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# *Dangerous Liaisons*

BY Christopher Hampton  
DIRECTED BY John Langs



Photo by Christopher Nelson

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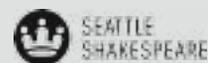
**FALL 2016**

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Encore Stages is a publication of Encore Media Group. We also publish Encore Arts Programs, the monthly arts & culture magazine *City Arts*, and custom publications, including the Official Seattle Pride Guide and the SIFF Guide and Catalog.

**Encore Stages features the following organizations:**





Founder Ray Carlsen with recipients and Director Miriam Shames. Photo courtesy of the Carlsen Cello Foundation

## The Carlsen Cello Foundation is a non-profit organization that has loaned instruments to young cellists for nearly twenty years.

---

We recently sat down with Miriam Shames, the Foundation's director, to discuss cello acquisitions, the best pieces for cello and how you can help put a cello in a child's hand.

Playing and studying the cello can be expensive. Base model cellos can cost \$2,000 or more, and terrific "student" cellos can cost another \$10,000 to \$15,000. The Carlsen Cello Foundation provides a fine instrument while a recipient is actively studying, giving serious and deserving students the opportunity to practice and perform on a cello that matches the quality of their study and growing talent.

Miriam Shames is the Foundation's director. With a Master's Degree from Juilliard in Cello Performance, Shames is no stranger to the expenses involved with the cello, nor the beauty the instrument can bring. While being involved in the Foundation, she also works with cello students in her Seattle studio and has performed with such groups as the Pacific Northwest Ballet and the Northwest Sinfonietta.

### Who is Carlsen?

Ray Carlsen is a Seattle dermatologist who started taking cello lessons as an adult beginner in the early 1990s. He immediately

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and Shakespeare Theatre Company



# KING CHARLES III

BY MIKE  
BARLETT  
DIRECTED BY DAVID MUSE

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became interested in going to auctions in London and New York and collecting older, mostly European, cellos. Over the next two decades, through his own purchases and some donated cellos, his collection grew to its present – approximately 100 cellos that are loaned out to students. It's a remarkable feat and a remarkable treasure in today's world.

#### Why the Foundation?

Besides being a player himself, Dr. Carlsen, like so many, was drawn to the particularly beautiful and human sound of the cello. He also soon realized that an advancing student needed a cello beyond what was available through rentals, the price of which is prohibitive. The cello is enjoying a beloved place in the music world today, evidenced by its huge popularity among younger students, adult beginners, its use in so many genres and its draw with audiences.

#### Any notable cellists that have used a Carlsen Cello?

Joshua Roman, the former principal cellist of the Seattle Symphony; Julie Albers, principal cellist of the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra; recent winner of a Boston Symphony audition, Oliver Aldort; and many more who are currently studying at major conservatories in the US and Canada.

#### Where do you get the cellos?

The cellos are purchased or donated. They are often restored in Seattle, and then maintained, by Rafael Carrabba of Rafael Carrabba Violins. He is a world-renowned restorer of the most beautiful and rare string instruments.

#### What is your favorite piece of cello music?

My usual answer is "whatever I'm listening to right now." But, of course, there are the Bach Cello Suites and the Schubert "Cello" Quintet in C Major.

#### How can someone help?

The Foundation accepts tax deductible contributions, as well as donations of cellos. ■

John Langs  
Artistic Director

Carlo Scandiuzzi  
Executive Director

Becky Witmer  
Managing Director

ACT – A Contemporary Theatre presents

# Dangerous Liaisons

By Christopher Hampton

From the novel by Choderlos de Laclos  
Directed by John Langs

Beginning October 21, 2016 • Opening Night October 27, 2016

## CAST

James DeVita*	Le Vicomte de Valmont
Keiko Green*	Emilie
Jason Marr	Azolan, Major Domo
Eleanor Moseley	Madame de Volanges
Kirsten Potter*	La Marquise de Merteuil
Lorenzo Roberts*	Le Chevalier Danceny
Wendy Robie*	Madame de Rosemonde
Jasmine Jean Sim	Cecile de Volanges
Jen Taylor*	Madame de Tourvel

## CREATIVE TEAM

John Langs	Director
Brian Sidney Bembridge	Scenic & Lighting Designer
Catherine Hunt	Costume Designer
Matt Starrit	Sound Designer
Lily McLeod	Assistant Lighting Designer
Briana Kersten	Stage Manager
Lisa Armstrong	Production Assistant
Geoffrey Alm	Fight Choreographer
Samip Raval	Kenan Directing Fellow
Arica Jeffery Kidd	Directing Intern

Running Time: This performance runs approximately two hours and 30 minutes. There will be one intermission.

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

"Dangerous Liaisons" is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

The video and/or audio recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited.

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Audience members are cordially reminded to silence all electronic devices. 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. Patrons wearing Google Glass must power down the device if wearing them in the theatre.



John Langs

PHOTO BY TRUMAN BUFFET

# A Note from Director JOHN LANGS

Why this play now? That is the question.

Last summer, as we planned for a way to bring our 51st Mainstage season to a rousing finale, we looked at dozens of plays that could fit the bill. When *Dangerous Liaisons* revealed herself, she seemed the perfect fit. I am challenged to think of a play with a more varied collection of roles for female actors that traverse as broad an emotional landscape. This story of power and sexuality is uniquely suited to explore a vividly feminist point of view, in a time period where feminine power had to be heavily veiled under layers of societal and fashionable trappings. Little did we know last summer how timely this story of feminine power and politics would become, as we are now in a year where we have our first female contender for the highest office in the land. Echoes of past and present double standards ricochet throughout this witty and biting dialogue.

Set in pre-revolutionary France, at a moment in history when a decadent upper class was warping an entire country's moral compass, *Dangerous Liaisons'* erotic dance of revenge is set in a fascinating era that caught the imagination of a 19-year-old Christopher Hampton, who

read and reread Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' singular epistolary novel. After decades of study, Christopher adapted this story in 1985 during the era of Reagan and Thatcher; a time when a kind of "institutionalized selfishness" was taking root. We continue to hear echoes of the 1% today that make the themes of the play more timely than ever.

The way in which sexuality is portrayed here feels as startling and uncomfortable to a modern audience as it did when it was written. There are some intolerable acts of decadence and cruelty in such close proximity to the script's comic ambition, that the whiplash is intoxicating.

Finally and most importantly, this is a wickedly entertaining story that has stood the test of time. It has been translated into many languages and genres, remaining an exhilarating thrill ride and the perfect way to bring this season to a close.

John Langs  
Artistic Director

A Note from Executive Director  
**CARLO SCANDIUZZI**  
and Managing Director  
**BECKY WITMER**



Carlo Scandiuzzi



Becky Witmer

What a fantastic 51<sup>st</sup> season—thank you for joining us! In addition to what you've seen onstage, we've been very busy behind the scenes as we explore what will be part of our future seasons. ACT has drawn national attention with some of our recent and upcoming projects—important support has been granted to support artists, ideas, and future productions.

The Kenan Charitable Trust awarded ACT \$50,000 to host two Directing Fellows in 2016. The award, given to ACT as well as Lincoln Center and Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, supports an up-and-coming director in their journey to a professional career. Fellows receive the opportunity to shadow the Artistic Director in their daily work, assist in the Mainstage and ACTLab rehearsal process, and produce a showcase for ACTLab. Please join us in welcoming our first 2016 Kenan Fellow, Samip Raval, and watch for news of his showcase.

ACT is taking proactive measures to stay in touch with changing demographics and lifestyles to keep live theatre relevant and appealing for our current and future audiences. In January, ACT began a 15-month artist-in-residence relationship with local performance and music artist extraordinaire Lucia Neare. To cultivate new audiences, The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation awarded ACT a \$40,000 grant. Lucia is researching and identifying the intersection of live theatre with tech and geek culture, exploring the culture of technology and gaming, and creating new ideas for the form of live theatre to appeal to these potential audiences.

Artistic Director Emeritus Kurt Beattie is pioneering a new legacy project for ACT's 2018 Mainstage Season. ACT's commissioned adaptation of the Japanese epic, *The Tale of the Heike*, has been supported by a \$100,000 award from the Tateuchi Foundation, \$30,000 from the NEA, and \$26,950 from MAP Fund. Kurt is working with playwrights Philip Kan Gotanda and Yussef El Guindi on the stage adaptation, and advance funding has supported two multi-day workshops with the University of Washington School of Drama.

Thank YOU for the support you bring to ACT's mission—we hope you enjoyed learning about some of the exciting projects underway at ACT, and look forward to welcoming you in the 2017 season and beyond.

## The ACT Core Company Women of *Dangerous Liaisons*



Photo by Christopher Nelson

When Keiko Green, Jasmine Jean Sim, and Kirsten Potter found out they would be part of ACT's first Core Company, they felt as if they were joining a family.

"I was incredibly overwhelmed by the idea of being part of something that little to no one was doing in the theatre world," Jasmine says.

Each actress has found a home at ACT this season through challenging roles for women that span decades: an advertising executive in 1960's New York, an angst-ridden Chekhovian, and a budding artist with a penchant for outdoor performance. This month, they find themselves in 18th century French court—in a world of excess and inequality. Taking the lead as La Marquise de Merteuil, Kirsten sought Merteuil's own set of instructions for refined behavior.

"The more I've learned about the age in which she lived and the struggles she was up against as a woman, the more sympathetic I became," Kirsten says. "If someone tried to put me in a very constrictive cage, denied me access to my passion, my intellect, and my opinions, I think I would rage very hard against such oppression."

For the courtesan Emilie, Keiko has learned the rules of the era, only to break them.

"In many ways, she is the most liberated, free character in the entire play," Keiko says. "She likes what she does, and everyone knows about it. There isn't much secrecy there."

Jasmine plays Cecile de Volanges, a character who looks forward to the freedom of post-convent life, only to become a pawn in a dangerous love game.

"There are secrets and plots and revenges that can so easily destroy lives without much thought," Jasmine says. "It's a good play to remind myself that as much as I try to live morally, you can't distance yourself from the possibility that we are all capable of being less than perfect."

Audiences can look forward to each actress gracing ACT's stages in the years to come.

"I'm on my third show at ACT this year," Keiko says. "And it has been the most educational, challenging, rewarding, life-altering year—certainly in the last 10 years."

To read more, visit [acttheatre.wordpress.com](http://acttheatre.wordpress.com).

# COMING SOON TO ACT



# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens  
Adapted by Gregory A. Falls  
Directed by Kurt Beattie

Nov 25–Dec 28

Photo by Chris Benjamin



## AN ATTIC AN EXIT

Oct 26–Nov 6



A haunting and delightful pas de deux for the 21st century, featuring dance artists Rachael Lincoln and Leslie Seiters.



## HAM FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Dec 8–24



Seattle comedy masterminds Lisa Koch and Peggy Platt (aka Dos Fallopia) return to ACT with their wonky, gender-bending holiday sketch hoo-hah, better known as *Ham for the Holidays*.



## ENDANGERED SPECIES THEATRE PROJECT

Nov 7, Dec 12



Explore the great plays you seldom see. Join ESTP for its sixth year of 12 book-in-hand presentations, chosen and performed by dozens of Seattle's best and bravest actors!



## SANDBOX RADIO

Dec 30



An all-new episode just in time for New Year's, "New & Improved", the latest installment in the locally grown radio variety show that combines killer music, sound effects, engaging storytelling, the city's best performers and an ultra cool sparkly host ... all recorded live.



## THE GREAT SOUL OF RUSSIA

Dec 7



Join The Seagull Project and members of Seattle's vibrant artistic community as they explore how various Russian artistic roads, past and present, begin and end with Chekhov.



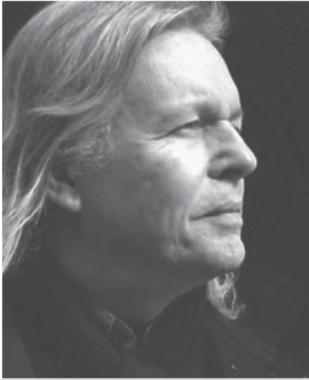
## THE CHERRY ORCHARD

Jan 31–Feb 19



The final play written by Russia's most enduring playwright, Anton Chekhov. Written when Russia was on the verge of an earth-shattering revolution and Chekhov himself was in the grips of tuberculosis, *The Cherry Orchard* is an unflinching laugh in the face of mortality.

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Christopher Hampton  
PHOTO BY JILL FURMANOVSKY

# A Conversation with Christopher Hampton

Playwright of *Dangerous Liaisons*

BY JOHN LANGS, ACT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

*Playwright and jet-setter Christopher Hampton joined John Langs on the phone from Dublin, to chat about ACT's upcoming production.*

**Christopher Hampton:** John, Hello!

**John Langs:** Hello!

**CH:** Finally! I had to battle my way through some sort of demonstration at the hotel.

**JL:** Oh no!

**CH:** It seemed quite friendly, but I haven't quite worked out what it's about.

[Christopher and John share a laugh.]

**JL:** I'm so glad we've got you on the phone to talk about a subject that might even be remarkable to you; that this terrific adaptation that you've written is getting so much play, years and years later. That's actually the first thing I wanted to ask you about. When was your introduction to this epistolary novel?

**CH:** I first read the book when I was 19. I was knocked out by it. It stayed with me, and I kept reading it and re-reading it year by year. And then somewhere in the '70s I thought maybe it would work as a play.

**JL:** I'm wondering if you're still connected to that impulse that made you take notice of the novel.

**CH:** Oh I think so, yes. I mean, my sex life had hardly begun, but this really is the most instruction you could probably hope for about sex. It is really—I hesitate to use the word—it's penetrating on that particular subject. Everything it says is true. Nothing in my life has proved to be the contrary. I'm so fascinated about Laclos. Nobody knew anything about him. He just wrote this one book. It's a really profound masterpiece. The thing that the novel does, that I actually can't do as the writer—I have my virtues—but the thing the book has is the most exquisite plot. Every single thing is satisfying, and in the right place at the right time. People tend to know the plot now because there's been a movie, but in the first days when we did

the play, the audience didn't know what was going to happen next, and were longing for it.

**JL:** How has the success of this particular script shaped your career as a writer? Did you think differently about writing after you saw all the movies come out? You were the groundbreaker with your adaptation.

**CH:** It just felt like I couldn't hope for anything more. I have a particularly vivid memory of when we first were screening the film in Pasadena ...

**JL:** It's just hilarious to me that the first audience of the film was in Pasadena.

**CH:** Yes, and the scores went through the roof, and we had to be in New York the next morning for the New York showing, and Warner Bros was so delighted by the reaction that they gave us the Warner Bros jet. [incredulous laughter] We get on the plane with the cans of film to go to New York, and somewhere over Kansas City, the director of the film turns to me and says, "It's never going to get any better than this."

**JL:** I hope he was wrong.

**CH:** He was sort of right. [laughter]

**JL:** Why the resurgence now? Why is the resonance still as clear now as the day you put this on the first time?

**CH:** I think that if a play works, it resonates differently at different ages. The '80s was the middle of Reagan and Thatcher, and were really to do with institutionalized selfishness, and people who were more privileged walking over others. And now I think it has to do with the 1%. I think people who saw it [*Liaisons*] at the beginning of this year in London were relating to it because it has to do with a certain imbalance in our hearts and lives.

**JL:** Thank you so much for your time, Christopher.

**CH:** Thank you, John. It was a pleasure. And please do give my love to the cast and to Seattle. I love that city.

# What makes a liaison dangerous?

BY ELIZABETH COEN

**CHODERLOS DE LACLOS** published his novel *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* (*Dangerous Liaisons*) in 1782, a few years prior to the start of the French Revolution. While we might think of the novel's sexual content as inherently apolitical, sex and politics were, in fact, very much intertwined in that era. Revolutionaries argued that the vices of aristocrats destroyed the social fabric of the French state and especially condemned the sexual exploits of noble women. In advocating for a new republic, they contended that women should shun the debased customs of the ruling class and uphold their virtue above all else. As a result of these controversies, the sexualized female body was placed at the center of revolutionary politics.

People living in 18th century France generally believed that regular intercourse served as a healthy part of a heterosexual couple's married life. Authors of popular literature and medical treatises acknowledged that women, as well as men, could experience the pleasures of sex. But notwithstanding this rather progressive outlook on female sexuality, there were many men (and women) who clung to antiquated assumptions about feminine health and psychology. For instance, women were considered less rational than men and therefore more likely to act according to emotion, rather than reason. According to medical experts, this made women more susceptible to temptations of the flesh. Mothers were encouraged to shield their adolescent daughters from erotic material and dangerous men. If they failed at this task, the repercussions could be quite damaging, both physically, as women who engaged in premarital sex were thought to lose their youthful glow, and psychologically, as vindictive gossip tended to follow scandal.



Frontispiece of *Crimes of the Queen of France*, 1791

Despite the many taboos, conversations about female sexuality were not relegated to the home. In communal spaces, like the Parisian theatres, the topic pervaded individuals' private thoughts and public conversations. Theatre-goers could speculate about a prominent noble woman's boudoir activities and, at the same time, daydream about her naked flesh. As they listened to an ingénue of the stage proclaim her heroic fidelity, they also gazed upon her body, which they assumed to be highly sexualized. Actresses were frequently derided as common prostitutes. So too, stories of sexual intrigue performed in the theatre often hinted at real events. The playwright Beaumarchais (1732-1799), for example, saw the consequences

*"Reports that the queen participated in orgies, made love to women... and had sexual relations with her own son, eventually supported grounds for her execution.*

of sexual licentiousness first hand.

He wrote his popular works *The Barber of Seville* and *The Marriage of Figaro* (famously adapted by Mozart) following an espionage mission in Vienna where he was charged to stop the circulation of pamphlets denigrating Louis XV's mistress Madame du Barry. Much to the delight of his audiences, Beaumarchais ridiculed the aristocracy and subversively made their private lives very public.

After Louis XVI took the throne and brought the Austrian princess Marie

Antoinette to France, stories of sexual intrigue and erotic pamphlets about the ruling class saturated the marketplace. A blurring of fact and fiction in titillating propaganda fostered a culture of fearful ire, and Marie Antoinette, indisputably bore the brunt of this fury. In the 1780s, pornographic depictions of the queen proliferated in engravings and erotic tales. Moreover, reports that the queen participated in orgies, made love to women, as well as men, and had sexual relations with her own son, eventually supported grounds for her execution. In an account of her trial, Marie Antoinette was accused of "criminal and culpable liaisons" and "intimacies with a villainous faction." Although Laclos's novel does not specifically allude to these depictions of the queen, this type of scurrilous material made the sexual machinations of his characters seem real. Publishers would frequently suggest that pamphleteers and novelists like Laclos had gathered their material from factual sources: a noble woman's stolen box of letters, for instance, or a secret diary. When *Dangerous Liaisons* hit the marketplace, many readers attempted to identify the real identities of the fictional characters. And so, as we reflect upon Laclos's novel today, we can see how the author foreshadowed the decline of a decadent society and the perilous consequences of female sexuality.

Elizabeth Coen received her PhD from the University of Washington and teaches dramaturgy and theatre history at the University of Pittsburgh.

## Who's Who in *Dangerous Liaisons*



**James DeVita** (*Le Vicomte de Valmont*) a native of Long Island, NY, is an author, actor, and a theatre director. He is happy to be back at ACT after being seen last year in *Seven Ways*

to *Get There* and *In Acting Shakespeare*. Along with his novels, *A Winsome Murder*, *The Silenced*, and *Blue*, Jim has also worked extensively as a playwright. His work for young audiences was acknowledged with The Distinguished Play Award by The American Alliance of Theater and Education, and AATE also honored his body of work with the Charlotte B. Chorpenning Award. His plays include: *Learning to Stay*; *Babylon*; *Gift of the Magi* (a musical adaptation); *In Acting Shakespeare*; *The Desert Queen* (the life of Gertrude Bell); *Dickens In America*; *Waiting for Vern*, and a new adaptation of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Jim is also a recipient of the National Endowment for the Arts Literature Fellowship for Fiction. He is a member of The Dramatists Guild and Actors Equity Association.



**Keiko Green** (*Emilie*) is a playwright and performer, originally from Georgia. She is a 2016 Core Company member here at ACT, where she recently appeared in *Stupid*

*Fucking Bird* (Mash) and the ACTLab production of *Bad Apples* (Lt. Scott). Recent work in Seattle includes *The Comparables* (Seattle Repertory Theatre); *Othello* and *Love's Labours Lost* (Seattle Shakespeare Company/Wooden O); *Water by the Spoonful* (Theatre22); *The Memorandum* (Strawberry Theatre Workshop); *Amadeus* and *Caught* (Seattle Public Theater). Keiko is a proud member of the Seattle Repertory Theatre Writers' Group. As a writer, her works *Bunnies* and *Puny Humans* premiered at Annex Theatre. She is a performer for Living Voices, bringing the story of Japanese Internment camps to classrooms and theatres nationwide. Keiko received her B.F.A. in theatre from New York University.



**Jason Marr** (*Azolan, Major Domo*) is delighted to be performing with ACT again. Previously with the company, he played Oliver in *Pitmen Painters*. This summer

## Who's Who in *Dangerous Liaisons*

he was the *King of Navarre* in a raucous *Love's Labour's Lost* (Wooden O) set in the '70s. Other roles include Bassianus in *Titus Andronicus* (Seattle Shakespeare Company), Felix Humble in *Humble Boy* (Seattle Public Theater), and Proteus in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Wooden O). He has also performed with Shakespeare Santa Cruz, the Shakespeare Theatre Company in D.C., Book-It Repertory, Washington Ensemble Theater, Theater Schmeater, GreenStage, Taproot Theatre, Harlequin Productions, Island Stage Left, 14/48, and Theatre Anonymous. He is a co-founder of One Lump or Two Productions (*Elsinore Diaries*, *Holiday of Errors*). Jason earned a B.F.A. in acting and directing from UNC-Greensboro and an M.F.A. from the Shakespeare Theatre Company's Academy for Classical Acting at George Washington University. He is married to the extraordinary Jill Marr.



**Eleanor Moseley** (*Madame de Volanges*) is delighted to make her ACT mainstage debut in one of her favorite plays. She was last seen as Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman* (ArtsWest).

Recent projects include *The Lion in Winter* (Second Story Rep), *Slaughterhouse Five* and *The Art of Racing in the Rain* (Book-It), and many others at Hugo House, Annex, Odd Duck, and other local stages. Recent film work: *Children of Light*, *Regulate*, and the award-winning feature *The Dark Horse*. She has worked onstage and on-camera in NYC, North Carolina, and the Bay Area. An aspiring writer, her short plays have been staged at the Seattle Fringe Fest, NW Playwrights' Alliance, and the Seattle Play Series. Represented by Actors First Agency.



**Kirsten Potter** (*Le Marquise de Merteuil*) Seattle credits include: *Daisy*; *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* (ACT); *Worse Than Tigers* (ACTLab); *View from the Bridge*, *Photograph 51* (Gregory

Award nomination for Outstanding Actress), *Or*, (Gregory Award for Outstanding Actress, Seattle Rep). Regional credits: *The Heiress*, *The Weir*, *Taking Steps* (South Coast Repertory); *Palestine, NM*; *Sex Parasite* (Mark Taper Forum—CTG); *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Geffen Playhouse); *Honour* (LADCC nom), *Bold Girls* (Garland Award, Matrix Theatre); *Major Barbara*, *The Constant Wife* (LA Theaterworks); *As You Like It* (A Noise Within); *Red Herring* (Laguna Playhouse). While a company member with Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Ms. Potter premiered *Work Song* by Jeffrey Hatcher and Eric Simonson, Steven Dietz'

*Paragon Springs* and *Force of Nature*, and performed in over 20 productions including *Twelfth Night*, *Amadeus*, *The Mai*, *An Ideal Husband*, *Collected Stories*, and *Mill on the Floss*. Regionally she has performed at Arizona Theatre Company, Huntington Theater, Arena Stage, Geva, American Conservatory Theater; and The Utah, California, Nebraska, and Santa Fe Shakespeare Festivals. Film/TV: *Medium*, *Judging Amy*, *Bones*, and *The Eyes Have It*. Ms. Potter can be heard voicing numerous video game vixens including the Queen of the Reef in *Destiny*, as well as various animated series and audiobooks. She is a summa cum laude graduate of Boston University. Kirsten is a proud member of ACT's 2016 Core Acting Company.



**Lorenzo Roberts** (*Le Chevalier Danceny*) received his B.F.A. in acting from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and appeared in *Romeo and Juliet* (Seattle Immersive

Theatre) and *Henry IV Part 1* (Wooden O). He is a member of ACT's 2016 Core Company, and has previously appeared this season in *The Mystery of Love & Sex* and *The Royale*.



**Wendy Robie** (*Madame de Rosemonde*) Recent Chicago credits include *The Game's Afoot* (Drury Lane Theatre); *Southbridge* (Chicago Dramatists); *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Private Lives*,

*Richard III*, *Hamlet*, *Hecuba* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Sense and Sensibility* (Northlight Theatre); *Float* (About Face); *Mother Courage and her Children* (Steppenwolf); *Trojan Women* (Jeff nomination for best supporting actress, The Goodman Theatre); *A Delicate Balance* (Remy Bumpo Theatre); *Ommium Gatherum*, *Far Away*, *The Love Song of J Robert Oppenheimer*, *The Long Christmas Ride Home*, *Entertaining Mr. Sloane* (The Next Theatre). Outside the U.S., Robie appeared as Regan in Brian Bedford's *King Lear* 2007 Stratford Festival of Canada, and as Bishop in *Joan Dark* Linz, Austria 09 Kulturhauptstadt. Regional credits: Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival 2015 Season, Illinois Shakespeare Festival 2013 Season; The Actors' Theatre of Louisville; Kansas City Repertory; Arizona Theatre Company; Broadway in Texas, Austin; Portland Repertory Theatre, and South Coast Repertory Theatre (Dramalogue Award, lead actress). Film credits: Wes Craven's *The People Under the Stairs*, and *Were the World Mine*. T.V. credits: *Star Trek: DS9*, and two seasons as Nadine in David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*.

Robie returns as Nadine in season three of *Twin Peaks* to air on Showtime in 2017. Robie received the Chicago After Dark Award for Outstanding Season 2005. Proud member of Actors' Equity since 1985.



**Jasmine Jean Sim** (*Cecile de Volanges*) graduated from the Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts (PCPA '13) in her home state of California and then from Cornish

College of the Arts ('15). Recent credits include: Bonnie Parker in *Bonnie & Clyde* (Studio 18 Productions), Nina in *Stupid Fucking Bird* (ACT), Doralee Rhodes in *9 to 5* (Seattle Musical Theatre), Belle/Niece in *A Christmas Carol* (ACT), and Mary Tilford in *The Children's Hour* (Intiman). Jasmine is also thrilled to be part of ACT's new Core Company. Much love and thanks to Mom and Dad, Rory, Andie, and all those at ACT that have made this place a home!



**Jen Taylor** (*Madame de Tourvel*) Previously at ACT, *Yankee Tavern* and *A Christmas Carol*. Jen is a founding member of New Century Theatre Company (*The Adding Machine*, *Orange Flower*

*Water*, *O Lovely Glowworm*, and *Holy Days*) and has also worked at Book-It Repertory (*Pride and Prejudice*, *Truth Like the Sun*, *Giant and House of Mirth*), Seattle Shakespeare Company (*Cymbeline*, *Pygmalion*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*), Portland Center Stage (*Cyrano*, *Doubt*, and *Twelfth Night*), San José Rep, Intiman, Seattle Children's Theatre, Empty Space, and The Village Theatre. She is a voice actor in radio, television, audiobooks, and numerous video games including the Halo series as Cortana and Dr. Halsey. If you have a Windows Phone or P.C. she is the voice of your personal assistant.



**Christopher Hampton** (*Playwright*) became involved in theatre while studying French and German at Oxford University, and wrote a play in his first year. The Royal Court's production

was so successful that it transferred to the Comedy Theatre while he was still a student, making him the youngest writer ever to have a play performed in the West End—a record which still stands. He said at the time that he also hoped to become the oldest writer to have a play in the West End, an ambition he has yet

to achieve. His plays and musicals have so far garnered four Tony Awards, three Olivier Awards, five Evening Standard Awards and the New York Theatre Critics' Circle Award; prizes for his film and television work include an Oscar, two BAFTAs, a Writers' Guild of America Award, the Prix Italia, a Special Jury Award at the Cannes Film Festival, Hollywood Screenwriter of the Year, and The Collateral Award at the Venice Film Festival for Best Literary Adaptation. His works for the stage include original plays: *The Talking Cure*, *White Chameleon*, *Tales From Hollywood*, *Treats*, *Savages*, *The Philanthropist*, *Total Eclipse*, and *When Did You Last See Me Mother?*; plays adapted from novels: *The Age of the Fish* and *Youth Without God*, *Embers*, *Les Liaisons Dangereuses*, *The Portage to San Cristobal of A.H.*; musicals: *Sunset Boulevard*, *Dracula: The Musical*, and, most recently, *Stephen Ward*, libretti: *Waiting for the Barbarian*, *Appomattox*, and *The Trial*, all with composer Philip Glass; and many translations: plays by Chekhov, Ibsen, Molière, Horváth, Yasmina Reza, and Florian Zeller; and a German musical based on du Maurier's *Rebecca*. Hampton's screenplays include most recently *Ali and Nino*, *Adore*, *A Dangerous Method*, *Chéri*, *Atonement*, *Imagining Argentina*, *The Quiet American*, *The Secret Agent*, *Mary Reilly*, *Total Eclipse*, *Carrington*, *Dangerous Liaisons*, *The Good Father*, *The Honorary Consul*, *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, and *A Doll's House*. His television scripts include mini-series *The Ginger Tree*, *Hôtel du Lac*, *The History Man*, *Able's Will*, and most recently *The Thirteenth Tale*.

**John Langs** (*Director*) see bio at right.

**Brian Sidney Bembridge** (*Scenic and Lighting Designer*) has collaborated on over 20 productions and films with John Langs including *Assassins* (Gregory Best Lighting Design Nomination) and *Mary's Wedding* at New Century (Gregory Best Lighting Design, Footlight and BWW Critics Choice Award: Scenic design). His other work includes, Off-Broadway: The Public Theatre, Second Stage Theatre, The Flea, Jean Cocteau Repertory Theatre, Kids With Guns, and Theatre at St. Clements. International: Theatre Royal Stratford East in London; Town Hall Theatre in Galway, Ireland; and Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Platform Hip Hop Festival in Sydney, Australia, among others. Regional: Guthrie Theatre, Children's Theatre Company, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Goodman Theatre, Chicago, and California Shakespeare theaters, Timeline Theatre Company, Lookingglass Theatre, The Second City, Court Theatre, Writers Theatre,

Victory Gardens Theater, Northlight Theatre, Drury Lane, Ravinia Festival, Luna Negra Dance, Visceral Dance, Asolo, St. Louis, Milwaukee, and Madison repertory theaters, Pittsburgh Public Theater, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Alliance Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Circle X Theatre, Opera Omaha, and Virginia Opera. He has received seven Jeff Awards, two LA Drama Critic Circle Awards, LA Weekly Awards, three Garland Awards, and an Ovation Award. Brian represented the United States at the Prague Quadrennial in 2011 with his design of *The Elaborate Entrance Of Chad Deity*.

**Catherine Hunt** (*Costume Designer*) is so excited to be back at ACT and working again with John Langs. Previously, they collaborated on the ACT premiere of *Bethany*. Favorite ACT productions include: *The Mystery of Love & Sex* directed by Allison Narver, *Bloomsday*, *In The Next Room*, *The Pitmen Painters*, and *Bach at Leipzig*, all directed by Kurt Beattie. Locally, Catherine has designed for Village Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman, Seattle Opera, and Seattle Children's Theatre. Catherine has designed for Hartford Stage, Syracuse Stage, ChildsPlay, and The San Diego Repertory Theatre. Catherine is the recipient of two Theatre of Puget Sound Gregory Awards, and a San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award, as well as a LA Times Drama Loge award for the Anne Bogart Production of *The Women*. Catherine also designed the costumes for the computer game *Riven*. She has been a guest lecturer at both the University of Washington, and Cornish College of the Arts.

**Matt Starrit** (*Sound Designer*) is a Seattle-based, freelance sound designer for theatre and dance. In Seattle, he has designed for Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman, Seattle Shakespeare Company, Strawberry Theatre Workshop, Book-It Repertory Theatre, ArtsWest, The Cherdonna and Lou Show, New Century Theatre Company, BenDeLaCreme, Waxie Moon, zoe I juniper, and Washington Ensemble Theatre. Nationally, he has designed for Alley Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Cornerstone Theater Company, The Old Globe, and South Coast Repertory. He is a part-time lecturer for the University of Washington School of Drama and was a founding member of Washington Ensemble Theatre.

**Geoffrey Alm** (*Fight Choreographer*) is very pleased to be returning to ACT to be a part of *Dangerous Liaisons*. His work was last seen in *Assassins* and *The Mystery of Love & Sex*. Recent local work includes *Romeo & Juliet* (Seattle Shakespeare Company), *View from the*

*Bridge* (Seattle Repertory Theatre), and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* (Seattle's Children's Theatre). National credits include work at The Old Globe, the Shakespeare Theatre, Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Arizona Theatre Company, and Kansas City Rep. Mr. Alm teaches stage fighting at Cornish College for the Arts, the UW Professional Actor Training Program, and Freehold Theatre Lab. He is a Fight Master with The Society of American Fight Masters, and a proud member of SDG.

**Briana Kersten** (*Stage Manager*) is thrilled to call this her first show with ACT and to be in such good company. Still a relatively new addition to the Seattle scene, her work about town includes: *Worse Than Tigers* (ACTLab, Red Stage); *Really Really* (ArtsWest); *As You Like It* (Kenan Directing Fellowship), and ASM on *Festen* (New Century Theatre Company). She'd like to thank American Players Theatre in Wisconsin for the years that brought her here, friend and mentor Evelyn Matten, dear friend Emily Penick, and boyfriend JC Bedard for their constant encouragement and support.



**John Langs** (*Artistic Director*) John has been delighted to serve ACT as Artistic Director in 2016, and previously as Associate Artistic Director for three years.

John's 16-year freelance career has afforded him the opportunity to work with many prestigious theatre companies across the country. He has directed productions at Playwrights Horizons NY, Ensemble Studio Theater NY, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Lookingglass Theater Company in Chicago, Circle X in Los Angeles, The Resident Ensemble, New Century Theatre Company, Washington Ensemble Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Company. John received his directing degree from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Some of his favorite directing credits include *The Shaggs Philosophy of the World* (LA Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Original Musical), and *Brothers Karamazov* (seven LADCC Awards including Best Production of the year and Best Direction) and directing Kurt Beattie in *King Lear*. John received the first annual Seattle Gregory Award honoring excellence in direction for *The Adding Machine*. Recent Seattle credits include *Mary's Wedding* (NCTC), *The Three Sisters* (The Seagull Project), and *Othello* (Seattle Shakespeare Company). As a dedicated fan of original work, John has shepherded over a dozen projects to their premieres.



**Carlo Scandiuzzi**  
(Executive Director) is a founder of Agate Films and Clear Pictures, producing such films as *Prototype*, *Dark Drive*, *Outpatient*, and *The Flats*, and Indieflix, a

distribution company. In 1979, Scandiuzzi started Modern Productions, bringing to Seattle such legendary bands as The Police, Devo, Nina Hagen, Iggy Pop, The Ramones, John Cale, Robert Fripp, James Brown, Muddy Waters, and many more. He performed in several plays at Empty Space Theatre including *Aunt Dan and Lemon*, *The Return of Pinocchio*, and *Dracula*. In the early '80s, he collaborated with many Seattle performance artists such as Norman Durkee, Alan Lande, and Jesse Bernstein. He also acted in various films including *Bugsy*, *The Public Eye*, *Another You*, *Casanova's Kiss*, and *Killing Zoe*. He graduated from the Ecole Supérieure D'Art Dramatique of Geneva. Carlo currently serves as a member of the Seattle Arts Commission.



**Becky Witmer**  
(Managing Director) has been with ACT since 2011, serving as the General Manager (2014-2015) and also the Director of Marketing and Communications

(2011-2014). Becky began her career in arts management through marketing and communications. She was the Director of Marketing and Public Relations at Intiman Theatre (2008-2011) and Opera Colorado (2006-2008). She was the Associate Director of Marketing with Central City Opera (2002-2005). Becky is an advisory board member for TeenTix, a founding co-chair of the Cultural Resource Collective, an Arts Business Consultant with Shunpike, and she frequently appears as a guest lecturer for Seattle University's Arts Leadership M.F.A. program. She is a graduate of the Leadership Tomorrow program.

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In the event of an emergency, please wait for an announcement for further instructions. Ushers will be available for assistance.

### Emergency Number

The theatre's emergency number in the Union lobby is 206.292.7667. Leave your exact seat location with your emergency contact in case they need to reach you.

### Smoking Policy

Smoking is NOT allowed in any part of the theatre or within 25 feet of the entrance.

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No firearms of any kind are allowed in any part of the theatre.

### Food

Food is not allowed in the theatre. Tuxedos & Tennis Shoes is the exclusive caterer of ACT.

### Accessibility

Wheelchair seating is available. The theatre is equipped with the Williams Sound® Listening System for the hard of hearing; headsets are available from the house manager for use, free of charge, with a valid ID and subject to availability. ACT offers American

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G. Wilmon Thomas in *The Boyde*. Photo by Chris Benjamin.

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# GIVING KIDS A LIFE IN THEATER

Seattle Public Theater's  
Youth Programs Thrive



Students in a Youth Stage production of *Room Service*. Photo courtesy of Seattle Public Theater.

There are Hobbits gathering. A dragon is in the wings. Children are on stage eager to speak their lines in English, and Spanish, and Vietnamese. Seattle Public Theater is putting on a multi-lingual *The Hobbit* as part of their youth programming. Another time, in a production of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, a teenage girl was playing the title role. Still another time there was a co-production of *The Mikado* with the Seattle Opera and the production became part of a national conversation about race and representation.

Why is theater important to kids? "Why is life important to kids," asks Shana Bestock, who is the founder of the youth program at Seattle Public Theater that began in 2001 and who is the currently the theater's artistic and education director. "Theater is a language, a discipline, a group activity, an art form, a recreation, an entertainment,

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an escape, and a social connector all rolled into one glorious package.” She continues, “Theater is vital for kids because they need structures in which they can try on different hats, take on different personalities, be inside foreign stories, wear funny clothes and put on makeup and give voice to emotion.” The things learned in a child’s life in theater – empathy, human connection, imagination – are applied to their life outside the theater.

It gave voice to Simon Irving, for one. As an 8th grader, he had fun playing a pompous man of the manor in a production of *The Passion of Dracula*. A great experience for him, he got the theater bug fast and was in the Seattle Public Youth Program for the next five years. Serving approximately 500 students a year, the organization don’t offer classes, per se, they simply immerse children, like Irving was at the time, in a show. And, not just acting. They offer

opportunities for students to learn lighting, stage fighting, directing, all the skills needed to create a play. That’s just what the kids do, once they’re enrolled, create.

In 2007, for his final senior production, Irving had learned a lot by then, not only about theater but about himself. “Loyalty, creativity, teamwork,” he listed. “Ingenuity.” During summer stints from college, Seattle Public Theater’s stage still pulled at him. The Bathhouse Ensemble was soon formed, a way for graduates of the SPT youth program to still perform and participate in theater. “It wasn’t about teaching theater,” Irving said. “It was about making theater and making it for ourselves.”

Irving is now SPT’s education coordinator. “It’s amazing that I get to work here with Shana. She was the director of one of my proudest moments on stage when I was a kid.” The show was a one-man monologue of Edgar Allan Poe’s *The Tell-Tale Heart*. As the education coordinator, he manages all of SPT’s youth programs, executing it at ground level. “They have the same experience with a production as a professional actor,” Irving says. “Now I see myself mirrored in every success with every successive generation.”

Bestock wrote out her vision of the program for those future generations when she was all of 17. A vision inspired by her mentors like Seattle Children’s Theatre’s Linda Hartzell, and by theaters she grew up with as a kid herself – ACT Theatre, Empty Space Theatre, and others. “I wanted to create a space for young people that could be a home, a doorway, a place for adventures and for self-discovery.” She is amazed at how far it’s come and how far it’s taken her. “It’s a safe place, an authentic place where young people have autonomy and ownership and agency.”

Irving agrees with his boss and his former director. “It’s a third place between home and school where children can feel safe.” Even if those children are Hobbits with a dragon lurking nearby. ■



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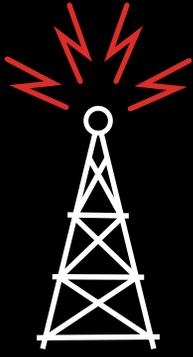
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# Intermission Brain Transmission

Are you waiting for the curtain to rise? Or, perhaps, you've just returned your seat before the second act and have a few minutes to spare? Treat your brain to this scintillating TRIVIA QUIZ!

Email us the answer to the last question for a chance to win tickets to a show!

- 1) Seattle Shakespeare Company is presenting *Medea*. Who wrote it?
  - a) Hippocrates
  - b) Euripides
  - c) Shakespeare
  - d) Sophocles
- 2) ACT Theatre is showcasing the classic tale *Dangerous Liaisons*, based on the novel written by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos. What year was it originally published?
  - a) 1905
  - b) 1885
  - c) 1836
  - d) 1782
- 3) Mark Morris Dance Group is performing as part of Seattle Theatre Group's season. Where did the famed choreographer grow up?
  - a) Portland
  - b) Spokane
  - c) Seattle
  - d) Tacoma
- 4) Jonathan Biss will be performing at Meany Hall. What instrument does he play?
  - a) Piano
  - b) Violin
  - c) Cello
  - d) Trombone



Media / Naples National Archeological Museum

- 5) Seattle Repertory Theatre is presenting the world premiere of *Roz and Ray*. Who wrote it?
  - a) Karen Hartman
  - b) Justin Huertas
  - c) Brandon Ivie
  - d) Alice Childress

## Bonus Question

What was the last performance you attended that you liked best and why?

Email [production@encoremediagroup.com](mailto:production@encoremediagroup.com) or tweet to @EncoreArts with #EncoreStages and be entered to win two tickets to an upcoming Encore Arts performance.

**ANSWERS** 1) B - Euripides. A tragedian of ancient Greece, about 19 of his plays still exist in full. 2) D - 1782. A French epistolary novel, it was published in four volumes. 3) C - Seattle. A famed ballet choreographer, he worked with the San Francisco Ballet, Paris Opera Ballet, and more. 4) A - Piano. He's particularly well-known for his take on Beethoven's piano sonatas. 5) A - Karen Hartman. Hartman is a Seattle Rep Writer's Group alumna and a UW Senior Artist in residence. Bonus Question: Email your response to [production@encoremediagroup.com](mailto:production@encoremediagroup.com) with Trivia Quiz in the subject line.



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