



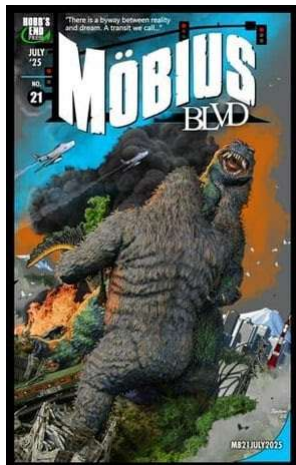
## Welcome!

Hello writers, actors and lovers of all things thespian! The Old Pueblo Playwrights' newsletter brings you news and inspiration from our friendly group of scribes and notable theatrical tidbits from around Tucson.



### Dennis' Heart Will Be Racing!

Congratulations to Dennis O'Dell whose new play *Quickening Heart* will receive a staged reading at the Scoundrel & Scamp Theatre on July 25th at 7pm. The piece is a timely, character-driven drama set in the near future, where access to abortion has become almost impossible. The play features a rockstar cast and tickets are FREE ([LINK](#)) so please go support!



### David Published in Ghostly Fashion

OPP member, David Rochon, has announced a short story of his has been published in the latest issue of Mobius Blvd magazine. It's a ghost story titled *The Ghastly Man*. ([BUY HERE](#)) Never one to rest on his laurels, David has also finished the first draft of a new one-act play, tentatively called *Boredom is Hell*, which he hopes to schedule a table read with OPP in the near future. Great stuff, David!

## Debra to Launch BEYOND OPP

OPP stalwart, Debra Vassallo, is launching a workshop to encourage members who want to submit their plays to theaters across the country. Debra says: "BEYOND OPP is a place for playwrights to explore opportunities to have our plays read and performed beyond the group. We will discuss the Playwrights Center, New Play Exchange and the Dramatists Guild's website plus shared copywriting experiences. The plan is to meet on a Thursday night over Zoom in the summer, and in person wintertime. If any OPP would like to join the workshop, please contact Debra via email: [Debra.Vassallo@gmail.com](mailto:Debra.Vassallo@gmail.com)



## Tell Tale *Signs* in Albuquerque (Follow Up)

Liisa Rose's monologue, *Signs*, was performed as part of The Seven Short Works Festival on June 9 at the [Fusion Theatre](#). The blind scripts are read by a jury of theatre professionals, and the fourteen highest scoring scripts are produced across two shows. *Signs* was directed by Laurie Thomas and performed by Zane Barker (pictured). Liisa says: "It was truly humbling to be included in the group of extremely talented playwrights, directors and actors." Nice!

## OPP SPOTLIGHT



Mel Hector, an OPP member who has seen the group grow from a dozen playwrights to well over forty now, was delighted to see his latest play, *Cecelia's Plight*, voted ready for a live performance by the membership this past week.

Like many OPP members, Mel is an intriguing character. After graduating from high school, Mel had seven full-ride college scholarship offers to study engineering and math but enlisted in the Marines instead. He got sent to Vietnam, where he was wounded in three separate incidents. Sent home to

recuperate, Mel then opted for college and medical school; and it's medicine and the patients he sees that continues to inspire his writing today.

Mel Hector, MD, who was diagnosed with multiple myeloma in 2021 and underwent a bone marrow transplant, maintains he's still honing his craft. "When I write a play, I can do fine with plot and structure and developments," he says. "What I really have to work on is making believable, real characters who emote because I spent a lifetime not emoting."

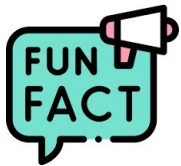
With regards to his time with OPP, Mel reflects: "We have the privilege of a front row seat to creative people telling their different stories every week, and doing their best to make them better, learning the craft, finding their voice. We share the fun as their effort comes alive, it changes, and it improves. OPP is a place to have fun. We don't always agree, and that adds to it. I can't think of a better, kinder group with whom to be disagreeable." Well said, Doctor Mel!

#### The London Stage in Tucson!



The ATC Cinema Series premieres with *Kinky Boots* at the Temple of Music and Art on June 20th at 630pm. Tickets are only \$15! ATC is bringing the magic of world-class theatre to the big screen

with exclusive screenings of celebrated plays and musicals from London's most iconic stages.

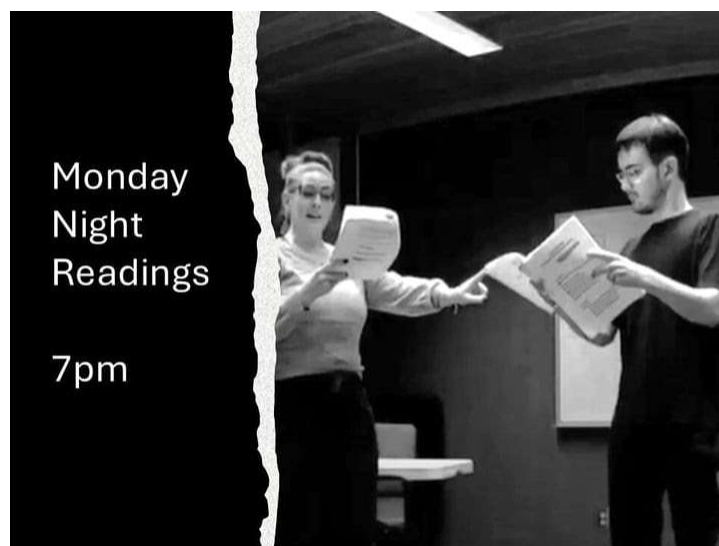


The expression *winging it* comes from the theater, where it alludes to an actor studying their part in the wings because he has been suddenly called on to replace another.



**Got a playwriting tip or experience to share?**

Send your playwriting experiences or any hard-earned advice to the [editor](#) for inclusion in the OPP newsletter.



**Join Us Live!**

Our Monday night in-person readings at St. Francis in the Foothills are three times a month. **Actors - we need you!** Get involved and hone your delivery by reading some seriously good scripts.

**Anyone can watch our Monday readings.**

Just click on this [ZOOM](#) link and enjoy the show!

**Next Up:**

6/23 *Home Sweet HOA Home* Debra Vassallo      6/30 *The Reading* John Heyl

7/7 *Lone Star* Mel Hector    7/14 *TBC* Gavin Kayner

**Save the Dates!**

We're back at the Temple of Music & Art for our 37th New Play Festival.

From March 3rd to 8th, OPP will be showcasing its annual collection of carefully curated readings. The record turnout for our 2025 plays proved how this popular event is going from strength to strength. Stay tuned folks!

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK >>>**



Joe L. Smith

Trained at the prestigious American Academy of Dramatic Arts in NYC. 30+ years.



David Zinke

ZINK is an actor with "gobs" of stage time. His career spans over six decades. He is

## OPP Actor Pool

Get your personal profile up on the [OPP website](#) and get noticed. A photo and a bit of background helps our playwrights enormously when it comes to selecting a crew to read.



The performing arts are a crucial part of our community's  
cultural health and economic vitality.  
As a small non-profit, OPP relies on donations to keep our  
humble contribution to this community going.  
Please consider a tax-deductible donation of any size to  
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