

1BERKSHIRE

BERKSHIRE LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Creative Economy Session Biographies **April 11, 2019**

Chris Post – Head Brewer/Founder, Wandering Star Craft Brewery

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Chris is founder and co-owner of Wandering Star Brewing Company, based in Pittsfield since June 2011. He is an English native who arrived in NYC from London in 1996 as an accountant and subsequently a structured finance banker. However the seeds of his eventual career had been sown long before when on his first trip to W Mass – indeed his first trip to the US – he had stumbled into the then newly opened Northampton Brewery, marveling at the shiny brewing equipment and wondering “do all bars in the US have these?” Following the global financial crisis in 2008, Chris began the transition from Manhattan to Becket armed with a diploma from the American Brewers Guild, a couple of years’ experience in Manhattan and Brooklyn brewpubs and most importantly a 15 barrel brewhouse he’d accidentally bought on Ebay while shopping for homebrewing supplies. The long search for a suitable brewery building gave rise to the Wandering Star name and ended with Chris scratching his head wondering how the heck to put all this stuff together in the new premises on Gifford St. Today Wandering Star is a popular weekend destination for Berkshire natives and tourists alike, while Chris self-distributes his products in kegs and cans to local bars, restaurants and package stores. Chris continues to live in Becket with Shannon and their two boys, all of whom help at the brewery on weekends, and is incredibly thankful to have landed up in the Berkshires. All because he went to a James Taylor concert by mistake.

Dawn Lane – Program & Artistic Director, CATA

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Dawn Lane is a graduate of Massachusetts College of Art and Design (1980, BFA) and Lesley University (1992, MEd). Her curiosity, training and experience with mixed ability casts started as a student at Jacob’s Pillow in the late 1980s. In the 90s, she worked with Paula Rais and Peter Dimuro, piloting the Elder Arts Initiative thru the Massachusetts Cultural Council to build opportunities for artists to make community based work in elder settings throughout the Commonwealth. Jacob’s Pillow Dance Award Initiative, NEFA, The Martha Boschen Fund, Massachusetts Cultural Council, Mid Atlantic Arts Council, LEF Foundation, Cottonwood Foundation, and VSA Arts International have all funded her work. Dawn was awarded a Massachusetts Cultural Council Choreography Fellowship a distinguished alumnus award from Massachusetts College of Art & Design, the Outstanding Dance Educator Award from Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education and the Unsung Hero Award for Berkshire County, MA. Dawn is one of six nationally chosen choreographers/dance educators to lead Curriculum in Motion (CIM) residencies for Jacob’s Pillow, a model that draws upon K-12 curriculum frameworks as a source for kinetic learning and student driven choreography. Dawn joined Community Access to the Arts in 1994 as a faculty member and has served as Program & Artistic Director since 1999.

Nick Paleologos, Executive Director, Berkshire Theatre Group

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Nick Paleologos joined the Berkshire theater Group last year as Executive Director. Nick served for 14 years as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, where his primary focus was education and the arts.

After leaving the Legislature in 1990, Nick helped spearhead the drive to create the Boston Renaissance Charter Public School—the largest of its kind in the country at that time. He then served for over a decade as one of its Founding Trustees.

In September of 2000, he founded Boston's Stuart Street Playhouse where he was the Producing Director for nearly a decade, and taught a course in theater production at Tufts University.

From 2007 until 2010, he also served as Executive Director of the Massachusetts Film Office. Under his leadership, the Film Office attracted more than a billion dollars of new direct spending on film and television production to the Commonwealth. Also during his tenure, Massachusetts-made movies (including: *The Fighter*, *Shutter Island*, *The Town*, *The Social Network*, *Game Plan*, *21*, *Mall Cop*, *The Proposal*, and *Ted*) earned a record sixteen Academy Award-nominations, and topped *Variety's* weekly box-office chart an unprecedented ten times in four years.

A two-time Tony Award-winning producer, Nick is also the recipient of a Primetime Emmy Award-nomination for the HBO film *In The Gloaming*. His other film for HBO was the Emmy-nominated *Lansky* Motion pictures include: *Hurlyburly* and *Ghosts Of Mississippi*. He has produced documentaries for both *Frontline* and *The American Experience*.

In 2011 he was appointed Executive Director of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. During his six year tenure, the Council awarded thousands of grants totaling close to \$100 million in support of the Garden State's most talented artists and arts organizations.

He won the 2014 Harvardwood Writers' Competition for Best Feature Screenplay (*The Story Of Television*). Nick is a cum laude graduate of Tufts University. He received his Masters Degree in Public Administration from Harvard University. He is the recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from the Boston Conservatory, and in 2016 he was awarded the Medal of Excellence from Rowan University.

Michelle Iglesias - Contemporary Artist and Art Instructor

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As an active member of the National Association of Women Artists, Oil Painters of America and the Berkshire Art Association, Michelle Iglesias is a self-taught artist who first took to painting for its therapeutic values after being diagnosed with cancer. Her passion and perseverance has led her to become a nationally recognized award-winning artist, art instructor, and the successful business owner of Berkshire Paint and Sip. She continues to encourage and foster creativity in her students and others inspired by her art.

Ms. Iglesias' paintings are influenced by family connections, nature, and travel. Consisting of the tumultuous dimensions that nature offers, portraits with personalities, and engaging exotic landscape compositions, her canvases invite viewer involvement and have been described as insightful, symbolic, and clarifying. She conveys the vision of nature's grandeur to produce artwork that is expressive, of the highest quality, and will grab the viewer's interest and attention.

A Berkshire-area native, Michelle Iglesias was born in 1972 in Blandford, MA and currently resides in Dalton, MA. She entered in to the art scene in 2002 when she opened Piece of My Art Gallery and Frame Shop in Westfield, MA. Two years after opening the gallery she was diagnosed with breast cancer at the age of 31 which led her to pick up her own paint brush for the first time, discovering the therapeutic value of creating art. Since then she has been showing her work regularly in group and solo exhibitions and her work is included in a variety of private collections.