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**THE STRAND THEATER, AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER'S
BRAND-NEW PERFORMANCE VENUE AND EDUCATION CENTER,
TO CELEBRATE ITS GRAND OPENING ON THURSDAY, MAY 14!**

Located in the heart of San Francisco's Central Market neighborhood, The Strand Theater will provide A.C.T. with a much-needed second space in which to produce and present dynamic and intimate work from multiple disciplines.

The Strand Theater will also be home to performances, classes, and workshops of A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts, Young Conservatory, and Education & Community programs.

SAN FRANCISCO (April 29, 2015) – **American Conservatory Theater** (A.C.T.) Artistic Director **Carey Perloff** announced today that **The Strand Theater** (1127 Market Street, San Francisco), A.C.T.'s brand-new performance venue and education center, will celebrate its grand opening on **Thursday, May 14**, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The festivities will continue with a series of donor and subscriber tours, culminating with an open house for the general public on **Saturday, June 13**. The inaugural production at The Strand Theater—the West Coast premiere of renowned playwright **Caryl Churchill's** internationally acclaimed work ***Love and Information***—begins performances on Wednesday, June 3, 2015, and will run through Sunday, August 9, 2015.

*PLEASE NOTE: Press tours of The Strand Theater will take place on **Monday, May 11, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.** Tours will begin every 30 minutes. To sign up for a tour, please send an email to Kevin Kopjak (kevink@charleszukow.com) with your preferred time.*

Located in the heart of San Francisco's Central Market neighborhood, the newly revitalized Strand Theater gives A.C.T. a much-needed second space in which to produce and present dynamic and intimate projects, providing another cultural boost to the Central Market district of San Francisco. The Strand Theater will also be home to performances by—and will provide classroom and workshop space for—A.C.T.'s Master of Fine Arts, Young Conservatory, and Education & Community programs. The Strand will expand the scope of A.C.T. performances, with productions being staged at both The Geary Theater, A.C.T.'s 1,040-seat mainstage, and in The Toni Rembe Theater, The Strand's more intimate 283-seat theater.

A.C.T.'s recently created new-play development program, New Strands, will find a welcoming home in The Strand, as well as in The Geary, The Costume Shop, and A.C.T.'s studios at 30 Grant Avenue. A.C.T.'s commissioned artists can utilize The Toni Rembe Theater for full productions of new plays that benefit from a substantial audience, while A.C.T.'s flexible upstairs space, The Rueff, can be used for more intimate productions, as well as workshops and readings.

As a component of A.C.T.'s expanded community engagement initiatives and audience building efforts, The Strand Theater will also be a part of A.C.T.'s Community Space-Sharing Initiative. The funding provided by two grants—one from the [San Francisco Neighborhood Arts Collaborative](#) and one from [The Kenneth Rainin Foundation](#)—helps cover the necessary facilities, maintenance, and staffing costs to enable A.C.T. to offer no-cost rehearsal and performance space to partnering arts organizations. The Strand Theater will also be available for rent to touring and local productions, private events and corporate meetings.

The \$34.4 million renovation is funded by A.C.T. through a capital campaign that has raised contributions from individuals, corporations, and private foundations, as well as through New Market Tax Credits (NMTC) and Historic Tax Credits (HTC) sourced and structured by Equity Community Builders (ECB) and provided by U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation, Clearinghouse CDFI, San Francisco Community Investment Fund, and Northern California Community Loan Fund. Financing for the purchase of the building in early 2012 was made possible by a gift from A.C.T. Board Trustee **Jeff Ubben** and his wife, **Laurie**.

A.C.T.'s expansion in Central Market is supported by the City of San Francisco as part of the Mayor's Central Market Economic Strategy. Launched in late 2011 following a ten-month community input process, the strategy articulates a number of objectives for the revitalization of Central Market, including the expansion and stabilization of arts organizations in the area. City agencies have provided grant funding and technical assistance around real-estate development for arts organizations in the neighborhood, as well as those wishing to locate in the area.

Equity Community Builders served as the Development Manager/Project Manager on behalf of A.C.T. managing financing, entitlements, consultant selection, design, and construction. Under the design of lead architect **Michael Duncan** at **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP** for architecture, structural systems, and architectural graphics—with historic preservation by **Page & Turnbull**, lighting design by **PritchardPeck Lighting**, theater consultation from **The Shalleck Collaborative**, and acoustic, security and telecommunications engineering by **Charles M. Salter Associates**—The Strand will feature:

- **THE TONI REMBE THEATER**
A 283-seat proscenium space that can transform into cabaret-style seating with 175 seats. The cabaret-style setup will first be used this summer for the Young Conservatory musical.
- **THE RUEFF**
A 140-seat event and performance space above the front lobby will host classes, rehearsals, and a wide variety of performances in a completely flexible environment.
- **CAFÉ**
A ground-floor cafe in the two-story lobby featuring an array of food and drink options will be open to the general public during breakfast and lunch hours. The cafe will remain open to ticket holders during performances at The Strand.
- **LED SCREEN**
A 28' x 18' state-of-the-art translucent LED screen—composed of 126 separate LED screens—will greet patrons in the main lobby with an array of images and curated video art. Visible from Market Street and the UN Plaza, the screen serves to contribute to urban vitality. This marks the first indoor application of this type of screen, manufactured by Luxmax.

- **LIGHTING DESIGN**

A state-of-the-art lighting system by Electronic Theater Controls will control the lighting inventory comprised of 70% LED fixtures, 18 moving lights, and a complement of traditional Source Four lighting.

- **SOUND DESIGN**

The new sound system in The Toni Rembe Theater features loudspeakers by Meyer Sound and digital control on a Yamaha console that provides the ability for both live sound mixing and recorded music playback. Ancillary equipment, such as wireless microphones, playback devices, and related equipment typical to the operation of a live theater, are provided.

The LEED-certified Strand Theater will feature a number of sustainable aspects that promote environmental quality and economic vitality through the design, construction, and operation of the building:

- Convenient location near public transportation, including subway, streetcar, and four bus lines that connect to ferries and trains, encouraging A.C.T. employees and patrons to use alternate forms of transportation other than their cars.
- High-efficiency HVAC equipment and lighting, which saves approximately 15% energy. The project will also subsidize green power facilities through the purchase of renewable energy certificates.
- High-efficiency toilets, water closets, showers, and bathroom sinks, which will save approximately 40% water.
- Implementation of clear recycling areas in the building to encourage ongoing diversion from landfills in the future.
- Paints, coatings, adhesives, sealants, flooring systems, and composite materials selected to minimize volatile organic compounds and eliminate added urea formaldehyde from the project, creating a healthier indoor environment in the building.
- Air-quality management plans introduced during construction to prevent construction dust and other pollutants from settling into the walls and duct system after construction is finished.

A number of historical restorations have been made to The Strand Theater during its renovation, paying tribute to the theater's diverse history. These restorations include:

- **FAÇADE ORNAMENTATION**

The cast stone relief ornament and metal cornices have been cleaned, patched, and repaired. New vertical decorative cast relief panels extend to the ground level and match the historic relief in detailing, finish, and form, but are constructed out of glass fiber reinforced concrete (GFRC). Because the detailing and finish of the new element will match the historic element, the use of a contemporary material is not discernible from the exterior.

- **CASEMENT WINDOWS**

The multi-light wood sash windows on the existing third and fourth stories have been retained and restored. The original windows have been upgraded with dual-pane glass for energy efficiency and added acoustical performance. These casement windows are showcased within The Rueff, the 140-seat flexible event and performance space located above the two-story lobby at the north end of the building.

- **AUDITORIUM MOLDING DETAILS**

The original plaster walls, vertical wall pilasters, coved ceiling molding, and decorative air grilles in the ceiling have been retained and restored in the new auditorium space. The existing plaster picture frame moldings on the east interior walls have been preserved. New wall openings for box seats have been installed within the panels between the picture frame moldings.

- **DOOR SURROUNDS**

Six of the Neoclassical wood door surrounds from the original auditorium have been salvaged and repurposed in the lower lobby level to frame the entries to the two public restrooms and at the dressing room entrances below the stage.

- **NEON MARQUEE LETTERS**

The metal-framed neon letters from the cinema marquee, installed in 1959, were salvaged, meticulously restored and incorporated in the design of the new lobby cafe. The weathered yellow coloration of the metal frames will be retained, and each letter will have four new bands of 13-millimeter pink neon to match the previous cinema appearance.

- **METAL CANOPY**

A steel-and-glass canopy projects out over the sidewalk ten feet from the building, honoring the original canopy that was constructed, which extended all the way to the curb in 1917. The City Planning Department has allowed a variance to provide an increased projection length of the canopy, reminiscent of the theater's originally constructed canopy.

- **BLADE SIGN**

A vertical blade sign will project from the third and fourth stories, reminiscent of the vertical blade sign that appears in photographs of the original theater in 1920. The sign features cutout letters in a stainless steel plate.

- **ORIGINAL ORCHESTRA SEATS**

A few pairs of the existing orchestra seating and decorative end standards have been salvaged and restored, and will be on display in The Strand Theater. This includes glass bead blasting of the American Standard end standards, which date back to the 1920s, and hand painting to match a historical sampling of original finishes. All materials, including springs and fabric underpinnings, will be replaced, and new paprika-colored velvet upholstery will frame the walnut wood backs.

- **LOBBY STAIRCASE**

The original onyx staircase has been removed from The Strand Theater, but an outline of the staircase has been incorporated into the lobby flooring to honor the location and dimensions of the stairs.

- **MURAL ART**

Three pieces of original mural art, created by individuals who inhabited the building following the close of operations in 2003, were salvaged from the building. This artwork was indicative of the personalities who called The Strand home while it was boarded up between 2003 and 2012, when A.C.T. purchased the building.

The construction project team for The Strand Theater includes the following:

- Architect, Structural Engineering, Architectural Graphics: **Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP (SOM)**
- Development/Project Manager: **Equity Community Builders LLC**
- General Contractor: **Plant Construction Company LP**
- Theater Consultant: **The Shalleck Collaborative, Inc.**
- Historic Architect: **Page & Turnbull**
- Architectural Lighting Design: **PritchardPeck Lighting**
- Legal Counsel: **Farella Braun + Martel LLP**
- Construction Financing: **First Republic Bank**
- New Market Tax Credits Investor: **U.S. Bancorp Community Development Corporation**
- Historic Tax Credit Investor: **Clearinghouse CDFI**
- Community Development Entity/Lender: **San Francisco Community Investment Fund**
- Community Development Entity/Lender: **Northern California Community Loan Fund**
- Community Development Entity/Lender: **Clearinghouse CDFI**

The reopening of The Strand as a performance and education venue is the latest and most ambitious in a string of arts organizations' relocation or expansion to Central Market and the Tenderloin. Along with technology companies, arts organizations have been welcomed by the neighborhood through various initiatives of the Mayor's Office aimed at activating vacant buildings and bringing positive activity to residents and visitors alike. In the past year, Burning Man, CounterPULSE, SF Camerawork Gallery, the Film Commission's film incubator, and PianoFight Theater have opened or signed leases in the area. They join numerous other longtime and recently established arts venues and a flock of new restaurants that have joined the Mayor's Central Market Partnership to introduce new jobs, services, retail, and arts to the area.

About American Conservatory Theater

American Conservatory Theater nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its Conservatory, and an ongoing engagement with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent the rich theatrical traditions that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work. For more information about A.C.T., go to www.act-sf.org.

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