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ABOUT A.C.T. 8
A.C.T. STAFF 12
PROGRAM NOTES 17
A.C.T. NEWS 27
WHO'S WHO IN TARTUFFE 35
A.C.T. PROFILES 41
SPONSOR PROFILES 43
CONTRIBUTORS 47
FOR YOUR INFORMATION 53

ON THE COVER
Photofituation by Diane Fenster

ABOVE
Reader talking with parishioners

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AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and 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 220,000 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.

Since Perloff’s appointment in 1992, A.C.T. has enjoyed continued success with groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Guided by Perloff and Kitchen, who joined the company in 1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable period of unprecedented audience expansion and renewed financial stability. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, now serving 1,900 students every year, was the first training program not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Winona Ryder are among the conservatory’s distinguished former students. With the 1995 appointment of Melissa Smith as conservatory director, A.C.T. renewed its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience. The A.C.T. Advanced Training 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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with the Red Clay Rambler
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HECUBA
by Euripides
translated and adapted by Timbersale Wortenbaker
directed by Carey Perloff
original music by David Lang
October 16–November 22, 1998

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
adapted from Charles Dickens's novella by Dennis Powers and Laird Williamson
directed by Candace Barrett and Remy Bark
November 28–December 27, 1998

MORNING, NOON AND NIGHT
written and performed by Spalding Gray

JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK
by Sean O'Casey
directed by Giles Havergal
January 16–February 7, 1999

INDIAN INK
by Tom Stoppard
directed by Carey Perloff
February 18–March 21, 1999

LONG DAY'S JOURNEY INTO NIGHT
by Eugene O'Neill
directed by Laird Williamson
April 1–May 2, 1999

THE FIRST PICTURE SHOW
book and lyrics by Ais Gordon and David Gordon
music by Jeanine Tesori
directed by David Gordon
May 6–June 6, 1999

TARTUFFE
by Molière,
translated by Richard Wilbur
directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
June 17–July 10, 1999

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Provocative and complex, his art was influenced by Picasso and surrealism. Talented and tormented, his life (1909-1992) was the recent subject of the film “Love is the Devil.” He was British painter Francis Bacon—one of the most important figurative artists of the 20th century. Explore his art in the first U.S. retrospective in more than a decade. Fifty-eight paintings from museums and private collections around the world—many on public view for the first time—are featured.


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Tartuffe

(1664)

by Molière

Translated by Richard Wilbur (1965)

Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright

with

Tom Blair  L. Peter Callender  Rudy Guerrero
Steven Anthony Jones  Nicole E. Lewis  Fannie Lee Lowe
Lloyd C. Porter  Roxanne Raja  Anika Noni Rose
Darryl Theirse  Shona Tucker  Gregory Wallace

Scenery by Ralph Funicello
Costumes by Beaver Bauer
Lighting by Peter Maradudin
Sound by Garth Hemphill
Dialect Consultant Deborah Sussel
Fight Consultant Marco Barricelli
Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw
Casting Consultant Ellen Novack
Hair and Makeup by Rick Echols
Assistant Directors Margo Hall, Marco Barricelli
Dramaturgical Assistance by Alice Moore

Stage Management Staff
Kimberly Mark Webb, Stage Manager
Elisa Guthertz, Assistant Stage Manager
Drew Stauffer, Intern

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Tartuffe

The Cast

Madame Pernelle, Orgon’s mother Fannie Lee Lowe
Orgon Steven Anthony Jones
Elmire, Orgon’s wife Shona Tucker
Damas, Orgon’s son and Shona Tucker
Elmire’s stepson Gregory Wallace
Mariane, Orgon’s daughter and Anika Noni Rose
Elmire’s stepdaughter L. Peter Callender
Valère Rudy Guerrero
Cléante, Orgon’s brother-in-law Darryl Theirse
Tartuffe Roxanne Raja
Dorine, Mariane’s lady’s maid Tom Blair
Mr. Loyal/A Police Officer Nicole E. Lewis
Flipote Lloyd C. Porter
Laurent

Understudies

Madame Pernelle, Elmire—Margo Hall
Orgon, Cléante—Rhonnie Washington
Damas, Valère, Laurent—Michael Gene Sullivan
Mariane, Dorine, Flipote—June A. Lomena
Tartuffe, Mr. Loyal/A Police Officer—Marco Barricelli

Time and Place
Tartuffe takes place in Orgon’s house in Durham, North Carolina, in the 1950s.

There will be one intermission.

Special Thanks to
Linda Kerr Norflett, North Carolina Central University Drama Department, for assistance with the dialects of Durham, North Carolina
Sheila Head, Head Designs
Charles O’Hanlon at Charles Place
Wesley Hodge

Prophets of Profit

by Elizabeth Brodersen

The characters of Charles Randolph-Wright’s Tartuffe may be part of the blue-blooded “400” who ruled African-American society during the 1950s, rather than high-born subjects of Louis XIV. Unlike their 17th-century counterparts, they may hum the tunes of Frank Sinatra instead of the operas of court composer Jean Baptiste Lully. Three hundred years after their invention, however, Orgon’s family remains hilariously vulnerable to the machinations of Molière’s charismatic predator in pious sheep’s clothing.

MATERIALISTIC EVANGELISM
The God business has become exceedingly lucrative in the latter half of the 20th century. Self-appointed religion watchdog James A. McNaught reported in 1980 that the top 11 evangelists in the United States (Garner Ted Armstrong, Oral Roberts, Pat Robertson, Jim Bakker, Jerry Falwell, Billy Graham, Rex Humbard, Jimmy Swaggart, Robert Schuller, James Robison, and “Rev. Ike” Eikerenkoetter) raised an estimated collective yearly gross of almost $400 million; by 1994 televangelism had become a $2.5 billion industry. From Tartuffe-like charlatans to sincere spiritual shepherds, these prophets of profit have made a fortune from spreading the Word to the Orgons of the modern era. A.C.T.’s own Tartuffe is based on several real-life religious figures who led the African-American evangelist pack during the 1950s.

“i am materially poor but in spiritual terms i am the richest man in the world.”
—“Sweet Daddy” Grace
Widely publicized throughout the fifties as the nation’s most successful cult leader was Charles M. “Sweet Daddy” Grace, who founded his church—the House of Prayer for All People—in Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1926. Fond of the spotlight, Daddy Grace specialized in highly theatrical services: after he entered the church on a red velvet carpet strewn with flowers, two brass bands—one playing blues, the other more traditional tunes—would play, as members gyrated in ecstasy and spoke in tongues. Finance, however, was the backbone of his church, and giving to Daddy was considered the flock’s highest spiritual obligation.

Daddy Grace pretended to limit himself to pious poverty, while making a fortune from fundraising and selling products that bore his name: magazines, toothpaste, face cream, tea, coffee from his Brazilian plantation, and eggs from his hatchery near Havana. “The products are blessed,” he said, “People can even be cured by touching a piece of paper I throw away.” Believed by his followers to have supernatural powers, Daddy Grace claimed he could heal all diseases, and once told a reporter that he had stopped World War II in 1945 “in five minutes.” Although he warned his people that “the love of money is the root of all evil,” he admonished potential donors to give in large denominations, because, he said, “The sound of metal hurts my ears.” His fabulous ring collection and seven-car fleet presumably eased that pain.

Absolute obedience to Daddy was a fundamental tenet of his church. He once asked a female follower whom she loved better: him or her husband. She promptly answered, “You, Daddy!” Daddy Grace encouraged the use of cosmetics (especially his own line), and painted the fingernails on his left hand—which he wore up to four inches long—red, white, and blue.

The subject of one of the longest-running tax disputes involving a single individual in U.S. history, Daddy Grace tangled with the IRS in eight tax cases between 1932 and his death in 1960. When he died, he reportedly had $80,000 in cash on him and left behind an estimated fortune of more than $6 million and a national religious institution with churches in 110 cities and three million members.

Detroit’s Prophet James Francis Marion Jones, ruler of the Universal Triumph and the Dominion of God, began prophesying at two, preaching at six, and broadcasting in 1940. Birmingham-born Prophet Jones started North in 1934 with $1.47 in his pocket. By 1950 he had an organization worth $2 million, operating 362 Thankful Centers in 45 states and 16 countries, and lived in a 54-room castle (shipped from France, rebuilt in Detroit, and bought from a gangster for $25,000) that held $200,000 of furniture, jewelry worth $100,000, twelve silver sets, 482 suits, a $13,500 mink coat, three cars, twelve servants, and three adopted children—“all gifts from his worshipful subjects.” He claimed six million followers, who showered him with gifts in gratitude for answering the prayers in their letters—most of which were never opened, but dumped into a nearby river.

Obedience was also a primary tenet of Prophet Jones’s philosophy. His official handbook prescribed the proper way to bow and curtsy before the royal family, how to wire the Prophet in case of tumor (which he reportedly removed by telegram), and forbade such evils as social clubs, coffee, tea, gambling, smoking, dancing, marrying without his consent, and illegitimate children. Women were required to wear girdles in public and to own swim suits; steam baths should be taken often, a laxative once or twice a week.

Like Daddy Grace, the Rev. M. J. Divine professed to poverty, saying “I haven’t a dime.” His estimated assets of $3 million, however, included a $500,000 estate donated by a devoted follower and a 10-story Philadelphia hotel purchased with small bills for $460,000. Most of Father Divine’s property was held in the name of his Peace Mission Movement, whose members were forbidden to smoke, drink, use makeup, go to the movies, or have sex (even with their spouses). Father Divine raised eyebrows and headlines when he married a much younger Canadian woman, who (like many of his followers) worshipped him as the personification of God.

Although not in the same league as Daddy Grace, Prophet Jones, and Father Divine, several other figures of the era preyed on the vulnerable and devout: Master X made a small fortune selling lucky charms and offering marital advice to suffering followers. “Father” Elbert Smith of Detroit, a.k.a. James Douglas, served time in prison in Georgia, Indiana, Washington, D.C., and Michigan for swindling followers out of their life savings in fraudulent real estate deals. Posing as a priest, wearing a long black robe and a shiny cross, he operated a small mission where donations helped him carry on the “great work of God.” St. Louis tent-preacher Prophet Harvey Ambrose Green, a self-styled evangelist, was a “gaudy, robe-wearing character” who, instead of preaching, bragged during his “services” about his worldly goods. His specialty was the sale of “blessed” cabbage leaves.

Probably the most blatantly materialistic evangelist to have emerged during the first decades after World War II is the infamous Frederick “Reverend Ike” Eikenkoetter, whose weekly sermons
were broadcast by some 1700 television and radio stations across America during his heyday in the early 1970s; he still operates an aggressive direct-mail operation that brings in an estimated $500,000 to $1 million tax-free dollars a month. “The Money Preacher,” as he is known, was the first African-American minister to harness the soul-saving and fundraising powers of television. Born in 1935 in Ridge-land, South Carolina, he opened his first faith-healing Miracle Temple in Boston in 1964 and moved to New York in 1966.

Reverend Ike—who sports $1000 suits, dries gold chains and diamond rings, and reportedly owns 16 Rolls Royces (“My garages run-neth over”), luxury homes on both coasts, and a velvet throne—is very clear about the message of his ministry: “The best thing you can do for poor folks is not be one of them. . . . I am telling you, get out of the ghetto and get into the get-me’. . . . You and me, we are not interested in a harp tomorrow, we are interested in a dollar today. . . . Money is not the root of all evil. I say lack of money is the root of all evil.”

Fond of attractive young (male) aides, Reverend Ike was sued for sexual harassment in 1995 (like Tartuffe, he may be pious, but he’s human, too). Ike’s United Christian Evangelical Association now works out of inconspicuous offices in Massachusetts. The operation targets the elderly and poor, emphasizing those of African and Caribbean descent; Ike typically sends a letter containing a charm or a curse, telling the recipient to avert doom by mailing it back by the following day with a donation of $20 to $30 for his blessing. Although King Louis is no longer around to save latter-day Orgons and their families, the Suffolk District Attorney launched a fraud investigation into Ike’s operation earlier this year.

THE AMBIGUITY OF GOOD AND EVIL

Daddy Grace’s House of Prayer fed, clothed, housed, and provided pensions and burial insurance for the poorest people in the community. Reverend Ike employs the severely disabled to stuff envelopes with his “holy charms,” and the huge printing project necessary to maintain his direct mail campaigns feed many people in the Boston area. Even today, after Jim Bakker, Jerry Falwell, Jimmy Swaggart, and many others have sufficed their crusades with scandal, eloquent and honorable promoters of the gospel continue to inspire millions of devout supporters worldwide.

Tartuffe director Randolph-Wright has said that he is “fascinated by the ambiguity of good and evil.” Although the wise Cléante believes that “sincerity and cunning art [can] be told apart,” and the saucy Dorine sees through Tartuffe’s mask from the very beginning, it is not so easy for the rest of us to distinguish the genuinely pious from the deliberately pernicious. Thank God we have Molière to help us recognize the “difference . . . / Between true piety and hypocrisy,” and to remind us that “it is best to err, if err one must, / As [Orgon has] done, upon the side of trust.”

“EXISTENTIAL TWONESS”

While directing Robert O’Hara’s Insurrection: Holding History at A.C.T. in 1998, director Charles Randolph-Wright realized that the story and characters of Tartuffe would be a perfect match for Insurrection’s talented cast. Invited to recreate Molière’s eternal comedy for A.C.T., he decided to stage the classic verse translation by poet laureate Richard Wilbur (developed with A.C.T. Founding Director William Ball in 1965 for Lincoln Center and produced as A.C.T.’s first production in the Geary Theater in 1967), to take advantage of the fact that these classically trained actors have an extraordinary facility with the poetry of Wilbur’s text—which not a word has been changed for this production.

Randolph-Wright then set out to envision a world that would be unique to this particular company of African-American artists, a contemporary setting in which it would be believable that a wealthy family, isolated from the community, could be duped by Molière’s seductive “saint-in-residence.” Raised in the small town of York, South Carolina, he found the perfect setting for Tartuffe in a place and time very close to home: Durham, North Carolina, in the 1950s. Below are a few observations on the people and period that inspired tonight’s production.

During the 1950s, everything was changing for black Americans, especially after the Supreme Court decision to end segregation in 1954. It was a time of tremendous idealism; it was also a time of growing rebellion, especially in families: while the parents were listening to Sinatra and Nat King Cole, the kids were listening to bebop and jazz and attempting to dress like James Dean.

Having grown up in the South and gone to school at Duke, I know that Durham has one of the richest black populations in the country. Many black businesses—banks, insurance companies, etc.—were established and thrived there. We’re talking generations of prosperity: upper-class African Americans who are almost never portrayed in the media.

W. E. B. DuBois talked about the concept of “existential twoness”—how wealthy black families are isolated because they can no longer relate to the black community, yet they are not accepted by the white community. That describes Tartuffe’s family exactly: Orgon allows himself to be taken in by this person from another side of life because he is lonely and looking for a sense of meaning in his own life. Tartuffe’s implied promise of eternal salvation is therefore extremely attractive to him.
I see Tartuffe as a kind of “Reverend Ike meets Dracula.” In the traditional lore, a vampire cannot enter your house unless you invite him in, and I think that’s what happens with Tartuffe, time and time again: he is invited into situations in which he completely takes advantage of his victims’ own weaknesses and his vampirism takes over. That is not to say that I believe the church is evil. But there are certain people, in any profession, who will try to exploit every advantage.

Every person on this stage is representative of someone I know (a scary thought). My desire for this production is that everyone will recognize people from their own lives. This is a family that’s being taken for a ride, and, 300 years after Molière penned this play, I think we can all relate to how easy it is still to go on that ride.

—Charles Randolph-Wright

HIGH SOCIETY
There is in [Durham, North Carolina,] a group of five thousand or more colored people, whose social and economic development is perhaps more striking than that of any similar group in the nation.

The Negroes of Durham County pay taxes on about a half million dollars’ worth of property or an average of nearly $500 a family, and this property has more than doubled in the last ten years.

The chief interest of any visitor who stayed long enough to notice would, however, center in the unusual inner organization of this group of men, women, and children. It is a new “group economy” that characterizes the rise of the Negro American—the closed circle of social intercourse, teaching and preaching, buying and selling, employing and hiring, and even manufacturing, which, because it is chiefly confined to Negroes, escapes the notice of the white world.


Whether designated as an “aristocracy” or a “fashionable social circle,” a “strictly discriminated upper class” of blacks existed throughout the South in both small towns and large cities. . . . They perceived themselves as keepers of high ideals, guardians of culture, and models of proper decorum to be emulated by other blacks. But being “too high on a hill” and too far removed from ordinary black folk made the aristocrats a natural target for “snipers” from below who sometimes regarded them as “stuck up and impossible.” . . .

That group known as the “old upper class” or “old families,” as distinct from those that later made up an economic elite, was drawn largely from the ranks of free blacks (some of whom owned slaves), house slaves and other privileged bondsmen, and certain immigrants from the West Indies. Class distinctions developed among antebellum free blacks in the South, ranging from those whose poverty, illiteracy, and
Molière and Tartuffe

Molière was born Jean-Baptiste Poquelin in Paris in 1622, the son of a wealthy tapestry merchant. He studied philosophy and law, then, at the age of 21, renounced the position at court which his father had secured for him, ran away with an actress, Madeleine Béjart, and founded with her a troupe of actors. His company toured the country under the protection of the Duke of Epernon, and Molière (the name he had taken in 1643) gained a reputation as a comic actor, writing and performing in his own plays.

In 1662 he married Armande Béjart, the young sister (or possibly even the daughter) of his former mistress Madeleine. By now the king, Louis XIV, had granted Molière's company a home at his theater in the Palais Royal. They had their first success there with Les précieuses ridicules in 1659, followed, notably, by L'école des femmes (1663), Le misanthrope (1667), and Le bourgeois gentilhomme (1671).

In 1664, during a week of court celebrations at Versailles, Molière held a private performance of his new play, Tartuffe; ou, l'imposteur. The court was amused, but Louis XIV, while recognizing the author's good intentions, forbade the play to be publicly performed. The Gazette de France applauded the king for having banned a dangerously anticlerical play.

Pierre Roulé, doctor of the Sorbonne and parish priest, wrote in a pamphlet:
A man—or rather a demon clothed in flesh and dressed like a man—and a more notoriously blasphemous libertine than any hitherto known in history—has had the abominable impiety to conjure out of his diabolical spirit a dramatic work, intended for public display, which holds up the Church and its sacred duties to derision and scorn. . . . For this sacrilegious outrage, he deserves public and exemplary torture—even by fire itself, harbinger of the flames of hell—in order to expiate so grave a crime of divine lèse-majesté, calculated to destroy the Catholic religion.

In 1667, a revised version of Tartuffe had its first public performance, in Paris. The next day, the play was banned by the parliamentary president. The archbishop of Paris issued a proclamation: “We hereby prohibit all persons in our diocese from presenting the aforesaid comedy, from reading it or hearing it read, either in public or in private, on pain of excommunication.”

The play was resumed, by royal decree, in 1669, when it opened with enormous success at the Palais Royal. Lured by the simmering controversy, the crowd seeking admission was reportedly so large that many people suffocated.

Four years later, while playing the title part in his play Le malade imaginaire, Molière died. The king had to intervene to allow his burial in holy ground.

In Development at A.C.T.: The Difficulty of Crossing a Field

In early April A.C.T. hosted a week-long workshop of The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, an extraordinary new music-theater piece currently being developed by A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff, playwright Mac Wellman, composer David Lang, and the acclaimed Kronos Quartet. The libretto for The Difficulty of Crossing a Field was written by Wellman during his playwriting residency (supported by Theatre Communications Group/Pew Charitable Trusts) at A.C.T. in 1995–96. Set on a Selma, Alabama, plantation in 1864, Difficulty is based on a short story by 19th-century San Francisco–based fiction writer and journalist Ambrose Bierce, whose searing examination of the human toll of the Civil War and the end of slavery remains unique in American literature.

continued on page 45

THE DIFFICULTY OF CROSSING A FIELD
(clockwise from top): (1 to r) chorus singers Anika Noni Rose, Hope Briggs, Fred Winthrop, and Baomi Buultjens; Kronos Quartet members Hank Dutt and Jennifer Koh; A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff; (1 to r) Dutt, musical director Peter Grünberg, and composer David Lang; and singer Lianne Marie Dobbs.
PHOTOS BY KEN BURGE
A.C.T. EXTRAS

Come to A.C.T. for the most entertaining education in town. A.C.T. offers several ways for you to learn about the season's productions and to express your views on the issues they raise:

A.C.T. PROLOGUES
Sponsored by the Junior League of San Francisco, these lively one-hour presentations are conducted by each show's director. Prologues are held before the Tuesday preview of every production, at 5:30 p.m., in the Geary Theater. Doors open at 5 p.m.

AUDIENCE EXCHANGES
These informal, anything-goes sessions are a great way to share your feelings and reactions with fellow theatregoers. Audience Exchanges take place in the Geary Theater for 30 minutes immediately after selected performances and are moderated by A.C.T. staff members and artists.

A.C.T. PERSPECTIVES
This popular series of free public symposia is back in 1998-99 from 7 to 9 p.m. on selected Monday evenings in the Geary Theater. Each symposium features a panel of scholars, theater artists, and professionals exploring topics ranging from aspects of the season's productions to the intersection of theater and the arts with American culture. Everyone is welcome—you need not have seen the play to attend.

WORDS ON PLAYS
Each entertaining and informative audience handbook contains advance program notes, a synopsis of the play, and additional background information about the playwright and the social and historical context of the work. A subscription for seven handbooks is available by mail to full-season subscribers for $42 ($21 for opening night subscribers); limited copies of handbooks for individual plays are also available for purchase at the Geary Theater Box Office, located at 405 Geary Street at Mason, and at the merchandise stand in the main lobby of the Geary Theater, for $8 each.

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To conserve water, use soaker hoses instead of sprinklers.

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Another easy way to help the environment in your garden is to change the tools you use. For instance,

instead of using sprinklers, try using soaker hoses. They leak moisture into the soil at slow rates, so water gets absorbed instead of running off. You may also consider using a rake, instead of gas-powered blowers. Use a rake instead of gas-powered blowers.

Rakes use no fuel and give you some exercise. Next, think about the types of plants you plant. Consider the plants that will reduce the need for chemicals. Finally, think about planting a tree in your yard. Trees keep harmful carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere and create lots of energy-saving shade.

So you see, when we say organic gardens are a good idea, it's no bull.

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Directed by Ted Dykstra

World Premiere

THE HOUSE OF MIRTH
From the novel by Edith Wharton
Adapted and directed by Giles Havergal

EDWARD II
By Christopher Marlowe
Directed by Mark Lamos

World Premiere Play with Music

SOME KIND OF A WIND-IN-THE-WILLOWS
From the novel by Kenneth Graham
Adapted and directed by David Gordon

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
Adapted from Charles Dickens
by Dennis Powers and Laird Williamson
Directed by Candace Barrett and Raye Birk

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color placed them closer to the slave masses than to those free people of color whose wealth, education, values, and complexion more closely resembled upper-class whites, with whom they were sometimes related by blood.

By the 1920s the black aristocracy was scarcely the same that had existed 20 years earlier. The rising tide of racism and the fading of hopes for an integrated society, as well as the decline in the economic base of the old upper class, eroded the prestige and influence of a group that had nurtured ties with whites and advocated assimilation into the larger society. Some of the genteel families chose not to compete with the new economic elite and instead preserved their traditions in splendid isolation from the black community.

—Aristocrats of Color: The Black Elite, 1830–1920, by Willard B. Gatewood

The typical patrician family is home-centered, entertains frequently and lavishly, patronizes the opera, ballet, and concerts. The husband either is prominent in a profession or owns a prosperous business. The wife is a charming hostess, well-Posted (Emily) on all the social graces. The son and daughter belong to one of the national Greek-letter fraternities or sororities. They marry within their own set, but only after the girl has made her formal debut.

Today’s high society is very different both from the early era when “blue blood” families were in social power and from the wild epoch of the 20s when heiress A’Leilah Walker Robinson gave her daughter a “million-dollar wedding” from the profits of her mother’s hair-straightening devices. It has departed from the tradition of the Negro Renaissance when literary figures were feted in art salons such as the Dark Tower of the “mahogany millionairess.”

Today’s social lights neither assume the airs of the early ancestor-worshipping gentry nor indulge in the lush and lavish party display of the Walker era. The new crowd zoomed to the top after the depression of the 30s and chipped off some of high society’s polish and glitter. The war years gave many newcomers a chance to move into the upper brackets and become “pillars of society.”

—“How Society Had Its Birth,” Ebony (1947)

[Nat King] Cole escorted [his daughter Cookie] to the premiere of Breakfast at Tiffany’s. Ebony featured her debut at the Links Cotillion, covering “a day in the life of a debutante” and beginning at the Cole home at 4 a.m. The Cole children knew neither poverty nor the overt racism experienced by less-sheltered black youngsters. They lived a comparatively rarified existence, one that many other blacks, not to mention whites, resented. Maria Cole didn’t seem to display a great deal of concern about how anyone else felt; she simply wanted the best for herself and her family. “A lot of people were alienated because they thought she was living too grand to be black,” says Kelly Cole. “They thought it was an affectation, but it really wasn’t an affectation with
her. It was her New England formality that alienated people. Black people really do have a chip on their shoulder about other black people succeeding. They tried to make her feel guilty, but she wouldn’t accept it.”

—Nat King Cole, by James Haskins

**AMEN**

Today Negro America is dotted with fine modern churches whose predominantly female congregations are led by men with tremendous charm as well as deep spiritual powers. Church census data shows that women membership in Negro congregations is 73 per cent compared to 62 per cent among white churches and inevitably the handsome minister is better able to fill the pews on Sunday. Chicago’s Rev. J. C. Austin . . . puts it bluntly into these words: “Where there is no passion, there is no power. A minister must have power, he must have a flash in his eye and a spring in his step if he is to maintain his position as a leader. It is when he loses his restraint that he steps down from his standard of righteousness.”

—“Ministers with Sex Appeal,” *Ebony* (1949)

**SOUNDS OF CHANGE**

Ever since the middle of the 1940s, the average age of record-buyers had been dropping fast. But in the early years of the ’50s that average age had not yet skidded into the teens; the typical record-store customer was in his early 20s, a so-called young adult. To suit his taste, most popular music was still bland and “sophisticated.”

But while the grownups were doing to Mario Lanza and Tony Bennett, the age level of record purchasers kept plummeting until 1958, when teenagers were buying 70 per cent of all records. Simultaneously the world of popular music was inundated by a wild new sound called rock and roll, a thundering mixture of country-western music with Negro rhythm and blues.

—“From Pop to Rock,” *The 1950s*

For the first time in history, a Negro blues singer is the heavyweight champion of “Millionaire” row. Fats Domino is Number One gold-record winner for the period of 1948–1958. Chugging ahead with a phenomenal 16 disks that have sold over 1 million each, the 200-pound singing piano-pounder has come within four of beating out the all-time “Millionaire” Bing Crosby whose lifetime total is 20. Fats is so far ahead of the most well-known recording stars of today, that he’s lonesome. Lagging far behind the 30-year-old New Orleans rock-’n’-roll boss are Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Harry Belafonte, and Johnny Mathis.

—“Millionaires,” *Ebony* (1959)

**Question:** Is it a sin to play rock-’n’-roll music for a living? **Answer:** . . . It seems to me that one must decide to either play gospel music or rock and roll. The two are totally incompatible. . . . The former serves to lift men’s souls to higher levels of reality, and therefore to God; the latter so often plunges men’s minds into degrading and immoral depths. . . . Never seek to mix the two.

—Rev. Martin Luther King, “Advice for Living,” *Ebony* (1958)

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**TOM BLAIR** (Mr. Loyd/Policeman) has worked at many of this country’s leading regional theaters, including A.C.T. (Indian Ink, The Guardsman, The Royal Family, Othello), Arena Stage, the Kennedy Center, the Cleveland Play House, Stage West in Springfield, Massachusetts, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and 13 years at Milwaukee Repertory Theater. He has performed in Tadashi Suzuki’s Tales of Lear throughout the United States and at the Toga and Mitsu festivals in Japan. Through his association with Mr. Suzuki, Blair has worked often in Japan as an actor and director.

**L. PETER CALLENDER** (Cléante) has appeared at A.C.T. in Hersebe, Insurrection: Holding History, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Tempest, and The Learned Ladies. He recently appeared as Paul Laurence Dunbar in Othello, directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, at Arena Stage and A Question of Mercy at the Magic Theatre. Callender has performed in theaters from Broadway to the Bay, including the Helen Hayes Theatre, New York’s Public Theater, the Pittsburgh Public Theater, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, and the California Shakespeare Festival. Favorite productions include Playboy of the West Indies, Richard III, The Elephant Man, The Haunted Hour, Julius Caesar, and The Tempest. Screen credits include “Nash Bridges,” Dr. Dolittle, A Nightmare before Christmas, Blue Steel, and several soap operas. He has trained at the Juillard School, the Webber/Douglas Academy in London, and the Tadashi Suzuki Company in Japan.

**RUDY GUERRERO** (Valere) made his Geary Theater debut earlier this season in A Christmas Carol. He is a recent graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program and recipient of the Joan Sandler Professional Theatre Intern Fellowship. Bay Area credits include The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas at Pacific Alliance Stage Company; Romeo and Juliet at Marin Shakespeare Company; Grease at the Willows Youth Theatre Company; A Question of Mercy at the Magic Theatre; and Josephine, The Human Comedy, Miami Lights, and The Rink at Theatre Works. On television he played Eddie in the Emmy Award–winning special Secrets. Guerrero has a B.F.A. in musical theater from the Boston Conservatory and an M.F.A. in acting from A.C.T.

**STEVEN ANTHONY JONES** (Orgon) was last seen at A.C.T. in Indian Ink and Hecuba. A.C.T. credits also include Insurrection: Holding History, Seven Guitars, the title role of Othello, Antigone, Miss Evers’ Boys, Clara, Joe Turner’s Come and Gone, Saint Joan, King Lear, Golden Boy, Feathers, and A Christmas Carol. Other local theater credits include Fuerza Ocupada 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; Master Harold . . . and the Boys at San Jose Repertory Theatre, and Division Street at Oakland Ensemble Theatre. He also created the role of Private James Wilkie in the original production of A Soldier’s Play at the Negro Ensemble Company in New York. Jones’s many film and television credits include two seasons of “Midnight Caller.”
NICOLE E. LEWIS (Flipote), a second-year student in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program (ATP), performed most recently in the ATP production of As You Like It at the Magic Theatre. She earned a B.A. in theater and psychology from Yale University, where she performed in The Colored Museum, Suddenly Last Summer, and Once on This Island. Credits also include The Tempest at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Ain’t Misbehavin’ at the Weathervane Theatre, Children of Eden, and Odysseus at Carnegie Hall Studio, as well as singing at Brandy’s Piano Bar in New York.

FANNIE LEE LOWE* (Madame Pernelle), from Pointello, Idaho, came to San Francisco for a two-week vacation and stayed 34 years. She performs with her jazz trio and appeared most recently on “Nash Bridges” and in Tongues, directed by Joseph Chaikin, at the Magic Theatre. She worked with Harry Elam and Robert Kelvin as Lola in Jar the Floor and Mrs. Antebus in The Skin of Our Teeth at TheatreWorks. She has also appeared in feature roles in original Danny Duncan productions for 25 years.

LLOYD C. PORTER* (Laurens), a second-year student in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program (ATP), performed most recently in the ATP production of As You Like It at the Magic Theatre. He graduated in 1996 from CSU Fresno with a B.A. in theater arts. Past ATP credits include Borgheim in Ibsen’s Little Eyolf, the title role of Seneca’s Thyestes, Peacham in The Threepenny Opera, and Moritz in The Fan.

ROXANNE RAJA* (Dorine), a recent graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program and recipient of the Colin Higgins Foundation Professional Theater Internship Fellowship, recently appeared at the Geary Theatre in Nell in Indian Ink and as Polynova in Hector. Other credits include Much Ado about Nothing and The World-Be-Gentleman at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, The Monogamist, She Stoops to Conquer, The Man Who Came to Dinner, and Alley Theatre productions of A Streetcar Named Desire, Julius Caesar, and Antony and Cleopatra (directed by and featuring Corin and Vanessa Redgrave). Raja spent last summer at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, where she played Polyxena in Hector and Scheherezade in The Blue Demon.

ANNA NONI ROSE* (Marzane) was last seen on the Geary stage in Insurrection: Holding History (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award for best ensemble). She received a 1998 Backstage West/Garland Award, Brad Rosenstein’s Upstage/Downstage Award, and a Dean Goodman Choice Award for her performance in Follies at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. A 1997 graduate of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program (ATP), her studio credits include several roles in Mules, Muriel in Ah, Wilderness! and the title roles of Iphigenia at Aulis and Hedda Gabler. She also performed in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program production of A Mouthful of Birds, by Cary Churchill and David Lan; Afro-Italianpower’s Watermelon, with Thick Description at New Langton Arts; and Hydrocephalus, or the Death of Dr. Brosene at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Rose received her B.A. in theater from Florida ASU University.

DARRYL THEIS* (Tartuffe) makes his A.C.T. debut in Tartuffe. He played Paul in South Coast Repertory’s Six Degrees of Separation, for which he received a Drama-Logue Award. Other theater credits include The Importance of Being Earnest, Jeffrey (original cast), Playboy of the West Indies (Gerald Gutierrez, dir.), Richard II (Stephen Berkhoff, dir.), and Death of the Last Black Man in the Whole Entire World at Yale Repertory Theatre. Television credits include starring with Bob Newhart and Judd Hirsch on “George and Leo,” “The Monroes” (series regular), “The Osiris Chronicles,” the television movies Cagney and Lacey and Voice from the Grave, and guest appearances on “Jesse” and “Becker.” Film credits include Turbulence, I Love You, Don’t Touch Me! The Jerky Boys, and Chicago Cab. This fall he can be seen on the new show “Popular.” Theis is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

SHONA TUCKER* (Elmire) appeared at A.C.T. in Insurrection: Holding History. She recently appeared in Oak and Ivy, directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, at Arena Stage. She has appeared off Broadway in Henry VI, Twelfth Night, and The Africans Company Presents Richard III at the Public Theater; A Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (Ohe Award) and The Investigation of the Murder in El Salvador at the New York Theatre Workshop; From the Mississippi Delta at Circle in the Square; Martin’s Room at Playwrights Horizons; Greeks at Manhattan Theatre Club; and The Caucasian Chalk Circle at the New York Shakespeare Festival. She has worked at many regional theaters, including Syracuse Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Acting Company, the Goodspeed Opera House, the Dallas Theatre Center, and Arena Stage. Screen credits include Boys on the Side, Woody Allen’s Alice, New York Undercover, “One Life to Live,” and “Loving.” Tucker received her B.S. from Northwestern University and M.F.A. from New York University and has been honored with a Fulbright Scholarship and an Audelco Award.

GREGORY WALLACE* (Darius) was previously seen at A.C.T. as Ron in Insurrection: Holding History and as Belize in the long-running production of Angels in America (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award). Other theater credits include Our Country’s Good on Broadway, A Light Shining in Buckinghamshire at the New York Theatre Workshop, As You Like It at the Public Theater, Much Ado about Nothing at the Alliance Theatre, The Screens at the Guthrie Theatre, Someone to Watch over Me at South Coast Repertory, The Learned Ladies at the Williamstown Theatre, King Lear at the Whole Theater, The Queen and the Rebels at Center Stage, and The Beaux’ Stratagem at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Screen credits include Peter Sellar’s Cabinet of Dr. Ramires, The Beverly Hillbillies, Dark Goddess, “Crime Story,” and “Internal Affairs.” Wallace is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama and teaches acting in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program.

MARCO BARRICELLI* (Undersudy/Fight Consultant/Assistant Director), an associate artist at A.C.T. since 1996, has appeared in Long Day’s Journey into Night, Hedda, Mary Stuart, Insurrection: Holding History, A Streetcar Named Desire, and The Rose Tattoo (Drama-Logue Award). Among his other favorite theatrical experiences are: Magic Fire at the Guthrie Theater; Silence with the Japanese theater company Subaru and Milwaukee Repertory.
THEATER: A Moon for the Misbegotten at Milwaukee Repertory Theater; The Tuning of the Shrew at South Coast Repertory (Drama-Logue Award); Richard III and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof at Missouri Repertory Theatre; and Henry V, Richard III, and many other plays at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He has also worked with the Intimia Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Portland Center Stage, Utah Shakespearean Festival, California Shakespeare Festival, and Illinois Shakespeare Festival, among many others. Screen credits include “L.A. Law,” Romeo and Juliet, Gipango! and 11th Hour. A graduate of the Juilliard School, Barricelli teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program.

MARGO HALL* (Understudy/Assistant Director) has appeared at A.C.T. in Hedda Gabler and A Streetcar Named Desire. She recently appeared as Alice Dunbar in Oak and Ivy, directed by Charles Randolph-Wright, at Arena Stage. She made her San Francisco theatrical debut as Anita Hill in Unquestioned Integrity: The Bill Thomas Hearings at the Magic Theatre. Last year she received critical acclaim in Polaroid Stories and earned a Goldie Award for her acting and directing achievements. She has appeared with WORD FOR WORD in Rose Johnny and The Blues I'm Playing (which toured Paris). As a member of Arena Stage’s acting company, she appeared in A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner?, Conquest of the South Pole, and Playboy of the West Indies. Hall’s screen work includes “Nash Bridges” and current contract for Kirk Douglas. She received her M.F.A. from Catholic University of America and is a core member of San Francisco’s Campo Santo.

JUNE A. LOMENA* (Understudy) made her A.C.T. debut last season in Insurrection: Holding History. Her theater credits also include Venus and The American Play with Thick Description, Late Bus to Mecia with Theatre Rhinoceros and the Black Artists Contemporary Cultural Experience, A Midsummer Night’s Dream and As You Like It with the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Silvius and the Cast of the Quilt with the Magic Theatre, Pericles and Twelfth Night with Shakespeare Santa Cruz, and Macbeth with Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Lomena attended the A.C.T. Summer Training Congress in 1993 and apprenticed at the California Shakespeare Festival in 1994. She studied political science and English literature at Brown University.

MICHAIL GENE SULLIVAN* (Understudy) last appeared at A.C.T. in The First Picture Show. Other A.C.T. credits include Mochinal, Pecos, and, for the past three years, A Christmas Carol. He is also a member of the Tony and Obie Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe and has performed in, written, or directed over 20 productions. Other credits include productions at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, and the Eureka and Lorraine Hansberry Theatres, as well as performances at Broadway at the Kennedy Center, and at theater festivals in Hong Kong, Jerusalem, South Korea, Canada, and Belgium. This fall Sullivan’s one-person show, Did Anyone Ever Tell You—You Look Like Huey P. Newton? will world premiere at the New York International Fringe Theatre Festival.

RHONNIE WASHINGTON* (Understudy) is part of the College of Creative Arts Department of Theatre Arts at San Francisco State University (SFSU). An associate artist with Thick Description, she has appeared there in Suzanne Lorréi Parker’s Venus, Blade to the Heart, Santos y Santos, King Lear, and The American Play. She played Agamemnon in the American Citizens’ Theatrical production of The Gods of the Mountain. Washington directed Tennessee Williams’s Glass Menagerie at SFSU last fall and will direct Lanford Wilson’s Burn This in October.

CHARLES RANDOLPH-WRIGHT (Director) directed Insurrection: Holding History at A.C.T. last season. He currently is a producer and writer of Showtime television’s critically acclaimed series “Line.” He recently directed Oak and Ivy at Arena Stage, and cowrote and directed The Devil Is Dismissed at the New York Shakespeare Festival/Public Theater and in Los Angeles and Homecoming in New York and Los Angeles. Other theater directing credits include the 20th-anniversary production of Hair at the United Nations, Miss Coco Peru’s Liquid Universe in New York and Los Angeles, and productions at Lincoln Center, New York Theatre Workshop, Manhattan Theatre Club, Classic Stage Company, Mark Taper Forum, and Carnegie Hall. His productions have received NAACP Image, Drama-Logue, Ovation, HOLA Weekly, Robbie, Garland, and Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle awards. Screenplay credits include Homecoming for 20th Century Fox, Fool’s Hill for Walt Disney Pictures, The Angela Davis Story for Castle Rock Entertainment (coproducer) and the recently completed White Chocolate (cowritten with John Leguizamo). Upcoming projects include producing and cowriting Bloodlines, a Showtime film starring Vanessa Williams and Cynda Williams. He is a founding member of the Wright Foundation of South Carolina.

RALPH FUNICELLO (Scenic Designer) has been associated with A.C.T. as a set designer since 1972, including serving as the head of design from 1989–90. He most recently designed the sets for Mary Stuart and Manchurian. He has designed the scenery for more than 150 theater productions throughout the United States and Canada. An artistic associate at the Old Globe Theatre, he has also worked extensively with the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, and Seattle Repertory Theatre. His work has been seen on and off Broadway, at the Lincoln Center Theatre Co., Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, American Festival Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, Guthrie Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Stratford Festival in Ontario, and New York City Opera. His designs have been recognized by Bay Area and Los Angeles Drama Critics’ Circle awards and Drama-Logue magazine. Funicello is the Powell Chair in Set Design at San Diego State University.

BEAVER BAUER (Costume Designer) has designed costumes for A.C.T. productions of Insurrection: Holding History, The Royal Family, The Matchmaker, Uncle Vanya, The Learned Ladies, Good, Twelfth Night, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Feathers, A Pill of the Mind, and The Floating Light Bulb. She has designed extensively for the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Eureka Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Lamplighters, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, Pickle Family Circus, Classic Stage Company, Theatre of Yugen, and the Riviera and Desert Inn Hotels in Las Vegas. From 1972 to 1984 she worked in all capacities for the Angles of Light, a troupe that specializes in cabaret and theater, and in 1995 she designed an international circus that travelled to Moscow and Japan. Bauer has won several Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards.

PETER MARADUDIN (Lighting Designer) has designed the lighting for more than 30 A.C.T. productions, including Long Day’s Journey into Night.
Juno and the Paycock, Hedenda, Old Times, Mary Stuart, Insurrection: Holding History. Mrs. Warren’s Profession, Singer’s Boy, The Royal Family, Machinal, A Christmas Carol, The Rose Tattoo, Silentel the First, The Matchmaker, The Cherry Orchard, Dark Rapture, and The Tempest. He also designed the lighting for The Kentucky Cycle and Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom on Broadway and Ballad of Yachio at the Public Theater. His regional theater designs include more than 200 productions for companies across the United States; other recent Bay Area productions include Hydaphobia, Skyhight, Valley Song, and Pentecost for Berkeley Rep. Maradun has received four Los Angeles Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards, more than thirty Drama-Logue Awards, and an Angstrom Award for lifetime achievement. He is a principal designer with Light and Truth, a San Francisco lighting-design firm, and is on the faculty of the California Institute of the Arts.

GARTH HEMPHILL (Sound Designer) is in his second season as A.C.T.’s resident sound designer. He has designed more than 70 productions in the past eight years, including A.C.T.’s productions of The First Picture Show, Long Day’s Journey into Night, Juno and the Paycock, Hedenda, Insurrection: Holding History, A Christmas Carol, Mary Stuart, The Guardsman, Old Times, and A Streetcar Named Desire (Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Award). He has earned Drama-Logue Awards for his work on The Moon, A Christmas Carol (at South Coast Repertory), The Things You Don’t Know. Blithe Spirit, New England, Lips Together. Teeth Apart. Fortinbras, and the world première of Richard Greenberg’s Three Days of Rain. During the past seven years, Hemphill has also served as technical director and sound designer for ten productions of Divas Simply Saging, a benefit for Project Angel Food and other AIDS charities.

RICK ECHOLS (Hair and Makeup) has worked on more than 200 A.C.T. productions since 1971. He designed wig and makeup for A.C.T.’s television productions of Cyrano de Bergerac, A Christmas Carol, and The Taming of the Shrew, as well as many other television and film productions. He also designed hair and makeup for the original production of Cinderella at the San Francisco Ballet, Hamlet for the American Shakespeare Festival, A Life for the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Canada, and Angels in America for the Eugene O’Neill Theatre Company. Echols returned to A.C.T. in 1996 after four and a half years on the road with the national tour of Les Misérables.

KIMBERLY MARK WEBB * (Production Stage Manager) returns this year for his fifth season at A.C.T., where he has worked most recently on Long Day’s Journey into Night, Juno and the Paycock, Hedenda (at A.C.T. and the Williamsstown Theatre Festival), A Streetcar Named Desire, Insurrection: Holding History, Mary Stuart, and Old Times. During 19 years with Berkeley Repertory Theatre he stage-managed more than 70 productions, including the Mark Taper mainstage inaugural production of Brecht’s Galileo, The Norman Conquests, American Buffalo (coproduced with Milwaukee Repertory Theatre), The Tooth of Crime, Man and Superman, Hard Times (as part of New York’s Joyce Festival), Spunk, and An Ideal Husband. Other credits include the San Francisco production of Picasso at the Lapin Agile, The Woman Warrior Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, and The Lady from the Sea at Boston’s Huntington Theatre Company. Webb served as production stage manager at Theatre Three in Dallas for six years.

ELISA GUTHERTZ * (Assistant Stage Manager) was assistant stage manager for Long Day’s Journey into Night earlier this season at A.C.T. Other A.C.T. credits include Mary Stuart, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Royal Family, The Rose Tattoo, Gaslight, and Dark Rapture. She was also recently the stage manager for Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Collected Stories. She has stage-managed numerous productions for the California Shakespeare Festival, including Othello, Richard III, and Pericles.

CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) assumed artistic leadership of A.C.T. in June 1992. Perloff has since led the company to unprecedented success, including the receipt of the prestigious 1996 Jujamcyn Theaters Award and the triumphant reopening of the Geary Theater following its $28.2 million restoration. Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff’s work at A.C.T. includes this season’s highly acclaimed remounting of Euripides’ Hecuba with Olympia Dukakis, a new production Perloff began at the Williamsstown Theatre Festival in August 1998, and the American premiere of Tom Stoppard’s Indian Ink. Other work at A.C.T. includes Friedrich Schiller’s Mary Stuart and Harold Pinter’s Old Times; Stoppard’s Arcadia; Tennessee Williams’s Rose Tattoo with Kathleen Welds and Marco Barricelli; Sophocles’ Antigone; August Strindberg’s Creditors; Paul Schmid’s new translation of Anton Chekhov’s Uncle Vanya; David Storey’s Home; the world première of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer’s Boy; and the Geary Theater inaugural production of Shakespeare’s Tempest, which featured David Strathairn and the Kronos Quartet. In 1993, Perloff directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Koror’s opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival and the Brooklyn Academy of Music. She recently staged Christoph Gluck’s Iphigenia en Tauride for the San Francisco Opera Center.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of CSC Repertory (the Classic Stage Company) in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Ezra Pound’s Elektra with Pamela Reed and Nancy Marchand; the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language and The Birthday Party with Jean Stapleton, Strathairn, and Pierce Brosnan; Berolt Brecht’s The Reisstide of Arturo Ui with John Turturro and Katherine Borowitz; and many other classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, CSC won the 1989 Obie Award for artistic excellence as well as numerous Obies for acting, design, and direction.

Perloff received a B.A. (Phi Beta Kappa) in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fullbright Fellow at Oxford University. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and currently teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program, for whom she recently staged a cabaret version of The Threepenny Opera. She is the proud mother of Lexie and Nicholas.

HEATHER M. KITCHEN (Managing Director), now in her 25th year of professional theater management and production, joined A.C.T. as managing director in 1996. She is a member of the executive committee of the U.S. League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the arts evaluation and accreditation team of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, the board of governors of the Commonwealth Club of California, and the board of directors of Big Brother/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the peninsula. Before joining A.C.T., she served as general manager of the Citadel Theatre in Edmonton, Alberta, where she was responsible for a five-theater complex that produced up to 16 productions annually. A native of Canada, she has served as a strategic planning consultant for leading arts and educational institutions, taught at eight universities and colleges throughout the country, and served on the Canada Council for the Arts Advisory Committee and the executive committee of the Edmonton Professional Arts Council. Kitchen received an honors degree in drama and theater arts from the University of Waterloo and earned her M.B.A. from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario.

MELISSA SMITH (Conservatory Director), the master acting teacher of the A.C.T. Advanced Training Program, has taught acting to students of all ages throughout the United States. Before assuming leadership of the A.C.T.
Conservatory in 1995, she was 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 actor, she has performed in regional theaters and in numerous off-off-Broadway plays. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

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

**CRAIG SLAGHT** (Young Conservatory Director) spent ten years in Los Angeles directing television and televisions before joining A.C.T. in 1988. An award-winning educator, Slaght is a consultant to the Educational Theater Association and the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts and is a frequent speaker and adjudicator throughout the country. He has published ten anthologies for young actors, three of which were selected by the New York Public Library as “Outstanding Books for the Teenage.” In 1989, he founded the Young Conservatory’s New Plays Program; 11 new works by professional playwrights have been developed, nine of which have been published by Smith & Kraus in New Plays from A.C.T.’s Young Conservatory. In January 1998 Carey Perloff awarded Slaght the first Artistic Director’s Award for his contributions to A.C.T.

**BRUCE WILLIAMS** (Director of Summer Training Congress & Community Programs) has had a 23-year working relationship with A.C.T., where he has taught in the Advanced Training Program (ATP), Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. (which he also administers), directed numerous ATP studio productions, and acted in more than 40 mainstage productions. He has also performed on numerous other West Coast stages and has worked extensively in film, television, and voice-over.

**PAUL WALSH** (Dramaturg & Director of Humanities) has extensive experience as a dramaturg, translator, and adaptor, including many years collaborating with the Minneapolis-based Theatre de la Jeune Lune on such projects as Children of Paradise, Germinal, Don Juan Giovanni, and The Hitchhiker of Notre Dame. His translation of Strindberg’s Creditor was directed by Perloff at CSC in New York in 1991 and at A.C.T. in 1992. Walsh received a Ph.D. in drama from the University of Toronto and taught theater history and dramatic literature at Southern Methodist University. His critical writings appear in The Production Notebooks, Re-interpreting Brecht, Strindberg’s Dramaturgy, Theater Symposium, and Essays in Theater.

**MERLYN LIND SHAW** (Artistic Manager/Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff in 1993. During the previous 17 years, she stage-managed more than 60 productions throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s Bon Appetit! and Creditor. She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for 12 years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She was active with Actors’ Equity Association for many years and served on the AEA negotiating committee in 1992 and 1993. Other casting projects include San Francisco’s Picasso at the Lapin Agile and the CD-ROM game Obsidian.

**VISA U.S.A.**

San Francisco–based Visa U.S.A. is proud to continue its support of A.C.T. as part of the company’s commitment to performing arts that enrich the lives of people in the Bay Area and beyond.

For patrons of the arts, Visa is truly “everywhere you want to be.” Visa supports a variety of events each year that entertain, excite, and educate customers. These events touch upon a wide variety of interests, ranging from musical performances to world-class exhibits and tours. In addition to being the preferred card of A.C.T., Visa is involved with the San Francisco Symphony, The Orchestra Partnership (TOPS), and “A Grand Design: The Art of the Victoria and Albert Museum”—the first traveling exhibition of selections from the London museum’s legendary masterpieces (on view in San Francisco at the Legion of Honor February 13–May 9).

Visa card products, preference programs, and special offers help to bring the arts closer to thousands of patrons nationwide. Last holiday season, for example, preferred seating was available to patrons who used their Visa cards to purchase tickets to A.C.T.’s Christmas Carol.

**KBLX 102.9 FM**

Few radio stations in the United States have survived the many musical trends which have come and gone over the years. While radio stations, call letters, and formats continue to change daily, KBLX has endured as an industry leader and music innovator since 1979.

From the start, KBLX envisioned a format offering adult listeners a unique music experience not available anywhere else in the country. In contrast to top-40 and album-rock formats, KBLX began delivering a sound encompassing a wide range of music—from pop and R&B to jazz instrumental and soundtrack recordings. This carefully selected mix became known as “soft and warm, the Quiet Storm.”

The station’s popularity soared as more Bay Area adults tuned in and became familiar with KBLX’s musical diversity. KBLX was the first to play the music of such artists as Anita Baker, Kenny G, Luther Vandross, Sade, Whitney Houston, Will Downing, Toni Braxton, and others, who are now considered the music superstars of the eighties and nineties.

Impressed with KBLX’s success reaching adult demographics, other radio stations began copying the station’s format, and “Quiet Storm,” adult alternative, and new adult contemporary stations began to appear around the country. Acknowledged as a leader in contemporary music by the radio and record industries, KBLX continues to break new ground in its music and is committed to achieving musical excellence in the future.
BISCUITS & BLUES
Biscuits & Blues, in the heart of San Francisco’s downtown theater district, is an intimate restaurant, bar, and music venue serving the best in contemporary southern cuisine and offering live music nightly. The facility features the best of Bay Area and national blues artists with a concert-quality sound system that heightens the listening experience. Biscuits & Blues serves fresh and updated seasonal American cuisine with an emphasis on influences from the American South, including seafood, steak, chicken, vegetarian options, salads, appetizers, and homemade desserts. Yep—we have biscuits!

Biscuits & Blues offers live entertainment, without age limits, with dinner served from 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and from 6 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Happy hours are 5–7 p.m. nightly. The mirror-backed, full-service premium bar offers reasonably priced beverages with an emphasis on upscale liquors, local micro brews on draft, and California wines.

Biscuits & Blues is conveniently located at 401 Mason Street, across the street from the Geary Theater and just one short block from historic Union Square. The box office is open after 10 a.m. Monday through Saturday. Tickets and reservations can be arranged by calling (415) 292-2583.

HONORING A.C.T.'S FRIENDS
Do you 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 and work with administrative departments, help at selected performances, staff the library, 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:

G. David Anderson
Alison Auguustin
Merie Bauer
Helen Bachner
Joan Cahill
Geraldine Collins
Maureen Dan
Elinor Foreman
Princess Frieder
Barbara Gerber
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Joe Rosenthal
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Ellen Sproule
Sam Shal
Sylvia Cook Tolle
Rick Villa
Jean Wilcox
Johanna Wilkens
For information about the Friends of A.C.T., call (415) 438-2301.
For information about ushering, call (415) 438-2349.

VISIT IRELAND WITH A.C.T.
Experience the great Irish literary tradition on A.C.T.’s second tour to the Emerald Isle, September 29–October 9, 1999. This ten-day excursion brings A.C.T. professionals and fellow travelers together for a dramatic journey to the heart of the Irish theater, which has become increasingly popular on this side of the Atlantic in recent years as contemporary Irish drama has taken Broadway and off-Broadway stages by storm.

The trip begins with three nights in the lively city of Galway, where we’ll visit the Druid Theatre (home to the Tony Award-winning director Garry Hines) and meet with leading members of that city’s vibrant theater community. On a day trip to the isolated Aran Islands, the setting of John Synge’s plays, you can glimpse the Ireland of centuries past before continuing up the coast to spend two days in the region immortalized in Yeats’s poetry. The journey concludes with four nights in the capital city during the world-renowned Dublin Theatre Festival. This annual festival features a rich variety of productions, including plays from Irish writers old and new, as well as the best of new international drama and the performing arts. You’ll receive tickets to three productions and the chance to meet the festival director at the Dublin Writer’s Museum.

The $2,750 package price includes round-trip air travel from San Francisco on Delta Airlines, nine nights’ accommodations (including breakfast daily), guided sightseeing tours, theater tickets and discussions, five dinners, all taxes and portage, and a tax-deductible contribution to A.C.T. Reserve your place now! Call (415) 439-2313 for a free brochure.

RING IN THE MILLENNIUM WITH A.C.T. IN LONDON
It’s not too early to start planning your millennial New Year’s Eve celebration with A.C.T. in London. From December 26, 1999 through January 2, 2000, A.C.T.’s fourth annual New Year’s London tour will bring together A.C.T. professionals and fellow theater lovers for a dramatic journey to the heart of English theater for a once-in-a-millennium opportunity to welcome the year 2000 at Windsor Castle.

The group will spend seven days and six nights in London attending the best current theatrical offerings, including West End shows, a production at the renowned Royal National Theatre, and a New Year’s Day performance at the recently restored Globe Theatre (including a backstage tour and afternoon tea). Other highlights include personalized guided tours of London, a day trip to William Shakespeare’s home, Stratford-upon-Avon (and a matinee at the
Royal Shakespeare Theatre, and a special New Year’s Eve visit to Windsor Castle, including the queen’s official residence which was recently reopened to the public after a five-year, $63 million renovation. You can celebrate New Year’s Eve with a private dinner at London’s famous Beekeeper’s Banquet Hall and, as the seconds tick down to the year 2000, view the magnificent fireworks from St. Katherine’s dock along the Thames River.

The $2,999 package price includes round-trip, nonstop airfare from any city in the U.S., first-class accommodations at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel, located just a few blocks from Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens, full English breakfast daily, orchestra-seat tickets to all productions, a London transport pass, all taxes and portage, and a tax-deductible contribution to A.C.T. For a free information packet, please call (415) 439-2313.

A.C.T. JOINS CITYSEARCH ON THE WEB

CitySearch7.com and A.C.T. have teamed up to provide an exciting new forum for discussion of Bay Area theater. Now you can see what fellow theatergoers think of Tartuffe anytime, day or night, and respond with your own thoughts. Simply log on to CitySearch7.com at www.citysearch7.com, click on “Post on Our Message Boards,” click on the A.C.T. discussion, and register your opinion. CitySearch7.com—it’s how to get to the good stuff in the Bay Area.

A.C.T. APPLAUDS SFMOMA FOR DRAMATIC PRESENTATION OF BILL VIOLA EXHIBITION

A.C.T. encourages you to enjoy a theatrical experience in an unexpected location. Journey through a dramatic series of video installations and experience a wide spectrum of emotional states as the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art presents “Bill Viola,” a full-scale overview of the work of the California-based media artist, on view from June 25 through September 12. Widely recognized as the leading figure in his field, Viola creates environments that poignantly address the universal themes of life and death, the passage of time, the power of nature, human spirituality, and personal relationships. Viola’s longtime friend, renowned theater director Peter Sellars, contributed his talents to the staging of the time-based theatrical works, enhancing the presentation of this highly moving exhibition.

SFMOMA is located at 151 Third Street. For hours and exhibition information, please call SFMOMA at (415) 357-4000.
1998–99 NATIONAL CORPORATE THEATRE FUND
The National Corporate Theatre Fund is a nonprofit corporation created to increase and strengthen support from the business community for ten of this country’s most distinguished professional theaters. The American Conservatory Theatre receives the support of the following corporations and individuals through their contributions to the National Corporate Theatre Fund:

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LEADERSHIP CAMPAIGN FOR AMERICAN THEATRE
The Leadership Campaign for American Theatre is a $5 million challenge project to build much-needed corporate support for non-profit professional theatre in the United States. American Conservatory Theater is one of the resident theaters that is benefiting from the campaign. To date, the following corporations have committed more than $600,000, in total, to the Leadership Campaign:
American Express
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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

BOX OFFICE AND TICKET INFORMATION
Geary Theater Box Office
Visit us at 401 Geary Street at Mason, next to the Geary Theater, one block west of Union Square. Box office hours are 12 to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, and 12 to 6 p.m. Sunday and Monday. During non-performances weeks, business hours are 12 to 6 p.m. daily.

BASS
Tickets are also available at BASS centers, including The Wharehouse and Tower Records/Videol

Online
Tickets are also available 24 hours/day on our Web site at www.act-sf.bay.org.

Charge by Phone or Fax
Call (415) 749–2250 and use your Visa, MasterCard, or American Express card. Or fax your ticket request with credit card information to (415) 749–2250.

Purchase Policy
All sales are final, and there are no refunds. Only current subscribers enjoy performance rescheduling privileges and lost-ticket insurance. If you are unable to attend at the last minute, you can donate your tickets to A.C.T. The value of donated tickets will be acknowledged by mail. Tickets for past performances cannot be considered a donation.

Hailing List
Call (415) 749–2250 or visit our Web site to request subscription information and advance notice of A.C.T. events.

Ticket Prices
Ticket prices range from $11 to $55.

Subscriptions
Full-season subscribers save up to 29% and receive special benefits including parking, restaurant, and extra-ticket discounts, performance rescheduling by phone, and more. Call the A.C.T. Subscription Hotline at (415) 749–2250 to find out about four- and seven-play packages.

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 Geary Theater Box Office 90 minutes before curtain. Matinee senior rush tickets are available one hour prior to the performance. All rush tickets are subject to availability, one ticket per valid ID.

Student subscriptions are available at half price. Senior citizen discounts are available for full-season and sampler series subscriptions. A.C.T. also offers one Pay What You Wish performance during the regular run of each production: patrons are allowed to pay any amount for tickets when they bring in a donation of canned food for Project Open Hand.

Group Discounts
For groups of 15 or more, call Linda Graham, Group Services, at (415) 346–7805.

Gift Certificates
A.C.T. gift certificates can be purchased in any amount by phone, fax, or in person at the Geary Theater Box Office. Gift certificates are valid for three years and may be redeemed for any performance or for A.C.T. merchandise.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS
A.C.T. Extras
For information on A.C.T. Prologues, Audience Exchanges, A.C.T. Perspectives symposia, and Words on Plays audience handbooks, please turn to the “A.C.T. Extras” page of this program.

Student Matinees
Matinees are offered at 1 p.m. to elementary, secondary, and college school groups for selected productions. Tickets are specially priced at $10. For information call (415) 439–2383.

Conservatory
A.C.T. offers classes, training, and advanced study in a wide range of theater disciplines. The Advanced Training Program offers a rigorous three-year course of actor training, culminating in a master of fine arts degree. The Summer Training Congress is an intensive program for those with some performing arts background. Studio A.C.T. offers evening and weekend classes, including new Corporate Education Services, to theater enthusiasts at every level of background and training. The Young Conservatory is a broad-based program for students between the ages of 8 and 18. Call (415) 439–2150 for a free brochure.

Costume Rental
More than 10,000 costumes, ranging from handmade period garments to modern sportswear, are available for rental by schools, theaters, production companies, and individuals. For information call (415) 439–2379.

Packing
A.C.T. patrons can park for just $8 at the San Francisco Hilton and Towers for up to five hours, subject to availability. Enter on Ellis Street between Mason and Taylor. Show your ticket stub for that day’s performance upon exit to receive the special price. After five hours, the regular rate applies.
AT THE THEATER

The Geary Theater is located at 415 Geary Street. The auditorium opens 30 minutes before curtain.

A.C.T. Merchandise
Posters, sweatshirts, t-shirts, nighthawks, mugs, note cards, scripts, and Books on Plays are available for purchase in the main lobby and at the Geary Theater Box Office.

Refreshments
Bar service is available one hour before the performance in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level and in the Sky Lobby on the second balcony level. Reservations for refreshments to be served at intermission may also be made, at either bar or in the main lobby, during the hour before performance. Food and drink are not permitted in the auditorium.

Beeper!
If you carry a pager, beeper, cellular phone, or watch with alarm, please make sure that it is set to the “off” position while you are in the theater. Or you may leave it and your seat number with the house manager, so you can be notified if you are called.

Emergency Telephone
Leave your seat location with those who may need to reach you and have them call (415) 439-2396 in an emergency.

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

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

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

Rest rooms are located in Fred's Columbia Room on the lower lobby level, the Balcony Lobby, and the Garret on the uppermost lobby level.

Wheelchair seating is available on all levels of the Geary Theater. Please call (415) 772-9999 in advance to notify the house staff of any special needs.

AFFILIATIONS

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

A.C.T. is a constituent of 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, Union Square Associates, San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, and San Francisco Convention Visitors Bureau.

A.C.T. logo designed by Landor Associates.

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

A.C.T. is supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, California Council for the Humanities and Grants for the Arts of the San Francisco Hotel Tax Fund.

A.C.T. is funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency.

A.C.T. is a participant in the National Theatre Artist Residency Program, administered by Theatre Communications Group, the national organization for the American theater, and funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts.

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