Dear Dobama Supporters,

The 19/20 Season had more than its fair share of challenges. The year started with a bang, thanks to a microburst storm that left the theatre without power for a week of performances, and it ended with an unsettling quiet as the season concluded prematurely due to a global pandemic. The statewide shutdown required closing Dobama’s hit production of Dance Nation after its opening weekend, suspending the final show of the season, and cancelling our 60th Anniversary Gala at Playhouse Square. Yet amidst the myriad challenges that Dobama Theatre faced to begin its sixth decade of producing Off-Broadway repertoire, there is much to celebrate in the vital work produced this year.

Dobama’s artists and staff were able to produce five important new plays that were both artistically and financially successful. We continued to invest in the theatre’s unique and invaluable education programs, providing high-level training to the next generation of professional actors through the Dobama Emerging Actors Program and expanding the resources for young playwrights in our Marilyn Bianchi Kids’ Playwriting Festival. We made theatre accessible to new audiences as evidenced by significant increases in our Membership and Pay-What-You-Can program.

When the pandemic hit, Dobama faced many challenges. But we faced those challenges together. We focused on keeping our community safe and finding new ways to connect while we were apart. With all its challenges, the 19/20 season was a year of celebration, caring, resiliency, and reflection. Like everything we do at Dobama, this was made possible by the support of the incredible community that we serve.

While Dobama Theatre, like most arts organizations, faces a time of uncertainty, we are using this time of pause to focus on how we can be of use in the community, how we can continue to pursue our mission, and to examine the theatre’s systems and practices to create a better Dobama. The work we’ve done in the months that our stage has been dark will make us stronger as we move forward together. After the safety of our community, Dobama’s top priority is the sustainability and resiliency of the theatre. Our mission is essential. Thanks to dedicated staff and the support of our community, Dobama will emerge from this moment a more focused, and more equitable organization.

With Love and Respect,

Nathan Motta
Artistic Director
**Synopsis:** STUPID FUCKING BIRD is a hilariously irreverent remix of the classic play that stages a timeless battle between young and old, past and present, in search of the true meaning of it all. This trailblazing adaptation is full of original songs and witty banter.

“We are witnessing a play within a play. [Director] Motta takes the notion one step further by sending actors who leave a scene to chairs lining the stage; they watch the action as an extended part of the audience, emphasizing even more the theatricality of the experience. The message is clear: Though theater can explore our agonies and ecstasies, it isn’t real life.”

**ANDREA SIMAKIS, The Plain Dealer**

“An absolutely brilliant production... There is no regard whatsoever for the fourth wall, which is exhilarating... ‘Stupid F**king Bird’ serves up two-and-a-half hours of intelligent, well-acted, risk-taking theater guaranteed to engage and entertain.”

**BOB ABELMAN, Cleveland Jewish News**

**CON:** We need bigger hearts! We need wider minds and better ideas and we need them now!
**Synopsis:** This new play features a guy named Guy who knows, like all of us on some level, that he is about to die. Guy engages the audience in a conversation about life and what is worth celebrating, what is worth treasuring, and what is worth letting go in this moving and hilarious play.

**“It is [actor Jason] Martin’s ... ability to frame this conversation as a most generous, noble and agonizing gesture by Guy that makes us want to listen to each and every word. Added theatricality and a sense of Guy’s fluctuating realities comes courtesy of wonderful projected imagery and immersive lighting and sound, designed by T. Paul Lowry, Marcus Dana and Derek Graham, respectively.”**

BOB ABELMAN, Cleveland Jewish News

**“This powerfully concentrated work is bound to elicit a cornucopia of reactions from each show’s collection of audience members. Some will understand while others... will think that they have gone through a drug free acid trip. No matter what the response, everyone who sees this show will be changed in some way. This is the distilled essence of good theater.”**

MARK HORNING, Talkin’ Broadway
The Old Man and the Old Moon
by PigPen Theatre Co.

Directors: Melissa T. Crum, Nathan Motta
Featuring: Amy Bransky, Emmy Brett, Josh Innerst*,
Tim Keo, Jouard Lewanda, Kieran Minor, Treva Offutt,
Gabe Reed
Scenic Design: Benjamin Needham
Lighting Design: Marcus Dana
Sound Design: Richard Ingraham
Costume Design: Angelina Herin
Stage Manager: Megan Mingus*
Asst. Director: Alex Stroming
Asst. Stage Managers: Elizabeth Cammett,
Rebekah Ferro, Arianna R. Marino

* Member Actors’ Equity Association

“The Gaelic-inspired tunes, the shadows, the homemade sound effects that include
the lapping of waves on a shore and the dripping of light from the moon ... add layers to the evening’s joyful entertainment. So does the multitalented and
abundantly charming cast, whose unflaggingly enthusiastic buy-in to this entire
enterprise engages the audience from the get-go and holds our attention for 100
minutes.”

BOB ABELMAN, Cleveland Jewish News

“The moon has sprung a leak and drips globules of liquid light. Enchantingly, the
effect is achieved not with digital projections but with a bedsheet and a flashlight
... the musicianship is strong and voices sweet.”

ANDREA SIMAKIS, The Plain Dealer

Synopsis: An Old Man must abandon his job of filling up the moon
every night to cross the seas and find his lost love. This new play with
music featured actors playing instruments, sound effects created live
on stage, and elaborate shadow puppets in an adventure with theatre
magic that appeals to the child in everyone.

MATHESON: There is no force on earth ... that comes even near close to matching the power of
memory. Memory – that’s the most powerful thing.
SKELETON CREW

JANUARY 24–FEBRUARY 16, 2020

CLEVELAND PREMIERE

Synopsis: In a struggling Detroit automotive plant, a few remaining workers are trying to figure out how to move forward if the plant goes under. Part of Dominque Morisseau’s acclaimed cycle of plays set in Detroit.

Skeleton Crew by Dominique Morisseau

Director: Nina Domingue


Scenic Design: Aaron Benson

Lighting Design: Wes Calkin

Sound Design: Derek Graham

Costume Design: Melody Walker

Props Design: Vanessa Cook

Stage Manager: Joel Rathbone*

Asst. Stage Managers: Bryanah Austin, Rebekah Ferro, Arianna R. Marino

* Member Actors’ Equity Association

“Director Nina Domingue infuses this production with a palpable urgency that drives the play forward, gives momentum to this superb ensemble, and makes it difficult for an audience to look away.”

BOB ABELMAN, Cleveland Jewish News

“Faye: I was scared shitless... but somethin’ in me knew what I was made of. I was gonna survive cuz I had to.

2016 OBIE AWARD WINNER
DANCE NATION
MARCH 6–29, 2020
CLEVELAND PREMIERE

Dance Nation
by Clare Barron

**Director:** Shannon Sindelar

**Choreographer:** Caitlin Reilly Miller

**Featuring:** Wesley Allen, Delee Cooper, Carolyn Demanelis, Sidney Edwards, Avani Hamilton, Anne McEvoy, CorLesia Smith, Mariama Whyte*, Tom Woodward*, Calista Zajac

**Scenic Design:** Cameron Caley Michalak

**Lighting Design:** Marcus Dana

**Sound Design:** Erik T. Lawson^

**Costume/Props Design:** Inda Blatch-Geib

**Stage Manager:** Megan Mingus*

**Asst. Director:** Alex Stroming

**Asst. Stage Managers:** Bryanah Austin, Elizabeth Cammett, Arianna R. Marino

* Member Actors’ Equity Association
^ Member IATSE 829

---

**Synopsis:** DANCE NATION features an army of preteen competitive dancers who are plotting to take over the world. This exciting portrait explores both the exhilaration and the raw terror of being a kid through a group of thirteen-year-olds played by a cast of adult actors.

“Directed by Shannon Sindelar with the diligence and scary energy of a routine choreographed by ['Dance Moms' star Abby Lee Miller] herself … [the] production exerts the power of a spell, able to strip away the years, taking you back to when you were 13 and thought you’d die if the thing you wanted more than anything didn’t happen … Cast members deliver bold, unselfconscious performances, whether casually chatting, topless, in a dressing room, learning to masturbate or getting a first period.”

ANDREA SIMAKIS, The Plain Dealer

“The girls dance. They share their passions while sharing girlish rumors and confidences. They soar and they hurt. And that’s the early teen life we experience with them for a couple hours. Yeah, you’ll remember.”

CHRISTINE HOWEY, Cleveland Scene

---

ASHLEE: What am I going to do with all this power?
2019 REGIONAL AWARDS

BEST DIRECTOR
Nathan Motta
Stupid Fucking Bird
Cleveland Critics Circle

BEST DESIGN
T. Paul Lowry, Projections
The Nether
Cleveland Jewish News

RISING STAR
Calista Zajac
The Nether
Cleveland Critics Circle

BEST ACTOR
Jason Martin
Wakey, Wakey
Cleveland Jewish News

OTHER RECOGNITION

NOMINEE - Stupid Fucking Bird
Best Non-Musical Production, Cleveland Critics Circle

NOMINEE - Laura Perrotta, Stupid Fucking Bird
Best Actress - Non-Musical, Cleveland Critics Circle

NOMINEE - T. Paul Lowry, The Nether
Best Projection Design, Cleveland Critics Circle

NOMINEE - Richard Ingraham, Stupid Fucking Bird
Best Sound Design, Cleveland Critics Circle

YEAR IN REVIEW - Stupid Fucking Bird
Best Adaptation, The Plain Dealer

YEAR IN REVIEW - The Nether
Most Memorable Moments, Cleveland Jewish News
The pandemic has had an unprecedented effect on the global community and Dobama is no exception. Due to government orders and important CDC recommendations given to contain the disease and keep people safe, Dobama’s hit production of Dance Nation was forced to close after its opening weekend. The final show of the season - The Other Place - was suspended indefinitely, the Marilyn Bianchi Kids’ Playwriting Festival performances were cancelled, and the theatre’s 60th Anniversary Gala at Playhouse Square was cancelled just 24 hours before it was scheduled to take place.

The Dobama Board of Directors was forced to confront the financial realities resulting from these cancellations. The Board considered many options and came to the painful conclusion that current and projected operations simply could not allow Dobama to sustain the current professional staffing levels. Consequently, the Board of Directors was forced to reduce those expenses by laying off the Managing Director at the end of June, instituting a 20% cut to the salaries of the Artistic Director and General Manager, and reducing hours for the Patron Services Manager by half.

Given the uncertainty surrounding the ability to present group events in confined spaces, the continuation of social distancing policies, and the economic impact of the pandemic, Dobama leadership has decided to produce a 20/21 Season of virtual programming in place of the planned mainstage season. Dobama’s next mainstage show will be no earlier than Fall 2021, and may be later depending on the availability and distribution of a safe and effective vaccine. In any event, Dobama continues to serve its community and pursue our vital mission while full productions are on hold.

In this challenging moment, Dobama Theatre has three important commitments. Our first priority is the safety of our artists, staff, audience, students, supporters, and the greater community. Second, we will do all we can to ensure that Dobama Theatre comes through this difficult situation as a strong organization, so we can open our doors to audiences again when it’s safe to do so. And thirdly, any artistic programming or content Dobama produces will be done professionally, tied to our vital mission, and both representative of, and accessible to, the entirety of our shared community in Northeast Ohio.

Dobama Theatre also committed to using this time while the Dobama stage is dark to examine our core values, mission, business model, operations, and future vision. We will do all we can to emerge from this difficult situation a stronger, more focused and equitable arts organization.

We remain optimistic about the theatre’s future. Someday the pandemic will be behind us, and Dobama will once again bring professional productions of important new plays to our region. In the meantime, let’s stay healthy, be safe, and take care of each other.
**From the Education Director**

Since 1979, the Marilyn Bianchi Kids’ Playwriting Festival (MBKPF) has been an integral part of Dobama Theatre’s mission. Every year, Northeast Ohio students in grades 1 through 12 are invited to submit their short, original plays to the MBKPF. Out of the 230 entries that we received this year, 20 playwrights were declared winners. In a typical year, those winners’ plays receive a production on the Dobama stage in June.

This year we served approximately 60 students in playwriting workshops, primarily in grades 3-6. Through a partnership with Lake Erie Ink funded by the Cedars Legacy grant, we were able to work with students in several elementary schools and Heights Libraries.

The Festival performances and winner ceremony is usually a joyful, lively culmination of the year’s events, and being unable to gather safely meant this year’s celebration looked fairly different. But the Festival was still a resounding success and we are excited to expand the program in 20/21.

Sincerely,

Carrie Williams
Education Director

---

**DOBAMA EMERGING ACTORS PROGRAM**

**Dobama Emerging Actors Program (DEAP)** is an auditioned, four-week, summer acting program for serious young actors who want conservatory-level, technique-based theatre training. The program was founded in 2010 by Artistic Director Nathan Motta. Each summer, local acting professionals who teach at universities in the Cleveland area provide instruction, and students are able to apply their classwork directly to the performance of a classic, heightened-text play directed by a local professional. Students are accepted to the program regardless of their ability to pay tuition, eliminating financial barriers to access.

In July 2019, there were 9 participants. DEAP’s professional teachers constructed a curriculum designed to prepare the students for success in collegiate acting programs and auditions while refining their communication skills and developing their range as performers. In July 2019, the DEAP students presented 4 workshop performances of the Greek tragedy *Elektra* at the end of program, directed by Katie Lupica, a former Artistic Directing Fellow at the Cleveland Play House.
From the General Manager

The 60th Anniversary Season was one of the most unique in Dobama’s history. This was true in terms of programming, vision and values, and the creation or continuation of community partnerships. It was also true in terms of our sustainability, with canceled performances leaving a dip in our typical earned revenue figures.

As part of Dobama’s ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality, we remain proud of our union affiliation with the Actors' Equity Association and the protections we provide to all arts professionals. This includes paying non-union artists a more liveable wage, an important investment in the community.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit Cleveland, we committed to the health of our staff, artists and patrons by canceling the remainder of the season and our 60th Anniversary Gala. To offset these losses, we sprung into action: cutting costs, applying for PPP and EIDL loans through the government, and asking patrons to consider donating unusable tickets. Beyond these efforts, the unparalleled generosity of our supporters brought Dobama comfort, strength, and resilience for the path ahead.

Be well and take heart. We look forward to welcoming you back.

Onward,

Colin Anderson
General Manager

According to financials audited by Koester, DiSalvo, and Fried. Full audited financial statements available upon request.
Dobama Theatre thanks the following members of The Premiere Club, Dobama’s individual giving program. Premiere Club members receive exciting benefits and play an invaluable role in helping Dobama bring our audiences first-rate professional theatre. For more information on The Premiere Club and its great benefits, please visit dobama.org. This listing includes donors from July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. Please call 216.932.6838 with corrections.

* denotes Dobama board members

**Platinum $10,000 +**
James F. Brown and Jean T. Stevenson

**Producer $5,000 - $9,999**
Char and Chuck Fowler
Jennifer Stapleton
Darwin Steele

**Director $2,500 - $4,999**
Laura Anderson* and Ken Schwartz
Christal Contini*
Marina Grant
Kirsten and Tom Hagesfeld
Patricia and Bill Hanavan
John O’Grady and Brad Motta

**Benefactor $1,000 - $2,499**
In memory of Larry Abelman
James Anderson and David Wittkowsky
Anonymous
Mark and Pat Averbach
Scott Aylward and Mark Baiza
Anthony and Cheryl Barabani
Ivan Berkel
Mark and Kathleen Binnig
Daniel and Shelley Boyle
Tim and Cindy Carr
Marcel* and Jackie Duhamel
Patricia Egan*
Matt* and Tammy Eiben
Dick and Deena Epstein
Marian Fairman*
Kathryn Gibbs
Anna Z. Greenfield
Peter and Lee Haas
Robert Hawkes
Vicki N. Heigel
Donna L. Korn*
Joanna and Andrew Laytin
Albert Leonetti and Ruth Anna Carlson
Deborah Neale
Mary Jane Nottage
Jamie* and Lori Owen
Aaron Petersal* and Elise Kuksinca
Curt and Sigrid Reynolds
Kim Sherwin
Alex Smilovich *
Kate Vlasek*
Killeen Vogel*
Mary and Bill Wilkinson

**Patron $500 - $999**
Marilou Abele and Mark Hardenbergh
Catherine Albers
Anonymous
Jacqueline Bannet
Linda Bianchi
In honor of Teddi Gibson Bianchi
George Brant and Laura Kepley
Jack and Janice Campbell
Joyce and Pat Casey
Cheryl S. Drake
Peter and Kathryn Eloff
Ketti Finneran and Rick Brown
Scott and Anne Flamm
Bob and Mia Graf
Barbara Hawley and David Goodman
John and Elizabeth Jarvey
Don and Pamela Jonovic
Eric and Marian Klieber
Ann V. Klotz and Seth Orbach
Christine Lakus
Bob Mast
Anne McEvoy
Claudia Metz and Tom Woodworth
Jean and Joel H. Rathbone
Margaret Robinson
In memory of Keith Robinson
Ron Rydarowicz

**Friend $150 - $499**
Kenneth and Chonyang Albert
Colin Anderson
In memory of Mary Ann Sword
Anonymous
Tina Arebalo
Lynda A. Bender
Roni and Elliot Berenson
Teddi Bianchi
In memory of Don Bianchi
Tom and Dorothy Bier
Stacy Blemmer
Jean Bloomfield
Geoff and Julie Bonebrake
Bread and Roses Fund
Vincent and Tanisha Briley
Bill and Carol Bruml
Daniel Brustein and Joan Trey
Laurence and Susan Channing
Barbara Colombi
Tom and Anita Cook

Gunter Schwegler
Faye and David Sholiton
Kathy Smachlo and David Kaplan
Scott and Lisa Stroming
Frank and Victoria Titas
Mary Wehrle

Mark and Bill Corcoran
Molly Cornwell
Ensign and Lana Cowell
Barbara Cross and Roy Call
Michael Daugherty and Susan Petrone
Jill Davis
Daniel and Laura Roberts Dempsey
Anne DesRosiers and Steve L. Kadish
William Doll
Jeffrey R. Dross and Michele J. Ladouceur
Judy Erlichman
Epstein-Gawry-Levine Family
Epstein-Zuckerman Family
Jonathan Freeman
Peter and Sheila Freimark
William Fulton
Carol S. Gee
Joe and Mia Gelles
Susan Gerson
Robert Gibb
Deborah Glosserman
Debby Gold
Kristen Grabenstein
David Greene
Grants Plus
Thomas and Cynthia Gustaferro
Nancy Y. Hammond
Donald and Ellen Harris
Fron Heller
Curt and Karen Henkle
Melissa Hintz
Thomas Hoadley
Kathy and Jamie Hogg
Les and Elana Hunter
Ruth Kabat
Marcy Kanner
Debby and Brian Kastner
Lauren Kawentel
Dr. David Kazdan and Laura Gooch
Catherine Keating and Charles King
Darlene Floden and Brian King
Stuart and Anne Klein
Izsak Krainsky
Joyce Dodrill and Mark Krieger
Glenda Kupersmith
Nancy and Neal Lavelle
Michael Lederman and Sharmo Sollitto
Jack and Linda Lesyk
Malia Lewis
Karen Marano
Patricia Martin
Sarah Matthews
Sharon R. McIntyre
Harriet McLeod
Donald and Sandra McPherson
Daniel and Diana Medalie
Pamela and Jim Meltzer
Carol and Dick Michel
Hedy and Michael Milgrom
Timothy and Marjorie Minnis
Jeremy Mosier
Anna Maria Motta
Nathan Motta and Natalie Green
Susan Murray and Don Harvey
Laurance and Donna Nowak
Carolyn Oakes
Susan Oelbracht
Lou Papes
Alexander and Barbara Pausley
Maryjean Pawlowski
Laura Perrotta and Donald Ford
Bill Peterson
Dan Powers and Pat Caine
Jack Praise
Philip L. Pritchett
Joanne and Richard Prober
Sonja Rajki and Michael Lyford
Susan and Larry Rakow
Char Rapoport Nance
Joel J. and Hester Rathbone
John Reynolds
Claire Robinson May
In memory of Keith Robinson
Evangelina Romoudi
Michael Salkind and Carol Gill
Toni and Donald Scherzer
Donald E. Schmid and
Rosemary L. Reymann
John and Barbara Schubert
Michael and Joanne Schwartz
In honor of Ken Schwartz
and Laura Anderson
Sequoia Realty Corporation
Tom and Alice Severovich
Eric and Jane Buder Shapiro
Charna Sherman
Jim Simler
Maxine Singer
Veronica and Thomas P. Slavin
Loren Smith and Donna Fox
Judith Sockman
Laura and Darrell Starnik
Nancy Stemmer
Audrey and Bob Strother
Douglas R. Sutherland
Lorraine Szabo
Jeanne Task
Cynthia Taylor
James and Debra Vail
Blanche and Jack Valancy
Darrell Wazlavek
Michael and Meredith Weil
Larry Weiss
Rona Weiss
Sondra Williams
Phillip and Jane Wise
Debra Yasinow
Rachel Zake

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARCEL DUHAMEL
President

MATT EIBEN
Treasurer

MARIAN FAIRMAN
Vice President

DONNA KORN
Secretary

CHRISTAL CONTINI

JAMIE OWEN

ALEX SMILOVICH

KILLEEN VOGEL

PATRICIA EGAN

AARON PETERSAL

KATE VLASEK
19/20 SEASON SPONSOR

Benesch
Attorneys at Law

$50,000+

The Milton and Tamar Maltz Family Foundation

Cleveland Foundation

$20,000 - 49,999

Ohio Arts Council

Paul M. Angell Family Foundation

cuyahoga arts & culture
strengthening community

$5,000 - 19,999

The George Gund Foundation

Shubert Foundation Inc.

Thompson Hine

David and Inez Myers Foundation

$2,000 - 4,999

Huntington

MAI Capital Management

Fox Charitable Foundation

VORYS

Meritech

Dominion Energy

$150 - 1,999

Actors’ Equity Association Foundation

Cleveland Play House

Grants Plus

KeyBank

McCarthy Lebit

McDonald Hopkins

Montlack Realty

Music and Drama Club

Progressive

Reminger Foundation

Sequoia Realty

Taste

Walter Haverfeld

In-Kind

CLE Urban Winery

AGNES Studio

Karamu House

Playhouse Square

Zagara’s MarketPlace

Great Lakes Brewing Co.

Playhouse East

Oberlin College Theaters

Karamu House:
A Joyful Gathering Place
DOBAMA THEATRE’S MISSION

is to premiere the best contemporary plays by established and emerging playwrights in professional productions of the highest quality. Through educational and outreach programming, Dobama Theatre nurtures the development of theatre artists and builds new audiences for the arts while provoking an examination of our contemporary world.

DOBAMA STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Nathan Motta

GENERAL MANAGER
Colin Anderson

PATRON SERVICES MANAGER
Elise Kuklinca

EDUCATION DIRECTOR
Carrie Williams

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR
Kirsten Nicole

RESIDENT LIGHTING DESIGNER
Marcus Dana

RESIDENT SOUND DESIGNER
Richard Ingraham

RESIDENT PROJECTIONS DESIGNER
T. Paul Lowry

RESIDENT COSTUME DESIGNER
Tesia Dugan Benson

RESIDENT PROPS DESIGNER
Vanessa Cook

RESIDENT WARDROBE
Melody Walker

RESIDENT SCENIC ARTIST
Justine Schneider

RESIDENT STAGE MANAGERS
Megan Mingus*
Joel Rathbone*

BOX OFFICE MANAGER
Owen Schneider

FRONT OF HOUSE
Deena Barrett
Michael Jones
Heather K. Pederson
Hollie S. Revay
Preston Roberts
Becca Snedeker-Meier

INTERNS
Bryanah Austin
Karyn Bellush
David Dolansky
Rebekah Ferro
Natalie Fischer
Sarah Gielink
Arianna R. Marino
Paulina Martz
Isabella Schiavon
Olivia Scicolone
Alex Stroming
Sara Young