

Gabriella C. Calicchio
Managing Director



MARIN
THEATRE
COMPANY

Marin Theatre Company celebrates its 40th season!

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MARIN THEATRE COMPANY RECEIVES GRANT FOR ITS FIRST COMMISSIONED PIECE EVER - Play Will Be Showcased In Nu Werkz Staged Reading Series

Distinction Awarded to Kenn Rabin of San Anselmo for "Found Objects"

MILL VALLEY, CA - Marin Theatre Company has received a \$5,000 grant from the Marin Arts Council to commission a piece for its Nu Werkz Series authored by a Marin playwright. Lee Sankowich, outgoing MTC Artistic Director, has chosen Kenn Rabin of San Anselmo to author MTC's first ever commissioned play. The piece will fill the second slot in MTC's 2006/07 Nu Werkz Staged Reading Series. The piece, directed by Sankowich, will be presented on December 3rd and 4th, at 7:30 pm each evening. The readings are FREE to the public with a suggested donation of \$10. Tickets are required for the readings and are available from the MTC Box Office, 415.388.5208, beginning Tuesday July 18th.

"I have always wanted to develop new works and be able to commission writers, which would put MTC in the forefront of the future of the American Theatre," said Sankowich. "To see plays that we develop go on to other theatres would provide a great sense of pride and service to future generations of theatergoers. It also is an important step in recognition and respect among the major regional theatres. When the Marin Arts Council approached us with the offer to apply for a grant to commission a Marin playwright, I immediately thought of Kenn Rabin. I had become familiar with his work through PlayGround and also directed a staged reading of his *The Great Wall From Space* at Berkeley Rep. I have found him to be an extremely sensitive writer with a good ear for plot and dialogue."

Rabin is in the process of constructing his newest work, *Found Objects*. According to his description, it is a family drama which takes place in the Bay Area (Marin and San Francisco). It centers on an unemployed cable television news pioneer; his wife, the founder of an influential modern art gallery; their teenage daughter; and an artist who has risen to national prominence through the mother's gallery. In the actual play, live scenes will be interspersed with short bursts of videotaped interviews conducted by the daughter, who is exploring following in her father's footsteps. *Found Objects* discusses the nature of love and family and also touches on the theme of how media has become so omnipresent that people's lives have, in a sense, become their own reality shows.

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"The Marin Arts Council is pleased that we could support the commission of new work by Kenn Rabin, through the Marin Fund for Artists, part of the Bay Area Fund for Artists initiative," said Jeanne Bogardus, Executive Director of Marin Arts Council. "Working artists make an enormous contribution toward defining the Marin experience. The creation of new work requires time and resources, as well as opportunities and venues for the public to view, hear and experience the work. This affiliate award to Kenn and the Marin Theatre Company accomplishes all these things."

Rabin was born in New York and raised on Long Island and was introduced to theatre by his grandmother. His interests quickly transferred from musicals to straight plays and in high school, spent most of his down time exploring Off-Broadway and Off-Off-Broadway work by people like Sam Shepherd, Lanford Wilson, Leonard Melfi and others. His interest in becoming a playwright grew in college, while being mentored by Gaynor Bradish, who had led the Playwrights Unit at Actors Studio. In Rabin's opinion, playwriting really is one of the best art forms because it involves both the solitary act of writing and collaboration with other talented artists. He moved to the Bay Area in 1993 from Boston.

"One of my real inspirations in creating theatre is watching a story become reality with set design, lighting and all the other elements that bring theatre alive," Rabin says. "What I most want to do as a playwright is at least slightly shift the molecules in the internal emotional landscape of my audience before sending them back into the night."

Although his aspirations lean towards playwriting, Rabin has had a very successful career in documentary film, including two Emmy nominations for work with PBS. In addition, he supplied all the documentary footage for the academy award nominated film *Good Night and Good Luck*.

As Marin Theatre Company celebrates its 40th season, the Nu Werkz Series enters into its third year of staged readings of new works by emerging playwrights. Each reading is followed by a Q&A/talk-back session with the director, playwright and actors.

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