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The AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER is a Tony Award-winning nonprofit theater in which professional training and production are inextricably linked to create work that aspires to the highest standards of American performance. Under the recent leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff, A.C.T. is committed to nurturing its rich legacy while expanding its reach into new communities and new areas of dramatic literature. Central to A.C.T.'s mission is the interaction of original and classical work on our stages and at the heart of our Conservatory.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the historic Geary Theater in 1967. During the company’s twenty-nine year history, more than two hundred productions have been performed to a combined audience of six million people in Japan, the U.S.S.R., and throughout the United States. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its international reputation as a leading theater and training company, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. From 1986 to 1992, A.C.T. experienced a period of rejuvenation and growth under the leadership of Artistic Director Edward Hastings.

Today, A.C.T. continues to fulfill the expectations of Bay Area audiences as a company of international recognition with performance, education, and outreach programs that annually reach more than two hundred thousand people in the San Francisco Bay Area.

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On Othello
Stage Door Theatre

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Director Richard Seyd

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(1604)

by William Shakespeare

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A.C.T.

OTHELLO

The Cast
(in order of appearance)

Rodrigo, a Venetian gentleman
Iago, Othello’s ancient
Brabantio, a Venetian senator and
Desdemona’s father
Othello, a noble Moor in the service of
the Venetian state
Cassio, Othello’s lieutenant
Duke of Venice
Lodovico, a senator
Gratiano, a senator and
younger brother of Brabantio
Desdemona, Brabantio’s daughter and
wife of Othello
Montano, Governor of Cyprus
Emilia, Iago’s wife
Bianca, a courtesan
Gentlemen / Messengers / Servants / Senators / Officers

Dan Hiatt
Tony Amendola
Ken Grantham
Steven Anthony Jones
Remi Sandri
Tom Blair
Mark Boober
Tom Lenoci
Maura Vincent
Michael Fitzpatrick
Domenique Lozano
Bren McElroy
Darren Bridgett, Tom Lenoci,
Michel Fitzpatrick, Tom Blair,
Mark Boober

Understudies

Othello—Nicolas Bearde; Desdemona, Bianca—Katharine Jay;
Iago—Remi Sandri; Emilia—Bren McElroy; Cassio—Mark Boober;
Brabantio, Duke of Venice—Jack Halton;
Rodrigo—Michael Fitzpatrick; Lodovico—Tom Lenoci;
Montano—Darren Bridgett; Gratiano—Greg Hoffman;
Servants, Senators, Messengers, Officers, Gentlemen—
Darren Bridgett, Jack Halton, Greg Hoffman, Tom Lenoci

Act I
Venice and Cyprus

Act II
Cyprus

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission.

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Shakespeare remains even today a powerful cultural icon. He appears in high school texts, and in college curricula, and on entrance exams for both. He is staged indoors and out, by amateurs and professionals, in festivals and on Broadway. Millions of dollars are raised to build or rebuild Shakespearean theaters at home and abroad. His face peers out from advertisements for perfumes and pantyhose; his name is on fishing rods. His phrases pepper even popular songs, and young movie stars looking to elevate their careers beyond the typical angst and action of Hollywood films go off to do Hamlet or Juliet in the boonies or on Broadway. Even non-English-speaking and non-Western members of our multicultural society are advised to “brush up their Shakespeare” if they wish to succeed. It almost seems as if all those who wish to exercise or retain or acquire cultural power in our Western, English-speaking society feel at some point the need to invoke his blessing on their endeavors. (With Shakespeare with us, who can be against us?)

The danger, of course, in being an icon is that one’s role might become merely symbolic. When the halo shines brighter than the saint, eventually the saint is so emptied of all content that even opposing sides can claim him as their own in the battle for social dominance—rather like the way all American political parties claim Jefferson and Lincoln as their own.

One way of enrolling Shakespeare into one’s own personal army is simply by quoting him, or at least those parts of him that support or, in a pinch, can be made to support, one’s cultural agenda. In this strategy, the Glover’s son from Stratford is cited only slightly less often than the carpenter’s son from Nazareth.

Another way is through the practice of scholarship—interpreting or reinterpreting Shakespeare, reconstructing him if possible, deconstructing him if necessary, so that one’s own cultural insights, no matter how humanist or Marxist, modern or postmodern, are rather magically discovered to have existed in his four-hundred-year-old works all the time. In this strategy, Shakespeare is seen either as a cultural subversive, whose criticisms of his own society were “in advance of his time,” or as an artist whose social insights may have been time bound, but whose personal vision remains somehow timeless: “not for an age but for all time.”

Another way is through production. In this strategy, a play by Shakespeare is specifically staged to embody, and in a sense privilege or celebrate, the cultural perceptions of the director or the producer or (rarely) the lead actor, who may or may not feel obliged to find these perceptions clearly anticipated or echoed in the text. If they are there, then they will be mined and refined and cast into relief; if they are not, they will be

(somehow) imposed or incorporated. Both practices are commonly known as “conceptual” directing.

This last strategy presumes a rich interplay between a piece of theater and the society for which it is presented. It presumes what Shakespeare scholar Stephen Greenblatt has called a “circulation of social energy” among members of a society through the medium of a play, so that our theater, like Shakespeare’s, can be a locale (though admittedly not a heavily populated one) where our society may identify itself, fashion itself, make itself.

In Shakespeare’s time, this “energy exchange” took place among members who shared a common currency of values—some stable, some still floating—with the playwright. Nowadays, however, especially in pluralistic societies like our own, common values are a little harder to come by; and when we find them, they may not be the same values that were common to Shakespeare and his society. Author and audience now live not just an ocean apart, but four centuries apart—a world of social change apart.

Nowadays, it is the director who is expected to establish the value link between the play and the audience. Unfortunately, however, in the modern marketplace of theater, Shakespeare is often presented not as the actual product, but only as a kind of acceptable currency—or perhaps better, a more or less reliable brand name. Social goods and services are put on the market under Shakespearean labels, in hopes that the initial sale will be helped by the high brand-name recognition. But the label is at best only a slippery guarantee, since experience tells us that the contents of any package marked “Shakespeare” may—for all we know when we walk into the theater—have gone hopelessly stale (the expiration date having passed long since) or have more additives and adulterates and artificial flavors and sweeteners and preservatives than is good for us.

I say all this by means of introducing modern audiences to some of the challenges of producing a
play like Othello for that end-of-the-twentieth-century, secular, pluralistic, democratic, multicultural society known as the United States of America. A society which in recent months has gorged itself on the courtroom drama of a prominent black hero accused of murdering his white wife in a jealous rage. A society where publicly funded art and immigration policies and affirmative action programs are all under simultaneous scrutiny and attack—and not coincidentally so.

I guess the primary question, most simply put, is what does a production of Othello have to say to us now? And secondly, how can the artists who produce it best help the play to say it?

I think that any production must speak for itself, so I cannot really answer the first question. But I can try to answer the second one.

I do believe that Shakespeare still has something significant to say. And that we are particularly privileged as English speakers, that this can be done mostly without translation. But it cannot be done without interpretation, obviously, because Shakespeare wrote plays rather than novels: in other words, he wrote incomplete pieces whose ultimate existence as works of art depends upon performing artists to share the creative burden of bringing them to life on stage—at the most elementary level, to speak the words, which is the literal meaning of “interpretation.” But once other artists are invited to share the creative process, they are not merely slaves to Shakespeare’s intentions, like arrows shot from Shakespeare’s bow. They are fully fledged artists of their own, who take their own flight paths to the target. They bring—indeed are required to bring—their individual artistic insights to bear upon the text. And it is not in spite of their intervention, but precisely because of it, that we the living are best able, as Greenblatt says, “to speak with the dead.”

I would say that these artists’ major obligations to the play may be summarized in the three primary Aristotelian categories from the Poetics: story, character, and thought.

First, tell the story. Tell Shakespeare’s story.

Narrative is perhaps the primary strategy by which mankind organizes experience, tries to make sense of it. Narrative imposes the first level of order on the chaos of life. Narrative antedates most philosophical and scientific systems of thought, and will probably outlive them all, because it imitates the structure of life itself.

The great narratives, the myths of a society, are the stories a society tells itself to remind itself what it is, and to pass itself on from generation to generation. Even apart from myth, the great stories that are current in any society—from fairy tales to classic novels, even best sellers and miniseries—are the narrative glue that holds that society together.

So the specific structure of Shakespeare’s narrative, his plot, is not just a clothesline to hang colorful events on; his plot, in all its complexity and detail, embodies his specific retelling of some of the great narratives of his culture and puts his unique spin on them: The story of the girl who leaves her home and family for her husband. The story of the outsider who wins and then loses the most precious prize a society has to offer. The story of the disgruntled underling who takes a wide and tragic revenge. The story of the talented man nearly ruined by a single fault. The story of the fool, gulled by his own folly no less than by the machinations of a villain. The story of the husband who, by mere suspicion of his wife’s betrayal, brings down havoc on himself and her. When a director makes clear how each plot works and how all plots intertwine, he or she has
made an essential contribution to the audience’s basic need to understand, and thereby cope with, a tragic event. Faced with disaster, humanity asks not just why, but how. And when the “whys” are unanswerable—as they too often are—the “hows” do provide some consolation.

Second, bring the characters to life. Shakespeare’s characters. This may seem obvious, but it is not. The specific techniques of characterization may change from one theatrical era to another; and modern audiences may not be as comfortable with Shakespeare’s techniques (which are very rhetorical) as they are with, say, Tennessee Williams’s (which are more intensely psychological) or Tom Clancy’s (which are more cinematic and stereotypical).

But what has not changed is the human heart, in all its complexity. If there is a timelessness and a universality to Shakespeare’s insight, I would have to say—however unfashionable it may be to do so—that I find it precisely here, in his study of the human heart. While modern actors must be trained to master the technical skills necessary to revitalize Shakespeare’s highly rhetorical characterizations, they must never forget that the point of all that training is to allow them to move through technique to discover the secrets of the human heart as uncovered and revealed by Shakespeare.

For who has dissected the jealous heart so finely as Shakespeare, not just in Othello, but in a number of plays? Who has diagnosed the secret weaknesses of the generous heart so heartbreakingly as in his portrait not just of Othello, but of Desdemona as well? Who has explored the labyrinth of the evil heart in greater depth and detail than in his portrait of Iago? And who has revealed the vulnerabilities of the flawed and fond and foolish heart so clearly as in his Cassio and Emilia and Roderigo?

Finally, to the question of “thought.” We enter here the area of theme or message, what Stanislavsky called the “superejective” of a play—why the author wrote it in the first place, what ultimately he was trying to say. If you truly want to speak with the dead, you must listen to the dead. Don’t try to make the plays say things they don’t say. Don’t try to make them be about things they’re not about. You will always lose that struggle. Either Shakespeare will overmatch you, or you will win only by diminishing him, which is the greater loss.

The thing to remember is that the task of art is more often, as Chekhov advised his fellow dramatists, not to give the right answers, but to ask the right questions. While the answers may change from era to era, from society to society, the great questions rarely do. We still explore the great literary works of the past—as we do not consult, for example, the great medical treatises of the past—because it is the search for questions, not for answers, that drives us. And it is the struggle to answer questions, not the answers themselves, which fascinates us.

Any great play by Shakespeare, and Othello is undoubtedly a great play, is rich in such questions. How does a society treat an outsider? How can love survive in a corrupt world? Why do men treat women the way they do? What motivates malice? Why do the innocent suffer? Why do the vicious thrive? How are one’s goodness and one’s good name related? Do we really have any control over our moral and emotional lives? Is virtue a value or a fraud? Is goodness merely a form of gullibility? Can any man be happy before he has gone down to his grave?

The task of a play is not really to answer such questions, but to pose them in ways that make us think, and as importantly, feel deeply about the human condition. To unite us with one another in the common task of examining our lives, and living them, and allowing others to live theirs, with depth and dignity.

The idea that art, that fiction, that a play, can be a contributing factor to that universal human challenge may strike one as odd—contradictory even. What, after all, can a piece of “unreality” contribute to “real” life? And because it cannot give the simple answer that politicians and purse holders desire, art finds itself underfunded, dismissed, attacked. And a human society that undervalues its art may eventually find itself artless. Which would be as fatal to it as for a human body to be heartless.

I am deeply indebted to conversations with my wife, Anne McNaughton, whose dissertation-in-progress “Shakespearean Renegotiation” is specifically about conceptual directing of Shakespeare in a multicultural society.

Dakin Matthews, a busy actor on stage and screen, is also a professor emeritus of English at Cal. State Hayward, a former artistic director of the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, and a former member of A.C.T.’s acting company. He will speak on May 8, 1995 on “Is Shakespeare Still Our Contemporary?”, the fifth installment of A.C.T. Perspectives, A.C.T.’s series of free public symposia funded by the California Council for the Humanities.

For who has dissected the jealous heart so finely as Shakespeare? 

FINELY AS SHAKESPEARE?
The Art of Deception

by Larry Biederman

It seems impossible to ruminate on the relevance of Iago, to marvel at his penchant for deception, to put him on the proverbial couch, without taking the position that Othello is, in fact, a play about Iago. For we have become accustomed to the structure of tragedy and the hubris of its heroes: every hero has his tragic flaw, an Achilles’s heel looking for something to trip over. But Iago invents no evils; he simply reflects and deflects the paranoia of his times. To Iago, every human foible is an opportunity—a chance to bend the lenses through which we perceive him, whether as a man to be condemned or one to be admired.

So how is it that one of the most sinister villains in Shakespeare’s imagination is regarded by his fellow characters as such a likable guy? Can it be that the monstrous consequences of Iago’s actions don’t necessarily make the man a monster himself? Is it possible that he actually is a likable guy, and that there is something more to our desire to see him plant the seed of destruction than a need for entertaining dramatic conflict? Or is our view of Iago like that of a fun-house mirror—exaggerating our own humanity with the most curious of results?

Despite the bloody consequences, Iago’s techniques for instilling such deadly paranoia are not so very distinct from the methods of deception most of us adopt to get through an average day. Yet deception—from the smallest white lie to the most public of scandals—is an art, far more sophisticated than the task of appeasing our gullible consciences with convenient rationalizations for each day’s necessary evil. Iago is a master deceiver, and Othello provides us with an encyclopedia of successful tactics to weave the most tangled of webs.

One of the many ways we shirk responsibility for the truth is the strategic use of the almighty disclaimer. How often do we spread rumors, blame our peers, sabotage our enemies, using our own imperfect humanity as an alibi? What better way to bypass guilt than to admit to the fallibility of our words before they’ve even been spoken?

“I may be wrong but…”

“I’m probably overreacting but…”

“You should know there’s a rumor that…”

“Is it me, or…”

Proclaiming yourself an unreliable source allows you to promote the most selfish of causes, or deflect the most incriminating of suspicions, without any commitment to accuracy. Iago wastes no time arguing the validity of his suspicions. Instead he relies on the insecurity of his listener to take his reports of circumstantial evidence “as if for surety.” Iago provides the information that leads people to lie to themselves—and is thanked for it in the process. He shows us that, safe behind the shield of the disclaimer, any lie can become a statement of truth. Iago can taint the waters, and stroll off with a crystal conscience.

The gray area is Iago’s playground. He uses it as a decoy, distracting people from his sleight of hand with an impressive arsenal of deceptive tactics: the plea bargain—apologizing for a lesser offense (e.g., telling the lie vs. inventing it, “I do repent me that I put it to you”)—dismissing the value of reputation in others as an “idle and most false imposition,” while swearing upon the sanctity of his own (“He that filches from me my good name robs me o’ that which not enriches him and makes me poor indeed”); inviting punishment (“Let loose on me the justice of the state/For thus deluding you”); and dropping concealed clues to his deceit to avoid suspi-
cation of it. Our natural gullibility as human beings, our thirst for gos-
sip, our morbid curiosity, our ten-
dency to assume something must be complicated to be true, and our inability to look at ourselves objectively make humans at once the cleverest of deceivers and the eas-
est of targets. The luxury of a gray area is that it is open to interpre-
tation and makes for a convenient leap to black or white, whichever extreme best suits the moment. Thus the mere hint of an affair can quickly blossom into blatant adultery, further justification for revenge.

Knowing when to stop, our capacity for restraint, is the only quality that separates most of us from tragedy. When a deception grows so large that it obscures its own justification, this is the stuff of plays and headlines. What do you tell your mistress five years after you first told her that divorce was imminent? How does a banker lose billions of dollars from Britain's oldest bank—and what thwarts his moral instinct to tell someone he's made a major mistake on the job when only five hundred million is gone? No one plans to have an affair, no one tells his mother he wants to grow up to be the worst investment banker in Singapore.

Iago just wants a promotion, or so he says. But each bending of the truth requires another more elaborately to maintain legitimacy—and how often do our own white lies snowball into potential avalanches of mendacity? Iago is willing to risk his reputation for the chance to improve it, but once his very life is at stake, his lies have swept him past the point of no return. Every base must then be covered, even if it takes the sacrifice of several other lives to protect his own. The high stakes make it easy to dismiss Iago's actions as an aberration; but we all find ways to live with our selective sense of responsibility for the truth.

We see in fiction and in reality how easily deception ensnares the

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ANGELS EXTENDED (AGAIN!) THROUGH APRIL 30

Due to the unprecedented continuing demand for tickets, A.C.T. has extended the run of its record-breaking production of Angels in America for the fourth time, through April 30. More than twenty thousand additional tickets went on sale on February 26.

Critically acclaimed and ecstatically received by audiences, Tony Kushner's two-part epic has become the most successful production in A.C.T.'s history—to date, more than 100,000 theatergoers have tickets for Millennium Approaches and Perestroika, which have been playing at 99.9 and 91.8 percent of capacity, respectively, at the Marines Memorial Theatre since last September.

Community recognition of Angels has also been enthusiastic. A.C.T. requests the pleasure of your company at a special benefit luncheon honoring Academy Award-winning actress Olympia Dukakis, who makes her A.C.T. debut this season in the title role of Hecuba. Sponsored by Morton's Restaurant of Chicago with support from San Francisco Focus magazine, the luncheon will take place at noon on May 11, 1995 at Morton's Union Square restaurant, located at 400 Post Street at Powell.

Tickets to the luncheon (chaired by community leader Diana Dalton) are $75 per person, or $600

AN OLYMPIC LUNCHEON INVITATION

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NEWS FROM A.C.T.

for a table of eight. Proceeds will benefit A.C.T.'s Conservatory Scholarship Fund, which since 1967 has helped hundreds of young people attend A.C.T. Conservatory classes.

Dukakis appears in Timberlake Wertenbaker's new translation of Euripides' Hecuba, directed by A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, from April 27 through June 4, at the Center for the Arts Theater at Yerba Buena Gardens.

For information and reservations, please call (415) 834-3251.

ART FOR A.C.T.'S SAKE

Stunning etchings by prominent Bay Area artist Ruth Asawa are still available for purchase from A.C.T. Asawa, a member of the A.C.T. board of trustees and community arts activist, has graciously donated to the company one hundred limited edition, signed etchings based on a drawing of one of her renowned wire sculptures. The image is 17" x 17" on a hand-pulled French rag paper, with a finished size of 22" x 26". The entire $250 purchase price of each etching will be contributed to A.C.T.

Asawa's graceful sculptures and unswerving commitment to arts education have enriched Bay Area life since 1949. Her major works include the Grand Hyatt's cast bronze fountain at the corner of Stockton and Post Streets on Union Square, the playful mermaid fountain in Ghirardelli Square, a 14' x 60' bas-relief in the Parc Fifty-Five Hotel, a large bronze wire sculpture on the facade of the Oakland Art Museum, and her most recent achievement, a commission by the city of San Jose for the Federal Building, a memorial honoring Japanese-American families interned during World War II. Asawa's work has also been exhibited in museums and private collections throughout the country, from the Whitney and Guggenheim in New York to San Francisco's De Young and Museum of Modern Art.

All those interested in purchasing an Asawa etching should call the A.C.T. development department at (415) 834-3253.

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No Shakespeare company features more stars than we do.

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TELESIS FOUNDATION TAKES A.C.T. TO SCHOOL

The Telesis Foundation has awarded A.C.T. $15,000 to fund a visiting artist program for San Francisco schools. The program will be coordinated by A.C.T. Associate Artistic Director Benny Sato Ambush and staffed by Professional Theater Interns (PTIs), graduates of the Conservatory’s Advanced Training Program who have been selected to serve as apprentice members of A.C.T.’s acting ensemble.

The grant allows A.C.T. to expand and enhance its existing Student Matinee Series (SMATS), which currently offers discount tickets, study guides, and post-performance discussions to approximately fifteen thousand Bay Area students each year—for many of whom an A.C.T. SMAT is their first experience of live theater. With this program, A.C.T. hopes to extend the SMATS to a more diverse audience, including many inner-city students, who would otherwise be unable to attend A.C.T. performances.

In addition to funding additional (or free) tickets and expanded educational materials, the grant will enable PTIs to conduct pre- and post-performance interactive workshops in classrooms at designated schools, helping students explore issues raised by A.C.T. productions relevant to their lives. The program will include one thousand students, or approximately ten schools, from throughout the San Francisco Unified School District, which currently represents only twenty percent of the A.C.T. SMATS audience.

A.C.T. is pleased to announce the arrival of Continental Airlines as a first-time sponsor. The official airline of the American Conservatory Theater, Continental opens an important new route in its expanding service to Bay Area performance with its sponsorship of Othello.

“San Francisco is the hub of cultural life in this area,” says Marie Downey, Continental’s Marketing Manager. “Among the many worthwhile options available to the theater-going public, we view A.C.T. as a top destination that must be served.”

Continental’s worldwide reach attests to a profound commitment to the travelling public. As the nation’s fifth largest air carrier, this Houston-based airline not only provides more than four hundred daily departures from its home port, but also serves 161 destinations around the globe. Continental customers can select from such major European cities as London, Frankfurt, Paris, and Madrid, as well as destinations in the Caribbean, Central and South America, and the Philippines. The airline also flies to ten locations in Mexico and six in Asia, more than any other U.S. carrier.

Continental’s OnePass program was named the airline industry’s best overall frequent-flier program for six out of the last seven years. Its new BusinessFirst ser-

vice offers amenities usually found only in international first class, at business-class fares. Passengers can luxuriate in roomy, electronically controlled sleeper seats, each of which is equipped with a personal entertainment system. Choices include six multilingual video programs on a personalized television screen, and ninety-minute audio selections on electronic stereo headsets. With more than four and a half feet of space between rows of seats—not to mention more flight attendants than are typically found in business class—the Continental BusinessFirst flight experience is set in a most comfortable, pampering atmosphere.

Concludes Downey: “The support we offer to nonprofit civic and performing arts organizations is our gateway to communities throughout the country. We are proud to extend our patronage to A.C.T.”
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The partnership between McCutchen and A.C.T. has flourished since the early 1970s, when the late Albert J. Moorman invited to become a member of the company's board of trustees. Moorman, who joined McCutchen in 1948 and served as the firm's managing partner from 1976 to 1985, was a staunch supporter of the arts in the Bay Area and a devoted advocate on A.C.T.'s behalf until his death in September, 1994. A.C.T. is grateful for McCutchen's continued commitment and mourns the passing of one of our most treasured friends.

Honoring A.C.T.'s Friends

Enjoy working with diverse people and learning more about the theater? The Friends of A.C.T., the company's volunteer auxiliary, offers many opportunities for people interested in contributing their time and talent to A.C.T. Volunteers assist with mailings, usher at student matinee performances, work in the library, help with auditions, and more.

Friends do so much for A.C.T. throughout the year that we can never thank our volunteers enough for the critical support they provide. We would like to recognize the Friends listed below, who have volunteered during recent months:

- Edwards Adams
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Performance Highlights
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After spending the season thus far exploring the theater of the twentieth century, from Molnár's *The Play's the Thing* to the contemporary *Angels in America*, spring finds the American Conservatory Theater in Shakespeare's Venice, making its first foray of the year into the classical theater with a production of *Othello*. The time-honored tale—perhaps the Bard's most familiar outside of *Hamlet*, and certainly his most intimate—is directed by Richard Seyd, who recently examined Shakespeare's world through the other end of the telescope, *vis-à-vis* Stoppard's popular comedy *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Seyd is planning to take a psychological view of Othello, Desdemona, and Iago, and the causes and effects of the "green-eyed monster." Previews begin on April 13 at the Stage Door Theatre, with opening night on April 19.

With April, the chances to see the San Francisco Symphony's esteemed departing music director Herbert Blomstedt this season are officially at a premium. An optimal occasion to witness his expertise comes on April 12, 13, and 15, when Blomstedt conducts one of his fortés, Bruckner. The program consists wholly of Bruckner's massive Eighth Symphony, which runs nearly 90 minutes. On April 7, 8, and 9, Leonard Slatkin assumes the podium for an evening of music both old and new. Tchaikovsky's Fourth Symphony stands for the old, while the San Francisco premiere of Barbara Kolb's 1994 *All in Good Time*, featuring soprano Linda Hohenfeld, speaks for the new. Completing the program is Vaughan Williams' Symphony No. 3, his lovely *Pastoral* Symphony. Later in the month, the Great Performers Series spotlights pianist Alfred Brendel. Brendel, respected as one of the greatest living interpreters of Beethoven, is currently in his third year of a four-year cycle exploring all of the composer's 32 sonatas. Bay Area Beethoven lovers have a chance to hear this year's edition on April 29 and May 2. On April 10, another noted soloist, violinist Midori, performs works by Bartók, Brahms, Saint-Saëns, Schnittke, and Szymanowski. She is accompanied by Robert McDonald on the piano.

—Robert Simonson

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deceiver. So much so, it seems, that getting caught is deception's most common cure.

Guilt doesn’t seem to weigh so heavily these days. We hold light
hearted debates over which is worse: Jewish guilt or Catholic
guilt? Just as parking tickets are a necessary expense of life in the
City, guilt has become a battle scar of existence and for some, a source
of pride. Talk shows exploiting every combination of human
foibles are a manifestation of our enormous tolerance for, if not
curiosity in, feeling bad about ourselves. All the time, we rely upon
self-deprecating humor to expose our most selfish tendencies, as if
exposing our humanity were in itself endearing. The more we fill
ourselves with, or even flaunt, our guilt and shame and doubt, the less
responsibility we assume for our actions. Ultimately, our values
become so vague and so flexible, it becomes impossible to contradict
ourselves. This lack of self, this assumption that, since we cannot
fill the void within, we must manipulate the fates of others,
makes deception an all-too handy tool.

If we are to understand how even the most average guy can find his
self irrevocably trapped by his own badness, both actor and audience
must be willing to get close to the buried hearts of the human
beings we call villains, close enough to feel the chill from the
warm breath of their deceptive words in our ears. Actors may love
to play villains, but no person truly wants to be one. For this reason
actors must assume that the actions of the darkest of characters are
intended for good. As for the tragic consequences, ignorance is
strength. For the actor playing Roy
Cohn, he must believe the man’s
abuse of power is motivated by
genuine concern for other people
(even if it’s only the “right” people
he cares about); to play Nixon is to
play a man desperate to serve his
country; and even Hitler (good,
no, but human) believed he would
save the world. Audiences know
better, but why not consider why
these men didn’t?

Perhaps it is possible, even for a
moment, to forget our previous
acquaintance with Iago as a world-
class villain, to celebrate, however
morbidly, the artistry of his decep-
tion, to admire and appreciate,
even enjoy the intelligence and
skill of his trickery, and still con-
front a darkness on earth that is
palpable, familiar, and rather ter-
ifying—our own capacity for evil,
and our increasing ability to immu-

nize ourselves against responsibil-
ity for it.

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Iago

I INVENTS NO
EVILS; HE SIMPLY
REFLECTS
AND DEFLECTS
THE
PARANOIA
OF HIS TIMES.
The frequently unsung heroes of any theatrical production are the behind-the-scenes collaborators who help to bring the director's concept to reality on stage. We asked A.C.T. resident designers Kate Edmunds, Peter Maradudin, and Stephen LeGrand, and Los Angeles-based costume designer Shigeru Yaji, to give us a glimpse into the process of designing Othello.

Kate Edmunds (sets): Richard (Seyd) knew right off the bat that essentially he wanted to emphasize the internal, psychological drama taking place in the play. How to make that drama manifest was the great topic of discussion at our initial meeting. We knew we wanted the internal world visualized, as opposed to a grand pictorial, full-stage set design which places you very specifically in terms of locale and period. It's important to us where we are, and it's important for us to help the audience know things like whether they're inside or outside, but the whole design pursues the goal of providing a space which can mimic the labyrinth of our mind and emotions. It's more a state of mind, however, than a specific personification of any one character.

We also knew that the set had to create a sculptural environment which could carry light, or carve up light, and that we wanted to use color as a way of underscoring emotion, as opposed to shying away from it. So we're using it in a nonliteral way, a "color field" approach, using sheets of color, as opposed to specific scenic elements that carry the weight of all that color.

There are a few rules that I think you should stick to with Shakespeare, and one of them is that less is better. It's not about scene changes; those delineations were added after Shakespeare was dead. Fluidity is of great importance. And with this play, to fiddle around with a lot of props, furniture, and so forth is to clutter the landscape—literally, in this case, because it's a very small space, but also figuratively. The actor must be thrown back on him- or herself. We just need to stay out of their way.

Shigeru Yaji (costumes): Many directors, particularly of Shakespeare, try to impose a concept on a play, without digging deeply into the script. But Richard wanted me to focus on these people's inner lives, not their exteriors, to create a look for any time, anywhere... and nowhere—so that the audience is drawn into the world of the play itself. It's a challenge to reflect the inner psychology of a person in their clothing, because I have to work from an exterior point of view, as well. The garment has to be wearable as much and help to create a certain society—in this case a very militaristic, men's world. So the lines and colors have to be very clean. I did of course design individualized costumes, but as a whole, it's very much a uniform society, no one person is totally different from another person, except of course Othello, the outsider. He starts with the same uniform, but when we see him in a private situation, he's much more individual than the others. And the female element is very much ornamental to the male society. Desdemona has her own individual strengths, which we wanted to show, but the society as a whole doesn't really accept that.

Steve LeGrand (sound): We talked not just about the color of the set, but the emotional color of each scene—the "red" scene, the "yellow" scene, whatever. That informed the sound, as well, because the tonal feel of any particular scene can also be expressed in sound waves.

I started out looking at the sound...
from the perspective of Iago. I thought I'd get inside his brain and make whatever sounds I could find there. He's an engine that drives a lot of what's going on in the play, and although we don't see everything from his perspective, it's fun to look at what might be hidden in the various shades of what he's doing. So I thought first of very low tones, and then of some kind of nattering brain activity going on. These are all synthetic tones, so I created them from various sound waves that I manipulated into little clots and clusters, and then arranged into a mosaic of sound. I'm hoping that we'll be able to understand Iago's sound as his sound, and as he's working on people it will intensify.

Peter Maradudin (lights): How human beings use lit spaces is interesting. If one just adopts the attitude that an actor's face has to be lit all the time, I think that gets boring. Light is, in a way, an actor itself. Even if you're doing something like The Play's the Thing, where pretty much the lights are just on, it's still the way that they're on that defines the environment, and that most people respond to subliminally: if it looks really warm and beautiful there, and everyone looks handsome and pretty, then you feel comfortable, and so you laugh. Okay. It's the same with Othello. If a light cue is a shaft of light, like a streetlight coming up an alleyway, splashing against a wall, and you see the shadows of two men coming up, it's like someone whispering to you: this is a world where paranoia is possible, very possible, in fact the rule of thumb, where things are mysterious and you can't necessarily trust what anyone's going to say.

One of my teachers told me, "Ninety-nine percent of the audience has no idea what's going on with the lighting, but one hundred percent of them are affected by it."
to the Elizabethans; they appeared in the sixteenth-century's widely read Spanish Palmerin Romances, and were described in Sir John Davies' Microcosm (1603) as cruel, moody, mad, Hot, black, lean lepers, lustful, used to vaunt. Yet wise in action, sober, fearful, sad. If good, most good, if bad, exceeding bad.

Recent scholarship, however, has made efforts to paint a more accurate picture, highlighting the significant influence of Moorish (Arab-Islamic) culture on the development of European civilization.

As Europe succumbed to the ignorance and fear of the Dark Ages, the great Moorish/Spanish cities of Córdoba, Seville, and Toledo were spectacular examples of urban government, complete with extensive libraries, public hospitals, stunning architecture, hot and cold running water, and beautifully designed gardens. From these centers of learning came the first Latin translations, from Arabic versions of the original Greek, of classical texts of philosophy, literature, science, medicine, astronomy, and mathematics.

Algebra and the concept of zero were developed in Moorish Spain. The Arabic numbering system replaced Roman numerals. Paper, cotton, rice, sugar cane, gunpowder, palm trees, and the transient vault (a fundamental characteristic of Gothic architecture) were all introduced to Europe through Spain during this time. The first Western book on a Moorish game, chess, was written in the thirteenth century—the expression "checkmate" is in fact from the Arabic shah 'akhl maat, "to kill the shah."

From Moorish culture, transmitted through Spain, the West learned the use of the astrolabe and quadrant and new systems of navigation and geography, and acquired the skills to build sundials and portable timekeepers. Physics, optics, surgery, pharmacology, and chemistry became subjects of European study with the translation of the works of Moorish scholars including al-Battani, al-Razi, and al-Ghafiqi.

As for literature, the strophic forms and themes of romantic poetry are said to be indebted to Moorish verse. The theme of courtly love, prominent in troubadour poetry, was introduced into sixteenth-century Spain by poets like Ibn Zaydun and Ibn Hazm. The Thousand and One Nights greatly influenced medieval short-story writing, and its themes eventually found their way into the work of such European writers as Boccaccio, Cervantes, and Carlo Gozzi. By the end of the sixteenth century, western scholars were even identifying links between Dante's Inferno and the Koran.

During the latter part of the sixteenth century, the Holy Inquisition tried to eradicate tangible evidence of Moorish influence on European life. Thousands of books were burned, and millions of Moors, who had remained after the fall of Grenada a century before, were expelled from Spain or forced to convert to Catholicism. The Moors themselves disappeared into fable and drama, but their cultural legacy nevertheless lives on. —Elizabeth Brodersen
MICHAEL FITZPATRICK (Montano), a graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program, is the recipient of the Burt and Dee Dee McMurtry Professional Theater Intern Fellowship. He has been seen on A.C.T.'s mainstage this season in *The Play's the Thing* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. Studio production credits at A.C.T. include Jacob in *Awake and Sing*, Sydney Black in *Light Up the Sky*, and Satin in *The Lower Depths*. He is also a graduate of the Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts (P.C.P.A.) and attended the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico. As a member of the P.C.P.A. company and a teacher in their Young Conservatory, he appeared in *Big River*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *The Normal Heart*, and *Baby*, among others. Fitzpatrick has also worked at many Sacramento theaters, winning six Elly Awards for acting and design.

KEN GRANTHAM (Brabantio) appeared this season at A.C.T. in *The Play's the Thing* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*. He has acted with Houston's Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Eureka Theatre Company (where he serve as associate artistic director and literary manager), the Magic Theatre, and the Z Collective, and in such long-running hits as *Cloud 9*, *Noises Off*, and *Dracula*. A cofounder of San Francisco's Magic Theatre, he directed John O'Keefe's *Chamber Piece* there in 1971 and *All Night Long* in 1980. He has also directed for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, Lincoln Center Performance Ensemble, Lincoln Center Institute for the Arts, and numerous colleges and universities. Recently he directed *Keely and Du* and *Death and the Maiden* for the Alley Theatre.

STEVEN ANTHONY JONES (Othello) was last seen at A.C.T. as Teiresias in Carey Perloff's 1993 production of Sophocles' Antigone. He also played Dr. Eugene Brodus in A.C.T.'s *Miss Evers's Boys* and Detective Lieutenant Fine in the A.C.T./Lorraine Hansberry coproduction of *Clara*. At the Geary Theatre, he performed in A.C.T. productions of *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Saint Joan*, *King Lear*, *Golden Boy*, *Feathers*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Other local credits include *Fuerza Ophelia* and *McTeague* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *As You Like It* at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival; *The Cherry Orchard, Every Moment*, and *The Island* at the Eureka Theatre Company; *Master Harold . . . and the Boys* at San Jose Repertory Theatre; and *Division Street* at Oakland Ensemble Theatre. He also created the role of Pvt. James Wilkie in the original production of A Soldier's Play at the Negro Ensemble Company in New York. Jones appears regularly in films and television, including two seasons of "Midnight Caller."

DAN HIATT (Rodrigo) has performed in dozens of plays in the Bay Area over the past twenty years or so. His A.C.T. appearances this season include the title role (Guilendternst) of Richard Seyd's production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* and the flustered secretary, Mell, in *The Play's the Thing*. He also recently appeared in *Laughing Wild* at the Mason Street Theatre, which followed an extended run in the role of Lucky in *Waiting for Godot* at the Y Theatre in the Tenderloin. Other favorites include *The Pope and the Witch* at A.C.T.; *Lips Together Teeth Apart*, *Glenngary Glen Ross*, and *Born Yesterday* at Marin Theatre Company; *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *King Lear*, *The Winter's Tale*, and others at the California Shakespeare Festival; *Noises Off*, *Greater Tuna*, and *Curse of the Werewolf* at various theaters; and *Undiscovered Country* and *The Way of the World* at the Huntington Theatre in Boston.

DANIEL ALEXANDER (Emilia) is excited to be making her debut at A.C.T. Most recently she was seen as Edna in *Light Sensitive* with the San Jose Stage Company and in performances with the California Shakespeare Festival, where she earned a Drama-Logue Award for her portrayal of the Duchess of York in *Richard II*. She has worked at many theaters in the Bay Area, including *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, and, most recently, in the role of Reverend Vincent in San Jose Stage Company's West Coast premiere of *The Living*. Regional credits include performances with the Sacramento Theatre Company, Pacific Con-
MAURA VINCENT (Ophelia) is very pleased to be making her A.C.T. debut with Othello. Recent regional theater credits include the role of DeeDee in Urban Folk Tales at the Mark Taper Too; Hermina in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Cordelia in King Lear, and Ira in Anthony and Cleopatra at the California Shakespeare Festival; Juliet in Romeo and Juliet at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival; and Beatrice in Much Ado about Nothing and Mollie in Animal Farm with the National Players. She has also performed in workshops with the Mark Taper Forum and South Coast Repertory Theatre, including The Aeneid, written by Octavio Solis. On television she has been seen in “Love & War.” She received an M.F.A. in acting from U.C. Irvine, where she performed in The Threepenny Opera, 1/3 Rapid “T” Movement, Pentathilo, and Mastergate, among others.

JACK HALTON (Understudy) apprenticed at The Old Theatre on the Wharf in Provincetown in 1966 and graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in 1969. Since making his San Francisco debut in Margrit Roma’s New Shakespeare Company in 1972, he has worked with the San Francisco Repertory Company, Illustrated Stage Company, Intersection for the Arts, North Beach Repertory Company, Antenna Theatre, Theatre of Yugen, Gulf of the Farrallons, and Exit Theatre. He founded the Bannam Place Theatre in 1987, is artistic director of San Francisco’s Trinity Shakespeare Company, and is a company member of the award-winning Actors’ Theatre of San Francisco. This season he also understudied for A.C.T.’s production of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead.

KATHARINE JAY (Understudy) has appeared locally in Twelfth Night and Romeo and Juliet (in the title role) with Shakespeare at the Beach, At You Like It with Theatre-Works, Play It Again Sam with the Hillbarn Theatre, and The Secret Order with Theatre Artists of Marin. She has appeared in the University of California productions of Collete in Love, The Romans in Britain, Measure for Measure, and Behind the Wire. She has studied with Richard Seyd, Tony Taccone, Lara Dola, and Charles Shaw Robinson.

Bruce in the long-running San Francisco production of Beyond Therapy. His Shakespearean credits include Orsino in Twelfth Night, Romeo and Juliet, and a season with the California Shakespeare Festival. He is a graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program and most recently studied with Tony Taccone, Richard Seyd, and Jeffrey Birh.

KATE EDMUNDS (Scenic Designer) created the sets for Hecuba, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Home, Oleanna, Full Moon, Scapin, Uncle Vanya, Pecos, Pygmalion, The Learned Ladies, and Antigone. On Broadway, he designed the lighting for The Kentucky Cycle and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, and for regional theater he has designed more than one hundred and fifty productions for such companies as the Guthrie Theatre, Kennedy Center, Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Old Globe Theatre, Alliance Theatre Company, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and South Coast Repertory Theatre. Other recent Bay Area productions include The Caucasian Chalk Circle and The Woman Warrior for Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Maradudin has received four Los Angeles Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards, twenty Drama-Logue Awards, and an Angstrom Award for lifetime achievement in lighting design.

SHIGERU YAJI (Costumes) is very pleased to return to A.C.T., where he last designed the costumes for Pygmalion. Now in his eleventh season as a principal designer with South Coast Repertory Theatre, he has created costumes for a number of their most critically acclaimed productions, including mainstage productions of Twelfth Night, Heartbreak House, Happy End, Man and Superman, Sunday in the Park with George, You Never Can Tell, and School for Scandal, and second stage productions of Noah Johnson Had a Whore, Man of the Flesh, Blue Window, and Top Girls. Yaji’s designs have also been seen at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival/Portland (in Richard Seyd’s production of King Lear), Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, Pasadena Playhouse, Westwood Playhouse, Los Angeles Theatre Center, Taper Too, Grove Shakespeare Festival, East-West Players, International City Theatre, GeVa Theatre in New York, and 1990 Singapore Festival of Arts. He received the 1988, 1990, and 1991 Los Angeles Drama Critics’ Circle Awards for distinguished achievement in costume design and has won twenty-five Drama-Logue Awards.

PETER MARADUDIN (Lighting Designer), designer in residence at A.C.T., has designed Hecuba, The Play’s the Thing, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Home, Oleanna, Full Moon, Scapin, Uncle Vanya, Pecos, Pygmalion, The Learned Ladies, and Antigone. On Broadway, he designed the lighting for The Kentucky Cycle and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, and for regional theater he has designed more than one hundred and fifty productions for such companies as the Guthrie Theatre, Kennedy Center, Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Old Globe Theatre, Alliance Theatre Company, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and South Coast Repertory Theatre. Other recent Bay Area productions include The Caucasian Chalk Circle and The Woman Warrior for Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Maradudin has received four Los Angeles Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards, twenty Drama-Logue Awards, and an Angstrom Award for lifetime achievement in lighting design.

NICOLAS BEARDE (Understudy) returns to A.C.T. after his recent portrayal of Will Parrish in Oakland Ensemble Theatre’s Flying West. He has also appeared as Holloway in the Lorraine Hansberry Theatre’s production of Two Trains Running, Walter Parker in A.C.T.’s Full Moon, Willie Molopo in Master Harold . . . and the Boys, The Man in Woody Guthrie’s American Song at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Antonio in the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival’s Twelfth Night. His film work includes Final Analysis (with Richard Gere and Kim Basinger), Pacific Heights (with Michael Keaton and Melanie Griffith), Firestorm, Baby Snatcher, and most recently, The Land of Milk and Honey.

GREG HOFFMAN (Understudy) has performed leading roles for several Bay Area companies, including Theatre Rhinoceros, Center Repertory Theatre, Phoenix Theatre, and Theatre Exchange. Last seen in the San Francisco Theatre Workshop’s production of The Europeans, Hoffman has also appeared as Burton in the award-winning production of Burn This at Above Brainwash Theatre, in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s The Importance of Being Earnest, and as
STEPHEN LeGRAND (Sound Designer and Composer) is in his tenth season as sound designer and composer at A.C.T., where his work has included Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Oleanna, Full Moon, Uncle Vanya, Scapin, A Christmas Carol, Pecoming, Pygmalion, Creditors, The Pope and the Witch, Miss Evers’ Boys, Antigone, Dinner at Eight, Good, Charley’s Aunt, Taking Steps, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Marriage of Figaro, The Seagull, and Faustus in Hell. With collaborator Eric Drew Feldman he has received awards for the music for The Lady’s Not For Burning at A.C.T., The Tooth of Crime and The Rivals at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and Fen at the Eureka Theatre. He also wrote scores for Yankee Doodle You Die, Lulu, and Fuente Ovejuna at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and music for The Wash at the Mark Taper Forum.

SHAHN LOFTUS (Assistant Director) has written and directed everything from television commercials to children’s stories. She was the assistant director and audio director for Les Mundial Sisters’ Free Fall, which was produced in San Francisco, Paris, Hawaii, and, most recently, at Lincoln Center in New York. Other directing credits include Apha Bahn’s The Rover and Paul Vogel’s The Baltimore Waltz at the Lucy Stern Theatre; Adam and the Experts at Theatre Rhinoceros; and Larry Kramer’s The Normal Heart. She graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in theater.

KATE STEWART (Stage Manager) returns to A.C.T., where she stage-managed many productions during the late 1970s, including Buried Child, Hay Fever, A History of the American Film, Hotel Paradise, and Julius Caesar. Since 1980 she has worked in New York as a stage manager, company manager, and production manager for many theaters, including Circle Repertory Company, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons, the American Opera Center at Juilliard, and the Lincoln Center Theatre Company. On and off Broadway, she has worked with such directors as Jerry Zaks, Greg Mosher, Arthur Laurents, Lynne Meadow, Melvin Bernhardt, John Tillingher, and Michael Bennett. Favorite shows include The House of Blue Leaves at Lincoln Center, Crimes of the Heart at Manhattan Theatre Club, and Scandal, Michael Bennett’s final production. Stewart was assistant to the general manager at A.C.T. from 1989–94. She also serves as the swing stage manager for The Phantom of the Opera at the Curran Theatre.

STEVEN LUKENS (Assistant Stage Manager) most recently served as assistant stage manager for The Play’s the Thing, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead, Full Moon, Uncle Vanya, and Pecoming at A.C.T. He was production stage manager for Encore Theatre Company for three seasons, where he worked on productions of Down the Road, Uncle Vanya, and Road to Nirvana. He was also on the stage management staff for Assassins at San Jose Civic Light Opera and for The Visit and Book of the Night at the Goodman Theater in Chicago. He is a graduate of the theater department of Northwestern University.

CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) assumed artistic leadership of A.C.T. in June 1992. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and new works adapted from or inspired by classical works and themes, Perloff opened her first season at A.C.T. with August Strindberg’s Creditors, followed by Timberlake Wertenbaker’s new translation of Antigone, last season’s acclaimed Uncle Vanya, and this season’s Home, by David Storey. In 1993 she staged the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot’s new music-theater-video opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival, which was subsequently presented at the Hebbel Theater in Berlin, Royal Festival Hall in London, and Next Wave Festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music. Perloff served as artistic Director of New York’s CSC Repertory, Ltd., the Classic Stage Company from 1986 to 1992, where she directed the acclaimed world premiere of Ezra Pound’s version of Sophocles’ Elektra (with Pamela Reed and Nancy Marchand), the American premiere of Harold Pinter’s Mountain Language (with Jean Stapleton and Peter Riegert) on a double bill with his The Birthday Party, Tony Harrison’s Phaedra Britannica, Thornton Wilder’s The Skin of Our Teeth, Lynne Alvarez’s translation of Tirso de Molina’s Don Juan de Sevilla, Michael Feingold’s version of Alexandre Dumas’s The Tower of Evil, Beckett’s Happy Days (with Charlotte Rae), Brecht’s The Raisable Rise of Arturo Ui (with John Turturro), and Len Jenkin’s Candide. Under her direction, CSC won the 1988 Obie Award for artistic excellence, as well as numerous Obies for acting, design, and production.

Perloff has directed and developed numerous new plays and translations and recently collaborated with Timberlake Wertenbaker on a new version of Euripides’ Hecuba for A.C.T., to be presented at the Center for the Arts Theater at Yerba Buena Gardens from April 27 through June 4, 1995. In Los Angeles, she staged Pinter’s The Collection at the Mark Taper Forum (winning a DramaLogue Award for outstanding direction), and was Associate Director of Steven Berkoff’s Greek (which earned the Los Angeles Drama Critics’ Circle Award for best production). Perloff received her B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford University. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.

BENNY SATO AMBUSH (Associate Artistic Director) has directed at A.C.T. Miss Evers’ Boys and Pecoming (each nominated for eight, and each winning three, Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards), Full Moon, and this season’s The Play’s the Thing. For A.C.T.’s 1990-91 Plays-in-Progress series, he directed Pigeon Egghead, a play about Native Americans which helped inspire the creation of a new Bay Area Native American theater company, Turtle Island Ensemble, currently operating under A.C.T.’s auspices. Other regional directing credits include Jar the Floor at South Coast Repertory; Playland at the Magic Theatre; the world premiere of Out of Purgatory at the Old Globe Theatre (Los Angeles Robbie Award nomination for best director of a drama); Miss Evers’ Boys at the Alabama Shakespeare Festival (filmed excerpts from which appeared in Deadly Deception on the acclaimed PBS series “Nova” in 1993); Fences at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Portland; and Sherley Anne Williams’ Letters from a New England Negro for the 1991 National Black Theater Festival and the 1992 International Theater Festival of Chicago (the only American entry). He has also directed the annual Bay Area McDonald’s Gospel Fest since 1990.

Before joining A.C.T., Ambush was the Artistic/Producing Director of the Oakland Ensemble Theatre (1982-90), Oakland’s first and only resident professional theater, where his directing credits included Division Street, A Night at the Apollo, MLK: We Are the Dream, Tamer of Horses, and Alterations (Drama-Logue Award for outstanding direction, 1985). He is a board member of Theatre Communications Group and the Bay Area Playwrights’ Foundation, producers of the annual Bay Area Playwrights’ Festival. He has been active locally, regionally, and nationally in advocacy for cultural equity, non-traditional casting, and pluralism in American art. Ambush received his B.A. from Brown University and his M.F.A. from the University of California, San Diego.
RICHARD SEYD (Associate Artistic Director) was appointed Associate Artistic Director of A.C.T. in 1992. He has received Drama-Logue and Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Awards for his productions of Cloud 9, About Face, and Noises Off. As Associate Producing Director of the Eureka Theatre Company, he directed The Threepenny Opera, The Island, and The Wash. He has directed the Pickle Family Circus in London; Three High with Geoff Hoyle, Bill Irwin, and Larry Pisoni at the Marines Memorial Theatre; A View from the Bridge and Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? for Berkeley Repertory Theatre; As You Like It for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival; and Unfinished Stories for the Mark Taper Forum's New Play Series. He directed The Learned Ladies (with Jean Stapleton) for CSC Repertory, Ltd., in New York during the 1991-92 season and directed A Midsummer Night's Dream as the opening production for the California Shakespeare Festival's new outdoor amphitheater in 1991. That year he also directed Sarah's Story at the Los Angeles Theatre Center; Born Yesterday at Marin Theatre Company; and King Lear at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Portland. For A.C.T. he has directed The Learned Ladies, the American premiere of Dario Fo's The Pope and the Witch, Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, and the Bay Area premiere of David Mamet's Oleanna. This season at A.C.T. he directs Tom Stoppard's Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead and Shakespeare's Othello.

THOMAS W. FLYNN (Administrative Director) became A.C.T.'s Administrative Director in the fall of 1993. For the previous three years, he was A.C.T.'s Director of Development and Community Affairs. Flynn has also served as Campaign Director for the Geary Theater Campaign. Prior to joining A.C.T., he held development positions at the Boston Ballet, the Handel and Haydn Society, and Tufts University. Flynn studied East Asian History at Harvard College. He has been a recipient of the Henry Russell Shaw Traveling Fellowship, conducting research on European architecture, and a Management Fellowship from the American Symphony Orchestra League. Flynn is currently a member of the San Francisco Arts Commission.

JAMES HAIRE (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva LeGallienne's National Repertory Theater. Among the productions he managed were The Madwoman of Chaillot (with LeGallienne, Sylvia Sydney, and Leora Dana), A Touch of the Poet (with Denholm Elliott), The Seagull (with Farley Granger), The Royal, John Brown's Body, She Stoops to Conquer, and The Comedy of Errors. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of Georgy (a musical by Carole Bayer Sager), and Miss Reardon Drinks a Little (with Julie Harris and Estelle Parsons), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen's Don't Drink the Water. Off Broadway he produced Ibsen's Little Eyolf (directed by Marshall W. Mason) and Shaw's Arms and the Man. Haire joined A.C.T. in 1971 as Production Stage Manager. In 1985 he was appointed Production Director, and in 1993 he assumed his current position. 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.

JOHN LOSCHMANN (Conservatory Executive Director) has been working at the American Conservatory Theater for fourteen years teaching ballet, musical theater, and acting and directing student projects. He has also taught at Northern Illinois University and San Jose State University, and for eight years he was a teacher and dancer with the Pacific Ballet. Loschmann won a Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award for his portrayal of Gregor Samsa in the San Francisco Conservatory Theatre Project's acclaimed production of Kafka's Metamorphosis, which went to the Edinburgh Theatre Festival in Scotland. He graduated from Antioch University with a degree in dance and has an M.F.A. in acting from A.C.T.

CRAIG SLAIGHT (Young Conservatory Director) spent ten years in Los Angeles directing theater and television before joining A.C.T. in 1988. An award-winning educator, Slaight is a consultant to the Educational Theater Association, a panel member for the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts, and a frequent guest speaker and adjudicator throughout the country. In 1989, he founded the Young Conservatory's New Plays Program; to date eight new works by professional playwrights have been developed, five of which have been published by Smith & Kraus in New Plays from A.C.T.'s Young Conservatory.

DENNIS POWERS (Senior Editor & Professional Advisor) joined A.C.T. in 1967, during the company's first San Francisco season, after six years as an arts writer at the Oakland Tribune. Before being named to his present position by Carey Perloff, he worked with William Ball and Edward Hastings as a writer, editor, and casting associate. The A.C.T. productions on which he has collaborated as dramaturg or adapter include Oedipus Rex, Cynara de Bencemer, The Cherry Orchard, The Bourgeois Gentleman, King Richard III, The Winter's Tale, Saint Joan, and Diamond Lil. The most popular of his adaptations, A Christmas Carol, was written with Laird Williamson, who was also his collaborator on Christmas Miracles, which premiered at the Denver Center Theatre Company in 1985 and was later published. Among the other theaters with which he has been associated are the Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Stanford Repertory Theatre, Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts, and San Francisco's Valencia Rose Cabaret Theater. Powers's reviews and articles have appeared in the New York Times, Chicago Tribune, Saturday Review, Los Angeles Times, American Arts, and San Francisco Chronicle.

MERYL LIND SHAW ( Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff in 1993 after sixteen years as a regular in the Bay Area theater community, where she has stage-managed more than sixty productions. At A.C.T., she stage-managed Ben Appel and Creditor. She was Resident Stage Manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years, Production Stage Manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons, and has stage-managed at the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Eureka Theatre, Alcazar Theater, and Center Stage in Baltimore. She directed Wills and Marie at the Julia Morgan Theatre, and Joy Carolin in The Belle of Amherst for the U.C. Berkeley library, and has served as assistant or co-director for The Sea at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, The Cherry Orchard at the Eureka Theatre, Bonjour, La! Bonjour at the Berkeley Stage Company, and Bill Talen's Rock Fables at Intersection Theater. She has been active with Actors' Equity Association for many years and served on the A.E.A. negotiating team for the current L.O.R.T. contract.

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*Indicates prices for Angels in America.

**Special Programs**

A.C.T. Proslogues: A series of one-hour discussions conducted by noted actors, directors, and designers who introduce each new A.C.T. production. Presented before the Tuesday evening preview of each production, in the same theater as the evening's performance, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 5 p.m. Sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco.

A.C.T. Audience Exchange: Informal audience discussions moderated by members of the A.C.T. staff, held after selected performances. For information, call (415) 749-2ACT.

A.C.T. Perspectives: A symposium series held from 7 to 9 p.m. on selected Monday evenings throughout the season, featuring in-depth panel discussions by noted scholars and professionals. Topics range from aspects of the season's productions to the general relation of theater and the arts to American culture. The symposia are free of charge and open to everyone. For information, call (415) 749-2ACT.

**Student Matinees:** Matinees offered at 1 p.m. to elementary, secondary, and college groups for selected productions. Tickets are specially priced at $8. For information, call Jane Tarver, Student Matinee Coordinator, at (415) 749-2230.
"Words on Plays": Handbooks containing a synopsis and background information on each of the season's plays can be mailed in advance to Full Season subscribers for the special price of $24 for the entire season. A limited number of copies of individual handbooks are also available for purchase by single-ticket holders at the A.C.T. Central Box Office for $5 each (sorry, no phone or mail orders for individual handbooks). For information, call (415) 749-2ACT.

Conservatory: The A.C.T. Conservatory offers classes, training, and advanced theater study. The Young Conservatory offers training for students between the ages of 8 and 18. Call (415) 749-2350 for a free brochure.

Costume Rental: A large collection of costumes, ranging from hand-made period garments to modern sportswear, is available for rental by schools, theaters, production companies, and individuals. Call (415) 749-2296 for more information.

Parking: A.C.T. patrons can park for just $6 at the San Francisco Hilton and Towers. Enter on Ellis Street between Mason and Taylor. Show your ticket stub for that day's performance upon exit to receive the special price for up to five hours of parking, subject to availability. Full Season subscribers enjoy an even greater discount. (Subscriber discount parking packages are already sold out.)

Listening System: Head sets designed to provide clear, amplified sound anywhere in the auditorium are available free of charge in the lobby before performance.

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

Smoking is not permitted in the auditorium.

Wheelchair Access: The Stage Door, Marines Memorial, and Center for the Arts Theaters are accessible to persons in wheelchairs.

VENUES
The Stage Door Theatre is located at 420 Mason Street at Geary, one block from Union Square.
The Marines Memorial Theatre is located at 609 Sutter Street at Mason.
The Center for the Arts Theater is the new state-of-the-art theater at Yerba Buena Gardens, located at 700 Howard Street at Third.

Stage Door Theatre Exits
Please note the nearest exit. In an emergency, WALK, do not run, to the nearest exit.