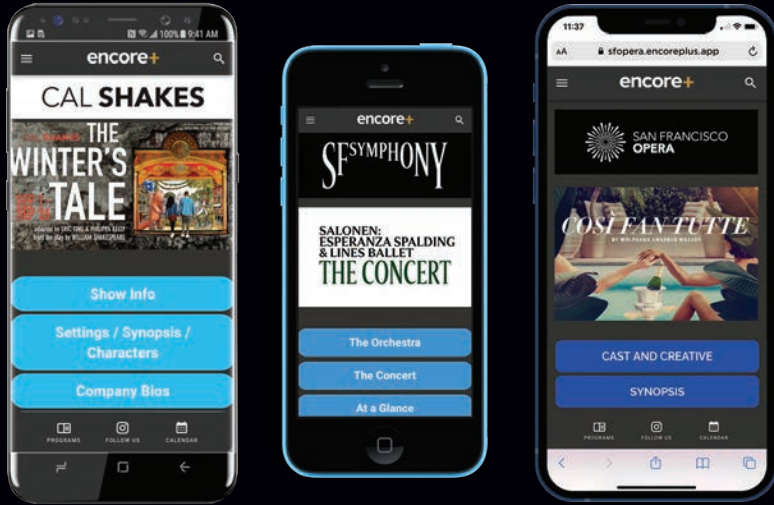


# FEFU AND HER FRIENDS

BY MARÍA IRENE FORNÉS  
DIRECTED BY PAM MACKINNON

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# THIS IS YOUR THEATER, SAN FRANCISCO

American Conservatory Theater is an essential gathering place that brings artists and communities together to inspire and provoke. Now four years into the leadership of Tony Award-winning Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, A.C.T. is charged with fulfilling its mission to engage the spirit of the San Francisco Bay Area, activate stories that resonate, promote a diversity of voices and points of view, and empower theater makers and audiences to celebrate liveness. A.C.T. is a Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater serving almost 200,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area annually through theater, training, education, and community programs. The organization values inclusion, transformational learning, participation, and rigorous fun.

**A.C.T. just welcomed more than 23,000 people to the Geary Theater in January/February to experience the show *Freestyle Love Supreme*, created by Thomas Kail, Lin-Manuel Miranda, and Anthony Veneziale. It was a joyous occasion to be back in-person with our community. Thanks to lead support from Salesforce, with additional support provided by the Koret Foundation and a number of generous donors, we were able to provide more than 10,000 highly subsidized tickets for only \$5–10 and more than 5,000 free tickets to community partners across the Bay Area.**

A.C.T.'s MFA Program is the last freestanding graduate acting training program in the country not affiliated with a university. We have determined that in order to thrive, the program must be in partnership with a university as is modeled throughout our field. At

this point in time we do not have a partnership in place that would enable us to continue the MFA Program, so it will end with the Class of 2022. We remain deeply invested in delivering the highest-level of training to the final class, and there remains the opportunity to support them through the Melissa Yandell Smith Legacy Fund. We honor and celebrate the tremendous impact the MFA Program has had on individual artists and on the American theater as a whole.

While the graduate training program is coming to an end, A.C.T. is steadfastly committed to transformative learning by maintaining its Conservatory, which offers a robust array of theater-based classes and training programs, including Studio A.C.T., the Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, San Francisco Semester, and Institutional Professional Development. These programs help participants discover their inner artistry, while also training the artists who will shape the cultural landscape of our society.

In addition, our Education & Community Programs bring theater and arts education curricula to schools and community-based organizations across the Bay Area. For an entire decade, these programs have provided annually close to 20,000 young people and educators from around the region with opportunities to experience the transformational potential of dramatic storytelling, critical thinking, and creation through collaboration, and have fostered the artists and audiences of the future.

American Conservatory Theater is your theater, San Francisco. Welcome!

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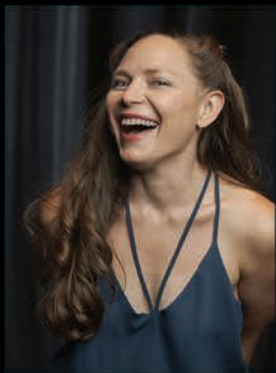
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(L to R) Marga Gomez, Lisa Anne Porter, Jennifer Ikeda (kneeling), Sarita Ocón, Catherine Castellanos, Stacy Ross (kneeling), Leontyne Mbele-Mbong, Cindy Goldfield.

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# FROM THE ARTISTIC + EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

## WELCOME TO A.C.T.'S STRAND THEATER!

We are here to reunite with you in big story: present and available; vulnerable and ready; excited and grateful. Here we go!

We continue Season 2022 with the theme of reunion. It's 1935. Stephany Beckmann, or Fefu, has invited seven friends for the weekend, some of whom have known each other for decades, to rehearse a pitch for arts in education. We get to know these eight women intimately. How they reconnect; how they re-establish or divert from old feelings and bonds; how they impress; how they spur each other on; provoke; inspire; laugh and be silly; be still.

I have wanted to direct this iconic play for years. As we venture beyond our homes and bubbles, it feels necessary. To re-open the Strand Theater with Fornés's ingenious play—exploring a reunion among friends, traveling space-to-space to eavesdrop and learn who these women are to each other—feels more charged, more needed. It's a celebratory open house. The Strand in its entirety is Fefu's home. The lobby, her garden. Backstage, a bedroom. The Rueff Theater, a study on one side, the other a kitchen. Stairwells, breezeways, halls, even the elevator are part of her world. And you are invited.

We treat these spaces around the Strand Theater as unique installations, each with their own relationship between audience and action. Sometimes you surround a scene, sometimes you look down on it, look up to it, within inches, or at a remove. Space, sound, and lights and you are all here to serve the story. Our hope is that each space gets you more in touch with yourself, the characters, this theater, and maybe even theater, the artform, most generally. That by part three you'll be transformed, ready to be pulled deeper in, knowing the players well and knowing you are part of their world.

When I was a girl, I played with doll houses. I had a traditional doll house with a red pitched roof, and added extensions made from shoe boxes and construction paper. At the center of this made-up community was a matriarch, Stella, who called the shots. Luke Skywalker could drop by for a birthday party. Playmobile knights could hitch their horses out front. A tornado could carry a dog, made of clay, or younger sister of pipe-cleaners and cloth into the garden for even bigger adventures. It was a mix-and-match world of possibility. It was good prep for Maria Irene Fornés's *Fefu and Her Friends*. Enjoy!



Pam MacKinnon,  
Artistic Director

## DEAR FRIENDS,

We're so excited to open our doors and to welcome you into the theater for *Fefu and Her Friends*! If you're new to A.C.T., we're delighted to meet you. If you're returning to A.C.T. for the first time in a long time—welcome back. This is your theater, San Francisco!

We are thrilled that you're joining us today, and that we're all working together to remain safe and to enjoy being together again. You can find detailed information about our COVID safety protocols on our website at [act-sf.org/covid19](https://act-sf.org/covid19). Your safety and that of our staff and artists are primary. Thank you for being in partnership.

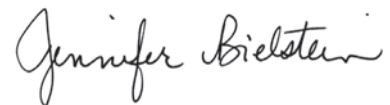
Additionally, we've made a couple of changes that we hope will make your trip to A.C.T. safer, more convenient, and enjoyable. You can now receive tickets on your phone, eliminating the need to stand in line for will-call. Our show's programs are available digitally as well—simply click the link in your email or scan the QR code posted in the lobby and you have access to everything included in the printed program.

Live theater—both making it and experiencing it—can be incredibly healing. Thank you for being a part of bringing us back into the theater, and for joining in the collective experience of today's live performance. The best thing that you can do to support the return of performing arts across the Bay Area is to continue to buy tickets, and to encourage your friends, family, and colleagues to do the same. Of course, donations are also always appreciated as ticket sales do not cover our full expenses.

At A.C.T., we're committed to engaging the spirit of the Bay Area, and to creating a supportive and welcoming environment for all. We believe that when a diversity of perspective and experience is embraced, we have better art and most importantly, we help to build a stronger community. To learn more, please visit [act-sf.org/about-us](https://act-sf.org/about-us).

Finally, A.C.T. has joined forces with over 150 arts and cultural organizations from all artistic disciplines throughout the Bay Area as we begin welcoming patrons back into our spaces. We encourage you to check out [BayAreaArtsTogether.org](https://BayAreaArtsTogether.org) and peruse the list of organizations committed to bringing enriching, in-person experiences back to the Bay Area, safely.

Thank you for being here.

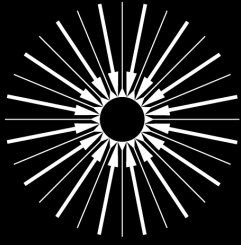


Jennifer Bielstein,  
Executive Director





# Ready to Explore



BAY AREA  
ARTS  
TOGETHER



Sarita Ocón, Rosie Hallett (seated), and Annemaria Rajala, in Jaclyn Backhaus's *Men on Boats* at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater, directed by Tamilla Woodard. Photo by Kevin Berne.



**PAM MACKINNON**  
Artistic Director

**JENNIFER BIELSTEIN**  
Executive Director



## PRESENTS

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BY MARÍA IRENE FORNÉS  
DIRECTED BY PAM MACKINNON

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# FEFU AND HER FRIENDS

BY MARÍA IRENE FORNÉS  
DIRECTED BY PAM MACKINNON

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Fefu

### CINDY GOLDFIELD

Emma

### MARGA GOMEZ

Cecilia

### JENNIFER IKEDA

Cindy

### LEONTYNE MBELE-MBONG

Sue

### SARITA OCÓN

Christina

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Julia

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Paula

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Fefu

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Director of Production

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**A.C.T.'s production of *Fefu and Her Friends* is dedicated to the memory of A.C.T. Trustee Olympia Dukakis.**

# WHAT MAKES A PLAY A CLASSIC?

BY JOY MEADS

A.C.T. DIRECTOR OF DRAMATURGY AND NEW WORKS

I have a degree in Dramatic Literature and Theater History from N.Y.U., and yet the long reading list in my required classes included only three plays that were not written by white men. In the years since, I've worked to make up for the gaps in my education and have been astounded by the depth and quality of work that was excluded from the canon I received. Call them the "America Wasn't Ready" plays: a treasure trove of great works by writers of color, by white women, and by members of other disenfranchised groups that failed to receive the attention they were due from curators who—largely unconsciously—understood universality through the lens of whiteness and masculinity. At A.C.T., we think of classics as works that:

- **Stand the test of time.** Plays that captured something essential in the moment they were written and achieve immortality by revealing fundamental truths about the human condition for each successive generation.
- **Influenced countless other artists.** Works that had a seismic impact on the art form and created aftershocks in the plays that came after.
- **Allow our intellects and imaginations to dance with the greatest minds of generations past.**

Of course, these determinations are subjective, and there are great debates to be found over which works ought to be considered "canonical." (If you see me in the lobby, know that I geek out about these conversations and would love to hear your thoughts.) Over the last years, we've presented work by Alice Childress (*Trouble in Mind*), Caryl Churchill (*Top Girls*), and Lynn Nottage (*Sweat*) alongside work by George Bernard Shaw (*Arms and the Man*), Edward Albee (*Seascape*), and William Shakespeare (*Cymbeline*). We passionately believe *Fefu and Her Friends* fits all of the criteria for a classic and María Irene Fornés ought to be discussed in the pantheon of playwrights like Samuel Beckett, Luigi Pirandello, Eugene Ionesco, and Sam Shepard: formally innovative artists who expanded the boundaries of the stage and galvanized the imaginations of artists to come.

Though her name may be new to many of you, she left an indelible creative imprint on some of the greatest theatrical minds of the late 20th and early 21st centuries.

**"THE FORNÉS OEUVRE IS ONE OF AMERICAN DRAMA'S MOST IMPORTANT ACHIEVEMENTS. ... [AFTER SEEING FORNÉS' PLAYS], I LEFT THE THEATER ON EACH OF THESE NIGHTS WANTING TO MAKE THEATER... I WANTED TO BE FORNÉS."**

—TONY KUSHNER, PULITZER PRIZE AND TONY AWARD WINNING PLAYWRIGHT OF *ANGELS IN AMERICA*

**"IN THE WORK OF EVERY AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT...THERE ARE ONLY TWO STAGES: BEFORE SHE HAS READ MARÍA IRENE FORNÉS AND AFTER."**

—PAULA VOGEL, PULITZER PRIZE WINNING PLAYWRIGHT OF *HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE*





Fornés with, from left, fellow playwrights Arthur Miller, John Guare, Edward Albee and Horton Foote before a round-table discussion at the Signature Theater in 2000. Photo Sara Krulwich, *The New York Times*



Maria Irene Fornés with longtime partner Susan Sontag

**“SHE HAD HER OWN VERY SPECIFIC VOICE BEFORE A LOT OF US HAD EVEN LEARNED TO SPEAK.”**

— TERRENCE MCNALLY, FIVE TIME TONY AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT

**“HER MARK ON ME WAS INDELIBLE.”**

—MACARTHUR GENIUS AWARD-WINNING PLAYWRIGHT LUIS ALFARO

**“I’M NOT SURE I WOULD HAVE BECOME A PLAYWRIGHT IF NOT FOR HER AND I KNOW MANY OF MY FELLOW WRITERS FEEL THE SAME. HER INFLUENCE WAS MONUMENTAL.”**

—HEIDI SCHRECK, WRITER OF *WHAT THE CONSTITUTION MEANS TO ME*, OBIE AWARD WINNER, AND PULITZER PRIZE FINALIST



## MAKING IRENE LAUGH: A MEMORY

BY LUIS ALFARO



María Irene Fornés

In 1991 I made Irene Fornés laugh. She probably doesn't remember it, but I do, as if it was yesterday. Consequently, I also made Irene's mother, Carmen, laugh.

As one of the original members of the Mark Taper Forum's Mentor Writers Workshop, Irene was one of the first instructors we worked with. The Taper provided us with an extraordinary cross section of writers like Mac Wellman, Sybille Pearson, Paula Vogel, Eric Overmyer, and John Steppling. They turned our playwriting worlds inside out. It was an amazing time for us, mostly because we were a rowdy bunch. The group of writers that were involved in the program, which included, among others, Han Ong, Kelly Stuart, Leon Martell, Oliver Mayer, Lynn Manning, Alice Tuan, and David Lee

Lindsay, have emerged as some of the best playwrights working in Los Angeles today. It's hard to imagine how we contained enough energy to sit and do the yoga, the exercises, the reading, and Irene's thoughts for the day for three hours, six days a week. But somehow we did.

Studying with Irene was the walk through fire for me. It was the place where I jumped over the cliff and stopped being a hobby artist and dedicated myself to full-time truth telling.

It was in Irene's workshop that I discovered what the *electricity* of playwriting was. I had already been working as a poet and in the performance world. But Irene showed me that theater was the *alchemy* part

of writing. It was the place where my passion and craft met. The beginning of mixing desire with technique.

And she was hard on me. Which is one of the many reasons why I am happy I made her laugh.

One of the first meetings we had, she asked people what kind of play they wanted to write. Well, I had been active in local politics for awhile. Everything from tracing my body with paint on a sidewalk for a protest group against the war in El Salvador to marching and getting arrested at the Federal Building when the attacks on the National Endowment for the Arts were beginning.

So, I immediately spoke up and arrogantly stated that I wanted to write a political play. "Ugh," was what I heard her say. I'm not so sure anymore but I think she said that she hated people who wrote political plays.

I was, of course, young and devastated.

She told me that if I wanted to write a political play, I should write no play at all. I should go off and do politics. I should go be political, live and breathe politics. Then I should come back and write a play about nothing, a rock, and it would be political.

Well, it sounds like a cliché now, but back then I took that advice quite seriously. I went off and worked for a local of the Service Employees International Union. Later, I went to work at The Gathering Place, a center for people with HIV and AIDS. I demonstrated with ACT-



UP, I did a million benefits and at one point I even helped people organize *how* to get arrested.

Irene, of course, was right.

I just lived and breathed for a while. And then I started to write. And after that I started to live and breathe art. The country of playwrighting became a great, extraordinary place that I never have gotten tired of.

So, there is this thing about making her laugh.

The truth is that I did love writing my politics out on the page. Mostly because I was trying to get a hold of what my politics were.

One day, Irene gave us one of her infamous exercises, probably something to do with a picture or photo. These were especially hard for me because they were something that I could not possibly attach my politics to. So I started to write about the only other thing I had going for myself and that was my body. This odd burly sexy *Rubenesque* body.

What I began to write was deeply emotional to me. And what was unusual for me was that the mother tongue took over. My Chicano tongue. And it was trying real hard to straddle both sides of the border. And somewhere in the middle of that struggle I started to describe a strange, kind of surreal world. A world where the painful poverty and violence of downtown Los Angeles that I was raised in, emerged as a language that was wicked, dark, sexy, and most of all, the *beautiful ugly* of that street corner in downtown. And to my surprise, the tongue was funny.

So, I started to read aloud in the workshop from this new voice.

And Irene laughed.

She laughed out loud.

And Carmen, Irene's 100-year-old mother, who we lined up chairs for to make a bed, laughed out loud too.

And the other playwrights smiled and laughed too. And I joined a community, a place where I could counter the silence of my pad and pen. The lonely solitary aspect of writing was made bearable with a group of writers that I was inspired by.

And now, here I am, almost ten years later. It's midnight in the hills of Echo Park. The dogs are barking and the graffiti is fresh. Little gang boys dream of moist cakes and innocence. And I am remembering some pretty good spaghetti and writing nights with

Kelly Stuart, Han Ong, Roxanne Rogers, and Alice Tuan. And I'm thinking, "Wow, a laugh made that."

Not any old laugh, mind you.

Irene's laugh.

--

*Originally published in* Conducting a Life: Reflections on the Theater of Maria Irene Fornes, 1999.  
*Reprinted with permission.*



Luis Alfaro

## YOU'RE INVITED TO FEFU'S PARTY

BY ALLIE MOSS

María Irene Fornés's *Fefu and Her Friends* is an invitation. Eight friends are gathered in reunion, as director Pam MacKinnon describes, "to manifest the unimaginable." Their task feels familiar as we navigate the (hopefully) waning days of a pandemic and try to imagine a way forward that we cannot yet see. Like us, their gathering prompts a collision of past and present selves, requiring some reflection about how we have collectively changed before we press on with the evening. The characters' act of coming together is as much about being in an authentic relationship with each other as it is about anything else. And, as you gather with those around you in the theater today, you are invited to do the same.

*Fefu* is an invitation to an experience. You (yes, you specifically—the fourth wall is porous here) will be asked to leave your seat, go to four other spaces, sit next to several different people, observe intimate scenes between these women, and return to the auditorium, perhaps seated next to someone who has experienced the scenes in a different order. There is no right or wrong; you are in the same boat as the rest of the audience, and indeed most of the characters, in piecing together the complex relationships between these women. You are also an essential part of the creation of this experience. Perhaps you contributed a plant to the garden. But also, as you will see, the entire Strand building is Fefu's house, and you are a guest at this reunion. Your presence at this gathering, and your willingness

to go on the journey alongside the characters, is vital to the communal experience of this performance.

*Fefu* is also an invitation to relationship. Fornés's play features eight women who, without the presence of men onstage, are freed from some of the mandatory performance of gender. Women simply existing with each other is still a rarity on American stages and that Fornés managed it 40 years ago is a feat. (That said, you may have seen it before at A.C.T.; *Fefu and Her Friends* is the sixth play featuring all women characters in Pam MacKinnon's tenure as artistic director, in direct response to this erasure.) The relationships between the women in *Fefu* are deep and complex; they are simultaneously immediately recognizable and impossible to name. The malleable descriptor "friend" stretches to cover them all, doing the best it can while lacking the specificity to describe the depths and curvatures of each unique pairing. It is the relationships of this play that make it sing; they are the heartbeat at its center, and they are worth watching for their own sake. In an essay for *American Theatre* magazine, Jorge Ignacio Cortiñas puts it beautifully: "Fornés's great achievement is that she recreates not a story exactly (though there is one), not a series of events in a plot (though there are plenty), but the emotional charge one feels in a house crowded with friends."

And finally, *Fefu* is an invitation to joy. Fornés demonstrates her mastery in that this play is *playful*; it bends

and reinvents the form in ways that surprise and delight. There is the pleasure of discovering inside jokes, there is curiosity of exploring of Fefu's house, there is the thrill of a water fight onstage. Cortiñas again: "We cannot understand Fornés's oeuvre without connecting to this foundational sense of joy. Any of the tragic endings Fornés wrote begin here, in this spirit of play." And indeed, joy at this gathering abounds, even in the face of darkness and uncertainty. The giddiness of reunion after a long time away is palpable and timely as we gather in the Strand for the first time in two years. It has proved uncontainable from the start of the process; at auditions, there were exuberant hallway reunions as actors who hadn't seen each other in years held each other's faces in their hands, brought together by Fornés's words. No doubt this joy will spill off the stage in performance, and you are invited to partake.

So please, come in. Accept the invitation to gather with your fellow audience members, with Fefu, and with her friends. Fornés said of this play, "I felt as I wrote [*Fefu*] that I was surrounded by friends. I felt very happy to have such good and interesting friends." May you feel surrounded by friends watching it as well.



# WHO'S WHO IN FEFU AND HER FRIENDS



## CATHERINE CASTELLANOS

(Fefu) has appeared as the Ghost of Christmas Present in *A Christmas Carol* at A.C.T. and was seen

in *Between Riverside and Crazy* as The Church Lady. She holds thirteen seasons as an Associate Artist with the California Shakespeare Theater in such roles as Prospero in *The Tempest*, Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*, Queen Margaret in *Richard III*, and Emilia in *Othello*, to name a few of the 21 roles performed. She has also been a company member with Magic Theatre's resident theatre company Campo Santo since 2001, creating premiere works with renowned writers. Other Bay Area credits include The Magic Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, *Roe* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and *Phaedra* at Shotgun Players. Regionally, Catherine has acted at Yale Repertory Theatre, La MaMa, Arena Stage, Portland Center Stage, and with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's 2016-2020 seasons. Castellanos has worked coaching and teaching restorative justice through theatre art with Community Works West Rising Voices and with the men in blue at San Quentin.



## CINDY GOLDFIELD

(Emma) has been a fixture in the Bay Area for many years. Regional credits include work at A.C.T.

(including 16 seasons of *A Christmas Carol*), CenterREP, San Jose Rep, TheatreWorks, Broadway by the Bay, Marin Theatre Company, N.C.T.C., and

42nd Street Moon. New York credits include D'Arcy Drollinger's *Project: Lohan*, and *Mr. Irresistible* at La MaMa E.T.C. Goldfield also enjoys a thriving cabaret career, collaborating with Scrumbly Koldewyn (*Goldfield & Koldewyn*) and David Aaron Brown (*One Night Stand*). In addition to her performing credits and awards, Goldfield has two Theatre Bay Area awards for Best Direction (*Trog!* and *Once*).



## MARGA GOMEZ (Cecilia)

is the writer/performer of thirteen solo plays which have been presented nationally and

internationally. Her acting credits include theatre roles in Campo Santo's production of *Translating Selena* (January 2020,) Off-Broadway Ars Nova production of *Dr. Rides American Beach House* (November 2019,) Clubbed Thumb's virtual premiere *The Woman's Party* (March 2021) as well as roles in *Sense8* (Netflix) and *Sphere* (Warner Brothers.) Gomez is currently developing her 14th solo play, *All Ages*, for Brava Theater in San Francisco in June 2022. [margagomez.com](http://margagomez.com)



## JENNIFER IKEDA (Cindy)

grew up in Oakland and took her first acting class at the Young Conservatory. She's thrilled to be

performing at A.C.T. Favorite credits include *Top Girls* (Broadway), *Bad News* and *The Bacchae* with JoAnne Akalaitis, *Vietgone* at Manhattan Theater Club, numerous Shakespearean roles at The Public

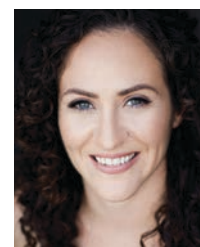
Theatre, as well as collaborations with writers such as Susan Soon He Stanton, Mike Lew, and Lloyd Suh. TV/Film credits include *Advantageous* (Sundance 2015), *Killing Hasselhoff*, *Dash and Lily*, *Blue Bloods*, *Maniac*, *New Amsterdam*. She's recorded dozens of audiobooks, including the best-selling *All Souls Trilogy*, and appeared on NPR's *Selected Shorts*. BFA from Juilliard.



## LEONTYNE MBELE-MBONG

(Sue) makes her A.C.T. debut with *Fefu*, after working front of house for over a decade. She recently appeared

in *The Half Life of Marie Curie* (TheatreSquared, AK), and *King Lear* and *Pericles* (SF Shakespeare Festival). Select credits include *Bull in a China Shop* and *Breakfast With Mugabe* (Aurora Theatre Company); *Watch on the Rhine* (Guthrie Theater/Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *Medea* (TBA Award), and *Antony & Cleopatra* (TBA Award Finalist) (African-American Shakespeare Company); *Top Girls* (Shotgun Players); *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Aluminous Collective); *Fences* (Altarena Playhouse); *Andromache* (Central Works); *Intimate Apparel* (Solano College; ARTY Award). [leontynembele-mbong.com](http://leontynembele-mbong.com) (she/her)



## SARITA OCÓN

(Christina) is an actor/performing artist whose regional credits include A.C.T., Arizona Theatre Company, Berkeley

Repertory Theatre, BRAVA Theater, Cal Shakes, Center Theatre Group, Huntington Theatre, Los Angeles Theatre Center, Oakland Theater

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

# encore



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San Francisco Bay Area

From

03/01/2022

To

03/31/2022

**GO!**

Project, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PlayMakers Repertory, Round House Theatre, San Francisco Playhouse, Teatro Visión, and TheatreWorks, among others. Awards: TCG Fox Foundation Resident Actor Fellowship, Center for Cultural Innovation Investing In Artists Award, California Arts Council Local Impact Award, the RHE Charitable Foundation Artistic Fellowship. Ocón received her BA from Stanford University. She is an Associate Artist with Oakland Theater Project, company member of HERO Theatre, and an inaugural member of the Cal Shakes Artist Circle. (she/her)



### **LISA ANNE PORTER (Julia)**

has performed with numerous theatres throughout the country. Most recently, she has been seen in *Eureka*

*Day* at the Aurora Theatre Company, *The Eva Trilogy* and *A Bright Half Life* at the Magic Theatre, and *Twelfth Night* at California Shakespeare Theater. She is currently the Co-Head of Voice and Dialects for the SF production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. As a teacher, she most recently served as Head of Acting and Dialects in the MFA program at A.C.T. She has an MFA. in Acting from A.C.T., a BA from Wesleyan University and is a Designated Linklater Voice Teacher.



### **STACY ROSS**

**(Paula)** is happy—and a little surprised, given the past year—to be back at A.C.T., having spent the last year in Zoom

readings, gardening, and framing pictures. . . Last seen at A.C.T. in *Communion*. Other most recent work from “the before times” includes *The Year of Magical Thinking* at Aurora Theatre Company, *The War of the*



Roses at California Shakespeare Theater, and *Free For All (a New Miss Julie for a New World)* at Cutting Ball Theater.



**SOFIA AHMAD  
(Understudy)**

previously appeared at A.C.T. in the 2019 New Strands Festival. She is a resident artist with Golden

Thread Productions, where she's appeared in *On the Periphery*, *ReOrient Festival 2019*, *Most Dangerous Highway in the World*, *Isfahan Blues*, and *Love Missile*. Other local credits include a pandemic podcast of *Books and Roses* (Word for Word Performing Arts Company); *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Comedy of Errors*, *Much Ado About Nothing* (San Francisco Shakespeare Festival); *Nero* and *The Black Eyed* (Magic Theatre); *Troilus and Cressida* and *Comedy of Errors* (Pacific Repertory Theater); *King Lear* and *As You Like It* (Shakespeare Santa Cruz).



**MICHELE  
APRIÑA LEAVY  
(Understudy)**

returns to A.C.T. where she was last seen in *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*.

Selected Bay Area theater credits include Berkeley Repertory Theatre (*The Laramie Project*); BRAVA Theater Center (*Ghost Limb*); California Shakespeare Theater (*Quixote Nuevo*); California Conservatory Theater (*The Rainmaker*, *The Turn of the Screw*); Center Repertory Company (*A Christmas Carol*). In farther locales, she has appeared with Theater Key West (*The Lemon Cookie*); The Elephant Theatre Company (*The Insanity of Mary Girard*); Theatre 167 (*167 Tongues*, *The Jackson Heights Trilogy*). Leavy is a longtime Resident



# What's on in Bay Area

03/01/2022 – 03/31/2022



MATTHEW MURPHY

**Harry Potter and the Cursed Child**  
Multiple dates available



**Skyfall—Film With Live Orchestra**  
Mar 16–17



**London Symphony Orchestra**  
Mar 20



**Hurray for the Riff Raff**  
Mar 29



OLAF HEINE

**Lang Lang: Goldberg Variations**  
Mar 30



**NEA Jazz Masters Tribute Concert**  
Mar 31

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Artist with San Francisco's Crowded Fire Theater where she developed and premiered many roles.



**DENA MARTINEZ**

**(Understudy)** has appeared in *The River Bride* (Arizona Theater Company); *American Night*

(California Shakespeare Theater); *The House of the Spirits* and *American Night* (Denver Center Theater Company); *Distracted* and *Sunsets and Margaritas* (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley); *Reckless* and *Gibraltar* (San Jose Stage); *Fuddy Meers* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Marin Theater Company); *La Posada Magica* and *The Taming of the Shrew* (San Jose Repertory Theater); and *Alicia in Wonder Tierra* (Berkeley Repertory Theater). Martinez has performed extensively with Campo Santo, The San Francisco Mime Troupe, Culture Clash, and El Teatro Campesino. She is a Company Member of Capital Stage and The Actors Reading Collective. [denamartinez.com](http://denamartinez.com)



**LUISA SERMOL**

**(Understudy)** is a transplant to the Bay Area from Portland, Oregon. Local credits include *Archduke*, *It's a Wonderful*

*Life*, *They Promised Her the Moon* (TheatreWorks Silicon Valley); *The Siegel* (City Lights Theater); *Noises Off* and *It's Only a Play* (Hillbarn Theatre). NY/Regional credits include *Hamlet* (Roundabout Theatre Company), *Macbeth* (Classic Stage Company), *Tennessee and His Women* (Lincoln Center); *Romeo and Juliet*, *A Little Night Music*, *The Maids* (Williamstown Theatre Festival); *Midsummer Night's Dream* (Portland Center Stage); *The Humans*, *The Goat*, *Sideman*, *Three Sisters*, *Master Class*,

and *Cuba Libre* (Artists Repertory Theatre). A graduate of the Juilliard School, Sermol is a teaching artist and a founding member of the Actors' Reading Collective.

**MARÍA IRENE FORNÉS**

**(Playwright)** was a Cuban American playwright and director, and author of more than three dozen works for the stage. Among her most celebrated plays are *Promenade*, *The Successful Life of 3*, *Fefu and Her Friends*, *The Danube*, *Mud*, *The Conduct of Life*, *And What of the Night?*, *Abingdon Square*, *The Summer in Gossensass*, and *Oscar and Bertha*. She received nine Obie Awards including one for Sustained Achievement in Theater, a Distinguished Artists Award from the National Endowment for the Arts, Rockefeller Foundation grants, a Guggenheim grant, an award from the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters, a Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Literary Award, a New York State Governor's Arts Award, and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. From 1973-79, she was the managing director of the New York Theatre Strategy. From 1981-1992, she was Director of the INTAR (International Arts Relations) Hispanic Playwrights-in-Residence Laboratory, a national program to stimulate and develop writing abilities of Hispanic playwrights. Ms. Fornés taught at some of America's most prestigious universities including Yale, Princeton, Brown, Wesleyan, and Iowa, and led workshops at leading theatres such as the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh, Scotland.

**PAM MACKINNON (Director)**

See bio on page 30.

**TANYA ORELLANA (Scenic Designer)**

designs performance spaces for theatre, opera, and immersive experiences. Collaborations include *The Winter's Tale* directed by Eric Ting (California Shakespeare Theater), *The Industry's Sweet Land*,

an immersive opera directed by Yuval Sharon and Cannupa Hanska Luger, and *The Kind Ones* by Miranda Rose Hall directed by Lisa Peterson (Magic Theatre). Originally from San Francisco's Mission District, she has been a core member of the award winning ensemble Campo Santo since 2008, participating in their intimate new work process, conceptualizing and designing sets alongside the writing process. She is a member of Wingspace Theatrical Design, USA Local 829, and an organizing member of La Gente: The Latinx Theatre Design Network. Orellana received her MFA in Scenic Design from CalArts and is the 2016 recipient of the Princess Grace Fabergé Theatre Award. (she/her/hers) [tanyaorellana.com](http://tanyaorellana.com)

**SARITA FELLOWS (Costume Designer)**

previously designed A.C.T.'s *Top Girls* and *Her Portmanteau*. Selected New York credits include *A Commercial Jingle For Regina Commet* (DR2); *SOCIAL! The social distance dance club* (Park Avenue Armory); *A Bright Room Called Day* (The Public Theater); *Native Son* (The Acting Co); *Original Sound* (Cherry Lane Theater); *Hatef\*\*k* (The Women's Project); *A Chronicle of the Death of Two Worlds* (New York Theater Workshop); *Fur*, *MUD*, *Prospect*, and *Fabuloso!* (The Boundless Theater Co). Regional credits include *The West End* (Cincinnati Playhouse); *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Pioneer Theater Co.); *Seize the King* (Alliance Theater Co); *The Royale* (Arizona Theater Co); *Ain't Misbehavin'* (The Signature Theatre); *Pipeline* (Studio Theatre); *The African School Girl Play* (Pittsburgh Public Theater); *Haunted Life* (M.R.T.); *Two Trains Running* (Weston Playhouse); *Berta Berta*, *A Late Morning with Reagan* (C.A.T.F.); *Having Our Say* (Philadelphia Theater Co). She is a Lecturer at Princeton University, and Adjunct Professor at NYU Tisch. MFA NYU/Tisch.



**RUSSELL H. CHAMPA (Lighting Designer)** previously designed at A.C.T. for *Wakey Wakey* (2020), *The Hard Problem* (2016), *The Unfortunates* (2016), *Let There Be Love* (2015), *Maple and Vine* (2012), *Blackbird* (2007), and *Waiting for Godot* (2003). His current and recent projects include *The Kind Ones* (Magic Theater), *Wintertime* and *Becky Nurse of Salem* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre), *Everest* (Lyric Opera of Kansas City), and *Thresh/Hold* (Pilobolus). Broadway credits include *China Doll* (Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre), *In the Next Room, or the vibrator play* (Lyceum Theatre/Lincoln Center Theater), and *Julia Sweeney's God Said "Ha!"* (Lyceum Theatre). New York work includes Playwrights Horizons, Theater For A New Audience, The Public Theater, Second Stage Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, and New York Stage and Film. Regional work includes Steppenwolf Theatre Company, The Wilma Theater, Trinity Repertory Company, California Shakespeare Theater, the Mark Taper Forum, and The Kennedy Center. Thanks J+J! PEACE. russellchampa.com

**JAKE RODRIGUEZ (Sound Designer)** is a sound designer and composer based in the San Francisco Bay Area. His recent credits include *The Cassandra Sessions* (Shotgun Players); *Wintertime* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *Dear San Francisco* (Club Fugazi); *Top Girls* (A.C.T.); *Oedipus el Rey* (Magic Theater); *Between Two Knees* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival); *The Great Leap* (A.C.T.); *Everybody* (California Shakespeare Theater); *Angels in America* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (A.C.T., Theatre Calgary, Grand Theater, The Old Globe); and *The Christians* (Actors Theatre of Louisville, Playwrights Horizons, the Mark Taper Forum). Rodriguez is the recipient of a 2004 Princess Grace Award and received an honorary MFA from A.C.T. in 2021.

**HANA S. KIM (Video Content Designer)** is a designer whose work has been seen in theaters across the country and internationally, including A.C.T., the Public Theater in New York, San Francisco Symphony, LA Opera, Geffen Playhouse, Pasadena Playhouse, Baltimore Center Stage, Opera Colorado, Shaw Festival, and South Coast Repertory. Her art installations have been shown at the Annenberg Space of Photography in Los Angeles, Jordan Downs Recreation Center, Occidental College, and Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York. Kim is a recipient of the Princess Grace Award in Theater Design, Richard Sherwood Award from Center Theatre Group, and Kinetic Lighting Award for distinguished achievement in theatrical design from Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle. Her designs have been recognized by the Helen Hayes Award, Stage Raw Awards, StageSceneLA Awards, and Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards. She is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829. hananow.com

**CONSUELO T. LOPEZ-ROBBINS (Hair and Makeup Manager)** began her professional training at the Lia Schorr Institute of Cosmetics in New York, followed by Special Makeup Effects & Theater at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. Between 2002 and 2010 while living in Miami, Florida, she further enhanced her skills in beauty, editorial, theater, and wigs. During that time, she worked with renowned organizations such as Warner Music Latina, Parfums Givency, Florida Grand Opera, and M.A.C. She spent four years traveling through South America, Central America, and the Caribbean as an International Consultant and Makeup Artist. In 2010 she rooted herself in the Bay Area and resides in Oakland. She is a licensed cosmetologist and member of the Make-Up Artists & Hair Stylists Guild I.A.S.T.E. Local 706. Today she divides her time between freelance production,

film/TV, commercial, theatrical, weddings, and salon services, and is an Instructor at the Academy of Art University, San Francisco.

**JANICE GARTIN (Props Manager)** previously designed props for A.C.T. Conservatory's production of *Passage* and was the Prop Director for A.C.T.'s *Cymbeline*. She recently completed working as a Property Assistant on the run of *The Magic Lamp* at the Presidio Theater. Gartin worked for Beach Blanket Babylon for six years, where she constructed and maintained costumes, repaired curtains, giant lion's tongues, and Christmas trees. She has worked in various theaters around the Bay Area. Lately she has been learning 3D printing and wearable electronics to add to her skill set. (she/her) Instagram: @electrageek

**CHRISTINE ADAIRE (Vocal Coach)** is head of voice at A.C.T. She is a Designated Master Linklater Voice Teacher, and has worked as an actor, voice coach, and director in many American regional theaters, including The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, Chicago Shakespeare, Goodman Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Court Theatre, Theatre for a New Audience (NYC), Santa Cruz Shakespeare, La Jolla Playhouse, and Shakespeare & Company. Adaire has taught at DePaul University, National Theatre School of Canada, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Roosevelt University. Her current area of research and writing is gender affirming voice. (she/her)

**DANYON DAVIS (Movement Coach)** is director of the MFA program and head of movement at A.C.T. He formerly served as the head of movement at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting, and he's also a former faculty member at the Neighborhood Playhouse, Circle in the Square Theatre

School, and HB Studio's Hagen Core Training program. Davis assisted Moni Yakim, founding faculty member and head of movement at the Juilliard Drama Division, for many years. He also performed, taught, and directed with the Guthrie Theater. He is a former collaborator with the SITI Company and a former associate with Bill T. Jones. Davis has coached individuals and taught group workshops in a variety of settings, including school programs, correctional facilities, Middlebury College, the 52nd Street Project, and The Public Theater. (he/him/Black American)

### **JOY MEADS (Dramaturg),**

a native of Oakland, is director of dramaturgy and new works at American Conservatory Theater. A.C.T. credits include *Communion*, *Testmatch*, *Wakey, Wakey*, *Sweat*, *Men on Boats*, Edward Albee's *Seascape*, *Her Portmanteau*, *The Great Leap*, and *Rhinoceros*. Prior to A.C.T., she was literary manager/artistic engagement strategist at Center Theatre Group. CTG credits include *Archduke*, *Good Grief*, *Appropriate*, *Forever*, *Marjorie Prime* (2015 Pulitzer Prize finalist), *A Parallelogram*, *The Royale*, and *Sleep* (also: Brooklyn Academy of Music and Yale Repertory Theatre). Previously, Meads was literary manager at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and associate artistic director at California Shakespeare Theater. Meads is a co-founder of The Kilroys. (she/her)

### **ALLIE MOSS (Casting Director)**

is A.C.T.'s literary manager and casting associate, as well as a freelance director in the Bay Area. Her casting work for A.C.T. includes several plays in development, A.C.T.'s annual New Strands Festival, the 2020 production of *A Christmas Carol: On Air* as well as the A.C.T. Out Loud readings of *Trouble in Mind*, *Arms and the Man*, *The Matchmaker*, and *Cymbeline*. As a director, she has worked at San Francisco Playhouse, Cutting Ball Theater, Custom Made

Theatre Company, FaultLine Theater, Playwrights Foundation, Left Coast Theater Company, and in A.C.T.'s Conservatory. Favorite directing projects include *Hookman* (A.C.T. Young Conservatory), *Bull in a China Shop* (A.C.T. MFA Skyfest), and *Cloud 9* (Custom Made Theatre Co.). She holds a BA in theater from Goucher College and is an associate member of SDC. [alliemossdirector.com](http://alliemossdirector.com) (she/her)

### **ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage**

**Manager)** has been a stage manager in the San Francisco Bay Area for over 30 years. Most recently she stage managed *Toni Stone* at Arena Stage and American Conservatory Theater. Some of her other A.C.T. credits include, *Testmatch*, *Rhinoceros*, *Seascape*, *Sweat*, and *Hamlet*. She has stage managed *A Thousand Splendid Suns* at A.C.T., The Old Globe, and Theatre Calgary. She has also worked on many shows for Berkeley Repertory Theatre including, *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *Cloud Tectonics*, and *Suddenly Last Summer*. Other credits: *Georgiana and Kitty: Christmas at Pemberley* and *Failure: A Love Story* at Marin Theatre Company. *The Good Body* with Eve Ensler at the Booth Theater on Broadway. *Big Love* at Long Wharf Theatre, Goodman Theater and Brooklyn Academy of Music. *The Vagina Monologues* with Eve Ensler at Alcazar Theatre.

### **CHRISTINA HOGAN (Assistant Stage Manager)**

returns to A.C.T. after working on *Gloria*, *Top Girls*, Edward Albee's *Seascape*, *Men on Boats*, *Hamlet*, *Monstress*, and *Love and Information*. Her other theater credits include *Pass Over*, *Brilliant Mind*, and *Skeleton Crew* (Marin Theatre Company); *In Old Age*, *The Baltimore Waltz*, *runboyrun*, and *And I and Silence* (Magic Theatre); *Ripped* (Z Space); *It Can't Happen Here* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); and *A Raisin in the Sun* (California Shakespeare Theater). Hogan has a BA in theater arts from Saint Mary's College of California. (she/her)

## **ADDITIONAL CREDITS**

**Grace Fojtik,\*** Assistant Director

**Mitchell Jakubka**, Lighting Design Associate

**Ana Gabriela Hernandez-Mckig**, Head Lighting

**Bert Hebbert Castillo**, Head Sound

**Matthew Reynolds**, Head Carpenter

**Ava Childs**, Draper/Build Manager

**Peter Gravener**, First Hand

**Nicole Anderburg**, Stitcher

**Lyre Alston**, Stitcher

**Kinsey Thomas**, Costume Department Administrator and Design Assistant

**BJ Bandy**, Wardrobe/Hair Crew Lead

**Maria Elena Frangos**, Wardrobe/Hair Crew

**Piper Ferguson**, Wardrobe Crew

**Nina Fay**, COVID Safety Manager

**Phoebe Angeni**, Production Assistant

**Yasmina Mattison Sudan**, Production Assistant

**Michaela Rubinfeld**, Production Assistant

**Anelisa Montoya**, Production Assistant & Alternate COVID Safety Assistant

**Joel Chapman**, Music Consultant

**Dave Maier**, Fight Consultant

**Paul Burke**, Multi Tech

Additional Casting Support by **Casting Collective** featuring the work of Laura Espino & Leigh Rondon-Davis

Counseling service provided by **Concern**  
Counselor: Andrea Jones, MFT  
Reps: Ann Wagner, Theresa Gilmour

\*MFA Candidate 2022



## REMEMBERING OLYMPIA DUKAKIS



Olympia Dukakis in *Hecuba*

Following the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, the Geary Theater sat empty for more than six years. When it finally reopened in 1996, Olympia Dukakis, the Oscar, Emmy, and Obie Award-winning actress and enthusiastic A.C.T. supporter, was on hand to bless the space. Today, as we reopen the Strand Theater after a two-year pandemic and once again face the start of a new chapter, Olympia's absence is keenly felt. Sadly, she passed away in May 2021 at the age of 89.

Olympia first graced A.C.T.'s stage in 1995 in a new translation of Euripides's *Hecuba*. The translation, penned by Timberlake Wertenbaker, was commissioned by A.C.T. specifically so that she could play the role. It was the beginning of a close and fruitful relationship with Carey Perloff, who served as A.C.T.'s Artistic Director at the time. Olympia would go on to appear in half a dozen other

productions at A.C.T. over the next seventeen years, including *Singer's Boy*, a second production of *Hecuba*, *For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again*, *A Mother*, *Vigil*, and *Elektra*.

But her involvement with A.C.T. was not limited to the stage. Olympia also served on A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees for over fourteen years. She was a true champion of actor training—and of the MFA Program in particular—and spent countless hours with our students whenever she was in town.

As an enthusiastic ambassador for our work, Olympia facilitated extremely generous and highly impactful donations from Jewels of Charity, a private foundation that has supported A.C.T. for over twenty years. Jewels of Charity has provided a wide range of support across our organization,

helping to bolster the MFA Program, Young Conservatory, New Works, Education and Community programs, as well as supporting A.C.T.'s general operations.

Throughout her career, Olympia used her platform to lift up those whose voices often were not heard. She was a vocal supporter of women's rights and an advocate and ally to the LGBTQ+ community. Through her art and through her activism, Olympia made the world a better place.

A.C.T. is honored to dedicate this production to the memory of the incomparable Olympia Dukakis.

# SUMMER TRAINING CONGRESS

## RETURNS

### An Interview with Christopher Herold, Director of the Summer Training Congress

#### What is the Summer Training Congress?

The STC is an intensive, comprehensive training program for actors. It is based on foundational skills that are necessary for any actor (acting, movement, voice, speech, improvisation, text, clowning, and audition).

#### Will this year's STC be in person, or virtual?

The 2022 STC will be in-person. We are delighted to return to this format, which provides essential personal contact among students and faculty. Even as we develop rigorous protocols for the in-person training, we anticipate an exciting, dynamic, and rewarding return to in-person training.

#### What can participants hope to gain in this program?

Participants in the STC can expect to be part of a diverse and distinguished group of students and faculty (all of whom are teaching artists). While enjoying the beautiful, vibrant city of San Francisco and the surrounding Bay Area, students will engage in rigorous daily training, designed not only to develop fundamental skills, but also to open up new perspectives and possibilities. Classes take place in our light-filled studios overlooking the heart of downtown San Francisco, and also in our two magnificent theaters. In addition to training in the classroom, students also participate in talk-backs with

industry professionals. Evenings may be spent in rehearsal or attending local theater productions.

Life-long friendships and professional relationships are frequently established in the STC.

Many former STC students have been subsequently placed in prestigious MFA programs, and currently appear on stages and in films across the globe.

#### Who can apply? Are you looking for performers with a lot of experience already under their belt, or do you have some folks just starting to get their feet wet?

While the STC accepts applicants with a wide variety of experience levels, all accepted applicants must be at least 19 years of age and have some acting experience, either onstage or in the classroom. Historically, the program has trained actors ranging from those who are in the early stages of their work, to those

seriously considering placement in top-flight MFA programs, to working professionals who wish to re-engage their educational goals.

#### Does A.C.T. offer other educational programs for people who don't fall into that category?

The Conservatory offers comprehensive training for actors of all ages and levels of development. The Young Conservatory, Studio A.C.T., and San Francisco Semester provide a wide variety of training models and opportunities. All interested applicants should check out the A.C.T. website ([act-sf.org/training](http://act-sf.org/training)).

#### What advice do you have for people thinking about applying?

2022 holds the promise of a welcome return to in-person training. Come to the STC for a life-changing and unforgettable summer.



Photo by Macie Davies



# producers CIRCLE

**FRANNIE FLEISHHACKER, CO-CHAIR • ROBINA RICCIETELLO, CO-CHAIR**

We are privileged to recognize Producers Circle members' generosity during the January 2021-January 2022, period. For information about Producers Circle membership, please contact Sasha Habash at 415.439.2415 or shabash@act-sf.org

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#### JEROME L. AND THAO N. DODSON

Jerry is president of Parnassus Investments and serves on the boards of San Francisco Opera and A.C.T. Thao and Jerry have established scholarships for music education at the San Francisco Symphony, undergraduate education at UC Berkeley, and high school education for 125 girls in Vietnam.

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### PRISCILLA AND KEITH GEESLIN

Priscilla is a vice chair of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees. She is President of the SF Symphony, a board member of Grace Cathedral, and a board member and former chair of NARAL Pro-Choice America Foundation. Keith is president of SF Opera's board and a board member of Episcopal Community Services.

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### TONI REMBE AND ARTHUR ROCK

Past chair of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees, Toni is a retired partner at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman. Arthur was one of America's first venture capitalists. Along with other community endeavors, they are cofounders of the Arthur and Toni Rembe Rock Center for Corporate Governance at Stanford Law School.

### ROBINA RICCIETELLO

Robina is the President of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees and Communications Director for the Million Person Project, a company that helps people identify their core values to tell their personal story. She is involved with the UCLA Depression Grand Challenge, an effort to cure depression by the end of this century, and with NARAL Pro-Choice America.

### KAY YUN AND ANDRE NEUMANN-LORECK

Former President of A.C.T.'s Board of Trustees and now an Emerita Trustee, Kay is a partner at private equity fund Health Evolution Partners. She is a trustee of Parnassus Funds and a board member of San Francisco University High School. Andre, the founder of On Tap Consulting, has held executive roles in startups and Fortune 500 companies.

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- **Welcoming back** patrons to live, in-person theater for the **first time in 22 months**, including recently sharing over **15,000 heavily subsidized and free tickets** to *Freestyle Love Supreme* with the community
- **Providing arts education curricula** to schools and community partner organizations that will reach **thousands of youth** across the Bay Area region
- **Employing over 100** full-time and part-time staff members and artists
- **Commissioning 13 new works**, including plays by Eisa Davis, Mfoniso Udofia, Anne Washburn, Lauren Yee, and The Kilbanes

To learn more about how you can help support this work, and so much more, scan the QR code with your camera app. **Thank you for your investment in A.C.T.!**



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For more information about Prospero Society membership, please contact

Sasha Habash
Deputy Director of Development
415.439.2415
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William Heavlin In Honor of Actors during COVID
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### Artistic Director Emerita

Carey Perloff

### Producing Director Emeritus

James Haire

### Conservatory Director Emerita, in memoriam

Melissa Smith

### Artistic

Andy Chan Donald\*, Associate Artistic Director  
Joy Meads, Director of Dramaturgy and New Works  
Allie Moss\*, Literary Manager and Casting Associate  
Ariana Johnson, Associate Producer

### Commissioned Artists

Kate Attwell, Julia Cho & Seret Scott, Eisa Davis, Aleshea Harris, Naomi Iizuka, Kate Kilbane & Dan Moses, Craig Lucas & David Zinn, Will Power, Mfoniso Udofia, Anne Washburn, Lauren Yee

### Coaches

Christine Adaire, Voice and Text  
Joel Chapman, Music  
Danyon Davis, Movement  
Daniel Feyer, Music  
Dave Maier, Fights  
Danielle O'Dea, Fights  
Lisa Anne Porter\*, Voice and Text

### Production

Martin Barron, Director of Production  
Jack Horton, Production Manager  
Michael Anderburg, Conservatory Production Manager  
Jessie Amoroso\*, Costume Director  
Taha Khan, Production Office Coordinator

### Human Resources

Chrystal Ellis Sweazey, Director of Human Resources  
Amanda Rocuzzo\*, Human Resources Manager

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Louisa Liska, Director of General Management & Operations  
Amy Dalba\*, General Manager  
Sam L. Wong, Company Manager

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Jim Sivori\*, Chief Financial Officer  
Ning Xiao, Controller  
Eric Law, Senior Accountant  
Yvonne Chen, Staff Accountant  
Deborah Horwith, Consultant  
Christine Wong, Consultant

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Thomas Morgan, Director  
Joone Pajar, Network Administrator

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Jeffrey Warren, Associate Facilities Manager  
Leopoldo Benavente, Assistant Facilities Manager  
Matt Stewart, Facilities Crew Member

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Sasha Habash, Deputy Director of Development  
Nicole Chalas, Associate Director of Development  
Stephanie Swide, Senior Manager, Development Operations  
Hillary Bray\*, Donor Relations and Membership Manager  
Derek Collard, Development Associate

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Executive Director

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Jerry Chirip, Audience Services Associate  
Genevieve Pabon, House Manager  
Mark Saladino, House Manager  
Tuesday Ray, House Manager  
Sadie Li, House Manager  
Loren Lewis, Stage Door & Security  
Oliver Sutton, Stage Door & Security  
Edris Sow, Front Door & Security

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### Education & Community Programs

Juan Manzo, Director of Education & Community Programs  
Shannon R. Davis, Director of Community Connections  
Natalie Greene, School Programs Manager  
Alejandra Maria Rivas\*, Conservatory and School & Community Programs Associate  
Elizabeth Halperin, Student Matinee Coordinator

### Teaching Artists

Andy Alabran, Fran Astorga, Reyna Brown, Callie Floor, Paul Flores, Sierra Gonzalez, Lauren Kivowitz, Brennan Pickman-Thoon, Radhika Rao, Annie Rovzar, Kimiya Shokri, Adam Sussman

### Conservatory

Peter J. Kuo\*, Director of the Conservatory  
Christopher Herold, Director of Summer Training Congress  
Jack Sharrar, PhD, Director of Academic Affairs  
Jerry Lopez, Director of Financial Aid  
Charlotte Brockman, Conservatory Manager  
Alejandra Maria Rivas\*, Conservatory and School & Community Programs Associate

### Master of Fine Arts Program Core Faculty

Danyon Davis, Director of the MFA, Head of Movement  
Christine Adaire, Head of Voice  
Peter J. Kuo\*, Collaboration Building  
Joy Meads, Character and Text  
Lisa Anne Porter\*, Head of Acting  
Jack Sharrar, PhD, Theater History

### MFA Program Adjunct Faculty

Milissa Carey, Singing, Director  
Matt Chapman, Clowning  
Richard Dent, Play Intensive  
Andy Chan Donald, Arts Leadership  
Julie Douglas, Beginning Mask  
Lauren English, The Business of Acting  
Daniel Feyer, Accompanist  
Janet Foster, Audition  
Anthony Fusco, Acting  
Jasmin Hoo, Citizen Artistry  
Mark Jackson, Performance Making  
Darryl Jones, Acting, Director  
W. D. Keith, On-Camera Acting  
Philip Charles MacKenzie, On-Camera Acting  
Heidi Marshall, On-Camera Acting  
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Danielle O'Dea, Combat  
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Gabriel Romero, Latin Social Dance  
Lindsay Saier, Stage Makeup  
Virginia Scott, Clowning  
Elyse Shafarman, Alexander Technique  
Lee Strawn, Singing  
Lisa Townsend, Director, Choreographer  
Brian Thorstenson, The Actor Writes

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Joseph Tally\*, Head Librarian

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Mark Jackson, Director of Studio A.C.T.  
Sophia Nguyen, Young Conservatory & Studio A.C.T. Programs Manager  
Liz Anderson  
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Emily Cooper, Young Conservatory Administrative Assistant  
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Robert Allen, Accompanist  
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Salim Razawi, Acting, On-Camera, Musical Theater  
Ely Sonny Orquiza, Acting, Devised Theater  
Kimiya Shokri, Acting, Devised Theater  
Valerie Weak, Acting, Shakespeare, College Prep  
Krista Wigle, Musical Theater, Voice

### Conservatory Accompanists

Daniel Feyer, Paul McCurdy, Thaddeus Pinkston, Naomi Sanchez, Katelyn Tan

### San Francisco Semester

Mark Jackson, Michael Mohammed, Patrick Russell  
Jack Sharrar, Dee Dee Stephens, Mia Tagano

### Professional Development

Dillon Heape, Ben Quinn, Mark Rafael, Radhika Rao, Katie Rubin, Domenico Salerno

\*denotes a member of the Staff EDI Committee

A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater.

A.C.T. is a member of Theatre Bay Area, the Union Square Association, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Convention and Visitors Bureau.

# A.C.T. PROFILES



## **PAM MACKINNON**

**(A.C.T. Artistic Director)** is in her fourth season as A.C.T.'s fourth artistic director. She is a Tony, Drama Desk, and Obie award-winning director, having directed upwards of 75 productions around the country, off Broadway, and on Broadway. Her Broadway credits

include Beau Willimon's *The Parisian Woman* (with Uma Thurman), David Mamet's *China Doll* (with Al Pacino), Wendy Wasserstein's *The Heidi Chronicles* (with Elisabeth Moss), Edward Albee's *A Delicate Balance* (with Glenn Close and John Lithgow), Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia*

*Wolf?*, and Bruce Norris's *Clybourne Park*. Her most recent credits include world premieres of Bruce Norris's *Downstate* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company, London's National Theatre), Lydia R. Diamond's *Toni Stone* (Roundabout Theatre Company, A.C.T., and Arena Stage), Kate Attwell's *Testmatch* (A.C.T.), Edward Albee's *Seascape* (A.C.T.), and Christopher Chen's *Communion* (A.C.T.). She has been recognized as among the 25 Most Influential San Franciscans of 2020 by *San Francisco Magazine*, along with Jennifer Bielstein. Pam is the most recent past president of SDC, the national union representing stage directors and choreographers, and remains on their board. (she/her)



## **JENNIFER BIELSTEIN (Executive**

**Director)** joined A.C.T. in 2018. She serves on the board of Theatre Forward, is a member of the International Women's Forum, was part of Mayor Breed's Economic Recovery Task Force, and is the immediate past-president of the

League of Resident Theatres (LORT)—an organization that represents 76 theaters nationwide—having previously served as LORT's vice president; chair of its Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee; secretary; and on multiple union negotiating teams. She has been recognized as among the 25 Most Influential San Franciscans of 2020 by *San Francisco Magazine*, along with Pam MacKinnon, and as one of the Most Influential Women in Bay Area Business by the *San Francisco Business Times* in 2021. Before relocating to the Bay Area, Bielstein was the

managing director of the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis, managing director of Actors Theatre of Louisville, and executive director of Writers Theatre in Chicago. She has also worked for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, About Face Theatre, Northlight Theatre, and the Lincoln Park Zoo, as well as served on multiple arts and civic boards. She has received the Center for Nonprofit Excellence's Pyramid Award of Excellence in Leadership, has been recognized as one of Louisville's *Business First's* 40 Under 40, by *Twin Cities Business* as a Person to Know, and by *Minnesota Business* magazine as a Real Power 50 member. Bielstein is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, attended Stanford's Graduate School of Business Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders in the Arts, and has an MBA from Bellarmine University, where she received the MBA Faculty Merit Award, was inducted into the honor society Beta Gamma Sigma, and in 2021 was recognized as a Distinguished Alumna. (she/her)



# ABOUT THE THEATER

## MAILING ADDRESS

415 Geary St  
San Francisco, CA 94102

ONLINE: [act-sf.org](http://act-sf.org)

## ADMINISTRATIVE/CONSERVATORY OFFICES

30 Grant Ave, 7th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94108

## BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

### A.C.T. BOX OFFICE

Address: 405 Geary Street and  
1127 Market Street

Tel: 415.749.2228

Visit our website for hours of operation

### SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION DISCOUNTS

Full-time students, educators, and administrators save up to 50% off season subscriptions with valid ID. Visit [act-sf.org/educate](http://act-sf.org/educate) for details.

### GROUP DISCOUNTS

Groups of 10 or more save 20%! For more information contact [groups@act-sf.org](mailto:groups@act-sf.org) or 415.749.2228.

### AT THE THEATER

The Strand lobby opens one hour before curtain. The theater opens 30 minutes before curtain.

### REFRESHMENTS

Visit our bar located in the main lobby for drinks and snacks.

### PHOTOGRAPHY & RECORDING

Audience members may take photos in the theater before and after the performance and during intermission. If you post photos on social media or elsewhere, please include the designer names listed on the lobby board. Please note: Photos are strictly prohibited during the performance. Video recording is not permitted in the theater at any time.

### CELL PHONES

If you carry a pager, beeper, cell phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. Text messaging during the performance is very disruptive and not allowed.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As part of our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion at A.C.T., we are in the process of building a meaningful relationship with the local Indigenous community. As part of this we begin by honoring the lands upon which we do our work. We would be proud to offer deep gratitude to the tribal band of Ramaytush Ohlone peoples and their lands that cover Northern California and down the Pacific coastline. Prior to the arrival of the Spanish in the 1700s, the Ramaytush Ohlone numbered approximately 1500 persons, and made their life on the sacred lands. Only a few families survived and still remain. Those descendants make up the membership of the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone (ARO) today. We honor the Ohlone as a people, their resilience, and all they have done and continue to do in maintaining sacred and ancestral lands, ceremony, and communities to this day.

## PERFUMES

The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented aftershave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe physical reactions in some individuals. As a courtesy to fellow patrons, please avoid the use of these products when you attend the theater.

## LATECOMERS

A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated before the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval.

## LISTENING SYSTEMS

Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performances. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

## AFFILIATIONS

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



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



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



The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



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



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



A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from Grants for the Arts.

## RESTROOMS

Restrooms are located on the basement level; on the ground floor (two ADA toilets behind the box office); and toward the back of the upper orchestra, on mezzanine 2. Gender diversity is welcome at A.C.T. We invite audiences to use the restroom that best fits your gender identity. If preferred, single-user restrooms can be found at the rear of the lobby.



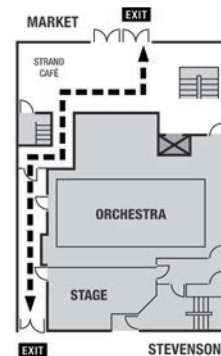
Wheelchair Seating is located at the main cross aisle on the orchestra level, at Box A on the orchestra level, and in the mezzanine.

An **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is available in the house management closet in the lobby of the Geary.

## LOST AND FOUND

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

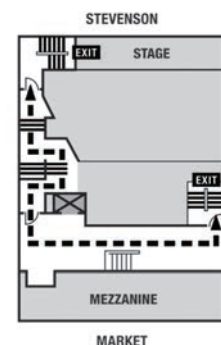
## STRAND THEATER EXITS



G



M1



M2



**2518 Jackson Street**  
7+ bedrooms, 5.5 baths, incredible entertaining spaces, gorgeous water and park views, garden, and 4-car garage, across from Alta Plaza Park.  
2518Jackson.com | \$17,500,000



**827 Marina Blvd.**  
4 bedrooms, 4.5 baths, family room, fabulous Bay and Alcatraz views, lovely yard, and 2 car garage.  
827Marina.com | Price Upon Request



**181 Fremont Street #57C**  
Gorgeous 2 bedroom, 2.5 bath home in an exclusive downtown tower. Fabulous interior design and endless building amenities.  
181Fremont57C.com | \$3,250,000

 **TEAMHATVANY**

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@hatvanyrealestate

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