

# Baril Takes a Dark Turn with WST

Koren Hill

A sense of humor. That's one way to describe Robert Baril, Warroad Summer Theatre's director of *Wait Until Dark*. A veteran of the stage, Baril, who is also a stand up comedian, has even opened for Louie Anderson in Las Vegas. He currently lives St. Louis Park, just west of Minneapolis and, in addition to stand up comedy, he is a substitute teacher by day.

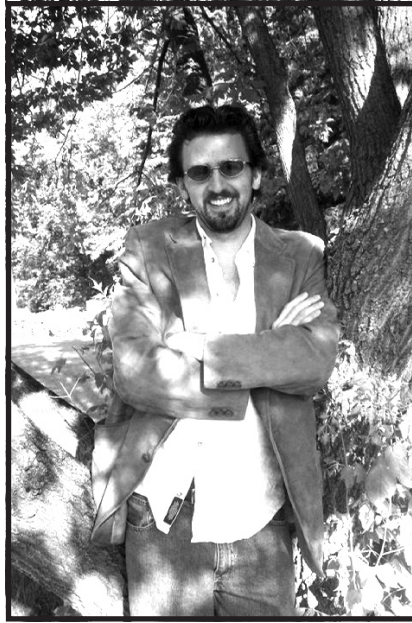
Robert began his career with WST in 2003 with the non-singing, barely-speaking role of Mr. Goldstone in the musical, *Gypsy*. And, he says, the creative restrictions placed on that role allowed him to ace it. As a side note, Robert also played the part of Patsy in that production and won the award for Best Youth Actor in a Minor Role. Baril has since lost count as to the number of productions he's been in, but it's at least ten. "I think most WST vets are like that, though. Some shows blend together with others, and before you know it, it's been seven or eight years," he says.

*Wait Until Dark* is the first play Baril has directed alone. Previously, he co-directed *Murder Once Removed* with Ben Johnston

in 2008 and *The Diviners* with Evie Halvorson in 2010. The experiences proved to be valuable and the cast of both plays went on to win multiple awards at the WST banquet.

Directing solo is a big step, and as the years have gone by, age, wisdom and experience have taught Robert well. "I like to think I have matured, if only a little, and have accrued some knowledge that I can share with others," Robert explained.

At the end of the day, though, what it really boils down to is that Robert just likes being part of Warroad Summer Theatre. And in his ever-comedic - but serious - way, he explains it best by saying, "I really enjoy having the opportunity to do live theatre up here because I get to work with some really great people and entertain my old community. It's also nice to see adults play again. I like being able to take familiar faces in the community, people everyone else already knows from their role in their regular day jobs (teacher, cop, librarian, etc.) and reintroduce them to that very



same community as robbers, thieves, farmers, little red-headed orphans, lonely and disfigured phantoms with dependency issues..." Well said, Robert. Well said.

*Wait Until Dark* will be performed at the Warroad High School mini theatre June 16-19 and June 22-25. All shows are at 7:30 p.m. For ticket information, call the WST box office at 218-386-3435.