

THE LEGACY THEATRE
2023 SEASON



WHO'S
READY
TO
RUMBLE?



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**MASTERS
OF PUPPETS**
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

BY LAURENCE DAVIS

THE WORLD PREMIERE OF A NEW PLAY
SLAMMED INTO THE TURNBUCKLE



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Letter from the Artistic Director



Dear Friends,

Welcome for the first time, or once again, to the Legacy Theatre for the official kickoff of our Mainstage Series for Season Three! How exciting to begin the season as the host of the World Premiere of this thrilling new work, *Masters of Puppets*, with such seasoned, recognizable visiting artists in this precious seaside town of Stony Creek. Orson Welles presented his bold, new theatrical work at this very venue in the 1930s, and I am moved to produce programming in a similar vein nearly a hundred years later, championing new works that challenge and thrill audiences. I am also pleased to be embarking upon Season Three with Managing Director

Jeff Provost at the helm, who heralds from decades of impressive theatrical administrative experience, for which we will all feel a great boost.

This piece was first presented to me in a pandemic zoom reading in 2020 by my old time acting-buddy, James Roday Rodriguez. He and I not only grew up together on stages in our hometown, but also on stage at NYU where we studied acting. The writer, director, and co-producer from *Masters of Puppets* are all from my same NYU class, and it is astounding to meet back up these years later to do together what we would collaborate on some twenty-five years ago. What an example of theatre as community! As you live out this experience in the audience, you are creating a similar community together -- a shared experience that will bond each of us to each other. Thank you for being here for this milestone experience for the writers and creatives behind this piece and for supporting Legacy Theatre to do so. Most of all, thank you for being here to begin our 2023 Mainstage Season together -- I look forward to welcoming you back again and again!

Warmly,

Keely Baisden Knudsen

Artistic Director & Co-Founder, Legacy Theatre

Welcome to Legacy!

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At This Theatre



c. 1890s



c. 1930s



c. 1930-1940s

- 1866 A small, non-denominational church was built at 128 Thimble Islands Road in the village of Stony Creek in Branford.
- 1900 A fire damaged the property.
- 1914 The land is sold to William Howd and the foundations were laid for a silent movie theater called Idle Hour Moving Pictures.
- 1923 A theater group belonging to the Stony Creek Church of Christ called the Parish Players was forming.
- 1928 The Parish Players purchased the movie theater space, and repurposed it to “live” theater for the first time. Productions included the world premiere of *Death Takes a Holiday* as well as *Private Lives*, *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Pygmalion*.
- 1938 Orson Welles wrote and directed a silent film to accompany his direction of William Gillette’s 1894 comedy *Too Much Johnson* at what was now the Stony Creek Theatre.
- 1946 The theater building became home to Panix/Materna-Line, Inc., a designer and manufacturer of corsets and the like.



Stony Creek Theatre production of *Too Much Johnson* (1938)

At This Theatre



1946



c. 1980s - 2010s



2021

1961 Grace Weil established the space as the Stony Creek Puppet Museum with life-sized Sicilian puppets direct from performances in Italy. Grace Weil's son, Jim, and Italian Salvatore Macri, were the next to put their mark on the theater. With their rare and cherished skills of puppetry, the Italian puppets came to life.

1970s-

2010s Classes and theater were in abundance under Jim Weil, Barry Fritz, the Alliance Theatre, Joe Davis and others. Passing on the legacy of theatre to others is a stronghold of the Legacy Theatre, which purchased this theater in 2013--and now you are part of its ongoing Legacy.

2021 Legacy Theatre, a repertory company with a conservatory arm, opened the restored theatre for performance and training. From nothing but a dream and a vision to now teams of committees, boards of directors and advisors, actors and teachers, this shoreline gem has been restored and revitalized. We at Legacy invite you to continue with us as we commemorate the past and spotlight the future of this special stage.



Jim Weil
(1960s-1970s)

Explore more about
AT THIS THEATRE
on the Legacy website!

Photos, video and more!

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THE LEGACY THEATRE

KEELY BAISDEN KNUDSEN
Artistic Director

JEFF PROVOST
Managing Director

and
Producer JAMES RODAY RODRIGUEZ

present



MASTERS OF PUPPETS

The World Premiere of a New Play by LAURENCE DAVIS

Starring
KURT FULLER AMANDA DETMER*

With
MICHAEL HOGAN* MICHAEL BOBENHAUSEN* JOSHUA HEGGIE*

And
DANA ASHBROOK

Master Carpenter
RICH BURKAM

Sound Designer
ADAM JACKSON

Properties Designer
ERICA PAJONAS

Scenic & Lighting Designer
JAMIE BURNETT

Costume Designer
GALI NOY

Assistant Costume Designer
POLLY GREGORY

Stage Manager
T. RICK JONES

Fight Choreographer
EMMETT CASSIDY

Director
GABE MCKINLEY

May 25-June 11, 2023, The Legacy Theatre, Branford, CT

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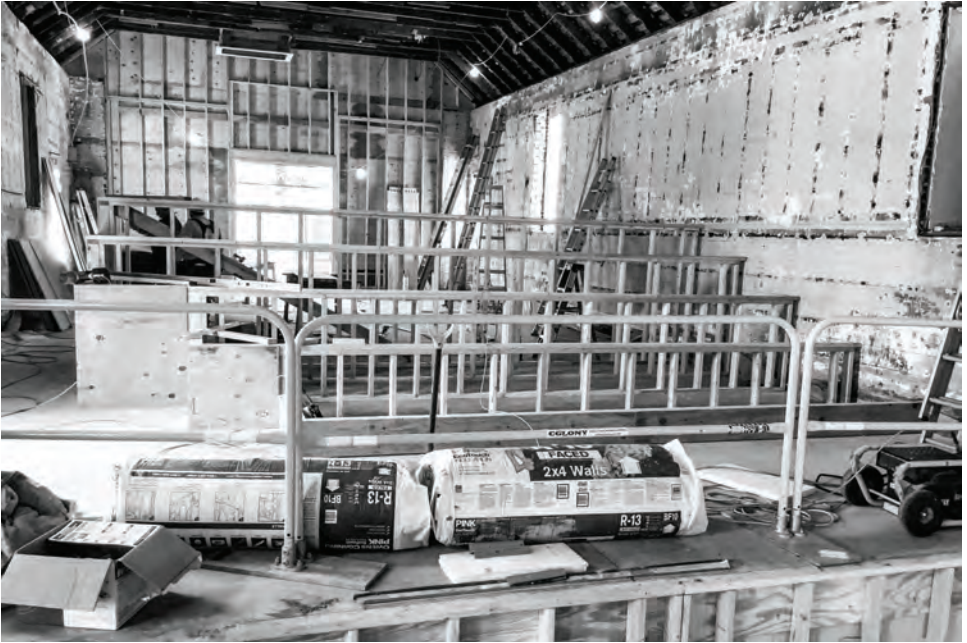


CONTENT WARNING: For mature audiences. Contains violence, harsh language, and drug use.
There is no puppetry in the production.

This is a work of fiction. Any similarities to persons living or dead, or actual events, is purely coincidental.



* The Actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



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Playwright's Note



Ladies and Gentlemen! Step right up! Welcome inside the Legacy big-top! To the most legacious, sagacious, capacious theatre in ole New Haven. Prepare yourself to bear witness to one of the thirteen wonders of the greatest tri-state area of the Northeast.

People of Branford, visitors from across the seven seas, reverse commuters, as your ringmaster, er playwright, I am honored to have the opportunity to be one of the first to ever explore on stage: the secretive, bizarre, twisted and tortured Kabuki theater that is the world of... marriage.

Now we know many naysayers will insist that marriage is completely fake and shouldn't be taken at all seriously. That it's a sham-ruse perpetrated by snake-oilers like me to give every commoner the chance at a false, fanatical and fantastical sense of unity of spirit in what is a completely chaotic universe. And all for pure monetary gain. Well, as the common saying goes, I have no beagle in that battle royal. What I do know is that nearly all of those who live the reality of said besotted dance of connubial blood sport engage in the practice because they believe in their hearts that it's real. The love, that is. (Speaking of love, we are offering it in bottles in the lobby following the show for only an additional \$25. Plus tax.)

Lovers of the carnival and the carnal! If marriage is a controversial and combative tango, then this exhibition is intended as a dare-devil's immersion into the commingling of marriage, business, sports entertainment and awesome power, both political and otherwise.

Herein we may probe as to who are the real masters of the marionettes? Can power, passion, television and unfathomable wealth ever amicably coexist? Who should we apprise as the genuine geeks and freaks in this raucous affair? And why must we choose between trunks or tights? All your questions shall be answered by final curtain drop or I will personally guarantee you a refund in pure gold bullion.**

Until then, thank you for loosening the purse strings so that we can uncoil this furious tangle of puppet wire.

** There will be absolutely no refunds at the end of the show.

Laurence Davis
Playwright, *Masters of Puppets*



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Glossary of Wrestling Terms

ANGLE: Another term for storyline. In wrestling the “angle” is the story.

BABYFACE: The good guy or hero.

BOOK: To determine and schedule the events of a match, or a series of both.

BUMP: The act of a wrestler hitting the ground or mat or taking a hit. A wrestler puts their body on the line when they take bumps.

DIRT SHEET: An insider newsletter (or website) in the professional wrestling business.

FALSE FINISH: A pinfall attempt, which is kicked out of, usually after a series of high-impact moves.

FINISH: The planned end of a match.

GIMMICK: The character traits of a given wrestler which define the way they act. Gimmicks can be based on real-life personalities or complete fiction.

HAM-AND-EGGER: A wrestler who loses all the time. See jobber.

HEAT: When a wrestler is booed by the crowd or generally generates a strong reaction. Heat is usually a good thing in wrestling because it means the audience is engaged. However, it can also mean real-life tension or bad feeling between wrestlers or industry players.

HEEL: The bad guy.

JOB: To lose in a wrestling match.

JOBBER: A wrestler who almost always loses.

KAYFABE: Keeping up the illusion that pro wrestling is not scripted. It is also used backstage as another term for secret or keeping secrets.

MARK: A fan of the wrestling business. Also used to describe fans who treat wrestling as if it is unscripted or are completely unaware that it is staged.

OVER: Refers to a wrestler (and/or their character) generating a reaction from the fans. A babyface is over when the fans love them. A heel is over when the fans hate them. Being over or getting over with the fans is the big goal of a wrestler.

POP: The crowd reaction that a wrestler generates.

POWDER: To run away from the action.

PROGRAM: A series of matches between two wrestlers.

PROMO: An in-character interview or monologue.

PUSH: When a wrestler climbs up the card and gets preferential treatment when it comes to storylines. Wrestling producers decide who gets pushed when.

SELL: How a wrestler reacts to an opponent’s moves. A crucial aspect to making scripted moves look unscripted.

SHOOT: Going off-script and making something real.

SMARK: A “smart” mark.

SPOT: A scripted move or series of moves. They are generally the moves in a match that have the biggest impact on the match and the story.

SQUARED CIRCLE: The wrestling ring.

SQUASH: A short match in which one wrestler beats another easily and quickly.

STIFF: Using excessive force when executing a move, deliberately or accidentally, causing the opponent legit pain; a move that causes real pain.

STRAP: A championship belt.

TURN: When a wrestler switches from heel to babyface or vice versa.

WORK: Anything that is scripted to happen. The exact opposite of a shoot.



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Cast

Cast in alphabetical order by Actor

Ted Blasendale	DANA ASHBROOK
Jace Powers	MICHAEL BOBENHAUSEN*
Delia Kragston	AMANDA DETMER*
Victor Kragston	KURT FULLER
Leonard "Reaper" Barnett	JOSHUA HEGGIE*
Rainey Daves	MICHAEL HOGAN*
Voiceover	KEELY BAISDEN KNUDSEN, GABE McKINLEY, JAMES RODAY RODRIGUEZ
Audience Chants	DRAMA AND CHOIR STUDENTS FROM GUILFORD HIGH SCHOOL

* The Actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Scene

Modern Day

Act 1, Scene 1 -- Plaza Hotel

Act 1, Scene 6 -- Cincinnati Arena

All other Scenes, Backstage at Madison Square Garden

There will be one 15-minute intermission. Approximate running time is 2 hours.

Who's Who



DANA ASHBROOK (*Ted Blasendale*)
FILM: *Please Baby Please, Minor Premise, Ice Cream in the Cupboard, Framing John DeLorean, Restraint, Getting Grace*, and others. TV: *Twin Peaks, Insatiable, Psych, Blue Bloods, The Resident, Crash* (TV series), *The Kill*

Point, Dawson's Creek, Chicago PD, and others. THEATER: NY: *Lesser Mercies* (Jason Williamson). LOS ANGELES: *Sustenance* (James Roday Rodriguez), *Night and Her Stars* (Richard Greenberg), *Pay or Play* (Roger Kumble), *Us and Them* (Betsy Thomas).



MICHAEL BOBENHAUSEN (*Jace Powers*) is delighted to be making his Legacy Theatre debut in *Masters of Puppets!* Michael received his MFA in Acting from the University of CT and has been enjoying a career in acting and education ever since. Some favorite

roles have been Blake in the pilot *Imposters* (winner of Best Series @Utah Film Festival), Kenan in the series *Waves Season 2* (now streaming on Amazon Prime), and as George Senesh in *Hannah Senesh* at the National Yiddish Theater Folksbiene (Off-Broadway.) When not performing or teaching, Michael can be found freestyle rapping, strumming his ukulele, and jamming wherever karaoke is available!



AMANDA DETMER (*Delia Kragston*) earned her MFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, and has starred in a variety of films and franchises including *Big Fat Liar*, directed by Shaun Levy, *Final Destination, Saving Silverman, The Majestic*, and *Kiss the Bride*. Notable

television credits include *Psych, The Vampire Diaries, Necessary Roughness, Two and a Half Men*, and *Empire*. Theater credits include Cecily in *The Importance of Being Earnest* at the Guthrie, several plays with the infamous Red Dog Squadron, and most recently appearing as Mary Jo in the stage adaptation of *Designing Women*. Her greatest achievement to date is her son, Jake.



KURT FULLER (*Victor Kragston*) Over his almost 40 year career, Kurt is proudest of his work as the grouchy and violent Mr. Brell (no first name) opposite Mr. Hulk Hogan in the actor/wrestler's starrer *No Holds Barred*. Produced by Vince McMahon, the film

has been criminally ignored on every list of "Best Films" ever compiled. Surprisingly, Fuller's performance was overlooked during 1989's awards season.



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Who's Who



JOSHUA HEGGIE (*Leonard "Reaper" Barnett*) is super stoked to be back on stage! It has been a while since he was seen in the NYMF *Roofless*, locally at STONC as Jim in *Big River*, or as Harker in *Dessa Rose* at the New Rep in Boston; and he couldn't be happier. He is

so blessed and lucky to be surrounded by the most amazing family, great friends, and outstanding colleagues. Gratitude, awe, and appreciation for all of the Medics, EMTs, Nurses, Police, Firefighters, Military, and school personnel. You keep us safe, help raise our kids, and enrich our community and culture. Thank you.



MICHAEL HOGAN (*Rainey Dayes*) New York Theatre: *Kandahar* and *What Happens In Vegas* (World Premieres) by Neil LaBute; Actors Theatre of St. Louis, *Welcome to Arroyo's*, by Kristopher Diaz. *Welcome Home Rock Rogers* by Gabe McKinley, *Much Ado About Nothing*

at NYU's Classical Studio, Directed by Louis Scheeder. Regional: *A Man's a Man* (Arena Stage), *Biloxi Blues* (Geva), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Festival of St. Louis). Television: Dr. Albert Nolan on *The Resident*, Swat Officer Hawk in *The Kill Point*, as well as featured roles on *The Sopranos*, *Chicago, P.D.*, *Psych*, *A Million Little Things*, *Murderville*, *Shooter*, *Law & Order C.I.* and *Genius: Aretha Franklin* as Sydney Pollack. Film: *Staten Island*, *Hank Boyd is Dead* (Producer), *Coffee and Cigarettes*, *I Don't Know How She Does It*, and others. Currently residing on Badstreet, USA.

GABE MCKINLEY (*Director*) is a writer, actor and director. His work has been produced nationally and internationally, including at the Imperial theater in Tokyo and by the Atlantic Theater Company in New York. He is thrilled to be working at the Legacy Theatre.

JAMIE BURNETT (*Scenic & Lighting Designer*) is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, recipient of the 2005 New Haven Arts award, and Founding member of The Elm Shakespeare Company. Lighting Designer at Elm Shakespeare for 26 years and Set Designer until 2009. Lighting Design credits include International Festival of Arts and Ideas 2018, *Requiem for an Electric Chair*, Iseman Theater 2017, *Never Stand Still*. CCT: *Skeleton Crew*, *Rasheeda Speaking*, *Jesus Hopped the A Train*, *Sunset Baby*, *Topdog/Underdog*. SCSU: *Stop Kiss*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Boyfriend*, and *Our Country's Good*. SHU: *In The Heights*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Citywide Open Studios: New Haven Armory; Projects2k: Stamford Train Station Façade Lighting; Producer/Lighting Designer/Production Manager for Terra Tractus (*The Earth Moves*), (2005) *Terra Mirabila*, (2001) *Terra Lumina* and *Terra Continuum* (1999):

performed in the Stony Creek Granite Quarry; PNM's Branford Luminata (2010) lighting Branford Green Town Hall. His company, Luminous Environments, specializes in theater and TV studio renovations and public art installations involving specialized lighting. Recent projects: Branford HS Theater, Fairfield Community Theater, and Legacy Theatre.

GALI NOY (*Costume Designer*) www.galinoy.com

POLLY GREGORY (*Assistant Costume Designer*) is a costume designer and costumer living in Los Angeles. She is originally from Nashville, TN, and studied costume design in theater at The George Washington University in DC. Even though Polly primarily works in film and television now, her roots will always be in theater and she is excited to be assistant designing on this show.

ERICA PAJONAS (*Properties Designer*) Legacy Theater: *The Tales of Christopher Robin* and *Winnie-the-Pooh* (Owl), *The Rape of Lucretia* (Assistant Stage Manager), *A Christmas Carol* (Female Swing), *The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play* (Props Coordinator), *Deathtrap* (Props Coordinator & Assistant Stage Manager), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hippolyta & Mustardseed). Yale School of Music: *Le Comte Ory* (Assistant Stage Manager). Quinnipiac University: *Thebes: A New Musical* (Laius), *Proof* (Catherine), *Macbeth* (Lennox & Doctor, Props Master), *Thom Pain* (based on nothing) (Producer), *The Lifespan of a Fact* (Props Master), *Love & Information* (Ensemble), *Bad Jews* (Set Designer), *Seven Minutes in Heaven* (Run Crew), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Fairy) New Play Festival 2019 (Stage Manager, *Last Words*). Education: Quinnipiac University, Psychology and Theater double major. Awards: Alpha Psi Omega Theater Honors Society, Psi Chi Psychology Honors Society.

ADAM JACKSON (*Sound Designer*) is thrilled to be a part of Legacy's third season! Adam has worked on over 50 productions as an actor and designer. He has done technical theatre design work for Walsh Intermediate School, the Branford High School Fall Play and Spring Musical, Ivoryton Playhouse, WCSU Opera, and Elm Shakespeare Company. He is also the resident technical supervisor at Shoreline Theatre Company where he particularly enjoys working on the summer camp shows. Adam recently graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a BS in Music Education and a concentration in classical trombone. He runs sound for The River Church in Danbury and occasionally has the pleasure of being invited into theatre classes to speak to students about the joys of technical theatre!

**The arts make a bridge a
ways that nothing else c**



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can.” – *Julie Andrews*



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Who's Who

RICH BURKAM (*Master Carpenter*) came to Connecticut to study music and music recording at UNH. He played in bands such as 4:20, Space Cushion, and Over The Line. His studies continued, learning to be a luthier under Barry Lipman and Chris Tatalias, giving him a taste for fine woodworking. Richard now owns a woodshop that makes fine furniture, in a space which is shared with lighting designer Jamie Burnett. Together they have built sets for many production companies, including Elm Shakespeare, Yale Baroque Opera Project, and many small black box theater productions.

T. RICK JONES (*Stage Manager*) is pleased to be back among his Legacy family. You may have spotted him haunting the booth during 2022's *A Christmas Carol* or *The Rape of Lucretia* earlier this year. His career spans 30 years, with other credits including Regional: White Heron Theatre Company (Resident SM/Production Manager); Lyric Stage Company of Boston (PSM); White Plains Performing Arts Center (PSM); Colonial Theatre – Shakespeare in the Park (PSM, Production Manager, Assistant Producer, Production Photographer); The Ivoryton Playhouse (PSM); Seven Angels Theatre (PSM). Off-Broadway: *Sessions: The Musical* (PSM); *A Night at the Carlyle* (PSM); *Yohen* (PSM). T. Rick is also the Managing Editor of the online outlet *Daily Star Trek News* and a Contributing Writer for *Sherlock Holmes Magazine*.

LAURENCE DAVIS (*Playwright*) The author of this play and his past works must remain kayfabe** and circled squarely behind the mask of the luchador at this time. This enigmatic dramatist wishes to thank his family for their encouragement; the donors and especially the PowerSlam donors for their generosity; the cast for bringing life to these characters with such elegance and inspiration; the director for lending the show his passion and expertise; and The Legacy Theatre for boldly originating a challenging new work. Your pseudo-innominate scribe insists on a special shoutout to K.F. for his editorial brilliance. And is proud to share his great, great gratitude to J.R.R. for being the shepherd, shipmaster and shaman of this show. In loving memory of Manny, Jack, Brian

and Bea. And dedicated to the future World Heavyweight Champion of Connecticut, Caleb. **See glossary of wrestling term definitions on page 13 of the program

JAMES RODAY RODRIGUEZ (*Producer*) went to NYU and studied theater with a bunch of other people in this company. He co-founded Red Dog Squadron and made plays in Los Angeles for 20 years for dozens and dozens of people who sometimes enjoyed watching them. One of those plays was Gabe McKinely's *Extinction* which they moved Off Broadway at the Cherry Lane. He couldn't be more excited to reunite with these old, talented bloodhounds and help bring this production to life at the Legacy Theatre. As an actor, James continues his work on *Psych* and just finished a five year run on ABC's *A Million Little Things*. Thanks, as always, to the fans who support him in all his endeavors including this one. And thank you Keely for taking this swing.

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Producer of Broadway Concert Series & Community Arts Coordinator	COLIN SHEEHAN
Community Outreach	MARY LEE WEBER
Front of House Manager & COVID Safety Manager	JEFF ZEITLIN
Box Office Manager	NICK FETHERSTON
Front of House Alternates	CHRIS LEMIEUX, KELSEY MULLIGAN, KENNY PELPHREY, NICK FETHERSTON
Graphic Designer	JOE LANDRY
House Photographer	SAMUEL BIBBINS
Interns	DAVID McGROARY, GRACE PARISI

STAFF FOR *MASTERS OF PUPPETS*

Deck Captain	EMMETT CASSIDY
Wardrobe Supervisor & Stage Crew	ALAINA DWYER
Stage Crew	NAVEEN BANGALORE
Production Intern	DAVID McGROARY

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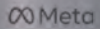
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Legacy Who's Who



JEFF PROVOST (*Managing Director*) was a Founding Advisory Committee member of the Fairfield Theatre Company (FTC), eventually becoming their first Managing Director while successfully leading their "FTC Moves Downtown" capital campaign. He

was the first Director of Marketing & Public Relations at Westport Country Playhouse during Joanne Woodward's earliest seasons as Artistic Director and held the same title at Hartford Stage during Michael Wilson's new artistic leadership. He created and managed the subscription-driven Family Broadway Series at the "new" Oakdale Theater, during the time that they became the largest theatre in New England. Jeff held management positions at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and Yale Repertory Theatre, as well as Off-Broadway and on, with the 1994 Tony-award-winning production of *Medea*, featuring Dame Diana Rigg. As an arts marketing consultant, Provost was invited to be a guest lecturer/presenter for the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. After holding management positions in the non-profit arts and commercial entertainment industries, Provost joined Red 7 Media in Norwalk where he helped launch the Event Marketing Institute. He founded PRO Management LLC in 2015 where he worked with a wide variety of clients including the Experiential Designers & Producers Association, the Healing NET Foundation, and McDonald's. He completed his undergraduate degree at The Catholic University of America in Washington DC., followed by graduate work at Yale University, where he earned his master's degree in Theatre Management. When not enjoying his lifelong passion for live theatre, Provost volunteers his time with the Make-A-Wish Foundation's CT Chapter where he performs magic under the stage name of "Mr. Jeffo". Jeff and his wife Traci are happy to have recently become Branford residents, and they look forward to getting to know the area and being a part of the shoreline community this summer.



KEELY BAISEN KNUDSEN (*Artistic Director & Co-Founder*) An award winning director, Keely has performed, directed and choreographed internationally in plays, musicals, operas and dance companies in hundreds of theatrical productions and has performed

in 48 of the United States and in the UK. Realizing her vision of a new theater company on the Connecticut Shoreline, Keely's ideals of inspiring, inclusive work that uplifts the human spirit and connects communities formalized in the creation of the Legacy Theatre with Co-Founder Stephanie Stiefel Williams, a performing colleague and dear friend. Keely has directed, choreographed, and taught a myriad of performing arts courses at such institutions as Quinnipiac University, Yale University, Fairfield University, Hartt School of Drama, Southern Connecticut State University, Westminster College, and was the Director of Education

of New Haven's acclaimed Elm Shakespeare Company for several years. Additionally a composer/lyricist and playwright, she is currently collaborating on two musicals and is a member of ASCAP. Her directing has been heralded by the *Arts Paper* as "...visually striking, emotionally moving" and "captivating" and of her direction of *Hamlet* it was said, "Knudsen has made the notoriously difficult Shakespearean language accessible." Her creation of the Wheel Life Theatre Troupe has been an especially rewarding program as she acts and directs with those who ambulate with crutches and wheelchairs. Her BFA is from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, at which she graduated first in the class, and she received her Masters Degree in Drama on full scholarship from The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. Keely, her husband Brian, and five children (Saviah, Liviana, Wynter, Emery, and Reeves) reside in Guilford, CT, where she thoroughly enjoys running the Legacy with a tremendous staff and community support.



STEPHANIE STIEFEL WILLIAMS (*Co-Founder & Chairperson of the Board*)

is an active and versatile performer in musicals, concerts, and plays and has appeared in numerous locations throughout the Northeast. A member of Actor's Equity Association, she has

appeared professionally in a variety of roles at venues such as Broadway's Marriott Marquis, Legacy Theatre, Hartford Stage Company, Foxwoods' Fox Theatre, Atlantic City's Tropicana, Turning Stone Casino, and the Garde Arts Center. Among these roles, her favorites include Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha*, Anita in *West Side Story*, Lola in *Damn Yankees*, Maria in *The Sound of Music*, and Guenevere in *Camelot*. Although her professional focus has been in musical theatre, she also has been engaged frequently as a concert soloist, as well as in a cappella ensemble singer. Locally, Stephanie is a proud founder, repertory member, and trustee president at Legacy Theatre where she starred in the critically acclaimed 2022 production of *I Do! I Do!*. In 2021, she was a featured performer in Legacy's *Barefoot in the Park* and she also appeared as a featured vocalist in the wildly popular *Mack Is Back!*. In addition to her work with Legacy, Stephanie sits on the Performing Arts Advisory Council at the University of Notre Dame and has been a member of the Board of Trustees at the Goodspeed Opera House. She has become involved on a producing level with critically-acclaimed productions of *Gypsy* and *Showboat* in London's West End, the revival of *Sweeney Todd* in New York, and Broadway's *Escape to Margaritaville*. As a former Miss Connecticut, she represented our state at the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, from Fairfield University and a Juris Doctorate with honors from the University of Connecticut School of Law. Stephanie is the proud mother of two adult children, Valerie and Rick, and lives in Guilford with her wonderful husband, Luke.



AT&T

Legacy Who's Who



KIERSTEN BJORK (*Theatre Manager*) is thrilled to be a part of the Legacy team as Theatre Manager. She is a 2021 graduate of Fairfield University, graduating summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with degrees in Theatre and English. In addition to her work with

Legacy, Kiersten does freelance theatre work as a stage manager, technician, and carpenter for the Quick Center for the Arts and Theatre Fairfield. She is also a performer – favorite performing credits include Legacy Theatre: *A Christmas Carol* (Fan/Mrs. Fezziwig/Others), *Joan Joyce* (Young Joan Joyce – BroadwayWorld CT Regional Theatre Nomination: Best Performer in a Musical), *The Tales of Custard the Dragon* (Ink the Cat), *A Princess Tea* (Evil Queen), and *The Tales of Christopher Robin & Winnie-the-Pooh* (Rabbit); Shoreline Theatre Company: *Footloose* (Ethel McCormack) and *Chicago* (June/"Squish"); and Theatre Fairfield *The Spitfire Grill* (Percy), [title of show] (Susan – BroadwayWorld CT Regional Theatre Nomination: Best Performer in a Streaming Musical), *Woman and Scarecrow* (Auntie Ah – BroadwayWorld CT Regional Theatre Nomination: Best Performer in a Streaming Play), *Titus Andronicus* (Demetrius), *Fortinbras* (Laertes), and *Authenticity* (Alice). Kiersten's credits also include director, scenic designer, master carpenter, board operator, stage manager, assistant stage manager, and runner on numerous productions, with favorites being *I Do! I Do!* (ASM, Legacy Theatre) and *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time* (Master Carpenter, Theatre Fairfield).



SARAH PERO (*Production Manager*)

Born and raised in New Haven, CT, Sarah has been involved with local community and professional theatre for 20+ years. Acting at the age of 10, and directing at 16, Sarah received her BFA in Theatre, with a concentration in directing from the University of Rhode Island. Right after college, Sarah was a part-time drama teacher in New Haven Public Schools and also taught theatre classes with Performing Arts Programs (South Windsor, CT). Sarah then worked at the Music Theatre of CT (Norwalk, CT) School of Performing Arts, wearing many hats as Administrative Manager, Teaching Artist, Director, Music Director, and Choreographer for the school. Sarah also managed the Box Office and was the Resident Sound Designer for MTC's Professional Main Stage. Following MTC, Sarah worked as Administrative Manager at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre (Bridgeport, CT). As a Production Stage Manager for various Theatre Productions in Rhode Island and Connecticut, some of her favorites include: *Tick, Tick Boom!*; *Little Women: The Musical*; and *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. Most recently, Sarah served as the Production Stage Manager for multiple Legacy productions in the 2021 and 2022 seasons. Sarah is thrilled to officially join the Legacy team as Production Manager.



ANNE RUNOLFSSON (*Development Manager*) has entertained audiences worldwide for the past 35 years. A veteran of the stage and concert venues, her Broadway and National tour appearances include: *Phantom of the Opera* (Carlotta), *Victor/Victoria* (Stand-

by for Julie Andrews and Liza Minnelli), *Les Misérables* (Fantine), *Cyrano: The Musical* (Roxane), *The Secret Garden* (Lili), *Aspects of Love*, and *James Joyce's The Dead* (Gretta). As a soloist, Anne has performed at such iconic venues as The Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall (with tenor Jose Carreras), The 02 Arena (London, with Julie Andrews), The Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), The Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap and countless others. Anne was awarded New York City's prestigious MAC award for Best Female Singer. Her cabaret appearances include Birdland, 54 Below, The Green Room 42, 92nd Street Y, The Russian Tea Room, Rainbow and Stars, and Hollywood's Cinegrill and Gardenia. Show recordings include: *Les Misérables* International Cast, *Listen to My Heart*, and *You Oughta Be On Broadway*, and a solo album "At Sea." Anne co-wrote and performs in two shows with singer/actress daughter Tess Adams; *The Story Goes On: A Broadway Family Journey* and *Heroine's Song*. Anne made her directorial debut in December 2021 in Los Angeles with *My Unauthorized Hallmark Movie Musical*. She has also appeared on NBC's *The Blacklist*. Anne is principal partner of Runolfsson Entertainment which includes "Sing With Anne," a vocal coaching practice. She has taught voice and performance at the Orange County School for the Arts in California and New York University.



COLIN SHEEHAN (*Producer of Broadway Concert Series & Community Arts Coordinator*) is a local arts enthusiast and serves as the Arts, Culture & Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Branford, Director of The Branford High School Performing Arts'

Spring Musical, and Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Branford Parks and Recreation Shoreline Theatre Company. He graduated from Branford High School and continued his studies at Wagner College with a B.A. in Theatre and Speech Performance. In 2003, he made his Broadway debut in the closing night production of *Les Misérables*. In '99, Colin appeared numerous times on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* and worked for three seasons on *The Wendy Williams Show*. Colin has produced, directed, hosted, and performed in the tri-state area and abroad with Broadway Cruises, Nickelodeon Cruises, and R Family Vacations Cruises. Colin is a philanthropist and has hosted, produced and raised funds and awareness for many organizations in Branford and beyond.



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Legacy Who's Who



MARY LEE WEBER (*Community Outreach*) is a Marketing and Communications consultant who has lived in Branford since 1988. She held the position of Director of Marketing and Community Development for the ABC affiliate WTNH-8 for 17 years where she

was responsible for non-traditional revenue and community partnerships. With a local creative team she Executive Produced a short documentary for the Stony Creek Museum called *Born at The Water's Edge*. It features interviews and information about the Thimble Islands and the history of Stony Creek including brief segments about Legacy Theatre, the Stony Creek Fife and Drum Corps and the Quarry. Mary Lee also helped with the Legacy Theatre productions while they were in residence at the Stony Creek Museum in 2018-19. She joined Legacy to help with Marketing and Community Outreach and is thrilled to play even a small part in helping Legacy bring theatre back to Stony Creek.



JEFF ZEITLIN (*Front of House Manager*) A long-time resident of Guilford, CT, Jeff's love of theatre was taken to the next level when his daughter was a part of the Guilford High School Theatre Arts program. Jeff served as a Board Member of the school's Theatre Arts Parents Support. He then became

the Box Office Manager and Front of House Advisor for GHSTA. He continues in that volunteer role today. Along with his wife, Alyson, he was an usher at The Ivoryton Playhouse. Most recently, he was a House Manager at The Katherine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center ("The Kate") in Old Saybrook. He first became aware of The Legacy Theatre when attending a couple of fundraisers a few years ago. He was taken by the plans for the historic building and the prospect of bringing high quality Broadway productions and performers to the shoreline. Jeff's community involvement also extends to Guilford A Better Chance where he is a member of the Board of Directors. When not at the theatre, Jeff is Loyalty Manager for IKEA in New Haven, focusing on Public and Community Relations. Jeff looks forward to welcoming theatre-goers from near and far to The Legacy Theatre!



NICK FETHERSTON (*Box Office Manager*) is thrilled to be a part of the Legacy team. He is an actor and theater lover, currently living in Hamden, CT. Nick graduated from Quinnipiac University in 2021 with his degree in theater and is also an alumnus of The

National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. Nick's previous work with Legacy includes playing Rosencrantz in the 2018 production of *Hamlet* on the Guilford Green and playing Lysander in the 2019 production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the Branford Green. His most recent credit was playing Don John and The Sexton in *Much Ado About Nothing* with Capital Classics in West Hartford. He is so excited to be taking the next step in his theater journey with Legacy.



JOE LANDRY (*Graphic Designer*) has had the pleasure of being part of the Legacy family for the past number of years. He has designed for several theatres, including MTC, Westport Country Playhouse, Fairfield Theatre Company and Pantochino Productions.

As a playwright, his plays have been produced throughout the world, including right here at Legacy, where his adaptation of *The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play* was staged last season. www.joelandry.com

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Legacy Theatre company members join Tony Award-winning actress/singer Nikki M. James onstage after her concert, 2/26/23. Photo by Samuel Bibbins.

- The Legacy Theatre Guild is comprised of dedicated members of the Shoreline East community who come together as a group to support the work and mission of the Legacy Theatre in Stony Creek, CT.
- These “cheerleaders for the performing arts and the creative process” freely give their time and talents to help the full and part-time staff at the Legacy with self-contained service projects: beautifying or updating a neglected or dated area within our actor housing, assembling printed materials for a bulk mailing campaign, helping to prepare or serve cast and company dinners or summer cookouts, etc.
- Active members quickly become part of the Legacy family, gathering when called upon to help in the true spirit of giving. A veritable and enthusiastic “theatre club of volunteers,” Legacy Guild members can soon become the backbone of the not-for-profit arts organization.

For more information
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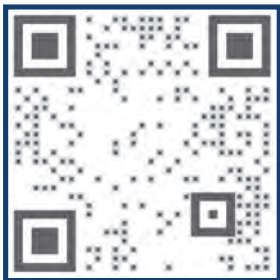
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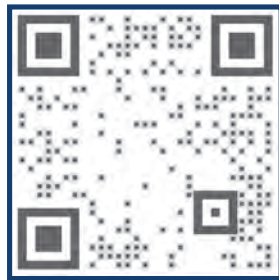
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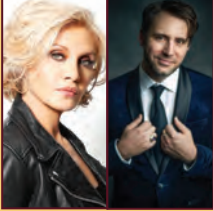
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