

Created by: Debra C. Argen

## Rich and Famous by John Guare at the Geary Theatre

The historic **Geary Theatre** in **San Francisco, California** was the setting for the **American Conservatory Theatre** production of **John Guare's** exciting play, **Rich and Famous**, directed by **John Rando**.



On January 18, 2009, I went to see the matinee performance of John Guare's play, *Rich and Famous*, at the Geary Theatre. The play starred the celebrated Broadway actor Brooks Ashmanskas in the lead role of Bing Ringling, with a talented cast that included Mary Birdsong, another Broadway veteran, playing the roles of Leanara, Veronica Gulpp-Vestige, Allison, and Mom; Gregory Wallace (A.C.T. associate artistic and core acting company member) in the roles of Aphro and Hare Krishna; and Stephen DeRosa, who has also graced Broadway, in the roles of the Stage Manager, Anatol Torah, Dad, and Tybalt Dunleavy. The play also featured Scenery by Scott Bradley; Costumes by Gregory Gale; Lighting by Alexander V. Nichols; Sound by Jeremy J. Lee; Musical Director Laura Burton; Dramaturg Michael Paller; Casting by Meryl Lind Shaw; New York Casting Consultant Laura Stancyk; Assistant Director Ryan Purcell; Songs by John Guare; and Music for "Three Sisters" by Michael Friedman.



### **Rich and Famous**

Courtesy of Kevin Berne and Alessdra Mello

The setting of the play is New York City in the 1970s, with the story unfolding of Bing Ringling, an ever-hopeful and aspiring playwright who despite his prolific efforts writing 843 plays has yet to have a single play produced. He has high hopes though, that this play, number 844, which at long last is being produced, will not only be his ticket to fame and fortune, he will finally realize his dream of becoming rich

and famous.



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The audience is carried along on a wild ride of his musical highs as he dreams and sings of success as things start looking up for him. However, when the opening night of his play arrives, his hope for success and to become rich and famous plummets quickly as the plot thickens and everything that can possibly go wrong around him does. Presented without an intermission, the fast-paced play with a zany assortment of characters combined with rapid-fire witty dialogue, kept the audience on the edge of their seats all the way until curtain call.



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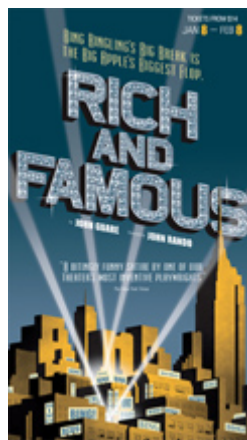
The American Conservatory Theatre was founded in 1965 and opened their first season at the Geary Theatre in 1967, a gilt historical treasure that opened in 1910 and has been lovingly refurbished. **Richard Famous** runs until February 8, 2009. Please visit the **American Conservatory Theatre** website, [www.ACT-SF.com](http://www.ACT-SF.com) to learn more about their upcoming performances.

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American Conservatory Theatre  
415 Geary Street  
San Francisco, California, United States 94102  
Box Office: +1-415-749-2ACT  
[www.ACT-SF.com](http://www.ACT-SF.com)

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