



51st Season • 484th Production
JULIANNE ARGYROS STAGE / OCTOBER 5-26, 2014

South Coast Repertory

Marc Masterson
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Paula Tomei
MANAGING DIRECTOR

David Emmes & Martin Benson
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

presents

VENUS IN FUR

by David Ives

Keith Mitchell
SCENIC DESIGN

David Kay Mickelsen
COSTUME DESIGN

Elizabeth Harper
LIGHTING DESIGN

Jeff Polunas
SOUND DESIGN

Jackie S. Hill
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Jennifer Ellen Butler
STAGE MANAGER

Directed by

Casey Stangl

Geoff and Valerie Fearn
Honorary Producers

Originally produced by Classic Stage Company, (Brian Kulick Artistic Director; Jessica R. Jenen, Executive Director)

Originally produced on Broadway by the Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer)
by special arrangement with Jon B. Platt, Scott Landis and Classic Stage Company, at the Samuel J. Friedman Theatre on October 13, 2011.

VENUS IN FUR is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Thomas *Graham Hamilton*
Vanda *Jaimi Paige*

SETTING

A rehearsal studio, New York City.

LENGTH

Approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Casting *Joanne DeNaut, CSA*
Dramaturg *Andy Knight*
Production Assistant *Bradley Zipser*
Assistant Director *Desiree York*
Dialect Coach *Philip D. Thompson*
Fight Coordinator *Ken Merckx*
Assistant Sound Designer *Harrison Haug*
Costume Design Assistant *Kaitlyn Kaufman*
Stage Management Intern *Amanda Short*
Light Board Operator *Sumner Ellsworth*
Sound Engineer *Chad Dove*
Wardrobe Supervisor/Dresser *Jessica Larsen*

The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association,
the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making other noises that may disturb surrounding patrons.

Video taping and/or recording of this performance by any means whatsoever are strictly prohibited.

Electronic devices should be turned off or set to non-audible mode during the performance.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.

COAST
MAGAZINE

Media Partner

A Private Look at the Professional Affairs of Leopold Von Sacher-Masoch

"I seem like a little captive mouse with which a beautiful cat prettily plays. She is ready at any moment to tear it to pieces, and my heart of a mouse threatens to burst."

—*Venus in Furs* by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch

by Andy Knight

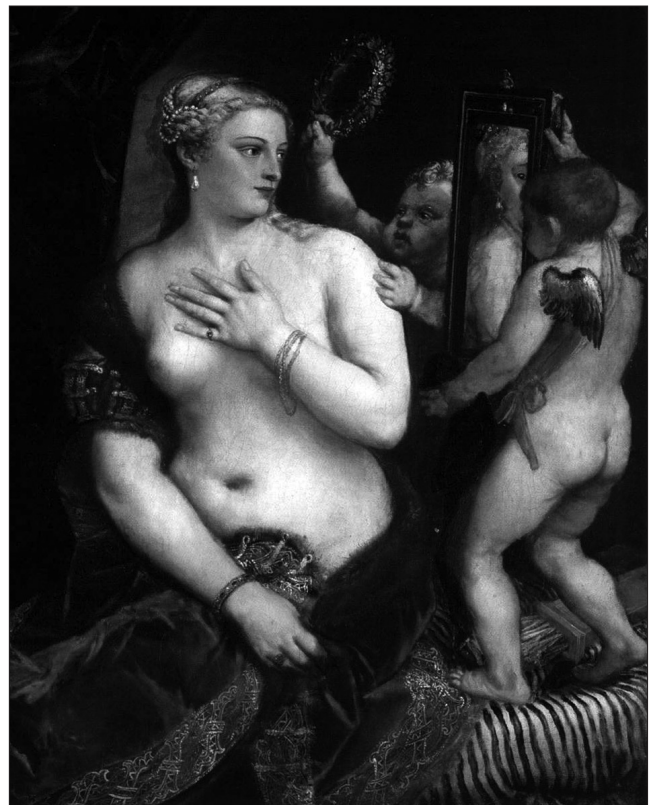
Austrian author Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (1836-95) began his professional career as a historian at the University of Graz, the same institution where he earned his law degree. His academic publications showed a passion not only for history, but for the art of prose as well and, in 1860, Sacher-Masoch left academia to pursue a more creative writing career. His interest in history and social justice never waned, though, and much of his fiction surrounded historical events in his native Eastern Europe. Although Sacher-Masoch had a productive and varied writing career, only his short novel *Venus in Furs* maintains lasting fame—in large part due to its erotic and autobiographical content and its unintended influence on modern psychiatry.

Venus in Furs tells the story of Severin von Kusiemski, a gentleman staying at a health resort near the Carpathian Mountains. While there, Severin meets a beautiful young widow, Wanda von Dunajev, falls madly in love with her and asks for her hand in marriage. Wanda shares her

suitors' affection, but is reluctant to marry again—and yet her refusal to do so only deepens Severin's infatuation. Severin offers to be Wanda's slave, aroused by the thought of her draped in extravagant furs and dominating him both publicly and privately. Wanda accepts, and the couple enters into a contract of rigid social and sexual hierarchy.

Severin's sexual predilection—to be dominated, even abused by his lover—reflected that of Sacher-Masoch's, and details from the author's own romantic trysts bear striking similarities to the plot of *Venus in Furs*. In December 1869, Sacher-Masoch entered into a contract with a widow named Fanny Pistor Bogdanoff. The contract stated that the author was to "become her slave and to comply unreservedly for six months with every one of

Below: A famous image of Sacher-Masoch at the feet of his mistress, Fanny Pistor. Right, "Venus with a Mirror" by Titian (1555), a favorite painting of *Venus in Furs*' protagonist Severin von Kusiemski.



her desires and commands.” In return, Pistor promised to “wear furs as often as possible, especially when... in a cruel mood.” Sacher-Masoch and Pistor, like Severin and Wanda, traveled to Italy to live in this fashion. Their contract also stipulated that Pistor was to allow Sacher-Masoch six hours a day for his work. It was likely during that time that he completed *Venus in Furs*, which was first published in 1870.

The writer’s affair with Fanny Pistor was neither his first nor his last submissive relationship. In 1888, he wrote about a formative experience, in which he detailed the “acute pleasure” that he experienced as a boy when his aunt, Countess Zenobia, punished him with the whip. Not long after *Venus in Furs* was published, Sacher-Masoch shared a written correspondence with a woman who used the alias Wanda von Dunayev, the same name as the novel’s infamous heroine. Sacher-Masoch and Wanda, whose real name was Aurora Rümelin, eventually married, but not before signing a contract that bound him to be her unconditional slave for life; the agreement even specified that Sacher-Masoch would have to kill himself to regain his freedom. Their contract’s legal validity, however, was flimsy—after all, Wanda von Dunayev was not even Rümelin’s real name—and after years of marriage, the couple divorced.

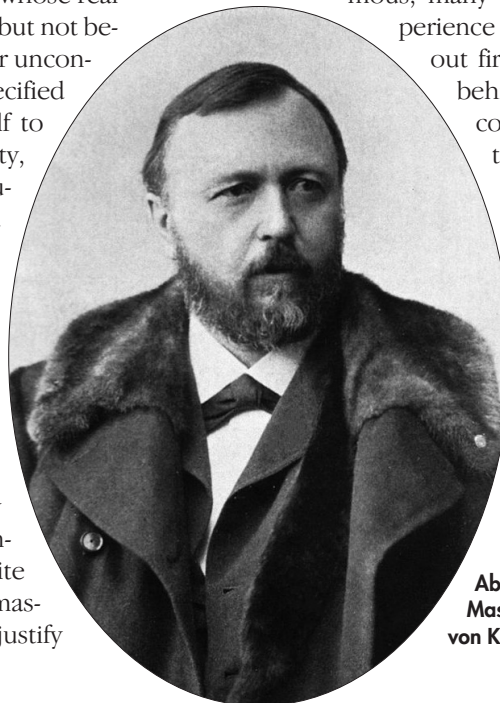
By 1890, many linked the writings of Sacher-Masoch with the plight of the sexually submissive male, especially after the German psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing popularized the term “masochism” in that year’s edition of his text, *Psychopathia Sexualis*. Krafft-Ebing defined the term as an individual who “in sexual feeling and thought, is controlled by the idea of being completely and unconditionally subject to the will of a person of the opposite sex; of being treated by this person as by a master, humiliated and abused....” He went on to justify



naming it after the famous writer “because the author Sacher-Masoch frequently made this perversion, which up to his time was quite unknown to the scientific world as such, the substratum of his writings.”

In David Ives’ comedy *Venus in Fur*, which deconstructs its source material with a fresh setting, a young actress calls Sacher-Masoch’s novel “S&M porn.” This likely would have offended the author. He was certainly less than pleased that Krafft-Ebing made his name synonymous with a “sexual anomaly,” fearing that history would remember him only for that. And while Sacher-Masoch’s work frequently explored sexuality and its relationship to violence, some scholars, like John Kenneth Noyes, maintain that the writer was using these intimate situations as a means to examine more global topics. In his book *The Mastery of Submission*, Noyes argues against reading Sacher-Masoch’s work with only the writer’s personal life in mind: “Sacher-Masoch’s representation of desire and sexuality should be seen in relation to his preoccupation with a repressive and turbulent sociopolitical environment in Eastern Europe in the mid-nineteenth century. The ‘masochistic’ thematic for which he is remembered cannot simply be explained in terms of the poet’s biography.”

Because Sacher-Masoch’s private life was so infamous, many modern readers can’t experience the author’s writing without first hearing about the man behind it and that context, combined with an appreciation for the author’s political undertones, certainly colors the experience. But with or without that knowledge, *Venus in Furs* remains an erotically charged and complex look at power play—and a text full of titillating events on which playwright David Ives puts a fresh spin.



Above, Leopold von Sacher-Masoch. Left, Psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing

Artist Biographies



GRAHAM HAMILTON
Thomas

previously appeared at SCR in *Becky Shaw*, *Saturn Returns* and *Hamlet*. Last year, Hamilton produced and starred alongside Jaimi Paige in the West Coast premiere of Philip Ridley's *Tender Napalm*.

The production won three *LA Weekly Awards*, and received Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle and Ovation nominations. He has performed on stages across the country and, in 2011, received the Helen Hayes Best Actor Award for his portrayal of Hamlet at the Folger Shakespeare Library. His television appearances include "Grey's Anatomy," "CSI," "Company Town," "Touch," "NCIS: Los Angeles," "Big Love," "Ugly Betty," "Cold Case," "Guiding Light," and national ad campaigns for Volkswagen, Miller Lite, Norelco, Apple and Samsung. A Boomerang Grant recipient and member of The Antaeus Company, Hamilton earned his BFA from The Juilliard School. He currently serves as chairman of the West LA/Malibu Chapter of the Surfrider Foundation, a grassroots, environmental nonprofit dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of oceans, waves and beaches.



JAIMI PAIGE
Vanda

is making her SCR debut. She was most recently seen in *Tender Napalm* at Six01 Studio. Her other Los Angeles stage credits include *Ghosts* and *Great Expectations* at A Noise Within; *The*

Collector; *Jesse Boy* and *Green Eyes/Rooming House* at Ruskin Theatre Group; and *Sleeping Ugly* at Santa Monica Playhouse. Her other notable stage credits include Juliet (*Romeo & Juliet*), Helena (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*) and Girl in the world premiere of Tennessee Williams' *Green Eyes*, featured at the Tennessee Williams Theatre Festival. Her television and film credits include "The Mentalist," "Medium," "Ghost Whisperer: The Other Side," "Diagnosis X," the feature film *Peacock* and the upcoming feature film *Within the Dark*.

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNERS

DAVID IVES (*Playwright*) is perhaps best known for his evening of one-act plays, *All in the Timing*, which has been included in the *Best Short Plays* series seven times, and for his drama being staged now at SCR, *Venus in Fur*, which was nominated for a Tony Award for Best Play. His plays include *New Jerusalem: The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza*; *The School for Lies*, adapted from Molière's *The Misanthrope*; *The Liar*, adapted from Corneille; *Times Flies*; and *Is He Dead?*, adapted from Mark Twain. He has also translated Feydeau's *A Flea in Her Ear* and Yasmina Reza's *A Spanish Play*. A former Guggenheim Fellow in playwriting and a graduate of The Yale School of Drama, he lives in New York City.

CASEY STANGL (*Director*) returns to SCR after directing Sarah Ruhl's *In the Next Room or the vibrator play*, Sofia Alvarez's *Between Us Chickens* and many Theatre for Young Audiences plays. Her recent projects include *The Curse of Oedipus* for The Antaeus Company, *Venus in Fur* for American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco and *First Person: Seeing America*, a multi-media piece with Ensemble Galilei. Nationally, Stangl's work has been seen at the Humana Festival/Actors Theatre of Louisville, Guthrie Theater, Denver Center Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre, Portland Stage Company, HERE Arts Center, Minnesota Opera, Juilliard Opera Center and many others. She was the founding artistic director of Eye of the Storm Theatre in Minneapolis—a company devoted to new work—for which she was named Minnesota Artist of the Year. Her short film *C U @ ED'S* has screened at film festivals across the country and won numerous awards.

KEITH MITCHELL (*Scenic Design*) is delighted to return to SCR where he recently designed *Fast Company*. By day, Mitchell is an Emmy Award-winning art director and works on a variety of television and film projects. He has designed productions for The Antaeus Company, 24th St. Theatre, A Noise Within, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Center Theatre Group, Gefen Playhouse, Getty Villa, Bootleg Theater, Evidence Room, Lewis Family Playhouse, Odyssey Theatre Ensemble, Artworks, and he created a 24-hour installa-

tion for *Glow* at Venice Beach. He has designed more than 20 shows for The Falcon Theatre, including *The Value of Names*, with the late Jack Klugman (Ovation Award for Scenic Design). He was the principal developing artist for the Childsplay production *Rock, Scissors, Paper*, which was awarded a Multi-Arts Production (MAP), Rockefeller Grant. He just concluded his 12th season as scenic consultant for Los Angeles Philharmonic's Summersounds, World Music and Art for Kids at the Hollywood Bowl.


DAVID KAY MICKELSEN (*Costume Design*) has designed more than 300 productions at the nation's leading theatres, including SCR; Guthrie Theater; Denver Center Theatre Company (59 productions); Arizona Theatre Company (47 productions); The Cleveland Play House (21 productions); Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (14 productions); Ford's Theatre; Williamstown Theatre Festival; Berkeley Repertory Theatre; Geffen Playhouse; Pasadena Playhouse; Laguna Playhouse; The Old Globe; San Diego Repertory Theatre; A Contemporary Theatre; the Oregon, Utah, Colorado and Illinois Shakespeare festivals; Studio Arena Theatre; Portland Center Stage; Northlight Theatre; Pioneer Theatre Company; GeVa Theatre; The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; Children's Theatre Company of Minneapolis; Tennessee Repertory Theatre; Missouri Repertory Theatre; Sundance Theatre Festival; New Mexico Repertory Theatre; Pennsylvania Center Stage; Florida Stage; The Maltz-Jupiter Theatre; Ensemble Studio Theatre; Irish Repertory Theatre; Theatre of the Open Eye; Jean Cocteau Repertory Theatre; The Hampton Playhouse; and Timberlake Playhouse. Originally from Canby, Ore., he graduated with an MFA from California Institute of the Arts and is a member of the United Scenic Artists. davidkaymickelsen.com.

ELIZABETH HARPER (*Lighting Design*) returns to SCR, where she previously designed *Reunion*. Her re-

gional credits include *A Raisin in the Sun*, directed by Phylicia Rashad (Center Theatre Group, 2011 Ovation Award nominee for Best Lighting Design, 2012 NAACP Theatre Award nominee for Best Lighting Design), *Play Dead* (directed by Teller), *Wait Until Dark* and *Good People* (Geffen Playhouse, 2012 Ovation Award nominee for Best Lighting Design). Her Los Angeles credits include *The Twentieth-Century Way* (The Theatre @ Boston Court, 2010 Ovation Award nominee for Best Lighting Design) and *Crescent City* (The Industry). She has served as a technical consultant for art installations at LACMA and Greene Naftali. Her industrial lighting projects include shows and events for Microsoft, On-Live, Ubisoft and Universal Studios. Harper holds an MFA in design for stage and film from the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. She is a guest lighting design instructor and lecturer at California Institute of the Arts. eharperdesign.com

JEFF POLUNAS (*Sound Design*) is thrilled to be designing for this production at SCR. Polunas received his MFA in sound design at UC Irvine and is currently the production sound engineer at CSU Fullerton. He has designed more than 90 productions in his career. His credits include *Ivy & Bean, the Musical*; *Anastasia Krupnik*; *Junie B. in Jingle Bells*, *Batman Smells!*; and *Between Us Chickens* (South Coast Repertory); *The Full Monty*, *Peter Pan*, *The Wedding Singer* and *The Producers* (Summer Repertory Theatre); and *Company*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (PCPA Theaterfest). He has been nominated four times for the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) Regional Sound Design Award.

JENNIFER ELLEN BUTLER (*Stage Manager*) has been a part of the stage management team at SCR for 12 seasons and more than 40 productions. Her other theatre credits include Laguna Playhouse, Utah Shake-



Mecca, Saudi Arabia. A life hangs in the balance.

ZEALOT


by Theresa Rebeck
directed by Marc Masterson

Oct 17 – Nov 16
Segerstrom Stage

Honorary Producers:
YVONNE AND DAMIEN JORDAN

This play is a recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Plays Award.

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Orange County's Tony Award-winning Theatre

spearean Festival, California Shakespeare Theatre, TheatreWorks, Perseverance Theatre, Spoleto Festival USA and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. She also has stage-managed operas for Long Beach Opera and Pacific Repertory Opera. Butler has a BA in theatre arts from UC Santa Cruz and has been a member of Actors' Equity since 2007.

THE BROADWAY PRODUCERS of *Venus in Fur* are Jon B. Platt, Scott Landis, MTC Productions Inc. Lynn Meadow, Barry Grove, Jessica R. Jenen, Scott M. Delman, and Classic Stage Company. Lead producer Jon B. Platt's producing credits include some of the most honored dramatic work in Broadway history: *Angels in America: Millennium Approaches* (Pulitzer Prize winner), *Perestroika*, *The Book of Mormon*, *Wicked*, *Copenhagen*, *God of Carnage*, *Death of a Salesman* and *Clybourne Park* (Pulitzer Prize winner). In addition to his seven Tony Awards, Platt has received 10 New York Drama Desk Awards and five New York Outer Critics Circle Awards, and the Robert Whitehead Award for Distinguished Producing in the Commercial Theatre in 2012. Tony Award-winning producer Scott Landis' credits include *The Children's Hour* (West End), *La Bete*, *The Pajama Game* and *Nice Work if You Can Get It*. Manhattan Theatre Club, led by Artistic Director Lynn Meadow and Executive Director Barry Grove, is one of the nation's leading non-profit theatres producing innovative and diverse work by playwrights at all stages of their careers, at its Broadway and off-Broadway theatres. Plays that debut at MTC are performed across the country and around the world, and six of them have won Pulitzer Prizes: *Doubt*, *Proof*, *Ruined*, *Rabbit Hole*, *Crimes of the Heart* and *The Piano Lesson*. Jessica R. Jenen produced *An Evening with Patti Lupone and Mandy Patinkin*, and while executive director of Classic Stage Company, produced the world premiere of *Venus in Fur*, as well as *Three Sisters*, *Uncle Vanya*, *The Tempest*, among others. Classic

GEOFF AND VALERIE FEARNs (*Honorary Producers*) have been SCR subscribers and donors for more than 20 years and enjoy seeing plays evolve from the script to the stage. The Fearn's became Silver Circle members in 1990 and have been Platinum Circle members since 2000. Valerie recently retired from the SCR Board of Trustees after nine years of service, having been actively involved since 2005 on committees for Platinum Circle, Education & Outreach, and Audience Development. She continues to participate on the Gala Committee, and they are generous Gala underwriters. The Fearn's are First Night subscribers to both the Segerstrom and Argyros stages. They are thrilled to add *Venus in Fur* to the growing list of memorable productions they have supported as Honorary Producers, which includes Molly Smith Metzler's *Elemeno Pea* (2012), Donald Margulies' *Collected Stories* (2009), and Terry Johnson's *Hitchcock Blonde* (2006).

Stage Company is the premiere off-Broadway theatre dedicated to re-imagining the classical repertory for a contemporary American audience. Scott M. Delman is a private equity investor at DGZ Capital who has co-produced *The Book of Mormon*, *American Idiot*, *Mary Stuart* and *Ragtime*.

MARC MASTERSON (*Artistic Director*) is in his fourth season with SCR. His recent directing credits include *Zealot*, *Death of a Salesman*, *Eurydice* and *Elemeno Pea* at SCR, *As You Like It* for the Houston Shakespeare Festival, *The Kite Runner* at Actors Theatre of Louisville and the Cleveland Play House. He previously served for 11 years as artistic director of Actors Theatre of Louisville and produced the Humana Festival of New American Plays. During his Actors

Theatre tenure, he produced more than 100 world premieres, expanded audiences and the repertoire, deepened arts education programs and spearheaded numerous community-based projects. His other Louisville directing credits include *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Shipwrecked! An Entertainment*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *The Tempest*, *Mary's Wedding*, *The Crucible*, *Betrayal*, *As You Like It*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Macbeth*. The world premieres he directed at the Humana Festival include works by Lisa Dillman, Wendell Berry, Craig Wright, Eric Coble, Adam Bock, Gina Gionfriddo, Melanie Marnich, Charles Mee and Rick Dresser. He served as artistic director of City Theatre in Pittsburgh for 20 years and was founder and chairman of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Alliance, and as a theatre advisory panel member for the National Endowment for the Arts as well as numerous foundations. He won the Man of the Year Vectors Award, and received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Pittsburgh New Works Festival.

PAULA TOMEI (*Managing Director*) is responsible for the overall administration of SCR and has been managing director since 1994. A member of the SCR staff since 1979, she has served in a number of administrative capacities including subscriptions manager, business manager and general manager. She was the president of the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre, and served two terms as a board member. She has also served as treasurer of TCG, vice president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and has been a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. In addition, she represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT; is a theatre panelist for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the California Arts Council; site visitor for the NEA; and has been a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford and UC Irvine. She is on the board of Arts Orange County, the county-wide arts council, and the board of the Nicholas Endowment. Tomei graduated from UC Irvine with a degree in economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance. She also teaches a graduate class in nonprofit management at UC Irvine.

MARTIN BENSON (*Founding Artistic Director*), co-founder of SCR, has directed nearly one-fourth of

SCR's productions. In 2008, he and David Emmes received the Margo Jones Award for their lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and fostering the art and craft of American playwriting. They also accepted SCR's 1988 Tony Award for Outstanding Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre L.A. Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Benson has received the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for Distinguished Achievement in Directing an unparalleled seven times for George Bernard Shaw's *Major Barbara*, *Misalliance* and *Heartbreak House*; John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*; Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*; Sally Nemeth's *Holy Days*; and Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and Houston's Alley Theatre. He has directed American classics such as *A Streetcar Named Desire* and has distinguished himself in staging contemporary work, including the critically acclaimed California premiere of William Nicholson's *Shadowlands*. Most recently, he directed a revival of Horton Foote's *The Trip to Bountiful* and the world premieres of Samuel D. Hunter's *The Whale* and *Rest*. Benson received his BA in theatre from San Francisco State University.

DAVID EMMES (*Founding Artistic Director*) is co-founder of South Coast Repertory. He received the Margo Jones Award for his lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art of American playwriting. In addition, he has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career. He directed the world premieres of Amy Freed's *Safe in Hell*, *The Beard of Avon* and *Freedomland*, Thomas Babe's *Great Day in the Morning*, Keith Reddin's *Rum and Coke* and *But Not for Me* and Neal Bell's *Cold Sweat*; the American premieres of Terry Johnson's *Unsuitable for Adults* and Joe Penhall's *Dumb Show*; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions he has directed include *New England*, *Arcadia*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Woman in Mind* and *You Never Can Tell*, which he restaged for the Singapore Festival of Arts. He has served as a theatre panelist and onsite evaluator for the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as a panelist for the California Arts Council. After attending Orange Coast College, he received his BA and MA from San Francisco State University and his PhD in theatre and film from USC.



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



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