THE RAINMAKER

by N. Richard Nash

Directed by Mark Rucker

A.C.T.

American Conservatory Theater

Encore Arts Programs

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About A.C.T.

American Conservatory Theater nurtures the art of live theater through dynamic productions, intensive actor training in its conservatory, and an ongoing dialogue with its community. Under the leadership of Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Heather Kitchen, A.C.T. embraces its responsibility to conserve, renew, and reinvest its relationship to the rich theatrical traditions and literatures that are our collective legacy, while exploring new artistic forms and new communities. A commitment to the highest standards informs every aspect of A.C.T.'s creative work.

Founded in 1965 by William Ball, A.C.T. opened its first San Francisco season at the Geary Theater in 1967. In the 1970s, A.C.T. solidified its national and international reputation, winning a Tony Award for outstanding theater performance and training in 1979. During the past four decades, more than 300 A.C.T. productions have been performed to a combined audience of seven million people; today, A.C.T.'s performance, education, and outreach programs annually reach more than 250,000 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 Theater Awards. In 2001, to celebrate A.C.T.'s 35th anniversary and Perloff’s 10th season, A.C.T. created a new core company of actors, who have become instrumental in every aspect of its work.

Today A.C.T. is recognized nationally for its groundbreaking productions of classical works and bold explorations of contemporary playwriting. Since the reopening of the Geary Theater (now the American Conservatory Theater) in 1996, A.C.T. has enjoyed a remarkable period of audience expansion and financial stability. In 2001, A.C.T. began producing alternative work at Zoean Theater, which now serves as a venue for student productions and exciting new plays. The company continues to produce challenging theater in the rich context of symposia, audience discussions, and community interaction.

The conservatory, led by Melissa Smith and George Thompson, now serves 3,000 students every year. It was the first actor training program in the United States not affiliated with a college or university accredited to award a master of fine arts degree. Danny Glover, Annette Bening, Denzel Washington, and Elizabeth Banks are among the conservatory’s distinguished former students. With its commitment to excellence in actor training and to the relationship between training, performance, and audience, the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program has moved to the forefront of America’s actor training programs, while serving as the creative engine of the company at large.
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American Conservatory Theater was founded in 1961 by William Ball.

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A.C.T. Box Office
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Discipline vs. Rigidity

What's the difference?

For Bingham, Osborn & Scarborough, discipline means a long-term investment perspective not driven by fads or market anomalies. Discipline means knowing you before we invest for you. Discipline means carefully analyzing trends, not chasing them. Discipline means plain speaking, even when it may be uncomfortable. Discipline requires effort. Discipline is execution. Discipline ensures that you and your wealth endure.

At Bingham, Osborn & Scarborough, our discipline gives you flexibility.

Dear Friends,

People often ask how we plan seasons at A.C.T., and The Raimaker serves as a wonderful example of the complex ways in which that planning process evolves. One of the things we like to consider is what the entire journey will feel like as you travel through a season at A.C.T. As with any good journey, the road should yield some unexpected thrills, some eye-opening new views, some familiar landscapes seen anew, some real nourishment, and, when we're lucky, a sense of emotional release. We began our season with the outrageous creativity of Svengali Told, which surely qualifies for the "unexpected thrills and eye-opening new views" category! And we follow Svengali with a heartwarming icon of the American theater, a play you may think you know but that we feel sure will give you the kind of emotional catharsis you crave from the theater.

A true "actor's play," The Raimaker is a favorite play of our core acting company, and this is a second reason we gravitate towards certain productions: to see René Augensen play Lizzie is itself a compelling reason for producing The Raimaker, which contains marvelous roles for several of our associate artists, as well as for a young actor, Alec Moffett, from our master of fine arts program who is making his A.C.T. mainstage debut in this production. Another notable reason is the opportunity to bring back two artists whose work we particularly admired last season: Canadian actor Georgie Johnson, who played a wicked Henry Clay in Travesties (and returns to tackle the magnetic role of Starbucks in The Raimaker) and director Mark Rucker, with whom we collaborated so happily on Luminous Dying, our coproduction with the Magic Theatre. This production also reunites us with some of our favorite designers, Robert Mark Morgan and Don Darnutzer, whose sets and lights for A Moon for the Misbegotten remain a highlight of recent seasons, and

Lydia Tanji, whose imaginative costumes were seen last season in our epic production of After the War.

The Raimaker is a play about hope. This is the third factor that came into play as we planned our season. We are living in a tough moment in American history. Engaged in a long-term war, worrying about our economy, and girding our loins for the election season ahead, this is a moment in which we can all use a taste of the inexpressible kind of hope that The Raimaker invokes. We know that when Lizzie falls for Starbucks she is putting her faith in someone who has nothing to recommend him but charisma and positive thinking, yet we root for her because we realize that sometimes you have to believe good things are possible. I love the feeling this play gives you at the end, the sense of release and the joy in the future that we feel all too rarely.

While The Raimaker is playing at A.C.T., many other creative enterprises are occurring on our other stages. We hope you will join us in late October for a work-in-progress presentation of The Tesla Project, a wild collaboration between myself and choreographer Val Caniparoli featuring a remarkable company of dancers and actors. Also in October, our third-year M.F.A. Program students will perform a repertory of plays directed by Bay Area greats Barbara Oliver and Ken Rutak Shaw's Candida and Wilde's The Importance of Being Earnest.

And, as always, please join us for one of our many audience events, from Audience Exchange discussions with the cast to Theater on the Couch, OUT night, and the upcoming Koer Visiting Artist Series panel, where you yourself can play an integral role in the experience of great theater at A.C.T.

As always, we are deeply grateful for your feedback and for your support. May the rains bring you much joy!

Yours,

Cory Perlloff
Artistic Director
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FROM THE

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Yours,

Cory Perliss

Artistic Director
NEW GOAL OF $30 MILLION SET FOR
THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN

$5 MILLION INCREASE TO BENEFIT NEW WORKS ENDOWMENT
$1 MILLION CHALLENGE GRANT ANNOUNCED

Thanks to the remarkable generosity of the greater A.C.T. community, which has resulted in nearly $24 million in gifts and pledges to date, A.C.T. is pleased to announce that it has increased The Next Generation Campaign goal from $25 to $30 million. The additional $5 million will be directed to the New Works Endowment, bringing that goal to $10 million and matching the goals for the Mainstage and Actor Training Endowments. Together, these three categories comprise the $30 million campaign that will establish a permanent endowment fund for A.C.T. Once established, the earnings from the endowment will provide crucial support for staging ambitious productions featuring distinguished visiting artists, attracting top-tier students and faculty to our conservatory, and for strengthening A.C.T.'s ability to commission and develop the provocative new works that keep theater vibrant.

In response to this ambitious increase in the overall goal, close friends of A.C.T. Jeff and Laurie Ubhne have made a generous challenge: they will match all new or increased gifts to The Next Generation Campaign this season dollar for dollar up to $1 million.

Jeff and Laurie have made this challenge to encourage others to join them in helping to ensure a prosperous future for A.C.T. Representatives of A.C.T. will be contacting you in the near future to ask for your participation in The Next Generation Campaign. Please help us meet this generous challenge and double the impact of your gift. Together, we can secure the future of great theater for generations to come!
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IN MEMORIAM

Justin Brennen Leath and Bob MacDonald

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Jeff Irwin

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“A SIMPLE STORY ABOUT FAITH”

BY MICHAEL PALLER

If that were all The Rainmaker had to say on the subject of dreams—that dreams are fine for children but that adults must settle for reality—it wouldn’t have become a phenomenon: when Nash recalled this meeting in 1956, the film version was about to be released and the play had been produced 90 times around the world. By the time Nash died in 2000, it had been translated into 40 languages, including an unwritten African one. Surely, there are few plays that stake the claims of reality over those of dreams and win the love and affection of a worldwide audience. The Rainmaker isn’t one of them.

For if we look closely at The Rainmaker, we see that it does not divide its characters into dreamers and realists. Rather, Nash populates his world with those for whom dreaming is as natural as rain, and those who want in their hearts to dream but who, for any number of reasons, cannot take the risk. Lizzie Curry is one of those who are caught high and dry in a drought of dust and reality. “You’re all dreams,” she says to Starbuck. “And it’s no good to live in your dreams.” Starbuck, who wants things to be as beautiful when he gets them as they are when he thinks about them, replies, “It’s no good to live outside your dreams either.” “Somewhere between the two,” Lizzie offers as a compromise. At first glance her response doesn’t make much sense. What does it mean, how is it possible, to live somewhere between dreams and reality? But she is wiser than she knows, and it is Nash’s accomplishment that he shows us that we can change the world of our quotidian reality if we nourish it with dreams.

Starbuck advertises himself as a rainmaker, a bringer of new life. “You’re in a padel of trouble,” he says to Noah, the elder Curry brother and, like Lizzie, a hard-eyed nondreamer. “You’ve lost twelve steers on the north range and sixty-two in the gully.” The solution, of course, is rain, which Starbuck promises in prodigious amounts: “Rain in buckets, rain in barrels, fill in the lowlands, floodin’ the gullies. And the land is as green as the valley of Adam.”

It is not necessarily rain that will make the world fertile. Starbuck makes it green for Lizzie through his dreams; his gift for dreaming big dreams is what gives Lizzie permission to have her small ones: “Like a man’s voice saying: Lizzie, is my blue suit pressed?” And the same man says: “Scratch behind my shoulder blades.” She says these are little, quiet dreams, but they are little only compared to the hope, which she cannot dare express, that they will come true. Being loved, and taking pleasure in doing the things that bring happiness to someone she loves, are large dreams for Lizzie, indeed. Too large, in fact, for her to acknowledge or say out loud before Starbuck rides onto the Curry ranch with his own visionary dreams of a fabulous woman named Melisande, of being able to bring torrents of rain to a parched country, of a woman believing

W HEN DROUGHT HITS THE LUSH GRASSLANDS OF THE RICHTLY FERTILE WEST, THEY ARE GREEN NO MORE AND THE DYING IS A PALPABLE THING. WHAT HAPPENS TO VERDURE AND VEGATATION, TO CATTLE AND LIVESTOCK CAN BE READ IN THE COLDLY STATISTICAL LITTLE BULLETINS FREELY ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE. WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PEOPLE OF THE WEST—BEYOND THE CALCULABLE AND TERRIBLE PHENOMENA OF SUDDEN POVERTY AND LOSS OF SUBSTANCE—I S AN INCALCULABLE AND FEBRILE KIND OF DESPERATION. RAIN WILL NEVER COME AGAIN; THE EARTH WILL BE SEER FOREVER; AND IN ALL OF HEAVEN THERE IS NO PROMISE OF REMEDY. YET, MEN OF WISDOM LIKE H.C. CURRY KNOW TO BE PATIENT WITH HEAVEN. THEY KNOW THAT THE EARTH WILL NOT THIRST FOREVER; THEY KNOW THAT ONE DAY THEY WILL AGAIN A WAKEN TO A GREEN MORNING. YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE LIZZIE, HIS DAUGHTER, CANNOT KNOW THIS AS CERTAINLY AS HE DOES. BRIGHT AS SHE IS, SHE CANNOT KNOW. SHE CAN ONLY COUNT THE SHOOTING STARS, AND HOPE.

"A SIMPLE STORY ABOUT FAITH"

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When drought hits the lush grasslands of the richly fertile West, they are green no more and the dying is a palpable thing. What happens to verdure and vegetation, to cattle and livestock can be read in the coldly statistical little bulletins freely issued by the Department of Agriculture. What happens to the people of the West—beyond the calculable and terrible phenomena of sudden poverty and loss of substance—is an incalculable and febrile kind of desperation. Rain will never come again; the earth will be sere forever; and in all of heaven there is no promise of remedy. Yet, men of wisdom like H.C. Curry know to be patient with heaven. They know that the earth will not thirst forever; they know that one day they will again awaken to a green morning. Young people like Lizzie, his daughter, cannot know this as certainly as he does. Bright as she is, she cannot know. She can only count the shooting stars and hope.


In that were all The Rainmaker had to say on the subject of dreams—that dreams are fine for children but that adults must settle for reality—it wouldn’t have become a phenomenon: when Nash recurred this meeting in 1956, the film version was about to be released and the play had been produced 90 times around the world. By the time Nash died in 2000, it had been translated into 40 languages, including an unwritten African one. Surely, there are few plays that stake the claims of reality over those of dreams and win the love and affection of a worldwide audience. The Rainmaker isn’t one of them.

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On a western road trip he took in 1953, N. Richard Nash met an eight-year-old boy at a filling station. The boy was covered in grime and dirt, his complexion "the color of dust." It hadn’t rained in a long time. He clutched a long, forked stick, which he shook at the sky every few minutes. "What’s that for?" Nash asked. "Rain," he said. Recalling that encounter a few years later, after The Rainmaker had become an international hit, Nash wrote,

I tried to tell a simple story about droughts that happen to people, and about faith, I tried to say that belief in a forked stick is sweet in an eight-year-old but a grownup has to find his magic in the rites of daily living. I tried to protest that the dreamers who are fugitive from the world have too long pretended that they alone know what is beautiful; that there’s beauty for those who stick around and have a good look at things. That there is beauty in reality, beauty in the balances of nature, no matter how brutal the imbalances; beauty in the togetherness of people which, sadly, must sometimes be measured by loneliness; beauty in seeing the fact and naming it the fact.

A GREAT TEXAS FAMILY FARM IN 1952

American Conservatory Theatre

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theatrical storm. She is the one who delivers the goods, and she does it with a flourish. Her performances are always a delight, and she is a joy to watch. I have never seen a better actress in the role of Lizzie Borden. She is a true star, and I am confident that she will continue to shine in future productions. In short, I highly recommend this show to anyone who enjoys the theater. It is a must-see production.
The Great Rainmaker

As in so many genres, the rainmaker who enjoyed the widest acclaim and power—the man who epitomized his medium—was the last of his kind. Though journalist and historian Carey McWilliams calls Charles Malfroy Hatfield—or Hatfield the Rainmaker, as he was popularly known, or simply the Great Rainmaker—"the first popular folk-hero" of Southern California, he lacked the unpolished braggadocio of the midwestern huskster of the 1890s. Hatfield was a professional. His self-proclaimed "moisture accelerator," whom nearly every Southern California municipality contracted between 1903 and 1928 "for fees ranging from $50 to $10,000," was described in the San Diego Union as "a quiet dressed, slender man of middle height with square shoulders, who is crowing forty." Well versed in the scientific literature, Hatfield prefaced his sentences with scientific-sounding phrases, called himself a specialist in "meteorology, the science of the atmosphere," and referred to his methods as creating "a chemical attraction or an affinity working in harmony with natural forces that make rain."  

Dependent as rainmaking is on the vagaries of climate, most men who set themselves up as rainmakers were able to celebrate a triumph or two. Unlike most rainmakers, however, Hatfield almost never failed, and his successes were fantastic. "One of his last great feats," reports McWilliams, "was to produce 40 inches of rainfall in three hours on the Mojave Desert near Randsburg." Impressive though his desert deluge might seem, it pales in comparison to his San Diego flood of 1916. "The most potent test I ever made," Hatfield called the flood, and the damages it incurred ran into the tens of millions of dollars. The San Diego Union of December 14, 1915, records, "The city council signed a contract yesterday with Hatfield, the Moisture Accelerator. He has promised to fill the Moreno reservoir to overflowing by December 20, 1916, for $100,000." Hatfield immediately began setting up his "evaporator tanks" (a series of towers topped with boiling vats of chemicals) at Moreno. By January 20, writes historian Barbour Tushill, "Black headlines screamed, 'San Diego in State of Flood.' The torrents continued, with brief respite, for weeks, breaking the Oatdam, leaving thousands homeless, many dead, and San Diego entirely cut off from the rest of the country. This was rainmaking on a grand scale, and Hatfield became an instant national celebrity. When he showed up at City Hall, demanding his $10,000, the City Attorney told him that he would give him credit for the water in the reservoir only if he accepted the $6,000,000 in suits filed against the city for flood damages. Practical rainmaker that he was, Hatfield declined."


About the Playwright

Richard Nash was born in 1913, as Nathaniel Richard Nisbaum, on the north side of Philadelphia, the son of S. L. Nisbaum, a bookbinder, and Jenny Singer Nisbaum. Nash grew up on the streets and first worked as a ten-dollar-a-month bookbinder, which opened on him, however, and, after graduating from South Philadelphia High School in 1930, he attended the University of Pennsylvania, where he studied English and philosophy. He published two books on philosophy after graduating in 1934: The Athenian Spirit and The Wounds of Sparta. Nash soon switched to teaching and writing plays. His first, Parting at Smuder (1940), brought him some immediate success, earning him the Maxwell Anderson Verse Drama Award. His Broadway debut, The Second Best Bud (a comedy about Shakespeare and Annie Hathaway, which he also directed), opened at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre in 1946, followed by The Young and the Fair in his next play, See the Jaguar (James Dean's Broadway debut, 1952), won the International Drama Award in Cannes and the Prague Award. Nash's greatest success and lasting fame were made with The Rainmaker, which opened on Broadway on October 28, 1954, starring Geraldine Page in the role of Lizzie Curry and Darren McGavin as Stubuck. Nash originally wrote the play as a television drama for the Philco Playhouse in tribute to his older sister, Mae, whom Nash described as "one of the left-out people." He credited Mae with teaching him of a childhood stutter. "She got me into a corner and would say to me, 'Talk,'" Nash remembered. "She would say, 'Sit here, I'll stay here, I won't rush you, and I won't leave you. Now talk.' Her willingness to listen is what saved my life. And this is what this play is about."  

Writing in the New York Times, Brooks Atkinson described the play as "warm, simple, and friendly; the humor is captivating, and the characters are lovely and original." Two years later, the London production, also starring Miss Page (who received nine curtain calls on opening night), charmed British audiences as well as critics. The Times of London described the play as "a humorous, tender, and wise little American comedy," while the Daily Mail began its review: "Here is a beautiful little American comedy with a catch in its throat." The Rainmaker became Nash's signature piece, ensuring his place in American popular culture. Eva Marie Saint, Nancy Marchand, Tuesday Weld, Sally Field, and Jayne Atkinson are among the actors who have played Lizzie in subsequent productions. The script has been translated into 40 languages and was adapted (by Nash) in 1956 into a film starring Katharine Hepburn and Burt Lancaster, as well as a musical, 110 in the Shade, which ran on Broadway for ten months in 1963 and was revived to acclaim in 2005 with Audra McDonald singing Lizzie's role. (Hepburn received an Academy Award nomination for best actress for her performance in the film.)  

Although Nash could have lived comfortably on the income from The Rainmaker for the rest of his life, he continued to work consistently. His subsequent writing for the stage includes Girls of Summer (1956), Handful of Fire (1958), Wildcat (starring Lucille Ball, 1960), The Happy Time (with music by John Kander and Fred Ebb) nominated for the Tony Award for best musical in 1968), and Sana (1970). He also wrote extensively for television anthologies, including the U.S. Steel Hour, General Electric Theater, Philco Playhouse, Goodyear Playhouse, and Theater Guild of the Air, as well as 12 episodes of the series Here Come the Brides (1968-69). His screenplays for Hollywood include Welcome Stranger (a 1947 bit starring Bing Crosby and Barry Fitzgerald), the suite Nora Prentiss (one of Warners' top four westerns of 1947), The Sainted Sisters (1948), Dear Wife (1949), Mako Maru (1952), Helen of Troy (1956), Porky and Bess (1959), and Between the Darkness and the Dawn (1985). He also published a novel, East Wind, Rain (about the bombing of Pearl Harbor, 1977), and taught in several academic theater departments over the course of his career, including those of Bryn Mawr, Haverford, Yale, Princeton, and Brandeis. Under the pseudonym of John Roc, he wrote a play, Fins! (1969), and a novel, Winter Blood (1973).

Nash died in Manhattan on December 11, 2000, at the age of 87. Of The Rainmaker, ultimately his most memorable achievement, he said, "I tried to tell a simple story about droughts that happen to people, and about faith."
A "VALENTINE TO A SWEETER TIME" 
AN INTERVIEW WITH RAINMAKER SCENIC DESIGNER ROBERT MARK MORGAN

BY ARIEL FRANKLIN-HUDSON

The setting of The Rainmaker—described simply by playwright N. Richard Nash as "a western state on a summer day in a time of drought"—presents a particular challenge to a scenic designer. The details of The Rainmaker's locale, as described in the text, are realistic and specific, invoking daily life on a struggling ranch in the American West of the early 1930s. At the same time, the play explores certain ineffable qualities of hope and faith that transcend conventionally naturalistic representations of time and place.

Rainmaker scenic designer Robert Mark Morgan—whose work is especially notable for his imaginative ability to draw out the romantic essence of traditionally realistic, classic American plays—spoke to us about his design process and the difficulties and rewards of visually addressing both the historical realism and the emotional unreality of The Rainmaker.

ARIEL FRANKLIN-HUDSON: HOW DID YOU APPROACH THE DESIGN FOR THIS PLAY?

ROBERT MARK MORGAN: As always, approaching a design begins with the director. In this case, [director] Mark Rucker and I sat down to discuss the play and look over some preliminary research about six months ago. Upon my first reading of [The Rainmaker], I was struck by the following quote, part of the foreword in the [Random House] version of the script: "[The Curry house] is a place where beauty is made out of affection and all manner of gentleness. The track room, if seen realistically, might be a distasteful attractive only to the termites and rodents of the night. But if the designer sees it romantically—as Lizzie might see it, with all its memorabilia of childhood—it will tell the hopeful promise intended. On File's office—it is not an office, really..." it is File's office—it is not an office, really, an office, really, it is File's office—secret hiding place from the world, the island where he earnestly believes he can bring balm to his loneliness.

I also chart the play to get a sense of where we are and where—a way of viewing the play at a glance. Seeing the play as a whole like this helps me to get a sense of the challenges involved, as well as seeing what might be similar about dissimilar locations to get a kind of 'essence.'

WHAT IS YOUR RESEARCH PROCESS?

For me, images and research are a way to come up with a "visual language" that a director and I can agree upon. One director's idea of what "romantic" looks like might be different from my own. For that reason, I usually have a lot of preliminary research that spans everything from paintings to photography. Later in the process, research is the well that I go to when the rest of the creative team and crew need answers about a specific look, texture, color, etc. A design can be thought of as a series of many, many decisions, and, as the "snowball" of people involved gets larger and larger, the questions get more and more specific: "What type of finish do you want on the desk? What kind of kitchen utensils is Lizzie using?" etc. The research has, for me, the answers within it—you just have to look closely.

I'M INTERESTED IN THE SPACE OF THE PLAY. DO YOU THINK OF IT AS AN EMOTIONAL SPACE? A REALISTIC SPACE? HOW HAS THIS AFFECTED YOUR DESIGN?

There is an interesting dichotomy about this play and our particular approach to the design for it that's worth noting. It was written at a time—1954—when naturalism and realism in design were very much the norm, and when designers like Robert Edmond Jones [a frequent collaborator of Eugene O'Neill] made their mark in the theater design world. For us, there's a level of that realism that Mark certainly wanted to use; at one point, he even mentioned: "I want Lizzie to be able to fry an egg onstage." At the same time, we have many more options today than they had in 1954. We have more technology to move scenery, and can have a set where we only see the location we need to see onstage. When we are in the Curry house we cannot see File's office, because that unit shifts on later. As an audience, we can focus our attention solely on the Curry house without being distracted by other visible locations. This design is, hopefully, a kind of blend of those two worlds. As Mark said, it's a "valetine to a sweeter time."

THERE IS A LOT OF SPECIFICITY IN THE ORIGINAL, SCRIPT AS TO WHAT THE SET SHOULD LOOK LIKE—I'M THINKING IN PARTICULAR OF THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CURRY RANCH AS "STRONGLY MASULCINIC IN ITS BASIC STRUCTURE" BUT SHOWING "LIZZIE'S HAND IN MANY OF ITS APPOINTMENTS." HOW HAVE YOU ADDRESSED THESE DETAILS, AND RECONCEIVED THEM WITH YOUR OWN VISION?

We have used a lot of wood tones in furniture and the like, softened with elements that Lizzie might choose: curtains, doilies, etc. Before she passed away, I heard a brilliant Broadway costume designer, Patricia Zippolt, speak on a design jury. She was asked a simple question: "How do you go about designing costumes for a contemporary play?" She answered in an equally simple way: "I think about the character, go to their closet, and pick something out." The same is true for props in The Rainmaker. When complete, we hopefully have created an environment that has Lizzie's hand on it; by association, those items are a nonverbal communication to the audience of what we want to convey about Lizzie.

In addition, however, it was important to Mark that the set have a bit of an old-movie Technicolor quality to it, a crispness and vividness of color that is a nod to the nostalgia we feel towards the time period in which this play was new and life was—seemingly—simpler and people were more "pure" and well-intentioned.

WHAT IS THE MOST INTERESTING FEATURE OF THIS SET, FOR YOU? Perhaps what is most interesting for me is what is not there—namely: the light and sky. Having lit and photographed the model myself and knowing [lighting designer] Don [Darmont]'s talents, I'm very interested to see how light transforms this set. After all, the sky is such a dominant element to the western setting where this play takes place. There's a lot about scenic and lighting departments collaborating and communicating that is important to gain that feeling of a parched, drought-ridden landscape.

COULD YOU TALK A BIT ABOUT ANY ARTISTS THAT INFLUENCED YOUR DESIGN?

It really wasn't Mark's desire to go much into the realm of artistic gestures—a la the design for A Moon for the Misbegotten. He wanted a classic and real environment, with some liberties taken on the edges. [Andrew] Wyeth was important, however, in his simplicity and his focus on skies. Wyeth's Christina's World, in particular, could be Lizzie herself on the hillside. The inspiration seems, again, to stress the importance of sky as a means of placing us in time and place. We should get a sense that we're in a dry and wide-open space that is strangely confining for Lizzie's character. In my view, she has so much room to run, and yet can't.

Robert Mark Morgan's recent projects include scenic designs at Indiana University, American Players Theater, San Jose Repertory Theatre, the Denver Center Theatre Company, and San Francisco's Magic Theatre. A.C.T. audiences may remember his beautiful and evocative sets for The Dazzle (2003) and A Moon for the Misbegotten (2005). The set for A Moon for the Misbegotten—described by the San Francisco Bay Guardian as "a beautifully melancholy affair in which Morgan brings out thoroughly [the elements of a dream play]"—was selected for display in the U.S. exhibit at the 2007 Prague Design Quadrennial.

American Conservatory Theater

The Rainmaker
A “VALENTINE TO A SWEETER TIME”
AN INTERVIEW WITH RAINMAKER SCENIC DESIGNER
ROBERT MARK MORGAN

BY ARIEL FRIEDLAND-HUDSON

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I’m interested in the space of the play. Do you think of it as an emotional space? A realistic space? How has this affected your design?

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THE RAINMAKER OVERALL COLOUR

There is a lot of specificity in the original script as to what the set should look like—I’m thinking in particular of the description of the Curry ranch as “strongly masculine in its basic structure” but showing “Lizzie’s hand in many of its appointments.” How have you addressed these details, and reconciled them with your own vision?

We have used a lot of wood tones in furniture and the like, softened with elements that Lizzie might choose: curtains, doilies, etc. Before she passed away, I heard a brilliant Broadway costume designer, Patricia Zipprodt, speak at a design jury. She was asked a simple question: “How do you go about designing costumes for a contemporary play?” She answered in an equally simple way: “I think about the character, go to their closet, and pick something out.” The same is true for props in The Rainmaker. When complete, we hopefully have created an environment that has Lizzie’s hand on it; by association, those items are a nonverbal communication to the audience of what we want to convey about Lizzie.

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RENE' AUGENES*  
(Lizzie Curry), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in The Misfits, she has appeared in recent seasons in The Three Sisters, The Far Side of the Moon, The Caucasian Chalk Circle, and The Crucible, among others. Her other credits include leading roles in King Lear, The Tempest, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Skin of Our Teeth for California Shakespeare Theater (where she is an associate artist); My Old Lady at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theater's production of The Elephant. On Broadway, she was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The, The Holy Terror, Cantos of Dantes, The Death of a Salesman (Biff), The Birthday Party (Billy), and The Cherry Orchard (Yasha). Last season she coproduced and directed the hit one-woman play The Birds, The Brunette, and the Vengeful Redhead, which returned this year for a second sold-out season. Other theater includes Synopsus (Henry) at the Winter Garden Theatre (Toronto); Huisman (Hosanna) and Father West (Thomas Shepard) at Tarragon Theatre (Toronto); Holiday (Nick Potter) at the Shaw Festival (Niagara); and, in England, The Taming of the Shrew (Petruchio) at the New Shakespeare Company. Film and television include Large Winch (Kerensky), Dracula: The Series (Dracula), Treadway (Daniel Booth), Liza's Rhapsody (Lizette), and The English Patient (Dr. Oliver). Johnson is the recipient of a Dora Award for A Year with You (Toilane) at the Tarragon Theatre and a Gemini Award for The City (Oliver) on CTV.

ROD GNAPP*  
(Sheriff Thomas) most recently appeared at A.C.T. in Happy End and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. He has been acting in theaters around the Bay Area for the last 20 years. He recently performed in Marin Theatre Company's production of Fiddler and in TheatreWorks' production of The Elephant Man. He can be seen at A.C.T. later this season in Sam Shepard's The Starving Class.

ALEX MORF†  
(Jim Curry) most recently appeared with the Chautauqua Theatre Company, where his credits included The Cherry Orchard and The Just (both directed by Ethan McSweeny), Twelfth Night, and Much Ado about Nothing, before joining the A.C.T. cast.

GEORGE JOHNSON* (Bill Starbird) appeared most recently at A.C.T. in last season's Travezzies (Henry Carr). He has spent 13 seasons with the Stratford Festival of Canada, where his performances have included roles in Gay & Dali (Nathan Detroit), Troilus and Cressida (Hector), Richard II (Richard II), Romeo and Juliet (Mercutio), King Lear (Edmund), The Winter's Tale (Autolycus), The Comedy of Errors (Antipholus of Syracuse/Ephesus), The Relapse (Worthy), The Cherry Orchard (Yasha), Pride and Prejudice (Darcy), Death of a Salesman (Biff), Stiff Bird of Youth (Chance Wayne), The Night of the Iguana (Reverend Shannon), and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Brick). Last season he coproduced and directed the hit one-woman play The Birds, The Brunette, and the Vengeful Redhead, which returned this year for a second sold-out season. Other theater includes Synopsus (Henry) at the Winter Garden Theatre (Toronto); Huisman (Hosanna) and Father West (Thomas Shepard) at Tarragon Theatre (Toronto); Holiday (Nick Potter) at the Shaw Festival (Niagara); and, in England, The Taming of the Shrew (Petruchio) at the New Shakespeare Company. Film and television include Large Winch (Kerensky), Dracula: The Series (Dracula), Treadway (Daniel Booth), Liza's Rhapsody (Lizette), and The English Patient (Dr. Oliver). Johnson is the recipient of a Dora Award for A Year with You (Toilane) at the Tarragon Theatre and a Gemini Award for The City (Oliver) on CTV.

ANTHONY FUSCO*  
(Filo), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in The Imaginary Invalid, Oslo's Galerie, The Shaw Festival (Henry Carr). He has spent 13 seasons with the Stratford Festival of Canada, where his performances have included roles in Gay & Dali (Nathan Detroit), Troilus and Cressida (Hector), Richard II (Richard II), Romeo and Juliet (Mercutio), King Lear (Edmund), The Winter's Tale (Autolycus), The Comedy of Errors (Antipholus of Syracuse/Ephesus), The Relapse (Worthy), The Cherry Orchard (Yasha), Pride and Prejudice (Darcy), Death of a Salesman (Biff), Stiff Bird of Youth (Chance Wayne), The Night of the Iguana (Reverend Shannon), and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Brick). Last season he coproduced and directed the hit one-woman play The Birds, The Brunette, and the Vengeful Redhead, which returned this year for a second sold-out season. Other theater includes Synopsus (Henry) at the Winter Garden Theatre (Toronto); Huisman (Hosanna) and Father West (Thomas Shepard) at Tarragon Theatre (Toronto); Holiday (Nick Potter) at the Shaw Festival (Niagara); and, in England, The Taming of the Shrew (Petruchio) at the New Shakespeare Company. Film and television include Large Winch (Kerensky), Dracula: The Series (Dracula), Treadway (Daniel Booth), Liza's Rhapsody (Lizette), and The English Patient (Dr. Oliver). Johnson is the recipient of a Dora Award for A Year with You (Toilane) at the Tarragon Theatre and a Gemini Award for The City (Oliver) on CTV.

* Member of Actors Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States
† Member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2008

Conceived by acclaimed artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, this exhibition spotlights the sculptural essence of contemporary Japanese fashion through 21 works by Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto, and others. New photographs by Sugimoto will be debuted alongside the innovative garments that inspired them.
RENE AUGSEN* (Lizzie Curry), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, made her A.C.T. debut in The Misbehaving; she has appeared in recent seasons in Celebration and The Room, The Board of Avon, Bilde Spirit, Buried Child, Night and Day, The Decade, The Three Sisters, A Doll's House, Mother, The Real Thing, The Golem, The Voyage Inheritance (also at Kansas City Repertory Theatre), Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, The Revival, Happy End, Renaissance, Luminous Darlings (at the Magic Theatre), Holida Gahler, and, most recently, Imaginary Invalid. New York credits include Spinning into Butter (Lincoln Center Theater), Muchmore (with Baldwin and Angela Bassett, Public Theater), I'm My Party (with F. Murray Abraham and Joyce Van Patten, Arc Light Theater), and Overruled (Drama League). Regional theater credits include Mary Stuart (dir. Carey Perloff, Huntington Theatre Company); several productions, including the world premieres of The Board of Avon and The Hollow Lands, at South Coast Repertory; and productions at the Great Lakes Theatre Festival, Baltimore's Centerstage, the Los Angeles Shakespeare Festival, Yale Repertory Theatre, and Stage West. Film and television credits include The Battle Studios, Laro & Order, Guiding Light, Another World, and Hallmark Hall of Fame's Saint Madey. Augensen is a graduate of the Yale School of Drama.

ANTHONY FUSCO* (File), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in The Imaginary Invalid, Holida Gahler, Truoasias, The Real, The Voyage Inheritance, The Golem, The Author, Las Liaisons Dangereuses, The Three Sisters, Night and Day, The Room and Celebration, Eros IV, The Misbehaving, Eduardo II, and A Christmas Carol. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in King Lear, The Tempest, The Importance of Being Earnest, Arms and the Man, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and The Skin of Our Teeth for California Shakespeare Theater (where he is an associate artist); My Old Lady at Marin Theatre Company; and Traveling Jewish Theatre's production of The Cleaver. On Broadway, he was in Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing and The Real Inspector Hound. Fusco's many off-Broadway credits include The Holy Terror, Centaurion, Danton's Death, and A Life in the Theatre. He is a graduate of The Juilliard School.

ROD GNAPP* (Sheriff Thomas) most recently appeared at A.C.T. in Happy End and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof. He has been acting in theaters around the Bay Area for the last 20 years. He recently performed in Marin Theatre Company's production of Frozn and in TheatreWorks' production of The Elephant Man. He can be seen at A.C.T. later this season in Sam Shepard's Curse of the Starving Class.

GEORGE JOHNSON* (Bill Starchard) appeared most recently at A.C.T. in last season's Truoasias (Henry Carey). He has spent 15 seasons with the Stratford Festival of Canada, where his performances have included roles in Goya and Dall (Nathan Detroit), Truisms and Expiry (Hector), Richard II (Richard II), Romet and Julius (Merecos), King Lear (Edmund), The Winter's Tale (Autolycus), The Comedy of Errors (Antipholus of Syracuse/Ephesus), The Relapse (Worthy), The Cherry Orchard (Yasha), Pride and Prejudice (Darcy), Death of a Salesman (Billy), Sweet Bird of Youth (Chance Wayne), The Night of the Iguana (Reverend Shannon), and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Brick). Last season he coproduced and directed the hit one-woman play The Blende, the Brouette, and the Vengeful Boarhead, which returned this year for a second sold-out season. Other theater includes Synaucation (Henry) at the Winter Garden Theatre (Toronto); Huiswacht (Hosanna) and Farther West (Thomas Shepard) at Tarragon Theatre (Toronto); Holiday (Nick Potter) at the Shaw Festival (Niagara); and, in England, The Taming of the Shrew (Petruchio) at the New Shakespeare Company. Film and television include Large Winch (Kerkenly), Dracula: The Series (Dracula), Trader (Daniel Booth), Liza's Rhapsody (Liza), and The English Patient (Dr. Oliver). Johnson is the recipient of a Dora Mavor Moore Award for I Am Yours (Toilane) at the Tarragon Theatre and a Gemini Award for The City (Oliver) on CTV.

ALEX MORF* (Jim Cary) most recently appeared with the Chautauqua Theatre Company, where his credits included The Cherry Orchard and The Just (both directed by Ethan McSweeney), The Public's Night, and MacAd Abo Nothing. Before joining the A.C.T.

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CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE FASHION FROM THE KYOTO COSTUME INSTITUTE OCTOBER 12, 2007 - JANUARY 6, 2008

Conceived by acclaimed artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, this exhibition spotlights the sculptural essence of contemporary Japanese fashion through 21 works by Issey Miyake, Rei Kawakubo, Yohji Yamamoto, and others. New photographs by Sugimoto will be debuted alongside the innovative garments that inspired them.
Who's Who

Master of Fine Arts Program, he worked in Minneapolis at the Children's Theatre Company, Frank Theatre, and Park Square Theatre. Favorino M.F.A. Program roles include David in David Copperfield, Agamemnon in Telephus, Valere in The Reluctant Deacon, and H.C. in a studio production of The Rainmaker. He is a native of Mt. Vernon, Iowa, and a graduate of St. Olaf College. He is the recipient of a 2006 Belle Foundation for Cultural Development grant and the 2007 Sadler Award.

STEPHEN BARKER TURNER (Noah Curry) has appeared in A.C.T. productions of Night of the Gundi and Luminous Daring.

Other Bay Area credits include Cymbeline (Dean Goodman Choice Award), the title role of The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and A Life at the California Shakespeare Theater, where he is an associate artist. Off-Broadway credits include productions with the New York Shakespeare Festival, Classic Stage Company, Roundabout Theatre Company, MCC Theater, Primary Stages, and The Next Stage. Regionally he has appeared at the Williamstown Theatre Festival, Arena Stage, Long Wharf Theatre, Intiman Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, Hartford Stage Company, New York Stage & Film, and the Humana Festival of New American Plays, among others. He will originate the role of Jerry in David Adjmi’s new play The Evidences at Yale Repertory Theatre in January. Turner’s film and television credits

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"who's who" continues after Inside A.C.T.
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Welcome to Inside A.C.T. Fall 2007

It’s intimidating. That’s the truth. Stepping into a role at a world-renowned theater with a 40-year history hoping to be a significant part of its future—yes, intimidating. I’ve worked at theaters long enough to know that the people who make them up—audience included—become a part of your family. So coming into a job like this is a little like being introduced to your future in-laws for the first time.

But A.C.T. has quickly and naturally felt like home to me, and the people I’m working with already feel like family. I think the primary reason I feel so at ease here is because my own aesthetic matches A.C.T.’s artistic mission: bold theatricality, rich language, and thought-provoking plays. It’s an incredible feat to produce world-class theater year after year, and I’m honored to be joining a team that has been doing just that.

What exactly is the role I’m stepping into? Essentially, I work with Artistic Director Carey Perloff to oversee all of the artistic elements of producing at A.C.T., and I’m responsible for stewarding the new works program known as First Look.

Theater cannot be created in isolation. Artists—writers, directors, actors, designers, choreographers, composers—need a safe space to achieve the fullest possible realization of their vision, and they need an audience to react to their work. This is what First Look is about. We are choosing to work with playwrights, directors, and actors we want to see on the American Conservatory Theater stage; because we are committed to a successful outcome, we are highly engaged in the creative process.

For the artists who take part in First Look, we have the strong resources of our core acting company, our M.F.A. Program students and faculty, and some of the best professionals from San Francisco and around the world. But our success is dependent on you, our audience and collaborators, and I hope you will come to every step along the way, from the inception of our plays all the way through to their mainstage debuts. I invite you to take advantage of the chance to watch the evolution of artists and the work at A.C.T. and be a part of the artistic process.

Sincerely yours,

Pink Padar / Associate Artistic Director
American Conservatory Theater

THE ACTOR AND THE AUDIENCE

The 2006-07 season not only marked A.C.T.'s 40th year in San Francisco, it was also a milestone for Artistic Director Carey Perloff and Executive Director Heather Kitchen, who last year celebrated their 15th and 11th anniversaries, respectively, at the helm of the company. Together they have shepherded A.C.T. through tough challenges: rebuilding and reopening the historic American Conservatory Theater (formerly the Geary) following its destruction in the Loma Prieta earthquake; reorganizing A.C.T.'s nationally ranked conservatory; stabilizing the theater's finances and infrastructure; creating a core company of actors; producing ambitious new interpretations of classical plays; and launching a wide-ranging new works program.

In 2001, the future looked bright, as audiences came in record numbers and A.C.T.'s artistic accomplishments mounted. During the post-9/11 recession, however, concern developed as to whether the expansion could be sustained. In the ensuing years, at the prompting of A.C.T.'s vigilant board of trustees, the company embarked on a phase of in-depth self-examination that has culminated in the recently adopted strategic plan.

"We looked hard at every aspect of A.C.T. and asked ourselves, How does this serve the mainstage audience?" says A.C.T. Executive Director Heather Kitchen.
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When the fledgling American Conservatory Theater landed in San Francisco in 1967, the regional theater movement was in full swing. Spearheaded by charismatic visionaries like A.C.T. Founding Artistic Director Bill Ball, the movement took root in hundreds of cities across the United States, united by the common desire to create provocative new plays and innovative interpretations of the classics, performed by companies of resident actors who could work and grow together in a secure and intimate creative environment, directly to the communities where people live and work.

In the years that followed, regional theaters like A.C.T. have had to find creative ways to ensure their continued survival in an increasingly competitive, electronic-media-oriented environment. Today, after celebrating 40 years of producing live theater in San Francisco, A.C.T.'s leadership has turned its collective energies toward planning for the theater's future by reimagining the principles on which the theater was founded. This season A.C.T. begins implementation of a new five-year strategic plan that will take the theater forward into the decades to come.

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“We looked hard at every aspect of A.C.T. and asked ourselves, How does this serve the mainstage audience?” says A.C.T. Executive Director Heather Kitchen.
"The center of everything continues to be the relationship between the actor and the audience member. Everything we do must invigorate that relationship. The other big question we asked was whether we were taking on too many different programs, and how best to unify them."

The theater's leadership focused on the three primary areas of A.C.T.'s work: mainstage producing, conservatory training, and the development of new works—and then began to examine creative synergies among the various wings of the organization. "It's easy to say what our strategy is," says Kitichen. "We will focus on developing artists and plays that we think have the potential to have a life on the A.C.T. stage."

The components of the new plan include: continued large-scale production of classical literature; increased development of interdisciplinary collaborations; nurturing of new work intended for the A.C.T. mainstage; growth of the core company; restructuring the conservatory to create more opportunities for students to be part of mainstage and new works programming; and deeper engagement of the entire organization with the mainstage audience. In addition, The Next Generation Campaign was launched to establish an endowment that will ensure future funding for these programs.

THE ARTISTIC PIPELINE

"Having just completed our 40th anniversary season, all of us have been thinking about A.C.T.'s future," says A.C.T. Artistic Director Carey Perloff. "What kind of work is going to both sustain the wonderful audience we have and introduce new audiences to the work? I love theater that demands sustained attention. We now live in a culture where people can TiVo anything they want to see and download anything they want to hear. That means what they see onstage has to be absolutely unique."

"As we look to producing work that is richer and more challenging, long-term planning and collaboration are critical," Perloff adds. "The planning process allows us to say, Here’s something we long to do—maybe we can’t afford to do it next year, but let’s put it in the pipeline. That’s one of the reasons After the War was so successful—we had 18 months to develop an original, complex piece that involved every part of the A.C.T. and greater San Francisco community. By the time that play opened, there wasn’t anybody in the city who didn’t know about it. For me artistically, I think this approach will give us a chance to do some of the larger-scale, less conventional work we would otherwise not be able to do."

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> The Student, a new collaboration by Robert Wilson and Tom Waits, creators of The Black Rider

In developing these artists and their work, A.C.T.’s artistic leadership hopes to take advantage of aspects of A.C.T. that make the company stand out in the American theater—objects that will be strengthened by implementation of the strategic plan.

One of the most significant resources A.C.T. has to offer artists developing new works is its core company of classically trained actors. The students in A.C.T.’s M.F.A. Program and Young Conservatory are also a vital part of the development process, serving as a kind of lab for new productions of classics like this season’s The Government Inspector and Tişş👀şey霞 a Whore, which require extensive text work and time to develop conceptually, as well as the plays workshoped in First Look. Plans are in place to integrate the school much more into new work development.

A.C.T.’s location in the San Francisco Bay Area is also a valuable asset in developing nontraditional interdisciplinary theatrical work. “I am very excited that we live in a city filled with multiple kinds of art forms,” says Perloff. “Over the years we’ve tried to take advantage of it by hiring local composers like After the War’s Anthony Brown, and musicians like Kitka and the Kronos Quartet. Tracy Chapman will compose music for The Rhial Knut. We have one of the world’s greatest ballet companies, and working with Val [Caniparoli] and Mutif [Maffei] and the other dancers on Tosca has been a tremendous privilege. We’re in conversation with David Geckeler at the opera about future collaborations, as well. Going forward I’d like to see that these kinds of crossdisciplinary collaborations, particularly with Bay Area artists, become more of our programming mandate.”

THE TOSCA PROJECT

The Tosca Project is a prime example of how unusual new work can emerge from the A.C.T. community. Caniparoli raised the idea of developing a similar piece to Perloff after seeing The Overcoat at A.C.T. in 2005. Developing the concept with Caniparoli, Perloff went to Tosca Caffè owner Jeannette Ethereedge to seek funding from the Nureyev Foundation. Perloff met with Ethereedge in the historic San Francisco bar, where she immediately realized she had found the perfect setting for the project, in which she and Caniparoli hoped to explore the story of the shifting mosaic of a city over time. An eclectic group of SF Ballet Ballet and movement-skilled actors—including A.C.T. core company member Gregory Wallace and Overcoat star Peter Anderson—gathered in an A.C.T. studio last year and embarked on an unconventional theatrical experiment.

Rooted in the rich history of San Francisco, and developed in a series of workshops by largely local and/or A.C.T.-connected artists that may ultimately culminate in a mainstage production at A.C.T., Perloff hopes Tosca "will do what we want our new works program to do."

A NEW A.C.T.?

Perloff outlines her artistic goals for A.C.T.’s near future: "When I look at the next five years, I think you will see more ‘creations’ land on our stage. By that I mean new work that has gone through a process that helps everybody here at A.C.T. feel invested in it. I’m hoping that the cultural mix—our stages, our audience, and in our conservatory—will get even wider. And that all of our separate parts will crystallize each other, so that students, professionals, and audiences will be intersecting in new and exciting ways."

"And I hope that we will have a robust audience in relationship to all this. I would hope that at the end of five years people would feel that they were part of the creation of new work that is completely unique. What I would dream of is an audience that is excited enough about the risks being taken that they come and engage with the work, whether or not it always lands."

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During the production of The Nightingale, Carey Perloff, director,1997, and Victor Vieira, stage manager,1997, prepare the set at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts with the musical theater company The Flea. "I try to look at every step as the beginning of a new project," says Perloff, "and to keep the energy fresh and inventive." The Flea is known for its innovative productions of new works in experimental theater and opera. Photograph by Robert Parten.
Alumni Notebook

Graduates of the A.C.T. Conservatory grace stages and screens across the country. Here’s what some of our illustrious alumni have been up to recently:

Jud Willford ’04 is the newest A.C.T. Young Company member, appearing in productions throughout the 2007–08 season. Jody Flader ’07 performed in Love Song at Marin Theatre Company. Willford, Brian Stevens ’07, and Margaret Head ’07 appeared in the recent A.C.T. production of Molinaire’s Imaginary Invalid. Finney Stevens ’02 portrayed Thea Elvsted in the A.C.T. production of Ibsen’s Hedda Gabler. Willford also performed in the California Shakespeare Theater production of The Triumph of Love. Also at Cal Shakes: Nancy Carlin ’83 and T.E. Edward Webster ’02 in Shaw’s Man and Superman and Andrew Hurteau ’02 and Webster in Richard III. Hurteau also appeared in King Lear at Cal Shakes. David Gross ’06 performed in Washington, D.C., in Richard III at the Shakespeare Theatre Company, while Wynn Harmon ’86 performed at the Shakespeare Theatre in Locc’s Lady’s Lost and Kenneth Lee ’01 appeared in Hamlet. Kurt Uy ’07 will appear there in repertory productions of Edward II and Tamburlaine. Lucas Rocco Albanese ’07 performed in The Joan Rivers Project and Webster appeared in the world premiere of Rebecca Gillman’s The Great Era In Which, both at the Magic Theatre. Allison Jean White ’05 appeared in The Heartbreak House at Berkeley Repertory Theatre.

Continued on page 11

SECOND ANNUAL
A.C.T. ALUMNI
HOMECOMING
WEEKEND
OCTOBER 16–17, 2007

The A.C.T.’s Alumni Association is pleased to announce the dates for the second annual Alumni Weekend. After the success of last year’s events, A.C.T. has expanded the range of activities. In recognition of the 20 years that have passed since they took their first class at A.C.T., members of the Advanced Training Program (ATP) class of 1989 will offer a series of hands-on workshops. There will also be another HomeBase reading and a forum on developing new work. This year, in response to feedback from last year’s event, the low $25 registration fee will include entry to all performances and receptions throughout the weekend, including the A.C.T. mainstage production of The Rainmaker, featuring sham Rod Gragg (ATP ’87) and current Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) Program third-year student Alex Morf, as well as second- and third-year M.F.A. Program productions at Zeum Theater and in Hastings Studio.

For details, visit www.ACTactortraining.org/AlumniWeekend.

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES MILLION DOLLAR CHALLENGE!

To encourage greater participation in The Next Generation Campaign, close friends of the theater Jeff and Laurie Uhlen have issued a generous challenge to A.C.T.’s audience: they will match all new or increased gifts to A.C.T. this season dollar for dollar up to $1 million!

“If we haven’t already, we will soon be contacting you to ask for your participation in The Next Generation Campaign,” says Campaign Chair Nancy Livingston. “Please help us meet this generous challenge and double the impact of your gift this season by joining those who have already made commitments to the future of the theater.”

Thanks to its immensely loyal audience, A.C.T. has become a San Francisco Bay Area cultural treasure and a nationally respected leader in actor training. Now A.C.T. has the very real opportunity to move to a new level of excellence—to stage more ambitious productions featuring distinguished visiting artists, to attract a greater number of top-tier students and faculty to the conservatory, and to strengthen its ability to commission and develop the provocative new works that keep theater vibrant.

To take this major creative leap forward, we will need everyone’s help. All gifts to The Next Generation Campaign, large and small, will make a difference as we strive to build the financial foundation for A.C.T. to commit to the bigger artistic challenges it is so eminently capable of meeting.

STAGING THE FUTURE OF GREAT THEATER FOR THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

In addition to providing vital annual support for this season’s programs, The Next Generation Campaign will establish an endowment of $30 million to provide A.C.T. with the financial wings to soar to new artistic heights in the years ahead. With nearly $24 million committed to date, A.C.T. is well on its way to success in creating this permanent growing asset that will support artistic excellence and quality actor training through the following endowments: Mainstage ($10 million), Actor Training ($10 million), New Works ($10 million).
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To take this major creative leap forward, we will need everyone's help. All gifts to The Next Generation Campaign, large and small, will make a difference as we strive to build the financial foundation for A.C.T. to commit to the bigger artistic challenges it is so eminently capable of meeting.

In addition to providing vital annual support for this season's programs, The Next Generation Campaign will establish an endowment of $30 million to provide A.C.T. with the financial wings to soar to new artistic heights in the years ahead. With nearly $24.5 million committed to date, A.C.T. is well on its way to success in creating this permanent growing asset that will support artistic excellence and quality actor training through the following endowments: Mainstage ($10 million), Actor Training ($10 million), New Works ($10 million).
THE A.C.T. ENDOWMENT

The Next Generation Campaign will establish a $30 million endowment for A.C.T. This permanent, growing asset will support:

EXCELLENCE ON THE MAINSTAGE

Over the past four decades, A.C.T. has become known for producing a diverse blend of classical and new work, for the excellence of its performers, and for the visual beauty of its productions. A.C.T.’s Mainstage Endowment will ensure enduring artistic brilliance in the form of large-scale classics, multidisciplinary work, and ambitious new plays, featuring members of our core acting company and the finest guest actors, directors, writers, choreographers, composers, and designers.

EXCELLENCE IN ACTOR TRAINING

The A.C.T. Conservatory is one of this country’s most vital links between the theater of today and the theater of tomorrow. Each year, the conservatory’s classrooms and rehearsal studios are crowded with acting students of all ages and backgrounds. Some—including such exceptional talents as Arnette Bening, Benjamin Britt, and recent Tony Award winner Anika Nuni Rose—will go on to devote their lives to professional performance. For others, conservatory training nourishes a lifelong appreciation for theater. A.C.T.’s Actor Training Endowment will help make possible a vital increase in scholarship support for students and compensation for faculty members, ensuring that A.C.T. can attract and retain the finest students and teachers.

EXCELLENCE IN NEW WORKS

A.C.T. has long held a commitment to nurturing new work and creating a safe haven for new voices to present their work to the public. This involves a long and uniquely collaborative process with the writer that demands the company’s focused attention, as well as significant financial resources. The New Works Endowment will make it possible to expand A.C.T.’s commitment to both emerging and established playwrights and to provide our audiences with increased opportunities for participation in the development of new work through public workshops and readings and forums for direct dialogue with writers, directors, and actors, as well as fully realized productions on A.C.T.’s stages.

For more information about how you can participate in The Next Generation Campaign, please contact Jamie Valle at 415.439.2464 or jvalle@act-sf.org.

THE NEXT GENERATION CAMPAIGN DONORS AGREE... A.C.T. ENRICHES LIFE IN THE BAY AREA

Donors to The Next Generation Campaign have many reasons for supporting this important effort to establish an endowment for the theater. But they all agree on one thing: A.C.T. is an important part of their lives and enriches the cultural life of the Bay Area as a whole. Their personal stories are testimony to the transformative role A.C.T. plays in entertaining and inspiring the members of our community.

CAROLINE EMMETT AND RUSSELL RYDEL

Dr. Caroline Emmett and Russell Rydel were introduced to A.C.T. by their landlord, who encouraged the student transplants from New York and London to experience San Francisco’s flagship theater company. Instantly, Emmett and Rydel were drawn in by the magic they experienced in A.C.T. productions. As they settled into the Bay Area and their professional lives, A.C.T. became part of their routine. “Soon we found that when we had the choice of going to the opera, the ballet, or A.C.T., we’d always choose A.C.T.,” explains Emmett. “We find it to be more interactive, more enriching, more visceral—it’s simply a great night out!”

A move from San Francisco to Belmont and the arrival of their daughter, Meghan, hasn’t diminished their involvement with A.C.T. “Even with all these life changes,” says Emmett, “the one thing that remains constant is A.C.T. It’s such an important part of our lives. Without it, there’d be a huge gap.”

Emmett and Rydel hope that their daughter will be part of the next generation of theater audiences. When she was three years old, they brought her to a rehearsal of A Christmas Carol at A.C.T., where she took particular interest in a certain ghost with chains. “Because she got to see the actors working in rehearsal, the performance didn’t frighten her at all,” says Rydel. “To this day, Meghan still does a great impression of Marley’s ghost,” adds Emmett.

In addition to their distinguished status as A.C.T. subscribers, Rydel and Emmett are Directors Circle members and have made a generous gift to The Next Generation Campaign. “The productions at A.C.T. make you think—and that’s a good thing,” explains Rydel. “Caroline and I are scientists and work in an analytical environment. What we love about theater is the communication of emotion—theater, for me, is an expression of the soul.”

BETTY HOENER

When Betty Hoener first moved to San Francisco in the 1970s, she immediately began taking advantage of the offerings of the cultural institutions of her new hometown, especially A.C.T. “I remember attending A.C.T.
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We feel that this endowment is crucial to A.C.T.'s future. It'd be a shame to lose such an important part of the cultural life of the Bay Area.

Montgomery '97 appeared in The Three Musketeers and Shotgun Players. Stephanie Saunders '07 appeared in A.C.T.'s workshop of The Tuska Project at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. Kevin Crook '95 wrote, composed, and produced Farmtruck: A Corporate Coffee Adventure, which premiered at the New York Fringe Festival in August, featuring recent grads Christin Sawyer Davis '07, Ann Farrar '06, Head, Grace Heid '07, Nicholas Hongola '07, Katie Huard '07, Graham Outerbridge '07, Stevens, and Us: Outerbridge also appears in the recurring role of Stewart Small on Guiding Light. Morgan Spector '06 and Joel Rainwater '06 are touring as principal standbys with Disney's national tour of The Lion King. Mary Jo McConnell '87 performed in the national tour of All Shook Up. Jacob Ming-Trent '01 appears in the spelling of 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee. Christopher Fitzgerald '97 will portray Igor on Broadway in Young Frankenstein. Stephanie Weeks '04 performed in As You Like It: Young and Raful and The Argument & Dinner Party with Target Margin Theatre in New York. Tony Award winner Anika Noni Rose appeared in the Oscar-nominated Dreamgirls. Rose's credits also include the feature film One For the Money, the CBS network miniseries The Starter Wife, and the voice of Princess Tiana in the Disney animated feature The Princess and the Frog. She will also star opposite Christopher Plummer in Caesar and Cleopatra at Canada's Stratford Festival 2008. Annette Bening '82 was nominated for Golden Globe and International Press Academy Satellite awards for her performance in the film Running with Scissors. She will appear in The Female of the Species at the Geffen Playhouse in Los Angeles. Matthew Nicklau '07 appears in a TV spot for Radio Shack, while Erik Heger '04 is spokesperson Jimmy in a series of ads for T-Mobile, and classmate Jeff Galler '04 represents Progressive Insurance and Domino's Pizza in national commercials. Heger also appeared on a recent episode of Law & Order and Geller portrayed Kyle in Wooden for The Wikipedia Plays at Ars Nova in New York. Elizabeth Banks '96 will be seen in the films Starship Troopers with Eddie Murphy, Fred Claus with Vince Vaughn, Definitely, Maybe with Ryan Reynolds, and Bill with Jessica Alba and Timothy Olyphant. She also plays Dr. Kimberly Briggs on Scrubs. Tony Award nominee Omar Metwally '97 will be seen as the lead in the James Ivory film The City of Your Final Destination with Anthony Hopkins and as Reese Whitherspoon's missing husband in Rendition. Andrew McElveen '06 appeared in a recurring role on Veronica Mars last season. A.C.T. alumni on the set of 24 include Gregory Irwin (President Charles Logan), Jamison Jones '94 (Secret Service Agent Dan), and Carlos Bernard '91 (Tony Almeida). Masi Oka (Studio A.C.T.), who plays Hiro Nakamura on Heroes, was nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Supporting Actor. Oka can also been seen in Balls of Fury with Christopher Walken and in the films Get Smart and Get Smarter: Bruce and Lloyd Out of Control. Castmate Milo Ventimiglia (VC), who plays Peter Petrelli on Heroes, will be seen in the film Pathology. Teri Hatcher (STC), who plays Susan Mayer on Desperate Housewives, will be heard as Coraline's mother in the animated feature Coraline with Dakota Fanning. Devon Graye (VC) plays Teenage Dexter in the Showtime series Dexter. Camryn Manheim (STC) plays Delia Banks of The Ghost Whisperer and will be seen in the feature film Shame, written and directed by Anthony Hopkins. She played the Nurse in the New York Shakespeare Festival's production of Romeo and Juliet in Central Park last summer and will be seen in the CBS movie Jesse Stone.

BRUCE AND ADRIENNE MITCHELL

Bay Area natives Bruce and Adrienne Mitchell have been a part of A.C.T. from the very beginning. "We saw Tiny Allie at Stanford [in 1966] and really loved it," says Bruce. "When Bill Ball brought the company to San Francisco a year later, we bought a subscription to the first season, and we've been coming ever since."

The Mitchells, together with friends who live nearby in their Hillsborough neighborhood, have "gotten into the habit" of making A.C.T. a special night in the city, enjoying dinner, the evening's performance at A.C.T., and then discussing the play at length on their drive home together after the show. "The plays at A.C.T. have always been fascinating, and the actors are top-notch," says Bruce. They fondly recall "amazing" performances by such talents as Peter Donat, Ruth Kobart, Rene Auberjonois, and Ken Ruta and today enjoy seeing members of the core company tackle new roles each season. Adrienne sums it up: "A.C.T. is the benchmark of good theater for us."
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The Mitchells have not only been subscribing to A.C.T. since the company’s inception, they have been donors for almost as long as they are members of the Directors Circle and recently made a significant gift to The New Generation Campaign, taking advantage of a new law that allows tax-free distributions from IRAs through 2007. "I am a strong believer in endowment," says Bruce. "Some years are good financially, and some are not, so it’s important for A.C.T. to have a strong foundation, which is what an endowment will provide," Adrienne adds. "We feel that this endowment is crucial to A.C.T.’s future. It’d be a shame to lose such an important part of the cultural life of the Bay Area."

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BENNET ’92 appeared in A.C.T.’s production of The Three Musketeers at A.C.T.’s workshop of The Threepenny Opera at Shotgun Players.
ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT
Kevin Crook '05’s Farmtrucks: A Corporate Coffee: A Corporate Coffee Adventure Triumphs at the New York Fringe Festival

Think of the largest coffee chain you know. Then imagine an intrepid A.C.T. grad struggling to support his artistic career by slaving away on the frontlines of that chain. You’re actually picturing Kevin Crook, a member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2005, who turned his surreal experiences as a barista into Farmtrucks: A Corporate Coffee Adventure, a musical theater piece featuring original music, epic battles, and a mysterious Archduke. With script and original music by Crook, and staged by Bay Area director/producer Jon Tracy, Farmtrucks was written for and workshoped at A.C.T. last spring by members of the M.F.A. Program class of 2007, many of whom went on to perform their original roles in Farmtrucks’s premiere at this summer’s New York International Fringe Festival. Time Out New York gave the production four stars, while the Village Voice praised the project as a showcase for “the attractive A.C.T. MEAs who form its cast.” Farmtrucks was also honored with a 2007 FringeNYC Overall Excellence Award for Outstanding Ensemble.

“When I worked on my corporate coffee job,” said Crook about the inspiration for Farmtrucks, “I was amused and frustrated by the whole experience and I wanted to share that in an amusing and frightening way. Also, I think it’s important to have fun in theater. This show started off as a sketch written for friends and it’s grown into a show written for friends, and it’s a rare opportunity to be able to do something like that. This is the kind of work that keeps me excited about theater.”

For information about the show and more photos, visit www.farmtruckscoffee.com.

If you are an alumnus/a of an A.C.T. training program (Advanced Training Program, Master of Fine Arts Program, Studio A.C.T., Summer Training Congress, or Young Conservatory), we’d love to know what you’re up to. Please write to Ashley Forrette at afo@act-sf.org and tell us about your recent accomplishments.

Since re-establishing the resident acting company in 2001, A.C.T. has been home to a closely knit group of artists who bring fearless commitment, consistent excellence, and a transformational spirit to each role they inhabit onstage. This season, existing core acting company members René Augesen, Steven Anthony Jones, and Gregory Wallace are joined by three accomplished actors already familiar to A.C.T. audiences: Anthony Fusco, Jack Willis, and 2007-08 Young Company member Jud Williford. Each of these artists is given the security of a full-time contract with A.C.T., which allows them to develop their artistic sensibilities throughout the season while teaching, directing, and mentoring young actors in the conservatory and participating in artistic planning for the theater.

You’ve seen them in roles that fit like a glove and roles that stretch beyond measure. We thought you’d like a chance to get to know the people behind the characters. 

René Augesen

BIRTHPLACE Mankato, Minnesota.
HOMETOWN Odessa, Texas.
FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE Performing in A Christmas Carol in college.
FAVORITE THEATER EXPERIENCE Performing in The Three Sisters at Yale Repertory Theatre while in graduate school.

FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE: The role of Nora in A Doll’s House.
LITTLE-KNOWN FACT I can twirl fire batons while drinking beer!
RECOMMENDATIONS Watch: Stays and Arrows (Canadian television show about the trials and tribulations of a repertory theater company). Read: Angle of Repose (Wallace Stegner), A Dirty Job (Christopher Moore).
PRE- OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL Pecan and physical warm-ups. Post-beer.

Anthony Fusco

BIRTHPLACE New York City.
HOMETOWN San Francisco.
FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE Watching Cleavon Little perform the title role of Hamlet at the New York Shakespeare Festival in 1968; performing the title role of The Dreams of Irving Croper in the sixth grade—addicted ever since.
FAVORITE THEATER EXPERIENCE Tuzenbach in The Three Sisters at A.C.T.; seeing Jason Robards and Colleen Dewhurst in A Moon for the Misbegotten; The Real Thing on Broadway (auditioning for an understudy role, but getting the part instead); meeting Steve Martin while wearing only my underwear.

PHOTO BY BERNIE FORGETTE.
with Tom Selleck. Delroy Lindo '79 played Latimar King on the TV series *Kidnapped* and will be seen in the feature *This Christmas*. Lindo recently directed *Blue Door* at Berkeley Rep. Heidi Armbruster '02 was nominated for a Drama League Award for her performance in the off-Broadway production of *Tis and Sympathy* and plays Yelena in *Uncle Vanya* at the Barrington Stage Company in Massachusetts.

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Kevin Crook '05's Farmtrucks: A Corporate Coffee Adventure Triumphs at the New York Fringe Festival

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INTRODUCING THE A.C.T.
2007-08

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LITTLE-KNOWN FACT I can twirl fire batons while drinking beer!
RECOMMENDATIONS Watch: *Slings and Arrows* (Canadian television show about the trials and tribulations of a repertory theater company). Read: *Angle of Repose* (Wallace Stegner), *A Dirty Job* (Christopher Moore)
PRE- OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL Pre- and physical warm-ups. Post- beer.

E. T. S. BARGEMAN / 485 NO.1 ST., LONDON NW1, LONDON / RE-PRODUCTIONS: A CORPORATE COFFEE ADVENTURE AT THE 2007 NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL FRINGE FESTIVAL. PHOTOS BY SUGA STERNBAUM
FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Seeing The Crucible (1973); performing the role of Kent in Edward II (1999).

FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE The first preview of Edward II, standing on the same stage as the heroes of my youth: Peter Donat, Rene Auberjonois, Ray Reinhardt, and Raye Birk. I still sometimes get goose bumps.

LITTLE-KNOWN FACT A faith healer once put his fingers inside my knee.

RECOMMENDATIONS Watch: Unfinished Pieces for Player Piano, a Russian film adaptation of several Chekhov short stories; anything by Buster Keaton; Herzog’s Kasper Hauser. Read: Other Voices, Other Rooms (Truman Capote), Bel Canto (Ann Patchett), The Eighth Day (Thornton Wilder). Listen to: Louis Armstrong, Al Green, Neil Young’s Harvest Moon, Stan Getz, Wille Nelson’s Stardust, Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, Aretha Franklin.

PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL Pre: Realizing I have to pee after putting on the tights!

LITTLE-KNOWN FACT I am a candidate for “rapture of the deep,” a phrase first used by Jacques Cousteau. An alteration of consciousness experienced by divers at depth, also called nitrogen narcosis, it is a condition that occurs from breathing compressed air. When diving approximately 100 feet, the increase in partial pressure of nitrogen produces an altered mental state similar to intoxication. At 300 feet, it becomes incapacitating, causing stupor, blindness, unconsciousness, and even death. Effects disappear within minutes of ascension.


PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL Post: single malt scotch.

GREGORY WALLACE

BIRTHPLACE New York City.
HOMETOWN Lawrence, NY
(on Long Island).


FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE My father took me to see the Broadway production of Hair when I was seven years old.

FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE Thus far, A.C.T.’s production of Angels in America. We rehearsed for three months (which is unheard of) and performed it for nearly a year. I’m still very close with many of the cast and crew. Opening that show felt a bit like going to war, because the set was notoriously large and unwieldy.

FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE Watching clips from a famous A.C.T. production of The Taming of the Shrew on public television as a teenager.

FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE Performing in Harold Pinter’s Celebration the day after 9/11. I still vividly remember listening to Carey’s poignant speech from backstage. Other favorites include marco barricelli sing and tap dance in his bare feet during Intermission: Holding History, silently stalking René Augezen backdrop while she played my cheating wife in The Three Sisters, and working with Steven Anthony Jones and Laird Williamson in “Master Harold...” and the boys.

LITTLE-KNOWN FACT I am the dubious owner of a 13-year-old talking African grey parrot named Gabriel. His favorite expressions are: “You be QUIET!” and “I must poop.”

RECOMMENDATIONS Watch: Rome, the HBO television series. Definitely worth putting on your Netflix queue.

PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL I have the grilled chicken, zucchini, and broccoli entrée at Lori’s Diner every evening before a show. They throw the chicken on the grill when I walk through the door.

JUD WILLIFORD

BIRTHPLACE Dallas, Texas.
HOMETOWN Denver, Colorado.


FIRST THEATER EXPERIENCE The role of The Tin Man in The Wizard of Oz.

FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE Performing in The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby at California Shakespeare Theater.


FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE Performing in The Imaginary Invalid.

LITTLE-KNOWN FACT I’m a huge Denver Broncos fan. Am pretty sure John Elway is my father.

RECOMMENDATIONS Watch: The Imposters, Anichoman.

PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL Pre: I usually enjoy a bowl of cottage cheese while listening to R. Kelly’s “Bump’n’Grind.” Post: Making fun of Steven Anthony Jones.

For more information about A.C.T.’s core acting company, including their production histories at A.C.T., other performance credits and awards, and links to related websites, please visit www.aclt.org/corecompany.

LEFT TO RIGHT: STEVEN ANTHONY JONES IN AFTER THE WAR; GREGORY WALLACE IN BAREFOOT IN THE PARK; JUD WILLIFORD IN THE COMEDIAN’S DARLING. PHOTOS BY MARY BENNETT.
FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Seeing The Crucible (1973); performing the role of Kent in Edward II (1999).  
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PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL  Pre: Realizing I have to pee after putting on the tights!  

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LITTLE-KNOWN FACT  I am a candidate for “capture of the deep,” a phrase first used by Jacques Cousteau. An alteration of consciousness experienced by divers at depth, also called nitrogen narcosis, it is a condition that occurs from breathing compressed air. When diving approximately 100 feet, the increase in partial pressure of nitrogen produces an altered mental state similar to intoxication. At 300 feet, it becomes incapacitating, causing stupor, blindness, unconsciousness, and even death. Effects disappear within minutes of ascension.  
PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL  Post: single malt scotch.

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FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Seeing Guys and Dolls in the Karamu Theater, in Cleveland, in 1958.  
FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Performing in the Negro Ensemble Company’s original production of A Soldier’s Play in 1981.  
FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  The role of Kent in King Lear, opposite Peter Donat (1987).  
FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Performing in Trelawny, “Master Harold”...and the boys, and other shows, because of the true joy of performing in a good show with good people.

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LITTLE-KNOWN FACT  I am the dubious owner of a 13-year-old talking African grey parrot named Gabriel. His favorite expressions are: “You be QUIET?!” and “I must poop.”  
RECOMMENDATIONS  Watch: Rome, the HBO television series. Definitely worth putting on your Netflix queue.  
PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL  I have the grilled chicken, zucchini, and broccoli entrée at Lori’s Diner every evening before a show. They throw the chicken on the grill when I walk through the door.

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FIRST A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  The role of The Tin Man in The Wizard of Oz.  
FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Performing in The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby at California Shakespeare Theater.  
FAVORITE A.C.T. EXPERIENCE  Performing in The Imaginary Invalid.

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LITTLE-KNOWN FACT  I am a huge Denver Broncos fan. Am pretty sure John Elway is my father.  
RECOMMENDATIONS  Watch: The Impostors, Anhurman.  
PRE-OR POSTPERFORMANCE RITUAL  Pre: I usually enjoy a bowl of cottage cheese while listening to R. Kelly’s “Bump It Grind.” Post: Making fun of Steven Anthony Jones.

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For more information about A.C.T.’s core acting company, including their production histories at A.C.T., other performance credits and awards, and links to related websites, please visit www.aact.org/corecompany.
THE A.C.T. 2007-08 SEASON
AT THE AMERICAN CONSERVATORY THEATER

SWEENEY TODD, THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
Based on an Adaptation by Christopher Bond
Directed and Designed by John Doyle
Aug 20-Sept 15

THE RAMBLER
by N. Richard Nash
Directed by Mark Rudkin
Oct 25-Nov 25

SPEED-THE-PLOW
by David Mamet
Directed by Loretta Greco
Jan 4-Feb 3

THE BLOOD KNOT
by Athol Fugard
Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
Jan 8-Mar 9

THE GOVERNMENT INSPECTOR
by Nikolai Gogol
Directed by Carey Perloff
Mar 20-Apr 20

CURSE OF THE STARVING CLASS
by Sam Shepard
Directed by Peter DuBois
Apr 25-May 25

'THE MÜTHER SHE'S A MENTAL CASE
by John Ford
Directed by Carey Perloff
Jun 9-Jul 6

A CHRISTMAS CAROL
by Charles Dickens
Adapted by Carey Perloff and Paul Walters
Music by Karl Lundeberg
Choreography by Val Caniparoli
Directed by Domenique LaSasso
Based on the original direction by Carey Perloff
Dec 5-Dec 23

AT VERNA BUENA CENTER FOR THE ARTS
THE TOSSED PROJECT
A movement theater project created by Carey Perloff and Val Caniparoli
Oct 30-Nov 16

AT ZEUM THEATER
BRANDENBURG
by Jason Rivera
Jan 22-Feb 16

FIRST LOOK
A series of new play workshops
readings
Apr 11-12
Zeum Theater

Inside A.C.T.
30 Grant Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94108

Who’s Who
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16
include Libyan Satellite (2005 Tribeca Film Festival), The Warrior Class, The Disappearance of Andy Warman, Cosmopolitan (PBS), Blair Witch-2, Maciavelli Rocks, We Pedal Uphill, Hack, Sex and the City, Law & Order, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, Law & Order: SVU, Guiding Light, and One Life to Live. Turner is a graduate of The Juilliard School and a Fox Fellow.

JACK WILLIS
(J.F. Curry) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in Hedda Gabler, A Christmas Carol, The Little Fawn, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Black Rider. An A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, he is also an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Theater Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, A Raisin in the Sun, The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credits include The Raisable Rise of Arturo Ui, World of Mirth, the Iphigenia Cycle, and Vespasiana. He recently appeared in Gypsy with Patti LuPone at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Cradle Will Rock, The Out-of-Towners, Last Harvest, I Come in Peace, Problem Child, Law & Order: Ed, and Dallas. Willis is a co-founder of Aruba Repertory.

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**The A.C.T. 2007-08 Season**

**At the American Conservatory Theater**

**Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street**
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
From an Adaptation by Christopher Bond
Directed and Designed by John Doyle
Aug 30-Sept 23

**The Ramaker**
by N. Richard Nash
Directed by Mark Rucker
Oct 25-Nov 25

**Speed the Plow**
by David Mamet
Directed by Loretta Greco
Jan 4-Feb 3

**The Blood Knot**
by Athol Fugard
Directed by Charles Randolph-Wright
Feb 8-Mar 9

**The Government Inspector**
by Nikolai Gogol
Directed by Carey Perloff
Mar 20-Apr 20

**Curse of the Starving Class**
by Sam Shepard
Directed by Peter DuBois
Apr 25-May 25

**The Pit and the Pendulum**
by John Ford
Directed by Carey Perloff
Jun 9-Jul 8

**A Christmas Carol**
by Charles Dickens
Adapted by Carey Perloff and Paul Zindel
Music by Karl Lindenberg
Choreography by Val Canipari
Directed by Dominic Lee Wills
Based on the original direction by Carey Perloff
Dec 3-Dec 23

**At Berkeley4Center for the Arts**

**The Tosca Project**
A movement-theater project created by Carey Perloff and Val Canipari
Oct 30-Nov 14

**At Zeum Theater**

**Brainstorm**
by José Rivera
Jan 30-Feb 16

**First Look**
A series of new play workshops
Readings
Apr 11-12
Zeum Theater

**American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco**
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**Who's Who**

*Continued from page 18*

include Lily, Satellite (2005 Tribeca Film Festival), The Warrior Class, The Disappearance of Andy Wanamaker, Cosmopolitan (PBS), Blair Witch 2, Maciovelli Bistro, We Pedal Uphill, Hack, Sex and the City, Law & Order, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, Law & Order: SVU, Guiding Light, and One Life to Live. Turner is a graduate of The Juilliard School and a Fox Fellow.

**Jack Willis**

(J.J. Carty) has appeared in more than 200 productions throughout the United States, including recent performances at A.C.T. in Holda Gahler, A Christmas Carol, The Little Fockers, Happy End, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, and The Black Rider. An A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, he is also an associate artist at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and has been a company member of the American Repertory Theatre, Trinity Repertory Company, and the Dallas Theater Center. On Broadway, Willis has appeared in Julius Caesar, The Crucible, Aris, and The Old Neighborhood. His off-Broadway credits include The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui, World of Mirth, The Iphigenia Cycle, and Voltaire. He recently appeared in Gypsy with Patti LuPone at the Ravinia Festival in Chicago. Film and television credits include The Talented Mr. Ripley, The Cattle Will Rock, The Out-of-Towners, Less Than Zero, I Come in Peace, Problem Child, Law & Order, Ed, and Dallas. Willis is a co-founder of Aruba Repertory.

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Who's Who

ROBERT ERNST* (Understudy) has performed in A.C.T. in The Time of Your Life as the Armenian (also at Seattle Repertory Theatre), A Christmas Carol, and June and the Paycock. He is a co-founder of the Iowa Theatre Lab and the Blake St. Hawkeyes. Recent credits include Phil Tracy in The People's Temple at Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Cesar in Marnia at the Aurora Theatre. Other credits include The John, A Moon for the Misbegotten, The Late Henry Moss (replacement for Nick Nolte), Eyes for Consuela, Speed of Darkness, Kingfish, and The Joy of Going Somewhere Definite. His film and television credits include Surfers, Jumpin' Jack Flash, Bargain, Men, Escape from Atlantis, Nash Bridges, and Hill Street Blues. In 1987 Ernst broke the Guinness Book world record for the longest continuous performance—by performing both set material and improvisation for twenty-four hours and one minute.

JUD WILLFORD (Understudy), an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in The Imaginary Invalid, Happy End, The Revolt, The Time of Your Life, and six seasons of A Christmas Carol. Other theater credits include Mark Jackson's American Suicide with Z Plays and Encore Theatre Company; The Imaginary Invalid at The People's Light Theatre; All's Well That Ends Well, The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and Trinculo in The Tempest at California Shakespeare Theater; Sergius in Arno and the Man at Chautauqua Theatre; and Rufus Oakedwood in Saturn: The Musical. Film credits include Wrong Time, Rite Spot with Olympia Dukakis and The Tripper, directed by David Arquette. He received his B.F.A. degree in theater from the University of Evansville and his M.F.A. in acting from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

ROBERT MARK MORGAN (Scenic Designer) last designed The Daedalus and A Moon for the Misbegotten at A.C.T. The design for A Moon for the Misbegotten was selected for display as part of the U.S. exhibit entry at the Prague International Design Quadrennial in June 2007. Other projects include: Twelfth Night for Indiana University; Ordinary Nuns and Rabbit Hole for The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; The Diary of Anne Frank, Lobby Hero, Almost Heaven, Bernice & Butterfly, and Copenhagen for the Denver Center Theatre Company; Much Ado about Nothing and Arsenic and the Man for the American Players Theatre; A Christmas Story for both Studio Arena Theatre (Buffalo) and San Jose Repertory Theatre; The Ice-Breaker and Birnam Woods for the Magic Theatre (San Francisco); Bad Dates and Major Barbara (2004 Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award) for San Jose Repertory Theatre; and The Subject Tonight Is Love for the Alliance Theatre (Atlanta). Morgan teaches design at UC Berkeley.

MARCIA PIZZO* (Understudy) was last seen at A.C.T. in A Matter. Other credits at A.C.T. include Opera Comique, You Never Can Tell, Passion Cycle, and A Christmas Carol. Most recently, Pizzo appeared in the title role of Mary Stuart at Pacific Repertory Theatre. Other Bay Area credits include leading roles in Restoration Comedy, Two Gentlemen of Verona, The Merchant of Venice, King Lear, and The Tempest for California Shakespeare Theater; As You Like It, Macbeth, The Taming of the Shrew, Cyrano de Bergerac, and A Servant of Two Masters for Marin Shakespeare Company; My Fair Lady, Oklahoma!, The King and I, Anything Goes, and Annie for the Mountain Play, The Women for Marin Theatre Company; and Picasso at the Lapin Agile at Theatre on the Square. Film credits include Bicentennial Man, Fruit of the Vine, This Space Between Us, and Delta Fever. Pizzo is a graduate of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

LYDIA TANJU (Costume Designer) recently designed the world premiere of Philip Kan Gotanda's After the War for A.C.T. She has designed Berkeley Repertory Theatre productions of The Glass Menagerie, Our Town, House, Master Class, Homebody/Kabul, and Slave! Recently, she designed The Merry Wives of Windsor at California State University, Fullerton. Some of the most vital and interesting people you’ll ever meet live at San Francisco Towers. The City’s premier retirement community. Life Care provides them with the assurance of comprehensive lifetime medical care...and the freedom to live life to the fullest. To learn more, please contact Kate Hoople at (415) 447-5528 or khoople@sfch.org.

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Who's Who

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JUD WILLIFORD* (Understudy) is an A.C.T. associate artist and core acting company member, has appeared at A.C.T. in The Imaginary Invalid, Happy End, The Revival, The Time of Your Life, and six seasons of A Christmas Carol. Other theatre credits include Mark Jackson’s American Suicide with Z Plays and Encore Theatre Company; The Imaginary Invalid at The People’s Light Theatre; A Fire Horse That Ends Well. The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby, and Trinoco in The Tempest at California Shakespeare Theatre; Sergius in Arsen and the Man at Chautauqua Theatre; and Ruffus Oakwood in Saturn: The Musical. Film credits include Wrong Time, Rite Spot with Olympia Dukakis and The Tripper, directed by David Arquette. He received his B.F.A. degree in theatre from the University of Evansville and his M.F.A. in acting from the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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Who’s Who

GREENBERG, Christopher; SHINS, Annie; WEISMAN, and CULTURE CLASH. Other regional theater credits include work at Yale Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Arena Stage, Intiman Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage, The Old Globe, Ford’s Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, and The Acting Company. Rucker’s feature film, Die, Momma, Die! won a Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.

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Who's Who

Shakespeare Theater and Pymatonic at Santa Cruz. Tanjí has designed for many of Gotadul’s plays, including Sistres Matumona (Seattle Repertory Theatre), The Wind Cries Mary (San Jose Repertory Theatre), and Ballad of Vashay (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). She has also designed for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, Portland Center Stage, Geva Theatre, East-West Players, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, Asian American Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Children’s Theatre, The Peacock Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Theatre Company, Syracuse Stage, and Arena Stage. She has received five Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards and two DramaLogue Awards. Film credits include The Joy Luck Club, Hot Summer Winds, Don Sam, Gotadul’s The Wash, A Thousand Pieces of Gold, and Life Tastes Great.

DON DARNUTZ (Lighting Designer) designed the lighting for the Tony Award-nominated Best New Musical Broadway show Ain’t Too Proud: The Life and Times of the Temptations. He has also worked for ACT (The Dazzle, A Moon for the Misbegotten), Denver Center Theatre Company, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Guthrie Theater, the Mark Taper Forum, The Shakespeare Theatre (Washington, D.C.), Arena Stage, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe Theatre, the Alley Theatre, the Geffen Playhouse, New Orleans Opera, the Cleveland Play House, the Atlanta Opera, the Coconut Grove Playhouse (Florida), Palm Beach Opera, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Portland Opera, the Minnesota Opera, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, ACT Theatre (Seattle), Geva Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and the San Antonio Festival.

JEFF MCKOOS (Sound Designer) returns to A.C.T. following last season’s The Circle. In the interim, he opened two world premiere musicals—Thais’ Tigers for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Lead Me a Tenor: The Musical, for the Utah Shakespeare Festival—as well as Guys & Dolls, Fiddler on the Roof (Center Stage Musical Theatre), Love’s Labour’s Lost (Center Repertory Theatre), and Prometheus Bound (Center Repertory Theatre). McKoos has served 14 seasons as resident sound designer for San Jose Rep, with more than 60 production credits, including Nixon’s Nixon, A Christmas Story, and The Haunting of Winchester. His work for Old Wicked Songs and Mary’s Wedding earned Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards, while By the Big of Cats, ART, and Major Barbara received Dean Goodman Choice Awards. A Lecturer for UC Santa Cruz’s Theatre Arts Department, he also has credits with A Contemporary Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, Missouri Repertory Theatre, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, PCPA TheatreFest, Sacramento Theatre Company, and Sledgehammer Theatre. Upcoming projects include South Pacific at the Western Stage and This Wonderful Life at San Jose Rep.

MERYL LIND SHAW ( Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff as casting director in 1995. She has cast roles for the Huntington Theatre Company, Arizona Theatre Company, the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of White Christmas, Jets, and Piazzolla at the Latin Polo, as well as a few workshop of The Gianta di Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game Odyssey. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s Creditors and Bon Appetit! She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She has served on the Bay Area advisory committee of Actors’ Equity Association, the negotiating committee for the LORT contract (1995 and 2005), and the board of the California Shakespeare Festival of the Oakland University.

ELISA GUTHERTZ (Stage Manager) most recently worked on Blackbird and The LIttle Foxes at A.C.T. and on the A.C.T. production of Death in Venice at San Jose. Her numerous other productions for A.C.T. include A Number, Sexual Persecution in Chicago, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, A Moon for the Misbegotten, Well, The Good Body, Leaving James, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Mississippi Long Man’s Journey into Night, Tariffs, Mary Stuart, The Rose Tattoo, and A Streeter Named Desire. She has also stage-managed The Mystery of Irma Vep, Suddenly Last Summer, Rhinoceros, Big Love, Civil Sex, Catherine Street, and Cloud Tzuomala at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Other productions include Ever Estler’s The Good Body at the Booth Theatre on Broadway, Big Love at Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The Regina Monologues at the Alcatraz Theatre.

HEATH BELDEN (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of Hedda Gabler, The Rituals, and Sexual Persecution in Chicago. Belden has stage-managed The Subject Tonight Is Love with Marin Theatre Company, Once Upon a Mattress, starring Lea DeLaria, with 42nd Street Moon, five operas with Donald Pippin’s Pocket Opera, and four seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weitzman’s Spin Moves, and Charles L. Mee’s Wintertime. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Lee Waters, Barbara Damshok, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Bariccioli. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RAINMAKER?

WORDS ON PLAY: A.C.T. in depth performance guide series, offers insights into the plays, playwrights, and productions of the A.C.T. subscription season. Each entertaining and informative issue contains a synopsis, advance program notes, study questions, and additional background information about the historical and cultural context of the play.

Individual issues of Winds on Plays for each production—including The Rainmaker—are available for purchase in the theater lobby at A.C.T. Ticket Services (next door at 405 Geary Street), and online at www.act.org. Subscriptions to Winds on Plays are also available. For information about subscribing to Winds on Plays, call 415.749.2250 or visit www.aact.org.

PATTI AND RUSTY RUEFF (Executive Producers), A.C.T. subscribers who have loved and actively participated in theater their entire lives, have attended countless performances together over the past 15 years. After participating on the boards of regional theaters in Dallas, Texas, and Taos, New Mexico, they wanted to get involved in the dramatic arts in the Bay Area, where they made their permanent home nine years ago. Rusty, chief executive officer of SNOCAP, a commerce company in the digital music marketplace, joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees in 2003, and Patti, a special events consultant, joined A.C.T.’s wildly successful Ruby Jubilee gala event in April 2007. Patti is also active with Family Service Agency of San Mateo County, and Rusty is a member of the Grammy Foundation Board. Together they are the named benefactors of the Patti and Rusty Rueff Department of Visual and Performing Arts at Pepperdine University.

American Conservatory Theater
Who's Who

Shakespeare Theater and Pygmalion at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Tanji has designed for many of Gotanpa’s plays, including Sisters Matsunawa (Seattle Repertory Theatre), The Wind Mr. Mary (San Jose Repertory Theatre), and Ballad of Visby (Berkeley Repertory Theatre). She has also designed for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Laguna Playhouse, Portland Center Stage, Geva Theatre, East-West Players, Pan Asian Repertory Theatre, Asian American Theatre Company, Aurora Theatre Company, Indiana Repertory Theatre, The Children’s Theatre, The Public Theater, Mark Taper Forum, the Huntington Theatre Company, Syracuse Stage, and Arena Stage. She has received five Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards and two DramaLogue Awards. Film credits include The Joy Luck Club, Hot Summer Winds, Don Sam, Gotanpa’s The Wash, A Thousand Pieces of Gold, and Life Trees Taste.

DON DARNUTZ (Lighting Designer) designed the lighting for the Tony Award-nominated (Best New Musical) Broadway show It Ain’t Nothing But the Blues and the off-Broadway shows Almost Heaven: The Songs of John Denver, The Immigrant for Dodger Stages, and Lost Highway for Manhattan Ensemble Theatre. He has also worked for A.C.T. (The Dazzle, A Moon for the Misbegotten), Denver Center Theatre Company, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Guthrie Theater, the Mark Taper Forum, The Shakespeare Theatre (Washington, D.C.), Arena Stage, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe Theatre, the Alley Theatre, the Geffen Playhouse, New Orleans Opera, The Cleveland Play House, the Atlanta Opera, the Coconut Grove Playhouse (Florida), Palm Beach Opera, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Portland Opera, the Minnesota Opera, the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, ACT Theatre (Seattle), Geva Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and the San Antonio Festival.

JEFF MORKUS (Sound Designer) returns to A.C.T. following last season’s The Circle. In the interim, he opened two world premieres—Thais’ Tigers for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and Lend Me a Tenor: The Musical, for the Utah Shakespeare Festival—as well as Guys & Dolls, Fiddler on the Roof (Centro Costa Musical Theatre), I Love My Dad (Center Repertory Company), and The Performers (The Western Stage), Dody Wur’s Kitchen (UC Berkeley), Rabbi Hole (San Jose Repertory Theatre), The Triumph of Love (California Shakespeare Theater/San Jose Rep), and Hank Williams: Lost Highway (Center Repertory Theatre). Morkus also served as resident sound designer for San Jose Rep, with more than 60 production credits, including Nixon/Nixon, A Christmas Story, and The Haunting of Winchester. His work for Old Wicked Songs and Mary’s Wedding earned Bay Area Theatre Critics’ Circle Awards, while By the Big Cats, ART, and Major Barbara received Dean Goodman Choice Awards. A lecturer for UC Santa Cruz’s Theatre Arts Department, he also has credits with A Contemporary Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, the Huntington Theatre Company, Missouri Repertory Theatre, San Diego Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, PCPA Theatrefest, Sacramento Theatre Company, and Sledgehammer Theatre. Upcoming projects include South Pacific at The Western Stage and This Wonderful Life at San Jose Rep.

MERRIL LIND SHAW (Casting Director) joined the A.C.T. artistic staff as casting director in 1993. She has cast roles for the Huntington Theatre Company, Arizona Theatre Company, the San Francisco Symphony and Opera, and the San Francisco productions of White Christmas, Jitney, and Picasso at the Lapin Agile, as well as the first workshop of The Count of Monte Cristo and the CD-ROM game Graham’s. Before joining A.C.T. as casting director, she stage-managed more than 60 productions in theaters throughout the Bay Area, including A.C.T.’s Creditors and Bon Appetit! She was resident stage manager at Berkeley Repertory Theatre for twelve years and production stage manager at the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival for three seasons. She has served on the Bay Area advisory committee of Actors’ Equity Association, the negotiating committee for the LORT contract (1992 and 1997), and the board of the California Shakespeare Festival of the University of California.

HEATH BELDEN* (Assistant Stage Manager) recently worked on A.C.T. productions of Hedda Gabler, The Rituals, and Sexual Perversity in Chicago. Belden has stage-managed The Subject Tonight Is Love with Marin Theatre Company, Once Upon a Mattress, starring Lea DeLaria, with 42nd Street Moon, five operas with Donald Pippin’s Pocket Opera, and four seasons with Marin Shakespeare Company. Belden has worked on such new plays as Sarah Ruhl’s Eurydice, Ken Weitzman’s Spin Moves, and Charles L. Mee’s Wintertime. He has also been the stage manager for such noted directors as Lee Waters, Barbara Damishok, Daniel Fish, Tina Landau, and Marco Barilli. Belden received a master of fine arts degree from UC San Diego and has stage-managed several shows for the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program.

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

222 Powell Street
San Francisco 415.397.7720
www.kuletos.com

PATTI AND RUSTY RUFFE (Executive Producers), A.C.T. subscribers who have loved and actively participated in theater their entire lives, have attended countless performances together over the past 15 years. After participating on the boards of regional theaters in Dallas, Texas, and Taos, New Mexico, they wanted to get involved in the dramatic arts in the Bay Area, where they made their permanent home nine years ago. Rusty, chief executive officer of SNOCAP, a commerce company in the digital music marketplace, joined the A.C.T. Board of Trustees in 2003, and Patti, a special events consultant, co-founded A.C.T.’s wildly successful Rudy Jubilee gala event in April 2007. Patti is also active with Family Service Agency of San Mateo County, and Rusty is a member of the Grammy Foundation Board. Together they are the named benefactors of the Patti and Rusty Ruffe Department of Visual and Performing Arts at Purdue University.

* Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
CAREY PERLOFF (Artistic Director) is a 16th season artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed acclaimed productions of Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War (an A.C.T. commission that premiered in March), Tom Stoppard’s Travesties, Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill’s Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), and A Christmas Carol (a new adaptation by Perloff with dramaturg Paul Killen). Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. The American premieres of Stoppard’s The Formation of Love and Indian Ink and Pinter’s Celebration and The Roomy. A.C.T.’s commissioned translations of Heidegger’s The Transistor, Porter’s Mary Stuart, Uncle Vanya, and A Matter (based on Gorhy’s Fane Zelebenzeze); David Mamet’s new adaptation for A.C.T. of Greene-Barker’s The Hoax: Inheritance; the world premiere of Leslie Ayvazian’s Singer of Songs, and major revivals of A Doll’s House, Waiting for Godot, The Three Sisters, The Threepenny Opera, Old Times, The Rose Tattoo, Antigone, Credits, Home, The Tempest, and Stoppard’s The Real Thing, Night, and Day, and ArCADia. Her production of Molière’s Hôtel, coproduced at A.C.T.’s second space (Zeum) with Laura Pac Productions, traveled to Washington, D.C.’s Studio Theatre and then to New York’s 59E59 Theatre in 2005. Perloff’s work at A.C.T. also includes the world premieres of Marc Bimilin’s Ni on an Anvil, David Lang/Mac Wellman’s The Difficulty of Crossing a Field, and the West Coast premiere of her own play The Colossus of Rhodes (a finalist for the Susan Smith Blackburn Award). Her play Limousines Dating was developed under a grant from The Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Science & Technology Project, was workshopped in the summer of 2004 at New York Stage & Film, premiered in New York in April 2005 at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, was coproduced by A.C.T. and the Magic Theatre last December, and is published by Dramatists Play Service. Her new play Waiting for the Wind was directed by Judith Ivey as part of A.C.T.’s First Look festival in January and workshopped at Roundabout Theatre Company this summer; her latest play, Higby, was developed at New York Stage & Film in June. Perloff has also collaborated as a director with many notable contemporary writers, most recently Philip Kan Gotanda, on his new play After the War at the Sundance Institute in 2004.

Robert O’Hara’s, On Beulahstreet for the 2005 O’Neill Playwrights Conference; and Irish playwright Lucy Caldwell, on Guardians, for the 2007 O’Neill conference.

Before joining A.C.T., Perloff was artistic director of Classic Stage Company in New York, where she directed the world premiere of Emma Rice’s Elders, the American premiere of Pinter’s Mountain Language and The Birthday Party, and many classic works. Under Perloff’s leadership, Classic Stage won numerous OBIE Awards for acting, direction, and design, as well as the 2008 OBIE for artistic excellence. In 1993, she directed the world premiere of Steve Reich and Beryl Korot’s opera The Cave at the Vienna Festival and Brooklyn Academy of Music. A recipient of France’s Chevalier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres and the National Corporate Theatre Fund’s 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Lea and Nicholas.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director) now in her 12th season with A.C.T., has strengthened the organization’s infrastructure and oversaw the company’s expansion to include the development of new work and the addition of a third year to A.C.T.’s acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. Her decision to undertake an M.B.A. degree from the Richard Ivey School of Business at the University of Western Ontario followed a 15-year career in stage, tour, and production management ranging across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Credits include the Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage Company, Charlotte Town Festival, Theatre New Brunswick, New Play City, Vancouver, and Neptune Theatre in Halifax. As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a five-theater performing arts complex and school that annually produced 16 productions, an International Children’s Festival, and a Teen Festival. As a member of the executive committee of the Edmonton Performing Arts Consortium, Kitchen authored the benchmark study Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts in Edmonton. An active community member, Kitchen serves on the board and executive committee of the Edmonton Community Foundation, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of the San Francisco Lead Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers/Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton and has served three terms on the executive of the League of Resident Theatres. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, Canada Council of the Arts, and Forbes magazine’s Business and the Arts Awards. The San Francisco Business Times named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past four years.

EILEEN SMITH (Executive Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory’s Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congreg, and Studio A.C.T., in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. in September 1995, Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in venues around the country, including teaching in Hanoi and in Florence, Italy. Also a professional actress, she has performed in numerous off-off Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. in 2004 where she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Continental Divorce. Smith holds a B.A. in English and theater from Yale College and an M.F.A. in acting from the Yale School of Drama.

JAMES HAIRe (Producing Director) began his career on Broadway with Eva Le Gallienne’s National Repertory Theatre as an actor and Stage Manager. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Mile Rainier Drinks a Little and Greatly (music by Coley Beyer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen’s Don’t Drink the Water. Off Broadway he produced Iheu’s Little Eyes (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 Credit 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.
CAREY PERLOFF (Executive Director) is in her 16th season as artistic director of A.C.T., where she most recently directed acclaimed productions of Philip Kan Gotanda’s After the War (an A.C.T. commission that premiered in March), Tom Stoppard’s Travesties, Bertolt Brecht/Kurt Weill’s Happy End (including a critically acclaimed cast album recording), and A Christmas Carol (a new adaptation by Perloff with dramaturg Paul Kael). Known for directing innovative productions of classics and championing new writing for the theater, Perloff has directed for A.C.T. The American premieres of Stoppard’s The Form of the Function and Indian Ink and Pulitzer’s Celebration and The奈美l’s A.C.T.-commissioned translations of Heidegger’s Die Metamorphose, Pinter’s The Habit of Art, and the National Corporate Theatre Fund’s 2007 Artistic Achievement Award, Perloff received a B.A. Phi Beta Kappa in classics and comparative literature from Stanford University and was a Fulbright Fellow at Oxford. She was on the faculty of the Theatre School of the Arts at New York University for seven years and teaches and directs in the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program. She is the proud mother of Leoni and Nicholas.

HEATHER KITCHEN (Executive Director), now in her 12th season with A.C.T., has strengthened the organization’s infrastructure and oversaw the company’s expansion to include the development of new work and the addition of a third year to A.C.T.’s acclaimed Master of Fine Arts Program. Her decision to undertake an M.B.A. degree from the Richard Ivey School of Business at The University of Western Ontario followed a 15-year career in stage, tour, and production management ranging across Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Credits include the Stratford Festival, Canadian Stage Company, Charlottetown Festival, Theatre New Brunswick, New Play City, Vancouver, and Nepean Theatre in Halif. As general manager of The Citadel Theatre, Kitchen managed a five-theater performing arts complex that annually produced 16 productions, an International Children’s Festival, and a Teen Festival. As a member of the executive committee of the Edmonton Performing Arts Consortium, Kitchen authored the benchmark study Economic Impact of the Nonprofit Arts in Edmonton. A active community member, Kitchen serves on the board and executive committee of the Community Club of California, as well as the board of the National Corporate Theatre Fund in New York. She is a past member of the San Francisco Leadship Board of the American Red Cross, the board of Big Brothers-Big Sisters, San Francisco and the Peninsula, and the Salvation Army Auxiliary in Edmonton and has served three terms on the executive of the League of Resident Theatres. She has also participated on peer review panels for Theatre Communications Group, Canada Council of the Arts, and Forbes magazine’s Business and the Arts Awards. The San Francisco Business Times named Kitchen one of the most influential women in business in the Bay Area for the past four years.

MELODY SMITH (Executive Director) oversees the administration of the A.C.T. Conservatory’s Master of Fine Arts Program, Young Conservatory, Summer Training Congress, and Studio A.C.T. in addition to serving as the master acting teacher of the M.F.A. Program. Before joining A.C.T. in 1993, Smith served as director of the program in theater and dance at Princeton University, where she taught acting for six years. She has worked with people of all ages in various round the country, including teaching in Hawaii and in Florence, Italy. As a professional actor, she has performed in numerous off-off-Broadway plays and at regional theaters, including A.C.T. in 2004 she toured London and Birmingham (U.K.) in Berkeley Repertory Theatre’s production of Continger of Desire. 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 as an actor and Stage Manager. He also stage-managed the Broadway productions of And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little and Gypsy (in musical by Cyndle Bayer Sager), as well as the national tour of Woody Allen’s Doct The Hine. Off Broadway he produced Ebear’s Little Eps (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 theatre Cinema Internationally 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.
Producers Circle members make annual contributions of $10,000 or more to A.C.T.'s extraordinary generosity supports production, actor training in our conservatory, and an investment in the artistic commitments of A.C.T. by extending production meetings and partaking in numerous behind-the-scenes opportunities. We are privileged to recognize these members during the August 1, 2006–August 31, 2007 period.

For information about membership, please contact Paul Knoln at 415.493.2535 or paul@act.org.

DIRECTORS' CIRCLE CONTINUED —
InterACT
From free parties to in-depth discussions with the artists, A.C.T. offers events for all—at no additional cost.

KORET PROLOGUE
A conversation with the director before the preview performance
- Sunday, 10/28 (6:30-5:50 p.m.)
- Tuesday, 1/18 (5:30-6 p.m.)

KORET AUDIENCE EXCHANGES
Free post-performance discussions with the actors and/or A.C.T. staff members
- Tuesday, 11/6
- Wednesday, 11/7
- Sunday, 11/18
- Tuesday, 1/15
- Sunday, 1/20
- Wednesday, 1/30

OUT WITH A.C.T.
A gathering of gay and lesbian theatre-goers, immediately following the 8 p.m. performance
- Wednesday, 11/14
- Wednesday, 11/16

THEATER ON THE COUCH
An exciting collaboration between A.C.T. and The San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis. After the show, the panel will discuss the psychological aspects of the play and take questions from the audience in Fred's Columbia Room.
- Friday, 11/12
- Friday, 11/17

AND DON'T FORGET...
FIRST LOOK PRESENTS
A Workshop Presentation of The Tosca Project
Yerba Forum
10/26-28

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESENTS
Homecoming Weekend
A.C.T./ZELM Theater
10/26-27

MASTERS OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS
CLASS OF 2008 IN REPERTORY: The Importance of Being Earnest and Candide
ZELM Theater
10/17-11/3

KORET VISITING ARTISTS SERIES PRESENTS "Finding a Voice"
A.C.T., 11/11

YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS
Broken Wings, and More
ZELM Theater
11/9-17

THE RAINMAKER
SPEED-THE-PLOW

A.C.T. Donor Events

OPENING NIGHT DINNER
Enjoy dinner with the director before the opening night performance of The Rainmaker.
Tuesday, 10/30, 5:30 p.m.

DESIGN PRESENTATION
Hear the director’s vision at the first meeting of the company of A Christmas Carol.
Tuesday, 11/6, 4 p.m.

CORPORATE CURTAIL CALL LUNCHEON
Annual luncheon honoring Corporate Partners and friends on the set of A Christmas Carol.
Thursday, 11/15, 12 noon

PRODUCERS CIRCLE DINNER
Monday, 11/26, 6 p.m.

SEASON GALA
Save the date: A.C.T.’s annual gala fundraising event at the Four Seasons Hotel. For more information call Leslie Bires at 415.439.2477.
Sunday, 6/6/08

To support A.C.T. and receive invitations to Annual Gala, Directors Circle, and Producers Circle events, please contact Paul Knudsen at pknudsen@act-sf.org or 415.439.2523.

Due to the spontaneous nature of live theater, all times are subject to change.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 415.749.2ACT OR VISIT WWW.ACT-SF.ORG.
InterACT
From free parties to in-depth discussions with the artists, A.C.T. offers events for all—at no additional cost.

KORET PROLOGUE
A conversation with the director before the preview performance
- Sunday, 10/28, 6:30-8 p.m.
- Tuesday, 11/8, 5:30-8 p.m.

KORET AUDIENCE EXCHANGES
Free postperformance discussions with the actors and/or A.C.T. staff members
- Tuesday, 11/6
- Wednesday, 11/7
- Sunday, 11/11
- Tuesday, 11/15
- Sunday, 11/20
- Wednesday, 11/30

THE RAINMAKER  SPEED-THE-PLOW

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DON'T FORGET . . .
FIRST LOOK PRESENTS A Workshop Presentation of The Tosca Project YRC FORUM 10/26-28
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION PRESENTS Homecoming Weekend A.C.T./ZELM THEATER 10/26-27
MASTERS OF FINE ARTS PROGRAM PRESENTS CLASS OF 2008 IN REPERTORY: The Importance of Being Earnest and Candide ZELM THEATER 10/17-11/3
KORET VISITING ARTISTS SERIES PRESENTS "Finding a Voice" A.C.T., 11/11
YOUNG CONSERVATORY PRESENTS Broken Wings. . . and More ZELM THEATER 11/9-17

A.C.T. Donor Events

OPENING NIGHT DINNER
Enjoy dinner with the director before the opening night performance of The Rainmaker. Tuesday, 10/30, 5:30 p.m.

DESIGN PRESENTATION
Hear the director's vision at the first meeting of the company of A Christmas Carol. Tuesday, 11/6, 4 p.m.

CORPORATE CURTAIN CALL LUNCHEON
Annual luncheon honoring Corporate Partners and friends on set of The Rainmaker. For more information call Leslee Bires at 415.439.2477. Thursday, 11/11, 12 noon

PRODUCERS CIRCLE DINNER
Experience the Annual Producers Circle dinner, featuring Duncan Sheik. Hosted by U.S. Trust, Bank of America Private Wealth Management. Monday, 11/26, 6 p.m.

DESIGN PRESENTATION
Hear the director's vision at the first meeting of the company of Speed-the-Plow. Monday, 12/3, 11 a.m.

SEASON GALA
Save the date! A.C.T.'s annual gala fundraising event at the Four Seasons Hotel. For more information call Leslie Bires at 415.427.2555.
Monday, 11/26, 6 p.m.

To support A.C.T. and receive invitations to Annual Gala and Directors Circle events, please contact Paul Knudsen at pknudsen@act.org.

SPECIAL EVENT!

The Rainmaker
by N. Richard Nash directed by Mark Rucker
Oct 25-Nov 24
Speed-the-Plow
by David Mamet
directed by Leslee Bires
Jan 4-Feb 3
The Government Inspector
by Nikolai Gogol
translated by Peter Baker
directed by Corey Portera
Apr 26-May 25
Curse of the Starving Class
by Sam Shepard
Jan 4-Feb 3
Tis Pity She's a Whore
by John Ford
directed by Corey Portera
Aug 5-Aug 25
The Blood Knot
by Athol Fugard
translated by Charles Sanford Wright
Apr 26-May 25

New Work Productions
A Christmas Carol is adapted by Carey Portera and Paul Melcher.

ACT-SF.ORG | 415.749.2ACT

"The best Christmas Carol ever! A terrific and imaginative production. Highest rating!"
- J. M. Sirr, SF Chronicle

"This is a Carol built to banish bah humbug for years to come."
- Joan Hart, Oakland Tribune

"A lively new Carol full of surprises . . . entertaining and radically different!"
- San Francisco Chronicle

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THE GALLERY
AT A.C.T.

Find yourself with some extra time before a performance or during intermission? Want to expose yourself to more fine art, but don’t make it to art galleries as often as you’d like? Now you need look no further than A.C.T. We invite you to view the second floor of the theater (just outside the auditorium doors, along the north bank of windows, and by the elevator) to view original artwork by a diverse range of artists, presented in a series of rotating exhibits throughout the 2007–08 season.

FREDRIC HOLLE: GNOMEGAME

Through November 25

Fredric Holle employs the art of figure drawing as a genesis for all of his work, in the tradition of William Blake, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and Egon Schiele. “I constantly draw from models, partly for the great pleasure it affords but, primarily, to maintain perceptual sensitivity and to obtain fresh data to fill a reservoir of images that may be tapped, when needed, for the paintings.”

Using free-hand airbrush with acrylic paint to provide a synthesis of drawing and painting, Holle synthesizes drawing and painting into one act, forming a direct conduit from subjective cognition to the picture plane. “The guiding concept of my work relates to the revelation and personification of universal human attitudes, ranging from satire to fantasy,” says Holle. “My awareness of the attitude manifested on the picture plane crystallizes as the painting unfolds. I don’t preconceive. I have the greatest faith in intuition and the truth it generates.” A studio art teacher for 30 years, Holle has developed a series of five classical life drawing videotapes titled The Artist-in-Residence® Series.

Each artwork purchase benefits A.C.T. For more information about Fredric Holle, please contact Kevin Simmers at 415.474.1066 / krscreativeoptm@aol.com.

FINDING YOUR VOICE

Sunday, November 11
following the matinee performance of The Rainmaker

An exploration of how artists and arts organizations are finding ways to engage young people in theater, the arts, and discovering their own creativity.

Featuring: CRAIG SLAIGHT (A.C.T. Associate Artist and Young Conservatory Director), SARAH DANIELS (playwright of Dust and Broken Wings; both VC commissions), LINDA HARRYZELL (Artistic Director, Seattle Children’s Theatre), and KATLIN TALBOT (former VC student and member of the A.C.T. Master of Fine Arts Program class of 2008)

MICHAEL PALLER

And stay tuned for information about Koret panels on the following dates:
Sunday, April 6
following the matinee performance of Speed-the-Plow
Sunday, March 2
following the matinee performance of The Threepenny Novel
Sunday, April 13
following the matinee performance of The Government Inspector
Sunday, December 10
following the matinee performance of Curse of the Starving Class

All panelists subject to change. For more information, visit www.aact-sf.org.
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From Gold Dust To Stardust

During the Gold Rush, Wells Fargo stagecoaches carried more than gold dust and mail. We also brought actors, musicians and other performing artists to the West.

Today, we’re proud to continue that tradition by helping to deliver arts and entertainment to our community.