

# Daily Inspiration: Meet Rob Nagle

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photo by Stephanie Girard

**Today we'd like to introduce you to Rob Nagle.**

**Hi Rob, we're thrilled to have a chance to learn your story today. So, before we get into specifics, maybe you can briefly walk us through how you got to where you are today?**

When I was around ten years old, I was involved with my elementary school choir, singing in venues around Illinois and Wisconsin. One day, I was asked to audition for the Northern Illinois University Opera Workshop production of Puccini's Gianni Schicchi. An opera, I thought. Who me? That's not like anything I've ever been a part of before, but they needed a kid to play Gherardino, a seven-year-old who was intent on playing marbles. I got the part and soon found myself in this amazing community of undergraduate and graduate students and creative beings. They were fun, they were talented, they were embracing. It was like being in a summer camp of merrymakers, a circus of like-minded performers. Acting classes and the Children's Community Theatre of DeKalb, Illinois, here I come. I was only ten, but I'd found my people, and I'd found La Vie Bohème, and I never looked back.

**We all face challenges, but looking back would you describe it as a relatively smooth road?**

Has it been a smooth road? I have never heard of a smooth road in the career of a creative person, and my journey is no exception. You can do everything right, get all the training you think you might require, hustle for work opportunities like a boss ... and still never get a job. No one is entitled to work in the creative industries. Each time it happens, it's something of a miracle to me. And it feels like it happens when talent meets fortune — or is it chance? —

under stars when they are aligned. Like so many others, I have struggled on this not-at-all-smooth road. There is very little security in the field. Employment is rarely reliable, so financial struggles abound. For every job you book, you've often had dozens of rejections, so keeping your head up and not giving in to self-doubt can be a recurring struggle. And because you don't get to schedule your jobs according to the timetable that best suits the needs of your loved ones, you can struggle with personal relationships. I'm grateful that my partner is not a "civilian," so she understands the industry and when I need to miss a wedding or a funeral or any other life event because of work.

**Thanks – so what else should our readers know about your work and what you're currently focused on?**

I am an actor . My work spans from film to television to theater, and I love bouncing back and forth between them. I don't specialize in any area, style, or any particular type of character. I strive to do them all and equally well. Colleagues have described me as the mayor of Los Angeles theater, but I've also appeared in pretty much every television show with "crime" or "criminal" in the title at least once. I'm known for being one of those actors who can fit into the "Everyman" category. I'm probably most proud of the fact that I've been a professional actor since 1992 when I graduated from Northwestern University with a double major in theatre and philosophy. I'm also very proud of my career as a teacher, as I teach acting regularly at a number of schools and acting studios around Los Angeles. What I think sets me apart is that I'm not interested in directing anyone's work or nudging them toward choices I might make as an actor. I'm interested in encouraging them to explore every text they are given, to figure out in a deep and imaginative way what matters to them in those texts on an existential level, and then to impart those discoveries to our audiences, whoever and wherever they might be.

**Who else deserves credit in your story?**

I have been fortunate to have many supporters and advocates over the years. My parents were always very encouraging, though rightfully also concerned, about my career choice. Though they never tried to dissuade me from pursuing what I love. She was a computer scientist, and he was a teacher, as well as an educational administrator, so the fact that they didn't encourage me to run away from my chosen profession is worth mentioning. Ed Asner and Garry Marshall were two other brilliant mentors. Their words of support, the lessons they taught me, their friendships, and the work we did together are all things I will always cherish. And I miss them a great deal. As Garry would say, "It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice." And as Ed would say, "Everyone's counting on you, so don't fuck it up. And don't make me look bad or I'll kill you." Made me smile every time. And most important cheerleaders over the last decade have been my wife Heather Allyn, my manager, Susan Zachary, and my agent Bobby Moses. Without them and their thoughtful counsel — not to mention their fan-ship for me and my work — I would probably be totally at sea.



photo by Jeff Lorch- with Jeffrey Nordling, Brothers Play, Legacy LA



photo by Jenny Graham – The Judas Kiss, Boston Court Pasadena



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photo by Patrick Weishampel – I Love to Eat, Portland Center Stage

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photo by Stephanie Girard





with Elizabeth Gillies, Dynasty



with Hilary Swank, New Year's Eve





with Justin Chambers, *Grey's Anatomy*



photo by Jenny Graham – with Tanya Alexander, *Human Interest Story*, Fountain Theatre

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