

BWW Spotlight Series: Meet Actor Rob Nagle from “Human Interest Story” at the Fountain Theatre

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by Shari Barrett

With the current theatre world on hiatus, I have created a Spotlight Series on Broadway World Los Angeles which features interviews with some of the many talented artists who make our Los Angeles theatre community so exciting and vibrant thanks to their ongoing contribution to keeping the arts alive in the City of the Angels. And like all of us, how are they dealing with the abrupt end of productions in which they were involved?

This Spotlight focuses on Rob Nagle, a proud member of the Antaeus Theatre Company and the Troubadour Theater Company, who was in the fourth week of performances of the world premiere of *Human Interest Story* at The Fountain Theatre when the production was forced to postpone the run.



Shari Barrett (SB): What would you like readers to know about your theatrical background?

Rob Nagle (Rob): I've been performing in the theater for nearly 40 years, the past 23 of them while based in Los Angeles. Cut my teeth at Northwestern University, then in the incomparable Chicago theater scene, before heading to New York City to play on the stages there.

(SB): What production(s) were you involved with when word went out you needed to immediately postpone/cancel the show?



(Rob): I was performing at The Fountain Theatre in our fourth week of the run of *Human Interest Story*, written & directed by Stephen Sachs. The show has been suspended, but not cancelled. Producers intend to continue the run once we return to some kind of normal.

(SB): How was the shutdown communicated with the cast and production team?

(Rob): The Fountain Theatre was in remarkably close touch with us, the cast & production team, keeping a keen eye on our safety as well as that of their loyal audiences. They made plans, and changed them accordingly, all based on the best recommendations of Mayor Garcetti and Governor Newsom.

(SB): Are plans in place to present that production at a future date, or is the cancellation permanent?

(Rob): I'm thrilled that the Fountain chose not to cancel the production. The plan is to reopen *Human Interest Story* as soon as we are all able to gather again, and do it safely. My fingers and toes have been crossed for two and a half weeks straight, and they're starting to cramp. But this too shall pass.

(SB): I certainly enjoyed the production and I really enjoy that the cast meets the audience in front of the theater after the performance. Sharing a link to my review of the show, which I hope lots of people will go see when the ban is lifted on public gatherings: [/los-angeles/article/BWW-Review-Timely-New-Play-HUMAN-INTEREST-STORY-Focuses-on-Homelessness-Celebrity-Worship-and-Truth-in-American-Journalism-20200224](https://www.los-angeles.com/entertainment/theater/2020/02/24/bww-review-timely-new-play-human-interest-story-focuses-on-homelessness-celebrity-worship-and-truth-in-american-journalism-20200224)

(SB): What future productions on your schedule are also affected by the shutdown?

(Rob): From my understanding, The Fountain Theatre hopes to slide the schedule to accommodate more weeks of *Human Interest Story* and then lead into their production of *If I Forget*. Personally, everything is at sixes and sevens, so who knows what's next or how plans will be affected. I know today, and most of tomorrow. That's about it.

(SB): How are you keeping the Arts alive while at home by using social media or other online sites?



(Rob): I am astonished by how inventive people have become in this "Life in the Time of Corona." I have taught acting classes, taken part in several virtual readings and a playwrights lab, watched live interviews, live podcasts, musical performances, and even drag shows; all through Zoom, Instagram Live, YouTube Live, and StageIt. These opportunities are truly strange and wonderful, all at once.

(SB): *What thoughts would you like to share with the rest of the L.A. Theatre community while we are all leaving the Ghostlight on and promising to return back to the stage soon?*

(Rob): This is our new reality - at least for now. I know it's challenging and it hurts some of our hearts that our art has become relegated to this. But I am reframing this time as a gift; as an opportunity for me as a creative person to be inventive in different ways, to be a braver explorer, and live in the uncomfortable part of now, as well as to encourage myself to change how I look at and relate to the world, and to my work. I can choose to accept this amazing RESET for what it is, or I can choose to let it destroy me, and my "art heart." But I believe complacency is the greatest enemy of creativity.

The Persians had it right when they said, "this too shall pass."

(SB): *Yes, please stay at home, everyone. Wear a mask and gloves when you go out. Carry hand sanitizer. #WashYourHands Do what you can to #FlattentheCurve so we can all get back inside the world of theatre in Los Angeles.*

Photo credit:

Rob Nagle headshot by Stephanie Girard



Shari Barrett meeting the cast of *Human Interest Story* after the performance at The Fountain Theatre. Photo by Patrizia Barretto

Rob Nagle and Aleisha Force in *Human Interest Story* at The Fountain Theatre. Photo by Jenny Graham

Photos of Rob Nagle and Tanya Alexander in *Human Interest Story* at The Fountain Theatre. Photo by Jenny Graham