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ONE TWO
MAN, GUNNORS
BY RICHARD BEAN



OCT
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{*ρφφφ*}

by David Auburn



APR
2024

DEATHTRAP
by Ira Levin



JUN
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Who We Are?

UU of East Aurora is the spiritual home for people of varied religions and belief systems, including atheists and agnostics.

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Reverence

Uniting people in spirit through communities of meaning and learning how to better live our values each day.

Different Beliefs. Shared Values.



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Aurora Players • PO Box 206 • East Aurora, NY 14052

RESERVATIONS/INFORMATION:
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Aurora Players is a member of the Greater East Aurora Chamber of Commerce (GEACC), American Association of Community Theatre (AACT), Theatre Association of New York State (TANYS), Western New York Alliance of Community Theaters (WNY ACTS!), and The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP).



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PARTICIPATION

Aurora Players is a non-profit organization and all work (technical support, actors, administration) is performed entirely by volunteers. Auditions for every production are open to members and non-members alike. Aurora Players encourages anyone interested to get involved, either on-stage or backstage. It's a great opportunity for families, no experience is necessary, and all are welcome! Visit our website for more information on membership, shows, and events: auroraplayers.org.



PURPOSE

The purpose of the organization is to create interest in and foster enthusiasm for the dramatic arts; to provide a medium of expression for those who love the theatre; and to be the means of bringing together in organized activities all those whose interest centers around drama.

DONATIONS

Our Pavilion is over 100 years old and anyone who has lived in an older home knows the project list never ends, but available funds, labor, and time usually do. If you – or someone you know – have resources, talents, or ideas that could help Aurora Players, please contact us at info@auroraplayers.org.

Your help will be greatly appreciated!

AP ONLINE

Looking for an easy way to purchase tickets securely and find out more about Aurora Players? Our website, auroraplayers.org, contains information on this season's shows, including photos and videos, auditions, volunteer opportunities (both for shows and to work on committees) and much more. Be sure to bookmark the site and stop back often to stay informed about new opportunities and events.

Our website is managed by Ian and Gina Ronan. Questions, comments and suggestions should be sent to info@auroraplayers.org.

Be sure to follow Aurora Players on **Facebook and Instagram**.



AuroraPlayers.org



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Robert H. Gurbacki

WHY GET INVOLVED?

by Laurie Oravec

Historical records suggest that Benjamin Franklin organized our emerging nation's first unpaid fire company in Philadelphia in 1736 after a ship fire burned down the wharf, warehouses and neighboring houses. Since that time, volunteering has been a mainstay of American life, whether it be for large organizations, such as the American Red Cross, or local school bake sales.

Without volunteers, this theater would be dark and silent. I can't even imagine it. For me, stepping into the world of community theater as a volunteer has given me a strong sense of community and led to much personal growth. Practically speaking, the experience has also honed my organizational skills, time management (yes, the ultimate deadline is a show opening!), adaptability and teamwork, all of which are valuable in any walk of life, even for a retiree like me. Consider adaptability: in the world of theater, unexpected challenges are par for the course, be it a set door that won't open during a performance, a sudden glitch with tickets or a costume malfunction (no, not that kind). We quickly learn to think on our feet and find creative solutions. Then we laugh about it later – a lot.

I think that one of the most remarkable aspects of volunteering with Aurora Players is the sheer satisfaction and excitement it brings. I won't lie, there are times I've been bored writing press release number 20, but then I remember what it's all for. It's the thrill of being part of a live production in some way. Sure, I'm not part of making the production happen, but we have to get the word out in order to fill those seats. In

that way, each and every volunteer is key to the secret sauce that makes Aurora Players such a sparkling gem in this community. Of course, being integrally involved in a live production, whether it's helping with set design, costumes, performing or backstage management, is marvelous. It's also fun to be part of a committee to flex one's creativity and problem-solving skills, and the lasting camaraderie that is cultivated on a committee is really quite special and rewarding. As it turns out, even the business side of theater is fascinating, especially knowing that what you do keeps Aurora Players strong and makes the productions possible. Ultimately, witnessing the audience's reactions and knowing you played a role in creating that magic is a deeply satisfying experience.

I've been in shows and I love that aspect, but volunteering with AP goes beyond the thrill of live performances. The roles to play here are truly endless. If you are looking for a place to belong, make friends, serve, learn, find new passion and give back to your community, Aurora Players is looking for you! It is a warm and welcoming place for growth, learning, and joy that ripples into various aspects of life. Memories made, skills learned and relationships forged are invaluable rewards that will continue to enrich my life long after the final curtain call of any show. That's magical; that's my answer to the "why."



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PARTNERS IN SUCCESS

Aurora Players established the Community Partner Award in 2000 to recognize the contributions made on our behalf by local companies and organizations, and to demonstrate our appreciation for their enduring efforts and continued participation in our activities. The award has been conferred upon the following partners:

- | | | | |
|-------------|---|-------------|--|
| 2000 | Elma Press | 2014 | Warning Electrical Services |
| 2001 | Aurora Answering Service | 2015 | Robert Sowyrda
– <i>“The Piano Man”</i> |
| 2002 | East Aurora Advertiser | 2017 | Elma Press |
| 2003 | Village of East Aurora | 2018 | East Aurora Cooperative Market |
| 2004 | Fisher-Price | 2017 | Nativity Lutheran Church |
| 2005 | The Roycrofters-At-Large Association | 2023 | Andrews’ Barber Parlor |
| 2006 | Fontanese Folts Aubrecht Ernst, Architects | | |
| 2007 | Aurora Paint Pot | | |
| 2008 | Warning & Robel - Keith Warning, Matt Robel | | |
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| 2011 | Roycroft Campus Corporation | | |
| 2012 | Allstate Insurance | | |
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Hey, Gang! Let's Put on a Season!

by Christie Koester Welsby

How are Aurora Players shows chosen? Choreographer Martha Graham once said, "Theater is a verb before it is a noun, an act before it is a place." Before the final product is performed for you here at the Roycroft Pavilion, our shows are first a verb through the hard work of our Play Reading Committee.

The Play Reading Committee, or PRC, can be considered one of the most important committees within Aurora Players. This committee recommends our three shows for mainstage productions in a single season, as well as shows for special engagements including Theatre in Hamlin Park and a holiday show.

The PRC consists of five to seven Aurora Players members or volunteers who may have directed for Aurora Players and understand the production and technical process. The committee works under the guidance of a committee chairperson. The members have technical knowledge and/or expertise in production, limitations for production, acting, costumes, lighting, music, technical support, set design, etc. Members serve on the PRC for no longer than five years, volunteer for at least two shows per season in any capacity and understand the production and technical limits of the Aurora Players.

This committee solicits submissions of the show proposals from the general membership, past and present directors,

previously unselected directors, and the WNY theater community. They read and evaluate all submissions based on the complexity of the production in relation to our capabilities. Finally and importantly, since not every show is right for our organization, the PRC must consider the balance between directors' show submissions and the best interest of Aurora Players and its mission.

It is perhaps the art of selecting a balanced season that can be the biggest challenge. Play Reading Committee member Mary Eckstein shares her personal experience with the PRC. "When reviewing submissions, the group takes great care to consider which submissions would appeal to the AP audiences, actors and the overall good of the organization. This process can prove to be a challenge if multiple submissions are viewed as a good choice to build a season, when only three will be selected. The PRC wants prospective directors to know that just because their submission was not selected for a particular season that it does not imply that their submission was a poor choice."

Once decisions on the submissions are finalized, two possible season selections are drafted and submitted to the AP Board for final consideration and decision making. Not long after the selections are submitted, the PRC begins the process again for our next season. We certainly would not be able to present the

caliber of shows at AP without the hard-working members of our Play Reading Committee!

Do you have a play or musical you'd like to direct for Aurora Players? If so, we invite volunteer directors to submit a musical or play for the 2024-25 season. Prospective directors may submit up to three plays. Please visit our website at www.auroraplayers.org or email the PRC at scripts@auroraplayers.org for more information.

This season's performances are the culmination of the Play Reading Committee's vision, and we are continually grateful for being able to share that vision with you. So on with the show and on with the season! ■

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KEEP THE FOOTLIGHTS GLOWING

For over 90 years, Aurora Players has been a significant part of the cultural wealth of East Aurora and Western New York communities. Our patrons tell us they return again and again because Players' productions offer opportunities to share the many worlds of theatre and enjoy the characters that inhabit those worlds. To many of our members, the historic Roycroft Pavilion is the place to support artistic creativity and be creative.

You can help to keep the footlights of our beloved theater glowing and assist members of our community to continue the mission of Aurora Players:

"To create interest in, and foster enthusiasm for, the study of the dramatic arts."



Please consider remembering
AURORA PLAYERS
in your will or estate plans.

Planning for your future can be a very personal and private decision. Many of our friends and patrons share the desire to guarantee our future as a vital part of the community and have already made this decision to continue their generosity to Aurora Players beyond their lifetime.

Leaving a gift to Aurora Players in your will or estate plan is very simple. We encourage you to speak with your own attorney or financial advisor during your planning if you are interested.

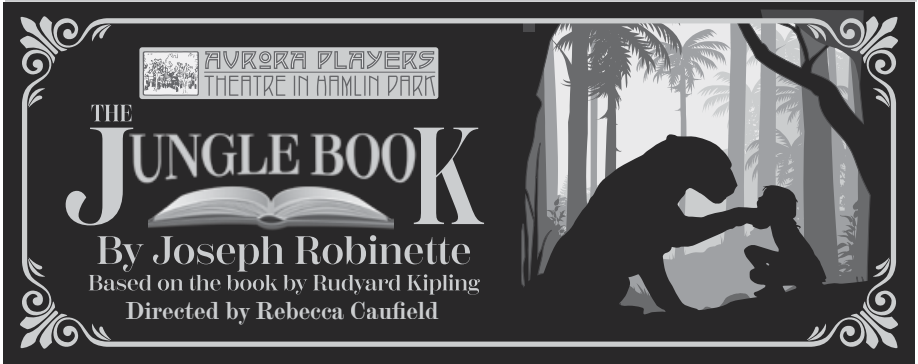
It can be as easy as stating the following:

"I give, devise, and bequeath to the Aurora Players, Inc. - federal tax identification number 16-6052466, a non-profit organization having an office at P.O. Box 206, East Aurora, New York 14052, the following..."

Your support makes our work possible today and for years to come.

Thank you for your generosity.

THEATRE IN HAMLIN PARK



Theatre In Hamlin Park's 4th Production: THE JUNGLE BOOK

by Rebecca Caufield

The trees of Hamlin Park were turned into a jungle for Theatre in Hamlin Park's fourth production, *The Jungle Book*. The story, by Joseph Robinette, is based on the 1894 collection of stories by Rudyard Kipling and intertwines the beloved tale of a lost boy Mowgli, a menagerie of jungle animals, and the red flower (fire) with scenes of 16-year-old Rudyard Kipling as he fights through his own jungle attempting to win the school writing contest by writing *Mowgli's Brothers*.

Director Rebecca J. Caufield brought together a cast of 15 talented actors from across the WNY region. Actors ranged in ages from 11 to 70 with each playing 2-4 characters. Wolves and monkeys dashed from one side of the stage to the other and actors often had a mere 60 seconds (or less) to change costumes before their next entrance.

Caufield says: "This cast is like a family to me and *The Jungle Book* is a show with family at its heart. Whether that family is given or chosen, we are all on a mission of self-discovery to find where we fit in this jungle we call life, all while enjoying the adventure to get there."

While the park was the ideal setting for this show, it did not come without obstacles, the biggest being the weather. Rehearsals were held longer at the Nativity Lutheran church due to the



cold nights of early summer. Once in the park, the Jungle team was often forced to either perform confined to the small stage outside or move the entire rehearsal inside. Once in public production, all show weekends were marked with threats of rain. Every Saturday saw at least one downpour either in the hours preceding or right during set-up time, pausing all activity. However, the clouds eventually cleared and the show went on. Fortunately, only one show was moved to the Sunday rain date. Social media was used to keep any potential audience informed and despite the often soggy park, over 1700 people attended the four-weekend run. We thank audience members for their generous donations

each year, which serve to keep this free program alive.

Theatre in Hamlin Park would like to acknowledge, with great thanks, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Brunson and Mr. and Mrs. Gary Stillman for their generous contributions toward the purchase of the new sound equipment used during this year's production. We are so very grateful to have this improvement to the Theatre in Hamlin Park experience as we continue to bring families together with an accessible theater experience for all ages. ■

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Aurora Players offers Sponsorship Packages that provide your business with increased exposure in the community through multiple marketing opportunities.

Becoming a Sponsor and/or Playbill advertiser is a great way to show your support for the arts in East Aurora and to reach our theater patrons — not only within East Aurora, but from the surrounding towns as well. Our thousands of patrons include theater lovers from all of Erie County and beyond. When audience members see your ad in the Playbill, it creates a positive impression of your business. It demonstrates that you're an involved and supportive member of the community!

Besides promoting your business, a sponsorship or Playbill advertisement provides many other benefits to you and the community:

- It enhances your image by connecting with people when they are enjoying a theatrical experience that truly engages them..
- Many of our patrons explore the Village of East Aurora as part of their visit, often shopping and dining either before or after a performance. A sponsorship or advertisement will keep your organization top-of-mind.
- Your support helps to fund our youth programs, including the Annual Youth Scholarship and our ProjectSTAGE summer education and mentoring program.
- Through your support, Aurora Players productions attract visitors to East Aurora and enhance the image of our community's charming, artistic and creative heritage.

Please e-mail Kelly Campbell, Fundraising Chair, at kanncampbell@gmail.com or call us at (716) 687-6727 to discuss your sponsorship options today! More information is also available at www.auroraplayers.org

Thank you for your continued support!



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AVRORA PLAYERS



PROUDLY PRESENTS

{*ρπφøf*}

by David Auburn

Directed by Patricia Hoefler

PROOF premiered at Manhattan Theatre Club (Lynne Meadow, Artistic Director; Barry Grove, Executive Producer) in New York City on May 23, 2000. It was directed by Daniel Sullivan; the set design was by John Lee Beatty; the lighting design was by Pat Collins; the original music and sound design were by John Gromada; the costume design was by Jess Goldstein; and the production stage manager was James Harker.

PROOF was subsequently produced on Broadway at the Walter Kerr Theatre by Manhattan Theatre Club, Roger Berlind, Carole Shorenstein Hays, Jujamecyn Theatres, Ostar Enterprises, Daryl Roth and Stuart Thompson on October 24, 2000. It was directed by Daniel Sullivan; the set design was by John Lee Beatty; the lighting design was by Pat Collins; the original music and sound design were by John Gromada; the costume design was by Jess Goldstein; and the production stage manager was James Harker.

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A Message from AP's President



“The mission of the theatre, after all, is to change, to raise the consciousness of people to their human possibilities.”

— Arthur Miller

Welcome, Aurora Players members, patrons and theater guests, to another season of live theater in the heart of East Aurora; a season of laughter, drama, and mystery. We gather here in the friendly confines of this historic Roycroft building to experience the shows brought to the stage through the hard work and dedication of the directors, actors, and production crews – and we do so in seasons of change: summer moving into fall, winter into spring, and lastly, spring back to summer.

So, too, are changes evident within the organization. New volunteers take on challenges and roles they are learning from seasoned hands, while the veterans embrace expanded opportunities themselves. Directors new to the AP stage are leading our fall and summer offerings, while production crews also have fresh recruits in critical positions, all lending their expertise and experience to ensure that our shows continue to entertain and delight with the quality that is Aurora Players' hallmark.

Changes don't stop there, though. Many of the committees crucial to Aurora Players' continued success also have fresh contributors: keeping the group and its activities visible to the community and to AP members; working to secure our financial stability; and handling the requests for season tickets, patron donations, and membership. Without the energies of these volunteers to do the “behind-the-scenes” work, this group would not exist. This truly is a theater based on community effort and dedication.

One thing seems changeless, though: the tremendous support of our season ticket holders, patrons and members, and the community. These vital partners make what we do at Aurora Players worth all the time and labor invested; along with, of course, the applause with which you grace us at the end of every performance.

We hope that the plays you enjoy this season give you a laugh-filled respite from your day-to-day routine, make you think about something differently, and intrigue you enough to unravel a mystery. Live theater is a unique experience: one that puts both the actors onstage and the audience in the seats into a shared realm, where that connection affects both groups in significant ways. There's nothing else quite like it. We are excited and honored to share that distinctive bond with you.



Sincerely,

Tim Musial

President, Aurora Players Board of Directors

The Cast (In Order of Appearance)

Robert	MICHAEL BREEN
Catherine	DANIELLE BURNING
Hal	WIL WEISS
Claire	MOLLY MCGRATH

Setting and Synopsis

The back porch of a house in Chicago.

ACT ONE

Scene 1: Night

Scene 2: The next morning

Scene 3: Night

Scene 4: The next morning

ACT TWO

Scene 1: September afternoon, four years earlier

Scene 2: Morning, an instant after the end of Act One

Scene 3: The next day

Scene 4: Winter, about three and a half years earlier

Scene 5: The present

Intermission and Recording Policy

There will be one 15-minute intermission between Act One and Act Two.

As a courtesy to the actors and audience members, and in compliance with Aurora Players policy and its contractual obligations, we ask that you do not use [flash] cameras, audio recording, and video recording devices during the performance.

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Director's Note

David Auburn, author of the play *Proof*, admitted he did not have a strong focus in mathematics when he attended the University of Chicago as an undergrad. However, he said he learned that he was able to learn about the subject, enough, at least to discuss it and, then, write about it. (“Auburn Returns to Hyde Park for “Proof” | University of Chicago News”)

He researched several key authors on mathematics for background on his show. Once it was written, he had mathematicians from the college read his script, and they gave it their approval. I found this particularly encouraging as I was not strong in mathematics myself (in fact, when I went back to college as an adult, I had to have my then 15-year-old son help me with my math homework.)

But math qualms aside, I found myself drawn to the script particularly because of how Auburn created his characters. As a member of a large family and the youngest of four sisters, I could appreciate the dynamics between Catherine and Claire. I told the cast of my own experiences and we collectively concerned ourselves with the relationships and why they were how they were. What was their childhood like? What caused the sisters to be estranged? How did Robert connect emotionally with Claire (the one person who does not share a scene with him)?

One other topic of our discussions was Sophie Germain, the 18th-century young female mathematician who showed a preternatural mathematical talent and whose life and works are mentioned in the play. There is an obvious connection between Germain and Catherine who, like Germain, is a young woman with extraordinary mathematical talent, particularly in the area of prime numbers. Could she, however, create a proof that would confound math experts? Reviewing the events in Germaine’s own life could lend credence to that possibility. But Auburn has so finely crafted this mystery that the true answer is not revealed until the final moments.

“Auburn Returns to Hyde Park for “Proof” | University of Chicago News.”
News.uchicago.edu, news.uchicago.edu/story/auburn-returns-hyde-park-proof.

Production Crews

Director	PATRICIA HOEFLER
Assistant Director	ANTHONY WIZNER
Producer	MARK ECKSTEIN
Assistant Producer	DARLENE SCHMIEGEL
Set Design	TIM MUSIAL
Costumes	NANCY SHEEHAN JOHNSON
Set Construction	TIM MUSIAL, Neal Bachman, Matt Bohlen, Julie Dana, David Moomaw, Ben Petryszak, David Watson, Randy West
Set Decoration	TIM MUSIAL, Patricia Hoefler, Nancy Johnson
Set Painting	TIM MUSIAL, Matt Bohlen, Rebecca Caufield, Julie Dana, Chris Estabrook, Lindsay Harris, Rob Krolczyk, Michael McGreevy, Michael E. Nowicki, Amanda Webber, Randy West, and others
Props	TARA POTZLER, Patricia Hoefler
Lighting & Sound	LOWELL SYLWESTER
Stage Manager	GAIL STENGEL
Assistant Stage Manager	XANDA WEISS
Lobby Photography	DORI SHEAR-MCGOWAN
Publicity Photography	DORI SHEAR-MCGOWAN
Marketing	LAURIE ORAVEC, Mary Loliger, Tim Musial, Ian Ronan, Johnny Woods
Graphic Arts	TIM MUSIAL
Front of House Coordinator	MARK ECKSTEIN
House Managers	Catherine Burkhart, Mark Eckstein, Jeff Maris, Amy Sue Matthews, Tim Musial
Box Office, Ushers, Concierge	Gail Ruth Arthurs, Patti Best, Matt Bohlen, Jennifer Brayman, Rebecca Caufield, Melissa Cumming, Lynn Fischer, Danielle Glynn, Alynn Greene, Cheryl Mankiewicz, Jeff Maris, Kim McAtee, Kelly McGarry, Sarah Pictor, Lydia Pikul, Mary Ann Reisdorf, Rachel Wach, Christie Koester-Welsby, Melissa Willey, SaraBeth Williams, John Woods, and others.

Cast Who's Who



Michael Breen – Robert – An AP Life Member, Michael has performed in numerous productions, including Best Actor award-winning roles in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and *Terra Nova*, as well as Supporting Actor honors for *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *Me And My Girl*. Other favorite AP roles include King Henry in *The Lion In Winter* and Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He has directed over 30 AP productions, including *Our Town*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Bus Stop*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, and five productions of *A Christmas Carol*. He served for 20 years as both Players' Publicity Chair and Chair of the Play Reading Committee, while also serving on the AP Board of Directors for 8 years. He has been honored with three Working Awards and three John Briggs Service Awards. Michael has also earned three TANYs Acting Awards and a Buffalo Artie Award. One of his favorite theater experiences over the years has been to direct 70 dramas and musicals for local high schools. Michael is deeply grateful for the ongoing support and love from his wonderful family and from a group of friends who are also family! Finally: thank you to Roberta, Rich, Bills Erdley and Estabrook, and Pete; you dear friends, along with so many other departed Players, have enriched my life beyond measure.



Danielle Burning – Catherine – is beyond delighted to be returning in her seventh show with Aurora Players! She has also taken to the stage in their productions of *Bright Star* (Alice Murphy), *Dearly Departed* (Delightful), *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime* (Nellie), and in the ensembles of *Grease*, *Pirates of Penzance*, and *Hair*. Danielle has nearly a decade of acting experience with local community theaters. Other favorite credits include *Murder on the Orient Express* (Countess Andrenyi), *The Adventures of Peter Rabbit and Friends* (Beatrix Potter), and *Charlotte's Web* (Charlotte) with Rocking Horse Productions; *Falsettos* (Trina) with Bellissima Productions; and *9 to 5* (Roz) with Niagara Regional Theater Group. She recently participated in Road Less Traveled Productions' Bridge Program as an acting mentee. When not on stage, she can be found working as a librarian for the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library or with her nose stuck in a book.



Molly McGrath – Claire – is thrilled to not get soaked with water in this production with Aurora Players! She holds a BFA in Acting and a minor in Dance from SUNY Fredonia. Her previous roles include the Audience Plant in *One Man, Two Guvnors* (Aurora Players), Connie Dayton in *Come Blow Your Horn* (Desiderio's Dinner Theatre), and multiple characters in the Buffalo Quickies 2023 (Alleyway Theatre). When she's not on stage, you may find her cooking international meals in her spare time. You may also see Molly house managing at the Kavinoky Theatre - don't be afraid to say "Hi" if you spot her! Molly would like to thank her family and friends for their endless love and support.



Wil Weiss – Hal – Wil is ecstatic to be making his Western New York Debut with the East Aurora Players' production of *Proof*. If you ever found yourself in Kansas City, you may have seen Wil in the Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre's productions of *Ragtime* where he played Henry Ford, or their production of *The Kentucky Cycle*. Wil has also performed a cavalcade of characters with Theatre for Young America, also in Kansas City. Wil spent seven years as the Drama Director for the Lutheran High School of Kansas City where he directed nine productions. In 2018, Wil became a produced playwright with his play, *Bonnie*, for the KC Fringe Festival. Wil would like to thank Pat for giving him the opportunity to play with this fantastic group of actors. Wil would also like to thank his wife Xanda and son Jon for being the best reason a guy could have to come home every night. "Your support has been nothing but heroic." And to all the patrons, Wil hopes you enjoy the show!

Crew Who's Who



Patricia Hoefler – Director – Patricia is back directing another play for Aurora Players. Most recently, she directed *Amateurs* (otherwise referred to as “the play with all the chairs”). Prior to that she directed the musical *She Loves Me* and the classic comedy *Barefoot in the Park*. She learned directing at Rhode Island College, where she received her MFA in theater. She is very active with AP, currently serving as vice president on the Board of Directors. She is often seen volunteering for front of the house activities such as tickets, ushering, and house manager. As she also responds to the theater’s voicemails, you may even get a chance to chat with her on the phone! When not at the theater, she is singing with the choir at Saint John Vianney’s church or is teaching online. She is grateful for the support of friends and her son and his fiancée.

Lowell Sylwester – Sound and Lighting – Lowell has been involved in the sound and lighting design and operation for over 70 different productions at the theater since 2006. He engineered the upgrades of the stage lighting to LED technology and the sound to computer control. He credits his expertise to the mentoring he received from AP Members, particularly Tom Durham.

Nancy Johnson – Costumes – With over 25 years of costuming experience, Nancy has costumed dozens of shows, including *The Pajama Game*, *Towards Zero*, *And Then There Were None*, *She Loves Me*, *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Bright Star*, *Hair*, *Clue*, and *Into the Woods*.

Meet The Playwright

David Auburn’s plays include *PROOF* (Pulitzer Prize, Tony Award, New York Drama Critics Circle Award), *AN UPSET* and *AMATEURS* (EST Marathons), and *SKYSCRAPER*. Films include “The Girl in the Park” (writer/director) and “The Lake House.” Recent directing credits include *A DELICATE BALANCE* for BTF. His short plays have been collected in the volume *FIFTH PLANET AND OTHER PLAYS* (DPS). His work has been published in *Harper’s*, *New England Review*, and *Guilt and Pleasure*; and he was a contributing editor to the *Oxford American Writers Thesaurus*. A former Guggenheim Fellow, he lives in New York City.

(Courtesy of Dramatists Play Service)

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Aurora Players Board meetings are held monthly
at the historic Roycroft Pavilion.

All are welcome to attend general membership meetings:
April 25, 2024 and November 21, 2024
(7:00 pm at the historic Roycroft Pavilion).

**Aurora Players is a member of American Association of Community Theatre (AACT),
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EVENTS

Banquet 2024	Catherine Burkhart, Rebecca Caufield
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ProjectSTAGE	Erin Francis
Script Library	Kimberly Hicks, Rebecca Caufield
Strategic Planning	Board
Theatre in Hamlin Park	Justyne Harris

2023-24 PRODUCERS

<i>One Man, Two Guvnors</i>	Christie Koester-Welsby, Sofia Kull
<i>Maybe This Time – Valentine Cabaret</i>	Play Reading Committee
<i>Proof</i>	Mark Eckstein
<i>Good People – Readers Theater</i>	Readers Theater Committee
<i>Deathtrap</i>	Rebecca Caufield, Randy West
<i>A Wrinkle in Time</i>	Justyne Harris
<i>ProjectSTAGE</i>	Erin Francis

We would like to thank all of these members for their volunteerism, their continued efforts, and their never-ending support of Aurora Players.

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DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Rolling with the 716! ProjectSTAGE 2023 was a huge success!

Theater is a passion ... for some people. When people who are passionate about theater get a chance to work together, two things happen: the magical and the unexpected. It was my pleasure over two weeks to be with these talented, young, creative theater people. They are a family. For the most part they have been together for years in ProjectSTAGE Act I, Act II and now Act III. There were some “newbies,” who were in short order adopted by the “veterans.” I don't think the audience could tell in the final production who was new and who were old-hands!

I challenged them to not only act in the plays but also to try directing plays written by local writers (the 716) and they embraced the challenge.



I was able to get plays from local playwrights through my Buffalo/WNY theater connections. The students read over 20 plays and decided on nine ten-minute plays.

The plays ranged from silly comedies to pretty heavy dramatic pieces with some strong language. All the kids were/are mature enough to recognize that strong language is real and realistic and they were also firm in their artistic selves to stand by the playwright's vision and truth. This commitment and their acting and directing talent gives me great hope for the future of theater!

Thanks to all the parents and families of these amazing children for their support and encouragement. A very special thanks to: Erin Francis for all of her help with



production and for stage managing, and Lowell Sylwester for lighting and sound design. The ProjectSTAGE program doesn't happen without Erin Francis! She is the indispensable person!

The kids were all wonderful! Thanks Timothy, Amelia, Kaitlin, Cate, Eve, Avary, Zech, Elijah, Kanen, Elias, Maddie and Beth!

And finally, a special thanks to the playwrights! It ALL starts with the words on the page. That is where the magic starts! This year's 716 playwrights: Donna Hoke, Matt Boyle, The Medaille Summer Theatre Ensembles Playwrights of the 2018 and 2019 classes (their directors—Bella Poynton and Jon Elston), Jenn Dlugos, Charlie Hatton, Madison Sedlor, Gigi McCann, T.L. Sherwood, and Noah Stoddard! ■

*Thank you to all who supported
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– Matt Boyle, Director
*2023 ProjectSTAGE, Act III
Summer Program*



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1979 Charles Merla
Delores Merla

1980 John Spooner
Marybeth Spooner

1981 Roger Stowell
Harriet Woodworth

1982 Monna Rose

1987 Julie Shed
Walter Shed

1994 Dan Brunson
Carl Burgwardt
Pat Durham
Tom Durham
Pat Lefort
Billie Lucas
Jan McKellar

1995 Becky Pfohl

1998 Melanie Desiderio
Audrey Dillon
Bill Erdley
Bill Estabrook
Ann Mosner
Jim Mosner
Richard Rathbun
Bob Steck
Carol Steck
Sylvia Troust

1999 Chuck McCormick
Jane McCormick
Tina Nowicki

2000 Julia Ciesinski
Gary Cunningham

2001 Bill Murphy
Al Sleeper
Glenda Sleeper

2002 Rosemary Barney
Elizabeth McCuen

2005 Michael W. Breen

2006 Mary Moebius
Kathleen Murray
Peter G. Taylor

2009 Ben Little
Karen Little
Tim Musial
Don Seel
Nancy Seel

2011 Gail Ruth Arthurs
Lynn Fischer
Kathleen Frost
Susan Musial

2012 Jessica K. Rasp

2015 Michael Nowicki

2016 Mike Starzynski

2017 Kimberly Hicks

2018 Margaret Brunson

2019 Rebecca Popiel

2023 Catherine Burkhart
Alli Pelletreau

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Life membership in the organization may be awarded in recognition and appreciation for long, outstanding contribution and dedication to the organization. **Qualifications for Life Membership** are as follows:

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One Man, Two Guvnors

by Richard Bean

Brighton, England. 1963. Change is in the air and Francis Henshall is looking to make his mark. Fired from a skiffle band and in search of work, he finds himself employed by small-time gangster Roscoe Crabbe, who is in town to collect a fee from his fiancée's gangster father. But Roscoe is really Rachel, posing as her own dead brother, herself in love with Stanley Stubbers (her brother's killer) who, in turn, becomes our hero's other 'guvnor'. Fighting a mounting sense of confusion, Francis goes out of his way to serve both bosses. But with the distractions of a pneumatic book keeper, a self-important actor and select members of the criminal fraternity (not to mention his own mammoth appetite) to contend with, how long can he keep them apart? Richard Bean's hilarious comedy received 5-star reviews from every London newspaper and was the hit of the 2012 Broadway season. ■



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with songs by Grant Olding

(courtesy of Dramatists Play Service)

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Proof

by David Auburn

On the eve of her twenty-fifth birthday, Catherine, a troubled young woman, has spent years caring for her brilliant but unstable father, a famous mathematician. Now, following his death, she must deal with her own volatile emotions; the arrival of her estranged sister, Claire; and the attentions of Hal, a former student of her father's who hopes to find valuable work in the 103 notebooks that her father left behind. Over the long weekend that follows, a burgeoning romance and the discovery of a mysterious notebook draw Catherine into the most difficult problem of all: How much of her father's madness—or genius—will she inherit? ■



(courtesy of Dramatists Play Service)



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Deathtrap

by Ira Levin

Comfortably ensconced in his charming Connecticut home, Sidney Bruhl, a successful writer of Broadway thrillers, is struggling to overcome a dry spell which has resulted in a string of failures and a shortage of funds. A possible break in his fortunes occurs when he receives a script from a student in the seminar he has been conducting at a nearby college—a thriller that Sidney recognizes immediately as a potential Broadway smash. Sidney's plan, devised with his wife's help, is to offer collaboration to the student for co-credit. Or is it? *Deathtrap* provides twists and turns of devilish cleverness, and offers hilariously sudden shocks in such abundance that audiences will be spellbound until the very last moment. ■



(courtesy of Dramatists Play Service)

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ACCEPTING THE AWARD...

We shook things up with the 2023 Aurora Players Banquet in September! It was a well-attended brunch at stunning Suncliff On The Lake in Derby. Lake Erie and sunshine provided a gorgeous backdrop to celebrate the 2022-2023 season, recognize our volunteers and actors with awards and catch up with friends, old and new. All enjoyed the chance to visit, laugh together and get a little preview of the upcoming season.



NEWCOMER AWARD

SaraBeth Williams

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(Cassie Cooper, *Rumors*)

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Anthony Wizner

(Glenn Cooper, *Rumors*)

LEAD ACTRESS

Maryna Seufert

(Jill Tanner, *Butterflies Are Free*)

LEAD ACTOR

Joel Murphy (Lenny Ganz, *Rumors*)

AP CELEBRATES THE 2022-23 SEASON

THANK YOU, 2022-23 DIRECTORS

Joel Murphy, Paul Blackwell, Dr. Madeline Harts, Gina Schuster – *Into the Woods*

John Szablewski – *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*

Reneé M. Ronan – *Rumors*

David Hall – *Butterflies Are Free*

Matt Boyle – *ProjectSTAGE*

Rebecca Caufield – *The Jungle Book*

THANK YOU, 2022-23 PRODUCTION CREWS

Deep appreciation is extended to our producers, costumers, stage managers, actors, musicians, set designers, builders, painters, furnishers and decorators, prop masters, lighting and sound technicians, hair and makeup stylists and production crews for their dedication and efforts to ensure the artistic and financial success of our productions. **They are all stars of Aurora Players.**

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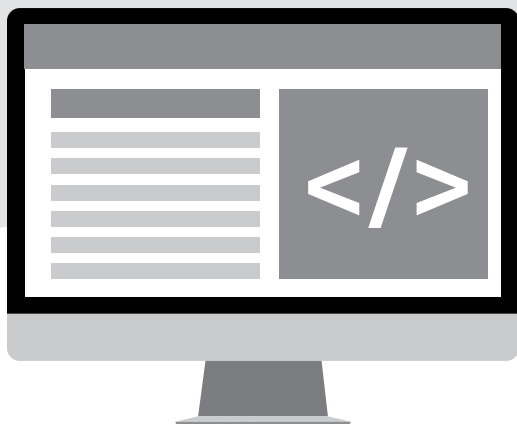
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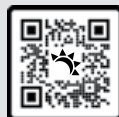
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