

A.C.T. AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER ANNOUNCES NEW HIRES

San Francisco’s premier nonprofit theater organization appoints three new employees to fill key positions within the Artistic and Conservatory departments

SAN FRANCISCO (July 19, 2019)—Today, **American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.)** Artistic Director **Pam MacKinnon** announced the appointment of three new employees to fill key positions within the Artistic and Conservatory departments at San Francisco’s premier nonprofit theater organization—**Joy Meads** as Director of Dramaturgy and New Works; **Peter J. Kuo** as Associate Conservatory Director; and **Danyon Davis** as Head of Movement.

“After three rigorous job searches that sparked attention from brilliant candidates around the country, I am beyond excited to begin my tenure at A.C.T. alongside Joy Meads, Peter J. Kuo, and Danyon Davis,” said **MacKinnon**. “All are artists, practitioners and educators, steeped in theater’s rich traditions and limitless possibilities. They are exciting leaders in the fields of new work, theater history, actor training and EDI.”



Joy Meads, a native of Oakland, comes to A.C.T. from Center Theatre Group (CTG) in Los Angeles, where she is wrapping up her tenure as literary manager/artistic engagement strategist. At CTG, dramaturgy credits include *Archduke* by Rajiv Joseph, *Good Grief* by Ngozi Anyanwu, *Appropriate* by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, *Forever* by Dael Orlandersmith, *Marjorie Prime* by Jordan Harrison (2015 Pulitzer Prize finalist), *A Parallelogram* by Bruce Norris, *The Royale* by Marco Ramirez, *Radiate* by Daniel Alexander Jones, and *SLEEP* by Naomi Iizuka with Ripe Time theater company (also BAM, Yale Repertory Theatre). Previously, Meads was literary manager at Steppenwolf Theatre Company and associate artistic director at California Shakespeare Theater. She has also developed plays with Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, the O’Neill, Ojai Playwrights Conference, Portland Center Stage, South Coast Repertory, and Campo Santo, among others. Meads is a proud member and co-founder of The Kilroys. Called “the superheroines of the theater” by *Backstage*, The Kilroys are a gang of playwrights and dramaturgs working for gender parity on American stages. An anthology of monologues from plays on The Kilroys’s annual List was recently published by TCG books. The first play Meads attended was *A Christmas Carol* at The Geary. She took several Young Conservatory classes as an awkward high school theater geek. She has warm memories of this theater and is delighted and honored to be joining its exceptional team.

As Director of Dramaturgy and New Works, Meads will lead the day-to-day literary and dramaturgy operations of commissioning and identifying new work, as well as championing classics for A.C.T.'s Geary Theater and Strand Theater. In addition, Meads will provide dramaturgical support for mainstage productions, teach and create curriculum in A.C.T.'s Conservatory, and spearhead A.C.T.'s robust New Works program. Meads begins her tenure at A.C.T. on Monday, August 13, 2018.

Peter J. Kuo is a director, producer, writer, and educator focused on raising the visibility of marginalized communities. He is currently in the Directing Corps at Williamstown Theatre Festival where he is assistant director to Rachel Chavkin on the new musical *Lempicka*. He just finished a First Stage Residency at The Drama League and was recently named one of TCG's Rising Leaders of Color. Recently, Kuo was the social justice programs coordinator at The New School, where he founded the NSD: Affinity Groups program and was involved with several equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives. He taught the class Acting Beyond Marginalization at HB Studio, and has directed students in productions at The Atlantic Acting School and Redhouse Art Center. He previously worked as an art administrator at South Coast Repertory, East West Players, Soho Repertory Theatre, and LA Stage Alliance. He is the co-founder of Artists at Play, a Los Angeles Asian American Theatre Collective. As a director and assistant director, he has worked at The Play Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, East West Players, South Coast Repertory, Geffen Playhouse, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, Leviathan Lab, Ma-Yi Theater Company, and Pan Asian Repertory, among others. His first assistant directing job was working with A.C.T.'s new artistic director, Pam MacKinnon, on the world premiere of *The Parisian Woman* at South Coast Repertory in 2013. Kuo is originally from South Pasadena, California. He holds a bachelor's degree in drama from UC Irvine, with a minor in business management; and a master of fine arts in directing from The New School for Drama.

As Associate Conservatory Director, Kuo will play a key role on the M.F.A. faculty, directing M.F.A. productions, teaching, and advising students, as well as serve as a liaison between M.F.A. faculty and students and A.C.T.'s artistic team. In addition, Kuo will oversee the day-to-day operations of A.C.T.'s San Francisco Semester and strategize cultivation of Conservatory alumni. Kuo begins his tenure at A.C.T. on Monday, September 10, 2018.

Danyon Davis is departing the Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York City, where he also served as head of movement. He trained as an actor at the Juilliard Drama Division as a member of Group 25. Danyon also apprenticed as a teacher at Juilliard under founding faculty member and Head of Movement/Physical Acting, Moni Yakim, at the invitation of the late director of the Drama Division, Jim Houghton. Davis is a former faculty member at the Neighborhood Playhouse, Circle in the Square Theatre School, and HB Studio's Hagen Core Training Program. He has taught workshops in many settings, including community and arts-in-education based work with Stephen DiMenna, as well as workshop intensives with the Bill Reed Voice Studio, Middlebury College, and the Public Theater. As an actor, Davis has performed in classical, contemporary, and experimental plays in theaters across the US and in Europe. Notably, Danyon originated the roles of Curly Day and Muddy in the marathon stage adaptation of John Irving's *The Cider House Rules* at the Mark Taper Forum, directed by Jane Jones and Tom Hulce; Danyon also created the role of Wilson in Chuck Mee's *bobrauschenbergamerica*, which was developed by the SITI Company. Danyon trained for many years with SITI while being mentored by the company's co-artistic director, Ellen Lauren. Playing the role of Puck in Joe Dowling's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Davis began an association with the Guthrie Theater during Mr. Dowling's inaugural season as artistic director. Davis continued to act in plays while also working with the Guthrie's education and artistic staffs. He had the great honor of assisting David Esbjornson in staging the Guthrie's world premiere of one of Arthur Miller's final plays, *Resurrection Blues*. As an associate director, Davis worked closely with Tony Award-winning director/choreographer Bill T. Jones in the development of commercial theater work. Davis's recent work onstage includes the role of Red in Aaron

Siegel's experimental opera, *Brother, Brother* (Abrons Arts Center); the role of Dusabi in the US premiere of Ken Urban's *Sense of an Ending* (59E59th St. Theater); and with the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, Davis narrated and played all of the speaking roles in Wynton Marsalis and Stanley Crouch's *A Fiddler's Tale*. Davis is currently working on a follow-up to *Of River, Of Days*, which is a stage adaptation of Henry David Thoreau's first book, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*.

As Head of Movement, Davis will oversee the movement curriculum in A.C.T.'s MFA program. Additionally, Davis will support A.C.T. developmental projects, coach mainstage works, support student productions, and serve as a student advisor. Davis begins his tenure at A.C.T. on Thursday, August 23, 2018.

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