



45th Season • 431st Production  
JULIANNE ARGYROS STAGE / JANUARY 4 - 25, 2009

# South Coast Repertory

David Emmes  
PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Martin Benson  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

presents the World Premiere of

## YOU, NERO

BY Amy Freed

Erik Flatmo  
SCENIC DESIGN

Paloma H. Young  
COSTUME DESIGN

Peter Maradudin  
LIGHTING DESIGN

Stephen LeGrand and  
Eric Drew Feldman  
ORIGINAL MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGN

John Glore  
DRAMATURG

Joshua Marchesi  
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Julie Haber\*  
STAGE MANAGER

DIRECTED BY  
**Sharon Ott**

**Elaine J. Weinberg**, HONORARY PRODUCER

*YOU, NERO was commissioned by South Coast Repertory  
and is produced in association with*

***Berkeley Repertory Theatre***

*Tony Taccone, Artistic Director    Susan Medak, Managing Director*

*SCR's production is a recipient of an Edgerton Foundation New American Plays award.*



*This project is also supported in part by an award from the  
National Endowment for the Arts.*

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Scribonius .....	<i>John Vickery*</i>
Batheticus/Beppo/Burrus .....	<i>Hal Landon, Jr.*</i>
Nero .....	<i>Danny Scheie*</i>
Zippo/Seneca/Patheticus .....	<i>Richard Doyle*</i>
Manilius/Fabiolo/Octavia's Ghost/Young Nero .....	<i>Kasey Mahaffy*</i>
Agrippina .....	<i>Lori Larsen*</i>
Poppaea/Inspiration .....	<i>Caralyn Kozlowski*</i>
Ensemble .....	<i>Angelle Buffet+</i>
Ensemble .....	<i>Christopher Crawford+</i>
Ensemble .....	<i>Marisa Hampton+</i>

## SETTING

*Rome, 63 A.D.*

## LENGTH

*Approximately two hours and 30 minutes including one 15-minute intermission.*

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Casting .....	<i>Joanne DeNaut</i>
Assistant to the Director .....	<i>Erin McBride Africa</i>
Production Assistant .....	<i>Jennifer Sherman</i>
Stage Management Intern .....	<i>Carla Neuss</i>
Assistant to the Sound Designers .....	<i>Mark Johnson</i>
Light Board Operator .....	<i>Lois Bryan</i>
Deck Crew .....	<i>Jeff Castellano</i>
Costume Design Assistant .....	<i>Marci Alberti</i>
Additional Costume Staff .....	<i>Mary Bergot, Star Davenport</i> <i>Catherine Esera, Cecelia Parker McClelland</i> <i>Peg Oquist, Katie Wilson</i>

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

*The use of cameras and recorders in the theatre is prohibited. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.*

*Cellular phones, beepers and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible mode during the performance.*

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

+Graduate of SCR's Professional Intensive Program.

**944**  
MAGAZINE

# Project Rome-way

Paloma H. Young's costume designs for *You, Nero* combine authentic Roman styles with a touch of Vegas.



Nero

Agrippina

# Emperor, Artist, Entertainer, Monster

By Kimberly Colburn

**“Hidden talent counts for nothing.”**  
—Nero

**N**ero was born Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus in 37 A.D. His mother, Agrippina (sister of the notorious Caligula), married Emperor Claudius. Lucius was officially adopted by Claudius at age 13 and became Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus, heir to the throne.

In 53 A.D., Nero married stepsister Claudia Octavia. Less than a year later, Claudius died, possibly by poison at the hand of Agrippina. Nero was established emperor at age 16.

His early reign was strongly influenced by his mother and his tutors, Seneca and Burrus. Competition quickly arose among the three; Nero responded by becoming progressively more powerful and impeding all possible rivals.

In 58 A.D., Nero became involved with Poppaea, the wife of a friend. While there are reports that Nero ordered the death of his mother the next year in order to divorce Octavia and marry his mistress, it is unlikely, as Nero did not marry Poppaea until 62 A.D.

Historians theorize that Nero executed Agrippina in response to her plotting against him. Octavia's execution followed. Ancient historians report that Nero, never

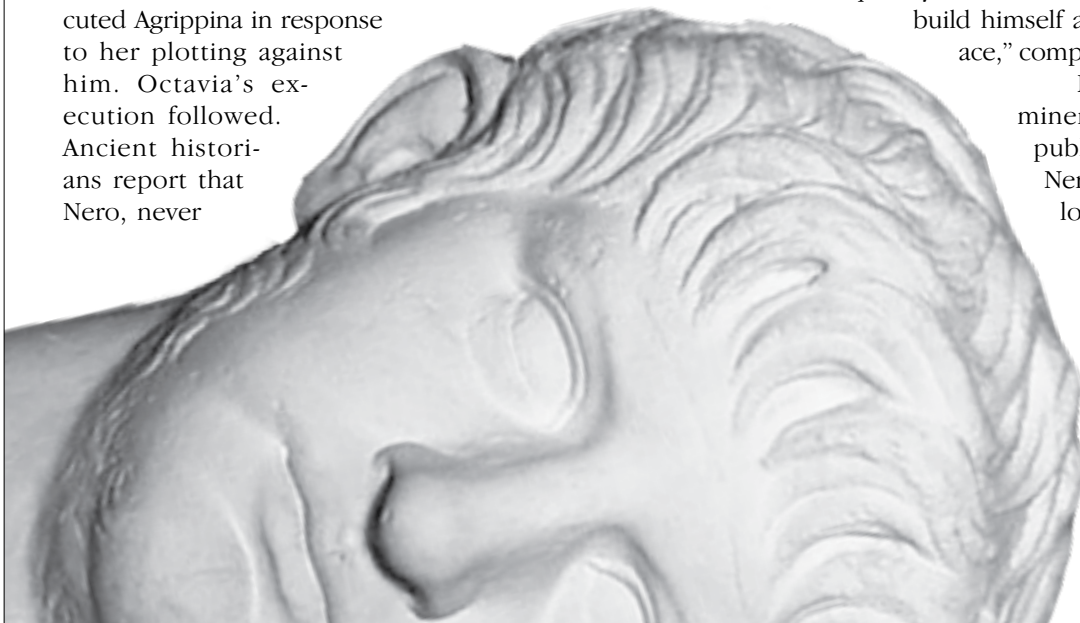
having found wedded bliss, kicked Poppaea to death after she complained about his coming home late from the races. Modern historians suspect bias against Nero and propose that Poppaea actually died from childbirth complications.

Nero's policies were often designed to garner support from the masses, and he was criticized for being obsessed with popular opinion. He lowered taxes on the poorer classes, imposed restrictions on fees, supported the rights of freed slaves, and arrested numerous government officials on charges of extortion and corruption. He also enacted a series of wide-reaching and expensive public works projects.

Nero had a great love of entertainment, and built a number of gymnasiums and theatres. He held enormous gladiatorial shows and established his own festival, the aptly named Neronia. Nero was known to sing and perform in public, much to the dismay of ancient historians. They felt it was shameful, believing theatre was for the lower class and led to immorality and laziness.

Did “Nero fiddle while Rome burned?” No, the fiddle wasn't invented until after Nero's death. There was a great fire in Rome during his reign, but historical accounts vary widely as to where Nero was and what he was doing. The etymology of the phrase is traced to the 17th century, and refers to his predilection for performance and the suspicion the Roman people had that Nero did not do everything he could to stop the fires, as he subsequently took advantage of the cleared space to build himself an enormous “Golden Palace,” complete with an artificial lake.

Nero's demise was imminent after being declared a public enemy by the Senate. Nero prepared for suicide but lost his nerve and ordered one of his companions to commit suicide first. Finally, at the sound of the approaching carriage, Nero plunged a dagger into his throat. His last words were: “What an artist the world loses in me.”



Bust of Nero. Photo by Marco Prins.



# Odds & (Bitter) Ends

In the book *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, Roman historian Suetonius describes Nero as “about the average height, his body marked with spots and malodorous, his hair light blond, his features regular rather than attractive, his eyes blue and somewhat weak, his neck over thick, his belly prominent, and his legs very slender.”

“Nero at this time was at Antium, and did not return to Rome until the fire approached his house...However, to relieve the people, driven out homeless as they were, he threw open to them the Campus Martius and the



public buildings of Agrippa, and even his own gardens, and raised temporary structures to receive the destitute multitude. Supplies of food were brought up from Ostia and the neighboring towns, and the price of corn was reduced to three sesterces a peck. These acts, though popular, produced no effect, since a rumor had gone forth everywhere that, at the very time when the city was in flames, the emperor appeared on a private stage and sang of the destruction of Troy.”

– **Tacitus**, *Annals*

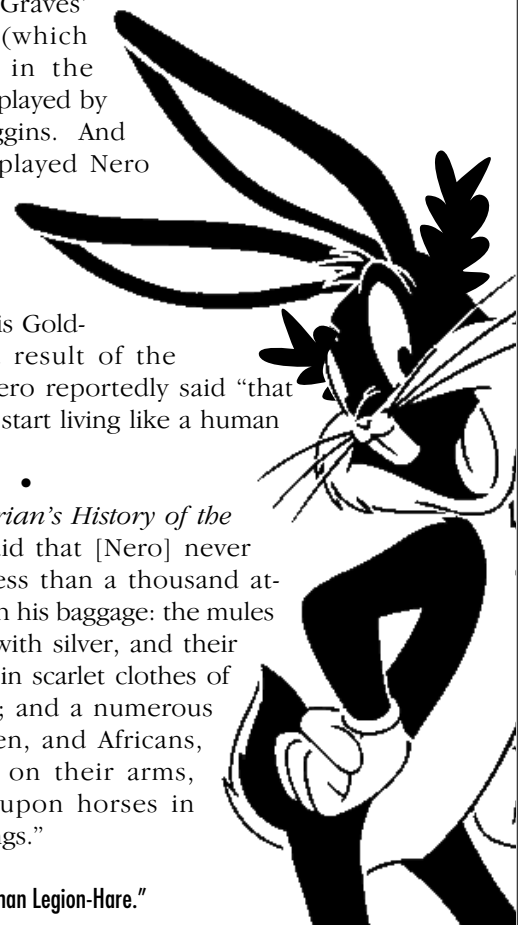
Early Christian writings foretell Nero’s return as the Anti-Christ. These may have been fueled by reports that Nero was one of the first to persecute Christians. In his *Annals* Tacitus wrote “to get rid of the report [that he had ordered the burning of Rome], Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the

populace.... Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination when daylight had expired. Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car.”

Nero has been portrayed many times on the silver screen, often by well known actors. Peter Ustinov played the emperor in the 1951 film *Quo Vadis*, based on the novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz. Charles Laughton played him in Cecil B. DeMille’s 1932 film *The Sign of the Cross*. In a 1955 Bugs Bunny cartoon called “Roman Legion-Hare” Nero was drawn to resemble Laughton. (Nero also appeared in a Daffy Duck cartoon and in an episode of “Peabody’s Improbable History” on the “Rocky and Bullwinkle” series.) In the 1976 BBC television adaptation of Robert Graves’ “I, Claudius” (which aired on PBS in the U.S.) Nero was played by Christopher Biggins. And Dom DeLuise played Nero in Mel Brooks’ *History of the World, Part I*.

After building his Golden Palace as a result of the Roman fires, Nero reportedly said “that he could finally start living like a human being.”

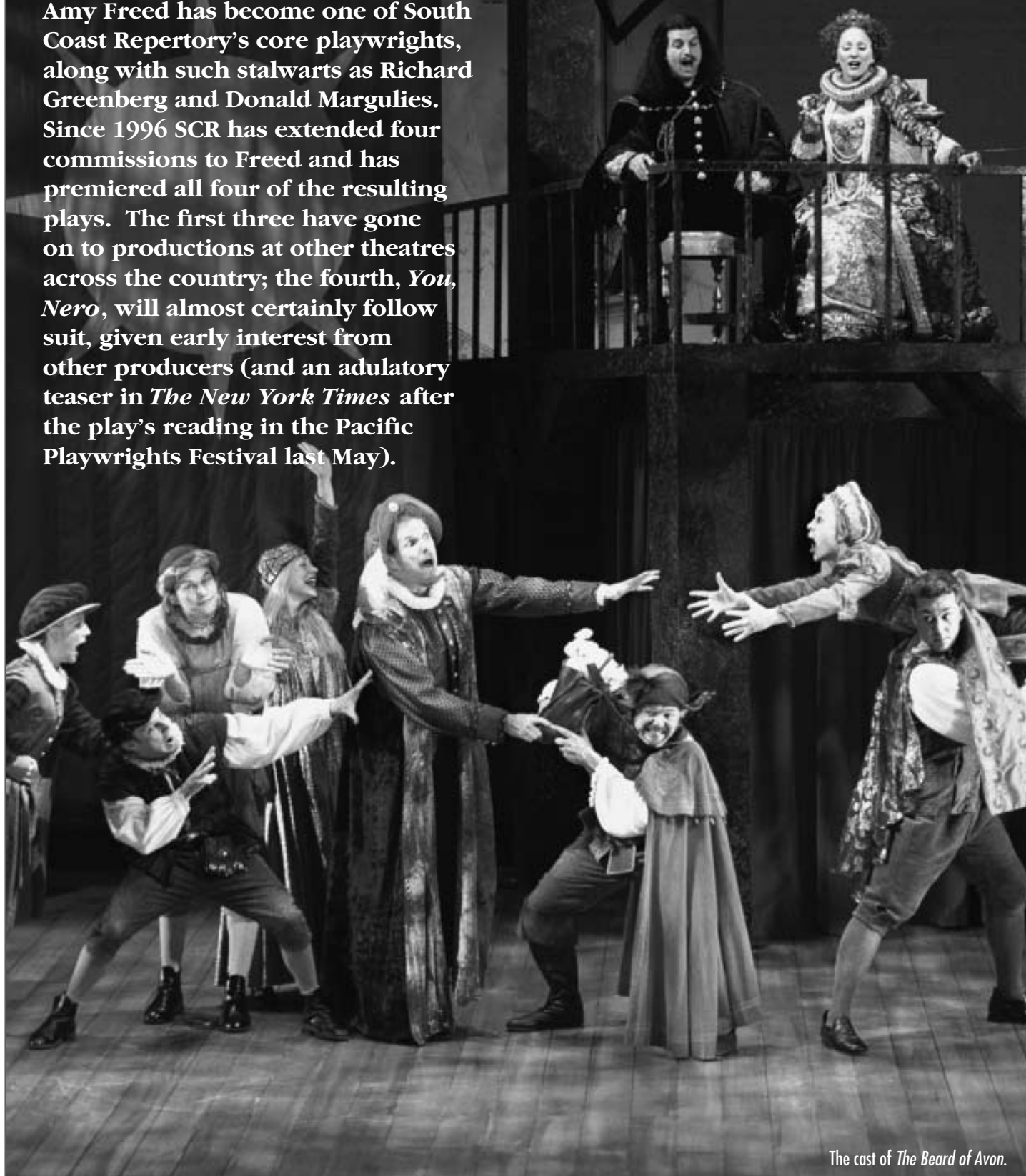
From the *Historian’s History of the World*: “It is said that [Nero] never traveled with less than a thousand attending him with his baggage: the mules being all shod with silver, and their drivers dressed in scarlet clothes of the finest wool; and a numerous train of footmen, and Africans, with bracelets on their arms, and mounted upon horses in splendid trappings.”



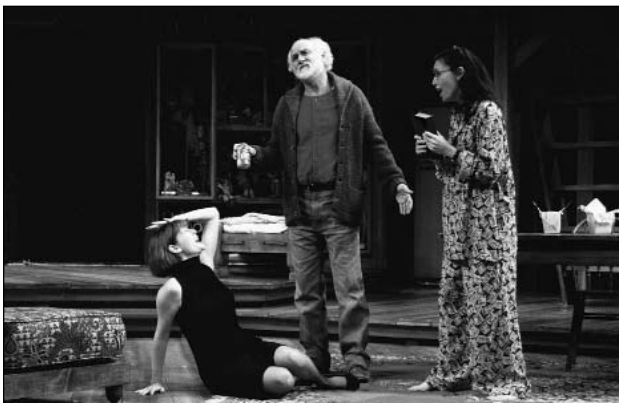
Above, Cecille B. DeMille’s 1932 film *The Sign of the Cross*. Right, Bugs Bunny in the 1955 cartoon “Roman Legion-Hare.”

# SCR's Freed-onia

Amy Freed has become one of South Coast Repertory's core playwrights, along with such stalwarts as Richard Greenberg and Donald Margulies. Since 1996 SCR has extended four commissions to Freed and has premiered all four of the resulting plays. The first three have gone on to productions at other theatres across the country; the fourth, *You, Nero*, will almost certainly follow suit, given early interest from other producers (and an adulatory teaser in *The New York Times* after the play's reading in the Pacific Playwrights Festival last May).



The cast of *The Beard of Avon*.



Heather Ehlers, Peter Michael Goetz and Annie LaRussa in *Freedomland*.

*Freedomland*, the first Freed play to be commissioned by SCR, received its world premiere in October 1997 under the direction of David Emmes. Centering on Noah Underfinger, a retired professor of religion who did too many drugs as a young man, the sharply acerbic comedy describes the tensions between Noah and his three resentful adult children when they all descend upon his peaceful life at the same time — “my offspring springing back at me like the jaw of a loaded wolf trap” as Noah puts it. *Freedomland* introduced SCR audiences to Freed’s particular brand of smart, funny, edgy comedy and her preoccupation with the social and cultural dynamics of contemporary society, an interest that has continued even though most of her later writing has dealt with historical subjects. *Freedomland* was one of three finalists for the 1998 Pulitzer Prize in drama.



Erin J. O’Brien, Simon Billig and Peter Michael Goetz in *Freedomland*.

*The Beard of Avon*, which had its world premiere as part of the 2001 Pacific Playwrights Festival, posits a novel theory as to who truly created the immortal plays of William Shakespeare: Freed somewhat sardonically suggests that the Bard’s collected works could only have been the result of a team effort by many of



Douglas Weston and René Augesen in *The Beard of Avon*.

the greatest minds of the late Elizabethan era — including Queen Elizabeth, herself. Underneath the literary romp is a serious investigation of the nature of creativity and the souls of the creators among us. *The Beard of Avon* has become Freed’s most successful play to date, with productions at many of the nation’s leading resident theatres. Reviewing the play’s Off-Broadway debut, *The New York Times* called it a “clever, thoughtful and entertaining farce ... not only shrewd and ambitious but also modest in its authorial tone.”



The cast of *Safe in Hell*.

*Safe in Hell* If Arthur Miller had decided to make *The Crucible* a wild satire rather than a historical drama, the result might have been something similar to *Safe in Hell*, Freed’s third SCR commission, which premiered in April 2004. Like *Freedomland*, *Safe in Hell* finds humor in the conflicted relationship between a strong father and his psychologically damaged son: in this case it’s the Puritan preachers, Increase and Cotton Mather, who were at the center of the 17th century Salem witch hunts. *Variety* called the play a “dark farce that looks at the consequences of extremism in pursuit of God, Devil or Dad.”





Danny Scheie as Nero and playwright Amy Freed.





# An Amy-able Conversation

*SCR's John Glore recently interviewed playwright Amy Freed about You, Nero.*

## **WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO WRITE A PLAY ABOUT NERO?**

Raindrops and roses and whiskers on kittens. Actor Danny Scheie and horrid Emperors are two of MY favorite things. And when I thought about Danny as Nero, I also thought of Lori Larsen, another actor whose comic gifts I cherish for Agrippina. Sharon Ott, who has worked with all of us, encouraged the thought. Then I had a dream in August of 2007 and the opening of the play and a good part of its actions came in that dream. Seriously.

## **ALTHOUGH YOUR HISTORICAL PLAYS HAVE A STRONG AND VERY FUNNY SATIRICAL TONE, I KNOW YOU RESEARCH THEM METICULOUSLY. HOW MUCH OF *You, Nero* HAS A BASIS IN THE HISTORICAL RECORD, AND WHAT SPRANG WHOLLY FROM YOUR ANTIC IMAGINATION?**

In the appalling events of the play there's actually quite a lot of truth. Not Nero's being held responsible for the burning of Rome, though. That seems to be fairly well discredited by historians. The murders of Octavia and Agrippina are true. The means employed in *You, Nero*, are not. Nero's fixation on an entertainer (called Fabiolo in my play), and the horrifying action it inspires, true. (I've changed the order of certain events.) The Neronia festival devised by Nero, true. The nature of the entertainment? Sprang from my antic imagination. And, of course, my main character, the hapless playwright Scribonius, and the tale of his unfortunate relationship with Nero, is pure fiction.

## **TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU HAVE AN EYE ON THE PRESENT SOCIOPOLITICAL MOMENT WHEN YOU'RE WRITING ONE OF YOUR HISTORICAL PLAYS?**

I guess I feel more like the sociopolitical moment has me inextricably in its claws. The play probably was fueled in part by my own feelings about the function of a playwright today. Actually, it's autobiographical.

Or perhaps I should call it a cautionary tale — with a lot of rather well-founded parallels between our entertainments and the Romans — that warns that when a civilization uses those entertainments to simulate aliveness, it's well on the way to being dead.

## **YOU'VE SAID YOU HAD DANNY SCHEIE IN MIND FOR THE ROLE OF NERO EARLY IN THE WRITING OF THE PLAY. DO YOU OFTEN WRITE FOR SPECIFIC ACTORS — OR IS IT MORE THAT IT TAKES A CERTAIN KIND OF ACTOR TO GET YOUR STYLE AND TONE, AND DANNY HAPPENS TO BE SUCH AN ACTOR?**

It does take a certain kind of actor to get my style.

From an actor's viewpoint, it's a challenge to handle the sometimes quite broad comedy without losing emotional logic. But when one can straddle both realities, the plays perform at the level where I actually arrive at them — as excisions of what's under the mask of human behaviors. So my scripts work best with actors who understand how to layer their performances accordingly, not skate all of the time on the joke-level. (Just sometimes.)

Danny can summon a great blend of high and low theatre styles, which is great for my work. As can everyone in this company. (I'm really delighted to be working again with Carrie Kozlowski, as well.)





# Let the Games Begin

"[Nero] admitted the common people to see him perform his exercises in the Campus Martius. He frequently declaimed in and recited verses of

to encounter wild beasts, and for various other services in the theatre. He presented the public with the representation of a naval fight, upon sea-water, with huge fishes swimming in it; as also with the Pyrrhic dance, performed by certain youths, to each of whom, after the performance was over, he granted the freedom of Rome. ...He very seldom presided in the games, but used to view them reclining on a couch, at first through some narrow apertures, but afterwards with the Podium quite open. He was the first who instituted, in imitation of the Greeks, a trial of skill in the three several exercises of music, wrestling, and horse-racing, to be performed at Rome every five years, and which he called Neronia.... He appointed as judges of the trial men

**"American Idolization has roots that go all the way back to the Coliseum and gladiators, with the emperor's thumb up or thumb down usually reflecting the wishes of thousands of spectators. But the emperor didn't have text messaging technology..."**

**— Rich Westerfield, events marketer**

his own composing, not only at home, but in the theatre; so much to the joy of all the people, that public prayers were appointed to be put up to the gods upon that account; and the verses which had been publicly read, were, after being written in gold letters, consecrated to Jupiter Capitolinus."

"He presented the people with a great number and variety of spectacles, as the Juvenal and Circensian games, stage-plays, and an exhibition of gladiators. In the Juvenal, he even admitted senators and aged matrons to perform parts.... A distinguished Roman knight descended on the stage by a rope, mounted on an elephant. A Roman play, likewise, composed by Afranius, was brought upon the stage. It was entitled, *The Fire*; and in it the performers were allowed to carry off, and to keep to themselves, the furniture of the house, which, as the plot of the play required, was burnt down in the theatre. Every day during the solemnity, many thousand articles of all descriptions were thrown amongst the people to scramble for; such as fowls of different kinds, tickets for corn, clothes, gold, silver, gems, pearls, pictures, slaves, beasts of burden, wild beasts that had been tamed; at last, ships, lots of houses, and lands, were offered as prizes in a lottery."

"...He secured four hundred senators, and six hundred Roman knights, amongst whom were some of unbroken fortunes and unblemished reputation, to act as gladiators. From the same orders, he engaged persons

of consular rank, chosen by lot, who sat with the praetors. At this time he went down into the orchestra amongst the senators, and received the crown for the best performance in Latin prose and verse, for which several persons of the greatest merit contended, but they unanimously yielded to him. The crown for the best performer on the harp, being likewise awarded to him by the judges, he devoutly saluted it, and ordered it to be carried to the statue of Augustus. In the gymnastic exercises, which he presented in the Septa, while they were preparing the great sacrifice of an ox, he shaved his beard for the first time, and putting it up in a casket of gold studded with pearls of great price, consecrated it to Jupiter Capitolinus."

— from *The Lives Of The Twelve Caesars* by Suetonius

"It would be easy to glibly compare the ancient Roman Empire to current America, but there really are some vast differences. For instance, ancient Rome had much more efficient government services, greater tolerance of diverse religious beliefs and far more decadent orgies. We, however, are clearly superior in our treatment of gladiators. Roman gladiators risked horrific, bloody death at the end of a sword, spear or set of lion's teeth, while ours only risk getting smashed around by colossal superathletes brandishing cushioned quarterstaves on national TV."

— Adam Gropman, *L.A. Weekly*

# Artist Biographies



## **RICHARD DOYLE\***

*Zippo/Seneca/Patheticus*

is an SCR Founding Artist. He appeared most recently in *An Italian Straw Hat: A Vaudeville, A Christmas Carol* and last season's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Other SCR credits include *Hamlet*,

*My Wandering Boy*, *Life is a Dream*, *Nothing Sacred*, *The Adventures of Pör Quinly*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Habeas Corpus*, as Eddie in *A View from the Bridge*, *Intimate Exchanges* (1993), *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* and the world premieres of *The Beard of Avon*, *On the Jump*, *But Not for Me*, *BAFO*, *The Interrogation of Nathan Hale*, *She Stoops to Folly*, *Wit*, *Hospitality Suite* and *Highest Standard of Living*. He also appeared in *Intimate Exchanges* (2004), for which he earned a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle (LADCC) Award nomination. He won an LADCC Award for his role in Sally Nemeth's *Holy Days* and was nominated for his role as Reverend Hale in *The Crucible*. He was a guest artist at Pasadena Playhouse in the world premiere of *Matter of Honor* playing Gen. John M. Schofield. "Cheers" fans will remember him as Woody's father-in-law Walter Gaines. He has many other film and television credits. As a voice-actor, Mr. Doyle has become a familiar voice in commercial advertisements, interactive voice recording (i.e. MGS-4), documentaries and animated series. Listen for him as "Pops" in "The Regular Show" on Nickelodeon; as Hogar the Troll in the animated feature *Clutch Powers*; and as Lycomedes in the new interactive "Jason and the Argonauts." Mr. Doyle is the holographic host at the union Theater at the Lincoln Library in Springfield, IL.

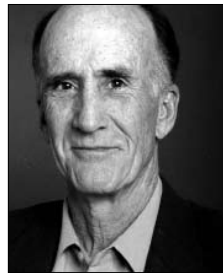


## **CARALYN KOZLOWSKI\***

*Poppaea/Inspiration*

is making her SCR debut. Theatre credits include *Secrets of a Soccer Mom*, *The Milliner* and *Fair Game* Off-Broadway; *Restoration Comedy* at The Old Globe,

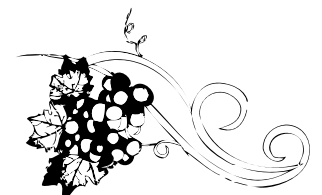
California Shakespeare Theatre and Seattle Repertory Theatre; *Private Lives*, *The Play's the Thing*, *Macbeth*, *Three Sisters*, *Othello*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *Twelfth Night* among others at Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey; *Three Viewings* and *The Shape of Things* at Barrington Stage Company; *As You Like It* at Connecticut Repertory Theatre; and *Love's Fire* at Berkshire Theatre Festival. Film and television credits include *Practical Magic*, "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit," "Law and Order," "Six Degrees," "Numb3rs," "Third Watch," "Guiding Light" and "All My Children."



## **HAL LANDON JR.\***

*Batheticus/Beppo/Burrus*

is an SCR Founding Artist who recently appeared in *Hamlet*, *Nothing Sacred*, *Man from Nebraska*, *Born Yesterday*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *A View from the Bridge*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Safe in Hell*, *Antigone*, *The Drawer Boy* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award nomination), *Major Barbara* and *The School for Wives*. Other credits include *Arcadia*, *Our Town*, *Sidney Bechet Killed a Man*, *BAFO*, *Six Degrees of Separation*, *An Ideal Husband*, *A Mess of Plays* by Chris Durang, *Play Strindberg*, *Faith Healer*, *Ghost in the Machine*, *Green Icebergs*, *Morning's at Seven*, *The Miser*, *Our Country's Good* and *Waiting for Godot*. He created the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in SCR's *A Christmas Carol*, and has performed it in all 29 annual productions. He appeared in *Leander Stillwell* at Mark Taper Forum and in *Henry V* at The Old Globe in San Diego. Other resident theatre roles include Salieri in *Amadeus*, Malvolio in *Twelfth Night* and Gordon Miller in *Room Service*. Among his film credits are *Trespass*, *Pacific Heights*, *Almost an Angel*, *Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure* and *Playing by Heart*.





**LORI LARSEN\****Agrippina*

is making her SCR debut. She has worked as an actor in Seattle every year since 1969. She was a founding member of The Empty Space Theatre and has performed on all the leading stages

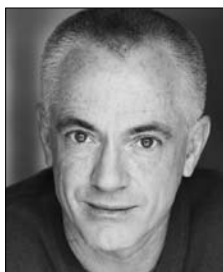
in the Northwest. In the '90s, she directed five operas for Seattle Opera. Larsen is a 2004 Fox Foundation Fellow and has been a proud member of Actors' Equity for 33 years. She recently appeared in *All the King's Men* at Intiman Theatre where last year she played in *Uncle Vanya* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Other recent performances include *Richard III* at Seattle Shakespeare Company; *Private Lives*, *Noises Off*, *The Time of Your Life* and Amy Freed's *The Beard of Avon* at Seattle Repertory Theatre; *Fuddy Meers* and *Quills* at Seattle's A Contemporary Theatre; *Frozen*, *The Psychic Life of Savages* (also by Amy Freed) and *Reckless* at The Empty Space Theatre; *My Fair Lady* and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* at Fifth Avenue Theatre; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* at Tacoma Actors Guild; *The Underpants* at Alliance Theatre in Atlanta (Suzi Award nomination); *Blithe Spirit* at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco; *Wit* at Madison Repertory Theatre in Wisconsin; and *Noises Off* at Civic Light Opera of South Bay Cities. Larsen also played Mrs. Le Fleur on three episodes of the popular TV series "Northern Exposure." This November she acted in an independent feature, *William Never Married*.

**KASEY MAHAFFY\****Manilius/Fabiolo/Octavia's Ghost/Young Nero*

appeared at SCR previously in *An Italian Straw Hat: A Vaudeville* and *Taking Steps*. Theatre credits include *Out Late* at The Globe Theatre in Los Angeles; *The Violet*

*Hour* at Ensemble Theatre Company; *Metamorphoses* at Pioneer Theatre Company; *Little Women* at Kansas City Repertory; *The Miracle Worker* and *Assassins* at Berkshire Theatre Festival; *Tartuffe* and *Much Ado About Nothing* at Sonnet Repertory Theatre; *The Merchant of Venice* at Portland Center Stage; *Life is a Dream* and *Trip to Bountiful* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival; *The Laramie Project*, *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Servant of Two Masters* at Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts; *Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs* and *Something's Afoot* at Oregon Cabaret Theatre; and *Kiss Me Kate*, *Evita*, *South Pacific* and *My Fair Lady* at Rogue Music

Theatre. Film and television credits include *Ocean's Thirteen*, "ER," "Medium," "Girlfriends," "Veronica Mars," "Crossing Jordan," "Joey" and the new web-series "Is this Thing On?"

**DANNY SCHEIE\****Nero*

returns to SCR as Nero after creating the role at the 2008 Pacific Playwrights Festival staged reading. He has also appeared in *The Wind in the Willows*. His additional theatre credits include Amy Freed's *Restoration Comedy* at both The Old Globe and California Shakespeare Theater, where, over five seasons, he played Feste, Mercutio, and Harlequin among other roles; *Cloud Nine* at Trinity Repertory Company and Berkeley Repertory Theatre (where he also appeared in the world premiere of Charles Mee's *Fêtes de La Nuit*); *Star Quality* at Pasadena Playhouse; *The Comedy of Errors* at A Noise Within; *The Last Hairdresser* at Zephyr Theatre and Theater Rhinoceros; and *Tartuffe* at LATC. He has also performed at Yale Repertory Theatre, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, TheaterWorks, San Jose Repertory Theatre and thirteen seasons at Shakespeare Santa Cruz (Artistic Director 1992-95). He has received multiple *Drama-Logue*, Garland, and Critics Circle Awards for acting and directing.

**JOHN VICKERY\****Scribonius*

appeared at SCR last in *Nothing Sacred*. He has also appeared in the NewSCRipts reading of *New York is Bleeding*; the Pacific Playwrights Festival readings of *The Singing Forest* and *Safe in Hell*; and in the productions of *Princess Marjorie*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Misanthrope* and *Heartbreak House*. On Broadway he appeared in *The Lion King*, *The Sisters Rosensweig*, *The Real Thing*, *Eminent Domain*, *Ned and Jack* and *Macbeth*. Off-Broadway appearances include *The Vampires*, *The Death of Von Richthofen*, *Henry IV, Part I*, *American Days* and *Looking Glass*. Regional theatre credits include *The Lion King* at the Pantages Theatre; *The Black Rider* at Ahmanson Theatre; *The Singing Forest* at Long Wharf Theatre; *Arcadia*, *Richard II*, *Aristocrats*, *Made in Bangkok* and *Stuff Happens* at Mark Taper Forum; *The Royal Family* at McCarter Theatre Center; *Richard II* at Yale Repertory Theatre; *I Hate Hamlet*

at the Royal George Theatre; *Tartuffe* and *Don Juan* at Huntington Theatre Company; *Romeo & Juliet*, *The Seagull* and *Macbeth* at La Jolla Playhouse; *The Caretaker* at Los Angeles Theatre Center; and *Julius Caesar* at The Old Globe. Film and television credits include *Murder by Numbers*, *Dr. Giggles*, *Rapid Fire*, *Patriot Games*, *Big Business*, "Babylon 5," "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine," "Star Trek: The Next Generation," "NCIS," "Star Trek: Enterprise," "Frasier," "NYPD Blue" and "Without a Trace."

## PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNERS

**AMY FREED** (*Playwright*) is the author of *The Beard of Avon*, *Restoration Comedy*, *Freedomland*, *Safe in Hell*, *The Psychic Life of Savages* and other plays. Her work has been produced at New York Theatre Workshop, Seattle Repertory, American Conservatory Theater, Goodman Theatre, Playwright's Horizons, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, and other theatres around the country and in Canada. Ms. Freed has been the recipient of the Kesselring Award, the Charles MacArthur Award, is a several times winner of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, and was a Pulitzer finalist for *Freedomland*. She is Artist-in-Residence in the Drama Department of Stanford University, and is also currently serving as Playwright-in-Residence for The Old Globe in San Diego.

**SHARON OTT** (*Director*) is very pleased to return to SCR where she recently directed Beth Henley's *Ridiculous Fraud* for Pacific Playwrights Festival and later as part of SCR's season. *You, Nero* is her third project with playwright Amy Freed. She directed the second production of *The Beard of Avon* following its SCR premiere, and directed the world premiere of *Restoration Comedy* at Seattle Repertory Theatre and later at California Shakespeare Theater. For the past 21

years, Ms. Ott has been a leading figure in the American theatre. She was the artistic director of Berkeley Repertory Theatre for 13 years and Seattle Repertory Theatre for eight years. Her work at Berkeley Repertory resulted in the Tony Award to that company in the final year of her artistic direction. She has been privileged to collaborate with many of the country's leading artists as a director and producer including Nilo Cruz, Anna Deavere Smith, the late August Wilson, Phillip Kan Gotanda, Mary Zimmerman, Stephen Wadsworth, Bill Irwin, Beth Henley and many others. She has directed at theatres throughout the country including Huntington Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Mark Taper Forum, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Kansas City Repertory, Alliance Theatre, Manhattan Theatre Club, Playwrights Horizons and The Public Theater. She has won many awards for her work as a director and producer including *Drama-Logue* Awards, Bay Area Theater Critics Circle Awards and the Elliot Norton Award (Boston) and is a member of the Executive Board of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. She is currently a professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design in Savannah, Georgia.

**ERIK FLATMO** (*Scenic Design*) has designed for the New York productions of *Smashing* at The Play Company, *St. Scarlet* at W.E.T. and *Stay* at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater. Regional theatre credits include *The Imaginary Invalid* and *The Government Inspector* at A Contemporary Theater; *Betty's Summer Vacation* at Yale Repertory Theatre; *The Constant Wife* at Asolo Repertory Theatre; *Richard III* and *Uncle Vanya* at California Shakespeare Theatre; *Radio Golf* at TheatreWorks; and *Endgame* and *Playboy of the Western World* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Mr. Flatmo has also designed for opera and dance including *Eugene Onegin* and *The Magic Flute* at Opera San Jose; *Cenerentola* for The San Francisco Opera Merola Program; Joe Goode Performance Group in San Fran-

cisco; Trajal Harrell's New York productions (including *Danspace Project*, *The Kitchen* and *Dance Theatre Workshop*); and Holcombe Waller's *On the Boards* in Seattle. Mr. Flatmo is a Resident designer at The Magic Theatre and received his MFA from Yale School of Drama and his BA from Columbia University. Mr. Flatmo currently teaches at Stanford University.

**PALOMA H. YOUNG** (*Costume Design*) designed costumes for *Charlotte's Web* at SCR, *1001* at Mixed Blood Theatre, *Dos Pueblos* at Miracle Theatre Group, *Sweet 15* and *Brooklyn Boy* at San Diego Repertory Theatre, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Old Globe, *The Adoption Project* at Mo'olelo Performing Arts Company, *The Uneasy Chair* at North Coast Repertory and *A Current Nobody* at La Jolla Playhouse. Ms. Young holds an MFA from UC San Diego. [www.palomahyoung.com](http://www.palomahyoung.com).

**PETER MARADUDIN** (*Lighting Design*) is pleased to return to SCR, where he has designed over 40 productions including *A Feminine Ending*, *Ridiculous Fraud*, *The Real Thing*, *The Studio*, *A Naked Girl on the Ap-pian Way*, *Princess Marjorie*, *Safe in Hell*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Hurrah at Last*, *Great Day in the Morning* and *Prelude to a Kiss*. On Broadway he designed the lighting for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Kentucky Cycle*, and Off-Broadway *Hurrah at Last*, *Ballad of Yachiyo* and *Bouncers*. Mr. Maradudin has designed over 300 regional theatre productions for such companies as The Kennedy Center, Guthrie Theater, American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Old Globe, Huntington Theatre Company, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Steppenwolf and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He is a Founding Principal of First Circle, a lighting design consultancy for architecture and themed environments with projects both domestic and international, including Macau, Panama, Egypt, Singapore, Mexico and Dubai: [www.firstcircledesign.com](http://www.firstcircledesign.com).

**ERIC DREW FELDMAN** (*Original Music and Sound Design*) has played with everyone from Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band, Snakefinger, The Residents and Pere Ubu to the Pixies, Frank Black and PJ Harvey. Mr. Feldman has also produced records by Frank Black, dEUS, Tripping Daisy, Sparklehorse and The Polyphonic Spree. He is currently recording the second album for his band kNIFE & FORK. Along with Mr. LeGrand he has composed scores and designed sound for productions at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Los Angeles Theatre Centre, La Jolla Playhouse, Seattle Repertory Theatre and Playwrights Horizons in New York City. Pro-

ductions include *The Tooth of Crime*, *Lulu*, *Macbeth*, *Restoration Comedy* and *Yankee Dawg, You Die*.

**STEPHEN LEGRAND** (*Original Music and Sound Design*) has designed music and sound for theatres throughout the country including Roundabout Theatre Company, The Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Huntington Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Alliance Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Mark Taper Forum and La Jolla Playhouse. He served as resident sound designer at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco for 12 years before relocating to Savannah, where he teaches at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Recent credits include *Restoration Comedy*, *Heartbreak House*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* and *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*. Some favorite shows include *Lulu*, *Golden Child*, *Hecuba*, *Twilight: Los Angeles*, *The Ballad of Yachiyo*, *Anna in the Tropics* and *A Skull in Connemara*.

**JOHN GLORE** (*Dramaturg*) has been SCR's Associate Artistic Director since 2005, after having served as the company's literary manager from 1985 to 2000. From 2000 to 2005 he was resident dramaturg for the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles. He co-directs SCR's annual Pacific Playwrights Festival and has served as dramaturg on dozens of productions, workshops and readings. He enjoys an ongoing collaboration with Culture Clash, which has included co-writing a new adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Birds* (co-produced by SCR and Berkeley Repertory Theatre in 1998) and serving as dramaturg on *Chavez Ravine* and *Water & Power* at the Mark Taper Forum. His own plays have been produced at SCR, Arena Stage, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and other theatres across the country.

**JULIE HABER\*** (*Stage Manager*) stage-managed *A Feminine Ending* and *Taking Steps* last season at SCR. She recently stage managed *Othello* at the Alley Theatre in Houston and *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Taming of the Shrew* and *Moonlight and Magnolias* at Dallas Theater Center. Other regional theatre credits include Mitch Albom's *And the Winner Is* (Laguna Playhouse); *The Front Page* (Long Wharf Theatre); ten productions at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco during her three-year tenure there as administrative stage manager, including *Lackawanna Blues* and *James Joyce's The Dead*; and productions at The Old Globe, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, The Guthrie Theater and Yale Repertory Theatre. She was the company stage manager at SCR for 20 years, stage managing over 70 productions and overseeing the stage management



department. She has also stage managed two operas: *Don Juan in Prague* (in Prague at Estates Theatre and at BAM in 2006) and *Guest from the Future* (Bard SummerScape), both directed by David Chambers. She received her MFA from Yale School of Drama and has taught stage management at UC Irvine (where she received her BA), Cal Arts and Yale School of Drama.

**DAVID EMMES** (*Producing Artistic Director*) is co-founder of SCR. In May 2008, he and Martin Benson received the Margo Jones Award for their lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art and craft of American playwriting. In addition, he has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career, including a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for the direction of George Bernard Shaw's *The Philanderer*. 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*; the West Coast premieres of C.P. Taylor's *Good* and Harry Kondoleon's *Christmas on Mars*; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions include the West Coast

**ELAINE J. WEINBERG** (Honorary Producer), together with her late husband Martin, has been one of SCR's most enthusiastic patrons for over four decades. They generously supported the Next Stage Campaign and have been the Honorary Producers of eight productions, including *Brooklyn Boy*, *The Beard of Avon*, *Everett Beekin* and *The Violet Hour*. In addition, Elaine underwrote last season's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. She was co-chair of the Gala Ball, "Play On..." in 1999 and currently serves on the theatre's Board of Trustees. Since 2006 Elaine has also been Honorary Producer of the NewSCRipts series.

premieres of *Three Viewings* by Jeffrey Hatcher, *The Secret Rapture* by David Hare and *New England* by Richard Nelson; and *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, Ayckbourn's *Woman in Mind* and *You Never Can Tell* by George Bernard Shaw, 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, on the Executive Committee of the League of Resident Theatres, and 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.

**MARTIN BENSON** (Artistic Director), co-founder of SCR, has directed nearly one third of the plays produced here. In May 2008, he and David Emmes received the Margo Jones Award for their lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art and craft of American playwriting. He has distinguished himself in the staging of contemporary work, including William Nicholson's *The Retreat from Moscow*, the world premiere of Horton Foote's *Getting Frankie Married — and Afterwards* and the critically acclaimed California premiere of Nicholson's *Shadowlands*. He has won accolades for his direction of five major works by George Bernard Shaw, including the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle (LADCC) Award-winners *Major Barbara*, *Misalliance* and *Heartbreak House*. Among his numerous world premieres is Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Alley Theatre in Houston. He has directed American classics including *Ab, Wilderness!*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *A Delicate Balance* and *A View from the Bridge*. Benson has received the LADCC Distinguished Achievement in Directing awards an unparalleled seven times for the three Shaw productions, John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Sally Nemeth's *Holy Days* and *Wit*. He also directed the film version of *Holy Days* using the original SCR cast. Along with Emmes, he accepted SCR's 1988 Tony Award for Outstand-

ing Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre LA Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Benson received his BA in Theatre from San Francisco State University.

**PAULA TOMEI** (Managing Director) is responsible for the overall administration of South Coast Repertory 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 served on the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre, from 1998-2006, and was its President for four years. 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, and site visitor for the NEA; served on the Advisory Committee for the Arts Administration Certificate Program at the University of California, Irvine; and has been a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford and the University of California, Irvine. She recently joined the board of Arts Orange County, the county wide arts council. Ms. Tomei graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a degree in Economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance.

**SOUTH COAST REPERTORY**, founded in 1964 and continuing today under the leadership of Artistic Directors David Emmes and Martin Benson, is widely regarded as one of America's foremost producers of new plays. In its three-stage Folino Theatre Center in Costa Mesa, California, SCR produces a five-play season on its Segerstrom Stage, a four-play season on its Argyros Stage, plus two annual holiday productions. SCR also offers a three-play Theatre for Young Audiences series, and year-round programs in education and outreach. SCR's extensive new play development program consists of commissions, residencies, readings, and workshops, from which up to five world premieres are produced each season. Among the plays commissioned and introduced at SCR are Donald Margulies' *Sight Unseen*, *Collected Stories* and *Brooklyn Boy*; Richard Greenberg's *Three Days of Rain*, *Everett Beekin*, *Hurrah at Last* and

*The Violet Hour*; David Henry Hwang's *Golden Child*; Jose Rivera's *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*; Lynn Nottage's *Intimate Apparel*; Craig Lucas' *Prelude to a Kiss*; Amy Freed's *The Beard of Avon* and *Freedomland*; Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit* and David Lindsay-Abaire's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Rabbit Hole*. Most of these plays were developed through its Pacific Playwrights Festival, an annual workshop and reading showcase for up to eight new plays, attended by artistic directors and literary staff members from across the country. Over forty percent of the plays SCR has produced have been world, American or West Coast premieres. In 1988, SCR received the Regional Theatre Tony Award for Distinguished Achievement, particularly in the area of new play development.

**BERKELEY REPERTORY THEATRE**, Born in a storefront, Berkeley Rep has moved to the forefront of American theatre – and is still telling unforgettable stories. Founded in 1968, the Theatre quickly earned respect for presenting the finest plays with top-flight actors. In 1980, with the support of the local community, Berkeley Rep built the 400-seat Thrust Stage where its reputation steadily grew over the next two decades. It gained renown for an adventurous combination of work, presenting important new dramatic voices alongside refreshing adaptations of seldom-seen classics. In recognition of its place on the national stage, Berkeley Rep was honored with the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre in 1997. The company celebrated by unveiling a new 600-seat proscenium stage in 2001, the state-of-the-art Roda Theatre. It also opened the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, a home for its long tradition of outreach and education programs. The addition of these two buildings transformed a single stage into a vital and versatile performing arts complex, the linchpin of a bustling Downtown Arts District which has helped revitalize Berkeley. In four decades, four million people have enjoyed more than 300 shows at Berkeley Rep, including 50 world premieres. The Theatre now welcomes an annual audience of 180,000, serves 20,000 students, and hosts dozens of community groups, thanks to 1,000 volunteers and more than 400 artists, artisans, and administrators. In the last seven years, Berkeley Rep has helped send seven hit shows to New York: *36 Views*, *Bridge & Tunnel*, *Brundibar*, *Eurydice*, *Metamorphoses*, *Passing Strange*, and *Taking Over*.



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.