HEDDA GABLER

by HENRIK IBSEN
Translated from the Norwegian by PAUL WALSH
Directed by RICHARD E. T. WHITE

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American Conservatory Theater nurtures 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 reinvigorate its relationship 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 performance and training in 1979. During the past four 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 25,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1996, A.C.T.'s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyns Theater Award. In 2001, to celebrate A.C.T.'s 35th 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 (now the American Conservatory 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 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 symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, led by Melissa Smith and George Thompson, 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 Elizabeth Banks 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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American Conservatory Theater

Carey Perloff, Artistic Director • Heather Kitchen, Executive Director

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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Perhaps the most humbling and fascinating thing about getting older is discovering which of your most closely held opinions turn out to be wrong. In my theatrical career, I had always been a Strindberg fan, while the brilliance of Ibsen eluded me. I responded so strongly to Strindberg’s messiness, his chaos, his beat. Ibsen, by contrast, seemed too careful, too schematic. Then, four years ago, I commissioned Paul Walsh to translate A Doll’s House for our own René Augensen to star in at A.C.T., and my feelings changed completely. Paul’s vivid translation made Ibsen seem visceral and funny and surprising: the play revealed itself to be filled with secrets and charged with eroticism and longing. René brought such artistry, compassion, and sheer presence to the role of Nora that the experience was thrilling for all of us. I realized that her work had simply been encrusted by Victorian performance practice into something far tamer than it wanted to be.

So—having watched Paul Walsh and René Augensen tackle A Doll’s House with such passion, it seemed only right to let them loose on Hedda Gabler. Hedda is one of Ibsen’s most mysterious and maddening heroines; she is like a race horse who is forced to live in a corral that is too small and pinched for her own spirit, so she lives in terror of becoming small and pinched herself. We long for Hedda to break loose and fulfill herself even as we question what form that fulfillment could possibly take in a world as circumscribed as hers. What has made the play eternally relevant is not just its examination of the ways in which a culture can suppress individual spirit, but how quickly we kill off our own best instincts because we are terrified to follow our own passions. Ibsen constantly asks us to question whether it is possible to find meaning in the seeming trivialities of the “everyday,” and if not, how to survive the disjunction between one’s private longings and public persona.

We are delighted to welcome back Richard E. T. White, with this production of Hedda Gabler, almost two years after his memorable staging of Albee’s The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia? Richard has been an invaluable collaborator with Paul, René, and the entire creative team of Hedda for many months now and has assembled a remarkable company, which includes the protege Jack Willis as Brisk, our beloved Anthony Fusco as Torvald, Stephen Barker Turner (who debuted so beautifully into archaeological mysteries in last month’s Lamiaconce Duing) as Lovborg, remarkable A.C.T. graduate Finney Streeves, returning to us as Thea, and the Bay Area’s esteemed Barbara Oliver and Sharon Lockwood as Berthe and Aunt Jelie respectively. What you will hear onstage is a vibrant new translation of a play as surprising and fascinating and dangerous as when it was first penned more than a hundred years ago. In presenting this play, we honor the incredible legacy of Ibsen productions begun by Bill Ball and Allen Fletcher at A.C.T. 40 years ago, as we hope to carry that torch into the future.

Welcome!

Carey Perloff
Artistic Director

The A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program presents

THE CIDER HOUSE RULES

PART I: HERE IN ST. CLOUD'S

Adapted by Peter Parnell
From the novel by John Irving
Conceived for the stage by Tom Hulce, Jane Jones, and Peter Parnell
Directed by Craig Shoight
March 1–March 17, 2007
Zumwalt Theater
Tickets www.act-sf.org | 415.749.2250

THE CIDER HOUSE RULES IS AN UNEXPECTED WINDFALL...”
—THE VILLAGE VOICE

Adapted from the bestselling novel, The Cider House Rules centers on Homer Wells, a boy growing up in aboarding orphanage in rural New England in the early 1900s. As the precocious Homer becomes a skilled physician under the guidance of Dr. Larch, the orphanage’s founder, the pair quickly develop a father-son kinship. But when he develops moral misgivings about the illegal medical procedures Dr. Larch performs, Homer must decide for himself exactly whose rules he wants to break.
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n 1884, six years before Heded Jukleby, Henrik Ibsen wrote to a young poet, "I do not believe any of us can do anything other or anything better than realize ourselves in truth and spirit." A radical notion, that—each person's highest duty was to become his own authentic self. It was radical in conservative late-19th-century Europe, and, in the largely reactionary theater of the day, revolutionary.

It's still a radical notion. But then Ibsen, in almost every way, was a theatrical radical, even if a century of calling him a classic has distanced some of us from that truth. This was a man who, in a poem called "To My Friend Who Talks of Revolutions," calls for wiping the human slate clean with a new Flood: "You unleash the waters to make your mark. / I set a torpedo under the Ark." Mere political revolutions he had no use for: "What's really wanted," he wrote, "is a revolution of the spirit of man." He fought his own revolution to break free from much of the conventionality of the theater, from the mundane moral thought of his time; this forced him to reject conventional dramatic thought, as well. He looked at the dominant dramatic forms of his day (and he was intimately familiar with them, having spent a decade running two Norwegian theaters) and turned them from occasions for the display of expert playwriting craft into vessels deep and flexible enough to contain art.

When Ibsen turned from poetic plays such as Brand and Peer Gynt in the mid-1870s to writing exclusively in prose, two forms of drama dominated Europe: melodrama and the well-made play. Melodrama, popular since the beginning of the 19th century, posed a simple universe consisting of two types of people: the Virtuous and the Evil. The Virtuous were good at the beginning of the play, the middle of the play, and the end; the Evil were similarly unchanging. Since characters never changed, all the conflict between the Virtuous and the Evil was external; the attraction for the audience lay in the deliciously visceral shocks to their nervous systems at the villain menacing the heroine or the hero falsely accused of a heinous crime. The clichés we know from silent films or from their parodies, of virtuous characters about to be sliced in half by the advancing buzzsaw or the scourching locomotive only to be rescued at the last moment by their belated, exact recreations of the thrills of 19th-century melodrama.

Melodrama also insisted that the universe was just: the Virtuous were always rewarded, the Evil always punished. Although the great novelists of the era knew this was to be manifestly absurd, the soothing falsehood, "Just be Good and you'll be rewarded, in heaven if not on earth," predominated in the theater. It was no coincidence that tyrannical governments across Europe loved melodrama and its soporific, conservative message. The other form of popular theater was the well-made play. As a reaction against the Romantic drama that preceded it with its emphasis on character above plots that were oftenadaringly and proudly incoherent, well-made plays stressed plausibility and structural coherence. By Ibsen's time, characters in these plays were so semantically bound to the plot, so shorn of moral component, that they barely existed in two dimensions, let alone three. They were there to move the plot along and not to interfere with it in their function were that of the cog mechanism, not a human being in the world. Indeed, the less mess human psychology they displayed the better. Nothing was meant to disturb the smooth ticking of the plot machine. Nor was anything meant to upset the ideas or prejudices of the audience. By the time Ibsen embarked on his great cycle of prose plays, the well-made play, like the melodrama, presented the image of a static world in which there was one correct way to behave and believe, to be—the way upheld by the majority—and any antiscocial behavior would be rooted out and punished.

This was possible because well-made plays tended to revolve around the revelation of a secret. As the themes in these plays grew more conservative, reflecting the increased political and social conservatism in Europe, the secret became darker and more sinful. When it was inevitably revealed there would be no forgiveness and the character harboring it would be in one way or another removed from the world. Often, this character was a woman, and her secret a sexual one: she had given birth to an illegitimate child, or had been secretly married and divorced without marrying the man who in the play is her husband. In any event, her sin was a transgression of the moral law as understood by the community, and atone for her transgression she would kill herself or die a painful tubercular death, with her sacrifice, the community's health and balance would be restored.

The community's moral law was usually represented by a male character who belonged to a respected profession. He was a doctor, a lawyer, or a political figure who, through advice and behavior, demonstrated to people on both sides of the proscenium the best, most moral way to live. He was the model citizen; the icon of an Ibsen play put it, he was one of The Pillars of the Community.

Ibsen took melodrama and the well-made play and turned them on their heads. Where they showed a simple moral universe he insisted that the world was complex. If their moral was that social conformity was every person's duty, he would show that the goal was to become the person you truly are, regardless of what the community thought. For a character like Nora in A Doll's House, there is more than one way to realize one's humanity; for Doctor Stockmann, the community's way is not only the wrong way, it's literally the way to death: so he becomes An Enemy of the People. The tragedy for someone like Tamman (née Gabler) is that she lacks the courage to become her own authentic self. She is smothered by the community's narrowness and lack of imagination and by her own inability to defy its restraints and make a place for herself in the world as wild and as large as her dreams had been.

The model citizen of her community is Commissar Brack's: a known and respected figure in the town—but whom we come to see as an opportunistic, self-interested, blackmailer. That is what Ibsen does to these male exemplars of civic virtue: he kicks them off their pedestals and shows us that no one, not even the most respected pillar of society, has the inherent moral authority to tell another person how to live. In A Doll's House, the traditional model citizen is Dr. Rank. Doctors were popular in these roles: they had good reason to be constantly at the main characters' house (a seemingly good middle-class house in which the moral not has yet to be exposed), their knowledge and good deeds were admired, and the medical metaphor was obvious. Dr. Rank, however, is in love with another man's wife, and his infatuation comes to the fore of the play, he tells her. Worse still, he carries within him a veneered disease that will kill him soon after the play is over. While audiences were outraged by the sight of a sane middle-class woman leaving her husband and children, many were just as shocked by the notion of a veneered community figure—and in the values he represented—so fatally compromised.

Ibsen paid for his boldness by seeing his plays banned across Europe. For many years, only the small "private" theaters, which played just to their members (and thus operated beneath the censorship to which all public European theaters were subject) could produce his plays. When Glaetz was produced by such a theater in London in 1891, one paper declared it "as foul and filthy a conception as has ever been allowed to disgrace the boards of an English theatre.

Yet, in his last years, when he returned from self-imposed exile to Norway, Ibsen was showered with medals and honors (some of which he eagerly solicited), and by World War II he had become one of the most frequently performed playwrights in Europe. As his prime plays became increasingly familiar, he became known as a writer of realistic plays about social problems, which he never considered himself to be.

In fact, Ibsen was the first major playwright since the Romantics to champion individuals over their community—but then, Ibsen, despite the realistic trappings of his prose plays, always remained the Romantic visionary of his early poetic soon. Ibsen showed that even within a single play there was more than one way to be, for his role, realism is forever bumping up against poetic imagery that resonates beyond our ability to give it a simple meaning. He also invented subtext—the idea that a line of dialogue could have one meaning to the person speaking it, another to the person hearing it, and a third one, contradicting the first two, to the audience. In doing so, he explored the deep
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The community's moral law was usually represented by a male character
who belonged to a respected profession. He was a doctor, a lawyer, or a political
figure who, through advice and behavior, demonstrated to people on both sides of
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reason to be constantly at the main characters' house (a seemingly

good middle-class house in which the moral not has yet to be exposed), their knowledge and good deeds were admired, and the
medical metaphor was obvious. Dr. Rask, however, is in love with another man's wife, and according to the mores of the day,
he tells her. Worse still, he carries within him a veneer of disease
that will kill him soon after the play is over. While audiences were outraged by the sight of a sane middle-class woman
leaving her husband and children, many were just as shocked by the notion
of a veneered character-figure and— the values he represented—so fatally
compromised.

Ibsen paid for his boldness by seeing his
plays banned across Europe. For many
years, only the small "private" theaters,
which played just to their members (and thereby operated beneath the censorship
which all public European theaters were subject) could produce his plays. When
Gleist was produced by such a theater in London in 1891, one paper declared
it "as foul and filthy a concoction as has ever been allowed to disgrace the boards
of an English theatre.

Yet, in his last years, when he returned from self-imposed exile to Norway, Ibsen
was showered with medals and honors
(some of which he eagerly solicited),
and by World War II he had become
one of the most frequently performed
plays in the world. As his prose
plays became increasingly familiar, he
became known as a writer of realistic plays
about social problems, which he never
considered himself to be.

In fact, Ibsen was the first major playwright since the Romans to
challenge individual who owned the
city—but then, Ibsen, despite the
realistic trappings of his prose plays, always
remained the Romantic visionary
of his early poetic son. Ibsen showed that
even within a single play there was
more than one way to be, for in his realism is forever bumping up
against poetic imagery that resonates beyond our ability to give
it a simple meaning. He also invented subtext—the idea that
a line of dialogue could have one meaning to the person speaking
it, another to the person hearing it, and a third one, contradicting
the other two, to the audience. In doing so, he expressed the
deeply
HEIDDA GABLER: MOMENTS OF CHOICE

In 1880, Henrik Ibsen wrote: "Everything I have written has the closest possible connection with what I have lived through inwardly—even if I have not experienced it outwardly. In every new poem or play I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification—for no man can escape the responsibilities and the guilt of the society to which he belongs." Ibsen was to put that statement into practice less than a decade later, when he—by then 41 years old and a famous author—met and fell in love with the engaging, charismatic, 19-year-old Emilie Bardach while visiting the small Tyrolean town of Gosnann. Over the course of several weeks in the summer of 1889, Ibsen and Emilie spent countless hours in conversation together, as Ibsen questioned her endlessly about her hopes and dreams and apparently found in her a revitalizing inspiration for his own work. Although Emilie told an interviewer many years later that Ibsen never so much as kissed her, the deity of their emotional and intellectual connection, as described in her personal journal and their letters to each other, was obviously profound. Ibsen even talked to Emilie about divorcing his wife to travel the world with her, but both were painfully aware of the constraints placed on them by Ibsen's family obligations and their conventional social environment. Emilie wrote in her journal at the time: "Passion has come when it cannot lead to anything, when both of us are bound by so many ties. Eternal obstacles! Are they in my will? Or are they in the circumstances?"

The frustrating affair came to a head in September in a particularly explosive manner, after which Bardach described Ibsen as "a volcano, so terribly beautiful!" "Oh, the world! If only they could have stamped themselves on my heart more deeply and distinctly! All that has been offered me before was only the pretence at love. This is the true love, the ideal, he says, to which I unknowingly have given myself in his art. And yet he is a true poet through pain and renunciation. And yet he is glad of having known me—the most beautiful! the wonderful! Too late!"

A SON OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

BY PAUL WALSH

Born in 1828 to a prominent merchant family in the shipping town of Skien, south of modern-day Oslo on the east coast of Norway, Henrik Ibsen was the eldest of five children. When he was eight, however, his father's business failed and he was left to his own devices. At sixteen he became an apothecary's apprentice and dreamed of going to university. While he never did attain university, he did start writing plays nationalistic romantic history plays in the grand style popular at the time.

In 1850 Ibsen moved to Christiansia (now Oslo), where he met the famous violinist and nationalist Ole Bull, who brought him to the west coast city of Bergen to work in Bull's Norwegian national theater as playwright-in-residence and stage manager. Ibsen owes his education in the craft of the theater to the years he spent working for Bull and later as artistic director of the Norwegian Theater in Christiansia, a position he held from 1857 to 1862 with limited success. During these years he met, courted, and married the spirited Susannah Thoresen and enjoyed his first modest success as a playwright.

In 1864, Ibsen left Norway for the European continent, where he stayed for 27 years, living in Germany and Italy. From abroad, he focused on Norwegian provincial life, recreating his abandoned home in his mind, turning it over and examining it in all its self-endearment. Out of the uncomfortable experience with a place of many receptions for rodine, he created the modern drama. All but two of his plays are set in Norway, and they are an impressive collection: the philosophical verse drama Brand (1866), the picaresque Peer Gynt (1867), and the world historical drama Emperor and Galilean (1873) about Julius the Apostate, followed by plays of contemporary social life. The League of Youth (1877), Pillars of Society (1877), and the "problem plays" that incited such public outcry, including A Doll's House (1879), Ghosts (1881), and An Enemy of the People (1882). As he was vilified in the press for attacking the sanctity of marriage and the family, Ibsen grew in stature and importance, becoming the most famous Scandinavian of his day.

Contemporary accounts give the impression of a man of meticulous temperament—elegant, finicky, and punctilious in his habits, with a surprising ability to empathize with strangers. It is this quality that suffuses his writing. Even as he saw the shortcomings and guessed at the hidden contradictions in the hearts of those he met on the street, he was able to feel their humanity and give expression to it. In doing so, Ibsen created a style that still strikes us today as direct, fresh, and surprisingly conversational. His characters sound like real people facing real problems. His language is dramatically supple and rich with emotional complexity and ambiguity. Behind a strikingly modern façade of bravado and evasion lurk subtle intimations of doubt and self-loathing. This is the third of Ibsen's plays of modern life that I have had the opportunity to translate. In each case, my task in translating Ibsen's plays for the contemporary stage has been to find the same freshness and emotional directness in English that these plays have in Norwegian and to allow these suprisingly modern characters to once again give voice to contemporary issues without losing sight of the contradictions inherent in modern life. By locating the great moral questions of his day square in the center of the middle-class dining room and daring to delve into the individual psyche of moral creatures drowning in a morass of social lies and self-deceptions, Ibsen brought metaphysical profundity to the domestic drama. In this he fathered not only the new drama but also a new morality of individual freedom and desire. But even as these characters speak for change, they find themselves caught in a web of duties and obligations. This is what makes these plays dramatically raw. Speaking out can destroy as well as liberate; often the rewards of self-discovery are less tangible than the suffering it causes. In plays like The Wild Duck (1884), Racingholmen (1886), The Lady from the Sea (1888), and Hedda Gabler (1890), Ibsen dug deep into the troubled psyche of the modern world, uncovering its propensity for easy truths and deadly deceptions, diagnosing the crisis of individual faith, and staring unabashedly at the despair of contemporary guilt.

In 1891 Ibsen returned to Norway after nearly three decades abroad. Here he wrote his final four plays—The Master Builder (1892), Little Eyolf (1894), John Gabriel Borkman (1896), and When We Dead Awaken (1899)—pushing beyond the limits of stage realism and the problems of social life into a dark and tormented realm of psychological anguish and isolation precipitated by the terror of his own failing creative energy. As a new century dawned, he fell ill and never really recovered. He died in 1906.
HEDDA GABLER: MOMENTS OF CHOICE

In 1883, Henrik Ibsen wrote: “Everything I have written has the closest possible connection with what I have lived through inwardly—even if I have not experienced it outwardly. In every new poem or play I have aimed at my own spiritual emancipation and purification—for no man can escape the responsibilities and the guilt of the society to which he belongs.” Ibsen was to put that statement into practice less than a decade later, when he—by then 41 years old and a famous author—met and fell in love with the engaging, charismatic, 19-year-old Emile Bandach while visiting the small Tyrolean town of Gosnanns. Over the course of several weeks in the summer of 1899, Ibsen and Emile spent countless hours in conversation together, as Ibsen questioned her endlessly about her hopes and dreams and apparently found in her a revitalizing inspiration for his own work. Although Emile told the interviewer many years later that Ibsen never so much as kissed her, the story of her emotional and intellectual connection, as described in her personal journal and her letters to each other, was obviously profound. Ibsen even talked to Emile about divorcing his wife to travel the world with her, but both were painfully aware of the constraints placed on them by Ibsen’s family obligations and their conventional social environment. Emile wrote in her journal at the time: “Passion has come when it cannot lead to anything, when both of us are bound by so many ties. Eternal obstacles! Are they in my will? Or are they in the circumstances?”

The frustrating affair came to a head in September in a particularly explosive encounter, after which Bandach described Ibsen as a “volcano, so terribly beautiful!”: “Oh, the world! If only they could have stamped themselves on my heart more deeply and distinctly! All that has been offered me before was only the pretence at love. This is the true love, the ideal, he says, to which unknowingly I gave myself in his art. At last he is a true poet through passion and renunciation. And yet he is glad of having known me—the most beautiful! the wonderful! Too late!”

Whether it was the difference in their ages, concern for his sickly, aging wife, or his own desire for comfort and stability and fear of scandal, carrying out his passionate desire to run away with his young mistress was ultimately a commitment Ibsen was unable to make. Emile departed Gosnanns a week later. Soon after, Ibsen returned to Munich, and his letters to Emile grew increasingly cold. He eventually broke off the correspondence and they never saw each other again. She died still unmarried and accomplished in 1955.

According to Ibsen biographer Michael Meyers, the intensity of Ibsen’s failed relationship with Emile was to bring “a new glory, but also a new darkness” into his work. The theme of finding the courage to go against accepted norms of behavior, to “commit a madness,” can be found in Rosmersholm and The Lady from the Sea, as well as the two plays he wrote soon after meeting Emile, Hedda Gabler and The Master Builder. “What has not been said since, or in my youth (1869), Pilgrims of Society (1877), and the "problem plays" that incited such public outcry, including A Doll’s House (1879), Ghosts (1881), and An Enemy of the People (1882). As he was vilified in the press for attacking the sanctity of marriage and the family, Ibsen grew in stature and importance, becoming the most famous Scandinavian of his day.

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Born in 1828 to a prominent merchant family in the shipping town of Skien, south of modern-day Oslo on the east coast of Norway, Henrik Ibsen was the eldest of five children. When he was eight, however, his father’s business failed and he was left to his own devices. At sixteen he became an apothecary’s apprentice and dreamed of going to university. While he never did attend university, he did start writing plays nationalist romantic history plays in the grand style popular at the time.

In 1850 Ibsen moved to Christiania (now Oslo), where he met the famous violinist and nationalist Ole Bull, who brought him to the west coast city of Bergen to work in Bull’s Norwegian national theater as playwright-in-residence and stage manager. Ibsen owes his education in the craft of the theater to the years he spent working for Bull and later as artistic director of the Norwegian Theater in Christiania, a position he held from 1857 to 1862 with limited success. During these years he met, courted, and married the spirited Suzannah Thoresen and enjoyed his first modern success as a playwright.

In 1864, Ibsen left Norway for the European continent, where he stayed for 27 years, living in Germany and Italy. From abroad, he focused on Norwegian provincial life, recreating his abandoned home in his mind, turning it over and examining it in all its stifling endearments. Out of this obsession with a place of deep, rich origins, he created the modern drama. All but two of his plays are set in Norway, and they are an impressive collection: the philosophical verse drama Brand (1856), the picturesque Peer Gynt (1867), and the world historical drama Emperor and Galilean (1873) about Julius the Apostate, were followed by plays of contemporary modern life: The League of Youth (1879), Pillars of Society (1887), and the “problem plays” that incited such public outcry, including A Doll’s House (1879), Ghosts (1881), and An Enemy of the People (1882). As he was vilified in the press for attacking the sanctity of marriage and the family, Ibsen grew in stature and importance, becoming the most famous Scandinavian of his day.

Contemporary accounts give the impression of a man of meticulous temperament—elegant, finicky, and punctilious in his habits, with a surprising ability to empathize with strangers. It is this quality that softens his writing. Even as he saw the shortcomings and guessed at the hidden contradictions in the hearts of those he met on the street, he was able to feel their humanity and give expression to it. In doing so, Ibsen created a style that still strikes us today as direct, fresh, and surprisingly conversational. His characters sound like real people facing real problems. His language is remarkably supple and rich with emotional complexity and ambiguity. Behind a strikingly modern façade of bravado and evasion lurk subtle intimations of doubt and self-loathing. This is the third of Ibsen’s plays of modern life that I have had the opportunity to translate. In each case, my task in translating Ibsen’s plays for the contemporary stage has been to find the same freshness and emotional directness in English that these plays have in Norwegian and to allow these surpassingly modern characters to once again give voice to contemporary issues without losing sight of the contradictions inherent in modern life.

By locating the great moral questions of his day square in the center of the middle-class drawing room and daring to delve into the individual psyche of mortal creatures drowning in a morass of social lies and self-deceptions, Ibsen brought metaphysical profundity to the domestic drama. I don’t think he ever noticed the new drama but also a new morality of individual freedom and desire. But even as these characters speak for change, they find themselves caught in a web of duties and obligations. This is what makes these plays dramatic rather than didactic. Speaking out can destroy as well as liberate; often the rewards of self-discovery are less tangible than the suffering it causes. In plays like The Wild Duck (1884), Rosmersholm (1886), The Lady from the Sea (1888), and Hedda Gabler (1890), Ibsen dug deep into the troubled psyche of the modern world, uncovering its propensity for easy truths and deadly deceptions, diagnosing the crisis of individual faith, and standing shockingly at the despair of contemporary guilt.

In 1891 Ibsen returned to Norway after nearly three decades abroad. Here he wrote his final four plays—The Master Builder (1892), Little Eyolf(1894), John Gabriel Berkmann (1896), and When We Dead Awaken (1899)—pushing beyond the limits of social realism and the problems of social life into a dark and tormented realm of psychological anguish and isolation precipitated by the terror of his own failing creative energy. As a new century dawned, he fell ill and never really recovered. He died in 1906.

Henrik Ibsen at the Dramatic Company, by Edward Kunch (ca. 1890-1895)
"Razor Dance"
Written by Richard Thompson

After the death of a thousand kisses
Comes the catacomb of tongues
Who can spit the meatiest venom
From the poison of their lungs

Cruelest dance is the razor dance
Circle in and circle around
He said, she said, he said, she said
Thrill to push the other one down

The razor dance, the razor dance
This time, gone too far
This time, can't heal the scar
I want to break out of this spin
But gravity's pulling me in

The razor dance, the razor dance
What flies straighter than an arrow
What cuts deeper than a lance
Your will may shine on the withering line
The razor dance, the razor dance
Blood boils, tears burn

Some people never learn
If time could crawl back in its shell
And miscellaneous tongues could untie
But that's not the meaning of hell

Take your partners for the razor dance
Take your partners for the razor dance
The razor dance, the razor dance


"HENRIK IBSEN, REVOLUTIONARY."
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

"Ibsen was not always a revolutionary, but he was revolutionizing. His plays were full of revolutionary ideas."

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THE GALLERY
AT A.C.T.

GARY
BUKOVNIK:
SMALL WORKS ON PAPER

THE ARTIST
will present an exhibition of his small works to the A.C.T. audience. The show will be open to the public during the week of the performance and will feature a variety of works on paper, including drawings, prints, and mixed media pieces. The exhibition will provide an opportunity for guests to experience the artist's unique approach to art-making and to reflect on the relationship between art and the human experience.

The exhibition will be held from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm daily and will be accompanied by a program of live music and poetry readings featuring local artists. The event will also include a screening of the artist's latest film, "The Last Supper," which explores the legacy of the Renaissance and the role of art in society today.

KORET VISITING ARTIST SERIES

The Koret Visiting Artist Series is an annual program that brings renowned playwrights, directors, and designers to A.C.T. to create new works that explore the complex issues of our time. The series is made possible by the generous support of the Koret Foundation, which has a long history of commitment to the arts and education.

This year's series includes a range of new works, including a reinterpretation of Shakespeare's "Hamlet" by the acclaimed director John Murrell and a multimedia production of "The Great Gatsby" by the renowned designer Robert Wilson. The series also includes a special performance of "The Last Supper" by the artist Gary Bukovnik, who will be among the artists featured in the exhibition.

The program is free and open to the public, and will be held in the A.C.T. studio theater. Visitors are encouraged to arrive early to secure a seat and to enjoy a special reception following the performance.

WHAT I LEARNED IN ACTING SCHOOL

Saturday, March 3, 3:15 pm

A.C.T. Conservatory alumni discuss lessons learned in life, art, and "making it" after A.C.T.

Panelists: Steven W. Bailey ("Gray's Anatomy"); Benjamin Bart (Tea & Company); Ryan Ballester (M drilled Bricke.

Southern Repertory Theatre, Amika Nene Rose (Brothers Lie); and Wim Greene (YAT M.C. artists galore)

Moderator: A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith

Free event. Reserves seating. TICKET REQUIRED. Please use promo code "KORET" when making your reservation.

HOMETOWNS / THEATER TOWNS

Sunday, April 21, 3:15 pm

Artistic directors from leading regional theaters across the country discuss their relationships with their respective communities and how the influx of a community affects their theater.

Guest Artist: To be announced.

Moderator: A.C.T. Assistant Director Cary Perlow

Free event. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

All programs subject to change. For more information, visit www.act-sf.org

THE ARTIST
will attend an opening reception at the theater on Saturday, February 17, 5:30-7:30 pm. Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about Gary Bukovnik contact Reenie Simmers at 415.474.1066 / kscreativeview@sbc.com.

Hedda Gabler
“Razor Dance”
Written by Richard Thompson

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Comes the catacomb of tongues
Who can spit the meanest venom
From the poison of their lungs
Cruelest dance is the razor dance
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THE GALLERY
AT A.C.T.

KORET VISITING ARTIST SERIES
Koret Visiting Artist Series is thrilled to present

GARY BUKOVNIK;
SMALL WORKS ON PAPER

WHAT I LEARNED IN ACTING SCHOOL
Saturday, March 5, 6-10 p.m.
A.C.T. Conservatory alumni discuss lessons in life, art, and making it after A.C.T.


Mentors: A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith

Free event. Reserved seating. TICKET REQUIRED. Please use promo code “KORET” when making your reservation.

HOMETOWNS / THEATER TOWNS
Sunday, April 6, 1-3 p.m.
Artistic directors from leading regional theaters across the country discuss their relationships with their respective communities and how the life of a community affects its theater.

Guest Artist: To be announced.
Moderator: A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff

Free event. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

All programs subject to change.
For more information, visit www.act-sf.org

Norwegian painter EDWARD MUNCH (1863–1944), whose work inspired the conception and design for this production of HEDDA GABLER, made his first illustration of an Ibsen play when he was 14 years old. By the end of his life, he had created roughly 400 works inspired by Ibsen plays, including scenic designs for productions of GHOSTS and HEDDA GABLER at Max Reinhardt’s Kammertheater in Berlin. Munch revered Ibsen as a fellow Norwegian artist who had achieved world fame and, importantly, had done so by triumphing over the Philistines. Munch quoted until the end of his life the words of support that Ibsen gave him in 1895 when the grand old man visited his exhibition at the Blunqvist Gallery in Oslo: “Believe me, things will go with you as with me—the more enemies, the more friends.” Munch works on pages 8–12 © 2007 The Munch Museum / The Munch-Ellingsoen Group / Artists Rights Society (ARS), NY. Visit http://www.munch.museum.no/munch_ibsen/english/index2.htm.
RENE AUGENEN (Hedda Tesman), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in The Misalliance. She has appeared in recent seasons in Celebration and The Room, The Bearded Appetit, The Great American Play, The Great American Play, The Great American Play, The Great American Play. She is also a member of the American Conservatory Theater's 

BARBARA OLIVER (Berta), a resident of Berkeley since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, Lady Macbeth in An Ideal Husband, Mrs. Malaprop in The Rivals, and Miss Helen in The Road to Mecca. She has also performed on the stages of Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, Berkeley Stage Company, and the One-Act Theatre. She has received two Drama-Logue and four Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle awards for performances. Also a director, she staged more than a dozen plays during her tenure (1992–2004) as founding artistic director of Berkeley's Aurora Theatre Company, including Saint Joan, The Penelopiad, and The Master Builder. She performed with Aurora Theatre as George Sand in Dear Master and as The Woman in The Chairs, among others. Oliver is a graduate of Carnegie Institute of Technology.

SHARON LOCKWOOD (Miss Juliette Tesman) has appeared at A.C.T. in Christmas Carol (2005 and 2006), The Rose Tattoo, Juno and the Paycock, The Royal Family, The Chorus Line, The Sophie, The Witch, The Trial, and The Marriage of Figaro, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. She recently returned from La Jolla Playhouse, where she portrayed the 200-year-old woman in Culture Clash's Zorro to Hell! (San Diego Playhouse Critics Circle Award) — a role she originated at Berkeley Repertory Theatre last year. Lockwood also originated the role of Barbara in the world premiere at Seattle's Intiman Theatre of Nickel and Dimed (dir. Bartlett Sher), which is currently moving to the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. Locally, Lockwood appears frequently at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and California Shakespeare Theatre and was a long-time member of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe. Regional theater credits include productions at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Missouri Repertory Theatre, and the Alley Theatre in Houston.

JACK WILLIS (Commissioner Brand) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol, The Little Foxes, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Black Rider. He is an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Theater Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credits include The Restorable Rise of Arantia Ur, World of Mirrors, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Yoruba. He recently appeared in Vegas with Patri LaPune at the Recina Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Crucible Will Rock, The Out-of-Towners, Law and Order, and the upcoming Sleuth of Figaro at Center RE Petry Theatre. In May, he appeared as Max Prince in Neil Simon's Laughter on the 23rd Floor, directed by Barbara Damashek. Hureef was Charles Cohn in The Trial and in 12 other roles in California Shakespeare Theatre's The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. He has worked at theaters throughout the Bay Area over the past 13 years, including Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Word for Word, and Napa Valley Repertory Theatre. At the Magic Theatre, he has appeared in A New Golden Rod, The Rules of Charity, Shadriinger's Girlfriend, Summerrent, and Bronte. At Berkeley Repertory Theatre, he has appeared in A New Moon for the Milestones and Rhinoceros. He is a company member of Playground.

WHO'S WHO IN Hedda Gabler


WHO'S WHO

TRISH MULHOLLAND (Understudy) was last seen at A.C.T. in W. Somerset Maugham's The Circle and The Constant Wife. She has appeared in theaters throughout the Bay Area, most recently at Aurora Theatre Company in Oscar Wilde's Salome. Mulholland is a graduate of the National Theatre of Australia, was a

Lives Dangers, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Enrico IV, The Misalliance, Edward II, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in The Tropes, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Cymbeline, and The Skin of Our Teeth for California Shakespeare Theatre (where he is an associate artist); My Old Lady at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of The Chosen. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The Holy Terror, Cendrillon, Danton's Death, and A Life in the Theatre. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School and is on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

STEPHEN BARKER TURNER (Effie Lockwood) was recently seen in Luminosence Dasing at the Magic Theatre. He has appeared with California Shakespeare Theatre, where he is an associate performer, as Orlando in A Yea Like It, Nicholas Nickleby in The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and Posthumus in Cymbeline. Off-Broadway credits include productions with the New York Shakespeare Festival, Classic Stage Company, Roundabout Theatre Company, MCC Theatre, and Primary Stages. Other theater credits include premieres of Terean Rebeck's The Scenic and Gina Gisinger's A Life Ashby, both at the Huntington Festival of New American Plays. Film and television credits include Sallie (2005 Tribeca Film Festival), "The Warrior Class, Comings and Goings" (PBS, "Sex and the City," "Law & Order," and "The unSaid Project."

ANDREW HURLEAYE (Understudy) was last seen as Count Almaviva in Michael Butler's production of The Marriage of Figaro at Center RE Petry Theatre. Where, he also appeared as Max Prince in Neil Simon's Laughter on the 23rd Floor, directed by Barbara Damashek. Hureef was Charles Cohn in The Trial and 12 other roles in California Shakespeare Theatre's The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. He has worked at theaters throughout the Bay Area over the past 13 years, including Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Word for Word, and Napa Valley Repertory Theatre. At the Magic Theatre, he has appeared in A New Golden Rod, The Rules of Charity, Shadriinger's Girlfriend, Summerrent, and Bronte. At Berkeley Repertory Theatre, he has appeared in A New Moon for the Milestones and Rhinoceros. He is a company member of Playground.

Lives Dangers, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Enrico IV, The Misalliance, Edward II, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in The Tropes, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Cymbeline, and The Skin of Our Teeth for California Shakespeare Theatre (where he is an associate artist); My Old Lady at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of The Chosen. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The Holy Terror, Cendrillon, Danton's Death, and A Life in the Theatre. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School and is on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

WHO'S WHO IN Hedda Gabler

RENE AUGUSEN (Hedda Tamman), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in The Misbegotten; she has appeared in recent seasons in Celebration and The Room, The Beard of Avon, Nihil Spiritus, Buried Child, Night and Day, The Daedalus, The Three Sisters, A Doll's House, A Matter, The Real Thing, The Gamemaster, The Voysey Inheritance (also at Kansas City Repertory Theatre), Cut on a Dead Run, The Rivers, Happy End and, most recently, Traverse and Luminance Dating at the Magic Theatre. New York credits include Spinning into Butter (Lincoln Center Theater), Mushiwa (with Alex Baldwin and Angela Bassett, Public Theater); It's My Party ... (with E. Murray Abraham and Joyce Van Patten, A rt Light Theater), and Overruled (Drama League). Regional theater credits include Mary Stuart (dir. Carey Perloff, Huntington Theatre Company); several productions, including the world premieres of The Board of Avon and The Hollow Land, at South Coast Repertory; and productions at the Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Baltimore's Centerstage, the Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Stage West. Film and television credits include The Battle of the Year, "Law & Order," "Guiding Light," "Another World," and HBO Mark Hall of Fame's Saint Maybe. Augussen is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

ANTHONY FUSCO (Jeygan Teoman) has appeared at A.C.T. in Travesties, The Rivals, The Voysey Inheritance, The Wooden Child, The Gamemaster, A Matter, Las Llasianas Dangereuses, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Enrico IV, The Misbegotten, Edward II, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in The Tempest, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Cymbeline, and The Skin of Our Teeth for California Shakespeare Theatre (where he is an associate artist); My Old Lady at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of The Choose. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The Holy Terror, Candelario, Dowton's Death, and A Life in the Theatre. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School and is on the adjunct faculty of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

SHARON LOCKWOOD (Miss Juliette Teoman) has appeared at A.C.T. in Christmas Carol (2005 and 2006), The Rime Tattens Jorn and the Poycaoth, The Royal Family, The Chorus Orphans, The Pope and the Witch, Gaslight, The Marriage of Figaro, Saturday, Sunday and Monday. She recently returned from La Jolla Playhouse, where she portrayed the 200-year-old woman in Culture Clash Zorro in Bell (San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award)—a role she originated at Berkeley Repertory Theatre last year. Lockwood also originated the role of Barbara in the world premiere at Seattle's Intiman Theatre of Nicky and Dimo (dir. Bartlett Sher), which subsequently moved to the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. Locally, Lockwood appears frequently at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and California Shakespeare Theatre and was a longtime member of the Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe. Regional theater credits include productions at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Missouri Repertory Theatre, and the Alley Theatre in Houston.

BARRABRA OLIVER (Berti), a resident of Berkeley since 1958, has been a part of Bay Area theater for nearly five decades. As an actor, she has appeared in 26 productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre (beginning in 1969), including The Stage Manager in Our Town, Lady Macbeth in An Ideal Husband, Mrs. Malaprop in The Rivals, and Miss Helen in The Road to Mecca. She has also performed on the stages of Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, Berkeley Stage Company, and the One-Act Theatre. She has received two Drama League and four Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle awards for performance. Also a director, she stayed more than a dozen plays during her tenure (1992-2004) as founding artistic director of Berkeley's Aurora Theatre Company, including Saint Joan, The Penelopes, and The Master Builder. She performed with Aurora Theatre as George Sand in Dear Master and as The Woman in The Chairs, among others. Oliver is a graduate of Carnegie Institute of Technology.

FINNERTY STEEVES (Thea Elstee) was last seen as Bella in Lost in Venetia at the Guthrie Theatre, where she was named outstanding actress of 2006 by the Minneapolis Star-Tribune. Regional theater credits include productions at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, The Old Globe, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Missouri Repertory Theatre, and the Alley Theatre in Houston.

JACK WILLIS (Commissioner Brand) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in A Christmas Carol, The Little Foxes, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Black Rider. He is an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Theater Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, Art, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credits include The Restorative Rise of Arsenic Us, World of Mirrors, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Volfitude. He recently appeared in Gypsy with Patti LuPone at the Recinna Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Crucible Will Rock, The Out-of-Towners, Law & Order, and In Peace, Problem Child, "Law & Order," "Ed," and "Dallas." Willis is a co-founder of Arabia Repertory.

ANDREW HURFAEU (Understudy) was last seen as Count Almaviva in Michael Butler's production of The Marriage of Figaro at Center Repertory Theatre, where he also appeared as Max Prince in Neil Simon's Laughter on the 23rd Floor, directed by Barbara D'Amato. Hurfau was previously Charles Campionship and 12 other roles in California Shakespeare Theatre's The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby. He has worked at theaters throughout the Bay Area over the past 13 years, including Marin Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Word for Word, and Napa Valley Repertory Theatre. At the Magic Theatre, he has appeared in Nine, Another Golden Rain, The Rules of Charity, Sondheim's Girlfriend, Summertime, and Bronx. At Berkeley Repertory Theatre, he has appeared in A Moon for the Misbegotten and Rhinoceros. He is a company member of Playground.

TRISH MULHOLLAND (Understud) was last seen at A.C.T. in W. Somerset Maugham's The Circle and The Constant Wife. She has appeared in theaters throughout the Bay Area, most recently at Aurora Theatre Company in Oscar Wilde's Salome. Mulholland is a graduate of the National Theatre of Australia, was a
Who's Who

top-rated radio announcer in Australia and Europe, and has appeared in various television roles. She is a core member of Berkeley's Shogun Players and has received Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award nominations and a Pater Award (Australian radio). Favorite roles include Mother Courage, Agave, Marion (the predatory rector in Caryl Churchill's first play, Owners), and Woman in the West Court premiere of Edward Albee's The Play About the Baby.

ALLISON-JOAN WHITE
(Understudy), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen as A.C.T. in The Circle, Tora Soppan's Thru the Glass: The Real Thing (both directed by Carey Perloff), and the 2004 production of A Christmas Carol. She was also seen last spring in A.C.T. First Look presentations of The Shocking Clarity,邓曼 Wasted, Warrandy, and Writing for the Flood at Zeum Theater. She appeared in Chez We, a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at The Players Theatre in New York and played Christina in Red Light Winter at the Wellesley Harbor Actors Theater. She performed with Killing My Lobster in Gonalon at the Magic Theatre and was seen at Venue 9 and The Marsh in her solo performance piece Whiteness. White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

RICHARD E. WHITE (Director) is chair of the theater department at Stanford's Cornish College of the Arts. He joined the department in 1995 after a three-year residency in Japan, where he taught at Toin and Gakushuin universities and was resident director at Tokyo's Theatre Company Subaru. In addition to serving as artistic director of San Francisco's Eureka Theatre and the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, White has directed professional theaters throughout the United States, including A.C.T. (The Goats or, Who is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, The Marriage of Figaro, Talking Stool), Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Nightlight Theatre and Court Theatre in Chicago, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the California Shakespeare Festival, and ACT Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, Intiman Theatre, and Seattle Repertory Theatre in Seattle. In collaboration with Jewish performing artists Rinde Eckert and composer Paul Dresher, he developed and directed the electronic opera Slow Fire, which has been performed at universities throughout the United States and Europe and will be presented at Project Artaud Theater in March 2007. White has received nine Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards and eight Drama-Logue Awards for outstanding direction.

SAVANNA WOODALL (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for A.C.T. (Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Doll's House, The Dancer, The Duces of Mafia, Light Up the Sky, and Sonny Joanne), San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Stuttgart Ballet, Singapore Ballet, Theatre of The Americas. Recent productions include Cinderella for the Bolshoi Ballet, Sleeping Beauty for the Norwegian National Ballet, and Fifth Season for San Francisco Ballet. She was visual director for the eighth-baht world premiere of Sun Lai's Like a Dream at Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and designed sets and costumes for Don Giovanni at the Taiwan National Symphony and for Rimsky-Korsakov's opera ballet Mlados for the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Other design credits include the Eureka Theatre Company's original production of Angels in America. This work has been shown in numerous gallery exhibitions, and she is the recipient of numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards for costume design.

KENT DORSEY'S (Scenic Designer) scenic design has been seen at A.C.T. in Sexual Perversity in Chicago, The Goats or Who is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, Light Up the Sky, Exogamy, The Pope and the Witch, and The Marriage of Figaro. Lighting designs at A.C.T. include The Pope and the Witch, Bon Appétit! and The Late Great Ladies of Blues and Jazz. He has designed scenery and/or lighting for most of the major regional theater companies in the United States, including the Kennedy Center, The Ahmanson Center Theatre Group, The Old Globe (more than 95 productions), La Jolla Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Griffin, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Milwaukee Repertory Theater, and the Cleveland Play House. His New York theater productions include About Time, Alligators Attila, Another design, The Cocktail Hour, Silence, Susie, and Yenben Youn Die. Dorse year designed the scenery and lighting for Silence/Chronicle, a world premiere in Tokyo by the Subate Acting Company.

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Who’s Who

top-rated radio announcer in Australia and Europe, and has appeared in various television roles. She is a core member of Berkeley’s Shoqgun Players and has received Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award nominations and a Pater Award (Australian radio). Favorite roles include Mother Courage, Agave, Marion (the predatory realtor in Caryl Churchill’s first play, Owners), and Woman in the West Cast premiere of Edward Albee’s The Play About the Body.

ALISSON JANE WHITE
(Understudy), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has been seen at A.C.T. In The Circle, Tora Sippovat’s Theatre The Real Thing (both directed by Carey Perloff), and the 2004 production of A Christmas Carol. She was also seen last spring in A.C.T. First Look presentations of The Shaker Chief, Divina Wants, Warburton, and Waiting for the Fox at Zeum Theatre. She appeared in Chez Nous, a clown cabaret, with Infinite Stage at The Players Theatre in New York and played Christina in Red Light Winter at the Welffenhart Actor’s Theatre. She has performed with Killing My Lobster in Granada at the Magic Theatre and was seen at Venus 9 and The Marsh in her solo performance piece Whiteness. White is a graduate of Brown University and the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

RICHARD E. T. WHITE (Director) is chair of the theater department at St. Mary’s College of the Arts. He joined the department in 1995 after a three-year residency in Japan, where he taught at Toin and Gakushuin universities and was resident director at Tokyo’s Theatre Company Subaru. In addition to serving as artistic director of San Francisco’s Eureka Theatre and the Wisdom Bridge Theatre in Chicago, White has directed productions and served as a guest director for companies throughout the United States, including A.C.T. (The Goats or, Who Is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, The Marriage of Figaro, Taking Steps), Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Northlight Theatre and Court Theatre in Chicago, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the California Shakespeare Festival, and ACT Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, Intrim Theatre, and Seattle Repertory Theatre in Seattle. In collaboration with Libretto/performer Rinde Eckert and composer Paul Dodeski, he developed and directed the electronic opera Stor V Groh, which has been performed at venues throughout the United States and Europe and will be presented at Project Artaud Theatre in March 2007. White has received nine Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards and eight Drama-Logue Awards for outstanding direction.

PauL WAlSHS (Translator) is head of dramaturgy and director of graduate programs at the University of Massachusetts. For nine years (1996–2005), Walsh was dramaturg and director of humanities at A.C.T., where he collaborated on dozens of productions, including his own translations of August Strindberg’s Creations (1992) and Henrik Ibsen’s A Doll’s House (2004). His translation of Ibsen’s The Master Builder was produced to acclaim last February by Aurora Theatre Company in Berkeley, and his translation of Strindberg’s Ghost Sonata was read as part of Cutting Ball Theatre’s "Hidden Classics Reading Series" at the Modern Times Bookstore last November. Last year, Walsh was named artistic director of the New Harmony Project, a new-play development residency program dedicated to serving writers who celebrate the human spirit. Walsh has worked as dramaturg, translator, and co-author with theater companies across the country, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune, with whom he collaborated on such award-winning productions as Children of Bonaventure, The White Dream, Don Juan Giovannucci, Gianfolino, and The Handbook of Nerve Dime. Walsh serves on the board of directors of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas. He received his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto.

KENT DORSEY (Scenic Designer) has designed scenic sets for A.C.T. in Sexual Pervocity in Chicago, The Goats, or Who Is Sylvia?, American Buffalo, Light Up the Sky, Pygmalion, The Pope and the Witch, and The Marriage of Figaro. Lighting designs at A.C.T. include The Pope and the Whore, Bon Apptit!, and The Late Great Ladies of Blues and Jazz. He has designed scenery and/or lighting for some of the major regional theater companies in the United States, including the Kennedy Center, The Ahmanson Center Theatre Group, The Old Globe (more than 95 productions), La Jolla Playhouse, Playwrights Horizons, Manhattan Theatre Club, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., the Griffin, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, and the Cleveland Play House. His New York theater productions include About Time, Alligator Pete, Another Design, The Cocktail Hour, Silence, Sounds, and Yerma Done You Done. Dorse created the scenery and lighting for Silence/Chromatics, a world premiere in Tokyo by The Subase Acting Company.

SANDRA WOODALL (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for A.C.T. (Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Doll’s House, The Dandy, The Duces of Mafia, Light Up the Sky, and Song of Joan), San Francisco Ballet, Frankfurt Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Stuttgart Ballet, Singapore Ballet, Theatre of Europe, and the Magic Theatre. Recent productions include Cinderella for the Bolshoi Ballet, Sleeping Beauty for the Norwegian National Ballet, and Fifth Season for San Francisco Ballet. She was visual director for the eight-hour world premiere of San Lamee درهم Like a Dream at Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and designed sets and costumes for Don Giovanni at the Taiwan National Symphony and for Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera ballet Mullah for the San Francisco Symphony, conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas. Other design credits include the Evreux Theatre Company’s original production of Angels in America. Her work has been shown in numerous gallery exhibitions, and she is the recipient of numerous Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards for costume design.

ALEXANDER V. NICHOLS (Lighting Designer) design works span from lighting and projections to scenery and costumes for dance, theater, opera, and art installations. His designs have been set on the stages of such companies as Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, The Alley Theatre, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Huntington Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, the National Theatre of Taiwan, San Francisco Ballet, Boston Ballet, Alvin Alley American Dance Theater, ODC/SE, Hubbard Street Dance, and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and have supported the work of the Krotos Quartet, the Paul Dreher Ensemble, and Rinde Eckert. Nichols has served as resident designer for the Margaret Jenkins Dance Company, Pennsylvania.
Who’s Who

Ballet, and Hartford Ballet and as lighting director for American Ballet Theatre. Other dance credits include designs for choreographers Christopher d’Amboise, Ann Carlson, Val Caniparoli, Sonya DeWald, Bill T. Jones, Joan Grand Maitre, Mark Morris, Meldon Nissinen, Kevin O’Day, Kirk Peterson, Stephen Petronio, Dwight Rhoden, Michael Smuin, and Brenda Way. Other projects include the exterior lighting of the Sarofim Building, Francis Ford Coppola’s historic headquarters in San Francisco, and structural and lighting design for the traveling art installation Circle of Memory.

JOHN GROMADA’s (Composer and Sound Designer) work has been heard on Broadway, including original music for Heartbreak House, Rabbit Hole, Well, A Streetcar Named Desire, Death of a Salesman, Outdoor Plays, 8 Nights, and a new play by John Guare, opening at the American Ensemble. Gromada has also worked on Harvey Fierstein’s The Life, The Visit, The Full Monty, The Country Girls, and a new play by David Mamet, opening at the American Ensemble. Gromada has also worked on Harvey Fierstein’s The Life, The Visit, The Full Monty, The Country Girls, and a new play by David Mamet, opening at the American Ensemble.

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Theatre (Cleveland), then worked as a play reader and script consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, and has since been a dramaturg for George Street Playhouse, the Berkshire Theatre Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, and others. He dramaturged the Russian premiere of Tennessee Williams’ Small Craft Warnings at the Sovremennik Theatre in Moscow. Paller is the author of Gentlemen Callers: Tennessee Williams, Homosexuality, and MidTwentieth-Century Drama (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005) and has written theater and book reviews for The Washington Post, Village Voice, Newsday, and Misha magazine. Before his arrival at A.C.T., he taught at Columbia University and the State University of New York at Purchase.

MERYL LIND SHAW (Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff as casting director in 1993. She has cast roles for the Huntington Theatre Company, Arizona Theatre Company, San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of White Christmas, Jitney, and Picasso at the Lapin Agile, as well as the first workshop of The Grant of Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game Obsidian. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s The Giver and Ben Apprèz! She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She has served on the Bay Area advisory committee of Actors’ Equity Association, the negotiating committee for the LORT contract (1992 and 1995), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

ELISA GUTHERTZ, (Stage Manager) most recently worked at A.C.T. on The Lizzie Foss and On Death in Venice at Zucca Theatre. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include A Number, Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Hello, Goodbye, Love, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Misfits, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Tartuffe, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Rabbit采暖, Big Love, Civil Sex, Collected Storied, and Othello Tornado at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include Eve Ensler’s The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcazar Theatre.

HEATH BELDEN (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of The Road and Sexual Perversity in Chicago. Belden has stage-managed A Streetcar Named Desire for Pacific Alliance Stage Company, Once Upon a Mattress, starring Lea DeLaria, for 42nd Street Moon, five operas with Donald Pippin’s Pocket Opera, and three seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weitzman’s Spin Move, and Charles L. Mie’s Wintertime. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Les Waters, Barbara Damashek, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Bariccotti. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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Ballet, and Hartford Ballet and as lighting director for American Ballet Theatre. Other design credits include designs for choreographers Christopher d’Amboise, Ann Carlson, Val Caniparilli, Sonya Delvaide, Bill T. Jones, Joan Grand Maitre, Mark Morris, Midlo Nissenson, Kevin O’Day, Kirk Peterson, Stephen Petronio, Dwight Rhoden, Michael Smuin, and Brenda Way. Other projects include the exterior lighting of the Sertford Building, Francis Ford Coppola’s historic headquarters in San Francisco, and structural and lighting design for the traveling art installation Circle of Memory.

JOHN GROMADA’s (Composer and Sound Designer) work has been heard on Broadway, including original music for Haunted House, Rabbit Hole, Well, A Streetcar Named Desire, Theater Angry Men, Proof, Sight Unseen, Sexton Woundal, The Retreat from Moscow, Enchanted April, Summer and Smoke, Holiday, and A Few Good Men. At The Public Theater, Gromada has worked on Henry V, Julius Caesar, Tartuffe, The Servitor, Machinal, The Seagull, and many others. Other New York credits include Pig Farm, Bath At Leipzig, Godspell at Palm Springs, On the Mountain, Small Tragedy, Danny and the Deep Blue Sea, Living Out, Fifth of July, and many others. Regional credits include more than 200 productions at leading theaters here and abroad. Gromada has received numerous awards, including Drama Desk, OBIE, Eddy, Drama League, and ASCAP awards, and is a NEA Opera Music Theatre Fellow.

MICHAEL PALLER (Dramaturg) joined A.C.T. as resident dramaturg and director of humanities in August 2005. He began his professional career as literary manager at Center Repertory Theatre.

ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage Manager) most recently worked at A.C.T. on The Little Foxes and On Death in Venice at Zawoos Theatre. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include A Number, Sexual Perversity in Chicago, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Well, The Good Body, Love James, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Merry Wives, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Tartuffe, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streetcar Named Desire. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Rhinoceros, Big Love, Civil Sex, Collected Stories, and Clytemnestra at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include Eve Ensler’s The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Vagina Monologues at the Alcatraz Theatre.

HEATH BLEDEN (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of The Romantics and Sexual Perversity in Chicago. Belden has stage-managed A Streetcar Named Desire for Pacific Alliance Stage Company, Once Upon a Mattress, starring Lea DeLaria, for 42nd Street Moon, five operas with Donald Pippin’s Pocket Opera, and three seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weitzman’s Spin Move, and Charles L. Mee’s Wintertime. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Lee Waters, Barbara Damashek, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Baricelli. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is concluding her 15th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she was named to an unprecedented third term in 2007, and Robert O’Hara, as artistic director for the 2005 O’Neill Playwrights Conference.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Eye of the Storm, the American premiere of Patrick Marber’s An English Father, the American premiere of Peter Shaffer’s Amnesia, and the American premiere ofking Lear.

Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theatre, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard’s The Invention of Lying and Ibsen’s Peer Gynt and Ibsen’s The Ocean between us, and for the 2001 National Tour of A.C.T.’s productions of The Seagull and The Cherry Orchard.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director), now in her 11th season, has strengthened the organization’s infrastructure and expanded the company’s expansion to include the development and performance of new work and the addition of a third season to A.C.T.’s acclaimed Main Stage program.

directors circle

Dianne Hogue, Co-Chair + Jonathan Kitson, Co-Chair

Directors Circle members make annual contributions of $1,500 or more to A.C.T. Their extraordinary generosity supports season production, giving American Conservatory Theater an invaluable resource that allows us to continue producing work of the highest quality. For information on membership, please contact Carl Nilson at 415.459.2450 or carl.nilson@act-sf.org.

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American Conservatory Theater
CAREY PERLOFF
(Artistic Director) is completing her 15th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she has overseen the acclaimed productions of Tom Stoppard's Tronchitis, Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill's Happy End (including a cast album recording), a Christmas Carol (a new adaptation by Perloff with Paul Wilks), David Mamet's adaptation of Grumpy Old Men by Burt Bein's The Happy End, and Constance Congdon's A Mother (an A.C.T.-commissioned adaptation of Sergei Terekhov's Nina Zlobeneva), Bosetti A Doll's House, Beckett's Waiting for Godot, Stravinsky's Night and Day, and 's The Diary of a Chambermaid. Her production of Maria Nalobad's Hille, coproduced at A.C.T.'s second space (Zuma) with Laura Pels Productions, traveled to Washington, D.C.'s JCC Studio Theatre and then to New York's 59E59 Theatre in 2005. Last year she awarded Frances Chiveres de l'Orchidee des Arts et des Lettres. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theatre, Perloff has directed for A.C.T.'s American Premiere of Stoppard's The Invention of Lying, Strindberg's The Dance of Death, and The Room, and A.C.T.'s commissioned translations of Hochs, The Minstrels, Eroica IV, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya - the world premiere of Leslie Ayadiva's Ring and acclaimed productions of The Temptation Open, Old Times, Arcadia, The Visit, Antigone, Crouching Tiger, Hidden, and the Emperor. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein No for an Answer, David Lang/Mac Wellman's The O God of Lascivious Phlegm, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colours of Rhode (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackwood Award). Her play Luminous Date, which will be seen at the Magic Theatre in December (in a coproduction with A.C.T.), was developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshopped in the summer of 2004 at New York Stage and Film, and was produced in New York in April 2005 at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, and will be produced by Dramatists Play Service this fall. Her new play, The Flood, was directed by Judith Ivey as part of A.C.T.'s First Look festival in January. She has collaborated with many notable contemporary writers, most recently Philip Kan Gotanda, on her new play After the War at the Sundance Institute in 2004 (an A.C.T. commission that will premiere in 2007), and Robert O'Hara, on a new adaptation of Tony Kushner's Angels in America for the 2005 O'Neill Playwrights Conference. Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Enzo Provenzale's Edipo, the American premiere of Patrick Marber's The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perloff's leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 1988 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. Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Leoni and Nicholas.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director), now in her 11th season as executive director, has strengthened the organization's infrastructure and continued to expand the company's expansion to include the development and performance of new work and the addition of a third play to A.C.T.'s acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. Her decision to undertake as M.B.A. degree from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario followed a 15-year career in tour, stage, and production management ranging across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Credit include the Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage Company, Charlottetown Festival, Theatre New Brumswick, New Play Centre, Vancouver, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax. As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a free-form performing arts complex and school that annually produced 16 productions, an international Children's Festival, and a Tart Festival. As a member of the executive committee of the Edmonton Performing Arts Consortium, Kitchen authored the benchmark study Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts in Edmonton. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the boards and executive committees of the Crossroads Club of California, as well as on the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of the San Francisco Leadership Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco, the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton and has served three terms on the executive of the League of Resident Theatres. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, Canada Council of the Arts, and Forbes magazine's Business and the Arts Awards. The San Francisco Business Times named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past three years.

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. in 1995, Smith served as director of the program in theatre and dance at Denison University; where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in various around the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-Broadway plays and regional theatre, including A.C.T. in 2004 the toured London and Bermuda (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre's production of Continental Divide. Smith holds an English and director in 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 Theatre as an actor and Stage Manager. He also stage-managed the Broadway production of Miss Ruddock Drinks a Little and Garing (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 Bronte 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 have administered A.C.T.’s New Stage program since 1983 and have been recognized Internationally’s Award for Excellence in theatre in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded A.C.T.'s Lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle.

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Directors Circle members make annual contributions of $850 to $9,999 to A.C.T. Their extra-generosity supports season productions, act training in our conservatory, and arts education in our community centers. Directors Circle members also enjoy a variety of benefits and are invited to participate in the artistic development of A.C.T.'s season by attending production meetings and taking part in numerous behind-the-scenes opportunities. We are privileged to recognize those members’ generosity during the December 1, 2005—December 31, 2006 period. For information about membership, please contact Paul Kivlin at 415.439.3333 or paulk@act.org.

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