PORTLAND CENTER STAGE
Presents

Other Desert Cities
By Jon Robin Baitz
Directed by Timothy Bond

February 21–March 22, 2015

Artistic Director | Chris Coleman
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By Jon Robin Baitz

DIRECTED BY TIMOTHY BOND

Scenic Designer
William Bloodgood

Costume Designer
Devon Painter

Lighting Designer
Dawn Chiang

Sound Designer
Casi Pacilio

Dialect Coach
Mary McDonald-Lewis

Stage Manager
Liam Kaas-Lentz

Production Assistant
Bailey Anne Maxwell

Casting
Harriet Bass


Performed with one intermission.

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

D'Arcy Dersham…………………………..Brooke Wyeth
Barbara Broughton………………………Polly Wyeth
Ned Schmidtke…………………………..Lyman Wyeth
Susan Cella……………………………..Silda Grauman
Joel Reuben Ganz……………………..Trip Wyeth

The Actors and Stage Manager employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

By Timothy Bond

On first exposure to Other Desert Cities a couple of years ago, I was struck by the love, humor, political sparring and fragile emotions shared between the five characters that inhabit the play. Set in Palm Springs, California, the events of the play occur on a single day, Christmas Eve of 2004, but the memories and the arguments of the play span the period from Vietnam to the post-9/11 invasion in Iraq.
I grew up in California in the 70s and was a teenager during that tumultuous time of societal upheaval, protest and Ronald Reagan’s second term as governor. *Other Desert Cities* reignites in my memory many family arguments that I witnessed and negotiated as the designated clown-peacemaker in my family. Jon Robin Baitz has penned a play that resonates deeply for those of us who lived through the travails of the 60s and 70s, and yet it speaks with profound and timely relevance as it echoes many of the arguments that plague and define our partisan divided nation today. In these perilous times, when we Americans seem horribly polarized politically and socially, it is fascinating to witness these divisions dramatized within the construct of the family which is, for all of us, our first society.

“Families get terrorized by their weakest member.” Playwright Baitz is a master of stating unarticulated truths that trigger in each of us memories of and personal reflections upon our own particular family’s secrets, while also binding us together collectively. In *Other Desert Cities*, the Wyeth family has a writer in its midst. I suspect nearly every family has secrets that have been deemed too dangerous or damaging to be spoken, let alone written about and made public. The consequences of maintaining family secrets or seeking to reveal explosive truths are seemingly catastrophic to the psychic survival of the family and its members.

As an artist, I find this play poses very potent and troubling questions: When is seeking the truth about family secrets off limits? Who determines what family stories get told? What is a writer’s responsibility to her family and to her art? *Other Desert Cities* confronts the Wyeths and all of us with these and other
compelling questions. Humorous and harrowing, Jon Robin Baitz has given us an emotionally complex family drama that frightens and comforts us with its central truth: Whether we name it or not, whatever we’re in, we’re in it together.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES | Other Desert Cities

Barbara Broughton

Polly Wyeth

Barbara Broughton is pleased to be making her debut at Portland Center Stage. Her Broadway credits include the original Sunday in the Park with George and Music Music at City Center Theatre. Among her numerous Off Broadway credits are Grey Gardens at Playwrights Horizons, Concertina’s Rainbow at Cherry Lane Theatre, A Little Night Music at The York Theatre and The Red Truck at Epic Theatre. Some of her favorite regional roles include Big Edie in Grey Gardens (Studio Theatre D.C.), Mrs. Bennett in Pride and Prejudice (Dallas Theatre Center), Marianne in The Bird Sanctuary (Alabama Shakespeare Festival), Emilia in The Comedy of Errors (Connecticut Repertory Theatre), Dolly Levi in Hello Dolly (Hangar Theatre), Mercy Lott in Humble Boy (BoarsHead Theatre), Ester in The Price (Northern Stage), Mrs. Higgins in My Fair Lady (Pioneer Theatre) and Mme. De Volanges in Les Liaisons Dangereuses and Annabelle in George Washington Slept Here (The Pittsburgh Public Theatre). National Tours: Sarah (Company), George M!. Television/Film: Law & Order, The Sunset Gang (PBS) and The Producers.
Susan Cella  
*Silda Grauman*  
Susan Cella is thrilled to be making her Portland Center Stage debut in *Other Desert Cities*, a play near and dear to her heart having played Polly twice and Silda once before. Broadway: *The Graduate, Crazy He Calls Me, Me and My Girl, Evita, On the Twentieth Century* and *Allegro* and *Lady in the Dark* for New York City Center’s Encores!. National Tours: *Fiddler on the Roof* (opposite Topol, Theo Bikel and Harvey Fierstein), *Hairspray, 42nd Street, La Cage aux Folles, Can-Can, Me and My Girl*. Regional: *White Christmas, Anything Goes, Mary Poppins, Gypsy, Funny Girl, Witness for the Prosecution, Lombardi, Noises Off, Gaslight, Bye Bye Birdie, Hollywood/Ukraine, The Full Monty, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Mame, Company, Time and Again, Sideman*.  
Television/Film: *Person of Interest, The Sopranos, Law & Order* (two episodes) *Hi Honey, I’m Home!* (series regular), *All My Children*, and *Follies* and *A Sondheim Celebration* for PBS.

D'Arcy Dershham  
*Brooke Wyeth*  
Room Called Day, Amadeus, King Stag); Trinity Summer Shakespeare (The Tempest, The Comedy of Errors). A graduate of Trinity Repertory Conservatory’s M.F.A. Acting program, D’Arcy also holds a B.A. in Dramatic Literature from Oberlin College, and studied physical theater under Jacques Lecoq at L’École Internationale de Théâtre in Paris. Voice and Speech faculty at the Brown/Trinity Repertory M.F.A. Program for eight years, and proud member of Actors Equity Association since 2002. With unending gratitude to all of my parents, whose support has meant everything to me. And for Billy.

Joel Reuben Ganz
Trip Wyeth
Mr. Ganz is thrilled to make his Portland Center Stage debut. He appeared on Broadway in War Horse (Lincoln Center Theater). Other New York credits include Macbeth (Lincoln Center Theater Educational) and The Clown Play (New York Fringe Festival). Regionally, Mr. Ganz appeared in Measure for Pleasure (Woolly Mammoth); Othello (The Shakespeare Theatre Company); The Book Club Play and Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Suicide Club (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park); Shear Madness and The Lisbon Traviata (The Kennedy Center); The Picture of Dorian Gray (Round House Theatre); The Death of Meyerhold and Take Me Out (Studio Theatre); Pangs of the Messiah, Honey Brown Eyes and The Admission (Theater J); and The Illusion (Actor's Express). Television credits include Unforgettable on CBS and What Would You Do? on ABC. Mr. Ganz is an associate artist with Faction of Fools, a commedia dell'arte troupe in Washington, D.C. Internationally, he worked on productions in Scotland,
France and Corsica. He received his B.A. in Theatre Studies from Emory University and his graduate degree from the International Theater School of Jacques Lecoq in Paris, France. Mr Ganz teaches movement technique and works as a movement and aesthetics consultant.

Ned Schmidtke

Lyman Wyeth

Ned Schmidtke is delighted to be making his debut at Portland Center Stage and to be working again with Director Timothy Bond. Recent stage appearances include You Can’t Take It With You, The Curse of Oedipus, Macbeth and Tonight At Eight Thirty (Antaeus Company, Los Angeles); Loot (Ensemble Theatre Company, Santa Barbara); and Groundswell, The Pleasure of his Company, Sea of Tranquility, A Body of Water, Blue/Orange and Pericles (Old Globe Theatre, San Diego). Ned has worked two seasons at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, as well as at the Utah, Illinois and Stratford (Canada) Shakespeare festivals. Other regional credits include the Goodman and Steppenwolf theaters in Chicago, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Arena Stage, Washington D.C., The Huntington Theatre, Boston and the Long Wharf, New Haven. He was in the Broadway and National Tour of Aren’t We All with Rex Harrison and Claudette Colbert and the National Tour of Six Degrees of Separation with Marlo Thomas. Recent films include The Change Up, Accepted and Wedding Crashers. He has also made many, many appearances on both daytime and primetime television. Ned’s been a proud member of Actors’ Equity Association for over forty years, and for much of that time has served as a member of Equity’s National Council.
Other Desert Cities opened Off-Broadway to huge critical acclaim in 2011, moving quickly to Broadway at the Booth Theatre later that year. It earned playwright Jon Robin Baitz the Outer Critics Circle Award, a New York Times Critics’ Pick and, in 2012, it was a Pulitzer Prize finalist and Tony nominee for Best Play. In the review of the world premiere, The New York Times said it “brings to mind the kind of plays New York audiences regularly enjoyed from the 1920s through the ’50s: literate, thoughtful, well-tailored topical dramas in which people spoke with a fluency, Wittiness and sense of timing we only wished we could command in real life.”

Baitz has a long and celebrated career as both a playwright and screenwriter. He is one of the most produced living playwrights on American stages right now and stands among the most respected writers in the country, known for his well-crafted, powerful plays that have earned their place in the annals of American drama. At a recent production of Other Desert Cities at the Goodman Theatre, Jon Robin Baitz spoke about his initial inspiration for this familial drama, and the intersection of politics and personal life:

Baitz: Initially, I was interested in all of the interconnected impasses that had occurred in American life and my own at the same time. Culturally in the time period – the play starts in
2004 – the smoke was starting to clear from the first moments of a long war, and sides were very vividly drawn in the country. There was a sense that there had been a sea change within the conservative movement and that there was a kind of nostalgia for the old Republicans – Reagan Republicans, and prior to that, Eisenhower Republicans. This new kind of conservatism is fascinating to me. It seems to be very aggressive and involve a lot of new language like “preemptive” and “unilateralism.” And I wondered how that had happened and I also wondered how the old Republicans were reacting to it.

At the same time I was involved in figuring out my own relationship with California, which is my natural habitat – but one that I don’t have a very peaceful relationship with – and I started to see this play. The Palm Springs in the play is a kind of battleground, but a battleground at the end of America, where all the promise of the West has been frozen in time. There were these anachronistic Americans living in a kind of cinematic library of old Hollywood movies, old versions of Western success. They were flitting around in my head, as was my own increasing anxiety about the role of the writer in the lives of others, and the responsibility that a writer has to himself and the people he loves. I had recently created and left a TV show – *Brothers and Sisters* – in Los Angeles, and sworn never to go back to that life, and I thought I’d try and do some of the things that *Brothers and Sisters* would not permit me to do: to write about the family as a narrative, and a certain kind of privileged America which is acknowledged in the play …

I strive to find the exact point in a narrative where the personal and the political intersect perfectly, because I find the two things
completely inseparable. America is currently in a giant political debate, and you see a kind of war going on that’s actually a very old war. I’m trying to mirror that in the play. Our elections are about the soul of this country, which is what makes them so harrowing. It’s like every four years there’s open heart surgery here, and having had heart surgery I can’t conceive of doing it again and again throughout one’s life. I see the country as really broken, much as the family in the play is breaking.

Tell us what you think of the show! Find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

CREATIVE TEAM BIOGRAPHIES | Other Desert Cities

Jon Robin Baitz
Playwright
Jon Robin Baitz’s plays include *The Film Society, The Substance of Fire, The End of the Day, Three Hotels, A Fair Country* (Pulitzer Prize finalist 1996), *Mizlansky/Zilinsky, Ten Unknowns* and *The Paris Letter*, as well as a version of *Hedda Gabler* (Broadway 2001). He created *Brothers and Sisters*, the TV series which ran for five seasons, until 2011. Other TV work includes PBS’ version of *Three Hotels*, for which he won the Humanitas Award, and episodes of *The West Wing* and *Alias*. He is the author of two screenplays: the film script for *The Substance of Fire* (1996) and *People I know* (2002). He is a founding member of Naked Angels Theatre Company and on
the faculties of the M.F.A. programs at The New School for Drama, and SUNY Stony Brook/Southampton. His play Other Desert Cities won the Outer Critics Circle Award in 2011.

**Timothy Bond**

**Director**

Timothy Bond is in his eighth season as producing artistic director of Syracuse Stage and the Syracuse University Department of Drama. Before moving back east, Mr. Bond served as Associate Artistic Director of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival where he directed 12 productions from 1996-2007. Prior to OSF, Bond directed over 20 plays and helmed the MultiCultural Playwrights Festival at Seattle Group Theatre, where he also served as Artistic Director from 1991-1996. Tim has guest directed at many theatres including The Guthrie, Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Cleveland Play House, A Contemporary Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Geva Theatre, Seattle Children’s Theatre, The Baxter Theatre (Cape Town, South Africa) and The Market Theatre (Johannesburg). Tim’s directing credits include The Piano Lesson, Twelfth Night, The Brothers Size, Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf, Top Dog/Underdog, Fences, Marisol, Death of a Salesman, Crowns, El Paso Blue, The Diary of Anne Frank, A Raisin in the Sun, The Price, Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom, Gem of the Ocean, and The Glass Menagerie. Bond won Backstage West’s Garland Award for Les Blancs and Blues for an Alabama Sky. Bond holds an B.F.A. from Howard University and a M.F.A. in directing from the University of Washington.
William Bloodgood

Scenic Designer

William returns to Portland Center Stage for his thirteenth production, having previously designed the scenery for *Misalliance* (2007), *The Beard of Avon* and *Twelfth Night* (2008), *Snow Falling on Cedars* (2010), *The Imaginary Invalid* and *Oklahoma!* (2011) and *Sweeney Todd* (2012). William has designed for many regional theaters in the U.S. and abroad, including Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., Birmingham Repertory Theatre in the U.K., Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Alley Theatre in Houston, Arizona Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Children’s Theatre Company in Minneapolis, Denver Center Theatre Company, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Intiman Theatre in Seattle, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, Seattle Repertory Theatre, Syracuse Stage, and especially for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. In 2002 he was presented with The (Oregon) Governor’s Award for the Arts. He now teaches at the University of Texas in Austin.

Costume Designer

Devon Painter

Devon lives in Bradley Beach, New Jersey, and pinches herself often that she gets to do this to earn a living. Highlights in her design career include work for the Guthrie Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Geva Theatre Center, Asolo Repertory Theatre, Kansas City Repertory Theatre, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Utah Shakespearean Festival, Launch Pad at UCSB, Folger Theatre,
Studio Theatre, Contemporary American Theater Festival and American Players Theater. She was Associate Costume Designer to the Tony Award-winning Desmond Heeley on *The Importance of Being Earnest* in 2011. Her work was included in the exhibit *Curtain Call; Celebrating a Century of Women Designing for Live Performance*. She is a proud member of United Scenic Artists.

**Lighting Designer**

**Dawn Chiang**

Dawn’s prior designs for PCS were *Crowns* and *The Old Settler*. She has designed the lighting at numerous regional theaters including Arena Stage, Denver Center Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Arizona Theatre Company, Alliance Theatre, Mark Taper Forum, Guthrie Theater and Syracuse Stage. On Broadway, Dawn designed the lighting for *Zoot Suit*, was co-designer for *Tango Pasion*, and associate lighting designer for *Show Boat*, *The Life* and the original production of *La Cage Aux Folles*. Off-Broadway, she has designed for the Roundabout Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, and co-designed the first two seasons of the *Encores!* concert musical series at New York City Center. Dawn was resident lighting designer for New York City Opera, where her designs included *A Little Night Music* and *La Fanciulla del West*. Awards include two Dramalogue Awards and nominations for an American Theatre Wing/Maharam Design Award, Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award and San Francisco Bay Area Drama Critics Circle Award.
Casi Pacilio  
**Sound Designer**

Casi keeps busy with a variety of work and play in Portland and around the country. PCS credits include *Threesome, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Dreamgirls, The Last Five Years, Othello, A Small Fire, Chinglish, Twist Your Dickens* (2013 and 2014), *The Mountaintop, Fiddler on the Roof, Oklahoma!, The North Plan, Shakespeare’s Amazing Cymbeline, Black Pearl Sings!, Opus, futura* (with composer Jana Losey), *Ragtime* (PAMTA Award 2010), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Alfred Hitchcock’s The 39 Steps, Snow Falling on Cedars, Crazy Enough, The Little Dog Laughed, Sometimes a Great Notion, Cabaret, The Pillowman, I Am My Own Wife, West Side Story, Celebrity Row* and eight seasons of JAW. National shows: Holcombe Waller *Surfacing* and *Wayfinders; Hand2Mouth Theatre credits: Left Hand of Darkness, My Mind is Like an Open Meadow* (Drammy Award 2011), *Something’s Got Ahold Of My Heart* and *PEP TALK*. Other theatrical credits include Squonk Opera’s *Bigsmorgasbord-WunderWerk* (Broadway, PS122, national and international touring); *I Am My Own Wife, I Think I Like Girls* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Playland, 10 Fingers and Lips Together, Teeth Apart* (City Theatre, PA). Film credits include *Creation of Destiny, Out of Our Time* and *A Powerful Thang*. Recordings: Glitterfruit’s *fruit snacks*.

Mary McDonald-Lewis  
**Dialect Coach**

Mary McDonald-Lewis has been a working artist since 1979 as SAG-AFTRA voice actor and on-camera performer, and in theatre for much longer as actor and director. MaryMac has been
a dialect coach since 1999, and is house coach for Hallmark Hall of Fame, the series Leverage, Grimm and others. Film, television and stage clients range from overnight sensations to Drammy, Obie, Emmy and Oscar winners, and include a Knight of the British Empire. She is blessed to be Resident Artist, Speech and Text Director, at Artists Repertory Theatre and house coach at Portland Center Stage, and is just thrilled to say this is her 22nd show as coach at PCS. MaryMac thanks Finnegan, Sullivan and Flynn for always wagging their tails when she comes home from telling her tales. www.marymac.com

Liam Kaas-Lentz  
**Stage Manager**

Liam is a native of Bellingham, WA. He is an ensemble member of Sojourn Theatre, having served as their stage and production manager for the past ten years and thirteen productions. He has also stage managed for Hand2Mouth Theatre, Portland Playhouse, Artists Repertory Theatre, the Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts, Geva Theatre Center, Oregon Children's Theatre, Pixie Dust Productions, The Kitchen, River to River Festival, TeatroMilagro and many others. He received his B.F.A. in stage management from Southern Oregon University and his M.Ed. in curriculum and instruction from Portland State University. Liam has also taught stage and production management with a focus on ensemble, devised, and site-specific contexts and methodologies at Georgetown University, Northwestern University, Portland State University, Reed College and Lewis and Clark College. He is a proud
member of Actors’ Equity Association, and lives with his wife and two cats in southeast Portland.

**Bailey Anne Maxwell**
**Production Assistant**
Bailey Anne Maxwell is thrilled to be joining Portland Center Stage this season. Bailey has most recently worked as a Production Assistant with Artists Repertory Theatre on *The Motherf**ker* with the Hat, *Foxfinder, Ten Chimneys, The Lost Boy* and *Seven Guitars*. Bailey has recently enjoyed being the Stage Manager on *Tamer Tamed* and the Assistant Stage Manager on *Taming of the Shrew* with Portland Shakespeare Project. She has also worked with Profile Theatre as a Stage Management Apprentice on *Buried Child* and *Eyes for Consuela*. Bailey is a Linfield College graduate and a proud member of the EMC program.

**FOR THIS PRODUCTION**

**Technical Direction**
Seth Chandler
David McCrum
Erinn McGrew

**Scenic Painters**
Shawn Mallory
Lauren Newey
Props Artisans
Teresa Pilar Huarte
Shawn Mallory

Sound Programmer and Engineer
Scott Thorson

SPONSOR STATEMENTS

Lead Corporate Champion Umpqua Bank
From the lead actor to the light technician, from the front seats to the back row, we’re proud to support every inch of Portland Center Stage. Of course we’re writing this in hope that, as a fellow lover of the theater, you’ll come and visit us. But for now, sit back, enjoy the show and cheers for the season!

Andy and Nancy Bryant:
We often say, "Families, how would we ever survive without them . . . yet how do we ever actually survive them?!" As part of a large (by today's standards), very connected (though geographically diverse) family, we can appreciate all the craziness of family dynamics. It was the interesting exploration of these family dynamics, along with how much we enjoy Portland Center Stage, that drew us toward supporting this production of Other Desert Cities.

Helen and Jerry Stern:
We are thrilled with Portland Center Stage and are pleased to be able to assist them in presenting memorable performances for the Portland community.