

WORD FOR WORD & Z SPACE PRESENT

HARD TIMES

APPALACHIAN STORIES BY RON RASH

*The Night the New Jesus Fell to Earth,
Sad Man in the Sky, and Hard Times*

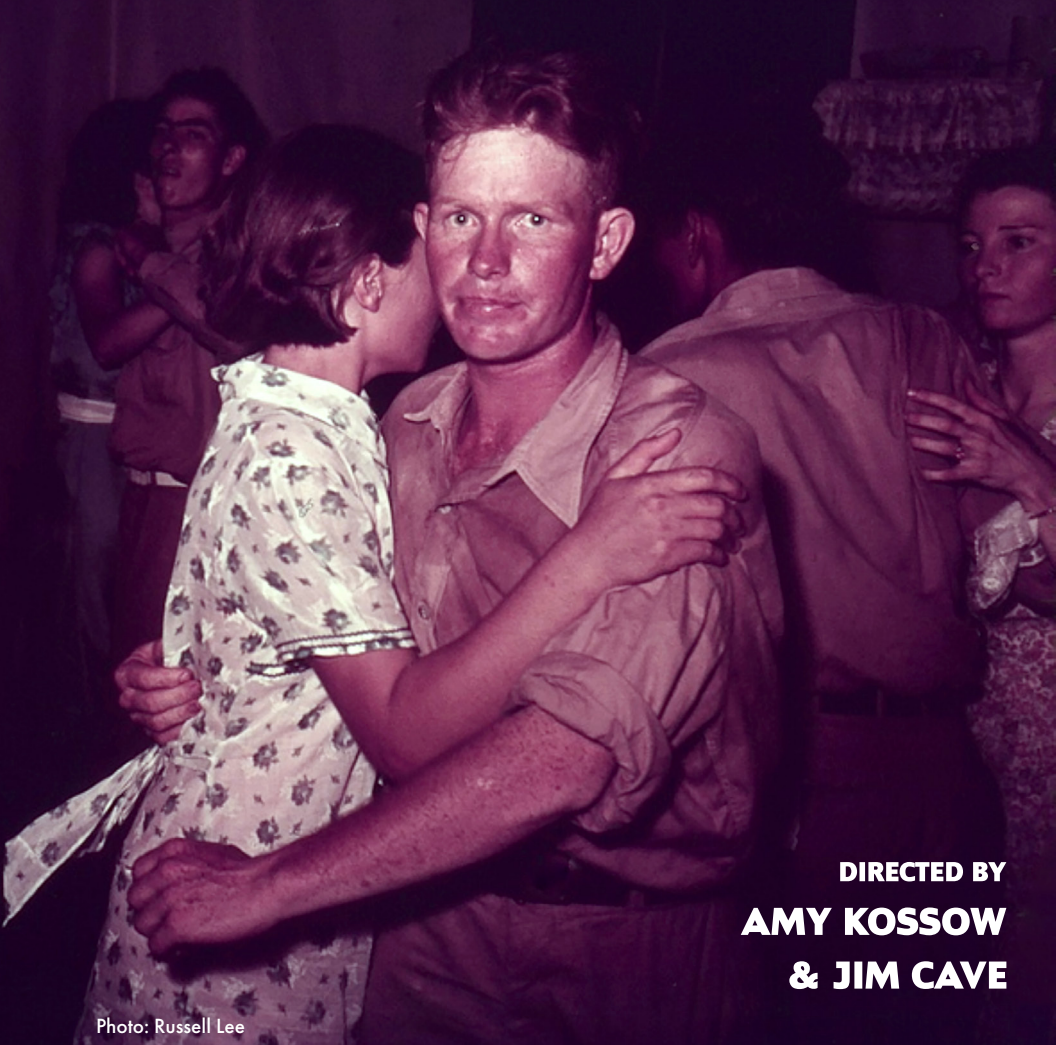


Photo: Russell Lee

**DIRECTED BY
AMY KOSSOW
& JIM CAVE**

OCTOBER 8 THROUGH NOVEMBER 2, 2025



DIRECTORS' STATEMENTS

JIM CAVE | *The Night the New Jesus Fell to Earth*

Ron Rash was 41 by the time his first collection of stories, *The Night the New Jesus Fell to Earth*, was published. He started writing the "Cliffside Stories" at 21, threw the manuscript in a dumpster, rewrote the first story from memory, and, by the time he was 30, had largely finished a series of linked stories about the community of Cliffside, North Carolina. He had always admired *Winesburg, Ohio* by Sherwood Anderson: "how those interwoven tales give the satisfaction of individual stories, yet, ultimately, also a novelistic sense of a particular place." Rash's collection sat in his dresser drawer for 10 years as his focus turned to poetry, until a publisher voiced interest in his fiction. *The Night the New Jesus Fell to Earth* was finally published in 1994.

Tonight, you're getting a chance to see the title story: a glimpse into the "fallen world" of the Cliffside Baptist Church, the foibles of its congregation, and how it got itself, in the words of Preacher Thompson, "...back in gear." Maybe it will prompt you to pick up a copy of Rash's book and read more?

AMY KOSSOW | *Sad Man in the Sky and Hard Times*

Sam Shepard once told me that every story needs a home run in it. Ron Rash is a major league slugger. The first time I read Ron Rash, I felt I had discovered a writer on par with John Steinbeck. Rash's focus on place, poverty, love and grief, set deep in America, caught and pulled at me. His imagery, his stunning, powerful ability as a writer totally knocked me out.

I cannot say how much I appreciate the WFW Core Company's belief in and support of this member's ringing passion for these stories. I am so grateful to everyone who has given their heart and hard work to bring this to life. Thank you especially to Jim Cave for sharing this work with me. And thank you, Ron Rash, for your trust and generosity.

Friends, I believe you are in for a feast of wonderful writing, of powerful storytelling, of humor and fun, of sadness and deep humanity. What a treasure this writer is.



ARTISTIC DIRECTORS' STATEMENT

We come to the theater for the purpose of stepping outside ourselves. We know that stories have the power to place us in lives not our own. We know that stories let us walk in another's shoes, to see through another's eyes, to feel what it might mean to be "the other." And that is a remarkable thing. To sit together in the dark and witness these lives unfold is to remember that even when endings feel heavy, the act of storytelling, as well as the act of bearing witness as an audience, are gestures of hope.

Ron Rash's work does not shy away from uneasy truths. His characters wrestle with loss, poverty, the weight of history, and circumstance. Also within these stories there is always humanity—humor, tenderness, resilience.

By being together in this theater and by seeing ourselves reflected and transformed onstage, we begin to imagine the possibility of connection in a world that so often insists on division. Tonight, as you leave Z Below, we hope you carry with you both the struggles of Rash's characters and the knowledge that storytelling remains one of our strongest tools for shaping a more compassionate future.

—JoAnne Winter and Vanessa Flores Chacko

SPECIAL THANKS

Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Toni Weingarten, Adrian Elfenbaum, Peter and Robin Ouborg, Miwa Kaneko and Kyoko Yoshida and Theatre of Yugen, The Word for Word Core Company, and Z Space Staff.

CAST

Molly Rebekka Benson*+

Tracy (New Jesus)/Ensemble

Paul Finocchiaro+

Pilot (Sad Man)/Ensemble/Musician

John Flanagan*

Larry (New Jesus)/Ensemble

Carla Gallardo

The Girl (Hard Times)/Ensemble

Delia MacDougall*+

Edna (Hard Times)/Ensemble

Joel Mullennix*+

Hartley (Hard Times)/Passenger (Sad Man)/Ensemble

Nancy Shelby*+

Mrs. Hartley (Hard Times)/Ensemble

Ryan Tasker*+

Jacob (Hard Times)/Ensemble

Used with generous permission of the author.

*Member, Actors' Equity Association +Member, Word for Word Core Company



PRODUCTION

Stage Manager: Ted Cordano Jr.*

Assistant Stage Manager: Chris Peterson

Production Manager: Sarah Phykitt

Scenic Design: Jacqueline Scott

Lighting Design: Jim Cave

Sound Design: Drew Yerys

Costume Design: Callie Floor**

Assistant Costume Design: Lyre Alston

Props Design: Amy Benjamin

Dramaturgy, Text, and Dialect Coach: Delia MacDougall+

Movement Consultant: Gendell Hing-Hernández

Original and Recorded Music: Paul Finocchiaro+

Master Carpenter: Dave Gardner

Master Electrician: Mary Clare Blake-Booth

Scenic Painter: Ewa Muszynska

House Technician: Anthony Aranda



2025 Season Sponsor:
Federated Indians of
Graton Rancheria

Institutional Funders



Photographs: Russell Lee 1939

Graphic design: Randall Homan

* Member, Actors' Equity Association ** Member, United Scenic Artists

+Member, Word for Word Core Company



DRAMATURGE NOTES

RON RASH

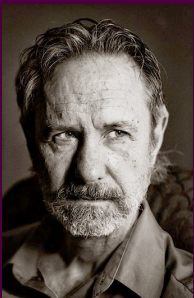
Best known as a chronicler of the residents, culture, and history of rural Appalachia, Ron Rash is critically acclaimed for his skillful, perceptive portrayal of the everyday lives of people in the region. In his poetry, short stories, and novels, he pays homage to their vital connection to the past and their struggles to preserve their cultural roots despite sweeping economic and social change, displacement, marginalization, and environmental degradation.

Rash's writings focus on family conflicts, the challenges encountered by working-class people, the pressures of the past upon the present, and the splendor and mysteries of nature.

A best-selling author with an international readership, Rash has been praised for his distinctive literary voice, consistent reexamination of regional stereotypes, and rendition of Appalachia's buried history.

"Every poem, every story, [is] an attempt to honor the beautiful, troubled, often contradictory and violent world of Southern Appalachia without blurring its edges. . . [these are] not 'Southern' stories; they [are] American stories that [happen] to occur in the South..."

Meet Ron Rash, the Blue-Collar Bard: (Garden & Gun, August/September 2020)



Ron Rash is the author of the PEN/Faulkner finalist and New York Times bestselling novel *Serena*, in addition to the critically acclaimed novels *The Caretaker*, *The Risen*, *Above the Waterfall*, *The Cove*, *One Foot in Eden*, *Saints at the River*, and *The World Made Straight*. He is also the author of five collections of poems and seven collections of stories, among them *Burning Bright*, which won the 2010 Frank O'Connor International Short Story Award; *Nothing Gold Can Stay*, a New York Times bestseller; *Chemistry and Other Stories*, which was a finalist for the 2007 PEN/Faulkner Award; and *In the Valley*. He is a three-time recipient of the O. Henry Prize, and his books have been translated into 17 languages. He teaches at Western Carolina University.



Green Apple Books

506 Clement Street SINCE 1967

Browser Books

2195 Fillmore Street SINCE 1976

Books on the Park

1231 Ninth Avenue SINCE 2014

BOOKSHOP

WEST PORTAL

Your Neighborhood Bookstore



**80 West Portal Ave
SF, CA 94127**

Order by phone or online:
415-564-8080
bookshopwestportal.com



BIOGRAPHIES

DIRECTORS



Jim Cave (Director, *The Night the New Jesus Fell to Earth*; Production Lighting Designer) has worn many hats in his “theatrical career” but thinks of himself primarily as a collaborator. He has worked with many artists, composers, and companies over the past 45 years including Bob Ernst and the Blake Street Hawkeyes, Anna Halprin, Muth Zaporah, Margaret Fisher, Lauren Elder, Oliver DiCicco, Erling Wold, Intersection for the Arts, Deborah Slater Dance Theater, Eureka Theatre, Magic Theatre, and Aurora Theatre. He’s worked with WFW for 25 years primarily as a lighting designer. His directing credits for the company include *Silence* by Colm Toibin, and co-direction on *Rime of the Acicent Mariner* and *Retablos*. Thanks to Amy and the Company for bringing me onboard for *Hard Times*.



Amy Kossow (Director, *Sad Man in the Sky* and *Hard Times*) A Company Member of Word for Word since its inception, Amy has developed and directed award-winning new works based on the prose of Alan Bennett, Sam Shepard, Siobhan Fallon, Muriel Spark among others. As an actor and singer, she originated roles in premieres by Taylor Mac, Octavio Solis, and Linda McLean, and has appeared in many WFW productions over the years. Amy is the Co-Curator of Theater at The 222, a multi-art space in Healdsburg, where she will be directing plays by Athol Fugard and Lauren Gunderson in Spring 2026. Amy is also a Resident Director with the Actors’ Reading Collective (ARC). With ARC, she will be directing the San Francisco premiere of Amy Herzog’s *Mary Jane*, running in November at Magic Theatre. As always, much love to Pete and Robin.

CAST



Molly Rebekka Benson is a stage actor and voiceover actor based in the Bay Area. A Core Company member of Word for Word, she has acted in several main stage shows, including *Food Stories*, *Anniversary!*, and most recently *Annunciation*, as well as numerous *Off the Page* staged readings. Molly has worked at many other Bay Area theaters through the years, including TheatreWorks, Shotgun Players, and Killing My Lobster, among others. Currently her main gig is being a voiceover actor and learning how to become an audiobook narrator, as well as being a mom and reading aloud daily to her two fabulous children.
www.mollyrebekka.com



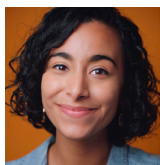
Paul Finocchiario directed last year’s WFW production of *Who’s Dead McCarthy: Stories* by Kevin Barry. As an actor he has performed in the Bay Area at Berkeley Rep., Magic Theatre, A.C.T., Aurora Theatre, Marin Theatre, and Eureka Theatre. With Word for Word, he has appeared in *A Child’s Christmas in Wales*, *The Loudest Voice*, *The Bunchgrass Edge of the World*, *More Than Human*, *Communists*, *Stories* by Tobias Wolff, *Strangers We Know*, *Angel Face*, *More Stories* by Tobias Wolff, *Olive Kitteridge*, *The Islanders*, *In Friendship*, *Stories* by Alice Munro, *Holiday High Jinx*, *Deep Kiss*, and *Victory Lap*. He was a member of Word for Word’s European Tour 10 different years. He has taught acting at Studio A.C.T. since 1990.



John Flanagan: Flan is happy to be back on stage with the WFW ensemble after having been seen in last year’s *Who’s Dead McCarthy: Stories* by Kevin Barry, and further back, in the Company’s *Angel Face*. He’s also performed with Marin Theatre, Magic Theatre, San Jose Stage, San Jose Rep, Center Rep, Campo Santo, Central Works, Shotgun Players, 3 Girls Theatre, the Fifth Floor, and more. Mr. Flanagan has a principal role in the recent indie film *You’ll Lose a Good Thing* and a small part in *Brother Verses Brother*, which will show at this year’s Mill Valley Film Fest.

BIOGRAPHIES

CAST CONTINUED



Carla Gallardo is a Bay Area actor and is excited for the opportunity to perform on the Z Below stage again. Her credits include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo / Juliet* (Marin Shakespeare Company), *Arsenic & Old Lace* (Center Rep), *1984* (Aurora Theatre), *Doméstica Realidad*, *Las Azurdus* (La Lengua Teatro), *Cost of Living*, *Exodus to Eden*, *Book of Sand* (a fairytale), *The Tempest*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Oakland Theater Project), *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot* (Custom Made Theatre), *The Box* (Pulitzer Center / Marin Shakespeare Company), and *Retablos* (WFW). Through acting, she has worked with many programs surrounding education & awareness on a myriad of topics with students all over Northern California with NCTC's YouthAware, WFW's Youth Arts Program, the San Francisco Mime Troupe's Youth Theater Project, and Kaiser Permanente's Educational Theater.



Delia MacDougall is an actor, director, and Core Company Member with Word for Word. Her productions with the company include *SMUT*, *Rose Johnny*, *Oill*, *Winesburg Ohio*, *Immortal Heart*, *In Friendship*, *Food Stories*, *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *Sam Shepard Stories*, *Victory Lap*, among others. Next year she will direct chapters from *The Eyes* and *the Impossible* by Dave Eggers for Word for WordPLAY, the company's new youth and family program, as well as stories by Kurt Vonnegut, and Ray Bradbury for WFW's 2026 season.



Joel Mullennix is happy and proud to be a Core Company Member and longtime collaborator with Word for Word. He has acted in many Word for Word productions such as: *Who's Dead McCarthy: Stories* by Kevin Barry, *The Blues I'm Playing* by Langston Hughes, and *Rose Johnny* by Barbara Kingsolver. Other favorite roles include Les in *East* by Steven Berkoff, Christy Mahon in *The Playboy of the Western World* by J. M. Synge, and Sloane in Joe Orton's *Entertaining Mr. Sloane*. Joel has also directed a number of shows for Word for Word, including *Annunciation* by Lauren Groff, *Olive Kitteridge* by Elizabeth Strout, *More Stories* by Tobias Wolff, *Stories* by Alice Munro, and *Which Is More Than I Can Say About Some People* by Lorrie Moore, as well as the co-production of *Family Alchemy*, *Stories* by Bernard Malamud and *Grace Paley* with A Traveling Jewish Theatre.



Nancy Shelby is a Charter Member of Word for Word. She has appeared in more than 20 WFW productions over these 32 years, with the award-winning ensembles of *SMUT*, *Olive Kitteridge*, *Stories* by Tobias Wolff, and *Winesburg Ohio*, and in stories by T.C. Boyle, Dino Buzzati, Angela Carter, Richard Ford, Alice Munro, John Sayles, Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf. Nancy began her career at San Francisco's Magic Theatre and has performed in theaters on both sides of the Bay and in Los Angeles. She directed WFW's *How a Mountain Was Made* by Greg Sarris and, with JoAnne Winter, *Stories* by Lucia Berlin.



Ryan Tasker is a Word for Word Core Company Member and has appeared in their productions of *Who's-Dead McCarthy: Stories* by Kevin Barry, *Citizen*, *Retablos*, *You Know When the Men Are Gone*, and *Three on a Party*. He has also acted and directed for the *Off the Page* series, with some favorites being Joan Didion's *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* and Chekhov's *The Lady With the Dog*. He has also worked with Marin Theatre Company, American Conservatory Theater, the San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Aurora Theatre Company, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, Shotgun Players, and the Livermore Shakespeare Festival, among others.

BIOGRAPHIES

ARTISTIC DIRECTORS



JoAnne Winter (Artistic Director, Word for Word) is an actor and director who has performed and directed in numerous Bay Area theaters, as well as nationally and abroad. She co-founded Word for Word Performing Arts Company with Susan Harloe and the amazing Charter Group in 1993. With them, she has had the pleasure of helping to create many, many productions, readings, and student projects. In addition, Winter is the Artistic Director of WFW's arts education program, Youth Arts. In 2019, WFW welcomed the new Core Company members, who are continuing the WFW way, while informing and expanding it. Thank you to all who have made the work of this company possible over the years, especially the WFW Core Company and Z Space staff. And special love and gratitude to Ben, Jack, and Adrian.



Vanessa Flores Chacko (Associate Artistic Director, Word for Word) is a theater maker and writer. Her work (on the page and on stage) centers voice, vulnerability, and the strange magic of everyday life. With an MFA in Writing from California College of the Arts, she creates across genres, pursuing stories that blend emotional truth with a touch of the surreal. A longtime arts leader and new mother, Vanessa brings a deep belief in collaboration, nuance, and play, and is joyfully (and carefully) navigating the intersection of art-making, parenting, and the pursuit of a story well told.

PRODUCTION

Lyre Alston (Assistant Costume Design) (he/him/she/her) is a costume, wig, and makeup designer working within the Bay Area. This is Lyre's first time working for Word for Word, and she's super excited to get to be a part. Previous shows here include *The Red Shades* (2022), and elsewhere, a few of her credits include *As You Like It* (2024) with California Shakespeare Company, *Panto in the Presidio* (2021-2025) with Presidio Theatre, and *Hadestown* (2025) with Throckmorton Theatre. Please enjoy the show!

Amy Benjamin (Props Design) draws from an extensive background in multidisciplinary art to create theater magic. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Design Studies from San Jose State University and has been mentored in scenic design by Nina Ball. She's most recently designed properties for *My Fair Lady*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, and *Fat Ham* for San Francisco Playhouse, as well as Word for Word's *Annunciation* and *The Strange Library*.

Jim Cave (Lighting Design) is a Core Company Member of Word for Word and has worked with WFW over twenty years as lighting designer, director, and production manager, including directing a story in tonight's production.

Ted Cordano (Stage Manager) is a San Francisco-based theater artist and graduate from

Loyola University of New Orleans. He tends to focus on stage management, theater tech, and video editing. This is his fifth production with Z Space/Word for Word and is proud to work as the Stage Manager for *Hard Times: Appalachian Stories* by Ron Rash. He also works as a stage-hand for I.A.T.S.E. Local 16 and as a freelance video editor/videographer. Ted would love to thank his friends and family for all their love and support.

Callie Floor (Costume Design) Bay Area credits, American Conservatory Theater, California Revels, Aurora Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Marin Theatre Co., Cal Shakes, Rock Music Festival Napa Valley. Recent projects include *The Sorcerer* for Lamplighters Music Theater, *Merry Wives of Windsor* for SPARC, and *Samson and Delila* for West Bay Opera. She has a BFA from the University of Utah and a Higher Diploma in Theater Design from the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London.

Gendell Hing-Hernández (Movement Consultant) was born in Havana, Cuba, and has actively worked as a bilingual actor, director, and producer in the Bay Area since 1997. He is currently Director of WFW's new Youth and Family Program. As an actor, he has worked with Word for Word, Campo Santo, Magic Theatre, Berkeley Rep, TheatreWorks, San Jose

BIOGRAPHIES

PRODUCTION CONTINUED

Rep, Center Rep, New Pickle Circus, and many others. Productions include *Stories by Lucia Berlin*, *Sorry Fugu*, *Oill*, *Around The World in 80 Days*, *The Cook*, *Blood Wedding*, *Oedipus El Rey*, and *References to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot*. He is stage-combat-certified, first-aid-certified, and a movement specialist. He won the Best Fight Choreography Award for *R&J* and Best Ensemble Award for his work in Magic Theatre's production of *Oedipus: El Rey*.

Sarah Phykitt (Production Manager) is thrilled to be part of the team for her first production with Word for Word. While she is new to Word for Word, she is no stranger to Z Below having started her San Francisco Production Management journey in the same venue when A Traveling Jewish Theatre was resident there. Recent projects include Z Space and SFBATCO's co-production of *The Day the Sky Turned Orange*, *Buttercup* at Marin Shakespeare, and *Golden Girls Live!*, the long running drag parody that now performs at the Curran Theater. She has production managed for several other companies throughout the Bay Area including Custom Made Theatre, A.C.T. Conservatory, and Oasis SF.

Christopher Peterson (Assistant Stage Manager) is a graduate of the technical theater program at Sonoma State University. Making

his return to Word for Word as Assistant Stage Manager, he has also worked around the Bay Area as a Set Carpenter, Electrician, and Stage-hand. Currently he is also working as Assistant Technical Director for Archbishop Riordan's 2025-2026 theater season.

Jacquelyn Scott (Set Design) works as a production designer and scenic designer for theater and film across the Bay Area. She is thrilled to return to play with Word for Word! Her work has been seen at American Conservatory Theater, San Francisco Playhouse, Magic Theatre, Shotgun Players, Cutting Ball Theater, and Z Space. Look out for her latest large scale public art installation, *Naga & The Captainess*, at Golden Gate Park.

Drew Yerys (Sound Design) After realizing he lacked the patience for fundraising and the wardrobe for mime, Drew turned to audio—where pants are optional and feedback is only sometimes literal. Armed with a mic, a questionable collection of field recordings, and an obsession with reverb, he began sculpting soundscapes that confuse his neighbors and delight his dog. When not obsessively EQuing the hum of a refrigerator, he's convincing friends that yes, a banjo can be ambient. An audio artist by trade and a sonic wizard by accident, he's out to make the world sound weirder and satisfyingly robust.



CHILDREN'S BOOK PROJECT

Word for Word is proud to support the Children's Book Project, a non-profit organization that provides books to children who need them for equity in literacy, learning, and life. Please bring a new or gently used children's book to the show to donate. Learn more about this great organization at childrensbookproject.org/give-books/

THANK YOU

FROM Z SPACE & WORD FOR WORD

We are so grateful to our donors who have made gifts of all sizes. Thanks to your generosity, we continue to work towards our mission of empowering artistic risk, collaboration, and camaraderie amongst artists, audience, and community in the service of creating, developing, and presenting new work. We are honored to list the donors below who have contributed \$100 or more from September 1, 2024 through September 10, 2025.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER \$20,000+

Anonymous
Linda K. Brewer Fund

PRODUCER \$10,000+

Jonathan Axelrad
Bruce Colman
Frances Hellman & Warren Breslau
Kenneth D. Love
Wendy vanden Heuvel & Bradley Coley
Toni K. Weingarten Fund

ASSOCIATE PRODUCER \$5,000–\$9,999

Emmett & Laura Bergman
Jennifer Braun & Raymond J. Ryan
Mary Burns
Andrew & Eileen Fisher Family Trust Fund
Betty Hoener
Marymor Family Fund
Gail Sinquefeld
Harold Wyman Foundation

GAME CHANGER \$2,500–\$4,999

Martin Chai & Gray Clossman
Carol Doup Muller
Daniel Handler
Susan Harloe
Shea Loewen Lazarow & Alexandre Lazarow
Craig & Kathy Moody
Carol Doup Muller & Richard Muller
Alex Ryan Randall
Thomas & Virginia Steuber
Bob & Lynne Zolli

PARTNER \$1,000–\$2,499

Anonymous
Ebby & Omita Abraham
Sheila Balter
Rosenkrantz Bluestone Family Fund
Neil Bray
Brian Byrne & Beth Lapachet
Ron Clyman & Francoise Mauray
Ruth Cox & Milton Chen
Brad Crowell & Gary Koehler

Luise Custer
Drusie Davis
Leslie & Charlie Dicke
Scott Gable & Patti Kim-Gable
Ellen Geohagan
Alex Gutow
Lara & Matt Hitchcock
Lorraine & Victor Honig Fund For Social Change
Richard & Terry Horrigan
Amy Hosa & Chris Jannini
Ranjie Long
Karen Mah-Hing
Laura Marlin
Karen Ottemann & Evelyn Strauss
Tina Pastelero
Henry Pedersen & Renate Slucka
Ute R. Rieleford
Jay & Elise Rossiter
John Ruskin
Greg Sarris
Lisa Steindler & Lou Helmuth
Susanne L. Stevens
Bill Tiedeman LCSW
Tyler Walker & Cedric Wilson
Margaret A. Wallace & Stacy L. Mathies
Karen Rhodes & Robert Weiner
Ronald Whittier Family Foundation
JoAnne Winter & Adrian Elfenbaum

COLLABORATOR \$500–\$999

Anonymous (4)
Gretchen Brosius
Melissa Cashion
Patricia Contaxis & Lisa Guerin
Culture Connects Us
Elizabeth Gelwicks Dietsch
David Donovan & Tina Rutsch
Mary Durbin
Katharine Gilmartin
Anne Hallinan
Sharmon Hilfinger & Luis Trabb Pardo
Svilen Karaivanov
Judy & Steven Kazan
Barbara & Douglas Konecky

THANK YOU

Suzanne Lampert
Karen Larsen
Sukey Lilienthal & David Roe
Susan Little
Ray Glickman & Kathy Mattes
in memory of Brett Glickman
Sophie & John Cate & Jeanne Myerson
Peter Nachtrieb
Morris Noble
Harmony Palmer
Linda Preuss in honor of Sheila Balter
Julie Richter
Bunnie & Jerome Sachs Family Foundation
Janice E. Sager
Carol Savary & George Koster
David A. Shapiro, MD & Sharon L. Wheatley
Dan Shuwarger
Rohit Suvarna
Joseph Todaro
Jim & Karen Wagstaffe
Ian Watson-Jones
Jeff & Meredith Watts
Arthur & Charlotte Zitrin Foundation

VISIONARY \$250-\$499

Anonymous (3)
Jennifer Brokaw
Donna Brorby
Glynn & Richard Butterfield
Len Christensen
Cassie Coggeshall
Philip Crawford
Meghan Crosby-Jolliffe
Alison Crowe in memory
of George & Ann Crowe
Paul Fogel & Ventura Chalom
John Fox
Lyssa Friedman & Daphne Stuart
in memory of Jeri Lynn Cohen
Judith Guerriero
Paul Heller & Helen Goldsmith
Linda Higgins
Xanthe & Jim Hopp
G. Jone
Abbe Kalos
Alison Kenny-Gardhouse
Joan Kung-Levy & Howard Levy
Alice LaRocca
Jo Lasater
The Maarritones
Everett & Julia Moore in honor of our son,
David Everett Moore

Robert Morgan
Brian Mott
Mark Nelson
Murrey E. Nelson
Janine Paver & Eric Brown
Robert W. Popper, M.D.
Stuart & Grace Ruth
Jay Schaefer
Marc Seville
Gae Shulman
Karen Slater
Janette Smith
Laura Stefanski
Marc Vogl & Megara Vogl in honor of Peter
Nachtrieb
Sarah Wilson
Winelander Fund

SUPPORTER \$100-\$249

Anonymous (16)
Allison Arieff
Francine Austin
Lisa Avallone
Marilyn Bancel
Karen D. Benson
Carol Blanton
Leigh Blicher
Emeline Brule
Ninive Calegari
Linda Carson
Noopur Chhabra
Dain Clarkin
Michele Cobble
Malcolm Gissen & Judith Cohen
Jeanette R. Cool & Georges S. Lammam
Kim & Ted Cordano
Karen & David Crommie
Nicholas Da Silva
Kenneth Danko & Loren Nordlund
Ed Decker
Jean & George Dowdall
Nanette Duffy
Jeannie Duisenberg
Jason Eagan
Michael Enright
Roberta & David Eshelman
William F. Falls
Krystyna Finlayson
Leslie Finlev
The Flow Fund
Charles Forrester
Carol Fregly in memory of Jeri Lynn Cohen

THANK YOU

Barbara Gersh
Humaira Ghilzai
Seth Gilmore
Julia Gorka
Joyce & Doug Grandy
Richard & Gretchen Grant
Elaine Hahn
Chris Hammer
Charlton Holland
Noah Holmes
Lola Hottensen
Jan Hunter
Beth Hutchins & Pete Skeggs
Anna Isaac
Chana Jacobs
Andrea Jepson
Elizabeth C. Johnson
Robert Kaiser
Stephen Kaufman in memory
of Margel Foote Kaufman
Louis Peppers
Martha & Michael Kessler
Joanne Koltow
Nancy Kux
Suzanne LaFetra
Stephanie Leider
Mark Lipman & Helen Cohen
Ann Marie Lonsdale
Gail MacGowan
Elizabeth Macken
Pam MacKinnon
Elizabeth Macleod
Mark Marino
Shafer Mazow
Mary Margaret McClure
Maudie McCormick
Blaise Meñez
Ellen Moore
Miriam Morgan
Lesbha M. Morones
Cathleen O'Brien
Evren Odcikin & King Choi
Sam Orr
Michael Palladino
Abby Pañares & Andy Chan Donald
Wendy Parkman
CJ Perry
Minna Pinger in honor of Lila Blue
Amy Prosser
Alice Rogers
Karen Runk
Ted Russell

Stuart & Grace Ruth
Ed & Diane Ryken in honor of Jessie Wong
Anne Scalmanini
Robbi Schear & Michael Goloff
Stephen Sagar & Susan Semonoff
Elizabeth M. Simpson
Barbara Slotnik
Gloria Sparrow
Suzanne Stassevitch
Rabbi Howard M. Steiermann
Gretchen & Grover Stone
Erin Mei-Ling Stuart
Joan Sullivan
Gilda & Daniel Sullivan
Emily True
Lorri Ungaretti
Cornelis van Aalst & Jeffrey Robinson
Elizabeth Varnhagen
Swapna Venkateswaran
Moya Verzhbinsky
Nicholas Wellington & Lee Safran
Dennis Yen
Victoria Zaroff

A special thanks to our **Friends of Z** who contribute under \$100 annually AND make up the largest segment (70%) of our donor family. There truly is no gift too small and every bit helps to empower artistic risk and keep our mission alive. THANK YOU!

CORPORATE MATCHES

Apple
Atlassian
Google
Kazan McClain Partners' Foundation
Netflix
The Omidyar Group
PayPal Giving Fund
Prudential
TCWGlobal

IN-KIND DONORS

BELdesigns
Philip Crawford
Dynamo Donut & Coffee
Jizake Quest
La Mediterranee
Magic Donuts & Coffee
Strong Brew Productions

THANK YOU

ESTATE & LEGACY GIFTS

We are grateful to the following individuals for generously remembering Z Space and Word for Word in their estate plans:

- John Dobleman
- Gail Sinquefield

Z Space is grateful to have been the beneficiary of a legacy gift from the estates of:

- Lauren Alexander
- Constance Bernstein
- The Nina Kivelson Auerbach Trust
- Cherylene Lee
- The Patty Wolfe Philanthropic Fund

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- Arts for Oakland Kids
- The Sheri & Les Biller Family Foundation
- Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria
- Hellman Foundation Fund
- William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
- Sam Mazza Foundation
- Kenneth Rainin Foundation
- San Francisco Grants for the Arts
- Society for Community Work
- Zellerbach Family Foundation



SUPPORT Z SPACE & WORD FOR WORD'S DYNAMIC PROGRAMMING!

To make a gift, please contact Director of Development Hillary Bray at hbray@zspace.org or 415.659.8135.

Prefer to donate by check? Please make it payable to Z Space and mail it to:
499 Alabama St. #450
San Francisco, CA 94110.



We are looking for friends!

The Friends of Word for Word is a group of volunteers who serve as Word for Word ambassadors and who help with fundraising, cast meals, party planning, hosting, and more!

If you're interested in being a part of this unique group, please reach out to Associate Artistic Director Vanessa Flores Chacko at vflores@zspace.org to learn more!



BOOKS AND RECORDS
653 Chenery St (at Diamond)
(415)586-3733 birdbeckett.com



OPEN FOR
BROWSING
TUESDAY TO
SUNDAY FROM
NOON TO SIX

LIVE MUSIC
ON WEEKEND
EVENINGS!



ABOUT WORD FOR WORD

Co-founded by Susan Harloe and JoAnne Winter, Word for Word's mission is to tell great stories with elegant theatricality, taking exciting works of fiction from the page to the stage. We believe in the power of the short story to provide solace, compassion, and insight into our daily lives.

Word for Word Core Company

The Word for Word Core Company is a group of talented theater professionals as well as avid readers. The Core Company works with the artistic leadership of Word for Word in the planning and creation of a season through attendance at monthly company meetings and annual retreats. Company members read and suggest stories for production, help with fundraising, and contribute to audience growth and engagement.

Core Company Members

JoAnne Winter, * Co-Founder
and Artistic Director
Vanessa Flores Chacko, Associate
Artistic Director
Rotimi Agbabiaka
Sheila Balter*
Molly Benson
Jim Cave
Edris Cooper-Anifowoshe
Jeri Lynn Cohen* (1959-2021)
Paul Finocchiaro
Rosie Hallett
Susan Harloe (Emerita)
Lisa Hori-Garcia
Stephanie Hunt*
Amy Kossov, * Literary Manager
Delia MacDougall*
Joel Mullennix
Wendy Radford*
Brian Rivera
Karen Runk
Nancy Shelby*
Patricia Silver*
Ryan Tasker
Joan Walton (Emerita)

Word for Word's Author Council

Greg Sarris, Honorary President
Julia Alvarez
T.C. Boyle
Sandra Cisneros
Siobhan Fallon
Paul Fleischman
Richard Ford
Ellen Gilchrist
Joanne Greenberg
Andrew Sean Greer
Lauren Groff
Daniel Handler
Edward P. Jones
Barbara Kingsolver
Armistead Maupin
George Saunders
Octavio Solis
Amy Tan
Tobias Wolff

*Charter Member, meeting monthly since Word for Word's founding in 1993



ABOUT Z SPACE

Z Space is a non-profit theater company located in the heart of San Francisco's Mission District. We produce our own works, foster and subsidize the development of other creative artists with our Subspace program, and serve as a presenting home to a wide variety of performing arts organizations through our curated rental program. Operating out of an old can-making factory, we activate two performance venues, an 83-seat intimate theater (Z Below) and a 236-seat flexible theater space (The Steindler Stage), with a warehouse aesthetic and an adventurous edge. Z Space is also home to Word for Word, our resident performing arts company that brings works of fiction to the stage in their own unique style.

Z Space Leadership

Shafer Mazow
Executive Director

Nikki Meñez
Curatorial Director

JoAnne Winter
Artistic Director, Word for Word
Director, Youth Arts

Vanessa Flores Chacko
Associate Artistic Director,
Word for Word

Z Board

Laura Bergman

Meghan Crosby-Jolliffe

Shea Loewen Lazarow, Secretary

Peter Nachtrieb, President

Janice Sager, Treasurer

Dan Shuwarger

Gary Stanford, Jr., Vice President

Z Space Staff

Hillary Bray
Director of Development

Andrew Burmester
Director of Marketing

Clara Fuls
Audience Experience Manager

Daniel Hall
Lead Production Technician

Neil Higgins
Business Manager

Gendell Hing-Hernández
Director of Youth and Family Programming

Colm McNally
Director of Technical and Production

Lance Mindell
Lead Facilities Technician

Regina Morones
Program Manager, Youth Arts

Rebecca Pierce
Communications Manager

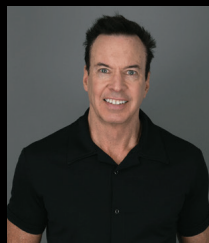
Amy Prosser
Director of Youth Arts

Sarah Phykitt
Associate Director of Technical and Production

Word for Word thanks the
FEDERATED INDIANS OF GRATON RANCHERIA
for being our 2025 Season Sponsors!



The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) and their Tribal Chairman, Greg Sarris, have been a part of Word for Word, almost from its inception. In 1994 we produced a story from Greg's book *Grand Avenue*, a novel about contemporary, urban American Indians and other marginalized people who live in Santa Rosa and Sonoma County. This led to many more wonderful collaborations over the years, most recently between our arts education program, Youth Arts, and FIGR's youth summer camp programs. Last summer was our eighth providing arts programming for the Native youth of Sonoma County!



Greg Sarris
Author and Chairman
of Federated Indians
of Graton Rancheria



FIGR's organic garden
L-R: Heather Knoll and
Michael Zigler.
Photo: Jenna Brager

Greg Sarris was instrumental in helping his people, the Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo of Northern California, gain federal recognition. On Dec 27, 2000, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria became the last tribe in the United States to be restored by an act of Congress. FIGR went on to use the opportunity and reparations from that recognition to create the Graton Resort and Casino in Rohnert Park. In addition to providing programs and services to Tribal Citizens to realize their dreams of self-sufficiency, the resort itself has a forward thinking design, with sustainability in mind. The employees receive some of the best pay and benefits for service workers in the county, and the Tribe has created an organic garden onsite at the resort that feeds local elders.

To learn more about FIGR's generosity to their community, their good works in the broader world, and Word for Word's partnership with them, please visit zspace.org/figr-sponsorship.

A special thanks to Landis Communications. landispr.com

BRING THE MAGIC OF WORD FOR WORD YOUTH ARTS TO YOUR SCHOOL!



Through the intersection of language arts and theater, Youth Arts empowers Bay Area students to read, adapt, and perform classic and contemporary stories and poems, relevant to their lives.

Professional Teaching Artists help students bring stories and poems from the page to the stage using the Word for Word signature performance style. In the process, students gain literacy, team-building and social-emotional skills.

To book a Word for Word Youth Arts Workshop at your school, contact Word for Word's Director of Youth Arts, Amy Prosser at aprosser@zspace.org



WORD FOR WORDPLAY!

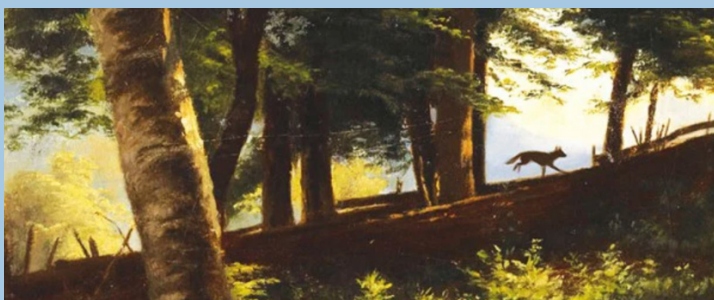
a program of **ZSPACE**

THE EYES AND THE IMPOSSIBLE

BY DAVE EGGERS

Directed by
Delia MacDougall

FEBRUARY 27th - MARCH 15th 2026



Golden Thread Productions and Z Space present



PILGRIMAGE

by Humaira Ghilzai and Bridgette Dutta Portman

directed by Michelle Talgarow

Oct 24–Nov 9, 2025 at Z Space

450 Florida Street, San Francisco

Tickets at zspace.org/pilgrimage

SCAN FOR
TICKETS



GOLDEN THREADS OF SOLIDARITY
PRODUCTIONS

ZSPACE

FLEISHACKER
FOUNDATION

THE WILLIAM AND FLORA
HEWLETT
FOUNDATION

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT **ARTS**
for the

GRANTS
for the **ARTS**