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About A.C.T.

AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER, a Tony Award–winning nonprofit organization in the heart of San Francisco, nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training, and an ongoing engagement with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Ellen Richard, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvent 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.

A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season in 1967; more than 320 A.C.T. productions have since been performed to a combined audience of more than seven million people. Internationally recognized for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting, A.C.T.’s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 250,000 people.

A.C.T.’s conservatory, led by Melissa Smith, serves 3,000 students every year. In 1996, A.C.T.’s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters Award, and 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 intersection of world-class artists, powerful performances...and you! These lively events take you inside every A.C.T. production—all season long.

Please join us at the following FREE events surrounding our next show, The Normal Heart. Simply show your Normal Heart ticket for entry.

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**Prologue**
**SEPT 18, 5:30PM**
Come early for a preshow discussion with Normal Heart associate director Leah C. Gardiner and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

**Theater on the Couch**
**SEPT 21, 8PM**
Explore the minds and motives of the characters with the chief of psychiatry from San Francisco’s Kaiser Permanente Medical Center.

**Audience Exchanges**
**SEPT 25, 7PM/SEPT 30, 2PM/OCT 3, 2PM**
Stick around for a lively Q&A session with the cast and a member of the A.C.T. artistic team.

*All discussions are free for Normal Heart ticket holders. Please note that performance times vary.

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Engage with the artists, attend exclusive behind-the-scenes events, and take an inside look at the theatrical process.

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**Conservatory Awards Luncheon**
**OCT 29**
Please join us for our second annual Conservatory Awards Luncheon, honoring outstanding alumni of A.C.T. and paying tribute to donors who have provided significant support to the M.F.A. Program Scholarship Fund. Honorees will include alumni Benjamin Bratt, Anika Noni Rose, and Ryan Rilette; donors Deedee and Burt McMurtry; and The Bernard Osher Foundation.

The star-studded event will raise much-needed support for scholarships while bringing like-minded supporters of the Conservatory together with award winners and current M.F.A. Program students.

For more information, please contact Helen Rigby, Associate Director of Development, Conservatory, at 415.439.2469 or hrigby@act-sf.org.
San Francisco’s Theater Company

A
erican Conservatory Theater Founding General Director William Ball, at the forefront of the regional theater movement, wanted to create a company outside New York that would have a significant national impact while providing an alternative to commercial theater. After a group of San Francisco civic leaders attended A.C.T.’s West Coast debut at Stanford University in 1966, they invited Ball and his company to settle in San Francisco, which was without a resident theater company. A.C.T. has been dedicated to bringing the power of live theater to San Francisco audiences since the company’s first rousing performance of Ball’s Tartuffe in the Geary Theater (now called the American Conservatory Theater) on January 21, 1967.

A.C.T.’s majestic stage opened January 10, 1910, rising from the rubble of the catastrophic earthquake and fires of 1906. It was immediately hailed as one of the grandest playhouses in the United States. In 1975 the Geary was awarded a place on the U.S. Department of the Interior’s National Register of Historic Places and named a landmark of the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco. In 1989 the Loma Prieta earthquake ripped a gaping hole in the ceiling, destroying the proscenium arch and dumping tons of equipment and debris on the first six rows of orchestra seats. Nevertheless, A.C.T.’s second artistic director, Edward Hastings (who succeeded Ball in 1986), never considered canceling the season. For the next six years, A.C.T. performed in seven different venues around the city. “We had to encourage people to come back to this devastated, ravished, magical place called San Francisco,” remembered Hastings. “And what they found in the theater were a lot of other people who were shook up. So there we were, all together in a theater, helping bring the city back together again.”

With the support of a community that contributed to a record-breaking $28.5 million capital campaign, the Geary reopened in 1996 with a production of The Tempest directed by A.C.T.’s current artistic director, Carey Perloff, who took over after Hastings retired in 1992. Committed to proving that theater is still “a place where language is kept alive and functional and muscular and breathing,” Perloff reconfirmed A.C.T.’s mission to expose San Francisco to exceptional works from across our rich theatrical tradition. She reintroduced the core acting company (which had been disbanded decades earlier) to keep top-quality local actors working, and she committed herself to “locavore” theater—theater made by, for, and about the community that supports it—with San Francisco–centered productions like After the War, The Tosca Project, and the much-beloved 2011 hit Armistead Maupin’s Tales of the City.

Since the company’s founding, A.C.T. has infused the Bay Area with some of the best young acting talent in the nation. The company first began training outside actors in the summer of 1967, and by 1969, the conservatory had expanded to include a year-long course of study, which has since evolved into the three-year, fully accredited, top-ranked Master of Fine Arts Program. M.F.A. Program students often grace the mainstage and return to perform at A.C.T. as alumni; they are also regulars on stages around the Bay Area and beyond. Other programs include the Young Conservatory, which offers training and performance opportunities for students ages 8 to 19; Studio A.C.T., which offers acting classes for adults; and the Summer Training Congress, which attracts students from around the world.

With the recent introduction of an education department and an increased presence in the Central Market neighborhood with the opening of a new performance space (The Costume Shop) and the purchase of the Strand Theater across from UN Plaza, A.C.T. is poised to continue its leadership role in securing the future of theater for San Francisco—and the nation.
Dear Friends,

It is with great joy that we welcome back Lorenzo Pisoni, whose Humor Abuse was one of the high watermarks of our 2011–12 season. As I said in January when we first presented this show, I fell in love with this piece long ago when I saw a preview of it in a tiny theater in New York, so it was extremely gratifying to see the overwhelming response it generated when it hit the far larger universe of the Geary stage. Humor Abuse is everything I love about live performance: richly imagined storytelling told through highly virtuosic physical theater. It is a gift that Lorenzo was able to return to San Francisco to satisfy the appetites of those audience members who told us they had to see the show a second time—and those who were bereft at having missed it the first time.

As I write this, I am looking ahead to the 2012–13 season, which marks my 20th anniversary at A.C.T. Interestingly, my first five years with this company were characterized by a kind of “diaspora” owing to the earthquake destruction of the Geary Theater. During those years, we performed all over the city in any venue we could find. So it is appropriate that 20 years later, in addition to showing seven fabulous productions in the beautiful theater you’re sitting in today, we are again venturing forth into many different neighborhoods of San Francisco to bring our work to audiences in venues all over town. Next season, we will continue to perform in our fun and funky Costume Shop theater at 7th and Market, bringing you the funny and moving new Finnish play Happy to Stand, a wide variety of cutting-edge work by our M.F.A. Program students, and a host program in which small companies from around the Bay Area will be presenting their own work as our guests in the space.

At the same time, work is underway next door to the Costume Shop on our latest venture, the Strand Theater, which we purchased this spring and are converting into a 300-seat house. It is thrilling to contemplate being part of the explosive change happening in San Francisco’s Central Market community, and we plan to present work in the Strand that is bold and brash, from brand-new works to vividly reimagined classics, in an intimate and friendly venue that will welcome the entire neighborhood. The Strand will also be the locus of our growing educational programs, as we invite Bay Area school children into the building to both watch and create work themselves.

And in the spring, we will take up residence in the Mission district, as we bring the extraordinary National Theatre of Scotland’s Black Watch to the long-dormant Drill Court in San Francisco’s historic Mission Armory. This will provide a chance for our audiences to see world-class theater in a huge and remarkable architectural space that is one of the gems of the city. Stay tuned for more details about Black Watch and the Armory as the season unfolds.

When I came to San Francisco 20 years ago, what I hoped for most of all was to develop a long-term relationship with a passionate theatergoing public. I truly believe that the essence of nonprofit theater lies in a consistent and open dialogue between artists and audiences over an extended period of time. Over the years, we’ve benefited from how very vocal Bay Area audiences are. You certainly aren’t shy about sharing your opinions, and for that we are grateful! This dialogue and engagement has kept me stimulated and inspired to do better. It has allowed for true artistic risk-taking and for a collective sense that we are all part of the same community, wrestling with the same issues and celebrating the same aspects of our humanity. Our dream is for A.C.T. to “matter” to as many people in the Bay Area as possible, and we will keep vigorously pursuing that dream as we look to the future.

Thanks for coming, and enjoy the fabulous Lorenzo!

Yours,

Carey Perloff,
Artistic Director
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**THE NORMAL HEART**

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DIRECTED BY
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begins Sep 13
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HUMOR ABUSE

Created by Lorenzo Pisoni and Erica Schmidt
Directed by Erica Schmidt
Performed by Lorenzo Pisoni

Lighting Designer    Ben Stanton
Sound Designer       Bart Fasbender
Stage Manager        Hannah Cohen
Assistant Stage Manager Kimberly Mark Webb

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

Humor Abuse runs approximately 80 minutes without an intermission.

This production is made possible at A.C.T. by

PRODUCER
Marilee K. Gardner

Humor Abuse was originally produced in the United States by Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, artistic director; Barry Grove, executive director) on February 19, 2009. Humor Abuse was developed during a residency at the Eugene O’Neill Theater Center.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS
Terry Lorant, Photographic Images
Randall Craig, “Larry’s Memory”

SPECIAL THANKS
Seattle Repertory Theatre
Preserving the Pickles

BY EMILY MEANS

By the time Humor Abuse’s Lorenzo Pisoni was six years old, he was a contracted member of his parents’ Pickle Family Circus. Born and raised a Pickle, he was exposed to the inner workings of a world many of us can only dream about, a world in which, as Lorenzo says, “there are no limits. You can do whatever you think of.”

Lorenzo’s parents, Pickle cofounders Larry Pisoni and Peggy Snider, met while working at The San Francisco Mime Troupe in the early 1970s. They began juggling together, performing and passing the hat in Union Square. Larry had moved to California from Manhattan with dreams of establishing his own circus company, and he convinced Peggy to join him in the endeavor. Together, they gathered a band of diverse performers—unicyclists, acrobats, jugglers, musicians, and clowns—and the Pickle Family Circus opened in May 1975 in the gym of John O’Connell High School in San Francisco’s Mission District. After that, they moved the show outdoors.

From the beginning, the Pickles made deliberate decisions that set them apart from traditional American circus. Unlike the business-minded big-top conglomerates, the Pickles staged performances in a single ring, without circus animals, and on an intimate scale that embraced and empowered audience members. Peggy remembers, “It was a way of leveling so that there was not really a vast difference between the audience and circus performer. It was a way of saying, ‘If you want to do something, you can do it. We are not extraordinary individuals. We are just like you.’”

The Pickles also embraced the communities from which their audiences came. Working out of circus headquarters in an old church on Potrero Hill, the troupe routed its tours based on the locations of the nonprofit community groups with which they partnered, which received a large percentage of total ticket sales and made money from concessions. Their first performance benefited Latino daycare centers in San Francisco, and up and down the West Coast they collaborated with senior centers, food pantries, and many other organizations.

With all the spirit of a neighborhood circus thrown together in somebody’s backyard, the Pickles relied on more than just the talent of its performers, who were responsible for every aspect of their business. Everyone pitched in to keep the show running, whether it meant assembling bleachers or hanging canvas, building props or personally mentoring sponsoring groups. Terry Lorant, Pickle performer and photographer, reflected on this all-for-one, one-for-all philosophy in an interview with San Francisco Chronicle columnist Jon Carroll: “We never considered saying, ‘Forget it.’ There was some intense—maybe insane—group pride that enabled us to do things that none of us individually would have ever thought of attempting.” This mentality permeated the lives of the Pickles, but also extended, as Peggy Snider told Carroll, “beyond the large group of Pickles past and present. It reaches out and embraces the audience, and the sponsors, and the towns that we visit.” The Pickle Family Circus was an all-inclusive celebration, founded by two visionaries who fell in love—not only with the circus, but also with each other.

Larry and Peggy married, and Lorenzo was literally born into the circus; he grew as the circus did. With a large extended family of civically minded artists, he was one of several Pickle kids who spent their childhoods on the road in backstage “tent cities,” learning tricks of the trade from a “kiddy corral” watched over by whoever was not onstage. “Everyone in the company was always having a good time,” Lorenzo remembers. “I think that is maybe the rarest thing I experienced as a child. I don’t know many kids who not only have a firsthand knowledge of what their parents do on a day-to-day basis, but also get to see their parents enjoying what they do—see any adults enjoying what they do.”

The adults were having such a good time, in fact, that Lorenzo could not wait to participate. “He wanted to do it all,” Larry remembers. “He wanted to do the acrobatics and the juggling. He wanted to clown; he wanted to play music.” At age two, Lorenzo began going onstage during intermission. Peggy remembers, “He knew the cues. The band would finish the tune that signaled it was time for intermission and he would pick up his suitcase, have his top hat on, part the curtains, march to the center of the ring—and begin.” His earliest acts were, according to his mom, “adorable” imitations of what he saw the adults do: wholehearted attempts at tumbling, clowning, and juggling.

Lorenzo was an earnest performer who understood early that the circus was serious business. His ability to exude authority from a young age made him the perfect straight man for his father’s clown—Lorenzo Pickle—to undermine. After Lorenzo signed on at age six, he and his father performed as partners for many seasons. “He was a little pro early on. He worked hard,” Larry says. “I could trust him onstage.”

When Larry left the Pickles in 1987, Lorenzo inherited a strong sense of responsibility for the circus his father helped start. Whenever he could, the 11-year-old inserted himself into the roles his father would have performed, both onstage and off. “If they would have let me drive the bleacher truck, I probably would have jumped at the chance,” he remembers.

Lorenzo continued to perform with the Pickle Family Circus throughout his teenage years, even while attending high school full time. School introduced him to a world of possibilities outside the family business: “I think that’s when I realized, ‘Oh,
‘I'm not going to do circus for the rest of my life.’ Although I never would have admitted it then, because it was my identity.” Matriculation at Vassar College across the country in upstate New York meant a fresh start for the Pickle kid. He chose to keep his unique upbringing a secret, but his anonymity was short-lived: a director called his apartment and left a message on the answering machine asking whether he wanted to be ringmaster of a circus in Tokyo. His roommates intercepted the call, and Lorenzo was forced to admit the truth. They were incredulous until he did a backflip.

After graduation, Lorenzo worked as a ringmaster in a Las Vegas Cirque du Soleil show before moving to New York to pursue an acting career. After many years of success, he decided to resurrect an old idea for a show, one that had begun as a couple of anecdotes he and fellow Pickle kid Jonah Hoyle (son of Pickle clown Geoff Hoyle) had contributed to a one-night benefit act they performed as teenagers alongside their dads. They were anecdotes about growing up in the circus and being “abused in the name of humor.”

At Vassar, Lorenzo and Jonah had merged versions of these “humor abuse” monologues with old Pickle routines and a performed history of clowning. When Lorenzo approached Jonah about reviving the piece as adults, Jonah declined: “Lorenzo’s story was the story of the Pickles. . . . I told him that he should make it a solo show. And that he should make it as personal and as honest as he could.”

With the help of director, writer, and Vassar friend Erica Schmidt, Lorenzo set out to do just that. Erica focused on the autobiographical elements, helping Lorenzo to see what was already there: the story of a father and a son. The show was produced by Manhattan Theatre Club in New York City Center—with Larry in the audience.

Lorenzo’s dad knew, more or less, what to expect, but Lorenzo had never shown him the script, which included a number of intimate thoughts he had never expressed directly to his father. It was an emotional experience for them both. “I don’t know that he quite knew how to process it,” says Lorenzo. “I really do think [the piece is] loving and celebratory. . . . He did a really great job as a parent, and he’s a great clown.” “I am just incredibly proud,” Larry says of Lorenzo’s performance in *Humor Abuse*. “I think it is really quite a wonderful gift. It is what I had to pass on to him, and I did.”

During performances of *Humor Abuse*, Lorenzo sometimes hears an audience member laugh and knows that there is a Pickle in the house. It is the laughter of someone who has been reminded of something forgotten. Lorenzo is happy to remind us: “I love that the Pickles can live on in some way. I love that I’m using the circus’s original backdrop in the show, and I love that I’m using props that my parents built and used in the ring. It’s a little walk down memory lane for a lot of people.” Lorenzo included.
You already know that A.C.T. is a world-renowned nonprofit theater company and a cornerstone of the Bay Area's vibrant arts community, but there is a lot more going on here than what you see on our mainstage. Inside A.C.T. takes you behind the scenes!

**ABOVE:** Stage manager Gillian Confair with actor Isabel Schrodel during a technical rehearsal for this summer’s Young Conservatory production of *After Juliet* (photo by Dan Rubin)
When schools let out for the summer, A.C.T.’s studios overflow with young actors-in-training. The A.C.T. Young Conservatory sees more students in June, July, and August than the other nine months combined. This summer, we will have served a record 600 students from around the Bay Area—and the rest of the country. The youthful and boundless energy these 8- to 19-year-olds bring into the building is thrilling as we on the A.C.T. staff prepare ourselves to tackle the upcoming 2012–13 season.

As we walk down the hallways, we can hear a symphony of sounds mixing from behind studio doors: singers stretching their vocal technique; actors engaged in dramatic dialogue; the playful strains of rousing improvisation. We might also hear swashbuckling swordplay being rehearsed in this summer’s teen production, Sharman Macdonald’s After Juliet, which imagines what happened in the days following the tragic deaths of Shakespeare’s doomed young lovers.

During the ten weeks of class—divided into four-week, two-week, and one-week sessions—YC students interact with A.C.T.’s professional theater staff, consisting of the best Bay Area instructors, A.C.T. alumni, and current Master of Fine Arts Program actors.

For those of us who work here, the summer brings the rejuvenating breeze of young artists grappling with their craft. It reminds all of us of our own dreams of making great theater and our commitment to passing that goal along to every generation that follows.

“Young actors are quick to jump into anything. Once they know what they’re doing, it’s like freefall.”

—Young Conservatory instructor and A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program student Philip Estrera
In Dialogue with the YC

Below, during the Young Conservatory’s July session, students Federica “Tulla” Garcia-Lehmann (age ten, left) and Lyra Johnson (age ten, right) rehearse a scene from Every Seventeen Minutes the Crowd Goes Crazy! for A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program student Tyee Tilghman’s Acting Project class.

**TULLA:** Before coming to the YC, I considered myself to be an okay actor, but Tyee has given me a lot more confidence onstage. He teaches us to be loud and clear and to make our actions big.

**LYRA:** I was the opposite! I used to think I was the best actor because I was usually acting with younger performers. Now, I have a smaller ego because I know that I’m not the best in the room: there are people who have more experience who might be better. And the YC teaches you that that’s okay.

**TULLA:** Tyee is a really fun instructor. He lets you take your character wherever you want. He makes sure you get the essentials right, but beyond that it is totally up to you.

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A.C.T.’s conservatory trains Bay Area actors year-round in our Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, and Studio A.C.T. During the summer months, A.C.T.’s Summer Training Congress (STC) caters to actors-in-training from around the country—and around the world—who join us for two- and five-week intensives taught by the best local professionals.

The interlinked intensives, which may be taken separately or together, focus on classical work and the core disciplines of acting. Students take master classes with members of A.C.T.’s core acting company and attend Conservatory Hours with prominent industry artists. This summer, Conservatory Hours were held with A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, the cast of A.C.T.’s production of The Scottsboro Boys, A.C.T. Casting Director Janet Foster, and A.C.T. Conservatory Director Melissa Smith.

“The STC fulfills a significant role in the creative and professional development of the actors who study here,” explains STC Director Christopher Herold. “Many of our students are university students who will go on to M.F.A. programs all over the country. They use the STC not only to receive superb foundational training, but also to discover whether they like an intensive training environment. Some of our more mature actors have already been working at various levels of theater, and they come here to expand the range and excellence of their work.”

Over the course of its 40-year history, the STC has trained Teri Hatcher, Camryn Manheim, Don Johnson, Jennifer Grey, and Omar Metwally, among other notable alumni. This year, the STC attracted performers from 20 states, as well as England, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, and Scotland.

“I always enjoy working with STC students,” says Bay Area artist and STC instructor Mark Jackson. “The program attracts hungry, scrappy, enthusiastic actors who like to break a sweat. My kind of people.”

The STC will return in summer 2013. Until then, adult performance classes—from acting, voice, and improv to dialect and movement—for students ages 19 and older continue in Studio A.C.T. More information can be found on our website at act-sf.org/studio.
I’ve found Viewpoints to be an invaluable tool for training and for creating work. It’s impacted my acting, my directing, and my writing. Seeing how young artists respond to it—when they’re asked to use it to push themselves physically, mentally, and emotionally—inspires and teaches me. Viewpoints has proven to be a perfect fit for the STC, I think, given the hungry, scrappy, ready-and-open young artists the program tends to attract.”

—Bay Area artist and STC instructor
Mark Jackson
LORENZO PISONI (Cocreator/Performer) was last seen at A.C.T. in The Gamester. His Broadway credits include Equus (Broadhurst Theater) and Henry IV (Lincoln Center Theater). Off-Broadway credits include Measure for Measure, All’s Well That Ends Well, Much Ado About Nothing, and As You Like It (The Public Theater/NYSF); Humor Abuse and Last Dance (Manhattan Theatre Club); Election Day (Second Stage Theatre); The Devil’s Disciple (The Irish Repertory Theatre); and Troilus and Cressida (Theatre for a New Audience). Selected regional credits include Tuesdays with Morrie, The Great Gatsby, and Humor Abuse (Seattle Repertory Theatre); The Injured Party (South Coast Repertory); The Great Gatsby (Guthrie Theater); The Tempest (McCarter Theatre Center); and Arms and the Man (Barrington Stage Company). Film and television credits include The Adjustment Bureau, Big Mommas: Like Father, Like Son, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, and All My Children. Other selected credits include A Midsummer Night’s Dream (New York Philharmonic at Lincoln Center), the Pickle Family Circus, and Cirque du Soleil. Pisoni graduated from Vassar College; selected honors include Drama Desk, Lucille Lortel, OBIE, and Outer Critics Circle awards.

ERICA SCHMIDT’s (Director/Cocreator) credits include Invasion! (The Play Company; OBIE Award); Honey Brown Eyes (The Working Theater); Humor Abuse (Manhattan Theatre Club, Seattle Repertory Theatre; Lucille Lortel, Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, and OBIE awards); Rent (Tokyo); Molière’s The Imaginary Invalid, Chekhov’s Uncle Vanya, Gilbert and Sullivan’s The Sorcerer, and Copland’s The Tender Land (Bard College’s SummerScape); Trust (The Play Company; Joe A. Callaway Award nomination); As You Like It (The Public Theater/NYSF); chashama and The New York International Fringe Festival 2000 winner for Best Direction); Debbie Does Dallas, which she adapted and directed (off-Broadway’s Jane Street Theatre); Spanish Girl (Second Stage Theatre Uptown); R&J and Buried Child (The Juilliard School); and Fair Ladies at a Game of Poem Cards (McCarter Theatre Center). Schmidt is a 2001 recipient of the Princess Grace Award.

BEN STANTON (Lighting Designer), based in Brooklyn, New York, has designed lighting for theater, dance, and concerts over the past 14 years throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe. Recent projects include Angels in America (dir. Michael Greif, Signature Theatre Company); The Whipping Man (dir. Doug Hughes, Manhattan Theatre Club), for which he received a Lucille Lortel Award and Drama Desk nomination for Outstanding Lighting Design; and
Who’s Who

Sufjan Stevens’s Age of Adz (European tour and Prospect Park Bandshell). In New York, Stanton has designed at The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, LCT3, Roundabout Underground, Signature Theatre, MCC Theater, Vineyard Theatre, Primary Stages, The Kitchen, Daryl Roth Theatre, Edge Theatre, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, and The StageFARM. Regional theater credits include work at the Mark Taper Forum, Long Wharf Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe, Dallas Theater Center, South Coast Repertory, the Huntington Theatre Company, Philadelphia Theatre Company, McCarter Theatre Center, Intiman Theatre, Paper Mill Playhouse, Westport Country Playhouse, Hartford Stage, Actors Theater of Louisville, the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Chautauqua Theater Company, Bay Street Theatre, New York Stage and the Film, and the Williamstown Theatre Festival.

BART FASBENDER (Sound Designer) has worked with Erica Schmidt on Honey Brown Eyes (The Working Theater), Invasion! and Trust (The Play Company), Slag Heap (Cherry Lane Theatre), Spanish Girl (Second Stage Theatre Uptown), Don’t Blink (The Directors Company), Top Girls (Fordham University), and Arms and the Man (Barrington Stage Company). New York credits include Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson on Broadway, Storefront Church and Port Authority (Atlantic Theater Company), Lonely, I’m Not and Mr. and Mrs. Fitch (Second Stage Theatre), Burning and Russian Transport (The New Group), Apple Cove (Women’s Project), Three Changes and Drunken City (Playwrights Horizons), Graceland (LCT3), Asuncion and The Aliens (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater), A Body of Water (Primary Stages), and Boozy, Hedda, and Hell House (St. Ann’s Warehouse/Les Freres Corbusier).

Regionally, Fasbender has designed for the Williamstown Theatre Festival, New York Stage and Film, Barrington Stage Company, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Center Theatre Group (Kirk Douglas Theater), Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, Two River Theater Company, and TheaterWorks. Fasbender was nominated a Hewes Design Award.

HANNAH COHEN’s (Stage Manager) off-Broadway credits include Humor Abuse, That Face, and Cradle and All (Manhattan Theatre Club); After the Revolution (Playwrights Horizons); The Burnt Part Boys (Vineyard Theatre, New York Stage and Film); This Beautiful City (Center Theatre Group, Vineyard Theatre); Indian Blood (Primary Stages); The Mistakes Madeleine Made (Naked Angels); The Wooden Brecks (MCC Theater); and Slag Heap (Cherry Lane Theatre). Cohen has toured with Sweeney Todd (Richard Frankel Productions) and SpongeBob Squarepants Live! (Broadway Asia Entertainment). Regional credits include Humor Abuse (Philadelphia Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre); Touch(ed), After the Revolution, Landscape of the Body, and Travesties (Williamstown Theatre Festival); Boston Marriage (Guthrie Theater); and The Rose Tattoo and Persephone (Huntington Theatre Company). She is a graduate of Boston University’s School of Theatre.

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB (Assistant Stage Manager) is in his 19th season at A.C.T., where his recent credits include Race, The Homecoming, Scapin, Phèdre, Rock ‘n’ Roll, ’Tis Pity She’s a Whore, and Sweeney Todd. In addition to a long association with Berkeley Repertory Theatre, his other work includes productions for Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, Boston’s Huntington Theatre Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, and Marin Theatre Company. He served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.
A.C.T. Profiles

CAREY PERLOFF
(Director/Artistic Director) is celebrating her 20th year as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed Endgame and Play, Scorched, The Homecoming, Tosca Cafe (cocreated with choreographer Val Caniparoli and recently toured Canada), and Racine’s Phèdre. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has also directed for A.C.T. José Rivera’s Boleros for the Disenchantment; the world premieres of Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War (A.C.T. commission) and her own adaptation (with Paul Walsh) of A Christmas Carol; the American premieres of Tom Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter’s Celebration; A.C.T.–commissioned translations/adaptations of Hecuba, The Misantrope, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, Uncle Vanya, A Mother, and The Voyage Inheritance (adapted by David Mamet); the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Boy; and major revivals of ‘Tis Pity She’s a Whore, The Government Inspector, Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), A Doll’s House, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Creditors, The Room, Home, The Tempest, and Stoppard’s Rock ‘n’ Roll, Travesties, The Real Thing, Night and Day, and Arcadia.

Perloff’s work for A.C.T. also includes Marie Ndiaye’s Hilda, the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s No for an Answer and David Lang/Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colossus of Rhodos (Susan Smith Blackburn Award finalist).

Her play Luminescence Dating premiered in New York at The Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and Magic Theatre, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her play Waiting for the Flood has received workshops at A.C.T., New York Stage & Film, and Roundabout Theatre Company. Her latest play, Higher, was developed at New York Stage and Film and presented at San Francisco’s Contemporary Jewish Museum in 2010; it won the 2011 Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Theatre Visions Fund Award and received its world premiere in February 2012 in San Francisco. Her one-act The Morning After was a finalist for the Heideman Award at Actors Theatre of Louisville. Perloff has collaborated as a director on new plays by many notable writers, including Gotanda, Nilo Cruz, and Robert O’Hara. She also recently directed a new Elektra for the Getty Villa in Los Angeles.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound’s Elektra, the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language, and many classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, CSC won numerous OBIE Awards, including 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.

A recipient of France’s Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund’s 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, 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 Lexie and Nicholas.

ELLEN RICHARD
(Executive Director) joined A.C.T. as executive director in August 2010. She served previously as executive director of off Broadway’s nonprofit Second Stage Theatre in New York City. During her tenure at Second Stage, she was responsible for the purchase contract of the Helen Hayes Theatre and substantial growth in subscription income and growth in individual giving. Under Richard’s leadership, Second Stage provided the initial home for the Broadway productions Everyday Rapture, Next to Normal, and The Little Dog Laughed.

From 1983 to 2005, Richard enjoyed a rich and varied career with Roundabout Theatre Company. By the time she departed as managing director, Roundabout had been transformed from a small nonprofit on the verge of bankruptcy into one of the country’s largest and most successful theater companies of its kind. Richard is the recipient of six Tony Awards as producer, for Roundabout productions of Cabaret (1998), A View from the Bridge (1998), Side Man (1999), Nine (2003), Assassins (2004), and Glengarry Glen Ross (2005). Producer of more than 125 shows at Roundabout, she had direct supervision of all general and production management, marketing, and financial aspects of the theater’s operations. She conceptualized and oversaw the redesign of the three permanent Roundabout stages—Studio 54, the American Airlines Theatre, and the Harold and Miriam Steinberg Center for Theatre. She directed the location search for Cabaret and supervised the creation of that production’s environmental Kit Kat Klub.

Prior to her tenure at Roundabout, Richard served as business manager of Westport Country Playhouse, theater manager for Stamford Center for the Arts, and business manager for Atlas Scenic Studio. She began her career working as a stagehand, sound designer, and scenic artist assistant.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. 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 theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in venues around the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. In 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Continental Divide. 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.
We’re proud to announce our upcoming season, featuring an array of accomplished artists who have collectively earned 11 Obie Awards and five Tony Awards.

2012–13

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**Chinglish**
Written by David Henry Hwang
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Co-production with South Coast Repertory
Aug 24–Oct 7

**An Iliad**
Adapted from Homer
by Lisa Peterson & Denis O’Hare
Translation by Robert Fagles
Directed by Lisa Peterson
Oct 12–Nov 11

**The White Snake**
Conceived and directed by Mary Zimmerman
Co-production with Oregon Shakespeare Festival
Nov 9–Dec 23

**World Premiere**

**Fallaci**
Written by Lawrence Wright
Directed by Gregory Mosher
Mar 8–Apr 21

**Pericles, Prince of Tyre**
Written by William Shakespeare
Directed by Mark Wing-Davey
Apr 12–May 26

**Dear Elizabeth**
Written by Elizabeth Bishop & Robert Lowell
Arranged by Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Les Waters
May 24–Jul 7

**Special Presentation!**

**The Wild Bride**
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A.C.T. gratefully acknowledges the Prospero Society members listed below, who have made an investment in the future of A.C.T. by providing for the theater in their estate plans. For information about membership, please contact Matt Henry at 415.439.2436 or mhenry@act-sf.org.

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The following members of the A.C.T. community made gifts in memory and in honor of friends, colleagues, and family members during the April 1, 2011-April 30, 2012, period.

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As A.C.T. is both a cultural and an educational institution, many employers will match individual employee contributions to the theater. The following corporate matching gift programs honor their employees’ support of A.C.T., multiplying the impact of those contributions.

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For Your Information

**ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**
A.C.T.'s administrative and conservatory offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the web: act-sf.org.

**BOX OFFICE INFORMATION**
A.C.T. Box Office
Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the theater, one block west of Union Square. **Walk-up hours** are Tuesday–Sunday (noon–curtain) on performance days, and Monday–Friday (noon–6 p.m.) and Saturday–Sunday (noon–4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. **Phone hours** are Tuesday–Sunday (10 a.m.–curtain) on performance days, and Monday–Friday (10 a.m.–6 p.m.) and Saturday–Sunday (10 a.m.–4 p.m.) on nonperformance days. Call 415.749.2228 and use American Express, Visa, or MasterCard; or fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.749.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our website at act-sf.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy ticket exchange privileges and ticket insurance. Packages are available by calling 415.749.2250. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone or fax, or in person.

**Special Subscription Discounts**
Educators, administrators, and students receive a 50% discount with valid ID. **10UP subscribers** get priority access to Balcony seats at certain performances for just $10 each. **Seniors** (65+) save $40 on eight plays, $35 on seven plays, $30 on six plays, $25 on five plays, or $20 on four plays for Saturday and Sunday matinee packages.

**Single Ticket Discounts**
**10UP** (world-class theater at happy-hour prices) offers $10 Balcony seats for select performances. **Half-price student and senior rush tickets** are available at the A.C.T. Box Office two hours before curtain. **Matinee senior rush tickets** are available at noon on the day of the performance for $20. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

**Group Discounts**
The bigger the group, the bigger the savings—save up to 50%! For groups of 15 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.439.2473.

**AT THE THEATER**
The American Conservatory Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The lobby opens one hour before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour before curtain. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

**A.C.T. Merchandise**
Copies of *Words on Plays*, A.C.T.’s in-depth performance guide, are on sale in the main lobby, at the box office, and online.

**Refreshments**
Full bar service, sweets, and 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. You can avoid the long lines at intermission by preordering food and beverages in the lower- and third-level bars. Bar drinks are now permitted in the auditorium.

**Cell Phones!**
If you carry a pager, beeper, cell phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the “off” position while you are in the theater. Text messaging during the performance is very disruptive and not allowed.

**Perfumes**
The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented after-shave lotions, even in small amounts, can cause severe physical 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 415.439.2317 in an emergency.

**Latecomers**
A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated before the first 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 performances. 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 lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

**Wheelchair seating** is available on all levels of the theater. Please call 415.749.2228 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.

**Lost and Found**
If you’ve misplaced an item while you’re still at the theater, please look for it at our merchandise stand in the lobby. Any items found by ushers or other patrons will be taken there. If you’ve already left the theater, please call 415.439.2471 and we’ll be happy to check our lost and found for you. Please be prepared with the date you attended the performance and your seat location.

**AFFILIATIONS**
A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of Theatre Bay Area, the Union Square Association, the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau.

A.C.T. operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

The scenic, costume, lighting, and sound designers in LORT theaters are represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE. The scenic shop, prop shop, and stage crew are represented by Local 16 of the IATSE.

A.C.T. is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the Grants for the Arts/San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

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**American Conservatory Theater Exits**

![Stage Exit Diagram](image-url)

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