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— PLAYHOUSE —

John Hedges, Executive Director

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2009-2010 Season

Rabbit Hole
Mainstage 2009-2010 #542
February 4 - 21, 2010

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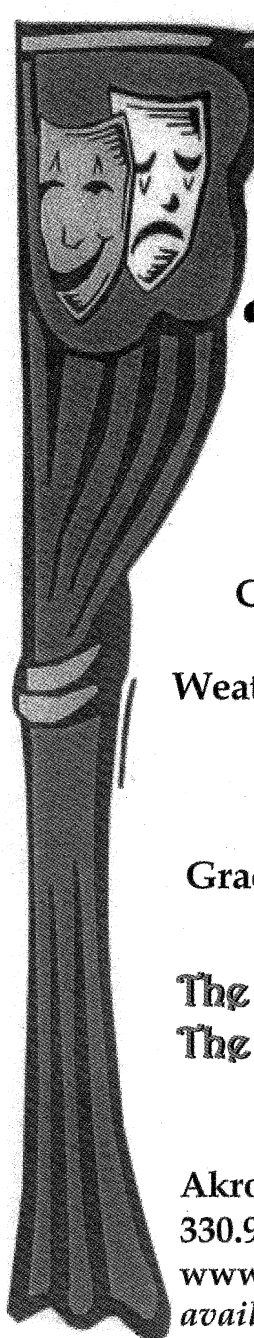
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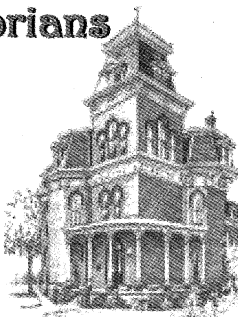
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A Brief History of Weathervane Playhouse

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. 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 directors were becoming scarce, the Board hired Bob Belfance as full-time Manager/Director. He held the position from 1961-69 and 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'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 just completed for the opening of the 75th season.



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Sunday, September 13, 2009

The Passion of John Brown / Eroica

Saturday, October 17, 2009

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Film Music Fantasies
Sunday, October 25, 2009

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Saturday, November 14, 2009

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Friday, December 18, 2009

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Saturday, January 16, 2010

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Saturday, January 30, 2010

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Saturday, February 20, 2010

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Sunday, March 14, 2010

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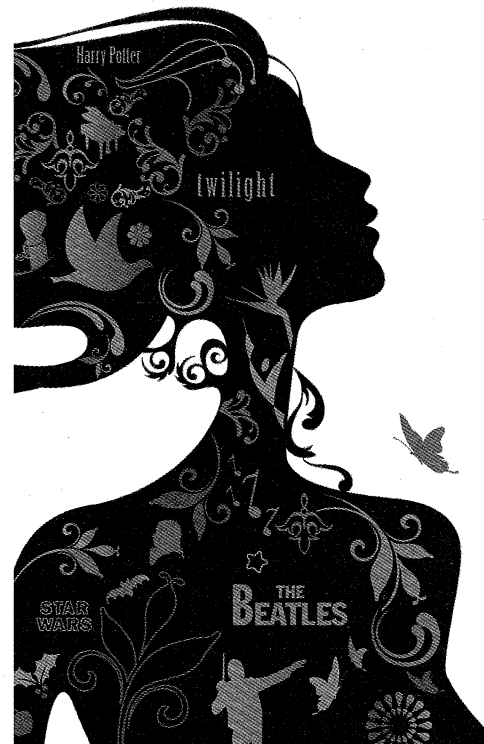
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From Our Executive Director

Our Resolution

As we begin the New Year at Weatherovane Playhouse, we thought it a good opportunity to pass along our collective resolution for 2010.

RESOLUTION:

We, the staff of Weatherovane Playhouse, resolve to create and support an environment at Weatherovane that is dedicated to the constant improvement and enrichment of the lives of all those who both attend our performances as well as those who participate in our programs first hand.

At Weatherovane, it is the people who create our success, pure and simple. From our Board of Trustees, Women's Board and Production Board, to our valued subscribers, patrons and donors, to the many individuals who give so generously of their time and talent to create our shows, we, the staff, extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to each of you. It is to and for you that we dedicate ourselves in 2010.

From all of us who work at Weatherovane, a happy and prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

John Hedges

Janis L. Harcar

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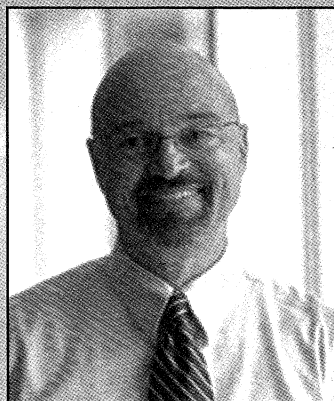
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Weatherovane

— PLAYHOUSE —

75th Season -- 2009 - 2010 -- Production #542
February 4 - 21, 2010

Rabbit Hole

A drama by David Lindsay-Abaire

Directed by Stephen Skiles

Stage Manager
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Sound Designer/Dialect Coach
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Original Music by
DANIEL TAYLOR

Scenic Designer
ALAN SCOTT FERRALL

Rabbit Hole is produced by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, 440 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016.

Weatherovane productions are sponsored in part by
the Kenneth L. Calhoun Charitable Trust, KeyBank, Trustee
and



Ohio Arts Council

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Ticket Office: 330-836-2626 • Fax: 330-873-2150 • weatherovaneplayhouse.com



About the Play and Playwright

Becca and Howie are a young married couple comfortably situated in the Westchester County village of Larchmont, New York (about 30 miles north of Manhattan). All notions of normalcy disappear when a sudden and incomprehensible accident results in the death of their four-year-old son, Danny. As they struggle to cope with the aftermath of their stunning loss, Becca and Howie's marriage begins to unravel. While Becca chooses to ignore her grief, Howie holds fast to his memories. Meanwhile, Becca's sister, Izzy, and their mother, Nat, complicate an already tense domestic situation. The sudden re-appearance of Jason, the young man who drove the car that killed Danny, unexpectedly offers a glimmer of hope as the family charts the emotional terrain of grief.

Playwright David Lindsay-Abaire told *The New York Times* in 2006 that *Rabbit Hole* "is about how people grieve – how they grieve in very different ways and what can happen when those differences are at odds with each other within a family, specifically. I hope that it's about people finding their way back into the light of day and finding hope where they thought there was none."

Rabbit Hole was originally commissioned by South Coast Repertory in Costa Mesa, California, which gave the play a staged reading in its Pacific Playwrights Festival. Positive critical reaction to the script encouraged Manhattan Theatre Club to produce the play on Broadway. *Rabbit Hole* began previews at the Biltmore Theatre in New York City on Jan. 12, 2006. Its official opening night was Feb. 2, 2006, and it played for 77 performances before closing April 9, 2006. The production – directed by Daniel Sullivan – earned five Tony Award nominations and won one: Cynthia Nixon for Best Actress in a Play for her portrayal of Becca. For his play, David Lindsay-Abaire won the 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Filming has wrapped on a motion-picture adaptation of the play. The film's producers tapped playwright Lindsay-Abaire to adapt his own play for the silver screen. Under the direction of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* co-creator John Cameron Mitchell, the movie version of *Rabbit Hole* stars Nicole Kidman (who also produced the film) as Becca, Aaron Eckhart as Howie and Dianne Wiest as Nat. The film is slated for a theatrical release in 2010.

About the Playwright

Playwright, lyricist and screenwriter **David Lindsay-Abaire** was born in 1969 in South Boston, Massachusetts. One of five siblings in a working-class family, his mother was a factory worker and his father worked for a fruit market. He attended public schools until the seventh grade, after which a scholarship enabled him to complete his early education at Milton Academy, one of New England's oldest "prep" boarding schools.

At Milton, he discovered theater, which inspired him to major in it at Sarah Lawrence College. After graduation, he moved to New York City, where he found work as an arts administrator at Dance Theater Workshop and he continued to write plays, some of which were produced at Off-Off Broadway venues (such as SoHo Rep). He was also accepted into the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at the Juilliard School, where his teachers included playwrights Marsha Norman and Christopher Durang.

His first New York "hit" was *Fuddy Meers*, a comic drama about a woman with amnesia, which Manhattan Theatre Club produced Off-Broadway in 1999. Lindsay-Abaire continued his association with MTC two years later when the non-profit theater company staged his next play, *Wonder of the World*, with Sarah Jessica Parker as a woman who leaves her husband and jumps on a bus to Niagara Falls. In 2003, MTC staged his next play, *Kimberly Akimbo*, the story of a woman with a premature-aging disease. *continued...About the Playwright on the Gallery page...*



Rabbit Hole -- Cast

| | |
|------------|-----------------|
| Becca..... | Holly Humes |
| Howie..... | Scott Shriver |
| Izzy..... | Pascalie Abel |
| Nat..... | Barbara Trotter |
| Jason..... | Greg Grimes |

The place: Larchmont, New York

The time: The present

Act I

Scene I: Becca and Howie's eat-in kitchen; a Saturday afternoon in late February

Scene II: Becca and Howie's living room; later that night

Scene III: The eat-in kitchen; a week later; evening

Scene IV: Danny's bedroom; later that night

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

Act II

Scene I: The living room; early in May

Scene II: Danny's bedroom; about a week later

Scene III: The living room; a few days later

Scene IV: The eat-in kitchen; at dusk

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 refreshments into the auditorium. However, if you have candy, please remove wrappers before the performance begins.
- ♦ NOTE: In case of an emergency in which the performance cannot continue, Calamity Vouchers will be issued for a future performance. Thank you.

What's Next?

MAINSTAGE

The Great White Hope

April 1 – 18, 2010

Italian American Reconciliation

April 29 – May 16, 2010

The Wedding Singer

June 3 – 27, 2010

YOUNG ACTORS

Pride and Prejudice

March 4 – 14, 2010



About Our Director

STEPHEN SKILES (Director) is an assistant professor of theatre in the School of Dance, Theatre and Arts Administration at The University of Akron. He is a professional actor and director, having performed at such theatres as the Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Bang and the Clatter Theatre Company, The Phoenix Theatre, The Kentucky Shakespeare Festival, Monomoy Theatre and The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis. He was also a founding member and actor of the Cincinnati Shakespeare Company. His directing credits include the Cincinnati Playhouse, The Bang and the Clatter Theatre, Ensemble Theatre of Cincinnati, Xavier University, Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, Anderson High School, The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music Preparatory Program and The Drama Workshop. Mr. Skiles is an active member of Actors' Equity Association and an associate member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. He received his undergraduate degree in theatre from Hanover College and is a proud graduate of the Professional Actor Training Program at Ohio University.

Director's Notes

I was struck by several things upon reading *Rabbit Hole* for the first time. The most surprising, however, was how many funny moments there were in the play.

Certainly, the play is heartbreakingly written. The five characters in *Rabbit Hole* have faced a terrible tragedy. Their lives have fundamentally changed. Each one of them has begun a search for ways to put the pieces back together, a search for something to help them understand, or at least accept, the unexplainable.

But, while the journey these five characters (and especially the main character of Becca) take is difficult, the overall tone of the play is not primarily one of sadness. What set *Rabbit Hole* apart for me was the playwright's understanding of the human spirit, with all of its idiosyncratic nuances.

A theatre is much like a rabbit hole. We enter a space, the lights go down and over a period of seconds we are warped to another time and place. The lights come up, and we get to view — from the outside — a glimpse of another world. Our reality, similar to that of the characters in this play, is literally turned upside down.

Each character has been thrown down a metaphorical rabbit hole. In the end we are left with the hope that peace may emerge on the other side.

Thank you for taking the journey with us today.

Stephen Skiles
Director

A Memorial contribution was made
in memory of **Jack and Sandra Scheatzle**
by Charlotte and Jim Horvath.



Cast Biographies

HOLLY HUMES (Becca) returns to Weathervane after last appearing as Lizzie in last season's *The Rainmaker*, for which she won her first Chanticleer Award. She has been seen on several local stages, including Weathervane, Coach House, Dobama and The Ohio Shakespeare Festival. Her favorite roles include Lizzie in *The Rainmaker* and Catherine in *Proof*. Other credits include *Romeo and Juliet* (Lady Capulet), *The Comedy of Errors* (Adriana), *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Mae), *Uncle Vanya* (Yelena), *The Laramie Project*, *Song of Survival* (Dawn), and *V-E Day* (Lil). Holly is the office manager at Fairlawn Family Chiropractic Center, and an assistant speech coach at Wooster High School. She would like to thank her husband, Scott Custer, for all of his love and support.

SCOTT SHRINER (Howie) most recently appeared in Weathervane's *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*. He has won Chanticleer Awards for his roles in Weathervane's productions of *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Three Days of Rain*, *Moon over Buffalo* and *All My Sons*. His favorite role here is Nick Cristano in *Over the River and Through the Woods* in 2005. You may also have seen him at Actors' Summit, The Bang and the Clatter, Ohio Shakespeare Festival and Coach House. Scott sends his love to Jolene and his supportive family.

PASCALLE ABEL (Izzy) is making her United States stage debut at Weathervane Playhouse playing Izzy in *Rabbit Hole*. She is a sophomore majoring in Theater

at The University of Akron, where she has worked on productions of *Proof* and *A Shayna Maidel*. Pascalle is originally from Durban, South Africa, where she performed at various local and community theatres before moving to the States.

BARBARA TROTTER (Nat) began volunteering with Weathervane Playhouse in 2000, working backstage on props crews. She designed costumes for the productions of *Arsenic and Old Lace* and *Proof*, both in 2003, and was costume coordinator for Weathervane's May 2006 production of *Angels in America: Perestroika*. She designed lighting for the May 2007 production of *String of Pearls*, and was the Stage Manager for the December 2008 *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, the spring 2009 Dietz theater production of *Intimate Apparel* and the September 2009 production of *Putting It Together*. Barbie is on the Weathervane staff as Coordinator of Volunteers and is delighted to be onstage with this cast in this production.

GREG GRIMES (Jason) is thrilled to be making his Weathervane debut in *Rabbit Hole*. Previous theater credits include *The Poe Play* (Egaeus/Set Designer), *Tom Sawyer* (Tom Sawyer), and *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Linus). Next spring, Greg will graduate from Tallmadge High School and go on to pursue theater in college. "Thanks to Mom, Dad, Leah, Lauren, Joshua, and Shane. I love you all so much!"

Creative Team Biographies

TIMOTHY PAUL (Stage Manager) holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in theater from Kent State University, where he served as stage manager for various plays. For Weathervane, he stage managed productions of *Having Our Say*, *Little Shop of Horrors* and *Tartuffe*. In addition, he stage managed the production of *Lunch Hour* for Coach House Theatre. Timothy and his wife, Kiera, live in Cuyahoga Falls.

KAREN BURRIDGE (Costume Designer) is a former Women's Board president who, most recently, designed costumes for last season's Dietz production of *Love! Valour! Compassion!* She also designed costumes for *Enchanted April* and *Moon Over Buffalo* and designed properties for *The Rainmaker* and *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. She is retired from the U.S. Postal Service and works at the Tallmadge



Creative Team Biographies - continued

Curves and answers telephones for *The Sunday Oldies Jukebox* on 88.9 WSTB-FM. She and husband Pat live in Brimfield.

BRANDON DAVIES (Lighting Designer) is excited to be working on his second production here at Weathervane! He previously helped with *Mrs. Bob Cratchit's Wild Christmas Binge*. Brandon teaches at Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy, where he serves as a director for its theatre program as well as lighting and sound designer. Brandon holds a degree in theatre from Messiah College in Grantham, PA. He wishes to thank his wife Jennifer for her love and support as he pursues his dreams!

DANIEL H. TAYLOR (Sound Designer/Dialect Coach/Composer) National credits include touring with Cleveland Signstage Theater and The National Theater of the Deaf, Portland Center Stage, Oregon Children's Theatre, and Artists Repertory Theatre. Locally, Daniel has appeared with The Great Lakes Theater Festival, Cleveland Public Theatre, Actors' Summit and Ohio Shakespeare Festival. In Oregon, Daniel worked with the educational wing of Artist Repertory Theater as an Artist in Residence, serving the at-risk youth population of the Pacific Northwest, and toured with the multi-cultural, youth education troupe, Viva La Cultura, with which he served as composer and sound designer. Gallaudet University featured Daniel's sound design and compositions for its productions of *Agamemnon*, *Deaf Odyssey*, and *Goya: En La Quinta Del Sodro*, which won accolades during the Kennedy Center's American College Theater Festival. Aside from theater, Daniel runs StrikingWolf Creative, a recording and mastering studio that focuses on mobility.

JENNIFER MAXSON DRAHER (Properties Co-Designer) received a Chanticleer Award for Best Technical Design for her properties design for last season's Dietz production of *Intimate Apparel*. Since 2007, she has worked on properties crews for *The Sisters Rosensweig*,

Bloody Murder and *Man of La Mancha* and been our go-to gal for spotlight operator for productions of *Joseph*, *Forum*, *Ragtime* and *The Full Monty*. She was also lightboard operator for *Moon over Buffalo* and *The Rainmaker*. Jennifer holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Ashland University, where she is currently employed at her alma mater as a marketing specialist.

ERIN KATZ FORD (Properties Co-Designer) is a dedicated and longtime Weathervane volunteer who can be found in our scene shop many evenings after work. By day, she is an educator for Congregation Bethaynu in Pepper Pike and is working on her master's degree in Jewish Education. Erin designed the lighting for such Weathervane productions as *Man of La Mancha*, *The Rainmaker*, *The Lion in Winter*, *The Sisters Rosensweig*, *The Chosen* and *The Sum of Us*.

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 twelfth season as a Weathervane staff member, serving as the Resident Technical Director and Scenic Designer. Before Weathervane, he worked at Cuyahoga Falls High School. He has designed sets for many local high schools as well as for the Players Guild of Canton, Cleveland Signstage Theatre and Western Reserve Public Media (PBS-TV Channels 45/49). At Weathervane, Scott has earned several Chanticleer Awards - including 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*, *The Full Monty* and *Man of La Mancha*. 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 banquet. He lives in Cuyahoga Falls.



Production Team

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

SET CONSTRUCTION

Ruth Richardson
Len Cheslock
Kevin Ford
Erin Katz Ford
David Ruggles
Dan Levan

LIGHTING

Christina Day
Zach Nusbaum
Sarah Rasnick
David Ruggles
Sue Stout Davis
Leslie Johnson
Judy Willemsen
John Frangos

PROPERTIES

Tom Abdo
Shirley Burkholder
Jessica Maxson

SOUND

David Ruggles
Robyn Cooper

COSTUMES

Diantha Seibert
Randie O. Sass
Connie Velotta
Susanne Abernathy
Carol Smith

Acknowledgements

Assistant Stage Managers:
James Bricker and Nicholas Bell

Special Thanks from Karen Burrige to:
Jasen J. Smith and John S. Catlos

Thanks to Our Hard-Working Volunteers

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Thelma Coss
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Margaret Dietz
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Erin Katz Ford
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Lois Murray
Pat Obenour
Barbara O'Connor
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Marci Paolucci
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Carol Seiberling
Diantha Seibert
Pearl Sentelik
Dorothy Shaffer

Lois Simmons
Sue Smith
Jackie Sukie
Barbie Trotter
Pete Ulrich
Verna Vander Kooi
Helen Vari
Connie Velotta
Bonnie & Bill Victor
Michelle Williams
Marta Williger
Mary Wolfman
Gen Woods
Richard Worswick
Elizabeth Young
BJ Ziegler

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 and 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. A 2009 graduate of Leadership Akron (Class XXV), John lives in Akron with his wife, Melissa Owens, and their daughters Rachel and Mary.

In the Harris Family Gallery

Because *Rabbit Hole* deals with a family's loss of their young child and the ways in which all are trying to cope with that tragedy, I thought that an exhibit featuring art therapy would be appropriate. Everyone may not be familiar with art therapy and its benefits. Since education is part of the Weathervane Playhouse mission, this seemed to provide a perfect opportunity to explore art therapy as a means of dealing with grief and loss. I hope this exhibit will be helpful and interesting.

"Art therapy is a mental health profession that uses the creative process of art-making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. Art therapists are master's-level professionals who hold a degree in art therapy or a related field" (from the American Art Therapy Association).

This is a group show featuring the work of six artists who are also licensed art therapists. **Nancy Nierman Baker**, who was instrumental in coordinating this effort, **Jacky Martin**, **Lou Higginbottom**, **Judy Jankowski**, **Diane J. Maytas** and **Heidi Larew**. **Toni Daniel**, a medical photographer and artist, was invited by Nancy to participate as well. There are also three pieces from different artists involved in art therapy who wished to remain anonymous. More information about art therapy is available at the Box Office.

Marci Paolucci, Gallery Director

About the Playwright - continued

In addition to adapting his *Rabbit Hole* for a forthcoming motion-picture adaptation, he has written two screenplays: *Robots* (2005) and *Inkheart* (2008). Sony Pictures hired him in the fall of 2008 to re-write a screenplay for the upcoming *Spider-Man 4*, but the studio has since rejected his script and hired a new screenwriter.

In the world of musical theater, Lindsay-Abaire wrote the book for the musical *High Fidelity*, which played a brief one-month run on Broadway in 2006. He also wrote both the book and lyrics for *Shrek: The Musical*, which concluded a 441-performance run on Jan. 3, 2010.

He has received commissions from South Coast Repertory, Dance Theater Workshop, and the Jerome Foundation, as well as awards from the Berilla Kerr Foundation, the Lincoln Center LeCompte du Nuoy Fund, Mixed Blood Theater, Primary Stages, the Tennessee Williams/ New Orleans Literary Festival, and the South Carolina Playwrights Festival. In addition to his 2007 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Rabbit Hole*, he was also awarded the 2008 Ed Kleban Award as America's most promising musical theatre lyricist.

He is married to Christine Lindsay, an actress, with whom he has two children. His marriage inspired him to add his wife's surname to his own legally – thus creating his hyphenated last name.

Want to get involved?

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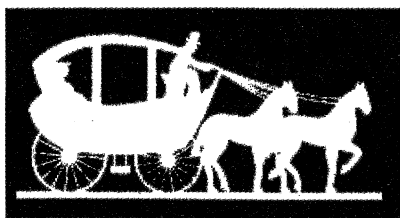
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75th Anniversary Quips & Quotes

Alan Scott Ferrall, volunteer since 1988

With the recent Broadway revival of *A Little Night Music*, Scott remembers when he stage managed our production of the Stephen Sondheim musical in 1991, directed by John Thomas with musical direction by Sandra Schlub. Two things stand out. The first was Sheila Kane's portrayal of Petra, and her singing of *The Miller's Son* every night, sitting downstage center belting out her love of a miller, a businessman and the Prince of Wales. The second was an off-stage starter pistol that sometimes failed to fire. The shot cued singers to stop singing, and they couldn't stop singing until it fired. The first time it happened was in performance, and after watching the stage-right props people trying to get the gun to fire, I grabbed the first thing I saw – my prompt book – and slammed it to the ground. My assistant and I kept the book in our hand each night after that.



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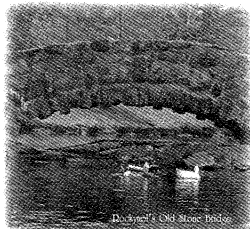
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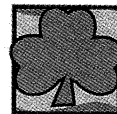
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