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PERFORMING ARTS

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GREAT EXPECTATIONS

Th-Th-That’s All, Folks
People and Performances Certain to Make News in June

RING MY CHIMES

Richard Wagner worked on his mammoth Ring cycle for more than twenty-five years; nowadays it only seems to take that long to see through it. Lengthy as the whole cycle is, convoluted and sometimes risible as the plots may seem, the four operas comprising the Ring of the Nibelung nonetheless offer grandeur and poignancy on so many levels that we warrant our dedication once or twice a decade.

The San Francisco Opera once again leads us through this beautiful ordeal with its second complete Ring cycle, repeating the imaginative and generally effective production by Nikolaus Lehnhoff first seen in 1986 and with many of the same cast members. James Morris, for instance, relatively new to the role five years ago, will sing Wotan in most of the performances. Gwyneth Jones will return as Brünnhilde (alternating with Janis Mattlin and Heidi Gravendal Behrens) and the splendidly vital Rene Kollo will share the role of Siegfried with William John.

It’s easy to mock the Ring, although difficult to do so as deftly as the musical comedian Anna Russell, who can boil the entire stupifying plot down to twenty minutes of clear-sighted hilarity. Wagner’s psychological acuity, however, is not so easily laughed away. He began writing his Nibelung dramas at a time when revolution wracked nineteenth century Europe; and nothing in the course of human events since allows us to dismiss his vision of greed and distrust, love and courage, struggling for dominance in the affairs of men and gods.

There is an extraordinary exchange in the second opera, The Hallotry, when Wotan must choose between two right causes, knowing that either choice will bring the downfall of the gods. Wotan’s tremendous narrative, acknowledging the greed for power that will bring him and all his race to disaster, is a confession of extraordinary force. It must be remem-

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There is an extraordinary exchange in the second opera, The Hallgerty, when Wotan must choose between two right causes, knowing that either choice will bring the downfall of the gods. Wotan’s tremendous narrative, acknowledging the greed for power that will bring him and all his race to disaster, is a confession of extraordinary force. It must be remembered and web-like suppsnaps reminds one more of Bach’s cantatas than of traditional operatic form. Wagner was obsessed by his vision of the Gesammtumswert — a fusion of music, poetry, lighting and stage decor — but in the end it is primarily the music that seduces us. Wagner was right in his belief that the experience of live music and theater is more moving than the mere listening. To live through the entire Ring cycle is to undergo a kind of trial by musical fire; the reward is a sense of spiritual cleansing.

Four cycles will be presented between June 6 and July 1; and a wealth of adjunct Ring events are planned for the month of June. To orchestrate an event from a twelve-minute film, “Hundert Jahre Ring des Nibelungen,” an eccentric miracle of compression, to a documentary exhibition on Bayreuth Festivals from 1876 to 1986. (Call 901-0700 for dates and details.) The Wagner Society of the United States is in full force with a series of lectures, exhibitions and films (421-4412), and the San Francisco Opera Guild offers preview lectures by Bryan Magee in Marin, Sontoma, San Francisco, San Jose and Palo Alto (565-6452). The University of California at San Francisco will conduct a two-day extension course on “Psychological, Social and Health Implications of Richard Wagner’s Ring” (788-2919), as an antidote to this heavy dose of medical, psychological, sociological, historical, musical and feminist overviews (some of the lecture titles read like parodies), we recommend Anna Russell’s recordings, The Ring of the Nibelung, June 6 through July 1, San Francisco Opera House, (415) 884-3390.

Above: A scene from San Francisco Opera’s 1986 production of Richard Wagner’s Ring of the Nibelung. Four complete Ring cycles will be presented between June 6 and July 1, at the Opera House.

by Kate Regan

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MUSIC IN HISTORY

Lovers of early music need not despair; Wagner will not be June’s only musical event. We have UC Berkeley’s Cal Performances to thank for its first Berkeley Festival and Exhibition: Music inHistory. The week-long festival will include more than thirty concerts, master classes and workshops and will be followed by early music festivals on subsequent even-numbered years.

Of greatest interest are a fully-staged production of Nico Muhly’s 1768 “serious comic” opera La schiava liberata; a Monteverdi day with performances of the Mass of the Blessed Virgin and Vespers of the Blessed Virgin, featuring sopranos Judith Nelson and tenor Jeffrey Thomas; and a staged production of Carmina Burana based on the original thirteenth century manuscript but not, we are happy to say, employing Carl Orff’s hypertensive score. A symposium on The Early Music Debate: Ancients, Moderns, Postmoderns has some promising speakers, and there will also be discussions of Carmina Burana in History, of the rarely-heard Jommelli opera and of Handel’s La Resurrezione. The early music festival is the sort of thorough, scholarly and enlivening activity that a great university should produce; and only a great university could attempt it. June 10-17, various locations on and off the UC Berkeley campus. (415) 642-9088.

DIFFERENT DANCE

The San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival began more than a decade ago as a chaotic, overgrown, embarrassingly enthusiastic event that sometimes tried the spectators’ patience but more often rounded heated applause. Over the years, this homegrown festival has become more professional in presentation, with a stricter eye for theatrical values.

The move toward making more sparsely evenings has brought controversy with it. Those interested in pure ethnic values have pointed out, rightly, that most folk dances were intended to be participatory or to involve viewers in a ritual that was often religious in nature. They protest that staging such dances as a showy theatrical experience dilutes their authenticity. Festival organizers have countered that the stage is an inherently artificial space and that some adaptation is necessary if a multi-ethnic audience is to understand and enjoy the multitude of dance languages seen during the festival.

In the end, both traditional values and performance aesthetics have flourished. Fifteen minutes each of dances, ranging from Indian bhangra to Balinese court dancing to Filipino, Aztec, Haitian, Tibetan, Spanish or Senegalese forms, may be only nomads, but they offer a vivid cultural taste. Alongside, sixteen companies and...
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three soloists will appear during six different programs. Ten entries are new to the festival; old favorites include Khadra International Folk Ballet, Pau Dia Congo, Kalinang Arts (Filipino) and the Balinese Gamelan Soerar Jaya. Each weekend will have a theme: "Dances of Celebration" will feature jubilant dances of many countries; "Dances of the African Diaspora" will demonstrate the African roots of dance from the Caribbean and Latin America; and "Dance Around the World" is an international sampler. This year the festival will expand to include curtain talks before certain programs and an all-day symposium on ethnic dance, to consider, among other things, the controversies involved in preserving and presenting ethnic arts. June 1-16 at the Palace of Fine Arts. (415) 532-3656.

BACK TO BASICS
Folk art doesn’t pontificate, and therein lies much of its mysterious attraction. Whether carving a utilitarian bowl, weaving a rug or painting an icon intended to focus a worshipper’s prayers, the makers of folk arts work with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose is usually self-evident and long-established. Even when an object has transformed itself, through age and rarity, into a work of purely aesthetic value, its original usefulness lingers like a patina. There is something direct and unassuming in the way these carvings, ceramics or quilts confront us. They do not make oblique statements; we can figure them out. This is not to say that the original artists were indifferent to the pride and delight of making something beautiful as well as useful. A strong sensitivity to the rhythm of color and form marks the folk art and crafts we continue to admire long after its anonymous creators have disappeared. But the unknown Amish women who made quilts in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, for instance would no doubt be pleased and even abashed to think that their bed coverings are now coveted collectors’ items.
Amish: the Art of the Quilt, an exhibition of sixty full size quilts from the Esprit Collection, will open next month at the M.H. de Young Memorial Museum. At the same time, a large survey of Folk Art to the catalogue that the design patterns used by Lancaster Amish women Art of the Soviet Union will open at the estimable San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum. The two shows differ in their scope, one focusing on the exquisitely controlled life and works of one Amish community and the other offering 750 works from fifteen republics. Both, however, exemplify the vibrancy of folk traditions.
The quilts in the de Young exhibition were collected by Doug Tompkins, a founder of Esprit De Corps, many of them will be on display for the first time. Dating from 1870 to 1950, the quilts cover all the major Amish design types: Center Square, Diamond, Bars, Ninepatch and Sunshine and Shadow, as they were called by their creators. Curator Julie Silver of the Esprit Collection says in her introduction:

"Love that by an unknown Amish quilter from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania."
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The works displayed in Folk Art of the...
Soviet Union date to the eighteenth and nineteenth century and range from intricately carved ivory boxes from Arkhangelsk Province, to a strikingly bold wooden idol from Siberia that resembles African tribal objects. This haunting little god, intended as a guardian of the house, has the grave, wondrous aspect of a fantastical creature by Paul Klee. All of the materials come from the State Museum of Ethnography in Leningrad, a vast collection of nearly half a million items from 150 ethnic groups of the USSR.

The diversity is fascinating. There are stiffly embroidered costumes from Russia proper, many brocaded and adorned with pearls, fanciful glass vessels from the Ukraine, elegant needlework from the Volga region, a Turkmen silver and carnelian woman's purse that many a fashion plate today might envy, velvet costumes from the Caucasus and splendid carpets made by the nomads of Central Asia. The objects may be gaudy, subtle, whimsical or profound in their simplicity.

June 21-July 29, San Francisco Craft and Folk Art Museum, Fort Mason Center. (415) 775-0990.

GOODE TIMING

Joe Goode generally likes to turn things upside down, so it's not surprising that his first choreographic venture on a proscenium stage will, he says, "undo the proscenium." Remembering the Pool at the Best Western, a full evening dance/theater piece designed by Zellerbach Playhouse in Berkeley, is his "most narrative work yet," a reflection of disaster and transcendence. It stems from a serious and startling revelation; he received a few years ago while floating in a motel swimming pool.

A tall, lean, muscular man in his late thirties, Goode grew up in Hampton, Virginia at a time when dancing was something you just couldn't do in Hampton. Even while active in a local ballet company during high school, he wouldn't tell his best friend about it. And his parents, while not actively opposed to a dance career, refused to support it financially.

Goode first encountered modern dance in college, when he had begun to be disenchanted with ballet. "I just find it a very narrow window on the possibilities," he says, "and it's a very limited view of what dance is all about". That's why he's ready to go for broke. He's ready to be an innovator, to make the world stand up and take notice.

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I. MAGNIN

COCCO

INTRODUCING EAU DE TOILETTE

A TANTALIZING NEW ASPECT OF THE MODERN CLASSIC

MAY 1980

of art and marked by sexist manipulations. As a tall man, I had lots of chances in ballet, but it was mainly to do lifting — and look noble. And as I got more involved with theater, ballet dancing didn’t seem to take anything on; it was pretty or sexy but nothing more. Just bow-tie.

With his introduction to modern dance and his college involvement with experimental theater group of Richmond, Goode became aware of a possible synthesis between abstract movement and text, "but I didn’t know how to make it work."

Around this time, in the late 60s, he period of dancing for Margaret Jenkins. His work for the last few years has been marked by the time he spent in Montana, where from 1984 on he taught at the University of Montana in Missoula. "It was not at all what I expected. The dance department is excellent, the students were aware, and the community is full of artists. I thought I was a house orchestra who could exist only in an urban setting at just the right temperature, but my work resonated for these people. In way it was a scary realization, that my work was accessible. And it sounds corny, but I became very aware of nature — how awesome it is. It seemed that every personal disaster, in the deaths around us! I was looking for some spiritual comfort, I suppose, something deeper and larger than the intimate tragedies that surrounded and seem to overwhelm us.”

In Brief:

Theater: Vasilv Havel’s 1977 autobiographical drama, Waiting, banned in Czechoslovakia for fifteen years, will open at Life on the Water Theater, June 29-July 15 (415) 885-2790. Berkeley Shakespeare Festival performs in John Hinkel Park for one last season before moving to Orenda’s Shrines Memorial Amphitheater. It begins with The Merry Wives of Windsor, directed by Julian Lopez-Martinez, starting June 22. (415) 525-8844.

Coco, the driving, exhilarating South African musical that won five Tony Awards on Broadway, is based on the experience of a class at the Morris Island High School in Soweto, site of the 1976 student uprisings and has an all South African cast; June 11-July 8 at the Golden Gate Theater. (415) 249-9001.

Music: It’s fitting that the San Francisco Symphony brings us its annual Beethoven Festival, lower Roger Norrington’s impassioned direction, just as Wagner’s Ring Cycle completes; “Get with the force. Listen to the music,” Norrington says, and he could have been quoting Wagner on Beethoven. June 26-July 8, Davies Symphony Hall. (415) 435-5440.

San Francisco Girls Chorus presents Never and Never Music for Treble, 1955-1989, including music brought from Hungary, “the capital of new music for girls’ voices,” they say; June 2-3, First Congregational Church in Oakland and June 3 at First Congregational Church of San Francisco. (415) 673-1311.

Art: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art presents two significant shows next month: Visionary San Francisco, an exhibition examining the city’s past, present and future through the eyes of architects and writers; June 14-August 26. And, Minor White: The Eye That Shapes, the first major retrospective of the American photographer; June 22-August 19. (415) 986-8800.
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Around this time, in the late 60s, he saw some early “happenings” in Washington, D.C. “There were Warhol, Merce Cunningham, Robert Rauschenberg. I can’t say I got it, but I did sense that there was some mystery there that I ought to pursue. The dancers then were like wonderful creatures; this was back when they were creatures and not recycled ballet dancers!” He eventually wound up in New York City studying with Cunningham, but, “in my soul I am not an athlete, I’m not much interested in doing something with my legs that’s never been done before. It’s the internal rhythm of a character or a movement that interests me.”

Goode officially formed his own company in 1986, after a long and amicable period of dancing for Margaret Jenkins. His work for the last few years has been marked by the time he spent in Montana, where from 1984 on he taught at the University of Montana in Missoula. “It was not at all what I expected. The dance department is excellent, the students were aware, and the community is full of artists. I thought I was a bohemian, that I could exist only in an urban setting at just the right temperature, but my work resonated for these people. In a way it was a scary realization, that my work was accessible. And it sounds corny, but I became very aware of nature — how awesome it is. It seemed that every personal disaster, in the deaths around us, I was looking for some spiritual comfort. I suppose, something deeper and larger than the intimate tragedies that surrounded me in Berkeley.”

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The Rite Stuff

A Discussion of Diaghilev, the Ballets Russes, Nijinsky, and Nijinska

In May of 1909 an artistic event occurred in Paris that changed how we perceive ballet in the twentieth century.

This was the date that thirty-seven-year-old Sergei Pavlovitch Diaghilev introduced Western Europe to the Ballets Russes, a collection of Russian dancers, choreographers, musicians, and artists of the Imperial Theatres. He presented Paris with a full season of these performers in May and June 1909, replete with original sets, stagings, and costumes.

DIAGHILEV

Diaghilev, who was born in the Russian province of Novgorod on March 18, 1872, always envisioned things on a grand scale. Like Peter the Great, the Diaghilev were thought to be his illegitimate off-springs: he attempted to open a window to the west, but unlike Peter, he attempted to conquer western Europe via a stream of new artistic ideas and creative strength from Russia into Europe, not vice versa.

Today Diaghilev productions are revived by many companies. The Jeffrey NYLA has done extensive research for the ballets in their repertoire. One can view their excellent stagings of Petrouchka, Parade, L'Après-Midi d'un Faune, Le Sacre du Printemps, and their most recent endeavor — Les Noces. Also included in the Jeffrey’s previous seasons are The Three

Cornered Hat, Pulcinella, and Le Spectre de La Rose.

This spring under the auspices of Jeffrey Artistic Director Gerald Apirito, the company is presenting three of these Russian masterpieces, L'Après-Midi d’un

and it was only natural for cosmopolitan Diaghilev to consider it the sole place in which to unveil his creative collaborations as novelty and modernity were in the air. By the May 18 dress rehearsal the shabby Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris had been completely redone to fit Diaghilev’s program. All of Paris responded to the excitement. Astruc and Diaghilev filled the audience with notables from around the world: Drama, art, music critics, and editors of the principal papers and journals were present. Diaghilev had invited directors of opera houses, including Gatti-Casazza and Dippel from the Metropolitan in New York, and Henry Russell from Boston. Politicians and notables of the foreign service, couture, writers, musicians, dancers, and the theatrical world were all represented including Leon and Loret Chaudet, Pierre Lalo, Gabriel Darté, Auguste Boïot, Geraldine Farrar, Pedro Chaliapine, Lusso Duncan, and enfant terrible Jean Cocteau. Astruc had prepared a particular surprise by offering the demi-monde, the prettiest actresses in Paris from row seats in the balcony. For the opening season, Diaghilev brought a company of fifty dancers recruited from the Russian Imperial Ballet. The majority were from St. Petersburg’s Maryinsky Theatre, with others hailed from Moscow and the Bolshoi. Among those dancing for the first time in Paris were the twenty-one-year-old rising star Vaslav Nijinsky, and his younger

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Los Angeles based Rosaline George writes frequently on the arts.

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Prune, Le Sacre Du Printemps and
Les Noes in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Orange County.

THE BEGGINNINGS
Diaghilev arranged the 1909 premiere season with French impresario, Gabriel Astruc. Paris was the center of cultural happenings at the turn-of-the-century.

And it was only natural for cosmopolitan Diaghilev to consider it the sole place in which to unveil his creative collaborations as newness and modernity were in the air. By the May 1909 dress rehearsal the shabby Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris had been completely redesigned to fit Diaghilev’s program.

All of Paris responded to the excitement. Astruc and Diaghilev filled the audience with notables from around the world. Drama, art, music critics, and editors of the principal papers and journals were present. Diaghilev had invited directors of opera houses, including Gatti-Casazza and Dippel from the Metropolitan in New York, and Henry Russell from Boston. Politicians and notables of the foreign service, couture, writers, musicians, dancers and the theatrical world were all represented including Leon and Lorca Daudet, Pierre Lalo, Gabriel Faure, Auguste Rodin, Geraldine Farrar, Peolet Chaliapine, Isadora Duncan, and enfant terrible Jean Cocteau. Astruc had prepared a particular surprise for offering the demi-monde, the prettiest actresses in Paris from row seats in the balcony.

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by Rosaline George
and the suite of dances Le Festin were performed both by Karasvina and Nijinsky had captured the hearts of Paris.

On June 2, 1910 Diaghilev presented two more ballets choreographed by Fokine: Chopin's Les Sylphides and Cleopatra. Pavlova and Nijinsky were partnered in Les Sylphides. This was one of their last pairings, as Pavlova went to England to form her own company at the end of the season. Cleopatra's lavish and exotic sets and costumes by Bakst, plus the sensuous dancing of Nijinsky again aroused Paris.

Thus the Ballets Russes was born. For the next twenty years Diaghilev was to devote his life to the dance, to ballet.

By the next season of 1910, with the introduction of Fokine's new ballets Scheherazade; to Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's music and Bakst's sets, Stravinsky's first ballet commissioned by Diaghilev D'oiseau De Feu (The Firebird). Carmaned and Les Pervinca, plus Fokine's rendition of Marius Paulin's Giselle, now performed at the Théâtre National de l'Opéra, Paris. Nijinsky was an international star. In addition to the thrill of watching Nijinsky's immense talent, Paris had never seen the colors and sumptuousness of the sets of these Russian artists. The pallid colors and watertints of the fire de steele gave way to the brilliant vivid colors as painted by Bakst, Bono, and Reicht. The unmatch of

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PERFORMING ARTS
By the next season of 1910, with the introduction of Fokine's new ballets *Schéhérazade*, to Nikolaï Rimsky-Korsakov's music and Balak’s work, Stravinsky's first ballet commissioned by Diaghilev, *L'Oiseau de Feu* (The Firebird), *Coromar* and *Les Oiseaux Dansant*, plus Fokine's new Nuit de St. Louis presented at the Théâtre National de l’Opéra, Paris, Nijinsky was an international star. In addition to the thrill of watching Nijinsky's immense talent, Paris had never seen the colors and sumptuousness of the sets of these Russian artists. The pallid colors and warm tints of the *fin de siècle* gave way to the brilliant vivid colors as painted by Bakst, Benois, and Bocher. The avant-garde

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**THE BALLET RUSSES**

The spring of 1911 was a milestone in ballet annals. It marked the first season of Diaghilev's permanent company, Les Ballets Russes de Diaghilev, featuring Diaghilev artists. Nijinsky was his premier danseur. Maestro Cecchetti joined them as a teacher and dancer. Adolph Bolm resigned from The Imperial Theatres to join. Also among the new recruits was the eighteen year old, Olga Khokhlova who married Pablo Picasso in 1918.

On April 19, 1911 Nijinsky and Karasukina were again the principal dancers in the Fokine/Balak ballet *Le Spectre de la Rose* performed in Monte Carlo. Nijinsky's new famous leap electrified his audience. In her autobiography Karasukina relates that when Nijinsky was asked about the difficulty of staying in the air he replied "you have to just go up and then pause a little up there." (In 1979, The Jeffrey premiered this ballet at the Mark Hellinger Theater in New York, with Rudolf Nureyev and Denise Jackson dancing the leads.)

Diaghilev prided himself on his ability to nurture young Russian talent. In addition to working repeatedly with Nijinsky he continued to expand his collaboration with Stravinsky. Prior to the June 1910 premier of *The Firebird*, he had told his dancers to "mark him [Stravinsky] well, he is about to become famous." With a standing ovation Stravinsky became an international figure overnight, one of the many to be discovered and launched by Diaghilev. Stravinsky worked with Diaghilev for the next twenty years, and composed the music for *Pétrouchka*, rumored to be Nijinsky's favorite role. *Pétrouchka*, the traditional puppet folk hero of every Russian carnival, demanded from Nijinsky not only his extraordinary dance technique, but his acting talents as well, his body had to be as limpid as a doll and his suffering realistic and moving.

Of all the Diaghilev dancers, the most legendary was Nijinsky. Paris regarded him as Le Dieu de Danse, (the God of Dance), the new Auguste Vestris. Indeed, in his tragic brief time as a performer he was the most famous male dancer in the world. He was the ideal Fokine interpreter, a strong male dancer who more

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**LINCOLN. What a luxury car should be.**

**PERFORMING ARTS**

**Stirrup together we can see stars.**
than hold his own with the female dancers he partnered.

NJNIJSKY

Njnijsky was short, 5'4", with Tartar features, dark hair, slanted eyes, a long elegant neck and a powerful muscled body. He was able to lift seventy-two pounds with one arm, his thigh muscles were so highly developed that he could not raise his legs higher in the front to more than ninety degrees. This may in part attribute to the extraordinary technical feats he was able to achieve. He was noted for his remarkable élévation and balancé, the former made more impressive by the fact that he took an almost imperceptible preparation for his leap, and seemed to pause in the air at the apex of his leap. He traveled through the air, not just up into it.

His stage presence was powerful and magnetic, and he exhibited tremendous sensitivity to music. The English critic Clive Beaumont stated, "He not so much danced to the music, but he appeared to issue from it."

A great and unusual artist, Njnijsky was able to expand a simple choreographic design into a rich dramatic portrait, using his whole body as an expressive instrument to not only depict the actions and gestures of an isolated type of character, but the spirit or essence of all types of that character.

Bodo sets down how, "The final metamorphosis took place when he put on his costume; about which he was always very particular, demanding that it should be an exact copy of the sketch made by the artist. At these moments the usually apathetic Vaslav became nervous and capricious... he gradually began to change into another being, the one he saw in the mirror. He became reincarnated and actually entered into his new existence. The fact that Njnijsky's metamorphosis was predominantly subconscious is in my opinion the very proof of his genius."

The Njnijskys were Polish. His parents Thomas (Foma) Larentievich Njnijsky (1862-1922) and Eleonora Nikolayevna Borevich (1865-1915) were both dancers who studied at the Warsaw Wolski Theatre Ballet School. The parents were part of a traveling dance troupe, and Vaslav and Bronia were born "on the road," in Kiev, Russia on March 12, 1888, and Bronia in Minsk on January 9, 1890 — one hundred years ago. An older brother Stanislaw was born in 1888.

Thomas was an excellent premier danseur noted for his high leaps and character dances. The children were taught dancing as early as walking and talking. Trained by their parents they learned ballet, acrobatics, and even tap dancing from the black American tap dancers Jackson and Johnson, who were touring Russia at the time.

Njnijsky made his debut at five performing Russian Folk dances, and Bronia years later Bronislava was accepted for the September 1, class of 1900. Out of 214 candidates only twelve were accepted.

After seven to eight years of training, and graduation, one could apply to become an artist of the Imperial Theatre, a permanent government position. Accepted applicants began with the corps de ballet, then were graduated to soloist or prima ballerina assoluta to fame, fortune and a pension at the age of thirty-six almost equal to their salary. In return for their schooling, the artists of the Imperial Theatre were obliged to dance for a minimum of five years with the Imperial Ballet Theatre.

Njnijsky graduated in 1907 and by May 25, 1907 he was appointed to the Imperial Theatre as a soloist, because of his distinguished dancing. At the Maryinsky Theatre he partnered Pavlova and Mathilda Khakichaevna, the 35 year old prima bailerina assoluta. On May 22, 1908, Bronislava Njnijski graduated from the Imperial School and like her older brother she too submitted her application to become an artist of the Imperial Theartre. On May 24, 1908 she was accepted in the ranks of the corps de ballet, and she began her first season at the Maryinsky Theatre from September 1, 1908 to the end of April 1909.

Brilliant at the bit, Diaghilev was determined to organize his own permanent company, with Njnijsky as his star. Njnijsky was even encouraged by Diaghilev to consider the possibility of choreographing ballets for him.

Events proved fortuitous for Diaghilev. On January 31, 1911 Njnijsky performed the part of Albrecht in Giselle at the Maryinsky. Choosing to wear his costume designed by Bodo for the Ballets Russes' performance in June 1910, Njnijsky created a scandal (fulfilling by today's standards of theatrical costume). The felt tunic over Njnijsky's thigh had been shortened by two inches, and he omitted wearing the traditional trunk over his tights. With Njnijsky's refusal to apologize or resign, he was dismissed from the Imperial Ballet on January 25, 1911.

Diaghilev wrung out all the press he could for Njnijsky's 'grotesque' dismissal. Bronia submitted her resignation in late January.

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Johnnie Walker
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NIJINSKY

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After seven to eight years of training, and graduation, one could apply to become an artist of the Imperial Theatre, a permanent government position. Accepted applicants began with the corps de ballet, to corégilles, to second soliste, to premier danseur or prima ballerina assoluta to fame, fortune and a pension at the age of thirty-six almost equal to their salary. In return for their schooling, the artists of the Imperial Theatre were obliged to dance for a minimum of five years with the Imperial Ballerina Assoluta.

Nijinsky graduated in 1907 and in May 1907 he was appointed to the Imperial Theatres at the rank of corégille, because of his distinguished dancing. At the Maryinsky Theatre he partnered Pavlova and Mathilda Kschessinska, the 36 year old prima ballerina assoluta.

On May 22, 1908, Bronislava Nijinsky graduated from the Imperial School and like her older brother she too submitted her application to become an artist of The Imperial Theatres. On May 24, 1908 she was accepted in the ranks of the corps de ballet, and she began her first season at the Maryinsky Theatre from September 6, 1909 to the end of April 1910. Bridging at the bit, Diaghilev was determined to organize his own permanent company, with Nijinsky as his star. Nijinsky was even encouraged by Diaghilev to consider the possibility of choreographing ballets for him.

Events proved fortuitous for Diaghilev. On January 24, 1911 Nijinsky performed the part of Albrecht in Giselle at the Maryinsky. Choosing to wear his costume designed by Beroin for the Ballets Russes' performance in June 1910, Nijinsky created a scandal (falsely by today's standards of theatrical costume). The felt tunic over Nijinsky's thighs had been shortened by two inches, and he omitted wearing the traditional trunks over his tights. With Nijinsky's refusal to apologize or resign, he was dismissed from The Imperial Ballet on January 26, 1911. Diaghilev wrung out all the press he could for Nijinsky's "grotesque" dismissal. Bronia submitted her resignation in late January.
1914, in support of her brother Nijinsky. At the pinnacle of his fame as a dancer, Nijinsky turned to choreography, with Diaghilev’s blessings. Fokine was becoming disenchanted, and Diaghilev constantly sought innovations and new trends for his company. “Astonish me!” he had informed Fokine, when asked what he wanted for a ballet.

Nijinsky choreographed four ballets for Diaghilev, none a great success in its day. Over seventy-five years later Nijinsky is finally recognized for his creative innovations. Three of his ballets were produced between 1912 and 1913. The first, L’Apres-Midi d’un Faune (Afternoon of a Faun) was based on a poem by the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé, to Debussy’s first great success in 1892, Prélude à l’Apres-Midi d’un Faune. The program read:

“A faun dozes, nymphs tease him, a forgotten scarf satisfies his dreams. The curtain descends so that the program can begin in everyone’s immorality.”

His sister, Bronislava, who danced one of the nymphs, claims Nijinsky started preparing the ballet in 1910, practicing many of the parts with her. The short ballet was like a moving frieze of Greek and Egyptian relics. The dancers were rigidly stylized, their bodies flattened, elbows angled, heads in profile, into an appearance of two dimensions. There were no traditional pair and leaps, and Nijinsky (who danced the faune) ended the ballet in a movement that appeared to simulate an organ.

The ballet was a success de scandale—a storm occurred in the press leading to a debate between the editor of Le Figaro, who castigated Nijinsky, as “Shameless and Hidesious,” and Auguste Rodin, who compared Nijinsky’s performance as the “perfect personification of the ideals of the beauty of ancient Greece,” in Le Matin.

Diaghilev reveled in the not wholly accidental scandal and the world-wide publicity that ensued.

In May 1913, Nijinsky premiered his third ballet for Diaghilev, Le Sacre Du Printemps (The Rite of Spring). The audience reacted almost immediately, hissing and talking during the performance. Diaghilev had to come on stage and bid the spectators to allow the show to continue.

Stravinsky’s score with its disjunctive rhythms and dissonance, was considered un-danceable; Nijinsky’s choreography, the feet turned in, knees slightly bent, fists clenched, simple steps—walking smoothly or stamping, and jumps with both feet landing heavily, to give the illusion of a primitive posture, the men even bestial, was the antithesis of classical ballet and caused the incredulous audience to riot.

Despite the fact that it was believed to have been performed only seven or eight times (five in Paris and possibly three in London), and that for more than seventy years the choreography was given up for lost, this ballet had a profound impact on the history of twentieth century ballet. It has been the pride of place as the first work of modern dance, and Stravinsky’s score was “the fanfare announcing the twentieth century,” according to Lincoln Kirstein.

It is here that the Joffrey’s connection to Le Sacre emerges. Diaghilev had hired Miriam Ramberg, a Polish dancer and expert in Jacques Dalcroze’s System of Eurythmics, to help Nijinsky analyze the counts of the score. As Marie Rambert, she danced with the Ballets Russes, and went on to become a major innovator in the flowering of the British ballet movement, launching the career of Sir Frederick Ashton.

In 1965 Rambert invited twenty-five year old Robert Joffrey to come to London to work with her company. While living at her home Rambert showed Joffrey her notation score and steps from Sacre. This was the birth of the collaboration of Joffrey, Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer to reconstruct the ballet. (On September 30, 1967 the Joffrey premiered Sacre Du Printemps at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles.)

NIJINSKA

Nijinsky was not the only choreographer in the family. His sister Bronislava Nijinsky did her share at creating, too. Her ballet, Le Train Bleu is named after the express that rushed the ‘fous monde’ from Paris to the Côte d’Azur. This was Cotyson’s last Diaghilev ballet. It premiered on June 20, 1924 in Paris as part of the season of art for the Eighty Olympiad. Coco Chanel created the costumes for the ballet and treated them as if they were for her own clientele. Like Nijinsky’s Jeur, Nijinska included sports such as tennis. Nijinska modeled the Tennis Flayer after the French tennis champion, Suzanne Lenglen. Gowns were borrowed from contemporary cinema, and Dolin’s athletic and acrobatic prowess enabled Nijinska to incorporate acrobatic dancing into a classical ballet vocabulary. Picasso designed the drop curtain after one of his paintings, and his drawings and studies of the company dancers were reproduced in the program.

However, it is Le Noce that many consider Nijinska’s masterpiece. Set to the words and music of one of Stravinsky’s most controversial scores it depicts a peasant wedding in old Russia. Nijinska insisted that the sets designed by Constanzo be simple and the costumes alike. She wished to maintain the integrity of her choreography. Its sparse eloquent abstraction predigaged much of contemporary ballet. The fate of the bride and groom in an arranged marriage, the bride’s feelings of loss and alienation might have reflected Nijinska’s own feel-
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“A faun dozes, 
Nymphs tease him, 
A forgotten scarf satisfies his dreams.
The curtain descends so that the program can begin in everyone’s imagination.

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In 1965 Rambert invited twenty-five year old Robert Jeffery to come to London to work with her company. While living at her home Rambert showed Jeffery her notation score and steps from Sacre. This was the birth of the collaboration of Jeffery, Millicent Hodson and Kenneth Archer to reconstruct the ballet. (On September 30, 1967 the Jefferies premiered Sacre Du Printemps at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles.)

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Bombay Sapphire Gin, 40% alc by vol (94 proof)
*Cocktail jacket and samurai sword by Carvin Imports, Ltd. Transax, N.J.

Dancing at the abandonment of her country.

The Joffrey's 1989 production of Los Nueve as staged by Irina Nijinska and Howard Swayne, received critical acclaim for both its style and emotional interpretation.

Nijinska resigned from the Ballets Russes in 1935 over growing disagreements with Diaghilev. Like her parents before her, Nijinska's life became one of an itinerant. She worked around the world. Many of her ballets were inevitably lost as she had no permanent association with an ongoing company. From 1935 she worked with the Paris Opera, the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires, the Ida Rubinstein Ballet, the De Basil Ballet Russes, and the Markova-Dolin Ballet Company to name a few. During the Depression (1932-35) she formed her company Théâtre de la Danse in Paris. An injury to her Achilles tendon in 1935 precipitated an end to her dancing career. In 1934 beck- oned by the film industry, she came to the United States for the first time, to stage the dance sequence in Max Reinhardt's 1935 feature film, A Midsummer Night's Dream featuring Myrna Loy as Puck.

Surviving a world war, a revolution, a Depression, her brother's continuing men- tal illness, personal tragedy once again struck her and her family. Her sixteen year old son León was killed in an auto accident in 1935, and her daughter Irina was critically injured — diminishing her dancing capacity. However, despite upheaval in her life, Nijinska continued to contribute to the world of dance. After organizing the Polish Ballet and touring Europe, she and her family were stranded in London at the onset of World War II in 1939.

To the credit of Richard Pleasant, one of the founders of The American Ballet Theatre, he invited Nijinska to come to New York to restage La Fille Mal Gardee for the inaugural 1940 season of his new company, now celebrating its Fiftieth Anniversary. Once in the United States, Nijinska and her family settled in Los Angeles where she presented Bolero, Chopin Concerto and Eudoxie Bach in a performance at the Holly- wood Bowl to an audience of twenty-two thousand, accompanied by the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra.

First teaching at the Niro Clarisse Ballet School in Hollywood, Nijinska opened her own Hollywood Ballet School in 1941. Her

daughter Irina taught with her for the next ten years. Among their pupils were Vera Ellen, Allegra Kent, Tamara Touma- nova, Natalie Wood and Margaret O'Brian.

She continued to work nationally and internationally, touring and opening schools. Finally in 1956 Bronislava moved to her last home in Pacific Palisades. When her husband died in 1968, Irina became her mother's full-time associate, accompanying her on all her artistic engagements. In 1972, at the age of eighty-one, while working on her memoirs, with contracts to review her ballets pending, Nijinska died of a heart attack.

Irina Nijinska, presently lives in her mother's home with her husband Gibbs Raetz, an aerospace engineer. Their two children George and Natalie are grown with careers outside the world of dance. The house is full of momentoes of her famed mother and uncle. Dedicated to perpetuating the legacy of her mother's work, Irina travels around the world, despite her almost seventy-seven years, staging her mother's ballets, writing about her as well. The love and respect she has for her mother is infinitely moving.

I recently received Irina backstage after a Harlem Dance Theatre performance in Pasadena. The dancers rushed to greet her when they saw her. "Oh, Madame, I did not know you were here." They hugged and kissed her.

THE LEGACY

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The mystery and legacy continue.
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EDWARD HUNTINGTON, Artistic Director
JOHN SULLIVAN, Managing Director

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RIGHT MIND
by George Coe; San Francisco Works
October 2 through October 27
Geary Theater

Two Acts of Passion;
Dutchman
by刺imin; Barbara
CLARA
by Arthur Miller
(co-production with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre)
November 4 through November 16
Lorraine Hansberry Theatre

A TALE OF TWO CITIES
by Charles Dickens
adapted for the stage by Nigel Jackson
November 21 through December 2
Curran Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
by Charles Dickens
December 7 through December 24
Curran Theatre

ALMOST LIKE BEING IN LOVE
The Magic of Alan Jay Lerner
December 27 through January 7
Herbst Theatre

JUDY BOND
by David Rudlin
January 10 through February 14
PASadena Playhouse; Broadway Theatre

TWELFTH NIGHT
by William Shakespeare
January 17 through February 13
PASadena Playhouse; Broadway Theatre

HAPGOOD
by Tom Stoppard
March 7 through April 22
Stage Door Theater

THE IMAGINARY INVALID
by Moliere
March 30 through April 14
PASadena Playhouse; Broadway Theatre

BURN THIS
by Lucinda Williams
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Stage Door Theater

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by George Coe
Co-produced with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre
October 2 through October 27
Geary Theater

Two Acts of Passion;
DUTCHMAN
by Amiri Baraka
Co-produced with the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre
November 4 through November 16
Geary Theater

CLARA
by Arthur Miller
(Appearance of the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre)
December 2 through December 23
Luminous Theater

A TALE OF TWO CITIES
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Adapted for the stage by Nigel Jackson
November 30 through December 24
OffBeat Theatre

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
by Charles Dickens
December 7 through December 24
OffBeat Theatre

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Herbst Theatre

JUDY
by David Rudolf
January 8 through April 14
PSTK Ohlone Street Theater

TWELFTH NIGHT
by William Shakespeare
January 31 through February 19
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

HAPGOOD
by Tom Stoppard
March 7 through April 22
Stage Door Theatre

THE IMAGINARY INVALID
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March 19 through April 14
Palace of Fine Arts Theatre

BURN THIS
by Lucille Wilson
May 3 through May 17
Stage Door Theatre

Honorary Theatre
In recognition of our vision and unflagging support:
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The American Conservatory Theatre was founded in 1866 by William Bell.

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NEWS FROM THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

A.C.T.’s volunteer organization, the Friends of A.C.T., has sponsored a number of Subscriber Dinners. Pictured at a recent dinner are Duffington Miller (left), chairman of the dinner; Nancy Carn, Friends of A.C.T. president; and Managing Director John Sullivan.

THE VOLUNTEERS

They’re not the people you see on the stage. They’re not the ones who move the scenery. But they are the ones who help keep A.C.T. functioning as smoothly as it does. They’re the Friends of A.C.T. volunteers. There is a professional staff administering the theater, but they would be absolutely overwhelmed without the dedicated and generous support of a corps of capable volunteer workers backing them up.

Among the many volunteers who are able to help out, there are a few individuals who devote enormous time — in some cases almost full time — to supporting A.C.T. On any given day a visitor to the company’s offices at 450 Geary St. is likely to find Mango Babcock working in the Press Office, sometimes alongside Joe Sandoz. The reception desk of the Conservatory — the teaching wing of the organization — is likely to be manned by Betty Krider or Alison Augusta; its financial and office affairs by Betty Yamada; its library by Evelyn Moore; and its production office by Ann Morelli, Susan Barrett, Elaine Freeman, Ellen Frank, Richard McLaurin, Maggie Pagnini, Judy Deely, Miriam Peraino, Philip Shulman, Gene Smith, Ellen Spier, Catherine Stroey, Ruth Tisdale, Ruth Tirt, Marilyn Welberg, or Isabel Weid.

Throughout the organization — and throughout the year — A.C.T. thrives with the support of people like Olga Aronoff, Jean Battenburg, Marie Bauer, Catherine Bushoff, Joan Casper, and Ed and Guy Chynacki, Robert Coffman, Mary, and Virginia Colanridi, Maureen Dan, Robert D’Antionio, Celia Gres, Bob Gudy, Helyn Janes, Etta and Glen Jennings, Susan and Harry Lawler, Riva Mintz, Leslie Nalen, Terry Pickert, Frank Pignatti, Elaine and Walter Riney, Sylvia and Sid Stockew, Jack Weil, and Joan Winkel.

And we all coordinate this volunteer work! Volunteers of course, and others such as: Marilyn Brunss, Nadine Dawson, and Pat Mechkoven, who man the Friends of A.C.T. office virtually full time. (If you’d like to be on their list, and join them as volunteers, the office number is 749-2101.)

Full-time Volunteer Editor Edward Hastings recently commented on the work of the Friends of A.C.T.: “These are people who selflessly devote their time, talent, and energy to ensure the success of the American Conservatory Theater. As a season approaches its close, A.C.T. would like to recognize their contributions. I know I speak for the company and the entire staff when I say, sincerely and simply: ‘Thank you.’”

In Memoriam

Jone Wilder
Library Director 1961–1969
Evelyn Mosher
Library Director 1969–1981

AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECTS ERIKHELL HODGES AND DAVIS TO REBUILD GEARY THEATER

A.C.T.’s Board of Directors announced on April 3 that they have selected the award-winning architectural firm Esherick Hoege Dodge and Davis (SH/ED) to undertake the renovation and restoration of the historic Geary Theater. The announcement was made from the headquarters of Chevron USA, which has provided a gift of $50,000 to begin work on the initial architectural survey. SH/ED is noted for its many awards.
American Conservatory Theater

presents

BURN THIS
(1987)

by Lanford Wilson

Directed by Albert Ukasauskas
Scenery by Ralph Funicello
Costumes by Sandra Woodall
Lighting by Derek Duarte
Sound by Stephen LeGrand
Fight Choreography by Larry Henderson

The Cast
Anna Andrea Marcovici
Burton Rick Hamilton
Larry Wesley Mann
Pole Daniel Reichert

There will be one intermission.

Stage Management: Karen Van Zandt, Alice Elliott Smith, and Eugene Barone

 understudies
Anna — Lauren Lane; Burton — Richard Butterfield; Larry — Andrew Dolan; Pole — Richard Butterfield

This production is made possible in part by American Express.

Opposite: Daniel Reichert and Andrea Marcovici
American Conservatory Theater

presents

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Lanford Wilson — with a Difference

Lanford Wilson, the author of Born This has sometimes been labeled “the natural successor to Tennessee Williams.” As critic Ruby Cohn puts it, “In the tradition of Williams, Wilson is tender to deviants, valuing them more highly than those who preserve the norm.”

In his deep compassion for the lonely, the lost and the outsider who doesn’t belong anywhere and can’t figure out why, and in his ability to look beyond the facade of the tough-talking rebel to find the longing of the inarticulate soul hidden beneath, Wilson sometimes evokes Williams’s beautiful losers. But if his sensibility stamps him as part of a recognizably American literary tradition, Wilson brings that sensibility to bear on distinctive contemporary characters whose unconventional attitudes and behavior would have automatically excluded him from the theatrical mainstream only a generation ago.

Wilson’s plays have introduced us to prostitutes, hustlers, pimps, transvestites, drug dealers and their clients — not as freaks on display, but as fixtures of the American urban scene whose humanity is as rich and full as that of more conventional characters with whom they often share the stage in Wilson’s world. He asks us to set aside our conventional values here in the darkness of the theater and to acknowledge, when all the externals have been stripped away, how much of ourselves we recognize in them — and vice versa.

Wilson’s other great gallery of characters is the one on view in his plays about small-town America, including those set in and around Lebanon, Missouri, where he was born in 1937 and spent his early years. But even in those works — and they are some of his most successful — he doesn’t settle for the easy sentimentality of great Americans. Over the gentle romantic comedy-drama of Bel shey’s Philip (1980), for instance, falls the shadow of anti-Semitism. And in 5th of July (1978), produced by A.C.T. in 1979 (prior to its Broadway opening the following season), the couple at the center of the play are two men, a parapsychologist and a botanist lover. Wilson makes no apologies for their love and, indeed, strongly suggests that their relationship has a lot more going for it than the one shared by the play’s heterosexual lovers.

The urban and rural settings of Wilson’s plays are far from separate worlds. Like his dialogue, in fact, they often overlap: city people are beset by the follies of their small-town counterparts, and young people from the heartland are aghast at what they discover as they struggle to make their way through the urban jungle of the Eastern United States. Wilson tends to avoid labeling his characters as either “good” or “bad.” He doesn’t give us villains, only people at the mercy of fear or shame or foolish dreams, doing what they have to do, surviving as best they can in a world that offers them little access to truth — even if they were equipped to recognize it. As the great French director Jean Renoir liked to say when he talked about the characters in his films, “Everyone has his reason.”

In Wilson’s plays, character takes precedence over plot or social “relevance,” yet several of the plays deal with topical issues — urban decay, growing alienation, drug abuse, the threat of nuclear disaster, carjackings in the workplace — usually in an indirect manner. Thematic material becomes an aspect of characterization rather than a subject for soap-box oratory.

When A.C.T. introduced its audiences to Wilson’s work in 1973 with Allen Fletcher’s production of The Hot Pot, the playwright had already been a mainstay of New York’s off-off-Broadway scene for a decade or so. Set in a crumbling inner-city hotel where
Lanford Wilson — with a Difference

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In his deep compassion for the lonely, the lost and the outsider who doesn’t belong anywhere and can’t figure out why; and in his ability to look beyond the facade of the tough-talking rebel to find the longing of the immaculate soul hidden beneath, Wilson sometimes evokes Williams’s beautiful losers. But if his sensitivity stamps him as part of a recognizable American literary tradition, Wilson brings that sensitivity to bear on distinctive contemporary characters whose unconventional attitudes and behavior would have automatically excluded him from the theatrical mainstream only a generation ago.

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the motley assortment of residents bide their time until the scheduled demolition of the building, the play won a New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. It was also the first of three Wilson plays to join the A.C.T. repertory in the 1970s and early '80s. 5th of July (1975) was the second, followed by Angels Fall (1984). Edward Hastings directed both productions. Biley's N GPS, which the playwright once called "a Waltz and a Valentine," was the first of Wilson's plays to find wide popular acceptance on Broadway, winning both the Pulitzer Prize and the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award in the process. Next to make the move uptown from the off-Broadway Circle Repertory Company, Wilson's longtime artistic home in the heart of Greenwich Village, were 5th of July and Angels Fall. Like their predecessors, they were honored with "best play" Tony nominations and directed by Marshall Mason, who has staged the original productions of most Wilson plays. Their artistic relationship has spanned more than two decades and is generally regarded as one of the most enduring and productive in American theater history.

The enthusiastic notices for Burn This, which opened on Broadway October 14, 1987, pointed out that the new work had a share of Wilson trademarks but at the same time marred something of a stylistic departure for the playwright. In addition to concentrating on only four characters instead of Either (The Hot Box) Baltimore or twenty-five (Blast in Ojibwa), its tone struck several critics as different from the one they had come to expect from Wilson.

Over the years, some critics had characterized his gentle, often deceptively casual style as "Chekhovian." characters start talking about what seems like nothing in particular and before you realize it, you've learned a lot about them and you've engaged in their problems. Burn This takes a somewhat different approach. "In the sense that it deals with lonely and displaced characters," Mel Gussow wrote in the New York Times, "Burn This is in the Wilson tradition. Where it breaks dramatic ground for the author is in its...
the motley assortment of residents bide their time until the scheduled demolition of the building, the play won a New York Drama Critics’ Circle Award. It was also the first of three Wilson plays to join the A.C.T. repertory in the 1970s and early ’80s. 4th of July (1976) was the second, followed by Angels Fall (1984). Edward Hastings directed both productions.

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Opposite: Members of A.C.T.’s cast of 4th of July with playwright Edward Wilson (seated center), director Edward Hastings (seated left), and others (seated right).
American Conservatory Theater

Bobbie, their dear friend and roommate and Anna’s frequent dancing partner, recently killed with his lover Dominie in a freak boating accident. A few weeks after the funeral, Anna is rousted at five in the morning by the unexpected and unwelcome noise of Bobbie’s brother Pale pounding relentlessly on her door and bellowing her name up and down the hallway. It’s an unlikely beginning for one of the most powerful and honest portrayals of a relationship between a man and a woman in recent American drama—a gripping, vividly entertaining play by an outstanding American playwright at the peak of his powers.

about the playwright

Landford Wilson received the 1983 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Talley’s Folly. He is a founding member of Circle Repertory Company in New York, and is one of that company’s twenty-one resident playwrights.


His other plays include Palm in the

Gleed (1965), The Gringhams Dog (1966), The Enrages of Elderich (1967), Lemon Sky (1969), Talley and Son (the third play in the Talley Trilogy, 1965), and some twenty produced one-acts. He has also written the libretto for Lee Hoiby’s opera Tennessee Williams’s Summer and Smoke and two television plays, That! and The Migrants (based on a short story by Tennessee Williams). His translation of Chekhov’s The Three Sisters was commissioned and produced by the Hartford Stage Company.

Mr. Wilson’s other awards include the New York Drama Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award, and the Outer Critics Circle Award. He has received the Brandeis University Creative Arts Award in Theatre Arts and the Institute of Arts and Letters Award.}

Burra New is opened at the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles in 1987 and later played on Broadway. He is currently writing the screenplay for the film version.

Landford Wilson makes his home in Sagi Harbor, New York.
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About the Playwright

Lanford Wilson received the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Talley’s Folly. He is a founding member of Circle Repertory Company in New York, and is one of that company’s twenty-one resident playwrights.


His other plays include Dallas is...
Who's Who


LAUREN LANE is a third-year student in the Conservatory's Advanced Training Program, where she has played Arachiiza in The Seagull, Audrey and Charlie (the wrestler) in As You Like It, and Lavinia in Much Ado About Nothing. She was also seen in A.C.T.'s production of The Threepenny Opera, and in Much Ado About Nothing, The Glass Menagerie, A Streetcar Named Desire, and The Importance of Being Earnest.

Since his return to A.C.T. in 1989 RICK HAMILTON has appeared as Barduf in A Tale of Two Cities, the Bailiff in Nothing Sacred, Bill in Woman in Mind (which he also played last summer at the Westport Playhouse with Sally Kirkland), Oswald in King Lear, Paul Cown and Jim in End of the World, -- Max in The Real Thing, and Elroy in Private Lives. He has been a member of the company from 1978 through 1986, during which time he appeared in Desire Under the Elms (which toured the Soviet Union), General Corcoran, The Threepenny Opera, and as Tarquin in The Taming of the Shrew, a revival which was televised for the PBS series "Theater in America." During his ten seasons with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival he played such roles as Benedick in Much Ado About Nothing, Tom in The Glass Menagerie, Valet in Henry IV, Part I, Marc Antony in Julius Caesar and Petruchio in The Taming of the Shrew. He has also spent seasons with the Alley Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Dallas Shakespeare Festival, and the Los Angeles Theatre Center. Mr. Hamilton was a member of the original cast of Amazons, and played Jack Harley in the film The Principal. He recently co-directed and appeared in the Pay-in-Progress production Outside Technicolour.

Andrew Dolan is in his third year with the A.T.P. His studio roles include

MAY THE ROAD RISE TO MEET YOU,
MAY THE SUN SHINE WARM UPON YOUR FACE,
MAY THE WIND BE ALWAYS AT YOUR BACK.

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Whether the terrain is paved or not, Montero's independent torsion bar front/3-link, coil spring rear suspension system assures very smooth going all around.

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American Conservatory Theater

Who's Who


Lauren Lane is a third-year student in the Conservatory's Advanced Training Program, where she has played Askalina in The Seagull, Audrey and Charlie (the wrestler) in As You Like It, and Lavinia in Another Part of the Forest. This season she appeared in the Imaginary Invalid and Jevudorin, and played Luna in Mabrouk and the title role in Company of Strangers. Her regional theater credits include the Dallas Theater Center and Stage West in Fort Worth, Texas. She has spent two seasons with Encore Theater Company, appearing in Coming Attractions and As You Like It. Ms. Lane is a graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington.

Andrew Dolan is in his third year with the A.C.T. His studio roles include the Actors' Shakespearean Festival and Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Last summer he acted in two productions in Connecticut: A.C.T.'s St. John's at Stratford Festival and Women in Mind at the Westport Playhouse. Mr. Butterfield is a graduate of Stanford University (with honors in international relations) and A.C.T.'s Advanced Training Program. He now teaches and directs in the A.T.P. teaches in the Young Conservatory, and serves on the Board of Trustees as one of its two artist members.

May the road rise to meet you, May the sun shine warm upon your face, May the wind be always at your back.

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Midsummer Night's Dream (which also had a successful run at the Westwood Playhouse in Los Angeles). Mr. Mann has been seen in such other plays as 

ANDREA MARCOVECCHI played the title role in Saint Joan at A.C.T. last season, for which she won a Drama-Logue Award and a Bay Area Critics Circle Award. Ms. Marvecchi's credits include New York theater: Hamlet with Sam Waterston (N.Y. Shakespeare Festival), Ambassador with Howard Keel, Babar, Ode, The Seagull, and Wedding of Bohogus (Public Theater); regional theater: Ghetto (Mark Taper Forum), Chapsis with Anthony Newley (Los Angeles Music Center, Carneval (Berkeley Theatre Festival), and Alfie (Chicago); film: Someone to Love with Orson Welles, The Front with Woody Allen, The End with Michael Caine, The Stuff with Michael Moriarty, Spandex, Kings and Desperate Men, and Airport 79; television: some Kind of Miracle, Cry Baby, Pacific 84, and Vahal in The Cinderella Ghost with John Gerdian, and Smilie, Jenry, Big N' Loud, television series: "Berengriri," "Trapper John, M.D., "Magnum, P.I., "Newhart," "Bill Street Blues," "Kojak," "Murder She Wrote," "The Tonight Show," and "Good Morning America." recordings: 5000 Songs Since Music, Early Kors, and What Is Love?. One of the country's foremost cantablers, she recently gave a sold-out concert at New York's Town Hall. She has also performed at Carnegie Hall and the Oak Rooms of the Algonquin Hotel in New York, at George's in Chicago, and in San Francisco at the Herbst Theatre and the Pitch Book. During the run of "Born This Way" (on May 27) Ms. Marvecchi has scheduled one concert: at the Great American Music Hall for the benefit of Women's Cancer Resource Center.

DANIEL REICHSTEIN was last seen as Sebastian in Twelfth Night. Previously at A.C.T., he played Sydney Carton in A Tale of Two Cities for which he received a Bay Area Critics Circle Award, Marco Polo in Merro Milione, Dumas in Saint Joan, and Edmund in King Lear, and he performed in A Christmas Carol, Diamond Lil, and Feathers. In studio productions in the Conservatory he has played Lepa in The Cherry Orchard, York in Henry VI, Part II, Homer in The Country Wife, Sir Malbry Hark in Nicholas Nickleby, Laertes in Hamlet, and Pran in Gandhi. He has also appeared as Mike in Orphans Reunited with the New York Stage and Film Company, and as Benedick in the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival production of Much Ado About Nothing. Last summer at the American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin, Mr. Reichstein played Edmund in King Lear (directed by Morris Carnovsky), The Thesaurus in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and the Second Messenger in Oedipus Rex.

EDWARD HASTINGS (Artistic Director) assumed the leadership of A.C.T. early in 1986. A founding member of the company he directed Charty's Jazz and Our Time during its first two San Francisco seasons. Since then he has staged many A.C.T. productions, including The Time of Your Life, The House of Blue Leaves, Street Scene, Fiftieth of July, The Real Thing, King Lear and Where We Are Married. In 1972 he founded the company's Plays in Progress program, which is devoted to the development and presentation of new theater writing. Mr. Hastings served as a resident director at the Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference for three summers, and taught acting in 1984 at the Shanghai Drama Institute as part of the Theater Bridge Program between A.C.T. and the Shanghai theater. Last year the program took a major step forward with the residence at A.C.T. of three theater artists from Shanghai for the opening production, Merro Milione. He directed a national company of the London and Broadway musical Oliver! staged the American production of Shakespeare's People (starring Michael Bedgrove), directed the Australian premieries of The Hot l Baltimore, and mounted his A.C.T. production of Sam Shepard's Buried Child in Serbo-Croatian at the Yugoslav Dramatic Theatre in Belgrade. His A.C.T. productions have also been seen on tour in the United States, including Hawaii, and in Tokyo, and he was a guest director at major resident theaters throughout the country. A graduate of Yale College and the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, Mr. Hastings teaches in the Conservatory, and this season directed Audience at the PG&E Beale Street Theater and the West Coast premiere of Arthur Miller's The Cider House Rules at the Lear-Rainier Hansen Theater.

JOHN SULLIVAN (Managing Director) joined A.C.T. as its chief administrative officer in 1986. A former deputy director of the California Arts Council, he is also a director of Theatre Bay Area and a member of the Advisory Committee of the Graduate School of Arts Administration at Golden Gate University. A native San Francisco, Mr. Sullivan has been active in the theater since the mid-1970s, when he directed Harvey Peir's Affordable Tea for the Circle Repertory Company in New York. Later he was associated with the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles as a resident

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DIRECTORS, DESIGNERS, AND STAFF

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A.C.T.
American Conservatory Theater

ALBERT TARAUKAS (Director) recently completed his directing debut at the Denver Center Theater Company. Both Cynthia and Christmas Carol were produced for television and seen throughout the country. During the past two seasons he worked with director Paul Blake and A.C.T. where he is Resident Director. He has worked extensively for other Bay Area theaters as well as television, film and radio productions such as The Norman Conquests, Chekhov in Haiti, Gemini, These Men, Shamus and Billy, Breaking the Code, and Pronovost and Jongkan in the Claire de Lune. Mr. Taraukas is a noted opera director, working throughout the United States for such institutions as the Seattle Opera, Minnesota Opera, the Kennedy Center, and the San Francisco Opera, where last year he directed Giusiello for the Spring Showpage. Having spent this season traveling to Port Worth, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, he has returned home for Eastern Standard at the Magic, The Contrast for the California Theater Center, and Lucia di Lammermooch, which will play in San Francisco and on tour for the Summer Shakespeare, 1976. Mr. Taraukas has directed projects such as The Stratford's Prospero, a Comedy of Errors, Othello (a new musical), and Much Ado About Nothing, as well as Don Quixote and an Epic Shakespeare at New York City, which he is writing with James Kelley.

LARRY BISHOP (Choreographic Consultant) came into a C.T. two years after he was appointed Director of the Young Conservatory. She is a playwright (her Miss Fairfield Stage was produced at Little Victory Theater in Los Angeles), director (more than 40 productions), actress (Cabaret Repertory Theater), and educator. She earned her B.A. from the University of California at Fullerton, taught in southern California for 14 years (Teaching a citation for a dedicated teacher holding a standing teaching in 1986-87), and serves as Chairman of the Theatre Department of the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts. At the Conservatory she has created and directed Find Me a Hero, The Winds of the Desert (1976 Shaw Box Special Award), and Who's On First? A Core variable, directed by Paula Pinter, and co-directed by Who, These People. Mr. Stauter has been a creative consultant at Downstage, and toured to Alaska as playwright-in-residence with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Educational Outreach Program.

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American Conservatory Theater

Artistic Director Edward Havens and Irene K. Avellin, Contributions Manager of Pacific Telesis Foundation, at the pre-theater reception for Bagdad Tower by Stein's "Babbling Brook".

NDBS continued from page ACT-4 winning projects, including the Camrey in San Francisco, the dramatic Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Sea Ranch development of Sonoma County, and Russian's Own restaurant in the Stanford Court, and the restoration of the Stanford History Center. The firm was named the National Architectural Firm of the Year in 1980 by the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and in 1989 partner Joseph Esherick received the industry's highest accolade, the AIA Gold Medal, an honor awarded to only 47 people in the 137 years the AIA has been around. A.C.T.'s Board of Directors began its search for an architectural firm immediately following the October 17 earthquake. Board President Alan L. Stein said, "We decided early in the process that we were committed to finding an architect sensitive to this region's history and values." Eleven firms were invited to make presentations to the committee, which evaluated each proposal and then narrowed the field to three candidates, from which EBDI was selected.

EBDI will not undertake the restoration of the interior of the Geary Theater but will address such issues as seismic upgrading, providing new handicapped access routes and restrooms, expanding the lobby and backstage areas, replacing interior seats, and rearranging the upper balcony seating. The cleanup process began April 11, when a crew of engineers hoisted the collapsed ceiling, cleaned up debris from the performing arts, and will be pivotal in enhancing interdisciplinarity of our rich dramatic heritage. The list below reflects gifts received between February 1, 1989 and March 31, 1990.


REPEAT PERFORMANCE BY LURIE FOUNDATION

The Louis R. Lurie Foundation, a major contributor to A.C.T. since 1987, has renewed a three-year commitment to help the company stage previously unproduced work. This year's grant from the Lurie Foundation will support A.C.T.'s Plays-in-Progress program, which nurtures playwrights and develops new works for the stage.

Founded in 1948, the Lurie Foundation is a prominent supporter of community, cultural, educational, and health activities throughout the Bay Area and the Chicago metropolitan area.

A GREAT THANKS TO SOME SPECIAL FRIENDS

Following the quiet A.C.T. discovered just how strong certain friendships were: numerous corporate, foundation and government supporters stepped up to come forth with counsel and aid during A.C.T.'s time of great need. A.C.T. extends its deepest thanks to the following friends who helped A.C.T. get on its feet after the ground shook.

Chekhan, U.S.A.

The Payroll Foundation

Grants for the Arts of the Hotel Tax Fund Walser and Else H. Fund William and Floy Fendley Foundation James Irvine Foundation Northern California Grantmakers Association PG&E

San Francisco Foundation These organizations took leadership roles in assisting that A.C.T. remained open during the remainder of the 1989-90 season. We remain deeply grateful for their generous support.

CONTRIBUTORS

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SOPOHOLES CIRCLE ($20,000 and above)

Robert Clark, W.D. Inc.
Tom D. Oker, Valero Oil Corp.
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PACIFIC TELEESIS FOUNDATION

Supports Long-term Artist and Audience Development

PACIFIC TELEESIS – Foundation

Pacific Telesis Foundation, one of California’s leading supporters of arts education, will be the exclusive corporate sponsor of A.C.T.’s student matinees through 1991. A generous supporter of A.C.T. since 1979, Pacific Telesis Foundation provided its first major support for education programs in 1986. A.C.T. decided early in the process that we were committed to funding an architect sensitive to this region’s history and values.

Eleven firms were invited to make presentations to the committee, which evaluated each proposal and then narrowed the field to three candidates, from which EHD was selected. EHH will not only undertake the restoration of the interior of the Geary Theater but will also address such issues as seismic upgrading, providing new hand-hung access routes and restrooms, expanding the lobby and backstage areas, replacing interior seats, and rearranging the upper balcony seating.

The cleanup process began April 11, when a crew of engineers hoisted the old-lamped lighting fixtures from the front orchestra seats and forestage, and began removing the thousands of pounds of flier plaster which once comprised the Geary’s unique, omni-projector screen arch.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION

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The Oliver Foundation
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Ticket Information: 415-749-2228
Charge to Visa, American Express, MasterCard.

Performance Times: Mon-Sat, Pers., 8 p.m.; Wed & Sat, Mat, 2 p.m. Other performance times as announced.

Box Office Hours: Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m.

Mailing List: Call 415-222-9099 to request advance notice of shows, events, and subscription information.

Gift Certificates: Offer A.C.T. to a friend, relative, co-worker, or client. Gift Certificates are perfect for every celebration.

Theater Parties: For groups of 15 or more, call Linda Abram at (415) 444-7800 for special group prices.

Discounts: Half-price tickets can be purchased at 7:30 on Union Square in San Francisco. Student and Senior Bus tickets at half price are available beginning at 6 p.m. for evening performances. Senior Bus tickets for matinees only are just $5.

Ticket Policy: All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers, eligible ticket exchange privileges or lost ticket insurance. If at the last minute you are unable to attend, you may make a worthwhile contribution by donating your tickets to A.C.T. The value of donated tickets is tax-deductible and will be acknowledged by mail. Tickets for performances already past cannot be considered as a donation.

Photographs and Recordings of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden. Flash cameras can dangerously distract the actors. Beepers: If you carry a beeper, watch, or cellular phone with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the "OFF" position while you are in the theater to avoid disturbing the concentration of performers and audience.

Educators: Call 415-2228 for information about 87 Student Matinees Program tickets, teacher's handbook, backstage tours. Call 415-2228 for information about A.C.T.'s Speaker's Bureau.

Conservatory: A.C.T. offers community classes, training, and advanced theater study. The Youth Conservatory program offers training for students between the ages of 8 and 18. Call 415-2250 for a free brochure.

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August As Artist
August Wilson Talks about his Craft

When August Wilson first came to the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center as one of the winners of its 1982 National Playwrights Conference, he was, in his own words, "absolutely terrified."

Wilson, a high school dropout, had been writing all his life but his plays hadn't been performed beyond his home city, St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1982 Lloyd Richards, Dean of the Yale School of Drama and Artist-in-Residence at the National Playwrights Conference, read Ma Rainey's Black Bottom. The significant element Richards sought was a unique playwright's "voice". Ma Rainey made him perk up his ears. Moreover, he found something he wanted to direct.

The rest is history. The remarkable Wilson/Richards collaboration resulted in a New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Ma Rainey when it opened on Broad-
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This interview took place last summer at the National Playwrights Conference in Waterford, Connecticut, where it all began. It incorporated questions Wilson answered for the National Critics Institute.

Wilson: You see, I began with an agenda. The agenda is Baldwin's thing about "a profound articulation of the things that can offer a man sustenance once he leaves his father's house." I knew that I wanted to explore black culture. From there I worked out a framework. Things I wanted to accomplish and things I wanted to do in this life. Then it becomes "How do you do that?" To The Piano Lesson, it was "Can you acquire a sense of self-worth by denying your past?" The second question was "What do you do with your legacy?" So then you have to invent the situation that will ask the question and attempt to answer. And I came up with the idea of a piano with these masks carved on it. The brother wants to sell it, the sister doesn't want to. Once you mark out your territory and have your agenda, then you invent a story that fulfills that.

Q: You mentioned Baldwin's quote about myth and ritual: equipping a black man to fit into American life. Do you feel myth and ritual are much stronger in black American life than in white American life?
A: Oh, I think so, sure. A lot of things varous animals. It existed in black America primarily. When our culture was the strongest in the rural south, 90, 80, 100 years ago.

Q: I was fascinated by what you said about the characters sort of knocking on your door and making a statement, and you asked them what happened.
A: I hear them in my mind talking and just write it down. I don't question what it means or where it's at. A guy says, "What did you go up to see Aunt Esther about?" He says, "I want to kill my grandfather." I didn't think that up. It's what the guy said. All I did ask the question. He answered it just like that. I wrote it down. Now what I don't know is what happened. I have to find that out. So at some point I will sit down with a tablet and in my mind I will say to him, "What did you want to kill your grandfather?" Hopefully he'll tell me. He'll say "Well, he wasn't no good for nobody" or whatever, and hopefully he'll tell me the situation and I'll write it down.

Q: Do you ever ask the character questions he doesn't answer?
A: Yeah, once in a while they get away. Q: Is that a clue the character doesn't have enough richness for you or are you on the wrong track?
A: I'm not sure what it is. Sometimes they don't want to. For instance, when I was writing about one guy, the next time I saw him he said, "I gave her everything I had when I met her. Then gave her everything I could get hold of for the next nine years. And when she was leaving, she didn't even shake my hand." I tried to find out more. He kind of noticed I was writing this down but that's as far as he wanted to go with it. I couldn't think of anything else. So I said OK, I'll leave that alone for right now and I'll go ask Holloway how come he wants to kill his grandfather and I'll come back to you and find out. And I just leave him alone for a minute. Then I wrote other parts of the character and got to know him a little bit better and in there somewhere the more I got to know about him, then I'll be able to answer the question "What happened?"

Q: What's your method of work? When one of these speeches starts to come to you, do you start from there?
A: I work as a collageist. I have some
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Q: You mentioned Baldwin's quote about myth and ritual equipping a black man to fit into American life. Do you feel myth and ritual are much stronger in black American life than in white American life?
A: Oh, I think so, sure. A lot of things people will point out are very superficial definitions of myth and superstition. They may want to say black people are more superstitious but it's African.

Q: Do you think it stems from the oral traditions blacks had in this country or is it innate?
A: I think it's innate. First of all, oral tradition comes from Africans. Second of all, I think it's more religious than anything. To Africans trees are alive, trees have spirits. The gods are personified in various animals. It existed in black America primarily when our culture was the strongest in the rural south, 80, 90, 100 years ago.

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A: I work as a collageist. I have some
idea where I'm going, and the various elements of the play. Then I put them together like a collage. Each one should ideally lead and connect to another.

Q: So you get to know the characters as you go along? It's not a linear scene that's planned in advance?
A: Absolutely not. I never know what they're going to do. For instance, in the last act of Joe Turner's Come and Gone when the guy cut his chest, I didn't say "Oh, I know what I'll have him do." It just happened. I was as surprised as anybody.

Q: I wonder if that began with your roots as a poet, because you were used to writing intuitively?
A: I suspect it is. Sure.
Q: Do you have ideas laid ahead for plays after this one?
A: I do. Fortunately I've never had a problem with ideas. I have more ideas than I have time to write. I have an idea for a play set in the '40s. At the same time I've been working on a play for some time called Snow Guitars which is much different from anything I've ever done.

It's not realistic, a different kind of thing I'm trying. It's the kind of thing I can write a little part here, a little part there.

Q: Do you still have the same technique of writing, going out with your pad and sitting in coffee houses?
A: Oh, I do, sure. Bars, restaurants. It's the only way I know to do it. I write in longhand, then I go home and type it up.
Q: And that going out keeps you in touch with the world?
A: Yeah. What I discovered is the character of these places constantly changes as people come and go and the music changes, and I sort of go with it wherever it goes. If they hadn't played a certain song, I might not have written what I'd written. If they'd played another song, I might have written something else. If I can't think of anything to write, I'll go to another place. Sooner or later, something will come.
Q: Have you written many roles with actors in mind?
A: Yeah. I'm writing a role in Two Trains Running for Charles Dutton. And I write Roy Willie in The Piano Lesson and Loomis in Joe Turner for him. Originally I was writing a role for Mary Alice in The Piano Lesson but the character kept changing age. Starting out she was 47, then I ended up with a 34-year-old character. I didn't think Mary Alice was quite suitable for it any more, but I still want to write something for Mary Alice. In writing for actors like Charles Dutton and Mary Alice, I always want to write something to cause them to reach to the limits of their talent and maybe go and find some more somewhere. If I can do that, then it's going to make me write a better role. So I'm driven to challenge them. I've been fortunate in the last few years. Lloyd Richards has such an astute eye for acting talent.

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A: Maybe that's something you have.

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idea where I’m going, and the various elements of the play. Then I put them together like a collage. Each one should ideally lead and connect to another.

Q: So you get to know the characters as you go along? It’s not a linear scene that’s planned in advance?
A: Absolutely not. I never know what they’re going to do. For instance, in the last act of Joe Turner’s Come and Gone the guy cuts his chest, I didn’t say “Oh, I know what I’ll have him do.” It just happened. I was as surprised as anybody.

Q: I wonder if that began with your roots as a poet, because you were used to writing intuitively?
A: I suspect it is. Sure.

Q: Do you have ideas laid ahead for plays after this one?
A: I do. Fortunately I’ve never had a problem with ideas. I have more ideas than I have time to write. I have an idea for a play set in the ’40s. At the same time I’ve been working on a play for some time called Seven Guitars which is much different from anything I’ve ever done.

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A: Maybe that’s something you have. Some from the Arena Stage production of Wilcox’s Joe Turner’s Come and Gone.

To learn. I’m not sure if 15 years ago I would have felt that way. You have to learn it’s not carved in stone, it’s not precious. Helpful to sometimes to have a 3rd or 4th or 5th or 6th view.

Q: What’s been the effect of this place on your work?
A: This has been very important for me. Here I learned how to rewrite a play. I was one of those writers who thought you get it right the first time. Rather than rewrite material, I was always anxious to move on to something else. When I came to the O’Neill, it didn’t happen the first year and it didn’t happen overnight but gradually I learned not only how to rewrite but to like it. Then I went back to what Boggs calls “the problematic practice of literature” which is simply solving a problem. Now it’s a part of the process I actually enjoy.

The other thing I learned is that it’s OK to be scared. I learned to try to make use of my fear. When I first started, I was absolutely terrified, not only did it just being here. I was talking with one of the playwrights whose play is going on tonight and I understand where he’s at. But that’s OK. You can use and channel that.

Coming here has been an important part of the process for me. In this environment I get a lot of ideas from a lot of people. I have tremendous respect for actors who have to go out and embody these works and make the character come to life. I’m always willing to listen to any difficulties they have and whatever they’re feeling about it. I’ve gotten very good staff from actors. If they don’t tell me, then I ask them. “What can I do for you? What do you think of this guy?” in a production situation once you cast the actors, they say, “OK, you want what I got.” You don’t really have the kind of thing you have up here. I don’t feel as free to talk with them, to explore in a sense of development. Here I get a lot of things from a lot of people.

I take my critique notes home and actually memorize them. In the critique notes of Mr. Shivers, I saw everybody said it took me 15 minutes to get into the play. When you hear it enough times, finally

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I said, "OK, Why?" I discovered the play started off with these four guys talking. You don't know who they are, what's happening. I saw I knew who they were but I wasn't communicating that to the audience. So I went back and rewrote the first part of the play to show them coming to the studio, anticipating trouble with Ma. So you're already set up for the thing. I got that here from looking at my critique notes.

Q: You said one of the main things you learned at the O'Neill was rewriting. Can you give any specific examples of the techniques that were suggested to you that worked best for you?

A: Well, I wrote a play Alimony that had three producers in its first draft. At the time I didn't know how to write a play. I thought, "This is it. Say the words and we're OK." I came to the O'Neill which was the first time I was actually working with other people. Michael Feingold was my dramaturg. Bill Partlan was my director. I realized they were trying to make this a better play, not destroy it. Maybe then for the first time I was willing to listen and try to understand what they were saying. I went back to the dorm, wrote, brought back pages, said, "Ah! This is great! I can do that." Now when I finish a draft, I understand the work is just beginning. The more you learn about it, the quicker you're able to finish. Your second draft's better.

Q: It doesn't hurt you to cut?

A: No. Though there were some things I would have liked to have said. One thing I've done at the O'Neill is generally kept — you see, we do a Pre-Conference and then do a rewrite after the Pre-Conference — after I do that rewrite I've kept everything at least for one performance that I wanted to hear. I said, "I know it's going to cut this speech or that, but I'm not going to cut them until the second night. Because one time only I want to hear the actors say this." When I've heard them say, I guess it lessens the line. Also you realize they're not that important. Sometimes I use them again in some other way. There's a wonderful story I cut out of The Piano Lesson. Maybe it'll fit into Beso Prieto. Maybe it won't. Sometimes you find it was in the wrong play to begin with.

Q: Lloyd and I were discussing a phenomenon in Los Angeles, the one-character play. Lloyd said, and I've noticed too, you do a lot of what musicians call riffs. Lloyd talked about the story-telling tradition. You, I know, get a lot of your inspiration from hearing stories from the barber shop.

A: Sure. There are reasons why people tell stories and pass them along, to pass along information. Generally they are stories that the community as a whole has decided you need to know. For instance, when you leave your father's house, in my case your mother's house, there are certain things you need to know. The community will tell you. One thing you need to know is who's a good lawyer. If you ever get in a jam, here's the guy to go see. Because if you are black and you are male, chances are you're going to jail for something. So the guys on the corner will tell stories, about Al Lichtenstein and how he got Archie off. They create this whole myth about this guy, I tell someone who tells someone else, they tell someone else. I've discovered that contained in there is information that you need in all these stories that you hear. I venture to say that many of them are not true. They're invented by the community in order to pass along certain kinds of information to you. The first thing in telling a story is that you have to make it memorable. Then someone will go tell someone else. If you don't make it memorable, the information dies, because the story is not passed along. In that sense, the stories get reinvented. They have a kernel of truth to them but they get reinvented to make them memorable, so that the first impulse of the person hearing them is to go tell somebody else. And the information is kept alive.

Q: Do you think the kind of speech that's an indirect response is caused partly by blacks avoiding being direct with whites?

A: I don't think the indirect response has to do with blacks' relation to whites because blacks do it among themselves all the time. If anything, and this is something I'm just discovering also, there are
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"A Taste of Heaven."
really two traditions of black life and black culture in America, and certainly in terms of the arts. One is the tradition of performance for whites and the other is the performance of blacks for themselves. For instance, since the early slavery days, blacks were often invited up to perform at the Big House, to sing and dance. But they would not perform the same things that they sang and danced when they went back to the slave quarters and were among themselves. So they developed these two traditions of performance for whites in giving whites what they wanted to hear and the other was a kind of ritual thing among themselves. So there’s probably that in terms of speech also. Two very distinct things. If you listen, for instance, to the music of the ‘20s, what they call blues, women singers are backed up by jazz bands, you’ll find all the music belongs to one tradition, of performance for whites. There’s another tradition, also sung by a woman, that’s much different. For example, a woman playing a guitar singing songs more responsive to our lives than the showcase blues singers are singing. This is where I first got the idea and began to see that there are two separate kinds of traditions.

Q: What was your experience of writing the screenplay of _Pocahontas_?
A: One way is telling a story with your eyes, the other is telling a story with your ears. But I left the words in, more or less. Nothing wrong with words. I didn’t. However, leave words in where images suited better. I worked to create images.

Q: You said you had a little feedback already.
A: Yeah, I’m looking forward to that.
Q: Do you have a production date?
A: No, when it happens, it’ll be fun, but I’m not sitting around waiting. I’ve got other stuff to do.
Q: Do you have ideas for screenplays?
A: No, I don’t. I’d like to do my plays sometime. Just for the fun of it write them as screenplays.

Q: _Joe Turner springs to mind as being visual_.
A: Just to see Loomis walking down the road with his daughter as an opening image.
Q: Do you still write poetry?
A: I do.
Q: Is that something now that you do for yourself? Do you work as hard on polishing the poems now that the plays have become what you’re primarily doing?
A: No, I work just as hard on the poems. It’s one of the arts that requires a great deal of work. I think it’s the most difficult form.
Q: It’s been called the purest art.
A: I agree. I work very hard at it. I’m just spending time writing other stuff right now. I don’t write as much as I would like to.
Q: You mentioned being interested in writing more ensemble pieces like _Joe Turner_ and _Piano Lesson_. Do you think of _Pocahontas_ as an attempt to get away from Western European style into one person’s story?
A: No. This is the Western tradition of theatre that I’m working in and I can’t change that. I’ve chosen to work in that tradition and I think all the plays fit in that tradition, but I can work in that tradition with an African viewpoint. _Pocahontas_ came about, actually, from being at the _O’Neill_ with _Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom_ in 1982. There were a lot of comments about the play. One of the things I kept hearing was that people somehow wanted a biography of Ma or they wanted her to be a central part of the play. She’s very important part but she are the four musicians. I kept saying, “No, no, no, that’s not what I’m trying to do, this is kind of what I wanted.” Then I went home after the _O’Neill_ and said, “August, you told these people you really know how to write this central character. My aim is that you really know how to do that.” I said, “Yeah, I know how to do that.” So I said, “Well, prove it.” That’s how I came up with _Pocahontas_ which, if you follow the line of _Ma Rainey_ to _Joe Turner_ to _Piano Lesson_ to _Two Trains Running_ those are more or less of the same cloth. _Pocahontas_ is kind of odd man out. So having done that, I wasn’t interested in trying to duplicate that or write another play with a central character. I just wanted to find out if I could do it at all. So then I moved on to further explore the idea of the myths and rituals of everyday life and how they fit into black America, which is what I started to do in the beginning.
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Understanding Asia means understanding its culture. For instance, if you're in Japan, and a lot of the little kids seem overenthusiastic, chances are it's the Shichi-Go-San (Seven-Five-Three) Festival. On November 15, girls age seven and boys age five and three don their finest outfits and assemble at local Shinto shrines for promenading, photographing, and copious parental oozing. It's one of the many social events of Shintoism, "the way of the gods," once the official state religion of Japan. Instead of dealing with metaphysical questions or issues of life and death, Shinto is what jazzes turn to for guidance in everyday matters. Visiting businessmen sometimes experience Shinto first-hand; new business ventures are often blessed by a visit to a Shinto shrine or priest.

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Beneath the ancient cobbles of the Place Vendome lies a maze of vaulted passageways leading to some of the most pleasurable new experiences Paris has to offer. This is the Ritz Health Club and though it's shamelessly modeled on the decadent opulence of ancient Rome - this being the '90s - it is, of course, good for you! Many hotels have created fitness and spa facilities to service the kind of high flying clientele that spends more time in an airplane seat than a Barcalounger. Some are no more than some gym equipment in a subterranean room; others offer everything from a quick fix for jet lag to wading deep decompression packages amidst exquisite formal gardens and gently playing fountains.

The Ritz Health Club opened in September '88 after Egyptian businessman Mohammed Al Fayed bought the hotel from the Ritz family and spent nine years

Above: Beneath the cobbles of the Place Vendome in Paris lies the new Ritz Health Club. "shamelessly modeled on the decadent opulence of ancient Rome." It's the most European style spa in the United States in Miami's Coral Gables.

by Susan Price
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The spectacular views are an added bonus at New York's United Nations Plaza Hotel.

and $150 million renovating it. Its centerpiece is the indoor swimming pool complete with soothing underwater music piped in and gushing water to give bathers the impression of swimming against the tide. Mosaics and trompe l'oeil frescoes modeled on the neo-classical (some would say "camp") paintings of Sir Alin Talbott, embellish the walls and ceiling. On sunny days, a draped skylight retracts for al fresco poolside dining and sunning. A dancefloor that slides over the pool has made the Ritz Health Club the site of some of the most glamorous balls in Paris.

More than just a pretty face, the luxury at the Ritz Health Club runs deep. The atmosphere is serene and softly lit, the spa staff shepherds you about with just the right degree of warmth and reserve. Details are flawless right down to the negative ion machine placed in the gym "to give the air an energizing feeling." All the workout equipment and treatments found in the world's best spas are here plus a Turkish bath, squash courts with video playback and "Oriental" sequence of treatments that would raise the dead. It includes a Thai massage therapy.

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The Spa at Cameback Inn is set up for those who work or wish to be on a conference program as well as for hotel guests who have just a few hours to enjoy it. “I forgot my shorts” is no excuse because the spa provides workout clothes for men and women.

Somewhat surprising, the most European style spa in the United States is in Miami. The mood of the Doral Satinara, a 40-suit luxury complex adjacent to the 2,400 acre Doral Resort and Country Club is lacon, calme et volupte. The architecture and interior design is of classical inspiration with a French art nouveau staircase rising towards a glass domed cupola at the spa’s center. Formal topiary gardens with classical architectural canopies extend down to the edges of the Doral’s lush golf course.

The Doral Satirana International Spa Resort is the American counterpart of the Terme di Saturnia in Tuscany, a spa at the site of the Saturnia volcano which has attracted seekers of “the cure” for centuries. The clientele here is sophisticated and discreetly high-powered. At the designated “social” table an English Lord and his wife mingled with other spa goers over a superb lunch of salads and chicken prepared with Balsamic vinegar.

With indoor and outdoor pools, soothing treatment rooms, banked jogging track, full-service beauty salon, gym, a menu of exercise classes, golf, tennis, and a world class equestrian center nearby, the Doral Satirana also offers cutting-edge nutritional counseling, a theater with private movie screenings, and a reading room with a full complement of international newspapers.

Even though it was at 175% capacity, it seemed as if I had the Villa and gardens all to myself. The fact that all of the suites have separate living rooms, private dressing areas and marble baths with jacuzzis and full entertainment consoles including VCR’s may have accounted for that.

With its exquisite serenity and European hotel service, the Doral Satirana is the place for moguls who need a break from mogul-ing before getting after yet another takeover battle. As for the rest of us, getting into the habit of incorporating even the shortest “pit stop” into our travel itineraries can be a real life saver.

Love Match

Rancho Valencia, John Gardiner’s brand new tennis resort is just the place for love matches — on or off the courts. Private casitas nestle under the bamboo vines on a Rancho Santa Fe hilltop in San Diego County, and there is a long list of elegant accommodations. The Spa at Cameback Inn is set up for those who work or wish to be on a conference program as well as for hotel guests who have just a few hours to enjoy it. “I forgot my shorts” is no excuse because the spa provides workout clothes for men and women.

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The Doral Satirana International Spa Resort is the American counterpart of the Terme di Saturnia in Tuscany, a spa at the site of the Saturnia volcano which has attracted seekers of “the cure” for centuries. The clientele here is sophisticated and discreetly high-powered. At the designated “social” table an English Lord and his wife mingled with other spa goers over a superb lunch of salads and chicken prepared with Balsamic vinegar.

With indoor and outdoor pools, soothing treatment rooms, banked jogging track, full-service beauty salon, gym, a menu of exercise classes, golf, tennis, and a world class equestrian center nearby, the Doral Satirana also offers cutting-edge nutritional counseling, a theater with private movie screenings, and a reading room with a full complement of international newspapers.

Even though it was at 175% capacity, it seemed as if I had the Villa and gardens all to myself. The fact that all of the suites have separate living rooms, private dressing areas and marble baths with jacuzzis and full entertainment consoles including VCR’s may have accounted for that.

With its exquisite serenity and European hotel service, the Doral Satirana is the place for moguls who need a break from mogul-ing before getting after yet another takeover battle. As for the rest of us, getting into the habit of incorporating even the shortest “pit stop” into our travel itineraries can be a real life saver.
TRAVEL: PIT STOP DELUXE (continued)

The Spa at Camellia Inn is set up for those who want to be on a serious wellness program as well as for hotel guests who have just a few hours to enjoy it. I forget my shorts” is no excuse because the spa provides workout clothes for men and women.

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In the 1957 film *Funny Face*, Fred Astaire transforms a bohemian book clerk into a beauty with the help of perfect make-up and clothing. Of course it helped that the girl was Audrey Hepburn, but the Pygmalion fantasy applies to all of us: with the right guidance, everyone's unique beauty can come shine brighter.

That's the premise cosmetic companies have been following ever since Charles of the Ritz, Helena Rubenstein, Elizabeth Arden and Max Factor began showing women what proper care can do. Such special care used to be cloistered away in expensive salons, out of reach for those without the time or the inclination. Now, however, everyone's beauty is as near as their local cosmetic counter.

Walking into a department store these days, one is bombarded with miracle make-up and technological treatments. None of them are cheap—hundreds of dollars can be spent looking for the most suitable product. Realizing this, cosmetic companies are attempting to reduce the confusion, and beat the competition, by stationing their own experts at their counters, ready to give a make-up les-

**IN FASHION**

**Making Up is Hard to Do**

Custom products are taking the guesswork out of cosmetics

Barbara Foley, former west coast fashion editor of Women's Wear Daily and W, is fashion editor ofՊեհերԺամանակագետներ

Above: A veil of sheer fantasy. Perspicuous rainbow of 24 colors of custom blended powder is the ultimate refinement for the skin. Intent: Subtlest of choice is also key to Estée Lauder's Signature Collection.

by Barbara Foley
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son or a treatment consultation at a moment's notice.

"It's best to have an appointment, but we try to help everyone who walks up," says Neiman-Marcus Prescriptives representative, Russell Durkee, an expert in blending custom foundations and powders. "We not only match color exactly to skin tones, but we also adjust the viscosity and control the texture of make-up appropriate to the skin's condition. We're into enhancing the individuality of skin."

Once skin is identified as to color family, an array of colors can be selected for an entire make-over. "Prescriptives is user-friendly," adds Durkee. "We know women are busy. We simplify make-up. First we identify your color family and then we provide lipsticks, eye-shadows, and blushes to compliment."

Visage Beauté is another recent and revolutionary addition to custom color. Founded by Roy Karlil in Beverly Hills in 1987, Visage earned $14 million in sales its first year and was then sold by Revlon's Robert Neilson, formerly of Prescriptives. Karlil said Visage to Revlon for an undisclosed amount last year, but remains President of the company he created that thrives on the fact that women are unique. In addition to their Pré line of hundreds of already-made lipsticks, eyeshadows, blushes, foundations and powders, any color can be custom blended. Favorite lipsticks can be matched; eyeshadows, blushes and foundations can be colored to suit one's skin. The blending is done at the counter; a small sample is given to the customer and the remainder goes off to Visage's lab. Within two weeks, the finished packaged product is ready. Lipsticks are $30 for two tubes, eyeshadows are $34 for a triple pan at Nordstrom and Bullock's. Accompanying products also share the success. "One of our best products is Brow Control," says Bullock's Visage consultant, Dais Hemberton. "It combs the brow, and gives the whole eye area a lift."

The Grande Dame of cosmetics companies, Estée Lauder launched its Spring 1990 soft and sophisticated colors of shell peach and pink mauve blushes to go with lip colors including geranium, brown-wood and cinnamon pink. Moving into summer, the colors brighten but are still white washed and sun-mellowed. Lipsticks include sun washed coral, snow pearly and orange ice.

At their counters a make-up expert is often on hand to take a before and after Polaroid of their subject, give a make-up lesson and a detailed diagram of the products used. One of Lauder's strongest messages for spring and summer are their Signature Automatic Pencils, self-sharpening, for eyes, lips and brows. Those interested in skin care are no strangers to the clean-grown of Clinique, one of the first companies to introduce individuated skin consultations with their "computer" and white-smocked professionals. Fragrance-free and allergy tested, Clinique also offers a fresh approach to make-up.

Clinique's half face make-up is billed as a working consultation in which their artist does half your face and the client does the rest. It guarantees a learning lesson. There are lots of tips--deaging! Avoid heavy creams under make-up, face color falls into creases, and go one shade lighter, wear natural lips with heavier eye make-up, lighter eye make-up with stronger lip color.

 Lancôme also offers make-up tips. Their artists are on hand to explain their new self-tanning product, Éclat du soleil, or their new Le stylo mate lip colors. A full or partial make-over can be had, just for the asking.

At the Ultima II counter, the news is "The Nudes." Revlon's ivory and black packaged neutrals have been virtually sold out since they were launched in January. Soft pink and coral lipsticks, skin-toned shadows and blushes point out the California demand for natural enhancement through tonal shadowing. They're subtle, but color-correct for spring and summer. Chanel's glossy black, white and gold packaging is usually nearby. Their make-up is as high styled as their clothes and a bit easier on the budget. Chanel colors are brilliant and their consultants look as if they just stepped off a Paris runway. There are also a number of "miracle" products.

"Blanc de Blanc makes your skin look better than it is. We just received it - it’s the product models wear to get that translucent, flawless finish," says L. Magin, Chanel make-up consultant, Glen. "And Skin Recovery Extract is a wonderful exfoliant without having to scrub the skin."

As she dunks on pale color to go with the alabaster skin and blond hair of her subject, Glen is careful to point out that make-up looks better on well nourished, moisturized and cleansed skin. "We can adjust make-up to suit the occasion, heavier at night, lighter in the daytime, but make-up only looks as good as the skin is underneath it."

Caring for the skin with botanicals is the specialty of Princess Marcella Borghese's...
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Suite Saint-Saëns; Touch Me; L’Air d’Esprit; The Green Table
The 7/19 & Fri 7/21 8 pm; Sun 7/20 8 pm
Billy the Kid; Lacrymosa (Bay Area premiere); Trinity
Fri 7/20 8 pm; Sun 7/22 2 pm
Tue 7/24 8 pm
Daglievi Program: Paradiso; L’Après-Midi d’un Faune; Le Sacre du Printemps
Sat 7/21 & Wed 7/24 8 pm; Sat 7/25 2 pm
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Make-up and treatments have reached a new level of technology and expertise. With that comes an increased need to decipher the differences. Before going for a make-over at any of the cosmetic counters, a customer should do a little research: ask questions; observe the counter and pick both a product and an artist that goes with your style; be sure that you’re somewhat serious, a purchase is usually expected after a demonstration; ask for a written list or diagram of the products used so that products can be added over time. One good treatment consultation and make-up lesson can be a lifetime guide to buying and using all the right stuff.
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SAN FRANCISCO

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Gaylord India, One Embarcadero Center (415-397-7772), Ghirardelli Square (415) 776-8921, Boulevard Shopping Center, Palo Alto (415-322-8755), 5-11 4-14, D 11-30 4-10 daily. Quite simply, the ultimate in Indian Traveler dining. AE DC V MC DIS

Kijiji's Italian Restaurant, 230 Powell St. (415-982-7730), 4-7:30-11:30 PM, L & D 11:30-11 PM. Wonderful authentic, pasta, grilled fish, meat & pastry. Considered San Francisco's finest Northern Italian restaurant. AE DC V MC DIS

Lagunepe 4th Street Diner, 24th Street (415-964-2750), 8-5 Tue-Sat. Original LouisianaDelta-style cuisine. Cooking in Giant theatre pickup. Reservations. AE DC V MC


Modesto's, Union Place. 305 Van Ness (415-628-0546), 5-11 2-10 Mon-Fri, 4-10 11 Mon-11 Sat. 4-11-10 Sat. 3-4 hrs. Traditional Italian lunch & dinner menu. Specials for theater & theater interiors. Banquet facilities. Reservations accepted. AE DC CV MC DIS

White Elephant, Holiday Inn Union Square, 400 Sansome St. (415) 594-6600, 11-11 Mon-Sat, 4-10 Sun. 3-4 hrs. Specials for dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring fine dining featuring 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TIMING THE LUXURY OF LIVING
The Last Word

"Break a leg!"
Peregrinating among the language of theater

Arctic tribes, it is said, can distinguish between two dozen types of snow; people in the theater have at least that number of words to discriminate among the disasters that can plague a show. The list in the American Thesaurus of Slang includes “bean, egg, fizzle, flop, dud, fiasco, fiasco, fizzle,” and more.

Peter Hay is the author of Theatrical Anecdotes and Broadway Anecdotes, both published by Oxford University Press.

A poor show is also described as “americana, dime museum, fish, no panic, cheese, producer, stinker, or stinkeroo.”

The most common current expression — “a turkey” — is sometimes attributed to nineteenth-century managers’ habit of opening a bad play during Thanksgiving or “turkey week,” in the hope that a festive and well-fed audience would (complete) fizzle, goos, oilcan, pizzicato and foldup.”

Above:任 Harrison in Moliere’s The Imaginary Invalid.

by Peter Hay

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"No one can top Shakespeare's great stars..." or "to be gored" meant being hissed. "Laying an egg" or "to be laid an egg" are the most common verbs we associate with failure and perhaps with the big birds. Old expressions included "to go west," still regarded not so much an opportunity, but a form of banishment by many New York actors. "To brood" is thought to refer to a poor player named Steve Brodie, who jumped to his death from the Brooklyn Bridge. "To bomb" means total failure in America, but exactly the opposite across the Atlantic, proving Oscar Wilde's axiom that "the English have really everything in common with the Americans -- except, of course, language."

When an American act failed in a London music hall, the manager would simply say: "The boat sails Tuesday." A quaint old expression among poor actors asks, "Does the Ghost walk?" Or: "The Ghost fails to walk." The reference is to a line in Hamlet: "--Has the thing happened?" -- which was usually asked by anxious actors at week's end. Would they be paid -- that was the question -- or would the manager walk with the money?

In the perverse lingo of the theater, to panic, paralyze, kill or murder an audience all demean ultimate success. Many shades of violence reside in dozens of phrases from "knocking 'em cold," and "drugging 'em on the seats," to "worrying 'em off their seats" -- and over the spotlight. These are all things decently to be wished. But once over those footsteps the meaning of the words changes again. Striking the sets and killing the lights are still fairly impertinent. Killing scenes or lines, however, are serious matters.

"The actor's devices for curbing, obscuring and 'killing' his fellow players are many," wrote the Broadway publicist Bernard Sobel sixty years ago, "most of them indicated by stage argot. The actor, for instance, who backs up continually while playing, in order to keep his own face to the audience, while pushing his associate in the background, is often told 'come into America,' that is, stand still and keep within bounds."

Hogging the spotlight, stealing a scene, and upsitting -- from the time the great stars used to rule a mixed stage from upstage, forcing all other actors to turn their backs to the audience -- have passed into general usage. Less well known is "catching flies," describing a secondary player who draws attention to himself by fumbling with his clothes. Other jokes par include stepping on other actors' lines or hitting their cues. By the way, cue comes from the letter Q, which appears in old prompt books; it stood for the Latin quando, meaning an actor when to enter. Noël Coward, even acting in other people's plays, used to irritate people by turning up at the first rehearsal with all his lines memorized. Once he glanced an actress, who had been slow in learning her part, into screaming: "If you go on like that, Noël, I'll throw something at you!" The master flashed back his famous smile: "You might start with my cue."

The cardinal sin on stage is to give the wrong cue, "to dry up" the other player, to "stick" or "corps" him. "Drying" is the actor's nightmare, when he forgets his lines completely. The cure used to be "going up," sometimes "in a balloon" in other words, turning upstage and getting "the word" from the prompter or a fellow actor. Sometimes more than a week or line was needed, and the actor had to walk offstage into the wings, to study the script for a while. This is probably the origin of "wringing it," which has come to mean improving and ad-libbing. Failure to murder the audience leads to one's own death. When actors feel instead of warmth coming from the house, they feel they died up there on stage. At the turn-of-the-century, the famous vaudeville team of Duffy and Sweeney was about to leave on a long tour. The king of the circuit, E.F. Albee -- Edward Albee is his adopted grandson -- advised the comics to take out membership in the National Vaudeville Association Club. "Besides the club privileges," Albee urged, "should you die, you will automatically receive a thousand dollars in death benefits." Duffy and Sweeney signed on and began their tour. A week later, Albee received a telegram from them: "Send the $1000 quick. We died last night in New Orleans."

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