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Montclair's Own Community Theatre



### Coming Soon to Studio Playhouse

*Weisenthal...* September 24&25, 2021

*Skylark: A Staged Reading...* October 2&3

*Over My Dead Body* Staged Reading...October 9,  
2021

Maxine Lyle's *Step Show*...October 3, 2021

Visit Our Website for Tickets and Even More

Upcoming Events

[www.studioplayhouse.org](http://www.studioplayhouse.org)



## September 17&18, 2021

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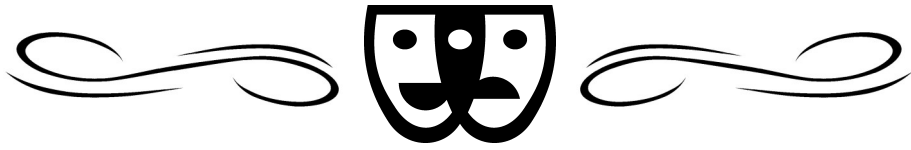


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Presents

## **Welcome Home Cabaret**

### **Director**

Kevin Ohlweiler

### **Musical Directors**

Darren Gage

Brian Walters

### **Technical Director**

Steve Moger

### **Sound Engineer**

Mike Yesenosky

### **Lighting Designer**

Steve Moger



### **Thank You from Studio Playhouse!**

THANK-YOU to all our generous donors through both the pandemic and recent flood, we couldn't have been able to mount this season without you. As we move forward with the pandemic persevering and a long road to recovery from the flood, we need your generosity to continue creating quality, affordable theatre to Montclair.

THANK-YOU again to all who have donated, purchased a ticket, or supported us in any way.

### **GET INVOLVED WITH STUDIO**

There are many ways to become a part of Studio Players. Maybe you'd like to act, sing or dance on stage. Perhaps you'd like to express yourself artistically by designing sets, lights, costumes or make-up. Or maybe you'd like to become part of the Studio family by helping out behind the scenes as a stage manager, usher, box office, etc....No matter what your interests, there's a place for you at Studio!

You don't need any special talents to join Studio Players. Even if you've never stepped foot in a theatre before, we'll gladly teach you everything you need to know. It's a great way to get involved and give something back to your community.

Adult membership is available for ages 16 and up; junior membership for ages 8-15. For more information, contact our Membership Manager at 973-744-9752 or [studiopl@studioplayhouse.org](mailto:studiopl@studioplayhouse.org).

### **Give the Gift of Theatre**

Gift certificates and gift subscriptions are available. Your recipient can choose the dates they wish to attend. The Box Office can keep your credit card info securely on file and only charge it when the tickets are actually reserved.

Call 973-744-9752 or email [boxoffice@studioplayhouse.org](mailto:boxoffice@studioplayhouse.org) for more information or to purchase The Gift of Theatre.

## Who's Who in the Cast and Crew

**Ethan Smith (she/her):** Ethan Smith is an actor/singer and musical director currently attending Montclair State University for Music Education. He is very excited to have this opportunity to perform one of his favorite songs, especially live! Which he has missed immensely. He moved from the West Coast to get a taste of that East Side glamour and attend school. Some of his favorite roles were Igor in *Young Frankenstein*, Gabe in *Next to Normal*, and Edward Bloom in *Big Fish*. @wheathan\_smyth

**Melissa Vogt (she/her):** Melissa Vogt is so happy to be a part of this cabaret, bringing joyful songs to the community! Originally from Austin, Texas; NYC for 10 years, now in New Jersey. This summer, she performed in *Smokey Joe's Cafe* with Pleasant Valley Productions. Other favorite past roles include: Sister Bear in *Berenstain Bears Live!* (Off-Broadway), Annelie in *Steel Magnolias*, Liesl in *The Sound of Music*, Miss Dorothy in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, CB's Sister in *Dog Sees God*, and Julia Gulia in *The Wedding Singer* (rehearsals only, March 2020). BFA Musical Theater, Sam Houston State. Thank you, Kevin for this opportunity. @meljo0707; www.melissajoiner.com

**Jessica Walsh (she/her):** Jessica is thrilled to make her Studio Playhouse debut. She is a voice teacher and performer who has performed professionally in musical theater, operetta, and opera, with a brief stint in folk. Favorite credits include *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* at the Paper Mill Playhouse, *Sweeney Todd* at Light Opera of NJ, and *Josephine* in *HMS Pinafore*. She runs Perennial Voice Studio and loves to cultivate the next generation of singers. www.perennialvoice.com

**Dylan Wyka (he/him):** A multi-faceted singer-songwriter, instrumentalist, producer, composer, arranger, orchestrator, actor, dancer and linguist, Dylan has made his way back into the world of secular music after a 10-year hiatus in gospel music. Dylan recently performed in Pleasant Valley Productions' *"Smokey Joe's Cafe"* and is working simultaneously on 2 EPs. @DylanAndTheMusic (IG/FB/YT), <https://linktr.ee/dylanandthemusic>, #DylanAndTheMusic



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to our official re-opening! We are so glad you decided to join us to celebrate the return of live indoor theater.

Our Welcome Home Cabaret is designed to lift your spirits and remind you of all you love about live performing. Kevin Ohlweiler and Darren Gage have assembled a diverse group of talent to entertain us all and welcome you all back to our community theater - we have missed you.

Please excuse the appearance of Alvin Place; as many of you know, Ida devastated our lower level. We took in over 5 feet of water. We lost set pieces, furniture, our entire green room - where the actors dress and hang out before and during a show - the kitchen and bathroom were totaled by all the heavy items lifted by the water, as well as props, costumes and more. We thank the community who came out and gave of their time (and money) to help with our clean up last weekend so the show could go on tonight.

We hope to rebuild our spaces. There is a donation bin in the lobby; please give what you can.

Thank you again for joining us tonight.

Enjoy the show!  
Amy Fox,  
President



## Director's Note

Good Evening and welcome back to Studio Playhouse. I could not be more excited to welcome a LIVE audience back into our theatre. For over a year and a half our stage lights have been dark but now we get to turn them back on! It has been a crazy time of zoom theatre and zoom play readings. For most of the people you are going to see on stage tonight this is their first time performing indoor to a live audience. For me personally it took a global pandemic to realize how much I need theatre in my life. The collaboration, the team work, the stress all are connected in such a fabulous way that when it is gone it truly leaves a void that needs to be filled. Well, I am so happy to say that we are back to fill that void.

This night would not have been possible without the help and support of so many people. First and foremost, thank you to season planning and the board members for trusting me with this benefit. Amy Fox & Laura Byrne who have led me through this process and who also spearheaded cleaning the basement following Hurricane Ida flooding. This night wouldn't have happened without you. I'd also like to thank Claudia Budris (pre-show announcement), Steve Moger (technical director and lighting design), Mike Yesenosky (sound design), Emily Miller (social media marketing) and Alicia Hayes (digital program design). Thank you to my musical team, Darren Gage, Brian Walters, & Bob White who created and learned arrangements to the many songs you are going to hear tonight. Loving thanks to my family and friends who support me unconditionally when I disappear into a theatre.

Finally, thank you to you-the audience. Thank you for trusting us. Thank you for wearing a mask. Thank you for coming back to experience live theatre at Studio Playhouse. Sit back, relax and enjoy the show.

Welcome Home,

Kevin Ohlweiler

**Melvin Rodriguez (he/him):** Puerto Rican Baritone Melvin Rodriguez is excited to join Studio Playhouse for Welcome Home Cabaret! Past credits include: Pistola (Verdi's *Falstaff* with International Summer Opera Festival, Morelia Mexico), Featured Soloist (Met Opera-Opera Scenes Concert and Orchestral Opera Gala). Awards include: 2019 Met Opera Auditions (First Place)(Puerto Rico), NATS Competition (First Place)(NYC). Melvin began his musical studies at the prestigious ELMERA of Mayaguez while studying theater in the specialized school CABA in Aguadilla, Puerto Rico, and with the Oficina de Arte y Cultura in San German, Puerto Rico doing musical theater productions like Lion King, Don Quixote, and more. He continued his training in Vocal Performance at the Puerto Rico Conservatory of Music.

**Paula Shtein (she/her):** Paula Shtein graduated as a Vocal Performance major from Capital University's Conservatory of Music. Credits include; Anne Lehmann (National Tour of *My Heart in a Suitcase*), Fanny Brice (*Funny Girl*), Chava (Fiddler on the Roof), and Olive Ostrovsky (*The 25th Annual Putnam...Spelling Bee*). She has performed in regional theatres, Off-Off Broadway (National Yiddish Theatre), and multiple cabarets/concerts in NYC. Her album, created with Dave Eggar and Dina Fanai (Trans-Siberian Orchestra) is available on iTunes for purchase! Paula can also be found on her YouTube channel. Paula is SO excited to finally be performing on stage again after the craziest past year and a half! <https://youtube.com/user/Paula273Ls>  
[Www.paulashtein.com](http://www.paulashtein.com)



**Cecelia Milnicki (she/her):**

**Michael Munley (he/him):** Mike is so excited to be in his first Studio Players production! He has been heavily involved with the theater at Stevens Institute of Technology (B.Eng. '09) both as an undergrad and as an alumnus. His real life acting gig is as Executive Director, Client Solutions at FreeWheel, a Comcast company, which recently acquired the startup for which he previously worked, Beeswax. Selected previous credits include: *Schoolhouse Rock Live!*, *I Love You You're Perfect Now Change*, *Chess*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *Tom Foolery*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *BatBoy*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Bye Bye Birdie*, *Footloose*.

**Molly Neff (she/her):** Welcome back to live indoor theater!! Molly's regional credits include *Next to Normal* (Diana), *How to Succeed...* (Rosemary), *Bye Bye Birdie* (Rosie), *Big Fish* (the Witch), *Smokey Joe's Café* (Pattie), *Company* (Jenny), and Morticia and Alice in two productions of *The Addams Family*. Molly has been studying voice with Alison Bolshoi since 2015, is a member of the Soundscape Singers Cabaret troupe, and also performs with the Celebration Singers community choir, with whom she has performed through several European countries. When not performing, Molly teaches middle school vocal music in Teaneck. Love to E, D, and A. @soundscapesingerscabaret

**Sofia Pastena (she/her):** Sofia Pastena is currently a sophomore BFA Acting major at Montclair State University. With Studio Players, she got to be apart of *Heathers* (Scotty), *Chicago* (Diesel), and *A Little Night Music* (Desiree). Sofia will always cherish the memories and friendships she has made along the way. She plans on pursuing her performing career in acting for the stage, camera, and in comedy. Sofia would like that thank all of the staff SO MUCH for making her summers and this night so memorable. And for always putting up with her crazy, of course. LOVE YOU GUYS! @sofiapastena

**Jennifer Roberstson (she/her):** Jennifer Robertson is so thrilled to be on stage with the Studio Playhouse. She recently performed in *Smokey Joe's Cafe*. Past credits include: *Sweeney Todd* (Young Lucy), *1776* (Martha Jefferson), *Carousel* (Ensemble/ u/s Julie Jordan) and *Ragtime* (Dance Captain) with the New Jersey Youth Theatre (NJ PAC and the Algonquin Arts Theatre), *Grease* (Marty), Royal Caribbean-'Navigator of the Seas' (Featured Singer), RWS Entertainment Group (Kennywood Amusement park), and *Midnight Madness* (Citigroup Theatre-New York Musical Theatre Festival). She is so grateful to be performing again and thanks her family, friends and teachers for their continuous love and support. @jazzedupby\_jr



Montclair's Own Community Theatre

**Band**

Percussion...Darren Gage

Pianist....Brian Walters

Bass...Bob White

**Design and Crew**

Director...Kevin Ohlwheiler

Musical Directors...Darren Gage, Brian Walters

Technical Director...Steve Moger

Lighting Designer...Steve Moger

Light Board Operators...Steve Moger, Abi Zellner



## **Singers**

(In alphabetical order)

Anastasia Arvanites

Duance Banks

Janine Barboza

Annie Challice

Christina Cruz

Kate Difonze

Jose Figueroa

Rachael Gareau

Vincent Gau

Susan Hagen

Alicia Hayes

Kay Koch



**Susan Hagen (she/her):** Susan Hagen is excited for this opportunity to perform at Studio Players for the first time in this very special event. Other recent (pre-pandemic) performances include Chess at CDC and NJCU, Sweet Charity at OLT, and Disenchanted! with the Chester Theatre Group. Over the years she has also worked on many productions with The Barn Theatre and served as Secretary on their Board of Directors. Susan is continually grateful for the opportunity to support and participate in the theatre arts. Much love to her chosen family for their unending support

**Alicia Hayes (she/her):** Alicia is a Jane of All (Creative) Trades. She was last seen on Studio's stage in *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, and she directed *Over My Dead Body* which was cancelled due to COVID-but will return with a one-night staged reading! Favorite onstage credits: *A Doll's House Part Two* (Emmy), *Jake's Women* (Molly), *Twelfth Night* (Fabian) and *Our Town* (Emily). Favorite stage management credits: *How It Really Happens*, *The Boys in the Band* and *Moon Over Buffalo*. She is thrilled to be returning to singing after eight years. Love and thanks to everyone who supports her in all her endeavors. Off we go! @alicia.c.hayes and aliciachayes.com

**Kay Koch (she/her):** Kay Koch is thrilled to be back here at Studio for the first time since going 'Into the Woods' as The Baker in 2018! Other favorite local credits: *Mamma Mia!* (Tanya) with Gas Lamp Players, *1776: The Women of Congress* (Thomas Jefferson) and *Gutenberg! The Musical!* (Dee) with Off-Book Productions. Kay sends huge thanks to Kevin & this awesome cabaret team, love to her husband Packy, and endless gratitude to "the Jesses" for being her Zoom theater and general sanity pals during 2020. @Kelonzi , kaykosh.com

**Caroline Macaluso (she/her):** Caroline is so thrilled to be making her Studio Players debut!! She is currently a sophomore musical theatre major at DeSales University in hopes of pursuing a career in the performing arts. She is so excited to be back live on stage after almost two years! She would like to thank her friends and family for their constant love and support:) @caroline\_macaluso

**Natalie Marone (she/her):** Natalie is excited to return to the stage after the Great Theater Hiatus of 2020. In recent years she has performed in NJ community theater circles as well as her alma mater's alumni shows at Stevens Institute of Technology. Favorite performances include "Little Shop of Horrors", "I Love You, You're Perfect...", and "Bat Boy: The Musical". By day Natalie gives three daily performances as a high school mathematics teacher (often with mixed reviews). She is also a mother to two small children whom she hopes

**Christina Cruz (she/her):** Christina Cruz is thrilled to be back on stage at Studio Playhouse! Right before the pandemic, she was in *The Vagina Monologues* at Studio Playhouse so she is excited to be back again! Christina has her MA in Theatre Studies from Montclair State University. Some of her favorite musical theatre roles include Rosie in *Bye, Bye Birdie*, Adelaide in *Guys and Dolls* and Columbia in *The Rocky Horror Show*. Most recently, Christina was Stephano in the Blackbox PAC's production of *The Tempest* and Maria in *Back Bog Beast Bait*. She is excited to be singing again. @mrschristinacruz

**Kate Difonze (she/her):** Kate DiFonzo is a mezzo-soprano with a wide range of repertoire centering largely on 1940s starlet music. She is an eclectic performer with experience ranging from musical theater to classical and even rock bands. Currently, she is a member of the Soundscape Singers Cabaret troupe which performs throughout the tri-state area. Ms. DiFonzo is a graduate of Muhlenberg College where she studied vocal performance and music education. She is currently a vocal music teacher and musical theatre director in Elizabeth, NJ. @soundscapesingerscabaret

**Jose Figueroa (he/him):** Jose Figueroa is delighted to be performing for the first time at Studio Playhouse, with such a talented lineup! Credits include *Smokey Joe's Café* (Ken Track), *Chess* (ensemble), *A Few Good Men* (Santiago), *Once Upon a Mattress* (Sir Studley) and *Standing on Ceremony: Gay Marriage Plays*. Jose is grateful to director, Kevin Ohlweiler, for his encouragement and to Susan Hagen for sharing the stage with him on this special night. Break legs, everyone! @apples4buster

**Rachael Gareau (she/her):** Rachael is in her 11th year teaching K-8 General Vocal Music. She has a Bachelor's of Music in Music Ed from Montclair State University and a Master's of Education in Music Ed from Loyola University Maryland. Rachael has a love for musical theater and is thrilled to have an opportunity to sing again. It's been quite a while since she's performed, even before the pandemic! @rachaelg821

**Vincent Gau (he/him):** Vincent Gau is a transgender lyricist and actor. Hailing from a small town on the east side of Washington State, he moved to New Jersey with hopes he will one day be a good representation of transgender artists. His works include writing *Reflections: The Musical*, and performing on stage in shows like *Mamma Mia!* and *Bring it On!*. You may have seen him in a Columbia Bank commercial in early 2020, but unfortunately Covid put a complete stop to his budding commercial acting career. Vincent sincerely hopes you enjoy the show and these amazing people who are performing. [vincentgau.com](http://vincentgau.com), [reflectionsthemusical.com](http://reflectionsthemusical.com)



## **Singers (cont)**

(In Alphabetical Order)

Caroline Macaluso

Natalie Marone

Cecelia Milnicki

Michael Munley

Molly Neff

Sofia Pastena

Jennifer Roberstson

Matt Rodriguez

Melvin Rodriguez

Lynette Sheard

Paula Shtein

Ethan Smith

Melissa Vogt

Jessica Walch

Dylan Wyka



**Darren Gage (he/him):** Dr. Darren Gage is a composer, conductor, music educator and percussionist. Darren serves as Artistic Director of NJ Arts Collective and runs the New Jersey Summer Theatre Workshop, now in it's 25th season. He has toured nationally and internationally as percussionist for Left-field Productions, where he has performed with countless Broadway artists, including Robert Cuccioli, Stephanie J. Block, Mandy Gonzalez and Audra McDonald. Dr. Gage has taught at Rutgers, Rider, William Paterson and Montclair State universities, and he is the Director of Bands at Glen Ridge High School. He has degrees from Swarthmore College and Rutgers University, where he studied composition with Charles Wuorinen

**Kevin Ohlwheiler (he/him):** Kevin is very excited to be directing his first show at Studio Playhouse. Kevin has been in and worked on several shows at Studio including, *It's Only A Play*, *Into The Woods*, *Superior Donuts*, *Appropriate*, *Assembled Parties* and more. Kevin would like to thank his amazing production team for their hard work and the amazing singers that you will see tonight. Break legs to everyone! [www.kevinohlweiler.com](http://www.kevinohlweiler.com)

**Bob White (he/him):** Bob has played bass in over a dozen Studio Playhouse productions. His favorites being, Full Monte, Trailer Park, and Urinetown. He has produced multiple albums with various bands, most recently with the Honky Cats. Bob's passion project is producing visual music as a generative artist. @lg3bass

**Mike Yesenosky (he/him):** Mike has worked in audio for over 30 years, mixing thousands of concerts across North America and Europe. He has been the FOH sound engineer for Nonesuch recording artists The Magnetic Fields since 1999. After 2 postponements, the next tour starts October 23! In theatre, Mike has worked on over 150 productions as a sound designer/board op, director, musical director, and/or musician. He's a founding staff member of NJ Summer Theatre Workshop, a youth program in residence here at Studio. When not traveling, Mike teaches piano lessons, plays the organ at a church, and takes a million pictures. @OMGitsMRY @njsummertheatre

**Abi Zellner (she/her):** Abi has newly become part of the technical crew family most recently being the lighting and production assistant for a production of *Into The Woods*. After performing in shows for many years and even with her ever growing love for being a musical theater performer, she could not be more excited to be behind the scenes. @abizellner

**Anastasia Arvanites (she/her):** Anastasia is thrilled to be making her Studio Playhouse debut. Previous credits include soloist/featured dancer in *EDGES*, *The Jogger/The Nightmare in 4 A.M!*, and soloist/ensemble in *Magic to Do: A Musical Review* at the former Writers Theatre of NJ. Anastasia is a graduate of Ithaca College, where she was an ensemble member of, and featured dancer in, Routine Disturbances Show Choir. Her offstage credits include dramaturg for *Little Shop of Horrors* at Bool's Flower Shop, and *The Royale*, *Grounded*, and *Tribes* with the Kitchen Theatre Company, both in Ithaca, NY. [anastasianarvanites.com](http://anastasianarvanites.com), @shes.radiant, [shesradiant.blogspot.com](http://shesradiant.blogspot.com)

**Duane Banks (he/him):** Duane Banks is NYC/NJ based Actor, singer, dancer and a BFA Musical Theater Student at Montclair State University! Off Broadway- Two Gentlemen of Verona, Little Princess. Recent Credits- Brigadoon ( Angus McGuffie), Hairspray ( Duane, U/S Seaweed), In The Heights ( Kevin Rosario) , Red The Musical ( Dancing Shadow), Heather ( Ram), Mystery of Edwin Drood ( Crisparkle), Carrie ( Freddy), Wiz Of Oz ( Tin Man), Chicago ( Fred Casley), Guys and Dolls ( Brannigan) . Duane was nominated for a Perry Award for " Outstanding Youth Actor " for his performance as Javert in Gaslamp Players Les Miserables. Duane also serves as the Co-Founder of The Inspired Tomorrow . @duanebanks

**Janine Barboza (she/her):** Janine is grateful to return to Studio after 15 years! Favorite roles include Baker's Wife (*ITW*), Amy (*Company*), Catherine (*Pippin*), Rona (*Spelling Bee*). Over 150 productions to her credit in various capacities; experience in several choral and a cappella groups, and short-form improv. Janine has spent nearly 20 years in Cedar Grove Schools: Math Teacher and K-12 Supervisor, Theatre Program (Assistant Director, Hair/Make-up, Vocal/Acting Coach), currently the Supervisor of Elementary Education. Janine's most significant role is "Mommy" to Ella and Mia, and hopes that music and theatre will continue to enrich their lives

**Annie Challice (she/her):** Annie Challice is a senior acting major at Rider University. Annie has previously performed as Velma Kelly in "Chicago" at Studio Playhouse with the New Jersey Summer Theatre Workshop and is so excited to be back up on this stage. Annie also performed in shows such as "Hair" and "The Wolves" at Rider where she also wrote and directed her own Halloween cabaret put on by The Rider Student Theatre Company. Annie is excited to be performing once again and wishes a great show to her fellow performers! @anniechallice