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2015/2016

# Dracula

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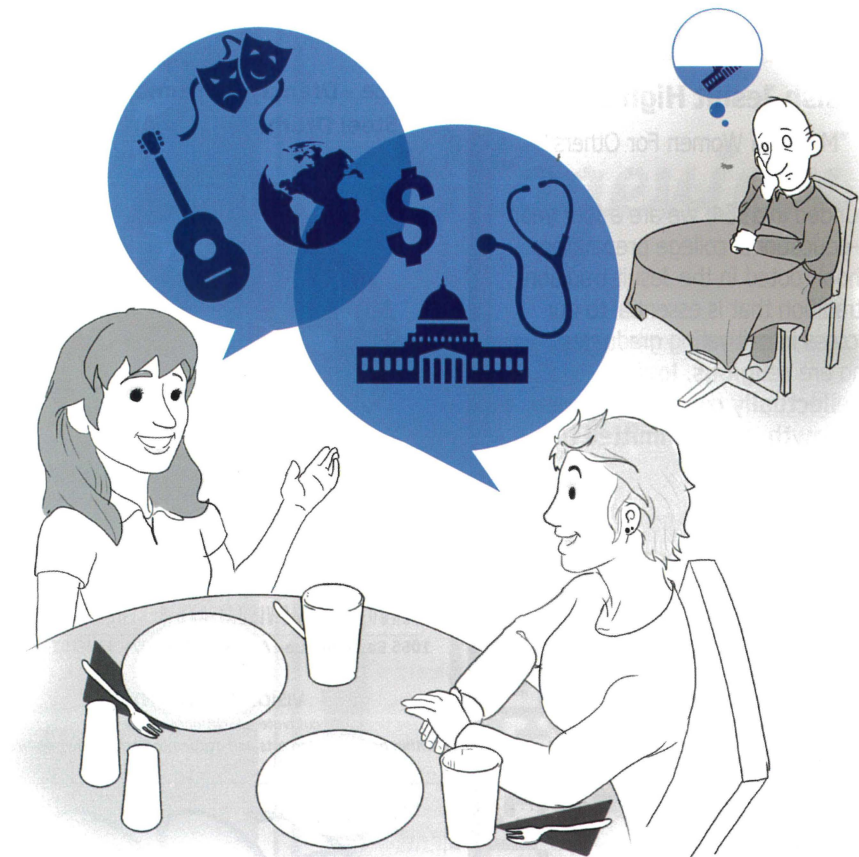


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# Stageview



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From the "barn" to Copley Road to the Valley ...

Weathervane Community Playhouse began its run in 1935. Four artistically talented Woman's City Club members – Grace Hower Crawford, Muriel MacLachlan, Laurine Schwan, Helen Troesch – and a core of charter members rented the empty carriage house belonging to Akron's Senator Charles Dick. Their goal was to present a wide spectrum of plays: classics, dramas, comedies, new works – even opera – with casting open to anyone who fit a part.

The women chose a carnival as their fundraiser to start paying the rent. Despite a drenching downpour, they raised \$60. They named their space "Weathervane" after the rooster on the barn's cupola. After cleaning their new home, scrounging for seats, a curtain and a coffee pot, Weathervane opened its first season. During that summer of 1935, the group presented seven fully costumed and staged plays. In 1936, Muriel MacLachlan, with the other founders, offered classes to children and adults, beginning a tradition that has become today's Education Department. In 1938, a Women's Board was formed to offer volunteer financial assistance. This group is now the Volunteer Guild.

The "barn" was home until it was sold. In 1951 the Playhouse purchased a cement block building at 1474 Copley Road and renovated it for a theater with seating capacity of 125. The all-volunteer organization hired its first employee, Nora Scott, as custodian/ticket manager. Actual management of the Playhouse was handled by the Operating Board, which reported to the Board of Trustees. Because directors were becoming scarce, the Board hired Bob Belfance as full-time Manager/Director. He held the position from 1961-1969 and from 1974-1992. During the Copley Road days, plays were presented six days a week. Because of their popularity, not everyone who wanted to see a show could be accommodated. A new home was planned.

During the 1960s, the membership's plans came together in June 1970 with the opening of *Dark of the Moon* here on Weathervane Lane. Longtime friend and founder Grace Hower Crawford died in 1971, remembering the Playhouse in her will. Her money enabled the Board to pare down the mortgage and set up an Endowment Fund. The last mortgage payment was made in 1974 through a contribution of the Women's Board. Three major additions followed: these included first-floor restrooms, classrooms, a costume shop, fly gallery and elevator. The former scene shop became the John L. Dietz Theater/Classroom in 2005 and the lobby project was completed in 2009 in time for the opening of the 75<sup>th</sup> season. Weathervane is proud to celebrate its 81<sup>st</sup> Season.

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- NO PHOTOS inside the theater or recording of the show in any way.
- Unwrap cough drops or mints before the performance begins.

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The Dracula Evolution:  
From Vlad the Impaler to Count Chocula  
and Original Fantasy Artwork by Robert A. Kraus

This exhibit has two complementary components. The first features images of Vlad, The Impaler, the iconic movie images of Dracula as portrayed by Bela Lugosi, Christopher Lee, Frank Langella, and others. Other elements of this display trace the transition of Dracula from a feared, evil demon to a humorous, engaging character such as Grandpa Munster, the Count from *Sesame Street*, and Count Chocula.

The original artwork by local artist, Robert A. Kraus, owner/creator of the independent company, RAK Graphics, presents unique interpretations of Dracula and other characters. Robert A. Kraus graduated in 1977 from Central-Hower High School, where he participated in the vocational Commercial Arts program. Robert attended The University of Akron, briefly, before creating his self-published graphic novel character "Chakan, The Forever Man." This character was later made

into a Sega Genesis Video Game in the mid 90's. He was one of the first independent Comic Book and Game publishers and the sole designer and fantasy artist of the board game "Dragon War" and the hundreds of expansions to go with it. This is a game that is never played the same way twice. He is the creator of RAK Attack Monsters, a toy line of game pieces, display and collectible 3D artworks. He has a large offering of "Superfrecks" a super-hero spoof series. Robert is involved in several Comic Cons throughout the year, including San Diego Comic Con-"The Mother of all Comic Cons" and several Wizard World Cons. He enjoys meeting and talking to his fans and will even host a "Dragon War" Game night at his house a few times a year. When his fans ask him if he likes what he does, his famous saying is, "Of course...how many people do you know that get to scribble for a living?" Visit [www.rakgraphics.com](http://www.rakgraphics.com) to see all his work.

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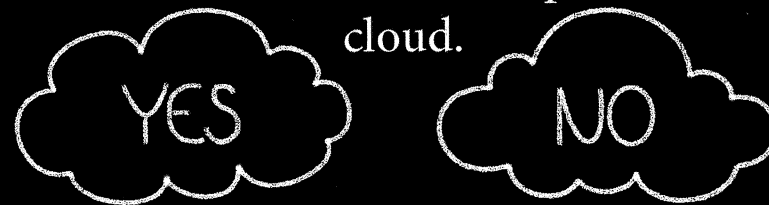
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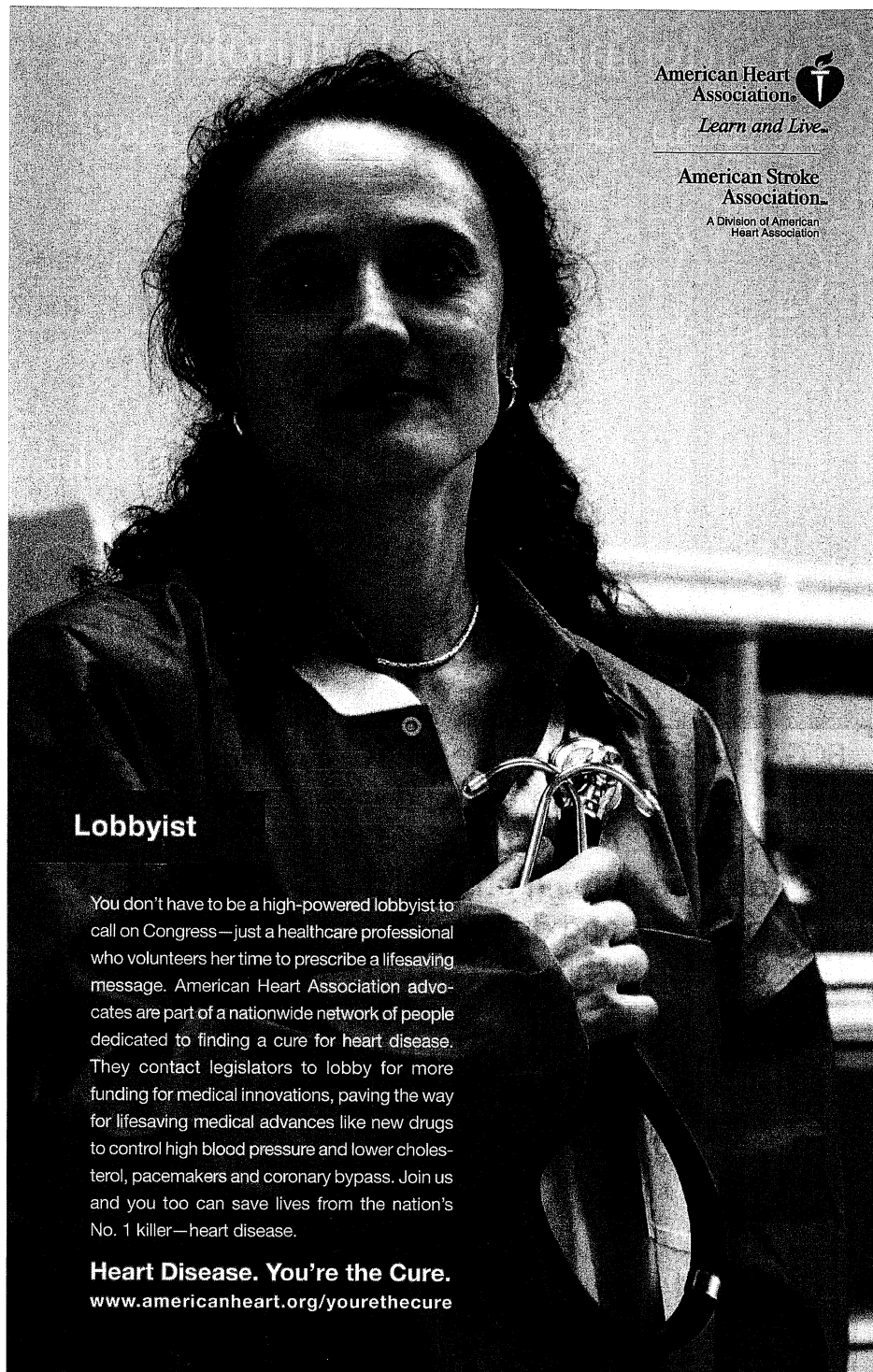
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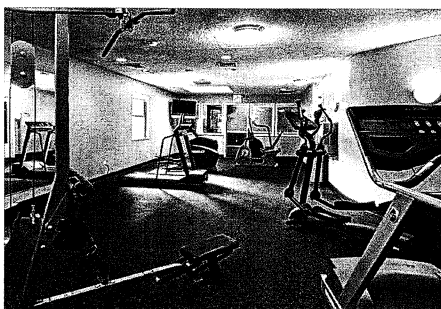
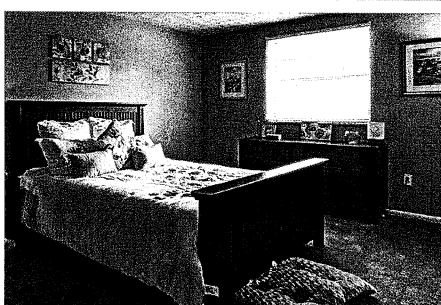
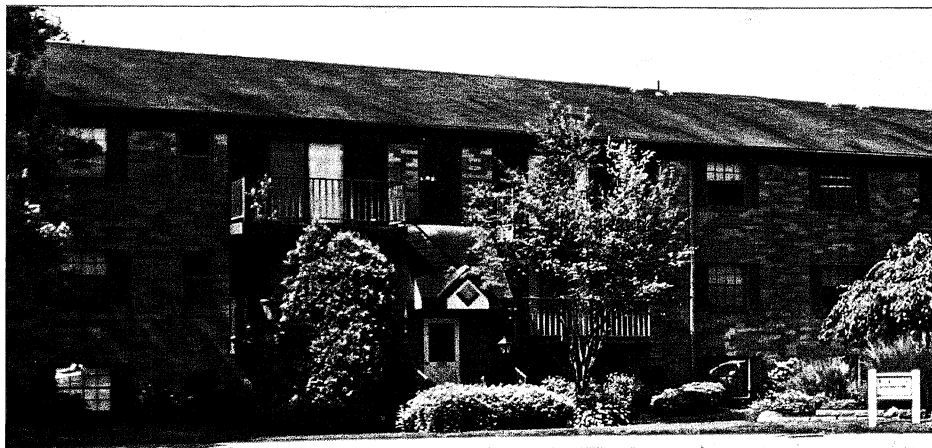


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**The time:** The late 19<sup>th</sup> century

**The setting:** The action takes place in and around the Purley Sanitorium on the west coast of England.

There will be one 15-minute intermission between Acts I and II.

## ABOUT THE PLAY

Just in time for Halloween, Weathervane Playhouse revisits the chilling tale of the world's most famous vampire. *Dracula* on stage is packed with enough blood, fire, fog and mayhem to jolt even the most jaded playgoer out of his or her seat. Professor Van Helsing and his brave comrades encounter drama, horror and suspense in their brave quest to hunt down and destroy the profoundly evil Count Dracula.

Actors Theatre of Louisville commissioned this adaptation of *Dracula* from one of its resident artists, William McNulty. First staged at the Kentucky theater in 1996, this adaptation has been revived at Actors Theatre of Louisville on an annual basis ever since.

Bram Stoker's Gothic horror novel, *Dracula*, was published in 1897, and its vast popularity spawned several unlicensed stage productions. In the early 1920s, Florence Stoker, the Irish writer's widow, authorized the theater actor and director Hamilton Deane to create a stage adaptation of her husband's famous book. Deane's vision of Count Dracula was to mold a sophisticated, charming character who could slip easily into London society.

In 1924, Deane's version of *Dracula* premiered in the English city of Derby. The show toured England for three years before opening in London in 1927. In that same year, the American theatrical producer Horace Liveright arranged for the show to play in New York City. He hired the American writer John L. Balderston to revise Deane's script slightly. The Broadway production of *Dracula* opened in October of 1927. Starring in the title role was a relatively unknown actor of Hungarian descent named Bela Lugosi. In a star-making turn, Lugosi dazzled American audiences as the sinister Count Dracula, and he enshrined his place in pop-culture history when he reprised the role in the classic 1931 film version.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES

John Davis, *Director*

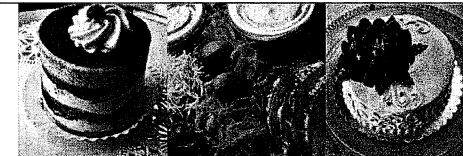
When asked to direct *Dracula*, I was very excited to bring this classic tale to the Weathervane stage. We assembled a great cast and allowed them to explore their characters in an organic fashion. As we refined the play to this final form,

I became increasingly more proud of this dynamic cast and how they are carrying forward *Dracula*'s legend. Fall into the story wholeheartedly. Allow yourself to be frightened. If we have done our job well, it will be a restless night.....



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Kathy Kohl.....	Assistant Technical Director

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Dale Gilbert  
Joe Hunter  
Tom Marshall  
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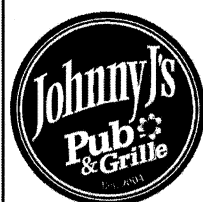
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**JOHN C. DAVIS** (*Director/Fight Choreographer/Projection Designer*) returns to Weathervane where he previously directed *Hamlet*, *Our Town*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and the world premiere production

of *Art of Deduction: Inside the Mind of Sherlock Holmes* (which Weathervane commissioned from playwright Derek Davidson). A professional actor, director and fight choreographer for the past 28 years, John is best known for his comedy sword-fighting show, *Hack and Slash*, which has been seen in 16 countries with over 4,000 performances. The show has been performed more than 100 times for the allied forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan. John has received certification from five major stage-combat organizations worldwide and is a recognized instructor with the International Order of the Sword and Pen. John also is a professor in the theater department at Oberlin College. He has directed shows in Baltimore, Miami, Nashville, Annapolis, Montgomery and, closer to home, *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* for the Cleveland Shakespeare Festival.



**MICHELLE CONNER** (*Stage Manager*) is very excited to be back at Weathervane working with the amazing cast and crew of *Dracula* after stage managing *Relatively Speaking* last season. Michelle's first

Weathervane experience was back in 1998 where she ran sound for *Blithe Spirit*. She has worked on many productions here at Weathervane; was Assistant Stage Manager for *See How They Run* and stage managed *Jacob Marley's Christmas Carol*. Michelle has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from The University of Akron and works at Alcon Tool Company in Akron. Michelle would like to thank Melanie Pepe and John Davis for giving her this wonderful opportunity, her parents for introducing her to live theatre at an early age and would like to give a special shout-out to her two dogs, Cordelia and Watson, who always make life interesting.



**SUSAN STOUT-DAVIS** (*Lighting Designer*) began as a volunteer at Weathervane in the fall of 1983. She won a Chanticleer for Lighting Design for *Camping with Henry and Tom* in 1999. Sue volunteers

for many shows on the light crew. Her most recent lighting designs were for *Unnecessary Farce*, *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* and *Uncle Vanya*. Sue works at UPS where she serves as the Wellness Champion on the company's Safety Committee. She makes her home in Cuyahoga Falls with her husband, Gary, and their sons, Nick and William.



**APRIL DEMING** (*Properties Co-Designer*) returns to the prop table after designing props for *4000 Miles* last year. April just finished playing Flo in *Picnic* this summer with The Seat of Our Pants Players.

She was last seen on the Weathervane stage in *Life With Father* (Margaret). She was lucky to be cast as Mattie in *August: Osage County* for Weathervane and is glad to have some place to "play." Her favorite acting credits include *The Little Foxes* (Regina), *Steel Magnolias* (M'Lynn) and *Inspecting Carol* (Zorah). April likes working on both sides of the curtain.



**TODD DIERINGER** (*Properties Co-Designer*) just couldn't stay away from designing. He is a two-time Chanticleer award winner – scenic & properties design for *Three Tall Women* and properties co-

designer for *The Drowsy Chaperone*. Todd served as an assistant stage manager for two Chanticleer winners of Best Production, *The Music Man* and *Oklahoma!* Scenic Design credits include *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Amadeus*, *Man of La Mancha*, *Children of a Lesser God*, and *The Sisters Rosensweig*. Other credits include properties co-design for *The Wedding Singer* and properties design for *Pippin*. Todd now works in the front office as the Director of Marketing and Technology/Volunteer Coordinator as his "day job."

**BRYAN BALLA** (*Scenic Co-Designer*) makes his Weathervane debut with this production. He is a contractor and remodeler with his own company, Harlequin Enterprises LLC. Though new to Weathervane, he is not new to the world of theatrical construction. He has worked on construction for *Monty Python's Spamalot* and *The Addams Family*, both at Hudson Players.



**JONATHON HUNTER** (*Scenic Co-Designer*) has designed lighting for Weathervane productions including *Peter Pan*, *Oklahoma!* (for which he won a Chanticleer Award), *A Delicate Balance*, *The Roar of the Greasepaint — The Smell of the Crowd*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Music Man*, *Rodgers and Hammerstein's Cinderella* and *Pippin*. He holds an M.F.A. in lighting design from the University of Virginia and is currently Weathervane's Technical Director. Jonathon's other Weathervane credits include properties designer for *A View from the Bridge*, *Breaking the Code* and *The Sum of Us* and stage manager for *They're Playing Our Song* and scenic design debut with *Peter Pan*.



**CHRISTOPHER PEPE** (*Sound Designer*) has been working with live sound for 28 years. In May of 2008, he started Clear Gold Audio & Lighting, specializing in live production for numerous Northeast Ohio events and beyond. He has enjoyed mixing live shows with artists such as Jim Brickman, Dar Williams, Dave Weckl, John McCutcheon, and Scars on 45. Christopher has designed sound for many Weathervane productions, including *Annie*, *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *The Witch of Blackbird Pond*. Other sound designs include *Hairspray*, *Ragtime*, and *Bye Bye Birdie* for The Akron All-City Musical performances at The Akron Civic Theatre. He also enjoys teaching classes at and mentoring students in the Akron Public Schools.

**JASEN J. SMITH** (*Costume Designer*) see biography in cast section.

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES



**BRIAN O. JACKSON** (*Robert Renfield*) is thrilled to be a part of this haunting production, as it is unlike any show in which he's been. He is appearing in his sixth production at Weathervane.

He was most recently seen in Weathervane's production of *Unnecessary Farce* (Todd). Favorite credits include *Next to Normal* (Dan), *Avenue Q* (Princeton), *The 39 Steps* (Clown 2), *The Producers* (Max Bialystock), and many more. The stage has always been a very special place to him and he can't imagine his life without it. He hopes to be on stage professionally someday. "Special thanks to all of my family and friends for their continuous love and support throughout my acting career. It means the world to me."



**ZACH MANTHEY** (*A Monster*) is thrilled to return to the Weathervane stage. You may remember him from last spring's production of *Hamlet* (Laertes). Before that, he was in our production of *Annie* (Rooster). Other theater credits include *Blur* (Father O'Hara) and *One Slight Hitch* (Harper), both with Kent State University Stark Campus, and *Hello, Dolly!* (Ambrose) at Stow-Munroe Falls High School.



**SIOBHAN MCCARTHY** (*Mina Grant*) is thrilled to make her Weathervane debut in this production. She holds a bachelor of arts in music-voice performance from The University of Akron

where she is currently completing prerequisite coursework for entrance into the graduate program in Holistic Human Nutrition at Bridgeport University. In addition to her studies, Siobhan teaches piano and works at Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens. While pursuing her undergraduate degree, she was named to the Dean's List every semester. She also received scholarships from the School of Music and Dr. Richard D. Gustely Scholarship Fund.



**DR. MARY MYERS** (*Margaret Sullivan*) is excited to mark this as her first theater production since high school. She is very excited to have been chosen to portray the good doctor's assistant in this play. In real life, Dr. Myers (Ph.D.) is a licensed psychologist who specializes in helping police officers. She retired in 2001 from her roles of police officer and detective at the Akron Police Department after having achieved the rank of Captain. She currently plays the role of a Professor of Criminal Justice at The University of Akron where she specializes in the profiling of serial killers (a role for which Count Dracula certainly qualifies). At home she plays the role of a single mother of two beautiful and adopted teenagers whom she deeply loves. "Thank you for coming!"



**RALPH COOLEY** (*Abram Van Helsing*) is happy to return to our stage after an eight year hiatus. He found a play that needed an old, fat, bald guy with a handlebar moustache and could speak with a German accent. Last time on stage, he played an old, fat, milkman singing "If I Were a Rich Man" as Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Other favorite productions include *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Big Daddy), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Stanley), *King of the Kosher Grocers* (Izzy), *On Borrowed Time* (Gramps), *Same Time, Next Year* (George), and Judas in the first national touring company of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Ralph is the winner of three Chanticleer Awards, a Royal Coach award, and an Acting Excellence award from OCTA (Ohio Community Theatre Association). Retired now, he found out that work interfered with his life, he is happily married to Wendy, who is President of the Volunteer Guild, father to three fabulous sons (and daughters-in-law), the prettiest and smartest granddaughter with a grandson on the way.



**JOSEPH GILBERT** (*Dr. Thomas Seward*) returns to Weathervane after his portrayal of Horatio in *Hamlet* last spring. He is a senior at Kent State University with a major in hospitality management and minor in theater. Recent credits include *Richard III* (Catesby) and *As You Like It* (Le Beau, Oliver Martext, Amiens) with Rubber City Shakespeare Company, *Treachery of Images* (Artist) at Kent State University and *Fiddler on the Roof* (Mendel) at Salem Community Theatre.



**NICK PETRUS** (*Count Dracula*) is excited to be part of his first production at Weathervane. He is currently studying political science at The University of Akron. Nick is no stranger to the stage, having studied for three years at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York. He made his television debut this past June in UPTV's *Love Finds You in Charm*, which premiered to two million viewers. "I want to extend a thanks to my parents for always supporting me in my endeavors, and to John and my fellow cast members for making this experience a memorable one."



**NICOLE DAVIES** (*Bride*) is originally from Alliance. Her community theater experience began with the Carnation City Players. She's had experience throughout the area since then with groups like Berea Grindstone Players and Red Hen Productions. She's thrilled to join Weathervane with this exciting, bloody play. As a pasty telemarketer, she's practically been training for years for her part as a pale, parasitic blood-sucker. She looks forward to utilizing her training in movement and scene study for her very physical role.



**CALI JACOBS** (*Bride*) is very excited to be making her Weathervane debut. She has been performing since the age of 10, playing many roles in school productions. These productions include: *Big Bad*, *The Mysterious Case of the Missing Ring*, and *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*. She just got home after working in San Francisco for the past year and is taking some time off to pursue acting, as it is one of her many passions in life.





**ANNE WRIGHT** (*Bride*) marks her first show at Weathervane with this production. She is a student at the Bio-Med Science Academy. She was in *The Seussification of Romeo and Juliet* at her school. She is interested in math and enjoys traveling. In her free time, she is expanding her artistic skills in piano and ballroom dancing.



**KAITLYN PHILLIPS** (*The Child*) has enjoyed her classes and experiences at Weathervane. She played a munchkin/jitterbug/poopy in the 2014 production of *The Wizard of Oz*. She is a seventh grader at Roberts Middle School in Cuyahoga Falls. She also plays trumpet for Roberts Middle School Band. Kaitlyn loves reading and working with stop-motion animation (to make her own movies). She also enjoys chemistry & physics. One day she hopes to be an astrophysicist or a chemist.



**JASEN J. SMITH** (*Norbert Briggs*) joined the Weathervane professional staff in August 2008. Since then, he's designed costumes for dozens of Weathervane productions. As a co-designer, he and Hedy Jones took home Weathervane's Chanticleer Award for best costume design for *Man of La Mancha* in 2009. He also won a Marquee Award from the Youngstown Area Community Theatre Association for his work on *Children of Eden*. Elsewhere, his design work has been seen on the stages of Porthouse Theatre, Case Western Reserve University and Ohio Light Opera.



**ALLISON KUMP** (*Lucy Westphal*) is a graduate of Bowling Green State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication for Theatre. Some of her fondest BGSU shows include *The Memory of Water* (Teresa), *Dutchman* (Lula), *Frankenstein* (puppeteer), and the Treehouse Troupe touring production of *Aesop's Fables* (Aesop). During her senior year, she directed the Elsewhere production of *Dancing on Checkers' Grave*. In Cuyahoga Falls, she participated in the ANTIC productions of *Les Misérables* (Fantine) and *Auntie Mame* (Gloria Upson). Allison would like to thank Weathervane Playhouse and the *Dracula* production team for this opportunity, the cast and crew for all of their hard work, her family and friends for their continued support, and the audience for their patronage of the arts.



**BRIAN DUSKEY** (*Jonathan Harker*) is new to Weathervane and tremendously honored to be a part of this production of *Dracula*. He spent the last six years studying theatre & cinema at Missouri Western State University. During his time there, he received several awards as not only an actor, but also a writer and director, in theatre and film, including three Irene Ryan nominations from the American College Theatre Festival. Some of his favorite past performances include *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Stanley) and *Romeo & Juliet* (Mercutio). Brian wants to thank director John Davis for this amazing opportunity and his entire family for supporting him throughout this entire process.

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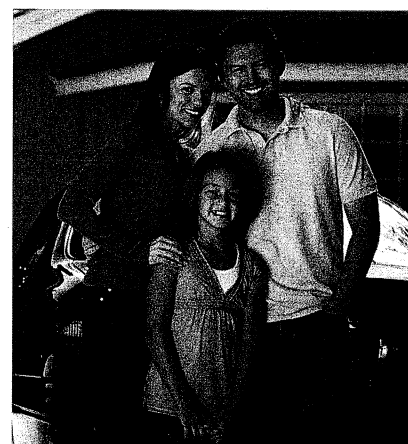


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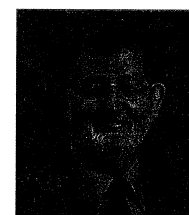
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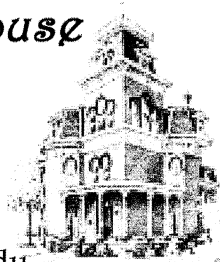
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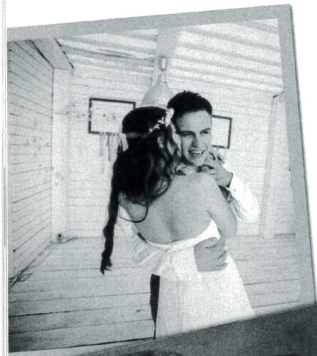




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### LIGHTS

Sue Stout-Davis  
Denise Eletich  
Allisyn Just  
Stephen Moushey  
Diane Thanasiu

### SOUND

Ashley Collins  
Christopher Pepe  
Hazen Tobar

### PROPERTIES

Chris Capron  
Kelly Chaff  
Ashley Collins  
April Deming  
Todd Dieringer  
Erin Hunter  
Bryson Lambes  
JJ McAdams  
Jonathan Merechant  
Jay Sigler  
Gracie Thanasiu

### MAKEUP

Designer - Madison Renner  
Advisor - Melanie YC Pepe

### WIGS

Designer - Alicia Martin-Shoates

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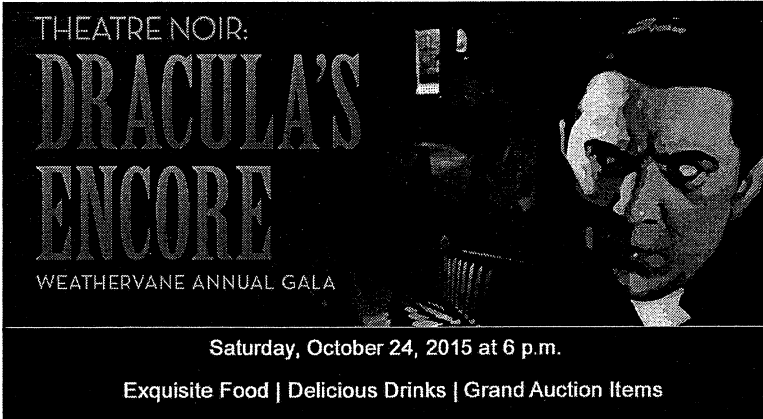
Gunshots, flashes of fire and fog effects are used throughout the performance.

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## Notes from the Managing and Artistic Directors

### **Lisa Mansfield, Managing Director**

Americans love vampires. From terrifying to sexy, they are a powerful image of immortality and monstrous, blood-thirsty terror. Americans also love scary stories and Halloween. Collectively, we spent about \$7.4 Billion last year alone on Halloween decorations and costumes. This season, we are excited to share Dracula with you in the month of October, combining these two obsessions. In fact, we hope you can't get enough and have to come back for an encore. Theatre Noir: Dracula's Encore is the theme for this year's annual Weathervane Gala. It is our biggest fundraiser of the year. This year's Gala takes place October 24 and we hope you will come dressed in your best black, white and red to celebrate Weathervane like you are going to live forever. In fact, giving to Weathervane is like a piece of immortality because you can help to leave a legacy for theater-goers in Akron for years to come. There are price points for many levels so you don't feel like you were drained of all of your blood.

### **Melanie YC Pepe, Artistic Director**

Mesopotamians dreaded a winged and taloned monster that preyed on the living. Greek mythology told of Lamia, a half-serpent child-eating demon. Babylonians feared Lilithu, who bore a striking resemblance to Lilith, the first wife of the first man, Adam. According to legend, Lilith left Adam and the Garden of Eden to become queen of the demons. These stories are prevalent across many cultures, from ancient to modern. In the age of science and reason, the vampire has changed. He is now a fictional character... until tonight. Tonight, we give you the monster, and I ask you to follow the advice of Bram Stoker. "I want you to believe...to believe in things that you cannot."

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