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New faces on the Dragon stage: 'Wild Boy' opens at downtown Redwood City theater

July 29, 2016, 05:00 AM By [Bill Silverfarb](#) Daily Journal

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When the Dragon Productions Theatre Company opened in downtown Redwood City in early 2013, it was starting from scratch after being a Palo Alto mainstay for more than a decade.

Now in its fourth year on Broadway, the company is launching the summer production of "Wild Boy," which tells the story of a modern family raising a child with autism intertwined with a tale of an 18th-century boy found mute and feral in the woods.

The actors will play multiple roles in the production, said Meredith Hagedorn, the company's founder and artistic director.

The 75-seat theater rarely gets a break, Hagedorn said. To pay the rent, Dragon has to put on eight productions a year with them often overlapping.

"We never get a break. Our season is from January to December," Hagedorn said.

She needs to keep the seats filled to keep the productions on stage.

Next year, however, only seven shows are planned and Hagedorn hopes to open up the theater more for community use, especially considering it will be Redwood City's 150th birthday.

"We get tons of rental requests," she said.

The theater is right in the heart of downtown, close to Courthouse Square and the Fox Theatre, which also features the occasional Broadway by the Bay production.

Dragon has open auditions for every production and all talent is local.

"It provides more opportunities for new people to perform. We like to get new faces on the Dragon stage," Hagedorn said.

Being close to the Caltrain station allows actors to commute to the theater from all over the Bay Area.

Some actors even travel from Marin County to perform on the Dragon stage.

The company likes to feature a wide variety of "interesting, rarely told stories," Hagedorn said.

And "Wild Boy" is just that, she said.

Based on the critically acclaimed memoir "Not Even Wrong," "Wild Boy" tells two stories — that of Paul and Jennifer Collins, who learn that their toddler, Morgan, may be autistic, and that of Peter "the Wild Boy," an 18th century boy found mute and feral in the woods by King George I.

"Wild Boy" is written by Oliver Goldstick and directed by Ken Sonkin.

Goldstick is credited as executive producer and writer for a number of television series including "Desperate Housewives," "Ugly Betty," "Coach" and "Caroline in the City." He is the executive producer and writer for the Emmy award-winning ABC series "Pretty Little Liars."

Sonkin is an actor/director whose work has been seen locally at American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Rep, S.F. Playhouse, Marin Shakespeare Company and The Magic Theater. He teaches at the University of San Francisco.

"Wild Boy" opens Friday, July 29 and runs through Aug. 21.

Go to dragonproductions.net for tickets and to learn more. It is located at 2120 Broadway, Redwood City.

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Photo courtesy of Kimberly Wadycki/Dragon Theatre
Isabel Siragusa plays Queen Caroline, John Stephen King plays King George I and Johnathan Tierney plays Peter the Wild Boy in Dragon Theatre's production of 'Wild Boy' now playing in downtown Redwood City.



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