

50  
YEARS

A.C.T.  
AMERICAN  
CONSERVATORY  
THEATER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press photos and kits: [act-sf.org/press](http://act-sf.org/press)

“Haunting and haunted!”—*The New York Times*

“You can’t take your eyes off it!”—*The Guardian*

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER TO PRESENT  
PULITZER PRIZE–WINNING PLAYWRIGHT ANNIE BAKER’S NEW PLAY,  
*JOHN*

Acclaimed stage actress and TV legend Georgia Engel reprises her off-Broadway triumph in A.C.T. debut

A.C.T.’s Strand Theater  
February 22–April 23, 2017

SAN FRANCISCO (January 3, 2017)—American Conservatory Theater (A.C.T.) continues its 2016–17 season with Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright Annie Baker’s new play, *John* (February 22–April 23, 2017). A haunting drama that took off-Broadway by storm, *John* is the latest hit from American theater’s hottest new voice—Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Baker (*The Flick*). Twentysomethings Jenny and Elias arrive at an old bed-and-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—he wants to tour the historic battlefield, she wants to be left alone. But in the creaking Civil War house, amid the shelves of smiling dolls and the ghostly landlady, every crack between the couple starts to surface. Echoing with tension, humor, and unease like a modern-day Chekhov, playwright Annie Baker creates a twenty-first-century nerve-jangler that had critics raving. “*John* is so good, on so many levels, that it casts a unique and brilliant light” (*The New Yorker*). Press nights for *John* will be held on Thursday, March 9 and Friday, March 10, 2017. **Single tickets** (ranging from \$20–\$105) are available at the A.C.T. Box Office at 415.749.2228 or online at [www.act-sf.org](http://www.act-sf.org). *Ticket prices are subject to change without notice.*

Says A.C.T. Artistic Director **Carey Perloff**: “Annie Baker is one of the most mysterious and seductive writers in the American theater today. I have long wanted to produce her work, yet The Geary was never the right space

for a writer that creates work of great intimacy. So, it is with great pleasure that we present her newest outing *John* at The Strand! With her signature wicked wit and complex characterizations, Baker takes us on a journey inside four very complicated and surprising individuals, two generations both wrestling with the big questions of life, stranded in a bed and breakfast so filled with tchotchkes they can hardly move. Annie will be in residence with us during rehearsals, and we so look forward to welcoming her and Ken Rus Schmoll to the Bay Area, with their spectacular cast, to recreate this magical haunting story."

Reprising a role she performed to great acclaim at New York's Signature Theatre, TV legend **Georgia Engel** (*The Mary Tyler Moore Show*, *Everybody Loves Raymond*) makes her A.C.T. debut in the role of "Mertis," the cheerful yet all too present landlady. Joining her are **Ann McDonough** ("Genevieve"), **Joe Paulik** ("Elias") and **Stacey Yen** ("Jenny").

Under the direction of **Ken Rus Schmoll**, the creative team for *John* includes **Robert Hand** (Lighting Designer), **Jessie Amoroso** (Costume Designer), **Marsha Ginsberg** (Set Designer), **Brendan Aanes** (Sound Designer), and **Jacquelyn Scott** (Props Master).

In connection with *John*, A.C.T. will offer numerous **InterACT events**—many of which are presented free of charge—that will give patrons opportunities to get closer to the action while having an entire night out at the theater. Visit [act-sf.org/interact](http://act-sf.org/interact) to learn more about subscribing to these events throughout the season:

- **Bike to the Theater Night:**  
**Wednesday, February 22, 7 p.m.**  
Providing a greener alternative to theater transportation, A.C.T. and the San Francisco Bicycle Coalition offer free valet bike parking, as well as a special discount on tickets, for these select performances.
- **Prologue:**  
**Tuesday, March 7, 5:30 p.m.**  
Before the curtain goes up, get a sneak peek at the artistic process at this fascinating preshow discussion with the director and artistic staff.
- **Theater on the Couch:**  
**Friday, March 10, following the 7:30 p.m. performance**  
Led by Dr. Mason Turner, chief of psychiatry at San Francisco's Kaiser Permanente Medical Center, this exciting postshow discussion series addresses audience questions and explores the minds, motives, and behavior of the characters.
- **Audience Exchanges:**  
**Tuesday, March 14, 7 p.m. | Wednesday, March 29, 1 p.m. | Sunday, April 16, 1 p.m.**  
After the show, stick around for a lively Q&A session with the actors and artists who create the work onstage.
- **OUT with A.C.T.:**  
**Wednesday, March 15, following the 7:30 p.m. performance**  
The best LGBT night in town! Mingle with the cast and enjoy free drinks and treats at this popular after-party.
- **Wente Vineyards Wine Series:**  
**Tuesday, March 28, 7 p.m.**  
Before the show, raise a glass at this wine-tasting event featuring the Bay Area's hottest local winery.

- **PlayTime**

***Saturday, April 15, doors open at 12:30 p.m.***

Before this matinee performance, get hands-on with the artists who make it happen at this interactive theater workshop.

A.C.T.'s production of *John* is made possible by producers **Abby and Gene Schnair**; and associate producers **Drs. Michael and Jane Marmor** and **Anne and Michelle Shonk**.

A.C.T. would also like to acknowledge its 2016–17 company sponsors **Ray and Dagmar Dolby Family Fund**; **Frannie Fleishhacker**; **Priscilla and Keith Geeslin**; **Jeri Lynn and Jeffrey W. Johnson**; **Fred M. Levin and Nancy Livingston**, **The Shenson Foundation**; **Burt and Deedee McMurtry**; **Barbara Ravizza and John S. Osterweis**; **Arthur Rock and Toni Rembe**; and **Mary and Steven Swig**, season partner **PG&E**, lead education partner **Wells Fargo**, 50th Anniversary Season Airline Sponsor **United Airlines**, and Official Hotel Sponsor **Hotel G**.

Up next, A.C.T. will present a reimagined version of Robert Lepage's internationally acclaimed play *Needles and Opium* (March 30–April 23, 2017). Following his remarkable worldwide success with *The Suit*, which played to standing ovations and sold-out houses at A.C.T. in 2014, legendary director Peter Brook is back with *Battlefield* (April 26–May 21, 2017). A.C.T. will close out its 2016–17 season with the critically acclaimed musical, *A Night with Janis Joplin* (June 7–July 2, 2017), in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the legendary Summer of Love in San Francisco.

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## **FACT SHEET FOR JOHN**

### **WHAT:**

A haunting drama that took off-Broadway by storm, *John* is the latest hit from American theater's hottest new voice. Jenny and Elias show up at an old bed-and-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania—he wants to tour the historic battlegrounds, she wants to be left alone. But in the creaking house they find something unsettling. Is it the spirits of the Civil War dead? The smiling dolls that line the rooms? Their curious landlady, Mertis, who switches their bedroom because “the Jackson Room can be a little temperamental”? Or is it just that their relationship is on the skids and one of them is cheating? A delicious nerve-jangler hailed as “A true masterpiece!” (*Slate*), this is a visceral ghost story with a millennial twist that will haunt the intimate Strand Theater.

### **WHO:**

Written by: **Annie Baker**

Directed by **Ken Rus Schmoll**

### **CAST:**

**Georgia Engel** (“Mertis”), **Ann McDonough** (“Genevieve”), **Joe Paulik** (“Elias”) and **Stacey Yen** (“Jenny”)

### **CREATIVE TEAM:**

**Robert Hand** (Lighting Designer), **Jessie Amoroso** (Costume Designer), **Marsha Ginsberg** (Set Designer), **Brendan Aanes** (Sound Designer), and **Jacquelyn Scott** (Props Master).

### **WHERE:**

**A.C.T.'s Strand Theater (1127 Market St., San Francisco)**

### **WHEN:**

**February 22–April 23, 2017**

Press Nights: Thursday, March 9 and Friday, March 10, 2017

### **PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE:**

Tuesdays–Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesdays and Saturdays at 1 p.m.

Sundays at 1 p.m. (7 p.m. performance on 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, 4/16)

### **InterACT Events**

Bike to the Theater Night: February 22 (7 p.m.)

Prologue: March 7 (5:30 p.m.)

Theater on the Couch: March 10 (7:30 p.m.)

Audience Exchanges: March 14 (7 p.m.), March 29 (1 p.m.), April 16 (1 p.m.)

OUT with A.C.T.: March 15 (7:30 p.m.)

Wine Series: March 28 (7 p.m.)

### **TICKETS:**

\$20–\$105

*Ticket prices are subject to change without notice*

### **PHOTOS:**

[http://act-sf.org/home/about/press\\_room.html](http://act-sf.org/home/about/press_room.html)

### **TIX & INFO:**

415.749.2228 | [act-sf.org](http://act-sf.org)

### **PRESS:**

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