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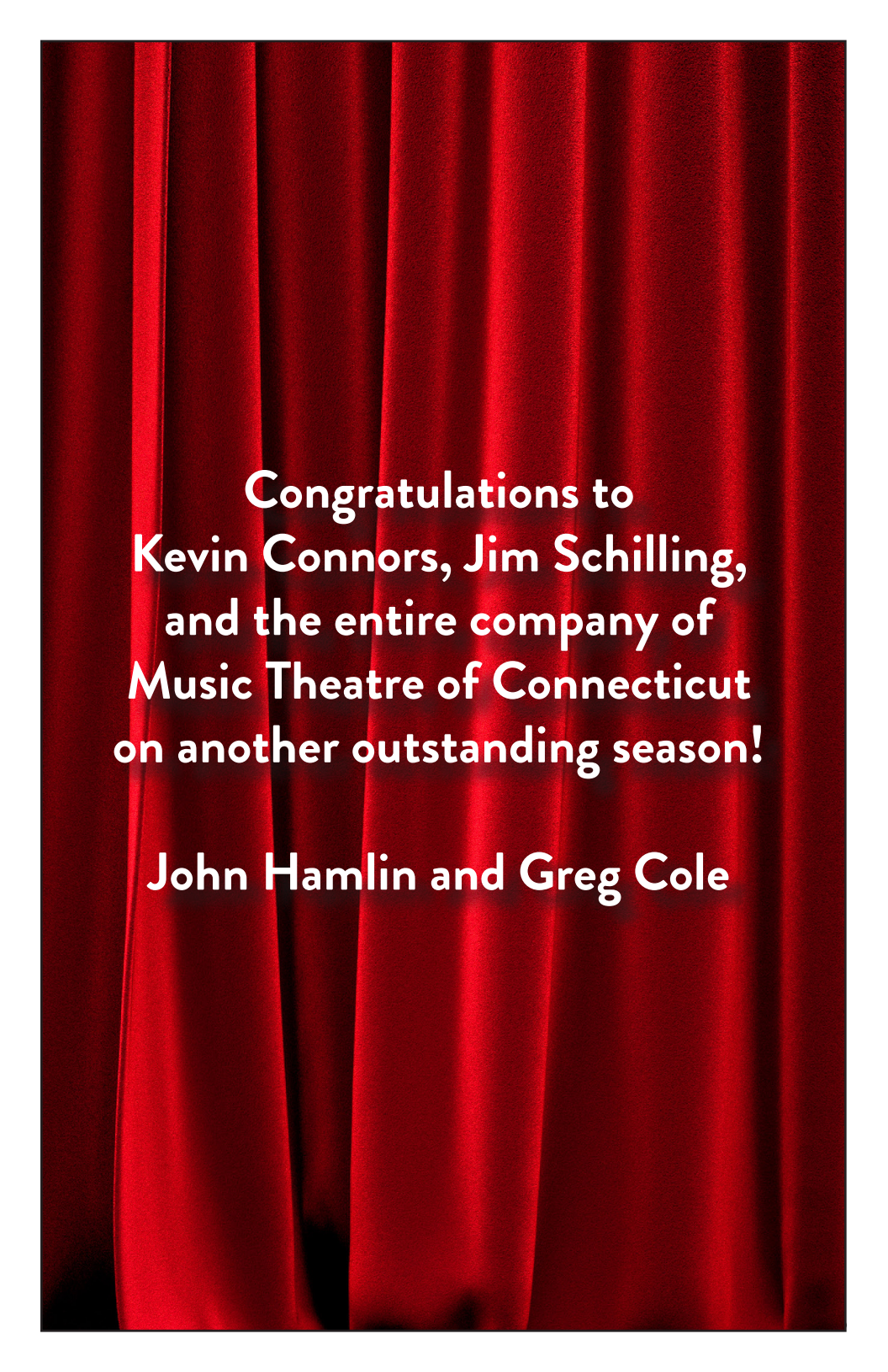
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A background of rich red, vertically pleated curtains, likely velvet or a similar heavy fabric, with soft lighting creating subtle shadows and highlights in the folds.

**Congratulations to
Kevin Connors, Jim Schilling,
and the entire company of
Music Theatre of Connecticut
on another outstanding season!**

John Hamlin and Greg Cole



Congratulations
to Kevin Connors
and Jim Schilling.

You have impacted
the lives of so many
and culturally enriched
even more!

MUSIC THEATRE OF CONNECTICUT
MTC MAINSTAGE



Dear MTC Guest,

Welcome to *RFK*, the second production of our 34th season of award-winning professional theatre! Whether you are joining us virtually or in-person, we are excited you are here!

Tonight's production is truly unique in many ways. During this election season, *RFK* offers a very personal window into the professional and personal life of one of America's most iconic politicians hailing from arguably America's most iconic political family. Tonight, you will see the extreme professional challenges of an official dealing with a major war, civil unrest, a rapidly changing society, racial conflict, economic inequality, and a country still reeling from an unfathomable assassination. But moreover, you will meet Bobby Kennedy the man – devoted husband, father of 11, Irish Catholic, privileged yet socially conscious, and a brilliant but very reluctant political animal.

I recently had the great fortune of virtually meeting and speaking with Jack Holmes, the playwright and first star of *RFK*. Not only did our conversation inspire and enlighten me about Bobby Kennedy himself, but also about Jack's perspective on Bobby's life, and how the most powerful elements of an enormously complex journey were selected and crafted to best tell Bobby's story.

We hope that you not only enjoy tonight's profile of Bobby Kennedy, but that his experiences and those of an American society in turmoil provoke thought and discussion about not only the turbulent 1960's, but also the unresolved cultural themes that remain all too present today.

Thank you again for your support and enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Connors'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

KEVIN CONNORS
Director of *RFK*
MTC Executive Artistic Director & Co-Founder



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October 23 - November 8, 2020

MUSIC THEATRE OF CONNECTICUT
MTC MAINSTAGE

presents



A Play by JACK HOLMES

with
CHRIS MANUEL*

Scenic/Prop Design by JESSIE LIZOTTE
Lighting Design by RJ ROMEO
Costume Design by DIANE VANDERKROEF
Sound Design by WILL ATKIN
Production Assistant JACK PARROTTA
Stage Managed by JIM SCHILLING*
Directed by KEVIN CONNORS

* Members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

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RFK received its Off-Broadway premiere at the Culture Project, on November 15, 2005.
It was produced by the Culture Project (Allan Buchman, Artistic Director)
in association with Arleen Sorkin, Winship Cook and Martin Davitch;
the associate producer was Duane Baughman.

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

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CAST

Robert F. Kennedy CHRIS MANUEL

TIME

1964-1968

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

CHRIS MANUEL (*Robert F. Kennedy*) is honored to have the opportunity to once again perform at MTC, this time as one of the most iconic politicians in American history. He has previously appeared in both *Ragtime* and *Jekyll & Hyde* at MTC as Houdini and Stride, respectively. Other regional credits include Billy Bigelow in *Carousel* at Summer Theatre of New Canaan, Eddie Lawrence in *Shear Madness* at Totem Pole Playhouse and Clopin in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* at New Paradigm Theatre. It is with a great sense of responsibility and gratitude that he portrays RFK in this production. Thank you MTC! Instagram: @imchrismanuel Website: www.imchrismanuel.com

JACK HOLMES (*Playwright*) is the author of the one-man play *RFK*. He performed the title role of Robert F. Kennedy during the 2005-2006 season in New York City at the Off-Broadway theatre The Culture Project. The performance earned him a nomination for "Distinguished Performance" by the Drama League as well as "Outstanding Solo Performance" by the Outer Critics Circle. New York's "Backstage" magazine chose his performance as one of the "Best of 2005" in their year-end issue. He was also nominated for an IRNE award for "Best Solo Performance in a Large Theatre" by the Independent Reviewers of New England for his performance in Boston. He previously performed *RFK* under the title *The Awful Grace of God: A Portrait of Robert F. Kennedy* in Los Angeles at the Court Theatre in 2004, and in Sierra Madre, CA, at the Sierra Madre Playhouse in 2003 where it received its world premiere. Born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, where he graduated from Scranton Preparatory School, he earned a BFA in Film/Drama from the California College of Arts in Oakland, CA, where he studied Modern Theater with the Beat poet and playwright Michael McClure. He considers the late

Elaine Aiken his greatest acting teaching influence. He studied to be a composer at the Juilliard School with the American composer Stanley Wolfe. Jack composed the original incidental score for *RFK*. Holmes' feature film screenplay *Live At the Foxes Den* was filmed in Los Angeles, CA in the summer of 2011 with Jack playing one of the lead characters and co-starring Elliot Gould, Bob Gunton, Jackson Rathbone (*Twilight*), Carly Craig, and Brian Doyle Murray. Holmes also composed the original orchestral score for *Foxes Den*, as well as three original songs which were performed in the movie. Jack recently again played the role of Robert F. Kennedy in the feature film *Chavez*, a biopic about the life of Cesar Chavez. Directed by Diego Luna, with Michael Pena playing Chavez, and co-starring John Malkovich, Rosario Dawson, America Ferrara, and Wes Bentley.

KEVIN CONNORS (*Director / Executive Artistic Director & Co-Founder*) Off-Broadway: *Play Like a Winner* (NYMF award-winner), *Prime Time Prophet*, *Jukebox Saturday Night*, *The Abandoned Loves of Frederick R.*, *Life Anonymous*, *Lover: The Valentino Musical*, *Babes Off Broadway*, *Saloon* and *Suzy Q*. Selected regional productions: *The Fantasticks*, *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, *Babes in Toyland*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Baby*; with such stars as Joan Rivers, James Naughton, and Johnny Mathis. He has directed over 100 MTC Equity MainStage productions including *Next to Normal*, *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, *Cabaret*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Evita*, *Doubt*, *Master Class*, *Gypsy*, (all Connecticut Critics' Circle Award Nominations/Winners), and *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, (Moss Hart Award Winner). Broadway World Award Winner as Best Director for MTC's *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Connecticut Critics' Circle Best Director winner for MTC's *Ragtime*, and recipient of the Tom Killen Award for Outstanding Contribution to Connecticut

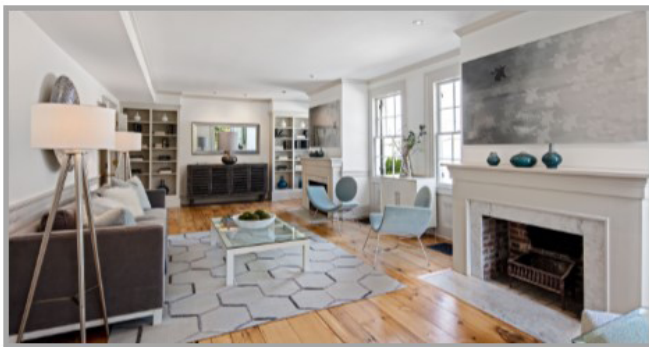
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Professional Theatre. As a composer he has penned the score for numerous musicals including *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and *A Christmas Carol: A Live Radio Play* (both published by Playscripts, Inc.), and served on the faculties of The Hartt School of Music/University of Hartford, Sacred Heart University, the University of Bridgeport and Musical Theatre Works in NYC. www.kevin-connors.com

JIM SCHILLING (*Stage Manager, Managing Director, Co-Founder*) co-founded Music Theatre of CT in 1987 and is currently MTC's Managing Director and Director of the School of Performing Arts. MTC acting credits include *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well...*, *Three Guys Naked from the Waist Down*, *Yours*, *Anne*, *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play*, *Doubt*, *Almost*, *Maine*, *God of Carnage*, *The Fantasticks*, *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*, *The 39 Steps*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* and most recently, *Sylvia*. He was nominated for a CT Critics Circle award for Herr Shultz in *Cabaret* and winner of the BroadwayWorld award for *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. He continues as a Blue Ribbon Panelist for the Daytime Emmy Awards, and is on the voting committee for the SAG awards, and a member of "Who's Who in the American Theatre" from 1991-present. Jim was also an adjunct professor at Sacred Heart University (Advanced Acting, Advanced Scene Study, Script Analysis and Directing) where he was recently nominated Best Director of a musical for his work on *Godspell*.

WILL ATKIN (*Sound Designer & Technician*) is very excited to begin his third Season with MTC, previously running sound for *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Always... Patsy Cline*, *Cabaret*, and *Ragtime* to name a few. He has stage managed *A View from the Bridge* (Westport Community Theatre), played Riff in *West Side Story* (Wilton Playshop). Will has a degree in Audio

& Music Production, with a focus in jazz trombone from Western Connecticut State University.

JESSIE LIZOTTE (*Scenic / Prop Designer*) is a Fairfield County-based scenic designer, lighting technician, and stagehand. Past works include *Ragtime*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Matilda*, *Wizard of Oz*, *Descendants* and *Sylvia* at MTC; *Mamma Mia* at Norwalk Community College; *All Shook Up* at Hackmatack Playhouse; and *Doubt* and *Constellations* at Fairfield University.

RJ ROMEO (*Production Manager / Lighting Designer*) has recently relocated from Pittsburgh, PA to become the Technical Director/Associate Director of Production at Westport Country Playhouse. He was very excited to make his debut at MTC as lighting designer for *Cabaret*, *Seussical* and *The Jungle Book*; and lighting designer for this season's *Ragtime* and *Steel Magnolias*. RJ has designed lighting for countless productions such as *Guys and Dolls*, *Twelfth Night*, and most recently, *Frozen Jr*.

DIANE VANDERKROEF (*Costume Design*) has been the resident costume designer for MTC MainStage and MTC School of Performing Arts since 2006. In the past she also worked with Kevin Connors on *Babes in Toyland* at the Stamford Center for the Arts. She did designs for the Connecticut Grand Opera, including *Elixir of Love*, *Don Giovanni* and *Don Pasquale*. She has also been designer for Downtown Cabaret Theatre's MainStage and Children's Company, as well as various musicals for New England Lyrical Operetta. When not designing, Diane is a flight attendant for Delta Airlines.

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Stephen Sondheim

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JUSTIN PAUL
MTC Alumni
Academy Award winner
Golden Globe winner

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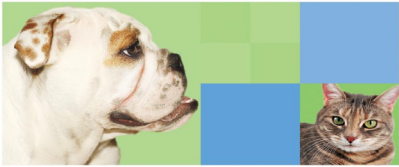
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(as of 9/9/20)

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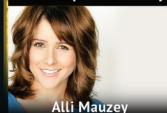
Debbie Gravitte



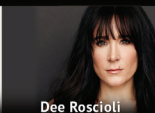
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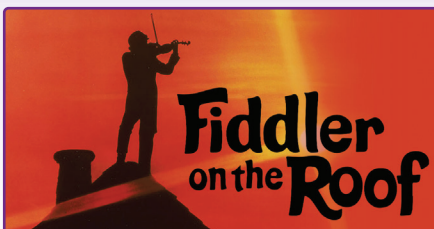
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