Do you have an in-law apartment or a spare room in your house? Would you be willing to host an A.C.T. artist for a short-term stay? You can become a producer of any one of our shows by helping us to house our out-of-town actors!

Interested? Email Company Manager Amy Hand at ahand@act-sf.org.

5-Week Summer Session
Back by Popular Demand!
Monday, July 20–Friday, August 21
Most courses meet twice a week for five weeks.

Check out two exciting new offerings:

**Molière Performance Project**
Tighten your corset, powder your wig, and practice your curtsy! Prepare scenes and monologues from some of Molière’s best plays for your friends and family. Shock them with your bawdy humor and surprise them with your comic timing. The Molière Performance Project meets every Friday night for five weeks. Course work culminates in a classroom performance on the final day of class.

**Theater for Social Change**
Want to make a difference in your community? This course will deepen your understanding of the sociopolitical factors that contribute to the disempowerment and empowerment of minority cultures. However, you don’t need to be a political activist to benefit from this course. If you’re passionate about theater and about helping people forge meaningful connections, this course is for you. Expand your creativity with a multitude of games focused on engendering empathy and empowering communities. Course work culminates in a classroom performance open to friends and family.
Perloff’s 20-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 “locavore” theater— theater made by, for, and about the San Francisco 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 45-year-old Conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, is at the center of our work. Our three-year, fully accredited Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America’s actor training programs, and our intensive Summer Training Congress attracts enthusiasts from around the world. Other programs include the world-famous Young Conservatory for students ages 8 to 19, led by 25-year veteran Craig Slaight, and Studio A.C.T., our expansive course of study for adults. Our alumni often grace our mainstage and perform around the Bay Area, as well as stages and screens across the country.

A.C.T. also brings the benefits of theater-based arts education to more than 10,000 Bay Area school students each year. Central to our ACTsmart education programs, run by Director of Education & Community Programs Elizabeth Brodersen, is the longstanding Student Matinee (SMAT) program, which has brought tens of 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 in-depth study materials to Bay Area schools and community-based organizations.

With our increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood marked by the opening of The Costume Shop theater, the renovation of The Strand Theater across from UN Plaza, and the launch of our mobile Stage Coach initiative, A.C.T. is poised to continue its leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco and the nation.
CARYL CHURCHILL IS PERHAPS THE MOST acclaimed female playwright in the English-speaking world, and simultaneously the most elusive. Critic Charles Spencer has called her the “least predictable of contemporary playwrights.” Her work has been described as elliptical, provocative, shocking, confounding—and, over the years, it has become significantly more pared down, devoid of stage directions or notes, which only seems to contribute to her enduring mystique.

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Feminist and socialist politics are important facets of Churchill's plays, as her work challenges the oppressions and repressions of gender, class, sex, and race—but her bold stylization is an equally prominent feature of her writing. The fact that her work ranges from epic Brechtian dramas to surreal “anti-plays” to disconnected slice-of-life episodes is part of what makes it difficult to define Churchill’s style. Flashbacks, twisted chronologies, overlapping dialogue, contradiction, repetition of word and gesture, and different actors playing the same character in different scenes are just some of the devices Churchill has employed in her plays.

Given the scope of Churchill’s experimentation (with form as well as process), many critics have noted that answering the question “What is a Caryl Churchill play?” leaves most people scratching their heads in puzzlement.
Dear Friends,

Welcome to the inaugural production at our beautiful new Strand Theater. As you take your seats in this magically reimagined space, I hope you will take a minute to gaze up and look all around you; you will see the theater’s original 1917 moldings and lovingly restored ventilation grilles on the ceiling, adjacent to contemporary architectural features and state-of-the-art theater technology. This blend of old and new, decorative and functional, along with the lively vermillion of the walls balanced by the subtle grays and blacks of the seats and stairs, ushers in a new era for American Conservatory Theater. We will have the opportunity to present work in a more intimate setting, to welcome new artists and audiences into the A.C.T. family, to showcase the talent of our young artists in training, and to expand our repertoire in thrilling ways.

Given that The Strand is the first major cultural center to open in what has come to be known as the “tech corridor” of Central Market, it seems fitting to launch our work in this new home with a play that delves deeply and incisively into the strange collision of data and desire for meaning that epitomizes our tech-saturated times. Caryl Churchill is a playwright of immense imagination who marries form and content in a unique way. As she set about to explore what is happening to our personal lives and to our sense of self in the context of information overload, she created a play whose form perfectly mirrors its content. Love and Information is composed of 57 short scenes, each one a miniature playlet in which individuals search for meaning and love in a mysterious and complex digital age. Churchill does not specify who the characters in each scene are; it is up to the director and the creative team to decide what each scene means, how to interpret it, and whom to cast. Neither gender nor age is spelled out, so an enormous amount of creative leeway is offered to the artists and audience members tackling the play. I love this aspect of Churchill’s work; as a playwright, she raises the bar on collaboration and invites the richest possible exploration of the major issues facing us today by leaving room for our own imagination. Each scene prompts us to question our assumptions. What is God? What is love? How are we to ascribe meaning to our lives when everything seems to be reducible to statistics? The scenes of Love and Information mount up inexorably—often hilariously, sometimes heartbreakingly—and combine to offer a rich theatrical stew that wakes us up to the contradictions of our world in remarkable, visceral ways.

This has been a beautiful spring for A.C.T., with Kwame Kwei-Armah’s moving Let There Be Love leading into Mark Lamos’s sumptuous and romantic vision of A Little Night Music. We are already hard at work preparing the 2015–16 season, including our explosive Pulitzer Prize–winning opener, Between Riverside and Crazy, and our lyrical and laugh-filled world premiere, Monstress, which will play at The Strand this fall. We are so grateful to all those who nurtured and supported us as we opened our second venue. As we learn how to operate in two spaces and two neighborhoods simultaneously, please let us know how we can help make Strand-going the best possible experience for all of you. Feel free to call my hotline at 415.439.2459 with any observations, questions, or concerns.

Enjoy Love and Information, and thank you for coming!

Best,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

CARYL CHURCHILL IS A PLAYWRIGHT OF IMMENSE IMAGINATION WHO MARRIES FORM AND CONTENT IN A UNIQUE WAY.
A.C.T.  AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

CAREY PERLOFF, Artistic Director

presents

LOVE and INFORMATION

BY Caryl Churchill

DIRECTED BY Casey Stangl

SCENIC DESIGN BY Robert Brill
COSTUME DESIGN BY Jessie Amoroso
LIGHTING DESIGN BY Lap Chi Chu
SOUND DESIGN BY C. Andrew Mayer
PROJECTION DESIGN BY Micah J. Stieglitz
CASTING BY Janet Foster, CSA
DRAMATURG Beatrice Basso
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Allie Moss

THIS PRODUCTION IS MADE POSSIBLE BY

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Rafael Jordan*†
Christina Liang‡
Sharon Lockwood*
Leo Marks*
Dominique Salerno‡
Mia Tagano*
Shona Tucker*

UNDERSTUDIES
Ryan Williams French*†
Gabriel Marin*
Emilie Talbot*
Kelsey Venter*

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF
STAGE MANAGER Elisa Guthertz*
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER Christina Hogan*
STAGE MANAGEMENT FELLOW Josie Felt

THE PLAY RUNS AN HOUR AND 40 MINUTES WITH NO INTERMISSION.

Scenery engineered and built at Rooster Productions, LLC, in Martinez, CA
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• Technical Director: Lara Berggren
• Master Carpenter: Tyler Burnhart
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• Scenic Carpenters: Andrew Flits, John McMillan, Matthew O’Neill

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States
† Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2015
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§ Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2016 and an Equity Professional Intern

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Needing to Know and Needing to Love

The Enduring Mystique of Caryl Churchill

By Nirmala Nataraj

Caryl Churchill is perhaps the most acclaimed female playwright in the English-speaking world, and simultaneously the most elusive. Critic Charles Spencer has called her the “least predictable of contemporary playwrights.” Her work has been described as elliptical, provocative, shocking, confounding—and, over the years, it has become significantly more pared down, devoid of stage directions or notes, which only seems to contribute to her enduring mystique.

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Feminist and socialist politics are important facets of Churchill’s plays, as her work challenges the oppressions and repressions of gender, class, sex, and race—but her bold stylization is an equally prominent feature of her writing. The fact that her work ranges from epic Brechtian dramas to surreal “anti-plays” to disconnected slice-of-life episodes is part of what makes it difficult to define Churchill’s style. Flashbacks, twisted chronologies, overlapping dialogue, contradiction, repetition of word and gesture, and different actors playing the same character in different scenes are just some of the devices Churchill has employed in her plays.

Given the scope of Churchill’s experimentation (with form as well as process), many critics have noted that answering the question “What is a Caryl Churchill play?” leaves most people scratching their heads in puzzlement.
Playwright April de Angelis says, “She has turned the idea of what a play should be over and over, revisioning it beyond the accepted imaginative boundaries, to produce plays that are always revolutionary.”

As eager as they are to be heard, according to Churchill’s publisher of over 40 years, Nick Hern, her characters themselves are often less “talky” (preferring to justify their existence not with long speeches but with activity) and less obviously categorizable as villains or protagonists than those of other playwrights. Actor Maxine Peake, who played the title role in Churchill’s The Skriker (about a malevolent fairy who manipulates two teenage mothers) in 2014 at London’s Royal Exchange Theatre, describes Churchill’s characters as “coming more from a physical impulse rather than a cerebral one.”

Churchill and her collaborators are often surprised by the plays that emerge from her imagination. Hern says, “The plays just turn up, without warning. I think she’s one of those shamanistic writers, in the way Harold Pinter was. A play isn’t planned or premeditated; it’s scratching an itch. They come to me and I sit down to read them, having absolutely no idea what the length or subject matter or form will be.” Much like Pinter, Churchill is also mordantly witty, whether she is training her eye on large-scale social ills or the quirky dynamics of an intimate relationship. A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff says, “Churchill’s plays are supremely alive because the scenes are endlessly active. They’re about transactions, power, competition, desire.”

Love and Information premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in 2012, under the direction of Churchill’s frequent collaborator James Macdonald. De Angelis notes that this enigmatic play is an exploration of two of the most powerful human themes: needing to know and needing to love. Love and Information is a collection of 57 short, episodic vignettes that use a series of interactions between mostly unnamed characters to explore knowledge, meaning, and how we make sense of information in our lives. Each vignette is self-contained and characters are not repeated from one scene to the next, meaning that the dozen actors in our production are responsible for playing multiple roles. Some of the scenes last only five seconds, and none are longer than five minutes. Because Churchill does not include stage directions or character descriptions in Love and Information, the artistic team is tasked with filling in the blanks and creating the world of the play according to the production’s specific needs and intentions.

Overall, Love and Information presents an assortment of stories and perspectives that leave much to the viewer’s imagination. Indeed, a viewer’s process of making sense of the play may be the ultimate point that Churchill is attempting to make. As she has said, “I don’t set out to find a bizarre way of writing. I certainly don’t think that you have to force it. But, on the whole . . . I enjoy finding the form that seems to best fit what I’m thinking about.”

“DECISION”
(a scene from Caryl Churchill’s script for Love and Information, exactly as it appears on the page)

I’ve written down all the reasons to leave the country and all the reasons to stay.

So how does that work out?

There’s things on both sides.

How do you feel about it?

No, I’m trying to make a rational decision based on the facts.

Do you want me to decide for you?

Based on what? The facts dont add up.

I’d rather you stayed here. Does that help?

WORDS on PLAYS
Celebrating more than 20 years!

Words on Plays, A.C.T.’s renowned performance guide series, started more than 20 years ago as a way for audiences to learn more about our plays before they came to the theater. Today the series continues to offer insight into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the subscription season with revealing interviews and in-depth articles—and it serves as a cornerstone of our ACTsmart education programs.

By subscribing to Words on Plays or purchasing individual copies at the theater and online, you directly support A.C.T.’s educational efforts, serving teachers and students throughout the Bay Area. Extend the love of theater to future generations—and learn more about Love and Information! 

act-sf.org/wordsonplays | 415.749.2250
DIRECTOR CASEY STANGL RETURNS TO A.C.T. AFTER STAGING

David Ives’s Venus in Fur last spring. That production was packed with intense, edgily comic exchanges about sexual politics, generating plenty of heat with its unexpected plot twists. Now, Stangl brings her talent for seamless transitions and precise pacing to Love and Information, a play that offered her a blank creative canvas that she describes as simultaneously “exhilarating and terrifying.”

Stangl’s early years as a director were spent in San Francisco, primarily at the Eureka Theatre. Among the plays she experienced while in the city was a production of Caryl Churchill’s Top Girls, which had its Bay Area premiere at the Eureka and then moved to the Curran Theatre. Coincidentally, the first job Stangl was offered after she became a full-time freelance director was the opportunity to stage Top Girls at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis.

She says she was awed to discover an elasticity in Churchill’s language that made the play relevant and provocative nearly two decades after its premiere.

Stangl found her stride in directing new work and reimagining classics through a bold contemporary lens. Her movement background and interest in visual composition have helped her weave the complex fabric of Love and Information. At a new-play festival in Southern California a week before rehearsals began, Stangl was happy to talk about the themes and ideas that have piqued her imagination, what it’s been like to include the specific communities of San Francisco in Churchill’s scenes, and whether the gap between love and information is truly as wide as it may seem.
How did you react when A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff asked you to direct *Love and Information*?

I was thrilled. Carey described the play, which is made up of disparate scenes with no common characters. Then she talked about it being the first production at The Strand Theater, which is located in San Francisco at a kind of crossroads between various communities—from homeless people to tourists to tech workers to government workers to immigrant mom-and-pop store owners. She felt that *Love and Information* was the perfect play with which to open this new space.

What were your first impressions of the play?

Carey told me, “The play is wide open.” When you read the first scene, there are just lines and no character names. I remember thinking, “Wow, she wasn’t kidding, this is *wide open*.” When you have that amount of choice, you can do anything, but it also means you have to find a container and a way into the play. With most plays, the container is usually already built for you, so this is an interesting challenge.

You were already familiar with Caryl Churchill’s work, as you directed *Top Girls* for the Guthrie Theater over a decade ago.

Yes. They are very different plays, but they share some commonalities; for instance, Churchill’s ability to manipulate language, to write characters and scenes in which so much is happening below the words, is important in both works. *Love and Information* is so striking because these scenes range from a quarter of a page to three pages, but despite such a small amount of dialogue, you can pull back the curtain and imagine what’s happening between these characters. This illumination of a moment in someone’s life is thrilling to be able to evoke. Churchill has a very unflinching, unsentimental view of life, but there’s so much hope and humanity and joy in her perspective, as well.

Generally, directors are asked to guide an audience through a linear, narrative, realistic journey.

Absolutely. I would say there is almost always a story being told, even in plays that have a nonlinear structure, or that bounce around in time. But that’s not what we’re doing here. There’s not one specific story we’re telling; the play has a radical form in which several individual narratives add up to something larger that reveals how we live and what it means to be a human on this planet right now. Because there are so many different themes and ideas, they will resonate differently for different people.

What do you think makes this play relevant at this particular moment in time?

When somebody told me about the play originally, they said that it was about living in the Digital Age. So before I read it, I really thought that it was about dealing with the age of Facebook, and that sort of thing. There are certainly hints of that in the play, but it’s so much bigger and broader than that. Throughout history, there have been large technological leaps—such as the invention of the wheel or the Industrial Revolution—that have radically changed the way people live. With such changes, there have always been predictions that we’re going to lose our humanity. I remember when computers first became ubiquitous, people said, “Soon, no one will ever see each other, and we’ll never leave our homes, and robots will take over everything.” In fact, what happened was a proliferation of coffee shops so that people could actually come out and connect with each other. Churchill has tapped into the sense that, despite the constancy of dire predictions, humanity prevails. We just find different ways to continue to have this sense of connection.

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*[Love and Information]* has a radical form in which several individual narratives add up to something larger that reveals how we live and what it means to be a human on this planet right now.

—Director Casey Stangl
CLOUD NINE (1979) was the play that first brought Churchill international recognition. In the first act, a British family living in a colonized African country struggles with the oppressive gender roles of the Victorian era. The second act takes place in modern-day London (although only 25 years have passed for the characters from the first act), as they begin to rebel against and liberate themselves from the sexual roles that were assigned to them in a bygone era. Cross-gender and cross-racial casting underlines the biting satire in this farce about sexual politics and colonialism.

TOP GIRLS (1982) is Churchill’s most-produced play. Eschewing chronological storytelling, Churchill begins the play with Marlene, a manager at Top Girls Employment Agency, who has recently been promoted and is celebrating with a surreal and fragmented dinner party of semi-famous women from history and fiction. The final scene takes place a year earlier and features a confrontation between Marlene and her working-class sister, who has raised Marlene’s daughter as her own, thus underscoring what Marlene has had to give up in order to succeed as a professional woman. Inspired by the politics of Margaret Thatcher, this play explores the intersection between capitalist ambition and feminism.

DRUNK ENOUGH TO SAY I LOVE YOU? (2006) tells the story of a complex, borderline-abusive, and decidedly one-sided romantic relationship between Sam (who is the embodiment of America) and Guy (who is an American). The narrative of the love story is chronological—Guy is initially enamored with Sam and helps him carry out various political tasks, leaves when he becomes uncomfortable with the things Sam does, and eventually returns—but the play is set in an ambiguous time period, discussing events all the way back to World War II as if they had just happened. The play is a critique of blind nationalism, patriotic fervor, and the lies we tell ourselves in order to continue loving our country.

Critics have lauded Love and Information for its innovative structure. Theater scholar R. Darren Gobert writes, “[In this play], sharply drawn dots . . . collectively constitute an epic canvas that exceeds the sum of its pointillist parts.” Early in Churchill’s career, she wrote, “The role of the playwright is not to give answers but to ask questions. We need to find new questions, which may help us answer the old ones or make them unimportant, and this means new subjects and new forms.” As a result of her commitment to constant reinvention, Churchill’s plays are widely recognized as some of the most innovative of the past half-century.

THE INNOVATION of CARYL CHURCHILL

by SHANNON STOCKWELL

INTRODUCING THE STRAND THEATER
NEW PERFORMANCE VENUE AND EDUCATION CENTER
INTRODUCING
THE
STRAND

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Congratulations to the Staff, Board and Patrons of A.C.T.

Wishing The Strand Theater a long legacy of impactful art and life-enhancing community engagement.

—President, Ruth Felt and the Staff and Board of San Francisco Performances

See you soon when SF Performances returns to the newly renovated Herbst Theatre this October 30!

For information visit: sfperformances.org
ABOUT THE STRAND

The opening of The Strand Theater in the heart of one of San Francisco’s most artistically fertile neighborhoods represents an exciting new chapter in A.C.T.’s history.

SETTING Located at 1127 Market Street, The Strand takes its place in San Francisco’s vibrant Central Market neighborhood just a half-block away from A.C.T.’s popular black-box performance venue, The Costume Shop, and close to many other nonprofit organizations, retail shops, and restaurants. Steps away, a major transportation hub provides fast and easy commuter access via BART and Muni.

THE TONI REMBE THEATER As the centerpiece of The Strand, our 283-seat theater will house a variety of innovative works, including plays, cabarets, dance and music performances, and film. From traditional theater seating to an easily transformed cabaret setup featuring cocktail tables and open seating, this venue will allow a dazzling range of possibilities for visionary artistic work—and the audience’s experience of it.

THE OSHER LOBBY & THE STRAND CAFE With its beautifully preserved historic facade, The Strand will be a LEED-certified, fully accessible building that will serve as a hub of activity on Market Street, welcoming visitors with a street-level lobby and cafe.

THE RUEFF Located a level above The Toni Rembe Theater, this 140-seat, 1,500-square-foot space offers soaring views of City Hall, flexible seating, and a dynamic layout—with the versatility to accommodate performances, education programs, and other special events.

VISIBILITY As the focal point of the lobby, an LED screen with state-of-the-art technology will display ongoing creative content to those in the space, as well as passersby on Market Street.

For more information about The Strand, visit www.act-sf.org/strand.
Dear Friends,

What a thrilling moment this is! For so many decades now, A.C.T. has been dreaming of creating a smaller venue: a place for new audiences and perspectives, a space to experiment and to nurture, a home for young and mature artists, an intimate gathering spot at the center of the city where our training and education programs can be made visible and where rich ideas and beauty will be shared. That dream has finally become a reality with our stunning new Strand Theater.

One of the joys of this project is that it helps reanimate a beautiful old venue on a block of San Francisco that used to be home to multiple theaters, and was in fact part of San Francisco’s flourishing arts district in the early twentieth century. Over the decades, many vaudeville and movie theaters disappeared and The Strand lay derelict and forlorn. When we first entered the theater in 2012 to take a look, the space was covered with graffiti and dead birds. But the bones of a wonderful theater were already present, and The Strand has now been brought back to life, thanks to the vision of our architects at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill; our theater consultants at The Shalleck Collaborative; our intrepid project managers at Equity Community Builders; the team at Plant Construction; a raft of incredibly generous donors; and the entire staff, board, and artistic community of A.C.T. What a journey!

As the project progressed over the last two years, we invited many people from different walks of life to brainstorm with us about the future of The Strand; among them were theater makers, writers, dancers, musicians, filmmakers, journalists, museum workers, visual artists, community leaders, and educators. We shared our dreams and hopes for the space, and those thoughts remain in the front of our minds as we open The Strand to the public. The 283-seat mainstage, named The Toni Rembe Theater after our extremely generous former board chair, allows audiences and performers to occupy the same room in a magical way. The stage is grand enough to encompass dance and large-scale classics, and intimate enough to nurture everything from solo performance to spoken word to experimental new plays. The Toni Rembe Theater will provide artists with a new platform on which to create work, while allowing A.C.T. to expand its repertoire to include projects that complement the performances in our 1,040-seat Geary Theater.

Meanwhile, The Rueff—named for our intrepid former board president, Rusty Rueff, and his wife, Patti—is a glorious open space that can seat up to 140 people; it will be a flexible home for a wide array of performances, as well as for our acclaimed Master of Fine Arts, Young Conservatory, and Education & Community programs. Looking out on the dome of City Hall, The Rueff reminds us that we are making art in the center of a great city and that theater is a crucial engine for democracy and civic life. This is a time of enormous change in San Francisco, and we hope that The Strand will help us embrace the power of the imagination to stimulate empathy, widen our vision, put us inside the hearts and minds of people very different from ourselves, and dream of new worlds and new possibilities. We encourage you to share in the future of this revitalized space, and we warmly welcome you to the new Strand Theater!

Best wishes,

Carey Perloff, Artistic Director
Dear Friends,

After much anticipation and preparation, I am thrilled to welcome you into The Strand! When I joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees 12 years ago, Carey Perloff was already dreaming up a second stage, but The Strand is far better than anything I could have imagined. Beyond a performance venue, The Strand will be a home for our actor training and arts education programs, an opportunity for community building, and an access point for new audiences to experience the art of live theater. I am eager to see what our Master of Fine Arts Program and Young Conservatory students, as well as participants in our growing Education & Community Programs, will bring to this new space, and how our audiences will grow and reflect the exciting energy of The Strand.

As a new neighbor in San Francisco’s Central Market community, A.C.T. has a duty to foster positive change, and I could not be prouder to be part of A.C.T. during this important time. Thank you for joining us as we welcome audiences, artists, students, and community members into the space and begin the next act in A.C.T.’s dramatic life!

Warm regards,

Nancy Livingston
Nancy Livingston, Chair, A.C.T. Board of Trustees

Dear A.C.T. Community,

San Francisco has entered an important period of cultural and technological change. Now more than ever, A.C.T. has the opportunity to play an exciting new role in the artistic life of the city, joining the lively arts community that has long been present in the Central Market neighborhood. In other major cities like Philadelphia, New York, and New Orleans, theater spaces have acted as catalysts for large-scale change. By “re-planting” The Strand in Central Market, we hope to contribute to the growth of new artists, audience members, tourists, restaurants, retail businesses, and more.

The streets of Central Market are filled with creativity and potential. As artists, patrons, and community members, it is our responsibility to honor that potential and support forces of positive change. Thank you for joining us.

All the best,

Rusty Rueff, Coordinating Co-Chair, Strand Capital Campaign
THE STRAND AT A GLANCE

FLOOR MAP OF THE STRAND

LEVEL 1

MEZZANINE

LEVEL 2

Rendering by Skidmore, Owings and Merrill LLP
WHERE TO FIND US

THE STRAND THEATER
1127 MARKET STREET (AT 7TH ST)
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94103
415.749.2228 | ACT-SF.ORG

- PARKING
  SOMA Grand Parking Garage
  1160 Mission Street
  (between 7th & Julia streets)

- PUBLIC TRANSIT
  Muni Lines
  5, 5L, 6, 9, 9L, 14, 14L,
  16X, 19, 31, 71, F
  Muni Metro
  Civic Center Station
  BART
  Civic Center Station

For detailed directions, visit 511.org.

THE TONI REMBE THEATER SEATING CHART

- MEZZANINE
- MEZZANINE BOX SEATING
- FRONT MEZZANINE
- ORCHESTRA
- ORCHESTRA BOX SEATING
- FRONT ORCHESTRA
- STAGE
  ■ Wheelchair seating

TICKETS

CONTACT THE BOX OFFICE:
tickets.act-sf.org | 415.749.2228

THE STRAND THEATER
BOX OFFICE
1127 Market Street (at 7th St.)
San Francisco, CA 94103
Visit act-sf.org for Strand box-office hours

THE GEARY THEATER
BOX OFFICE
405 Geary Street (at Mason St.)
San Francisco, CA 94102
Walk-Up Hours:
Monday (12–6 p.m.) and
Tuesday–Sunday (12 p.m.–curtain)*
Phone Hours:
Monday (10 a.m.–6 p.m.) and
Tuesday–Sunday (10 a.m.–curtain)*
*Please check performance schedule for curtain times.
THE STRAND THROUGH THE YEARS

A HISTORIC BUILDING

Located in the Market Street Theatre & Loft National Register Historic District—a 200-foot span of old vaudeville theaters and other buildings constructed between 1906 and 1926—The Strand stands in a place that used to be known as San Francisco’s “Great White Way” because of how its marquees glowed at night.

Born from the booming silent-film industry of the early twentieth century, The Strand was built in 1917 for the S.F. Land Company from a design by architect Emory Fraser. The building was first known as the Jewel, and as it changed ownership, it was successively called the Sun, College, and Francesca. Its various incarnations featured everything from cabaret performances to an all-female orchestra. In 1928 the building finally became The Strand—named after the country’s original Strand, a movie theater that opened in New York’s Times Square in 1914.

Despite frequently rotating ownership, The Strand has always been a theater, even in the 1950s, when Market Street’s entertainment district experienced a slump as more households acquired televisions. By the time movie lover Mike Thomas took over The Strand in 1977, it was in bad shape, but a thorough refurbishment restored the theater to its former glory. Double and triple features of “esoteric” films, as well as weekly screenings of the cult classic The Rocky Horror Picture Show, drew new crowds of movie lovers. However, when operations at the theater ceased in 2003, the building fell into disrepair.

THE STRAND STANDS IN A PLACE THAT USED TO BE KNOWN AS SAN FRANCISCO’S “GREAT WHITE WAY” BECAUSE OF HOW ITS MARQUEES GLOWED AT NIGHT.
WELCOME TO THE STRAND

In the midst of one of San Francisco’s most artistically diverse neighborhoods, The Strand Theater is the perfect complement to A.C.T.’s 1,040-seat Geary Theater. Our new performance venue and education center is both dynamic and intimate, and will be a creative home for artists from the Bay Area and beyond. With its unique size and flexible scope, The Strand is ideal for a range of productions, from classic plays to commissioned new works to dance performances. We are excited to partner with other Central Market organizations and businesses, and to engage the local community through year-round performances, creative educational opportunities, and other special events. Just steps away from City Hall, The Strand will deepen A.C.T.’s relationship with San Francisco by helping our audiences access the transformative power of live theater. Aside from being an exciting addition to the Central Market neighborhood, The Strand also offers a nod of recognition to a compelling history.
On October 2, 2013, San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee joined Supervisor Jane Kim, Senator Mark Leno, A.C.T. leadership, community-development partners, and a crowd of excited members of the A.C.T. family to break ground on The Strand Theater. The design for the new Strand by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM), a highly distinguished architecture, interior-design, engineering, and urban-planning firm, restored the distinct facade and many of the unique elements of the century-old cinema.

In his speech at the ceremony, Mayor Lee said that when his office was first thinking about how best to reinvest in the Central Market corridor, his team predicted there would be moments that truly signaled meaningful change; he acknowledged that the groundbreaking of The Strand was one such moment.

Financing for the purchase of The Strand in early 2012 was made possible by a gift from ten-year A.C.T. board member Jeff Ubben and his wife, Laurie. As the chair of the Strand Capital Campaign, which has a fundraising goal of $34.4 million, Ubben says, “To marry two interests [theater and revitalizing Central Market] and know that they are naturally symbiotic is exciting for any donor. That is how I feel about being part of bringing A.C.T.’s second stage to Market Street. To advance A.C.T. programming with a space that will allow for risk-taking fits perfectly with the exciting possibilities of the Central Market corridor. We have seen time and again: the arts transform neighborhoods.”

“WE HAVE SEEN TIME AND AGAIN:
THE ARTS TRANSFORM NEIGHBORHOODS.”
—Jeff Ubben, Chair of the Strand Capital Campaign

Our reclamation project redefines the original 1917 building while retaining several historic elements. Signs of The Strand’s past can still be found today, from its incarnation as the Jewel in 1917 up to more recent years, when local artists and others took over the abandoned building.

When A.C.T. bought the building in 2012, graffiti art on the walls was salvaged to serve as a reminder of The Strand’s unique history. Among the other elements we have restored are the 1959 neon cinema marquee letters, which will light up The Strand Cafe in the lobby, and the 1917 multi-light wooden sash windows showcased in The Rueff.

In order to give audiences a comprehensive picture of the building’s many lives, our renovation includes a display of photos chronicling its rich history.
Every great performance space deserves an Encore!

Congratulations to A.C.T. and all its stakeholders on this magnificent achievement…BRAVO!

www.encoreartssf.com
Congratulations to A.C.T. on the grand opening of The Strand.
The Strand has been made possible by generous contributions from Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock, as well as Priscilla and Keith Geeslin. Thanks to the Keith and Priscilla Geeslin New Strands Fund, augmented by a generous New Works Endowment from the Hewlett Foundation, audiences will be able to follow our plays while they are in progress.

New Strands is our recently launched, ongoing program dedicated to developing new plays commissioned and nurtured by A.C.T. The opening of The Strand Theater gives A.C.T. and the artists we love many options when it comes to finding the perfect venue in which to workshop, hold readings, and perform. New Strands will find a welcoming home in The Strand, as well as in The Geary, The Costume Shop, and our studios at 30 Grant Avenue. Our commissioned artists can utilize The Toni Rembe Theater for full productions of new plays that benefit from a substantial audience, while our intimate upstairs space, The Rueff, is perfect for smaller staged readings and workshops. In January 2016, we will present the first annual New Strands Festival, in which a collection of our works in progress will be presented to the public, alongside other performances and events.

THE OPENING OF THE STRAND THEATER GIVES A.C.T. AND THE ARTISTS WE LOVE MANY OPTIONS…

PROGRAMMING A.C.T.’S THEATRICAL FUTURE

When Caryl Churchill’s internationally acclaimed Love and Information was selected as the premiere production at The Strand Theater in June 2015, A.C.T. not only fulfilled a long-held wish to present our works in a second, more intimate venue complementing the 1,040-seat Geary Theater—it also set the stage for creative new ways to shape upcoming subscription seasons, as well as broaden opportunities for artistic planning.

Two of the seven productions during A.C.T.’s 2015–16 subscription season will be produced at The Strand: Monstress, a world-premiere theatrical adaptation of Lysley Tenorio’s acclaimed short stories about contemporary Filipino-American life in the Bay Area; and The Unfortunates, a surreal steampunk musical infused with gospel and blues that had its first outing—and was a sold-out hit—at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 2013.

Together, Love and Information, Monstress, and The Unfortunates represent the pivotal stages of development for theater—from the newest work by one of our greatest living playwrights, to an important second developmental run of a thrilling new musical, to a world-premiere staging created for and by San Francisco artists. The Strand gives A.C.T. a vital home in which to house international pieces, interdisciplinary works, and homegrown projects of any size. It also offers our audiences the opportunity to experience art in an entirely different way and lets A.C.T. collaborate with artists we admire and whose work will resonate in a beautiful, intimate environment.
As A.C.T. builds our presence in the Central Market neighborhood, it is more important than ever for us to continue involving San Francisco’s artistic community in our theaters. We offer all of our venues for rent, now including The Strand’s two performance spaces.

To help alleviate the pressure on artists facing displacement in San Francisco, we established the Community Space-Sharing Initiative to provide free rehearsal/performance space, professional mentorship, and production support to organizations who would not otherwise be able to afford renting professional venues. Grants from the city and local foundations have supported this initiative in our black-box theater, The Costume Shop, for the past three seasons. We hope to expand this program in The Strand.

However, The Strand will have significantly higher production costs than The Costume Shop, making foundation, corporation, and individual support more necessary than ever in order for A.C.T. to provide free services to arts organizations in need. We will continue to seek support to ensure that The Strand will provide the space and technical capacity for emerging theater companies to take their productions to the next level, for established companies to collaborate in a new venue, and for new audiences to experience the full impact of live performance. To discuss participating in this vital fundraising effort, please contact Institutional Giving Manager Kate Goldstein at 415.439.2319. To learn more about renting any of A.C.T.’s spaces, please contact Company Manager Amy Hand at 415.439.2415.
EDUCATION AT THE STRAND

As we look ahead to the future of The Strand, we simultaneously consider the future of theater as an art form. With its two versatile performance spaces in the heart of San Francisco, The Strand is the perfect home for A.C.T.’s actor training and arts education programs. The theater will provide a fertile creative ground for three programs in particular:

**YOUNG CONSERVATORY** students perform in one musical and two plays each season—now, all musicals will be performed on The Strand’s mainstage, while other plays will be staged in The Rueff.

Our **MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM** faculty and young actors are excited to utilize the capabilities of The Strand Theater, which will house performances throughout the year, as well as provide space for specialized classes.

Our **EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS** will also find a home in The Strand, which will provide space for our myriad residencies and partnerships with local schools and community-based organizations. And, just like our mainstage productions at The Geary Theater, the subscription shows performed at The Strand will be opened to local schools for special matinee performances. Education programming at our new venue has been made possible by The Vermut Family Education Fund at The Strand Theater, which will establish it as a hub for creative expression for the Central Market neighborhood and students who visit from throughout the Bay Area.
JOEL BERNARD** is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. Recent credits include an appearance on Law & Order: Special Victims Unit and the voice of the villain, Sewell, in Silent Hill: Downpour. Bernard is a founding member and artistic director of Benefit of the Doubt Theatre Company. He was last seen at A.C.T. as Young Scrooge in A Christmas Carol. His M.F.A. Program credits include Mercutio in Romeo and Juliet, Firs in The Cherry Orchard, Laertes in Hamlet, Hobson in The Girl from Maxim’s, and Galileo Galilei in Galileo. He was recently awarded the Joan Sadler Award, given to a third-year A.C.T. M.F.A. Program student in recognition of leadership and sustained passion.

ANTHONY FUSCO*, a member of Actors’ Equity Association since 1984, is an A.C.T. resident artist. A few favorites from the dozens of A.C.T. productions in which he has appeared are Indian Ink, Clybourne Park, The Homecoming, Edward Albee’s At Home at the Zoo, Dead Metaphor, Hedda Gabler, The Three Sisters, Race, November, and The Rainmaker. Fusco most recently appeared at Magic Theatre in John Kolvenbach’s Sister Play; other Bay Area credits include Pygmalion, Candida, Arms and the Man, The Tempest, King Lear, and The Importance of Being Earnest at California Shakespeare Theatre, as well as The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures and Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Fusco appeared in The Real Thing on Broadway, in many off- and off-off-Broadway shows, and at regional theaters across America. He trained at The Juilliard School and The Barrow Group, and is a proud alumnus of Tamalpais High School’s drama department.

CINDY GOLDFIELD* is a two-time recipient of both the San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle and the Dean Goodman Choice awards. She recently finished her 11th season of A Christmas Carol at A.C.T. Other regional credits include The Mystery of Edwin Drood (Center REPertory Company); Spring Awakening and Bill W. and Dr. Bob (San Jose Repertory Theatre); Another Midsummer Night (TheatreWorks); Brimstone, Moon Over Buffalo, and Merrily We Roll Along (Willows Theatre Company); Oliver! (Broadway by the Bay); Moving Bodies (Marin Theatre Company); Crimes of the Heart (Playhouse West); the world premiere of OMFG! The Internet Dating Musical (ODC); Texas Chainsaw Manicurist and Cowardly Things (New Conservatory Theatre Center); Mack & Mabel (42nd Street Moon); and Scalpel! (Brava! For Women in the Arts). New York credits include D’Arcy Drollinger’s Project: Loahn, and Mr. Irresistible, at La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club. Goldfield also enjoys the cabaret collaboration of Goldfield & Koldewyn with the inimitable Scrumbly Koldewyn.

DAN HIATT** has been seen at A.C.T. as the Englishman in Indian Ink, Stephen Hopkins in 1776, Tom in Round and Round the Garden, the Magistrate in The Government Inspector, Bob Acres in The Rivals, Guildenstern in Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, and Cornelius Hackl in The Matchmaker. Other Bay Area credits include Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, Dinner with Friends, and Menocchio at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby and many others at California Shakespeare Theater; Twentieth Century at TheatreWorks; Picasso at the Lapin Agile at Theatre on the Square; Noises Off at Marines’ Memorial Theatre; Wittenberg and Breakfast with Mugabe at Aurora Theatre Company; and Othello at Marin Theatre Company. Regional theater credits include work with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Huntington Theatre Company, The Pasadena Playhouse, Ford’s Theatre in Washington, DC, Studio Arena Theatre, the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, and Theatre Calgary.

JOE HOLT* is a member of The Antaeus Company in Los Angeles. Roles include Hotspur in Henry IV, Part 1; Banquo in Macbeth; Celso in The Malcontent; Macaulay in The Thin Man; and Waiter in Celebration. Classics-Fest performances include Stanley in A Streetcar Named Desire, Levee in Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, and Nelson in Wedding Band. Other theater credits include We Are Proud to Present … (The Matrix Theatre Company), Nine Circles (Bootleg Theater), and The Pain and the Itch (Zephyr Theatre). As a member of The Flea Theater in New York City, he had roles in No Mother to Guide Her, A Heartbeat to Baghdad, and The Breakout. Regional theater credits include Blue/Orange (TheaterWorks in Hartford) and Twelve Angry Men (Merrimack Repertory Theatre). Television credits include roles on Scandal, Grey’s Anatomy, The Good Wife, Franklin & Bash, I Didn’t Do It, and Supernatural.

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States
† Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2015
WHO’S WHO IN LOVE AND INFORMATION

RAFAEL JORDAN** was recently seen at A.C.T. as Topper in A Christmas Carol and Tom in The Glass Menagerie, directed by Ryan Purcell.

Other memorable roles include Bobby in American Buffalo at Aurora Theatre Company (San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Best Production; Theatre Bay Area Award nomination for Best Ensemble); Dorante in The Liar at the Livermore Shakespeare Festival; and Describe the Night, by Rajiv Joseph, at the TheatreWorks New Works Festival. New York credits include Apollodorus in Caesar and Cleopatra (off Broadway), George in Uncle Tom’s Cabin during Metropolitan Playhouse’s OBIE Award–winning season, I Feel Your Pain with multiple OBIE Award winner Kathryn Grody, and the world premiere of Thunder Above, Deeps Below. Other theater credits include 365 Days/365 Plays and The Open Road Anthology and The Best Laid Plans; and Othello in Othello (the web series).

CHRISTINA LIANG† recently completed her second year of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. Some of her Conservatory credits include The Cherry Orchard (Anya), Kalos Kai Agathos (Antigone), A Midsummer Night’s Dream (Hermia), Iphigenia and Other Daughters (Electra), and Hello from Bertha (Goldie). She also helped create a devised theater piece called Girlhood for A.C.T. Sky Festival and Faulkline Theater. Some of her regional credits include Twelfth Night and Uncommon Women and Others at Mad and Merry Theatre Company and Measure for Measure at New York University. Liang received a B.A. in Individualized Studies from New York University and has trained at the Upright Citizens Brigade in New York City.

SHARON LOCKWOOD’s* work at A.C.T. includes Napoli!, Dead Metaphor; Tis Pity She’s a Whore; Hedda Gabler; Juno and the Paycock; The Cherry Orchard; The Rose Tattoo; The Pope and the Witch; Saturday, Sunday and Monday; and A Christmas Carol for ten seasons. She also has a long-time association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre; there, she most recently played Sonia in Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, for which she received a San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award. Other Bay Area credits include productions at California Shakespeare Theater, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Marin Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. Regional credits include Houston’s Alley Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse (San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award for Culture Clash’s Zorro in Hell), San Diego Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Missouri Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, and The Old Globe. She originated the role of Barbara in Nickel and Dimed, which she performed at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles under the direction of Bartlett Sher. Film and television credits include Mrs. Doubtfire, Long Road Home, and Vonnegut Stories.

LEO MARKS* appeared most recently as the title character in the world premiere of The Missing Pages of Lewis Carroll at the Theater @ Boston Court. Other regional credits include Smokefall, The Language Archive, and Major Barbara at South Coast Repertory; How to Write a New Book for the Bible at Berkeley Repertory Theatre Seattle Repertory Theatre; Lincoln’sque and Time and the Conways at The Old Globe; A Perfect Wedding at the Kirk Douglas Theatre; All the King’s Men at Intiman Theatre; and Cymbeline at Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC, among many others. He co-founded New York’s Elevator Repair Service and played Hamlet in Jessica Kubzansky’s acclaimed production. Other credits include Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Performer of the Year Award in 2012, and Top 10 Leading Men in 2010 and 2011; several L.A. Weekly Awards and nominations; and an OBIE Award. Marks has had many television appearances, most recently on Masters of Sex.

DOMINIQUE SALERNO‡ was last seen on A.C.T.’s Geary stage as the Ghost of Christmas Past in A Christmas Carol. Her A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program credits include Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Sueño, Galileo, Niagara Falls, and Limited Unlimited (a one-woman show in which she performed 14 characters while inside a cupboard). Regional credits include Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Shrek the Musical, and The Pirates of Penzance at Santa Rosa Junior College Summer Repertory Theatre. Salerno is also an internationally credited director and domestically produced playwright. She directed HALF, by Rebecca Foresman, in the 2014 Roma Fringe Festival. Her own play, So Small a Thing, will be featured in the San Diego International Fringe Festival this July. Salerno also has 13 years of improv training and performs at Endgames Improv in her spare time. She has had many television appearances, most recently on Masters of Sex. Salerno has a B.A. from Princeton University and is a graduate of the A.C.T. M.F.A. Program.
MIA TAGANO* has performed locally with Magic Theatre (Every Five Minutes), TheatreWorks (M. Butterfly, Snow Falling on Cedars, and The Loudest Man on Earth), California Shakespeare Theater (The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby and Hamlet), and the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival (Twelfth Night). Her regional stage credits include Tamburlaine at the Shakespeare Theatre Company in Washington, DC; Snow Falling on Cedars at Portland Center Stage and Hartford Stage; and Tantalus with the Denver Center for the Performing Arts and the Royal Shakespeare Company, including a UK tour. Her New York credits include 99 Histories at Cherry Lane Theatre, Song of Singapore at Capital Repertory Theatre, and Far East at Lincoln Center Theater. Her television and film credits include All My Children, Law & Order, Tantalus: Behind the Mask, and John Barton’s The Shakespeare Sessions. She received her B.A. in drama from Ohio State University and her M.F.A. from the University of Washington’s Professional Actor Training Program.

SHONA TUCKER’s* previous A.C.T. credits include Blithe Spirit, Tartuffe, and Insurrection: Holding History. Tucker is a company member of both YARA Arts Group and Half Moon Theatre, for which she has performed Love/Sick; Good People; Almost, Maine; and a staged reading of her own play, Growing Wild. Her off-Broadway theater credits include roles at New York Theatre Workshop, The Public Theater, Circle in the Square Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, and La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club. Regional theater credits include the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Stageworks/Hudson, Arena Stage, The Acting Company, Hartford Stage, and the Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Her television and film credits include Lights Out, Walk the Fish, Preaching to the Choir, Third Watch, New York Undercover, and Law & Order. She is a Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab director, AUDELCO Award winner, Schomburg Fellow, and Fulbright Scholar. Tucker earned a B.S. from Northwestern University and an M.F.A. in acting from New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts. She is currently an associate professor of drama and director of theater at Vassar College.

RYAN WILLIAMS FRENCH** (Understudy) recently graduated from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program and is a proud recipient of the Bratt Family diversity scholarship. French was last seen on the Geary stage as Sam in Mr. Burns, a post-electric play and as Fred in A Christmas Carol. Recent A.C.T. M.F.A. Program acting credits include Hamlet (title role), Sueño; Romeo and Juliet, Seven Guitars, Niagara Falls, The Strangest Kind of Romance, and Battle for Babylon. French also worked regionally as a company member at Chautauqua Theater Company in New York, where he starred in The Comedy of Errors. Most recently, he taught classes in the Young Conservatory. French has also written and directed several plays and debuted his solo performance This Modern Life during A.C.T.’s Sky Festival in January 2014. French has a B.A. from Dartmouth College.

GABRIEL MARIN* (Understudy) was last seen at A.C.T. in Napoli! Locally, Marin has appeared in over 50 productions with Cal Performances, San Francisco Playhouse, Aurora Theatre Company, Playwrights Foundation, Black Box Theatre, Center REPertory Company, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, PlayGround, the San Francisco Fringe Festival, San Jose Repertory Theatre, TheatreWorks, The Jewish Theatre, Thick Description, Word for Word, Z Space, and many others. Marin has performed on NBC, CBS, PBS, and the BBC.
EMILIE TALBOT* (Understudy) has worked in the Bay Area for over 20 years at such theaters as Aurora Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, and PlayGround, and she is an Associate Artist with AlterTheater. Around the country, she has appeared at or spent seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Huntington Theatre Company, and Pittsburgh Public Theater, among others. Film credits include Tenderloin Blues, The Fifth Stage of Labor, Ceremony, and many commercials, voiceovers, and video games. She is a graduate of Duke University, CalArts, and Oxford University.

CARYL CHURCHILL’s (Playwright) stage plays include Objections to Sex and Violence, Cloud Nine, Three More Sleepless Nights, Top Girls, A Mouthful of Birds (with David Lan), Serious Money, Icecream, Mad Forest, Thyestes (translated from Seneca), This Is a Chair, Blue Heart, A Number, Drunk Enough to Say I Love You?, Seven Jewish Children, and Ding Dong the Wicked, which all received their first productions at Royal Court Theatre in London. Her honors include three OBIE Awards for Playwriting (Cloud Nine, Top Girls, Serious Money), an OBIE Award for Sustained Achievement, the Laurence Olivier/BBC Award (Best New Play, Serious Money), and an induction into the American Theater Hall of Fame. Churchill has also written extensively for radio and television.

CASEY STANGL (Director) returns to A.C.T. after directing Venus in Fur last spring. Recent projects include The Curse of Oedipus for The Antaeus Company; Venus in Fur and The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane for South Coast Repertory; First Person: Seeing America, a multimedia piece with Ensemble Galilei; and Lombardi, a coproduction with Cleveland Play House and Arizona Theatre Company. Stangl’s production of Peace in Our Time at The Antaeus Company won the 2012 Ovation Award and the L.A. Weekly Theater Award for Best Production. Nationally, Stangl’s work has been seen at the Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville, the Guthrie Theater, the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Portland Stage, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Minnesota Opera, Portland Opera, Fort Worth Opera, and many others. Stangl was the artistic director of Eye of the Storm Theatre in Minneapolis, for which she was named Minnesota Artist of the Year in 2003.

JESSIE AMOROSO (Costume Designer) is in his sixth season at A.C.T. and is currently the costume director for the company. Bay Area theater design and styling credits include work at the California Theatre Center, New Conservatory Theatre Center, the Julia Morgan Theatre, Solano College Theatre, the Berkeley City Club Theater, Marines’ Memorial Theatre, the Herbst Theatre, Herbst Pavilion, and the Palace of Fine Arts Theatre. A.C.T. credits on the Geary stage are Testament, with Seana McKenna, and Underneath the Lintel, starring David Strathairn, both directed by Carey Perloff. Other highlights include designing two world premieres for Brad Erickson at New Conservatory Theatre Center, most recently American Dream. At Project Artaud he designed Caligula, featuring Nancy Carlin, and at Z Space he designed A Round-Heeled Woman: The Play, starring Sharon Gless. He is a graduate of California State University, Hayward (now California State University, East Bay).

KELSEY VENTER* (Understudy) was most recently seen in Mr. Burns, a post-electric play at A.C.T. and the Guthrie Theater, and by San Diego audiences in Dr. Seuss’ How the Grinch Stole Christmas! at The Old Globe. Other regional credits include Les Misérables, The 39 Steps, Tiring, and Guys and Dolls at Lamb’s Players Theatre; I Love You Because at North Coast Repertory Theatre; Timepiece at The Active Theater; Oliver! at Woodminster Amphitheatre; She Loves Me and Boeing Boeing at Center REPertory Company; The Threepenny Opera and A Seagull in the Hamptons with Shotgun Players; and ’Tis Pity She’s a Whore and A Christmas Carol with A.C.T. Venter is one of the Guinness World Record holders for Longest Marathon Theatrical Performance with Lamb’s Players Theatre. She earned her B.A. in theater from San Diego State University and her M.F.A. in acting from A.C.T.
LAP CHI CHU’s (Lighting Designer) regional credits include designs for the Mark Taper Forum, the Geffen Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Goodman Theatre, The Shakespeare Theater, Arena Stage, Hartford Stage, and Dallas Theater Center. New York credits include designs for The Public Theater, New York Theatre Workshop, Signature Theatre, Second Stage Theatre, Performance Space 122, and Kitchen Theatre Company. He is the lighting/video designer for chameckilerner Dance Company (Costumes by God, Visible Content, Hidden Forms, I mutantes seras, Por favor, and Não me deixe), which has performed in the United States and Brazil. Honors include recognition from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle, the Angstrom Award for Career Achievement in Lighting Design, multiple San Francisco Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, a “Drammy” for Best Lighting, and a Lucille Lortel Award nomination for The Good Negro at The Public Theater. Chu is on the lighting-design faculty at California Institute of the Arts.

C. ANDREW MAYER (Sound Designer) is a Minneapolis-based sound designer. He has worked with numerous regional theaters in the Twin Cities and elsewhere, including the Guthrie Theater, the Jungle Theater, Mixed Blood Theatre, Children’s Theatre Company, and History Theatre, as well as on SeaGlass Theatre’s Los Angeles production of How Cissy Grew. He has also worked on several productions with Minnesota Opera, including the Pulitzer Prize–winning Silent Night. He was a McKnight Theater Artist Fellow and won an AUDELCO Award for his design for Carlyle Brown’s Pure Confidence at 59E59 Theaters in New York City. Every summer he serves as the producing director of the Acadia Repertory Theatre on Mount Desert Island in Maine. This is his first production with A.C.T.

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ON SATURDAY, APRIL 25, A.C.T. HOSTED OUR 2015 gala, Get Stranded, to support the incredible training and arts education offered by our Conservatory and our Education & Community Programs, which bring the power of live theater to more than 12,000 Bay Area students each year. This year, more than 350 gala attendees gathered in a tent on UN Plaza, in the heart of Central Market and across the street from our new Strand Theater. A.C.T. Director of Special Events Luz Perez says the location was a statement in and of itself: “We wanted to bring our guests to the neighborhood and give them access to The Strand.”

The evening began with performances by Master of Fine Arts Program students and celebrated stage and film star Alan Cumming. Artistic Director Carey Perloff says the gala was “a magical night in the very center of the city; we watched the sun set as the amazing Alan Cumming regaled us with songs and stories against the backdrop of The Strand.”

The live auction was a great success; popular items included a pair of restored seats from the original Strand and a dinner for 12 at designer Ken Fulk’s Magic Factory with celebrity chef Nancy Oakes. The after-party ended the event with a bang, as DJ Flaxo spun music while guests danced the night away. The gala raised more than $850,000, thanks to supporters of our programs. We are confident this success will propel us forward as we celebrate the opening of The Strand.

WHO’S WHO IN LOVE AND INFORMATION

MICAH J. STIEGLITZ’s (Projection Designer) previous credits include projection design for Head of Passes at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Bauer off Broadway and at San Francisco Playhouse; Camelot, Promises, Promises, and Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo at San Francisco Playhouse; Breakfast with Mugabe, A Bright New Boise, and Our Practical Heaven at Aurora Theatre Company; and Heart Shaped Nebula, Bonnie & Clyde, and Harry Thaw Hates Everyone at Shotgun Players.

BEATRICE BASSO (Dramaturg) serves as the director of new work at A.C.T., focusing on season planning, the commissioning process, and new-work development through A.C.T.’s New Strands program. She previously served as dramaturg and literary manager at Long Wharf Theatre, where she collaborated on new plays by Julia Cho, Craig Lucas, and Dael Orlandersmith, among others. Basso’s translations from Italian have been produced at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and A.C.T. Her experience as a translator has been featured in Tradurre and Theatre Topics and on NPR’s All Things Considered. Basso has taught seminars on translation and dramaturgy at UC Santa Cruz, University of Massachusetts Amherst, and Yale University. She has worked as a freelance dramaturg at numerous festivals and theaters, including the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, The Ground Floor at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Theatre Calgary. She is an ensemble member with Affinity Project, currently in residence at CounterPulse. Basso has studied drama at Royal Holloway, University of London, and she graduated in classics and theater studies from the University of Padua, Italy.

ELISA GUTHertz* (Stage Manager) most recently worked on Mr. Burns, a post-electric play, Testament; Major Barbara; Underneath the Lintel; and Arcadia at A.C.T. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include 4000 Miles, The Normal Heart, The Scottsboro Boys, Endgame and Play, Scorched, Once in a Lifetime, Clybourne Park, Marcus; or The Secret of Sweet, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, November, Bolero for the Disenchanted, Rich and Famous, The Rainmaker, A Number, and Eve Ensler’s The Good Body, among others. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep; Suddenly, Last Summer; Rhinoceros; Big Love; Civil Sex; Collected Stories; and Cloud Tectonics at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre.

CHRISTINA HOGAN’s* (Assistant Stage Manager) theater credits include Hookman (Encore Theatre Company); And I and Silence, Hir, Arlington, Every Five Minutes, The Happy Ones, Terminus, Se Llama Cristina, and Any Given Day (Magic Theatre); A Raisin in the Sun, Blithe Spirit, Much Ado About Nothing, The Verona Project, and Pastures of Heaven (California Shakespeare Theater); Fuddy Meers and Good People (Marin Theatre Company); and very still and hard to see (A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program). Hogan has a B.A. in theater arts from Saint Mary’s College of California.

LESLEY ANN CLEMENT (Executive Producer) has supported A.C.T. since 1989. Currently secretary of the A.C.T. Board of Trustees, Clement joined the board in 2004, co-chaired the 2010 Crystal Ball season gala, and serves on the Development Committee as co-chair of the Producers Circle. She was an executive producer on A.C.T.’s productions of The Scottsboro Boys, Armistead Maupin’s Tales of the City, and The Tosca Project. Her last role on the A.C.T. stage was a walk-on in the finale of A Christmas Carol. By day, Clement prosecutes elder-abuse cases.

NOLA YEE (Executive Producer) is a member of A.C.T.’s Board of Trustees and was recently an executive producer for The Orphan of Zhao. Raised in Honolulu, Yee remembers her first A.C.T. experience from the mid 1970s, when the company toured Hawaii every summer. She holds a B.A. in psychology and an M.S. in information management and systems from UC Berkeley. She is currently a partner at NVC Holdings and is cofounder of the Pikake Foundation. She is a former board member of many nonprofit organizations, including Hospice by the Bay, Hospice of Marin, the Center for Women and Religion of The Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, and the San Francisco Aloha Festival, as well as a current board member of NextCourse.

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States
VERSATILITY AND TRANSFORMATION
THE M.F.A. PROGRAM ACTORS IN LOVE AND INFORMATION
By Shannon Stockwell

ACTORS FROM OUR ACCLAIMED MASTER OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM have been seen in almost every show this season, from Ryan Williams French as the title character in Mr. Burns, a post-electric play and Danielle Frimer and Glenn Stott in Indian Ink to countless understudy roles, while the entire third-year class takes the stage each year in A Christmas Carol. Love and Information features three members of the M.F.A. Program class of 2015—Joel Bernard, Rafael Jordan, and Dominique Salerno—who celebrated the completion of three years of intensive training at a graduation ceremony on May 18. Second-year student Christina Liang rounds out the cast.

Conservatory Director Melissa Smith is thrilled that these four students have had the opportunity to perform in Caryl Churchill’s newest play. “The M.F.A. Program teaches instrumental flexibility, professionalism, collaboration, and transformation,” she says. “Love and Information demands fluency in those areas. You could not pick a better test of our training.”

The very nature of the play is enticing to these four actors. “I love how innovative Churchill’s writing is,” says Salerno. “Each scene of Love and Information is completely different from the last, but there is the same longing and desire to connect.”

Love and Information presents actors with the challenge of performing multiple roles. “It’s exciting to be able to attack a show from multiple perspectives,” says Jordan. “You have to follow your instincts and jump in. You have to know who you are, where you are, right away.”

Being in a play that invites so many interpretations made the rehearsal process an invigorating experience for the M.F.A. Program actors, all of whom have an affinity for trying on new characters and ideas. “Casey [Stangl, the director] was interested in a real sense of collaboration,” says Bernard. “There was a great sense of freedom.”

Some of the M.F.A. Program actors’ collaborators in the cast include such seasoned performers as Cindy Goldfield and A.C.T. Resident Artist Anthony Fusco. “Working with this group of incredible veteran actors is like being welcomed to eat lunch at the cool kids’ table,” says Liang. “Everyone is so smart, talented, warm, and inclusive.”

“Performing in Love and Information is kind of like jumping off the high dive for these actors,” says Smith. “How perfect for people who are in or have just graduated from the M.F.A. Program.”
ABOUT THE PLAY

A.C.T. IS THRILLED TO INCLUDE IN OUR 2015–16 subscription season the world premiere of Monstress, an evening of two one-act plays that explore the resilience of a community struggling to find home in the ever-shifting sands of the American dream. The project will be the first production at The Strand Theater this fall.

In these two contemporary tales about the rich history of Filipino-American life in California, adapted from the acclaimed collection of short stories by Bay Area author Lysley Tenorio, a vibrant array of characters strive for personal transformations that are seemingly impossible, wonderfully moving, and distinctly theatrical. The infamous eviction of Filipino residents from San Francisco’s International Hotel in the 1970s sets the background for Philip Kan Gotanda’s stirring Save the I-Hotel, which illuminates the dangers of love that crosses forbidden territories. Sean San José’s Presenting . . . the Monstress!, based on Tenorio’s title story, moves us from the streets of Manila to the Bay Area, where a Filipino B-movie director has been seduced by the opportunity to work with a shady American filmmaker.

Tenorio’s book of short stories was published in 2012 to great critical acclaim; NPR said, “[Tenorio] has taken a uniquely Filipino-American perspective, polyglot and glittering with cinema dreams, and used it to make a bold collection of stories of the rejected, the helpless and the lost. Monstress is the debut of a singular talent.” A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff was immediately entranced by the potential theatricality of the stories. Through New Strands, our recently created new-play development program, we commissioned four artists to select the tales that most inspired them and adapt them for the stage. During the workshopping process, Perloff discovered that Gotanda’s Save the I-Hotel and San José’s Presenting . . . the Monstress! could share a cast and would be perfect to present alongside each other. As another part of the Monstress project, Colman Domingo’s The Brother(s), adapted from Tenorio’s story “The Brother,” will be presented as a late-night event after the show on October 18 at 10 p.m. and as a part of our Scripts reading series on October 19.

So far, the development process, which has featured several readings along the way, has proved to be “smooth, fun, and generous,” says Gotanda. “I’ve known and worked with A.C.T. for years, and they are as close to a theater family as one can have.”

Perloff, Gotanda, and San José have invited Tenorio to be a part of the development of these plays, and he has attended every reading. “I love seeing how these artists have taken my stories and transformed them,” says Tenorio. “While they’ve preserved the integrity of the stories and have remained true to the characters, they’ve reimagined the material as well, so that it feels like my stories have new life infused into them.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT NEW STRANDS, VISIT: ACT-SF.ORG/COMMISSIONS

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engage in important dialogue about issues facing our city and country,” he says.

The festival also includes *I’m Still Standing*, a musical based on the songs of Sir Elton John. Almost a decade ago, Slaight approached John to request permission to write the book for a play that would weave together the songwriter’s most beloved works as a tribute to John’s iconic place in the music industry. John gave Slaight his blessing, and seven years ago, the musical was born.

*I’m Still Standing* is an epic tale about a girl named Bennie, a teenage pop icon who embarks on a journey toward acceptance and self-discovery. The play will be performed on The Strand’s mainstage, The Toni Rembe Theater, and will mark the first time cabaret seating is used in the space.

The Two-Play Festival offers 35 roles for young people and is a cornerstone of the YC’s summer curriculum. Slaight is excited to bring the talent of so many of our students together, especially given his passion for presenting new work that reflects the voices of our youth. “I began commissioning plays for young actors because I knew it would be a way to tap into their true creative talent,” says Slaight.

**INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE YOUNG CONSERVATORY AND ENROLLING IN ITS SUMMER PROGRAM?**

VISIT: ACT-SF.ORG/YC
A.C.T. PROVIDES INTENSIVE TRAINING FOR
those who aspire to be theater professionals, but skills learned
in an acting class can positively affect a person’s life beyond
the stage. Many of the classes offered by Studio A.C.T., the
Conservatory’s extended-learning program, stimulate creativity
while cultivating leadership, business, and social skills.

Classes specially created for business-minded students
include Acting for the Executive Presence, which helps
participants create onstage presence and use acting skills to
enhance pitches, keynotes, and public speeches necessary in
the corporate world. The Art of Public Speaking covers basic
voice, speech, diction, and body-language techniques
necessary for everything from sales pitches to TED talks to
wedding toasts.

Although some of the available classes will be especially
compelling to people in the corporate world, Director of
Studio A.C.T. Nick Gabriel says that our offerings are for
artists and non-artists alike: “These classes are all about
ingendering empathy and trust, and using your imagination
with an ensemble of people to accomplish a collective goal in
a short period of time, just as you would if you were assigned
to a team in a corporate environment.”

Filipp Nisenzoun took Acting for the Executive Presence
in the summer of 2014. Nisenzoun, a product manager
for Appirio (a company that helps build cloud-powered
businesses), says that Studio A.C.T. taught him a range of
lessons, including “appropriate body language and vocal skills,
and more advanced lessons, like structuring presentations and
handling questions. These skills help ease self-consciousness
and let your authentic self emerge.”

Conservatory Operations Manager Dan Kolodny says,
“Acting is fun to learn, and it provides a skill set that people
don’t typically receive in regular corporate training.”

Given the success of these techniques inside the classroom,
A.C.T. has decided to take some of our classes “off campus”
with its Corporate Training Program. Gabriel and Kolodny
have created class models that can be customized to serve a
variety of businesses in San Francisco. Classes include Team
Building and Collaboration, Storytelling and Presentational
Skills, and Acting for the Executive Presence, which are
available as half-day, full-day, and two-day sessions.

Gabriel hopes to bridge the gap between the tech sector and
the arts by offering these classes off campus. He says, “Both
tech professionals and theater professionals are interested
in connectivity; it’s one aspect of our work that unites
us. A.C.T. hopes to expand the very definition of community
by bringing some of our best work right into the offices of Bay
Area businesses.”
A.C.T. IS HONORED TO COMMEMORATE THE
inaugural supporters of The Strand Theater by installing their
names on seat plaques, as we know that these inscriptions will
inspire theater-loving audiences for years to come.

Jasmine and Michael Malaga have been coming to
performances at A.C.T. for the past two decades and became
subscribers four years ago. Jasmine used to travel frequently
to New York for business and always made time to see a play
or two when there. “I’m impressed that the caliber of A.C.T.’s
work rivals that of any I saw in Manhattan, even though San
Francisco is a much smaller city,” she says.

The Malagas have especially enjoyed attending A.C.T. with
their friends and sharing the magic of theater. “We set aside
several magical evenings a year to invest in our friendships and
share our passion for theater,” says Jasmine.

This year the Malagas welcomed the arrival of their daughter,
Charlotte, who they hope will share their love for the arts.
“We want to be part of supporting exceptional theater in
San Francisco and to help ensure that institutions like A.C.T.
continue to be a part of our daughter’s life,” Jasmine explains.
“Since she was born the year The Strand opened, we thought
it would be fitting to sponsor a seat in her name. We hope to
introduce her to theater at A.C.T. as she grows up.”

The Malagas believe San Francisco needs to continue
nurturing the arts and are excited that The Strand will revitalize
a building that has been such a mainstay in the city’s cultural
history. The Strand will also showcase the work of A.C.T.’s
Master of Fine Arts Program and Young Conservatory students,
house our expanding Education & Community Programs, and
provide a venue for a wider range of A.C.T. productions.

BECOME AN INAUGURAL SUPPORTER OF A.C.T.’S
STRAND THEATER

GRAB YOUR SEAT $2,400–$7,500

Be recognized for years to come by Strand theatergoers—choose your gift level of Front Orchestra ($7,500), Orchestra ($4,500), or Mezzanine ($2,400), and your name will appear on a permanent plaque on a theater seat in the section of your level.

For more information about The Strand and other naming opportunities, please pick up a brochure in the lobby or contact A.C.T. Director of Development Amber Jo Manuel at 415.439.2436 or amanuel@act-sf.org.
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Jesse Hazzard, Dylan Mansan, Mechanic
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Prop Shop
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Selby Souza, Properties & Scene Shop Fellow
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CalleFlour, Rental Manager
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Jef Valentine, Inventory Manager
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The Geary:
Michael Ongon, Head Carpenter
Suzanna Bailey, Head Sound
Mark Pugh, Head Properties
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Tim Tank, Master Electrician
Mary Montijo, Wardrobe Supervisor
Diane Cornelius, Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor
Tom Blake, Joe Jeonson, Stage Door Monitors
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Jack Sharrar, PhD, Director of Academic Affairs
Jerry Lopez, Director of Financial Aid
Dan Kolody, Manager, Conservatory Operations & Corporate Training Programs
Lisa Guzman, Conservatory Associates, Academic Programs
Jim Schwartz, Conservatory Associate, Young Conservatory & Studio A.C.T.
Mark Jones, Barnet/Payroll Administrator
Leila Ghaemi, Conservatory Fellow
Master of Fine Arts Program Core Faculty
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Anthony Fusco, Acting
Dominic Lozanno, Acting, Director
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Lisa Anne Porter, Co-Head of Voice and Dialect
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Giles Havelag, Director
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David Keith, On Camera Acting
Corinne Nagata, Dance
Kari Prindl, Alexander Technique
Stacy Prinl, Dance
Robert Pritt, Singing
Elyse Shafarman, Alexander Technique
Lisa Townend, Director, Choreographer
Jon Tracy, Director
Studio A.C.T.
Andy Albrahan, Artistic Development
Carol Coiff, Acting, Shakespeare
Stephanie DeMott, Acting
France Eppich, Diving, Musical Theater
Paul Finocchiaro, Acting
Daniel Flapper, Acting, Shakespeare, Criticism
Calle Floor, Costume Design
Jenette Jones, Acting, Professional Development
Nick Gabriel, Professional Development
Cheryl Gayonais, Acting
Marvin Greene, Acting, Auditioning
W. D. Keith, Acting, Auditioning
Drew Khaloud, Speech and Dictation, Public Speaking
Francine Lambe, Acting
Dominic Lozanno, Auditioning
Raven Nielsen, Dance
Kari Prindl, Alexander Technique
Medical Brandes, Acting, Auditioning
Patrick Russell, Acting
Raven Nielsen, Dance
Noumi Sanchez, Musical Theater
Barbara Scott, Improvisation
Francine Torres, Acting, Improvisation
YOUNG CONSERVATORY
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Andy Albrahan, Acting
Christina Anselmo, Acting
Fierce Brande, Musical Theater
Keith Carames, Acting
Laura Derry, Improvisation
Nancy Gold, Physical Character, Acting
W. D. Keith, Director
Dominic Lozanno, Director, Acting
Christine Matheson, Dance, Choreographer
Patrick Russell, Acting
Vivian Sam, Musical Theater, Dance
Amelia Stewart, Acting, Director
Krista Wigle, Musical Theater
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Ben Malkovich, Thadius Pinkston, Naomi Sanchez
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A.C.T. thanks the physicians and staff of the Centers for Sports Medicine, St. Francis Memorial Hospital, for their care of the A.C.T. company. Dr. Victor Perez, Dr. Hyoilong Hong, Dr. Susan Lewis, Don Kemp, P.A., and Chris Corin, Clinic Supervisor.
A.C.T. PROFILES

CAREY PERLOFF (Director, A.C.T. Artistic Director) is celebrating her 23rd season as artistic director of A.C.T. This past fall, she staged the New York premiere of Tom Stoppard’s Indian Ink at Roundabout Theatre Company (nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award for Best Revival) before bringing the show to A.C.T. Recent A.C.T. productions also include Testament, Underneath the Lintel, Arcadia, Elektra (coproduced by the Getty Villa in Malibu), Endgame and Play, Scorched, The Homecoming, Tosca Café (co-created with choreographer Val Caniparoli; toured Canada), and Racine’s Phèdre in a coproduction with the Stratford Festival. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has also directed for A.C.T. José Rivera’s Bolerios for the Disenchanted; the world premieres of Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War (A.C.T. commission) and her own adaptation (with Paul Walsh) of A Christmas Carol, the American premieres of Tom Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink, and Harold Pinter’s Celebration; A.C.T.-commissioned translations/adaptations of Hecuba, The Misanthrope, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, Uncle Vanya, A Mother, and The Voysey Inheritance (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Boy; and major revivals of ’Tis Pity She’s a Whore, The Government Inspector, Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), A Doll’s House, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Creditors, The Room, Home, The Tempest, and Stoppard’s Rock ’n’ Roll, Travesties, The Real Thing, and Night and Day. Perloff’s work for A.C.T. also includes Marie Ndiaye’s Hilda, the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s No for an Answer and David Lang/Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colossus of Rhodes (Susan Smith Blackburn Award finalista).

Perloff is also an award-winning playwright. Her play Kinship premiered at the Théâtre de Paris last October in a production starring Isabelle Adjani and Niels Schneider, and will be produced at the Williamstown Theater Festival this summer, starring Cynthia Nixon and directed by Jo Bonney. Waiting for the Flood has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage and Film, and Roundabout Theatre. Higher was developed at New York Stage and Film, won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award, and received its world premiere in February 2012 in San Francisco. Luminescence Dating premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and the Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. The Colossus of Rhodes was workshopped at the O’Neill National Playwrights Conference, premiered at Lucille Lortel’s White Barn Theatre, and was produced at A.C.T. in 2003.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound’s Elektra, the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language, and many classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, CSC won numerous OBIE Awards, including the 1988 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot’s opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

A recipient of France’s Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund’s 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years, and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. Perloff is on the board of the Hermitage Artist Retreat in Sarasota, Florida, and is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas. Perloff is the author of Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater (City Lights, March 2015).

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. She has also taught and directed in the M.F.A. Program, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. Prior to assuming leadership of the Conservatory, Smith was the director of theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught introductory, intermediate, and advanced acting. She has taught acting classes to students of all ages at 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., California Shakespeare Theater, and Berkeley Repertory Theatre; in New York at Primary Stages and Soho Rep; and in England at the Barbican Theater (London) and Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Smith holds a B.A. from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from Yale School of Drama.