

MARCH 2024

KRISTINA WONG, SWEATSHOP OVERLORD

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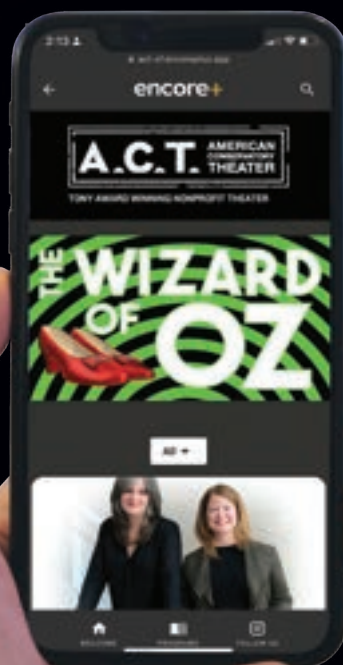
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THIS IS YOUR THEATER, SAN FRANCISCO

American Conservatory Theater is an essential gathering place that brings artists and communities together to inspire and provoke. Now in its sixth 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.

In the first half of our 2023/24 Season, we celebrated “love, peace, and soul!” with the word premiere of the Broadway-bound *Hippest Trip – The Soul Train Musical*, and honored decades of tradition with the final year of our beloved *A Christmas Carol*. (We’ll be back next year with a new *Christmas Carol* to continue the tradition!) We explored the way technology intersects with relationships in the world premiere play *Big Data*, directed by our own Pam MacKinnon and featuring BD Wong as the algorithm personified.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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 are 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. A.C.T. donates to the Shuumi Land Tax to support the repatriation of these Indigenous lands. For more information on how you can support the Ohlone community, please visit act-sf.org/indigenous-community.

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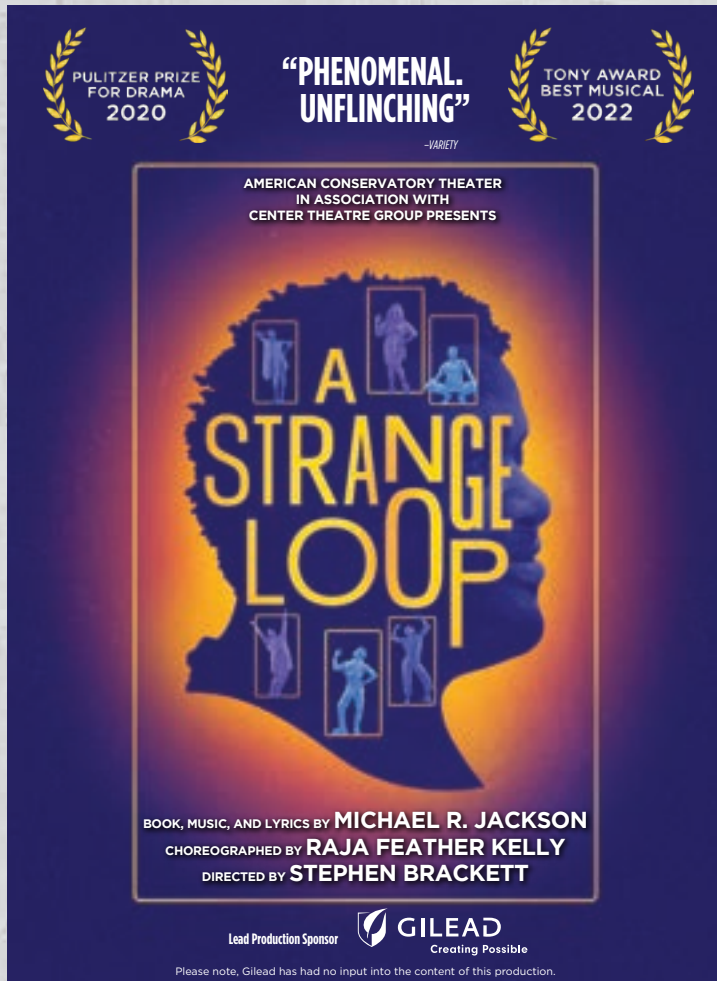
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Kristina Wong in *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord* at Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre. Photo by Javier Vasquez.

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EDITOR
SYCHE PHILLIPS

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JENNIFER BIELSTEIN
PAM MACKINNON
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RULES OF PLAY

WE ARE TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE **LIVENESS.**

All and any laughter is welcome. Laughter from many that can make a whole room shake. Laughter that is a beacon of any one person's connection to the story told. And laughter that betrays nerves as a story builds tension. Please laugh and let others around you laugh. It is why we have come together.

We encourage all response. You, the audience, are part of the storytelling equation. Feel free to express yourself and let those around you express themselves. We are building a community with each performance.

Theater is alive and precious in that aliveness. The stories are honed and rehearsed and told with—not just to—you, the audience. If you miss a phrase or two, please know that the show will take care of you. It'll come round again to catch you up and pull you forward. You can trust in the craft, so you can enjoy yourselves.

We ask that you turn off your mobile devices during the performance. This is out of respect for us all coming together to be part of a story told in this space and in living time.

Please share the fun. We ask that you save taking photos or video to before and after the performance and during intermission. We love seeing posts on social media: our programs held high among friends, floating before the set or curtain or lobby spaces. Tell folks about your experience. These shows have short runs and then are gone.

We encourage you to be present, mindful, and together in these spaces. Be kind to your neighbor and fellow theater lover. Help nurture and welcome new and young theater goers; for some this is their first time seeing a play. Give each other room, but also smile and say hello, as you pass on the way to your seats, or at intermission standing in a line, or as you walk out into your city.

WELCOME TO A.C.T. THIS IS YOUR THEATER.

Our intent is to be a truly inclusive theater, welcoming to all. Including these in each program was influenced by artist Dominique Morisseau's Rules of Engagement.

FROM THE ARTISTIC + EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

WELCOME TO YOUR THEATER!

If you saw Kate Attwell's play *Big Data* at the Toni Rembe Theater last month, you would have seen a larger blue and red abstract painting over the fireplace. The painting belongs to me, and since closing it is now back hanging in my dining room/home office.

A crucial part of the story of act two was that, unlike in act one—all smooth and sleek; with just a few pieces of furniture repurposed for each location—we immediately sink into a lived in world, an intense realism on stage full of details, all texture and personal, “full of the stuff of years,” to quote Kate's stage directions. Day one of seeing that living room set in the theater, both set designer Tanya Orellana and I knew that we needed more than what our prop shop or some thrift store shopping could provide. Sometimes you have to bring stuff from home to ground a work of fiction.

Now switch to *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*. This is an autobiographical story about Kristina's singular steps in March 2020 that gave rise to a massive mutual aid network—the Auntie Sewing Squad—who rushed to fill the wide gaps of US government failure. I want to believe that the Hello Kitty sewing machine on stage is the actual Hello Kitty sewing machine from her LA Koreatown apartment. It at the very least is an exact stand in for her own sewing machine from home that she used over years to make her own sets and props and to sew a first mask. And it is a stand in for other home sewing machines, and of course much more importantly the more than 350 people across 33 states working them. This is the stuff from home—the often invisible essential labor of women with expertise learned through working in the garment industry or passed down generation to generation as means of survival, community, and thrift—and here portrayed is the catalyst for a movement.

I am grateful that Kristina Wong is at the Strand to share her story, a story of action, volunteerism, and citizenry. Four years into the Covid-19 era in front of a Bay Area audience replete with members of the 2020/21 Auntie Sewing Squad, this is the last time she plans to perform this particular story. As a true citizen artist, she continues to see the gaps that need filling. She jumps in with both feet, and lucky for us is willing to share the stories that come out of trying, of failures and successes, struggle and momentary triumph. It is ongoing and part of a life well lived and expertly observed.

And I hope inspirational for us all. Take a leap. Laugh together, breathe, and return to your homes and your City more invigorated and ready.

Enjoy



Pam MacKinnon
Artistic Director

Hello, and welcome to *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*, and A.C.T.'s Strand Theater!

It's been such a delight to have Kristina here with this hilarious, heartfelt show. It is exciting to so quickly have a piece about the pandemic, and especially one that helps us to laugh out loud. Kristina has performed this show multiple times around the country since its conception, but this is going to be her last production of this piece—so please do tell your friends so they don't miss the chance to see her perform it live!

Some exciting news: we've announced our 2024/25 Season! We hope you will join us as a subscriber as it is the best way to be plugged in to all things A.C.T. and to support your theater. We depend upon the loyalty of subscribers and returning audience members to bring you excellent theater to inspire and provoke joy, laughter, conversation, reflection and more. You can read more about these shows on page 14, and learn all about the new season at act-sf.org.

Speaking of recently announced, our Young Conservatory's summer production will be *Carrie: the Musical*, performed in August right here at the Strand Theater! This musical features a book by Lawrence D. Cohen (screenwriter of the classic film), music by Academy Award winner Michael Gore (*Fame, Terms of Endearment*), and lyrics by Academy Award winner Dean Pitchford (*Fame, Footloose*)—and an ending that will bring the house down. Learn more at act-sf.org/CSV-shows.

Thank you for choosing to join us today for *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*. We hope you'll check out more of what A.C.T. has to offer: classes and training for all ages through our conservatory program (act-sf.org/training), space rentals for all sizes and needs (act-sf.org/rentals), behind-the-scenes benefits for our generous donors (act-sf.org/support), and more. This is your theater!

Best,



Jennifer Bielstein
Executive Director



PHOTO BY KEVIN BERNE

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SWEATSHOP OVERLORD**

Written and Performed by Kristina Wong

Directed by Chay Yew

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& OPERATIONS

AMY DALBA GENERAL MANAGER

MARTIN BARRON DIRECTOR OF PRODUCTION

Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord had its World Premiere at New York Theatre Workshop
Jim Nicola, Artistic Director, Jeremy Blocker, Managing Director, 2021

The actor 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.

Recording notice: The videotaping or making of electronic or other audio and/or visual recordings of this production, or distributing recordings on any medium, including the internet, is strictly prohibited.

SEWING AS CARE WORK

BY PREETI SHARMA

Excerpted from The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide to Mask Making, Radical Care, and Racial Justice.

The Auntie Sewing Squad's volunteer members use the familial moniker Auntie to highlight how care with and for others is a necessary part of a relationship based in mutual aid. An Auntie may be known for her unpaid reproductive caretaking role in extended family relationships, but the term often applies to anyone in an intergenerational, gendered relationship who offers support. During the pandemic, Aunties in the Squad embraced the role and the broader caring relationship. But even in the midst of this at-home sewing effort to benefit workers and others frequently exposed to the virus, the Aunties also managed to care for each other. Therein lay a distinguishing feature of their mutual-aid labor and their politics.

Cognizant of the physical and emotional tolls that mask making exacted, the Squad established a robust Community Care team that sent meals, baked goods, handmade mementos, and notes of appreciation to working Aunties. Although the Squad operates under noncapitalist labor relations, this dimension of its operation offers an alternative to labor practices and relationships that dehumanize immigrants and women of color. By creating a mechanism to safeguard one another's well-being, the Aunties voiced but also enacted a critique of the harms wrought by a wildly negligent state and the crushing structures of exploitative work long reliant on immigrants and women of color. The Squad expands conversations about forms of nonexploited labor under different sets of conditions, as much as it demonstrates the

mutuality in mutual aid. During a pandemic that requires government public health intervention, one might expect the language of care to be spectacularly politicized—and so it was in 2020, sometimes in ironic and troubling ways. On March 27, 2020, the US federal government signed into law the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act, signaling an attempt to aid the country in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, local shelter-in-place laws, and the growing economic crisis. Under the jovial acronym of CARES, the act offered an economic stimulus to seven different categories of groups, including individuals and hospitals.

Belying its name, however, the CARES Act failed to provide material protection to the most vulnerable communities, particularly Indigenous, Black, and other communities of color, as well as undocumented communities. Its well-documented deficiencies include the inaccessibility of the one-time \$1,200 stipend to undocumented people as well as to students who were listed as dependents. Moreover, the amount was laughably small in comparison to the economic pain of anyone who had lost a job because of the pandemic. Although the CARES Act enhanced unemployment benefits with \$600 a week from the federal government, that program expired at the end of July 2020. Such inadequate benefits for working families seemed further diminished when news emerged in late spring 2020 of major corporations claiming millions in CARES aid that had been earmarked for small businesses. At the same time, billionaires added \$10.2 trillion to their wealth while the companies they owned laid off workers or refused to properly protect workers

against COVID-19; Jeff Bezos, the CEO of Amazon, for example, had made an estimated \$90 billion during the pandemic as of December 2020, while Amazon workers had not received sustained hazard pay or adequate protection at work. Those who were regularly exposed to COVID-19 at their workplaces because of lack of protection were sacrificed to “keep the economy running” and labeled as “heroes.” In the beginning of the pandemic in the US, shelter-in-place laws made exceptions for “essential workers,” a euphemistic label for those who met vital needs or safeguarded human life or property. Essential workers picked crops, rang up groceries, cooked meals, and treated medical patients. They scrambled to find supplies of masks and gloves in order to keep their jobs and survive.

The term care is often associated with women's invisible and unpaid work to raise and nurture children and others in need. Two commonly used definitions of care are, first, a “mental disposition of concern”; and, second, the “practices that we engage in as a result of these concerns.” Care is also about caring relationships, or “the sustained and/or intense personal attention that enhances the welfare of its recipients.” Care work has always had gendered and racialized dimensions on every scale, from local to global. Care as “service work” comprises a wide range of occupations, from manicurist to nanny; each of these positions has its own dynamics of race, migration, and relationships to empire. For example, today many women of Vietnamese descent work in the nail industry in the United States, and Caribbean and Central American women often work as nannies or as caregivers for the elderly. Feminist labor historians have

offered trenchant accounts of how such work evolved from slavery and servitude—for example, from work done by enslaved African and Indigenous women and their descendants prior to Emancipation and then as home help performed by Asian, Black, and Latina women across the United States.

The Auntie Sewing Squad understands its efforts of care and concern as a form of radical care, mutual aid, and social justice. In times of urgent need or disaster, like a pandemic, radical care offers rapid assistance without placing any expectations or requirements on the recipient. The Auntie Sewing Squad also defines radical care as a project affirming a person's inherent worth through protection.

Radical care through mutual aid is different from charity, which often has strings attached and whose agencies may take a long time to evaluate whether a recipient is worthy of receiving assistance. Instead, mutual aid functions as an immediate response to systemic harm with the goal of making space for continued political change. As its national group of volunteers grows, the Squad has refused to incorporate as a nonprofit organization not only because a nonprofit structure would limit its horizontal leadership (with requirements for an executive board, for example), but also because nonprofits often adopt a charity orientation that evaluates a recipient's behavior or morals. In a mission statement drafted by Auntie Sewing Squad founder Kristina Wong and other Aunties, the Squad states:

Our Aunties, Uncles, and non-binary volunteers give time and labor to make masks to stop the spread of Covid-19, specifically in the most vulnerable of communities with no access to masks. We believe in a system of community care and having a direct connection to our recipients. We share resources on patterns, fabric, and elastic. We



"Moment of Joy"—photo courtesy of Chey Townsend and Beatrice Townsend.

pride our origins as a mostly WOC and QTNB group that celebrates the ability of all our Aunties to rise up and become the real leaders in this crisis. The Squad's system of Community Care, which operates both externally and internally, is an important aspect of its practice of mutual aid.

Externally, the Squad has dispatched masks to the communities made most vulnerable by constant exposure to COVID-19. These have included workers' organizations, abolitionist organizations, community-based organizations, resource centers, refugee support shelters, and Indigenous nations and communities. The requirements for receiving aid are minimal: mainly, the Squad needs to have direct contact with members of the receiving community in order to quickly assess a group's need for

masks and its readiness and ability to distribute donated masks. Internally, Aunties have sustained each other by sharing resources as well as offering care gifts (such as food items and hand salve) and mutual emotional support.

The Auntie Sewing Squad offers alternative possibilities for rapid response and sustained care in the future.

To read the full text of this article, and various other pieces about the Auntie Sewing Squad experience, we recommend checking out the book *The Auntie Sewing Squad Guide to Mask Making, Radical Care, and Racial Justice*, edited by Mai-Linh K. Hong, Chrissy Yee Lau, and Preeti Sharma, with Kristina Wong and Rebecca Solnit.

AUNTIE ROLL CALL

Meet some of the local Aunties who are a part of the Auntie Sewing Squad (otherwise known as A.S.S.)! Although there is only one actor onstage in this show, there are hundreds of people who made up this team of Aunties, working to help in any and every possible, during a time when the future was uncertain. These Aunties (and the hundreds more who make up A.S.S.) are proof that a single person really can make a difference.



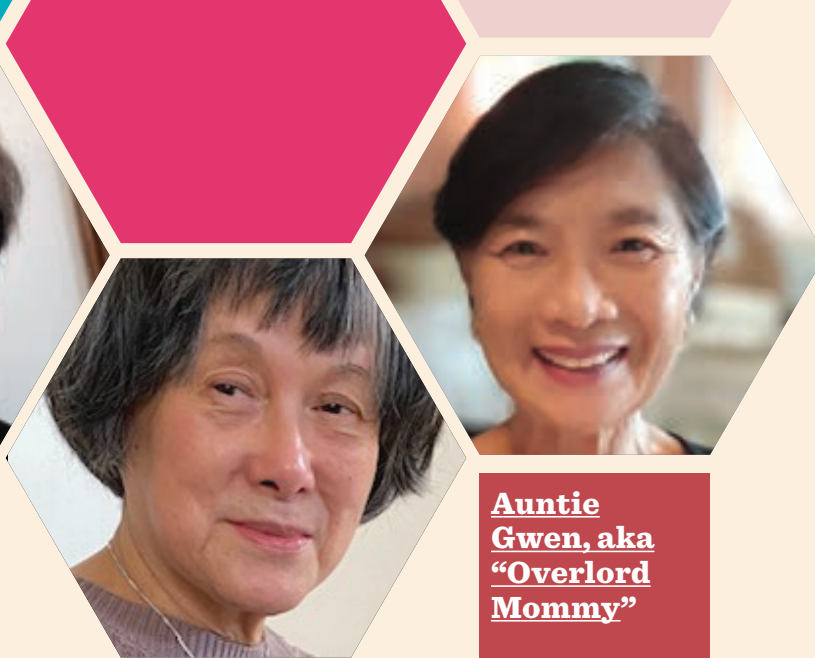
Auntie Emily

It has been a remarkable experience to be part of a group of like-minded humans, who freely gave their skills and talents, (to ease a worldwide pandemic) but also documented everything (in theater, on film, and in a book) in the moment while it was happening! After sewing on my own at home for so long, it was really wonderful to finally meet some local Aunties in person. We had a potluck meal outdoors, traded stories, fabrics, gifted preserves, plants, and seeds. We still gather a couple of times a year and I think we'll always have the deep bonds we made while doing this emergency work. It still blows my mind that this group of primarily artists, dancers, actors, teachers, writers, musicians, quilters, etc. (almost 800 of us at the peak) together produced and distributed several hundred thousand masks freely to people who had no other resources to stay safe from COVID-19 in 2020.



Auntie Annie

A.S.S. saved my sanity. Instead of alternating between depression and anger at the moron on the news, I channeled my energy to become a part of the solution to the pandemic. It felt great knowing my modest sewing skills could save lives—especially satisfying when the masks went to underserved groups. Kristina created out of sheer force of will a massive life-saving community that I am so proud to have been a part of.



Auntie Esther

I knew nothing about A.S.S. when I joined, only that I wanted to sew masks. It was very gratifying when I realized that I had become a member of a well-organized, caring family that wanted to help those in need. I felt proud whenever I sent off a batch of masks and hoped that each recipient would have one less thing to worry about.

Auntie Gwen, aka "Overlord Mommy"

It was amazing to watch my daughter order everyone around and become the "Overlord." The community built was wonderful! Old friendships were deepened and new friendships made.



Auntie Erica

One of my favorite memories of A.S.S. is not about sewing at all. Auntie Grace scheduled a zoom to teach us how to make vegetarian kimchi (a favorite in my home). This meeting felt like I was hanging out with friends, laughing and preparing food together and for a brief moment life felt a little “normal” again.



Auntie Melissa

My greatest joy, derived from my years in the Auntie Sewing Squad, came from my close friendships with other Aunties! I was not the most prolific mask maker, though I worked very hard. I am a quiltmaker first and foremost. So I made quilts, where I could see that they could lend warmth and comfort. And I baked many, many chocolate shortbread hearts, as my small contribution to Auntie Care. I will always love the Aunties I was privileged to meet, with whom I worked.



Auntie Rita

I retired from my health care worker job right before the COVID pandemic shut down, a few months later came the call to join A.S.S. to make masks. It was like responding to an emergency in a hospital. The best part was the coordination, collaboration, and camaraderie from Aunties all over the country who rallied to help, which reminded me of “Rosie the Riveters,” the millions of women during World War II who stood up when the country needed them.



Auntie Ivy

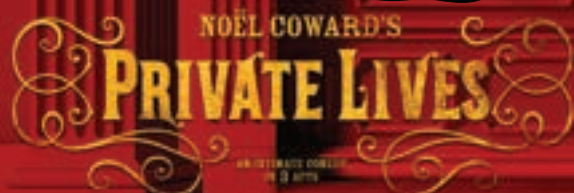
Being in the Auntie Sewing Squad gave me the opportunity to be creative while producing critically needed face masks. Knowing that I was part of a coordinated, caring, committed collective of aunties and uncles helped turn times of isolation during the pandemic into valued moments of solitude as Viggie, my sewing machine, and I pumped out masks. I am grateful and humbled to be part of such a strong and dedicated difference makers—thank you, Overlord and fellow Aunties and Uncles, you rock!



Auntie Valerie

The Aunties gave me hope during a time when it was so hard to be optimistic. With all of us working together to fight against the spread of the pandemic, the Aunties restored my faith in humanity.

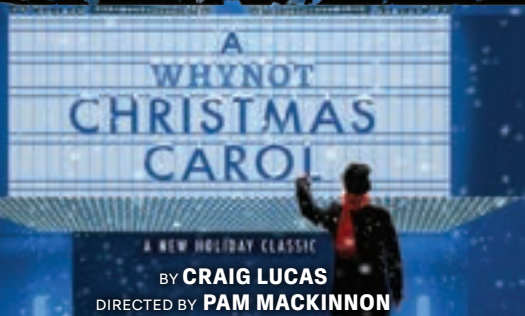
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DIRECTED BY **KJ SANCHEZ**

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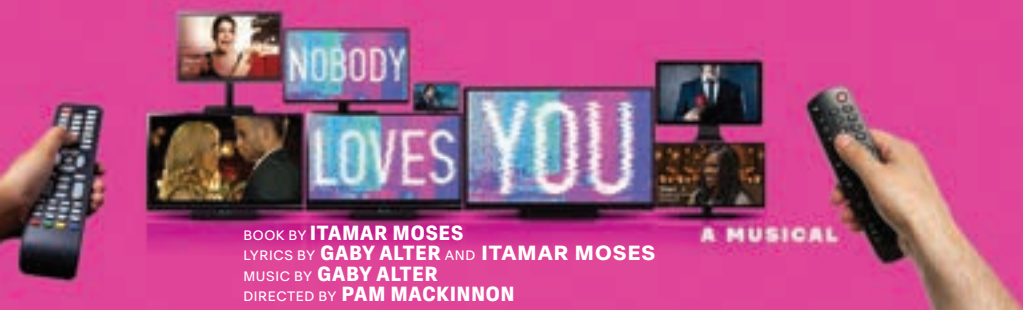
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IN A MODERN VERSE TRANSLATION BY **CHRISTINA ANDERSON**
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WHO'S WHO IN SWEATSHOP OVERLORD



KRISTINA WONG'S (Writer/Performer)

solo plays include *Wong Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *The Wong Street Journal*, and

Kristina Wong for Public Office. *Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord* premiered at New York Theater Workshop and won the Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle and Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Solo Performance and is a Pulitzer Prize Finalist in Drama. She's a Doris Duke Award Winner and Guggenheim Fellow who has been supported by among others, Creative Capital, The MAP Fund, ASU Gammage Artist Residency, Joan D. Firestone Commissioning Fund from En Garde Arts and the Kennedy Center Social Practice Residency. kristinawong.com

CHAY YEW (Director) New York credits include the Public Theater, Playwrights Horizon, New York Theatre Workshop, Signature Theatre, New York City Center Encores!, Playwrights Realm, Audible Theatre, Flea, Rattlestick, Ensemble Studio Theatre, National Asian American Theatre, and Ma Yi. His regional credits include the Goodman Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Arena Stage, La Jolla Playhouse, Alley Theatre, South Coast Rep, Old Globe, Center Theatre Group, Hartford Stage, Denver Center Theater, Huntington Theatre, Seattle Rep, Cincinnati Playhouse, Kennedy Center, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Empty Space, Portland Center Stage, East West Players and Singapore Repertory Theatre. chayyew.com

JUNGHYUN GEORGIA LEE

(Scenic Design) has designed sets and costumes for New York Theatre Workshop, Audible Theatre, Atlantic Theatre, Public Theatre, Soho Rep, Ma-Yi, NAATCO, Guthrie Theatre, Alley Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Syracuse Theatre, Indiana Rep, Playmakers Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, and Huntington Theater Company. Nominations include: Drama Desk Awards for Outstanding Set Design (*Kristina Wong, Sweatshop Overlord*), Henry Hewes Design Award (*Romeo and Juliet*), CT Critics Circle Award (*The Chinese Lady*). MFA: Yale School of Drama; Faculty at Amherst College, MA.

LINDA CHO (Costume Design)

is delighted to be returning to A.C.T., where her previous productions include: *The Orphan of Zhao*, *A Walk on the Moon*, and *A Thousand Splendid Suns*. Broadway credits include: *Doubt*, *Great Gatsby*, *Harmony*, *POTUS*, *Take Me Out*, *Great Society*, *The Velocity of Autumn*, *Summer 1976*, *Anastasia* (Tony nomination), *Lifespan of a Fact*, and *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* (Tony Award). She is on the Advisory committee for the American Theater Wing and is currently teaching at NYU.

AMITH CHANDRASHAKER

(Lighting Design) Broadway: *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Prayer for the French Republic*. NYCC Encores!: *Bring me to Light* with Sutton Foster, *Dear World*, and *Once Upon a Mattress*. Regional theaters: Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, The Geffen, The Huntington. Opera: The Glimmerglass Festival, Houston Grand Opera, Royal New Zealand Ballet, Washington National Opera. Dance: Staatstheater Nuremberg, The Lyon Opera Ballet, The Royal Ballet of New Zealand, and The National Dance Company of Wales. He is the recipient of The Drama Desk and

Henry Hewes awards; Union Trustee for United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829, IATSE; MFA, NYU Tisch School of the Arts and faculty at The University of Maryland's School for Theatre Dance and Performance Studies.

MIKHAIL FIKSEL (Sound Design)

is an award-winning designer, composer, dj, and audio producer, residing on airplanes traveling between New York and Chicago. Recent collaborations include *Uncle Vanya* (Lincoln Center Theatre) and *Mexodus* (Baltimore Center Stage) as well as various productions with New York Theater Workshop, Guthrie Theater, Playwrights Horizons, Berkeley Repertory, The Public, The Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, La Jolla Playhouse, Third Rail Projects, and Albany Park Theatre Project, and various original film scores and multiple original audio productions with Audible Originals and Make Believe Association. Currently, Fiksel is a Practitioner-In-Residence at Columbia College Chicago and is a proud member of USA and TSDCA. (he/him)

ADAM SALBERG (Sound Design)

is excited to be designing at A.C.T. for the first time. Recent design credits include *Hangmen* (Broadway, US Associate), *Spring Awakening* (Yale), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Yale), *Romeo and Juliet* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival), and *The Woodsman* (New World Stages). He is a proud member of USA Local 829. Outside of the theater, he designs food security and nutrition programming for humanitarian organizations, and is a friend to all street cats.

CAITE HEVNER (Projection Design)

first designed projections for *Sweatshop Overlord* in 2021 at New York Theater Workshop, where her work was nominated for a Lortel Award. Broadway credits include *In*

Transit; Derren Brown: *SECRET*; Harry Connick Jr., *A Celebration of Cole Porter*. Select New York credits include *Between the Lines*, Tony Kiser Theatre (Drama Desk Nomination); Ars Nova, Atlantic, Carnegie Hall, Heartbeat Opera; Manhattan Concert Productions; MCC; MTC; Primary Stages; Roundabout, York. She has designed across the US and internationally, at theaters like Alley, Arena, Alliance, Guthrie, McCarter, MUNY, Seattle 5th Avenue. Since 2018 she has served as the Video Coordinator for BC/EFA's Broadway Bares. USA829 Eastern Region Board Member Representative, Co-Chair of Respectful Workplace Committee. caitedesign.com, IG @caitehevnor

AARON MALKIN (Dramaturg) is the Associate Artistic Director, Theatre & Productions at New York Theatre Workshop and has been on the Artistic Staff since 2012. Before moving to New York, Aaron worked at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and Arena Stage as a dramaturg and producer. As a freelance dramaturg, Aaron has worked with the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Ma-Yi Theater Company, and People's Light and Theater Company. He has collaborated with Kristina Wong, Hansol Jung, Aleshea Harris, Celine Song, Martyna Majok, Anaïs Mitchell, Rachel Chavkin, Colman Domingo, Nathan Alan Davis, Mfoniso Udofia, Whitney White, Heidi Schreck, Jeremy O. Harris and Lucas Hnath, among others.

MEGAN MCCLINTOCK (Stage Manager) is A.C.T.'s Resident Stage Manager. Her favorite A.C.T. credits include *The Wizard of Oz*, *Wakey, Wakey*, *A Walk on the Moon*, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Indian Ink*. Other Bay Area credits include productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, California Shakespeare Theater, The Curran, Aurora Theatre Company, and Marin Theatre Company.

Regionally she has worked at St. Ann's Warehouse, La Jolla Playhouse, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, McCarter Theatre Center, and Arena Stage. She has a BA in theater and history from Willamette University.

CHRISTINA HOGAN (Assistant Stage Manager) returns to American Conservatory Theater after working on *The Headlands*, *Fefu and Her Friends*, *Gloria*, *Top Girls*, and *Men on Boats*. Other theater credits include *Bulrushers*, *POTUS*, *English*, and *Sanctuary City* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); August Wilson's *Two Trains Running*, *Pass Over*, and *Georgiana and Kitty* (Marin Theatre Company); *Lear* (Cal Shakes); *Josephine's Feast*, *In Old Age*, and *The Baltimore Waltz* (Magic Theater); and *The Road to Mecca* and *Ripped* (Z Space). Hogan has a BA in theater arts from Saint Mary's College of California. (she/her)

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Gabriel Armstrong, Head Sound and Video
Thomas Boland, Head Carpenter
Solomon Casado, Stage Management Production Assistant
Jessa Dunlap, Wardrobe Supervisor
Griffin Harwood, Head Lights
Liora Jacob, Stage Management Substitute
KIMKIM, Associate Scenic Designer
Spenser Matubang, Lighting Design Associate
Eric Norbury, Associate Lighting Designer
Paige Weissenburg, Production Assistant
 Scenic construction by **California Shakespeare Theater**

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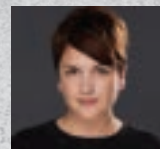
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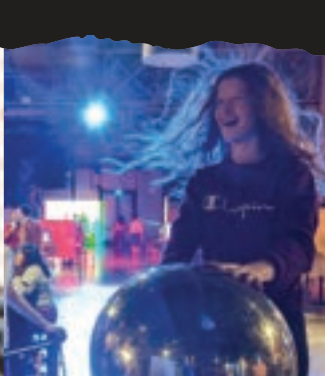
May 10

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June 17-20

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A Timeline of the COVID-19 Pandemic, 2020-2021

BY DRAMATURG AARON MALKIN

2020

JAN

FEB

MAR

JAN 21

United States confirms its first case in Washington state, a man who traveled to the Wuhan area.

FEB 3

Ahmaud Arbery is murdered in Atlanta.

FEB 13

U.S. CDC Director says that the coronavirus will likely become a community virus and remain beyond this season.

MAR 13

Breonna Taylor is murdered in Louisville.

MAR 18

Trump tweets about the "Chinese Virus" in advance of a press conference (amidst other reports of the White House referring to the virus as Kung Flu, etc.).

MAR 20

The United States CDC reports more than 18,000 coronavirus cases; President Donald Trump invokes the Defense Production Act to disperse medical supplies to hospitals.

MAR 19

California issues a stay-at-home order for all of its 40 million residents.

MAR 15

The CDC recommends no gatherings of 50 or more people in the U.S.; New York City public schools close; New York Mayor Bill DeBlasio signs an executive order stating that New York City hospitals are required to cancel elective surgeries.

FEB 29

The United States reports its first death, a man in his fifties with an underlying health condition.

DEC 23

The United States reaches 117,777 hospitalizations, a new record; the United States administers its first one million COVID-19 vaccine doses.

DEC 14

The U.S. death toll surpasses 300,000.

DEC 3

Biden says he will ask Americans to wear masks for 100 days.

NOV 7

Joe Biden wins presidential election.

OCT 28

The U.S. government announces it will pay for any future COVID-19 vaccines for Americans.

DEC

NOV

2021

JAN

JAN 1

The United States surpasses 20 million COVID-19 cases.

JAN 6

Insurrection at the Capitol.

JAN 13

The United States tops 4,000 COVID-19-related deaths in one day, the deadliest day in the pandemic.

JAN 15

The United States surpasses 400,000 COVID-19-related deaths.

DEC 18

The FDA approves Moderna's Covid vaccine.

DEC 11

The FDA approves a vaccine by Pfizer.

NOV 8

The U.S. surpasses 10 million infections.

OCT 27

The Trump White House lists ending the COVID-19 pandemic as an accomplishment despite a surge in cases.

FEB 10

The beginning of the rolling Texas blackouts due to blizzards.

FEB 3

Noel Quintana is assaulted on the MTA in the first of many anti-Asian attacks in NYC.

FEB 24

The Biden administration announces it plans to send masks to over 25 million Americans.

MAR 19

The Biden administration surpasses its goal of administering 100 million doses.

FEB

MAR

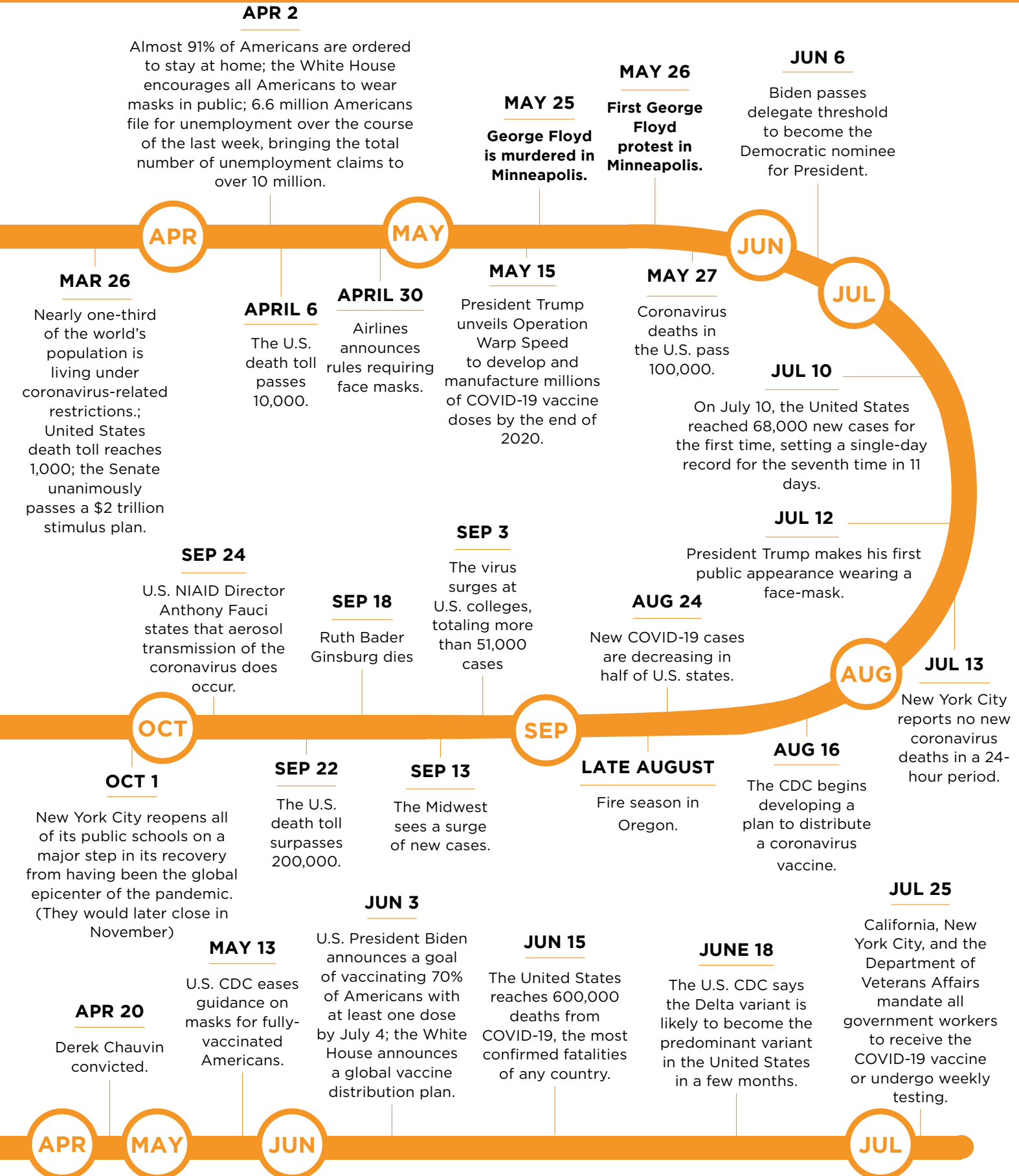
JAN 20 Presidential inauguration.

FEB 22 The United States passes 500,000 COVID-19-related deaths.

MAR 16 Atlanta spa shootings.

"I created this timeline as a resource for Kristina when she was writing the original draft of *Sweatshop Overlord* in the summer of 2021. When I made this, we were early in process and looking at a 3 hour piece that only covered March and April of 2020! The timeline eventually grew to include events up to July of 2021, which is when we workshoped the show in advance of its October 2021 premiere at New York Theatre Workshop."

—Aaron Malkin



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YC students in class, photos by Bekah Lynn



The cast of *Urinetown*, photo by Jay Yamada



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Jerry is the former president of Parnassus Investments. Now retired, he serves on the boards of San Francisco Opera and San Francisco Symphony, as well as on the Emeritus Board of A.C.T. Thao serves on the board of the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco. 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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Alain "Hurrikane" Lauture and the cast of *Hippest Trip - The Soul Train Musical*. Photo by Kevin Berne and Alessandra Mello.



Jomar Tagatac and BD Wong in *Big Data*. Photo by Kevin Berne.

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A photograph of a theater stage during a performance. The stage is bathed in blue light from several spotlights. In the center, a large, ornate musical instrument, possibly a harp or a large organ, is visible. The stage is flanked by large speakers. The audience is visible in the foreground, with rows of seats. The text "A.C.T. is" is overlaid in white, followed by a blue circular icon with a white arrow pointing right, then the word "bartable" in blue and white, and the URL "bart.gov/bartable" in white.

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Photo | Kevin Berne

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A.C.T. PROFILES



PAM MACKINNON

(A.C.T. Artistic Director) is in her sixth season as A.C.T.'s fourth artistic director. She is a Tony, Drama Desk, and Obie Award-winning director, having directed upwards of 80 productions around the country, off Broadway, and on Broadway. Her

Broadway credits include *Amélie*, *A New Musical* (featuring Phillipa Soo), 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?* (Tony and Drama Desk Awards for Best Direction of

a Play), and Bruce Norris's *Clybourne Park* (Tony Award nomination and Obie Award for Best Direction of a Play). Her most recent credits include world premieres of Bruce Norris's *Downstate* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company, London's National Theatre, Playwrights Horizons), 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.), Christopher Chen's *Communion and The Headlands* (A.C.T.), and María Irene Fornés's *Fefu and Her Friends* (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. (she/her)



JENNIFER BIELSTEIN

(Executive Director) joined A.C.T. in 2018. She serves on the board of TCG (Theatre Communications Group), 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 80 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

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 for details.

GROUP DISCOUNTS

Groups of 10 or more save 20%! For more information contact 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.

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. 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.

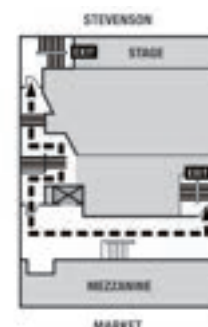
STRAND THEATER EXITS



G



M1



M2

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