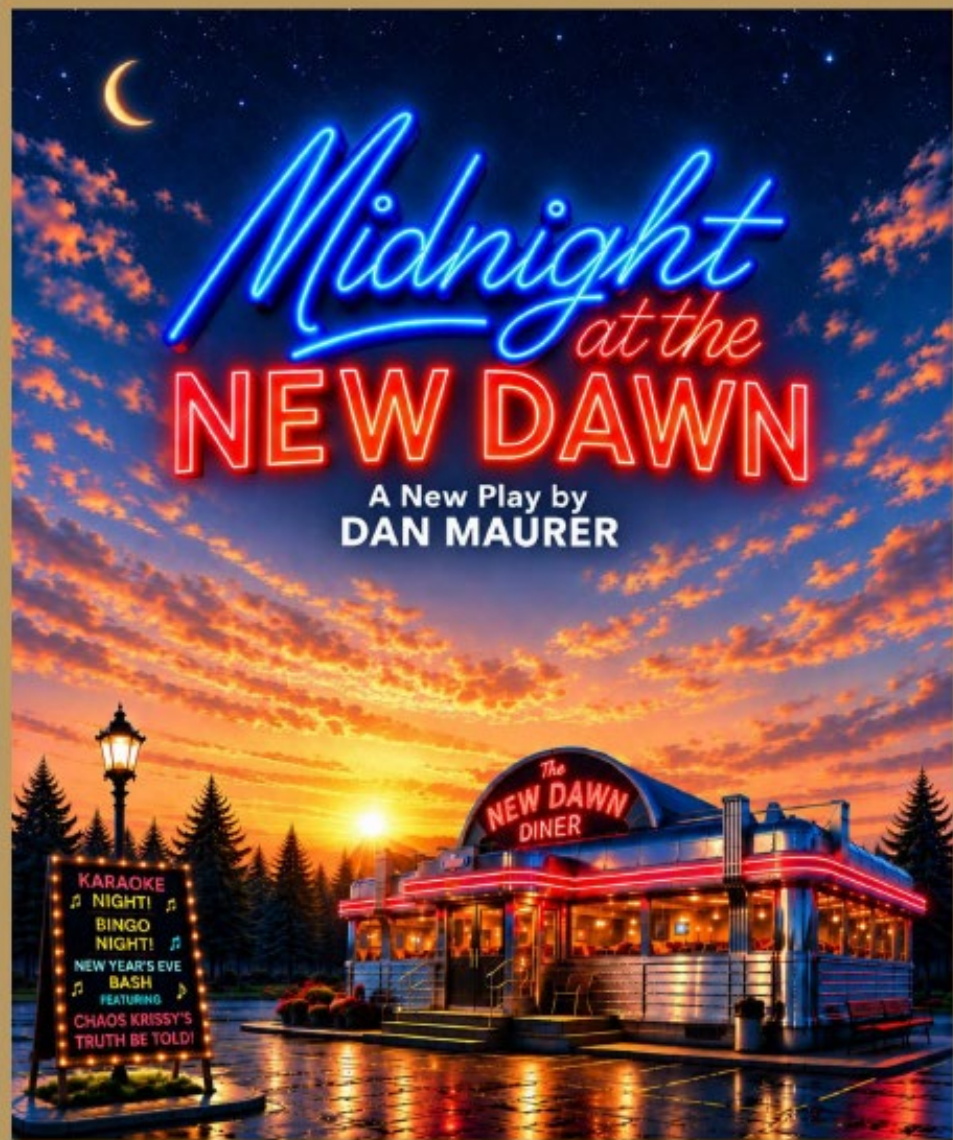


KELSEY THEATRE

at Mercer

Midnight *at the* NEW DAWN

A New Play by
DAN MAURER



Maurer Productions OnStage, Maurer TheaterWorks,
and Kelsey Theatre present the world premiere of

Midnight *at the* **NEW DAWN**

A New Play by
Dan Maurer

Featuring
"Truth Be Told"

An original song by Laurie Gougher
based on the characters and story from
Midnight at the New Dawn by Dan Maurer

Performance Venue

Kelsey Theatre
Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Road, West Windsor, NJ 08550



John Maurer, Dan Maurer
Diana Gilman Maurer
Producers

Dan Maurer
Playwright
& Director

John Maurer
Scenic Design
& Properties

Laurie Gougher
Music Direction &
Song Choreography

Jeff Cantor
Stage Manager
& Master Carpenter

Judi Parrish
Lighting Design
& Sound Effects

Anthony Wurtz
Costume
Design

Eric Collins
Sound Design

Diana Gilman Maurer
Properties & Set Dressing

CAST

(In order of appearance)

JESSICA BRAYNOR.....	Krissy
JUSTIN MANCINI	Brad
TINA MICHEL	Sasha
TONIA DEL PRIORE	Julie
AINSLEY HARDT	Polly
LAURIE HARDY	Maude / Hildie
BRIAN WURTZ	Grumble
AVA MATTSOON	Claire
MARK VIOLI	Louis
BOB ABRAHAMSON	Walt
NIGEL ROGERS	Owen
CHRIS GUEAR	Ted
J.R. HAZELTON	Miles
ELIZABETH RZASA	Lucy
LAUREN LAPONTE	Nicole
JOE ZEDENY	Jake
JOEY VIOLI	Lyle
EMMA J. ALLISON	Emma
EMRE CELIK	Toby

PRODUCTION TEAM

Set Construction.....	John Maurer, Jeff Cantor, Dan Maurer
Scenic Artist	Jenna "Jay" Moschella
Photography and Video Production.....	John Maurer
Marketing	Dan Maurer
Audition Assistance	Jane Coult
Assistant Stage Manager.....	Dekota Homer
Recorded Voice of First A.D. in Studio Flashback.....	Jeff Cantor
Food Wrangler.....	Diana Gilman Maurer
Restaurant Service Props	Fabiola Bien-Aime
Backstage Running Crew.....	Zhi Sharpe, Angela Chapman & Maria Carona Fontanive

ABOUT THE USE OF AI: Please note that no AI was used to write the story, characters, dialogue, song lyrics, or music you will experience in today's performance.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

DAN MAURER (Playwright, Director, Producer) is also a screenwriter, author, and member of the Dramatists Guild. In 2026 he founded Maurer TheaterWorks to develop original stage productions. Before that, he spent ten years with Maurer Productions OnStage at Kelsey Theatre, co-producing more than 20 plays and musicals and directing acclaimed productions of *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Hollywood Arms*, and *Elton John & Tim Rice's AIDA*. That work earned him several NJACT Perry Awards for directing, producing, and sound design, and in 2015 he was inducted into the NJACT Hall of Fame. His screenplays have been an Austin Film Festival finalist, a Page International Screenwriting Awards semi-finalist, and the winner of the WeScreenplay Feature Screenwriting Lab. His thriller *Snow Day* is available on Amazon. He is currently writing his next full-length play, and his short plays are available at newplayexchange.org. Dan dedicates this production to his recently deceased mother, Margaret Maurer.

ABOUT THE PRODUCERS

MAURER PRODUCTIONS ONSTAGE (MPO) was founded in 2004 by John and Diana Maurer to support the community through creative opportunities for actors, artists, and theater craftsmen. Later that year, Dan Maurer joined as co-producer, marketer, and eventually director. Their first collaboration — MPO's inaugural production for adult audiences, *The Foreigner* — opened in January 2005 at Kelsey Theatre.

Together, they assembled a company board featuring some of New Jersey's top community theater talent. Known for raising the bar on production values, the MPO team went on to stage some of Kelsey Theatre's most popular shows during that period, including *Monty Python's Spamalot*, *Avenue Q*, *Shrek the Musical*, *Singin' in the Rain*, and *Elton John & Tim Rice's AIDA*.

In 2014, Dan stepped away from MPO to focus on his writing. He published fiction and earned recognition for his screenwriting before turning to playwriting. After his short plays received readings around the state, he launched **Maurer TheaterWorks** in 2026 to produce original material. Now, more than a decade later, Maurer Productions OnStage and Maurer TheaterWorks unite — together with Kelsey Theatre — for this special co-production: *Midnight at the New Dawn*, an original ensemble comedy written and directed by Dan Maurer.

THE PLAYWRIGHT GIVES HIS THANKS to organizations that have supported his work in the past — Kelsey Theatre (West Windsor, NJ), Pioneer Productions (Morristown, NJ), Open Door Arts (Hillsborough, NJ), Dragonfly Multicultural Arts Center (Plainfield, NJ).

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

JESSICA BRAYNOR (Krissy) is thrilled to be a part of this production! She was last seen at Kelsey Theatre at Fruma Sarah in *Fiddler on the Roof*. Favorite past roles include Ruth in *Blithe Spirit*, Laura in *The Glass Menagerie*, Catherine in *Pippin*, Rosie in *Bye Bye Birdie*, and Rosalind in *As You Like It*. When not on stage, she is busy performing as Principal in the Flemington-Raritan School District and as Mom to her two amazing daughters. She would like to thank her family for their tremendous support!

JUSTIN MANCINI (Brad) is proud to be a part of this talented and gracious cast and crew. His recent stage credits include Duke Solinus in *The Comedy of Errors*, Thomas Putnam in *The Crucible*, Dick Scorsese in *Drop Dead*, Conrade in *Much Ado About Nothing*, and Andrew Aguecheek /Sebastian in *Twelfth Night*. Other favorite credits include Fayette/Mystery Man in *Waiting for Lefty*, Tom Snout in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Publius Casca (et al) in *Julius Caesar*, and Sherlock Holmes in *Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery*. When not on stage, he works as an editor.

TINA MICHEL (Sasha) is thrilled to return to the stage in *Midnight at the New Dawn* after a long intermission. She has enjoyed getting to know her character while bringing her to life and is grateful to the director, cast, and crew for such a wonderful welcome to the Kelsey Theatre. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support and her husband, Grant, for encouraging her to step back into the spotlight.

TONIA DEL PRIORE (Julie) is tickled pink to be returning to the Kelsey Theater stage with Maurer Productions OnStage and Maurer TheaterWorks. Past credits include *The 39 Steps* (Maurer Productions OnStage), *Blithe Spirit* (Theater To Go), *Bat Boy: The Musical* (College Avenue Players), and *Debbie Does Dallas: The Musical* (College Avenue Players). For nearly a decade, she honed her craft as a comedy writer and performer in NYC, performing extensively in sketch and improv shows at theaters including UCB, the People's Improv Theater, and the Annoyance Theater. She would like to thank her family for their endless support.

AINSLEY HARDT (Polly) is making her debut with Maurer Productions. She is a senior at The Pennington School in Pennington, NJ, where she recently portrayed Titania and Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Prior credits also include *Something Rotten* (Portia), *Metamorphoses* (Hermes, Nursemaid, and Singer), and an abridged production of *Head Over Heels* (Philoclea). Ainsley thanks her family, friends, and vocal coach Stephanie Myre for always being her biggest supporters. She is also grateful to the team at Maurer Productions for giving her the opportunity to engage with theater in a whole new way.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

LAURIE HARDY (Maude / Hildie) has enjoyed acting in local theaters for, let's just say, since well before she could collect Social Security. She alternated theatrical work; teaching creative drama and performing in traveling children's theater troupes, with more mundane jobs until retiring. Some past roles include *Scenery* (Marion Crane), *Master Class* (Maria Callas), *Steel Magnolias* (M'Lynn), *Noises Off!* (Dotty Otley), *Threepenny Opera* (Mrs. Peachum), *On Golden Pond* (Ethel Thayer), *Calendar Girls* (Ruth). Recently Laurie played Denise Miller in the two-woman show *Yes, Virginia* at Playhouse 22. Laurie spends time volunteering, procrastinating, thinking about gardening, and, of course, studying lines. I'll always have a table ready for you, my loves.

BRIAN WURTZ (Grumble) is very excited to be working with MPO on this original play, he is not a stranger to the Kelsey stage. You might have seen him in past productions of *Young Frankenstein the Musical* (MPO) or *Fiddler On The Roof*, and *Seussical* with Theater To Go. He would like to thank the cast and crew of *Midnight at the New Dawn* and Dan Maurer for their welcoming him to this production and hope it brings a lot of laughter to all watching.

AVA MATTSO (Claire) is excited and grateful to be part of the debut production of this show, which also marks her debut at Kelsey Theatre! A recent graduate of Muhlenberg College with a BA in Theatre, her most notable role was Max Bennett in *The Play That Goes Wrong*. She is thrilled to continue exploring her passion for performance and hopes you enjoy the show!

MARK VIOLI (Louis) is a Kelsey veteran of 25+ years, including MPO's first production, *The Foreigner* in 2005. Last seen as Jack Manningham in *Gaslight*, favorite roles include Lt. Daniel Kaffee in *A Few Good Men* (MPO), Dave Moss in *Glengarry Glen Ross*, Billy Bibbit in *...Cuckoo's Nest*, Starcat in *Psycho Beach Party*, Dr. Seward in *Dracula*, and Harry the Horse in *Guys & Dolls*. Mark is author of the acclaimed dramas *Roebling: The Story of the Brooklyn Bridge* and *Riding the Comet*. He belongs to SAG-AFTRA and Dramatists Guild of America. Thanks to Dan and our wonderful cast & crew. All my love to JAJ.

BOB ABRAHAMSON (Walt) is excited to join this phenomenal ensemble in bringing *Midnight at the New Dawn* to life. Thanks to Dan and Jeff for the opportunity and shepherding us through this adventure. It's been fun. As always, love to Jen, Solomon, and Claire

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

NIGEL ROGERS (Owen) is excited to be back on the Kelsey stage after a 15-year absence and to be appearing for the first time with Maurer Productions in this brand-new original play. Earlier this year he was performing with Langhorne Players as James in their production of *On the Market* and before that as Max Prince in *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* also at Langhorne. He has also appeared in productions at Playhouse 22, ActorsNet and PlayMasters since 2023. Nigel would like to express his sincere gratitude to Dan Maurer and the whole MPO team for this wonderful opportunity.

CHRIS GUEAR (Ted) is excited to appear in *Midnight at New Dawn*. This is his fourth performance at Kelsey Theater, where he most recently played Clement Moore in *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, and he was featured as Puss 'n Boots, *Magic Mirror* & Vinnie the Woodsman in *The Further Adventures of Nick Tickle*. In *The Emperor's New Clothes*, he starred as the Emperor. When not on stage, Chris works as an Investigator for the State of New Jersey's Election Law Enforcement Commission and enjoys cheering on his favorite Philadelphia sports teams.

J.R. HAZELTON (Miles) is a part-time college professor and a full-time dad, who also moonlights as an amateur actor, writer, poet, and YouTuber. *Midnight* is his second performance at the Kelsey Theatre; he was also featured in the Yardley Players' production of *Drop Dead!* last October.

ELIZABETH RZASA (Lucy) is thrilled to be back on the Kelsey stage after 8 years! Favorite roles have been the title roles in *Mary Poppins*, *Peter Pan*, Anna (*The King & I*), Maria (*The Sound of Music*), Marian (*The Music Man*), The Baker's Wife and Cinderella (*Into the Woods*), Mabel (*The Pirates of Penzance*), Narrator (*Joseph...*), Sarah (*Guys & Dolls*), Louisa (*The Fantasticks*), Lily (*The Secret Garden*), Violet (*9 to 5*), Margot (*Bright Star*), Mollie (*The Mousetrap*), Hermia (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*). She is pursuing her Ed.D. at Gwynedd Mercy University and hopes to graduate in May. Love to friends and family!

LAUREN APONTE (Nicole) is thrilled to be part of *Midnight at The New Dawn*. She was most recently seen onstage as Julia in *Seasonal Allergies*. Her work also includes film and commercial productions, including a lead role in the indie horror feature *Legado*. Lauren trains in scene study, improvisation, and clowning at McCarter Theatre in Princeton. Offstage, she enjoys spending time with her husband, daughter, and two dogs. She is grateful to the director and creative team for this experience and to her family for their endless support.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

JOE ZEDENY (Jake), a veteran of over 35 years in NJ and regional theater, is pleased to return to MPO in this brand-new original comedy written by Dan Maurer. Over the years, he has appeared their productions of *Man of La Mancha* (Governor/Innkeeper), *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Gangster #1), *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Val), and *A Few Good Men* (Lt. Weinberg). He last appeared on the Kelsey Theatre stage in last Fall's musical production with the MTM Players as Emile DeBecque in *South Pacific*. Other recent credits include: *The Unexpected Guest* (Michael Starkwedder), *22 a Day* (Betz), *Lend Me a Tenor* (Tito Mirelli), and *The Italian American Reconciliation* (Aldo Scalicki), as well as such favorites like: *Guys and Dolls* (Sky Masterson), *Oklahoma* (Curly), *The Addams Family* (Gomez), *Mamma Mia* (Bill Austin), and *Long Days' Journey Into Night* (Jaime Tyrone). Special thanks to Dan and Jeff for the opportunity to work with this amazing cast and crew.

JOEY VIOLI (Lyle) is an honor student at Nottingham HS, where he's worked backstage on *Little Shop of Horrors*. His Kelsey debut was as Fritz in MTM Players' *Parfumerie* – a role that earned him an NJACT Perry Award Nomination as Best Male Youth Performer. He was last seen at Kelsey as a British police officer in Theater To Go's *Gaslight* and will be performing in their production of *1776* next month. Joey is excited to be playing this fun role in the premiere production of *Midnight at the New Dawn* and happy to be performing alongside his dad once again.

EMMA J. ALLISON (Emma) is a junior attending Somerset Vocational and Technical High School in the Honors Theater Arts Program, part time with Franklin High School. This is Emma's first show at Kelsey Theater and is thrilled to be a part in bringing this new show to life! You may have seen her in *Clue High School edition* as Yvette (SCVTHS), *A Christmas Carol* as Fan & Fred's Wife (BAACP), or in a version of *SNL* where she was a script writer and a part of the main cast (FHS). Thank you to the cast and crew for this wonderful experience!

EMRE CELIK (Toby), a senior at West Windsor-Plainsboro High School South, is having a blast as Toby in this new play. Previously, he has performed at Kelsey Theater in Yardley Players' productions of *Meet Me in St. Louis*, and *The Little Mermaid*. He thanks Dan and Jeff for giving him the opportunity to do what he loves most with this talented and inspirational cast. He also thanks you, the audience, for coming out to watch and support the show. He hopes you enjoy it as much as he has!

WHO'S ON THE CREATIVE TEAM

JOHN MAURER (Producer, Scenic Design) founded MPO with his wife, Diana, and his brother, Dan, in 2004. John has directed over 20 plays and musicals, including *Around the World in 80 Days* (Perry Award for Outstanding Production of a Play) *City of Angels*, *Something Rotten*, *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*, and *Noises Off*, among others. He is an accomplished set designer, costume designer, make-up artist, and prop master. He holds 25 of the company's 67 NJACT Perry Award nominations, having won seven times. John started in theater at the age of 10 and ever since then has been an actor, magician, clown, juggler, balloon sculptor, stilt-walker, and mime and has specialized in comedy and improvisational theater.

DIANA GILMAN MAURER (Producer, Properties, Set Dressing) is a producer, director, and actress. She co-founded Maurer Productions OnStage together with her husband, John, and brother-in-law, Dan. MPO has won numerous Perry Awards including Production of a Musical (*AIDA*), Outstanding Costumes (*AIDA*), Production of a Play (*Driving Miss Daisy* & *Around the World in 80 Days*). Diana was nominated for a Kelsey Award for directing *A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody* & *Jake's Women* and received the award for Direction of a Play for *Sleuth*. Diana's stage credits include *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Radio Show Calendar Girls*, and *Sordid Lives*. Diana dedicates this performance to her mother-in-law, Margaret Maurer.

LAURIE GOUGHER (Music Director) has really enjoyed the opportunity to work on this creative, engaging project. She is a founding member of Thank You 5 Productions and a proud MPO Board member. Laurie is active in the NJ theatre community as a director (*The Prom*, *Kinky Boots*, *School of Rock*, *Matilda* & *Catch Me if You Can*) music director (*Young Frankenstein*, *School of Rock* - Perry Award Nominee, *Something Rotten* and *Avenue Q* -Perry Award Nominee) and performer (*Company*, *Big Fish*, *Sunday in the Park with George* and *Ragtime*). Her previous song writing credits include the school song at the elementary school where she teaches. She would like to thank Dan for taking a risk and allowing her to compose a full song from scratch and the cast for having a sense of humor and trying something new. No AI was used in the creation of the song "Truth Be Told".

JUDI PARRISH (Lighting Design & Sound Effects) has 55 years in community theatre. Judi has credits as a director, musical director, producer, stage manager, set designer, lighting designer, sound designer, and actress. Judi has 2 NJACT Perry awards with MPO: one for acting (*The Drowsy Chaperone*), and one for scenic design (*NOISES OFF!*). Other lighting credits for MPO include *The 39 Steps*, *Young Frankenstein*, *Death Trap*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Matilda*, *A Gentleman's Guide*, *Something Rotten*, *Fiddler On the Roof*, *City of Angels*, and *Around the World in 80 Days*. Judi has also directed *Bright Star* and *The Glass Menagerie* for MPO.

WHO'S ON THE CREATIVE TEAM

JEFF CANTOR (Stage Manager, Master Carpenter) was asked to join the Board of Directors of Maurer Productions OnStage as Master Carpenter as early as 2006. Since that time, he has had the privilege to interpret John Maurer's award-winning designs and lead the set building efforts for every MPO since, including *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Singin' In The Rain*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Avenue Q*, and *Noises Off*. In addition, Jeff has served as Master Carpenter for other companies at Kelsey and previously held the role of stage manager for MPO's productions of *A Few Good Men*, and *AIDA*.

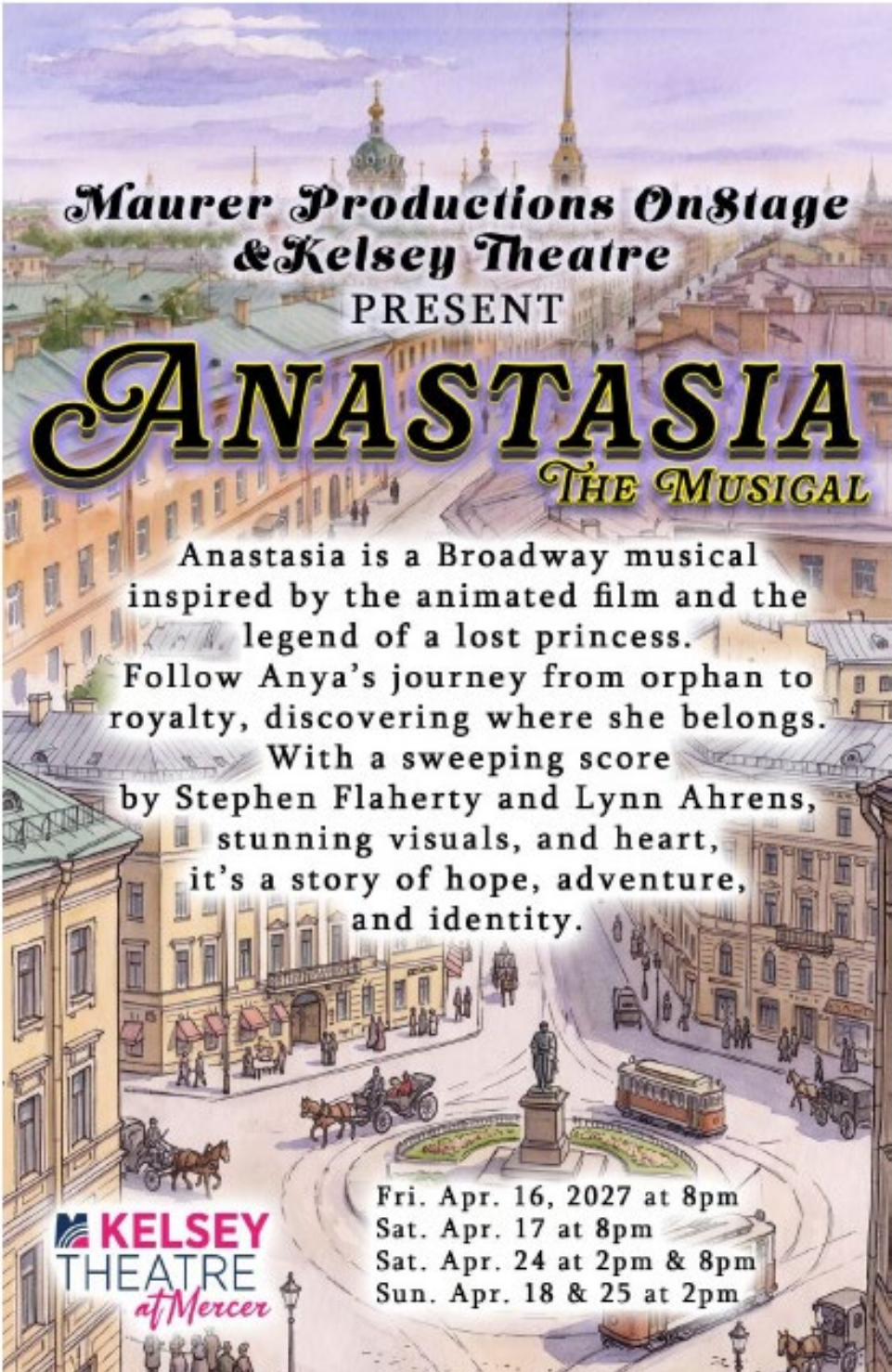
ANTHONY WURTZ (Costume Design) has been costuming for 12+ years in PA and NJ and has worked on many community and semi-professional productions at Kelsey Theatre, Barnstormers, Clocks and Daggers, along with High Schools and Opera. He has been nominated at the Perry Awards for his past productions of *Boy from Oz*, *Around the World in 80 Day*, and *Beauty and the Beast* for which he won a Kelsey Award for Best Costumes. He would like to thank Dan for the chance to work on an original work, to the fellow cast of the diner "I hope you serve it piping hot". He would like to thank his better half Brian and his family and friends for all their love and support.

ERIC COLLINS (Sound Design) is a sound designer and engineer with over 10 years of experience running tech for concerts, plays, musicals, and corporate/school events. He's worked on shows like *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* and *Blithe Spirit*, both of which were nominated by NJACT for Outstanding Sound Design, and musicals like *It's Never Too Late*, the musical written by the late Lou DiPietro that premiered on the Kelsey stage in February 2026, and *South Pacific*. Eric has enjoyed his time at Kelsey for this past decade, but he sadly bids the Kelsey family farewell as his next step in life is taking him to Detroit, where he hopes to continue the tradition of quality theater he learned while here.

ABOUT KELSEY THEATRE

KELSEY THEATRE is an award-winning, semi-professional performing arts center on the West Windsor, NJ campus of Mercer County Community College. The 393-seat venue has brought live performance to central New Jersey for more than five decades, at prices that keep the arts within reach.

The season includes musicals, plays, comedies, dramas, children's theater, dance and concerts. That range comes from the theatre's unique model: 14 independent resident groups share its stage. They include semi-professional companies such as Maurer Productions OnStage, Shakespeare '70, the Yardley Players and the in-house Kelsey Players. The MCCC Academic Theater & Dance Company, the Mercer Dance Ensemble and the Mercer County Symphonic Band also perform there. (www.kelseytheatre.org)



**Maurer Productions OnStage
& Kelsey Theatre**

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Anastasia is a Broadway musical inspired by the animated film and the legend of a lost princess.

Follow Anya's journey from orphan to royalty, discovering where she belongs.

With a sweeping score by Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens, stunning visuals, and heart, it's a story of hope, adventure, and identity.

 **KELSEY**
THEATRE
at Mercer

Fri. Apr. 16, 2027 at 8pm
Sat. Apr. 17 at 8pm
Sat. Apr. 24 at 2pm & 8pm
Sun. Apr. 18 & 25 at 2pm

WELCOME TO KELSEY THEATRE



1. Please note the nearest EXIT in case of emergency
2. NO photography or videotaping unless prior permission is obtained from theatre manager
3. Please turn off all Cell Phones and other Electronic Devices
4. NO food or drinks (except water) are allowed inside the theatre
5. NO smoking or vaping allowed on campus (except in your own vehicle)

KELSEY THEATRE STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR M. Kitty Getlik
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIALIST Amy Bessellieu
TECHNICAL THEATRE COORDINATOR Nick Mastalesz
BOX OFFICE MANAGER Diana Maurer
BOX OFFICE CLERK Mark Anthony Baldwin
SHOP SUPERVISOR Michael Almstedt
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Shawn Simmons
HOUSE MANAGER Sheron Williams
TOMATO PATCH PROGRAM DIRECTOR Melissa Jackson
TOMATO PATCH PROGRAM COORDINATOR Jane Coult

ON-CALL STAFF

Len Calabrese, Angela Chapman, Tim Metzger, Zoey Montplaisir,
Noah Schwartz, Jackson Siegel, Owen Whitman



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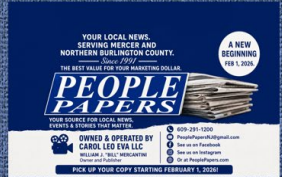
THANK YOU to our 2026-2027 Kelsey Theatre Sponsors

SPECIAL THANK YOU TO

JEFF CANTOR & MICHELLE GLOVER
STANTON de RIEL & ANNETTE SHELTON
FRANK FOULKES
BETH ANNE KAFASIS
CATHLEEN & PETER SAPIO
KENNETH STERN



This program is made possible, in part, by the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the Mercer County Board of Commissioners and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.



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RICHARD STEPHAN



**Kelsey Theatre's
2026-2027
Production Partners**



BEFORE YOU SETTLE THE CHECK

How was everything?

Tell us what you thought of *Midnight at the New Dawn*.
It's a brand-new play, and your feedback helps shape
what comes next.

GUEST CHECK

TABLE: YOU



SCAN TO TAKE OUR SURVEY

surveymonkey.com/r/ZHQK8K7

Thanks for dining with us!

MAURER PRODUCTIONS ONSTAGE • MAURER THEATERWORKS
KELSEY THEATRE