



43rd Season • 412th Production
SEGERSTROM STAGE / OCTOBER 13 - NOVEMBER 19, 2006

South Coast Repertory

David Emmes
PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Martin Benson
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

presents

RIDICULOUS FRAUD

by Beth Henley

Hugh Landwehr
SCENIC DESIGN

Joyce Kim Lee
COSTUME DESIGN

Peter Maradudin
LIGHTING DESIGN

Stephen LeGrand
SOUND DESIGN

Martin Noyes
FIGHT DIRECTOR

John Glore
DRAMATURG

David Leavenworth
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Randall K. Lum*
STAGE MANAGER

DIRECTED BY
Sharon Ott

Linda and Tod White
HONORARY PRODUCERS



CORPORATE PRODUCER

*Ridiculous Fraud was originally commissioned and produced by McCarter Theatre, Princeton, N.J.
Emily Mann, Artistic Director/Jeffrey Woodward, Managing Director*

THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

Lafcad Clay	<i>Ian Fraser*</i>
Andrew Clay	<i>Matt McGrath*</i>
Willow Clay	<i>Betsy Brandt*</i>
Kap Clay	<i>Matt Letscher*</i>
Uncle Baites	<i>Randy Oglesby*</i>
Georgia	<i>Eliza Pryor*</i>
Maude Chrystal	<i>Nike Doukas*</i>
Ed Chrystal	<i>Paul Vincent O'Connor*</i>

THE PLAY TAKES PLACE OVER THE COURSE OF A YEAR

ACT I, SCENE ONE: SUMMER

Clay family home in New Orleans, the Garden District

ACT I, SCENE TWO: FALL

Outside Uncle Baites' farmhouse in the Louisiana backwoods

15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT II, SCENE ONE: WINTER

Kap's cabin and backyard, deep in the woods

ACT II, SCENE TWO: SPRING

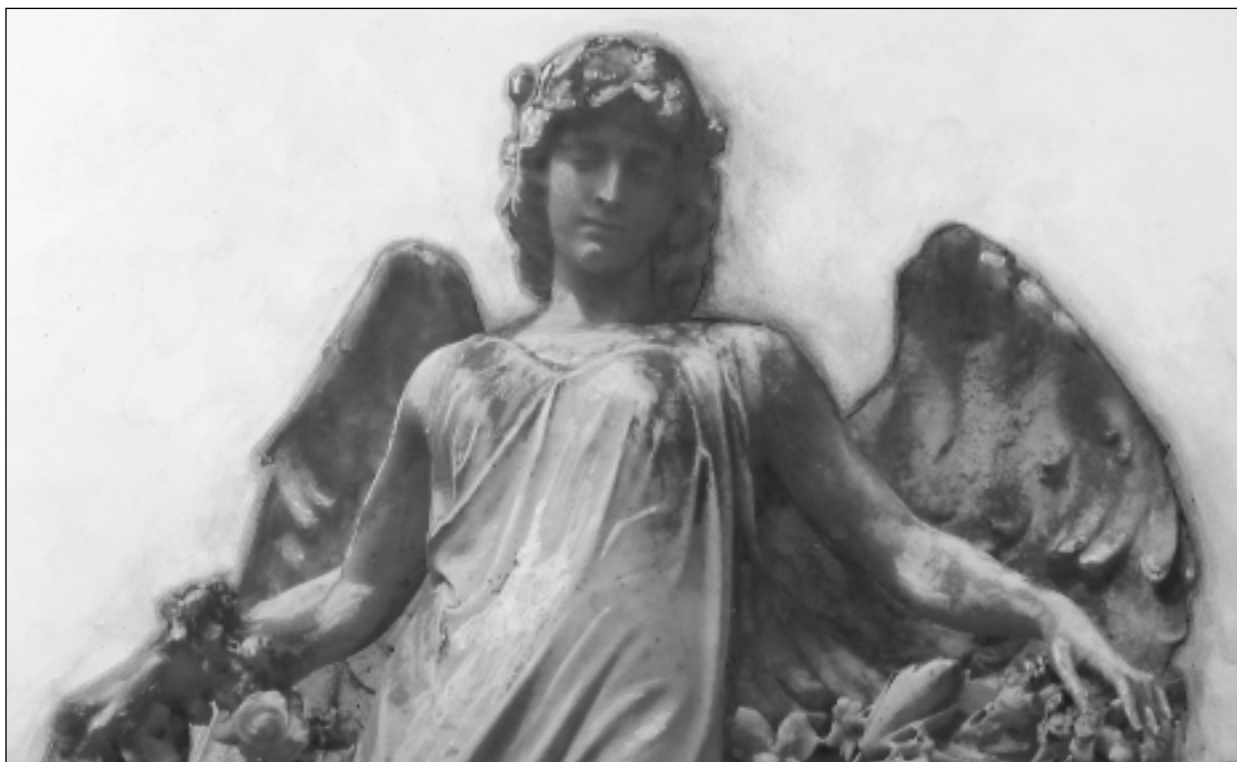
New Orleans cemetery, the Clay family tomb

LENGTH

Approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes, including intermission.

ORANGE COAST
THE MAGAZINE OF ORANGE COUNTY
Media Partner





PRODUCTION STAFF

Assistant Stage Manager	<i>Nina K. Evans*</i>
Casting	<i>Joanne DeNaut</i>
Dialect Coach	<i>Cynthia Bassham</i>
Stage Management Intern	<i>Jennifer Sherman</i>
Assistants to the Scenic Designer	<i>Michelle Carello, Jian Jung, Bradley Schmidt</i>
Deck Crew	<i>EJ Brown, Brian Coil, Emily Kettler, Courtney Sprague</i>
Costume Design Assistants	<i>Valerie Bart, Vanessa N. King</i>

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.

*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.*

Southern Belles-Lettres

BY JOHN GLORE

Like Eudora Welty before her, Beth Henley has been known to chafe at hearing her work described as “Southern Gothic” — a literary label of convenience which, like any such label, over-simplifies and irons out individuality. One can find at least as many differences as similarities between Henley’s work and that of Welty, William Faulkner, Flannery O’Connor, Tennessee Williams, Carson McCullers and Cormac McCarthy — other distinctive writers who have had the “Southern Gothic” descriptor applied to them.

What these writers share, though, is their Southern heritage, their tendency to set their work in the South, and their use of at least some of the general stylistic qualities that have accreted under the “gothic” umbrella: eccentric characters; irony; strange plot turns; grotesque imagery; a sense of faded glory, of a world in decay, often marked by the decadence that may accompany decay. But more than anything what snags Henley on the gothic hook, in common with many of the aforementioned writers, is her ability to discover rich veins of humor in an unhappy, even horrific situation.

Flannery O’Connor, whom Henley counts among her favorite writers, once suggested that “anything that comes out of the South is going to be called grotesque by the northern reader, unless it *is* grotesque, in which case it is going to be called realistic.”

On the same subject, Carson McCullers, in an essay called “The Russian Realists and Southern Literature,”

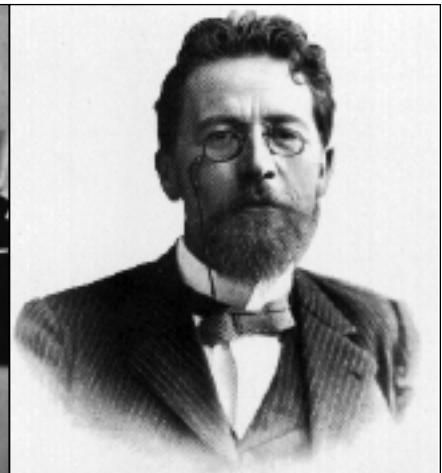
“The cult of the past in the South, as symbolized in its ruins, its preserved glories displayed in spring pilgrimages, its monuments and graveyards, owes less to cultural climate and imagination than to remembered history.”

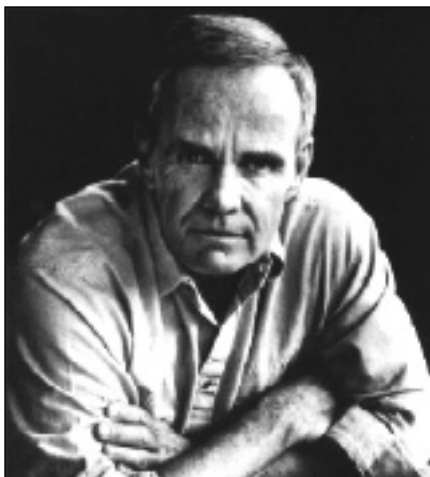
— critic Elizabeth M. Kerr

drew a comparison between Southern writers and those of 19th-century Russia, noting their shared inclination to achieve “a bold and outwardly callous juxtaposition of the tragic with the humorous, the immense with the trivial, the sacred

with the bawdy, the whole soul of man with a materialistic detail.”

This would undoubtedly make sense to Henley who, while acknowledging the roots of her dark humor in her Southern upbringing, also points to the work of the Russian playwright, Anton Chekhov, as a source





and inspiration. In more than one interview she has described the seminal experience of attending a production of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*: "I was crying and screaming; I was really euphoric because I understood how things could be simultaneously tragic and comic and so alive and so real."

Henley's Southern plays — and it should be noted that they fall mostly at the beginning of her career — share something else with Chekhov's work. Chekhov begins *The Three Sisters* on the name day of one of its characters, and almost all of his plays turn on homecomings, leave-takings and other special events. Similarly, Henley looks to special occasions as springboards for the dramatic action in her Southern plays. Her first success, the Pulitzer-winning *Crimes of the Heart*, takes place on the birthday of one of its three sisters. *The Miss Firecracker Contest* takes its title from the event that gives rise to its story, as do *The Wake of Jamey Foster* and *The Debutante Ball* (which had its world premiere at South Coast Repertory in 1985). But in and around these supposedly celebratory occasions, people's lives are falling apart, hopes are fading, the desperate reach out for solace — and the laughs keep coming.

Henley's interest in commemorations and festivities may again stem from her Southern roots. Does anyone, after all, have a greater sense of occasion than a Southerner? — and perhaps above all the people of



New Orleans (the setting for *Ridiculous Fraud*), where a funeral may entail a jazz procession, and where balls and masquerades begin with Twelfth Night on January 6th and continue through a carnival season that culminates with Mardi Gras in February or March.

Ridiculous Fraud marks a return to Southern centrality for Henley, and like its predecessors, it looks to momentous occasions to frame its drama. But as with several of her early Southern plays, the special events in *Ridiculous Fraud* don't quite make it to the stage: the wedding that is to launch the story gets derailed; and the funeral at its conclusion happens off stage, prior to the final scene.

Henley doesn't want us to focus on the occasions

themselves, but on the more quotidian transactions that happen around such events, having perhaps remembered Chekhov's own observation that life-changing moments may take place while a salt shaker is being passed across the dinner table — or, in Henley's case, while an unsuspecting man eats a canapé laced with a surprise ingredient.

"Southern writers are stuck with the South, and it's a very good thing to be stuck with."

- Flannery O'Connor

Pictured on opposite page from left, Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers and Anton Chekhov. Above, clockwise from left, Cormac McCarthy, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams and Flannery O'Connor.

Henley on Life and Theatre

Growing into the Theatre

I was real shy when I was little. I was sick with asthma. Spent a lot of time getting shots and laying in bed. At night, Mama'd come into my room and ask me why I was crying. I'd tell her I was pretending to be Heidi.



When I was a senior in high school, I was kind of bereft and [my mother] put me in an acting class. What I loved about the acting class was that you got to think all day long about a person that wasn't you, and figure out why they were sad and what they wanted, what they dreamed. I just loved being divorced from my own wretchedness.



I did have friends at that age [in high school], but what you fear is not having friends. You fear that part of you is not acceptable to be exposed and I think that's a lot of what I look for in my characters. I wonder what their greatest fear is and what their greatest dream is and what the tension is between the two. Usually their fear is holding them back from their dream, and their dream is giving them hope to fight against their fear.



When I was younger I kept thinking that I needed to write an important play, that I needed to help people understand something and improve the world and enlighten people - except I didn't know anything. This was the big problem. And then I read where Ionesco said: "Oh, I just like to write about my own confusion." I said, "Well, I can do that; I'm certainly confused." It was like this weight was lifted. I don't have to solve anything because there is nothing to solve. It's all a big mystery and if you can express the misery and the confusion truthfully, that might be something worth looking at.



The reason I love the theatre... is because it always felt like such a sanctuary to me from the real world. It was such a magical world where everyone was passionate about something; they felt so alive when they were there.... It made you not think about dying.



Funny Sad

I believe the humor may be about survival. Growing up I didn't feel entitled to be outraged and shame had to be denied. Self-pity was definitely frowned upon. Perhaps because Southern culture at that time was dedicated to the glorification of lost causes. Also when I get earnest about something I'm usually just seeing one piece of the pie and I miss what is true and unsettling. One of my mother's favorite refrains was, "Let's not take ourselves so seriously."



I went to see an all-black production of *The Cherry Orchard* starring James Earl Jones and Gloria Foster... It was like a *satori* when James Earl Jones as Lopakhin came back in after buying the cherry orchard and said, "I bought it." It was the greatest day of his life because he was no longer a serf, but also it was the worst day in his life because he had betrayed his dearest friend. All through that speech he was zing, zing, zing, back and forth between despair and joy, madness and sanity, and regret and not caring. I was screaming in the theatre; I thought I was going to be evicted. I started crying and laughing and I couldn't stop. Then, after he leaves, Gloria Foster falls out of her chair and has to be carried off. It was just abso-

lutely a revelation about how alive life can be and how complicated and beautiful and horrible....



[On her Mississippi upbringing:]

As much as I try to shake it, I can't. It's just there. A kind of sensibility that's dark and light at the same time. A kind of Grand Guignol view of life.

Crimes of the Heart

I never know how a play is going to end when I start writing. When I was writing *Crimes of the Heart*, I remember being upset because I thought that one of the characters was going to commit suicide. I was so relieved when it didn't happen.



[On her first major production, at Actors Theatre of Louisville:]

It was January and it was freezing... I remember standing in the parking lot, and these people in fur coats were getting out of their cars. And I thought, "Oh, my God, they paid money, they hired babysitters, and they came out to see this," and I started crying. I was terrified that I was going to be arrested for fraud.

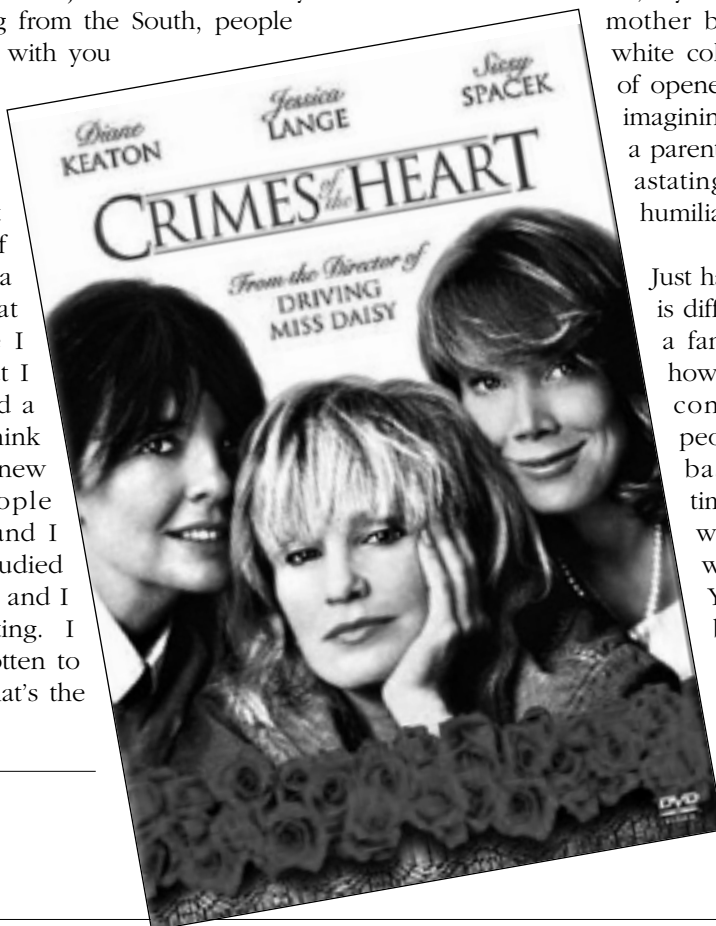


When I saw *Crimes of the Heart*, I was really amazed at how funny it was to people. I just think it's the way your mind works. Coming from the South, people didn't have much patience with you embracing your own pain, groveling in it.



When you have a Pulitzer Prize for a play you get other jobs, and you sort of have to believe you're a writer, which up until that point I wasn't even sure I was. The hard part is that I was kind of obnoxious and a little bit arrogant. And I think I was arrogant because I knew I didn't know what people thought I should know, and I felt like a phony. But I studied a lot, went back to school, and I keep learning through writing. I feel very lucky to have gotten to be a writer in my life. That's the main thing.

Crimes of the Heart poster from the movie



[On the 20th anniversary of the first production of *Crimes of the Heart*.]

Sometimes it feels like it's been 50 years, and sometimes it feels like it's been two days. Time is the most fascinating thing to me: It's liquid and relative and makes no sense whatsoever. I'm just happy to be alive, and happy that someone is still interested in doing the play.

Ridiculous Fraud

I knew I wanted to write a play about men. To see if I could do it. And when I got the commission I had just done a play with four women and I thought it would be fun to watch men in rehearsal for a change!



I had eight notebooks of stuff but I didn't have a very clear outline. I knew that the first scene was going to be about a wedding that didn't happen, and the next was going to take place out in the country, and the next was going to be deep in the woods and the last was going to be in the cemetery. I didn't know who was going to die or if somebody was going to die. But here's an interesting thing: when I was being driven back to the airport after one of my trips to Princeton, my driver told me about his mother being in prison for a white collar crime. That kind of opened things up for me—imagining the reality of having a parent in prison. How devastating and disruptive and humiliating that would be.



Just having a family, I think, is different from not having a family. It is so strange how you can feel that the connection with these people is so primal and basic, although sometimes you would not be with them if they weren't your family. You are inextricably bound to them, concerned for them and enraged by them or enraptured by them. Families are a peculiar sort of situation.

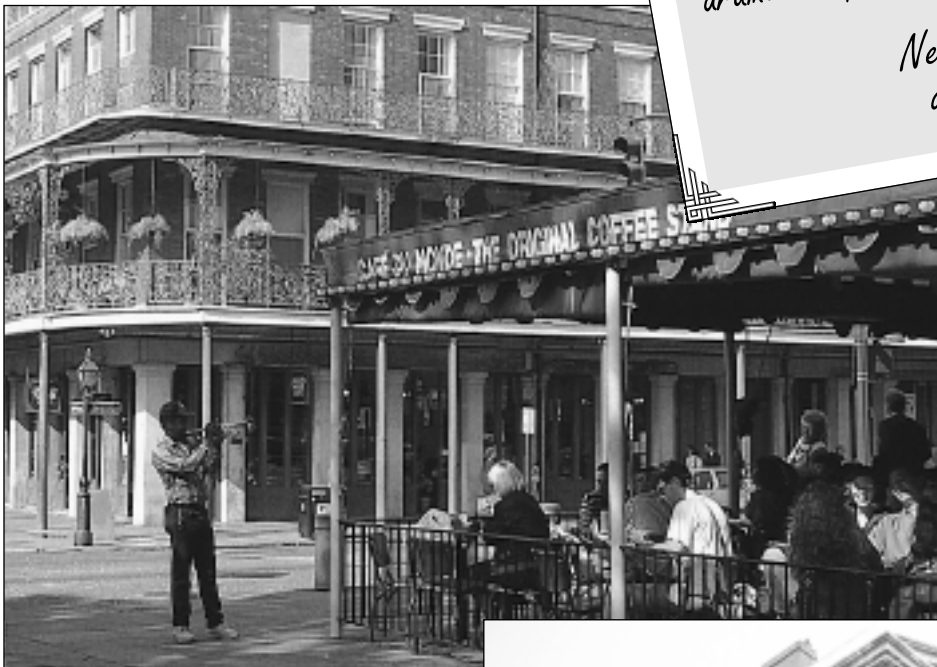
"The City that Care Forgot"

BY JOHN GLORE

New Orleans. Nowadays when anyone mentions that city all we can think of is Hurricane Katrina and the devastation it visited upon Louisiana's gaudy jewel. But Beth Henley wrote the first draft of *Ridiculous Fraud* many months before the great storm hit, and

Carnival, for all its masks and disguises, mirrors New Orleans society, with its peculiar social hierarchies, its pockets of strange traditions, its wild diversity, its partiality to drama and spectacle.

*- Carol Flake,
New Orleans: Behind the Mask
of America's Most Exotic City*



conveys a sense of royalty to a family line and where, concomitantly, to fall from high society carries the worst kind of humiliation.

It's a fate that seems to have befallen many a family over the last two centuries. After having changed hands during its early history, from French

after the hurricane had left disaster in its wake she inserted a new stage direction specifying that the play takes place five years prior to Katrina. She wants audiences for the play to have in mind the vital, thriving New Orleans, the Big Easy, the home of Mardi Gras and muffaletta, jambalaya and jazz; that New Orleans whose hub is the Café du Monde ("the café of the world"), where tourists rub elbows with people from every stratum of city life, dunking their beignets in chicory-laced *café au lait* in the wee hours of the morning; the old-world New Orleans where to be part of high society





to Spanish to French again and finally to U.S. control, by 1840 New Orleans was easily the wealthiest city in the nation. But more recently, even before Katrina hit, it ranked as the thirteenth poorest among the country's large cities.

New Orleans' sense of high society was instilled during the 18th century

I went there from the time I was a child. My cousins lived there, and we would go down there to visit them or for Mardi Gras, and in high school I would take a bus or a train for the day. It was very glamorous. I've vacationed there a lot, and the last year my mom was alive we went there at Easter. It's such a bizarre thing how 'Ridiculous Fraud' bookends 'Crimes of the Heart,' which was set five years after Hurricane Camille. To me it's very poignant.
-Beth Henley

by the French and Spanish, who frowned upon the wave of American commoners that descended upon the city after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. But even as the city's wealth subsided through the 20th century, its particular sense of aristocracy persisted, carried on by those families whom history and tradition had anointed as the *crème de la crème* of the Crescent City.

Today the elite continue to join the other citizens and temporary citizens of New Orleans for Mardi Gras, which was first brought to the city by the European upper class. On Fat Tuesday you can find the *haut monde* strutting its stuff at masquerade balls and tapping its own to serve as King and Queen of the Carnival. Through the rest of the year they display their ascendancy more quietly. The vast American middle-class may have long since taken over the city through sheer strength of numbers, but the moneyed families still guard their sense of the social order against the barbarians at the filigreed gates.

Pictured on the opposite page, the Café du Monde and a New Orleans Bourbon street building. On this page, a typical New Orleans cemetery and a Mardi Gras poster.





BETSY BRANDT
Willow Clay



NIKE DOUKAS
Maude Chrystal



IAN FRASER
Lafcad Clay

Artist Biographies

***BETSY BRANDT** (*Willow Clay*) appeared at SCR previously in the Pacific Playwrights Festival readings of *Truth and Beauty* and *Scab*. Other theatre credits include *Much Ado about Nothing* at the Arizona Theatre Company; *Ctrl Alt Delete* at San Jose Repertory; *Royal Family* and *The Little Foxes* at Intiman Theatre; *The Tempest* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Tacoma Actors Guild; *The Little Foxes* at Portland Center Stage; *Thirst* and the readings of *American Siddhartha* and *The Fabulous Invalid* at American Conservatory Theater; *Taking Sides* at Jewish Ensemble Theatre where she was awarded Best New Actress by the Michigan Alliance of Professional Theatres; *The Fantasticks* at Bathhouse Theatre; and *Albertine in Five Times* at Illinois Repertory Theatre. Her film credits include

Shelf Life, *Memphis Bound...* and *Gagged and Confidence*. Television appearances include "CSI," "Close to Home," "Medical Investigation," "Navy NCIS," "The Practice," "ER," "Without a Trace," "The Guardian," "JAG," "Judging Amy" and the made for television movie *Back When We Were Grownups*.

***NIKE DOUKAS** (*Maude Chrystal*) most recently appeared at SCR in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Other SCR credits are *Major Barbara*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Everett Beekin*, *The Beard of Avon*, *The Norman Conquests: Round and Round the Garden*, *Pygmalion*, *How the Other Half Loves*, *Arms and the Man*, *Blithe Spirit*, *Green Icebergs*, *Loot* and *The Company of Heaven*. She appeared at A Contemporary Theatre in Seattle in *God of Vengeance* and *Com-*

municating Doors. She has also appeared at Pasadena Playhouse, The Old Globe, Mark Taper Forum, Doolittle Theatre and Shakespeare Festival/LA. In the Bay Area she performed at the American Conservatory Theater, the California and VITA Shakespeare Festivals and Shakespeare Santa Cruz. Television and film credits include "Without a Trace," "Criminal Minds," "Blind Justice," "Boston Legal," "Malcolm in the Middle," "NYPD Blue," "The Guardian," "Judging Amy," "Diagnosis Murder," "Caroline in the City," *Little Girls in Pretty Boxes*, recurring roles on "Desperate Housewives" and "Almost Perfect," and in the feature film *Seven Girlfriends*. Ms. Doukas has an MFA from the American Conservatory Theater and is a member of The Antaeus Company.



MATT LETSCHER
Kap Clay



MATT McGRATH
Andrew Clay



PAUL VINCENT O'CONNOR
Ed Chrystal

***IAN FRASER** (*Lafcad Clay*) is making his SCR debut. Theatre credits include *Man and Superman* at Kansas City Repertory; *Bunnicula* and *The Gingerbread Man* at Seattle Children's Theatre; *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia?* at ACT Theatre; *Owen Meany's Christmas Pageant* at Book-it Repertory; *Scapin*, *The Servant of Two Masters* and *The Dying Gaul* at Intiman Theatre; *Two Gentlemen of Verona* at Wooden O Theatre; *The Time of Your Life* at Theatre Schmeater; *Bell, Book and Candle* at Village Theatre; *David Copperfield* at Book-It All Over; *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Hamlet* and *Shakespeare's Top Ten* at Seattle Shakespeare Company; *Catch-22* at Stepping Stone Productions; and *Bald Soprano* at Stone Soup Theatre.

***MATT LETSCHER** (*Kap Clay*) is making his SCR stage debut, although he appeared at SCR previously in the Pacific Playwrights Festival (PPF) reading of *Ridiculous Fraud*, as well as the NewSCRipts reading of Kate Robin's *Anon* and the PPF reading of Craig Lucas' *Singing Forest*. Theatre credits include *The Rivals* and Neil Simon's *Proposals* on

Broadway; *Double Double* at Williamstown Theatre Festival; *Rain Dance* and *The Tropical Pickle* at The Purple Rose Theatre Company; *Love's Labour's Lost* at The Old Globe; *Absolution* at Court Theatre; *Julius Caesar* and *As You Like It* at the Idaho Shakespeare Festival; *The Sisters* at Pasadena Playhouse; and *The Seagull* at Fountain Theatre. Film and television credits include the upcoming untitled Alan Ball film, *Madison*, *Straight-Jacket*, *Identity*, *Gods and Generals*, *Super Sucker*, *John John in the Sky*, *The Mask of Zorro*, *Lovelife*, *Gettysburg*, "The New Adventures of Old Christine," "Criminal Minds," "Joey," "Good Morning, Miami," "Living in Captivity," "Almost Perfect," "NYPD Blue," "Ellen," "The Larry Sanders Show," "The West Wing" and the made for television movies *King of Texas*, *When Billie Beat Bobby*, and *The Beach Boys: An American Family*. His play, *Sea of Fools*, will have its world premiere at The Purple Rose Theatre in 2007.

***MATT McGRATH** (*Andrew Clay*) appeared previously at SCR in the NewSCRipts reading of *House to Half* and the production of *Raised in Captivity*. He most recently ap-

peared in *The Black Rider* (Center Theatre Group, Ahmanson, Los Angeles; Barbican, London; ACT, San Francisco; Sydney -- Helpmann Award nominee). On Broadway he appeared in *Cabaret* (Emcee) and *A Streetcar Named Desire* and Off-Broadway in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *A Fair Country* (Lincoln Center), *Minutes from the Blue Route*, *What Didn't Happen*, *Nothing Sacred*, *The Dadshuttle*, *Escape from Happiness*, *Fat Men in Skirts*, *The Old Boy*, *Life During Wartime* and *Amulets Against the Dragon Forces*. Regional theatre credits include *Japes* (Bay Street Theatre), *Mother of Invention* (Williamstown Theatre Festival), *Loot* (Williamstown Theatre Festival and La Jolla Playhouse), *Distant Fires* (LA Weekly Award) and *Snakebit*. Film credits include *Full Grown Men* (Tribeca Film Festival '06), *The Notorious Bettie Page*, *The Anniversary Party*, *The Broken Hearts Club*, *Boys Don't Cry*, *The Impostors*, *Story of a Bad Boy*, 1999, *Colin Fitz*, *The Substance of Fire*, *Bob Roberts*, *The Dadshuttle* and *Desperate Hours*. On television he appeared in "Law & Order: Criminal Intent," "Frasier," "Now and Again," "Chicago



RANDY OGLESBY
Uncle Baites



ELIZA PRYOR
Georgia

Hope," "New York Undercover," "Winnetka Road," *Andersonville*, *The Member of the Wedding* and *Cruel Doubt*.

***PAUL VINCENT O'CONNOR** (*Ed Chrystal*) is making his SCR debut. Theatre credits include *The Sound of Music* at the Hollywood Bowl; *Juno and the Paycock* at the B Street Theatre; *The Drawer Boy* at Papermill Playhouse; *Continental Divide* at La Jolla Playhouse; *The Skin of Our Teeth* at California Shakespeare Festival; *The Weir* at Geffen Playhouse; *Henry V* at The Old Globe; *Death Defying Acts* at Aurora Theatre Company; *How I Learned to Drive* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *Gross Indecency* at Theatre on the Square; and *Death of a Salesman*, *The Darker Face of Earth*, *Arcadia*, *Twelfth Night*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, *You Can't Take it With You*, *Mad Forest*, *The Firebugs*, *Other People's Money*, *Aristocrats*, *The Ice-man Cometh* and *Enrico IV* at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Film credits include *Rikers*, *Seabiscuit*, *Purpose*, and *Terminal Fear*. Television credits include a recurring role on "Felicity," guest starring roles on "Vanished," "24," "JAG," "Cold Case," "Kingpin,"

"The West Wing," "The Court," "The X-Files," "NYPD Blue," "ER," "Bette," "Any Day Now," "Family Law," "The Practice"; and supporting roles in the made for television movies *A Perfect Husband*, *The Laci Peterson Story*, *A Few Good Hearts* and *Inherit the Wind*.

***RANDY OGLESBY** (*Uncle Baites*) has appeared at SCR as Carlton Gleason in *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*, CC Showers in *The Diviners*, Jerry in *Betrayal*, Jay in *All the Way Home* and Nick in *Sight Unseen*. He studied theatre at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and at the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco where he also spent six years in the acting company performing such roles as Belyaev in *A Month in the Country* and Orin in *Mourning Becomes Electra*. He has performed at The Old Globe, The Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Westport Country Playhouse, Papermill Playhouse, Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts and eight shows at Mark Taper Forum, most recently *Lewis and Clark Reach the Euphrates*. He was a cast member of *The Kentucky Cycle* from its workshop begin-

ning at Mark Taper Forum through its run at Intiman Theatre, The Kennedy Center and the Royal Theatre on Broadway. His numerous film and television appearances include *The Island*, *Bringing Down the House*, *Pearl Harbor*, *Liar Liar*, and recent appearances on "Cold Case," "Without a Trace" and an upcoming episode of "Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip." He played the Democratic Majority Leader of The Senate on the series "Mr. Sterling" and has a recurring role on this season's "Vanished."

***ELIZA PRYOR** (*Georgia*) is returning after making her SCR debut as Lucy in the world premiere of Noah Haidle's *Mr. Marmalade*. She recently worked with David Mamet on his comedy *Boston Marriage* at Geffen Playhouse. She also had a recurring role on the second season of HBO's "Carnivale." Her film *Red Is the Color Of* was the 2006 winner of The Merchant-Ivory Award for Best Feature Film at The Oxford International Film Festival. Before moving to LA, Ms. Pryor lived in New York City performing on stage as Violet in Tennessee Williams' *Small Craft Warnings* with The Worth Street Theatre, as

Christina in *Christina* at Soho Repertory Theatre and as Agathe in *Nothing* at Richard Foreman's Ontological Theatre. Film credits include *13 Conversations About One Thing*, as well as festival award winners *City of Thieves*, *Weeki Wachee Girls* and *Mad About Harry*. Her guest starring roles on television include "CSI," "Gilmore Girls," "Numb3rs," "Angel," "Third Watch," "The Job," "Madigan Men" and "Sex and the City." She studied in New York, Montreal and Paris.

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR & DESIGNERS

BETH HENLEY (*Playwright*) was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Drama and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award for Best American Play for *Crimes of the Heart*. Smith and Kraus published a two volume collection of 12 of her plays including *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *The Wake of Jamey Foster*, *The Debutante Ball*, *The Lucky Spot*, *Abundance*, *Signature*, *Control Freaks* and *Impossible Marriage*. Ms. Henley wrote the screenplay for the film version of *Crimes of the Heart*, for which she was nominated for an Academy Award. She also wrote the screenplays for *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *Nobody's Fool*, *Trying Times* and *True Stories*. Ms. Henley is the Presidential Professor of Theatre Arts at LMU/LA.

SHARON OTT (*Director*) has been a leading director in the American theatre for the past 21 years. She became Artistic Director of Berkeley Repertory Theatre in 1984, and in her 13-year tenure she developed the company's reputation for innovative programming that resulted in a Tony® Award in 1997, the final year of her leadership. At that point, she became the Artistic Director of Seattle Reperto-

ry Theatre where she oversaw the initiation and completion of a \$15 million endowment campaign, and developed important relationships with playwrights Nilo Cruz, Lisa Loomer and Amy Freed. She has directed at theaters throughout the country including Mark Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, La Jolla Playhouse, Huntington Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Kansas City Repertory, Alliance Theatre Company and Playwright's Horizons, The Public Theater, and Manhattan Theatre Club in New York. She has also directed several operas at Seattle Opera, San Diego Opera and Opera Colorado. She has received many awards for her directing and producing including Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards for *The Tooth of Crime* and *Heartbreak House* at Berkeley Repertory; *Drama Logue* awards for *Twelfth Night*, *Lady from the Sea*, *Ballad of Yachiyo*, and *Lulu*; the Elliot Norton Award for Best Production (Boston) for *The Woman Warrior*; and an Obie Award with Theatre X for *A Fierce Longing*. She is thrilled to return to South Coast Repertory which was a co-producer of *The Ballad of Yachiyo* and where she started her West Coast career with a production of *The Seagull*.

HUGH LANDWEHR (*Scenic Design*) has designed scenery throughout the United States. His work on Broadway has included productions of *Frozen*, *Bus Stop*, *All My Sons* and *A View from the Bridge*. Off-Broadway, he has designed *Last Easter*, *Scattergood*, *Filumena*, *The Baby Dance*, *The Entertainer* and *Candide*, among others. He has had long and productive relationships with many regional theatres including Center Stage in Baltimore, Long Wharf Theatre in New Haven, Buffalo's Studio Arena, The Shakespeare Theatre in Washington, D.C., Alley

TOD AND LINDA WHITE

(*Honorary Producers*). Two years on the SCR Board, two years as SCR Honorary Producer. Tod White and his wife Linda are both generous and adventurous. They chose to underwrite Beth Henley's *Ridiculous Fraud*, a new play that has not yet been seen on the West Coast, following last season's underwriting of Joe Penhall's *Dumb Show*, which had not been seen anywhere in America. Besides being in their seventh season as subscribers to First Nights on both stages and members of the Platinum Circle of donors, the Whites prove their interest in new work by attending NewSCRipts readings during the season.

US BANK (*Corporate Producer*) joined SCR's Corporate Circle during the 2004-05 Season and the following year became a first-time Honorary Producer by helping underwrite the final play of the Theatre for Young Audiences series, *The Stinky Cheese Man*. U.S. Bank is the sixth largest financial services holding company in the United States and through its foundation provided more than \$19 million in grants to nonprofit organizations in 2005.

Theatre in Houston, Guthrie Theatre, Seattle Repertory Theatre and ACT Theatre in Seattle and many others. During summers he has designed at Williamstown Theatre Festival and Westport Country Playhouse. He is presently a member of the faculty of NYU's Tisch School of the Arts and has taught at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, The North Carolina

What's New in the Theatre Shop

**Beth Henley, Vol. 1:
Collected Plays 1980-1989**
(Smith & Kraus, 2000)

The first of a two-volume compilation of Beth Henley's collected plays reveals a consistently excellent body of work from a distinctive voice of the American theatre — a modern Southern Gothic with a bit of wild comedy, some theatrical poetry, a pinch of pessimism and lots of warm geniality thrown in for good measure. In addition to her most famous work, the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Crimes of the Heart*, contents include *Am I Blue?*, *The Wake of Jamey Foster*, *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *The Lucky Spot*, and *The Debutante Ball* (World Premiere 1985 on SCR's Mainstage). These plays reveal the gallery of memorable Southern women that has kept Henley's work alive on stages across the country for two decades.

**The Plays of Beth Henley:
A Critical Study**
by Gene A. Plunka
(McFarland & Co., 2005)

In the first critical study of Henley's complete plays, the author dispels common stereotypes that attempt to pigeonhole her work as regional drama and/or sociological treatise. The book maintains that Henley's plays must be understood as universal statements about the angst of modern civilization and suggests reassessment of her characters in light of Freud's proposition that cultural restrictions create neurotic individuals. The introduction provides a brief account of the playwright's childhood and career, followed by an insightful examination of thematic and

stylistic elements in all twelve of Henley's widely-produced plays.

**Eating New Orleans: From
French Quarter Creole
Dining to the Perfect Pobo**
by Pableaux Johnson
(Countryman Press, 2005)

This guide to the city's legendary eateries and distinctive food culture includes more than 100 restaurants where authentic Louisiana cuisine lives and breathes — from the French Quarter's white-linen Creole institutions such as Antoine's to the funky, family-owned joints frequented by locals. Equal parts travel book and food guide, author Pableaux Johnson provides plenty of tips for hungry travelers, guiding them to both the culinary hot spots and the lesser-known neighborhoods.

**Cemeteries of New
Orleans: A Journey Through
the Cities of the Dead**
by Jan Arrigo, Photography by
Laura A. McElroy
(Voyageur Press, 2005)

Aphotographic tour of the city's most captivating graveyards, such as St. Louis #1, Greenwood, St. Roch, Lafayette, bayou and plantation country cemeteries, this book is loaded with intriguing facts and historical tidbits, such as a list of "Who's Buried Where." Numerous sidebars and captions discuss the origins of All Saints' Day, architectural styles, burial processes, cemetery preservation, history, jazz funerals, and voodoo. If you think that there is nothing left to be said about New Orleans' famous "cities of the dead," better think again!

School of the Arts, and Williams College. He is proud to have twice been the recipient of NEA grants as an Associate Artist, to have won the Murphy Award in Design (administered by Long Wharf Theatre), and to be the 2003 winner of the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Set Design. He was educated at Yale College.

JOYCE KIM LEE (*Costume Design*) is pleased to be returning to SCR where she last designed the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *A Naked Girl on the Appian Way*. Her other designs at SCR include *The Clean House*, *Anna in the Tropics*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Hold Please, Art*, *The Summer Moon*, *Sidney Bechet Killed a Man* and *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*. Other selected credits include *Sonia Flew* at Laguna Playhouse; *Room Service*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* and *The Comedy of Errors* at Oregon Shakespeare Festival; *The Country* and *Wonderland* directed by Lisa Peterson at La Jolla Playhouse; *Ten Unknowns* with Stacy Keach and *The House of Bernarda Alba* with Chita Rivera and Sandra Oh (LA Ovation Nomination) at Mark Taper Forum; and *Under the Blue Sky* directed by Gil Cates at Geffen Playhouse. She has also designed costumes for the Los Angeles Opera, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, East West Players, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Chicago's Court Theatre, Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Arena Stage, Berkshire Theatre Festival Children's Theatre, Latino Theatre Company and Singapore Repertory Theatre. Recent film design includes *Say Uncle* starring Peter Paige and Kathy Najimy. Ms. Lee is a recipient of an NEA/TCG Grant for Designers.

PETER MARADUDIN (*Lighting Design*) is pleased to return to SCR, where he has designed over 30 productions including *The Real Thing*, *The Studio*, *A Naked Girl on the Appian 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 Oregon Shakespeare Festival. He is a Founding Principal of First Circle, a lighting design consultancy for architecture and themed environments, and is the author of the plays *Eugene Onegin*, *The Woman in White* and *The Blackamoor of Peter the Great*.

STEPHEN LeGRAND (*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 11 years before relocating to Seattle to explore the sonic nuances of espresso steamers and whale spouts. 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*.

***MARTIN NOYES** (*Fight Director*) returns to SCR where he most recently fight directed *Nothing Sacred*, *Bach at Leipzig*, the American premiere of *Hitchcock Blonde*

(he also played the Husband) and *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler*. Other recent work includes *King Lear*, *As You Like It* and *Pygmalion* at Shakespeare Santa Cruz; *I'm not Rappaport* at Little Fish Theatre Company; *Big Love*, *Cabaret*, *Hot 'N' Throbbing*, *A Christmas Story* and *Never in My Lifetime* at The Chance Theater; and *The Grapes of Wrath* at Alabama Shakespeare Festival. Mr. Noyes received his BFA from Southern Oregon University and his MFA from the University of Alabama, both in Theatre with the emphasis in Acting. He is also a member of the Society of American Fight Directors.

JOHN GLORE (*Dramaturg*) began his new job as Associate Artistic Director of SCR in 2005, after five years as the resident dramaturg for the Mark Taper Forum, where projects included Luis Alfaro's *Electricidad*, Culture Clash's *Chavez Ravine*, Lisa Loomer's *Living Out* and Jessica Goldberg's *Sex Parasite*. Prior to his time at the Taper, he was literary manager for 16 years at SCR, where he served as dramaturg on dozens of productions, workshops and readings. From 1981-84 he was literary manager at Washington D.C.'s Arena Stage, and he has also served as a dramaturg for Midwest PlayLabs in Minneapolis. His own plays have been produced at SCR, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and other theatres across the country and internationally. In 1997-98 he teamed with Culture Clash to write a new adaptation of Aristophanes' *The Birds*, which was co-produced by SCR and Berkeley Repertory Theatre. His adaptation of *The Stinky Cheese Man*, by Jon Scieszka and Lane Smith, was seen on the Argyros Stage in June, as part of SCR's 2005-06 TYA season. He has taught playwriting

and related subjects at Pomona College and UCLA and has contributed articles to such publications as *Theater* and *American Theatre*. He received his MFA degree in dramaturgy from the Yale School of Drama.

***RANDALL K. LUM** (*Stage Manager*) began his 17th season with *Nothing Sacred*. This summer he stage managed his good friend Amy Freed's play *Restoration Comedy* for California Shakespeare Theater in Northern California. Last season he stage managed *Blue Door*, *Man From Nebraska*, *Born Yesterday* and *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler*. Two seasons ago he worked on *Brooklyn Boy*, *Habeas Corpus*, *Vesuvius*, *Princess Marjorie* and made his Argyros Stage Managing debut with *On the Mountain*. During his long association as SCR's resident stage manager, he has worked on more than two dozen world premieres and has been associated with over 80 productions. In 1997, Mr. Lum stage managed the AIDS Benefit *Help is on the Way III* at the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. Other stage management credits include the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco, The Old Globe in San Diego, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, San Jose Civic Light Opera, VITA Shakespeare Festival, Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts, Long Beach Ballet, San Francisco Convention Bureau and Kawasaki Motorcycles. He would like everyone to take a moment to remember all those who have lost the battle and all those still suffering and fighting the AIDS epidemic.

***NINA K. EVANS** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is returning to SCR for her fourth season. She served as the Assistant Stage Manager on *The Studio*, *Bunnica* and *The*

Adventures of Por Quinly. In addition, she was the Production Assistant on *Dumb Show*, *Vesuvius*, *On the Mountain* and *The Retreat from Moscow*. Ms. Evans also served as Company Manager and Audience Services Director for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. She has a BFA in Technical Theatre from the University of Colorado at Boulder.

DAVID EMMES (*Producing Artistic Director*) is co-founder of SCR. 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 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 with his colleague David Emmes, has directed nearly one third of the plays produced here. 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 *Ah, Wilderness!*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *A Delicate Balance* and *A View from the Bridge*. Mr. 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 Outstanding Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre LA Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Mr. 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 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 and the California Arts Council (CAC), and site visitor for the CAC; 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 graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a degree in Economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance.



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.