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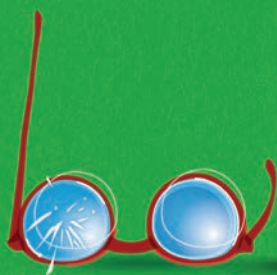
CHRISTMAS

STORY

A Play in Two
Acts written by
Philip Grecian

Based on the motion
picture and on a book by
Jean Shepherd

Based on the Warner Bros. Motion
Picture by Jean Shepherd,
Leigh Brown & Bob Clark and on the
book "In God We Trust, All Others Pay
Cash" by Jean Shepherd



Jamie & Kevin Magon



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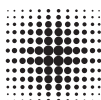
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A Message from the Managing Artistic Director

Welcome to SLO REP's annual production of *A Christmas Story*!

This story, beloved by millions because of the classic holiday film released almost 40 years ago, has proven to be one of the most pervasive and ubiquitous parts of the American holiday experience. For nearly four decades, generations of people have made the story of Ralphie's tumultuous quest for a Red Ryder BB Gun a part of their own personal celebration of Christmas, family, and childhood.



As theatre artists, that's a tremendous amount of pressure to have on our shoulders.

However, as I have discovered over the last 10+ years, producing this timeless story is an incredible gift for our actors, technicians, costumers, directors, and company. All of us are so grateful to have the opportunity to be an important part of your family's holiday celebration. Each year that we produce *A Christmas Story* in this theatre, I'm overwhelmed at the universality and poetry of Jean Shepherd's story, and the willingness of audiences to absolutely lose themselves in the joy, nostalgia, and human connection that only live theatre can create. So, be ready to laugh, reminisce, and feel the holiday spirit as we present *A Christmas Story*. We hope this production will become a cherished part of your holiday tradition.

Happy holidays, everyone, and thank you so much for your support!

Kevin Harris



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Jamie & Kevin Magon (along with their two children, Avery and Kaylee) are proud to be involved with SLO REP and sponsors of *A Christmas Story*. While both originally from southern California, Kevin and Jamie met while attending Cal Poly and have made SLO their home ever since.

Jamie is the proud owner of Promotional Concepts, a promotional products company in San Luis Obispo and volunteers her time as President of the SLO Girls Softball Association and running the Los Ranchos Elementary Theater Club. Kevin owns a food brokerage and trading company in town and last year he joined the SLO REP Board of Directors.



Avery and Kaylee have been singing, dancing, and acting their way across the stage for years through many of the SLO REP ACT classes and camps. Kaylee is also on the competition team with CORE Dance here in SLO. Avery has been on the SLO REP mainstage for ***A Wrinkle in Time*** and ***Once*** (2023), just finished ***Mary Poppins Jr.*** at the Coastal Youth Theater in Arroyo Grande, and performs with the Laguna Middle School Choir.

The Magons love family movie nights, traveling, good food, and spending time with friends and family. We hope you enjoy spending time with your loved ones this holiday season. Enjoy the show!

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In Memory of Kay & John McCraw by The Raftery Family

Jay and Nicole Raftery (along with their two children, **London** and **Logan**) have been ardent supporters of local theatre since moving from the Los Angeles area in 2016. Jay grew up in Arroyo Grande whereas Nicole hails from Mission Viejo. They met while attending USC. Jay is an attorney specializing in business and real property matters in San Luis Obispo. Nicole is the Director of Marketing for PCPA – Pacific Conservatory Theatre in Santa Maria.



John & Kay McCraw

Theatre has always been a family affair for the Rafterys. London and Logan have both performed in *A Christmas Story* (London: 2018 & 2019; and Logan: 2022 & 2023). London also performed in SLO REP's *Annie* and has been involved both as a performer and now as an intern with SLO REP's Academy of Creative Theatre (ACT).

This year Jay and Nicole have chosen to dedicate this sponsorship in memory of Nicole's parents. **John McCraw** flew with Delta Airlines for nearly 40 years. **Kay McCraw** ensured that Nicole and her sisters (Misty and Tracy) grew up in a wonderful home. *A Christmas Story* (the movie) was a favorite in the McCraw household. Carrying their memory along with this show is significant to the McCraw sisters.

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About the Authors



Christmas is a recurring topic for **Philip Grecian**. His authorized stage adaptation of the film *A Christmas Story* has had well over 1,000 productions, professional and amateur, since its publication in 2000. His stage adaptation of Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* has been on the boards for 40 years, and his full stage adaptation of *It's a Wonderful Life* has been produced multiple times by North American professional theatre companies, while his staged radio version of the same story has been broadcast on both radio and television and continues to be produced in theaters throughout the USA and Canada.



A master storyteller, **Jean Shepherd** (1921-1999) took bits and pieces from his youth in Hammond, Indiana, his adventures in the Army Signal Corps and stories of the obscure and infamous, as fertile sources for his tales. For almost three decades, he told these stories to eager radio audiences. In the 1970s, he took his talents to television in a series of humorous narratives for PBS called *Jean Shepherd's America*. His most popular and well-known work is the film *A Christmas Story* (1983), which he co-wrote and narrated.



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About the Film

A *Christmas Story* is a 1983 American Christmas comedy film based on the short stories and semi-fictional anecdotes of author and raconteur Jean Shepherd, based on his book *In God We Trust: All Others Pay Cash*, with some elements derived from *Wanda Hickey's Night of Golden Memories*. The film has become a holiday classic and is shown on television during the Christmas season, often in a 24-hour marathon. In 2012, the film was selected for preservation in the National Film Registry by the Library of Congress for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant."





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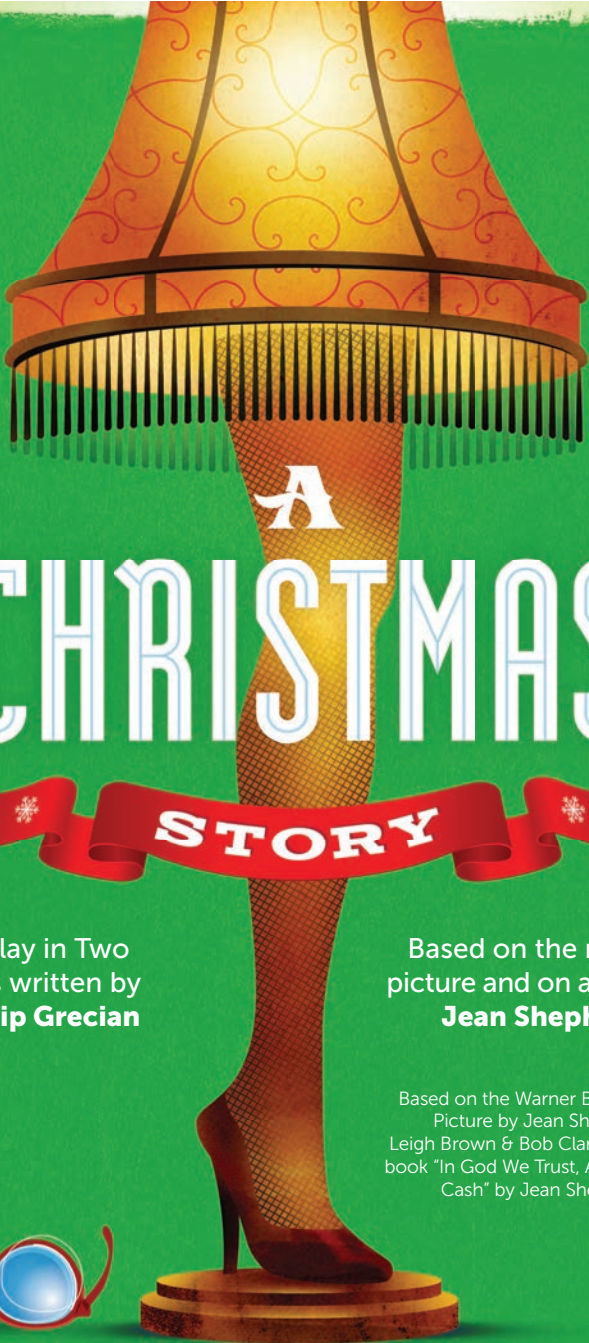
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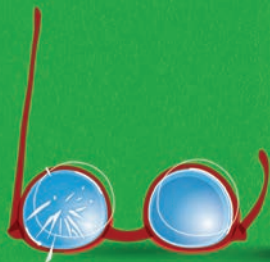


A CHRISTMAS STORY

A Play in Two
Acts written by
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Based on the motion
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Leigh Brown & Bob Clark and on the
book "In God We Trust, All Others Pay
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Presented by special arrangement with Dramatic Publishing Company of Woodstock, Illinois.

Time: Christmas Past
Place: Hohman, Indiana

There will be one 15 minute intermission

Cast of Characters

Ralph Parker	Ben Abbott
Ralphie Parker	Jonah Vander Kam
The Old Man	Mike Mesker
Mother	Alicia Klein
Randy	Jackson Hicks
Helen	Aurora Joy Lester-Cook
Schwartz	Simone Alcorn
Flick	Maxine Castillo
Esther Jane	Simone Spence
Scut Farkus	Frida Vega
Miss Shields	Elizabeth Martinié

Artistic Team

Director	Kevin Harris
Stage Manager	Lupita Marisol Rodriguez
Assistant Stage Manager	Bekah Badger
Scenic Design	David Linfield
Original Production Costume Design	Randal Sumabat
Costume Coordinator	Barbara Harvey Abbott
Lighting/Sound Design	Kevin Harris
Set Dressing & Props	Dave Linfield & Suzy Newman
Set Construction Crew	Dave Linfield, Bob Rice, Greg Peters, Valerie Pallai & Larry Bolef

Any photography, video or audio recordings of this production are strictly prohibited. Please silence your cell phones.

About the Cast

Ben Abbott (Ralph) is a local actor and playwright. He attended the acting conservatory at PCPA – Pacific Conservatory Theatre and holds a BA in Theatre and Performance Studies from UC Berkeley. He is currently pursuing an MFA in playwrighting from Hollins University. At SLO REP, Ben has appeared in *Annie*, *Million Dollar Quartet*, and *A Christmas Story*. He has also been a regular at The Great American Melodrama. As a playwright, Ben's produced plays include *Grave Mistakes: A Haunted Rom-Com* (at the Melodrama) and *Buddies: A Bromantic Comedy*.



Simone Alcorn (Schwartz) is thrilled to make her mainstage debut! She was last seen in SLO REP's Academy of Creative Theatre production of *Crazy For You* as Betsy, a bubbly New York showgirl. You may have previously seen her in *A Snake in the Grass* (Whitney) at Laguna Middle School and ACT's production of *Honk JR!* (Grace). In her free time, Simone enjoys dancing with CORE Dance and singing with the LAMS Choir. She is elated to perform with this wonderful cast and crew! Simone would like to thank her family and friends for their love and support. Happy Holidays!



Maxine Castillo (Flick) is thrilled to be doing *A Christmas Story* again this season! She previously appeared in the ACT productions of *A Wrinkle in Time* (Charles Wallace) and *Honk JR!* (Beaky). Maxine began her theater journey in *The Lion King* (Simba). When not at SLO REP Maxine can be found reading books and spending time with her friends.

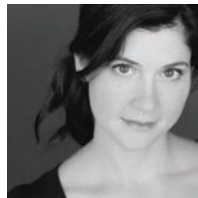


Jackson Hicks (Randy) has enjoyed acting since the age of six when he first started in SLO REP's ACT after-school program. He has been doing these classes on and off ever since, and always finds growth and FUN in each program he participates in. His favorite role in these after school sessions was playing Max in *Where the Wild Things Are*. He had his first ever audition in 2022 when trying out for The Great American Melodrama's *A Christmas Carol*. He was enthusiastic to get the role of Tiny Tim, and very much enjoyed the entirety of the Christmas season alongside wonderful performers who acted as role models and comrades. Singing in front of large crowds four times a week was both challenging and exhilarating. He is very excited to take on his role as Randy in this year's production of *A Christmas Story*!



About the Cast

Alicia Klein (Mother) is delighted to be back on the SLO REP stage, reprising one of her favorite roles. Previous SLO REP credits include *Steel Magnolias* (Annelle), *Mary Jane* (Mary Jane), *Our Town* (Mrs. Webb), *Enchanted April* (Rose), *Independence* (Jo), *Picasso at the Lapine Agile* (Suzanne) and *The House of Blue Leaves* (Corinna). She has also performed locally with the Central Coast Shakespeare Festival, the Cambria Center for the Arts, and *Exit Pursued by a Bear*. She dedicates this performance to her own two boys, Hans and Walden, and to the only man she would tolerate a leg lamp for, Eric.



Aurora Joy Lester-Cook (Helen) is in 7th grade, and spends her time reading, hanging with friends, listening to music, and many other things. She loves singing, and is a major Swiftie. (Taylor Swift fan) She loves acting and has been in numerous school productions. This is her third show at SLO REP, and she is thrilled to be participating in *A Christmas Story* a second time. She'd like to thank her parents for supporting her dreams and her best friend for always coming to watch her shows.



Elizabeth Martinié (Miss Shields) is thrilled to make her debut at SLO Repertory Theatre! Growing up, she cherished the tradition of watching this movie every Christmas Day. You may have seen her at PCPA – Pacific Conservatory Theatre as Maire in *Cinderella*, Lucinda/Rapunzel in *Into the Woods*, and Sister Margaretta in *The Sound of Music*. She also performed at The Great American Melodrama in *Gold Fever* and *The Pirates of Pismo*. Elizabeth would like to thank SLO REP for their warm welcome and joyful spirit, her family for their love and support, and her partner for literally everything. Merry Christmas! MARGINS!



Mike Mesker (The Old Man) actually loves dogs and meatloaf and is blasé about turkey. You may have seen him earlier this year in *What the Constitution Means to Me*. Mike has an extensive show history at SLO REP including *The Fantasticks*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *The Producers*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Foreigner*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Take Me Out*, *My Fair Lady*, and *The Full Monty*. He sends love and thanks to The Clapper and wishes his mom in heaven, and the audience, a Merry Christmas.



About the Cast

Simone Spence (Esther Jane) is overjoyed to be returning to this year's production of *A Christmas Story*, having played Schwartz in the 2023 production. A 9th grader at Arroyo Grande High School, Simone had the title role in the SLO REP ACT Musical Theatre camp's production of *Peter Pan JR.* and played Belinda Cratchit in The Great American Melodrama's 2022 *Holiday Extravaganza*. When she's not on the stage, she enjoys playing softball, hanging out with friends, and hanging out with her golden retriever, Chuck. Simone would like to thank her family and friends for all their love and support!



Jonah Vander Kam (Ralphie) is overjoyed to begin his experience on the mainstage here at SLO REP. In January this year, Jonah had one of his favorite theatre experiences in SLO REP's ACT program, playing Mr. Pippet in *Suite Surrender*. Since then, he has been eager to engage in any SLO REP show. Jonah has performed locally in *Footloose the Musical* (Bickle,) *The Little Mermaid* (Sebastian,) *The Addams Family* (Lucas,) *The Snake in the Grass* (Sheriff Billy Bold) and many more. Jonah has enjoyed theatre all his life, and hopes to love it for the rest of his life too.



Frida Vega (Scut) Is elated to return to the SLO REP stage! You may recognize her as Mrs. Whatsit from ACT's production of *A Wrinkle in Time*, or as Martha or Belinda Cratchit in *A Christmas Carol* at The Great American Melodrama. Additionally, she is the president of the SLO High School Theatre company, and can't wait to thrust herself back into live theatre! She would like to thank the SLO REP team and her family for their endless support. Enjoy the show!



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About the Production Team

Lupita Marisol Rodriguez (Stage Manager) is thrilled to return for her second season with SLO REP and is particularly excited to be stage managing this year's holiday production of *A Christmas Story* for the second time. With a professional stage management career that began in college, she has worked for various theatre companies in Monterey, San Benito, and San Jose counties, cultivating a passion for bringing theatrical productions to life. Lupita holds a BA in Cinematic Arts and Technology from CSU Monterey Bay. Before joining SLO REP, she spent three years in Los Angeles, where she honed her production and management skills in the film industry. In 2020, she returned to the beautiful Central Coast, eager to contribute to the vibrant local theatre community here. As you dive into this beloved holiday classic, Lupita hopes audiences are captivated by the holiday spirit once again. Happy Holidays!

Bekah Badger (Assistant Stage Manager) is delighted to be working on this nostalgic show with the incredible SLO REP crew and this amazing cast! Though she is relatively new to theatre, Bekah has adored it since she saw her very first show at seven years old. She had so much fun bringing this holiday classic to life again this Christmas season, and hopes you enjoy the show!

Dave Linfield (Scenic Design) has designed and built nearly all SLO REP's Mainstage productions over the past 15 years. The theatre bug bit him in 1990 when an audition notice for a community theatre production caught his fancy. Over the years, he migrated from performing onstage to working behind the scenes, embracing technical stagecraft as his true calling. Dave's educational background in graphic design and his work experience in retail display and housing construction have blended in distinctive ways to fuel his passion for designing and building sets.



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SLO REP's new venue will feature two stages – a 215-seat mainstage and a 100-seat black box theatre – plus plenty of bathrooms!

Thanks to the many generous donors listed on these pages, we have raised nearly \$18.5 million of our \$21.5 million goal. We need to raise the remaining \$3 million by this time next year.

You can help to make this long-held dream become real. Won't you join us?

With your help, we will reach our goal by the end of 2025, allowing us to put shovels in the ground in early 2026 and celebrate with a grand opening in 2027!

Kevin Harris, Artistic Director

For more information about this campaign or to make your donation, contact Patty Thayer, Development & Capital Campaign Director.

patty@slorep.org | (805) 592-3190 | slorep.org/a-new-stage



All donations listed on page 19 have been pledged or received as of November 5, 2024. Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. For more information or questions about your listing, please contact Patty Thayer at **(805) 592-3190 / patty@slorep.org**.

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Kevin Casey & Mike Mesker
June Minikel, Minikel Family Foundation
Don & Nancy Norton

Don & Ricki Pace
Kimberly Perez
Susan Piel
Laura Slaughter*
Sally H Young

Stage Managers (\$100+)

Dr. Richard Adams
Krystyna Amaral
Rebecca & Joseph Anastasio
Mitchell Blum
Linda Butler
Carlyn Christianson
Maria Ciamaichelo
Kathleen & Phil Cohl
Edna Marie Cole
Cee Cee Cuccaro
Elena & Joseph Demartini
Sharon Deos
Marguerite & Donald Erickson
Jose Luis Flores and Carole Flores
John Hallvik
Mary Kay Harrington
Dwayne Head

William & Yvonne Hoffman
Deborah Adams & Michael Howard
Robert & Darrylin Huttie
George & Marie Lepper
George Lusich*
Cathy Marvier
Mike Milanesi
Christy & Mike Palmer
Ms. Judith Resnick
Julie Rodewald
Yvonne Ramos & Bob Smidt
Heather Smith
Lynn & Jon Sterner
Linda & Thomas Stuermer
Patty & David Thayer
Ken & Nancy Thompson
Elaine & Bert Townsend
Anamaria & Nina Unger
Sheila & Al Vossler
Nancy Walter
Nancy & Jerry Weber
Tom Cash & Danna Weidner
Marta & John Zanghi
Ray Ramirez & Gregory Zocher



Special Remembrances

In Memory of Scott Burdette
Deronda & Steve Burdette

In Memory of Norma DuBon
Natalie Miske

In Memory of Grace Bernadette Langere
By her Family

In Memory of Pat & Ben McAdams
Kathy Coull
Maggie King
All of us at SLO REP

In Honor of Mr. Mouse Our Most Theatrical Feline
Jacqueline Heimel

In Memory of Burr Nissen
Audrey Elliott

In Memory of Roberta Ozanich
John Ozanich

In Memory of Kristin Rawlinson
Wendy & Keith George
Brad & Jacqueline Hinds
Andi & Scott Portney
Michael & Maryellen Simkins
Minke WinklerPrins

In Memory of Breck Smith
By Heather Smith

In Memory of Bob Wacker
All of us at SLO REP

In Memory of Wilda Rosene

Kelley Abbas
Marian Anderson
Sharon & John Dobson
Ray Fleming
Jamie & Lynn Foster
Yvon Gresser
John Hallvik
David & Sharon Juhnke
Frank Kelton

Gina Kirk
Betsy Kiser
Karen S. Kolba MD
Pamela Lee
Juliane McAdam
Leslie McKinley
Pam & Mitch Nichter
Dawn Ortiz-Legg
Richard Pottratz

Rotary Club of San Luis Obispo
Gary & Vallerie Steenson
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Christopher Teaford
Mary Vickers
Ellie Washington
Tom Weiss
Janice Fong Wolf

Leave a Legacy of Live Theatre for the Future

Everyone can leave a legacy. Great or small, planned gifts through your financial or estate plans make a big difference. Your future gift may provide tax benefits for you or your loved ones and will ensure that the enjoyment and enrichment you've experienced at SLO REP is available to our community for years to come.

Please join us in a round of applause for our Legacy Society members whose foresight and generosity will keep live theatre going strong in downtown San Luis Obispo for years to come.

Legacy Society

Concettina* & Allyn* Arnold
Sharynn & Jerry Chirpich
Jeff McKeegan & Steven deLuque
Kate Hines & Bryce Engstrom
Ray* & Jaime Hatler*
Brenda & Jules* Hock
Bernie & Ed Kurtz
Lisa Langere
Amy Hart & Steven Lloyd-Moffett

Jeanne & Lawrence Lovelace
Catherine & Richard Luckett
Pam & Mitch Nichter
Wilda Rosene*
Gail Ryff
Michael & Maryellen Simkins
Robert Lahr & Bruce Stuart*
Ben* & Pat* McAdams
William F. Mooney* & Wilbur Wooster*

Choosing the right planned gift depends on your personal circumstances and goals. Please consult your financial advisor, then contact us about joining SLO REP's Legacy Society. Benefits include exclusive invitations to special events, priority seating for all shows with personal assistance from SLO REP staff and a listing in our playbill. If you've already included SLO REP in your future plans, please let us know. We want to honor and celebrate your generous gifts TODAY!

Building the Future

Thanks to the foresight, generosity, and determination of Dr. Bernhard Singen, SLO REP has established an Endowment Fund for the future of live theatre in downtown SLO. This fund will grow as we grow, providing security and future funding, ensuring that this organization continues to thrive for years to come.

Endowment Fund Donors

Catherine & Richard Luckett
Pam & Mitch Nichter
Dr. Bernhard Singen

For more information about how you can build the future of live theatre in downtown SLO, please contact **Patty Thayer** at (805) 592-3190 or patty@slopep.org.

Special Thanks

Playbill Sponsors

Anonymous
Catherine & Richard Luckett

Empleo Street Headquarters Renovation Assistance

Bryan Wallace

Artist Hospitality Sponsors

Pam & Mitch Nichter
Ann Robinson

*deceased



Contact

Box Office: (805) 786-2440
boxoffice@slorep.org
Business Office: (805) 781-3889

Box Office Hours

Wed-Fri 3 pm – 6 pm
Show Saturdays 3 pm – 5 pm
Will Call open 1 hour before
every show

Downtown Venue Address

888 Morro Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Empleo Street Headquarters

3533 Empleo Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Mailing Address

PO Box 122
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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Scenic Designer

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Volunteer Coordinator
& Front of House
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Rachel Tietz
Assistant Education
Director

Shannon Peters
Assistant Education
Director & Empleo
Office Manager

**Lester Wilson, Isaac
Capp, Carolyn Peters
Natalie Mara
...and more!**
ACT Teaching Artists

**Aaron Jackson,
Sonya Jackson, Abe
Lincoln, Carly Medina,
Chichahua Martínez**
Assistant House
Managers

Mission

SLO REP strengthens theatre's cultural influence and enriches the Central Coast by producing professional theatre, nurturing artists and providing theatre education for children and adults.

Our Belief

Live theatre's powerful storytelling connects people in ways that open the mind, nourish the soul and illuminate our shared humanity.

Vision

To be a nationally recognized regional theatre that:

- Produces professional theatrical productions in a state-of-the-art facility.
- Strengthens the cultural vitality of the Central Coast, entertains audiences, nurtures artists, and cultivates future generations of theatre enthusiasts.
- Creates a strong and sustainable economic impact, attracting residents and visitors to downtown San Luis Obispo.

Our Commitment

Theatre plays a vital role in our culture and our community and has a responsibility to enact positive change through its work, practices, educational programs and policies. We at SLO REP are committed to diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. To learn more about our commitment to you, our community and to ourselves, please visit our website at slorep.org

Land Acknowledgement: San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre acknowledges with respect that the place we work and gather is located on the traditional land of the Northern Chumash people.

Artwork: Subplot Studio

Photos/Video: RyLo Media Design, Ryan Loyd

SLO REP
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