



**Igor Golyak, Founder & Artistic Director**  
**Sara Stackhouse, Managing Producer**

## **2023-2024 Season Announcement Letter**

**From Artistic Director Igor Golyak**

Dear Friends,

In 2000, a controversial article was published in a Polish newspaper, followed by the book “Neighbors” (both written by historian Jan Gross), which unearthed shocking and difficult information. The response was a great outcry from the Polish and as they struggled with new ideas of culpability and responsibility, and tried to face a painful past. It also illuminated a truth that it hard to accept — that evil can live within us and next to us unexpectedly, and is part of our human nature. In 1941 in the small Polish village of Jedwabne, 1600 Jews were murdered, not by Nazis as earlier reported, but by citizens of the town — their classmates, people they grew up with, studied with, fell in love with, played sports with... their neighbors.

Today, as I write this, Ukraine is on both the counter-offensive and the defensive, responding to strikes and atrocities propagated by those who are their neighbors and relatives in Russia.

And history has confirmed that Ukrainians collaborated as police in the massacre in Babi-Yar, Kyiv, where my grandmother’s family and over 33,000 other Jews were exterminated, also in 1941.

These irreconcilable stories collide within me, have continued repercussions in the communities I answer to. They confront us with a part of humanity that is hard to understand. How do we find a way to live responsibly, believe in something good, and enjoy the time we have with each other, our families and loved ones in the face of this reality?

This season at Arlekin we are trying to untangle these traumas and pain points, to make sense of the complicated history of Jews, of Europe, and of our lives here and now in the US. Our projects this year are an exploration of humanity, an effort to comprehend what we might do and who we might be in the face of future aggression and oppression, and how we might live together with meaning. I invite you to join me as we delve into this beautiful, challenging set of artistic projects, and hope to see you at the theater.

With gratitude for your continued support,

Igor Golyak