

**ACTORS'
THEATRE**



2024

JANUARY 19 - FEBRUARY 18

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INTRODUCING OUR 2024 SEASON

MAR 22-APR 14

The Odd Couple

Original + Female Versions, in Repertoire

Both Versions by Neil Simon

Original Version directed by Stephen Phillipps

Female Version directed by Simon Hayward

MAY 17-JUN 09

Becky's New Car

By Steven Dietz

Directed by Hannah Eckstein

AUG 16-18

New Works Weekend

SEP 20-OCT 20

The Music Man

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Meredith Willson

Director TBA

NOV 22-DEC 22

Miracle on 34th Street, The Play

Adapted by MCT from the Novel by Valentine Davies

Directed by Daria Troxell



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Santa Cruz County Actors' Theatre
presents



Co-Artistic Coordinators
Buff McKinley & Brian Spencer

Lighting Design
Holly Boyd

Sound Design/Stage Manager
Lyndsey Gould

Deck Manager
Siid Bobisuthi

Deck Crew
Calissa Leite

Set Design
Suzanne Schrag

Board Operator
Toby Lara

Assistant Deck Manager
Felix Gillespie

Office Manager
Sandra Beiser

Box Office
Johanna Miller

The photographing, videotaping, or other video or audio recording
of this production is strictly prohibited.

Sponsored in part by:



PART 1 – ACT I

Stop Saying That

by George Smart

Directed by Hannah Eckstein

Setting: Morning, at a coffee shop

Meg Herz Harlor Gloria

Lee Ann Gray Joan

Mary Ann LoBalbo Edna

Marigold Fine Marion

Steven Capasso Alvin

Patrick W. True Mark

Owen Morgan Joe the Barista

Debunked

by Mick Hilgers

Directed by Davis Banta

Setting: An urban bunker

Ward Willats One

Zoe Willats Two

Sense of Direction

by Seth Freeman

Directed by Sarah Albertson

Setting: Mitch's place

Mitch's composition by Sarah Zae Deranleau

Scott Kravitz Mitch

Shannon Marie McDonough Katie

Geronimo!

by F. J. Hartland

Directed by Jonathan Carter Schall

Setting: A rooftop

David Leach Buddy

Brad Roades Cal

Intermission

PART 1 – ACT II

The Visit

by Dan Borengasser

Directed by Peter Gelblum

Setting: The Harpers' bedroom

David Leach Justin Harper

Susy Parker Kate Harper

Signing Off

by Gail Thornton Borkowski

Directed by Marcus Cato

Setting: A radio station

Scott Kravitz Rocky Jones

Rose Culligan The Kid

Someday After RU-486

by Amanda O'Donnell

Directed by Bill Peters

Setting: Annie and Sean's bedroom

Sophia Alexander-Sidhom Annie

Owen Morgan Sean

Waiting for Godot

by Bruce Bonafede

Directed by Gerry Geringer

Setting: A cafe, early evening

Shannon Marie McDonough Waiter

Ward Willats Godot

Aaron Artiaga Boy

PART 2 – ACT I

The Stocking Exchange

by Lynnmarie May

Directed by Sally Bookman

Setting: The returns section of the Bradham and Hollis department store,
December 26th

Linda S. Gunther Carol

Martin Sampad Kachuck Nick

The Artist

by James Ingagiola

Directed by Evan Hunt

Setting: A room in Harper's home

Kevin Karplus Harper

Jonathan Carter Schall Blake

Camila Snyder-Alaniz X-45

Two Mothers

by Abby Dunbar

Directed by Suzanne Sturn

Setting: The waiting room of a fertility clinic

Manirose Bobisuthi Chantal

Sarah Mitchler Heather

The Hill

by Robb Willoughby

Directed by Kathryn Adkins

Setting: The top of a hill

Andy Waddell Frank

Lyndsey Marks Francine

Matthew Chipman Freddy

Intermission

PART 2 – ACT II

On the Road to Tikrit

by Rosemary Parrillo

Directed by Steven Capasso

Setting: A war zone in Iraq

John Denham Bennett Soldier

Not Knowing

by Alyssa Ahle

Directed by Cathy Warner

Setting: A Valentine's Day party, evening

Chris Arcarese Hugo

Camila Snyder-Alaniz Ronnie

Baylee Hult Tasha

Tristan Ahn Kegan

Talking to Myself

by Sam Weller

Directed by Helene Simkin Jara

Setting: A stage

Isaac Ludington Sam

Andy Waddell Old Sam

Come On, Ref!

by Bram Hartman

Directed by Jim Schultz

Setting: A soccer field

Jonathan Carter Schall Chet

Ian Dyer Keith

FROM ACTORS' THEATRE

Thank you so much for being here today and supporting Actors' Theatre and these new short plays! Theater is an art form that only truly lives when seen and heard, and we are grateful to all of the audiences who have brought their eyes, ears and hearts to this space over the years to enable our work to come alive.

I was recently asked how I would characterize the role of Actors' Theatre in this 21st-century era of streaming and online entertainment. I don't have an easy answer, but I know there is something about coming together in the dark, or even in broad daylight, to witness and share in the telling of a story about this human journey we're all on—whether it involves laughing at absurdity, grieving with empathy, learning about an experience different from our own, or seeing our own experiences validated—that is happening right now, in the moment, unfolding with the collective breath, whether the words were written centuries before, or last year, or are being made up on the spot. Live performance creates that energetic exchange in real time, an increasingly rare and special thing in our world today.

This year, Actors' Theatre is producing our first “season” since 2019, beginning last fall with *The Thin Place* by Lucas Hnath, directed by Miguel Reyna, who brought his flair for all things spooky. We hope to explore more theatrical chills and thrills in upcoming Octobers. And, of course, the *8 Tens @ 8 Short Play Festival* continues as one of our signature events. This spring, we're very excited to be partnering with Soaring Dragon Endeavors to present Steve “Spike” Wong's *White Sky, Falling Dragon*, which is based on his own father's experience of returning to small-town Watsonville after serving as a bombardier in WWII. It's a beautiful play, with so many themes to relate to—family, changing roles, the immigrant experience, service in wartime, and coming home. Don't miss it!

In addition to our own productions, Actors' Theatre provides a venue for many other community art groups to present their work, including Kirby School, All About Theatre, Seven Directions, the Y2K Loop Festival and Best Coast Burlesque, to name just a few. We now offer workshops in acting, directing, improv and voice. We've hosted the 36 North Playwrights' Collective series of readings of new plays and will do so again this summer. Having the theater space allows us to contribute to the wider Santa Cruz performing arts community in an ongoing and tangible way.

Things are happening! We'd love for you to be part of it. Check out the website at www.santacruzactorstheatre.org for auditions and backstage opportunities, workshop offerings, and upcoming shows. And, if you enjoy our work and want to help us continue to thrive, please consider making a tax-deductible donation.

Again, we're so glad you're here. Enjoy the show!

—Suzanne Schrag, Board President



In Memorium

To all our theatre friends whom we have recently lost and
whom we celebrate with our continued work:
You are always with us in spirit and in our hearts.

BONNIE RONZIO

BARBARA BURKHART

ERIC CONLY

LILE CRUSE

SUZANNE DUVALL

WENDY EDMONDS

MICHAEL GRIGGS

PATRICIA GRUBE

LISA HADLEY

ELEANOR HUNTER

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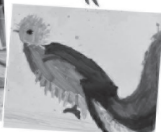
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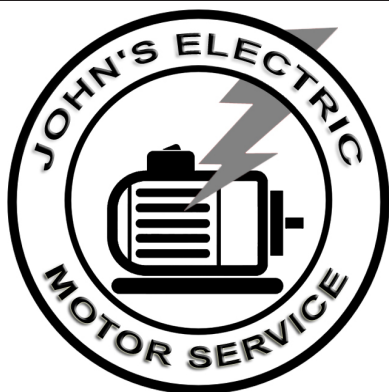
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THE ACTORS



Tristan Ahn (*Not Knowing*) is a Theatre Arts major at UC Santa Cruz about to graduate. His previous roles include Christian de Neuville (Cyrano de Bergerac), Eddie (*White Sky, Falling Dragon*) and various roles in the Actors' Theatre 8 Tens @ 8 (Sam in *Frodo Lives*, 2019; Evan in *The Winner*, 2020; Father Shannon in *Confessions à Deux*, 2023). He looks forward to another great year of 8 Tens!



Sophia Alexander-Sidhom (*Someday After RU-486*) is so happy to be involved once again with the Actors' Theatre. She last played Lady Macbeth in Midsummer Ensemble's production of *Macbeth*, and the Venus de Milo in *Love at the Louvre* in the 2019 8 Tens @ 8. When she's not fighting for survival in nursing school, she enjoys being in nature, hanging out with the kids in her family, and reading fiction.



Chris Arcarese (*Not Knowing*) is finishing his last year at UCSC where he studies Cognitive Science. He trained at CalARTS where he attended their summer program CSSSA. His credits include various student films—his favorite being *Egg Head*—as well as several stage productions he participated in while attending Scotts Valley High. His passions include stand up comedy and film making. Lastly, Chris would like to thank sidewalks for keeping him off the streets.



Aaron Artiaga (*Waiting for Godot*) attends a local Catholic school and is in the 5th grade. He has done drama in summer camp and is looking forward to performing in more plays in the future.



John Denham Bennett (*On the Road to Tikrit*) is a UCSC graduate with experience earned from Rainbow Theater/AATAT (African American Theater Arts Troupe). He's played in a series of plays by directors Don Williams and Steve Capasso including, but not limited to, *Sweat*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Fuschia*, and *Kandyland*.



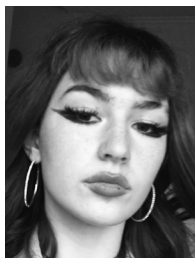
Manirose Bobisuthi (*Two Mothers*) is delighted to be returning for another 8 Tens @ 8 festival. Manirose was very active in the Santa Cruz theater community from 1999 to 2002, performing in 8 Tens @ 8 at Actors' Theatre, and in *Everyman* and *The Marat/Sade* at Cabrillo College, as well as shows with Pisces Moon Theater Company. Her return has rekindled a passion for improv theater, which she performs locally. Manirose would like to thank her husband, kids and friends for their overwhelming support and love.



Steven Capasso (*Stop Saying That*) is an actor, improviser, and playwright. He has performed with the Actors' Theatre 8 Tens Festival since 2008, as well as with Mountain Community Theatre and Cabrillo College. Favorite roles include Morty (*Nobody's Hero*, 8 Tens Reboot, 2022) Cheswick (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, MCT, 2022) Stan (*SWEAT*, Cabrillo College, 2020), Kit Carson (*The Time of Your Life*, Cabrillo College, 2019), Sawyer (*Miracle on 34th Street*, MCT, 2018) and Lendell (*Almost Maine*, Cabrillo College, 2021). In 2017, Steve performed his solo show *You Always Remember* at United Solo Theatre Festival in NYC. He is a member of 36 North, a playwright's collective.



Matthew Chipman (*The Hill*) in his first year since getting into theater and becoming a "theater kid," has played Christopher in *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, directed a short play for Cabrillo College's authentic creative works, and done scenic design for Cabrillo's performing arts collective. He is very excited to be performing for Actors' Theatre and what the future holds.



Rose Culligan (*Signing Off*) has loved being a part of 8 Tens @ 8, and she hopes to return in the future. She has danced in *Something Rotten* at Mountain Community Theater and has worked backstage on *A Home for Christmas* at MCT as well. She has always wanted to act and just recently got into the theatre community. She absolutely adores it, and she hopes you love the show.



Ian Dyer (*Come On, Ref!*) has been an actor for 22 years performing in sketch comedy and improv in New York City in various capacities. Recently he's moved to Santa Cruz County and has discovered the rich tradition of theater in this part of the country. He's happy to have played the role of Master of the Justice in Mountain Community Theater's *Something Rotten*, and looks forward to his first 8 Tens@8. Thank you to Jim Schultz and Jonathan Carter Schall for being incredible artistic collaborators during this whole process.



Marigold Fine (*Stop Saying That*) is excited to be making her debut at 8 Tens @ 8. After 36 years as a video producer and documentary filmmaker, Marigold has stepped out from behind the camera to realize her childhood passion for theater. Her first and favorite role was *The Cowardly Lion* (*The Wizard of Oz*) in seventh grade. Marigold performs locally with NextStage Productions, and has written and performed 12 spoken word monologues. Her book, *Double Rainbow ~ Collected Poems & Memoir Musings* will be published in 2024.



Lee Ann Gray (*Stop Saying That*) is happy to return for a second season in the 8 Tens @ 8 Festival. Last year she appeared in *The Tree* (Tree) and *Wonder People* (Wonder Woman). She has been involved in local theatre for over 40 years as an actor, improviser, director, and clown. She taught drama for the last 13 years of her teaching career, produced numerous plays, and was constantly inspired by the creativity of young people she was privileged to direct. Her favorite roles include LaVonda, *Sordid Lives* (Mountain Community Theater), Mme. Josephine, *Madwoman of Chaillot* (MCT), Felicia, *I Hate Hamlet* (MCT), and Yvette, in a zoom production of *Clue* (NextStage). She also played Henrietta in *Honk, the Musical*, and appeared in *Annie Get Your Gun* (Scotts Valley Performing Arts). She currently sings with the Choraliers and The Little Big Band. Retirement is her renaissance!



Linda S. Gunther (*The Stocking Exchange*) has been performing in local theater in the Santa Cruz and Silicon Valley areas for more than 20 years, and studied acting with the British American Drama Academy at Oxford University. Her focus over the last few years has been on writing. Her published works include over 55 short stories featured in various literary journals and six suspense novels; most recently, *Death is a Great Disguiser* (a Santa Cruz Murder Mystery) and a memoir titled *A Bronx Girl* (growing up in the Bronx in the 1960s and 70s). Linda's belief: "Acting experience heightens my ability to be authentic in my writing. There's a symbiotic relationship between the two forms."



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written & directed
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Meg Herz Harlor (*Stop Saying That*) has been active in local theatre since 1974. She has been in over 80 productions from 1974 to 2009 as well as having directed, written, produced and done backstage work. She is thrilled to be back on stage and totally surprised at 81 to be playing a sexy woman! The last full length play she was in was *Clean House* at Actors' Theatre in 2009. She has been teaching Laughter Yoga for the last 7 years.



Baylee Hult (*Not Knowing*) discovered her love of theater when doing her first play, *The Wizard of Oz*, when she was 11 years old. This is her second play since the pandemic and she is really excited to be able to be doing performances again. This play with 8 Tens @8 has reminded her how much she loves theater!



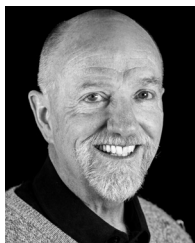
Martin Sampad Kachuck (*The Stocking Exchange*) has performed in and around the South Bay area for countless years. Favorite roles include the artist Mark Rothko in the Actors' Theatre production of *Red*, directed by Wilma Chandler, Matt Friedman in *Talley's Folly*, and Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and, most recently, Chester in *The Viewing Room* at Mountain Community Theater, directed by Peter Gelblum. Along with performance, Martin has dedicated his life to the craft of teaching, working for over 40 years at Mt. Madonna School, a private school in the Watsonville mountains, as the Director of Theater as well as a Middle School English teacher. Recently retired, Martin is happy to return to the 8 Tens @ 8 for a third time, and is certainly grateful for the opportunity to perform. He dedicates the show to his former students, walking the talk that a good director must remember what it is like to go through the actor's experience of thrills, spills, anxieties and excitements that is all part of the process of creating a character.



Kevin Karplus (*The Artist*) started acting in February 2023 after retiring as an engineering professor, so this is his first appearance in 8 Tens @ 8. He has also performed with NextStage Readers' Theater in *Ferris Wheel* and *Emotional Baggage* and is taking acting classes at Cabrillo College. This bio was written by Kevin, "every element painstakingly crafted by his own hands—with precision."



Scott Kravitz (*Sense of Direction, Signing Off*) is thrilled to be returning to the 8 Tens Festival once again. Scott has been recently seen playing the role of Lopakhin in *The Cherry Orchard* (MCT - directed by Bill Peters). A New York native, Scott arrived in Santa Cruz in 2002 and has since found a home in the theatre community from Monterey to the San Francisco Bay.



David Leach (*Geronimo!*, *The Visit*) is happy to be back with you again for the 8 Tens @ 8. He was in last year's festival, in *Something Holy in Croatia* and *Slave Trade*. He has also appeared in many shows for MCT. Some of his favorite roles have been in *The Humans* (Erik), in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (Gaev), *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* (Don), *Sordid Lives* (Brother Boy) and the title character in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. Theatre training includes the British American Theatre Conservatory and a BA in Acting from Arizona State University.



Mary Ann LoBalbo (*Stop Saying That*) was last seen as Ellen in *A Home for Christmas* with Mountain Community Theater, 2023. Mary Ann also was the costumer for *A Home for Christmas* doing double duty. Past summer was murder mystery dinner theater at Brookdale Lodge with Elf Empire, *Hummus and Homicide*, as Bella Donna, 2023. Performed in 2022 with 8 Tens @ 8 as the woman in *The Tree*. Mary Ann loves performing on stage and wishes everyone a grand new year! Keep theater in your hearts and alive by promoting or volunteering whenever you can to be part of the performing family.



Isaac Ludington (*Talking to Myself*) is excited to be making his 8 Tens @ 8 debut. He is a founding member of Santa Cruz theatre troupe Midsummer Ensemble, and with them he has performed as Macduff in *Macbeth* and Lysander in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Other favorite credits include Benedick in *Much Ado About Nothing* (WEST Ensemble), Oscar Wilde in *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde* (WEST Ensemble), and Montfleury in *Cyrano de Bergerac* (GayInnocentHeartless Theatrics). Outside of acting, he enjoys writing, making short films, and playing music with his band Chamberlains of the Plague.



Lyndsey Marks (*The Hill*) has an extensive background in Improvisational theater, with a four-year stint in Scriptease Improv and Sketch Comedy Troupe. She has performed in *The Vagina Monologues* as Mona, or possibly better known as Moan-a, and in her own self-written piece, *First Date*. This will be Lyndsey's third 8 Tens @ 8 performance, as well as joining the cast of *The Best of the Rest* this last season.

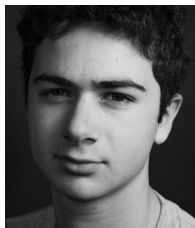


Shannon Marie McDonough (*Sense of Direction*, *Waiting for Godot*) has been a proud member of the SAG/Aftra acting unions since 2003. She is a mama to her darling 5-year-old son, Finn, and to 14-year-old bonus kid, Dylan. She married singer Ian McDonough in 2020. The dashing couple met while rehearsing *The Pajama Game* in 1992, and the showmance ensued. Shannon is a Music Together teacher for special needs children and adults, (through Mucical Me & Building for Generations). She spent many years performing in

professional theatre (Emerging Artists Theatre Co.), and on camera in NYC. Recent shows include *Something Rotten* (MCT) Choreographer, *Hummus and Homicide* (Elf Empire) Ginger, *Charlie's Aunt* (Cabrillo) Donna Lucia D'Alvadorez, *Let's Make A Deal* (CBS) winning contestant, *One Goodbye* (MCT film) lead, *Damn Yankees* (MCT) Lola & Choreographer, and many more. TV appearances include *Ugly Betty*, *Life on Mars*, *Law & Order*, *Maury*, *LMN with Chuck Nice*, etc. Love and prayers for those who are experiencing war or trauma.



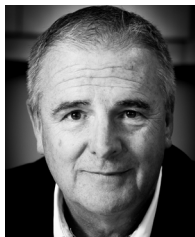
Sarah Mitchler (*Two Mothers*) is making her debut with 8 Tens @ 8. You may have recently seen her dancing in the ensemble of *Mamma Mia*, though her favorite role will always be Jo March in *Little Women*. She has degrees in Music and Theatre from Muhlenberg College and has had the opportunity to train at the Accademia dell'Arte in Italy. She owes much gratitude to her family for their endless support.



Owen Morgan (*Stop Saying That*, *Someday After RU-486*) was born in Santa Cruz, California. He has been in shows at All About Theatre and has acted in some student films at CSU Northridge.



Susy Parker (*The Visit*) started acting at age 8, when her mother told her she was “too dramatic” and put her in acting classes as a way to channel it. She’s been acting ever since, most recently in short plays and films, including Robert Kirkendall’s *What’s Hiding in Your Tree*, and *Escape from Jury Duty*, and the feature film *TWENTY*, directed by Hilary Davidson. She has also participated in Spotlight performances with The Fun Institute.



Brad Roades (*Geronimo!*) is delighted to be part of the 8 Tens @ 8 at Actors’ Theatre. Brad won the Mimi Steinberg playwriting award at Brandeis University where he studied writing and directing with Martin Halpern, David Wheeler, Michael Murray, Edward Albee, Jayne Anne Phillips, Geoffrey Wolff, and others. He has had his plays produced off Broadway and in Boston and is a partner in the Whitefire Theater in Sherman Oaks California. His day job is as a provider of learning and information tools to Academic Libraries working for ProQuest. Locally, Brad has worked with All About Theatre, where he directed *Billy Elliot*, *Batboy*, *Spring Awakening*, *The Addams Family*, and *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*. In addition, this last summer he directed the *Storytellers* for NextStage.



Jonathan Carter Schall (*The Artist, Come On, Ref!*) began acting in eighth grade as Harvey in the teenage farce *No Boys Allowed*, and has performed in over 30 productions and earned a best supporting actor nomination from the LA Weekly theatre awards. Debuting at Actors' Theatre earlier this year with two roles in *The Best of the Rest* staged reading, Jonathan's two roles in this year's festival mark his first appearance in *8 Tens @ 8*, with the additional honor of having been tapped to direct F. J. Hartland's *Geronimo!*—his theatrical directorial debut. Photography and his solo music project, *Identity Theory*, a gothic synergy inspired by Bjork and film composer John Barry, take up the remainder of his time.



Camila Snyder-Alaniz (*The Artist, Not Knowing*) is positively stoked to be performing in two *8 Tens @ 8* shows in this, their first year with the company. They began acting at Santa Cruz High, and are currently a core member of another local theater troupe called the Midsummer Ensemble, where they recently played *Macbeth*. They have plans to continue their studies in acting, both on stage and screen.

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Patrick W. True (*Stop Saying That*) has worked onstage and off for many Santa Cruz theater companies. He was the Master of Ceremonies in the NextStage musical *Razzle Dazzle*, the guard in *Taking Flight* with Mountain Community Theater's Ghost Light Theater, a gentleman in the radio play of *Ebenezer* for Jewel Theater, and the TV ad executive in *Calendar Girls*, also with MCT. He has also been a video producer and image and audio tech for MCT and a singer/musician in the rock band Better Daze.



Andy Waddell (*The Hill, Talking to Myself*) received a BA in drama from USC, but gave up the theater in the early '80s for a glamorous career as a high school English teacher. Now retired, he's decided to give it another try.



Ward Willats (*Debunked, Waiting for Godot*) is delighted to be returning for his fourth year with 8 Tens @ 8. Ward was most recently seen on this stage in October as Jerry in the Actors' Theatre production of *The Thin Place*, which was a delight to do. In 2023 he also appeared in a short play for The Santa Cruz Chamber Players, and designed the lights for the MCT production of *The Humans*. Ward holds a BA in Theater Arts from UCSC, runs a YouTube channel at [youtube.com/WardCo](https://www.youtube.com/WardCo), and is a bit intimidated to be performing this year with the up-and-coming starlet Zoe Willats, whose private trailer, entourage, and talent have proven difficult to adjust to.



Zoe Willats (*Debunked*) is a Santa Cruz local who has been delighted to get back involved with the theatre arts in the last year. Last on stage in the 418 Project's production of *Star Twerk* in October, she can mostly be found meandering along west cliff with her dog or curled up with a book.

SPECIAL THANKS

Amber Artiaga, Geraldine Byrne, Community Printers, Stephanie Golino, Harbor High School, Jewel Theatre, June Magnaldi, John McKinley, David Van Brink and Idea Fab Labs, Noel Warwick, Ward Willats



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Submissions are accepted year-round but must meet the summer deadline of June 30 to be considered for the 8 Tens @ 8 Festival the following January. We accept up to 300 submissions each cycle. See our website for details: www.santacruzactorstheatre.com



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THE DIRECTORS



Kathryn Adkins (*Director, The Hill*) is thrilled to return to 8 Tens @ 8, having directed *Janis Gives Comfort* in 2016. A music and theater specialist, she has performed with Opera Theater of St. Louis, Santa Cruz Symphony, and Tandy Beal and Company, and has played numerous leading ladies for Cabrillo Stage and throughout the South Bay. Favorite roles include Liza in *My Fair Lady* and Frau Schneider in *Cabaret*. She is on the faculty of Cabrillo College where she has directed many musicals, most recently *Carrie, the Musical*. She is co-founder and current president of NextStage Productions, a nonprofit company bringing performance opportunities, education and improved health through the performing arts to mature adults, including touring shows, Open Mic and Drumming for People Living with Parkinsons. Learn more at nextstagesantacruz.org.



Sarah Albertson (*Director, Sense of Direction*) has worked off-Broadway and with theatre companies in the U.S. and Canada. She most recently appeared as Llubov in Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* at Mountain Community Theater and in *Mermaid Madonna* at Center Stage. Sarah is on the Theatre Arts faculty at Cabrillo College. She delights in each opportunity to direct in the 8 Tens @ 8 Festival.



Davis Banta (*Director, Debunked*) has worked as an actor/director in Santa Cruz since 2008. Directing credits include *True West* by Sam Shepard, *Isaac's Eye* by Lucas Hnath, *A Contemporary American's Guide to a Successful Marriage ©1959* by Robert Bastron, and *Assassins* for Mountain Community Theatre, along with many previous 8 Tens @ 8 productions.



Sally Bookman (*Director, The Stocking Exchange*) feels truly honored to be invited to direct her first 8 Tens @ 8 play for the 2024 season, having acted in previous performances with the festival. During the pandemic, on behalf of NextStage Productions, she directed 25 short and two long plays on zoom, with over fifty actors. In 2022 and 2023, again with NSP, she directed short comedy plays performing live in community centers, libraries, and retirement housing facilities. On stage she has performed in *Nice Work if you Can Get it*, *Three Penny Opera*, and a *Short Play Festival* (Cabrillo College), *Wizard of Oz* (Pacific Rep), *Lend me a Tenor* (Mountain Community Theater), as well as musical revues with Choraliers and Market Street Theater. Most recently, she played Chris in the 2023 production of *Calendar Girls* with MCT (thank you, Hannah Eckstein, for that role of a lifetime). Thank you to Martin Kachuck and Linda Gunther, my brilliant cast in this production, and thank you, our audience, for supporting live theater!



Steven Capasso (*Director, On the Road to Tikrit*) is an actor, improviser, and playwright, making his directorial debut with 8 Tens @ 8. He has performed with the Actors' Theatre 8 Tens Festival since 2008, as well as with Mountain Community Theater and Cabrillo College. Favorite roles include Morty (*Nobody's Hero*, 8 Tens Reboot, 2022) Cheswick (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, MCT, 2022) Stan (*SWEAT*, Cabrillo College, 2020), Kit Carson (*The Time of Your Life*, Cabrillo College, 2019), Sawyer (*Miracle on 34th Street*, MCT, 2018) and Lendell (*Almost Maine*, Cabrillo College, 2021). In 2017, Steve performed his solo show *You Always Remember* at United Solo Theatre Festival in NYC. He is a member of 36 North, a playwright's collective.



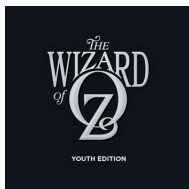
Marcus Cato (*Director, Signing Off*) has acted and directed in the annual 8 Tens @ 8 Festival since 2011. He has acted for many local theater companies including Jewel Theatre, Santa Cruz Shakespeare and its previous incarnation Shakespeare Santa Cruz. He was a company member, actor and director for ten years with the former Bear Republic Theatre. As an arts administrator, he enjoyed a career of over 35 years in Santa Cruz, working with Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Tandy Beal & Company, and the Bear Republic Theatre. Marcus studied theater at the University of Illinois and the California Institute of the Arts.



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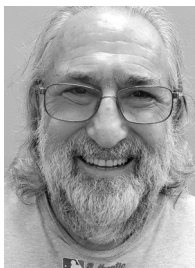
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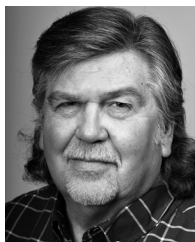
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Hannah Eckstein (*Director, Stop Saying That*) is thrilled to return again, acting and directing for her seventh season of 8 Tens @ 8. She performs locally with Mountain Community Theater, Jewel Theatre, Center Stage, NextStage, Cabrillo, Monterey History, DNA Comedy, and numerous other playhouses. Hannah recently directed *Calendar Girls* and *Sordid Lives* for MCT. She has performed in film, TV and stage in Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York.



Peter Gelblum (*Director, The Visit*) received his BA in Theater from Wesleyan University. He worked professionally as an actor and director in New York, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, including playing the killer on a *Kojak* episode. This is his eighth year directing for 8 Tens @ 8. Peter has also directed regularly at Mountain Community Theater in Ben Lomond, including *August: Osage County*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *Other Desert Cities*, *The Goat, or Who is Sylvia*, and *Miracle on 34th Street*. He has performed at MCT and Cabrillo College in roles ranging from Kris Kringle in *Miracle* to Brutus in *Julius Caesar*. During the pandemic shutdown, he created and directed *The CZU Fire in Their Own Words*, a 90-minute film that tells the stories of people who lost their homes in, and fought, the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire in the San Lorenzo Valley.



Gerry Gerringer (*Director, Waiting for Godot*) has been involved in Santa Cruz theater since 1981. He has been a producer, director and actor. He has worked with Santa Cruz Repertory, Bear Republic Theatre, Santa Cruz Actors' Theatre and produced and directed independently. In 1991, he oversaw the creation of the Broadway Playhouse at the Santa Cruz Art League. Gerry has directed for 8 Tens @ 8 for many years and has a special place in his heart for this wonderful festival. He dedicates this year's performances to his long-time best friend, the incredible Bonnie Ronzio.



Evan Hunt (*Director, The Artist*) is an actor, director and playwright living in Santa Cruz. Originally from San Francisco, he's been participating in the 8 Tens @ 8 and Best of the Rest festivals since 1996. He currently serves on the board of directors at Actors' Theatre, which feels like a second home to him.

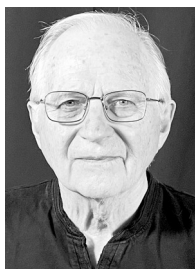


Helene Simkin Jara (*Director, Talking to Myself*) received her BA in Theatre Arts from UCLA in 1969. She has performed in Los Angeles, NYC, and at The Western Stage in Salinas, Carl Cherry Center for the Arts in Carmel, Scotts Valley Performing Arts, Pisces Moon, SEE Theatre, and Cabrillo College. She is also a frequent collaborator with Actors' Theatre, having directed eight 8 Tens @ 8 shows, as well as acting in five Best of the Rest shows and ten 8 Tens @ 8 shows. In September 2020, Helene was featured in *Side x Side*, a Zoomed play reading of three short plays by Jory Post, presented by

36 North Playwright's Collective. In addition to performing, Helene is an award-winning author. Her poems, stories, and plays have been published over 32 times, and have won various awards. Learn more at helenesimkinjara.com.



Buff McKinley (*Artistic Coordinator, Part 1*). This marks Buff's 17th straight year participating in 8 Tens @ 8. Aside from Actors' Theatre, she has worked in a variety of technical roles with some of the best local theater companies, including Soaring Dragon Endeavors, Mountain Community Theater, SEE Theatre, VanAntwerp Theater Company, LPRT, Blue Wolf Productions, and Evergreen Theater. During lockdown, she shared "stage crew" duties, with a cohort in Abu Dhabi for ZoomTheater's international production of *& Juliet*. Upcoming projects at Actors' Theatre include *White Sky*, *Falling Dragon* this spring and something special TBD next fall guaranteed to send shivers down your spine!



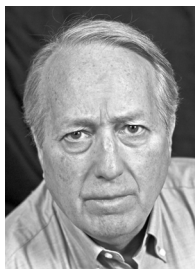
Bill Peters (*Director, Someday After RU-486*) has presented a number of pieces in Santa Cruz as a producer and director, including Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Hamlet*, *Pinocchio* (by local writer Stephanie Golino) and two of his own adaptations – *Hunting for Moby Dick* (Herman Melville), and *Hard Times* (Charles Dickens), which he toured to New York, Australia, and Canada. His directing credits include projects at the Manhattan Theatre Club, The Denver Center, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Jewel Theatre, and the Magic Theatre in San Francisco. Among his more recent directing projects: *Doll's House, Part 2*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Skylight*. Bill has directed eleven plays in 8 Tens @ 8 and has led several theater workshops at Actors' Theatre.



Jonathan Carter Schall (*Director, Geronimo!*) began with home movies in his youth (both live action narratives with his friends, and stop-motion animated shorts), and performing in several school plays. He later studied filmmaking at Columbia College in Chicago, while directing and photographing music videos for local bands. In Los Angeles, he worked as a camera assistant on several independent and Hollywood productions. In Santa Cruz, he studied theater (with Actors' Theatre board member, Robin Aronson) at Cabrillo College. Upon completing two workshops at Actors' Theatre taught by director Bill Peters, Jonathan was tapped by Actors' Theatre board president Suzanne Schrag to direct F. J. Hartland's *Geronimo!*—his theatrical directorial debut. Deepfelt thanks go to Suzanne for her steadfast support in transforming Jonathan from a frog into a prince. A special thank you goes also to director David Lynch whose oeuvre has inspired and informed Jonathan's own directorial approach.



Jim Schultz (*Director, Come On, Ref!*) began his theater career in 2008 when Helene Simkin Jara cast a reluctant newly-retired carpenter as a very large cricket. And, so, the journey began. Five semesters of acting classes at Cabrillo, topped off with a class in directing taught by Wilma Chandler, and a new light was cast on Jim's previously humdrum retirement. Though later cast as a dodo bird, Jim eventually worked his way up to human roles. But when he was given the opportunity to direct, he felt like he had found his niche. *Come On, Ref!* is the eighth short play Jim has directed. He's proud to have worked with this playwright and these actors.



Brian Spencer (*Artistic Coordinator, Part 2*) is a well-known local actor, director, producer and playwright. He has worked with the 8 Tens @ 8 Festival as a playwright and as a director. Brian received his BA from SFSU and his MA in Drama with an emphasis in playwrighting from SJSU.



Suzanne Sturn (*Director, Two Mothers*) Selected local credits include many roles at the Western Stage, also, Santa Cruz Shakespeare, Pacific Repertory Theatre, and Pear Avenue Theatre. Selected regional credits: Irish Classical Theatre, Bristol Valley Theatre, GeVa Theatre, and Centre Stage, New Jersey Shakespeare Festival, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, Kentucky Repertory Theatre and 21st Street Theatre. Playwrighting: *A Thinking Heart*, *The Diary of ETTY HILLESUM*. Suzanne holds an MFA in Acting from UW-Madison, a PhD in Theatre from the University of Minnesota, and the rank of Professor Emerita from SUNY College at Brockport.



Cathy Warner (*Director, Not Knowing*) is a theater artist, choreographer, and educator, who ran the Theater and Dance programs at Harbor High for 37 years, where she had the great pleasure of working with thousands of students and functioning as Artistic Director/Producer for over 100 productions. She loves sharing her deep passion for theater and all aspects of performance. Favorite directing experiences include co-directing last year's *Best of the Rest*, several seasons of directing for the 8 Tens @ 8 and Lampshade's production of *Going to St. Ives*. She is a retired teacher who is absolutely delighted to be directing for the 8 Tens Festival for her fifth time.



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THE WINNING PLAYWRIGHTS - 2024

Alyssa Ahle – *Not Knowing*

Alyssa Ahle is the author of the full-length stage play *Lost and Found* and the short play series *Five Short Plays of Magical Realism*. Her work has been featured in the anthology book series *America's Emerging Literary Fiction Writers: California*; *America's Emerging Science Fiction Writers: Pacific Region*; and *California's Emerging Writers: An Anthology of Fiction* by Z Publishing House. Her work has also appeared online in *Germ Magazine*, *Poetry Super Highway*, and *The Calliope Art & Literary Magazine*. As a writer, she aspires to draw attention to the beauty and humor of life. You can visit her online at <https://alysaahle.com>.

Bruce Bonafede – *Waiting for Godot*

Bruce Bonafede is a Lifetime Member of the Dramatists Guild. Plays include *Advice to the Players* (Heideman Award, Actors Theatre of Louisville), *Ellie* (Finalist, Gulfshore Playhouse), *Crusade* (Baltimore Playwrights Festival), *The Desert of Love* (Coachella Valley Repertory), and *Eyeless in Colonius* (Best Play, Broadway world regional awards). One-acts include *War Island*, *North*, and *South*. His 10-minute plays have been included in annual "Best of" anthologies published by Applause or Smith & Kraus three times.

Dan Borengasser – *The Visit*

Many of Dan's plays have been produced or have received staged readings, including *Death Brings a Casserole*, which was featured in the 2023 8 Tens @ 8 festival. Four plays—*A.R@Uni*, *Gov*, *The Kindness of Strangers*, *The Canterbury Tales Revisited*, and *Sense & Insensibility*—have been published. His plays have been produced in theaters across the country, from New York to Los Angeles, as well as in Canada, Mexico, India, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Several short screenplays have been produced, as well as a feature-length film he helped write, titled *The Donor Conspiracy*. A number of radio plays have been produced and broadcast nationally. www.danborengasser.com

Gail Thornton Borkowski – *Signing Off*

Gail is a director, actress, and playwright. She has directed, produced and acted in Santa Cruz since 1984. Her play *Waking Up* was produced by Actors' Theatre in the 2020 8 Tens @ 8 festival, and her plays *My House* and *Women of a Certain Age* were included in the Actors' Theatre Best of the Rest staged play readings in 2023. She is a member of 36 North, a collective of playwrights dedicated to the writing of theatrical works.

Abby Dunbar – *Two Mothers*

Abby Dunbar is a theatre artist, filmmaker, and writer from Southern California. After earning their BA in Theatre Arts and Media & Visual Culture Studies from the University of Redlands, they began their career in the theatre and arts industries in a variety of different positions including writing, film editing, graphic design, house managing, producing, and marketing.

Seth Freeman – *Sense of Direction*

Seth Freeman writes for the stage, print, film and television, for which he created the series Lincoln Heights. His articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, *Southern Theatre Magazine*, *YaleGlobal*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Stars and Stripes*, *The Hill*, and other periodicals. His work in TV has earned multiple Emmys, Golden Globes, Writers Guild, P.E.N, Peabody, First Amendment and other awards. There have been over 250 productions and readings of his shorter plays in the U.S. and around the world. In 2019 he graduated with a Master's degree from UCLA's Fielding School of Public Health. He dedicates non-writing time to institutions devoted to health care, education, the empowerment of women, and human rights.

F. J. Hartland – *Geronimo!*

F. J. Hartland holds an MFA in Playwriting from Carnegie-Mellon University where he was a Shubert Fellow and the recipient of the Bud Yorkin Playwriting Award. His plays have been performed in New York City, and he is a two-time winner of the Samuel French Off-Off Broadway Short Play Festival.

Bram Hartman – *Come On, Ref!*

Bram Hartman works in a corporate role by day, and explores creativity at night. He enjoys seeing live theater, frequenting dive bars, and spending time with his partner. Bram is particularly interested in writing that reflects the real life struggles we face. Bram lives in NYC. @bramhwriter

Mick Hilgers – *Debunked*

Mick Hilgers is a NY/NJ-based actor and playwright whose work includes playing Judge Ripple in the film *The Courtroom* (which premiered in the Tribeca Festival), having originated the role Off-Broadway; the Emmy-Nominated *The Accidental Wolf* (starring Kelli O'Hara) with Waterwell Films; *Uncle Vanya* for the 3 X Chekhov festival. Additional Theater: La MaMa, Joe's Pub, Luna Stage, The Frigid Festival, the Utah Shakespearean Festival, Northern Stage, Mill Mountain Theater. Mick's short play *Midnight Baseball* premiered at the 7th Inning Stretch Festival at Mile Square Theatre in Hoboken. www.mickhilgers.com

James Ingagiola – *The Artist*

James Ingagiola is an actor, director, and writer, living in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan with a BA in drama. He was a founding member and Artistic Director of The Brass Tacks Ensemble, a nonprofit theater group in Ann Arbor.

Lynnmarie May – *The Stocking Exchange*

Lynn is a playwright and also a children's writer living in western Massachusetts. Her work has been published in many children's and literary magazines. A short play she wrote and performed in was at a CTA festival in Massachusetts, but she has only recently begun seriously submitting plays to theaters. She has been a member of the Westfield Theatre Group (Westfield, MA) for twenty years, most often working backstage as the stage manager and is also the group's historian. Lynn is thrilled *The Stocking Exchange* is making its debut at Actors' Theatre.

Amanda O'Donnell – *Someday After RU-486*

A self-described jack-of-all-trades, Amanda has worked all over New England as a performer, educator, and fight choreographer. She received her MFA from Emerson College, and her plays have been performed at a number of local theaters, including Quannapowitt Players and Artists from Suburbia. Outside of theatre, Amanda enjoys running, reading, and baking.

Rosemary Parrillo – *On the Road to Tikrit*

Rosemary Parrillo is a New Jersey playwright. Her play *The New Normal Trilogy* was selected as a semi-finalist in the 2017 Eugene O'Neill Theater Center National Playwrights Conference. *Grind City* won first place in the 2017 Dubuque One-Act Contest and Festival in Iowa. She also is a three-time finalist in the Tennessee Williams One Act Festival contest, New Orleans. *Shelter* was produced by Freedom Theater in Philadelphia. Parrillo holds a B.A. in English from Rowan University. She is a member of the Dramatist Guild, New Play Exchange, The Playwrights Group, Playwrights' Center, International Centre for Women Playwrights, and New York Women in Film and Television.

George Smart – *Stop Saying That*

George Smart is a Boston-based playwright who's twenty-five 10-minute plays have been produced throughout the United States and in England and the Philippines. His full length play *Mr. Teddy* had its world premiere in Boston in June of 2014. His group of short plays titled *Gay Shorts* had its world premiere in Boston in March of 2017. He is a member the Boston Playwrights Platform and the Dramatist Guild of America.

Sam Weller – *Talking to Myself*

Sam is an actor, director and playwright living in Santa Cruz. Originally from San Francisco, he's been participating in the 8 Tens @ 8 and Best of the Rest festivals since 1996. He currently serves on the board of directors at Actors' Theatre, which feels like a second home to him.

Robb Willoughby – *The Hill*

Robb Willoughby grew up in Xenia, Ohio. He studied at the University of Southern California and the HB Studios in NYC. Equity Readings of Robb's plays include *Dirty Laundry* (RattleStick Theatre, NYC), *Lie on the Water* (Hudson, NY), *Have You Ever Played Dayton?* and *Look Into My Eyes* (HRTC, Dayton, OH). *ALICE*, Robb's take on the Wonderland story has been produced by high schools throughout Southwest Ohio. His play *'se Krits/* was the winner of the 2018 New Works Competition at the Las Vegas Little Theatre. Robb's One-Act plays, *Bro*, *SAY IT!*, *Cowboy Chuck* and *Mr. Pringle's 1:00* have enjoyed several productions: Silver Spring Stage's (D.C.), and P.L.A.Y NOIR (CA), Old Library Theatre (NJ), Lakeshore Players Theatre (MN), City Theatre (MO), The Drama Workshop (OH), SnowDance 2023 (WI). His play *Can't Stop the WROK!*, commissioned by the Franklin School (OH), and *ROOF MAN*, presented at The Method Playhouse (MO), both premiered in 2022.



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