



61st Season
SEGERSTROM STAGE / FEBRUARY 19 - MARCH 2, 2025

South Coast Repertory

David Ivers
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Suzanne Appel
MANAGING DIRECTOR

David Emmes & Martin Benson
FOUNDING ARTISTIC DIRECTORS

present a new musical play

RACHMANINOFF AND THE TSAR

the music of Sergei V. Rachmaninoff

book by Hershey Felder

dramaturgy by Jerry Patch

Hershey Felder
PRODUCTION DESIGN

Erik S. Barry
LIGHTING DESIGN

Marysol M. Gabriel
COSTUME DESIGN

Stefano Decarli
VIDEO DESIGN

Erik Carstensen
SOUND DESIGN &
PRODUCTION MANAGER

Judi Lewin
WIG AND MAKEUP DESIGN

directed by
Trevor Hay

Michael Ray
HONORARY PRODUCER

CAST

Sergei V. Rachmaninoff *Hershey Felder*
Tsar Nicholas Romanov II *Jonathan Silvestri*

PRODUCTION STAFF

Associate Producer *Tammy Globerman*
Production Assistant *Vita Muccia*
Light Board Operator *Adam Manning*
Follow Spot Operators *Chelsea Garcia-Perez, Cybelle Kaehler*
A1/Sound Board Operator *Kaden Cutler*

LENGTH

Approximately one hour and 40 minutes, with no intermission.

WITH THANKS






Joel Zwick, Writers Theatre and Braden Abraham, Erika Bendersky, Ekaterina Siurina,
Moses and Susan Libitzky, Josef and Margot Lakonishok, Stephen and Jacqueline Swire,
Daniel and Phyllis Epstein, Tom Wirtshafter, John and Evonne Yonover,
Irwin and Helgard Field, The Wallis Annenberg Centre for the Performing Arts,
Deborah Hartwell, Amy Carstensen, Robert Rudolph, Siamanto Ismaily,
Hilary Helstein Dr. Benjamin Salisbury, Natalie Niles and Steinway & Sons,
Jana Oechsner and Anabella and Evelina Silvestri, Annette Nixon,
Kim Campbell (XO) Leo and Dagwood Dog.

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

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

Photos may be taken before and after the show, but not during the performance itself.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.

  @SouthCoastRepertory    @SouthCoastRep



STEINWAY & SONS



Musical Selections

Prelude in C#-, op. 3/2

Star Spangled Banner (arranged Rachmaninoff)

Bozhe Tsariya Khrani (arranged Felder)

Nocturne in F#-

March Slave (Tchaikovsky, selection)

Prelude in G#- op. 32/12

Concerto no. 1 in F#- op. 1

Concerto no. 2, op. 18, Adagio, Selection

Concerto no. 2, op. 18, Maestoso, Alla Marcia

Prelude in G-, op. 29/5

Concerto no. 2, op. 18, Adagio, Selection

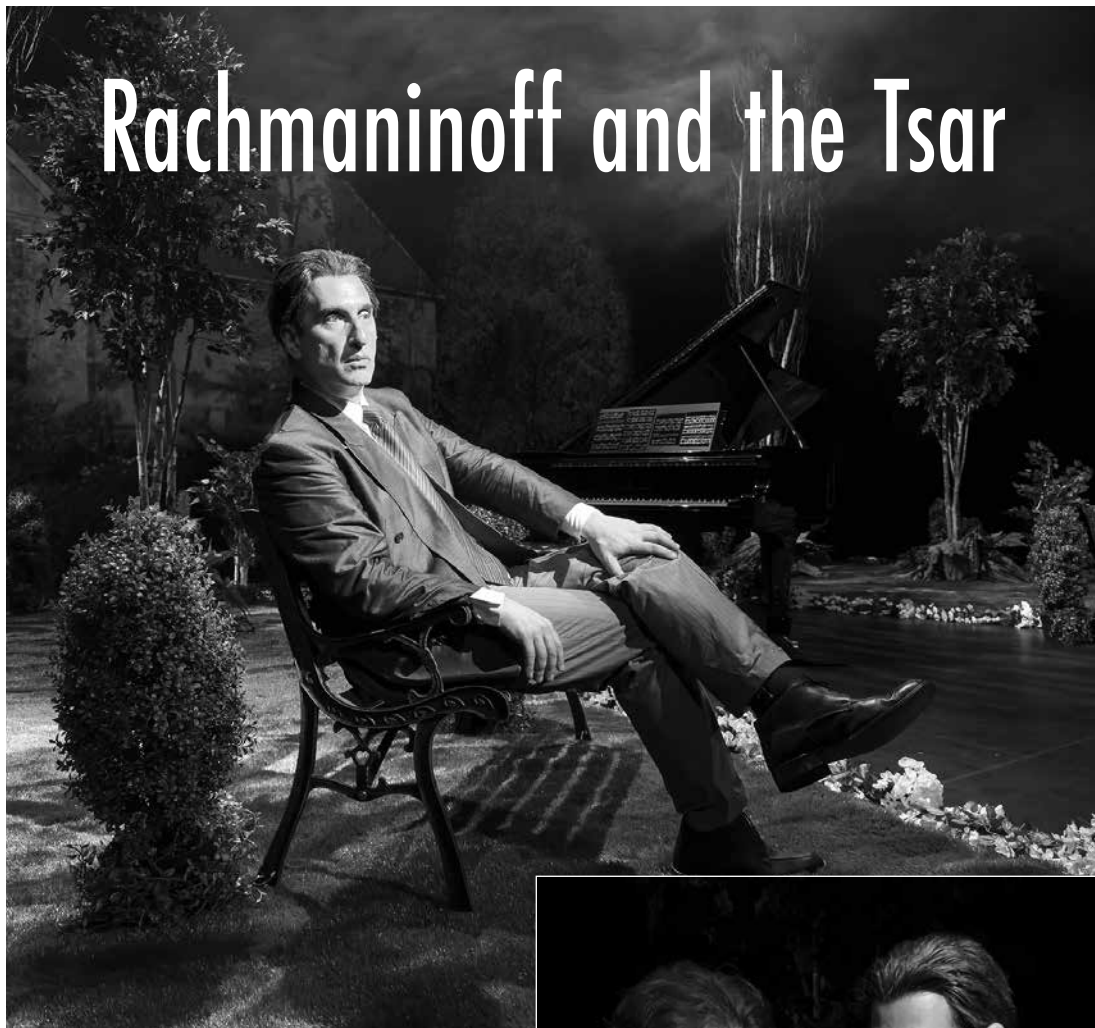
Sonata no. 2, first version, Selection

Concerto no. 2, op. 18, Finale

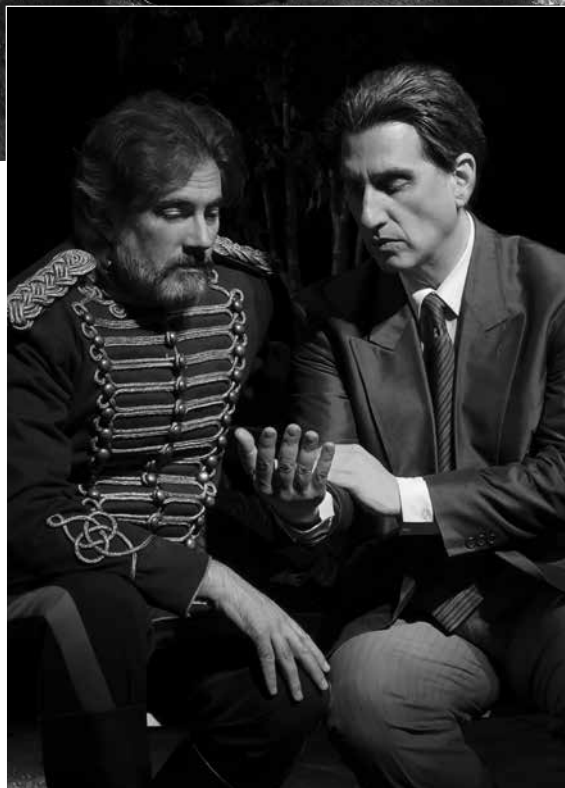
Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, op. 43, Variation 18

Vocalise op. 34/14

Rachmaninoff and the Tsar



In 1942, world famous pianist-composer Sergei Rachmaninoff moved to Beverly Hills. At that time, he applied to become an American citizen and was granted citizenship eight weeks before his 70th birthday, April 1, 1943. Unfortunately, a severe illness would claim him before he would be able to celebrate. In those last years of his life, Rachmaninoff secretly helped many in the Russian immigrant community begin a new life in America. One such person captured the imagination of the world, leading to much speculation that would last the better part of a century. This is that story.



Artist Biographies

HERSHEY FELDER (*Sergei V. Rachmaninoff/Book*) has recently been named Artistic Director of Florence's historic Teatro della Signoria as well as Florence's Teatro Niccolini. Creator and President of FirenzeOnStage, an international theatrical and presentation house in Florence Italy, *American Theatre Magazine* has said, "Hershey Felder, actor, Steinway Concert Artist and theatrical creator is in a category all his own." Following 28 years of continuous stage productions and more than 6,000 live performances throughout the U.S. and abroad, Hershey Felder created Live from Florence, An Arts Broadcasting Company, based in Florence, Italy, which has produced more than eighteen theatrical films to date. They include the recently-released *Noble Genius—Chopin & Liszt*; *The Assembly*; *Violetta*, the story of Verdi's Traviata; *Dante and Beatrice*; *Mozart and Figaro in Vienna*; the world premiere musicals *Nicholas, Anna & Sergei*; the story of Sergei Rachmaninoff; *Puccini*, the story of famed opera composer Giacomo Puccini; *Before Fiddler*, a musical story about writer Sholem Aleichem; *Great American Songs and the Stories Behind Them*, *Leonard Bernstein and the Israel Philharmonic*, a documentary, and the popular *Musical Tales in the Venetian Jewish Ghetto*. Three seasons of programming, are currently available at www.hershefelder.net with season four being launched in fall of 2025. Felder has given performances of his solo productions at some of the world's most prestigious theatres and has consistently broken box office records. His shows include *George Gershwin Alone* (Broadway's Helen Hayes Theater, West End's Duchess Theatre); *Monsieur Chopin*; *Beethoven*; *Maestro* (Leonard Bernstein); *Franz Liszt in Musik*, *Lincoln: An American Story*, *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, *Our Great Tchaikovsky*, and *A Paris Love Story and Monsieur Chopin*. His compositions and recordings include *Aliyah*, *Concerto for Piano and Orchestra*; *Fairytale*, a musical; *Les Anges de Paris*, *Suite for Violin and Piano*; *Song Settings*; *Saltimbriques for Piano and Orchestra*; *Etudes Thematiques for Piano*; and *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*, and the opera *IL QUARTO UOMO* that premiered in Fiesole, Italy in the summer of 2023 with the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Felder is the adaptor, director, and designer

for the internationally performed play-with-music *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* with Steinway artist Mona Golabek; producer and designer for the musical *Louis and Keely: 'Live' at the Sahara*, directed by Taylor Hackford; and writer and director for *Flying Solo*, featuring opera legend Nathan Gunn. Felder has operated a full-service production company since 2001. He has been a scholar-in-residence at Harvard University's Department of Music and is married to Rt. Hn. Kim Campbell.

JONATHAN SILVESTRI (*Tsar Nicholas II*) began his career at BAC Youth Theatre in London's Clapham District, later studying with Simon Furness. He is known for his roles in the international television HBO hit series "Borgia" as Cardinal Fonsalida; his recent film with Tim Rozon as a U.S. Marine in *Dakota*, the television series "The Young Pope," "Dangerous Lies," "Devils," "Fangs," and more. He is a regular on Italian TV, in particular RAI's 'Impazienti' in a starring role with Max Tortora and Enrico Bertolino. Silvestri recently appeared as Eugene Delacroix in Hershey Felder's feature film *Noble Genius—Chopin & Liszt* and the feature film *Hey Joe*, with James Franco. A regular on Roman stages, his notable theatre credits include *Closer* by Patrick Marber, *Julius Caesar*, *Our Country's Good* and *Chinatown* at the Teatro Manhattan as well as many other productions. He is both an actor specializing in International character accents and he is of British-Roman origin.

TREVOR HAY (*Director*) directed the world premieres of *An American Story for Actor and Orchestra*, *Abe Lincoln's Piano*, *Hershey Felder as Franz Liszt in Musik*, *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, *Our Great Tchaikovsky*, and *A Paris Love Story*. He is associate director for Mona Golabek's *The Pianist of Willesden Lane*, *George Gershwin Alone* and *Maestro*. He is a former member of the historic The Old Globe in San Diego where, at the age of nine, his first position was selling Old Globe memorabilia. Over the next 32 years, Hay went on to various aspects of production on more than 80 presentations.

JERRY PATCH (*Dramaturg*) served as dramaturg on more than 150 new plays, including the world

premieres of *Abundance*, *Freedomland*, *Golden Child*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Search and Destroy*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Ruined* and *Wit*. He was the founding project director for South Coast Repertory's Pacific Playwrights Festival and artistic director of the theatre program of Sundance Institute. A professor of theatre and film, he was consulting dramaturg for Roundabout Theatre Company (New York) for nearly a decade and resident artistic director at The Old Globe in San Diego. He is now artistic consultant for Manhattan Theatre Club, where he served more than a decade as Director of Artistic Development, and is resident dramaturg at SCR.

STEFANO DECARLI (*Video Design*) born in Florence in 1983, is an Italian filmmaker, editor, and producer. After graduating in 2010 in Agricultural Sciences and Sustainable Rural Development from the University of Florence, he worked in Iraq for two years for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, coordinating international development and reconstruction programs in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of State. At the same time, he began his professional career in visual communication, specifically in photography and video production, which became his main profession. Since then, he has been working across Italy and Europe on multimedia content, feature films, live theater shows, music videos, and corporate videos. Starting in 2020, he has filmed, co-directed, and edited shows, movies and documentaries in collaboration with renowned pianist, actor, director and producer Hershey Felder. In 2023, he worked together with American director Madison Kinsella on a short documentary about a group of Ukraine refugees in Italy, *A Castle for Kyiv*. The same year, he also collaborated with Canadian director Jennifer Baic-hwal on the impact of website insights following the 2022 documentary *Into The Weeds*. Decarli is also a professor of Multimedia Language at ISIA Firenze, the first university-level public institution for Design education in Italy.

ERIK S. BARRY (*Lighting Design*) is a freelance lighting designer based in Chicago. He received the Non-Equity Joseph Jefferson Award for 2019 for *The Displaced* with Haven Chicago. His designs have been seen at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Carnegie Hall, Seattle Repertory, Harris Theater (Chicago), and Music Hall

Detroit. He has done extensive gaffer/production electrician work, including multiple 2020 Presidential Debates and on Fox Sports Pre/Postgame shows for the MLB World Series. Barry earned his MFA in Lighting Design from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. eriksbarry.com

MARYSOL M. GABRIEL (*Costume Design*) originally from Argentina and now based in Florence, Italy, is a seasoned costume and accessory designer with a rich background in theatre. She recently showcased her talents as a Costume Designer for the *Quarto Uomo* Lyric Opera at Estate Fiesolana and has contributed significantly to various productions at Fondazione Teatro Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, in addition to collaborating on projects with Sartoria Antonietta in Florence. Gabriel's expertise extends to the film industry, where she designed costumes for *Chopin* by Hershey Felder and supported numerous other Felder productions. Her creative journey is characterized by a harmonious fusion of innovation, meticulous craftsmanship, and unwavering dedication to her craft. Beyond costume design, Gabriel excels in accessory design, having worked as an Accessory Designer Consultant for Flo Bags and as a Freelance Handbag Developer. Her proficiency in creating and prototyping bags and accessories has been invaluable to fashion students from prestigious institutions like Polimoda, IED, Marangoni, and Central Saint Martin, aiding them in preparing for their final fashion showcases. Notably, she spearheaded Sol Gabriel Concept Bags as the Owner and Senior Designer from 2004 to 2011, crafting distinctive, handmade bags. Furthermore, as a Senior Designer at Richmond Ltd., Gabriel directed the evolution of a casual clothing line and orchestrated fashion exhibitions in Shenzhen and Hong Kong.

ERIK CARSTENSEN (*Sound Design/Production Management*) has worked for Eighty-Eight Entertainment since 2008. He has served as sound designer on *Hershey Felder as Irving Berlin*, *Our Great Tchaikovsky*, *A Paris Love Story*, *Maestro*, *Louis and Keely "Live" at the Sahara*, *An American Story*, *Beethoven As I Knew Him* (Ovation Award winner), *The Pianist of Willesden Lane* (Ovation Award nomination), and numerous other productions. Formerly, he was the master sound technician at the The Old Globe in San Diego and was production engineer on more than 60 productions.

JUDI LEWIN (*Wig and Makeup Design*) is a seasoned Makeup/Wig/Hair Designer in and around the Los Angeles area. Lewin moved to Los Angeles in 1990 with her family from Toronto, Canada. In Toronto, she worked primarily in theatre and for the Canadian Opera Company, where she worked on such operas as *Tosca* and *La Boheme*. Since moving to Los Angeles, she incorporated television and film into her repertoire. Lewin has designed two national tours: *Happy Days—A New Musical* and *I Love Lucy Live on Stage*. She also designed the European tour of the musical *Sisterella*. She has designed for many theatre companies, including Pasadena Playhouse, Rubicon Theatre Company, Fremont Theater, Interact Theatre, The El Portal Theatre, The Blank Theatre, The Fountain Theatre, McCoy Rigby Entertainment, Sacramento Music Circus, Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, Theatre 40, The Group Rep, Reprise 2.0, Unbound Productions, Sierra Madre Playhouse and The Hollywood Bowl.

TAMMY GLOBERMAN (*Producer*). Based in Los Angeles, Globerman joined the Hershey Felder Presents team in the summer of 2020. She worked with Hershey on his earlier projects in the late 1990s and 2000s before working with talent agencies specializing in below-the-line talent for film and television. After taking some time off to be with her two children, she is excited to be working again with Hershey and his team.

DAVID IVERS (*Artistic Director*) is responsible for the overall artistic operation of the theatre. The 2019-20 season was the first he programmed for SCR and during that season, he directed *She Loves Me*. In addition, he directed the 2024 production of *Joan*, the 2021 Pacific Playwrights Festival reading of *Coleman '72* by Charlie Oh and the 2022 reading of Spenser Davis' *A Million Tiny Pieces*. He spent August of last season directing Guthrie Theater's production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. He was last seen onstage at SCR as John in Richard Greenberg's world premiere of *A Shot Rang Out* and as part of his SCR tenure, created the theatre's Outside SCR program in partnership with Mission San Juan Capistrano. Prior to his appointment as Artistic Director, he directed the SCR-Berkeley Repertory Theatre co-production of *One Man, Two Guvnors*. Before arriving to SCR in his current capacity, Ivers was artistic director for Arizona Theatre Com-

MICHAEL RAY (*Honorary Producer*) has been an ardent supporter since 2013 and an energetic ambassador for SCR in the community. Ray returns for a second year in a row to underwrite SCR's special engagement of Hershey Felder. He has served as Honorary Producer of seven mainstage productions, including *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Prelude to a Kiss*, *The Musical* and *What I Learned in Paris*. He was an early advocate for Outside SCR, SCR's family-friendly, theatre-under-the-stars programming, and served as Season Producer for four consecutive years (2021-2024). Ray joined the theatre's Board of Trustees in 2018 has underwritten numerous SCR galas—serving as a Co-Chair in 2021—and is a major donor to SCR's Endowment in support of Musical Theatre initiatives.

pany and, before that, served more than 20 years as an actor and director at Utah Shakespeare Festival, with the last six as artistic director. He was a resident artist at Denver Center for the Performing Arts for a decade, acting in and/or directing more than 40 plays, and has helmed productions at many of the nation's leading regional theatres, including the Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and South Coast Repertory. Ivers' early career included serving as associate artistic director of Portland Repertory Theatre and appearing in productions at some of the nation's most prestigious theatres, including Portland Center Stage and the Oregon, Alabama and Idaho Shakespeare festivals. He has taught at the University of Michigan, University of Minnesota, Southern Utah University and Southern Oregon University. He earned his BA from Southern Oregon University and his MFA from the University of Minnesota.

SUZANNE APPEL (*Managing Director*). For more than two decades, Suzanne Appel has pursued a personal mission to bring people together through transformative experiences led by form-challenging artists. Working in partnership with Artistic Director David Ivers and reporting to the Board of Trustees, Appel is responsible for providing strategic leadership for SCR's long-term sustainability and growth. She oversees SCR's business operations, including fund-raising, marketing and community

relations. Her accomplishments as Managing Director of Off-Broadway's Vineyard Theatre (2017-2024) include expanding the revenue-generating capacity of the organization, bringing on seven new board members, negotiating a two-production, industry-first producing partnership with Audible (David Cale's *Harry Clarke* and Ngozi Anyanwu's *Good Grief*), and transferring four Tony-nominated productions to Broadway. She is perhaps most proud of working with Artistic Director Sarah Stern to keep all Vineyard Theatre full-time staff employed during the COVID pandemic and developing a 2022-26 plan raising all arts worker wages. Appel joined The Vineyard after serving as Director of External Affairs for Hubbard Street Dance Chicago. Prior to her role at Hubbard Street, she served as Managing Director at Cutting Ball Theater in San Francisco, where she nearly doubled the organization's operating budget and built a two-plus-month operating reserve in four years. She was awarded the Alfred Drake Award from Brooklyn College, an honor given to an accomplished theatre professional who has made significant contributions to the American theatre. Her previous positions include roles with Dance Theater Workshop, Yale Repertory Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and Wesleyan University. Her volunteer work includes serving on the Board for Arts Orange County and South Coast Metro Alliance. Previously, she served as Chair of the Wesleyan Fund (2020-24). She is a graduate of Wesleyan University, Yale School of Drama and Yale School of Management (MFA/MBA).

MARTIN BENSON (*Founding Artistic Director*), (Mar. 15, 1937-Nov. 30, 2024) co-founder of SCR, directed nearly one-fifth of SCR's productions, including the 2020 production of *Outside Mullingar*. 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 LA Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Benson 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 *Heart-break 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 directed American classics such as *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and 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); *The Whipping Man* by Matthew Lopez; and *The Roommate* by Jen Silverman (West Coast premiere). Benson received his BA in Theatre from San Francisco State University.

DAVID EMMES (*Founding Artistic Director*) is co-founder of South Coast Repertory. He received the Margo Jones Award for his lifetime commitment to theatre excellence and to fostering the art of American playwriting. In addition, he has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career. He directed the world premieres of Amy Freed's *Safe in Hell*, *The Beard of Avon* and *Freedomland*; Thomas Babe's *Great Day in the Morning*; Keith Reddin's *Rum and Coke* and *But Not for Me*; and Neal Bell's *Cold Sweat*; the American premieres of Terry Johnson's *Unsuitable for Adults*; and Joe Penhall's *Dumb Show*; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions he has directed include *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.



This Theatre operates under an agreement between the League of Resident Theatres and 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 Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.



The theatre is a member of Arts Orange County, the official local arts agency.