Central Works 2023 Season Continues With:

World premiere #72: from the Central Works Writers Workshop

Oct 14 - Nov 12

The Engine of Our Disruption
A new comedy about bad behavior

Artificial Intelligence meets Authentic Misconduct

Written by Patricia Milton
Directed by Gary Graves
Featuring: Chelsea Bearce, Louel Señores, Michael Tuton & Jan Zvailler

Make sure you’re on our mailing list!
Central Works mission is to develop and produce new plays for the theater. We are building a community where our commitment to new plays and civic engagement flourish together.

Central Works believes:

- New Plays are the lifeblood of a vital, relevant, and progressive theater.
- Collaboration is at the heart of everything we do.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion—in our storytelling, our company, and our audiences—are fundamental to our success.
- We are committed to social justice and the exploration of pressing political issues facing our world, inviting our community to reflect, converse, and connect in civic engagement.

A Note From the Playwright

I learned about gifting circles a few years ago and was immediately fascinated by the people who both perpetuate, and fall for, these cons. In The Dignity Circle, I’m interested in exploring the human desire to find an accepting community that offers the immediate rewards of recognition and praise (and, in this case, cash). I’m exploring how corruptible the allure of power can be, and how badly we can hurt one another, even if we start with the best of intentions.

Simply put, we’re all lonely, and looking for comfort. In The Dignity Circle, I wanted the audience to recognize and empathize with my characters’ loneliness, so as to perhaps provide greater understanding into how these gifting circles succeed in conning their victims again and again and again.

I am deeply grateful to our director, Gary Graves, everyone at Central Works, and this fantastic cast for bringing The Dignity Circle to life.

- Lauren Smerkanich

Central Works recognizes that our performance space is positioned on Huchuun territory, unceded land of the Lisjan Ohlone people. Our community has benefited from this land, and we owe the Ohlone people a collective debt.

Central Works donates annually to the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust.

Central Works recognizes that our performance space is positioned on Huchuun territory, unceded land of the Lisjan Ohlone people. Our community has benefited from this land, and we owe the Ohlone people a collective debt.

Central Works donates annually to the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust.

Julia’s

Enjoy 15% off Dinner before the show
*Excludes beverages, tax & gratuity

Located on the second floor of the Berkeley City Club. A contemporary, farm-to-table French restaurant influenced by California culinary cuisine. Combined with a beautiful atmosphere and friendly service, Julia’s creates a memorable dining experience for all guests.

Make a reservation on Open Table, call (510) 848-7800 or email julias@berkeleycityclub.com

Morgan’s

We have relaunched the lounge on the second floor of the Berkeley City Club as Morgan’s Bar & Lounge! Take a seat at our new bar, originally built in the 1880s and graciously donated and restored by a few of our own members.

Try our wide variety of cocktails, wine, beer, and small bites.

Open Tuesday-Saturday, 4:30pm-9:00pm

Berkeley City Club | 2315 Durant Ave, Berkeley, CA 94704 | www.berkeleycityclub.com

The Berkeley City Club is a historic hotel, private social club, and event venue. It has been accepted into the National Register of Historic Places and is a member of the Historic Hotels of America. In 1927, a small group of women hired Julia Morgan to design and supervise the construction of a center around women’s activities. Miss Morgan’s “Little Castle” opened in November 1930 as the Berkeley Women’s City Club, which became a center for social, cultural, recreational, and family activities in the East Bay.

For more information, please visit berkeleycityclub.com.
What Some of Our Central Workers Are up To:

Steve Budd has a new solo show, Seeing Stars, at the SF Fringe Festival, Exit Theater, Aug 10, 19 & 26. Reservations & info: TheExit.org

Thomas Carnacki (aka Gregory Scharpen) has a new double-lp, Cadavre Isolé, slated to come out in September or October. thomascarnacki.bandcamp.com

Elizabeth Carter will direct The Wolf Play with lights designed by Stephanie Anne Johnson at Shotgun Players, Sep 2 - Oct 1. Reservations & info: ShotgunPlayers.org or 510.841.6500

Tamar Cohn will be appearing in The Glass Menagerie at Ross Valley Players, Sep 15 - Oct 15. Reservations & info: RossValleyPlayers.com or 415.456.9555

Cristina Garcia’s new novel, Vanishing Maps, is coming out in July! Please join her for the book’s launch on Tues 7/18 at Mrs. Dalloway’s bookstore in Berkeley, 7 PM. Reservations (recommended) & info: CristinaGarciaNovelist.com

Stephanie Anne Johnson is designing lights for The Birds, directed by Kimberly Ridgeway at Altarena Playhouse, Aug 11 - Sep 10. Reservations & info: Altarena.org or 510.523.1553

Armando McClain appears in Twelfth Night at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival Jun 15 - Oct 15. Reservations & info: OSFashland.org or 800.219.8161

Radhika Rao is performing in the SPARC (formerly Livermore Shakespeare Festival) production of Silent Sky, by Lauren Gunderson Jun 23- Jul 9. Reservations & info: SPARCTheater.org or 925.443.2273

The Dignity Circle
written by Lauren Smerkanich
directed by Gary Graves
World Premiere #71

The action takes place in a conference room in a very nice hotel in Sacramento, California. Several very nice living rooms in the suburbs of Sacramento, California. And the Baking Aisle of a Green Leaf supermarket.

The play runs 90 minutes with no intermission.

*Member of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers. This Theater operates under an agreement with Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

This production is made possible with the generous support of the Actors Equity and RHE Foundations, Alameda County ArtsFund and the Berkeley Civic Arts Grants Program.
Bios

HEATHER KELLOGG BAUMANN (Kate) is making her debut with Central Works. She was most recently seen in Clue and A Christmas Carol with Center REP. Other recent productions: Rachel in The How and the Why (Lucky Penny Productions), Varya in The Cherry Orchard, Margaret/Anne in Sense and Sensibility, and Hallie in The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance (all at Town Hall Theatre), Evelina Bunner in The Bunner Sisters (reACT), and Kristin in Kristin Hersch’s RAT GIRL (DIVAfest). She graduated from UCLA’s School of Theater, Film, and Television, and SF Circus Center’s Clown Conservatory. See her next as Olympe in The Revolutionist at Lucky Penny Productions. www.heatherkelloggbaumann.com

TAMMY BERLIN (costume designer) began her theatre career in Chicago where she was the Artistic Director of Transient Theatre and Heroes Inc. Ensemble and The Managing Director of The Playwrights’ Center. After moving to the Bay Area she switched her focus to costume design. Most recently she has designed shows for Bay Area Children’s Theatre, Playground, Diablo Theatre Co., St. Mary’s College, Marin Shakespeare and Berkeley Playhouse, as well as films for Flying Moose Productions, Videosyncrasy and EyeQ Films. She is a recent recipient of a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Costume Design.

GARY GRAVES (director) has been a resident playwright and company co-director at Central Works since 1998. He has been a part of developing 71 world premiere productions with the company, many of which he has either written and/or directed. Some of the other productions he has directed for the company include Dreaming in Cuban, King of Cuba, Bamboozled, Chekhov’s WARD 6, Into the Beautiful North, and Machiavelli’s The Prince. He directed the company’s first collaboratively developed script, Roux, at the Berkeley City Club in 1997. He also leads the Central Works Playwriting Program, and he teaches playwriting year-round at the Berkeley Rep School of Theater.

DOV HASSAN* (Parker) grew up in the Bay Area where he has been working as an actor, musician, director and teacher for many years. Dov is very excited to be working with Central Works for the first time. He is a co-founder and member of Theatre Cultura and a company member with Oakland Theater Project. Recent acting work includes Lear (CalShakes), Vinegar Tom (Shotgun Players), Hamlet (Oakland Theater Project), and CHEER: Story of a Dreamer (Theatre Cultura). Dov received his MFA in Acting and Directing from University of Missouri – Kansas City and currently is head of the theater program at Chabot College.

SIERRA MARCKS* (Angela) is thrilled to be making her debut with Central Works. She is an LA-based actress and voiceover artist and serves on the Board of Directors for Theatre of Note. Selected productions include Nimrod, Welcome to the White Room, Phrazzled, and more at Theatre of Note. Other favorite west coast productions include Born To Win at Celebration Theatre, and By The Way, Meet Vera Stark at Long Beach Playhouse. She is a graduate of Marymount Manhattan College.

THOMAS O’BRIEN, he/him (property designer) is very pleased to be working with Central Works on The Dignity Circle. Thomas has designed props for theatre and photography for many years. Based in San Francisco, he has had opportunities to work with very talented theater groups. Credits include Universal Robots for Quantum Dragon Theatre, Passion for Custom Made Theatre, The Full Monty at Bay Area Musicals, and Aunt Jack, Prep Play, and Dot at NCTC. He has been nominated for a BACC Scenic Design Award for The Mousetrap (Ross Valley Players) and for Picnic at Ross Valley Players which won a BACC award for the Entire Production.
Donors to Our 2023 Season (so far):

Anonymous (various and many)
Ida & Myles Abbott
Candace Adams
Rica Anderson
Michelle Barbour
Joann Steck Bayat & Hossain Bayat
Linda Beideman
Annie Beytin Barko
Eloise Bodine
Diana Bort
Suzanne Bregman
Edythe Bresnaham
Mary Helen Briscoe
Zelda Bronstein
Gretchen Brosius
Lisa Bruce
Tim DeWolf & Cristina Campbell
Barbara Sheng & Brad Cantos
Melissa Carey
Dale Hopkins & Jeff Carlock
Elisabeth Chomouni
Miriam Clochon
Ann Claessens
Susanne Stoffel & Michael Coan
Marilyn Colby
Tom Consoli
Narsai & Veni David
Don & Judy Davis
Joanne De Phillips
Carla den Dulk
Allan Cunningham & Ellen Dietschy
Betsy Dixon
Bruce Dodd
Linda Dondoro
Mona Droiker
Dennis Edds
Elizabeth Edelstein
Dusty Sykes & Carolyn Edwards
Thomas Edwards
Homeira Elder
Brenda Way & Henry Erlich
Lisa Esherick
Susan Taylor & Bob Fabry
Marta Falicov
Bekka Fink
Deb Fink
Candace Fitzgerald
Kevin & Brenda Fitzpatrick
John Flanagan
Nancy Friedman
Karen Gabrielson
Ellen Daniell & David Gelfand
Sarah Gill
Michaela Goldhaber
Carol & Arthur Goldman
Anita Grandpre
Rudy Guerrero & Warrior Artists of the Horizons Foundation
Lee & Patrick Hackett
Pamela Haenke-Clark
Anne Halilnan
Victor Morales & Sharon Halpern
Lisa Hammond
Jay Harlow
William Davis & Carol-Joy Harris
Rosemary Hegarty
Ken Hempel
Brian & Jocelyn Herrdon
George Heymont
Alandra Hiler
Caroline Hillhouse
Estle Hudes
Lynne Inman-Hoffert
Craig & Deborah Janke
Andrew & Susan Jokelson
Guy Joslin
John Kemp
Casey Kho
Karen Kline
Hillary Lorraine & Donald Klose
Jeremy Knight
Martha & Karl Knobler
Marian Kohlstedt
Marcia Kolb
Artie & Weldon Lee
Laurence LePaul
Yurria Lobato & Hilary Lerner
Andrew Leslie
Janette Levenson
Susan Levin
Hank Levy
Eugenia Loken
Robin Low
Phil Lowery
Arthur & Martha Luehrmann
Bonnie Lynn
Linda Maio
Neela & Bill Manley
Georgia Maslowski
Jayne Matthews
Denise Maudlin
Armando McClain
Ted McClintic
Lee & Patrick Hackett
Hector & Linda Mendez
Joseph Michael
Elsa Mikitin
Laura & Phillip Miller
David Harder & Patricia Milton
Dean Pichotto & Ann Moen
James & Juliane Monroe
Joseph & Mary Morganti
Pheobe Moyer
Maris & Ivan Myerson
Richard Nelson
Erica Niefeld
Michael Scott & Ellen O’Brien
Thomas O’Brien
Vicki Oliveira
Ayolene Oseye
Vicki Oswald
Cindy & David Michael Ott
Rebecca Parlette-Edwards
John Pemick
Kris Peterson
Catherine Philippon
Hendrik Picciotto
Margaret Pinter
Vivan Pizaro
Kathy Price
Madeleine Puccioni
Sandra Ramsey
Jon & Jane Raymond
Vincent & Cheryl Resh
Sophie Rheinheimer & The Rheinheimer Family
Gregg Richardson
Kimberly Ridgeway

REBECCA PINGREE (Judith) recently played Adira in Michael Moran’s Exodus to Eden at OTP, Bridget Potter in the original cast of The Kilbanes’ The Code with ACT YC, The Baker’s Wife in Sondheim’s Into the Woods at Berkeley Playhouse, and an assortment of puppets (and herself) in Shadow Circus’ Voidville. She’s also performed throughout the Bay Area, including with TheatreFirst, Shotgun Players, Marin Theatre Company, Ray of Light, Playground, Napa Valley Conservatory, Livermore Shakespeare, and Perspective Theatre. She holds an MFA in Collaborative Theatre making from Rose Bruford in London, and is a regular deviser/performer for Analog Theatre’s Mask Monday series at Standard Deviant Brewing in SF (analogtheatre.org).

KIMBERLY RIDGWAY (Heather) is making her return to Central Works after playing Duchess in Wonderland in 2019 and Biz in The Human Ounce in 2020. Kimberly is an accomplished Actor, Director and Playwright. Next up she is directing Conner McPherson’s The Birds at Altarena Playhouse (August 2023) and Misery at Palo Alto Players (January 2024).

ADAM ROY (Scott) returns to Central Works for his third production in company having also appeared in Years in the Hundreds by Jesse Potterveld and Chekov’s Ward 6 adapted by Gary Graves. Other Bay Area credits include OASIS, Marin Theatre Co, Golden Thread, PlayGround and AlterTheater. Adam has trained with Second City Hollywood and San Francisco Circus Center’s Clown Conservatory.

GREGORY SCARPEN (sound design) has designed for Central Works for over 25 years, and his work has appeared in productions by Shakespeare Santa Cruz, Shotgun Players, Theatre Rhino, TheatreFIRST, and many others. Among other hats he’s been known to wear are film editor (the Emmy-winning series Have You Heard From Johannesburg; The Whistleblower Of My-Lai featuring the Kronos Quartet; and most recently Town Destroyer) and radio broadcaster (numerous programs on KALX 90.7fm). Under the obscure moniker Thomas Carnacki, he concocts, records, and performs “experimental” (read: unlistenable) music; the next Carnacki record will be the double-lp Cadavre Isolé, slated to be out in the fall. He is the recipient of a few Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Awards, a Golden Eagle CINE Award, and – most significantly – one of the very infrequently-bestowed Jolly Trephination Awards for Total Textual Immersion.

LAUREN SMERKANICH (playwright), a graduate of The Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, is a writer-director currently based in Los Angeles. Recent honors include placing as a Semi-Finalist (Gigi Inherits Four Mink Coats) and Second-Rounder (Boil) in the 2021 Austin Film Festival Playwriting Competition. Recent favorite credits include writing and directing A Glass of Wine for Animal House’s Backyard Plays series, and assistant directing on Poor Clare at The Echo Theater Company (winner “Best Production,” 20-21 LA Drama Critics Circle Awards). Additionally, Lauren has recently participated in a writing residency at The Writer’s Colony in Eureka Springs, AR, and is a Guest Teaching Artist with The Atlantic Theater Company’s Access Success Program.
Central Works Is:

Vanessa Ramos.................................................................Board President
Deb Fink.................................................................Board Vice-President
Craig Rice.................................................................Board Treasurer
Patricia Milton.................................................................Board Member
Jeffrey Price.................................................................Board Member
Sophie Rheinheimer.................................................................Board Member
Gary Graves.................................................................Company Co-director & Board Secretary
Jan Zvaifler.................................................................Company Co-director & Board Member
Tammy Berlin.................................................................Resident Costume Designer
Cristina Garcia.................................................................Resident Playwright
Patricia Milton.................................................................Resident Playwright
Deb Fink.................................................................Artistic Associate
John Patrick Moore.................................................................Artistic Associate
Kimberly Ridgeway.................................................................Artistic Associate
Gregory Scharpen.................................................................Resident Sound Designer
Dennis Edds.................................................................Administrative Volunteer
Cheshire Isaacs.................................................................Website Designer
Kevin Clarke.................................................................Graphic Designer
David Hyry.................................................................Public Relations Manager
Patricia Milton.................................................................Social Media Director

Central Works
2023 Season is dedicated to the memory of Linda Schieber.

Linda and her husband Will became supporters and subscribers to Central Works in 2004. Linda joined the Central Works board of directors in 2009, and subsequently served as board president until last year. Her even temperament, sense of humor, willingness to work, and overwhelming generosity guided us and contributed enormously to the company’s health and stability, particularly over the past few difficult years.

Solano Cleanette Services
1425 Solano Ave.
Albany, CA 94706
Tel. 510.526.3737

Business Hours
Mon-Fri: 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sat: 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Sun: Closed

www.solanocleanette.com