



Director Gabriel Barre

### **What is your vision for *A Sign of the Times*?**

*A Sign of the Times* is a brand-new show that features popular music from the mid-1960s and an original book and story by the creative and hilarious celebrity-writer, Bruce Vilanch. The Terris Theatre production will represent the very first time we will be staging the show and developing the physical production. Together with our excellent design team (Paul dePoo, Sets; Jennifer Caprio, Costumes; Ken Billington, Lighting; and Ben Percy, Projections), our learned music team led by Joseph Church and Rick Fox, and our terrific choreographer JoAnn

Hunter, we are conceiving a seamless new show that tells the story of a young woman who leaves the safety and security of a small Midwestern town to discover herself in the world of New York City. We see the show as kinetic and full of movement and dance that will bear the energy and tumult of that decade and will take Cindy and the audience on a real journey of self-discovery. We will use the music of the era to tap into a nostalgia for it, but will also be approaching things freshly to tell a story that offers relevancy to today's audiences and can exist as a "sign of our times," too. There will be lots of laughs, stunning visuals, and moments of emotional release as well. As our lead character of Cindy comes of age in the big city, we will also witness and remember the coming of age of America itself.

### **What are your inspirations?**

Of course, the music itself is the most vibrant inspiration. Many of the tunes were made popular by the wonderful Petula Clark and tell great stories in and of themselves. Visually, especially because we have made the choice that Cindy is a photographer who eventually finds a career in that field, we are also inspired by the photographs of Vivian Meier and others of the period. It was also an exciting time in photography, of course.

### **What plans do you have for working on your show at The Terris Theatre?**

We will make full use of the time afforded us at The Terris Theatre to try things with the audience and with the style of the show and the aesthetic. This will be a very flexible production so we can continue to experiment as we see what works and what doesn't, what's clear and what's not, and what is powerful for an audience and what is not...it is a luxury to have this time to develop—not just the story, music and dance in the show—but to refine the theatrical vocabulary of our piece.

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### **What can the audience expect to see?**

We will be working to really contrast the quiet, colorless, world of Centerville, Ohio with the color, splendor, and excitement of New York City. With a tight cast of 15 actor/singer/dancers, the audience will be taken on a fun-filled ride through the nightclubs, subways, cramped apartments, and penthouses of 1960 New York—and the music will be the blood of the show, pulsing through it all.

We are eager to share the work and get the valuable feedback from the smart, savvy, and educated Terris Theatre audience. Thank you all for the support and the opportunity to develop this show with you!