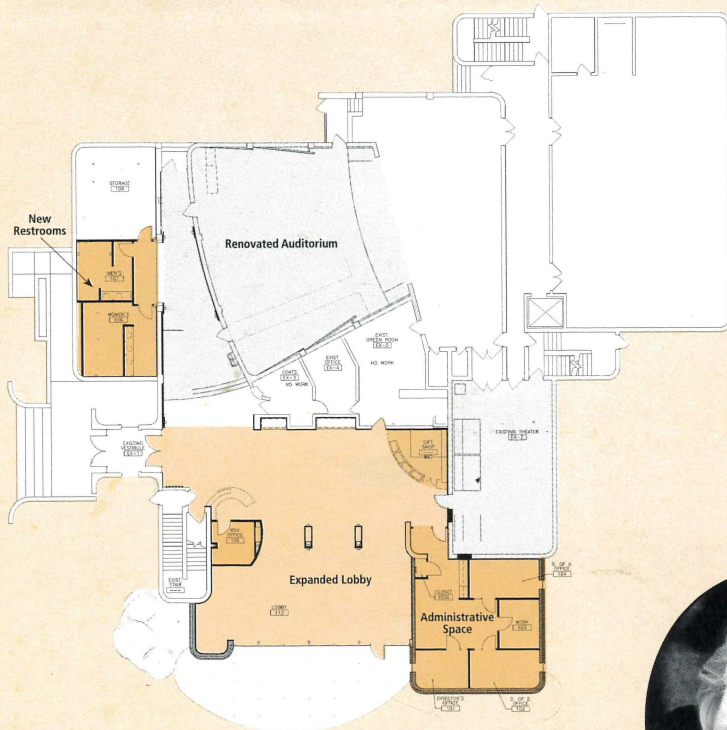


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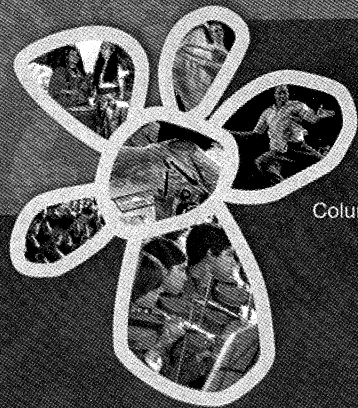
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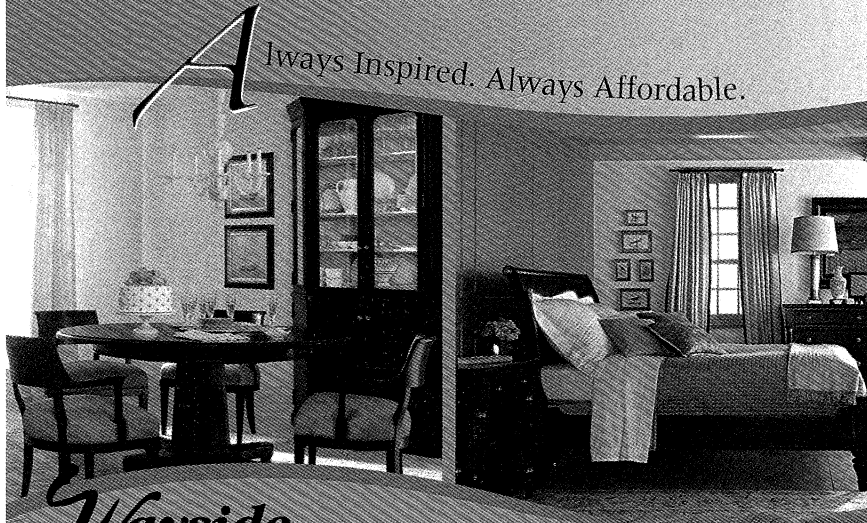


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From the barn to Copley Road to the Valley...

Weathervane Community Playhouse began its run as a live theater 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.

Their first problem was money to pay the rent and to cover production costs. Money was in short supply in 1935 so the women chose a carnival as their fundraiser. Despite a drenching downpour, they raised \$60 which encouraged them to continue. 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. It, too, continues to this day.

The barn was home until it was sold. In 1951 the Playhouse purchased a cement block building at 1471 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 there were fewer and fewer people willing to commit to directing a play, the Board hired Bob Belfance as full-time Manager/Director. Belfance held the position from 1961-69 and again from 1974-92. 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 planned, plotted and raised funds. It all came together in June 1970 with the opening of *Dark of the Moon*. There was ample space and a mortgage. 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. Two major additions to the facility followed; these included first-floor restrooms, classrooms, a costume shop, fly gallery and elevator. The former scene shop in 2005 became the John L. Dietz Studio/Theater/Classroom, where experimental productions are presented.

Weathervane Playhouse now looks forward to a third expansion and a 75th anniversary.

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Weather vane's "Thank You Dollar" Program

This may bring to mind the old joke of an actor asking for a tip and getting the reply "Don't go into Show Business." But this is no joke...

If you like what you've seen at this performance, we ask that you please consider giving a "Thank You Dollar" as you exit the theater. (You'll see a contribution box near the lobby's exit doors.)

As you probably know, earned income accounts for only 60% of our total expenses. The plain fact is, if each Weather vane patron gave just \$1 extra this season, we would be able to meet our goal for Individual Contributions! Won't you show your appreciation of this performance with a "Thank You Dollar" after the show?

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5% of a \$20 ticket

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On behalf of all of us here at Weather vane, I thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

John Hedges
Executive Director



From Our Executive Director

What we say to others . . .

On February 2, 2009 Weather vane submitted its request for funding to the Ohio Arts Council. Among the array of information they sought, there were two particularly interesting questions. I thought you d be interested to know our answers:

How does your organization define artistic success and how will you continue to evolve creatively to achieve that success?

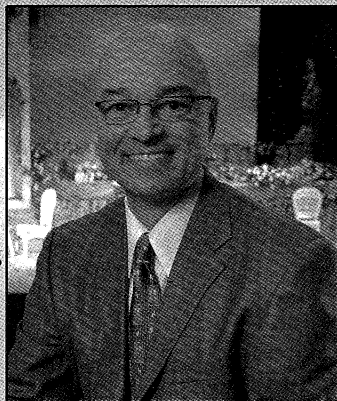
We define success one person at a time — engendering tolerance, promoting greater empathy, altering perspectives, finding common ground, creating more questions than answers, connecting us all to our common humanity, being a catalyst for hope, accessing that which is eternal. We are committed to evolving by living in the questions and embracing the future as a possibility, by trusting, supporting and celebrating those with the courage to reveal the human condition to us so that we can come closer to understanding the world and our place in it. Weather vane strives to matter - to be relevant to peoples lives, to engage our community. We have a unique opportunity in that WCP is a community-based arts organization. We have a dynamic mix of trained professionals augmenting the work of people from the community who come to us with a desire to create and a love of the theater. We will be expanding initiatives in the future to let more people IN to our organization and experience firsthand the life-enhancing possibilities of the performing arts.

How does your organization define educational and cultural success and how will you continue to achieve that success?

Embedded at the core of our theater — and by extension our educational programs — is the notion of life skills through stage skills. We re looking to create better citizens for our community, not necessarily to generate a flow of talent into the entertainment business. We hope to promote more empathetic doctors, more articulate lawyers, more insightful and imaginative teachers and more confident and thoughtful young people. Ultimate success in this regard is a long way away and is easily couched in utopian kinds of phrases, but it is something we strive for every day. We believe the arts are uniquely qualified to address essential aspects of human development and our objective is to tap into the power and veracity of that assertion. Our best way of achieving that is, again, through asking the right questions and living in the possibilities - through finding and committing to ways of bringing our community IN to our organization and to constantly embracing a culture of growth and reinvention.

If you d like to comment on these ideas (or anything else), please feel free to send me an email. I d love to hear from you!

John Hedges
Executive Director
jhedges@weathervaneplayhouse.com



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74th Season -- 2008-2009 -- Dietz Production #10
February 26 - March 14, 2009.

Lynn Nottage's

Intimate Apparel

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About the Play and Playwright

About the Play

A woman's elusive pursuit of love and independence in the early 1900s takes center stage in Lynn Nottage's drama, *Intimate Apparel*. Esther Mills, a 35-year-old African-American woman, sews beautiful corsets for a living. Her clients reflect the diversity of 1905 New York City, ranging from Fifth Avenue socialites to lower-class prostitutes. As Nottage's play begins, Esther is sewing a camisole for a soon-to-be-wedded woman who lives in her boardinghouse. Smart, sensible and ambitious, Esther holds fast to her dreams of opening a beauty parlor in Harlem and finding a husband even though her prospects for love seem remote to her meddling landlady, Mrs. Dickson. In spite of Mrs. Dickson's advice to marry respectably, Esther begins a courtship by mail with George, a West Indian man working on the construction of the Panama Canal. Esther, however, can neither read nor write so she cajoles her clients to pen her words in her stead. When the correspondence grows more passionate, George proposes marriage to Esther — but the long-distance lovers find their happiness diminished by the biases George encounters from his race and immigration status. With the odds stacked against her and trapped in the socially stratified world of turn-of-the-century New York, Esther struggles to keep her dreams of love and marriage alive during a time of great cultural and economic change.

Intimate Apparel premiered in 2003 at Center Stage in Baltimore. After a second production that year at South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa, California, the play received its off-Broadway premiere in April 2004, and was the inaugural production in the Laura Pels Theatre at Roundabout Theatre Company (the largest non-profit theatre company based in New York City). The New York production won several awards: the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Play, the Drama Critics' Circle Award for Best Play and two Lucille Lortel Awards (one for Outstanding Set Design and one for Outstanding Costume Design). Oscar-nominee Viola Davis (for 2007's *Doubt*) originated the role of Esther in the New York production and won both the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Actress in a Play and the Obie Award for her performance.

About the Playwright

In an interview for a 2004 edition of the Roundabout Theatre Company's online newsletter, *Intimate Apparel* playwright Lynn Nottage revealed to an interviewer that her own great-grandmother served as one of her inspirations when she set out to pen her play. She came to New York in 1912 and made intimate apparel for African-American and white women, said Nottage. I was always curious about how she felt entering the various boudoirs and worlds of women very different from herself. What did she see? How did it shape her sensibilities? How did she feel about the corset? How did she change the way women saw themselves?

Born in Brooklyn, New York, in 1964, Nottage graduated from Brown University and the Yale School of Drama. In the early 1990s, she worked as the national press officer for Amnesty International. In 1993, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Kentucky, presented her play *Poof!*, which earned the playwright the Heideman Award as part of the theater's annual Humana Festival of New American Plays. Her other plays include *A Walk through Time* (a children's musical), *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (nominated for an NAACP Award), *Por Knockers*, *Las Meninas* (winner of the AT&T OnStage Award) and *Fabulation*. Her latest play, *Ruined* — which examines the struggles of women in the civil war-torn Democratic Republic of Congo — opened in February in a production presented by the Manhattan Theater Club at New York's City Center. Nottage's plays have been produced Off Broadway and regionally by The Acting Company, Alliance Theatre Company, Capital Repertory Theatre, Crossroads Theatre, Freedom Repertory Theatre, Playwrights Horizons, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Second Stage Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Studio Arena Theatre, Vineyard Theatre, Yale Repertory Theatre and many others. In 1999, she received a National Endowment for the Arts/Theatre Communications Group grant for a yearlong residency at Freedom Theatre in Philadelphia. She also received a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2005 and a MacArthur Genius Grant in 2007. She lives in Brooklyn.



Intimate Apparel -- Cast

Esther.....	Tonya Broach
Mrs. Dickson.....	Taba Aleem
Mrs. Van Buren.....	Shannon Brown
Mr. Marks	Jasen J. Smith
Mayme.....	Tina Thompkins
George	Brian Armour

The Place: Lower Manhattan

The Time: 1905

There will be one fifteen-minute intermission between the Acts.

Once Weathervane had a theater to call its own on Copley Road in the 1950s, the wish/need for another smaller black box theater surfaced. Through the Capital Campaign of 2000, new classroom space became a reality as well as an elevator and the installation of a fly system. One of the classrooms was sponsored by Margaret J. Dietz and named in memory of her son, John L. Dietz. This space became the black box theater so long awaited. John was a sixth-grader at Akron's Rankin School and was 12 years old at the time of his death in 1971 following an auto accident. A darling boy with a passion, even at that age, for play-acting, he had just finished playing a clown in a youth theater production of *Aesop's Fables*.

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches was the Dietz Theater's inaugural presentation running from January 23 through February 5, 2005. The Pulitzer Prize-winning play was directed by Sean McConaha. Since then, we have presented:

Parallel Lives: The Kathy and Mo Show (2005)

Angels in America: Millennium Approaches
(remount 2005)

Angels in America: Perestroika (2006)

Fat Men in Skirts (2006)

The Last Five Years (2006)

String of Pearls (2007)

Someone Who'll Watch Over Me (2007)

And the Winner Is (2008)

Love! Valour! Compassion! (2008)

For Your Safety...

- ♦ We request that you remain seated until the house lights have come up at intermission and after the curtain call.
- ♦ The use of cameras, recording equipment and laser pointers is forbidden during this performance.
- ♦ As a courtesy to fellow audience members, please make sure that cell phones and pagers are turned off during the performance.
- ♦ Please do not bring food or drink into the auditorium.
- ♦ NOTE: In case of an emergency in which the performance cannot continue, Calamity Vouchers will be issued for a future performance. Thank you.



About Our Director

KAREN SABO (Director) is pleased to be making her Weathervane directorial debut. She has been a resident union actor at Stage One in Louisville, KY, and at the Barter Theatre in Abingdon, VA. During her six years at Barter, she also became the company's dialect coach, as well as a resident director. Originally from New York, she has a BA degree from Hampshire College in Massachusetts and is currently completing an MA degree in Liberal Studies from East Tennessee State University. Karen received her theater training from the American Conservatory Theatre, the Saratoga International Theatre Institute, Shakespeare & Co., and the San Francisco Mime Troupe. She is the producer of an independent film called *This is Not the South*, which was written and directed by her husband, Dr. Derek Davidson. Karen cut her teeth doing community theater and is happy to be revisiting it, especially in such a fine institution as Weathervane Playhouse.



Director's Notes

There are many things I love about this play. First, I particularly admire plays like *Intimate Apparel* that are written to appeal on many different levels. For audience members who know little about the culture and customs of New Yorkers in 1905, they'll still be intrigued by the simple fact of the story, the interesting characters, and the surprising choices of the characters and relationships between them. As a fan of women's history, social history, and, well, sewing, I was intrigued by the setting, the social customs, and the lead character's profession after only my first reading. But what I really love about this play is that we get to glimpse some of the people who helped shape this country a century ago, but whose names we'll never know. We know Henry Ford was a pioneer of the American auto industry, but what about the many workers in his factories who assembled the Model Ts? And we can admire a painting of 1905's First Lady Edith Roosevelt, but who was the anonymous dressmaker who created her gown? For that matter, who made the now-archaic corset that we don't even directly see in the portrait? I admire the way Nottage uses the corset as a metaphor for people who were also rarely visible in our country in 1905, and how she assigns them respect and validity by presenting their story for us.

I also like the way Nottage uses the corset, which we now recognize as an archaic, painful and damaging garment, as a metaphor for outdated expectations about social expectations. The characters in *Intimate Apparel* all want love and happiness, but just as corsets were a restrictive fashion that impeded physical freedom, the social restrictions of the time were similarly restrictive. Rich women were expected to marry rich men. People of different races and religions were expected to marry someone from their own ethnic or religious group. Perhaps the very idea that all women must marry was as damaging to society as these corsets were to bodies and health. I think watching *Intimate Apparel* gives us a wonderful excuse to ask questions about outmoded garments that we take for granted in our lives today, to examine items and customs that seem crucial, but that are actually restrictive to our pursuit of health and happiness.

Thank you so much for attending our production of *Intimate Apparel*.

Karen Sabo,
Director



Cast Biographies

TONYA BROACH (Esther) is an accomplished and a trailblazing actress who is not afraid to push the envelope when it comes to performing. Whether it's a dramatic, comedic or musical production, she is in her element and definitely leaves her mark. She has appeared on many stages and has performed in notable productions such as *Dreamgirls*, *Beehive*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Purlie*, *Two Trains Running* & *Black Nativity* within the Greater Cleveland area. Her most recent performance at WCP was in the role of BJ in *Smokey Joe's Caf*. Her performance in *Smokey Joe's* earned her the coveted Chanticleer Award for best actress in a musical.

Doing live theater is very therapeutic for me, she says. You get to experience life through someone else's eyes and step out of your own life if only for a few hours. *Intimate Apparel* is Tonya's second project at Weathervane and she sincerely hopes that everyone will have a wonderful and enjoyable experience at the Thee-ah-tah. Tonya extends a huge welcome to our wonderful Director, Karen Sabo. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity.

TABA ALEEM (Mrs. Dickson) was trained in New York at the Afro-American Studio for Acting and Speech and appeared in many of its productions. After rearing four children, she moved back to this area and worked with the African Community Theatre at Kent State University appearing in several plays including *A Long Time Since Yesterday*. For Weathervane she was seen in *From the Mississippi Delta* and August Wilson's *Seven Guitars*. In May 2001, she enjoyed performing as Sojourner Truth and delivering the Ain't I a Woman? speech before audiences at the 150th anniversary of the YWCA and the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron.

SHANNON BROWN (Mrs. Van Buren) is proud to be making her stage debut here at Weathervane. Shannon owns and operates a commercial cleaning business and specializes in new construction

cleaning. She has been employed by the Playhouse since 2000. She is a member of Weathervane's Women's Board and the Akron Hibernian Club, where she volunteers in the kitchen with her mother. Shannon thanks everyone for this special experience.

JASEN J. SMITH (Mr. Marks) was seen in Weathervane's Dietz Theater production of *Love! Valour! Compassion!* as Arthur earlier this season. Other roles include Mr. Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol*, Barney Benson in *Kiss or Make-Up*, Roy in *Nice People Dancing to Good Country Music*, Durdles in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and Joe in *Lovers*. When not on stage, Jasen is the Costume Shop Manager/Resident Costume Designer for WCP as well as Adjunct Professor at Case Western Reserve University teaching costume design and construction and designing for its theater season.

TINA THOMPCKINS (Mayme) was last seen at WCP in *Ragtime* last summer. Other performances include CSF's production of *Taming of the Shrew* and *Richard III*, ECT's production of *Secret at Sugarcourt*, BNC's production of *The Late Henry Moss*, Karamu's production of *Johnny Taylor's Gone*, at the Edinburgh, Scotland Fringe Festival in *Intensive Care*, Weathervane's production of *A Lesson Before Dying* and Strongsville Playhouse's production of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. A few of her favorite shows were *The Piano Lesson*, *Seven Guitars* and *A Raisin in the Sun*. Thank you for your support.

BRIAN ARMOUR (George) was recently seen in our productions of *Ragtime* and *Children of a Lesser God*. He has been a musician for 14 years and is thrilled to be in this show. Brian thanks God for blessing him with the chance to do what he loves. He also sends thanks to his mother (Diane Armour) and his brothers (Michael Armour and David Jones). He thanks John Hedges for continuing to support his endeavors in acting and Karen Sabo for giving him the opportunity and for being so encouraging.



Creative Team Biographies

BARBIE TROTTER (Stage Manager) is quickly becoming a volunteer who can be called on to do almost anything. She stage managed the 2008 production of *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, played the role of a shepherd in the 2007 production of *Amahl*, created the lighting design for *String of Pearls*, coordinated costumes for *Angels in America: Perestroika*, and designed costumes for *Proof* and *Arsenic and Old Lace*. Barbie is Weathervane's Coordinator of Volunteers and is an instructor in the School of Communications at The University of Akron. She holds an MA degree in Communications from the New York Institute of Technology.

JASEN J. SMITH (Costume Designer) served for four years as the Costume Designer and Theatre Rentals Manager for Akron Design and Costume. From 2001 to 2004, the College of Wooster employed him as the Costume Designer/Costume Shop Manager. At Wooster, he also served as the resident costume designer for the Ohio Light Opera's 2003 and 2004 summer seasons. Mr. Smith is a graduate of Huntingdon College in Montgomery, AL. In 1997, he worked as a wardrobe assistant for the Alabama Shakespeare Festival and he designed costumes for its Graduate Acting Company's production of *The White Devil* in 2001. Jasen is the Costume Shop Manager/Resident Costume Designer for Weathervane Playhouse.

KEVIN FORD (Lighting Designer) has done most of his work at Weathervane. Kevin created the swimming pool for *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*; the trap door for *Dracula*; the bridge for *Fiddler on the Roof* and the elevator for *The Rocky Horror Show*. He also co-designed the lighting (with Scott Ferrall) for *Ain't Misbehavin* and the Chanticleer Award-winning *The Full Monty*. Last season he designed lights for *Enchanted April*. He has just finished

Appointment With Death at Coach House Theater. By day, He is a CNC Supervisor for Acro Tool and Die Company in Akron.

JENNIFER DRAHER (Properties Designer) is a graduate of Ashland University with a BSBA degree in marketing. She has been volunteering at WCP since 2000 and has served as spotlight operator for *Joseph, The Full Monty* and *Ragtime* and has run props for *The Sisters Rosensweig*, *Enchanted April* and *Bloody Murder*. She also enjoys being a member of the Not-Ready-for-Mainstage-Players at the annual Chanticleer Awards celebration. Jen is an Assistant Account Executive for Malone Advertising.

CHERYL STADLER (Sound Designer) is a new volunteer who worked on sound crews for *Enchanted April*, *The Rainmaker*, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* and *Bloody Murder*, all since the spring of 2008. She is a graduate of Firestone High School and lives in Akron with her husband, Gil. They have three children ~ Joyce, Gilbert and Elijah.

ALAN SCOTT FERRALL (Scenic Designer) began his association with Weathervane as a backstage volunteer under the tutelage of the late John R. Thomas. This is Scott's 12th season as a Weathervane staff member. Previously, he worked at Cuyahoga Falls High School. He has designed sets for many local high schools as well as for the Players Guild, Cleveland Signstage Theatre and PBS-TV Channels 45/49. At WCP, Scott has earned five Chanticleer Awards — one as stage manager for *Fences*, and the others for his lighting designs for *The Laramie Project* and *A Lesson before Dying* and co-lighting design for *A Man for All Seasons*. Scott also takes great pleasure in writing the end-of-the-season revue for the Not-Ready-for-Mainstage Players, who appear at Weathervane's annual Chanticleer Awards ceremony.



Production Team

Alan Scott Ferrall -- Technical Director
Kathy Kohl -- Assistant Technical Director

SET CONSTRUCTION

Ruth Richardson
Tom Marshall
Kevin Ford
Erin Katz Ford
Len Cheslock
Todd Dieringer

COSTUMES

Susanne Abernathy
John S. Catlos
Paulette Lark
Connie Velotta
Dorothy Kies
Henrietta Cook

SOUND

LaDonna Harden
Joyce Stadler
Judy Willemssen

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mair Kineapple ~
Blue Rose Corsetry
Shirley Kurz

PROPERTIES

Jessica Maxson
Erin Katz Ford

Thanks to Our Hard-Working Volunteers

The following are the dedicated volunteers who have assisted us recently.

Patrice Bechtol
Ann Britton
Shannon Brown
Thelma Coss
Ann Edwards
Trish Forkel
Jill Forster
Marilyn Heagerty
Linda Heath

Evie Kidder
Leslie Lund
Mary Mahoney
Sheila Motter
Lois Murray
Patricia Obenour
John O'Neill
Bess Raines
Ruth Richardson

Nancy Schaefer
Dorothy Shaffer
Lois Simmons
Sue Smith
Barbie Trotter
Michelle Williams
Gen Woods

and the parents of the cast of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

JOHN HEDGES, Executive Director

Mr. Hedges has an extensive background in theatre as both an actor and a producer. Prior to coming to Weathervane, John spent ten years in the acting company at the Barter Theatre in Virginia, where he performed in over sixty shows. Other acting credits include performances at Town Hall in New York and the Pantages Theatre in Los Angeles. Regionally he has worked at the Indiana Repertory Theatre, the Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville and the American Stage Festival where he appeared opposite Academy Award-winner Olympia Dukakis in *The Cherry Orchard*. John has been Managing Director of First Stage Milwaukee, Associate Producer of North Shore Music Theatre, Business Director of Gloucester Stage Company and General Manager of New York's award-winning Pearl Theatre Company. Mr. Hedges is a member of Actors' Equity Association, served on the Board of Directors of Boston's StageSource and chaired its Strategic Planning Committee, been a Conference Panelist for the American Alliance for Theatre & Education and written for *American Theatre* magazine. He studied at Indiana State University, the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware, is a graduate of the National Shakespeare Conservatory and holds an honorary MFA in theatre from Stafford University. He lives in Akron with his wife, Melissa Owens, and their daughters Rachel and Mary, and is a current class member of Leadership Akron.



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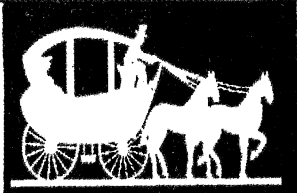
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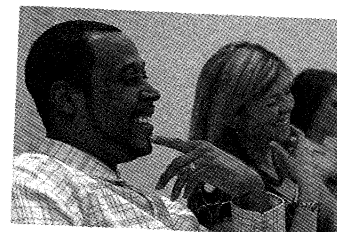
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