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by **A.R. Gurney**

directed by **Leslie Swackhamer**



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by **A.R. Gurney**

directed by Leslie Swackhamer

July 1 – 30, 1995

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A Contemporary Theatre • 100 W. Roy Street • Seattle, WA 98119
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General Information

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A Contemporary Theatre is pleased to offer these services. The building itself is accessible for the physically challenged.

We invite you to attend sign-interpreted performances at 8:00 p.m. on the third Friday of each play:

Later Life, July 21
Das Barbecü, August 25
Tea, September 29
The Language of Flowers, November 3

Audio-described performances are provided by AVIA (Arts and Visually Impaired Audiences), funded in part by the Seattle Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Washington State Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. These are scheduled for the third Sunday of each play's run at 7 p.m.:

Later Life, July 23
Das Barbecü, August 27
Tea, October 1
The Language of Flowers, November 5

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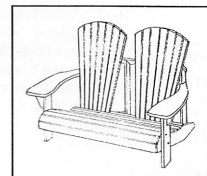
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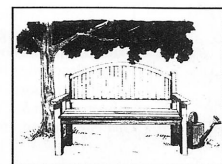
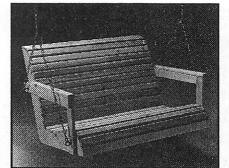
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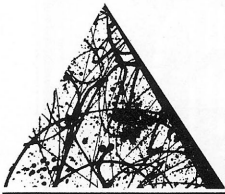


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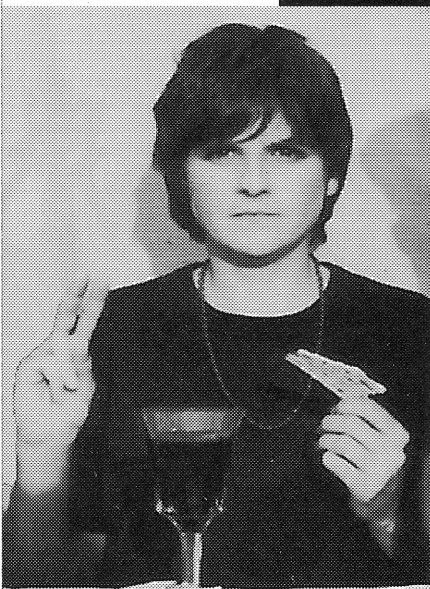
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Notes From the Playwright

...The play really asks the question whether in later life we are simply exaggerations and extensions of our earlier selves, or whether we can change and grow as we grow older. Austin and Ruth would seem to embody the former position, though Ruth instinctively chooses a turbulent life over what bodes to be a kind of genteel death. The other characters are examples of human resiliency and changeability, dramatized by the fact that two actors are asked to play so many different roles. Boston itself, in its ability to adapt and respond to the times, is also living out its own later life.

As I was writing this play, I realized that Austin's sense of his own personal doom was similar to that of Henry James's tormented hero in his novella *The Beast of the Jungle*, which I had taught several times in my own earlier life at M.I.T. In this sense, my play is an adaptation of James's story, but I would argue that in its form and setting it is very different. Jamesian or not, I find Austin's predicament infinitely sad — a man encumbered by so much baggage from the past that he is unable to seize life, even when it presents itself to him in such an enticing way.

...Of all my children, this one had the easiest birth, and so far has been the easiest to bring up. Whether that means it will succeed better than its siblings in the long run remains to be seen. I have to say I have a special affection for it, since it so particularly embodies the collaborative pleasures of this strange, enticing profession we call theatre.

A.R. Gurney

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presents

LATER LIFE

by A.R. Gurney

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Director | Leslie Swackhamer |
| Set Designer | Shelley Henze Schermer |
| Costume Designer | David Zinn |
| Lighting Designer | M.L. Geiger |
| Sound Designer | David Pascal |
| Dialect Coach | Deena Burke |
| Assistant Director | Jef Vowell |
| Stage Manager | Jeffrey K. Hanson |

Cast

| | |
|-------------|----------------|
| Austin | Peter Silbert |
| Ruth | Jo Leffingwell |
| Other Men | Rick Tutor |
| Other Women | Eve Roberts |

Time: An autumn evening

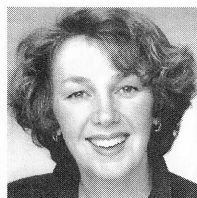
Place: A balcony in Boston

The play is performed without intermission.

This production is made possible in part by the membership companies in ACT's Corporate Circle.

A Contemporary Theatre is a member of the League of Resident Theatres, the American Arts Alliance, the Washington State Arts Alliance, and is a constituent of the Theatre Communications Group. This theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. Directors and choreographers at ACT are members of the Society of Stage Directors, an independent national labor union.

The Actors



Jo Leffingwell
Ruth

made her professional acting debut at ACT in 1970 as Lucy in *The Birthday Party*,

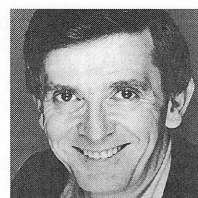
directed by Greg Falls, the founding director. Since then, she has performed in over 20 shows at ACT. Two of her favorite roles have been Nelly Mann in *Tales from Hollywood* and Gussie in *Merrily We Roll Along*. Jo has performed with Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre Company, Empty Space Theatre and The Group. She also taught acting at Cornish College for seven years and has directed for Alice B. Theatre and the Seattle Children's Theatre. She last appeared at the Northlight Theatre in Chicago as Mrs. Warren in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Since 1990, she has been studying yoga, working in her garden and spending time with her family. Jo is delighted to return to the stage by joining ACT in celebrating its 30th anniversary season.



Eve Roberts
Sally, Marion, Nancy,
Esther and Judith

Eve last appeared on our stage in *Painting Churches*. Other

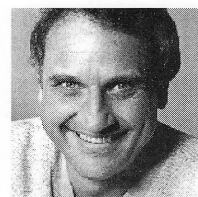
performances at ACT include *Shadowbox* and *Wings*. A veteran of the local theater scene, her many appearances include *Happy Days*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Pal Joey* at Seattle Repertory Theatre and *A Touch of the Poet* and *The Cherry Orchard* at Intiman Theatre Company. As a teacher she has worked with students at the University of Washington and the Cornish Institute. Presently, she is the Master Acting Teacher at the University of Southern California. Eve's recent acting credits include *Mornings at Seven* at the Old Globe and the film *Fearless*.



Peter Silbert
Austin

Among Peter's many roles at ACT are Galen Gray in *Gray's Anatomy*, Fr. Toulon

in *Red Noses*, Brecht in *Tales from Hollywood*, Peter de Marrone in *Sunsets and Glories* and several productions as Ebenezer Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol*. For the Empty Space Theatre he has played Finkelbaum in *The Puppetmaster of Lodz* and Ray in *Dark Rapture*. He has also worked at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild, Center Stage and, for six seasons, the Intiman Theatre Company. Nationally Peter has appeared at Berkeley Repertory, Milwaukee Repertory, La Jolla Playhouse, the Goodman Theatre and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Most recently, he was seen at the Arizona Theatre Company in *Noises Off* and as Van Helsing in Steven Dietz's *Dracula*.



Rick Tutor
Jim, Ray, Duane, Ted
and Walt

Rick last appeared at ACT as Joe Josephson in *Merrily We Roll*

Along. Other roles here include Baylor in *A Lie of the Mind*, Aranow in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, First Actor in *The Dining Room*, Jarvis in *A Chorus of Disapproval* and Kent in *King Lear*. Other local credits include Mervin Kant in *The Sisters Rosensweig* and Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* at the Seattle Repertory Theatre; Tarleton in *Misalliance* and David Bliss in *Hayfever* at the Intiman Theatre; and George in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and Davies in *The Caretaker* at the Tacoma Actors Guild. Rick has also appeared at the Bathhouse Theatre, Pioneer Square Theatre and the New City Theatre. His work at other regional theatres include Dr. Chumley in *Harvey* at La Jolla Playhouse and Yovan in *Division Street* at the Portland Center Stage.

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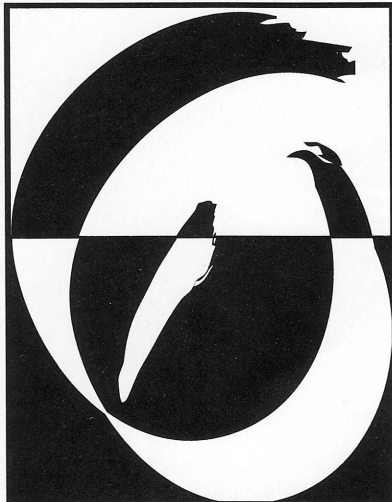
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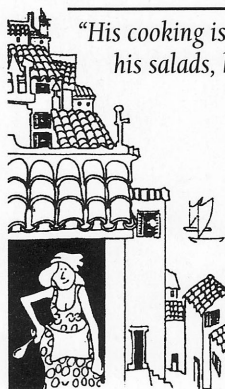


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Directors and Production Staff

Peggy Shannon Artistic Director

arrived at ACT last fall from Los Angeles, where she was associate producing director of L.A. Theatre Works and the artistic director of the School of Theatre at the University of Southern California. Seattle audiences may remember her work at The Empty Space, The Group Theatre, Pioneer Square Theatre and Theatre Off-Jackson. She directed *Hunting Cockroaches* at the Seattle Rep in 1988 and earlier served as assistant director and dramaturg at ACT. Peggy's credits as a free-lance director include work at the Los Angeles Theatre Center, The Matrix Theatre, Portland Repertory, San Jose Rep, and most recently *You Can't Take It With You* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. She has also directed many plays for National Public Radio.

Susan Trapnell Moritz Managing Director

joined ACT in 1982 as Administrative Manager and became Managing Director in 1989. Susan holds a B.A. in French from the University of North Carolina and attended the University of Lyons in France. She also did graduate work in dance education at George Washington University. Prior to coming to ACT, Susan spent four years with Bill Evans Dance Company/Dance Theatre Seattle as Educational Director and then General Manager. She served as a UNESCO bilingual aide in Paris and held writing and editing positions in the Washington, D.C., area. Other experience includes work with the National Urban League and a teaching position in Algeria. She is a member and past president of the Washington State Arts Alliance, a member of the King County Arts Commission, and a member of the Leadership Tomorrow class of 1992. Susan is a native of Arlington, VA.

Phil Schermer Producing Director

has been working in professional theatre for over 25 years. He began his career at the Seattle Repertory Theatre as a painter and then scenic carpenter. He has also designed lighting for the Seattle Rep and its Second Stage, The Bathhouse Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, The Seattle Group Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild and Montana Repertory Theatre as well as numerous productions at ACT. He served as Technical Director and Production Manager at ACT before being named Producing Director in 1989. For the past five years, he has been actively involved in the design process for ACT's new facility. Phil received a B.A. in Literature/History from Reed College in Portland and an M.A. in Lighting Design/Technical Production from the University of Washington.

A.R. Gurney Playwright

has written over 20 plays, among them *Love Letters*, *The Dining Room*, *The Cocktail Hour*, *Another Antigone*, *Scenes from American Life*, *Children*, *Richard Cory*, *The Wayside Motor Inn*, *The Middle Ages*, *What I Did Last Summer*, *The Golden Age*, *Sweet Sue* and *The Fourth Wall*. He is also the author of three novels: *The Snow Ball*, *The Gospel According to Joe* and *Entertaining Strangers*. Gurney won a Drama Desk Award in 1971, a Rockefeller Award in 1977, a National Endowment Award in 1982, an Award of Merit from the American Academy of Arts and Letters in 1987, and a Lucille Lortel Award in 1989 for *The Cocktail Hour*. In 1994 he was awarded another Lucille Lortel Award honoring the body of his work. He is also a member of the Artistic Board of Playwrights Horizons in New York City, where many of his works have been performed. His play, *Sylvia*, debuted in May of 1995 off-Broadway at the Manhattan Theater Club. His most recent play, *Overtime*, is currently receiving its premiere production at the Old Globe in San Diego.

Leslie Swackhamer Director

is ACT's associate artistic director and director of new play development. Prior to moving to Seattle, she was artistic associate for four years at The Cleveland Play House. In addition to heading the CPH Playwrights Lab, she directed and dramaturged for the CPH Mainstage, their new plays series, and the CPH Lab Company. She has also directed new work for the Playwright's Center (Minneapolis), and the Cleveland Public Theatre. While at the Cleveland Play House, Leslie directed numerous world premieres, including Paul Monette's *A Country Beyond Tears* (Northern Ohio Live Award of Excellence), Wendy Kesselman's *The Butcher's Daughter* (AT&T Onstage Award) and Anne Harris' *Scenes from the Penitentiary* (Mark Klein Award). Leslie directed the American premiere of Nicholas Wright's *Mrs. Klein* for American Stage. She has been a guest artist at Case Western Reserve University, the University of Washington, ATHE, and the University of Southern California. She holds an M.F.A. in directing from the University of Washington. Later this year Leslie will direct ACT's *A Christmas Carol* for its 20th anniversary production.

Deena Burke Dialect Coach

returns to ACT after coaching the dialects for *Dancing at Lughnasa* at Seattle Repertory Theatre, and *Playland* and *Hay Fever*, among others, at Intiman. She previously coached ACT's productions of *The Cover of Life*, *Dreams from a Summer House*, and *A Christmas Carol* and appeared in *Life During Wartime*. She has taught and coached at schools and theatres throughout the country including the Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Cal-Arts, University of California at San Diego, Tacoma Actors Guild and the University of Washington. As an actress, she has appeared at ACT, Tacoma Actors Guild, the Old Globe, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and South Coast Repertory among others. A Julliard graduate, Deena teaches voice/speech at Cornish College. She would like to thank Steve for his love and support.

Mary Louise Geiger Lighting Designer

is very pleased to be returning to ACT. In Seattle, she has designed lighting for *Betty the Yeti* at ACT; *The Grace of Mary Traverse*, *Macbeth* and *Master Harold and the Boys* at Intiman; and *Mahagonny Songspeil*, *Gianni Schicci* and *A Woman of No Importance* at the University of Washington, where she teaches. Around the country she has worked for Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Pioneer Theatre Company, Philadelphia Drama Guild, New Mexico Repertory Theatre, Virginia Stage Company, Playmakers Repertory Company, Players Theatre Columbus, Peterborough Players and Yale Repertory Theatre. Her New York credits include *One Neck*, *The New Americans*, *Bon Appetit* and *Cabaret Verboten*, *The Learned Ladies*, *The Mud Angel*, *Bovver Boys*, *Heart of a Dog*, *Goose! Beyond the Nursery*, *The Red Sneaks*, *The School of Jolly Dogs* and *Faulkner's Bicycle*.

Jeffrey K. Hanson Stage Manager

Since 1990, Jeff has stage managed more than a dozen productions for ACT, among them *The Gospel at Colonus*, *The Revengers' Comedies*, *Sunsets and Glories*, *Halcyon Days*, *The Illusion*, and *Lloyd's Prayer*. Jeff has also stage managed productions at Intiman Theatre Company and The Bathhouse Theatre. Regional credits include the Arizona Theatre Company and two seasons at New Mexico Repertory Theatre. While living in the Land of LA LA, Jeff stage managed a dance company, coordinated a research laboratory in the UCLA Department of Psychology, and earned a graduate degree in theater history. In addition, Jeff is a graduate of St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN.

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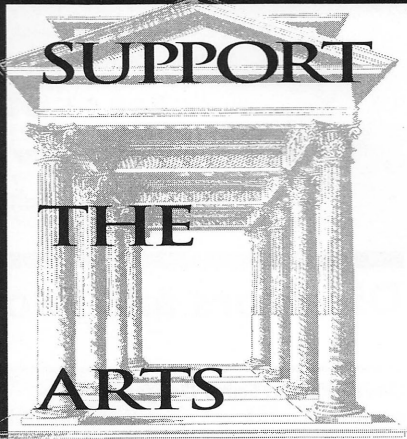
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David Pascal Sound Designer

has had his work as a composer, sound designer, synthesizer programmer and music director heard at ACT, Seattle Repertory, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, The Empty Space, Pioneer Square Theatre, New City, The Seattle Group and Tacoma Actors Guild, as well as the Club at La MaMa E.T.C. in New York. He has produced music and sound effects for KOMO-TV and since 1975 has worked as a bassist in show and club bands, recording studios, theatre orchestras, and as backing for national acts. He holds a musical engineering degree from the University of Washington.

Shelley Henze Schermer Scene Designer

has been associated with ACT designing properties, scenery and costumes since 1971. Shelley's Mainstage designs include *Custer*, *Amadeus*, *Fool for Love*, *On the Razzle*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Lloyd's Prayer*, *My Children! My Africa!* and *The Revengers' Comedies*. Her work has also been seen at many other local theatres, most recently, *Miss Evers' Boys* at Tacoma Actors Guild and *The Rememberer* at Seattle Children's Theatre. She has also designed several exhibits for The Children's Museum as well as booths and exhibits for conventions and fairs.

Jef Vowell Assistant Director

is pleased to be joining ACT as an intern, and brings with him a background in directing, stage management, design, and acting. He is currently enrolled in the MFA Directing program at the University of Southern California, where he has worked on *Oedipus Tyrannos*, *As You Like It*, *Tartuffe*, *Praying Mantis*, and *Alpine Glow*. Other credits include *God's Country*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Dancing at Lughnasa*, *Lips Together/Teeth Apart*, and *The Baltimore Waltz*, as well as the movies *Hoosiers* and *Eight Men Out*. Currently he is working as co-translator with Latin poet Luis Bauz on an anthology of contemporary Latin American plays. This fall, Jef will be joining the intern company at The Milwaukee Repertory Theater.

David Zinn Costume Designer

is very happy to make his ACT debut with this production. His other Seattle credits include *Hay Fever*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Peter Pan*, *Macbeth* and *Antigone*, all at Intiman Theatre Company. Regionally his work has been seen at Minnesota and Edmonton Opera (*Partenope* and *The Magic Flute*); Portland Stage Company (*The Illusion*, *Mrs. Warren's Profession*); Portland Center Stage (*Absurd Person Singular*, *Measure for Measure*); and with Swine Palace Productions in Louisiana (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). In New York City he is the resident costume designer for Target Margin Theatre and director David Herskovits, including the Richard Foreman opera *Young Goodman Brown*, *India Song*, *Medea*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth* and *Titus Andronicus*.

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