

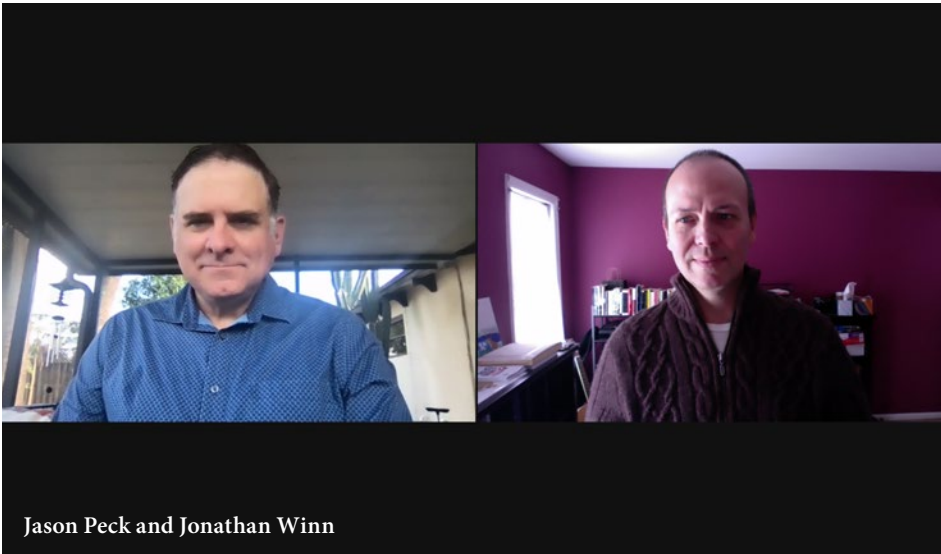
THROWN  
STONE

# CONNECTION



*2020 Annual Report*

## Our Strategic Priorities



### FROM THE FOUNDERS

## What We Learned from the Season that Never Was

IN A YEAR MARKED BY THE DEVASTATION OF COVID-19, a national reckoning on racial justice, global environmental and economic catastrophe, and a cultural divide that threatens to tear apart the fabric of society, the activity of a little new-works theatre company in a small Connecticut town feels insignificant. After all, what can we do in the face of such intractable crises?

The conventional response is that we must do what we always do: Use the power of storytelling to forge human connection and provide a space for emotional catharsis, intellectual inquiry, and spiritual reflection — to “hold, as ‘there, the mirror up to nature.” Hamlet’s advice to the players has been an article of faith in the theatre, but today it rings hollow. The world is hurting, and whatever good we’ve done hasn’t been enough. It’s far past time we held the mirror up to ourselves.

Lockdown has given us a rare opportunity to step off the frenetic treadmill of production, do some real self-interrogation, and throw ourselves into some work that might have felt too hard or too scary before. In this, Baldwin is more helpful than the Bard: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”

In a perverse way, an *annus horribilis* can be quite clarifying, but maybe that gives 2020 too much credit. The real credit belongs to our Artistic Associates, Gina Pulice, Maria McConville, and Richard Harrison, whose thoughtfulness and intent set the stage for Thrown Stone to emerge from this year better and stronger. Credit also goes to our board, who have locked arms in support of the mission every step of the way. Leaders of service organizations, particularly Nan Barnett of the National New Play Network, and Lisa Scails of the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut, have been shining beacons on rough seas. Finally, our underwriters, grantors, and supporters who doubled down on Thrown Stone through postponements, cancellations, and long stretches of uncertainty, are the reason we will not only survive, but thrive in 2021.

One last thank you goes out to Bob Iger. We don’t know Mr. Iger personally, but we did watch his *MasterClass*. His anecdote about how he developed, shared, and reinforced his strategic priorities for The Walt Disney Company made such a big impression that we tried it for ourselves. Our three strategic priorities outline how we intend to fulfill Thrown Stone’s mission in this time of great change.

#### 1. Take Smart Creative Risks

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted Thrown Stone to experiment with programming and formats that can work during a pandemic. The health and safety of our audience and our company members is always our first priority, and we are committed to discovering creative ways to connect with audiences while complying with all public safety measures. We will also invest in more commissions of new plays and hold virtual workshops of new plays that show promise.

#### 2. Share Ownership of the Mission

Thrown Stone will recommit to our service area, defined as Fairfield, Westchester, and Putnam Counties. We will build an ensemble of local artists, offer training and education for our particular area of practice, and create more channels for audience input and participation. We will continue to lead and participate in essential community conversations, confabs (such as the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut’s *Walk in Their Shoes*), and panels, commissions, and collaborations with our peer nonprofits. We will found and recruit an Artistic Advisory Board of nationally recognized artists to advise the Artistic Directors and make recommendations on new work and opportunities to serve.

#### 3. Achieve Diverse Representation

We believe that representation is essential to diversity, equity, and inclusion and we will pursue diverse representation in our board, staff, and offering through the cultivation of authentic relationships based on trust and transparency.

As we developed and shared these ideas over the past year, they grew clearer and more action-oriented. They’ve also become an excellent tool of alignment when shared with other artists and stakeholders. We will continue to refine and build on these priorities over the next year as we continue to evolve new ways of fulfilling our mission.

We welcome your questions, comments, or suggestions on these strategic priorities.

Email [jason@thrownstone.org](mailto:jason@thrownstone.org) or

[jonathan@thrownstone.org](mailto:jonathan@thrownstone.org) any time,

or give us a call at (203) 442-1714.

Likewise, if you are an artist living in our service area, we want you to know

Thrown Stone’s mission is yours to share. ☺

# 2020 SEASON RECAP

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC FORCED THROWN STONE TO INITIALLY POSTPONE, and ultimately cancel our 2020 season.

Thrown Stone actively engaged in the national conversation about **race and social justice** this year, participating in the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut's *Walk in Their Shoes* framework, conference sessions sponsored by the National New Play Network, and a collaboration with the Ridgefield Arts Council and Compassionate Ridgefield.

## AMMI: REFRAMING AMERICA

In July, we announced the Daniel E. Offutt III Charitable Trust awarded Thrown Stone a grant to commission a new play about Ammi Phillips (1788-1865). Ammi Phillips worked as a traveling portrait painter throughout Connecticut, Massachusetts and New York in the early 1800s. We first learned about him on *Searching For The Lost Limner*, an episode of Davis Dunavin's *Off The Path* podcast, which explored the fascinating story of how his legacy as one of the most prolific folk painters of his time was uncovered.

Just as fascinating was the world Ammi lived in, bookended by the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. His life coincided with the gradual abolition of slavery in Connecticut between 1784 and 1848 — a time of massive change in America. His story invites us to reflect on the great changes facing us today, in the same region, two centuries later.

We chose award-winning playwright and previous Thrown Stone collaborator, **Jacqueline Goldfinger** (*The Arsonists*, 2018), for the project. Jacqui's plays are complex tapestries of the American experience. Her characters are everyday, often overlooked Americans, whose struggles we connect with, while acknowledging their problematic legacies.

The commission was recently profiled by the Cultural Alliance of Western Connecticut in their *The Arts Are Greater Than* campaign:



Work on the new play will begin in January 2021. Workshops and public readings will be held in October of that year in collaboration with noted Ammi Phillips historian and collector Barbara Holdridge, the Ridgefield Library, Keeler Tavern Museum and History Center, Ridgefield Historical Society, Kent Historical Society, and other local organizations. The American Folk Art Museum, whose collection includes several works by Phillips, will be working with Thrown Stone in an advisory capacity for the play. We look forward to inviting you to take part in the development of this new play. Ø



Playwright Jacqueline Goldfinger



*Portrait of Rhoda Goodrich (Mrs. William Northrop) Bentley and Daughter.*  
Ammi Phillips; New York, 1815-1820.



*Portrait of George C. Sunderland (detail).*  
Ammi Phillips, Somers, New York; 1840.



Tony Meneses, Phanésia Pharel<sup>1</sup>, Catherine Yu, Kholoud Sawaf<sup>2</sup>, the Cass Gilbert Fountain on Main Street in Ridgefield<sup>3</sup>, Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, West Lane Inn.

## 2021 Season Preview

**THIS FALL**, as it became clear that widespread COVID-19 vaccinations would not be complete until the late summer months of 2021, we had to face the possibility that a season of indoor theatre would not be safe or practicable. It was crucial to find another way to connect with our audience. Just as important was our renewed commitment to achieve diverse representation in our board, staff, and offering. With these imperatives in mind, we enlisted the support of our local partners and devised a plan to meet the palpable need we feel as citizens and neighbors to come together to write our next chapter.

Thrown Stone's 2021 season will consist of **three world premieres** to be performed at **three outdoor locations** in Ridgefield, August 26 - September 12, 2021. The plays will be commissioned as **short, site-specific works to be performed in sequence** at Keeler Tavern Museum, The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, and West Lane Inn as a **single "roving production"** (where the audience follows the action from location to location). Three playwrights have been selected to explore the theme of *The Suburbs*: Tony Meneses, Phanésia Pharel, and Catherine Yu. Kholoud Sawaf has been selected to direct.

Thrown Stone's 2021 programming will engage our region with a bold new theatrical experience that centers BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) work and stories, while doing so in a format that is 100% compliant with public health guidelines.



Henry J. and Erna D. Leir

## Season Underwriters

Thrown Stone thanks 2021 Season Underwriters, The Leir Foundation and the Daniel E. Offutt III Charitable Trust for their generous and visionary support of new theatre.



Daniel E. Offutt III

## Accessibility

As we continue to evolve and grow, we are committed to expanding the way we think about accessibility across all our activities. In 2021, with support from the Offutt Charitable Trust, all regular performance tickets will be subsidized to \$39; and preview tickets will be subsidized to \$20. To help make the production accessible for people of all abilities, a \$25 closed-captioned digital version will also be offered.

## ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

**Kholoud Sawaf** was born and raised in Damascus, Syria. She has worked and trained in theatre and television in Syria, Lebanon, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and the United States. Recent credits include *Much Ado About Nothing* (Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival, T.Y.A.), *Vietgone*, and *10,000 Balconies* (TheatreSquared). *10,000 Balconies* was conceived, written, and directed by Sawaf after having received a \$250,000 grant from the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art. A recipient of the Classical Directing Fellowship from the Drama League in New York, she collaborated with Tina Packer at Shakespeare & Company on *Cymbeline*. At the Manhattan Theatre Club (as a Jonathan Alper Directing Fellow) and at Oregon Shakespeare Festival (as part of the FAIR Program), she was the assistant director of *Vietgone*, both under the direction of May Adrales. Currently, she is co-devising and co-directing *Curbside Theatre* in collaboration with ARKANSASTAGED ensemble, while also collaborating with playwright Joe Claroco and actor/educator Mohamad Al Rifaie on a new work *Rafiq* (Onley Theatre Center). Sawaf holds an MFA in Directing from the University of Arkansas and a B.A. in Mass Communication from the American University of Sharjah.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHTS

**Tony Meneses** was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and raised in Albuquerque and Dallas. His plays include *Guadalupe in the Guest Room*, *The Women of Padilla*, *twenty50*, and *The Hombres*. He's an alum of the Soho Rep Writer/Director Lab, Ars Nova Play Group, the Sundance Institute Playwrights Retreat at Ucross, Playwrights Realm Writing Fellowship, Youngblood, and has been previously developed at the LARK Playwrights' Week, the Berkeley Rep Ground Floor, the WildWind Performance Lab, the Denver Center New Play Summit, The Old Globe Powers New Voices Festival, and the Pacific Playwrights Festival. He's a two-time recipient of the Kennedy Center Latinx Playwriting Award, is published by Dramatists Play Service, and has been previously commissioned by the Denver Center, Two River Theater, and The Juilliard School; he is currently under commission from The Old Globe. Education: The University of Texas at Austin, Iowa Playwrights Workshop, Juilliard.

**Phanésia Pharel** is a Haitian-American playwright who is currently focusing on the divine metaphysical dilemma of Black and Latinx girlhood. Generally, her plays span revolutions, islands, and Afro-Futurism. Her first play, *Penelope*, was selected as one of four in the nation to be workshopped at the International Thespian Festival and was subsequently published in *Dramatics* magazine and by Samuel French. One of her favorites, *Shovel Me Away*, was produced at Micro Theater Miami and received the Best Of The Best 2016 award. Her monologue, *My Kid, My Life*, appears in the 2015 City Theatre anthology. Her play *And Other Dreams We Had* was a finalist for the City Theatre National Short Playwriting award. She attends Barnard College of Columbia University where she recently won the Brandt Playwriting award and the Helen Prince Memorial Prize for excellence in dramatic composition. She works as a Teaching Artist for ViBe Theater Experience. In terms of development, she is currently an Artist in Residence for New York Stage and Film, was a 2020 National Young Playwright Residency for the Echo Theater Company of Los Angeles and is a proud member of the Dramatist Guild of America.

**Catherine Yu** is a writer of plays and librettos. Her plays include *Le Jeté* (2019 BAPF Semifinalist), *The Day is Long to End* (University of Florida production), *The Things You Tell Yourself* (2019 Yellow Earth short-list) and *The Sun Experiment* (NYCFringe Festival Excellence in Playwriting; Time Out NY's Top Ten Nightlife and Music Events). She has been a 2016 NYSCA/NYFA fellow, a MacDowell Colony Fellow, a Soho Rep W/D Lab writer and a New York Theatre Workshop Emerging Artist of Color. Her short plays have been commissioned by 52nd Street Project, Two Headed Rep and Planned Parenthood among others. Her one-act *A Sand Romance* was a 2016 Heidman Award finalist. Her arts writing and poetry have been published by Hyperallergic and Dutch Kills Press. She also wrote the libretto to a one-act opera in development adapted from Svetlana Alexievich's *Secondhand Time*. She has served as a grant panelist for the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and the Brooklyn Arts Council. BA: Stanford University. MFA: New York University.



## Meet Kimberly Wilson

We are proud to welcome Kimberly Wilson as **Associate Producer** for our 2021 Season.

A native of Minneapolis, MN, Kimberly was a founding acting company member of Mixed Blood Theater in Minneapolis and also performed at the renowned Penumbra Theater in St. Paul. After graduating from Breck School, Kimberly studied Fine Arts at Howard University.

In 2012, Kimberly wrote her own musical one-woman show, *A Journey*, and has performed it throughout the country, winning the Best Playwright Award at the 2016 Atlanta Black Theatre Festival.

Also in 2016, Kimberly played Frederick Douglass in the first public reading of *Sisters* by Joanne Hudson & Royal Shirée at the Keeler Tavern Museum & History Center. She directed the 2020 live and virtual production, working side-by-side with Producer and Keeler Tavern Executive Director, Hildegard Grob.

A Westport resident for the past 15 years, Kimberly is a loving mother and mother-in-law to her daughter Clorasteen Wilson and her daughter's husband Garrett Gobillot. She is a long-time member of Norfield Congregational Church in Weston and a founding member of SurviveOARS rowing team at Saugatuck Rowing Club in Westport. Kimberly is also a Realtor with Coldwell Banker Realty in Greenwich.

Read more about Kimberly at [thrownstone.org/kimberly-wilson](https://thrownstone.org/kimberly-wilson). ☎

# FACTS

## MISSION

To engage our region with new and reimagined theatre in intimate settings, creating a body of work that moves, connects, and challenges all who join the conversation.

## PERSONNEL

Jason Peck & Jonathan Winn,  
Co-Artistic Directors  
Gina Pulice, Artistic Associate/  
Company Development Manager  
Richard Harrison, Artistic Associate  
Maria McConville, Artistic Associate

## BOARD

Jason Peck, President  
Emily Wilson, Vice President  
Dean Miller, Treasurer  
Jonathan Winn, Secretary  
Jennifer Dineen  
Jeff Krulwich  
Andrew Levine  
Daniela Sikora  
Robert Trainer  
Jeffrey Warshaw

## GOVERNANCE

Thrown Stone is a 501(c)(3) organization.

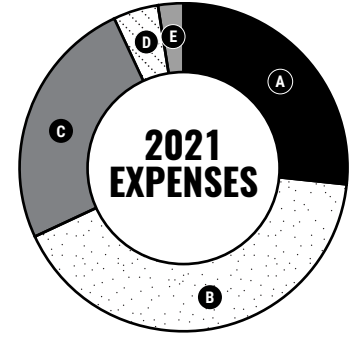
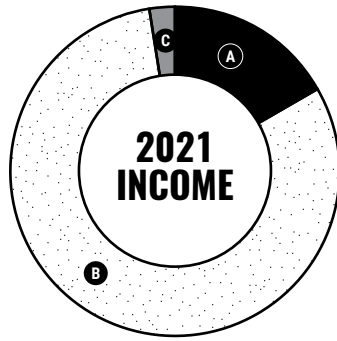
EIN: 81-1683094.

D-U-N-S Number: 080603526.

2017-2019 IRS Form 990, Bylaws, Conflict Of Interest Policy, and Sexual Harassment Policy available upon request.

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

	EXPENSES	NET ASSETS
2016	\$8,600	\$2,800
2017	\$64,800	\$14,700
2018	\$100,400	\$25,500
2019	\$122,300	\$41,500
2020	\$20,800	\$160,900
2021 EST.	\$203,600	\$61,000



<b>A.</b> In-Kind Donations . . . . .	\$35,600	<b>A.</b> Production, Space Rental, Marketing . . . . .	\$54,800
<b>B.</b> Donations and Grants . . . . .	\$171,700	<b>B.</b> Artist and Other Salaries . . . . .	\$84,000
<b>C.</b> Ticket Sales, Concessions, Other . . . . .	\$5,300	<b>C.</b> Commissions & Licensing . . . . .	\$50,700
<b>Total</b> . . . . .	<b>\$212,600</b>	<b>D.</b> Development . . . . .	\$9,500
		<b>E.</b> General Operating . . . . .	\$4,600
		<b>Total</b> . . . . .	<b>\$203,600</b>

## FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Although our 2020 season was put on hold due to COVID, our generous donors, grantors, and sponsors allowed us to apply their support to the 2021 season. In addition, we expect to receive generous in-kind donations from individuals and businesses for media, equipment, services, artist housing/travel, and fundraising events. Ticket revenue will be much lower in 2021 due to a grant that will subsidize ticket prices.

Of our 2021 expenses, 93% represent the direct costs of production — artist and other salaries, commissions and licensing, production, space rental and marketing costs. The other 7% is development and general operating costs.

We anticipate a substantial increase in our 2021 expenses compared to the 2019 season due to an increase in the number of artists and staff, production complexity, and the investment in commissions over licensing published plays, so we are counting on your support again to help bring these important new works to life.

## HISTORY

- 2016** Debut Summer Reading Series: *The Fields of Blue and Glow* by August Schulenberg and *Blink* by Kate Moira Ryan at the Ridgefield Library; Chekhov International Theatre Festival staged reading of *Milk* by Ross Dunsmore
- 2017** The U.S. Premiere of *Milk* by Ross Dunsmore at Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance; Chekhov International Theatre Festival staged reading of *The Butcher* by Gwydion Suilebhan
- 2018** The New England Premiere of *The Arsonists* by Jacqueline Goldfinger and The East Coast Premiere of *Where All Good Rabbits Go* by Karina Cochran, in repertory at Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance
- 2019** The Connecticut Premiere of *Cry it Out* by Molly Smith Metzler and The East Coast Premiere of *Birds of North America* by Anna Moench, in repertory at Ridgefield Conservatory of Dance; staged reading of *Willing* by Claire Glubiak at the Ridgefield Library
- 2020** Productions cancelled due to COVID-19.

## FUTURE PLANS

- 2021** New short commissions by Tony Meneses, Phanésia Pharel, and Catherine Yu, directed by Kholoud Sawaf; Full-length commission of *Ammi: Reframing America* by Jacqueline Goldfinger.

*93% of our expenses go directly into our programs*

# Thank you for being part of the Thrown Stone Family

## 2020 PARTNERS

### Media Partners

TownVibe  
HamletHub

### Producing (\$5,000+)

The Burry Fredrik Foundation  
Connecticut Department  
of Economic and Community  
Development Office of the Arts

### Contributing (\$1,000+)

The Ancient Mariner  
Barts Tree Service  
Fairfield County Bank  
The Wadsworth R. Lewis Fund  
Network for Good  
Ridgefield Thrift Shop

## 2021 UNDERWRITERS

The Leir Foundation  
The Daniel E. Offutt III  
Charitable Trust

## 2020 INDIVIDUAL DONORS

Anonymous

### Sapphire (\$1,000+)

Jon & Kim Jodka  
Jeanine & Andrew Levine  
Dean & Theresa Miller  
Daniela Sikora & Keitha Kinne  
Robert & Vicki Trainer

### Emerald (\$500+)

Jennifer Dineen  
Diana Glubiak  
Jeff Krulwich  
Amanda Curtin & Jonathan Winn

### Aquamarine (\$100+)

Christine Boris  
Elly Brown-Riley  
John Chopourian  
Margaret Curtin  
Sally & Barclay Griffiths  
Teresa Grillo  
Hattie Herman  
Emily Levi  
Marc Monte  
Jason & Alana Peck  
Gina Pulice  
Peter Sorenson  
Charles Stebbins  
James Steele  
Joel Third

### Amethyst (\$50+)

Derek Aframe  
Anonymous  
Lynda Bleustein  
Susie Buckley  
Deborah Carlson  
Lenore Eggleston-Herbst  
Juliet Furch  
Chuck & Barbara Jennes  
Vanessa Landegger  
Jennifer Rose  
Vivian Sorvall  
J.R. Sullivan  
Eva Welchman  
Rachel Wimpee

### Quartz (\$25+)

James Blau  
Barbara Distinti  
Hildegard Grob  
Joanne Hudson  
Mary Joyce  
Anne Lewson  
Clare Parme  
Eileen Peterson  
Angela Rice  
Kirsten Salley  
Jeremy Sawruk  
Angela Whitford

## COLLABORATORS

The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum  
The American Folk Art Museum  
Ann's Place  
Cultural Alliance  
of Fairfield County  
Cultural Alliance  
of Western Connecticut  
Harvard Business School  
Community Partners  
Barbara Holdridge  
Keeler Tavern Museum  
& History Center  
Kent Historical Society  
Chekhov Theatre Festival  
National New Play Network  
Ridgefield Arts Council  
Ridgefield Chamber  
of Commerce  
Ridgefield Chorale  
Ridgefield Conservatory  
of Dance  
Ridgefield Economic  
and Community  
Development Commission  
Ridgefield Historical Society  
Ridgefield Parks and Recreation  
Ridgefield Library  
West Lane Inn  
Women's Center of Danbury  
Woodcock Nature Center

## SPECIAL THANKS

Jennifer DiLaura  
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Andy Forsythe  
Barbara Holdridge  
Chuck & Barbara Jennes  
Connoisseur Media  
Lesley Lambton  
Rudy Marconi  
Geoffrey Morris  
Amy Piantaggini  
James Steele  
Allison Stockel  
Howard Turner  
WSHU Public Radio

We apologize for any errors or omissions — please email us with any corrections or if you wish to remain anonymous in the future.



Richard Harrison, Jonathan Winn, Jason Peck, and Gina Pulice

# THROWN STONE

A NEW THEATRICAL EXPERIENCE  
PO BOX 731 RIDGEFIELD, CT 06877  
203-442-1714

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in /COMPANY/THROWNSTONE



## FROM THE PLAYWRIGHTS

*“Working with Thrown Stone was a fantastic experience for me. They reached out, took a risk, and I’m deeply grateful for the connection they made with a fellow artist far away.”*  
— **Ross Dunsmore**, *Milk*, 2017

*“I wish that all theaters were as exuberant and innovative as Thrown Stone. They understand that both today’s audiences and the future of the American theatre rest on producing a wide-range of new work that exemplifies the breadth, depth, and spirit of the American experience.”*  
— **Jacqueline Goldfinger**, *The Arsonists*, 2018

*“I am so grateful for my experience with Thrown Stone. The whole performance was a dream. I was thrilled with the level of talent they were able to bring in, from the set design to the actors. They really tried to find ways to make the production benefit the writer, and they saw the script to its fullest vision.”*  
— **Karina Cochran**, *Where All Good Rabbits Go*, 2018

*“Thrown Stone is an incredibly dedicated group of artists who champion complex, vital new work. I was so honored to have a play in their season, and although I live far from Connecticut, I felt very included in the process and production. Every writer should send them plays!”*  
— **Anna Moench**, *Birds of North America*, 2019

*“Jason and Jonathan clearly create an environment that demands integrity, and it shows: Thrown Stone has quickly established itself as a true playwright’s theater, where today’s playwrights WANT to be programmed. I am very grateful to Thrown Stone for having me, and I’ll be very eager to work with them again!”*  
— **Molly Smith Metzler**, *Cry It Out*, 2019

Front Cover:  
*Girl in Red Dress with Cat and Dog*, Ammi Phillips, c. 1830-1835.

Back Cover:  
*Blond Boy with Primer, Peach, and Dog*, Ammi Phillips, c. 1836