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Edwin Outwater conductor
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ABOUT A.C.T.

American Conservatory Theater
nurture the art of live theater through
dynamic productions, intensive actor
training in its conservatory, and an
ongoing dialogue with its community.
Under the leadership of Artistic Director
Carey Perloff and Executive Director
Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its
responsibility to conserve, renew, and
reinvent its relationships to the rich
theatrical traditions and literatures that
are our collective legacy, while exploring
new artistic forms and new communities.
A commitment to the highest standards
informs every aspect of A.C.T.’s creative
work.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball,
A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco
season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In
the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national
and international reputation, winning
a Tony Award for outstanding theater
During the past three decades, more
than 300 A.C.T. productions have been
performed to a combined audience of
seven million people; today, A.C.T.’s
performance, education, and outreach
programs annually reach more than
270,000 people in the San Francisco Bay
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creative talent for the theater were
recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyn
Theaters Award. In 2001, to celebrate
A.C.T.’s 150th anniversary and Perloff’s
10th season, A.C.T. created a new core
company of actors, who have become
instrumental in every aspect of its work.
Today A.C.T. is recognized nationally
for its groundbreaking productions of
classical works and bold explorations
of contemporary playwriting. Since
the reopening of the Geary Theater in
1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable
period of audience expansion and
producing alternative work at Zeum
Theater, which now serves as a venue
for student productions and exciting new
plays. The company continues to produce
challenging theater in the rich context
of symposium, audience discussions, and
community interaction.
The conservatory, led by Melissa
Smith, now serves 3,000 students every
year. It was the first actor training
program in the United States not
affiliated with a college or university
accredited to award a master of fine arts
degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening,
Denzel Washington, and Winona
Ryder are among the conservatory’s
distinguished former students. With
its commitment to excellence in actor
training and to the relationship between
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A.C.T.’s Master of Fine Arts Program has
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nurture the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community.

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Today A.C.T. is recognized nationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Since the reopening of the Geary Theater in 1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable period of audience expansion and financial stability. In 2001, A.C.T. began producing alternative work at Zeun Theater, which now serves as a venue for student productions and exciting new plays. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, now serves 3,000 students every year. It was the first actor training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory’s distinguished former students. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America’s actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.

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The Good Body 5
FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Welcome to Eve Ensler’s The Good Body! I remember the morning that Eve first told me about her vision for this show: we were having breakfast at the Fairmont Hotel, and the dining room was filled with tired accountants attending a business conference. I remember that the room got quieter and quieter as Eve began regaling me with stories about her wild around-the-world adventures in search of a way to tame her fractious middle-aged tunnyness. By the time she got to the Indian section of the piece with her jadhi ("fart") friends at the gym in Mumbai fighting for time on the treadmill, Eve was practically standing on her chair, the eyes of the tired accountants were wide with curiosity, and I knew we had to bring this piece to A.C.T.

Eve Ensler is a force of nature. She has single-handedly changed the way we think about, and talk about, women’s sexuality and women’s bodies, and she’s done it with a grace, wit, and theatricality all her own. This piece is the culmination of a journey around the world, asking women everywhere how they feel about their own bodies. Eve has always been sure that if women could harness the energy spent despising their own physiques and turn it towards more positive endeavors, the world might tilt in a different direction. Perhaps The Good Body will be a first step.

It has been a great joy to be part of the development of this piece, and to watch Eve and her director, Peter Askin, sculpt the many stories Eve has collected into a theatrical whole that is wise and witty, surprising and sexy, unique and totally universal. New work always takes enormous courage to launch, and the real discoveries begin when an audience walks into the room for the first time and shares the experience. So, as always, we thank you for being here, and for being part of the inception of this remarkable new adventure.

Many of you took part in our exciting new play readings this year, came to our workshops and discussions, shared the world premieres of A Mother and Lear (James on the Geary stage), watched talented teenagers create new work in our Young Conservatory, and observed with delight as we launched a remarkable new crop of actors into the world through our Master of Fine Arts Program. A.C.T. is deeply invested in the future of the art form, and we hope you will look back on your experiences at A.C.T. as a time in which you watched precious seeds being planted and beautiful buds begin to grow. We could never do it without you!

Have a wonderful time at The Good Body, and we’ll see you this fall at our spectacular season-opening production, Robert Wilson and Tom Waits’s The Black Rider.

Yours,

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

P.S. A.C.T. is now a member of the New York Times The Broadway Guide. It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with them. For reviews and information, please check the listings.

PLEAS EJOIN US FOR THESE FREE EVENTS ABOUT THE GOOD BODY: at the Geary Theater

A.C.T. Prologue
A conversation with director Peter Askin
Tuesday, June 29, 6:30-7:00 p.m.

Audience Exchanges
directly following The Good Body
Tuesday, July 6 (after the 7 p.m. performance)
Sunday, July 11 (after the 7 p.m. matinee)
Wednesday, July 21 (after the 7 p.m. performance)

Out with A.C.T.
A gathering of gay and lesbian theatergoers, immediately following the performance July 14.

For more information, please call 415.749.2ACT or visit www.ACT.sf.org.
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american conservatory theater

Carey Perloff, Artistic Director • Heather Kitchen, Executive Director

presents

EVE ENSLER'S
The Good Body
(2004)

Directed by Peter Askin

Scenery by Robert Brill
Costumes by Susan Hilferty
Lighting by Kevin Adams
Original Music & Sound by David Van Tieghem
Video Design by Wendall K. Harrington
A.C.T. Resident Sound Designer Garth Hemphill
Dramaturgy Priya Pandar

STAGE MANAGEMENT
Arabella Powell, Stage Manager
Elisa Goethete, Assistant Stage Manager

The Good Body is performed without an intermission.

This production is sponsored in part by

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SPECIAL THANKS TO
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and deep thanks to Ariel Orr Jordan

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Body Language

AN INTERVIEW WITH EVE ENSLER

BY JESSICA WERNER

Eve Ensler’s conservation style is not unlike her performance style: bold, frank, compassionate, persuasive, free-ranging, and, perhaps most remarkably, radically optimistic that the world can and will become more peaceful—one body at a time. Even while discussing the various subjects she explores in The Good Body—namely, our culture’s insidious preoccupation with an unhealthy, feminine ideal and the tyranny of women’s deep, deploring programming to be good—Ensler radiates the genuine belief in personal, and global, transformation that has infused all of her work since she first started writing plays more than 25 years ago.

Inspired by the phenomenal popularity of The Vagina Monologues (her boundary-breaking play about women’s sexual triumphs and traumas which ran off Broadway from 1999 to 2003 and has since been staged by women in more than 1,500 cities worldwide), Ensler spoke with women in more than 40 countries about their complex feelings about their bodies as she traveled on behalf of V-Day, the international movement launched by Ensler to eradicate violence against women and girls. Framing these cross-racial conversations within her own personal journey to come to terms with her “less-than-flat, post-40s stomach,” Ensler has transformed her griefstricken exploration of the female form into The Good Body, which she calls her most personal—and challenging—work to date. Among the play’s most salient messages is the notion that ever-present self-criticism and physical obsession have effectively distracted many women from engaging with the world in significant and tangible ways. “Can you imagine the energy that would be unleashed if women stopped obsessing about their bodies?” asks Ensler. The Good Body was workshopped at Seattle Repertory Theatre in April and is scheduled to open on Broadway in September. Ensler spoke with us in June as she prepared for the play’s world premiere at A.C.T. in San Francisco.

JESSICA WERNER: I wanted to start by asking you about the title of this play, about what it has meant for women to strive to be “good,” as well as the correlative that if you’re not good enough, if you fall short of the ideal, then you must be bad. I wonder how that concept of “being good” has played out in your work, and if it’s changed at all as you’ve worked on THE GOOD BODY.

Eve Ensler: I think there is an underlying force that affects all of us, men and women, that has to do with the nature of pure authority and control all of us to some degree, gets us to behave and to be good in general. But I do think it’s different for women. I think that from the time we’re born this underlying theme—this ongoing brainwashing, really—to be good is powerfully present. I mean, we say, “She’s a good baby” if she doesn’t cry. I hear people say this all the time: “She’s good,” meaning she’s quiet and she doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that good? So you begin there, and then you start working on all the many ways this culture trains women to be quiet, to be polite, and to be thin—being thin is a huge piece of it, because I believe it’s really about making women disappear, becoming lesser and lesser versions of themselves.

Ultimately, it is all about control. A game is set up dictating the way your body is supposed to look, the way you’re supposed to walk, the way you’re supposed to talk, and you’re never supposed to speak up too much.

EACH WOMAN YOU PORTRAY IN THE GOOD BODY SEEMS TO DEFINE A FACET OF WHAT THE IDEAL OF BEING “GOOD” CURRENTLY MEANS: THIN, WITHHOLDING, QUIET, CONTROLLED.

Yes. It also means not messy. And absolutely not living in ambiguity. There can be no mess, no darkness, no acceptance of the shadow side. Good doesn’t allow much leeway. It means either this or that, right or wrong, perfect or not perfect. And capitalism puts quite a role. I don’t know which is the chicken and which is the egg, as far as capitalism [and body issues], but in order to be good we have to consume more. In order to be perfect, we have to buy certain products.

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO POINT OUT THAT, WHILE THIS FEMININE IDEAL MAY HAVE BEEN POSTERIZED BY PATRIARCHY AND CONSUMERISM, WOMEN ARE COMPLICATED IN THE PROCESS? WE’RE BUYING THE MAGAZINES . . .

We are absolutely implicated in it.

YOU’VE DESCRIBED THE GOOD BODY AS YOUR MOST PERSONAL PIECE TO DATE. DO YOU THINK THE OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE RESPONSE YOU RECEIVED TO THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES GAVE YOU THE CONFIDENCE TO EXPLORE THESE ISSUES NOW?

Definitely. In a way I think doing The Vagina Monologues gave me courage, and I felt like after doing all the work on that play I had scratched the surface of this. But, what was fascinating is that after having done that show for a while, I thought, OK, I’ve got this. I’m home free. I like my vagina, I feel good about myself. And then of course it just traveled up. One day I looked down and it had just all moved up to my stomach. And I realized, Oh no, this is a virus. This is deeper than I knew. In some ways, this really is the hardest thing I have ever reckoned with. It is so scary how deep this programming is. People can say whatever they want about this issue, but it is the deepest propaganda, the deepest conditioning, it is so much more insidious than anything I have ever reckoned with in my entire life. I have been everywhere in the world and there is just nothing that has had me like this fundamental, self-hated-for-not-being-good and for not measuring up. And it is so amplified in the West.

WAS IT DURING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES THAT YOU STARTED KEEPING THE JOURNAL THAT BECAME [A 300-PLUS PAGE] DIALOGUE WITH YOUR STOMACH?

I started keeping the journal nearing the end of The Vagina Monologues, but it really got clear to me shortly after I stopped performing that piece that I had become aware of my stomach. I was in my 40s, and I suddenly had this belly. I had always had a flat stomach, and suddenly I had this thing. And I believe every single woman has her thing. I was just spending hours thinking about it and I thought, Can this really be you? Are you doing this? I mean, come on, you know better!

There is a huge amount of shame around this stuff. When I started working on this I thought, Eve, you can’t write a piece about this. And then, you know what I thought, You have to! Because this is the truth. It doesn’t matter who you are, your age or political orientation, it just gets you. It’s funny, sometimes women say to me, “Oh, I don’t have body issues.” And I say, “Really? You don’t really like your body?” And they say, “Well, I like everything... but my face.” [laughs] Oh, OK.

I was so encouraged by [the recent workshops of] The Good Body in Seattle. Nearly every single woman I identified. There were a few women who said, “There are many women who love our bodies, and why aren’t you focusing on them?” And I just said, “Because I haven’t met them!” [laughs] “Please introduce me, I’d love to meet them.”

SO HOW DID YOUR INTERVIEWS AND CONVERSATIONS WITH WOMEN FOLLOWING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES EVOE INTO THE MONOLOGUES IN THE GOOD BODY?

I spoke to women as I traveled all over the world and heard so many stories, and in many cases the monologues are composites of things I’ve heard from different women. There are a couple of real interviews, with [actress/model] Isabella Rossellini, and with [Cosmopolitan magazine editor] Helen Gurley Brown, but it was really that I had started this dialogue with my stomach. That became the leaping-off point, because I would think, How can I really feel this way? What do other women think? And then I’d start talking to women.

WERE YOU SURPRISED TO FIND JUST HOW PERSUASIVE AND COMMON THESE ISSUES ARE CROSSCULTURALLY?

Yes. I was surprised by how that Cosmo image has traveled this planet. Look, every culture has its own mishguss, there’s no doubt about it. But there is something so potent about this Western ideal. I asked people all over the world, “Who do you think is beautiful?” And I cannot tell you how many people said [model] “Claudia Schiffer, she’s perfect.” Instead of The Good Body, I was going to call this Claudia Schiffer, Because She’s Perfect. Because it didn’t matter if I was in South Africa or India. That was the answer: “Claudia Schiffer, because she’s perfect.”

IN THE FACE OF SOMETHING THAT POWERFUL, HOW DO YOU REMAIN HOPEFUL? YOU ONCE SAID IN AN INTERVIEW THAT WE ARE DOING A GREAT JOB OF “EXPORTING BODY HATRED,” AND I DON’T SEE OUR MEDIA, OUR LARGEST COMMODITY, CHANGING ANYTIME SOON.

Well, I think part of it is that women have to demand that it changes, and part of that is changing ourselves. I think that if we start feeling differently about our bodies, then we will stop buying into this. And I do think it’s possible. I really do. We just
Body Language

AN INTERVIEW WITH EVE ENSLER

BY JESSICA WERNER

Eve Ensler’s performance style is not unlike her performance style: bold, frank, compassionate, persuasive, free-ranging, and, perhaps most remarkably, radically optimistic that the world can and will become more peaceful—one body at a time. Even while discussing the survival subjects she explores in The Good Body, namely, our culture’s insidious prescription with an unhealthy feminine ideal and the tyranny of women’s deep, deep programming to be good—Ensler radiates the genuine belief in personal, and global, transformation that has infused all of her work since she first started writing plays more than 25 years ago.

Inspired by the phenomenal popularity of The Vagina Monologues (her boundary-breaking play about women’s sexual triumphs and traumas which ran off Broadway from 1999 to 2003 and has since been staged by women in more than 1,500 cities worldwide), Ensler spoke with women in more than 40 countries about their complex feelings about their bodies as she traveled on behalf of V-Day, the international movement launched by Ensler to eradicate violence against women and girls. Framing these cross-cultural conversations within her own personal journey to come to terms with her “less-than-flat, post-40s stomach,” Ensler has transformed her golf-skirt-wearing exploration of the female form into The Good Body, which she calls her most personal—and challenging—work to date. Among the play’s most salient messages is the notion that even-present self-criticism and physical obsession have effectively distracted many women from engaging with the world in significant and tangible ways. “Can you imagine the energy that would be unleashed if women stopped obsessing about their bodies?” asks Ensler. The Good Body was workshopped at Seattle Repertory Theatre in April and is scheduled to open on Broadway in November. Ensler spoke with us in June as the producer for the play’s world premiere at S.C.P.

JESSICA WERNER: I wanted to start by asking you about the title of this play, about what it has meant for women to strive to be “good,” as well as the correlative that if you’re not good enough, if you fall short of the ideal, then you must be bad. I wonder how that concept of “being good” has played out in other aspects of life, if it’s changed at all as you’ve worked on The Good Body.

Eve Ensler: I think there is an underlying force that affects all of us, men and women, that has to do with the nature of pure authority and controls all of us to some degree, gets us to behave and to be good in general. But I do think it’s different for women. I think that from the time we’re born this underlying thing—this ongoing brainwashing, really—to be good is powerfully present. I mean, we say, “She’s a good baby” if she doesn’t cry. I hear people say this all the time: “She’s good,” meaning she’s quiet and she doesn’t make any noise. You have to ask, What’s good about that? Why is that good? That’s quiet. That’s not noisy. But why is that good? So you begin there, and then you start working on all the many ways this culture trains women to be quiet, to be polite, and to be thin—being thin is a huge piece of it, because I believe it’s really about making women disappear, becoming lesser and lesser versions of themselves.

Ultimately, it’s all about control. A personal or societal dictating the way your body is supposed to look, the way you’re supposed to walk, the way you’re supposed to talk, and you’re never supposed to speak up too much.

EACH WOMAN YOU PORTRAY IN THE GOOD BODY SEEMS TO DEFINE A FACET OF WHAT THE IDEAL OF BEING “GOOD” CURRENTLY MEANS: THIN, WITHHOLDING, QUIET, CONTROLLED. Yes. It also means not messy. And absolutely not living in ambiguity.

There can be no mess, no darkness, no acceptance of the shadow side. Good doesn’t allow much leeway. It means either this or that, right or wrong, perfect or not perfect. And capitalism certainly plays quite a role. I don’t know which is the chicken and which is the egg, as far as capitalism [and body issues], but in order to be good we have to consume more. In order to be perfect, we have to buy certain products.

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO PEOPLE WHO POINT OUT THAT, WHILE THIS FEMINIST IDEAL MAY HAVE BEEN FOSTERED BY PATRIARCHY AND CONSUMERSHIP, WOMEN ARE COMPlicit IN THE PROCESS? We’re buying the magazines ... We are absolutely complicit in it.

You’ve described the Good Body as your most personal piece to date. Do you think the overwhelmingly positive response you received to The Vagina Monologues gave you the confidence to explore these issues now? Definitely. In a way I think doing The Vagina Monologues gave me courage, and I felt like after doing all the work on that play I had scratched the surface of this. But, what was fascinating is that after having done that show for a while, I thought, OK, I’ve got this. I’m home free. I like my vagina, I feel good about myself. And then of course it just traveled, one day I looked down and it had all just moved up to my stomach. And I realized, Oh no, this is a virus. This is deeper than I knew. In some ways, this really is the hardest thing I have ever reckoned with. It is so scary how deep this programming is. People can say whatever they want about this issue, but it is the deepest propaganda, the deepest conditioning, it is so much more insidious than anything I have ever reckoned with in my entire life. I have been brought up to be perfect and there is just nothing that has had me like this fundamental self-hate for not being good and for not measuring up. And it is so amplified in the West.

WAS IT DURING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES THAT YOU STARTED KEEPING THE JOURNAL THAT BECAME A 300-PLUS PAGE DIALOGUE WITH YOUR STOMACH? I started keeping the journal nearing the end of The Vagina Monologues, but it really got clear to me shortly after I stopped performing that piece that I had become aware of my stomach. I was in my 40s, and I suddenly had this belly. I had always had a flat stomach, and suddenly I had this thing. And I believe every single woman has her thing. I was just spending hours thinking about it and thought, Can this really be you? You are doing this? I mean, come on, you know better! There is a huge amount of shame around this stuff. When I started working on this I thought, Eve, you can’t write a piece about this. And then, you know what? I thought, You have to! Because this is the truth. It doesn’t matter who you are, your age or political orientation, it just gets you. It’s funny, sometimes women say to me, “Oh, I don’t have body issues.” And I say, “Really? You don’t? You really like your body?” And they say, “Well, I like everything... but my face.” [laughs] OK, OK.

I was so encouraged by [the recent workshops of] The Good Body in Seattle. Nearly every single woman identified. There were a few women who said, “There are many women who love our bodies, and why aren’t you focusing on them?” And I just said, “Because I haven’t met them” [laughs] “Please introduce me, I’d love to meet them.”

So how did your interviews and conversations with women following The Vagina Monologues evolve into the monologues in The Good Body? I spoke to women as I traveled all over the world and heard so many stories, and in many cases the monologues are composites of things I’ve heard from different women. There are a couple of real interviews, with [actress/model] Isabella Rossellini, and with [Cosmopolitan magazine editor] Helen Gurley Brown, but it was really that I had started this dialogue with my stomach. That became the leap-off point, because I would think, How can I really feel this way? What do other women think? And then I started talking to women:

WERE YOU SURPRISED TO FIND JUST HOW PERSUASIVE AND COMMON THESE ISSUES ARE CROSSCULTURALLY? Yes. I was surprised by how that Color image has traveled this planet. Look, every culture has its own mikhay, there’s no doubt about it. But there is something so potent about this Western ideal. I asked people all over the world, “Who do you think is beautiful?” And I cannot tell you how many people said [model] “Claudia Schiffer, she’s perfect.” Instead of The Good Body, I was going to call this Claudia Schiffer, Because She’s Perfect. Because it didn’t matter if I was in South Africa or India. That was the answer: “Claudia Schiffer, because she’s perfect.”

In the face of something that powerful, how do you remain hopeful? You once said in an interview that we are doing a great job of “exporting body hatred,” and I don’t see our media, our largest commodity, changing anytime soon.

Well, I think part of it is that women have to demand that it changes, and part of that is changing ourselves. I think that if we start feeling differently about our bodies, then we will stop buying into this. And I do think it’s possible. I really do. We just
have to be vigilant about it. It’s kind of like giving up alcohol. It’s withdrawing from some fundamental addiction to self-hatred.

THAT’S AN APPEAL TO METAPHOR, BECAUSE IT IS REALLY SEDUCTIVE SOMEHOW, ISN’T IT? So seductive, and familiar, and even comforting. You know, in the U.S. we consume 60% of the world’s resources. The numbers are frightening. One-third of all Americans are now obese, and yet we export the fantasy of anorexia. That, to me, is just mind-blowing.

IT’S A HORRIBLE PARADOX, THAT AS WE ARE LITERALLY OVERTHINKING OURSELVES TO DEATH, ANOTHER SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION IS STARVING ITSELF INTO OBSESSION. Yes. Well, because everything, at the bottom of it, is self-hatred.

THE GLOBAL POPULARITY OF PUBLICATIONS LIKE COSMOPOLITAN (WHICH NOW HAS 52 EDITIONS WORLDWIDE) IS BAFFLING, SINCE I THINK A LOT OF WOMEN HAVE A LOVE/HATE RELATIONSHIP WITH WOMEN’S MAGAZINES. IT CAN FEEL LIKE SELF-FLAGELLATION TO READ THEM, BUT THEN YOU CAN’T GET THROUGH AN AIRPORT AND NOT PICK ONE UP. I think it’s great when you don’t. I don’t know the areas where I’m addicted to the self-flagellation, and those things that just don’t make me feel good. You don’t learn from them, you don’t grow from them, you just feel like shit when you’re done. So why don’t we read what makes us feel good?

YOU STARTED THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES FROM A VERY PERSONAL PLACE, BE TALKING TO WOMEN ABOUT THEIR SHARED SEXUALITY AND ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR DESIRES, AND IT GREW INTO A GLOBAL MOVEMENT TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. THE GOOD BODY ALSO STARTS FROM A PERSONAL PLACE; DO YOU SEE IT LEADING TO A GREATER POLITICAL AGENDA? I really see it as a continuation. I see the next wave of V-Day moving toward women really loving and owning their bodies, and feeling good in whatever bodies they have so they can literally not be distracted anymore and start running the world. I hope the next stage of V-Day is that women choose to be great instead of good. That would mean living with ambition, living with not being approved of, living with your voice, living with your originality, living with the mess, and living with your power.

I DON’T THINK MOST PEOPLE MAKE THAT CONNECTION, WHICH YOU DO IN THE PLAY, THAT IT’S NOT JUST DAMAGING TO WOMEN’S PERSONAL WELL-BEING TO OBSESS ABOUT THEIR BODIES, BUT THAT IT’S LITERALLY STUNTING OUR GROWTH POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY AND Socially, IF WE COULD JUST FREE UP ALL THE MENTAL SPACE WE USE DESPERING OURSELVES . . .

I know, it’s just so consuming. I say in the play, women are busy “piercing, perming, waxing, lightening, covering, cutting, lifting, lightening, flattening, straining...” when we could be running the world. We need to look at what happens to us when we don’t play by the rules. Let me tell you something: If you can stand up and say, “I love my body,” you can do anything. I really mean it. If you can walk in whatever body you own in the world and feel good, you can stand up to anyone. I think that when we truly end the internalized self-violence, when women actually live in their bodies, actually love their bodies as they are, feel safe and empowered in them, then the world will change.

TO TALK MORE SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THEATER, DO YOU SEE YOUR WORK AS A THEATER ARTIST AS AN OUTFIT OF YOUR WORK AS AN ACTIVIST, OR DID THEY SORT OF DEVELOP IN TANDEM?

That’s one of those questions I don’t really know the answer to anymore. I think that I have always been a writer and considered myself a writer, but I have been an activist my entire life. For me, to be an artist means that you feel the intensity of the world in the narrow of your bones. You are receptive and responsive to what is around you, so if [poet] Adrienne Rich’s theory is right—that “the moment a feeling enters the body is political”—then all of us artists are political. It’s just a question of what your politics are. I’ve never separated them, politics and art. I actually began writing poetry, and I had no desire to act. I didn’t really perform until The Vagina Monologues. But things have always come to me in very dramatic terms, and those are the things we call “drama.” I think the world lives in a very tiny tiny way, and that we are scared of the bigness of our feelings and the depth of our passions and the bigness of our hearts. So I think we have created “Drah-ma” as this place where we get to express what we really feel. But I’m not convinced that if we were really living in our authentic, actualized, full selves we would have drama anymore.

YOU THINK WE MIGHT EVOLVE OUT OF THE NEED FOR THEATER? I think we would just call it “life.” Who knows?

JOANNE WOODWARD WAS AN EARLY MENTOR FOR YOU IN THE THEATER, WHO ELSE HAS INFLUENCED YOU? I was very influenced by Beckett. His interior monologues had a huge impact on me.

THAT’S INTERESTING, SINCE PEOPLE OFTEN THINK OF BECKETT AS TERRIBLY CEREBRAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL, YET HIS WORK RESIDES IN THE BODY, TOO, AND IT’S VERY PHYSICAL.

Fry physical. And I would say that Brecht had an enormous impact on me, Mother Courage for example. And I was very influenced by rock ’n’ roll people, like Tina Turner and Grace Slick, women who found their way and their voice through their bodies. And in terms of writers, the stream-of-consciousness monologues of Virginia Woolf and Toni Morrison, and Pinter. The Greeks also had a huge impact on me.

SINCE THERE’S SO MUCH OF YOUR OWN STORY IN THIS PLAY, DO YOU SEE IT EVOLVING INTO A PIECE LIKE THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES THAT’S PERFORMED BY OTHER ACTRESSES? Yes, I do. I think someone will be able to play the Me part, as well as the others. I’m just a character like everybody else.

IT’S GOING TO BE INTERESTING TO SEE WHERE THE GOOD BODY LEADS.

Because the content is more global—since it’s [set in] India, Afghanistan, Italy, Kenya—I think it will have a more global reach and people everywhere will own it more. But first, I’m just so excited about opening in San Francisco. I love San Francisco, and I really wanted to premiere it there because of the city’s incredible support and reception of The Vagina Monologues. I feel safe there, and I feel emboldened to take risks because of the people there.

HOW IMPORTANT IS HUMOR IN YOUR WORK, FINDING A BALANCE BETWEEN THE VERY SERIOUS AND THE COMIC? I IMAGINE YOU REALIZED DOING THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES THAT IF THEY WERE ALL VAGINA MONOLOGUES NO ONE WOULD WANT TO KEEP LISTENING.

Exactly. I remember when I first worked with Joanne Woodward she said to me, “I don’t care what you do, it has to be funny.” At the time I was writing a play about nuclear war, and I said, “It is not funny.” And she said, “Yes, it is, you’ll make it funny.” I thought, Funny? Nuclear war? All I want to be now is funny, because I know when people are laughing some part of them opens. Humor is the key. It lets people hear things they can’t hear otherwise.

THERE’S CERTAINLY PLENTY TO LAUGH AT IN OUR BODY OBSESSIONS.

Oh yes, it is just absolutely insane what we do to our bodies, what we think, and what we’re doing inside ourselves. It’s hysterical! And it’s completely embarrassing.

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**Body Language**

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**Who’s Who**

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(Playwright/ Performer/Artist) is the acclaimed writer of the OBIE Award-winning play *The Vagina Monologues* and the founder and artistic director of V-Day, a global movement to end violence against women and girls. In six years, V-Day has raised more than $25 million for grass roots groups around the world. *The Vagina Monologues* has been translated into more than 35 languages and has run in theaters worldwide, including sold-out runs at both off-Broadway’s Westside Theater and on London’s West End (2002 Olivier Award nomination, best entertainment). Her play * Necessary Targets*, set in a Bosnian refugee camp, opened Off Broadway at the Variety Arts Theater in February 2002, following a hit run at Hartford Stage Company. Enslers other plays include *Corrosion*, *Lemons*, *The Depot*, *Floating Rhoda and the Glim Man*, and *Extraneous Measures*. *The Vagina Monologues* and * Necessary Targets* have both been published by Villard/Rand McNally, who has also published *The Good Body* (August 2004) and Enslers upcoming book *I Am an Emotional Creature and V–World*. Enslers is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship Award in playwriting, the 2002 Amnesty International Media Spotlight Award for leadership, and the Matrix Award (2002). She is chair of the Women’s Committee of PEN American Center and is an executive producer of *What I Want My Work to Be as You*, a documentary about the writing group she has led since 1998 at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women; the film had its world premiere at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, where it received the “Freedom of Expression” Award; the film premiered nationally on PBS “POV” last December.

**PETER ASKIN** (Director) recently directed *Trombone*—starring (at different times) Ed Harris, Richard Dreyfuss, Tim Robbins, Chris Cooper, Alex Baldwin, Eddie Izzard, Nathan Lane, Bill Irwin, Aidan Quinn, F. Murray Abraham, and Brian Dennehy—and will direct Paul Newman in *Trombone* in July. Other recent productions include Mike OMalley’s *Searching for Certainty*, John Leguizamos record-breaking *Seasahub*, *Spic–O–Rama* (Drum Desk Award), and *Mano Mou* (OBIE, Outer Critics Circle Awards). Askin has also directed the New York, London, and Los Angeles productions of * Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (OBIE, Outer Critics Circle Awards), and Pulitzer Prize finalist Dael Orlandersmuth’s *Monster* and *Beauty’s Daughter* (OBIE Award), as well as her play *The Gimmick*, which he conceived and directed at Sundance and the McCarter Theatre Center. Other New York credits include *Dinner with Demos, How I Stanged Linda Lee, Beauty Marks, Dearly Beloved, Running to the Reality Ranch*, and *Down an Alley Filled with Cats*. He has written (or cowritten) several screenplays, including *Smithereens* and *Paramount Classics Company*. Askin is also a director and has directed for HBO, FOX, and the Comedy Channel. Askin is also the director of New York’s Westside and Jane Street theaters, home of David Mamet’s *The Cryptogram and...**

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The Good Body 15
**Body Language**

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YOU’VE SAID THAT YOU THINK BEING A TEENAGE GIRL IN AMERICA HAS TO BE ONE OF THE HARDEST THINGS IN THE WORLD. I DO, IT’S JUST HELL.

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SAY TO ANY TEENS AND THEIR PARENTS ATTENDING THE GOOD BODY?

That’s always a hard one for me because I don’t want to shock anyone, but a part of me thinks these kids know more than we do. Why are we pretending they don’t?

Don’t we want girls to be aware that people molest girls, so they are protected? Don’t we want girls to see what other women do to themselves so they don’t do it? Don’t we want them to get this consciousness early on so they can protect themselves?

I am actually working on a new series of monologues based on interviews with teenage girls, titled *I Am an Emotional Creature: The Secret Life of Girls around the World*.

DO YOU EVER JUST PINCH YOURSELF IN DISBELIEF ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT’S HAPPENED WITH THE VIRGINIA MONOLOGUES AND WHAT YOU’VE CREATED?

I am absolutely in awe. I just can’t believe what is happening with the movement. We had 2,300 [V-Day] events last year, in places as varied as Nairobi and a Methodist church in Idaho. It’s just incredible! Unbelievable. I sometimes think the kindness I have been shown by women around the world is so overwhelming that one day if I ever let it all in, I would just throw myself on the ground and rain. Because people are so kind, in spite of everything.

WELL, YOU’RE giving SO much back, too.

I see it as a privilege.

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Ensler is the recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship Award in playwriting, the 2002 Amnesty International Media Spotlight Award for leadership, and the Matrix Award (2002). She is chair of the Women’s Committee of PEN American Center and is an executive producer of *What I Want My Work to Do Is to Be Seen*, a documentary about the writing group she has led since 1998 at the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility for Women; the film had its world premiere at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, where it received the “Freedom of Expression” Award; the film premiered nationally on PBS’ “POV” last December.

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**PETER ASKIN**

(Director) recently directed *Trumpet*—starting (at different times) Ed Harris, Richard Dysfus, Tim Robbins, Chris Cooper, Alex Baldwin, Eddie Izzard, Nathan Lane, Bill Irwin, Aidan Quinn, F. Murray Abraham, and Brian Dennehy—and will direct Paul Newman in *Trumpet in July.*

Other recent productions include Mike O’Malley’s *Searching for Certainty*, John Leguziamo’s record-breaking *Seasahinu,* *Spic-Rama* (Drama Desk Award), and *Mambo Mouth* (OBIE, Outer Critics’ Circle Award). Akin has also directed the New York, London, and Los Angeles productions of *Heads-Up and the Angry Inch* (OBIE, Outer Critics’ Circle awards), and Pulitzer Prize finalista *Reel Orlandemis*’s *Monster* and *Beauty’s Daughter* (OBIE Award), as well as her play *The Gimmick,* which he conceived and directed at Sundance and the McCarter Theatre Center. Other New York credits include Dinner with Demos, *How it Hangs, Linda Lee, Beauty Marks,* *Our Idiot Abroad, Now., Reality Ranch,* and *Desert an Alley Filled with Cats.* He has written (or cowritten) several screenplays, including *Smithereens* and *Paramount Classic’s Company.*

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**The Good Body** 15
Who's Who

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ROBERT BRILL (Scenic Designer) designed The First Picture Show for A.C.T. His designs include the recent Broadway revival of Assassins (Tony Award nomination), as well as the set and club designs for the revival of Cabaret at the KirkKerkHub and Studio 54 in New York and for all U.S. and international tours. Other designs for Broadway include Anna in the Tropics, Design for Living, One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, Buried Child, and The Rehearsal. Credit also include Sinatra (Radio City Music Hall), An American in Paris (Boston Ballet), A Clockwork Orange (Steppefont Theatre Company), The Laramie Project (New York, Denver, Berkeley, La Jolla), L'Immagine di Poppa (Chicago Opera Theatre), and The House of Martin Guerre (Goodman Theatre). A founding member of Shedeghamer Theatre, he has also designed for Feld Entertainment, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Lincoln Center Theater, the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Stage and Film, New York Theatre Workshop, Classic Stage Company, Vineyard Theatre, the Atlantic Theatre Company, and regionally at the McCarter Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Denver Center Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Theatre Company, La Jolla Playhouse, the Old Globe, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Repertory Theatre, and South Coast Repertory. Upcoming projects include On the Record for Disney's theatrical and the Broadway revival of The Wiz.

SUSAN HILPERTY (Costume Designer) includes among her recent Broadway productions of Wicked (2003 Tony, Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk awards), Assassins, Into the Woods (Tony and Drama Desk nominations; Hewes Award), Dirty Blonde, T'eyone, and How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying. With Richard Nelson she has designed My Life with Albertine, Left, The General from America, Franny's Way, Madame Mivet, and Goodnight Children Everywhere. She has designed more than 300 productions with such well-known directors as Arthol Fugard (with whom she has worked as costumer and/or set and costume designer since 1980), Joe Mantello, James Lapine, Robert Falls, Tony Kushner, Robert Woodruff, JoAnne Akalaitis, the late Garland Wright, Mark Lamos, Frank Galgin, Des McAnuff, Sharon Ott, David Petrarca, Chris Ashley, David Warren, Marion McClinton, Laurie Anderson, Carole Rothman, Garth Hymes, David James, Gordon Edelstein, and Emily Mann. HilPERTY also designs for opera, film, television, and dance and is chair of the department of design at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. She has received awards for her work, including a 2000 OBIE for sustained excellence.

KEVIN ADAMS (Lighting Designer) has designed lighting and scenery for Broadway, off Broadway, West End (London), and Tokoyo productions, regional theater, opera, ballet, pop acts, music videos, and museum performances and installations. He has designed solo shows featuring Anna Devesce Smith, John Leguizamo, Eric Bogosian, Kevin Bacon, David Morris, Choris Leachman, Kate Mulgrew, Sandra Tising-Lob, Sandra Bernhard, Rinde Eckert, Jonathan Reynolds, Rachel Rosenthal, Hans Cline, and John Piek, one of the "NEA 4." For his extensive work off

Broadway, which includes the original production of Hedwig and the Angry Inch, he received an OBIE Award for sustained excellence. Pop acts include Janet Jackson, the Indigo Girls, and The Magnetic Fields. Recent work includes Osvaldo Golijov's opera Ainadamar, with Dawn Upshaw (Tanglewood and Frank Gehry's new Disney Hall in Los Angeles); I Never Sang for My Father, with John Mahoney (Steppefont Theatre Company); and Candido, with Pari Lupon, Kristin Chenoweth, and the New York Philharmonic.


WENDALL K. HARRINGTON (Video Designer) received Drama Desk, Outer Critics Circle, and American Theatre Wing awards for his design of The Who's Tommy. Broadway credits also include Ragtime, Pating It Together, Company, Raving Donoss, The Capeman, Peral, Amos Vices, The Will Rogers Follies, My One and Only, The Heidi Chronicles, and They're Playing Our Song. Opera credits include Nixon in China at St. Louis Opera, A View from the Bridge for the Metropolitan Opera, The Photographer at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and Maman Loncon at D.C. Opera. She has also designed Anna Karenina for Royal Danish Ballet, Ballet Mecaniique for Doug Varone and Dancers, and Oedipus for American Ballet Theatre. Harrington, a founding member of The Drama Department, is the former design director of Esquire magazine. She created player introductions for the New York Knicks, Liberty, and Rangers and two fine daughters. Recently she directed and designed Arjuna's Dilemma, a new opera by Doug Cuomo, and Snapshots, an evening of string quartets and imagery.

GARTH HEMPHILL (A.C.T. Resident Sound Designer) is in his seventh season as A.C.T.'s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 150 productions, including, most recently for A.C.T.: A Mother, A Doll's House, Waiting for Godot, Lest We Forget: The Vietnam War, The Three Sisters (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), and Romeo and Juliet (Old Globe Theatre, San Diego). Film and television credits include: Working Girls, "Perr & Teller," and videos by The Wooster Group. Dance credits include work for Twyla Tharp, Michael Mohlen, and Boston Ballet. He has also performed as a percussionist with Steve Reich, Laurie Anderson, Tailing Heads, Brian Enn, and Dan Byne. His CDs include: Those Things Happen, Safety in Numbers, and Strange Cargo.

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NoireFa Furniture

Who's Who

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Who’s Who

ARABELLA POWELL* (Stage Manager) has worked on Broadway with the productions Sexaholic...a love story, Kat and the Kings, and The Lion King. Her off-Broadway credits include Trumbo, Crisis Angel Mindshift, Munamonic, Tabletop, Wake Up and Smell the Coffee, and Tap Dogs, including tours of North America, Europe, the West End, and the Edinburgh Festival. She has also participated in the workshops of Eve Ensler’s The Good Body (at Seattle Repertory Theatre), King Island Christmas, and Duiducise, the Musical. Powell is a graduate of the National Institute of Dramatic Art, Sydney.

ELISA GUTHERTZ† (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on numerous A.C.T. productions, including Levie James, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Misanihrope, Tartuffe, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has stage-managed numerous productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, including The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Big Love, Civic Sex, and Cloud Taints. Other credits include Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music and The Vagina Monologues at the Acustic Theatre in San Francisco.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS
Allison Poynter, Associate Producer
Carol Fox Prescott, Voice Coach
Deborah Hecht, Assistant Coach
Lisa Leguillon, Movement Consultant
Jill B. C. Du Boff, Associate Sound Designer
Hope Hall, Associate Video Designer
David Bierd, Bo Eriksson, Video Graphics
Tony Montenieri, Assistant to Ms. Eosl

ADDITIONAL THANKS to
Kim Rooker, Tom Brennan, Foghouse Productions, Bob Ferrell

A.C.T. Profiles

CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director), who recently celebrated her eleventh season as artistic director of A.C.T., most recently directed acclaimed productions of Ibsen’s A Doll’s House, Samuel Beckett’s Waiting for Godot, Torn Stoppard’s Night and Day, and Chekhov’s The Three Sisters with A.C.T.’s core acting company, known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater. Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter’s Celebration and The Room. A.C.T.’s acclaimed international productions of Haruka, The Misanihrope, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Boy; and acclaimed productions of The Threepenny Opera, Waiting for Godot, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Credentors, Home, and The Tempest. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s No for an Answer, David Lang/Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colours of Rhode (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, Luminance Daring, is being developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project and will be workshoped this summer at New York Stage and Film. A.C.T. in New York, where she directed the world premieres of Elisa Poulos’s Elders, the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, design, as well as the 1998 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot’s opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music.

HEATHER M. KITCHEN (Executive Director) joined A.C.T. in 1996. Since that time, Kitchen has overseen the company’s expansion and been instrumental in fortifying the organization’s infrastructure and increasing support for A.C.T.’s artists and employees. After earning her B.A. in drama and theater arts at the University of Waterloo in 1975, Kitchen began her career in stage management at the prestigious Stratford Festival. Other career highlights include four seasons as production manager of Theatre New Brunswick, a regional touring company located in Eastern Canada, and as general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Canada’s largest regional theater. Following 15 years of stage and production management, Kitchen received her M.B.A. from the internationally renowned Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario. She is an active member of the larger San Francisco community, currently serving on the board of the Commonwealth Club of California, and is a past member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross and of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula. Kitchen is serving her third term on the executive committee of the League of Resident Theaters and serves on the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, the Canada Council of the Arts, and Forbes magazine’s Business and the Arts Awards. In April, the San Francisco Business Times named Kitchen one of the 20 most influential women in the Bay Area public arena.

MELISSA SMITH (Consortium Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory’s Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T., Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, songwriting, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a professional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-off-Broadway plays, including work by Mac Wellman and David Greenspan. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne’s National Repertory Theater. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little and George (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen’s Don’t Drink the Water. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen’s Little Eyolf (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw’s Arms and the Man. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International’s award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle.
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*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

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EASY RIDER: A.C.T. STAGES INTERNATIONAL HIT

When A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff discovered that maverick theater artist Robert Wilson had never staged a major piece in San Francisco, she knew what she had to do—reunite Wilson and Waits (Burroughs died in 1997) and featuring British rock icon Marianne Faithfull as the titular devil, The Black Rider opened in London in May. It will receive its only North American engagement at A.C.T. in August and then travel to Sydney.

Perloff calls The Black Rider “one of the most ambitious productions A.C.T. has ever launched.” Indeed, the technical obstacles involved in the production are numerous—from transporting finely crafted sets and costumes overseas, to securing visas for performers and personnel from six different countries, to following an implausibly tight production schedule (a visual artist as well as a director, Wilson is known to spend epic amounts of time honing every visual detail of his productions, from the exact angle of an actor’s arm, to the precision of minutely subtle lighting cues). But, says Perloff, minor administrative headaches are a small price to pay for giving A.C.T. audiences the exclusive chance to see Wilson’s heralded piece. The U.K. run has already generated tremendous transatlantic buzz. London’s Daily Telegraph declared The Black Rider “an extraordinary piece of music theater... Enough to make the cool drool.” The production plays A.C.T. from August 26 to September 26.

“I was floored,” she recently explained. “To think that one of the world’s most famous directors, who has sold out entire runs at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, who has received more honors than he can probably count—to think that he’d never directed here was simply shocking.” After ten years of planning, San Francisco audiences will finally have a chance to discover Wilson and his unique brand of theater when A.C.T. presents The Black Rider this August.

The Black Rider combines Wilson’s Expressionist-influenced theatrical aesthetic with composer Tom Waits’ gritty, rock-tinted songcraft and writer William S. Burroughs’ wry, staccato prose. It premiered in a German-language production in 1990 at Hamburg’s Thalia Theater; the current production, the first in English, is coproduced by A.C.T., London’s Barbican Theatre, and the Sydney Festival in Australia.

A.C.T. Geary Theater 415 Geary San Francisco


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A.C.T.-branded souvenirs—clothing, jewelry, videos, travel mugs, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts and Wipe on Plays, are on sale at the souvenir desk in the main lobby and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

Refreshments
Full bar service, sandwiches, salads, and other savory items are available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level and the Sky Bar on the third level. There is also a mini-bar in the main lobby. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beggars
If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarms, please make sure that it is set to the “off” position while you are in the theater. On rare occasions, you may be asked to leave the premises.

Performers
The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented after-shave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe respiratory reactions in some individuals. As a courtesy to fellow patrons, please avoid the use of these products when you attend the theater.

Emergency Telephone
Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call 415.439.2396 in an emergency.

Latecomers
A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated from the front intermission only if there is an appropriate interval.

Listening Systems
Headsets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performance. Please turn off your hearing aid when using an A.C.T. headset, as it will react to the sound system and make a disruptive noise.

Photographs and recordings of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden.

Restrooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the upper level.

Wheelchair seating is available at all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call 415.749.2ACT in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

A.C.T. is pleased to announce that an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is now available on site.

AFFILIATIONS
A.C.T. operates under agreement between the League of Resident Theaters and Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. A.C.T. is a constituent of the League of Resident Theaters, Theatre Bay Area, Union Square Association, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau. A.C.T. is a member of the National Theatre Artist Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

AT THE THEATER
The Geary Theater is located at 455 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour prior to curtain.

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