



53rd Season • 504th Production
JULIANNE ARGYROS STAGE / JANUARY 3-22, 2017

South Coast Repertory

Marc Masterson
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Paula Tomei
MANAGING DIRECTOR

David Emmes & Martin Benson
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

presents

THE ROOMMATE

by Jen Silverman

John Iacovelli
SCENIC DESIGN

Angela Balogh Calin
COSTUME DESIGN

Brian Gale
LIGHTING DESIGN

Michael Roth
ORIGINAL MUSIC and
SOUNDSCAPE

Jackie S. Hill
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Joanne DeNaut, CSA
CASTING

Kathryn Davies
STAGE MANAGER

Directed by
Martin Benson

Barbara Roberts and Brooke Roberts-Webb
Honorary Producers

World premiere in the 2015 Humana Festival of New American Plays at ACTORS THEATRE OF LOUISVILLE

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Sharon *Linda Gebringer*
Robyn *Tessa Auberjonois*

SETTING

Iowa City.

LENGTH

Approximately one hour and 40 minutes, with no intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Dramaturg *Kimberly Colburn*
Production Assistant *Mariann Papadopoulos*
Assistant Director *Mark Anthony Vallejo*
Assistant Scenic Designers *Sojin Han, Michael Riha*
Costume Design Assistant *Kaitlyn Kaufman*
Stage Management Intern *Thomas Nagata*
Light Board Operator *Dan Gold*
Sound Board Operator *Sam Levey*
Dresser *Jessica Larsen*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special thanks to Calvin Picou, Voice of Son.

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.

Videotaping 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.

THE ORANGE COUNTY
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Chatting with Silverman

by Kimberly Colburn

How did you get your start in theatre?

I started in undergrad at Brown. Before college, I had written a lot of fiction, a lot of poetry and had very little, if not nothing, to do with theatre. I had taken a playwriting class on a whim my first year at Brown. I was pulled over to the dark side very rapidly.

You didn't do theatre in high school?

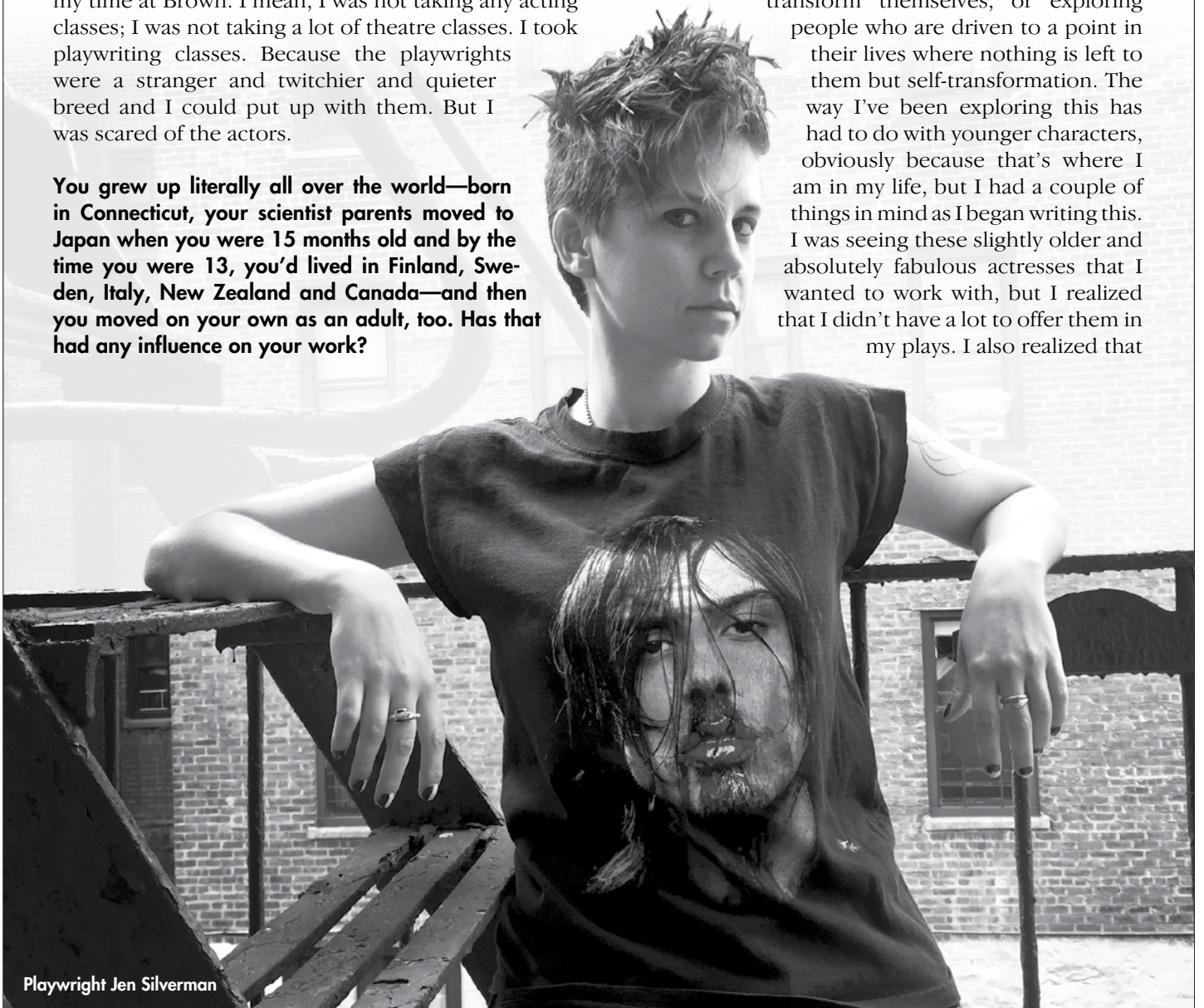
No, god, the theatre kids were scary and loud. I avoided them at all costs. I think that can also be said of my time at Brown. I mean, I was not taking any acting classes; I was not taking a lot of theatre classes. I took playwriting classes. Because the playwrights were a stranger and twitchier and quieter breed and I could put up with them. But I was scared of the actors.

You grew up literally all over the world—born in Connecticut, your scientist parents moved to Japan when you were 15 months old and by the time you were 13, you'd lived in Finland, Sweden, Italy, New Zealand and Canada—and then you moved on your own as an adult, too. Has that had any influence on your work?

Oh, yeah, in every way. It influenced the kinds of stories that interest me and the kinds of people I want to put in them. I'm interested in characters coming from different worlds that collide or overlap or clash. I'm interested in outsiders, border crossers—whatever those borders are. I think that has to do with my experience of constantly being a little outside of wherever I am, and making friends with people who are as transient and nomadic as I was.

What was your inspiration for writing *The Roommate*?

I'm fascinated by stories of how people transform themselves, or exploring people who are driven to a point in their lives where nothing is left to them but self-transformation. The way I've been exploring this has had to do with younger characters, obviously because that's where I am in my life, but I had a couple of things in mind as I began writing this. I was seeing these slightly older and absolutely fabulous actresses that I wanted to work with, but I realized that I didn't have a lot to offer them in my plays. I also realized that



Playwright Jen Silverman

when I went to the theatre I wasn't seeing roles in which older women were total badassess. I was seeing roles where older women were waiting for their children to come home or older women watching their husbands sleep with younger women...the audience was being invited to laugh at older women in a way that felt suspicious to me. That informed the choice for the play to be older women, and it informed the choice for it to be two characters, because I wanted to see these women at center stage in a way that a large ensemble piece might not allow them to be.

I've never seen a play where it's just two older women and no other characters.

Yeah! Audiences are often being asked to take younger characters seriously and then the mom and grandma are simply silly or old-fashioned! I wanted to strip away all of that. These women have very active, vibrant, and dangerous lives. They make decisions that require a lot of boldness and recklessness—and desperation, and desire for life. In terms of the play itself: I lived in Iowa for three years for grad school. It was my first time living in the Midwest, as I had grown up fairly transiently. It was a revelation to me to make friends in Iowa who were living on the family farm or the family piece of land. People who really had their roots in a place in a way that I felt like I had never reached in a place. I knew that I was going to write about Iowa, particularly when I left and started missing it.

Linda Gehringer and Tessa Auberjonois

Do you personally identify more with either Sharon or Robyn?

That's a good one! I don't know because I think there are certain parts of each of them that I identify with rather strongly. And there are certain parts of each of them that are much more observed behavior for me. It's hard to identify with Sharon's initial resignation. Because I've grown up so transiently; if some place is not working then you grab your passport and go someplace else. In some ways I identify with both of their desires to transform. The desire to invite something else, different, into your life and into your body and into your city.

What are your non-theatre related interests? What do you do when you're not making plays?

I love non-fiction, I love poetry. I love documentaries about strange things. I have a two-book deal with Random House right now and I'm working on my first feature film, so that's basically what I do when I'm not making plays. One of these days I want to go on vacation. Maybe before I turn 50.



Artist Biographies



TESSA AUBERJONNOIS
Robyn

previously appeared at SCR in *Mr. Wolf*, *Absurd Person Singular*, *Becky Shaw*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *Lobby Hero*, *Hold Please*, *Everett Beekin* and numerous Pacific Playwrights Festival and NewSCRipts readings.

Her favorite roles include *Lady Macbeth* (The Antaeus Company); Lydia Languish in *The Rivals*, title roles in *Lady Windermere's Fan* and *The Country Wife* (The Shakespeare Theatre, D.C.); Myra in *Hay Fever* (Westport); Viola in *Twelfth Night* (Utah Shakespearean Festival); Leah in *Bones* (Kirk Douglas Theatre); Allison in *Trainspotting* (off-Broadway); and numerous other off-Broadway and regional appearances. She is currently working on Neil LaBute's *How to Fight Loneliness* for Utah Shakespeare Festival. She can be seen and heard frequently on television, in film, radio, audiobooks, music videos, web series and video games including "Shameless," *Law & Order*, "Law & Order: SVU," "ER," *Birth*, *Final Fantasy*, *Guild Wars* and the upcoming "I'm Dying Up Here" on Showtime. Auberjonois is a graduate of London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts and Yale School of Drama. @TAuberjonois



LINDA GEHRINGER
Sharon

appeared at SCR previously in *Going to a Place where you Already Are* and *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*, for which she received a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle nomination.

She also appeared in the world premieres of *The Parisian Woman*; *The Language Archive*; *The Piano Teacher*; *A Naked Girl on the Appian Way*; *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*; *Hold Please*; *But Not for Me*; and *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*, a role she repeated in its New York premiere at the Atlantic Theatre Company. Her other SCR credits include *Circle Mirror*

Transformation; *Doubt, a parable*; *Hamlet*; *The Retreat from Moscow*; *A Delicate Balance*; *All My Sons*; *Relatively Speaking*; *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*; *Arcadia*; and *Good as New*. She has played leading roles in theatres across the country, most recently in the world premieres of *Vicuña* at Kirk Douglas Theatre; *The Comparables* at Seattle Repertory; and *I Saw My Neighbor on the Train and I Didn't Even Smile* and *Cat On a Hot Tin Roof* at Berkshire Theatre Festival; *Surf Report* at La Jolla Playhouse; *The Women* and *Since Africa* at The Old Globe; and *The Crowd You're In With* (Jeff Nomination) at Goodman Theatre, where she will appear this spring in *The Lady From Denmark*. Her recent television credits include "Grey's Anatomy" and recurring roles on "Touch" and "Justified." Her other television work includes "NCIS," "Raising Hope," "Weeds," "Gilmore Girls," "Without a Trace," "Cold Case," "Ally McBeal," "Frasier" and "The West Wing" and in the films *Into the Storm*, *Kreep* and *As Good As It Gets*.

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR AND DESIGNERS

JEN SILVERMAN (*Playwright*) has had her work produced in New York by Clubbed Thumb (*Phoebe in Winter*) and the Playwrights Realm (*Crane Story*), and regionally at Actor's Theatre of Louisville (*The Roommate*, Humana 2015; *Wondrous Strange*, Humana 2016), Yale Repertory Theatre (*The Moors*), Woolly Mammoth Theatre (*Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Boops*); and InterAct Theatre in Philadelphia (*The Dangerous House of Pretty Mbane*, Barrymore Award, Steinberg Award citation). She has productions coming up at The Playwrights Realm @ The Duke (New York premiere of *The Moors*), The Theatre @ Boston Court and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (world premiere, *All the Roads Home*), among others. She is a member of New Dramatists, a Core Writer at the Playwrights Center in Minneapolis, and has developed work with the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, Williamstown Theatre Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, PlayPenn, SPACE on Ryder Farm, Portland Center Stage, The Ground Floor Residency at Berkeley Repertory and the Royal Court in London among other places. She's a two-time MacDowell Fellow, recipient of a New York

Foundation for the Arts grant, the Helen Merrill Award and the Yale Drama Series Award. She is the 2016-17 Playwrights of New York (PoNY) Fellow at the Lark. She currently has a two-book deal with Random House. She holds degrees from Brown University and The Juilliard School and is an alumna of the Iowa Playwrights Workshop. jensilverman.com

MARTIN BENSON (*Director/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 the world premiere of 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*. He directed revivals of Beth Henley's *Abundance* and Horton Foote's *The Trip to Bountiful* and Samuel D. Hunter's *The Whale* and *Rest* (world premiere); and *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez. Benson received his BA in theatre from San Francisco State University.

JOHN IACOVELLI (*Scenic Design*) created memorable designs at SCR including *Amadeus* and *Abundance*

last season, *Rest*, *Silent Sky*, *Noises Off*, *Talley's Folly*, *The Philanderer*, *Heartbreak House* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle award), *Oleanna*, *Skylight*, *Shadowlands*, *Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune*, *Faith Healer*, *Pick Up Ax* and 12 more. He has designed more than 300 plays and musicals at most major theatres in the U.S. including McCarter Theatre, Long Wharf Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Geffen Playhouse, Pasadena Playhouse, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Magic Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Deaf West Players, East West Players and Center Theatre Group. Iacovelli received a prime-time Emmy Award for the broadcast of the Broadway production of *Peter Pan*, starring Cathy Rigby. He was the film production designer on *Ruby in Paradise*, starring Ashley Judd in her film debut, and art director on *Honey, I Shrank the Kids!* His television credits include *Beckett Directs Beckett: Endgame* with The San Quentin Drama Workshop, *The Old Settler* starring Phylicia Rashad and Debbie Allen, *The Gin Game* starring Mary Tyler Moore and Dick Van Dyke, "Babylon 5," "Ed," "Resurrection Blvd." and "Lincoln Heights." He has an MFA in scenic design from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. iacovelli.com

ANGELA BALOGH CALIN (*Costume Design*) returns to SCR where she has designed costumes and/or sets for more than 40 productions including *Abundance*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Whipping Man*, *Rest*, *The Whale*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, *The Weir*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, *Crimes of the Heart*, *Ordinary Days* and *The Happy Ones*. She has designed more than 60 productions for Chautauqua Theater Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Denver Center Theatre Company, The Old Globe, Pasadena Playhouse, Georgia Shakespeare, A Noise Within and many local theatres. She has worked extensively in film and television in the

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by Aditi Brennan Kapil
directed by Jessica Kubzansky

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U.S. and Romania and has design credits with I.R.S. Media, Cannon Films, PBS, Full Moon Entertainment and Romanian Films. Calin is a resident artist at A Noise Within Theatre. She graduated with an MFA in set and costume design from the Academy of Arts in Bucharest, Romania.

BRIAN GALE (*Lighting Design*) returns to SCR where he previously designed *Ivy+Bean: the Musical*. His other recent designs include *Model Apartment* at Geffen Playhouse; *Carrie the Musical* and *God Of Carnage* at La Mirada Theatre; *Disgraced* and *Red* at San Diego Repertory; *Hugh Jackman: One Night Only* at the Dolby Theater; lighting and projection design for *Sleepless In Seattle: The Musical* and lighting for *Twelve Angry Men*, *Intimate Apparel* and *The Heiress* at Pasadena Playhouse; lighting and projection for *Waiting For Godot*, lighting for *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* and *Harp and Angels* at Mark Taper Forum; projection design for *Eurydice*, lighting design for *Doctor's Dilemma* at A Noise Within; and lighting and projection for LA Opera's complete *Ring Cycle*. He also has designed numerous productions for The Public Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Seattle Repertory Theatre. He spent 24 years with the Walt Disney Company, and continues to consult on Disney Theme Parks, Shows and Special Events worldwide. Gale is a member of International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees USA Local 829.

MICHAEL ROTH (*Original Music/Soundscape*) returns to SCR where his work has been heard in more than 55 productions including the world premieres of *Mr. Marmalade*, *Wit*, *Rest*, *Brooklyn Boy* (also Broadway) and *Dinner with Friends*, *Sight Unseen* and *Abundance* (all also off-Broadway) and many others. His recent projects include two collaborations with Christopher Plummer, his one-man show *A Word or Two* (Stratford Festival and

Los Angeles) and *The Tempest* (Stratford Festival, Bravo); many collaborations with Randy Newman including musical direction/arrangements for Disney's *Princess & The Frog*, *Faust* (including the City Center/Encores concert version), SCR's *Education of Randy Newman* and editing five songbooks; *Jews & Baseball* (PBS documentary); many productions as La Jolla Playhouse's resident composer; collaborations with, among many others, Stacy Keach (*Henry IV* in Washington, D.C.), Culture Clash, Dan Sullivan, Des McAnuff, Sarah Ruhl, Mac Wellman, Anne Bogart, the United Nations and Tom Stoppard (including the American premieres of *Indian Ink* and *Invention of Love*); a Sundance film composer fellowship; and accompanying singers from Alicia Keys to Alice Ripley. His opera *Their Thought & Back Again* is available via iTunes. His upcoming projects include his chamber music/theatre treatment of Beckett's *Imagination Dead Imagine*, *Fats November* (piano sonata) and an opera to be premiered online in the spring. More information is available at rothmusik.wix.com/rothmusik

KATHRYN DAVIES (*Stage Manager*) previously stage-managed *All the Way*, *Future Thinking*, *Red*, *Vietgone*, *OZ 2.5*, *The Whipping Man*, *Tartuffe*, *Reunion*, *Trudy and Max in Love*, *Ivy+Bean: the Musical*, *The Motherf**ker with the Hat*, *How to Write a New Book for the Bible*, *Sight Unseen*, *Topdog/Underdog*, *Sideways Stories from Wayside School*, *In the Next Room or the vibrator play*, *Doctor Cerberus*, *Ordinary Days*, *Our Mother's Brief Affair*, *The Injured Party*, *The Brand New Kid* and *Imagine* at SCR. Her favorite credits include *Dividing the Estate* at Dallas Theater Center, *La Bohème* at Tulsa Opera, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* at The Old Globe, *Daddy Long Legs* at Laguna Playhouse, *Tosca* and *La Fille du Régiment* at Opera Ontario, *Of Mice and Men* at Theatre Calgary/CanStage/Neptune Theatre, *The Dresser* at Manitoba Theatre Centre, *Skylight* at

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directed by Casey Stangl

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Tarragon Theatre, *To Kill a Mockingbird* at Citadel Theatre/Manitoba Theatre Centre/Theatre Calgary and *The Designated Mourner* at Tarragon Theatre and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Davies also has worked as head theatre representative at the Toronto International Film Festival, Dubai International Film Festival, AFI Fest, TCM Film Festival, Los Angeles Film Festival and as team leader at Sundance.

MARC MASTERSON (*Artistic Director*) is in his sixth season with SCR. Under his leadership, SCR has expanded community initiatives and world premieres including CrossRoads commissions with plays *Vietgone* and *Orange* and the Diálogos project in Santa Ana. In recent years, SCR productions have transferred to some of the leading theatres in the country including Manhattan Theatre Club, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and The Shakespeare Theatre. His recent directing credits include *All the Way, Going to a Place where you Already Are, 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 served for 11 years as artistic director of Actors Theatre of Louisville and produced the Humana Festival of New American Plays, where 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. He has served 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 leading the overall administration of SCR. She has been managing director since 1994 and a member of SCR's staff since 1979. She is a past president of the board of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for theatre. In addition, she served as treasurer of TCG, vice president of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and as a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. 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 schools of business at Stanford and UC Irvine (UCI). She teaches a graduate class in nonprofit management at UCI and was appointed by the chancellor to UCI's Community Arts Council. She is also on the board of Arts Orange County, the county-wide arts council, and the board of the Nicholas Endowment. She graduated from UCI with a degree in economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance.

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 *Red, 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 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.