

CORNELL WOOLRICH (a.k.a. William Irish and George Hopley) was born Cornell George Hopley-Woolrich in 1906. Known as the "Edgar Allen Poe of the 20th century," Woolrich, like Poe, led a fragmented and troubled life. He moved often as a child, suffered through parental divorce, and ultimately married the daughter of a Hollywood movie mogul (whom he adored), only to have her annul the marriage when she discovered that he was a closeted homosexual. For the next twenty-five years, Woolrich lived in a conflicted love-hate relationship with his mother. Even as he wrote his best work, Woolrich decayed emotionally and physically, eventually losing a leg to gangrene and becoming an alcoholic. His widely quoted aphorism, "First you dream, then you die," sums up both his dark worldview and many of his plots, and also provides a clue to his undisputed mastery of suspense. As the most prolific of the Noir writers, Woolrich is considered by many to be the godfather of the genre, and more films have been made from his work than from the work of any other Noir writer, including Hitchcock's *Rear Window* and Truffaut's *La MariÈe Etait en Noir* (*The Bride Wore Black*). Following his mother's death in 1957, Woolrich's physical decline accelerated, and he died of a stroke in 1968, leaving behind two dozen novels and over 200 short stories.

Stephanie Hunt, (Director) a Charter Member of Word for Word, has acted in over 12 stories with the company, including playing the speedometer in the first chapter of Upton Sinclair's novel *Oil!* and Lizzie Borden in Angela Carter's *Fall River Axe Murders*. For Word for Word, Stephanie has directed "Lady's Dream" and "Bullet in the Brain," two of the three stories in *Stories by Tobias Wolff*, which extended for over two months and was called one of the 10 Best Theater Performances of 2002 by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. With Word for Word, Stephanie has worked as Assistant Director on several productions, including the award winning *Winesburg, Ohio*, and *Goodbye and Good Luck*. She directed the Word for Word school tour production of Gerald McDermott's *Anansi the Spider* and has directed in long-term residencies as a Word for Word teacher in several schools throughout the Bay Area. As an actress, Stephanie has worked throughout the Bay Area at theaters including Berkeley Repertory Theater, Aurora Theater, Campo Santo, and at the Magic. Stephanie has originated roles in plays by Sara Felder (*The Lady Upstairs*), John O'Keefe (*Osiris*), and Ellen Moore (*Available Light*). She was an original founding member of the improv company *Pulp Playhouse*. Stephanie won a Bay Area Critics' Circle Award for her portrayal of Mum in the *Industrial Strength* production of Steven Berkoff's *East*, which played for a year in San Francisco, before moving to La MaMa E.T.C. in New York. Stephanie is currently a lecturer in the theater department at Sonoma State University, where she has directed Brecht's *The Exception and the Rule*, Lanford Wilson's *This is the Rill Speaking*, Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*, and Carlo Gozzi's *The Green Bird*. She has an M.F.A. from American Conservatory Theater.

WORD FOR WORD is the theatre company that transforms classic and contemporary fiction into performance works for the stage. Founded in 1993 by Susan Harloe and JoAnne Winter, the company is in its 14th year. Word for Word performs short stories in their entirety, preserving the author's language and honoring his or her literary intent. Word for Word has staged works throughout the Bay Area, as well as in France. In addition, Word for Word presents an annual School & Library Tour throughout Northern California under the auspices of the Z Space Studio's Youth Arts Education Program. In 1997, Word for Word received a special Bay Area Critics Circle Award for its unique concept and in 1998, 2002, 2003, and 2005, the Bay Area Critics Circle awarded the company numerous honors for productions including *The Halfway Diner*, *Winesburg, Ohio*, *Stories by Tobias Wolff*, and *Immortal Heart*. Word for Word is a program of the Z Space Studio.

THE Z SPACE STUDIO supports a culturally and aesthetically diverse community of theater artists working together to develop Bay Area theatre and theatre audiences. Founded in 1993 by David Dower, the Z Space Studio has become one of the nation's leading laboratories for the development of new voices, new works and new directions in American theater. By creating a space where all types of artistic development can occur side by side, the Z Space Studio has become what Berkeley Repertory Theatre's Artistic Director Tony Taccone describes as "a virtual bastion of creativity, a bubbling

cauldron of new work, and a safe haven for unfettered creative expression." The Z Space Studio employs hundreds of artists each year in the process of developing new works. The programs developed under the Z umbrella are enjoyed by over 30,000 people each year and can be found in schools, libraries, and theaters throughout Northern California and the country. Since the founding of the Z Space Studio in 1993, the Studio and the Bay Area artists we serve have racked up an impressive list of awards and other notable achievements, including the Helen Hayes Award, the Kesselring Prize, the MacArthur Award, and two Pulitzer nominations. Two Z-commissioned works, Haiku Tunnel and Red Diaper Baby, have become major motion pictures. In 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2005, Z-produced projects have landed in the San Francisco Chronicle's "10 Best Theater Events of the Year" list, and in 2006 the Z-produced 4 Adverbs appeared in the Oakland Tribune's Top 10 Events of the Year. www.zspace.org