

Central Works

The New Play Theater

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For press materials and hi-res color press photos visit <http://centralworks.org/strange-ladies/#showtab=details>

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**The Central Works 2017 Season Concluding Production
A New Play With Music About The Struggle To Gain The Vote For Women**

Strange Ladies

Written by Susan Sobeloff

Directed by Jan Zvaifler

Musical direction by Milissa Carey

Oct 14–Nov 12

Press Night on Sat. Oct. 14 (Previews Oct 12 & 13)

Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue

The Central Works 2017 season concludes this Fall with ***Strange Ladies* by Susan Sobeloff** opening with a press night on Saturday October 14 running through November 12 (previews Oct 12 & 13) at the renowned **Berkeley City Club**. ***Strange Ladies*** is a Central Works Method play inspired by the Suffrage movement. The production is told with music of the period under the musical direction of **Milissa Carey**. 1917: a diverse group of Suffragists is fighting to gain the vote for women as the US enters World War I. Torn between loyalty to their political cause and loyalty to the war effort, these women each struggle to make difficult choices in a time of tremendous social upheaval. The personal pits each against the political in *Strange Ladies*.

2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the imprisonment of the “Silent Sentinels.” These women were arrested and sent to Occoquan Workhouse Prison after picketing the White House and demanding the right to vote. Their brutal treatment and subsequent hunger strike earned them the epithet of the “Strange Ladies” and forced the issue of Woman Suffrage into the national consciousness. Three years later the 19th amendment was ratified, granting women the right to vote. The ***Strange Ladies*** ensemble features actors Milissa Carey*, Nicol Foster*, Gwen Loeb*, Regina Morones, Radhika Rao, and Renee Rogoff.

A Central Works Method play, *Strange Ladies* is written by Susan Sobeloff with direction by Jan Zvaifler and musical direction by Milissa Carey. The play was developed in collaboration with Milissa Carey, Gary Graves, Gwen Loeb, Regina Morones, Radhika Rao, Renee Rogoff, Gregory Scharpen and Jan Zvaifler.

***Strange Ladies* Written by Susan Sobeloff**

Directed by Jan Zvaifler, Musical direction by Milissa Carey

Oct 14–Nov 12 (Previews Oct 12 & 13) Press Night on Sat. Oct. 14

Performing at the Berkeley City Club 2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley

Tickets: \$30 online at centralworks.org or \$30 – \$15 sliding scale at the door.

Previews and Thursdays are pay-what-you-can at the door.

For more information call 510.558.1381 or visit <http://centralworks.org>

Susan Sobeloff (playwright) is a Bay Area playwright whose plays have been produced at the Exit Theatre, Custom Made Theater Company, SF Olympians Festival, SF Theatre Festival, The Marsh and the Woman's Will Playfest. She is a two-time Fellow at the Helen R. Whiteley Center, and an alumna of the TBA Atlas Program for Playwrights. She has been an invited member of the Central Works Writers Workshop since 2012 where she developed the script for *Strange Ladies*.

Jan Zvaifler (director) is Co-director of Central Works along with Gary Graves. A founding member of the company, she has participated as an actor, designer, director and/or producer for the past 27 seasons. For Central Works, she has recently directed *RLS: Jekyll and Hyde*, *Charlotte Perkins Gilman's The Yellow Wallpaper*, *Dracula Inquest*, *The Lion and the Fox*, and *RICHARD THE FIRST; a trilogy*. She has also worked with many local theater companies including the Berkeley Rep, Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theater Company, San Francisco Playwrights Foundation, and San Francisco Shakespeare Festival.

Strange Ladies Ensemble

Milissa Carey* (music director and actor) has appeared with many Bay Area companies and on the National Tour of *Evita* under the supervising direction of Hal Prince. In addition to acting, Milissa is a director and educator. Recent directing credits include *Shrek*, *Side Show*, *Kiss Me Kate*, *Sunday in The Park with George*. Milissa is on the faculty at A.C.T. in the MFA program, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music and Foothill College.

Gwen Loeb* (actor) is a Bay Area based actor whose recent productions include: *Can You Hear Me Baby* with Prospect Theatre Company in New York; *The Nurse in Romeo and Juliet* with San Francisco Shakespeare Festival; *Mrs. Bennett in Pride & Prejudice* at Livermore Shakespeare Festival; *Pauline in A Bright New Boise*, and *Babette in The Arsonists* at Aurora Theatre Company; *Gertrude Stein in There There* with First Person Singular; *Scripts* readings of Mabel Cantwell in *The Best Man*, and *Mrs. Bacon & the Nurse in East of Eden* at American Conservatory Theatre; and *Flo* in the movie *The Boat Builder* with Christopher Lloyd.

Nicol Foster* (actor) is honored to be portraying a character inspired by Mary Church Terrell, a national activist instrumental in the advancement of civil rights and suffrage. Since being of age to vote, Nicol has never missed the opportunity, and right, to vote in any election, local, state or national. She and her parents go to the polling station as a family. Nicol has performed with Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theatre Company and TheatreWorks.

Regina Morones (actor) is a native Bay Area actor, singer, teaching artist and a member of San Francisco Shakespeare Festival's Resident Artist Company. Most recently she was seen as Hermione in *The Winter's Tale* at the African American Shakespeare Company. Morones has a BA in Theatre Arts from Clark Atlanta University and an MFA in Acting from the University of Iowa, and she is an Equity Membership Candidate with Actors' Equity Association.

Radhika Rao (actor) is an actor, director, storyteller, improviser, teaching artist, and arts-integrator. She is a member of Eth-noh-tec storytelling ensemble and a resident artist of the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival. She is a frequent performer and director for 'New Work' festivals. She was recently seen in SF Shakes' *Hamlet*. In the spring of 2018, she will be seen in Cutting Ball Theatre's *Timon of Athens*.

Renee Rogoff (actor) is an alumni of Lee Strasberg Studio in New York, Repertory Philippines, New York Film Academy, and The American Academy of the Dramatic Arts. She is currently pursuing a degree in Photojournalism at Academy of Art University in the Bay Area after living in New York and the Philippines. Her appearances include *Josie* in *A Moon For The Misbegotten* (Roustabout Theater Co.)

Sarah in Time Stands Still (AAU), has performed with Upright Citizens Brigade in NYC, and played opposite Peter Greene in the short film, *Poetry Man*, winning honorable mention at the Cannes Film Festival. She can be seen playing Ouisa in AAU's upcoming production of *Six Degrees of Separation* opening this December.

*member AEA

Central Works Method

The script was created using the **Central Works Method** of collaborative play development. In a supportive workshop environment, group exploration and collective brainstorming contribute to the development of the script. The play emerges as a rich mix of group research, dramaturgical analysis and shared imagination. "The creative simmering that takes place gives a Central Works production a different brand from other more conventionally created productions...a unique style of theater not to be missed"—*San Jose Mercury News*.

Central Works fills a special niche for theater artists in the San Francisco Bay Area, producing more new plays by local playwrights than any other company in the region. "**The New Play Theater**" utilizes three basic strategies: some come to the company fully developed, some are products of the **Central Works Method**, and some are developed in the **Central Works Writers Workshop**, an ongoing commissioning program established in 2012.

CALENDAR EDITORS PLEASE NOTE:

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Strange Ladies

Written by Susan Sobeloff

Directed by Jan Zvaifler

Musical direction by Milissa Carey

Oct 14–Nov 12 (Previews Oct 12 & 13) Press Night on Sat. Oct. 14

At: The Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Avenue, Berkeley.

Performances: Thurs, Fri & Sat at 8 pm, Sun at 5 pm

Post-show talk-backs: Oct 15 & Nov 5

Ticket prices: \$30 online at centralworks.org, \$30–\$15 sliding scale at the door.

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