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TICKETS FOR AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER'S 2019–20 SEASON ON SALE FRIDAY, AUGUST 9 AT 10 A.M.

New InterACT event, Drinks & Drama Friday, to take place the first Friday preview performance of every production during the 2019–20 season

SAN FRANCISCO (August 5, 2019)—Tony Award winner and American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) Artistic Director Pam MacKinnon and Executive Director Jennifer Bielstein announced today that tickets for A.C.T.'s 2019–20 season will be available beginning **Friday, August 9 at 10 a.m.** The seven productions that make up the company's 2019–20 season include 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*, starring two-time Emmy Award winner **Tony Hale** (HBO's *Veep* and Fox's/Netflix's *Arrested Development*); Branden Jacobs-Jenkins's shocking and scalpel-sharp dark comedy, *Gloria*; Lydia R. Diamond's extraordinary, real-life story of a trail-blazing Bay Area athlete, *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*. To purchase tickets, call the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or visit act-sf.org.

Please note: Beginning September 2019, the new Geary Theater performance schedule is as follows: **Tuesdays at 7:30 p.m.; Wednesdays at 2 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.; Thursdays at 7:30 p.m.; Fridays at 8 p.m.; Saturdays at 2 p.m. & 8 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.** The Strand Theater performance schedule remains the same: **Tuesdays–Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.; Wednesday and Saturdays at 2 p.m.; Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.**

A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events** for each mainstage production during the 2019–20 season that give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. New for the 2019–20 season, A.C.T. is opening its doors at each theater for **Drinks & Drama Friday**—an evening of drinks, pop-up food, and low-priced tickets to the performance—taking place the first Friday preview performance of every production during the season. Admission (\$15 advance purchase/\$20 at the door) will include one drink voucher and an orchestra seat to see the show. Doors and bars will open two hours prior to the performance so patrons can gather before the show to enjoy specialty cocktails, mingle with friends, listen to music, get involved with A.C.T.'s community partner organizations, and have a great night out after work! Pop-up restaurant partners will serve small bites for purchase.

The Drinks & Drama Friday schedule for the 2019–20 season is as follows:

- ***Top Girls***—Friday, September 20
- ***Testmatch***—Friday, October 25
- ***Wakey, Wakey***—Friday, January 24
- ***Gloria***—Friday, February 14
- ***Toni Stone***—Friday, March 6
- ***Richard O’Brien’s The Rocky Horror Show***—Friday, April 24
- ***Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone Part 2***—Friday, June 5

Other InterACT events for the 19–20 season include **Bike to the Theater Night**, a partnership with the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition; **Prologue**, featuring a preshow sneak peek at the theatrical process with members of the artistic staff; **Theater on the Couch**, featuring exciting postshow discussions that explores the minds, motives, and behavior of the characters in each production; **Audience Exchanges**, featuring lively Q&As with the actors and artists who create the work onstage; **A.C.T. Pride Night** (formerly Out with A.C.T.), a revamped pre- and postshow party celebrating LGBTQ+ pride within the theater community; **Wine Night**, featuring preshow wine tasting from some of the Bay Area’s hottest local wineries; and **PlayTime**, a preshow interactive theater workshop with the artists who make each production happen. Additional InterACT events will be added throughout the season.

The 2019–20 season kicks off with **Caryl Churchill’s “breathtaking” (*The Washington Post*) *Top Girls* (September 19–October 13, 2019)**. Shattering the glass ceiling doesn’t come without a few injuries. It’s 1980s Britain and nothing will stop Marlene’s ascent from working girl to top exec. Not the sniveling, jealous male coworker. Not the family birthdays she’ll miss. Not even other women. In the race to the top, there’s no time for sisterhood. Written by 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. **Performances of *Top Girls* will take place at A.C.T.’s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.**

Next, A.C.T. Artistic Director **Pam MacKinnon** (in her Strand Theater debut) directs the scorching world premiere of **Kate Attwell’s *Testmatch* (October 24–December 8, 2019)**, a contrast of two time-traveling stories focusing on cricket, a game of strict rules and hidden violence. It’s 2019 and tensions in the locker room rise during a world-class match between rival women’s cricket players from India and England, as secrets spill about relationships, influencers, and the integrity of the sport. Then in 1800 (or so), Abhi, the Number One Sepoy of the East India Co., struggles to force two bungling, cheating British administrators—absorbed in setting down the rules of cricket—to focus on the famine they have created outside the compound walls. Asking hard-hitting questions about colonialism, gender, and power, *Testmatch* launches Kate Attwell, an exciting new voice in American theater.

Performances of *Testmatch* will take place at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater. Press nights will be held on Wednesday, November 6, 2019 at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, November 7, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.

Following another successful run in 2018, A.C.T. welcomes back the Bay Area's favorite holiday tradition, ***A Christmas Carol* (November 29–December 24, 2019)**. 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. Directed by A.C.T. Associate Conservatory Director **Peter J. Kuo**, *A Christmas Carol* is a cornerstone of the A.C.T. repertory and has become a holiday tradition for families around the Bay Area. Performances of *A Christmas Carol* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Friday, December 6, 2019 at 7 p.m.

Ring in 2020, A.C.T. will present Obie Award–winning playwright **Will Eno's** new play ***Wakey, Wakey* (January 23–February 16, 2020)**. The curtain rises. You have just a few minutes. What do you say? 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 refreshments to follow the show. Starring two-time Emmy Award winner **Tony Hale** (HBO's *Veep* and Fox's/Netflix's *Arrested Development*) and directed by Obie Award winner **Anne Kauffman** (*Hundred Days* at Z Space), *Wakey, Wakey* is a remarkable combination of the everyday and the extraordinary that invites you to share the pleasure, humor, and beautiful mystery of life. Performances of *Wakey, Wakey* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, January 29, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

Next up at The Strand, A.C.T. will present **Branden Jacob-Jenkins's** "sharply observed satirical comedy" (*The Hollywood Reporter*), ***Gloria* (February 13–April 12, 2020)**. 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 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. Performances of *Gloria* will take place at A.C.T.'s Strand Theater. Press nights will be held on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, February 27, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.

In Spring 2020, A.C.T. will present **Lydia R. Diamond's** new play, ***Toni Stone* (March 5–29, 2020)**. 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, 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. *Toni Stone* is a coproduction with Arena Stage. **Performances of *Toni Stone* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.**

On a dark and stormy night, Brad and Janet get a flat tire . . . So begins the party at The Geary Theater with **Richard O'Brien's *The Rocky Horror Show* (April 23–May 17, 2020)**. 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!" **Performances of *The Rocky Horror Show* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.**

After the rollicking success of *Vietgone* (2018) at The Strand, playwright **Qui Nguyen** returns to A.C.T. with ***Poor Yella Rednecks: Vietgone Part 2* (June 4–28, 2020)**, the second chapter in his kickass, hip-hop, autobiographical trilogy about a Vietnamese family who swap war-torn Saigon to build a new life in 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. **Performances of *Poor Yella Rednecks* will take place at A.C.T.'s Geary Theater. Press night will be held on Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 7:30 p.m.**

A.C.T. would also like to acknowledge its Season Presenters **Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; Priscilla and Keith Geeslin; James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen-Hormel; Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston, The Shenson Foundation; Kenneth and Gisele Miller; Toni Rembe and Arthur Rock; Robina Riccitiello; Mary and Steven Swig; Jeff and Laurie Ubben; Kay Yun and Andre Neumann-Loreck**. Additional support provided by **Hilton Union Square** and **Parc 55 San Francisco**, A.C.T.'s Official Hotel Partner.

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