*. Since that time she has been a member of the first national tour of *Annie*, received a Tony nomination for her performance in *A Funny Thing Happened on the* ACT-10



Way to the Forum and appeared in the Broadway and film versions of *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Miss Kobart has also been a guest star and co-star on network television.



BARRY KRAFT is a charter member of the company. In 1965, he appeared in the A.C.T. production of *King Lear* at the Pittsburgh Playhouse as well as *Under Milkwood*, *The Crucible* and *Our Town* during the company's 1967-68 season in San Francisco. Most recently, his work has been seen at The Empty Space in Seattle and in the San Jose Repertory Company's productions of *Cyrano de Bergerac* as Cyrano, Edward Hastings' *007: Crossfire* as Tom and in *Passion Play* as Jim under the direction of Joy Carlin. A veteran of 34 of Shakespeare's 38 plays, Mr. Kraft has spent 20 of the last 26 summers acting in Shakespearean Festivals around the country, including the Old Globe Theatre's San Diego Shakespeare Festival, the Marin Shakespeare Festival, the California Shakespeare Festival, the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival and the Oregon Shakespearean Festival. During the past six seasons at OSF in Ashland, Oregon he performed the roles of John of Gaunt in *Richard II*, Berowne in *Love's Labour's Lost*, Hotspur in *Henry IV, Part I*, Mark Antony in *Julius Caesar*,

and Leontes in *The Winter's Tale*, among others. Mr. Kraft has also taught Shakespeare at various educational institutions.



LIAM O'BRIEN recently came to the attention of Bay Area audiences for his performance as Billy in the acclaimed production of Alan Bowne's *Sharon and Billy* at the Magic Theatre. Closing after six months and 128 performances, *Sharon and Billy* became the longest running show in the twenty year history of the Magic. Other local performances include Douglas in *The Concubine at the Feast* at Theatre Rhinoceros, Dwight in *The Singing Book* at the Berkeley Repertory Theatre and the male understudy in *Three Penny Opera* at the Eureka Theatre. In two summers at P.C.P.A. Theatrefest he was seen in *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Medea*, *The Suicide*, *Camelot* and *Macbeth*, which was directed by the late Allen Fletcher. Further credits include Hero in *A Funny Thing Happened . . . Andos* in *Philemon*, and the title role in *Pippin*. Mr. O'Brien received his training at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles and the Drama Studio of London in Berkeley.



WILLIAM PATERSON is now in his 20th season with A.C.T., having joined the company in 1967 to play James Tyrone in *Long Day's Journey into Night*. A graduate of Brown University, Mr. Paterson served in the army for four years before starting his professional acting career in a summer stock company. He appeared for at

least part of every season for twenty years at the Cleveland Play House, taking time out for live television, films and four national tours with his own one-man shows which he has performed in 32 states of the Union and at the U.S. Embassy in London. His major roles for A.C.T. include *You Can't Take It With You*, *Jumpers*, *The Matchmaker* (U.S.S.R. tour), *The Circle*, *All the Way Home* (Japan tour), *Buried Child*, *Happy Landings*, *The Gin Game*, *Dial "M" For Murder* and *Painting Churches*. Last season he appeared in *Opera Comique*, the 10th anniversary of *A Christmas Carol*, a role he originated, *You Never Can Tell* and *The Lady's Not For Burning*. He presently serves as a member of the San Francisco Arts Commission and is a newly-elected member of the Board of Trustees of A.C.T.



STEPHEN ROCKWELL joins the company this year as a third year student in the Advanced Training Program. For the past two years he has appeared in several A.C.T. studio productions, including *The Three Sisters* as Chebutykin, *King Lear* as Edgar, *Tartuffe* as Orgon, *Ah, Wilderness!* as Nat Miller and *Joe Egg* as Freddie. Last summer at the Valley Shakespeare Festival he performed the roles of Gratiano in *The Merchant of Venice* and the Duke in *Don Quixote*. A graduate of Vassar College with an A.B. in Drama, he has also worked for the Peterborough Players in New Hampshire, the Quaig Theatre in New York City, and at Playwright's Horizons, where he served as an assistant stage manager under director James Lapine in the first production of *March of the Falsettos*. Mr. Rockwell will also appear in *A Christmas Carol*, *Seagull* and *Faustus in Hell* later this season.



LANNYL STEPHENS is a new company member and a third year student in the Advanced Training Program. While at A.C.T., she performed in studio productions as Olga in *Three Sisters*, Dorine in *Tartuffe*, Goneril in *King Lear* and Marta Boll in *The Physicists*. She has appeared most recently as Sister in Paul Bernstein's *Looking in the Dark For*, directed by Robert Woodruff at the Bay Area Playwrights Festival last summer. A graduate of the University of Texas/Austin with a B.A. in Drama, Miss Stephens has also appeared at the Golden Spike Repertory Theatre, the University of Texas Summer Repertory Theatre and in several university mainstage productions.



HOWARD SWAIN came to San Francisco in 1976 from the University of Idaho. Following a tour with the New Shakespeare Company he worked with the Magic Theatre, Eureka Theatre, One Act Theatre, San Francisco Repertory Company and Overtone Theatre. In 1982 he joined the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival and has also performed for the Berkeley Jewish Theatre, San Jose Repertory Company and the Berkeley Repertory Theatre where he appeared as Crow in *The Tooth of Crime*, receiving a Bay Area Critics' Circle Award for best performance in a musical. He joins the company following Oregon Shakespearean Festival productions of *As You Like It*, *Three-Penny Opera* and *The Tempest* as Caliban. Mr. Swain's other

credits include roles in *Partners in Crime* and *Hill St. Blues* on network television, as well as the upcoming film *Cherry 2000*. He is happy to be back in San Francisco and is especially honored to be working with A.C.T.



SYDNEY WALKER is a forty-year veteran of stage, film and television, having performed in some 216 productions since 1946. The Philadelphia native trained with Jasper Deeter at the Hedgerow Theatre in Moylan, Pennsylvania, and from 1963 to 1969 was a leading actor with the APA Repertory Company in New York City under the direction of Ellis Rabb. He also appeared for three seasons with the Lincoln Center Repertory Company under Jules Irving. In 1974, Mr. Walker joined A.C.T. and has since performed in forty-eight productions including *The Matchmaker* (U.S.S.R. tour), *Peer Gynt*, *The Circle*, *The National Health*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Chalk Garden*, *Loot*, *Angels Fall* and the current season's *The School for Wives* and *Translations*. He has appeared on television in such serials as *The Guiding Light* and *The Secret Storm*, acted in the film *Love Story*, and performed the voice of Papa Ewok in the television movie, *The Ewok Adventure*. Mr. Walker was narrator for the KQED-TV series *New York Master Chefs* and teaches Auditioning in A.C.T.'s Conservatory.

J. STEVEN WHITE has been with A.C.T. for ten seasons, in a variety of capacities. He has excelled as an actor, teacher, choreographer, administrator and director. Mr. White traveled with A.C.T. to the Soviet Union in 1976 and to Japan in 1978, and spent last season at the Denver Center Theatre Company as Acting Conservatory Director. As an actor, he is a veteran of twenty-seven A.C.T. productions; as a teacher and administrator, he has been active in A.C.T.'s Conservatory, most recently as direc-



tor of the 1984 Summer Training Congress. He is currently Dean of Academic Affairs in the Conservatory, in addition to teaching stage combat. Mr. White has been the fight choreographer for sixty-one productions, including the San Francisco Ballet's production of *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Michael Smuin, and A.C.T.'s *Cyrano de Bergerac*. His directing credits include the Valley Shakespeare Festival production of *Count of Monte Cristo* at the Paul Masson Winery; six A.C.T. Playroom productions, most recently *Uncle Vanya*; and the Western Stage Company's *The Hostage* in Salinas.

DIRECTORS, DESIGNERS AND STAFF

EDWARD HASTINGS (Artistic Director), a graduate of Yale College and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art and a founding member of A.C.T. whose productions of *Charley's Aunt* and *Our Town* were seen during the company's first two San Francisco seasons, has staged many shows for A.C.T. since 1965, including *The Time of Your Life*, *The House of Blue Leaves*, *All the Way Home* and *Fifth of July*. In 1972, he founded the A.C.T. Plays-in-Progress program devoted to the development and production of new writing. During the summer of 1985, Mr. Hastings served as a resident director at the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights' Conference in Connecticut and taught acting in 1984 at the Shanghai Drama Institute as part of the Theatre Bridge Program between A.C.T. and the Shanghai Theatre. Off-Broadway, he co-produced *The Saintliness of Margery Kempe* and *Epitaph for George Dillon* and directed the national company of the Broadway musical

Oliver! He staged the American production of *Shakespeare's People* starring Sir Michael Redgrave, directed the Australian premiere of *The Hot 1 Baltimore*, and restaged his A.C.T. production of Sam Shepard's *Buried Child* in Serbo-Croatian at the Yugoslav Dramatic Theatre in Belgrade. He has recently been a guest director at the Guthrie Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, San Francisco Opera Center and Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Earlier this year, he directed *The Tempest* for the Oregon Shakespearean Festival and *007 Crossfire* for San Jose Repertory Company.

JOHN SULLIVAN (Managing Director) joins A.C.T. as part of the new team that will lead the company into its third decade. With a background encompassing arts administration, fundraising, theatre production, directing, writing and extensive experience in the communications field, he is A.C.T.'s chief administrative and financial officer. Prior to his most recent position as senior advertising associate specializing in corporate communications at Winner/Wagner & Associates, he served for two years as a deputy director of programs at the California Arts Council, overseeing the awarding of \$14 million in grants to more than 800 artists and arts institutions. From 1979 through 1983, he headed John Sullivan Communications in Lander, WY. In the late 1970s, he spent three seasons at Los Angeles' Mark Taper Forum, where he produced and directed plays in the theatre's Forum Laboratory and directed on its main stage. His work in films includes educational projects, three special films for national Emmy Award broadcasts and commercial features. He was a member of the Advisory Board for last June's San Francisco New Vaudeville Festival and, in association with the Magic Theatre, produced *The Detective*, a collaboration between Joseph Chaikin and Vaudeville Nouveau, in 1985. Among his writings are *The National Outdoor Leadership School's Wilderness Guide*, published by Simon and Schuster in 1983, and numerous articles for major magazines and newspapers. He is married to Monica Buchwald Sullivan, an attorney. They have two children.

LAWRENCE HECHT (Conservatory Director) continues this year as head of A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program. In addition to staging productions at A.C.T., he has also served as resident director and Director of Actor Training for the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts in Santa Maria, California, where his directing credits include *Harvey*, *Major Barbara* and *Bus Stop*. This will be Mr. Hecht's 15th season with A.C.T. A graduate of the University of San Francisco and A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program, Mr. Hecht has directed numerous productions for the Plays-in-Progress Series and is an instructor in the Advanced Training Program. He is also a member of the acting company and has performed in more than 25 productions with A.C.T. including *The National Health*, *The Visit*, *Buried Child*, *Night and Day*, *The Three Sisters*, *Happy Landings* and *The Holdup*.

JOY CARLIN (Resident Director), a director, trainer and actress with the A.C.T. company for many years, appeared in numerous productions, including the roles of Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Kitty Duval in *The Time of Your Life*, Bananas in *The House of Blue Leaves*, Ose in *Peer Gynt*, Aunt Sally in *All the Way Home*, Birdie in *The Little Foxes* and Odile in *Opera Comique*. She has been Resident Director and the Acting Artistic Director of the Berkeley Repertory Theatre where she directed *Awake and Sing!*, *Too True to Be Good*, *Beyond Therapy* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*, in addition to performing such roles as Lady Wishfort in *The Way of the World*, Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*, Gladys in *A Lesson From Aloes*, Mme. Ranevskaya in *The Cherry Orchard*, Emily Dickinson in *The Belle of Amherst* and Margaret Fuller in the premiere of Carole Braverman's *The Margaret Chost*. She has also appeared as Pope Joan in the Eureka Theatre's production of *Top Girls* at the Marines Memorial Theatre. Her directing credits include *The House of Bernarda Alba* and *The Lady's Not For Burning* at A.C.T. in addition to productions at the Berkeley Stage Company, Seattle's A Contemporary Theatre, the Oregon Shakespearean Festival and the San Jose Repertory Company. She is a member of the board of trustees of the Berkeley Jewish Theatre where she recently directed *Cold Storage*.

DENNIS POWERS (Director of Communications) joined A.C.T. in 1967, after six years at the Oakland Tribune, where he was Book Review Editor and Associate Drama Editor, and a season at Stanford Repertory Theatre, where he was Associate Managing Director. After serving as A.C.T. Press Representative, he became General Director William Ball's executive assistant and, later, Dramaturg and Artists and Repertory Director, collaborating with Ball on new translations or adaptations of such classic works as *Oedipus Rex*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *The Bourgeois Gentleman*. With Laird Williamson, he adapted *A Christmas Carol* for the stage, and the production has been presented annually by A.C.T. since 1976. As Director of Communications, he provides writing and editorial supervision for several departments as well as working with Artistic Director Edward Hastings on season planning, play selection and casting. His 1975 dramatization of *Dracula* was premiered at the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts and subsequently produced by some thirty theatres and schools. In 1985, he and Williamson wrote *Christmas Miracles*, which had its world premiere at the Denver Center Theatre Company. Both *Cyrano* and *A Christmas Carol* have been produced for television. Mr. Powers is a member of the 1986 National Endowment for the Arts Theatre Panel and the Dramatists Guild.

JESSE HOLLIS (Scenery) joined A.C.T. for the first time last fall to design scenery for *The Majestic Kid* and *Opera Comique*. Prior to his work at A.C.T. he provided scenery for the production of *The Majestic Kid* seen at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival, where he has also designed *Crimes of the Heart*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Of Mice and Men* and *Measure for Measure*. Mr. Hollis has also designed sets for Stephen Paulus' *The Postman Always Rings Twice* at the Fort Worth opera. In recent seasons, he has designed *Cold Storage*, *Dreamhouse* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Sacramento Theatre Company, including "Master Harold"...and the Boys and *Twelfth Night* during the 1985-86 season. Locally, Mr. Hollis' credits include nine productions for the Berkeley Repertory Theatre, designs for The Lamplighters, including last fall's *Countess Maritza* and the original production of Sam Shepard's *True West* at the Magic Theater. He has created

scenery for the San Francisco Ballet, San Francisco Opera Showcase and Merola Program, Civic Arts Repertory of Walnut Creek, Contra Costa Music Theater, West Bay Opera of Palo Alto, Opera Piccola of San Francisco and the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival.

FRITHA KNUDSEN (Costumes) continues a long association with A.C.T. After earning a B.A. in costume design from California State University/Hayward, she worked at A.C.T. as a scene painter on *Hay Fever* and *The Visit* and was Assistant Shop Supervisor for *Ah, Wilderness!*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Circle*. In addition to three seasons with A.C.T., she has also served on the staffs of Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts in Santa Maria, Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Oregon Shakespearean Festival. Last season she designed costumes for *Opera Comique*, *You Never Can Tell*, *Private Lives* and *The Passion Cycle*. She was the recipient of a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for her work on *Opera Comique*.

DEREK DUARTE (Lighting) returns to A.C.T. for a second season as resident lighting designer after designing seven productions last season, including *Opera Comique* and *Passion Cycle*. Most recently Mr. Duarte designed lighting for *The Normal Heart* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. His work has been seen at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, San Jose Rep, Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, The Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland and at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Mr. Duarte holds an M.F.A. in theatre technology from U.C.L.A.

JAMES HAIRE (Production Manager) began his career on Broadway with the famed Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theater. Among the productions he managed were *The Madwoman of Chaillot* with Eva Le Gallienne, Sylvia Sydney and Leora Dana, *The Rivals*, *John Brown's Body*, *She Stoops to Conquer* and *A Comedy of Errors*. Mr. Haire also stage managed the Broadway productions of *Georgy*, a new musical by Carol Bayer Sager at the Wintergarden Theater, *And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little* with Julie Harris and Estelle Parsons, and the national tour of Woody Allen's *Don't Drink the Water* with Sam Levene and Vivian Blaine. Mr. Haire joined the American Conservatory Theatre in 1971 as Production Stage Manager and in this capacity has managed over one hundred productions as well as taking the

company on tour to many places in the United States, including Honolulu, Hawaii; Billings, Montana; Central City, Colorado; and Santa Fe, New Mexico. He also managed the A.C.T. tours to Japan and the Soviet Union.

EUGENE BARCONE (Stage Manager) is a charter member of A.C.T. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree in music, he directed the famous Red Diamond Chorus in Europe with the Army. Mr. Barcone has directed for the Plays-in-Progress program and worked on the televised adaptations of *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *A Christmas Carol*. Recently he celebrated his 60th production with A.C.T.

KAREN VAN ZANDT (Stage Manager), now in her eighth season at A.C.T., has stage managed company productions of *A Christmas Carol*, *The Sleeping Prince*, *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Another Part of the Forest*. She has also worked at the Marines Memorial Theatre as production stage manager of *Top Girls* by Caryl Churchill and *Greater Tuna* at the Alcazar and Mason St. theatres.

DUNCAN W. GRAHAM (Stage Manager) is very happy to return to A.C.T. for his second season as an assistant stage manager. Prior to A.C.T. he stage managed for San Jose Repertory Company, Sunnyvale Summer Repertory and the California Theatre Center, where he was production stage manager and resident lighting designer for three seasons. Mr. Graham has degrees in Political Science and Theatre Arts from the University of Santa Clara.

ALICE SMITH (Stage Manager) began her career at A.C.T. as a stage management intern. Now in her eighth season, she has been the company's master scheduler, production coordinator of Plays-in-Progress, director of staged readings, associate director of the Troubadour program and director of the studio production *Ah, Wilderness!* and co-director of *Mornings at Seven*. As a stage manager during the past two seasons she worked on *Opera Comique*, *'night*, *Mother*, *Private Lives* and *The Lady's Not For Burning*. Her other credits include work at the American Shakespeare Festival in Stratford, Connecticut, The Living Theatre in New York City and the Summer Repertory Theatre in Santa Rosa as production stage manager.



THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE

presents

THE DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

(1906)

by George Bernard Shaw

Directed by Joy Carlin

Scenery by Jesse Hollis
Costumes by Fritha Knudsen
Lighting by Derek Duarte
Sound by Stephen LeGrand
Wigs by Rick Echols

Cast

(in order of appearance)

<i>Redpenny</i>	Liam O'Brien
<i>Emmy</i>	Ruth Kobart
<i>Sir Colenso Ridgeon</i>	Peter Donat
<i>Dr. Leo Schutzmacher</i>	Drew Eshelman
<i>Sir Patrick Cullen</i>	Sydney Walker
<i>Dr. Cutler Walpole</i>	Barry Kraft
<i>Sir Ralph Bloomfield-Bonington</i>	William Paterson
<i>Dr. Blenkinsop</i>	Tony Amendola
<i>Jennifer Dubedat</i>	Nancy Carlin
<i>Louis Dubedat</i>	Howard Swain
<i>Minnie Tinwell</i>	Gina Ferrall
<i>Waiter</i>	Peter Bradbury
<i>Reporter</i>	J. Steven White
<i>Mr. Danby</i>	Stephen Rockwell

June, 1903

Act I: Dr. Colenso Ridgeon's consulting room

Act II: The terrace at the Star and Garter, Richmond

Act III: Dubedat's studio

Act IV: Dubedat's studio

Act V: A Bond Street picture gallery

There will be one intermission between acts two and three.

UNDERSTUDIES

Redpenny—Peter Bradbury; *Emmy*—Kimberley LaMarque; *Ridgeon*—Frank Ottiwell;
Schutzmacher—J. Steven White; *Cullen*—Joseph Bird; *Walpole*—Peter Bradbury; *Bloomfield-*
Bonington—Lawrence Hecht; *Blenkinsop*—Stephen Rockwell; *Jennifer*—Robin Nordli;
Dubedat—Timothy Greer; *Minnie Tinwell*—Lannyl Stephens; *Waiter*—Timothy Greer;
Reporter—Stephen Rockwell; *Mr. Danby*—Peter Bradbury

Stage Management: Alice Elliott Smith

The Company dedicates this production to the memory of Carol Teitel,
a dear friend and a distinguished actress.

This production is made possible by generous gifts from the Simpson
Paper Company and the Xerox Foundation.

From the Director's Notebook

by Joy Carlin

The story of the play is easily accessible. Funny and wicked, it would make a great episode of *St. Elsewhere*. A doctor is called upon to save the life of a genius/scoundrel with whose wife he has fallen in love. Conflict of interest? Moral angst? Not really. Not for our Dr. Ridgeon.

Numerous satirical characterizations and mildly serious discussions, too, of morals and medical ethics. Hilarious shop talk among the doctors of their various medical disasters: "You remember Jane Marsh's arm?"

The play is askew. We would say: "off the wall." The set should reflect this.

Shaw is telling us what happens when professionals are put into the position of being competitive tradespersons. Heard among fellow-actors: "I'd kill for that part!"

Reading about Stephen Porter's current New York production of Shaw's *You Never Can Tell* with Uta Hagen. Amanda Plummer in it, too. She wonders where to put her heart when doing Shaw. She concludes, "The heart is in the mind." And vice-versa, say I.

Next to the wackiness in this play, which appeals to me greatly, my cast is a chief inspiration. Donat, Paterson, Walker, Kraft, Amendola, Eshelman... a veritable Masterpiece Theatre cast for this master piece of theatre. Ruth Kobart, Liam O'Brien, Gina Ferrall, J. Steven White, Stephen Rockwell and Peter Bradbury in small scene-stealing parts (encourage



Shaw at A.C.T.: Rene Auberjonois and Ken Ruta in the 1967 production of "Man and Superman".

them—loose reins). Nancy and Howard, with their new wave sensibilities are the linchpins—state of the art Shavians of the 80's.

Vocal muscles. Remind them all ad nauseum to do vocal warm-ups. The secret to doing Shaw, Albert Takazaukas once told me, is breath control. Uta Hagen in two Shaw revivals in the last two seasons, reminds us that Shaw requires almost operatic lungs.

Jennifer Dubedat intrigues me. Like Sonia Tolstoi, like the fascinating and true stories of the wives of great men: Jane Carlyle, Mrs. Mill, Mrs. Dickens. What are their own names! (find my copy of Phyllis Rose's *Parallel Lives*.) Our heroine deliberately attaches herself to a man of genius. With her beauty, her encouragement, and her "little savings," hopes to bring some charm and happiness into a struggling artist's life. Shaw sees that Jennifer Dubedat gets to the top on her own terms. She not only inherits the entire oeuvre of her talented but thorny husband; she promises to be the living symbol of his immortality. She wholeheartedly accepts the legacy to carry with her the atmosphere of wonder and romance that has always accompanied great art.

Which American women did this? (Wyeth's model Helge.) And is it only



"Saint Joan" (1970) featured Kitty Winn and Philip Kerr.

something women do for men? Call Diane Johnson. Henry James "encouraged" Edith Wharton. George Henry Lewes "stood behind" Mary Ann Evans. Mr. Thatcher is often publicly appreciated by Mrs. Thatcher. John Zaccaro certainly gave his all for Geraldine Ferraro. But can't men be seduced into becoming muses?

Infatuated women run rampant through our season. In addition to Jennifer in *The Doctor's Dilemma*, there is Dot in *Sunday in the Park with George*. Dot has little education. She loves George's beard, she loves his "sighs" or is it "size" . . . this is ambiguous, but she has the surprisingly sophisticated good taste to sing "most of all, George, I love your painting." She wants the one she sat for . . . to take with her when she leaves him. She's not thinking of the future value of the piece. She wants proof of her personal contribution. The thrill, the honor of being part of the creative process. God knows she deserved it!

Enid Pollack in *The Floating Light Bulb* pins her hopes on her magician son, Paul. She stands behind her son and pushes him . . . a little too hard . . . to become her ticket to financial independence and fame. She's a romantic. She's no good at inventing schemes to free herself

Paul Shenar and William Paterson in "The Devil's Disciple", 1968.

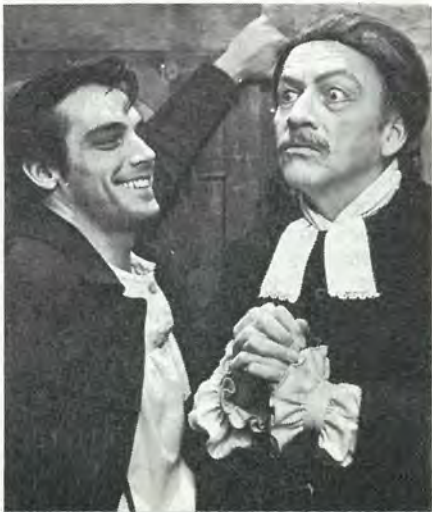
from her husband's indifference, so she invests in her son's talent. Ah, mothers. That's another angle. What's motherly about Jennifer?

All the women in *The Seagull* are in love with men who, in their eyes, are creative geniuses. In his zany *Beyond Therapy*, Christopher Durang (I know Durang has some spiritual connection to GBS) has a character describe the love threads of the plot of *The Seagull*: "Masha loves Konstantin, but Konstantin only loves Nina. Nina doesn't love Konstantin, but falls in love with Trigorin. Trigorin doesn't love Nina, but sort of loves Mme. Arkadina, who doesn't love anyone but herself. And Medvedenko loves Masha, but she only loves Konstantin, which is where we started out."

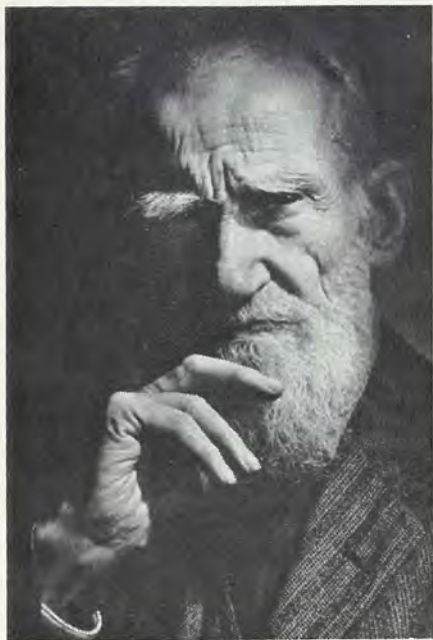
In *The Real Thing*, Annie and Henry are each creative artists. The sexual revolution has arrived but the torment lingers on: "I use you because you love me. I love you so use me."

Here's finally a reverse twist in the sexes: in *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, Ma is the creative "star" her clingers-on, mostly men in the music business, are hitching themselves to.

What is in my own experience to play on here? Putting myself in the Godly hands of doctors? Definitely, repeatedly. Learning that the famous and gifted have weaknesses like the rest of us? Alas, yes. Falling in love with the artist at work? Story of my life.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



George Bernard Shaw achieved the status of a classic dramatist in his own lifetime, yet was so iconoclastic that his contemporary, Oscar Wilde, once remarked: "Shaw hasn't an enemy in the world, and none of his friends like him."

Born in Dublin in 1856, Shaw moved to London at the age of nineteen. There he wrote five unsuccessful novels and worked as an art, music and book reviewer. Having seen at first hand the destructive effect of alcoholism on his father, Shaw was a teetotaler. At twenty-five he became a vegetarian and after a mild attack of small pox, gave up shaving. The writer's lifelong interest in socialism began in 1882. Two years later he founded the Fabian Society "to promote the general renovation of the world."

In 1885 Shaw began work on his first play, *Widowers' Houses*, which was staged in 1892. *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1893), banned by the Lord Chamberlain until 1924 for dealing with the taboo subject of prostitution, was followed by *Arms and the Man* (1894), *Candida* (1895), *The Devil's*

Disciple (1897), *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1898), *Man and Superman* (1901-3), *Major Barbara* (1905), and *The Doctor's Dilemma* (1906).

At the age of forty-two, having achieved sufficient material success to make feared charges of fortune hunting impossible, Shaw wed Charlotte Frances Payne-Townshend, a lady of means.

The two remained contented companions for nearly thirty years until Charlotte's death. Their union, a *marriage blanc*, was never consummated: "We found a new relation in which sex had no part," Shaw explained. He poured the passion of his creative prime into his work and into his famous forty-year-long epistolary romance with Mrs. Patrick Campbell.

In the first decade of this century Shaw became associated with the Court Theatre and achieved his greatest public success. In subsequent years *Misalliance* (1911), *Pygmalion* (1913), *Heartbreak House* (1920) and *Saint Joan* (1923) appeared, adding to the master dramatist's reputation.

Through the late period of his life Shaw continued to aim at the minds of playgoers rather than at their emotions in his writing, but plays like *The Millionairess* (1935) and *Bouyant Billions* (1948) failed to hit the mark with the accuracy of his earlier work. At the same time, however, Gabriel Pascal's films of *Pygmalion*, *Major Barbara* and *Caesar and Cleopatra* were bringing the playwright's wit and eloquence to millions of people who had never seen the plays on the stage.

Shaw died at the age of ninety-four in 1950. In accordance with his wishes, no religious ceremony attended his cremation—he had specified that "no cross or any other instrument of torture or symbol of blood sacrifice" was to be in evidence. Some years earlier he had written what can now be taken as his testament: "Either I shall be remembered as a playwright as long as Aristophanes and rank with Shakespeare and Moliere, or I shall be a forgotten clown before the end of the century."

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TO THE AUDIENCE

HOW TO BUY TICKETS

Tickets-by-Telephone—Call (415) 673-6440 and charge your tickets to AMEX, Visa, or MasterCard (\$1 service charge per order).

Window Sales—Visit A.C.T.'s Geary Theatre Box Office at Geary and Mason Streets.

Box Office Hours: 10 a.m. through the first intermission of the evening performance.

For information call 673-6440.

Mail Orders—Write A.C.T. at 450 Geary Street, San Francisco 94102, or sign up for A.C.T.'s mailing list in the Geary Theatre lobby.

Ticket Agencies—Most ticket agencies handle tickets for A.C.T. (service charges vary). If you buy through your local agency, you'll get either tickets (BASS or Ticketron) or a receipt to present prior to the performance at the Geary Theatre in exchange for your tickets.

NOTE: If tickets are held for you at the box office, it is best to pick them up at least one half hour prior to the performance.

BOX OFFICE TICKET EXCHANGE AND DONATION POLICY

Tickets may be exchanged at the A.C.T. Box Office at least 24 hours prior to show time.

If, as an A.C.T. ticketholder, you are unable to attend a performance, you may make a tax-deductible contribution to the theatre by turning in your tickets at the box office prior to the curtain. Donations are accepted by telephone only on the day of the performance. A receipt for tax purposes will be issued in exchange for the tickets.

TO THE AUDIENCE

LATE ARRIVAL AT THE THEATRE

A.C.T. performances start on time! Curtain times vary, so please check your tickets! Latecomers will not be seated until intermission or a suitable break in the performance so those who have arrived on time are not disturbed.

NOTICES

Please observe the no smoking regulations. The use of cameras or tape recorders is not permitted. Kindly refrain from carrying in refreshments. In respect for the health of our performers it is the policy of this company not to actually light cigarettes during the play. The management reserves the right to change the attraction without prior notice to the patrons.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

Boxes are available for wheelchairs the week of the performance at \$5 a ticket. A wheelchair accessible restroom is available on the main floor.

A.S.L. AT A.C.T.

A.C.T. has a special series of plays interpreted in American Sign Language for the hearing-impaired. For information call TTY (415) 771-0338 or 771-3880 (Voice).

CHILDREN

Patrons are discouraged from bringing very young children or infants to regular performances. Every person, regardless of age, must have a ticket.

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GIFT IDEAS

Gifts available from A.C.T.: *The A.C.T. of Cooking* is a collection of recipes from the kitchens of the A.C.T. family, available by mail for \$6.00 including postage and handling. The tote bag and apron, specially designed for A.C.T., are off-white with burgundy lettering. The tote bags are \$15.75 each and the aprons are \$16.75 each; prices include postage and handling. Make checks payable to A.C.T.

ANY DISCARDS?

The A.C.T. props department welcomes the donation of any useable furniture, clothing, books and other household items. Please call the production office, 771-3880.

This theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

If you carry a beeper, watch, or calculator with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "OFF" position while you are in the theatre to prevent any interruption in the performance.

THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATRE

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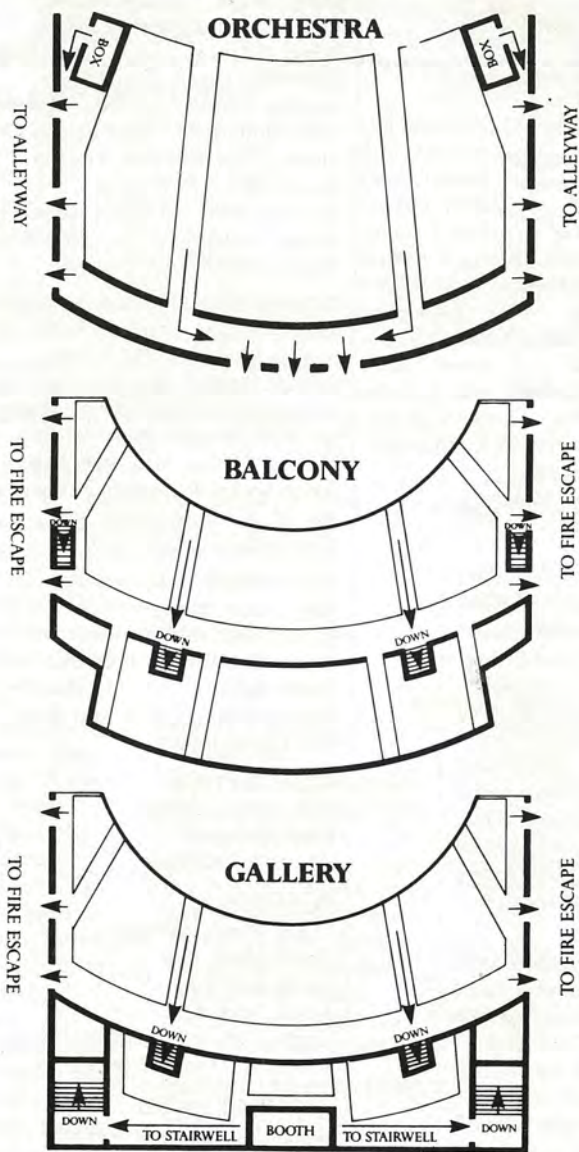
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GEARY THEATRE FIRE EXITS

ety of creative endeavor. And by matching outside donations with Government funds, it claims a hand in boosting the total of private gifts in the arts field from \$226 million in 1967 to more than \$4.6 billion in 1984.

Thus, on the face of it, the endowment — contributing less than 5 percent of all spending on the arts in this country, but still their largest single backer — is an American success story par excellence. A major boon to the culture industry, it may even be — though the notion is challenged by conservative critics — a boon to culture itself. While President Reagan, in his first year of office entertained proposals for dismantling it in favor of an agency that would solicit private funds, the endowment seems since to have risen in its graces, and he recently praised its “good work” in making creative activity “accessible to all Americans, not merely a small elite.” Representative Sidney Yates, Democrat of Illinois, the white knight in Congress who continually does battle on behalf of the agency, sees it as a force for “cultural advancement, not only in urban centers, but also in smaller rural areas of this country, instilling pride in Americans for their own creative achievements.”

On the other hand, as a cultural superpower, the endowment is wide open to challenge and attack. And some critics, even as the agency approaches its majority, so to speak, are questioning whether it has a right to go on living. “Even if they cleaned up their act, I still wouldn’t want them to exist,” Congressman Richard Arme, a Republican from Texas, said of the endowment last September. He is one of three Texas Representatives who tried to have Congress cut off endowment financing of what the Representatives judged to be “pornographic” work by poets, and then proposed cuts in this year’s endowment budget. To save the situation, Representative Yates agreed to freeze the agency’s

budget at last year’s level of \$163 million provided that 3 million more was added for public broadcasting. The Texas Representatives acceded. Their pornography citation was picked up by the Christian Broadcasting Network, which on its *Club 700* television show last September excoriated the endowment as a waste of taxpayers’ money.

On a somewhat more philosophical level, in his 1984 book, *The Democratic Muse*, Edward C. Banfield, professor of government at Harvard University, argued that Federal support of the arts is not constitutionally justified, and doesn’t



Nancy Hanks (pictured here with George Stevens, Jr., former director of the American Film Institute) presided over the agency's biggest budget leaps, from \$8.2 million when she took office in 1969 to \$123.8 million on her retirement in 1977.

work in practice; that is, it does nothing to enhance the esthetic experience. And the pianist and critic Samuel Lipman, who is also publisher of the conservative arts magazine, *The New Criterion*, takes the view that the large-scale cultural expenditures by the endowment “haven’t created any art. We’re in no different an artistic position than we’d be without the endowment,” he says. “It’s true we’ve expanded the audience, however we

decide what the audience is. But its quality has gone down in recent years; that's the other side of size.

"If the endowment were to approach its task as educating the citizenry to be a sophisticated audience for any art, that would be fine. Until this particular moment, however, the aim has not been education but entertainment." Part of a team that in 1980 wrote a report harshly critical of the endowment for the conservative Heritage Foundation, Mr. Lipman was appointed by President Reagan in 1983 to serve on the National Council on the Arts, an influential advisory body to the endowment, and he remains one of the agency's most diligent gadflies.

But, troubled over such sallies from intellectuals, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the historian and professor of the humanities at the City University of New York, stressed in a recent talk the solid mandate given the endowment by the American public. "The policy of Federal support is an expression of the value the Republic places on the arts, a symbol of the role assigned to the arts in our national life," he said. "And Congress today remains steadfast in its belief in the centrality of arts in a civilized society. It has shown no disposition to repeal the act of 1965 and has steadily resisted Presidential attempts to cut National Endowment budgets."

The agency's establishment in 1965 was a momentous decision for Congress. It signaled that support of the arts was an appropriate area of concern for the Federal Government. The endowment, even with its then token budget, would not only provide funds to stimulate development of the arts and their audiences; it would also give culture a national presence. As Frank Hodsoll, the endowment's current chairman — who has just been confirmed by the Senate for his second four-year term — puts it, "For the first time people from the different fields of creativity could come together to provide a national perspective on the arts."

Starting off with \$2.5 million under the

chairmanship of Roger L. Stevens, the real-estate magnate and theatrical producer appointed by President Johnson in 1965, the endowment was brilliantly expanded by Mr. Stevens's successor, the late Nancy Hanks. A consummate politician who built an arts constituency that helped her budgets sail through Congress, Nancy Hanks presided over the agency's biggest appropriations leaps, from \$8.2 million when she took office in 1969 to \$123.8 million on her retirement in 1977. And she broadened its scope to include such categories as expansion arts, which supported community-based arts projects, and the challenge-grant program, aimed at giving larger institutions long-term financial stability.

After the Hanks regime and the advent of big budgets for the agency, it drew its first heavy salvos from critics. Under Roger Stevens and Nancy Hanks, the endowment had always been perceived as insulated from the political hurly-burly that surrounded most Federal agencies. But cries of "politicization" arose with the installation of Livingston Biddle appointed by the Carter Administration. Battle lines were drawn between "elitists" and "populists," referring to those who thought primarily in terms of reaching large audiences (populists) versus those for whom the size of the audiences was purely incidental to the quality of presentations (elitists).

As special assistant to Senator Clairborne Pell, Democrat of Rhode Island (a prime mover behind the endowment), Mr. Biddle had drafted the legislation establishing the Arts and the Humanities Endowments. His appointment was sponsored by Senator Pell, whose expressed anti-"elitist" sentiments played into the "populist" views of the Carter Administration. Though the shift of endowment money — including challenge grants — toward wider geographical representation and support of nontraditional groups had actually begun during the Hanks chairmanship, it was

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intensified during Mr. Biddle's time.

Under Mr. Biddle, a diligent but low-key chairman whose lively staff served him well, the agency undertook such "populist" initiatives as the Office of Minority Concerns, to act as liaison between the endowment and minority arts groups. Mr. Biddle and his staff also helped to give the agency's annual budget another healthy boost of almost \$35 million to \$158.7 million by 1981. He forecast that it would reach \$300 million by 1984.

That, of course, given the less-is-more government philosophy of the Reagan Administration, and the huge Federal deficit that has forced cuts in most agency



NEA chairman Frank Hodsoll: "We symbolize the Federal Government's recognition of culture in this country as an aspect of national health."

budgets, has proved to be a pipe dream. At \$163.6 million for fiscal 1985 the endowment may be said to have leveled off, and substantive increases are certainly not in the cards for a while. Chairman Hodsoll, a good soldier, has consistently requested less money than Congress has finally given him.

Among the sharpest critics of the Reagan-proposed cuts for the endowment is former Representative John Brademas, actually one of the agency's legislative creators — and now president of New York University. In a speech in New York City on Nov. 1, Mr. Brademas

said: "It is nonsense to expect that state and local governments, corporations and foundations can fill the immense gap in funds for the arts, education and social services that would be the consequence of the budgets Mr. Reagan proposes."

Regarded as purely a Reagan functionary in the early days of his office, Mr. Hodsoll appears now to have established himself as a chairman to reckon with. Although he makes it clear that his mandate is from the Reagan Administration, his approach seems to be on the liberal side of that Administration, and he has taken a lively interest (some say too lively) in promoting avant-garde and experimental work.

While feeling that the chairman serves the Reagan budget position on the arts "too strongly," Representative Yates says: "I'm told he's a good administrator and I guess he's doing a fairly good job. he's carrying out orders in asking for these low budgets, but his hands are not tied in any other way. He has a good deal of flexibility and discretion."

The "elitist-populist" question seems to have faded away, due to Mr. Hodsoll's skill at nurturing both grass-roots and more established constituents. While regarding the "populist" expansion-arts program as "a very good thing," he has also beefed up the challenge-grant program — which gives grants to institutions of high artistic quality to help their long-term financial stability — from the \$14 million it stood at in 1982, to nearly \$22 million this year.

The word "private" is important to Mr. Hodsoll, who takes very seriously the dictum that Federal funds are given in *partnership* with private money. One of his most successful initiatives has been the so-called "Locals Test" program begun in 1983, whereby for a three-year period the endowment gives matching funds to a group of state and local arts agencies across the country, on the premise that they will raise \$2 in new — private and public — money for every \$1 contributed

by the agency.

Imbued with the idea that the arts should be taught from the first grade in schools "on the level of English, math and science," Mr. Hodsohl has led the endowment to commission, with the Rockefeller Foundation and the Department of Education, a survey on the state of arts education in the country. Next spring the agency will take the significant step of setting up, in partnership with state arts councils, a program to make the arts an integral part of basic education, from the first to the 12th grades. And somewhat more problematically, it has joined with the J. Paul Getty Trust to produce a series of public-television programs in the arts aimed at children from 8 to 10 years of age.

As an administrator, Mr. Hodsohl gets good marks from within and without the agency. He has tightened staff operations and assumed greater control over them than his predecessors. He has also, he says, effectively "systematized" the workings of one of the endowment's most important — and controversial — processes, its peer review panels, on which experts drawn from the various arts fields serve to advise the agency on grant-making in their respective areas. Endowment applicants have long complained about the secrecy of the panels — rejectees are not told in detail why they were turned down — and suggest that the objectivity of panelists may be flawed by cronyism and conflicts of interest. There are also complaints that some panels are weighted on one side, such as the current dance panel, which has far more participants from modern dance than from traditional disciplines.

"We may not have a perfect balance," says Mr. Hodsohl, "but now we have several checks. Program directors submit two, three or four names for every slot; we look at them from the point of view of geographical distribution, we try to ask all the right questions. But we never do a perfect job. As for conflicts of interest,

no one who's coming up for a grant himself as an individual can serve on any panel." With regard to the dance panel, he says "ballet companies get by far the largest grants."

Mr. Hodsohl himself, unlike his predecessors, takes a very active role in reviewing panelists' recommendations. And he has even vetoed some of them. Last year, he caused a flap in the art world by suspending indefinitely a program of fellowships for critics in the visual arts, after a report by an outside evaluator, John Beardsley, pointed out weaknesses in the program. Mr. Hodsohl says now that an overview panel for the endowment has recommended that the agency should increase its emphasis on publications by artists and critics rather than continue the fellowships.

Does partisan politics play a part in the endowment's decisions? Although some critics would insist that it does, Mr. Hodsohl vigorously denies it. On the plus side for the endowment is the case of the painter Peter Saul, winner of a \$25,000 fellowship in the visual arts. His recent work has contained vitriolic portrayals of President Reagan in situations that are, to say the least, unholy. "We do fund good artists, and if they do things that are political, that's their business," says Mr. Hodsohl.

As the endowment awaits its reauthorization by Congress through fiscal year 1990, a process that by law must occur every five years, its role as a cultural benefactor seems established. But as Mr. Hodsohl himself points out, that role remains a limited one. "The endowment has nothing to do with creating genius," he says. "What we've done essentially is to make it easier for institutions and creative individuals to pursue their art. More important, we symbolize the Federal Government's recognition of culture in this country as an aspect of national health. □

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FASHION SCENE

by Catherine Seipp

• For those who want the real thing in silver jewelry to go with all the gray and black clothes in the stores this fall, Tiffany's has some elegantly understated strings of sterling silver beads for between \$85 and \$175 and a very pretty sterling compact for \$500. The costume



The fanciful "Flutterby" hair ornament.

jewelry counter at Neiman-Marcus is overflowing with silver-colored necklaces of every description. An amusing one looks like a string of ball-bearings and costs \$60. Another, for \$175, is made up of several ribbony metal strands that manage to evoke the undulating form of a waterfall.

Donna Karan's new collection of hammered and pounded brass jewelry at Saks Fifth Avenue should appeal to those who want a look that's warm and earthy, yet also sleek and urbane. Prices range from \$300 for earrings and cufflinks to

about \$1,000 for a necklace. The pieces are just the thing to set off Karan's tight-fitting, clean-lined fall ready-to-wear.

The champion figure skater Tai Babilonia, who once wanted to go to art school, has teamed up with artist Marina Drasnin to create a collection of butterfly-shaped crystal pins and hair ornaments. This "Flutterby" jewelry costs between \$30 and \$150.

• A new evening bag is a lovely present for a woman, especially if she goes to a lot of black tie parties. Whiting and Davis, the company known for its beautiful work in metal mesh, is celebrating its 110th anniversary this year with a "heritage collection." These bags are elongated enough to hold a pair of opera glasses and bring back the turn-of-the-century with pale, colorful printed mesh reminiscent of Victorian upholstery brocades. They cost between \$55 and \$75 and are available at Saks Fifth Avenue. Also spotted in the accessories department at Saks were a couple of elaborate little rhinestone-encrusted, catshaped evening cases by Judith Leiber. These cost \$1,950 each and are just the thing to give to a woman who indulges in that improper habit of resting her evening bag on the dinner table. This way, the bag looks like a small cat taking a nap, which is rather charming.

• What would the holidays be without a new sweater? Pretty cold, no doubt. Here are a few suggestions:

Axis, a German company that's been getting a lot of attention lately, has some great looking ribbed cotton turtle-necks in exaggeratedly long lengths. They come in a variety of bright colors, retail for around \$100 and are available at Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman-Marcus, Bullock's in Southern California, Ron Ross in Tazana, Fred Segal in West Hollywood and The Garment Center in San Diego.

Oke, a relaxed, cheerful line of casual Italian knits, has an appealing fall collection of cableknit pullovers and drop-shouldered cardigans in fresh-looking

shades of indigo, grass green, periwinkle and gray. Oke sweaters range from \$45 to \$100 and are carried at Encino Flair in Encino, Attitudes in Brentwood, Philippe Dery in the Beverly Center, Comme Ça in Marina Del Rey, Jean Ryan in Newport Beach, Just Clever in Laguna Niguel, and Sharon Wilson in San Diego.

Winter white always brightens up the cold, dark months. Lina Lee in Beverly Hills has a creamy, texturey wool and viscose sweater by Umberto Ginocchi. Finally, for men, the Trifles holiday catalogue features a cashmere long-sleeved polo shirt in hunter green, beige or burgundy for \$130. To order, call (800) 527-0277.

- For anyone preparing to take off for the slopes during the holidays, nothing could be a more welcome gift than one of those trendy, new European-influenced ski suits. No longer is it enough to just get out that trusty old navy blue parka. Ski-wear this year is designed as much for fashion as for function. But, points out Lisa Kovitz of the trade organization Ski Industries America, "A lot of it looks outrageous, but it's also highly skiable. You have research scientists constantly figuring out new ways to make it drier, warmer, slimmer."

One of the leaders in the field is Bogner, which this year introduced a \$1,000 "thermal system" suit made with a SuperMicroft outer shell and insulated with Alufill 2000. Small packs that keep warm for 20 hours (just rubbing them between your hands activates the heat-producing chemicals) are inserted in the outfit's lower back. "We call it the most comfortable suit in the world," says Bogner's marketing vice-president, Don Schwamb.

For those who prize individuality, Bogner this year commissioned 350 artists to hand-paint 350 one-of-a-kind suits. These cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000 and are selling extremely well. Or if you prefer a dashing look from days of yore,

the company also has a collection of medieval-inspired, tapestry-patterned \$1,000 outfits designed to make you look like Sir Lancelot of the Slopes.

Bogner is also doing a group of suits in multi-colored, zigzag patterns and jacquard weaves that range from \$400 to \$700. "People turn from gray city dwellers during the course of the week to these colorful creatures on the slopes," says Schwamb. "You can't dress up like this for paddle tennis or basketball or any other sport." The Bogner collection is available at Bogner and Swiss Ski Sports in San Francisco, Vale West in Beverly Hills, Abercrombie and Fitch in the Beverly Center and Newport Ski Company in Newport Beach.

- Here's the perfect stocking stuffer for a man who longs to wear a bow tie but could never figure out how to tie it: *The Bow Tie Book* by Mario Sartori, which costs \$5.95, should be out this month at most bookstores and comes complete with a quite nice bow tie. The book gives clear, step-by-step instructions on how to tie a real bow tie (we don't even want to hear about clip-ons) and should be welcomed by any man who wants to imitate the erudite style of George F. Will, or even Pee Wee Herman.

Tim McGinnis, a senior editor at Fireside, the book's publisher, says that when the book's cover picture was photographed, he had to ask a salesman from Barney's in New York to come over and tie the featured bow tie. That was nothing new. "He said limos are always pulling up to Barney's, and guys run into the store to get the salesmen to tie their bow ties," McGinnis recalls. "That's my neck on the cover, tragically enough," he adds.

Bow ties are becoming ever more popular, though. "A lot of guys say they're great because you can't spill things on them," McGinnis says. "But on the other hand, you spill things on your shirt. In the book, we call that food physics." □

The Compulsion to Act

by Dennis Powers

ACTORS' Equity Association, the American stage actors' union, admits that up to eighty percent of its members are out of work at any given time. The Screen Actors' guild has said that something like ninety percent of its membership earns less than \$5,000 a year from movie acting jobs. A handful of stars can command fees so astronomical that in some cases the word "salary" seems hopelessly inadequate, and a larger number of demi-stars and top featured players make a very good living in the profession. But the great majority toils in relative obscurity, worrying about where the next job — if not the next meal — is coming from.

Uta Hagen, a revered acting teacher and

a respected actress herself, says that actors are often the "migrant workers" of the arts, forced to go where the work is and seldom able to put down roots or savor the rewards of the good life. What's more, she adds, although some stars are idolized, actors as a group usually don't command the kind of respect routinely accorded to ballet dancers, opera singers or concert violinists.

In the face of such overwhelmingly unfavorable odds and dauntingly dim prospects, you'd think that acting would rank somewhere near bomb dismantling or indentured servitude on the list of preferred career choices. But, in fact, acting schools like the Juilliard Theatre Center in New York, the Yale School of Drama



Waiflike Julie Harris as Joan of Arc in Jean Anouilh's *"The Lark,"* for which she won a Tony in 1956, and in her Tony Award-winning performance as Emily Dickinson in *"The Belle of Amherst."*

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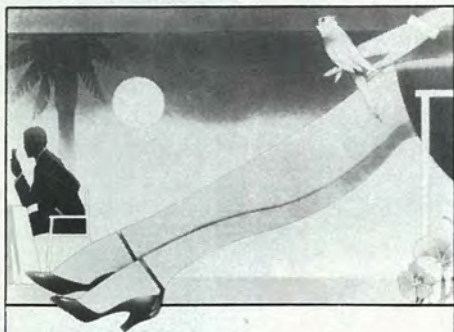
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in New Haven, the National Theatre Conservatory in Denver and the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, along with scores of others across the country, are not only packed with students but turn away hundreds of applicants every year. Obviously, the eager young graduates of such schools who turn up annually on the doorsteps of agents and casting directors haven't chosen their profession on the basis of a coldly objective assessment of job opportunities and chances for success. On the contrary, the desire to act seems more



JAY THOMPSON

Julie Harris, with Charles Durning, in "On Golden Pond" at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles.

likely to be the result of deep feelings and powerful needs that frequently have their roots in early childhood.

A classic case in point is that of the legendary Sarah Bernhardt. Born out of wedlock, she was an unloved and neglected child, a ragged, lonely waif who knew little love or acceptance until she got it years later when it came in wave after wave of applause from her audiences. "When she was off the stage, she always seemed to be acting," wrote



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her biographer Gamaliel Bradford. "She only seemed to be living when she was on it." The same comment, in countless variations, has been made about thousands of other actors. Of course, an actor's love affair with his or her audience has its pitfalls, as the great British actress Ellen Terry pointed out when she remarked, "They love me, you know — not for what I am, but for what they imagine I am."

Julie Harris, a star for more than three decades and the winner of an unmatched

be."

Harris, who performs her popular one-woman shows *The Belle of Amherst* (about Emily Dickinson) and *Currer Bell, Esq.* (about Charlotte Bronte) in between taping episodes of the television serial *Knots Landing*, on which she's been a cast member for five years, also remembers that "in school I was a pitiful student in most courses. But when I acted in school plays, everybody applauded me and told me I was good." Like many other future actors, Harris learned early on that performing earned her praise and approval not available elsewhere.

Sada Thompson, another highly regarded actress who has won many awards and honors for her stage performances but is probably best known for her work on a TV series — in this case, the long-running *Family* — has memories of "putting on plays and performing for my parents in the living room — to win their approval, I guess, but for my own enjoyment, too. Yes, I always wanted to be an actress. Early on, it was getting dressed up and looking as pretty as possible, and wanting to be like somebody in the movies. Later on, I began to see how hard it was and how demanding."

Ellis Rabb, the Broadway actor-director recently seen as Henry Higgins in the San Diego Old Globe Theatre production of *Pygmalion*, says that "as a boy I knew nothing about the theatre except what I had invented on my grandmother's back porch, where I used to force the family to gather and watch me show off — which is what I guess I thought the theatre was. And probably still do."

Unlike many another stagestruck child, both Harris and Thompson had parents who were supportive of their daughters' ambitions. "I had remarkable parents," says Harris, "who took me to the theatre and who loved actors and acting. From my father, I had the feeling that I was somehow remarkable, and I said to myself, 'If he thinks I'm remarkable,



ROBERT BURROUGHS

Ellis Rabb as Prospero in the Old Globe staging of the "The Tempest".

five Tony Awards as Broadway's best actress, recalls that "I was a child who felt herself very plain and envied all the pretty girls in school. I went to the movies and saw all those beautiful people, and later to the theatre and felt its magic and wanted to be part of that. Then it wouldn't matter if I were pretty or not, because I would be in a different atmosphere, an imaginative atmosphere where I could be beautiful if I wanted to



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maybe I am.' But I don't think they had any idea that I would become a professional actor or that I would go to New York and have a tough time and be told that I was nothing. They thought it would be sort of a hobby, and that I would go to college and marry, and that would be that. They didn't know how stubborn I was."

Rabb recalls that his father accepted the idea of his only son becoming an actor and even admired the boy's gumption in choosing a profession so notoriously

VIII, and on the night they came to see the show, it happened that twenty or so people had come backstage afterward to see me. As they crowded around the dressing room door, I spotted my parents at the back of the group; in that moment, I saw in my mother's eyes a look of utter astonishment. She had expected to walk right up to me with one of her characteristic after-the-show comments like 'Why on earth did you have to wear that funny-looking nose all through the play?' But for the first time in her life she had to wait to see me, while other people were complimenting and congratulating me. So by the time she and my father got to me, she didn't quite know what to say. It was no big deal but I think that was the moment when she realized that maybe I'd made the right choice after all.

"Shortly after that she bought a very large press book and began to keep a record of my career. Now, when I go home to Memphis for a visit, she always says, 'Have you even *looked* at your scrapbooks? You know I work my fingers to the *bone* on those things.'"

When parents do object to the idea of a son or daughter treading the boards, it's usually because they want to spare their child the rigors and uncertainties of the actor's life — or because, as stage and film actor Roscoe Lee Browne ruefully acknowledges, some vestiges of the age-old view of theatre folk as "essentially sinful, careless and irresponsible gypsies" lingers even today. Conservative parents still cringe, if only inwardly, at the idea of their innocent darling plunging into a gaudy backstage world where conventional morality is blithely waved aside, all sexual orientations are welcomed, and even rather bizarre personal eccentricities are cheerfully tolerated.

As it happens, Browne, whose most recent Broadway appearance was as co-star of *My One and Only*, has no childhood memories of brooking parental disapproval to pursue his acting ambitions,



Ellis Rabb, seated at left, as Lady Bracknell in the Old Globe's "The Importance of Being Earnest" with, from the left, Tom Lacy, Donald Corren, Sands Hall.

tough to crack. But on the other hand, "My mother thought I would get over it. To her it was like a bad cold."

As things turned out, it was some time before his mother came around, but as Rabb tells it, the occasion was worth waiting for: "I got my first professional acting job at the Antioch Shakespeare Festival in Ohio one summer, and my parents came for a visit. My best role of the season was Cardinal Wolsey in *Henry*

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because they didn't surface until he was nearly 30. By that time, he had already been a track star, a college teacher of literature and French, and a sales executive for a large liquor import company. It was in 1956, when the firm wanted to promote him to a top management position, that he suddenly began to feel trapped, the "the company was mapping out my future for me, and if I took the job I'd be there for the rest of my life."

Ignoring dire warnings from friends like Leontyne Price and Josephine Premice, who spoke from firsthand experience about the difficulties of carving out a theatrical career, Browne abruptly quit his lucrative job and announced to one and all, "I'm going to become an actor." Until that time, he'd been an avid playgoer who occasionally dabbled in amateur theatricals. But, he now realized, the desire to act professionally had been simmering on the back burner for years, and it was now or never. Novice that he was, Premice took him under her wing, bringing him a stack of theatrical trade papers to give him some idea of what he was getting into.

"I opened one called *Show Business*," Browne remembers, "and there on the page was an announcement that Joseph Papp was holding final auditions for the inaugural season of the New York Shakespeare Festival. I knew Shakespeare, even if I'd never acted it, so I thought, why not? By 6 p.m. the next day I had my first acting job, playing the Soothsayer in *Julius Caesar*."

From then on, Browne worked pretty steadily, becoming a pillar of the Off-Broadway theatre before going on to make films in the 1970s. One of his fondest memories is the 1961 production of Jean Genet's *The Blacks*, whose original cast also included James Earl Jones, Louis Gosset, Cicely Tyson, Godfrey Cambridge, Raymond St. Jacques, Maya Angelou and Charles Gordone.

Actor-director Dakin Matthews has had

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the kind of career that provokes snarling and teeth-gnashing from dedicated players who've wanted to do nothing but act for as long as they can remember and have fought tooth and nail for every little break that's come their way. Like Browne, Matthews — seen last summer in the Mark Taper Forum repertory productions of *The Real Thing* and *Hedda Gabler* — came to acting relatively late in life. But for him, acting remained a sideline for nearly two decades.

He calls himself an "accidental actor" and admits that, in spite of substantial recognition and the ability to attract a succession of performing jobs with increasingly prestigious companies, he thought of himself until recently as "a college teacher who acted on the side." As a youngster, Matthews spent eleven years as a seminarian studying for the priesthood. At 23, he left the seminary and got

a job teaching at Serra High School in San Mateo.

In 1965, a fellow teacher saw a newspaper article announcing auditions for the old Marin Shakespeare Festival, then a fledgling company with nonprofessional status. Seeing that *Henry IV, Part I* was on the Festival schedule and remembering that Matthews had bragged about playing Falstaff as a college student, he dared him to try out for the part. "I thought, why not?" Matthews remembers.

Lugging a huge, heavy volume of Shakespeare's complete works and sweating through his dark blue suit at the height of a heat wave in the Festival's outdoor theatre, Matthews felt completely out of place but doggedly completed the audition and, to his astonishment, got the job. "After that," he says, "I just sort of kept on acting — but always on the side, as an avocation."

Why did it take Matthews nearly twenty years to realize that acting was really what he wanted to do with his life?

Dakin Matthews — with Barbara Dirickson — in the A.C.T. production of Lanford Wilson's "Angels Fall".



LARRY MERKLE

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"Well, for one thing, I loved teaching and found a lot of satisfaction in it," he explains. "And I still do, although I'm taking more leaves of absence now than ever before. It wasn't that I thought the theatre was demeaning or anything like that; I guess it just never crossed my mind that it might be *the* profession for me. And I never really had to choose one or the other, because I could always do both. Somehow I managed to have an acting

and directed, and Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, where he was artistic director until resigning after this year's summer season opened.

"I offered to resign because I could never guarantee anymore that I would actually be on site when I was needed. Opportunities are beginning to open up for me now, both in acting and directing, that I feel I can't turn down. And I felt the Festival would be better off with someone who could commit full-time to it." And, he confides, although he enjoys directing, "especially plays that are extraordinarily demanding of language, well, frankly, I'd rather act."

Now that he's working in Los Angeles more than ever before, Matthews is finding that film and television work has become a prerequisite for getting first-class stage acting jobs: "If a theatre has to choose between me and somebody who's only been acting for three years but has a TV series, they'll probably pick the other guy, even though I have twenty years of experience. And if by chance they hire both of us, they'll pay him more than they pay me. It's unfortunate, but film and TV credits give an actor national recognition, and without them, he has less control over his destiny as an artist."

What does he think about acting on television? "Well, as a friend of mine says, usually it's not really acting. It's something *like* acting. And it's what you have to do to support your acting habit."

Needless to say, things don't always fall so neatly into place when an actor is just starting out, and a young performer can wait a long time for the fabled "big break" that opens all the doors. For Julie Harris, the turning point came in a now forgotten play of 1948, Bessie Breuer's *Sundown Beach*, directed by Elia Kazan, in which she played a young Southern woman, married to an emotionally disturbed returning World War II pilot. She'd had another man's baby while her husband was overseas. "It was a very touching



JAN THOMPSON

Dakin Matthews in the Center Theatre Group/Mark Taper Forum "The Real Thing" by Tom Stoppard.

career without having to leave the Bay Area to do it."

In the past few years, Matthews has turned his hand to directing. This fall, he and his wife Anne McNaughton staged "his-and-hers" productions of Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman* and its rhetorical centerpiece *Don Juan in Hell* for Denver Center Theatre Company. And until recently, he has divided his time between San Francisco's A.C.T., where he acted

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part," says Harris, "and it showed off that waifish quality I had." Luckily, director Harold Clurman saw the play, and Harris's performance convinced him that she could play the tricky role of 12-year-old Frankie Adams in *The Member of the Wedding*. "I never had to read for the part of Frankie," she recalls, "and it was the beginning of everything for me." Carson McCullers's play opened in 1950, and critic Brooks Atkinson described Harris as "an actress compounded of light and spirit." When it became her first film two years later, she got an Oscar nomination as best actress.

As any actor will tell you, acting is usually very hard work. In John Gielgud's words, "Acting is never really easy. Sometimes, you know, it is an escape, occasionally a pleasure, often a responsibility." Writer Edward Wagenknecht puts his finger on one of the things that makes acting so difficult and that puts actors in a uniquely vulnerable position when he said, "Only the actor gives *himself* to his audience, only he dramatizes his own personality, uses his own body as the instrument on which he plays."

Do the rewards and satisfactions of acting justify the hard work and the risky, uncertain life that goes along with it? Sada Thompson, who spent much of last year playing Amanda Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie* at the Stratford, Ontario, Festival Theatre, thinks they do: "Most of all, it's the people. There's a rich sort of brotherhood possible in a theatre company, and it's a wonderful thing. And it's wonderful to be onstage with somebody when you know just how their heart is beating and pulses are leaping back and forth between you that are enlivening and exciting. And then there's the audience. When things start coming together onstage and the audience turns into this one creature. It's just marvelous, even though it doesn't last very long. The theatre is so evanescent. It's just a breath, a breath on the evening air."



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Many actors have memories of going to movies and plays as youngsters and being deeply affected, even inspired by the stars they saw. Among Julie Harris's favorites as a young girl were Paul Muni, Bette Davis, Laurence Olivier, Merle Oberon and Vivien Leigh. "I remember seeing *Gone With the Wind* perhaps a dozen times," she says. "Later, in the theatre, I saw Laurette Taylor in *The Glass Menagerie*, and that really changed my life. I could hardly find my way out of the theatre, I was so moved."

"One of the first times I realized that acting might be something I'd want to do with my life was when I saw David Ogden Stiers [the actor later known for his TV work on M*A*S*H] playing King Lear back in the sixties," Matthews recalls. "He really knocked me out of my seat. Another performance that had the same effect was the character actor G. Wood as Sir Anthony Absolute in *The Rivals* with Eva LeGallienne's company. And there are some people, Elizabeth Huddle is one, whose work always makes me proud to be an actor."

The actors who fascinated me were always stage actors," says Ellis Rabb. "When I was a student at Carnegie Tech, I would go into New York and see the Lunts, the Oliviers, Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes and Eve LeGallienne. They were really my role models."

Among the most persistent cliches about actors is that they never grow up, that they remain childish creatures inhabiting an imaginary world cut off from "real life." Thompson believes the image may have something to do with the fact that an actor "has to retain throughout his life certain qualities — like openness, spontaneity, responsiveness — that people generally regard as childlike. So I think they assume we must be childlike in other ways, too." In truth, she adds, "actors really have to be so endlessly inventive with their lives, always pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, that I



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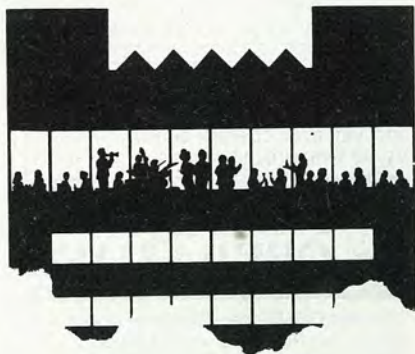
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think they're actually people of stronger character than most other folks I've met."

Have things changed much in the years since these five players — all of them in the 45-60 age range — first felt the bite of the acting bug? In some ways, yes. For one thing, acting as a profession is at least somewhat more acceptable now, even to anxious parents. Training opportunities are more widely available than ever before. And the growth of regional theatre has brought the professional stage to cities all over the nation and with it, more role models for young hopefuls as well as more roles for working actors.

Some things, however, are constant, as 22-year-old Timothy Piggee, a first-year acting student at the Denver Center Theatre Company's National Theatre Conservatory, reveals when he talks about his Utah childhood. "I was 11 years old and planning to become a Baptist minister," he remembers. "One night I went to see my sister in a Salt Lake City Acting Company production of *The Little Foxes*. It was only the second play I'd seen in my life. I remember watching her and thinking how wonderful it was, because she wasn't just my sister anymore. She was someone else entirely, someone I'd never met. The whole notion of being able to become someone else, to interpret life and create a whole other world completely fascinated me. By the time it was over, I knew that's what I wanted to do."

A school-sponsored excursion to New York, where Piggee and his ninth-grade classmates took in *Annie*, *A Chorus Line*, *Deathtrap* and half a dozen other Broadway hits, cinched it. When he graduated from the University of Utah — where he had been the only black student in the actor-training program — he auditioned for the National Theatre Conservatory and was accepted. Since last September, he's been taking classes in voice, speech, scansion, movement, acting, dance and cultural history, as well as applying what he's learned to workshop productions of



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Piggee is aware that he faces tough odds as a young actor but is convinced that his "endurance and personal commitment" will carry the day: "If my belief and my desire are strong enough, it will happen for me." And although his mother occasionally makes wistful references to his "going back to the ministry," he feels that his parents are behind him all the way. Has he had second thoughts about acting as a career? "Well, I can convince myself for about five minutes that there's something else I'd rather do," he confesses, "but I always come back to acting, because I can't imagine my life without the theatre."

Why do people become actors? There are probably as many answers as there are actors. For most, a powerful urge for self-expression plays a big part in the decision. So does the opportunity "to interpret life," as Piggee puts it, and to

"become" somebody else, to communicate the thoughts and feelings, the poetry of great playwrights, to move an audience to laughter and tears. Some seek approval or validation at the outset. Others hope to overcome shyness or personal problems such as stammering — it's true that some actors who stammer frequently off-stage have perfect speech as soon as they get "into character." In Sada Thompson's words, "Nothing seems to open up your soul in quite the same way as acting. You can say things that you just can't communicate in other ways."

One of the most distinctive reasons I have ever heard came from a successful character actor. When I asked him how he'd come to settle on acting as a career, he said, "Well, I'll tell you. I was sitting in my cell at a state prison, trying like hell to figure out how I could make a living when I got out. What I needed to find was a job where my prison record wouldn't be a handicap. What I came up with was acting. That was years ago, and it's never been a problem." □



Roscoe Lee Browne at the right (pictured here with Antonio Fargas) in his award-winning performance in Derek Walcott's *The Dream on Monkey Mountain* at the Mark Taper Forum in 1970.

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DINING SCENE

by Stanley Eichelbaum

The good news is that traditional French cuisine is back in vogue. I'm delighted to say that the food Mafia's effort to bury it under an avalanche of trendy cooking, from Cajun to Thai, hasn't worked. French food, done with classical charm and know-how, forms the basis of three small, bistro-like restaurants that are recent arrivals in town. All three are the personal domains of seasoned chefs from France. All three are modestly priced. And all are eminently commendable.

Let's begin at *Le Piano Zinc*, 708 14th St. (Phone: 431-5266), just off Market Street in quarters that used to house Gérard's Brasserie. The new owner-chef, Michel Laurent, took as his partner a French compatriot, Joel Coutre, remembered as the manager of Camargue. The men met at Le Castel, where they worked in 1979. Laurent left to return to Paris, and worked for a time at Maxim's. Now, he's doing simpler food, but of elegant quality, under the slogan, "A Renaissance of Classic French Cuisine," which is certainly a welcome thought.

Laurent and Coutre chose the name *Le Piano Zinc* after a piano bar in Paris, the "zinc" being the durable material that covers a good many bars in France. The hitch, though, is that it's only a name. There's no zinc covering on a small wine bar, or for that matter, on a white piano that stands near it. Nonetheless, the atmosphere is overwhelmingly French and exceedingly agreeable. Banquettes line the walls, and the close quarters make it possible for you to get to know your neighbor. The crowd is friendly and ca-

sual, and the interesting selection of appetizers and entrées gives one ample cause for conversation. Coutre is an affable host, and together with Laurent's expertise in the kitchen, the pair couldn't possibly fail.

A prix-fixe dinner, at \$30, is something of a feast. You're fed three first courses: a shitake mushroom pâté, a lobster turn-over and a truly winning warm salad of quail and bean sprouts. You get a choice of three main courses—pheasant with a Cognac sauce, or tournedos of beef Beaujolais, or, the one I tried, a paillard of Provimi veal sautéed with a sherry sauce. You have the feeling here that someone cares a lot about what he's doing. The vegetables come in a splendid combination of puréed broccoli, puréed carrots, sautéed spinach and corn fritter. If you order a la carte, you can have a fine house salad of mixed baby lettuces (\$3.50) and a meticulously underdone rack of lamb in a no-nonsense presentation with natural juices and baked garlic (\$15). Desserts are also notable, like a sensual black currant mousse cake (\$4.50).

Next, there's *Janot's* in the heart of downtown, near Union Square. You'll find Janot's at 44 Campton Place (phone: 392-5373), in an attractive, brick-walled setting with brass trim and cloth panels. It's named for Jacques Janot, long-time owner of the Tricolor Restaurant way out on Geary. He's now teamed with chef Pierre Morin, a native of Angers in the Loire Valley. For such a small place (about 40 seats), Janot's offers a fairly extensive menu made up of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres, grilled entrées, poached or braised entrées, and a large selection of house-made desserts. For a starter, you can have an excellent roulade of salmon stuffed with shrimp, mushrooms and spinach, with a basil sauce (\$5.50). I would also recommend the hearts of romaine salad done with a tangy vinaigrette and grated Roquefort strewn over it (\$4.50). A classic steak with French fries

Simply elegant dining.



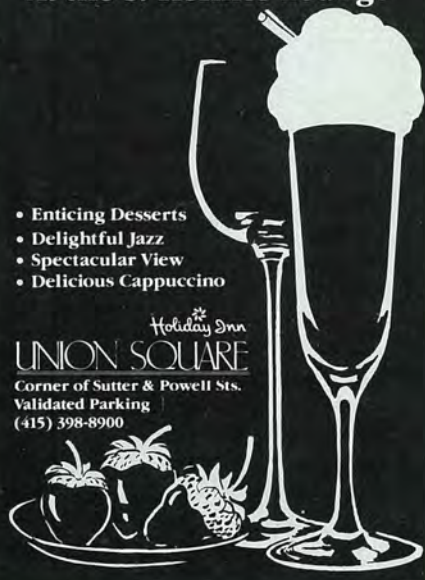
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comes in a butterflyed version that I found delicious (\$13). Lamb chops are served with white beans and fresh mint sauce (\$15), and a seafood dish of prawns, scallops and oysters comes molded in cabbage leaves with a fennel butter sauce (\$11). From a wonderful-looking dessert tray, I chose an orange-génoise cake (\$3.25) made with obvious love.

Heading south of Market, you can stop at the *South Park Cafe*, amazing for its authentic atmosphere of a Paris bistro. It's situated at 108 South Park (phone: 495-7275), in a once-fashionable residential district that's now being rehabilitated with small businesses after decades of decay. The oval-shaped park provides a pleasant background for the light, airy cafe, which has been made to look very inviting, with off-white walls, red tile floor and a wine bar that *does* have a zinc covering.

You can sit at the bar and order from a wide selection of wines available by the glass. Bar food, or tapas, may also be ordered. Prawns in garlic, for example, cost \$2.50. The lunch and dinner menu is the handiwork of Catherine Allswang, an exceptionally ingratiating Parisienne who is co-owner with Robert Voorhees. Considering today's high cost of food, you might not believe the prices. A substantial fish soup made with sea bass, prawns and mussels is only \$7.95, though it's a meal in itself, and comes, bouillabaisse-style, with a small dish of aïoli, or garlic mayonnaise. Rabbit fricassée with a lemon sauce is also hearty and satisfying, for \$9.50. Roast duck with turnips is \$9.75, and grilled lamb chops are at the top of the price list for \$10.50.

No wonder the South Park Cafe is doing so well. The food is prepared with flair, and attractively presented without all the pretention that you get today. Desserts are turned out by chef Allswang, be it a tarte tatin with Pears (\$3), or a Gateau des Iles, which is a coconut rum cake served with crème fraîche (\$2.50). □

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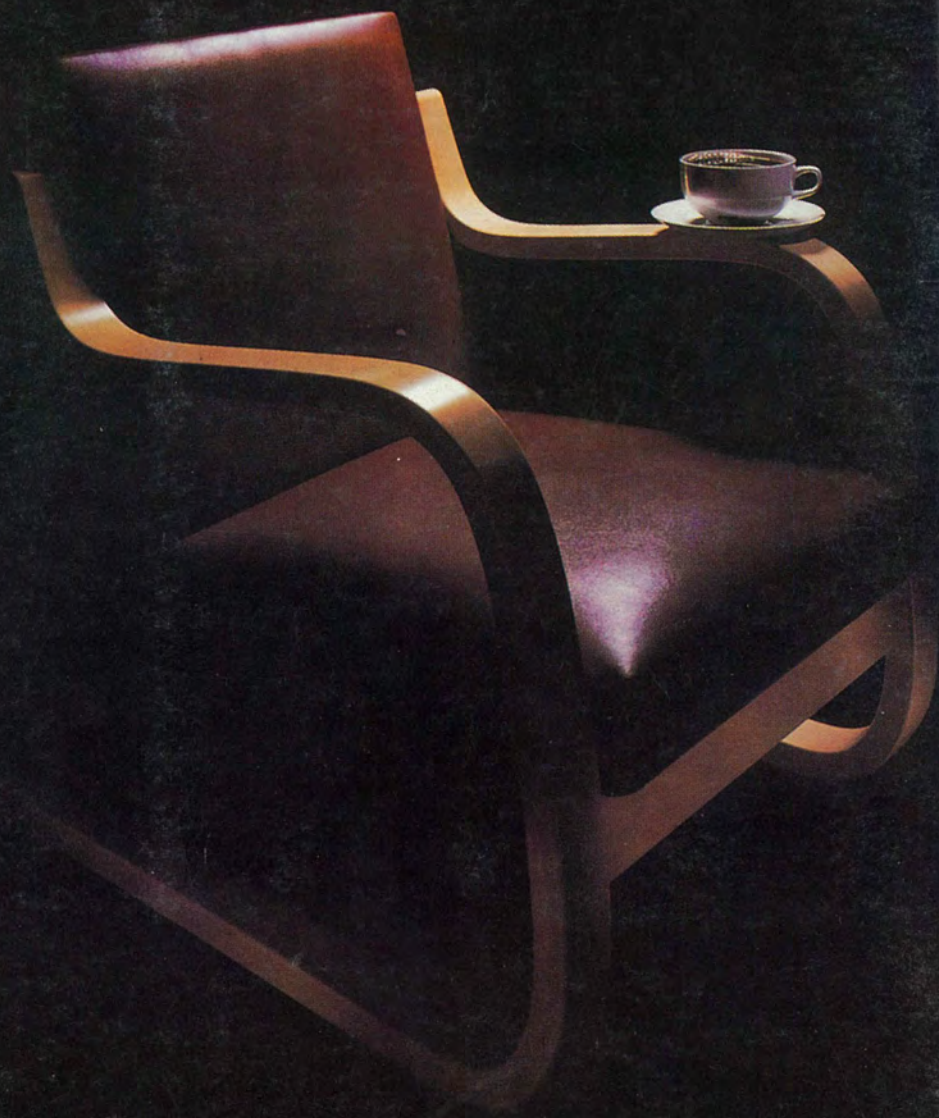
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