

# STRAWDOG

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## THEATRE COMPANY

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3829 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago IL 60613

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[www.myspace.com/strawdogtheatre](http://www.myspace.com/strawdogtheatre), [www.strawdog.org/strawblog](http://www.strawdog.org/strawblog)

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PRESS RELEASE

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Media passes, photographs, videos, interviews and additional materials available.

### **Brett Neveu's World Premiere Musical About Chicago's Political Machine "Old Town" Closes Strawdog's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season**

**WHAT:** Strawdog Theatre Company closes their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary season with a world premiere musical "**Old Town**," by **Brett Neveu**, with original live music by Strawdog ensemble member **Mikhail Fiksel**, directed by ensemble member **Kyle Hamman**, and featuring a 10-piece live band. Set on election night at Chicago's fictional Whilter Hotel, "**Old Town**" tells the story of the Wertz family political dynasty and their date with the fickle Chicago voting public. Patriarch Jerry's long career has been full of kissing babies and greasing palms, but will a sudden slip in the polls spell the end for this rough and tumble politician? Or will his legacy fall to his daughter, rising political star Cindy Wertz? Acclaimed playwright Neveu returns to Strawdog, where he last contributed world premiere radio plays for the company's "*Wireless*" series in 2005. "**Old Town**" runs about two hours with one intermission, with free admittance to "*Strawdog Late Nights*" following the Friday and Saturday night shows.

**WHERE:** Strawdog Theatre, 3829 N. Broadway Ave., Chicago, IL 60613  
Red Line Sheridan stop; 36-Broadway and 80-Irving Park buses  
\$5 honor parking at Greeley School, 832 W. Sheridan, weekends after 5 p.m.

**WHEN:** Opens Sunday, April 27, 2008, 7 p.m. (reception following)  
Closes on Saturday, May 31, 2008  
Runs Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 7 p.m.  
Previews on April 24 and April 25, 8 p.m.  
Special Gala Benefit performance on April 26, 7 p.m. (\$40)  
Added show on Monday, May 5, 8 p.m. (\$5 industry/\$20 regular)  
Added Thursday show with pre-show reception on May 15, 8 p.m. (\$30)  
Added Thursday show on May 29, 8 p.m. (\$20)  
Special closing night soiree on May 31, 8 p.m. (\$30 ticket-includes post-show refreshments)

**TICKETS:** Publish this number: 773-528-9696, [www.strawdog.org](http://www.strawdog.org)  
\$20 for all regular performances; \$10 for previews  
\$15 for students and seniors (with ID), and for groups of ten or more  
\$5 for industry show on Monday, May 5 (with resume/headshot/card); \$20 otherwise  
\$40 for Gala Benefit on April 26, including cocktails and appetizers  
\$30 for Theatre Thursday on May 15, 8 p.m. (includes pre-show reception with refreshments)  
Regular ticket purchase also includes admittance to "*Strawdog Late Nights*" (improv, comedy, music, etc.) directly after Friday and Saturday shows

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## **“Old Town” / Page 2**

- STAFF:** Strawdog ensemble members **Kyle Hamman** (Director), **Sean T. Mallery** (Lighting Design), **Aly Renee Greaves** (Costume Design), **Mikhail Fiksel** (Original Score) and **Erin Carlson** (Stage Manager). With guest artists **Mike Smallwood** (Scenic Design), **Eilleen Mallery** (Choreographer), **Andra Velis-Simon** (Vocal Coach) and **Cortney Hurley** (Production Manager).
- CAST/BAND:** Strawdog ensemble members **John Ferrick** (Daniel Deering), **Christopher Hainsworth** (Scotty Weltz), **Tom Hickey** (Andy Ringer), **Shannon Hoag** (Karen Mosher) and **Kat McDonnell** (Cindy Weltz). With guest artists **Johnny Moran** (Mike Michaels), **Mike Ooi** (Mel Dank), **Anne Sheridan Smith** (Liz Weltz), **Danny Taylor** (Ted Minor) and **Damian Vanore** (Joseph Hild). Live music in **“Old Town”** will be a big band with a rhythm section, including an upright bass, keyboard, electric jazz guitar, violin, viola, and a horn section of trumpet, saxophone and trombone.
- LATE NIGHT:** *“Strawdog Late Nights”* are post-show offerings almost every Friday and Saturday night following the “regular” show, free to those that attended the prime-time show as well as anybody else who’d like to see these events. Strawdog’s Hugen Hall, an intimate 50-seat space with a beer and wine bar next to the theatre, hosts a variety of performance programs including live music, open mics, and burlesque reviews, and features Chicago Magazine’s top late night program *“The Game Show Show...and Stuff!”* plus *“The Mic”* (music and poetry), *“Kyle’s Basement”* (sketch, variety and music), *“Next Up”* (open mic), and other rotating events. For up-to-date weekly information, visit [www.strawdog.org](http://www.strawdog.org)
- FUNDERS:** Strawdog Theatre Company is supported in part by the **Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Alphawood Foundation, the Illinois Arts Council (a state agency), Elizabeth F. Cheney Foundation, Gerry Brown and Associates**, and the annual support of businesses and individuals.
- MISSION:** From fresh takes on the classics and kitchen-sink dramas to inventive world premieres, Strawdog Theatre Company is committed to presenting great stories. We tell these stories to provoke the important questions and excite the imagination of our audiences. And we use our amazing, intimate space to fully immerse people into the unique worlds that we create for each one of our productions. Founded in 1988, the Strawdog ensemble has consistently produced shows built on authentic human connections, and our comfortable 70-seat home in Lakeview is perfect for offering our audience a quintessential Chicago storefront theatre experience. *“The whole wide world in a little black box.”* Strawdog is a proud member of the NorthHalsted Area Merchant Ass’n, The Chicago Storefront Theatre District and the League of Chicago Theatres.
- HISTORY:** Strawdog Theatre Company was formed in 1988 by a group of actors who had performed together in a production of Euripides’s *“Helen”* at a (now defunct) theatre on the west side. The group took their name from Sam Peckinpah’s movie *“Straw Dogs”* (*Theatresaurus Rex* was, thankfully, the runner-up), and they produced their first show, Len Jenkin’s *“Five of Us”* at a (now defunct) space in Bucktown. At the time, the Chicago Reader said “Strawdog Theatre Company’s inaugural production brings ... truth home with a vengeance,” and Skyline Chicago added “The Strawdog troupe shows us what an ensemble can do.” Twenty years later, Strawdog Theatre Company has survived the ups and downs of Chicago theatre, and is still dedicated to bringing the truth to audiences through the committed work of an award-winning ensemble of actors and designers.

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