

# Where everyone is welcome



**ACT's mission is to provide entertainment, enrichment, and education through the celebration and practice of the theatre arts.** The emphasis is on creating high quality audience experiences. Plays bring people together and reflect issues which interest and concern. They help audiences better understand themselves and their fellow humans through imaginative experiences.



The Autumn Players provides an opportunity for seniors to continue to express themselves and their love of theatre and literature. These participants celebrated over 360 years of combined experience (2014). Left to Right: Beatrice Diamond, Shirley Cohen, Eileen Walkenstein, and Natalie Nachman.

## The Autumn Players

The Autumn Players began as the "Senior Wing" of the Second Stage Readers Theatre. They are a troupe of seasoned actors, directors, and writers dedicated to taking theatre into the community. Since 1992 they have entertained students, seniors, and in-betweeners with a growing repertoire of short and full-length plays, adapted classics, and poetry.



ACT members participating in the RiverLink Anything that Floats Parade (early 2000s).

## Community Outreach

ACT takes its middle name seriously and is an integral part of the community in so many ways. The Autumn Players can be found performing in schools, libraries, and retirement homes. ACT offers benefit performances for local charities, donates tickets to support other local non-profits, participates in community celebrations, hosts an annual fashion show featuring local clothing designers, and so much more. ACT also offers a variety of classes for all ages.

## Tanglewood



Tanglewood Youth Theatre produced *Seussical, Jr.* in 2015.

Over the years ACT has provided a variety of children, teen, and young adult theatre experiences. They all began when 11-year-old John Haber produced a play in his backyard. Popularity forced him into the North Asheville Community Center where, as Tanglewood Children's Theatre, he produced *The Ghost of Mr. Penny* in 1959. It was magical. Currently, Tanglewood is thriving at ACT: classes and camps are offered year-round, often generating long waiting lists.

## In the Past

**Second Stage Readers Theatre** was started in 1985 as a forum for new and challenging works, allowing the focus to be on the literary value of the



The Autumn Players production of *The Conjure Wives* (2009). Left to Right Mike Vaniman, Janell McLeod, and Lennie Senfeld.

script without the production and costs of sets and costumes. Though this program no longer exists, director Bernie Hauserman (1937-2009) initiated a **Readers Theatre Showcase** series through The Autumn Players, which is flourishing.

## The Theatre Guild

**The Theatre Guild** was started as ACT Associates by Barbara Hodgson in 1990. By 1993 it became the ACT Guild which was absorbed into ACT's volunteer program in the early 2000s.



Theatre Guild Members worked tirelessly organizing events and fundraisers. The Guild held A Roaring Twenties Party benefit for ACT in 1992 (pictured above).



Tanglewood Summer Camp (2014).

**TOP PHOTO BAR - LEFT TO RIGHT:**  
*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (2006) • *Chicago* (2012) • *Driving Miss Daisy* (1991) • *Annie Get Your Gun* (2013) • *The Lion in Winter* (2000)

### PANEL CREDITS:

Photographs courtesy of Pack Memorial Library, North Carolina Collection. The ACT archive includes photos by Tommy Propest, Misha Schmiedecke, Eva Skowska, and Rodney Smith. Additional photographs, as noted, are courtesy of Roger Bargainnier (*The Lion in Winter* (2000), *The Autumn Players* (2014), *The Conjure Wives* (2009), and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (2006)). Layout and design by KRT Graphic Design. (www.krtgraphicdesign.com). Content by History@Hand (www.history-at-hand.com).

For additional information about Asheville Community Theatre visit [www.ashevilletheatre.org](http://www.ashevilletheatre.org).