

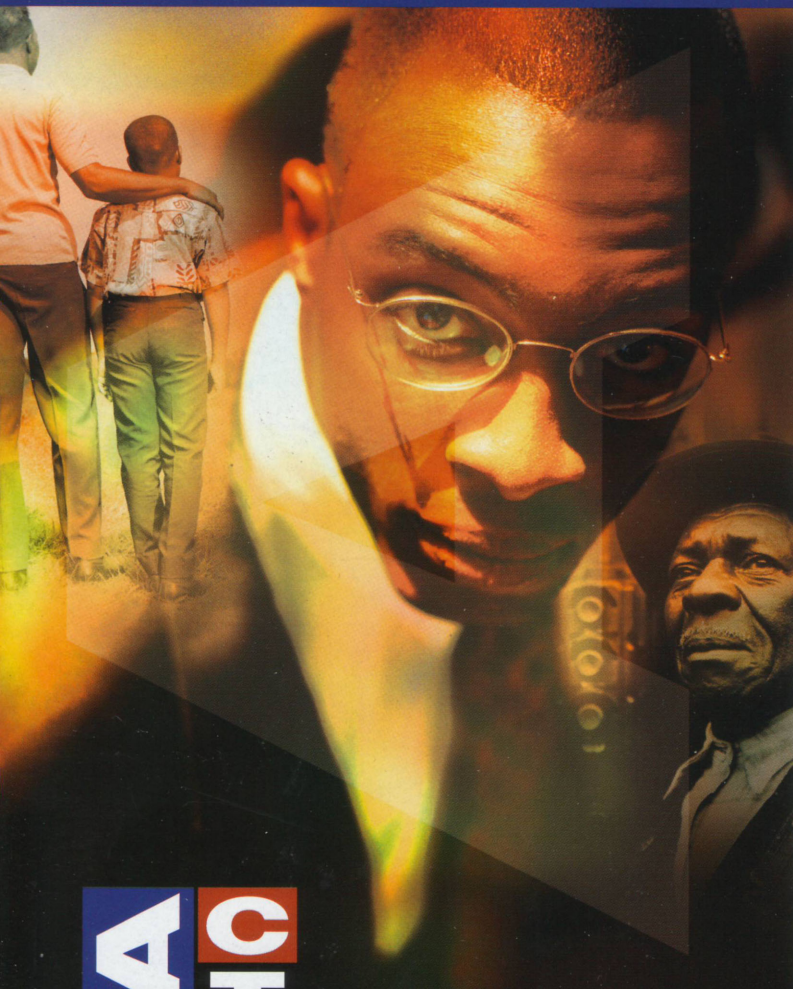
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The Hansberry Project at ACT Presents



FATHERS AND SONS

by Michael Bradford
Directed by Valerie Curtis-Newton

2008 Season

The Ilkhom Theatre Festival

March 14 – April 13

Fathers and Sons

by Michael Bradford
April 25 – May 25

A Marvelous Party: The Noël Coward Celebration

Words and Music by Noël Coward
Devised by David Ira Goldstein,
Carl Danielsen, Mark Anders,
Patricia Wilcox and Anna Lauris
June 13 – July 13

Intimate Exchanges

By Alan Ayckbourn
Aug 15 – Sept 14

Eurydice

By Sarah Ruhl
Sept 5 – Oct 5

Becky's New Car

By Steven Dietz
Oct 17 – Nov 16

Kurt Beattie
Artistic Director

Kevin M. Hughes
Managing Director

The Hansberry Project at
ACT Theatre presents

The World Premiere of

FATHERS AND SONS

by Michael Bradford

Directed by Valerie Curtis-Newton

Beginning April 25, 2008

Opening Night

May 1

Seasonal support provided by:



THE PAUL G. ALLEN
FAMILY foundation



THE SHUBERT
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Media support for *Fathers and Sons* provided by:

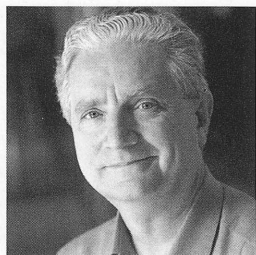


Fathers and Sons is produced by special arrangement with the Playwright and Harden-Curtis Associates, 850 Seventh Avenue, #903,
New York, NY 10019.

A large print version of the Program is available from the house staff.

ACT is a member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), the American Arts Alliance and Theatre Puget Sound, and is a constituent of Theatre Communications Group. ACT is also a member of the Downtown Seattle Association, Seattle's Convention and Visitors Bureau and Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce.

WELCOME TO ACT



"We disappoint, we disappear, we die – or we don't," sings a father in Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods*, ruefully reviewing the ways in which parents fail their children.

It's the first and most influential relationship of our lives—father and son, mother and daughter—and yet it sometimes seems intentionally designed to collapse into disillusionment and anger as each partner watches the other devolve (or evolve) from the perfect people we first believe, imagine and long for them to be into mere

human beings, with all the flaws and failings we are heir to.

These timeless tensions have been fertile material for centuries of writers. Now, in his new play *Fathers and Sons*, Michael Bradford explores with compassionate insight how issues of parental absence and longing impact within the African American community as three generations of men struggle to accept each other's humanity and discover what it means to be a father, what it means to be a son, and how to reconcile those roles with their need to be strong, independent men.

Fathers and Sons represents a milestone for the Hansberry Project at ACT, its first world premiere, and speaks as well to our mutual mission to be a laboratory for new work and a greenhouse for new dramatic literature. We are very proud to share with you this first production of a major new play by a striking new voice in American theatre.

Kurt Beattie
Artistic Director

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ACT 2008: Contemporary on every level.

A Marvelous Party: The Noël Coward Celebration

Words & Music by Noël Coward. Devised by David Ira Goldstein, Carl Danielsen, Mark Anders, Patricia Wilcox & Anna Lauris

Directed by David Ira Goldstein

Bubbly as a champagne cocktail, this two-hour homage showcases Noël Coward's legendary wit, mind-boggling musical talent, and unmistakable style. The best of Coward's words and songs are seamlessly stitched together by a talented four-person ensemble who conjure a golden era that just may make us feel better about our own.

Aug 15 -
Sept 14

intimate exchanges

by Alan Ayckbourn

Sept 5 -
Oct 5

eurydice

by Sarah Ruhl
Directed by Allison Narver



June 13 - July 13

TICKETS | acttheatre.org | (206) 292-7676 | 7th Avenue and Union Street, downtown Seattle

THE COMPANY

CAST

William Hall Jr.*	Leon Goodwater
Reginald André Jackson*	Marcus Goodwater
Tracey A. Leigh*	Yvette Goodwater
Wilbur Penn*	Benard Goodwater

PRODUCTION TEAM

Valerie Curtis-Newton	Director
Matthew Smucker	Scenic Designer
Melanie Taylor Burgess	Costume Designer
L.B. Morse	Lighting Designer
Eric Chappelle	Sound Designer
Jeffrey K. Hanson*	Stage Manager
Nora Menkin*	Assistant Stage Manager

There will be one 15-minute intermission.

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Audience members are cordially reminded to silence all electronic devices such as cell phones, watch alarms, and pagers prior to the performance.

All forms of photography and the use of recording devices are strictly prohibited.

Please do not walk on the stage before, during or after the show.

ACT operates under agreements
with the following:



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

DIRECTOR'S NOTE



The Hansberry Project's first two seasons at ACT highlighted classic works from the black theatre canon, *Wine in the Wilderness* and *The Mojo and the Sayso*. Now in our third season, we are thrilled to present our first World Premiere, Michael Bradford's *Fathers and Sons*.

With pitch-perfect writing, *Fathers and Sons* captures the yearning of every father to give his best self to his children. We eavesdrop as Marcus, Leon and Benard Goodwater work to mend their tattered relationships, lay claim to their shared legacy and move forward. We feel for them as they confront a history

of absence, mistakes, mistrust, and broken promises in an attempt to redefine themselves as men.

It is a truly exciting thing for us as a theatre company to be able to work on a powerful and well-crafted new play with a talented and inspired team. *Fathers and Sons* is that play and our production team is one of those teams.

We hope you'll enjoy this thoroughly entertaining evening of theatre.

Valerie Curtis-Newton

Director, *Fathers and Sons* and

Artistic Director of The Hansberry Project at ACT

Celebrate Juneteenth with The Hansberry Project at ACT *June 14, 2008*

The Hansberry Project was born of a profound need for the returned presence of professional African American theatre within Seattle's rich regional theatre community. With collaborative foresight and commitment, ACT Theatre provided a platform for giving voice to such a presence; and Seattle's black theatre artists once again took center stage.

To commemorate this spirit of inclusion, freedom, equity and excellence, The Hansberry Project at ACT has chosen an annual celebration, representative of the incorporation of the African American experience into the American story – Juneteenth!

We invite everyone to join us for our **3rd annual Juneteenth Fundraising Gala on June 14, 2008**. This year's event, *An Evening*

of Gifts and Talents, features a reading from Lorraine Hansberry's *To Be Young Gifted and Black*. The cast includes prominent members of Seattle's theatre scene, including ACT's own Artistic Director Kurt Beattie!

The very capable gala committee, Mrs. Louise McKinney, Dorothy H. Mann, Carissa Hunt, Joan D. Houston, Evelyn Reingold, Lisa Youngblood-Hall and Sylvia M. Young, is planning an exceptional evening of Black Tie elegance. Support The Hansberry Project by joining us for this commemorative evening of great entertainment, food, and fun.

Tickets are \$125 and are tax deductible to the extent of the law. To purchase tickets and to learn more, contact (206) 292-7660 ext. 1331 or visit acttheatre.org/hansberrygala.



Juneteenth Gala, 2007. Photo by Team Photogenic.

Chatting with Michael Bradford:

Father, Son, Playwright

By Desdemona Chiang



DC: *Thanks so much for taking time out to chat about Fathers and Sons. Before we dive into talking about play, I just want to know more about your career as a playwright. How did that start?*

MB: Well, I was stationed at the Bangor Submarine Base outside of Bremerton, Washington in the early '80s, and I was dating a girl from Bellevue, and she wanted to see a production of August Wilson's *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*—I had no desire to go. I wasn't interested in theatre or anything at the time, but she had two tickets, and you know how that goes...so we went. And I fell in love with theatre.

DC: *Do you find yourself writing mostly plays, or have you worked on other forms, like novels or short stories?*

MB: You know, I really started as a poet—I actually had published a few things in *Essence Magazine* and a couple of small journals in Seattle at the time. I was publishing little pieces of poetry on a pretty regular basis, so I was writing a lot, and I love to read. The novel is still too big for me—I can't seem to wrap my head around that particular idea. And I just collaborated on a screenplay for one of my earlier plays, but it's difficult for me to step out of theatre.

DC: *We see a bit of history in Fathers and Sons with Benard and his jazz references. It's like a little bit of musical history in the play.*

MB: I was actually in Washington when I met jazz, and you know, I never really was a big fan—I thought it was a lot of cacophony—but an old Navy buddy of mine introduced me to Jackson Pollock and jazz at the same time. For some reason, I was ready for it and fell in love with it, and of course in that downtown Seattle area right off the ferry, there were a lot of little jazz spots, and so I found myself quite a Bohemian in those days.

My great grandfather had gone to Seattle around World War II to get out of the war to work in one of the factories, so there was a bit of providence that he had gone to Seattle, I had been in Seattle, I had fallen in love with jazz in Seattle. And so when I thought about writing this play, jazz seemed to be the thing, and for me the idea that you can know something about jazz, but not know the particulars of it, I found kind of fascinating—once again, to know the surface, but not the thing behind it that actually drove it.

DC: *Is that what inspired you to write the play?*

MB: Yeah, it came from a really personal place. I was recently separated and I was visiting my kids one day, and we had gone into the bookstore—me, my daughter and my son. My son was about nine years old and just being a little knucklehead, and I was just telling him—I said, "You know, negro, if I didn't love you like I do I would throw you out this window, you being such a knucklehead." And you know, he just laughed and I laughed, because you know, he really was messing up. But I'm admonishing him and we're laughing with each other, and it was cool. And I thought, my father never would have treated me that way, and with my father's father...who knows how that would have went. I wanted to write about that. I had a long crazy

history with my own father, and as writers I'm sure we all want to jump into our family at some point in time—so that's where it began.

DC: *There will be many men in the audience who are fathers and sons as well. What kind of dialogue do you think this play can help generate for them and for the men in the community as a whole?*

MB: It's a tough question—maybe a dangerous question. Hopefully, the men that come see the play and the women that come see the play will see something that strikes a bell within them. For me, it's the idea of what we define a man to be and how that often gets in the way of being a human being to the people that we love—our wives, our children and our friends. This social idea of what it means to be a man can be a little dangerous and inhibiting.

DC: *And it's interesting that Leon has this very battle.*

MB: I think in many ways, Leon started out like my father. But after some time, Leon began to feel like a really conflicted man who wants to do the right thing, wants to turn a corner, but he carries a lot of baggage. He doesn't have the tools to do what he wants to do, and when you want to do it in one night in the midst of a horrific situation, it's asking a lot. And it's because he doesn't have the tools that he doesn't really understand what he's asking for. He says he comes to help, to support his son, but he needs as much, if not more, than what he is prepared to give. He's conflicted in so many ways, and that conflicted nature is manipulated by his son on one side, and his own dead father on the other.

DC: *How did you arrive at this layering of multiple realities in the play? You've structured the play in a non-linear way, with time bouncing back and forth, the living mingling with the dead.*

MB: You know, I'm such a big fan of jazz—it's almost an obsession. I love Suzan-Lori Parks' essays on the literary jazz structure that she uses in a lot of her work, and it made me think about how you can structure a play on a jazz tempo with the melody separating from the rhythm, each doing their own thing, and then coming together in the end....so I really wanted to give that notion some reality on the stage and play with it.

And the story about Marcus and Yvette—which I think is the anchor of the play to some degree—I didn't want to make linear. I'm not sure why I didn't want to do it, but I did know that I would allow their story to come on the page the way it came to me, and if I could do that faithfully, then it would be faithful in the play. And so I didn't have to worry about thinking about exactly what happened moment after moment—I could let those moments come to me, and when they came, they would inform a moment earlier, which would allow me to go back and add depth to the play.

DC: *The scenes with the two of them are so full of love and promise. There is something wonderfully young and fresh about their relationship.*

MB: Yvette came into this world powerful. She came into this world solid and clean and powerful, and she is organic and elemental. Even if she's wrong for whatever the case may be, she's right because it's her child. And so I'm hoping that her bouncing off of Marcus will illuminate

some love the audience already knows. Because I love those two cats together, Marcus and Yvette.

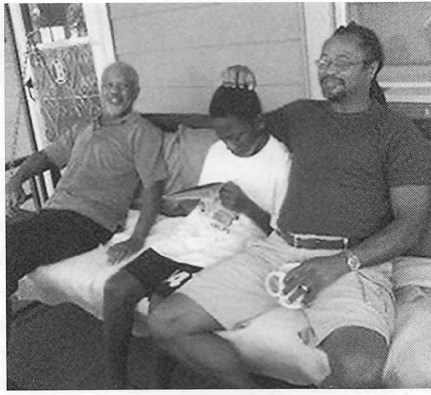
DC: *Are there moments of insight you think the women in the audience can take away from the play?*

MB: *(laughs)* That's a hard one—that's a difficult one. I'm scared to think about what women really know. You know you go to the grocery store and you see those magazines—you know, "This Is What You Should Know About Your Man... These Are Fifteen Things You Should Do..." And I think to myself, "You know, you ain't saying nothin' right now that the women standing in this line don't already know." So I just imagine in a very humble way that the women in the audience might see something that echoes an experience in their lives. Because I'm sure that each one of these men who I think operate in a different place on the spectrum, between Benard and Leon and Marcus—each of these men will have something in them that echoes a grandfather or a father or a brother or a husband or a son—and so I think I'm just presenting an old rock in a new light. That's all. You get to see the rock in a new kind of light, but it's the same rock. But you get to see it from a different angle.



Michael with his father, Doetch Leon Bradford, and his son, Toussaint Bradford.

DC: *To backtrack a little bit, what was the process like in developing this play? When did you start writing it? How has it evolved from the first draft that you wrote?*



MB: I think I began this play about two, two and a half years ago. I had been working a lot with the Lark Play Development Center in New York. John Eisner, who runs the place, and Daniella Topol, the director who's a really good friend mine, had directed another play of mine *Willie's Shine*. So we'd known each other a while, and when I approached them with this project, they said "Yeah, come on in." They do regular readings, and so I put down 15, 20 pages, and I would bring it in and they would listen to it.

And I realized very early on that the father and son—Marcus and Leon—were just arguing. Arguing, arguing, arguing. Developmental wise, we can't have two hours of this—there must be some hills and valleys. There must be some kind of a journey that these people take, and so I was very lucky that I was able to continually bring the play to crazy, crazy beautiful talented artists, and have it read and have it talked about on a pretty regular basis. That was invaluable.

We had a New York Stage and Film residency that lasted about a week, where we just went up to Vassar, hung out, worked the play through on a daily basis. I had a rough draft at the time, took it back to New York and did a public reading, and had some nice comments. Then I brought it back home, sat in my corner, did a bit more writing, just trying to figure out who Benard was. I have a hard time tying him down. He just refuses to be tied down, and I feel like I've tied him down a bit more in the structure of the play, but he just refuses to be, and I feel like I need him, so I just leave him the heck alone, but he gets on my nerves.

DC: *Do you think you'll make any adjustments to the play while it's at ACT? Or after its premiere here?*

MB: I'm always ready for that. I won't say no, put it that way. I hesitate to say that it would not have any changes, but it's difficult for me when I'm not there, listening and hearing. It's good when you trust your director from a distance, and I feel really good about Valerie. She's got a lot of love and passion for the play.

This is why I don't think I'm ready to try novels and film. I love being in the rehearsal process and working the play. I love finding the characters and the moments and taking out of the play what shouldn't be there, putting in the play what should. I love going home at night and writing for the next morning's rehearsal. I adore being in the theatre. I am the most me I can be either standing in front of my classroom or sitting in a theatre, in a rehearsal process.

Desdemona Chiang, UW MFA Directing Program '09

Those Winter Sundays

By Robert Hayden

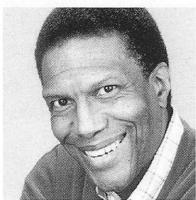
Sundays too my father got up early
And put his clothes on in the blueback cold,
then with cracked hands that ached from
labor in the weekday weather made banked
fires blaze. No one ever thanked him.

I'd wake and hear the cold splintering,
breaking.

When the rooms were warm, he'd call,
and slowly I would rise and dress,
fearing the chronic angers of that house,

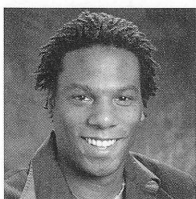
Speaking indifferently to him,
who had driven out the cold
and polished my good shoes as well.

What did I know, what did I know
of love's austere and lonely offices?



WILLIAM HALL, JR. (*Leon*) is pleased to return to the stages of ACT. Previous performances here include *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Sunsets and*

Glories, and *Wine in the Wilderness*. Recent Seattle roles include *The Breech* and *Birdie Blue* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Intiman), Willie Loman in *Death of a Salesman*, the title role in *Othello*, and Zachariah in *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*. Film credits include *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Trouble in Mind*, and *Farewell to Harry*.



REGINALD ANDRE JACKSON (*Marcus*) is excited to be returning to ACT: a few years ago he was able to join the ACT family in spreading

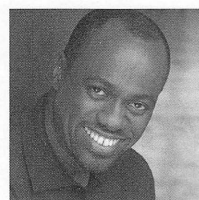
Christmas cheer to Seattle, by playing Fred in *A Christmas Carol*. Jackson has also performed at Seattle Repertory Theatre (*Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Cider House Rules*), Lake Tahoe Shakespeare Festival (*Othello*, *Twelfth Night*), Seattle Shakespeare Company (*Pericles*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, and many more.), Book-It Repertory Theatre (*Cry the Beloved Country*, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, among others), Intiman (*The Dying Gaul*), Seattle Children's Theatre (*Holes*, *Magic City*, *When I Grow Up I'm Gonna Get Some Big Words*), and Freehold Theatre Lab's Engaged Theatre (*Cymbeline*, *Winter's Tale*, *Veronika Decides to Die*).



TRACEY A. LEIGH (*Yvette Goodwater*) A 2007 Obie Award-winning performer for *Tale of 2 Cities: An American Joyride in Multiple Tracks* at New

York's P.S. 122, Leigh is thrilled to be back at ACT, this time with the Hansberry Project. Previous ACT shows: *Blues For an Alabama Sky*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Stonewall Jackson's House*. Other credits include *The Vagina Monologues* national tour, as well as the New York premieres of *Up Against the Wind*, (New York Theatre Workshop), *A Lesson Before*

Dying (Signature Theatre), *Krisit* (Primary Stages), *Le Menage* (La MaMa ETC), and *Attempts on Her Life* (Soho Rep). In addition to her recent performance as Esther in Pittsburgh City Theatre's *Intimate Apparel*, Leigh's regional credits include productions at the Old Globe Theatre, South Coast Rep, Arena Stage, Milwaukee Rep, Arizona Theatre Company, Indiana Rep, and Intiman, among others. TV credits include *Jake in Progress*, *Law & Order*, *Strong Medicine*, and *Charmed*.



WILBUR PENN (*Benard*) is a native of Montgomery, Alabama and currently is based in Dallas, Texas. His selected stage credits include: Satan/Pontius

Pilate in *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* for Risk Theatre Initiative; Noah "Horse" T. Simmons in *The Full Monty* for Theatre Three; Tonton Julian in *Once on This Island* for TFM Productions; Miles Davis, Charlie Parker and other principal roles in *Trane: Beyond the Blues*, Joe Clark/Sweet Back/Joe/Ensemble in *Spunk* for Soul Rep Theatre Company; and Mr. West in *Two Trains Running* for the Artist & Elaine Thornton Foundation. Other stage appearances include The Head Man in *A Cabin in the Sky* for Lyric Stage (Irving, TX); Hoke Coleburn in *Driving Miss Daisy* for Theatre Arlington (Arlington, TX); Godfrey Crump in *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; and Walter Lee Younger in *A Raisin in the Sun* for Jubilee Players (Fort Worth, TX). Penn's talents also have been featured in multiple principal roles for independent film and broadcast projects. Penn gives all thanks to God, his family, friends and associates for their unwavering support.

MICHAEL BRADFORD (*Playwright*) is an associate professor of dramatic arts at the University of Connecticut, teaching theatre history, theatre literature, and playwriting. Bradford has received both the Manhattan Theatre Club Playwright fellowship and The NEA/Lark Theatre Playwright Residency fellowship for *Fathers and Sons*. His play, *Living in the Wind*, played off-Broadway at the American Place Theatre in New York and was nominated for several prestigious

Audelco Theatre Awards. He has served on the Cherry Lane Theatre Playwright's Board, Lark Theatre (NY) Festival Board, and Rhode Island Art Foundation Grant Committee. Bradford holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Connecticut and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Brooklyn College of C.U.N.Y.

VALERIE CURTIS-NEWTON

(*Director*) Currently Head of Directing at the University of Washington's School of Drama and an Artistic Associate at ACT - A Contemporary Theatre, Curtis-Newton serves as the artistic director for The Hansberry Project in collaboration with ACT. She has previously served as artistic director of both Seattle's Ethnic Cultural Theatre and Hartford's Performing Ensemble, Inc. and worked with Actors' Theatre of Louisville, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Seattle Children's Theatre, The Mark Taper Forum, New York Theatre Workshop, Tacoma Actors' Guild, Southern Repertory Theatre, Capitol Repertory Theatre, and Northwest Asian American Theatre among others. Curtis-Newton was a participant in the National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group (TCG/NEA) Career Development Program for Directors in 1997-1999 and in 2001 she received the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation's (SDCF) Gielgud Directing Fellowship. Curtis-Newton holds a B.A. from Holy Cross College and an M.F.A. in Directing from the University of Washington.

MATTHEW SMUCKER (*Scenic Designer*)

is pleased to return to ACT where his work has included scenic designs for *The Women*, *The Clean House*, *The Pillowman*, *Wine in the Wilderness*, *Flight*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *The Ugly American*, *Jumpers*, and *Black Coffee*. Smucker's designs have appeared locally at Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, Book-It Repertory Theatre, The Empty Space, Village Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild, Seattle University, and Youth Theatre NW, and nationally at Portland Center Stage, San Jose Rep, Kansas City Rep, and Childsplay Theatre. Smucker is a founding ensemble member of Deus X Machina, and was a long time company member and resident designer with Annex

WHO'S WHO

Theatre. Smucker is currently an adjunct faculty member in the fine arts department at Seattle University, and a lecturer at the University of Washington School of Drama. He received his MFA in scenic design from the University of Washington School of Drama.

MELANIE TAYLOR BURGESS (*Costume Designer*) previously designed *Mojo* and *The Sayso*, *Wine In The Wilderness*, *Flight* and *Vincent In Brixton* at ACT. Locally she has also designed for: Seattle Repertory Theatre, The 5th Avenue Theatre, Intiman, Empty Space Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild, Village Theatre, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Seattle Opera and over 25 productions at the Seattle Children's Theatre. Additionally she has designed for Idaho Theatre for Youth, Honolulu Theatre for Youth, and Hawaii Opera. Taylor-Burgess is on the adjunct faculty at Cornish College of the Arts and received her MFA from the University of Washington.

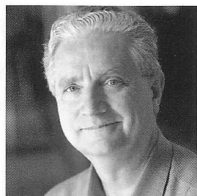
L.B. MORSE (*Lighting Designer*) is a lighting, scenic and multimedia designer for theatre and dance. Previously at ACT he designed the multimedia for *Mitzi's Abortion*. In Seattle he has also designed for Seattle Repertory Theatre, Empty Space, Maureen Whiting Dance Company, Lingo dancetheater, UMO Ensemble, On The Boards, The Workshop, Printer's Devil, Union Garage, Theater Schmeater, North Seattle Community College and EXITheatre. Recent design credits include lighting for *My Name is Rachel Corrie* and multimedia for *Twelfth Night*, both at Seattle Repertory Theatre, and sets and multimedia for *Pericles* with Seattle Shakespeare Company. Morse holds a BA in Theatre Arts and a Graduate Certificate in Scenic Design from University of California, Santa Cruz and is the Lighting Design Associate at Seattle Repertory Theatre.

ERIC CHAPPELLE (*Sound Designer*) has designed *The Clean House*, *First Class*, *The Underpants*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Fiction*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Omnium-Gatherum*, *Side Man* and *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?* at ACT, where he also played violin for *Goblin Market*, fiddled for *Das Barbecü*, and composed music and designed sound for *The Clean House* and

The Crimson Thread. Recent productions include *Murderers* and *How? How? Why? Why? Why?* at Seattle Repertory Theatre. His other work includes sound designs and compositions for Seattle Children's Theatre, Intiman, Empty Space, Northwest Asian American Theatre, Bathhouse Theatre, Northwest Actors Studio, Belltown Theatre Center, Kaleidoscope Dance Company and Co-Motion Dance. Recently, he was The 5th Avenue Theatre onstage musician in *Buddy*. Chappelle's *Music for Creative Dance* series of compact discs is used by dance educators internationally.

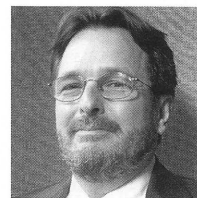
JEFFREY K. HANSON (*Stage Manager*) stage managed his first production at ACT, *Lloyd's Prayer*, in 1990. Now in his 19th season, he has stage managed more than 50 ACT productions including *The Women*, *Stuff Happens*, *The Pillowman*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, *Yellowman*, *Fuddy Meers*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Grand Magic*, *Big Love*, *A Skull in Connemara*, *Quills*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *The Gospel at Colonus*, *Halcyon Days*, *The Illusion* and *The Revengers' Comedies*. Outside of ACT Hanson most recently stage managed *Mame* for The 5th Avenue Theatre. He has also stage managed at Seattle Repertory Theatre on productions such as *Metamorphoses* and *The Cider House Rules*, *Parts I and II*, and productions at Seattle Children's Theatre, Intiman, Arizona Theatre Company and New Mexico Rep.

NORA MENKIN (*Assistant Stage Manager*) Menkin most recently worked on *A Christmas Carol* (past three seasons), *The Mojo* and *the Sayso* and *The Clean House*. In previous seasons, Menkin worked on *The Underpants*, *Mitzi's Abortion*, *Born Yesterday*, and *Vincent in Brixton*. Around town, she has also worked on *Honus & Me* and *The Magic City* (Seattle Children's Theatre), *The Mystery of Irma Vep*, *The Play's the Thing*, and *Blue/Orange* (Intiman), and *The Chosen* and *The O'Connor Girls* (Seattle Repertory Theatre).



KURT BEATTIE (*Artistic Director*) joined ACT in 2001 as associate artistic director and was appointed artistic director in April of

2003. In ACT's 2007 season, Beattie directed David Wagoner's play *First Class* about the life and teachings of the Pulitzer Prize winning poet, Theodore Roethke. His other past productions at ACT include *The Pillowman*, the world premiere of *Mitzi's Abortion* by Elizabeth Heffron, *The Underpants*, *Vincent in Brixton*, *Bach at Leipzig*, *Black Coffee*, *Alki*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *Fuddy Meers*, *Fully Committed*, *Via Dolorosa*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Elsewhere he has directed *Things Being What They Are* and *Art* at Seattle Repertory Theatre, as well as productions at The Empty Space, Intiman Theatre, the Hugo House, and the University of Washington. Nationally he has directed at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, the Alley Theatre in Houston, and the Ojai Playwrights Festival. As an actor he has appeared in leading and major roles at ACT, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman and The Empty Space, as well as many regional theatres throughout the country. Beattie was the co-recipient of the 2004 Theatre Puget Sound Gregory A. Falls Sustained Achievement Award. This season he'll direct *Intimate Exchanges* by Alan Ayckbourn, the world premiere of Steven Dietz's play *Becky's New Car*, as well as the Short Stories Live series at TOWN HALL.



KEVIN M. HUGHES (*Managing Director*) has represented businesses, government jurisdictions, grassroots efforts and nonprofit

organizations, including many cultural organizations, at the state, county, city and federal levels for 22 years, working on a variety of issues. Prior to starting his own firm, he was director of public affairs and major gifts for Pacific Science Center. He was executive director and lobbyist for the Washington State Arts Alliance and also spent many years in the theater, starting his career at ACT in the ticket office and then as assistant controller. He was the managing director of the Empty Space Theater and an actor at the Hedgerow Theater in Pennsylvania.

Over the Years: ACT & THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WORK

FOR THE PAST 43

seasons, ACT's mission has been to present a broad spectrum of the very best of contemporary theatre that speaks to audiences of all backgrounds. A significant part of ACT's mandate is to commission new works and to foster the development of those works in a supportive and inspiring workplace. Through the launch of the innovative Central Heating Lab and partnerships with the Hansberry Project at ACT and Icicle Creek Theatre Festival (ICTF), ACT is expanding its role in nurturing new voices in theatre and setting the stage for future playwrights today.

Recent projects include:

- New Works for the American Stage, a new commissioning program where this year's production of Steven Dietz's *Becky's New Car* originated.
- The ACT New Play Award program, including *Mitzi's Abortion* (2005 and produced on the Mainstage in 2006), *The K of D* (2006) and *Language Rooms* (2008).

Partners in New Work Development:

THE ICICLE CREEK THEATRE FESTIVAL



The Icicle Creek Theatre Festival (ICTF) of new plays, which operates in collaboration with ACT Theatre, is in the middle of the process of reading hundreds of plays that were submitted to ICTF by playwrights from virtually every state in the country.

Brendan Healy, head of ICTF's play-reading staff, is responsible for assigning the plays to specific readers. Though he admits it is an enormous challenge to get through all the plays read in a two-month period, he takes it on with energy and determination.

Founder and Artistic Director Allen Fitzpatrick said, "We are immensely gratified to see the number of submissions triple from last year. It is a testament to the growing national reputation of our festival of new plays."

ICTF will face the difficult task of choosing the two or three best plays from these submissions to present this coming summer during the Festival. Decisions are made by May 15, after which Festival preparations switch into high gear. Casting of actors begins at the end of May.

The playwrights, along with professional actors, directors, and dramaturges, arrive on August 1 to begin the one-week developmental process, which culminates in presentations to the public on the weekend of August 9-10.

ICTF conducts the workshops and presentations in their facility at the Icicle Creek Music Center, on the grounds of Sleeping Lady Mountain Retreat in Leavenworth, Washington.

Last year's Festival presented *Atomic Farmgirl* by C. Denby Swanson, which then went directly to production by The Drilling Company off-Broadway in NYC, and *Dov and Ali* by Anna Ziegler, which then received subsequent workshops and readings.

Seattle residents and ACT theatergoers are strongly encouraged to take the relatively short drive out to Leavenworth this August to see the incredibly exciting work being done at the Festival. They can enjoy the many recreational opportunities afforded by the beautiful Cascades, and be among the very first to see promising new plays before they are discovered by the nation's regional theaters. And it's a much shorter drive than going to Ashland!

Clockwise from left: L to R, C. Denby Swanson (playwright, Atomic Farmgirl), Brooke Brod (dramaturg, Atomic Farmgirl), Wier Harman (director, Atomic Farmgirl); a staged reading during The Icicle Creek Festival.

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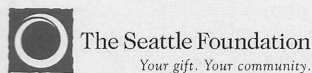


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