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Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike

by christopher durang

WINNER
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for Best Play

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-NYTimes

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Fri 8:00pm

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Director
MYRA F. KAE LIN

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South Valley Civic Theatre

presents

**Vanya and
Sonia and Masha
and Spike**

by christopher durang

**is presented by special arrangement with
Dramatists Play Service, Inc., New York**

By CHRISTOPHER DURANG

Originally produced on Broadway by:

Joey Parnes, Larry Hirschhorn, Joan Raffe/Jhett Tolentino, Martin Platt & David Elliot,
Pat Flicker Addiss, Catherine Adler, John O'Boyle, Joshua Goodman,
Jamie deRoy/Richard Winkler, Cricket Hooper, Jiranek/Michael Palitz,
Mark S. Golub & David S. Golub, Radio Mouse Entertainment,
Shawdowncatcher Entertainment, Mary Cossette/Barbara Manocherian,
Megan Savage/Meredith Lynsey Schade, Hugh Hysell/Richard Jordan,
Cheryl Wiesenfeld/Ron Simons, S.D. Wagner, John Johnson
in association with McCarter Theatre Center and Lincoln Center Theater

Originally commissioned and produced by McCarter Theatre Center, Princeton, N.J.

Emily Mann, Artistic Director; Timothy J. Shields, Managing Director;
Mara Isaacs, Producing Director;

and produced by Lincoln Center Theater, New York City
under the direction of André Bishop and Bernard Gersten in 2012.

Sound design and original music by Mark Bennett

"Here Comes the Sun"

Written by George Harrison

Published by Harrisongs, Ltd. (ASCAP)

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A message from SVCT's President



For this year's adult comedy, we are delighted to offer you *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, a play that works at many levels--a fun playful comedy which also touches a number of serious and interesting aspects of life. Playwright Christopher Durang is known for his absurd comedies, plays that deal humorously with serious issues such as mental illness, homosexuality, religion, and the madness of the theatre business. This play is no different.

The title, "*Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*" might lead you to think this has something to do with characters from a Chekhov play. But no. According to Durang, "My play is not a Chekhov parody ... I take Chekhov scenes and characters and put them into a blender." The characters were simply named after Chekhov characters as their deceased parents were "college professors who dabbled in community theater." While the characters and the situation are hilarious, the play's extra depth becomes apparent as the viewer learns each character's motivations and desires. Vanya and Sonia have reached an age when life's path has narrowed uncomfortably and, after dealing with the dementia and passing of their parents, their challenge is to pause to reflect on whether there is another, more rewarding course to their lives. Masha, an aging actress, has experienced firsthand how few leading roles are written for women over 40 and she is also examining her options. And Spike ... well, Spike is in a world of his own, in a different phase of his potential career and life.

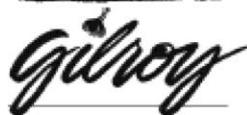
The play started as a one-act play that premiered in 2012, moved to Broadway to a sold out run, received six Tony Award nominations including Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Featured Actor, Best Featured Actress, Best Director of a Play, and took home the Tony for Best Play. Ben Brantley of *The New York Times* described the play as a "sunny new play about gloomy people."

SVCT's 48th season will close with the delicious adventure *Willy Wonka*, a treat for the whole family opening June 23. We have just announced our 49th season, which will begin with the legendary Stephen Sondheim musical *Follies* in September. For details of our 49th season or to purchase season tickets, go to our website www.SVCT.org.

Enjoy the show and please consider joining our theatrical family for opportunities to be on stage or back stage, and to become members. Help us continue our tradition of quality theater.

Peter Mandel - President, South Valley Civic Theatre

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A Note from the Director



In the summer of 2013, I had the very good fortune to see *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* performed on Broadway, starring David Hyde Pierce, Kristine Nielsen, Julie White, and Billy Magnussen. Always a fan of Christopher Durang, a quirky and unconventional playwright, I was not disappointed. So when I found out that SVCT had planned it for their 2016-2017 season, I jumped at the opportunity to direct.

On the surface, this play may seem like mimicry of some of the great works by Anton Chekhov. After all, Christopher Durang (the playwright) was introduced to Chekhov as a young teen, and it would seem only natural that “imitation is the sincerest form of flattery”. Upon his own admittance, the characters in Durang’s play do somewhat reflect those in three of Chekhov’s plays, *The Seagull*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *Three Sisters*, but loosely. According to Durang, “My play is not a Chekhov parody... I take Chekhov scenes and characters and put them into a blender.” With closer examination, it is easy to see that the themes reflected, while seemingly absurd, often ring true in our own lives: a mashed up family struggling to find common ground with each other. This is my family. This is your family. This is everyone.

You may be familiar with Chekhov... and you may not. But that’s okay. This play will still make you laugh. And it will probably make you cringe a little. A tear or two might make its way to the corner of your eye. Ultimately, though, I believe you will see hope through the regret, happiness through the tears, and a ray of sunshine behind the clouds. Thank you for joining us tonight to experience it all.

Myra F. Kaelin
Director

Dramaturg Notes

Anton Chekhov said that the role of the writer is to ask questions, not answer them. When Christopher Durang realized that he was the same age as Chekhov's characters when they began looking back at their lives with regret, he asked "what if?" Christopher Durang lives in Bucks County, PA with his partner, John Augustine, in a stone farmhouse overlooking a pond where a blue heron comes to dine. He asked himself "what if I lived with my adopted sister instead of my partner and we had taken care of our elderly parents and never left home? What if we had a glamorous movie star sister who sent money from wherever she was in the world and we felt left behind? What if a cleaning woman named Cassandra came in and made prophesies of doom, like "beware of Hootie Pie?" (He didn't know if Hootie Pie was a person or a thing but he liked the name.) Durang answered those questions by sprinkling a healthy dose of Chekhov (*Uncle Vanya*, *Three Sisters*, *The Seagull* and *The Cherry Orchard*), borrowing from Greek mythology and drawing on his personal life to give us the delightful *Vanya*, *Sonia*, *Masha* and *Spike*.

Durang says that Vanya is who he might have become if he hadn't become a playwright. He created Sonia and Masha for his long time friends, Kristine Nielson and Sigourney Weaver. Sonia's Maggie Smith impersonation comes from Kristine who frequently laments failing an audition by saying "if only I'd done it as Maggie Smith." Weaver is the antithesis of Masha's five failed marriages and over inflated belief in her own importance. (although the gentle dig at her *Sexy Killer* movie franchise takes a shot at Weaver's *Alien* movies.) Nina parallels her alter ego in *The Seagull*, as the starry eyed, aspiring actress who idolizes Masha. Masha is as flattered by Nina's hero worship of her as she is threatened by her youth and innocence. Cassandra is the family's cleaning woman who comes in, warns them of coming disaster using the language in Greek dramas and ends the rant with something like "lunch in twenty." Rounding out the cast is Masha's boy toy, Spike, the over sexed, overly ego inflated young hunk who likes to strip off his clothes as much as he likes the sound of his own voice.

Durang takes us on a wild weekend of revelations, confessions, rants and resolutions in a way that allows us to see ourselves in the characters and laugh along with them. Chekhov's plays ended in tragedy or quiet desperation as lives remain unchanged however Durang gives his characters a sunnier ending. They have lived in a long, dark winter of discontent and despair but are coming into the spring of renewal and hope. Yes, it is the writers job to ask questions but if they answer them like Durang by creating characters who speak truths about the human condition and make us laugh along the way, then it is a job well done.

Robin Harris

Dramaturg

Cast

| | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Vanya..... | Scott Lynch |
| Sonia..... | Adrienne Wilkinson |
| Cassandra..... | Roberta Vinkhuyzen |
| Masha..... | Denee Lewis |
| Spike..... | Tyler Savin |
| Nina..... | Krista Warner |

Characters - Who's Who

VANYA - 50's, living in Bucks County. Resigned to his life, more or less, at least compared to Sonia.

SONIA - his adopted sister, early 50s, living with him in Bucks County, Discontent, upset, regretful.

MASHA - his sister, 50s, glamorous and successful actress who goes gallivanting around the world.

SPIKE - an aspiring actor, 29 or younger, Masha's new companion. Sexy, self-absorbed, but otherwise outgoing and friendly.

NINA - lovely, sincere would-be actress, early 20s, visiting her aunt and uncle next door. Star struck, earnest and energetic.

CASSANDRA - cleaning lady and soothsayer

Place and Time

A lovely farmhouse in Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Set in the present.

Production Staff

Producer:

Mary Dokter

Director:

Myra F. Kaelin

Assistant Director:

Nicole Tung

Costume Designer:

Elizabeth Calisi

Set Designer:

Scott Lynch

Scenic Designers:

Bill Tindall

Jason Leong

Lighting Designer:

Colleen Blanchard

Lighting Operators

Luna Bodeda

Joyce Bedard

Properties Mistress:

Lori Foster

Stage Manager:

Chris Foster

Sound Engineer:

Bill Haskell

Sound Operator:

Bridget Harnett

Program Designer:

Lisa Stebbins

Graphic Designer:

Jason Leong

Cast Photographer:

Chris Foster

Promo Photographer:

Rebecca Little

House Manager:

Megan Griffin

Concession Managers

Trudy Parks

Lobby Designer:

Christine McElroy

Glynis Crabb

Audition Crew:

Beth Dewey

Sandra Aranda

Dramaturg:

Robin Harris

Master Carpenters:

Mark Starritt

Timer Starritt

Richard Marcotte

Meet our Cast



Scott Lynch - Vanya and Set Designer

Scott returns to SVCT's stage as Vanya, a character close to his heart. He likes to think this role is a natural part for him to play and not that he was type cast! Previous appearances include "Reverend Brown" in *Inherit the Wind*, "Kolenkov" in *You Can't Take it With You* and most recently, "Yvan" in *Limelight's* production of *Art*. Scott has also served SVCT as a producer, having special pride in *Tru*, *The Producers*, *Oliver* and *Out of Order*. He has also been a member of the SVCT Board of Directors, serving as VP of Publicity and Treasurer. Scott thanks his family and coworkers for their tolerance of his passion for theater and would like to dedicate his performance to his sister, Kimberly, who is truly "the star" in the family.



Adrienne Wilkinson - Sonia

Adrienne Wilkinson is thrilled to be returning to SVCT. She was last seen at SVCT as Claire in *Proof* (closing weekend). A resident of Morgan Hill, she has performed throughout the Bay Area. Most recently she portrayed Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with *Odyssey Theatre Company*. Her favorite role to date was Annie in *San Jose Repertory Theatre's Over the Tavern*. She has also performed with *San Jose Stage Company*, *Tabard Theatre*, *Renegade Theatre Experiment*, and *Santa Clara University* (where she received her BA in theater). She completed graduate studies at *NYU* in educational theater where she had an opportunity to work with *The Globe Theatre, London* and *The Abbey Theatre, Dublin*. In addition to performing, she has also directed children's musicals for the *City of Gilroy*. For the past two years she has also portrayed the 9-foot tall Mother Ginger in *South Valley Dance Arts' production of The Nutcracker*. By day, Adrienne can be found working as an academic coach for *Gilroy Unified*. She would like to thank the production staff for giving her the awesome opportunity to be part of this hilarious show.



Denee Lewis - Masha

Denee is excited to return to the South Valley Civic Theater. She was last seen on the SVCT stage as Claire in Proof and Doris in Miracle on 34th Street. Her most recent credits include Brooke in Other Desert Cities at Limelight Actors Theater and Meredith in First Night at Pintelto Comedy Theater. Other favorite roles include Ima in The Immigrant at Tabard Theatre Company and Sis in Queen of Bingo at Northside Theatre Company. Denee's film credits include Tessa in the locally produced film The Biggest Game in Town directed by John Nava with 152 WEST Productions. Denee is grateful for the support she receives from her husband and two daughters as she continues with her acting endeavors.



Tyler Savin - Spike

Tyler loves being on the stage and is very excited to be working again with SVCT. He's been doing theatre for 11 years and there is no end in sight for him. Tyler is VERY excited to be working again with the wonderful Krista Warner. He'd like to thank his parents for all their support. His next show he'll be working on is Catch Me If You Can with West Valley Light Opera! Enjoy the show!



Roberta Vinkhuyzen-Rasmussen - Cassandra

Roberta is delighted to be back at SVCT with this very talented group of actors, director, producer and staff. Roberta was previously seen on the SVCT stage in CITY OF ANGELS, DAMN YANKEES & CURTAINS. She also performs at Limelight Actors Theater in Gilroy where you may have seen her in NUNSENSE, THE 39 STEPS, MOMOLOGUES, LOVE, LOSS & WHAT I WORE or STEEL MAGNOLIAS. Roberta is active in the local community theatre and music scene and teaches part time at Oakwood High School. She is the proud mother of Saskia, Pascale & Lukas and the happy wife of Erik, whom she thanks for his loving patience and support.



Krista Warner - Nina

Krista is so pleased to revisit the South Valley Civic Theatre stage! She last performed in SVCT's production of *The Producers* as Ulla and loved every moment of it. Since *The Producers* she has begun working as a preschool teacher, and an art teacher which has proven to be one of the most difficult and rewarding adventures of her life. Over the past year, she has taken time away from theatre to settle into her teaching career but has now returned! She is so honored to have been cast in this hilarious production and is so excited to be working with such an amazing cast, and crew. Enjoy!

Meet our Production Staff



Myra Kaelin - Director

Myra is thrilled to be directing again for South Valley Civic Theatre with Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. No stranger to the stage, she was last seen in SVCT's 2012 production of *The Wizard of Oz* as a "Talking Tree", and currently serves on SVCT's Board of Directors. From directing and producing, to performing, to make-up and hair, to stage management, and everything in between, Myra has been passionate about theatre for over 20 years; she holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre and Dance from Santa Clara University, and has worked with many Bay Area theatre groups, The Tabard Theatre Co., Northside Theatre Company, and Children's Musical Theatre of San Jose being among them. Some of her directing credits include *The Producers*, *City of Angels*, *It's A Wonderful Life*, *The Fantasticks*, *Harvey*, and *God's Favorite*. In a past life, she served as the Director of Theatre Arts at Valley Christian High School, as well as the Performance Program Manager at The Tech Museum of Innovation. While at The Tech, she pioneered a theatre-based educational program that introduced and explained Silicon Valley technologies to audiences of all ages. Currently she works in Development for Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County, and she looks forward to continued involvement in SVCT's 2016-2017 season!



Nicole Tung - Assistant Director

Nicole is thrilled to be working alongside Myra again and assistant directing this brilliant play. She last worked with SVCT choreographing City of Angels. Other credits include choreographing Gentlemen Prefer Blondes for SBMT and The Golden Child for Hillbarn Theater. Onstage, Ms. Tung has had the pleasure of working at regional theaters such as American Musical Theatre San Jose, TheatreWorks, San Jose Rep, and Magic Theatre where she has had the honor of working with Broadway talent and directors/choreographers. Selected credits include Pacific Overtures, Evita, A Chorus Line, South Pacific, Miss Saigon, Cabaret, Flower Drum Song, Candide, King and I, Falsettoland, and Making Tracks. She is also represented by LOOK Talent and recently completed an industrial project for LinkedIn. She dedicates this show to her father, who loved to laugh.



Mary Dokter - Producer

Mary is happy to return as producer for South Valley Civic Theater's hilarious adult comedy Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. She is thrilled to be a part of this fabulous and talented group of actors and crew and found it to be very enjoyable. Her previous production was the musical Damn Yankees in 2011. She has appeared on stage as one of the many lovely wives in The King and I in 2010. She has done costumes for SVCT's Mulan, Oliver!, and God of Carnage. Mary currently is a member of the SVCT Board of Directors. Aside from traveling and photography, theater has fulfilled her creative side while being a mother, wife and dental hygienist during the day. She'd like to acknowledge and thank her family for their support and allowing her to have "mom time".



Elizabeth Kay Calisi - Costume Designer

Elizabeth is excited to be making her costuming debut with Vanya! She majored in musical theatre at Kent State University in Ohio and performed professionally while living in NYC. She's appeared in several SVCT productions, her latest role being "Mrs. Banks" in Mary Poppins. Elizabeth is entering her fifth year of service as an SVCT board member. She sends a shout out to the cast "Break legs!" And wants to give a very special "thank you" to Michelle Griffin for helping her with costumes.



Chris Foster - Stage Manager and Cast Photographer

Chris has been a volunteer parent for quite a few youth and teen plays. His children have participated in several of SVCT's productions. Usually taking all the cast photos. Being stage manager is a new role for him but he welcomes the challenge.



Lori Foster - Properties Mistress

This is Lori's 23rd SVCT production as property mistress, Lori hopes you enjoy the show from the audience as much as she enjoys watching from backstage.



Bill Haskell - Sound Engineer

After a 35-year hiatus, Bill Haskell returns to theater...the back of the theater. Having done technical theater in high school and college, the bug never left. The interest in audio video technology and computers sustained him lo those long years. Now, his acclaimed (by himself) comeback graces the ears in attendance of SCVT's production of Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike.



Bridget Harnett - Sound Operator

Bridget has been involved with SVCT since 2006. She has been onstage for five productions and this is her second time working backstage. Her most recent show with SVCT was God of Carnage. She is excited to be here and hope you enjoy the show!



Colleen Blanchard - Lighting Designer

Colleen has been involved with South Valley Civic Theater since the 1996 production of Music Man. She has enjoyed her roles both on and off stage as a director, actor, lighting designer and member of the orchestra. She is pleased to be working with such a talented and fun group of actors and artists for Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. She would like to extend a special thanks to the dedicated lighting crew for all their hard work.



Luna Bodeda - Lighting Operator

Luna is a high school freshman at Pioneer Family Academy. This is her 3rd production with SVCT doing lights. You might have recognized her from past productions of The Little Mermaid and Foot-loose. She has done lights for Mary Poppins and 1940's Radio Hour. On her free time she enjoys playing ukulele and watching movies. She would like to thank all of her family and friends for supporting and encouraging her. She hopes you enjoy the show and hopefully become a member of SVCT .



Joyce Bedard - Lighting Operator

Joyce is delighted to be a part of the lighting crew for this production. She has been working on designing and running lights for SVCT for the past year and a half. She served as an SVCT , San Benito Stage Company and Lyric Theater. Enjoy the big lights!



Bill Tindall - Scenic Designer

The acting bug hit Bill ten years ago when he first appeared in a local production of Boeing Boeing. The infection grew as he portrayed everyone from the greedy Potter in *It's a Wonderful Life* to the cantankerous Aunt Peral and ten other characters in *Tuna Christmas*. Bill played a homophobic dad in *Norman is this You?* Followed by the lovable grandfather in *You Can't Take It With You*. And he has brought numerous other characters to life in SVCT, Limelight Actors Theater, and Pintello Comedy Theater. In January 2016, a dream came true for Bill when he played Truman Capote in the one man play *Tru*.



Jason Leong - Scenic Designer and Graphic Artist

This is Jason's 9th production helping with set visuals, the 7th with SVCT. Jason had a great time collaborating with Scott, Bill, Myra, and Mary to bring the set of *Vanya & Sonia & Masha & Spike* to life. He is also grateful for the generous time and energy from the Starritt Construction company and the many additional hands from staff, cast, and other volunteers who all worked hard to build a world around our talented actors to live and breathe in.

Tradition of the Gypsy Robe

Each SVCT production awards the "Gypsy Robe" to a cast member who has made special contributions of time and energy towards the good of the show. The robe is presented to the recipient on opening night; the cast member puts on the robe and blesses the stage before the performance. It is then the duty of the recipient to affix to the robe a patch that signifies the show. The Gypsy Robe is then returned closing night to perform its duty for another show and carry on the tradition.

The Producers of
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are pleased to present the Gypsy Robe to:

Scott Lynch



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Josh Young for your patience and video production

Elizabeth Mandel for all your guidance and endless hours promoting our show

Marianne Snook for being available to answer a question or two

Bridget Harnett for being my right hand woman and jumping in to do any task

Larry Tom for specific back stage training and theater advice

Kathy Tom for your great advice and guidance

Peter Mandel for helping with setting up and guidance in sound

MaryBeth Anderson for your research in promotional video

Glynis Crabb Painting our beautiful Heron scene for the lobby

John Dokter for helping out with detail carpentry during our set construction

Matthew Hendrickson for helping with Sets

Amy McElroy for your specific house manager and concessions training

Roger Traverso for driving to move our sets into the theater

Murphy's Mercantile for the loan of the antique decor of our farmhouse

Our Set Painters - Thanks for putting in hours on our set.

Sheryl Astalos, Alissa Weinstein, Danielle Dokter, Amber DalPogetto, Hailey Gangitano, Yadira Lopez, Veronica Mishviki, Bhavini Kadiwala, Taylor Tran, Annie Dinh, Emily Dinh, Shannon Coakley, Pam Armstrong Drayton, Donna Cowan, Donald Cowan, Kelsey Beard

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***Morgan Hill Community Foundation & Alex Salvatti** for their generous grant/gift for the purchase of our new wireless microphone system.*

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***Johnson Lumber** for making our set construction materials and paint more affordable.*

***Morgan Hill Community Center and Staff** for the use of the Community Playhouse and for their ongoing support.*

***New SV Media** (The Gilroy Dispatch, The Morgan Hill Times and Out & About Magazine), **Morgan Hill & Gilroy Life** and **Gilroy Morgan Hill Today** for giving our shows special consideration in their publications.*

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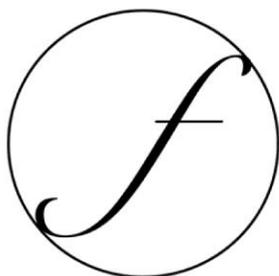
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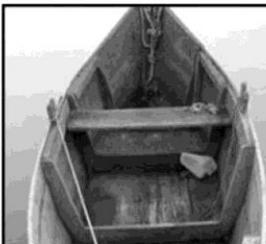


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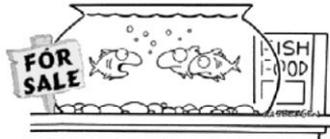
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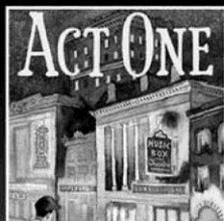
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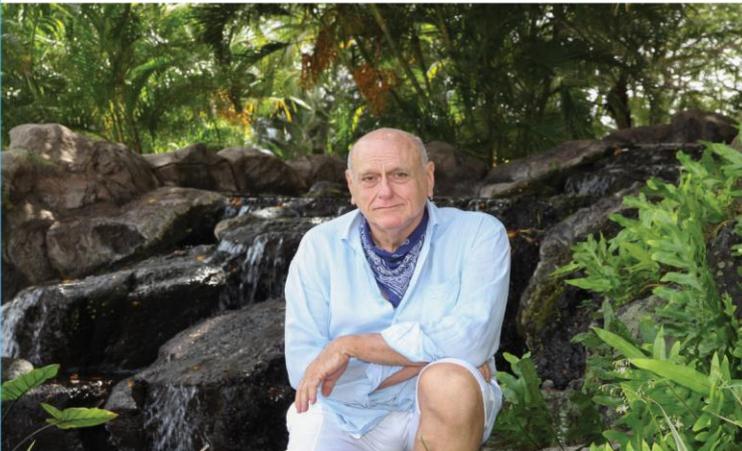
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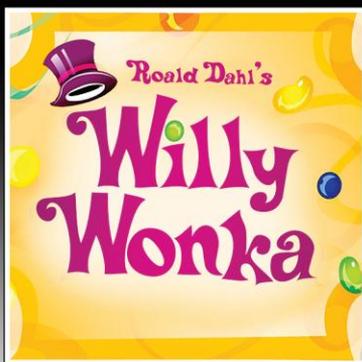


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