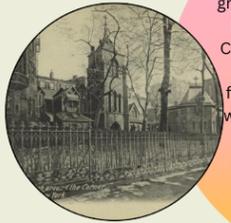


# THE EAGLET

The Episcopal Actors' Guild | Est. 1923 | For All Faiths and None

Celebrating **100** years  
of charitable help

**1923**



On a cold blustery night in December 1923, a prestigious group of Broadway actors met with Randolph Ray, the Rector of the Church of the Transfiguration, and other trustees of the church to form the Episcopal Actors' Guild, which would serve as a social and artistic center for its non-denominational members while quietly assisting, on a non-sectarian basis, those in need.



EAG helps Fred and Adele Astaire get their start in films with an emergency grant for rent and train fare to LA. Mr. Astaire remembered that \$500 grant throughout his life, sending \$500 each year to help others as he had been helped.

**late 1920's**

EAG first addresses hunger during the Great Depression by handing out meal tickets on the breadlines.

**1930's**

Actors are sent to serve in WWII.



**1939**

**1943**

EAG helps the war effort by hosting a Serviceman's Morale Corp benefit



Our first scholarship, in honor of EAG president and Broadway producer, VINTON FREEDLEY, is started at the American Academy of Dramatic Arts (AADA).

**1968**

**1950's**

EAG shifts its charitable help to provide relief to performers who had been blacklisted due to McCarthyism.

*See more inside....*

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Angela Lansbury  
9/15/09

Dear Karen Lehman,  
Thank you so much for your letter which I received on arriving back in town on Oct 12<sup>th</sup>. I very much appreciated you writing me to make the keynote speech at the Annual Memorial Service on November 8<sup>th</sup>. I am about to embark on a new production of "A Little Night Music" and because of the heavy work schedule, I fear I am not able to work on my one day off! I know you understand.

Yours very sincerely,  
Angela Lansbury.

Above: Correspondence from EAG's long-time Advisory Board member, the late Angela Lansbury, sending her regrets that due to her busy work schedule, she would be unable to deliver the memorial address at EAG's Annual Memorial Service in 2009.

## In Memoriam

Let us take a moment to remember the following Guild Members who we learned we have lost since the last issue of *The Eaglet*:

- Alvin Brandt
- Marianne Cullinan
- Henry DeSheilds Fisher
- Jay Hickerson
- Annette Hunt
- Wilhelm Lewis
- Lawrence Merrit
- Jill Ober
- Elizabeth "Betsy" Parrish





Happy 100th Anniversary, Episcopal Actors' Guild! We have come a long way since our founding in 1923, and we plan to celebrate all year long!

This is the first in a series of 4 commemorative *Eaglets*. The focus is on our charitable work during the past 100 years. From the Great Depression to the breadlines, to the war effort, to McCarthyism, to the AIDS crisis, to the COVID pandemic, to Black Lives Matter, EAG has been there to help, quickly adapting our services to help those in the performing arts who are in need. For a century, we have provided exemplary and expedient service.

Our next 3 *Eaglets* will focus on the history of membership, Guild Hall and events, and the Annual Memorial Service. And we need your help! We are looking for members to share their memories of EAG so that we may publish them in future issues. Please email your stories (2-3 sentences) to [karen@actorsguild.org](mailto:karen@actorsguild.org) or mail to 1 East 29th St., NYC 10016.

Our publications are just the beginning of the celebration of this important milestone. We

are in the process of planning a big party to be held this December. And we are committed to making this party accessible for all who want to be there. We will work to maintain a fair pricing schedule for this event.

Once we have finalized the date and venue, we will share them with you. You won't want to miss this event so please stay tuned for the details.

Our Archives committee, led by Eric Stamm, has been working on a banner display to be hung in the church. Our 100th anniversary is also the Church's 175th anniversary, so we are thrilled that we can celebrate together!

The Archives is also working on some displays for Guild Hall and will offer tours throughout the year so people who visit can view our proud history.

We will create membership specials throughout the year, encouraging people to join us (or rejoin) to help celebrate our centennial year. If you are not already a Life Member, this will be a great time to upgrade your membership.

We are thrilled to celebrate this landmark year with all of you. And we are so grateful for everyone's contributions to help us get here!

**Karen Lehman Foster**  
**Executive Director**



**The Episcopal Actors' Guild of America**  
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- Jennifer Fouché | Vice President
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Rebecca Lovett, Jamie Soltis | Layout and Content  
Karen Lehman Foster | Cover  
Mervyn Kaufman, Anthony Newfield,  
Jerry Vermilye | Publications Committee



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# 100 Years of Charitable Help

(continued from Cover)...

The AIDS crisis takes its toll on the performing arts community. EAG responds early and swiftly.

**1980's**



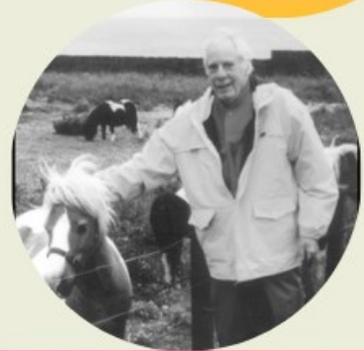
EAG forms HIV/AIDS PROGRAM to restrict 20% of budget to those living with the disease.

We receive critical funding from BROADWAY CARES/EQUITY FIGHTS AIDS, which continues to today.

**1998**

**2007**

THOMAS BARBOUR MEMORIAL PLAYWRIGHTS AWARD established to recognize the work of emerging playwrights



**1974**

The TESSA KOSTA SCHOLARSHIP is established at AADA.

**1997**

The LON CLARK SCHOLARSHIP is established at AADA to honor his service as Executive Secretary.

During his tenure, he started our CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY FUND, which was later named after FLORENCE JAMES, chair of the Grants Committee, who worked tirelessly to address the needs of performers with children.

**2001**

The GEORGE C. SCOTT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is established at the University of Missouri.

The PETER HARRIS/TED TILLER SCHOLARSHIP is established at AADA.

**1972**

The CLAIRE HARRIS STRAKOSCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP is established.

EAG members volunteer at the World Trade Center, in the days and weeks following 9/11.





In response to an increase in hunger throughout the performing arts community, EAG founds the ACTORS PANTRY to supply groceries to those in need.

EAG receives NYIT Award's Indie Theatre Champion Award for our work supporting NYC's performing artists during the pandemic and our work fighting white supremacy



SUSAN CARR PICKETT FUND FOR VETERAN ACTORS established by Ms. Pickett to help those over age 65.

2014

EAG responds to the global pandemic and the shuttering of Broadway and other venues as the need for food and financial assistance quadruples.

2020

2021

Actor Ryan Murray's THE WISHING KIDS FOUNDATION creates a special fund to help performers and their families suffering from life-altering illnesses, terminal or otherwise

SUSTAINABLE CONVERATIONS--our safe space to discuss racism in America and the arts--is born



2013

2012

THE HEADSHOT PROJECT (providing free professional headshots to clients) is established at EAG, in an arrangement with photographer Ahron R. Foster.

The OPEN STAGE grant is started to give emerging theatre companies a six-week residency in Guild Hall.

2021

THE INTENTIONAL ARTIST support group begins.

2015

ARTIST AFTERNOONS, our free seminar series, is born.

2017

The TERI BLACK PERFORMANCE FUND was later started by Council Member Teri Black so that Open Stage actors and directors could receive stipends for their work.

2008

The MART HULSWIT SCHOLARSHIP established at AADA.



HAPPY 100th BIRTHDAY, EAG! It is quite a milestone and an achievement. There is much to celebrate, like all the work that EAG has done—and continues to do—to serve NYC’s performing arts community, and to encourage its members to be more conscious of social injustice and find ways to fight racism. To be aware. To get involved. While it is a time to celebrate, it is also a time to reflect back on how far (or not) we have come as a country... and how much farther we have to go. A lot farther. There is still a lot of work to be done in fighting racism and changing those minds and policies which hold that system in place. Never stop learning. Never stop growing. Here is a look back at what else was happening 100 years ago, in 1923, as EAG was just born into this world... this beautiful and bruised world.

**READ:** [“Thind vs United States, 1923.”](#) A stern reminder of the blatant hate and discrimination that immigrants faced 100 years ago and continue to be subjected to today. “There’s still a lot of work to be done.” Recommended by DEI Committee and EAG Council member Jo Yang.

**WATCH:** [The Cotton Club.](#) 1984 film directed by Francis Ford Coppola. The famous and legendary Cotton Club shares the same birthday as EAG! Also born in NYC in 1923, the Cotton Club showcased some of the most famous Black performers of the time—yet Black patrons were not welcomed. Recommended by DEI Committee and EAG Council member Tyrone Henderson.

**LEARN:** [“Rosewood.”](#) After Greenwood, sadly, there was Rosewood. 1923. The Rosewood Massacre in Florida occurred less than 2 years after the horrific devastation in Tulsa. In 1997, Jon Singleton made a film about what happened in Rosewood.

*If you would like more information on the DEI Committee, please contact Chair Chris Chinn at [chrischinn2020@gmail.com](mailto:chrischinn2020@gmail.com).*

Happy 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, EAG. Happy 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Church of the Transfiguration (COT). Over the past year, COT Historical Society has developed a plan for four poster presentations over the coming year to highlight the church’s significant history—the first centered on the COT’s strong abolitionist stance and acknowledgment of the value of all peoples is available for viewing in the church, and I encourage everyone to make time to see it. Among other activities being planned are Guild Hall tours to highlight the wonderful physical documentation of our history.

The Guild’s first charitable work was planned to be a school for the children of performers. Despite several years of planning, this was never accomplished. Instead, the Guild provided financial assistance to performers in need. Lorraine Sherwood (Executive Secretary 1961 to 1973) describes “Responding to a 5am call from Bellevue Hospital, taking an ambulance ride by the dawn’s early light...getting a frantic midnight call from a suddenly bereaved family too stunned to make the necessary final arrangements...”

It was Lon Clark (Ex. Sec. 1973 to 1995) who expanded our financial assistance program, leading the transition of the Guild from a primarily social organization to a leader in the entertainment industry relief community. Lon credited then Grants Committee Chair Tessa Costa, Guild President Ray Heatherton, and Guild Vice President Mike Merian as key players in effecting this transition. The Guild has come a long way since that “cold, blustery night,” on December 16, 1923, when “a small but eager group of actors and actresses, clergymen and laymen” gathered “to form an organization whose prime object... was the banding together of the stage with the Church for their general welfare.”

*(Quotes from the 25<sup>th</sup> and 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Benefit books.)*

## Two on the Aisle | Jerry Vermilye

*(Reprinted from February 2017)*

As assistant stage manager at the Berkshire Playhouse in Stockbridge, MA, in the mid-fifties, an aspiring young actor enjoyed the rare excitement of working with somewhat faded stars from Hollywood’s Golden Age, as well as those who supported them.

With only a week to rehearse each play, those celebrities were hard-working pros. At 63, Ruth Chatterton cared enough about her image to climb ladders and resurrect abandoned footlights with surprise-pink gels on dress-rehearsal day. Richard Arlen welcomed a lobby display of movie stills from his youth; vinegary Sylvia Sidney evinced her displeasure with a fan’s comment (“I’ll never forget you in *An American Tragedy*”) with the retort, “That was a very long time ago!”

Fussy Edward Everett Horton, a favorite of the matinee ladies, proved less lovable backstage, complaining loudly about his quick-change booth and relentlessly humiliating his leading lady in rehearsal. Margaret Hamilton, typecast by Hollywood in unpleasant film characterizations, displayed her naturally warm and kindly self, revealing her versatility. But Betty Field, cast as a grim and stoic character, allowed hovering playwright husband Elmer Rice to offer counter-productive private direction that altered the play, resulting in a dress rehearsal that erupted into a war of words.

## Beyond the Fourth Wall | Mervyn Kaufman

I recall hearing a noted stage director sputter when asked to define star quality. I felt for him; I, too, would’ve been hard pressed to frame a plausible response. Yet I can readily name performers who’ve had star power in spades—Jolson, Merman, Garland, and Minnelli come to mind. Also: Dietrich, Callas, Elvis, and the Beatles. All were routinely cheered just for *being there*. Were they all remarkably gifted? Perhaps. But there was obviously some indefinable “X” factor also at work.

Josephine Baker certainly had it. One lyric from the opening number of her long-ago U. S. tour, began modestly, “I sing a little . . . dance a little.” But it’s clear there was more to her legendary success—an almost magical presence-plus that guaranteed an ovation every time she appeared onstage.

More recently there was Hugh Jackman, who won acclaim and fat screen roles after playing Curly in a celebrated London revival of *Oklahoma!* a few years back. But whatever plaudits he later earned from film roles were dim, compared to the response from audiences attending his stage appearances—notably the recent *Music Man* revival. Decades ago, when asked what impulse had sustained him throughout his illustrious stage and film career, Sir—excuse me, *Lord*—Laurence Olivier hardly paused for breath before replying, “Look at me, look at me!” And, since then, I’ve wondered—is that the elusive “X” factor? Really? Hmmm. . . .

## SEPTEMBER 2022...

**Leslie Middlebrook** starred in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame: A Dramatic Musical* at 30th Street Theater, September 8 - October 2.

Don't Tell Mama welcomed back VANGARI! NYC's favorite mother/daughter cabaret duo: **Evangeline** and **Ariana Johns**, with Musical Director **Darryl Curry**. Their new show, *Funny You Should Ask*, featuring some of their most requested songs, along with a sprinkling of new tunes and an original from the songwriting team of Ariana and Darryl, was on stage, September 17-18 and October 13.

**Teri Black**, **Eric Kuzmuk**, and **Eve Sorel** appeared in Break A Leg Productions' *3rd Annual One Act Slam* on September 17 at The Unity Center of New York.

Quick Silver Theater Company hosted a staged reading of **Reynaldo Piniella's** *Son of An Unknown Father* at The Billie Holiday Theatre on September 25.

## OCTOBER 2022...

**Cynthia Shaw** made her NYC cabaret debut in her show *Spark of Creation* at Don't Tell Mama on October 6 and 8.

New York City-based singer **Jenny Lynn Stewart** brought her musical performance *New York Spirit* to Lincoln Center's New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Bruno Walter Auditorium, October 15.

**Jo Yang** performed in *Younger Battles the Possible Ghost* as part of Series A in Ensemble Studio Theatre's first completely BIPOC *Marathon of One-Act Plays Festival* October 16 to November 13.

**Aan Steele** performed *My Side Lady*, her original piece about the great Italian stage actress Eleonora Duse, at Guild Hall on October 21 and November 18.

**Teri Black** directed the world premiere of Arthur I Miller's *Synchronicity* at The Unity Center of New York on October 22, as a part of Break A Leg Productions' *The Art of Science Reading Series*.

**Erik Kuzmuk** appeared in The Amateur Comedy Club's "fang-tastic" production of *Dracula* October 26 through November 12.

## NOVEMBER 2022...

**Cindy Cooper** presented her short play *The Prize* (about Dr. Patricia Bath, the African-American ophthalmologist who invented laser surgery) at Guild Hall on November 12 as part of Repro Freedom Arts' *We [Heart] Women Doctors* event.

## DECEMBER 2022...

**Ginger Grace** starred in *Flight Delay* by Peter Anderegg at The Tank, December 1-18.

**Mary Goggin** brought her award-winning solo show *Runaway Princess* to AMT Theater, December 3rd and 4th.

**Stacey Robinson** performed his one-man show *The Story, The Songs* at Don't Tell Mama on December 9.

**Anthony Newfield**, **Chris Chinn**, and **Jennifer Fouché** continued the House of the Redeemer tradition of a holiday reading on December 12. This year's choice was O. Henry's *The Gift of the Magi*, adapted by **Richard Alleman**.

The Actors Shakespeare Company returned to New York on December 13 and 15, presenting their acclaimed one-man production of *A Christmas Carol*, adapted by **James Rana**, at Guild Hall.

**Paul Bedard** toured the country with Bread and Puppet Theater this fall, appearing in *The Apocalypse Defiance Circus*, a rollicking spectacle of protest and celebration, with Manhattan performances at Theatre for the New City December 14-18.

**Craig Wichman**, **Christina Britton Conroy**, and **Bernadette Fiorella** were a part of the *Victorian Carol Sing-Along* with a reading of *A Christmas Carol* presented by Friends of the Erben Organ and the Victorian Society New York at Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral on December 15.

**Cynthia Shaw** conducted the wonderful and eclectic a cappella chorus, The Art Mob., in their non-Christmas music winter concert *Return to Cinders* on December 16 and 18.

## JANUARY 2023...

**Alan Tongret** (writer-producer), **Jo Ann Yeoman** (co-producer), and **Kathleen Conry** (director) presented readings of *Memories of the Lost Acres* at Guild Hall on January 7th and 8th.

**Meron Langsner's** play *Burning Up the Dictionary* was recently published by Next Stage Press in an Acting Edition. For more details about the play or to order copies, please visit [www.nextstagepress.com/burning-up-the-dictionary](http://www.nextstagepress.com/burning-up-the-dictionary).

**Fran Sisco** presented her play *It's An Italian Thing! No, It's a Black Thing*. on Zoom on January 22, as a part of Tiger's Heart Players' Sunday reading series.

## CONGRATULATIONS!...

The winners of the 2022 BroadwayWorld Cabaret Awards have been announced and Jeff Harnar's *I Know Things Now: My Life in Sondheim's Words* (musical director Jon Weber, director **Sondra Lee**) at the Laurie Beechman, was awarded Best Show! It was also a BroadwayWorld Editor's Pick for 2022, with Stephen Masher saying, "This show defines the art form of cabaret and deserves every accolade it has gotten."

# COMING SOON TO EAG

Go to the link listed to purchase tickets/register/RSVP.

More info at [actorsguild.org/calendar](https://actorsguild.org/calendar)

[reservations@actorsguild.org](mailto:reservations@actorsguild.org)

212-685-2927

Leviathan Lab, in partnership with EAG's Open Stage Grant, presents a workshop production of

## ***Learning How To Read By Moonlight*** by Gaven D. Trinidad

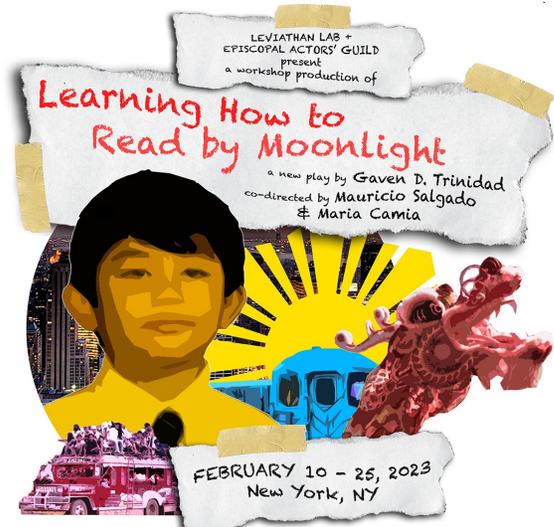
February 10-25 | 7:00pm ET in Guild Hall

Tickets (\$10-\$25) at [events.humanitix.com/learning-how-to-read-by-moonlight](https://events.humanitix.com/learning-how-to-read-by-moonlight)

UNDER THE MOONLIGHT...six-year-old Eddie imagines a dragon eating moons and an imaginary friend teaching him English. His mother smokes as she prays to a statue of the Santo Niño. His father waits alone in Manila for their daily phone calls. Songs from a mythical giant turtle travel across oceans, but are drowned by the voices of Duterte and Trump on the television. As fantasy and reality become indistinguishable, the family is forced to learn how to articulate unspoken truths that will either break them or heal them. How will the weight of living undocumented in New York City force them to reevaluate their understanding of "community," "dreams," and "home"?

The cast performs original music and songs to help tell the story. The play is spoken in English and Tagalog, with subtitles and translation. To assist the actors, a new narrator (a fellow artist, community organizer, or elected official) joins the cast every night. Having neither seen the play nor read the entire script, they read the play aloud, experiencing the play for the first time together with the audience.

Proceeds from these performances will be split between Leviathan Lab and the charitable programs of EAG.



## ***Mid-Winter Mysteries: An Audience Participation Event***

Thursday, March 2 at 7:00pm ET in Guild Hall

Tickets (\$0-\$25) at [ticketstripe.com/eag-mid-winter-mysteries](https://ticketstripe.com/eag-mid-winter-mysteries)

Here's the opportunity that all you "armchair detectives" have been waiting for...The Episcopal Actors' Guild Salutes the Season with Suspense, Suspicion and Surprise! Join the EAG for an evening of mystery, murder, and mayhem as audience volunteers read from classic Who-Dunnits--from the big screen, small screen, and printed page. Throw in a few charades and groom your inner Detective Clousseaus, Jessica Fletchers, and Perry Masons as we embark on a crime-busting evening of fun with hosts **Amelia V. Anderson** and **Sally Sherwood**. All proceeds go to support the charitable programs of EAG.

## **Broadway Book Club**

### ***The Club*** by Ellery Lloyd

Monday, April 3 at 2:30pm ET in Guild Hall and on Zoom

FREE. More info and instructions on registering to attend at [ticketstripe.com/eag-the-club](https://ticketstripe.com/eag-the-club)

Every two months, book club members meet to discuss their latest pick, which is always a novel that takes place in the world of the performing arts! All are welcome to join. Are you ready for the roller-coaster ride that is *The Club*?... A beautifully written, densely plotted murder mystery that takes place at a private club off the coast of England. Read about a luxurious, celeb-only island during a weekend of partying and, ultimately, murder.

## **Artist Afternoon**

### ***Intro to Middle Eastern Dance***

**Wednesday, May 24 at 3:00pm ET in Guild Hall**

**FREE. Space is Limited. Registration Required: [ticketstripe.com/eag-aa-middle-eastern-dance](https://ticketstripe.com/eag-aa-middle-eastern-dance)**

Join instructor and EAG member **Dorit Elena K.** for a fun, online workshop that will introduce students to the basic movements that cover the social dance and art form of Middle Eastern dance. This workshop is appropriate for all ages, genders, and abilities. The movements range from relaxed and flowing to percussive and sharp, and they can all be adjusted to preference and ability. By the end of the class, everyone will have learned a few movements they can use when engaging with basic Arabic rhythms. (90 minutes)

## **FREE RECURRING EVENTS AT EAG...**

### ***Actors Night***

**Third Tuesday of the Month (February 21, March 21) at 7:00pm ET in Guild Hall**

**Register for each month's FREE class at [ticketstripe.com/eag-actors-night](https://ticketstripe.com/eag-actors-night)**

*Actors Night* with **Peter Von Berg** is a judgment-free zone, where EAG members can work on monologues, scenes, commercial copy, cold readings, their own material—anything!—before a group of supportive and talented fellow artists. “Whether or not you get constructive feedback is up to you.”

### ***Sustainable Conversations***

**Mondays, February 27, March 20, and April 24 at 7:00pm ET on Zoom**

**Register for each month's FREE forum at [ticketstripe.com/eag-sustainable-conversations](https://ticketstripe.com/eag-sustainable-conversations)**

Author/actress/EAG Member **Helena-Joyce Wright**, actor/EAG Council/DEI Committee chair **Chris Chinn**, and members, staff, and friends of EAG are continuing our monthly Zoom discussions centered around race and racism in America and in the arts.

### ***The Artist's Way***

**Tuesdays, February 28 through May 23 at 1:00pm ET on Zoom**

**Register for this FREE workshop by emailing [karen@actorsguild.org](mailto:karen@actorsguild.org)**

Join EAG Executive Director **Karen Lehman Foster** as we work through THE ARTIST'S WAY, Julia Cameron's 12-week spiritual path to creativity. No matter where you are on your path or how many times you've worked through the material, we hope you'll consider attending.

### ***Yoga Mondays***

**Every Monday | 1:00pm ET on Zoom**

**Register for this FREE weekly class by emailing [reservations@actorsguild.org](mailto:reservations@actorsguild.org)**

Stretch, strengthen, and start your week right with some soul-soothing yoga with **Rebecca Ambrose**. (45 minutes)

### ***Pilates with Marla***

**Tuesdays at 10:30am ET + Thursdays at 2:30pm ET on Zoom**

**Register for these FREE classes by emailing [reservations@actorsguild.org](mailto:reservations@actorsguild.org)**

Stretch, work that core, and have fun with certified personal trainer **Marla Altberg**. (45 minutes)

# 100 EAG

**Welcome, New Members!**

**Catherine Caplan**

**Judith Gruttman**

**Jason Duvall Hunter**

**Zazel-Chavah O'Garra**

**William Petrano**



**The Episcopal Actors' Guild**  
**1 East 29th Street**  
**New York, NY 10016**