



42nd Season • 402nd Production
JULIANNE ARGYROS STAGE / SEPTEMBER 25 - OCTOBER 16, 2005

South Coast Repertory

David Emmes
PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Martin Benson
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

presents the American premiere of

DUMB SHOW

BY Joe Penhall

SCENIC/COSTUME DESIGN
Angela Balogh Calin

LIGHTING DESIGN
Tom Ruzika

MUSICAL ARRANGEMENT/SOUND DESIGN
Dennis McCarthy

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Jeff Gifford

STAGE MANAGER
Scott Harrison*

DIRECTED BY
David Emmes

HONORARY PRODUCERS
Linda and Tod White

Dumb Show was first presented by the English Stage Company on 2 September, 2004

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Barry *Micheal McShane**
Liz *Heidi Dippold**
Greg *John Rafter Lee**

SETTING

A five-star hotel room in London and a café.

LENGTH

Approximately two hours, including one 15 minute intermission.

PRODUCTION STAFF

Casting *Joanne DeNaut*
Dramaturg *Megan Monaghan*
Assistant to the Director *Suzanne Karpinski*
Production Assistant *Nina K. Evans*
Stage Management Intern *Mia Osherow*

*Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making other noises that may disturb surrounding patrons.
The use of cameras and recorders in the theatre is prohibited. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.
Cellular phones, beepers and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible mode during the performance.*

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

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The Voice Behind 'Dumb Show'

Moments from a conversation between SCR Literary Manager Megan Monaghan and Dumb Show playwright Joe Penball.

What drew you to playwriting? Were you involved in theatre when you were young, or did it visit you later in life?

Theatre didn't visit me till quite late in life, really, not till I was in my late teens. I discovered Joe Orton through that film, *Prick Up Your Ears*, which was written by Alan Bennett which was terrific. Then I started seeing Joe Orton plays and the first one I saw was *The Ruffian on the Stair*. And I started reading plays. From there I went to Harold Pinter, and I was very interested because of that golden era of English playwriting. And Arthur Miller I had done at school—the first play I ever saw was *Death of a Salesman*, in a Fringe production. That really excited me, and the idea that you could have music and lights and sets and there were these real people going through these extraordinary emotions, trials and tribulations on stage, twenty feet away.

I've often tried to figure out why I write plays and not novels or anything else. It's to do with that, really. The animation of human interaction, breathing life into people's conflicts and relationships. You animate certain types of behavior. Giving voice to people.

So I started noodling with playwriting, and that's when I got involved with the Royal Court's writing group for young wannabes. It was terrific. They have this kind of ethos which is you *can* teach people to be playwrights. I'd been at art school and I'd dropped out because the whole ethos was "You're blank slates, and far be it from us to impose our agendas on you wonderful *tabula rasas*." That wasn't any good to me. I wanted to be taught.

What sorts of things did the Royal Court teach?

They taught you how to find your voice. With writing, like a lot of art forms, for years you can just be hopelessly unoriginal. One of the reasons that you do it [write plays] is that you want to emulate your heroes, and the result of that is you get all these young writers who are hopelessly unoriginal. And they [the Royal Court's writers] impressed upon us that you had to be original to be a good writer.

Now that you look back at it, is there a play or a moment or an experience where you can say "That is where my voice started to emerge. That is where I started to sound like me"?

I was fascinated by work. So, all my plays tend to be about work, have something about work or the process of doing a job. Work can be your redemption or it can be your hell. And for a lot of people it's nothing, it's just a dull thing that they do to make ends meet. But for me, it was always either redemption or hell.

The jobs that I had before I was a journalist, I hated. And then I was a journalist and I loved that. There was nothing better than mooching about town, talking to cops, digging up a story. I was the chief reporter on a small London newspaper, so I was the only reporter. I did everything: I did crime, I did features, I did Council stories, I did entertainment stories, I'd go and review theatre, I'd go review musicians, compile press releases. But the stuff that excited me the most was the stuff that was most beyond my previous existence. Going in to talk to detectives about a murder. And doing features on psychiatric wards that were having problems and having to be shut down. Stuff that was beyond my realm.

When you began *Dumb Show*, was the spark of the play something you encountered during your years as a journalist? Where did the play begin?

Years ago, the Royal Court wanted me to write a play about a comedian. They thought it'd be fun if I wrote a play about a comedian. They kind of mysteriously said, "Meet me at the Royal Court on Friday night and we'll pick you up in a car and we'll drive you somewhere. It'll be fun." And I thought "Wow, that's weird." It was Stephen Daldry's idea.

So I did. We drove in a limo down to Kent in southern England, deep dark southern England, and we saw this comedian doing his act. He was kind of very well-established, but in actual fact, privately he was chaotic. We went back to his dressing room afterwards and he was surrounded by these kind of heavies, and these superannuated strippers, people taking hard drugs, and it was hilarious. This was a very popular, very highly regarded comedian, but he was hopelessly inarticulate and vaguely thuggish. I thought "That's a great form of behavior."

The Fame Game

“There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.”

- Oscar Wilde

“Often called the first person famous for being famous, Wilde foreshadowed our modern celebrity obsession.”

- David Plotz, *Slate* 5/10/98

Any phenomenon that starts with Oscar Wilde is bound to be interesting, entertaining and inimitably memorable. Wilde was a master of self-promotion, parlaying his verbal gifts and his titillatingly scandalous life to make sure that no one would ever forget him. If he wasn't truly the first celebrity, he was certainly one of the greatest.

European history actually shows a long-term commitment to celebrity worship. When a winner of the ancient Olympic Games returned victorious, his home city would demolish part of its guardian wall, so that the newly famous athlete would not have to use the gates “like ordinary mortals.” Gladiators became equally famous for their rougher athletic achievements: while Olympians were believed to embody all that was good and lawful about their city-states, even to the point of being considered divine, the gladiators were all too human, generally suspected of being outlaws. Not to be outdone by the grandeur that was Greece, ancient Rome raised its celebrities' profiles by imprinting them on coins. Julius Caesar was the first man to enjoy this privilege during his own lifetime.

With the spread of literacy in the general population after the Dark Ages, persons who were neither royalty nor nobility nor clergy found it easier to achieve celebrity status. The printing press, first invented in China in 1041 AD but appearing in Europe only after

Johann Gutenberg's later, independent invention in the mid-15th century, made all sorts of reading material easier to come by. One can trace the rise of the newspaper, and with it the beginnings of our modern culture of celebrity, back to Gutenberg's innovation.

Tabloid newspapers have created a special niche by obsessively following the personal and professional lives of the wealthy, beautiful, and above all, famous. It is not surprising that the birth of tabloids, around 1830, was accompanied by two characteristics that are, ironically, the same that motivate publishers and editors to convert to smaller formats today. They catered to “readers in a hurry,” and they offered a unique journalistic formula full of human interest stories, police news, entertainment and sports. The contents of the tabloids would be much slimmer without a constant flow of information about celebrities, from pop stars to royalty—people about whom readers seem to have an endless thirst for the most mundane details or the most outlandish tales.

Where does this thirst come from? Perhaps from a basic human curiosity about others, which is heightened in the case of celebrities—the more we know about them, the more we wish to know. One might well wonder how much of that curiosity is embedded in human nature, and how much is warped and bloated from outside feeding. The tabloids can give us a daily dose of glee at the dirty details and misfortunes of the wealthy and beautiful, or they can give us a daily reality check on whether choosing a life in the spotlight relieves a person of any right to define the boundaries of what he or she will keep private—whether or not he or she has anything to hide.

A Few Choice Words

The Ivy: A high-end London restaurant where one is likely to see celebrities dining.

Tommy Cooper: Beloved British comedian, magician, live performer and television star who died during a national TV broadcast on April 15, 1984.

MI5: The British national security service, whose work focuses on counter-terrorism, measures against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and serious crime within the U.K.

Ribena: A brand of uncarbonated soft drink containing blackcurrant juice, popular among children and teenagers.

The Strand: The famous London road that links Trafalgar Square to Fleet Street and the City of London.

Value Added Tax (VAT): A sales tax levied on every business as a fraction of the price of each taxable sale they make, compounding with each stage of production.

Injunction: A court order prohibiting a party from a specific course of action.

Wide boy: Someone who operates barely within the law. Not quite crooked, but suspicious.

The High Court: The British equivalent of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Entrapment: The act of inducing a person to commit a crime so that a criminal charge will be brought against him or her.



HEIDI DIPPOLD
Liz



JOHN RAFTER LEE
Greg



MICHEAL McSHANE
Barry

Artist Biographies

***HEIDI DIPPOLD** (*Liz*) made her SCR debut in *Mr. Marmalade*. Theatre credits include *Fifth of July* at the Signature Theatre, *Ghosts* at the Century Center for the Performing Arts, *Self Torture and Strenuous Exercise* at The Drama League Directors Project, *Homebody/Kabul* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre, *I Hate Hamlet* at The Cleveland Play House, *The Bungler* at the Long Wharf Theatre, *The Rape of Lucrece* at The Shakespeare Theatre Classical Acting Workshop, *Private Eyes* at the Centennial Theatre and *NakedTV 2005* with the Naked Angels. Film and television credits include *Stardom*, "Alias," "Angel," "Law and Order," "NYPD Blue," "Navy NCIS," "The Sopranos," "All My Children," "Guiding Light" and "As the World Turns." Ms. Dippold is an MFA graduate of Rutgers University Mason Gross School of the Arts.

***JOHN RAFTER LEE** (*Greg*) is making his SCR debut. He has acted in productions at the Mark Taper Forum, A

Noise Within, The Old Globe and played Nathaniel Hawthorne in The Road Theatre's *An American Romance*. Outside Southern California he has been seen on the stages of all Seattle's major theatres as well as Tacoma Actors Guild and the New Mexico Repertory. His voice can be heard in MTV's "Aeon Flux," as Trevor Goodchild, the most evil man in the world; in HBO's "Spawn," as Jason Wynn, the most evil man in the world; and in Jet Li's *The Black Mask* he dubbed the voice of The Commander, the most evil man in the world. He is the author of the plays *Blood and Milk* (Pacific Resident Theatre 1998), *Hitler's Head* (The Road Theatre 1999), *Passchendaele*, *Clean Souls* and *Frankincense*. His adaptation of Schiller's *Don Carlos* received its premiere at the Evidence Room Theater in Los Angeles in June of 2001 and opened in New York in September 2004. He wrote, produced and played the lead role in the feature film *Breathing Hard*, which won awards at eight film festi-

vals across the country and internationally, including the Texas Film Festival and the International Festival of Film in Ajijic, Mexico. Production just finished on his latest feature film, *Gone*. He is currently developing a screen version of his play *Hitler's Head* for 2006 production and has had his screen play *A Spike In The Road* optioned for shooting in Ireland. He is the recipient of a Research Fellowship from the American Antiquarian Society.

***MICHEAL McSHANE** (*Barry*) made his SCR debut in *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Theatre credits include *Taller than a Dwarf* at the Long-acre Theatre; *What Became of Owen Beavers* and *The Amazing Kozmo* at The Actors' Gang; *Waiting for Godot* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre; *A Bright Room Called Day* at the Eureka Theatre; and *Golden Boy*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Twelfth Night*, *Feathers* and *Diamond Lil* at American Conservatory Theater. He has also appeared in

the West End productions of *The Pocket Dream* at the Albery Theatre and *Exact Change* at the Lyric Theatre. Film credits include *Big Trouble*, *Gold Cup*, *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, *Office Space*, *Tom and Huck*, *Richie Rich*, *Robin Hood*, *Tucker and Peggy Sue Got Married*. He also voiced the characters of Tuck and Roll in Pixar's *A Bug's Life* and Twitch in HBO's "Spawn." Television credits include series regular roles on "Brotherly Love" and "Whose Line is it Anyway?"; a recurring role on "Seinfeld"; and guest starring appearances on "The Drew Carey Show," "The Norm Show," "Honey I Shrunk the Kids," "Caroline in the City," "Frasier," "Third Rock from the Sun," "ER" and "Oliver Beene."

PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR & DESIGNERS

JOE PENHALL (*Playwright*) joined the Royal Court Theatre's program for young writers, where he wrote his first play *Some Voices*, which premiered at the Royal Court Upstairs. His next offering, *Pale Horse*, was produced to similar acclaim at the Royal Court the next season. *Love and Understanding* and *The Bullet* soon followed. Penhall then became a writer-in-residence at Royal National Theatre, where he wrote *Blue/Orange*. The play, which was produced at the National in 2000 and transferred to the West End and Off-Broadway at the Atlantic Theater Company, swept London's best new play awards that season, winning the 2000 *Evening Standard* Award for Best Play of the Year, the Critics' Circle Award for Best New Play, and the 2001 Olivier Award. Penhall has also adapted his writing for the screen with *Blue/Orange* starring Brian Cox and *Some Voices*, which premiered in Directors' Fortnight at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival. In 2004 he adapted Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love* for Paramount Classics and wrote the four part crime drama *The Long Firm* for the BBC, which

was nominated for a British Academy Award. His latest play, *Dumb Show*, premiered at the Royal Court Theatre in September 2004. He lives in London.

DAVID EMMES (*Director/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 premiere of Terry Johnson's *Unsuitable for Adults*; the West Coast premieres of C.P. Taylor's *Good* and Harry Kondeleon'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. His producing responsibilities involve the overall coordination of SCR's programs and projects. 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 California State University, San Francisco, and his PhD in theatre and film from USC.

ANGELA BALOGH CALIN (*Set/Costume Design*) designed *A View from the Bridge*, *Princess Marjorie*, *The Re-*

treat from Moscow, *Mr. Marmalade*, *Intimate Exchanges*, *Terra Nova* and the Theatre for Young Audiences productions of *The Little Prince*, *The Hoboken Chicken Emergency*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *The Emperor's New Clothes* and *Sideways Stories from Wayside School*. Her previous SCR credits include set and costume design for *The Carpetbagger's Children*, *Making It* and *The Lonesome West*; set design for *Play Strindberg*; and sets and costumes for SCR's Educational Touring Productions from 1998 to present. She is a resident designer at A Noise Within where her costume designs include *The Matchmaker*, *The Price*, *Bus Stop*, *The Imaginary Invalid*, *The Skin of Our Teeth*, *The Misanthrope*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Another Part of the Forest* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award and Garland Award), *Little Foxes* (Garland Award), *The Seagull*, *A Winter's Tale*, *The Threepenny Opera* (Drama-Logue Award) and *Twelfth Night* (Drama-Logue Award). Ms. Calin has designed over 50 productions for local theatres and in her native Romania. Some of those productions are: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at The Hollywood Bowl, *The Winter's Tale* at The Old Globe, *The Last of Mr. Lincoln* at El Portal, *Dialogues* at the Tiffany Theatre, *The Sunshine Boys* and *Harvey* for La Mirada Center for the Performing Arts, *Ivona*, *Princess of Burgundia* for the Odyssey Theatre, *Blood Poetry* (Drama-Logue Award) for Theatre 40 and *Ancestral Voices* for the Falcon Theatre. She has worked extensively in film and television in the U.S. and Romania, having 16 design credits with I.R.S. Media, Cannon Films, PBS, Full Moon Entertainment and Romanian Films. She graduated with an MFA in set and costume design from the Academy of Arts in Bucharest.

TOM RUZIKA (*Lighting Design*), in 33 seasons with SCR, has created lighting designs for more than 85 productions. His designs have been seen

on Broadway, in national tours, at major regional theatres and for many national and international dance and opera companies. His entertainment lighting can be seen at theme parks in six different countries and his architectural lighting can be seen in prestigious hotels, casinos, restaurants, and retail centers across the nation. Mr. Ruzika has received numerous awards for his contributions to the art and craft of lighting design.

DENNIS McCARTHY (*Musical Arrangement*) returns to SCR where he previously composed music for *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*, *The Beard of Avon* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. He has been writing music for television for more than 20 years. His career began as a conductor/arranger for Glen Campbell, whose concert tours took him to every state in the nation and overseas. Once based back in Los Angeles, he worked as musical director on several television variety productions such as “The Barbara Mandrell Show.” He then became an orchestrator for film composer Alex North and began composing for episodic television. Over the years he has written music for numerous television films and many series: “V,” the long-running “MacGyver,” “Parker Lewis Can’t Lose,” “Star Trek: The Next Generation,” “Deep Space Nine” and “Voyager,” among others. Mr. McCarthy has also written music for “Star Trek: Enterprise” “Project Greenlight,” the movie-of-the-week *Having Our Say* and “Dawson’s Creek.” He has won two Emmy Awards for his work on “Star Trek: The Next Generation” and composed the music for the series’ first feature, *Generations*. He is a 12-time winner of ASCAP’s Most Performed Composer Award. He is a Southern California native, the father of three and proud grandfather of eight beautiful grandchildren.

***SCOTT HARRISON** (*Stage Manager*) returns to SCR for his 17th season as

a member of the Stage Management staff. Last season he stage managed *Brooklyn Boy*, *A Naked Girl on the Appian Way* and *A Christmas Carol* and served as the Assistant Stage Manager on *The Clean House* on the Segerstrom Stage. Most recently, he was the production Stage Manager for Christopher Hart’s staging of Moss Hart’s *Light Up the Sky*, the inaugural production (of what hopes to be a summer season) of Equity Theatre at The Village in Mammoth, California. Mr. Harrison would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and continuously support his friends and colleagues who are battling the fight of HIV/AIDS.

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*, Horton Foote’s *The Carpetbagger’s Children* and the world premiere of *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*, the critically acclaimed California premiere of Nicholson’s *Shadowlands*, the Southern California premiere of Michael Healey’s *The Drawer Boy*; and the West Coast premieres of Peter Hedges’ *Good As New* and Martin McDonagh’s *The Lonesome West*. 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 the numerous world premieres he has directed are Tom Strellich’s *BAFO* and Margaret Edson’s Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Alley Theatre in Houston. He has directed American classics including *Ab, Wilderness!*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *A Delicate Balance* and *A View from the Bridge*. Mr. Benson has been honored with the *Drama-Logue* Award for his di-

rection of 21 productions and received 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 California State University, San Francisco.

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 is the immediate past President of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for the professional not-for-profit theater and serves as a member of the Board. In addition, she has 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. She represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT; is a theatre panelist and site visitor for the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council; 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 U.C. 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.