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## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES COMPLETE LINEUP FOR THE 2019–20 SEASON

Season includes Caryl Churchill’s acclaimed play, *TOP GIRLS*; the world premiere of Kate Attwell’s *TESTMATCH*; Obie Award–winning playwright Will Eno’s latest work, *WAKEY, WAKEY*; Branden Jacobs-Jenkins’s shocking and scalpel-sharp dark comedy, *GLORIA*; Lydia R. Diamond’s unforgettable baseball play, *TONI STONE*; the cult classic, Richard O’Brien’s *THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW*; and Qui Nguyen’s raucously funny and deeply moving sequel to *Vietgone*, *POOR YELLA REDNECKS*

*A Christmas Carol* returns following another successful run in 2018

SAN FRANCISCO (March 4, 2019)—**American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon** and **Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein** announced today the seven productions that will make up the company’s 2019–20 season: Caryl Churchill’s acclaimed play, *Top Girls*; the world premiere of Kate Attwell’s *Testmatch*; Obie Award–winning playwright Will Eno’s latest work, *Wakey, Wakey*; Branden Jacobs-Jenkins’s shocking and scalpel-sharp dark comedy, *Gloria*; Lydia R. Diamond’s unforgettable baseball play, *Toni Stone*; the cult classic, Richard O’Brien’s *The Rocky Horror Show*; and Qui Nguyen’s raucously funny and deeply moving sequel to *Vietgone*, *Poor Yella Rednecks*. Performance schedule will be announced at a later date. Season subscriptions for the 2019–20 season range in price from **\$98–\$693** and are available now. Single tickets will go on sale in mid-summer 2019. To become a new subscriber, or renew a current subscription for the 2019–20 season, visit [act-sf.org/join](http://act-sf.org/join) or call the A.C.T. Subscriptions Office at 415-749-2250.

“A.C.T.’s 2019–20 season is united by what I am calling ‘rules of play,’” says **MacKinnon**. “Who makes the rules that we obey and take for granted? Who makes the rules that we fight against, when and why? How are rules made and when are they enforced? Told with decorum, rage, spirit, and a wink, this season’s offerings continue A.C.T.’s tradition of telling stories that provoke responses and lead to debates, dreams, and even action.”

“This season is filled with exciting work that reflects the rich diversity of stories and human experience from throughout the world,” adds **Bielstein**. “We are thrilled to create and share these productions with Bay Area audiences.”

Full-season subscriptions offer incredible savings, unparalleled access, exclusive benefits, and personalized customer service. Subscribers save as much as 33% off single-ticket prices. Students and educators are eligible to save 50% on subscriptions, and senior discounts are available for certain series. To make subscriptions more affordable, A.C.T. also offers all subscribers an extended payment plan that allows payment in three easy installments. A.C.T.'s competitive subscriber benefits include free ticket exchanges up to the day of your scheduled performance, guaranteed best seating, ticket protection, access to convenient prepaid parking one block away from the theater, discounts for neighborhood restaurants, and the opportunity to subscribe to *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.'s in-depth theater guide for each show.

## AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER'S 2019–20 SEASON

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### *Top Girls*

by Caryl Churchill

Directed by Tamilla Woodard

The Geary Theater

"Breathtaking . . . a masterful work" —*The Washington Post*

"One of the most resonant theatrical set pieces of the past 50 years" —*The New York Times*

The Geary Theater hosts the most unforgettable dinner party you'll ever attend. In Thatcher's Britain of the '80s, Marlene celebrates a promotion with a dinner party full of legendary, historical, and mythical women, from Pope Joan to one of Chaucer's pilgrims to an imperial Japanese courtesan. As the wine starts to flow, each of these iconic women shares her own stories of sacrifice and success—but where's the sisterhood?

Written by **Caryl Churchill** (*Love and Information*), one of the English language's greatest living playwrights, and directed by **Tamilla Woodard** (*Men on Boats*) in her return to A.C.T., this modern classic dissects feminism and the cost of progress in Margaret Thatcher's Britain, a country divided by class, cruelty, and capitalism.

### *Testmatch*

by Kate Attwell

Directed by Pam MacKinnon

The Strand Theater

How can we understand the present, if we won't acknowledge the past? **Pam MacKinnon** (in her Strand Theater debut) directs this scorching world premiere by playwright **Kate Attwell**—a contrast of two time-traveling stories focusing on cricket, a game of strict rules and hidden violence.

In the first story, tensions in the locker room rise during a match between rival women's cricket players from England and India, as secrets spill about relationships, ambition, and the integrity of the sport. In the second, two British administrators in colonial India confront challenges on the field of play that threaten the entire regime. Asking hard-hitting questions about colonialism, gender, and power, *Testmatch* launches an exciting new voice in American theater.

***Wakey, Wakey***

by Will Eno

Starring two-time Emmy Award winner Tony Hale

The Geary Theater

“Glowingly dark, profoundly moving” — *The New York Times*

“Is it now? I thought I had more time.” What if you had just a few more minutes left to live? Obie Award–winning playwright **Will Eno** (*The Realistic Joneses*) crafts an intimate comedy drama that takes audiences on a theatrical journey that’s surprising, yet familiar.

Experience the play that has everyone talking—plus the curtain-raiser written especially for A.C.T. by Eno, and a party to follow the show. Starring two-time Emmy Award winner **Tony Hale** (HBO’s *Veep* and Fox’s/Netflix’s *Arrested Development*), *Wakey, Wakey* is a remarkable combination of the everyday and the extraordinary that invites you to share the pleasure, humor, and sheer absurdity of life.

***Gloria***

by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins

Directed by Eric Ting

The Strand Theater

“Shocking, hilarious and spectacularly honest” — *Chicago Tribune*

“A sharply observed satirical comedy . . . a springboard for the playwright to examine the ramifications of our exploitative, media-saturated age” — *The Hollywood Reporter*

In the editorial office of a Manhattan magazine, competing twentysomethings Ani, Dean, and Kendra are only interested in scoring a book deal to kick-start a career. But after disaster strikes, which one of them will write the story?

MacArthur “Genius” winner **Branden Jacobs-Jenkins** (*Appropriate, Everybody*) reunites with Cal Shakes Artistic Director **Eric Ting**, who directed the playwright’s *An Octoroon* (2017) at Berkeley Rep. A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in 2016, this scalpel-sharp dark comedy evolves into a provocative exploration of how we cope with trauma and the tales we tell each other to escape.

***Toni Stone***

by Lydia R. Diamond

Directed by Pam MacKinnon

Choreographed by Camille A. Brown

A coproduction with Arena Stage

“One of the best players you have never heard of” — Negro Leagues Baseball Players Association

“I had to play . . . I wanted to find the heart of the game.” Toni Stone dreams of nothing but baseball. But to become the first woman to play professionally as a member of the Negro League’s Indianapolis Clowns, she must confront hostile crowds, ruthless team owners, and players who slide spikes first. As she negotiates life’s challenges and opportunities on and off the field, Toni stays true to herself and reaches for who she can be.

In this new play, playwright **Lydia R. Diamond** (Broadway’s *Stick Fly* and Showtime’s *The Affair*) uncovers the theatrical journey in Martha Ackmann’s book, *Curveball: The Remarkable True Story of Toni Stone*. The

culmination of a six-year collaboration between Diamond and director **Pam MacKinnon**, *Toni Stone* is the extraordinary, real-life story of a trail-blazing Bay Area athlete.

**Richard O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror Show***  
Book, music, and lyrics by Richard O'Brien  
Directed and choreographed by Sam Pinkleton  
The Geary Theater

"A musical that deals with mutating identity and time warps becomes one of the most mutated, time-warped phenomena in show business."—*The New York Times*

On a dark and stormy night, Brad and Janet get a flat tire . . . So begins our party at The Geary Theater. Tony Award–nominated director-choreographer **Sam Pinkleton** (*Soft Power* and *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*) reimagines this swirling, sci-fi world for 2020 San Francisco.

Before this cross-dressing classic was ever a midnight movie at The Strand, **Richard O'Brien's** Dr. Frank-N-Furter, Magenta, and Riff Raff started life as a smash rock musical. Experience The Geary as never before in this outrageous celebration of sex, drag, rock'n'roll, and being who you really are. In a dazzling mix of sequins and fishnet stockings, "Let's do the Time Warp again!"

***Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone Part 2***  
by Qui Nguyen  
Directed by Jaime Castañeda  
The Geary Theater

After the rollicking success of *Vietgone* (2018) at The Strand, playwright **Qui Nguyen** returns to A.C.T. for the second chapter in his kickass, hip-hop trilogy about a Vietnamese family who swap war-torn Saigon for rural '70s Arkansas. Lovers Tong and Quang are now married, but with low-wage jobs, a son struggling with English, and rumors of old flames, the challenges are only beginning.

Nguyen reunites with director **Jaime Castañeda** to draw from rap, leap into martial arts, and dig deep into his own family journey. Funny, sexy, and subversive, *Poor Yella Rednecks* confirms Nguyen as a groundbreaking playwright of the new American story.

***A Christmas Carol***  
by Charles Dickens  
Adapted by Carey Perloff and Paul Walsh  
Music by Karl Lundeberg  
Choreography by Val Caniparoli  
Directed by Peter J. Kuo  
Based on the original direction by Carey Perloff  
The Geary Theater

"A smash hit! Holiday traditions don't get any better"—*Stark Insider*

"The best *Christmas Carol* ever . . . a guaranteed good time"—Jan Wahl, *KCBS*

Following another successful run in 2018, A.C.T. welcomes back the Bay Area's favorite holiday tradition, *A Christmas Carol*. Featuring a lively cast of dozens, delightful music, gorgeous costumes, and deliciously spooky ghosts, this version of *A Christmas Carol*, adapted by Paul Walsh and Carey Perloff, stays true to the heart of Dickens's timeless story of redemption and brings a playful sensibility to his rich language. Now in its 43rd year, *A*

*Christmas Carol* is a cornerstone of the A.C.T. repertory and has become a holiday tradition for families around the Bay Area.

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#### **ABOUT AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER**

American Conservatory Theater is a Tony Award–winning theater and educational institution dedicated to nurturing 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 Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to explore new artistic forms and new communities to create a diverse aesthetic and an inclusive organization, while continuing to conserve, renew, and reinvent our relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.’s creative work. Founded by pioneer of the regional theater movement William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967. Since then, A.C.T. has performed more than 400 productions to a combined audience of more than seven million people. A.C.T. reaches more than 250,000 people through its productions and programs every year. For more information, visit [act-sf.org](http://act-sf.org).