

A.C.T. PRESENTS

# PASSENGERS

From **The 7 Fingers**

Directed, Written, and Choreographed by

**Shana Carroll**



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## encore

September 2022 | Volume 20, No. 1



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Cover photo by Alexandre Galliez

# 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 in its fifth year under 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. welcomed more than 23,000 people to the Geary Theater at the top of this year 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. We then explored every corner of the Strand Theater with the experiential *Fefu and Her Friends* by Maria Irene Fornés and

directed by Pam MacKinnon building community as audiences connected with each other in traversing the theater.

A.C.T. is steadfastly committed to transformative learning through 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. While the Conservatory's MFA Program ended with the Class of 2022, we honor and celebrate the tremendous impact the program has had on individual artists and on American theater as a whole.

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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## ACTORS ENSEMBLE

(Middle School, High School)

This company offers serious young actors in grades 6-12 an opportunity to study a different acting focus or specialty each semester under the guidance of a professional guest director. Acceptance into the Actors Ensemble is by audition only and culminates in a performance for family and friends in A.C.T.'s Garret space.



## CABARET PROGRAM

(Middle School, High School)

A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory Cabaret Program is an advanced-level musical theater training and performance program that casts young actors each season in three groups of 12-16. These groups meet weekly and hold performances from September to April with the culminating Best of the Best concert featuring all three ensembles in May 2023.

Learn more at [act-sf.org/yc](https://act-sf.org/yc)



*Passengers photo by Cimon Parent*

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# Ready to Explore

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**ARTS**  
TOGETHER



Jay C. Ellis (Jellis J), Andrew Bancroft (Jelly Donut), Anthony Veneziale (Two Touch), and Kaila Mullady (Kaiser Rôzé) in *Freestyle Love Supreme*. Photo by Kevin Berne.



# FROM THE ARTISTIC + EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

## WELCOME TO AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER—A.C.T.—AND THE KICKOFF TO OUR 2022/23 SEASON!

We are exploring the theme of HOME throughout the season. *Passengers* at first blush turns this theme on its head perhaps, by exploring the points in between home and far-flung destinations. But if the journey is truly more important than the endpoint, and if home is where the heart is, and if home is a place where there is love overflowing, and if there is no place like it, then home is in fact on these trains and these stations. Places and feelings created and invoked by these performers, with deep roots in circus and physical storytelling.

I gave originator/director/choreographer and Bay Area native Shana Carroll a tour of the theater a few months ago in preparation of the 7 Fingers touching down here this fall. I mentioned our season's theme, and she told me a small story. On tour, a reporter asked a four-year-old son of a member of the troupe where home was. He replied simply, "home is the circus." Home is the people we love through highs and lows. Home is the group we make things with and for, be it a spectacle or a meal. It is the group we look to for support and encouragement, and honest critique. Home is family—broadly defined. Home is the circus.

And we are thrilled to bring this circus into our theater, to feel collectively the fun suspense of where a feat of realized rigorous training, balance, and strength can take us, to feel the sweep of a story told more with bodies in motion than with the language of words. To gasp together and laugh in relief. There is a long tradition of theater in the Bay Area told through the body. I am excited to welcome the 7 Fingers to A.C.T., as they are a continuation of this homegrown legacy. This is a beautiful story of love and adventure. A story of a young woman, the amazing beauty of the world around her, and who she meets along the way.

Thank you for joining us at A.C.T. Please tell your friends about the show.



Pam MacKinnon  
Artistic Director

## WELCOME TO PASSENGERS AT AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER!

When we were exploring *Passengers* and this partnership with the 7 Fingers, one of the things we learned is that before each and every single performance, the artists do a 4-hour training session. That's a longer session than the runtime of the show—but they do it to keep themselves and each other safe. They can't walk in cold and perform this kind of physical artistry.

Lifelong training is a core value at A.C.T. as well. We know that you can't study acting once, and then never revisit that study. You need to keep coming back to the fundamentals, things like breathwork and character exploration, and continue to work those muscles, to make sure they're strong and ready for the more advanced actions you're going to put them through.

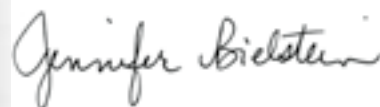
We lay that groundwork in our Conservatory programs, beginning in the Young Conservatory, where students ages 8–19 learn how to build their actor toolboxes, while also learning about how to play. As students grow out of high school, we welcome them into the San Francisco Semester or the Summer Training Congress, where they get more intensive in their work, while always remembering to exercise those basic muscles and keep play at the forefront.

For adults aged 19 and older, we offer classes through Studio A.C.T., whose tagline is "Real theater classes for real people." In Studio A.C.T. we work with a wide range of people, some who acted in college and enjoyed it, or who have never taken a class but think that clowning sounds fun, or who are terrified of being onstage but want to try their hand at playwriting. Professional artists also come to Studio A.C.T., to hone a particular skill or for career building workshops.

This variety of Conservatory classes means that there is something for everyone—theater training to help prepare artists of all ages and experience levels to explore their craft

and grow as artists. You can learn more about all these programs at [act-sf.org/training](https://act-sf.org/training)—and we hope you're inspired to take a class yourself, and become a part of A.C.T.'s lifelong training legacy.

See you at the theater (season tickets are still available for as little as \$90) ... or in a class!



Jennifer Bielstein  
Executive Director





PHOTOS BY MARK KITAGAKI AND TRACY MARTIN

# REAL THEATER **CLASSES** **FOR** REAL PEOPLE



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## PRESENTS

# PASSENGERS

A production by The 7 Fingers

Directed, Written, and Choreographed  
by Shana Carroll

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# PASSENGERS

A production by The 7 Fingers  
Directed, Written, and Choreographed by Shana Carroll

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Musical Director

ANA CAPPELLUTO

Scenic Design

CAMILLE THIBAUT-BÉDARD

Costume Design

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Lighting Design

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Video Design

ISABELLE CHASSÉ

Assistant to the Director

FRANCISCO CRUZ

Head Coach

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General Manager

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Director of Production

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# THE VIRTUOSITY OF MISTAKE

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF CLOWNING WITH LOCAL CLOWN JOSH MATTHEWS

BY SYCHE PHILLIPS

*Josh Matthews is a clown, actor, and director specializing in physical theater, interactive performance, and performer generated works, as well as co-artistic director of Under the Table ensemble theater. He has worked as a clown doctor for the last 18 years finding moments of delight, fun, and transformation within medical facilities throughout the U.S. Currently he is a lead teaching artist for A.C.T.'s education program, and has performed with San Diego Rep, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Lincoln Center, Big Apple Circus, and Third Rail Projects. "Through character, improvisation, and interaction I have found new spaces in places we feel are solid and immovable."*

A.C.T. has been proud to present shows throughout our history that represent clowning and physical theater. On the mainstage, you may have seen Bill Irwin's *On Beckett* (2017); *Old Hats* (2014), created and performed by Bill Irwin and David Shiner; *Humor Abuse* (2011), created by Lorenzo Pisoni and Erica Schmidt; Molière's *Scapin* (2010), adapted by Bill Irwin and Mark O'Donnell; or *Fool Moon*, which A.C.T. produced in 1998 and brought back again in 2001. Additionally, each of our MFA classes participated in clowning workshops and presented an annual Clown Show. The study of the clown increases actors' ability to access vulnerability and capacity for wonder along with the

rigor of creating a character from the outside-in.

Physical theater and circus has deep roots in the San Francisco Bay Area, in companies that are still thriving today. The San Francisco Mime Troupe was founded in 1959 by RG Davis, and from early days, incorporated facets of *commedia dell'arte*, melodrama, and farce, performing around the

a tradition of one ring, European circus. The one ring style, a more intimate style, started to cotton on in the United States in the 60s, 70s, 80s," says Josh. "The hallmarks and distinctions of *cirque nouveau*, which is what you'll see in *Passengers*, is first, no animals—it's all about the expression of the human body. And second, there is going to be more of a visual and emotional narrative, rather than a pure spectacle.

Modern circus is going to use a theme, a setting, or an idea as a backdrop to put the circus skills into."

As you watch *Passengers*, you may find yourself drawn to the narrative themes, and extrapolating what they mean to you. Or you may find yourself focusing on enjoying the visuals and the expression of the human body. "I find it helpful to watch with an expressionist point of view rather than

literal," says Josh. "A great professor once

told me when it comes to this kind of work, people want to 'get it.' But when you get into a bathtub, you don't 'get' the bath. You *soak*. You don't try to understand the bath. You experience the bath, you feel what it is, you enjoy the sensory input . . . and you may realize things it's bringing up for you along the way. It's like listening to a symphony. You don't understand the symphony. You float in the music."

If we think of clowning as being a closer relative to the symphony



Lorenzo Pisoni with an old photo of his two-year old self in *Humor Abuse*. Photo by Chris Bennion.

San Francisco area, both indoors and outdoors in a display of "guerilla theater," often centering pieces around political satire. In 1974, the Pickle Family Circus was created by the Pickle Family Jugglers, who were at the time members of the SF Mime Troupe. The Pickle Family Circus, along with the Big Apple Circus on the east coast, are both considered to be foundational in the reinvigoration of modern circus in the United States.

"Pickle Family and Big Apple are twin companies, and they come from



or ballet or modern dance than it is to traditional linear theater, some connections come into focus. The physicality of expression, for instance. The use of archetypes (a kind of cousin to leitmotifs in music) as a shorthand with the audience. And the distance between the audience and what's being done onstage—with traditional linear theater, there's often an emphasis on realism and an ability for an audience member to think, "I could be an actor." But "I could do that" may not occur to you watching virtuoso musicians, prima ballerinas, or acrobats throwing each other into the air.

Josh points out, "You sometimes forget that what you're witnessing is months if not years of work. That flawless moment seems impossible for you to do, and you become numb to it because it looks like they're doing it without effort. But it's months and years of work to be able to not only do the skill, but make it look effortless and fit into an artistic expression to convey emotion."

There's a thing that happens in clowning that doesn't happen in many other artistic fields. If an artist misses a move—drops a ball while juggling, or doesn't make it through the hoop—if it's safe, they'll reset and do it again and land it. It's a gorgeous proof that this isn't some magical machine, that these are real people doing incredible tricks, and sometimes they're going to miss a

step. But like any normal person, you reset and fix it and you persevere. And the audience goes wild.

"Personally, that's why I'm a clown," Josh says. "The clown's job is the vulnerability of the human, the celebration of folly. You see the mistakes. The whole thing becomes about the virtuosity of mistake."

"And sometimes those drops are planned. Jugglers call it 'the juggler's drop.' It's how you get the audience on your side. It's been so magical for so long, it's the artist's way of saying, 'Don't forget that this is very hard.' If I see you do ten backflips in a row with no effort, then when you do one backflip it doesn't mean anything. Of course you can do it. You can do impossible things. But if I see you struggle and not land it, over

and over, in an interesting, artistic, beautiful way . . . then when you do land it, I'm jumping out of my seat."

The roots of clowning, as they come from *commedia dell'arte* and traditional melodrama, grew out of a popular form of theater—meaning theater for the populace. Circus and clowning are intended to connect bodies in space and time, to evoke emotions, and to entertain. Like many art forms, if you study it and learn about it, your appreciation of it may grow—but you can also just let yourself be entertained.

We hope you're able to float in the artistry and the music of *Passengers*, and to open your mind to the virtuosity of mistake. Enjoy the show.



# OPENING THE DOORS TO THE NEXT GENERATION

BY JUAN MANZO



A.C.T. has long been committed to ensuring young people have access to the transformative power of theater. A.C.T.'s Student Matinee (SMAT) program has been presenting special matinees of select productions since 1968, serving as an introduction to live performance for over half a million students in the Bay Area and beyond since its inception. Conveniently scheduled during the school day, these performances are an ideal opportunity for students and teachers to share in the magic of A.C.T.'s productions. But the advent of COVID-19 in early 2020 meant live performances came to an abrupt halt, just days before the SMAT performance for *Toni Stone*.

As A.C.T. geared up to open our doors in January 2022 to welcome *Freestyle Love Supreme*, the Education and Community Programs team carefully considered how to best prepare students for the return to live theater. Thanks to a lead gift from Salesforce, with additional support from the Koret Foundation and several generous donors, we were able to make our first live student matinee in two years completely free to all students

in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Education team provided each school attending with a pre-performance workshop at no additional cost to schools. Paired with a comprehensive Educator Guide, these workshops served as an introduction to the production, led students through games and activities focusing on improvisation and freestyle, and highlighted A.C.T.'s House Rules of Play (included in this program), which highlights agreements to ensure all patrons feel welcome and can participate fully as audience members.

The planning paid off—students were rapt during the performance and actively engaged during the post-performance talkback with the cast, a hallmark of all SMAT performances. Natalie Federico of Mission High School shared, “The students and I really LOVED it. It was so nice to see their smiling eyes. It’s been a rough two years and this day was a real bright spot.” A month later, we repeated the process for our production of Maria Irene Fornés’s *Fefu and Her Friends* in the Strand Theater to similar success.

In considering the 2022/23 Season, it became clear that “home” is strong throughline across our productions. From the journey to get there in *Passengers*, the way it’s shaped by memory in *The Headlands*, to how the immigrant characters in *Poor Yella Rednecks* build it in a foreign land—home, and where we find it, is top of mind as our world continues to open. As we welcome audiences back, we’re excited to continue making pre-performance workshops available at no cost to schools attending SMAT performances. We are also introducing our new Teacher Preview program, an opportunity

for teachers to attend a preview performance and special educator workshop before seeing the show with their students. We’re thrilled to offer a full season of live performances and excited to share the magic of live theater with the students and teachers of the Bay Area, and to once again say “Welcome home to A.C.T.”

## 2022/23 Season Student Matinees

### *Passengers*

Sep 23, 2022  
at 11 a.m.

Recommended for grades 3-12

### *A Christmas Carol*

Dec 1, Dec 9, and Dec 14, 2022  
all at 11 a.m.

Recommended for grades 1-12

### *The Headlands*

Feb 17, 2023  
at 11 a.m.

Recommended for grades 8-12

### *Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone 2*

Apr 28, 2023  
at 11 a.m.

Recommended for grades 6-12

To learn more about our SMATs,  
or to request tickets for your  
students, please visit  
[act-sf.org/SMAT](https://act-sf.org/SMAT)

**Education & Community Programs support generously provided by** Bank of America, The Bernard Osher Foundation, Bill Graham Memorial Foundation, California Arts Council, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, Laird Norton Family Foundation, The Kimball Foundation, Koret Foundation, Rawley T. Farnsworth Fellowship Fund, San Francisco Department of Children, Youth & Their Families, The Sato Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Martin Tannenbaum/Gerald B. Rosenstein Estate, Theatre Forward, and U.S. Bank.





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## Bridge Your Artistic Journey

San Francisco Semester (SFS) is a 15-week actor training program located in the heart of one of the world's most culturally vibrant and diverse cities. Grounded in a rich curriculum, SFS introduces theater artists to the active, ongoing engagement of the Bay Area's eclectic and energetic arts energy.

Enrollment is open on a rolling basis for semesters each Spring and Fall.

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



Photo by Mark Kitaoka



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Next summer, join Summer Training Congress (STC): an extraordinary community of students training at our world-renowned, Tony Award-winning theater company and conservatory. Ideal for anyone serious about acting, STC offers intensive, comprehensive training in classes taught by a distinguished faculty of teaching artists.

Enrollment will open after January 1 for Summer 2023.

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



Photo by Macie Davies



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Setting the Stage for Personal Growth

For businesses and corporations, looking to elevate the skills of the staff and employees

An actor's skill set provides a competitive advantage for people working in our modern business environment. As more professionals are working remotely, how do you connect with your team and lead them when you're physically distant? Our team can help you discover ways to build relationships and connections online, engage and influence, and keep up the creative collaboration—even through a computer screen.

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



Photo by Stefan Cohen

# CLOWN ABOUT TOWN

BY JESS KATZ

As you settle into your seat to watch the world-class acrobatics and spectacular stagecraft of The 7 Fingers's *Passengers*, consider another phenom of physical theater: Bill Irwin.

Soon to be returning home to A.C.T. with his singular work *On Beckett*—which played to San Francisco audiences at the Strand Theater in 2017—Irwin has long illuminated the magic of clowning alongside Samuel Beckett's seminal works *Waiting for Godot* and *Texts for Nothing*. A Tony Award-winning actor and seasoned artist, Irwin has crafted a unique performance that melds robust physical theater with devotion to language that lifts off the page.

*On Beckett* is a love letter to a literary great, that also elevates the art and history of clowning as physical theater, a rich tradition with roots in *commedia dell'arte* of the 16th century. Aided by expert technique as both a master clown and dramatic actor, **Irwin plumbs the depths of Beckett's brand of existentialism with keen wit and charisma as only a clown can. The result is something not easily quantifiable, an energetic and chameleon-like evening, moving you between side-splitting physical comedy, oratory prowess, and wry meditation with grace and candor.**

A.C.T. welcomes this maverick production home, five years later, to expand our understanding of what theater, and who our artistic heroes, can be. We hope you'll join us. This special engagement plays for only six performances—don't miss Bill Irwin in *On Beckett*!

**Get your tickets today  
at [act-sf.org/beckett](http://act-sf.org/beckett)**

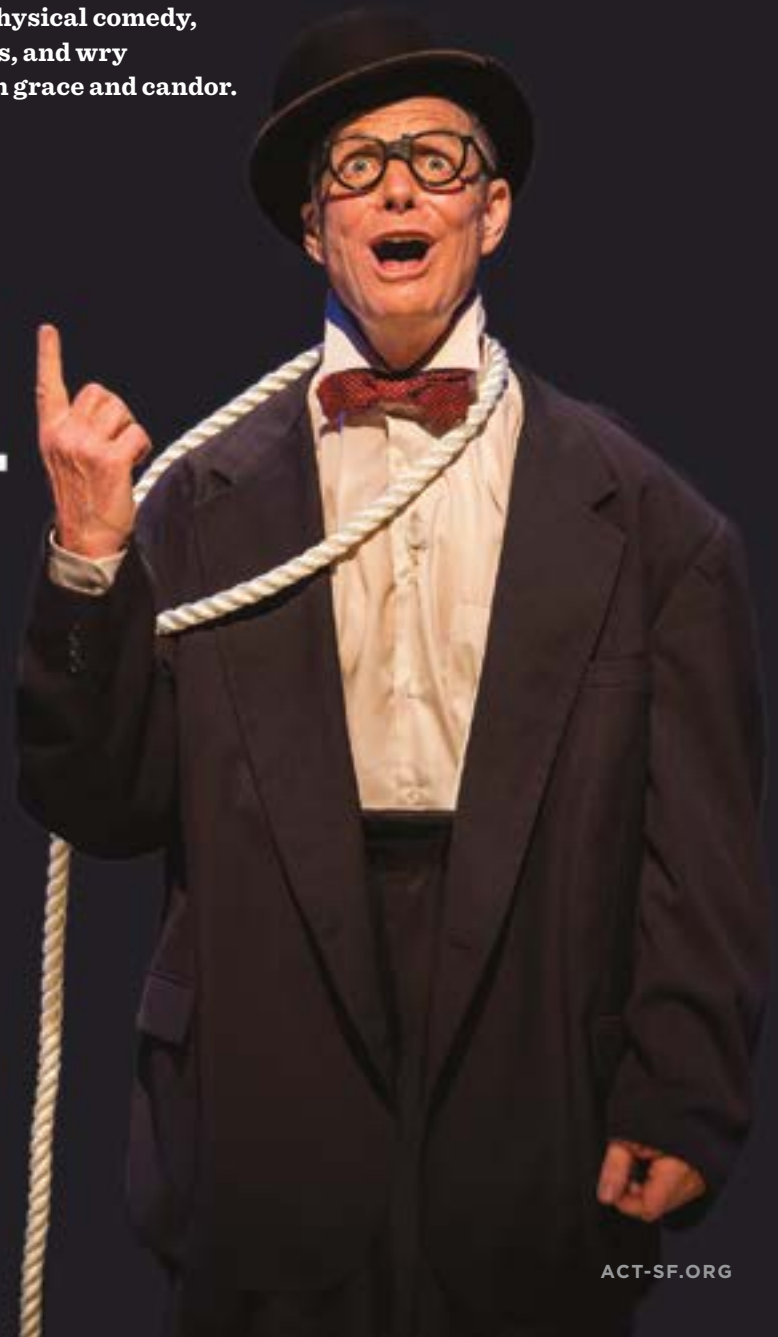
## A.C.T. Presents **ON BECKETT**

Conceived and Performed by  
**Bill Irwin**

An **Irish Repertory  
Theatre Production**

Produced by  
**Octopus Theatricals**

**OCT 19–23, 2022**





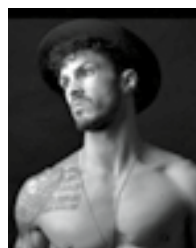
# WHO'S WHO IN PASSENGERS

**SHANA CARROLL (Creator/Director/Choreographer)** is co-founding artistic director of the Montreal-based contemporary circus company Les 7 doigts de la main (The 7 Fingers). Since its founding in 2002, Shana first performed and created (alongside the collective) their shows *Loft* and *La Vie*, then went on to direct, write, and choreograph (often in partnership with fellow "Fingers") their shows *Traces*, *Psy*, *Sequence 8*, *Feriamuse*, *Le Murmure du Coquelicot*, *Cuisine & Confessions*, *Passengers*, *Duel Reality* (for Virgin Voyages), *Dear San Francisco*, and *Mon Ile Mon Cœur*. Outside of The 7 Fingers, Shana directed Cirque du Soleil's first-ever ice show *Crystal*, in addition to their performance at the Academy Awards in 2012. Also for Cirque du Soleil, Shana was acrobatic designer and choreographer for their shows *Iris* (Los Angeles) and *Paramour* (Broadway). Other collaborations include: *Queen of the Night* (World Wide Variety); *Soul of the Ocean* (Moment Factory); *Temporel* (Lemieux-Pilon); *Cité Mémoire* (Lemieux-Pilon); and the Sochi Winter Olympics Opening Ceremonies. Shana is currently working as co-choreographer and circus designer for *Water For Elephants* the Musical with Pigpen Theatre Co., premiering at Atlanta's Alliance Theatre spring of 2023. Shana has created many world-renowned circus acts, her work receiving six gold medals at international circus festivals through the years. Born and raised in Berkeley, California, and daughter of beloved *San Francisco Chronicle* columnist Jon Carroll, Shana began her career as a trapeze artist with San Francisco's Pickle Family Circus. She went on to a 20-year career in the air, including seven years as original solo trapeze artist for Cirque du Soleil's *Saltimbanco*. She currently lives in Montreal, Canada.



**KAISHA DESSALINES-WRIGHT (Performer)** From England in the UK, Kaisha is a hand-to-hand base, acrobat, and aerialist, who

just freshly graduated from the National Circus School of Montreal this year. Kaisha started out competing in sports acrobatics as a flyer and a porter nationally and internationally for over 15 years, including five years of dance training, before continuing her training in London in 2016. After graduating in 2019, Kaisha attended National Circus School in Montreal to study her dream discipline, hand-to-hand, as well as training Dance Trapeze as her graduating discipline. She has trained in many other disciplines such as acrobatic movement, contortion, banquine, and other aerials. Kaisha has worked for companies such as the British all-female circus company, Mimbire Acrobats, and Cirque Eloize. Kaisha enjoys traveling, singing, learning piano, and learning about different languages and cultures, hoping she picks up new hobbies along with her travels.



**BETO FREITAS (Performer)** Born in the south of Brazil and involved in sports since childhood, Beto discovered Circus and Gymnastics at

the age of 17 as part of a professional group called Grupo Tholl. He graduated from the Escola Nacional de Circus do Brasil, the largest circus school in Latin America, and entered the world of musical theater, acting in *Ayrton Senna the Musical*, and then joining Cirque du Soleil in Germany with the musical *Paramour*, directed by Shana Carroll. After that he was a part of television programs such as *Tu Si que Vales* (Italy), *Germany's Got Talent*, and *France's Got*

*Talent*, working with other world-class acrobats to create eclectic bankine. He joined The 7 Fingers and Virgin Voyages, and is now a part of *Passengers* with this amazing family and company. Creating collectively is his passion, being surrounded by people and mixing their characteristics to achieve a collective work. It makes him fall in love and moves him.



**MARCO INGARAMO (Performer)** was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. After high school, he discovered the circus school La

Arena where he took his first acrobatics class, and immediately knew that nothing would give him as much joy as circus did. In 2011 he auditioned for the circus formation from the University of San Martin directed by Gerardo Hochman, where he trained in acrobatics, teeterboard, Trampowall, Chinese pole, and cradle. He also started taking contemporary dance classes in different studios in Buenos Aires. He worked in Argentina in different kinds of shows, from musicals to traditional circus, and in 2017 he got his first job outside Argentina with the Hungarian company Recirquel. In 2018 he started working in *Mystere* by Cirque du Soleil where he performed Chinese poles and Teeterboard. By the end of 2019 he auditioned for The 7 Fingers in Las Vegas and he was selected to be a part of the inaugural cast of *Duel Reality*, directed by Shana Carroll, onboard of *Scarlet Lady* by Virgin Voyages. After the pandemic he did *Duel Reality* again and then went to Germany to perform his Chinese Pole solo act with Cirque Bouffon directed by Frederic Zipperlin. Besides being on stage, Marco also helped The 7 Fingers in two *Duel Reality* remounts as a Line Director, teaching and coaching the new casts.

**NELLA NIVA**

**(Performer)** has had a passion for the acrobatics since she was just a kid. She grew up doing cartwheels and has been continuously

hanging upside down for a couple decades now. In her career she has performed with various shows, including *Cuisine & Confessions* with The 7 Fingers, her favourites being the full length pieces, where you spend a long time onstage and can form a connection with the audiences. She hopes circus brings them as much joy as it does to her. Instagram @njeeeva

**MANDI OROZCO**

**(Performer)** grew up in Orlando, Florida, where she appeared with Stevie Wonder in the opening of Animal Kingdom,

and Disney Christmas specials in 1997 and 1998 including a duet with Tim McGraw. Her formative training began in the dance studio, where she competed in jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and contemporary. In 2006, shortly before graduating high school, Mandi moved into circus and began touring with New Vision Cirque. As Mandi traveled along the eastern seaboard and into the Caribbean, she performed at numerous galas and special events, including charities and private parties hosted by celebrities such as John Travolta and Jenny McCarthy. Her training led her to The National Circus School in Montreal, where she graduated with specialties in aerial tissue, contortion, and duo trapeze. While still in school, Mandi was invited to participate in the 2010 Winter Olympics opening ceremonies in Vancouver, BC. Immediately following graduation, Mandi performed with Cirque du Soleil's *Dralion* as a principal character on a world tour, performing in a new city every week, for four years. She has collaborated with many of the other top companies of the industry including The 7 Fingers, Cirque Eloize,

45 Degrees, Palazzo, and GOP. The natural development of art and performance has led Mandi to pursue creative endeavours offstage, as well. Mandi has worked as an artistic consultant for both aspiring and established circus performers and as choreographer and assistant director for Palazzo. She is inspired by the challenges presented by pushing both physical and mental limits. Mandi has also completed a degree in Psychology from the University of Phoenix, speaks three languages, and dabbles in the world of triathlons.

**SANTIAGO RIVERA LAUGERUD**

**(Performer)** was born in Guatemala in 1997, and is a multidisciplinary artist and owner

of his own Circus, "Cie. Zirconium." He has been dedicated to the arts since an early age and influenced by contemporary dance and physical theater. Specializing in juggling, he has had the chance to develop other disciplines such as hoop diving and Chinese pole. Santiago is the first Central American to be accepted into Montreal's National Circus School in Canada, recognized as one of the best circus schools in the world. Santiago was part of different art institutions in Guatemala, including the art ministry "En el arte producciones," Teatro Fantasia at IRTRA Petapa, and the Batz circus school. His work has been recognized by multiple organizations such as Guatecirko, Montreal Completent Cirque, TOHU, and Cirque Éloize. Representing Guatemala internationally in the circus field is complicated and due to the lack of support for art from the Guatemalan government, much of Santiago's work came from private and personal funding and the ability to create beautiful things out of simple materials. The support of each being that has influenced or promoted the development of circus art in this artist has been of great help and much benefit.

**DINA SOK**

**(Performer)** After studying at Phare ponleu selpak in Cambodia, he got a scholarship from his school to continue his studies

at the circus school in Montreal in 2011. He is considered a generalist, in Chinese hoop and juggling, and is also a dancer. He is the first Cambodian who had the chance to work for the Cirque du Soleil (*Volta* in Chinese Hoop and Wire). Dina performed in *Carry Me Home*, the first Live and Virtual Circus Concert by The 7 Fingers and Shocap Entertainment. His message for all generations is to never give up what you dreamed.

**ANDREW SUMNER**

**(Performer)** Born in the UK and raised in Australia, circus artist Andrew Sumner began his gymnastics journey

at age 4, going on to represent Australia internationally with elite level artistic and trampoline gymnastics. After many years of competition, Andrew discovered his love for Circus, making his onstage debut as a guest artist in multiple Fringe World Festival cabaret shows. His most recent and notable theatrical credits include: Guest Artist with Circa Contemporary Circus with their shows *PeepShow* and *Carnival Of The Animals* for the Australia and Singapore tours; Feature Ensemble Player in *Pippin The Musical* Australia by Les 7 Doigts De La Main; and an international residency in Dubai with *La Perle* by Franco Dragone. Andrew spent 12 months as a member of the aquatic house troupe, in the show's most memorable Banquine, tumbling and high diving acts. Other key roles include: Acrobatic Dancer with Disney Cruise Lines featuring as "The Magic Carpet" in *Aladdin*; and touring with Circus Joseph Ashton where Andrew created and developed his hand-balancing and hand-to-hand act for the touring show *Infamous* under the traditional big top.





## MÉLIEJADE TREMBLAY-BOUCHARD

**(Performer)** Born

in Quebec City, Méliejade was first exposed to the arts at the Quebec

Circus School during a summer camp at the age of five. Growing up she practiced many different art forms such as gymnastics, singing, and classical, contemporary, and Irish dance. However, she decided to devote herself to circus because it allows her to utilize her diverse artistic background. Méliejade performed in *Duel Reality* with The 7 Fingers, and will be graduating from the Quebec Circus School in June of 2017. Her principal discipline is HulaHoop because it combines what she loves most: the rhythm of dance and the contortion of the body.

## THE 7 FINGERS (Artist

**Collective)** In 2002, the seven founders set out to redefine circus by stripping down the spectacle to its thrilling essence. The contemporary company tells stories using death-defying acrobatics with a life-affirming theatricality that is unique to The 7 Fingers. Since its inception, the company has expanded from its own signature touring shows to creating theatrical experiences as diverse as the very artistic directors themselves: original productions varying from intimate one-man shows to large-scale arena performances, Broadway musicals, artistic collaborations with renowned international artists and companies, production design and direction, special events, Olympic ceremonies, televised performances, fashion, art and music events, immersive experiences and much more. Their shows tour the globe and bring audiences to their feet wherever they go. In 2018, The 7 Fingers opened their very own Centre of Creation and Production. Situated in the heart of Montreal's downtown theater

district, the new center houses all of the company's activities, departments, and dreams under one roof.

## COLIN GAGNÉ (Musical

**Director)** has been composing music and designing sound for circus, theater, and musicals for quite a while. After a diploma in electroacoustic composition at Université de Montréal, he worked with Akousma, Mutek, Cirque Éloize, Théâtre du Nouveau Monde, and The 7 Fingers, among others, while teaching musical technologies at CEGEP de St-Laurent. Recently, with The 7 Fingers, he signed the music for *Mon île mon coeur*, *En Panne*, *Passengers*, *Réversible*, and *Vice et Vertu*. He also wrote music for theater and other circus companies, and designed sound and sounds for multiple shows, while doing musical arrangements and sound design for Sochi's Olympic Games Opening with The 7 Fingers.

## ANA CAPPELLUTO (Scenic

**Design)** is based in Montréal. There she has worked with numerous local and national companies in Montréal and Canada. For The 7 Fingers she has designed the sets for *Passagers*, *Cuisine & Confessions*, *Réversible*, and *Vice & Vertu*. Her designs have traveled to numerous international festivals including Londrina International Festival in Brazil, Singapore Arts Festival, Valencia International Arts Festival in Venezuela, Festival Cultural de Mayo in Mexico, Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and Le Festival d'Avignon in France. She has been the recipient of several awards including a Jessie for Outstanding Set Design, for Sarah Kane's *4.48 Psychosis*. She is a Professor at Concordia University in Montréal.

## CAMILLE THIBAUT-BÉDARD

**(Costume Design)** Following her studies in Fashion Design at LaSalle College in Montreal, Camille began her career as patternmaker and seamstress for various local designers. In 2010, she met Montreal's renowned costume designer Liz Vandal. As her assistant, Camille worked for three years at Vandal Costume and participated in major productions for dance and

circus companies, where she learned how to cater to the specific needs of this rigorous domain. Since then her valued experience creating costumes for stage performances has led her to collaborate with many choreographers and circus companies, including with The 7 Fingers on *Triptyque*, *Projet Fibonacci Marrakech*, *Vice & Vertu*, and *Rengeteg*. Through her regular work with young designers, she continuously explores the close connection between dance and fashion, dressing and celebrating the body in movement.

## ÉRIC CHAMPOUX (Lighting

**Design)** is a graduate of the National Theatre School of Canada (1997). While there he met theater artist Wajdi Mouawad, later creating the lighting design for almost all of Mouawad's pieces. Éric has also worked a lot in both Opera and Circus. His design credits for Cirque du Soleil include *Ovo*, *Allavita!*, *Juste Une P'Tite Nuite*, *Crystal*, *Joyeux Calvaire*, *Axel*, and more recently *Amora* in Malta. Éric collaborated previously with The 7 Fingers as lighting designer on *Le Murmure du coquelicot*, *Cuisine & Confessions*, *The Last Chapter*, *Princess Of Circus* (Moscow), *Prime Time* (Moscow), and *Cadence*.

## JOHNNY RANGER (Video

**Design)** is a video and design artist. He divides his time between his own interdisciplinary creations involving unusual or multi-screen projections and collaborates as a new media director with projects involving choreographers, directors, media art centers, and design studios. He regularly works in collaboration at the Society for Arts and Technology, and over the last several years Johnny has focused on creating works that use 360-degree circumferential projections. His work put the visual language on the foreground of scenic events and presents a new type of immersive cinema that stimulates the public to choose their own narratives from the multiple iconographic paths that are often proposed simultaneously.

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PRESENTS

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— SF Chronicle

**“BEST NIGHT OUT!”**

— SF Magazine

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**ISABELLE CHASSÉ (Assistant to the Director)** A key figure in the history of the Quebec circus and a major contemporary artist, Isabelle Chassé is one of the artists who have contributed to the success of Cirque du Soleil.

Winner of several prestigious awards, including gold at the Festival Mondial du Cirque de Demain de Paris and the Monte-Carlo Festival, she has toured the world and performed in hundreds of shows in an innovative and dynamic contortion quartet. As a young adult, she made her mark with her memorable aerial silk performance in *Quidam*. Co-founder of The 7 Fingers, she has performed in *Loft*, *La Vie*, and *Temporel*, creations she co-directed, as well as the shows *Vice & Vertu*, the third piece of *Tryptique*, the film *En Panne*, as well as *Summer Tale* (one of the first post-March 2020 shows with an audience in Toronto), and *3 Géants* for the Montreal Completément Cirque Festival in 2022.

**FRANCISCO CRUZ (Head Coach)** is from San Francisco, California, where he began circus at the age of seven. In 2005, Francisco joined with Les 7 Doigts to perform in the original cast of the show *Traces* with which he toured internationally for over six years. Francisco has since retired from the stage and is now an Associate Artistic Director at Les 7 Doigts. He also has a love of filmmaking where he creates and directs the visuals for Les 7 Doigts's social media as well as his own personal projects, where his work has been featured internationally on various platforms. Outside of circus, Francisco has a BA degree in Early Childhood Elementary Education from Concordia University. Francisco lives in Montreal with his wife and two daughters and can be seen skateboarding throughout the summer in the streets of Montreal.

**NASSIB EL-HUSSEINI (CEO of The 7 Fingers)** left his native Lebanon in the late 1980s and worked with numerous Quebecois, Canadian, and international governmental and non-governmental agencies, obtaining a Ph.D. in political science in 1996, and publishing *L'Occident Imaginaire* in

1998. In 2003, his path crossed that of seven artists determined to make their mark on the world of contemporary circus. Nassib placed his experience and his passion for art and innovation at the service of the nascent troupe that would become one of the jewels of artistic expression. Awards: Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)'s Prix Reconnaissance in recognition of his exceptional career (2013); Artists for Peace Award on behalf of The 7 Fingers (2014); Carmelle and Rémi Marcoux Chair in Arts Management's Cultural Manager Award from HEC Montréal (2019); named Chevalier (Knight) by the Ordre de Montréal.

## ADDITIONAL STAFF

**Associate Lighting Designer** Mitchell Jakubka

**Head Rigger** (LOCAL 16) David Freitag

## 7 FINGERS STAFF

**Project Manager** Sabrina Gilbert

**Technical Director** Simon Lachance

**Stage Manager** Charlotte Legault

**Assistant to the technical director** Marie-Hélène Grisé

**Video Coordinator** Dominique Hawry

**Video Programming**

Laura-Rose R. Grenier

**DOP - Shooting**

Mark Ó Fearghail et Harley Francis

**Video Animation**

Yannick Doucet et Remi Borgeal

**Sound Engineer** Jérôme Guillaume

**Light Programming**

Stéphane Lecavalier

**Electric Chief**

Gabriel Fournier-El Ayachi

**Trapeze Coach** Véronique Thibault

**Set design assistant**

Dominique Coughlin

**Costume Assistant** Catherine Veri

**Music, Lyrics, sound design and arrangements** Colin Gagné

**In collaboration with**

Jean-Sébastien Leblanc (arrangements Contorsion, Hulahoop et Trapeze / arrangements Contorsion, Hulahoop and Trapeze), Boogát (paroles

Jonglerie / Lyrics Juggling), Jérôme Guillaume (arrangements Jonglerie / arrangements Juggling

**Opening, Tight Wire and Epilogue music is based on a theme composed by** Raphael Cruz

**Voice and instruments**

Boogát, Maude Brochu, Alexandre Désilets, Guido Del Fabbro, Jérôme Dupuis-Cloutier, Jonathan Gagné, Gabriel Godbout-Castonguay, Dominiq Hamel, Sheila Hannigan, Olivier Hébert, Frannie Holder, Anna Kichtchenko, Jean-Sébastien Leblanc, Jeffrey Moseley, Maude Parent, Pablo Pramparo, Mathieu Roberge, Guillaume St-Laurent, William Underwood

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## TOURING TEAM 2022

**Tour Manager** Guillaume Biron

**Technical Director** Martin Ruel

**Rigger** Celia Ste-Croix

**Light Operator** Loriane Foisy

**Sound & Video Operator**

Michael Amstadt

This show is dedicated to Raphael Cruz

# PHYSICAL THEATER

BY NATALIE GREENE

All theater is physical, as it relies on bodies in space. However, **physical theater** places the body at the center of storytelling. While words and dialogue might be included, the body is the primary method of communication. This makes room for the audience to have a visceral experience and allows for expansive interpretations of the work onstage.



*Passengers* cast in rehearsal in August 2022. Photos by Francisco Cruz.

## Here are some things to look for when you're watching physical theater:

### Focus

- Where are the performers looking / not looking?  
What can they see / not see?
- What energy or emotions are they sending in the direction of their focus?

### Spatial relationships

- Proximity - are they near? far? evenly spaced? randomly staggered?
- Do the positions of their bodies suggest other things? (like a train? love? loneliness?)
- Who and how many? Look for: Solo / Duo / Small Group / Large group, then ask yourself how the groupings of bodies suggest emotions, ideas, and stories.

### Time and quality

- TEMPO: Fast? Medium? Slow? When the tempo changes, is it abrupt or gradual?  
What could that mean?
- DURATION: How long does something last?  
How quickly does something pass?
- Does the tempo, texture or duration suggest an emotion or story? For example, SLOW can be sorrowful or sleepy, but can also be calm & at peace. FAST can be stressful & anxious, but can also be joyful & exuberant. What emotions or stories do the tempo changes convey?

### Kinesthetic response

- What qualities or sensations do you notice, physically?
- Does it make you want to move your body?
- Does it impact your breath? Give you butterflies? Does it make you pull back in surprise?

### Movement and shape

- Are the performers portraying human characters at this time? Look for: quotidian (everyday) movement and behavioral gestures, such as waving at someone or picking up a suitcase.
- Are the performers portraying bigger ideas or abstract elements? Look for: symbolic gestures representing inner states, or combined bodies representing large concepts.
- How are the bodies situated in relation to other elements? Consider how the body relates to props, architecture, and apparatus, as well as how performers' bodies interact with video, lighting, and sound.

The elements described above are also the tools that creators of physical theater use to make new work. I hope these lenses support your viewing and enjoyment of the stories and ideas expressed in *Passengers*.



The cast of A Christmas Carol / 2018. Photo by Kevin Berne.

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by **Charles Dickens**

Adapted by **Carey Perloff** and **Paul Walsh**

Music by **Karl Lundeberg**

Choreography by **Val Caniparoli**

Directed by **Peter J. Kuo**

Based on the original direction by **Carey Perloff**

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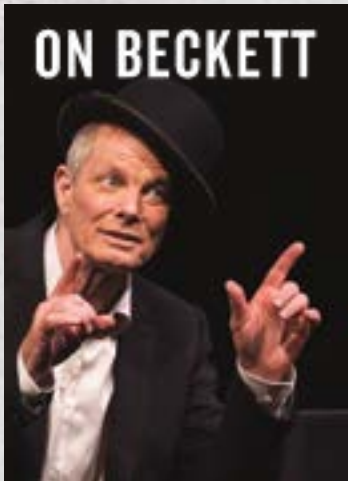


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– Ben Brantley, *The New York Times*



By **Charles Dickens**

Adapted by **Carey Perloff** and **Paul Walsh**

Music by **Paul Lundeberg**

Choreography by **Val Caniparoli**

Directed by **Peter J. Kuo**

Based on the original direction by **Carey Perloff**

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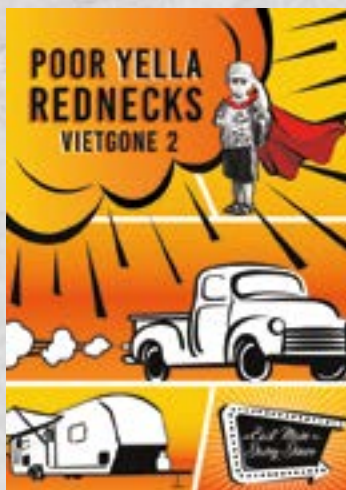
By **Christopher Chen**

Directed by **Pam MacKinnon**

**Feb 9-Mar 5, 2023**

**"INGENIOUSLY CONSTRUCTED . . . A NOVEL BLEND OF TWISTY WHODUNNIT,  
FAMILY MYSTERY, IMMIGRANT TALE, AND MEMORY PLAY"** – *The New Yorker*





By Qui Nguyen  
Directed by Jaime Castañeda

**Mar 30–May 7, 2023**

**“WILDLY EXUBERANT, UNABASHEDLY OVER-THE-TOP,  
AND GLEEFULLY IMAGINATIVE”** *– BroadwayWorld*



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Music & Lyrics by Harold Arlen and E.Y. Harburg  
Directed & Choreographed by Sam Pinkleton

**Jun 1–25, 2023**

**SEE YOU DOWN THE (YELLOW BRICK) ROAD.**



By Dominique Morisseau  
Choreographed by Camille A. Brown  
Directed by Kamilah Forbes

**Aug 25–Oct 1, 2023**

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AL GREEN, CHAKA KHAN, THE O'JAYS, SISTER  
SLEDGE, STEVIE WONDER, AND MORE.**

# DONOR SPECIAL EVENTS

As a nonprofit organization, A.C.T. depends heavily upon the support of our generous community to fuel every aspect of our mission-driven work. In appreciation, we offer donors access to special events and behind-the-scenes opportunities that are designed to provide connection to the art and artists on our stages. This season, we are honored to host an array of experiences for supporters. Mark your calendars for these exciting donor events and keep an eye out for invitations throughout the year, hitting your inboxes closer to event dates.

## **SATURDAY SALON LUNCHEON**

Mix and mingle over fine dining with special guest artists.

*A benefit for Patron level donors and above (\$1,200+)*

Saturday, October 1, 2022

## **A CHRISTMAS CAROL WALK THE STAGE**

Explore a production's set up-close during an exclusive post-show tour.

*A benefit for Benefactor level donors and above (\$7,500+)*

Sunday, December 11, 2022

## **PRODUCERS CIRCLE DINNER**

Enjoy an intimate dinner on stage with special guest artists.

*An exclusive benefit for members of our Producers Circle (\$10,000+)*

Thursday, January 12, 2023

## **THE HEADLANDS DRESS REHEARSAL**

Witness the artistic team, production crew, and actors work through the finishing touches of the production prior to public performances.

*An exclusive benefit for Sponsor level donors and above (\$125+)*

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

## **PROSPERO SOCIETY BRUNCH**

*An exclusive brunch for members of our Prospero Society Legacy Giving Circle*

Saturday, February 25, 2023

## **POOR YELLA REDNECKS TECHNICAL REHEARSAL RECEPTION**

Enjoy a first look at the production and witness the final stages of the rehearsal process.

*A benefit for Sustainer level donors and above (\$750+)*

Saturday, March 25, 2023

## **DIRECTORS CIRCLE DINNER**

*An exclusive dinner for members of our Directors Circle (\$2,500-\$9,999)*

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

## **THE WIZARD OF OZ BACKSTAGE TOUR**

During this behind-the-scenes tour, you'll hear unique insights from the team who helped bring the production to life.

*A benefit for Sponsor level donors and above (\$125+)*

Sunday, June 11, 2023

Dates, times, and locations are all subject to change. All events will be held in strict compliance with federal, state, and local health protocols, as well as union COVID guidelines.

For a complete list of giving levels and benefits, or to become a donor, please visit [act-sf.org/support](https://act-sf.org/support), or contact Deputy Director of Development Sasha Habash at [shabash@act-sf.org](mailto:shabash@act-sf.org) or 415.439.2415.



Photo by Kelly Mason

A.C.T.'S INAUGURAL

# ALL HALLOWS' GALA

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2022

AUGUST HALL

420 MASON STREET, SAN FRANCISCO

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We are privileged to recognize Producers Circle members' generosity during the August 1, 2021 to August 1, 2022, period. For information about Producers Circle membership, please contact Sasha Habash at 415.439.2415 or shabash@act-sf.org.

\*\*Deceased

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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 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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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 RICCITIELLO †

Robina is the Board Secretary 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.

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The following members of the A.C.T. community made gifts in memory and in honor of friends, colleagues, and family members of \$100 or more during the August 1, 2021 to August 1, 2022 period.

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Ms. Kathleen Foote in honor of the wedding of Meredith Charlson and Matthew Donato  
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Anne and Rick Riley in honor of Nancy Kubacki's 90th birthday

Alison Tatlock in honor of Pam MacKinnon  
Allison and TJ Belger in honor of the amazing Jill MacLean  
Kevin Pitts in honor of Brianne Pitts  
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Mr. Kevin J. Keen in honor of his wife, a lover of the theater  
Kiran and Vito Verghese in honor of Young Conservatory training

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# A.C.T. STAFF

## PAM MACKINNON *Artistic Director*

## JENNIFER BIELSTEIN *Executive Director*

### Artistic

Andy Chan Donald\*, *Associate Artistic Director*  
Joy Meads, *Director of Dramaturgy and New Works*  
Katie Craddock, *Literary Manager and Casting Associate*

### Commissioned Artists

Kate Attwell; Ryan Nicole Austin, Beau Lewis, & Adesha Adefela; Julia Cho & Seret Scott; Eisa Davis; Aleshea Harris; Naomi Iizuka; Craig Lucas & David Zinn; Will Power; Mfoniso Udofia; Anne Washburn; Lauren Yee; Karen Zacarias

### Production

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

### Costume Shop

Kinsey Thomas, *Costume Shop Assistant*  
Mika Rubenfeld, *Costume Shop Administrator*  
Kelley Koehn, *Craft Artisan*  
Peter Gravenor, *First Hand*

### Prop Shop

Abo Jose Greenwald, *Prop Shop Supervisor*

### Crew (Local 16)

Candace Shankel, *Head Props*  
Shawn Annecton, *Head Carpenter*  
Brandon Gage, *Flyrail*  
Ian Roth, *Head Sound*  
Eddie Masias, *Head Electrician*

### Wardrobe (Local 784)

Mary Montijo, *Head Wardrobe*  
Diane Cornelius, *Wardrobe Assistant*

### Administration

Jess Katz, *Executive Assistant*

### Human Resources

Chrystal Ellis Sweazey, *Director of Human Resources*  
Dao VanQuate, *Human Resources Manager*

### General Management

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

### Finance

Jim Sivori\*, *Chief Financial Officer*  
Ning Xiao, *Controller*  
Eric Law, *Senior Accountant*  
Yvonne Chen, *Staff Accountant*

### Information Technology

Thomas Morgan, *Director*  
Joone Pajar, *Network Administrator*  
Steph Swide, *Data Systems Analyst*

### Operations

Eric Brizee, *Operations and Facilities Manager*  
Jeffrey Warren, *Associate Facilities Manager*  
Leopoldo Benavente, *Assistant Facilities Manager*  
Matt Stewart, *Facilities Crew Member*

### Development

Caitlin A. Quinn, *Director of Development*  
Sasha Habash, *Deputy Director of Development*  
Nicole Chalas, *Associate Director of Development*  
Irma Ramirez, *Director of Special Events*  
Will Gaines, *Associate Director of Individual Giving*  
Steph Swide, *Interim Senior Development Operations Manager*  
Derek Collard, *Special Events and Donor Engagement Manager*

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Adam Thurman, *Director of Marketing & Communications*  
Syche Phillips, *Deputy Director of Marketing*  
Kevin Kopjak/Prismatic Communications,  
*Public Relations Counsel*  
Samantha Lomax\*, *Digital Engagement Manager*  
Sarah Sugg, *Video Content Producer*  
Laura Clatterbuck, *Lead Visual Designer*  
Dani Karonis, *Graphic Designer*  
Nakia Gibbs, *Digital Marketing Associate*

### Ticket Services

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Elizabeth Halperin, *Assistant Head Treasurer*  
Andy Alabran, *Treasurer*  
David Englemann, *Treasurer*

### Audience Services

Megan Murray, *Audience Services Manager*  
Jerry Chirip, *Audience Services Associate*  
Sudeshana Karki, *House Manager*  
Traci Mar, *House Manager*  
Genevieve Pabon, *House Manager*  
Mark Saladino, *House Manager*  
Tuesday Ray, *House Manager*  
Sadie Li, *House Manager*

### Bartenders

Ramsey Abouremeleh, Warren Duprey, Bernadette Fons, Clara Fulkis, Anthony Hernandez, Anthony Hoyer, Sam Hoffman, Hannibal Jones, Jessica Lim, Ben McGrath, Miles Sheppard-Tokat, Kacey Wilson, Tygre Wolf, June Yee

### Ushers

Susan Allen, Rodney Anderson, Felix Bishop, Serena Broussard, Philip Carberry, Nancy Chang, Katherine Dere, Myah DeStefans, John Doll, Katherine Dominguez, Mileta Foster, Clara Fulkis, Gerry Garber, Claire Gerndt, Jorge Gonzalez-Rodriguez, Carol Grace, Aron Gruber, Sophia Halperin, Kathleen Keeler, Ryszard Koprowski, Alec Le, Sharon Lee, Steven LeMay, Maria Markoff, Kescha Mason, Val Mason, Ken McKellar, Meechai McKellar, Jesus Medina, Sam Mesinger, Katherine Napoleon, Nathaniel Paluga, Stephen Salmons, Audrey Soss, Melissa Stern, David Tavernas, Christopher Willers, May Yasui, June Yee

### Safety

Loren Lewis, *Stage Door & Security*  
Oliver Sutton, *Stage Door & Security*  
Idris Sow, *Front Door & Security*

### Education & Community Programs

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

### Teaching Artists

Andy Alabran, Fran Astorga, Reyna Brown, Yari Cervas, Callie Floor, Lauren Kivowitz, Anne Kobori, Brennan Pickman-Thoon, Radhika Rao, Annie Rovzar, Kimiya Shokri

### Conservatory

Peter J. Kuo\*, *Director of the Conservatory*  
Christopher Herold, *Director of Summer Training Congress*  
Jerry Lopez, *Director of Financial Aid*  
Fran Astorga, *Conservatory Manager*  
Alejandra Maria Rivas\*, *Conservatory and School & Community Programs Coordinator*

### Library Staff

Joseph Talley\*, *Head Librarian*

### Library Volunteers

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### Studio A.C.T.

Mark Jackson, *Director of Studio A.C.T.*  
Emily Cooper, *Young Conservatory and Studio A.C.T. Associate Programs Manager*  
Liz Anderson  
Heidi Carlsen  
Frances Epsen-Devlin  
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Laura Wayth  
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### Young Conservatory

Jill MacLean, *Director of the Young Conservatory*  
Emily Cooper, *Young Conservatory and Studio A.C.T. Associate Programs Manager*  
Justin P. Lopez, *Young Conservatory Administrative Assistant*  
Andy Alabran, *Acting, Voice & Dialect*  
Kimberly Braun, *Musical Theater*  
Janel Chanté, *Musical Theater, Acting*  
Meredith Joelle Charlson, *Dance/Choreographer*  
Gwynnevere Cristobal, *Musical Theater, Acting*  
Allison Gamlen, *Cabaret*  
Nancy Gold, *Physical Character, Acting*  
Lore Gonzales, *Acting, Improvisation*  
Andrew Mondello, *Musical Theater, Acting*  
Dario Johnson, *Musical Theater, Voice, Cabaret*  
Brennan Pickman Thoon, *On-Camera, Acting*  
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Veronica Renner, *Musical Theater, Acting*  
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Kimiya Shokri, *Acting, Devised Theater*  
Valerie Weak, *Acting, Shakespeare, College Prep*  
Krista Wigle, *Musical Theater, Voice*

### Conservatory Accompanists

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

### San Francisco Semester Faculty

Mark Jackson, *Performance Making*  
Peter J. Kuo, *Collaboration Building*  
Michael Mohammed, *PhD, Voice*  
Patrick Russell, *Physical Theater*  
Jack Sharrar, *PhD, Cultural Landscaping*  
Dee Dee Stephens, *Acting Styles*  
Mia Tagano, *Acting Styles*

### Professional Development

Dillon Heape, Ben Quinn, Mark Rafael, Radhika Rao, Katie Rubin, Domenique 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.

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CAREY PERLOFF  
*Artistic Director Emerita*

JAMES HAIRE  
*Producing Director Emeritus*

MELISSA SMITH  
*Conservatory Director Emerita, in memoriam*

CRAIG SLAIGHT  
*Young Conservatory Director Emeritus*

# A.C.T. PROFILES



## PAM MACKINNON

**(A.C.T. Artistic Director)** is in her fifth 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 Woolf?*, 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, the Advance SF Advisory Panel, and the leadership team of the SF Arts Alliance, 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 the boards of the League of Chicago Theatres, the Arts and Cultural Attractions Council, and other 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, was named by *Twin Cities Business* as a Person to Know, and a *Minnesota Business* magazine 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 received an MBA from Bellarmine University, where she received the MBA Faculty Merit Award, was inducted into Beta Gamma Sigma, the honor society for business programs, and in 2021 was recognized as a Distinguished Alumna. (she/her)



# ABOUT THE THEATER

## MAILING ADDRESS

415 Geary St  
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## BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

### A.C.T. BOX OFFICE

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

### REFRESHMENTS

Join us in Fred's Columbia Room & Nancy's Bar on the lower level, or the Sky Bar on the 3rd floor, to enjoy a full, relaxed bar and treats experience. You'll find delicious ready-to-drink cocktails, soft drinks, and snacks at one of our lobby Quick Bars.

### 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.

### MOBILE DEVICES

If you carry a mobile device, including a phone, tablet, or watch with alarm, please make sure to completely turn them off while in the auditorium. Vibrating devices still produce audible sounds in a quiet auditorium. Text messaging during the performance is disruptive and not permitted.

### 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, so it is important to arrive with enough time to comfortably get settled and enjoy the show. Latecomers will be held in the lobbies until an appropriate late seating opportunity is called. Latecomers with seats in the first five rows will also be reseated to the best available seats as late arrivals in those rows are disruptive to the entire theater. Late coming parties may or may not be seated together based on availability of new seating where moving seats is required.**

### 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.

### RESTROOMS

Gender diversity is welcome at A.C.T. We



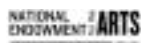
A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.



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 a grant from Grants for the Arts.

## 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.

invite audiences to use the restroom that best fits your gender identity or expression. If preferred, a single-user restroom can be found on the 5th floor.



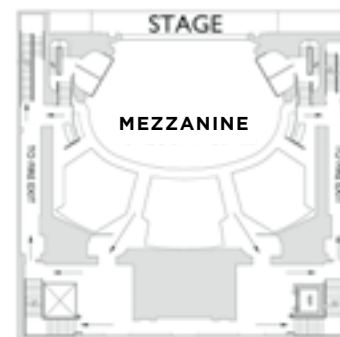
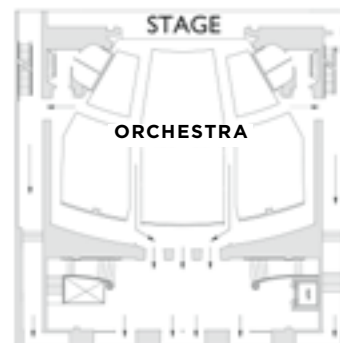
Wheelchair-accessible restrooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

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

### 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.

## THEATER EXITS





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