les liaisons dangereuses

by choderlos de laclos

adapted and directed by giles havergal

act american conservatory theater

encore arts programs
ABOUT A.C.T.

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 Managing Director Heather Kitchen, 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.

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 three decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.’s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 270,000 people in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1996, A.C.T.’s efforts to develop creative talent for the theater were recognized with the prestigious Jujamcyn Theaters 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 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 Zeon Theater, which now serves as a venue for student productions and exciting new plays. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

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

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Chairman Emeritus
American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1965 by William Ball.
Edward Hastings
Artistic Director 1986-92
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Edward Hastings
Artistic Director 1966–62
FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

It’s been so busy at the Geary Theater with Urinetown, The Musical performing to standing-room audiences all summer that it’s hard to believe a new season is already upon us. But here we are, diving into September with not one but two new productions:

Giles Havergal’s fascinating new adaptation of Latchis’s Les Liaisons Dangereuses here at the Geary, and Yohen, Philip Kan Gotanda’s richly imagined exploration of a 30-year marriage between an African-American soldier and his Japanese war bride, performing at Ziezen Theater (located just down the road at Yerba Buena Gardens).

As many of you know, A.C.T. has had a long and fruitful relationship with Giles Havergal, one of our favorite directors and adapters, who first came to us with his incredibly imaginative version of the Graham Greene novel Travels with My Aunt in 1996 and has returned many times since. We have such profound appreciation for his continuing contributions to A.C.T. (not to mention his inestimable kindness and delightful wit) that we awarded him an honorary masters of fine arts in acting degree last year, to recognize not only his extraordinary work on the Geary stage, but his inspirational work in the classroom with our students, as well. For this new adaptation of Les Liaisons Dangereuses, Havergal went back to Latchis’s wickedly brilliant epistolary novel and took its structure as his inspiration. The romantic drama advances as a dangerous cat-and-mouse game in which we, the audience, piece together tidbits of information that culminate in an outrageous climax. As always at A.C.T., we want you to be involved in the actual act of making theater; Liaisons exemplifies a kind of storytelling that puts you in the center of an unfolding tale of intrigue that simply will not allow you to remain passively on the sidelines. We hope you’ll have a wonderful ride.

We also hope you’ll join us for Yohen, which features A.C.T. Associate Artist Steven Anthony Jones and distinguished stage and screen actress Dian Kobayashi, at the 140-seat Ziezen Theater. Philip Kan Gotanda is one of the Bay Area’s most accomplished and respected writers, and a powerful dramatic voice for the Asian-American experience; A.C.T. has long been eager to produce one of his plays. This is your chance to see A.C.T.’s “up close” in an intimate setting, to watch two extraordinary actors uncover the mysteries of a complex crosscultural marriage, as well as to help support A.C.T.’s commitment to new work and new voices. Stay tuned for news about other exciting “New Works” ventures to come throughout the A.C.T. season at Ziezen.

Ziezen also continues to serve as the perfect space for public productions by A.C.T.’s acclaimed M.F.A. and Young Conservatory programs, which both have exciting seasons on the boards this year—beginning with Havergal’s own ingenious interpretation of Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream, performed by our talented third-year M.F.A. students in October, and Jim Griswold’s new A.C.T.-commissioned play War Daddy, directed by Young Conservatory Director Craig Slaight, in November. We’d love to see you there for all these events.

Most of all, we’re thrilled that you’re with us this season.

Welcome!

Cary Perloff
Artistic Director
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Artistic Director

A.C.T. performing at Zeyun Theater

Yohen
by Philip Kan Gotanda
directed by Scott Bert

Sep 6–27

This production is the latest in a continuing exploration of new writing presented by A.C.T. and is set in a new theatrical work from the page to the stage with a series of workshops and readings throughout the season.

Tickets: $14-$24

American Conservatory Theater

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Los Liaisons Dangereuses 5
seduce and conquer

by Choderlos de Laclos (1782)

Adapted and Directed by Giles Havergal (2003)

Scenery by Kate Edmonds
Costumes by Deborah Dryden
Lighting by Rui Rita
Sound by Garth Hempbill
Music composed, remixed, and arranged by PeterD
Choreography by Francine Landes
Dramaturgy by Paul Walsh
Assistant Director by C. Diane Manning
Dialect Coach by Deborah Sossel
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw
Wigs by Theatrical Hairgoods

THE CAST

Madame Joan MacIntosh
Marquise de Merteuil Lisa Brueneau
Vicomte de Valmont Marco Barriecelli
Madame de Tourvel Libby West
Cecile de Volanges Elizabeth Raets
Chevalier Danceny Neil Hopkins
Ensemble Anthony Fusco, Lauren Grace, Michele Leavy, Scott Nordquist, Patrick Sieler, Taylor Valentine

UNDERSTUDIES

Madame—Jean Harris-Gibb
Marquise de Merteuil—Madame—Laurens Grace
Vicomte de Valmont—Anthony Fusco
Cecile de Volanges—Female Ensemble—Mary McGin
Chevalier Danceny—Male Ensemble—D. Matt Worley

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Julie Haber, Stage Manager
Stoya Mitchell, Assistant Stage Manager
Alice Hising, Intern

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

This adaptation is based on the first English translation published in London by T. Hookham in 1784.

This production is sponsored in part by

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS
Mort and Fran fries Fleishacker

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Trevia Barnes • Kent Anderson • Laird Williamson
seduce and conquer

BY JESSICA WERNER

This book, it burns like ice," Baudelaire famously wrote of Les Liaisons Dangereuses, the French epistolary novel by Choderlos de Laclos that has fascinated readers for more than 200 years with its provocative tale of seduction and betrayal played out in the aristocratic parlors and boudoirs of ancien régime France. The novel—told completely through the letters written between the story’s main characters—chronicles the decadent diversions and unsavory alliance of seducers the Marquise de Merteuil and the roving Vicomte de Valmont, who plot the downfall of two unsuspecting virtuous young women.

Les Liaisons Dangereuses caused an immediate and lasting sensation from the moment it made its debut in the bookshops of Paris in the spring of 1782. The tale both scandalized and titillated French society, inspiring the private delight and public censure of 18th-century readers. Condemned on the one hand as a diabolical portrait of scheming aristocrats whose erotic free-for-all was a study in licentiousness, the novel also had an insinuating hold on its audience and was, we now know, read by everyone.

The book’s first printing sold out in two weeks and was immediately pirated. Several plays soon appeared based on Les Liaisons’s characters, and at least 16 separate editions of the novel had been reissued by the end of the year. Even Marie-Antoinette owned an early edition—bound for her personal library with a discreetly anonymous, unlisted title.

Laclos’s book has throughout its history been read alternatively as a work of courtly, high-brow pornography, a condemnation of moral depravity, and an objective, even instructive, portrait of the complicated nature of sexual relationships. The prevailing appraisal of each successive era has depended in part on the sexual and political climate in which the book is read. A 19th-century Paris court, for example, banned the book (1815–78) “for outrage to public morality,” and the novel occupied a prominent position in the Vatican’s Index Librorum Prohibitorum until that reading list was abolished in 1966. France’s criminal justice system eventually went so far as to prosecute Les Liaisons Dangereuses, together with such other controversial works as Flaubert’s Madame Bovary and Baudelaire’s poems Les Fleurs du Mal. (Baudelaire was one of the few 19th-century writers to approach Laclos’s novel as a work of art and not as a scalding manual of seduction.) It wasn’t until after World War I that Europeans again began to recognize Laclos’s incontestable artistry and powers of observation. Writers as diverse as Arnold Bennett, Virginia Woolf, and Aldous Huxley openly admired Laclos’s essays, verse, and correspondence, as well as his one and only novel. But it was really in the 1960s that Laclos came to be ranked among the finest of France’s novelists. In the last decades of the 20th century, Les Liaisons Dangereuses finally achieved “classic” status, regularly taught among the great works of libertine literature and frequently translated to the stage and screen. Literary critic Luc Sante has written of the novel’s enduring reputation: "What really keeps

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Tevia Barnes • Kent Andersen • Laird Williamson
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ted to the corruption of language by polit cant and the corruption of morals by money. It implicates a whole society so founded on falsehood that a single act of emotional truth is tantamount to an act of subversion."

MORE NOTORIOUS THAN FAMOUS

Laclos himself said of Les Liaisons Dangereuses that he had "resolved to write a book which would be quite outside the ordi-
nary trend, which would make a sensation and echo over the world after I left it." In both aims he succeeded with a vengeance, leav-
ing readers to speculate about how a petty bourgeois career soldier and family man, with no literary background, could craft a work of fiction with such rare and merciless intelligence. "It is the most extraordinary thing, isn't it, that this rather unremarkable man, who had really never written anything before, wrote this one remarkable book which is among the most widely read volumes of European liter-
ture," observes adaptor/director Giles Havergal, whose imagination was stirred by the dramatic possibilities of making the let-
ters themselves in Les Liaisons Dangereuses the key players they were in Laclos' time.

Very little is known about Pierre-Ambroise-François Choderlos de Laclos (1741–1803), and we can only speculate about the internal forces that brought about Les Liaisons, his only work of imaginative literature beyond a few apparently forget-
able verses and the libretto for an opera that was banned "from beginning to end" at its single performance. A military man from a recently ennobled family, Laclos served during an unusually lengthy period of peace, and his provincial postings over more than 25 years were to take him practically everywhere in France (Strasbourg, Grenoble, Besançon, Valence, Île d'Arize) except the battlefield. He was a capable and respected soldier, strategist, and inventor (notably, of the first hollow artillery shell), but, under the ancien régime, truly illustrious military careers were for the most part reserved for noblemen of rank. Unquestionably, his slow progress up through the military (and stymied attempt to volun-
teer to serve in the American War of Independence) was a source of frustration, and this has led to the theory that Laclos was motivated by thwarted ambition to write Les Liaisons Dangereuses to avenge himself on the aristocracy.

When the Revolution came Laclos joined the Jacobins, and entered the service of the regicide royal cousin Philippe-Égalité. He survived two imprisonments during the Terror, and in 1800 was made a general by Napoleon. He died three years later in Italy, of dysentery and malaria. After Les Liaisons he wrote a few tracts on military strategy and a treatise on the education of women, published posthumously. Laclos never profited from his exceptional novel, nor did he concern himself much with its re-
ception after it was published. It made him more notorious than famous, and inspired various great ladies to announce that they would not receive him should he visit.

LOVE LETTERS

Laclos might have come out of nowhere, but the same cannot be said of his book. Les Liaisons fits squarely within the 18th-century tradition of the epistolary novel that was then very much in vogue in French and English literature. Tales told in letters were immensely popular in an age of correspondence; the two most influential works of the period, Rousseau's La Nouvelle Héloïse and Richardson's Clarissa, were both written in epistolary form—and Les Liaisons de Valmont has more than a little in common with Richardson's rake Lovelace. Laclos himself wrote that "Clarissa showed more genius than any other novel and that only the cre-
ator of Lovelace knew how to make a heroic figure of a seducer." (Laclos pays literary homage in Les Liaisons by having Madame de Tourvel read Clarissa to strengthen her resistance to Valmont's advances.)

Many of the epistolary citations sprinkled throughout Les Liaisons allude to the period's mildly prurient romans gal-
lants—a sort of upper-class pulp, which were frequently set in a mythic Orient and were all the rage. Even Voltaire and Diderot augmented their incomes by writing in the genre. At the other extreme, though often sharing writers and readers, were the romans noirs, a literature of debauchery and corrup-
tion that detailed the lewd activities of prominent society men and women in crudely illustrated porn-
ographic pamphlets. Les Liaisons—neither wholly precious nor prurient—is simply better realized than most novels of its day.

One of the epistolary novel's strengths, as well as its liabilities, is that it offers readers a seemingly unmediated glimpse into the minds and hearts of corresponding characters. Scholars praising Laclos's consummate success comment that, whereas Richardson and Rousseau allowed their characters to analyze their feelings in excruciating detail and deliberate social and moral questions, Laclos succeeds in seemingly silencing the author's voice. By removing himself so completely from the world he creates, Laclos denies us the chance of hearing his own voice and consequently any way of knowing where his own loyalties lie. Libertine? Moral-
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—Merteuil

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ilish Valmont and the pious virtuous Madame de Tourvel. Not only a captivating literary device, this is a "fascinating theatrical device, providing us unparalleled insight into his characters," says Havergal, who spoke with us about his new adaptation as he prepared to begin rehearsals of Les Liaisons Dangereuses at A.C.T.

JESSICA WERNER: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS SO APPEALING ABOUT THIS 18-TH-CENTURY NOVEL, THAT WRITERS AND DIRECTORS AND FILMMAKERS KEEP COMING BACK TO IT?

Giles Havergal: Les Liaisons Dangereuses is really that curious thing, a story with a highly moral center, but told in an incredibly di-
verging way. It is a remarkable reversal of the normal moral model, the characters who are the most immoral are the most attractive. Merteuil and Valmont are so wicked and so funny, and their relation-
ship with each other is so perverse, that you can't help but be attracted and repelled at the same time.

Fundamentally, though, I think this story continues to fasci-
nate people because it hits something very profound in all of us. It's impossible not to get drawn into this world, to be mesmer-
ized and fascinated and amused, even against our better judg-
ment, by these monstrous characters—who embody the monstrous goings-on of all human beings, really. Of course, the story is also very sexy, and it is fun. These characters make you laugh, even as you think, Oh, I wish she wouldn't do that! They are tremen-
dously witty, and I'm sure that's why people still read the novel.

YOU DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL EPISTOLARY STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL, AND TELL THE STORY ONSTAGE THROUGH THE LETTERS SENT BETWEEN THE MAIN CHARACTERS. DID THIS PRESENT PARTICULAR CHALLENGES DURING THE ADAPTATION PROCESS?

Well, all adaptation is amputation. You can't keep everything, but it seemed to me that there were three principal threads in this story that it was important to dramatize: Far and away the most interesting dynamic psychologically is the relationship between Valmont and Merteuil. Their exchange is so imaginative as a piece of writing, and it is one of the very few truly original relationships in literature. They are every bit as passionate as they are destruc-
tive. The popularity and absolute force of the book down through the centuries is based on these two diabolically intriguing char-
ters. The letters between them comprise more than half of the 178 letters in the book. The second key plot strand is Valmont's seduction of the teenage Cécile and the attempt to corrupt her before her marriage. And the third strand is Valmont's seduction of the "good woman," Madame de Tourvel.

I decided it was important to concentrate on the fact that the book was indeed written as a series of letters, which was very much the fashion of its time. The appeal of the epistolary style is that it
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Pleasure, which is indeed the sole motive for the union of the two sexes, is not sufficient to forge a bond between them.

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Laclos's stroke of genius is in creating convincingly authentic voices for both male and female characters as distinct as the devilish Valmont and the piously virtuous Madame de Tourvel. Not only a captivating literary device, this is a "fascinating theatrical device, providing us unparalleled insight into his characters," says Havergal, who spoke with us about his new adaptation as he prepared to begin rehearsals of Les Liaisons Dangereuses at A.C.T.

JESSICA WERNER: WHAT DO YOU THINK IS SO APPEALING ABOUT THIS 18th-CENTURY NOVEL, THAT WRITERS AND DIRECTORS AND FILMMAKERS KEEP COMING BACK TO IT?
Giles Havergal: LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES IS really that curious thing, a story with a highly moral center, but told in an incredibly diverting way. It is a remarkable reversal of the normal moral model, the characters who are the most immoral are the most attractive. Merteuil and Valmont are so wicked and so funny, and their relationship with each other is so perverse, that you can't help but be attracted and repelled at the same time.

Fundamentally, though, I think this story continues to fascinate people because it hits something very profound in all of us. It's impossible not to get drawn into this world, to be mesmerized and fascinated and amused, even against our better judgment, by these monstrous characters—who embody the monstrous goings-on of all human beings, really. Of course, the story is also very sexy, and it is fun. These characters make you laugh, even as you think: Oh, I wish she wouldn't do that! They are treenously witty, and I'm sure that's why people still read the novel.

YOU DECIDED TO RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL EPISTOLARY STRUCTURE OF THE NOVEL, AND TELL THE STORY ONSTAGE THROUGH THE LETTERS SENT BETWEEN THE MAIN CHARACTERS; DID THIS PRESENT PARTICULAR CHALLENGES DURING THE ADAPTATION PROCESS?
Well, all adaptation is amputation. You can’t keep everything, but it seemed to me that there were three principal threads in this story that it was important to dramatize: Far and away the most interesting dynamic psychologically is the relationship between Valmont and Merteuil. Their exchange is so imaginative as a piece of writing, and it is one of the very few truly original relationships in literature. They are every bit as passionate as they are destructive. The popularity and absolute force of the book down through the centuries is based on these two diabolically intriguing characters. The letters between them comprise more than half of the 178 letters in the book. The second key plot strand is Valmont’s seduction of the teenage Cécile and the attempt to corrupt her before her marriage. And the third strand is Valmont’s seduction of the “good woman,” Madame de Tourvel.

I decided it was important to concentrate on the fact that the book was indeed written as a series of letters, which was very much the fashion of its time. The appeal of the epistolary style is that it

PHOTO © ROB GOLDMAN/CORBIS
affords you several strikingly different viewpoints on the story, to in effect see a multiplicity of characters through each of their own eyes. Usually [in traditional narrative], we see only through the author’s eyes, whereas in this case Laclos puts himself into the minds of about ten characters, of which I’ve chosen to focus on six or seven. His writing is so lively that each character’s style is clearly defined. That is not only fascinating as a literary device, but also as a theatrical device, inssofar as it provides us unparalleled insight into characters who express themselves through their own words, rather than through social observation alone.

IT’S ALMOST AS IF LACLOS WROTE EACH CHARACTER AS AN ACTOR, DIDN’T HE? I THINK OF THE REAL PROTAGONISTS OF THE STORY AS ACTORS IN THEIR OWN LIVES. Yes, and Laclos said that about them. The two primary references he makes in his writing are to military endeavors and to the theater. Valsmont sees seduction as a military campaign, as does Merteuil; they refer to “worthy enemies” and the “Siege” and “surrender” of sexual conquest. And Merteuil has matured into the woman she is by learning to act—to feign indifference, if necessary, to conceal at all costs her heart’s true desire. She says at the beginning [of the play], “I realized that I needed an author’s wit and an actor’s talent” to survive the incredibly duplicitous life she leads. Of course, we can see that she has been forced to lead a duplicitous life in order to have the freedom that men enjoy regularly in her world.

MERTUEIL IS A SURPRISINGLY FEMINIST CHARACTER FOR HER TIME, ISN’T SHE? I think it is astounding that Laclos wrote what we would now describe as a very feminist novel, in which it is acknowledged that women in society are in a very unfair situation and are very easy prey for men. Laclos was interested in the subject of the education of women, and wrote essays that were quite revolutionary at the time, suggesting that women were being trained only to enter their narrowly accepted positions in society, rather than receiving an education that would allow them to blossom and develop freely. Cécile de Valanges, for instance, falls for Valsmont in part because, growing up in a convent, she hasn’t been educated at all about sex or even about how to interact with men. Laclos seems to be saying that you can’t send people out into the world with absolutely no weaponry against the ordinary to and fro of human behavior. The novel is indeed educational from that point of view.

We can only imagine how shocking it must have been in 1782 to create a female character as powerful and vicious as Merteuil.

The more predictable and obvious tactic, if you wanted to prove that women were trapped by their social conditioning and victimized by men, would be to make the villain a man. Instead, Merteuil is powerful precisely because she has learned how to behave like a man. The highly refined seduction techniques of the men of her culture meant that the women had to bloody well sharpen up to defend themselves, and Laclos portrayed a woman as equally culpable. Merteuil wants to be sexually promiscuous, and the only way she can do that is by appearing absolutely irresistible and incredibly proper. I think that’s a fascinating idea that a woman who wants the privileges of a man can only get them by behaving appallingly. This is one of the very rare situations in which a heroine, if that’s what Merteuil is, is absolutely sexually driven, because in most books of the time that certainly didn’t happen.

LACLOS’S NOVEL REMINDS US HOW IMPORTANT LETTER WRITING WAS IN ARISTOCRATIC 18TH-CENTURY CULTURE, SOMETHING WE’VE CERTAINLY LOST TODAY. THERE SEEMS TO BE AN IRONY IN CORRESPONDENCE: WRITING A LETTER FEELS LIKE AN INTIMATE FORM OF EXPRESSION, YET BY WRITING YOU ACKNOWLEDGE A SEPARATION THAT KEEPS YOU FROM INTERACTING DIRECTLY, IN PERSON, WRITING IS INTIMATE, YET IT SIMULTANEOUSLY HIGHLIGHTS SOLITUDE AND DISTANCE.

I absolutely agree. There is both real intimacy and formality to writing letters. And we still encounter that today, in our modern forms of communication. We see this with the telephone, don’t we? And also with e-mail, which encourages a feeling of apparent intimacy and immediacy, but in fact has a curious distance and pronounced formality.

DO YOU AGREE THAT LACLOS MEANT THE STORY TO BE MORALISTIC, INSOFAR AS IT CONDEMNED THE BEHAVIOR HE DESCRIBES?

Yes, I do think Les Liaisons Dangereuses is a moral book. It teaches a moral lesson about corruption, really. It is about two people who plan a series of extremely vile seductions and set out to destroy two other people, and who use the most unfair weapon that you can possibly use, which is to pretend to somebody that you’re in love with them in order to get into their knickers—while making it clear that such behavior is morally reprehensible. Les Liaisons is really in my mind about blasphemy—about betraying the sacrosanct nature of the most central of our emotions. The most privileged and intimate thing we human beings can experience is the moment when another person says to us, or we say to them, “I love you.” And to betray that event with pretense is to mess about with the most precious thing we possess, which is our love for each other. That’s what makes [Merteuil and Valmont] so dreadful.

People continue to be drawn to this novel partly because it depicts behavior that is disgusting and erotic, and partly because it has a very powerful moral. I think those two things go together. [Screen Designer] Kate Edmunds has described [Les Liaisons] as a “measurably fairy tale for adults.” The book certainly isn’t pornographic, yet it is emotionally graphic. It packs a punch, without having to be crude.


Somebody whose opinion I very much trust once said that adaptations and translations for the theater last about ten years. All adaptations of foreign literature stand to be reexamined on a regular basis, because the acts of translation and adaptation are so much of the time of the person who does them and the audience that experiences them. I have no hesitation in saying that Les Liaisons Dangereuses can be looked at again and again. Hampton’s narrative adaptation was very successful, yet I wanted to see how much dramatic mileage there is in actually returning to the letter format of Laclos’s original novel. This is such a wonderful story that I think it needs reinterpreting as often as anybody wants to do it.

I believe this particular piece of material is for all times. It is not locked into its period, it’s not just an interesting look at 18th-century social behavior. It is as strikingly contemporary as it is of its own time. Les Liaisons Dangereuses is about the most basic behavior of the human heart, and that is why it will never go out of fashion.
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WHY DO YOU THINK IT MAKES SENSE TO BRING THIS NOVEL TO THE STAGE AGAIN NOW? AND WHY DO A NEW ADAPTION WHEN OTHERS, LIKE CHRISTOPHER HAMPTON'S PLAY (1986) AND FILM (1988) DANGEROUS Liaisons AND MILOS FORMAN'S FILM VALMONT (1989), ALREADY EXIST? Somebody whose opinion I very much trust once said that adaptations and translations for the theater last about ten years. All adaptations of foreign literature stand to be reexamined on a regular basis, because the acts of translation and adaptation are so much of the time of the person who does them and the audience that experiences them. I have no hesitation in saying that Les Liaisons Dangereuses can be looked at again and again. Hampton's narrative adaptation was very successful, yet I wanted to see how much dramatic mileage there is in actually returning to the letter format of Laclos's original novel. This is such a wonderful story that I think it needs reinterpreting as often as anybody wants to do it.

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MARKO BARRICELLI (Violoncello), an A.C.T. associate artist and core company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in, among others, The Three Sisters, American Buffalo, Buried Child, for the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, The Board of Avon, Celebration and The Room, Enrico IV (Dean Goodman Award), Glogarry Glen Ran (Dean Goodman Award), The Initiation of Love (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award; Dean Goodman Award), Long Day's Journey into Night, Mary Stuart, A Streetcar Named Desire, and The Rose Tattos (Drama-Logue Award). Other credits: Tamaa on Broadway, Isadora in Japan; title roles of Hamlet, Henry V, Richard III, and other plays at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival; productions at the Guthrie Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Williams Players Theatre Festival, Huntington Theatre Company, Missouri Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Portland Center Stage, and the Utah, California, and Illinois Shakespeare festivals, among others. Screen credits include "I.A. Law," Romeo and Juliet, and 11th Hour. Barricelli is a Five Fellow, a recipient of a Spencer Cheshire grant, and a graduate of The Juilliard School.

LISE BRUNEAU (Marquise de Merteuil) returns to A.C.T., where she last appeared as the Angel in Angel in America (Dean Goodman Award). Bay Area audiences have also seen her in Pontus, Triumph of Love (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award), An Ideal Husband, and Lady from the Sea at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Dybbuk (Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award) at A Travelling Jewish Theatre; and two seasons at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. She has also performed with San Jose Repertory Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Magic Theatre, and the Oregon Shakespearean Festival. East Coast credits include Lady computing, Mrs. Warren's Profession, and, most recently, Elizabeth I in Mary Stuart at Center Stage, as well as productions at The Shakespeare Theatre, The Wilma Theater, and the Huntington Theatre Company and a tad of avant-garde work at New York's Chashama. Bruneau is a graduate of RADA.

LAUREN GRACE (Ensemble) lists among her favorite credits the role of Gillian in Lee Hall's Cooking with Elvis for the Phoenix Theater, Marie in Incomparable at San Jose Stage Company, The Lysistrata Project at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Deseadona in Othello with Guerilla Shakespeare Productions. She has also performed with Theatre FIRST, Marin Theatre Company, The California Conservatory Theatre, FoolsFury, and C.A.F.E. Theatre. Her training includes classes at A.C.T. and London Studio Centre.

MICHELE LEAVY (Ensemble) has performed locally and regionally with such companies as Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Crowded Fire, the Sonoma Valley Shakespeare Festival, The Western Stage, Bay Area Playwrights Festival, The Elephant Theatre Co. (Los Angeles), and Theatre Key West (Florida), among others. In her media work, she has been featured in several industrial films, videos, and CD-ROMS. She received her M.F.A. from UC Davis and, while growing up, was a member of the A.C.T. Young Conservatory.

JOAN MACINTOSH (Madame)’s most recent theater credits include King Lear at the CalArts Center for New Theater; The Seagull at Portland Center Stage; and By the Bog of Cats at San Jose Repertory Theatre. Productions directed by Ivo van Hove include All Is True in Bad and More Stately Mansions (Drama League and Herald Angel awards, and OBIE Award for Sustained Excellence of Performance). Broadway credits include Orphans Descending, Our Troum, and The Seagull. Off Broadway she has appeared in Request Concert (1991 Drama Desk Award), Night Sky, A Shyama Maiden, and Endgame, as well as New York Shakespeare Festival productions of All's Well That Ends Well, Cymbeline, Julius Caesar, and A Bright Room Called Day. She received OBIE Awards in Performance Group productions of Dionsysis in 69, The Toilet of Crimon, and Commedia, and played the title role in Mother Courage. Favorite regional theater credits include Hudsca Gables, Three Sisters, and The Balcony. Film credits include Awakenings, A Flash of Green, and Body of Correspondence; television credits include "The West Wing," "Law & Order," and numerous daytime shows. Macintosh is a Fox Fellow and the recipient of a Spencer Cheshire grant and a 2001 ITTT/TCG travel grant.

SCOTT NORDQUIST (Ensemble) makes his A.C.T. debut in Les Liaisons Dangereuses. He has appeared at theaters around the Bay Area, most recently in True West at Calaveras Repertory Theatre and the world premieres of Tennessee Williams's The Fugitive Kind at Center Repertory Company. Theater credits also include Joyful Noise at the Willows Theatre Company, Moving Bodies at Marin Theatre Company, Coniuntos at Teatro Vision, Cinderella at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and The Comedy of Errors and Twelfth Night at Bus Barn Stage Company. He has appeared in commercial and industrial spots for Durafume, Virgin Mobile Phones, The American Cancer Society of Marin, Apple Computer, Oracle Corporation, Charles Schwab, Kodak, and others.

ANTHONY FUSCO (Ensemble) was last seen at A.C.T. as Baron Zunebach in The Three Sisters. Previous A.C.T. productions include De L'Innocente, A Christmas Carol, and Error I. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Gynm, The Skin of our Teeth for the California Shakespeare Theatre, and A Travelling Jewish Theatre's production of TheChosen. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard’s The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Among his off-Broadway credits are Simon Gray's The Holy Terror, Ira Levin's Candelabra, and David Mamet's A Life in the Theatre. Fusco is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

NEIL HOPKINS (Chevalier de Vaillant) is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program (’02). His previous A.C.T. roles include Vincenzo in Buried Child and the Gentleman Caller in The Glass Menagerie. He now lives and works in Los Angeles, where his television credits include "Dragnet," "Cruising Jordan," and "Birds of Prey." Film credits include Wakenahili (DreamWorks Short Film Festival; San Diego Film Festival).

ELIZABETH RAETZ (Giselle de Valdengo) comes to A.C.T. directly from Shakespeare & Company, where she performed the one-woman show Funny kombah’s Lemon Address. Other regional theater credits include The Philadelphia Story at The New Harmony Theatre, And Then They Came for Me at the George Street Playhouse, State Fair at the Allenberry Playhouse, and The Diary of Anne Frank and Th Gillian on Her 37th Birthday at the Shadowland Theatre. She graduated last spring from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program, where her credits included Keiky in The Ramayana and Lavinia in Macbeth, Becoming Elektra.

TAYLOR VALENTINE (Ensemble) makes his A.C.T. debut in Les Liaisons Dangereuses. He was last seen as Brian in the world premiere of Mysterious Skin at the New Conservatory Theatre, where he also appeared as Student 2/Juliet in last year's acclaimed hit Shakespeare's R & J (best costume nomination from the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle). Other Bay Area credits include Two Gentlemen of Verona with San Jose Repertory Theatre, the world premiere production of
Who’s Who

MARCO BARRICELLI* (Vicente de Valmont) is an A.C.T. associate artist and core company member, and has appeared at A.C.T. in, among others, The Three Sisters, American Buffalo, Buried Child and The Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, The Board of Avon, Celebration and The Room, Enrico IV (Dean Goodman Award), Glengarry Glen Ross (Dean Goodman Award), The Intention of Love (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award; Dean Goodman Award), Long Day’s Journey into Night, Mary Stuart, A Streetcar Named Desire, and The Rose Tattoo (Drama-Lgue Award). Other credits: Tomoko on Broadway, Isan in Japan; title roles of Hamlet, Henry V, Richard III, and other plays at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; productions at the Guthrie Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Huntington Theatre Company, Missouri Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Portland Center Stage, and the Utah, California, and Illinois Shakespeare festivals, among others. Screen credits include "L.A. Law," "Romans and Juliet," and "11th Hour." Barricelli is a Five Fellow, a recipient of a Spencer Cherashore grant, and a graduate of The Juilliard School.

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NEIL HOPKINS* (Chevalier Dangereux) is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program ’92. His previous A.C.T. roles include Vincent in Buried Child and the Gentleman Caller in The Glass Menagerie. He now lives and works in Los Angeles, where his television credits include "Deadnet," "Crossing Jordan," and "Birds of Prey." Film credits include Wodehouse (DreamWorks Short Film Festival; San Diego Film Festival).

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JOAN HARRIS-VELB* (Understudy) has performed recently at A.C.T. in Bilby Spirit and A Christmas Carol. Stage credits also include Miranda in the world premiere of David Henry Hwang’s Yellow Mountain at A.C.T. and on Broadway, Eleanor Widner in the original Broadway company of Titanic, and Mrs. Walker and others in the original Broadway company of The Who’s Tommy. She also performed in Big River on Broadway. Gelb has performed her solo show, Mother, Where Were You When I Woke Up Screaming and My Bed Was On Fire in the Middle of the Night! all over New York City. Her television credits include The Last Day in the Life of Brian Darby for HBO, Women Aloud, and “Law & Order.”

MARY MCGLOIN (Understudy) makes her A.C.T. debut in Los Liasons Dangereuses. She has acted for the past 18 years in California and Illinois. Locally, she has worked with the California Shakespeare Theater, TheatreWorks, Shakespeare at Stanislaus, and California Center Theater, among others. Some of her favorite roles include Julia in The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Women’s Will) and Felicia Lee in Santos y Santos (Teatro Vision). Recently, she played Molly in the independent feature entitled The Big 40.

KATE EDMUNDS (Scenic Designer) has designed more than 25 productions at A.C.T., including Angels in America, Uncle Vanya, The Rose Tattoo, The Tempest, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and, most recently, The Country Wife. She has designed just as many shows at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, most recently Tony Kushner’s Homebody/ Kathul. Over the past 25 years she has designed at many of the country’s leading regional theaters, including Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the American Repertory Theatre, and Baltimore’s Center Stage, as well as Manhattan Theatre Club and Second Stage in New York. The recipient of many awards, Edmunds also teaches design at UC Berkeley. For the past six years she has designed scenery for dance at St. Joseph Ballet, led by Beth Burro. She has received the Michael Merritt Award for excellence in design and collaboration and the USITT Distin- guished Achievement Award in costuming. She is also the author of the book, Fabric Painting and Dying for the Theatre. Dryden is professor emeritus of design at UC San Diego.

Deborah Dryden (Costume Designer) has designed the costumes for A.C.T. productions of The Glass Menagerie, Celebration and The Room, Enron IV, The Invention of Love, Long Days’ Journey into Night, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and The Tempest. She has also designed for Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., The Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, Intiman Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Huntington Theatre Company, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Minnesota Opera Company, the Mark Taper Forum, San Diego Opera, and Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. She has had a 23-year affiliation with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where she is currently the resident costume designer.

Who’s Who

KATE EDMUNDS (Scenic Designer) has designed more than 25 productions at A.C.T., including Angels in America, Uncle Vanya, The Rose Tattoo, The Tempest, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and, most recently, The Country Wife. She has designed just as many shows at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, most recently Tony Kushner’s Homebody/ Kathul. Over the past 25 years she has designed at many of the country’s leading regional theaters, including Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the American Repertory Theatre, and Baltimore’s Center Stage, as well as Manhattan Theatre Club and Second Stage in New York. The recipient of many awards, Edmunds also teaches design at UC Berkeley. For the past six years she has designed scenery for dance at St. Joseph Ballet, led by Beth Burro.

DEBORAH DRYDEN (Costume Designer) has designed the costumes for A.C.T. productions of The Glass Menagerie, Celebration and The Room, Enron IV, The Invention of Love, Long Days’ Journey into Night, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and The Tempest. She has also designed for Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., The Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, Intiman Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, the Huntington Theatre Company, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Portland Center Stage, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Minnesota Opera Company, the Mark Taper Forum, San Diego Opera, and Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. She has had a 23-year affiliation with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where she is currently the resident costume designer.

She has received the Michael Merritt Award for excellence in design and collaboration and the USITT Distin- guished Achievement Award in costuming. She is also the author of the book, Fabric Painting and Dying for the Theatre. Dryden is professor emeritus of design at UC San Diego.

RUI RITA (Lighting Designer) designed the lighting for A.C.T.’s 2000 production of The Midsummer. On Broadway he has designed Enchanted April, The Price, and A Thousand Clowns. His off-Broadway credits include The Carpsmerchant’s Children, Fair Earth, Ancestral Vision (all for Lincoln Center Theatre); Endpapers and Dinner with Friends (both at various Arts Theatre); Crimes of the Heart (Second Stage); Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know (New York and Boston); Anonymity and Clownfish (New York Shakespeare Festival); and Vita and Virginia (Union Square Theatre). He has also designed productions at numerous regional theaters, including the Alley Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, Hartford Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, the Kennedy Center, San Jose Repertory Theatre, the Geffen Playhouse, and Ford’s Theatre. He enjoys a longtime association with the Williamstown Theatre Festival.


PETER MALEITZKE (Music Director) is resident musical director of A.C.T., where he most recently worked on Carey Perloff’s The Caloomus of Rhodes, Stephen Sondheim’s Saturday Night, and Jason Robert Brown’s Songs for a New World. He was also the musical director for world-premiere A.C.T.’s productions of David Lang and Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field and Marc Blitzstein’s 1941 opera No for an Answer, as well as for A.C.T.’s acclaimed production of The Threepenny Opera (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award). Other Geary Theatre credits include A Christmas Carol and The First Picture Show. Before coming to A.C.T., he was the conductor of the first national production of Phantom of the Opera. His regional musical-direction credits include Gypsy, A Little Night Music, Rags, and The Most Happy Fella. Maleitzke earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in piano performance at the University of Michigan. He has also worked as the musical assistant to Michael Tilson Thomas and was the resident conductor of the Tuscany Music Festival. He is currently developing the new musical The Count of Monte Cristo.
Who's Who


JOAN HARRIS-HELGB (Understudy) has performed recently at A.C.T. in Bilberry Spirit and A Christmas Carol. Stage credits also include Miranda in the world premiere of David Henry's Wrong Mountain at A.C.T. and on Broadway, Eleanor Widner in the original Broadway company of Titanic, and Mrs. Walker and others in the original Broadway company of The Who's Tommy. She also performed in Big River on Broadway. Helgb has performed her solo show, Mother, Where Were You When I Woke Up Screaming and My Bed Was on Fire in the Middle of the Night! all over New York City. Her television credits include The Last Day in the Life of Brian Darlington for HBO, Women Aloud, and "Law & Order."

MARY MCCLION (Understudy) makes her A.C.T. debut in Les Liaisons Dangereuses. She has acted for the past 18 years in California and Illinois. Locally, she has worked with the California Shakespeare Theatre, TheatreWorks, Shakespeare at Stonoin, and California Theatre Center, among others. Some of her favorite roles include Julia in The Two Gentlemen of Verona (Woman's Will) and Felicia Lee in Santus y Santus (Teatro Vision). Recently, she played Molly in the independent feature entitled The Big 40.

D. MATT WORLEY (Understudy) made his Geary Theater debut as Dick Wilkins in last season's production of A Christmas Carol. A graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program, he includes among his favorite M.F.A. credits The Ramayana, Serious Money, Mourning Becomes Electra, Twelve Night, and As You Like It (directed by Giles Havergal). Theater credits also include Waiting for Godot, the title role of Pippin, Much Ado about Nothing, and Children of Eden. He has also taught at the University of San Francisco.

GILES HAVERGAL (Adaptor/Director) served, from 1969 to June 2003, as the artistic director of The Citizens’ Theatre in Glasgow, a theater with a unique reputation in Britain and throughout Europe. He directed more than 100 Citizens’ productions and acted with the Citizen’s company. He has adapted numerous literary works for the stage, including Graham Greene’s The End of the Affair (New York Drama Desk Award, Olivier Award, 1997) and Edith Wharton’s The House of Mirth, which he directed at A.C.T. in 2000. He also directed Sean O’Casey’s Juno and the Paycock at A.C.T. in 1999. He performed his one-man adaptation of Thomas Mann’s Death in Venice in New York (off Broadway) in 2002. His work in opera includes productions for the Welsh National Opera, Scottish Opera, Minnesota Opera, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Havergal was named a Commander of the British Empire in 2002.

KATE EDMUNDS (Scenic Designer) has designed more than 25 productions at A.C.T., including Angels in America, Uncle Vanya, The Rose Tattoo, The Tempest, The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and most recently, The Common Woman. She has designed just as many shows at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, most recently Tony Kushner’s Homebody/ Kathul. Over the past 25 years she has designed at many of the country’s leading regional theaters, including Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the American Repertory Theatre, and Baltimore’s Center Stage, as well as Manhattan Theatre Club and Second Stage in New York. The recipient of many awards, Edmunds also teaches design at UC Berkeley. For the past six years she has designed scenery for date at St. Joseph Ballet, led by Beth Burns.

DEBORAH DRYDEN (Costume Designer) has designed the costumes for A.C.T. productions of The Glass Menagerie, Celebration and The Room, Enriva IV, The Innocent by Love, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and The Tempest. She has also designed for Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., the La Jolla Playhouse, The Old Globe Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, the Alliance Theatre Company, the Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, Intiman Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, Ando Theatre Company, Portland Center Stage, the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Minnesota Opera Company, the Mark Taper Forum, San Diego Opera, and Hong Kong Repertory Theatre. She has had a 25-year affiliation with the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where she is currently the resident costume designer.

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RUI RITA (Lighting Designer) designed the lighting for A.C.T.’s 2000 production of The Misanthrope. On Broadway he has designed Enchanted April, The Price, and A Thousand Clowns. His off-Broadway credits include The Carpetbaggers’ Children, For Ever, The Ancestral Vision (all for Lincoln Center Theatre); Endpapers and Dinner with Friends (both at Variety Arts Theatre); Crimes of the Heart (Second Stage); Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know (New York and Boston); Amapol and Clopoteta (New York Shakespeare Festival); and Vita and Virginia (Union Square Theatre). He has also designed productions at numerous regional theaters, including the Alley Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, Hartford Stage Company, Long Wharf Theatre, the Kennedy Center, San Jose Repertory Theatre, the Geffen Playhouse, and Ford’s Theatre. He enjoys a longtime association with the Willamastown Theatre Festival.


PETER MALEITZKE (Music Director) is resident musical director of A.C.T., where he most recently worked on Carey Perloff’s The Caisus of Rhodos, Stephen Sondheim’s Saturday Night, and Jason Robert Brown’s Songs for a New World. He was also the musical director for world-premiere A.C.T. productions of David Lang and Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field and Marc Blitzstein’s 1941 opera No for an Answer, as well as for A.C.T.’s acclaimed production of The Threepenny Opera (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award). Other Geary Theatre credits include A Christmas Carol and The First Picture Show. Before coming to A.C.T., he was the conductor of the first national production of Phantom of the Opera. His regional musical-director credits include Gypsy, A Little Night Music, Rags, and The Most Happy Fella. Maleitzke earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in piano performance at the University of Michigan. He has also worked as the musical assistant to Michael Tilson Thomas and was the residency conductor of the Tuscan Music Festival. He is currently developing the new musical The Count of Monte Cristo.

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, The Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

American Conservatory Theatre

Los Angeles, December 15

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PAUL WALSH (Dramaturg) has worked on more than two dozen productions since coming to A.C.T. in 1996 as dramaturg and director of humanities. Before joining A.C.T., Walsh worked with theater companies across the country as dramaturg and translator, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune in Minneapolis, where he worked on several award-winning productions. Walsh earned his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto. Publications include articles in The Production Notebooks, Re-interpreting Brecht, Strindberg! Dramaturgy, Theatre Symposium, Essays in Theatre, and Studio Neurophilia.

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, and the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of Jimoy and Picasso at the Lapin Agile, as well as the first workshop of The Count of Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game Obliqaud. 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 Creditor and Bon Appetit! 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 1993), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

JULIE HABER (Stage Manager) is the administrative stage manager for A.C.T. Last season she stage-managed The Constant Wife, American Buffalo, and Lacharina’s Blues and assisted on Night and Day, and she has also stage-managed A.C.T. productions of For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, Blithe Spirit, James Joyce’s The Dead (also at the Huntington Theatre Company), Master Harold... and the Boys, and Richard Nelson’s Goodnight Children Everywhere. For 20 years Haber was the company stage manager for South Coast Repertory, where she worked on more than 70 productions. Other credits include productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Santa Fe Festival Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, and Yale Repertory Theatre. She holds an M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama and has taught stage management at UC Irvine, California Institute of the Arts, and Yale.

SHONA MITCHELL (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on A.C.T. productions of The Three Sisters, The Dazzle, The Glass Menagerie, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include Homebody/Kabul and 36 Vices (Berkeley Repertory Theatre); Missailliance and Candida (Marin Theatre Company); Kiss the Witch, 5 Women on a Hill in Spain, and Ernest the Rookie (Magic Theatre); and Candide (San Francisco Symphony), as well as work at Theatre on the Square, where she was the assistant stage manager on The Late Henry Moss and Dirty Blonde. Boston credits include work for the Boston Jazz Repertory, American Repertory Theatre, and Blue Man Group.

CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director), who recently celebrated her eleventh season as artistic director of A.C.T., most recently directed acclaimed revivals of Tom Stoppard’s Night and Day and Chekhov’s The Three Sisters with A.C.T.’s core acting company. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has worked with A.C.T. since 1989, the American premieres of Stoppard’s The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter’s Celebration and The Room, A.C.T.’s commissioned translations of Heine’s The Misunderstood, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya, the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Jouj and acclaimed productions of The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, Arcadia, The Rose Tinted, Antigone, Creditors, Home, and The Tempest. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein’s Ni in An Answer, David Lang/ Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Creating a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colours of Rhodes (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, Luminosity Dating, is being developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Asher P.インド Foundation Science & Technology Project. This season at A.C.T. she directs Beckten’s Waiting for God, a new translation and adaptation of a classic from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Asher P.インド Foundation Science & Technology Project. She is a recipient of the MacArthur “Genius” Grant, the world premiere of Constance Conquergood’s A Mother. 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 The Birthday Party, and many classics. Under her 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 Korson’s opera The Crane at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music. Perloff received a B.A. 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.

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

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

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne’s National Repertory Theatre. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Miss Rudd Can Drink a Little and Goeree (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 It’s the Little Things (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw’s Arms and the Man. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International’s award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle.
Who's Who

Paul Walsh (Dramaturg) has worked on more than two dozen productions since coming to A.C.T. in 1996 as dramaturg and director of humanities. Before joining A.C.T., Walsh worked with theater companies across the country as dramaturg and translator, including Theatre de la Jeune Lune in Minneapolis, where he worked on several award-winning productions. Walsh earned his Ph.D. from the Graduate Centre for the Study of Drama at the University of Toronto. Publications include articles in The Production Notebooks, Re-interpreting Brecht, Strindberg! Dramaturgy, Theatre Symposium, Essays in Theatre, and Studio Nostalgia.

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, and the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of Jiminy and Picasso at the Laguna Playhouse, as well as the first workshop of The Count of Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game Obiwania. 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 Creditors and Don Giovanni. 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 1993), and the board of trustees of the California Shakespeare Festival.

Julie Haver* (Stage Manager) is the administrative stage manager for A.C.T. Last season she stage-managed The Constant Wife, American Buffalo, and Luchazanna Blue and assisted on Night and Day; she has also stage-managed A.C.T. productions of For the Pleasure of Seeing Her Again, Black Coffee, James Joyce's The Dead (also at the Huntington Theatre Company), Master Harold... and the Boys, and Richard Nelson's Goodbye Children Everywhere. For 20 years Haver was the company stage manager for South Coast Repertory, where she worked on more than 70 productions. Other credits include productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Santa Fe Festival Theatre, the Guthrie Theatre, and Yale Repertory Theatre. She holds an M.F.A. from the Yale School of Drama and has taught stage management at UC Irvine, California Institute of the Arts, and Yale.

Shona Mitchell* (Assistant Stage Manager) has worked on A.C.T. productions of The Three Sisters, The Dazzle, The Glass Menagerie, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include Homebody/Kabuli and 36 Views (Berkley Repertory Theatre); Miss Julie, and Candide (Marin Theatre Company); Kiss the Witch, 5 Women on a Hill in Spain, and The Rosie Room (Magic Theatre); and Candide (San Francisco Symphony); as well as work at Theatre on the Square, where she was the assistant stage manager on The Late Henry Moss and Dirty Blonde. Boston credits include work for the Boys and Girls Theatre, American Repertory Theatre, and Blue Man Group.

* Member of Actors Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

A.C.T. Profiles

Caryl Perloff (Artistic Director), who recently celebrated her eleventh season as artistic director of A.C.T., most recently directed acclaimed revivals of Tom Stoppard's Night and Day and Chekhov's The Three Sisters with A.C.T.'s core acting company. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. the American premieres of Stoppard's The Invention of Love and Indian Ink and Harold Pinter's Celebration and The Room; A.C.T.-commissioned translations of Henrik Ibsen's The Master Builder, Enrico IV, Mary Stuart, and Uncle Vanya; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian's Singer's Ring and acclaimed productions of The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, Arcadia, The Rose Tattoo, Antipholus, Creditors, Home, and The Tempest. Her work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Blitzstein's No for an Answer, David Lang/Mac Wellman's The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colours of Rhodes (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her new play, Luminoscope Dating, is being developed under a grant from the Ensemble Studio Theatre/Asherl P. Skon Formation Science & Technology Project. This season at A.C.T. she directs Beckert's Waiting for Godot, a new translation and adaptation of Samuel Beckett's masterpiece, and the world premiere of Constance Congdon's A Mother.

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 Elckerlyc, the American premiere of Pinter's Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classics. Under her direction, 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. 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.

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Mellissa Smith (Conservatory Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory School of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T., Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting, scene study, and Shakespeare for six years. Also a profes¬sional actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-Broadway plays, including work by Mac Wellman and David Greenspan. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

James Haire (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne's National Repertory Theatre. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little and Goray (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 Israel's Little Eyeful (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's Arms and the Man. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971. He and his department were awarded Theater Crafts International's award for excellence in the theater in 1989, and in 1992 Haire was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle.
ADDITIONAL OFFICES
A.C.T.'s administrative and consulting offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the Web: www.acl.org

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION
Geary Theater Box Office
Visit us at 408 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12-2 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During performance week, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily. Call 415.864.3838, A.C.T. and your MasterCard, or American Express card. Fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.293.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at acl.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance resheduling privileges and lost- ticket insurance. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone, or in person at the box office.

Discounts
Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the box office two hours before curtain. Majority senior and student rush tickets are available on the day of the performance for $10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one per ID. Student and senior citizen subscriptions are also available. A.C.T. offers one Pay What You Want night to ensure the regular run of each production.

Group Discounts
For groups of 10 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.493.2497.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A.C.T.'s Merchandise
A.C.T.-branded wares—clothing, jewelry, videos, travel rugs, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts and Word on Plays, are on sale at the Geary Theater box office and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

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

Beepers
If you carry a beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please note that it is set to the “off” position while you are in the theater. Or when you may listen to your watch with the number manager, you can be notified if you are called.

Perfumes
The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and香水-soaked letters, 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 415.493.2296 in an emergency.

Latecomers
A.C.T. performs the entire performance. Latecomers will be seated after the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval in the performance.

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

Photographs and recordings of A.C.T. performances are strictly forbidden. Rest rooms are located in the Freda Columbus Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Room, and the Ganen on the uppermost lobby level.

Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call 415.293.4279 in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

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

AFFILIATIONS
A.C.T. operates under an agreement with the League of Resident Theaters and Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. A.C.T. is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the nonprofit professional theater. A.C.T. is a member of the League of Resident Theaters, Theatre Bay Area, san Francisco Stage Association, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau. A.C.T. is a participant in the National Theatre Artist Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group and funded by the Ford Charitable Trusts.

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FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A.C.T.’s administrative offices are located at 280 Geary Street, San Francisco, CA 94108, 415.834.3200. On the Web: www.acl.org

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION
Geary Theater Box Office
Visit us at 408 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12-2 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During performance week, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily. Call 415.864.3838, A.C.T. and your MasterCard, or American Express card. Fax your ticket request with credit card information to 415.293.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at acl.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance resheduling privileges and lost- ticket insurance. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone, or in person at the box office.

Discounts
Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the box office two hours before curtain. Majority senior and student rush tickets are available on the day of the performance for $10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one per ID. Student and senior citizen subscriptions are also available. A.C.T. offers one Pay What You Want night to ensure the regular run of each production.

Group Discounts
For groups of 10 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.493.2497.

AT THE THEATER
The Geary Theater is located at 408 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour prior to curtain.
ARTISTIC
Carney Perloff Managing Director
Melissa Smith Managing Director
James Haines Producing Director

Hallelujah, Amos: Baritone
Mercury, J.: Tenor
Hesperus, The: Bass
Hesperus, The: Tenor
Hesperus, The: Bass
Hesperus, The: Tenor
Hesperus, The: Bass
Hesperus, The: Tenor
Hesperus, The: Bass
Hesperus, The: Tenor
Hesperus, The: Bass
Hesperus, The: Tenor

For Your Information

For Your Information

A.C.T. offices and administrative offices are located at 30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102, 415.834.3200. On the Web at www.a-c-t.org.

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION

GEAR THEATRE BOX OFFICE
Visit us at 405 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Gear Theatre, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12-2 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12-6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During performance weeks, business hours are 12-6 p.m. daily. Call 415.444.7427 and use your MasterCard, or American Express card. For your ticket request with credit card information to 415.444.2291. Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at a-c-t.org. All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount online, by phone, or in person at the box office.

Discounts
Half-price tickets are sometimes available on the day of performance at TIX on Union Square. Half-price student and senior rush tickets are available at the box office two hours before curtain. Matinee senior rush tickets are available on the day of the performance for $10. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one per ID per day. Student and senior citizen subscriptions are also available. A.C.T. offers one Pay What You Wish composite ticket for any performance of the regular run of each production.

Group Discounts
For groups of 16 or more, call Edward Budworth at 415.449.2395.

At the theater, the audience opens 60 minutes before curtain. Bar service and refreshments are available one hour prior to curtain.

A.C.T. Merchandise
A.C.T.-branded novelties—clothing, jewelry, videos, travel mugs, and other novelty items—as well as books, scripts, and Words on Plays, are on sale at the souvenir desk in the lobby and at the Gear Theatre Box Office.

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

Beepers
If you carry a beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure it is set to the "off" position while you are in the theater. On many occasions you may need to answer your number with the house manager, so you can be notified if you are called.

Perfumes
The chemicals found in perfumes, colognes, and scented after-sale lotions, even in small amounts, 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 415.443.2936 in an emergency. (Note: In the event of a fire, all exits will be locked to prevent panic and confusion.)

Latecomers
A.C.T. performances begin on time. Latecomers will be seated at the first intermission only if there is an appropriate interval between acts.

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

GEAR THEATRE EXITS

The director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.

American Conservatory Theatre

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A.C.T. is supported in part by a grant from the California State Endowment for the Arts.
YOUR OWN 105.6-CUBIC-FOOT RESORT.

AVALON. Spacious, well-appointed accommodations. Breathtaking views. Luxurious amenities. Just don’t try and order room service.

GET THE FEELING

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