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SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS



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OCT-DEC 2017
SEASON 51, ISSUE 2

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SAN FRANCISCO'S THEATER COMPANY

American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco's Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and ongoing engagement with our community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Peter Pastreich, we embrace our responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent our rich theatrical traditions and literatures, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. Founded by William Ball, a pioneer of the regional theater movement, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967. We have since performed more than 350 productions to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Every year we reach more than 250,000 people through our productions and programs.

Rising from the wreckage of the earthquake and fire of 1906 and hailed as the "perfect playhouse," the beautiful, historic Geary Theater has been our home since the beginning. When the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake ripped the roof apart, San Franciscans rallied together to raise a record-breaking \$30 million to rebuild the theater. The Geary reopened in 1996 with a production of *The Tempest* directed by Perloff, who took over in 1992 after the retirement of A.C.T.'s second artistic director, gentleman artist Ed Hastings.

Perloff's 25-season tenure has been marked by groundbreaking productions of classical works and new translations creatively colliding with exceptional contemporary theater; cross-disciplinary performances and international collaborations; and theater made by, for, and about the Bay Area. Her fierce commitment to audience engagement ushered in a new era of InterACT events and dramaturgical publications, inviting everyone to explore what goes on behind the scenes.

A.C.T.'s 50-year-old Conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, is at the center of our work. Our three-year, fully accredited Master of Fine Arts Program is at the forefront of America's actor training programs. Meanwhile, our intensive Summer Training Congress attracts students from around the world, and the San Francisco Semester offers a unique study-abroad opportunity for undergraduates. Other programs include Studio A.C.T.—our expansive course of theater study for adults—and the Professional Development Training Program, which offers actor training for companies seeking to elevate their employees' business performance skills. Our alumni often grace our mainstage and perform around the Bay Area, as well as on stages and screens across the country.

A.C.T. also brings the benefits of theater-based arts education to more than 16,000 Bay Area students and educators each year. Director of Education & Community Programs Elizabeth Brodersen oversees both the world-famous Young Conservatory (for students ages 8 to 19), and our ACTsmart education programs, including the Student Matinee (SMAT) program that has brought thousands of young people to A.C.T. performances since 1968. We also provide touring Will on Wheels Shakespeare productions, teaching-artist residencies, in-school workshops, and study materials to Bay Area schools and community-based organizations.

With our increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood marked by the renovation of The Strand Theater and the opening of The Costume Shop Theater, A.C.T. plays a leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco and the nation.

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The 2016 cast of *A Christmas Carol*. Photo by Kevin Berne.

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The cast of the 2017-18 national tour of *Small Mouth Sounds*.

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AT THE GEARY THEATER

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To learn more and order tickets for InterACT events, visit act-sf.org/interact.

LEFT
Diana Gonzalez-Morett, M.F.A. class of 2017, in *A Christmas Carol* (photo by Kevin Berne).

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Above Photo: Carmen Steele and James Carpenter in the 2016 production of *A Christmas Carol*. Photo by Kevin Berne.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Silence is a mysterious phenomenon—it seems to compel and frighten us in equal measure. Harold Pinter famously said, “There are two types of silence. One when no word is spoken. The other when perhaps a torrent of language is being employed. . . . When true silence falls we are still left with echo but are nearer nakedness. One way of looking at speech is to say that it is a constant stratagem to cover nakedness.” Imagine the dramatic possibilities of putting a group of characters into a heightened situation in which they must co-exist for a week in the nakedness of silence. This is what Bess Wohl does so beautifully in *Small Mouth Sounds*. She asks us to watch the incredibly complex, surprising relationships and mysteries that can develop between people when they can’t or won’t relate to each other through language.

In our hyper-scheduled, digitally aggressive culture, there is an ever greater longing for silence, stillness, spiritual peace, and moral or emotional clarity. And because that has become harder to come by, we often go to great lengths to find it. The Bay Area is home to several acclaimed retreat centers, including Spirit Rock in Marin County, where those seeking solace and enlightenment can go for weeks or even months as they are guided in meditation on a variety of subjects. Among the fascinating things about these silent retreats is the intimacy of spending time with people whose voices you never hear. *Small Mouth Sounds* lets us inside the minds of a group of anxious people at one such retreat. Its comedy and heartbreak come from the extreme situation of needing connection and hope from total strangers in total silence, with no guideposts about how to behave. This play seems perfectly suited to the condition in which we find ourselves in contemporary San Francisco, and we are delighted to have this opportunity to share the work of one of the most original new voices in the American theater.

It is perhaps not a coincidence that *Small Mouth Sounds* arrives at A.C.T. on the heels of *Hamlet*, which ends with the dying title character telling his friend Horatio, “The rest is silence.” In *Hamlet*, Shakespeare reminds us how desperately we wish to be remembered, but how often we have no way of knowing whether the stories we leave behind will stand the test of time.

If silence is a theme of the fall at A.C.T., then so is time: in November an absolutely unique piece will arrive at The Geary called *Refuse the Hour*, by visual art giant William Kentridge. This brilliant South African painter, videographer, filmmaker, and director has created a new work in collaboration with Harvard science historian Peter Galison that explores the mysterious nature of time in human experience. Starring Kentridge himself—in collaboration with exceptional dancers and musicians and surrounded by Kentridge’s astonishing visual imagination—*Refuse the Hour* is a once-in-a-lifetime event that builds on A.C.T.’s history of presenting astonishing multimedia work, from *The Black Rider: The Casting of the Magic Bullets* to last season’s *Needles and Opium*. For three performances in November, The Geary will be home to a magical confluence of great international artists in an astonishing work of music-theater you won’t want to miss.

Meanwhile, we have wonderful news from our Young Conservatory. In August, we hired Jill MacLean to become A.C.T.’s new Young Conservatory director. Following upon the acclaimed 29-year tenure of Craig Slaight, MacLean arrives at the YC with a major pedigree of her own: she is an educator, director, arts leader, and advocate of young people, with an extensive resume that includes distinguished teaching experience at institutions across the Bay Area. One of MacLean’s goals is to align the YC more closely with A.C.T.’s Education & Community Programs so that young people of every background and level of interest can find a creative home at A.C.T. She will be working in collaboration with Education & Community Programs Director Elizabeth Brodersen and Conservatory Director Melissa Smith as she develops her vision for the Young Conservatory, and we are delighted to welcome her to A.C.T.

Welcome to *Small Mouth Sounds*!

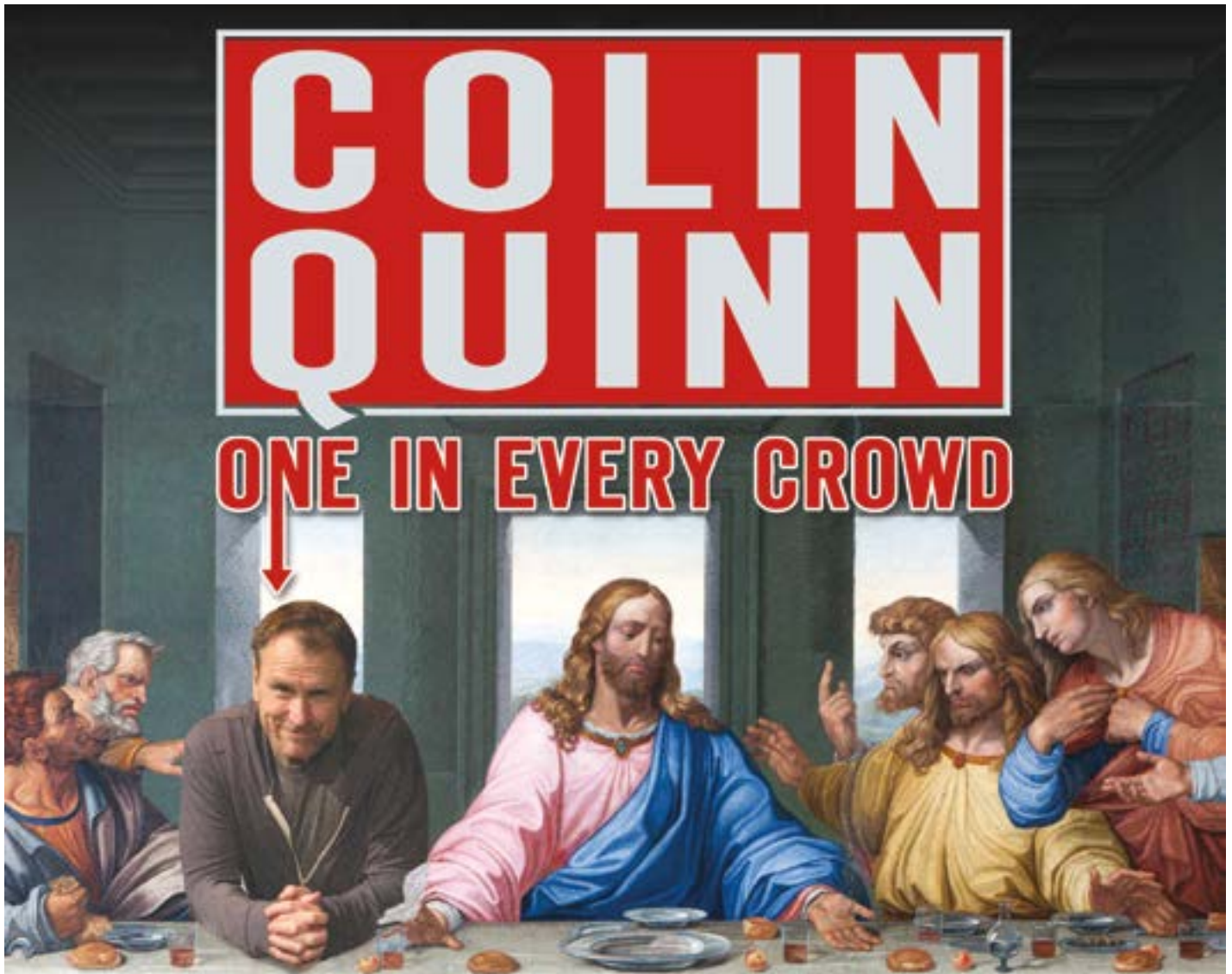
Warmly,



Carey Perloff
Artistic Director



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SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS

BY **BESS WOHL**
DIRECTED BY **RACHEL CHAVKIN**

CAST

JAN **CONNOR BARRETT**
NED **BEN BECKLEY**
RODNEY **EDWARD CHIN-LYN**
TEACHER **ORVILLE MENDOZA**
ALICIA **BRENNA PALUGHI**
JOAN **SOCORRO SANTIAGO**
JUDY **CHERENE SNOW**
UNDERSTUDY **SAFIYA FREDERICKS**
UNDERSTUDY **JOMAR TAGATAC**

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LIGHTING DESIGNER **MIKE INWOOD**
SOUND DESIGNER **STOWE NELSON**
PROPS DESIGNER **NOAH MEASE**
VIDEO DESIGNER **ANDREW SCHNEIDER**
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR **LAUREN Z. ADLEMAN**
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THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

AN INTERVIEW WITH PLAYWRIGHT BESS WOHL AND DIRECTOR RACHEL CHAVKIN

BY SIMON HODGSON

Small Mouth Sounds started life at a silent retreat, though playwright Bess Wohl didn't know that at the time. She only showed up at the retreat to spend time with a friend. "I didn't even realize that we were going to be in silence," she says. But the experience triggered her storytelling instincts. By the end of the first day, the playwright was secretly making notes. After workshopping the play at Ars Nova, a New York-based incubator of new work, Wohl was paired with Rachel Chavkin, a young director with an eye for innovative productions. The pair hit it off, working together to develop *Small Mouth Sounds* into an off-Broadway hit. As the production's national tour arrives on the West Coast, we caught up with Wohl and Chavkin.

How did the storytelling of *Small Mouth Sounds* go from secret notes to a fully staged production?

Bess Wohl: I first tried a draft with lots of "cheating" in the form of dialogue. Then one with absolutely no speech. After erring too far in both directions, I found a middle path that felt right. Then I workshopped the play three times with actors and a director.

Rachel Chavkin: Once we had a cast, it became about doing scenes again and again in rehearsal. For the first production of this play, Bess was out of town a lot because her television show [ABC's *Broad Squad*] had been picked up. The actors and I would make two or three different versions of a scene and then Bess would come in and we would run it and then she and I would talk. Bess has done some directing, she's done a lot of acting, she's multidisciplinary. So she and I can have great conversations around this character's skewing a little this way or that way. What's so crazy is that the entire meaning of a scene can feel radically different depending on what direction a character is looking when she puts her bag down.

BW: Seeing a play embodied in space for the first time is always revelatory, but in this case it was especially important, since there's no way to do a reading of the piece. As we moved from rehearsals into production, it was fascinating to see how audiences searched for clues about the story. I began to think of the play as a mystery, with the audience as the detectives trying to uncover who these characters are.

LEFT Rachel Chavkin OPPOSITE Bess Wohl



PHOTO BY CHAD BATKA



“MY HOPE IS THAT THE PLAY CREATES A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG THE PEOPLE WHO GO SEE IT, AND THAT BEYOND HAVING PASSIVELY WITNESSED SOMETHING, THEY’VE PARTICIPATED IN AN ACTIVE EXPERIENCE TOGETHER.”

—BESS WOHL

Why do you think *Small Mouth Sounds* resonates with audiences?

RC: It’s the humor. Bess’s work is so beautiful, but it’s also rooted in the absolute pain and mortification of being human. Each of the characters is living inside that while being sort of a fool. There’s something about the horror show of the moment that we’re in, mingled with the extreme vulnerability of living our very short and very tiny lives.

BW: The epigraph at the beginning of the script is the first of Buddhism’s Four Noble Truths: “Life is suffering.” While that might sound like a daunting way to begin a play, there’s something freeing and universal in coming together, acknowledging that obvious fact, and letting it unite us. Within that suffering, of course, there’s tons of humor, joy, and nobility in continuing the struggle. When I began work on this

play, a colleague noted that every time an audience goes to a play, they’re expected to sit and be quiet—essentially they’re on a “silent retreat.” My hope is that the play creates a sense of community among the people who go see it, and that beyond having passively witnessed something, they’ve participated in an active experience together.

RC: *Small Mouth Sounds* raises a deep question about the pursuit of happiness and whether we should be happy. Those questions are really at the heart of California, which is such a pioneer in mindfulness.

What’s your own experience of mindfulness, wellness, and silent retreats?

RC: It’s my existential nightmare. [Laughs] Bess has done a number of meditation retreats. I have not. I sometimes think I’ll try yoga, because I know it’d be good in terms of flexibility. But it’s not where I live. I do think I’m quite present most of the time; I’m a long-distance runner, which is very meditative.

BW: I have benefited a great deal from my study of mindfulness, which has been intertwined with the making of this play. Though I was a novice when I started writing this, and in many ways still am, through the play I’ve come into contact with people and teachers who have transformed me and my relationship to spirituality. A mindfulness teacher told me about the Tibetan idea that the success of a work of art should be measured by the degree to which the process of making it changed the artist. I love that way of thinking of art-making, and am always seeking to be a different person when I’m done with a play than I was when I began it.



WORDS ON PLAYS

Want to know more about *Small Mouth Sounds*? *Words on Plays* is full of original essays and interviews that give you a behind-the-scenes look. Proceeds from sales of *Words on Plays* benefit A.C.T.’s education programs.

Available at the box office and lobby, at the bars, and act-sf.org/wordsonplays

THE MEDITATION MARKET

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
MINDFULNESS IN AMERICA
BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

Mindfulness is seemingly everywhere: touted by celebrities, your boss, your best friend, online, at the gym, and in your local bookstore. Like the characters in *Small Mouth Sounds*, many of us are searching for ways to disconnect from our increasingly busy lives and reconnect with ourselves. But mindfulness in America today seems a contradiction in terms; it is not only a means to help us relax and recharge, but also a business powerhouse, raking in an estimated \$4.2 billion a year. This juxtaposition of relaxation and commerce, however, has only appeared in the last 50 years.

Mindfulness first arrived in America in the 1840s, as Buddhist Asian immigrants poured into California in search of gold, and East Coast academics became enamored of the religion and the esoteric man at its center, the Buddha. For these academics, mindfulness was just another aspect of Buddhism to be studied, not practiced in its own right. However, as the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, increasingly stringent laws brought Asian-US immigration to a standstill and rising ethnic tensions curtailed interest in Buddhism.

After World War II, the position of mindfulness changed dramatically in the United States. Many colleges and universities established religious studies departments, educating each new generation about Buddhism. The US government relaxed many of the immigration laws, opening new channels of communication and outreach between America and Asia. Increasing political and military involvement in Asian affairs kept media attention on Asian culture. And young adults, disillusioned by the Korean and Vietnam wars, turned to Asian culture for solace and guidance.

Among these young adults were the Beats, a literary counterculture movement. Writer Jack Kerouac was particularly taken with mindfulness. The protagonist of his novel *The Dharma Bums* (1958) meditates and even secludes himself in the wilderness for a summer to reconnect with himself and the world around him. Soon, Kerouac's book was joined on bookstore shelves by nonfiction works recounting the experiences of Westerners who had traveled to Asia to train with leading Buddhist monks.



View of San Francisco looking north toward Tiburon.



The Gouden Buddha.

COURTESY WIKIMEDIA COMMONS. LEFT: PHOTO BY ISHAN GUPTA

It wasn't until the 1970s that mindfulness and Buddhism began to diverge. Buddhist monks teaching in America, as well as American-born Buddhist practitioners and psychologists, all saw ways to apply mindfulness to the stresses of suburban life and modern medical practices. They started to market mindfulness as a way to increase concentration and productivity, reduce stress, and deal with chronic pain and mental illnesses.

The summer of 1974 marked the beginning of one major aspect of the growing business of mindfulness: silent retreats. At Vajradhatu in Boulder, Colorado, mindfulness disciples gathered for a retreat run by former monk Chogyam Trungpa. Among the attendants were the composer John Cage, poet Allen Ginsberg, and American-born mindfulness practitioners Jack Kornfield and Joseph Goldstein. It was this silent retreat that inspired Kornfield and Goldstein to found Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, and Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, California, just 25 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge.

By the 1980s, it was American mindfulness practitioners, not Buddhist monks, who were leading the growth of the industry. High-profile advocates such as rocker Leonard Cohen, actor Richard Gere, basketball coach Phil Jackson, and author Alice Walker touted the benefits of mindfulness, bringing new awareness to the practice. And the Baby Boomers who had participated in mindfulness's blossoming in the middle of the twentieth century were settling down in the suburbs and searching for ways to apply mindfulness to daily lives filled with packing school lunches, carpooling children, and weekend DIY. Meditation teachers adjusted their offerings to meet these new needs.

With the turn of the millennium, the mindfulness industry received a boost from the resurgence of another industry in America: self-help. As Americans sought to improve every aspect of their lives, from clean eating to decluttering to breaking bad habits, mindfulness practitioners were ready with suggestions and support. Mindfulness's increasing exposure caught the attention of big business; Target, Aetna, Hearst Publications, eBay, General Mills, and Ford incorporated mindfulness training into their programs to boost the happiness and productivity of their employees.

While these recent changes have significantly increased mindfulness's presence in our daily lives, they have also affected other aspects of the industry. Mindfulness is now an activity that more and more people are taking up on their own, rather than in group sessions and retreats. With all the books, apps, websites, and instructional YouTube videos available at the click of a button, mindfulness can now be done anywhere. But will these changes result in mindfulness becoming more firmly entrenched in our daily routines, or will it send us, like the characters in *Small Mouth Sounds*, to escape our gadget-filled lives in the silence of a meditation retreat?

WHO'S WHO IN *SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS*



CONNOR BARRETT (Jan)

makes his A.C.T. debut with *Small Mouth Sounds*. Barrett has acted in several of writer and director Adam

Rapp's works, including *The Purple Lights of Joppa Illinois* (Atlantic Theater Company), *Finer Noble Gases* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), *The Metal Children* (Vineyard Theatre), and Sam Shepard's *True West* (Actors Theatre of Louisville). He has also performed in productions at Geva Theatre Center, McCarter Theatre Center, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Summer Play Festival, and the New York Fringe Festival. His film and television credits include *The Runaround*, *Hot in Cleveland*, *True Blood*, *Parks and Recreation*, *CSI: NY*, *Harry's Law*, *Rita Rocks*, *Do Not Disturb*, *The Jury*, and *Guiding Light*. Barrett holds a BFA in acting from Northwestern University and an MFA in acting from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.



BEN BECKLEY

(Ned) recently appeared in *Dying For It* at Atlantic Theater Company and the first national tour of *Peter and the Starcatcher*. Beckley

has performed in plays at Clubbed Thumb, New Georges, The Actors Company Theatre, and Berkshire Theatre Group; musicals with Prospect Theater Company, Joe's Pub (The Public Theater), and Playhouse on Park; four international tours with Temporary Distortion; and five original works with The Assembly. His on-camera credits include *The Onion*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Easy Living*.



EDWARD CHIN-LYN

(Rodney) was born in Toronto, but now calls New York City home. He has appeared in the television series

Jessica Jones, *Feed the Beast*, *Limitless*, *Elementary*, *Person of Interest*, *The Mysteries of Laura*, and *Mysteries at the Museum*. He is also a supporting actor in the upcoming Netflix film *Set It Up*. His theater credits include *KPOP* (workshops at Ars Nova, Ma-Yi Theater Company, and Woodshed Collective), *True West* (Curious Frog Theatre Company), *Reconstruction* (International WOW Company), *Leviticus* (Theatre 4the People, Ohio Theatre), *The Brig* (The Living Theatre), *Wake* (Connelly Theater), *You Can't Take It with You* (T. Schreiber Studio), *A Grimm Reality* (Theatre 4the People), and *A Year in the Life of Twenty-Five Strangers Living in a City by the Lake* (Algonquin Theater).



ORVILLE MENDOZA

(Teacher) was last seen at A.C.T. in *The Orphan of Zhao* as General Wei Jiang. He is a Drama Desk Award nominee and

Barrymore Award winner who has performed on Broadway in *Peter and the Starcatcher* and *Pacific Overtures*. His off-Broadway credits include *Pacific Overtures* and *Passion* (Classic Stage Company); *Found* (Atlantic Theater Company); and *Romeo and Juliet*, *Timon of Athens*, and *Road Show* (The Public Theater). Mendoza has also acted at several regional theaters such as La Jolla Playhouse, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, East West Players, Goodspeed Musicals, and Long Wharf Theatre. His television credits include *The Blacklist*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, and many commercials.



BRENNA PALUGHI (Alicia)

has appeared on Broadway in *A Time to Kill* as well as off Broadway in *Scared of Sarah* (La MaMa Experimental

Theatre Club), and *Naked in a Fishbowl* and *King Lear* (Cherry Lane Theatre). Her regional theater credits include *Phèdre*, *Orlando*, and *Three Sisters* (Yale Repertory Theatre), and *World Builders* (Contemporary American Theater Festival). Palughi has acted in television series and films such as *High Maintenance*, *The Family*, *The Mysteries of Laura*, *Royal Pains*, *Mozart in the Jungle*, *She She*, and *Synecdoche, New York*. Also a filmmaker, she wrote and directed a short film called *Close*. She has an MFA from Yale School of Drama, founded Virago Theatre Company, and is a proud company member of The Actors Center.



SOCORRO SANTIAGO

(Joan) has performed at several prominent New York theaters, including Roundabout Theatre Company, Clubbed

Thumb, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, The Public Theater, INTAR Theatre, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Ma-Yi Theater Company, 59E59 Theaters, and The Lark. She was also in the chorus for the Broadway production of *The Bacchae*. Regionally, she has worked at Long Wharf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater (Joseph Jefferson Award), Huntington Theatre Company (IRNE nomination), Shakespeare Theatre Company, and Guthrie Theater. Santiago has appeared in the television series *Mozart in the Jungle*, *Seven Seconds*, *Law & Order: Characters*, *Blue Bloods*, and *All My*

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

Children (ALMA award), as well as the films *Freedomland*, *Heaven's Prisoners*, *The Devil's Advocate*, and *iCreep*. Recently, she finished filming on Steve McQueen's *Widows*.



CHERENE SNOW (Judy)

shared the stage with Scarlett Johansson in the 2012 Broadway production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. Her off-Broadway and regional credits include *Walking Down Broadway*, *The Last of the Thorntons*, *Welcome to Fear City*, *Having Our Say*, *The Little Foxes*, *Fata Morgana*, *brownsville song: b-side for tray*, *Civil War Voices*, *Black Pearl Sings*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Coyote on a Fence*, and *Doubt, A Parable*. Her film and television appearances include *Arthur*, *Perhaps Tomorrow*, *My Sassy Girl*, *City of Angels*, *The Long Walk Home*, *Law & Order*, *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, *Third Watch*, and *Chappelle's Show*.



SAFIYA FREDERICKS

(Understudy) returns to A.C.T., where she previously appeared onstage in Tom Stoppard's *The Hard Problem*. Other recent

credits include the world premiere of *Aubergine* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *Much Ado about Nothing* at California Shakespeare Theater, *Blackademics* at Crowded Fire Theater, *Once on This Island* at TheatreWorks, and the title role in *Antigone* at San Jose Repertory Theatre. Past favorites include The Civilians' production of *In the Footprint* and *By Hands Unknown* at the New York International Fringe Festival. Fredericks received a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award nomination for her role as the Witch in *Into the Woods* at San Francisco Playhouse. She plays the female lead in the film *America Is Still the Place* and can be heard as the voice of PBS's *Independent Lens*. She studied at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) and UC Irvine.



JOMAR TAGATAC

(Understudy) most recently appeared in A.C.T.'s *Hamlet* as Fortinbras. His recent Bay Area credits include

Jacques in *As You Like It* (California Shakespeare Theater), Doctor/Smuggler/Well Inhabitants in *You For Me For You* (Crowded Fire Theater), and Fortunado/Mata in *Monstress* (A.C.T.). Other credits include Lin Bo in *Caught* (Shotgun Players); Clarin in *Life Is a Dream* (California Shakespeare Theater); Perlita/General Ledesma in *Dogeaters* (Magic Theatre); *Jesus in India*, *Every Five Minutes*, and *The Happy Ones* (Magic Theatre); and *Rights of Passage* (New Conservatory Theatre Center). He has also been in workshops for A.C.T., Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, TheatreWorks, and Playwrights Foundation. Tagatac earned a BA in theater from San Diego State University and an MFA from A.C.T.

BESS WOHL (Playwright)

is a playwright and screenwriter from Brooklyn, New York. Her plays include *Small Mouth Sounds* (Top Ten of 2015 in *The New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *New York Post*, and others; Best of 2016 in *New York Magazine* and others), *Continuity* (Goodman Theatre's New Stages Festival), *American Hero*, *Barcelona* (Ovation Award nomination), *Touch(ed)*, *In, Cats Talk Back*, and the original musical *Pretty Filthy* in collaboration with Michael Friedman and The Civilians (Lucille Lortel and Drama Desk Award nominations for Outstanding Musical). Her work has been produced and developed at Second Stage Theater, Ars Nova, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Geffen Playhouse, and many other theaters. She is the recipient of Drama Desk's Sam Norkin Off-Broadway Award for "establishing herself as an important voice in New York theater" and Outer Critics Circle's John Gassner Award. Wohl has also developed projects for HBO, ABC, USA, Disney, Paramount, and others.

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RACHEL CHAVKIN (Director) is an Obie Award-winning and Tony Award-nominated director. She is also the artistic director of the Brooklyn-based performance company, The TEAM. Selected work includes Dave Malloy's *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova, Kazino, American Repertory Theater, Broadway), Marco Ramirez's *The Royale* (The Old Globe, Lincoln Center Theater), Bess Wohl's *Small Mouth Sounds* (Ars Nova, Signature Theatre Company, national tour), Anaïs Mitchell's *Hadestown* (New York Theatre Workshop), and multiple collaborations with Taylor Mac, including *The Lily's Revenge* and *Act 2* (HERE Arts Center). The TEAM's work has been seen worldwide, including at The Public Theater, Performance Space 122, London's National Theatre, Royal Court Theatre, National Theatre of Scotland, and festivals across Europe, Australia, and Asia. Chavkin is the winner of three Obie Awards; Drama Desk, Elliot Norton, and IRNE awards; and multiple Lucille Lortel Award nominations. She was twice nominated for the Doris Duke Impact Award and was nominated for the Tony Award for Best Direction for her work on *Great Comet*. She and Dave Malloy are recipients of the 2017 Smithsonian Award for Ingenuity.

LAURA JELLINEK (Scenic Designer) is an Obie Award-winning designer who recently designed the set for *Marvin's Room* on Broadway. Her off-Broadway credits include *The Antipodes*, *Everybody*, *The Wolves*, *A Life* (Lucille Lortel Award, Drama Desk Award nomination), *Marjorie Prime*, *The Nether* (Lucille Lortel Award nomination), *The Village Bike*, and *Buzzer*. She has worked on multiple projects with The Debate Society and The Mad Ones. Regionally, she has designed for Yale Repertory Theatre, Bard SummerScape, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and South Coast Repertory. She has also designed for several

operas such as Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Philadelphia, The Atlanta Opera, and Juilliard. Jellinek has an Obie Award for Sustained Excellence in Set Design.

TILLY GRIMES (Costume Designer) is an English theater designer based in New York. Recent and upcoming credits include *Underground Railroad Game* (Ars Nova, international and national tour), *Small Mouth Sounds*, and *Deathless* (Goodspeed Musicals). In New York, she has worked with Roundabout Theatre Company, Ars Nova, Clubbed Thumb, HERE Arts Center, The Barrow Group, New Georges, and La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club. Regionally her work has been seen at Williamstown Theatre Festival, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Wilma Theater, Two River Theater, Trinity Repertory Company, Pittsburgh Public Theater, and Westport Country Playhouse. Opera credits include productions at Boston Lyric Opera, Curtis Institute of Music, and The Juilliard School. She received her MFA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts and has taught in Brown University's MFA directing program. Grimes has received the Balsamo Grant for Emerging Immigrant Artists, the Irish Arts Design Award, Irish Times Theatre Award nomination, and the Onstage Critics Award.

MIKE INWOOD (Lighting Designer) designed the off-Broadway premieres of *Small Mouth Sounds* (Signature Theatre Company), *Hir* (Playwrights Horizons), *Stupid Fucking Bird* (The Pearl Theatre Company), *Out Cold/Zippo Songs* (Brooklyn Academy of Music), *Half Moon Bay* (Lesser America, Cherry Lane Theatre), and *Miles for Mary* (The Mad Ones). He has worked regionally with Boston Lyric Opera, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Magic Theatre, Pittsburgh Opera, Perseverance Theatre, Company of Fools, and Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. He received an Emmy Award in 2010 for NBC's coverage of the Vancouver Olympic Games.

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STOWE NELSON (Sound Designer)

has designed sound for several New York productions, including *Animal* at Atlantic Theater Company; *The Skin of Our Teeth* at Theatre for a New Audience; *The Wolves* at The Playwrights Realm; *Miles for Mary* and *Samuel & Alasdair: A Personal History of the Robot War* at The Mad Ones (Drama Desk Award nominations); *Indian Summer* at Playwrights Horizons; and *The Painted Rocks* at Revolver Creek and *The Wayside Motor Inn* at Signature Theatre Company. His regional credits include *The Roommate* at Williamstown Theatre Festival; *What Would Crazy Horse Do?* at Kansas City Repertory Theatre; *Cry it Out* and *I Now Pronounce* at Humana Festival of New American Plays; and *The Book of Will* at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts.

NOAH MEASE (Props Designer)

has worked as a designer on numerous off-Broadway productions such as *John* (Signature Theatre Company, Obie Award); *Hadestown* (New York Theatre Workshop); *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (American Repertory Theater); *Small Mouth Sounds* (Ars Nova); *An Octoroon* (Soho Rep., Theatre for a New Audience); *The Nether* (MCC Theater); *Jacuzzi* (Ars Nova); and *Blood Play* (The Bushwick Starr, The Public Theater). As a playwright, Mease's works include *Republic* (JACK, Manbites Dog Theater) and *Omega Kids* (Dixon Place).

ANDREW SCHNEIDER (Video Designer)

is an award-winning performer, writer, and interactive electronics artist. His performance works include *YOUARENOWHERE* (2015 Obie Award, 2016 Drama Desk Award nomination), *Dance/Field* (Roulette Intermedium, Inc.), and *WOW+FLUTTER* (The Chocolate Factory). Schneider has designed videos for The Wooster Group and was a company member from 2007 to 2014.

HENRY RUSSELL BERGSTEIN, CSA (Casting Director)

cast the original New York productions of *Small Mouth Sounds* with Lauren Port. Other New York productions he has cast

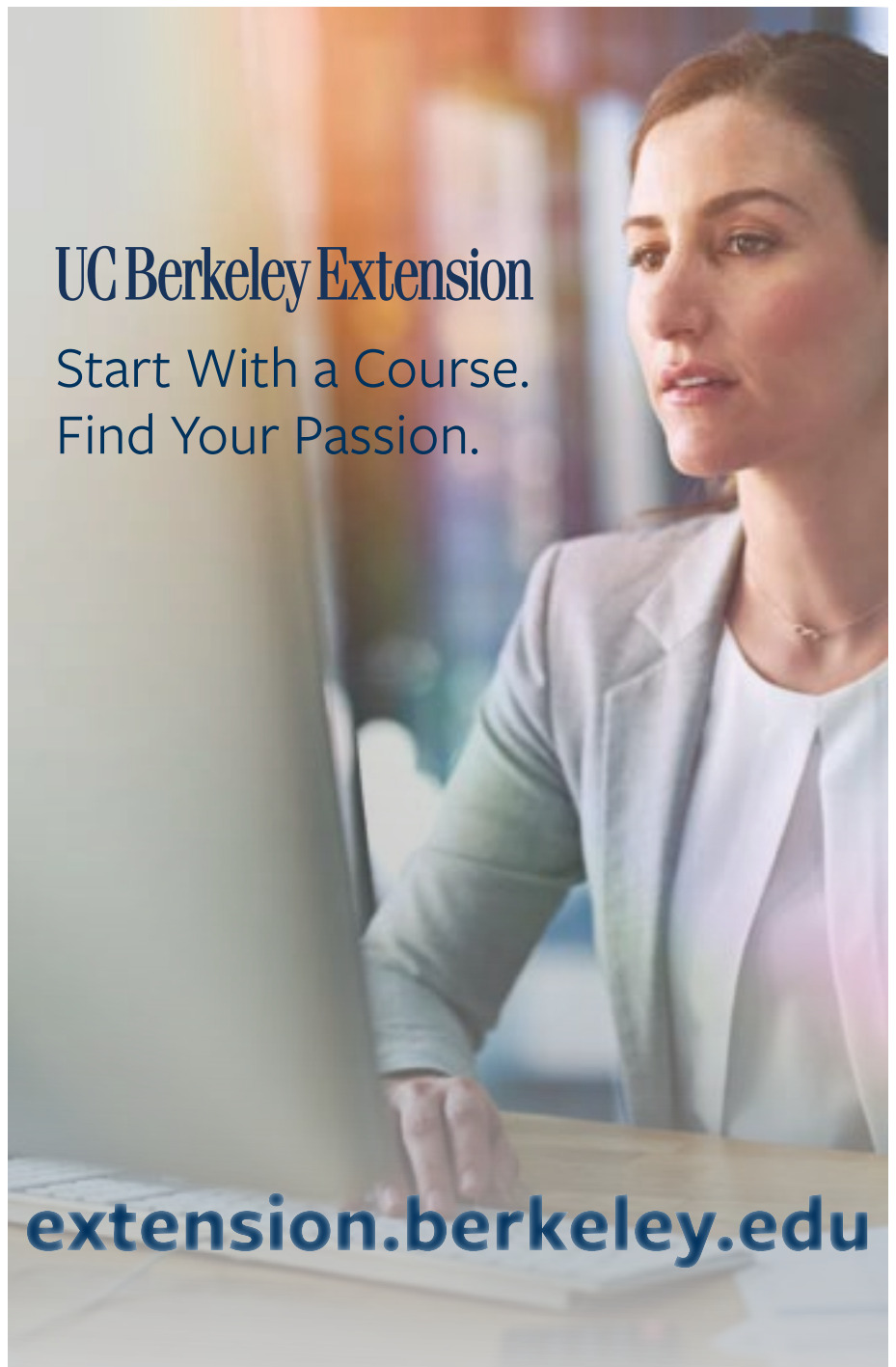
are *The Lyons* (Broadway), *Gloria*, *Kid Victory*, *Middletown*, *Wig Out!*, *Preludes*, *3C*, *Gorilla Man*, and *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova).

His film and television credits include the US casting of *Black Mirror* (seasons 3-4), *Mozart in the Jungle*, *The Sinner*, *Saturday Church*, *Love After Love*, *Beauty Mark*, *It Felt Like Love*, *Grandma*, and the New York casting of *Spider-Man: Homecoming*. As a casting associate, Bergstein worked on *Manchester by the Sea*, *The Grand Budapest Hotel*,

Frances Ha, and *Two Lovers*. He is the former manager of East Coast casting for Warner Bros. in New York.

LAUREN Z. ADLEMAN (Associate Director)

is a Brooklyn-based director who has an affinity for stories exploring the nature of identity colliding with an external culture. Recent credits include the premiere productions of *Black Hollow* (Columbia University School of the Arts), *Journey to the Center of a Black Hole* (Alchemical Theatre



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Laboratory), *Ambition: the female American serial killer musical* (Ars Nova ANT Festival), and *Malefactions* (Chinatown Soup). Adleman was the 2015-16 Robert Moss Directing Fellow at Playwrights Horizons, and is an alumna of the 2017 Lincoln Center Theater's Directors Lab.

JAMES STEELE (Production

Stage Manager) has worked on the Broadway productions of *Mrs. Warren's Profession* and *One Man, Two Guvnors*. He also has several off-Broadway credits, including *By The Water* (Manhattan Theatre Club); *Pageant* (SAS Productions, Inc.); *Tail! Spin!* (Lynn Redgrave Theater at Culture Project); *Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet of 1812* (Ars Nova); *My Name is Asher Lev* (Westside Theatre); *An Iliad* (New York Theatre Workshop); *The Tribute Artist* (Primary Stages); and *The Divine Sister* (DR Theatrical Management).

MEGAN MCCLINTOCK (Assistant

Stage Manager) returns to A.C.T. with *Small Mouth Sounds*. Past A.C.T. credits include assistant stage-managing *King Charles III*, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *A Little Night Music*, and *Indian Ink*. She often works across the bay at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Her favorite Berkeley Rep credits include Mary Zimmerman's *Treasure Island*, *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*, *Girlfriend*, *The Arabian Nights*, *The White Snake*, *No Man's Land*, *Dear Elizabeth*, and *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*. Other local credits include productions at California Shakespeare Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, Marin Theatre Company, Center REpertory Company, and San Francisco Opera. McClintock has a BA in theater and history from Willamette University.

J. MICHAEL STAFFORD

(Production Manager) joins the production as a freelance production manager and technical director based in Brooklyn, New York. Over the past decade, he has worked in production departments with various touring and New York City-based companies such as Maximum Entertainment, Technical Producing Group, Troika Entertainment, Big League Productions, Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Juilliard School, and Mind the Gap, Inc. Stafford received a BFA in theatre design and technology from University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT

(General Management) is a producing, developing and management company founded by Avram Freedberg, Mary Beth Dale, and Eva Price, and is joined by Managing Director/General Manager Carl Flanigan. General management credits on Broadway, off Broadway, and on tour include *Born For This*; *Cruel Intentions: The Musical*; *Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons On Broadway!*; *Carefree: Dancin' With Fred & Ginger*; *The Lion*; *The Hip Hop*

Nutcracker; *50 Shades! The Musical*; *Ivy + Bean, The Musical*; *Blank! The Musical*; and *Colin Quinn: Long Story Short*.

EVA PRICE (Producer) is a Tony Award-winning producer whose credits include over 15 Broadway plays, musicals, and concerts. She is a member of The Broadway League's Board of Governors and was named one of *Crain's New York Business* 40 Under 40 honorees. She is executive producer for Maximum Entertainment, a producing and general management company located in New York. Recent Broadway and off-Broadway productions include *Dear Evan Hansen* (six Tony Awards); *On Your Feet!*; *Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons on Broadway!*; *Peter and the Starcatcher*; *Found*; *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*; John Grisham's *A Time To Kill*; *Lewis Black: Running on Empty*; *Annie*; *Kathy Griffin Wants a Tony*; *Colin Quinn: Long Story Short*; *The Merchant of Venice*, starring Al Pacino; *The Addams Family*; *Carrie Fisher's Wishful Drinking*; and *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas! The Musical*. Price has also produced a number of international productions and national tours.

MAXIMUM ENTERTAINMENT PRODUCTIONS STAFF

Eva Price
Carl Flanigan
Andrew Hartman
Danielle McGarry
Avram Freedberg
Mary Beth Dale

SMALL MOUTH SOUNDS NATIONAL TOUR STAFF

You-Shin Chen, Associate Set Designer
Caity Mulkearns, Assistant
Costume Designer
Cecilia Durbin, Associate
Lighting Designer
Beth Lake, Associate Sound Designer
Gil Sperling, Associate Video Designer
Satchel Buck Jones, Casting Associate
Ben Arons, Production Photographer

ADDITIONAL CREDITS

Aaron Clark, Stage Supervisor

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

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THE STRAND HITS ITS STRIDE

YOUR STORIES, YOUR SPACE,
YOUR THEATER

BY TAYLOR STEINBECK

Since its sparkling renovation in 2015, A.C.T.'s Strand Theater has become a beacon of theatrical innovation and community engagement. From presenting new plays in the New Strands Festival to providing space for local artists to showcase their work with ArtShare, A.C.T. has reinvented this historic theater. As The Strand turns 100 years old this October, we celebrate this theater's Bay Area story and look ahead to its next chapter.

Located in San Francisco's old vaudeville district, dubbed the "Great White Way" for its marquee lights, The Strand has been rooted in the arts since its 1917 foundation. Despite changes in the building's name (it started life as The Jewel) and its offerings (it was once a silent film cinema), this venue was always a theater. But when operations closed in 2003, the building became derelict. In October 2013, A.C.T. began a two-year, \$35-million transformation guided by architects Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, converting the 700-seat cinema into a community destination featuring the Strand Cafe, the 283-seat Rembe Theater, and the 140-seat performance space, The Rueff. The reconstruction not only represented growth for A.C.T. as an institution, but also marked the revitalization of the Central Market neighborhood.

From the moment A.C.T. moved in, The Strand was envisioned as an incubator of new theater in the Bay Area. Nowhere is that more visible than with the New Strands Festival, a weeklong exploration of new work. During the 2017 festival, San Franciscans experienced master classes in songwriting, playwriting, and clowning; saw staged readings of work from three Ma-Yi Theater Company playwrights; and attended the reading of



PHOTO BY REEK FELIZIANI



PHOTO BY BRUCE DAMONTE

Black Butterflies, Darren Canady's new play commissioned for A.C.T. about girls and young women of color trapped in the incarceration system. Several of the works in New Strands have become full productions—Lauren Yee's *The Great Leap* will play this season at Atlantic Theater Company in New York City, while *Black Butterflies* was staged at The Strand this summer by actors from the Young Conservatory, A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs, and Destiny Arts in Oakland. From workshopping plays in development to producing innovative productions such as *The Unfortunates*, *Love and Information*, *Monstress*, and *Chester Bailey*, The Strand has provided a home for thrilling untold stories from diverse communities.

Both artists and audiences have responded to The Strand's storytelling possibilities. Through ArtShare, A.C.T.'s space-sharing initiative supporting local artists and arts organizations, different communities (including Campo Santo, Magic Theatre, and Teatro Pachuco) have added their own storytelling flavor to A.C.T.'s stages. And with the introduction last season of our @TheStrand series—world-class entertainment from around the country—new audiences filled The Rembe for productions including Bill Irwin's *On Beckett*, Martin Moran's solo show *The Tricky Part*, and concerts from The Skivvies. Look out for comedian Colin Quinn (*Saturday Night Live*, *Trainwreck*) playing a weeklong @TheStrand set in December.

As The Strand evolves, San Franciscans continue to discover this multidisciplinary venue, from a morning coffee in the Strand Cafe, to an M.F.A. Program matinee, to a night of stand-up comedy. This coming season will be full of innovative theater, featuring Qui Nguyen's hit comedy *Vietgone* and the third rendition of the New Strands Festival. By developing groundbreaking work and reinvigorating the arts in Central Market, The Strand is making San Francisco history all over again.

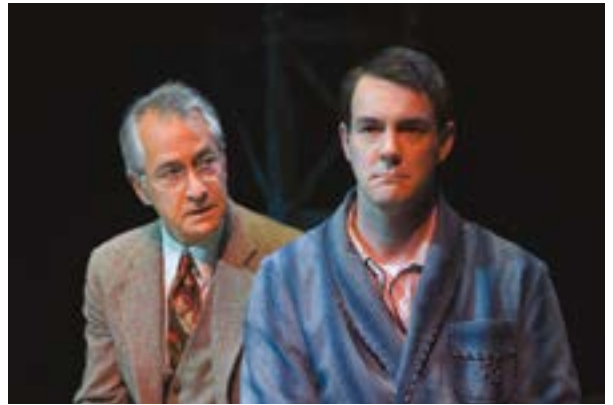


PHOTO BY JAY YAMADA



CLOCKWISE FROM UPPER LEFT

The cast of *The Unfortunates* (2016); Ogie Zulueta, Jomar Tagatac, and Rinabeth Apostol in *Monstress* (2015); David Strathairn and Dan Clegg in *Chester Bailey* (2016); Tiana Bishop and Citlali Perez in *Black Butterflies* (2017); Young Conservatory student Walker Brinskele in *Punk Rock* (2016); M.F.A. Program actor Emily Brown in *The Rocky Horror Show* (2016).

OPPOSITE FROM TOP

The Strand Theater (1950);
The Strand Theater (2015).

VINTAGE AND VANGUARD

M.F.A. ACTORS MIX IT UP IN A NEW SEASON

BY SIMON HODGSON



**LEFT**

M.F.A. Program actors Adam Donovan, Jerrie R. Johnson, Carlos O. Andrickson, and Julie Adamo in *promiscuous/cities*.

OPPOSITE

M.F.A. Program actors Diana Gonzalez-Morett and Akilah A. Walker (class of 2017) in *Black Orpheus: Una Historia de Amor*.

While fall heralds a new theatrical season on the stages of The Strand and The Geary, it also raises the curtain on a new academic year at A.C.T. At 30 Grant Avenue, 37 young actors from our Master of Fine Arts Program throng the studios and corridors. Many have been performing over the summer in festivals and theaters or teaching in A.C.T.'s Education & Community Programs. All of them are looking forward to appearing in this year's M.F.A. Program productions, which range from *The Changeling*—a Jacobean tragedy first performed in 1622—to *Malicious Animal Magnetism*, a brand new play about a landmark moment of gay history in 1970s San Francisco.

That range speaks to the breadth of the M.F.A. Program and mirrors the way A.C.T. uses contrasting content to inspire mainstage audiences. Training in the Conservatory inspires young actors by challenging them with productions from different eras. "Actors cut their teeth on the classics to better perform contemporary work," says Conservatory Director Melissa Smith. By developing a critical understanding of classic theater-making techniques, M.F.A. candidates can bring that insight and knowledge to new work, understanding how a contemporary playwright may be influenced by twentieth-century theater-maker Bertolt Brecht, for example, or how a modern-day scene has echoes of sixteenth-century playwright Christopher Marlowe.

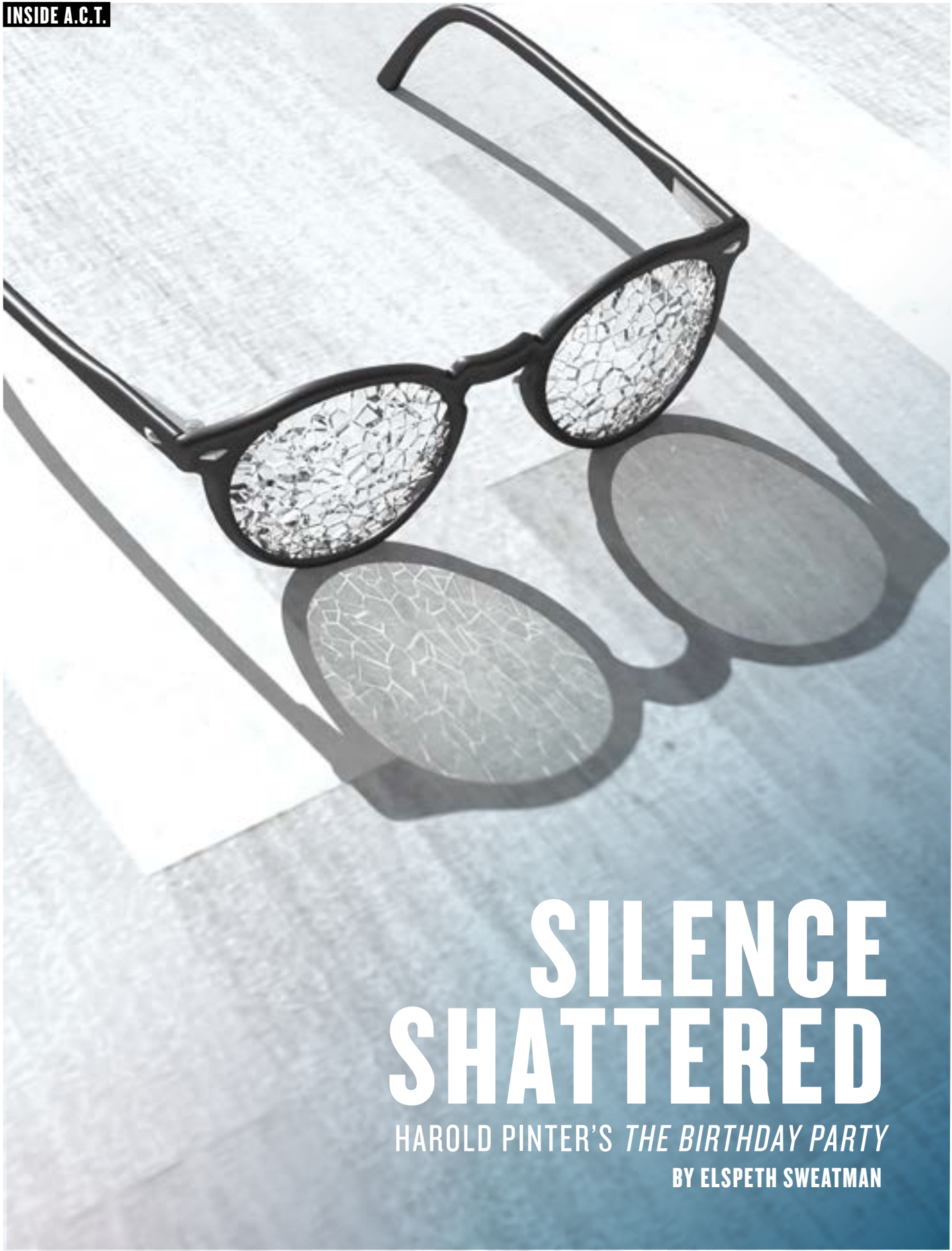
The first M.F.A. classic coming up this season at The Strand is *The Changeling*, a seventeenth-century revenge tragedy written by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley. It's directed by Nancy Benjamin, A.C.T.'s longtime head of voice and dialect who has wanted to stage the play for years. This season's second-year actors, says Smith, are a perfect fit. "Revenge tragedy is not about dry wit. It's really visceral—this class of actors has the emotional range and the temperaments to tackle this play."

By contrast, *Malicious Animal Magnetism* (playing at The Strand this winter) is a contemporary new drama by Jeremy Cohen and Dipika Guha, co-commissioned by A.C.T. and Z Space. Workshopped in the New Strands Festival earlier this year, *Malicious Animal Magnetism* provides A.C.T.'s student actors with an opportunity to participate in the creation of a world premiere. While acting in a new work can be freeing, "That freedom comes with a different responsibility to contribute," says Smith. "With his or her work in the rehearsal room, an actor might influence the writing of the play—that role might become more important to the story, for example."

These two productions represent just a slice of this year's eclectic M.F.A. season. Also in the mix are multiple musical revues, plus a pair of plays featuring dynamic female-led stories—seventeenth-century Spanish drama *Fuenteovejuna* and Greek tragedy *The Bacchae*. It was Stephen Buescher, head of movement in the M.F.A. Program, who suggested these timeless stories in the wake of the women's marches across the country in January 2017. "We are living in a time of renewed protest," says Buescher. "These plays are classics whose themes are resonant with our times."

Audiences eager to see these new works and classics told anew can buy tickets for any of these productions on A.C.T.'s website. And if you're in a hurry to see these talented performers on the mainstage, you're in luck—all our third-year actors will be appearing in *A Christmas Carol*, which opens December 1 at The Geary.

Buy tickets for M.F.A. Program productions
at act-sf.org/mfa or by calling 415.749.2228.



SILENCE SHATTERED

HAROLD PINTER'S *THE BIRTHDAY PARTY*
BY ELSPETH SWEATMAN

**LEFT**

From left, Adam O’Byrne, René Augesen, and Jack Willis in *The Homecoming* (2011).

BELOW

Carey Perloff and Harold Pinter in rehearsal in 1989 at Classic Stage Company.



Some playwrights are drawn to silence for its humorous potential. British playwright and Nobel Prize recipient Harold Pinter was drawn to it for its danger. In his work—including the contemporary classic *The Birthday Party*, which opens at The Geary in January—silence is a weapon: a means of gaining tactical advantage, psychological power, and domination.

But silence is just one of the many weapons in his characters’ arsenals. “In a Pinter play, the movement of a glass from one side of a table to another or the simple crossing and uncrossing of a pair of legs” becomes a way of establishing advantage and control, said theater critic Michael Billington. Add in dialogue in which characters’ identities are continuously shifting, and you get a play that seethes with mystery, menace, and sudden humor.

Pinter is a playwright that A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff has returned to throughout her career. During her 25-year tenure at A.C.T., she has directed *Old Times* (1998), *Celebration* and *The Room* (2001), and *The Homecoming* (2011). Now, in her last year as artistic director, she revisits Pinter’s tale of refuge and resistance that she first directed in 1988 at New York’s Classic Stage Company. Joining her on this journey are A.C.T. favorite Marco Barricelli, Tony Award winner Judith Ivey, and Stratford Festival star Scott Wentworth.

In *The Birthday Party*, the inhabitants of a ramshackle boarding house in an undisturbed English seaside town find themselves in a lethal psychological battle with two unsettling strangers, Goldberg and McCann. Petey, Meg, and Stanley must now resist: resist the two strangers who have upended their lives; resist the terror of the present and the reminders of the past; resist society’s dead ideas and traditions. It is telling that one of Pinter’s favorite lines from *The Birthday Party* is “Stan, don’t let them tell you what to do!”

“We are in a moment in American history in which there are many ‘knocks on the door’—interrogations in which you’re not sure what the crime is or why the person is singled out,” says Perloff. “That’s what *The Birthday Party* is about: the absurdity and horror of people trying to take power over each other. What has Stanley done that he deserves to be tormented by Goldberg and McCann? And who are *they* working for? It’s a fascinating theatrical event, totally alive in the moment. That’s what I’ll be going for: the vivid, real-time explosion of the play.”

The Birthday Party runs

JAN 10–FEB 4 AT THE GEARY THEATER.

Learn more at act-sf.org/birthday

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A.C.T. thanks the physicians and staff of the Centers for Sports Medicine, Saint Francis Memorial Hospital, for their care of the A.C.T. company: Dr. Victor Prieto, Dr. Hoylond Hong, Dr. Susan Lewis, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corpus, Clinic Supervisor.

Accreditation

A.C.T. is accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Senior Colleges and Universities of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), 985 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 100, Alameda, CA 94501, 510.748.9001, an institutional accrediting body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation and the U.S. Department of Education.

A.C.T. PROFILES



CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director)

is celebrating her 25th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she has overseen a huge growth in the quality and scope of A.C.T.'s work, helped to rebuild the earthquake-damaged Geary Theater and the new Strand Theater in Central Market, and has forged

collaborations between A.C.T. and theaters across the United States and Canada. Known for innovative productions of classics and championing new writing and new forms of theater, Perloff has directed classical plays from around the world, 10 plays by Tom Stoppard (including the American premieres of *The Invention of Love* and *Indian Ink*, also at Roundabout Theatre Company, and two productions of *Arcadia*), and many productions by favorite contemporary writers such as Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, José Rivera, and Philip Kan Gotanda. Favorite productions include *Hecuba*,

Mary Stuart, *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*, *The Tosca Café*, *The Voyage Inheritance*, *Scorched*, and *Underneath the Lintel*.

Perloff is also an award-winning playwright. Her recent play *Kinship* premiered at the Théâtre de Paris in 2014; *Higher* won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award; and *Luminescence Dating* premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre. Perloff's book, *Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater* (City Lights Press), was selected as San Francisco Public Library's One City One Book read for 2016.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the premiere of Ezra Pound's *Elektra*, the American premiere of Pinter's *Mountain Language*, and many classic works. Named a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government, Perloff received a BA Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford.



PETER PASTREICH (Executive Director)

joins A.C.T. after a 50-year career in arts management. He spent 21 years as executive director of the San Francisco Symphony, a period that included the tenures of music directors Edo De Waart, Herbert Blomstedt, and Michael Tilson Thomas, and during which

the orchestra increased its endowment from \$12 million to \$120 million. Pastreich was the chief administrator responsible for the construction of Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco, and for its acoustical renovation.

Before coming to San Francisco, he spent 12 years as executive director of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra and

six years as managing director of the Mississippi River Festival. In addition, Pastreich has done management consulting for the Berlin Philharmonic, Southbank Centre in London, Detroit Symphony, Louisville Orchestra, Milwaukee Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, and Sydney Symphony Orchestra in Australia. He has also served as mediator in orchestra and opera union negotiations in Detroit, Louisville, Milwaukee, Phoenix, Sacramento, Seattle, and San Antonio.

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1938, Pastreich received a BA in English literature from Yale University in 1959. In 1999, he was made a *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres* by the French government and was named an honorary member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees by Local 16 of the Stagehands Union.



MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director, Head of Acting)

has served as Conservatory director and head of acting in the Master of Fine Arts Program at A.C.T. since 1995. During that time, she has overseen the expansion of the M.F.A. Program from a two- to a three-year course of study and the further

integration of the M.F.A. Program faculty and student body with A.C.T.'s artistic wing, while also teaching and directing in the M.F.A. Program, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. She also successfully launched the San Francisco Semester, a semester-long intensive designed to deepen students' well of acting experience, broaden their knowledge of dramatic literature, and sharpen their technical skills—all while immersing them in the multifaceted cultural landscape of

the Bay Area. Prior to assuming leadership of the Conservatory, Smith was the director of the Program in Theater and Dance at Princeton University, where she also taught introductory, intermediate, and advanced acting. She has taught acting classes to students of all ages in various colleges, high schools, and studios around the continental United States, at the Mid-Pacific Institute in Hawaii, New York University's La Pietra campus in Florence, and the Teatro di Pisa in San Miniato, Italy. She is featured in *Acting Teachers of America: A Vital Tradition*. Also a professional actor, she has performed regionally at the Hangar Theatre, A.C.T., the California Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre; in New York at Primary Stages and Soho Rep.; and in England at the Barbican Centre in London and Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Smith holds a BA from Yale College and an MFA in acting from Yale School of Drama.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the web: act-sf.org

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

A.C.T. BOX OFFICE

Visit us at 1127 Market Street at 7th Street, across from the UN Plaza; or at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square. Walk-up hours are Tuesday-Sunday (10 a.m.-15 minutes after curtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (noon-6 p.m.) and Saturday-Sunday (noon-4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. (For Geary Box Office walk-up hours, please visit act-sf.org.) Phone hours are Tuesday-Sunday (10 a.m.-curtain) on performance days, and Monday-Friday (10 a.m.-6 p.m.) and Saturday-Sunday (10 a.m.-4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Call 415.749.2228 and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard; or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours a day on our website at act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current ticket subscribers and those who purchase ticket insurance enjoy ticket exchange privileges. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION DISCOUNTS

Seniors (65+) save \$40 on 8 plays, \$35 on 7 plays, \$30 on 6 plays, \$25 on 5 plays, and \$20 on 4 plays. Full-time students, educators, and administrators save up to 50% off season subscriptions with valid ID. Visit act-sf.org/educate for details.

SINGLE TICKET DISCOUNTS

Joining our eClub is the best—and sometimes only—way to find out about special ticket offers. Visit act-sf.org/eclub for details. Find us on Facebook and Twitter for other great deals. Beginning two hours before curtain, a limited number of discounted tickets are available to seniors (65+), educators, administrators, and full-time students. For matinee performances, all seats are just \$20 for seniors (65+). Valid ID required—limit one ticket per ID. Not valid for Premiere Orchestra seating. All rush tickets are subject to availability.

GROUP DISCOUNTS

Groups of 15 or more save up to 50%! For more information call Anthony Miller at 415.439.2424.

AT THE THEATER

A.C.T.'s Strand Theater is located at 1127 Market Street. The lobby opens one hour before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour before curtain. The theater opens 30 minutes before curtain.

A.C.T. MERCHANDISE

Copies of *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.'s in-depth performance guide, are on sale in the main lobby, at the box office, and online.

REFRESHMENTS

Strand Cafe hours are Thursday-Tuesday (8 a.m.-4 p.m.) and Wednesday (7 a.m.-noon) for the general public. Full bar service, sweets, and savory items are available to patrons one hour before performances. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages. Bar drinks are now permitted in the theater.

CELL PHONES

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

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.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE

Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2397 in an emergency.

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.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDINGS of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

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.



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

A.C.T. is pleased to announce that an **Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)** is now available in the Strand box office.

LOST AND FOUND

If you've misplaced an item while you're still at the theater, please look for it at our merchandise stand in the lobby. Any items found by ushers or other patrons will be taken there. If you've already 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.

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 a grant from the Grants for the Arts Tax Fund.

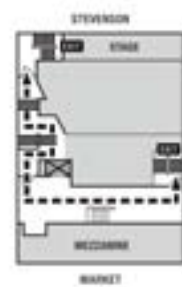
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