



Kathleen Marshall at the first read-through of Goodspeed's *My Paris*. ©Diane Sobolewski.

The first production of a new musical is a thing both thrilling and terrifying. Most musicals these days have a rather protracted gestation period and the development process often goes on for several years. Along the way, you do readings and workshops for small groups of invited audiences—audiences made up of some friends and family, but mostly consisting of other theatre professionals. But the fact of the matter is that you don't really know what you have until you do your first production, until you put your show up in front of real people.

jointly have a plethora of Tony Awards and nominations. Add to that our wonderful music team of David Chase and David Gardos, my right hand man David Eggers, and all the folks here at Goodspeed and in New York City who have worked diligently to bring this show to life. And bringing the colorful world of Toulouse-Lautrec to life is a spectacular company of actors, each uniquely talented and creative, and collectively, a formidable group of fearless artists.

It truly does take a village to put together a show, and we are delighted that the town of Chester is hosting our creative village for the world premiere of *My Paris*.

We are thrilled that our first production of *My Paris* is happening here at Goodspeed's Norma Terris Theatre. Goodspeed has a long and distinguished history of developing new work and we are honored to be a part of that storied tradition. We thank you for being our first audience, for helping us to learn more about what we have created and for playing a crucial role in the development of a new show.

And now just a minute to talk about the "we" behind this new project. My amazingly brilliant colleagues have enough hardware between them to fill a museum. First of all, there's the legendary, world-famous and dapper Charles Aznavour, composer, lyricist and performer extraordinaire, whose many honors include his induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and an Honorary César Award, basically the French equivalent of an Oscar. Oh yeah, and M. Aznavour is also the Armenian Ambassador to Switzerland. The remarkably ingenious and charming Alfred Uhry's crowded shelves include an Oscar, the Pulitzer Prize and two Tony Awards. Speaking of Tonys, the astonishing Jason Robert Brown, who adapted M. Aznavour's French lyrics into English, has three Tonys of his own. Our incredible design team includes Derek McLane, Paul Tazewell and Don Holder, who