Meet the Cast

CHARLES BEARCE (*Messenger, Chorus*) was born and raised in Melrose, MA. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts in 1962. He served in the US Navy from 1962–1966. A Naval Flight Officer, he flew as a C-130E navigator and was involved in transport operations around the world. In 1965 Charles took part in the airlift operation into the Dominican Republic; in 1966, transport support operations in Vietnam. Discharged that year, he remained in the active Naval Reserve until 1968. After working in television production for several years he moved to New York City and practiced social work at The Society for Seaman’s Children. He graduated with a MSW from Fordham University School of Social Services in 1971. He was a psychotherapist at the Wing Memorial Hospital in Palmer, MA, from 1972–1981. In 1981 he became Coordinator of Alcoholism Services at the Warren-Washington MHC in Glens Falls, NY. Here he became involved with combat veterans who served from WWII to the present day Iraq/Afghanistan Wars, and he continued this work into private practice until retirement at the end of 2013. With Robin Temple he is co-founder of Veterans’ Voices. He has been married to Sue Elliot for 32 years, with whom he has three adult children, two grandchildren, and one grandchild on the way in May of 2016.

PAUL PINES (*Director*) grew up in Brooklyn around the corner from Ebbet’s Field and passed the early 60s on the Lower East Side of New York. He shipped out as a Merchant Seaman, spending September 1965 to February 1966 on the SS Esparta delivering supplies to combat zones in Vietnam. In the 70s he operated his Bowery jazz club, The Tin Palace, which became the setting for his novel, *The Tin Angel* (Morrow, 1983). *Redemption* (Editions du Rocher, 1997), a second novel, is set against the Guatemalan Maya genocide. *My Brother’s Madness* (Curbstone Press, 2007), a memoir, explores the unfolding of intertwined lives. He has published twelve books of poetry, most recently *Message from the Memoirist* and *Charlotte Songs*. As a teen Paul studied acting at the Dramatic Workshop with distinguished German director Irwin Piscator, and over the years he has performed in and written for theater and film. Paul lives with his wife, Carol, in Glens Falls, NY, where he practices as a psychotherapist working with a range of trauma-based issues, and he hosts the Lake George Jazz Weekend. He is proud to have shipped out with Veterans’ Voices as director of Sophocles’ *Ajax*. It’s been an epic voyage.
**RYAN SMITHSON** (*Ajax*) served in Iraq with the 463rd Engineer Battalion from 2004–2005 where he conducted road repair, base fortifications, and various earth-moving operations. Upon returning home, he enrolled at Hudson Valley Community College where he began writing about his combat experiences, culminating in his 2009 memoir, *Ghosts of War: The True Story of a 19-Year-Old GI* (HarperCollins). He is an alumnus of Empire State College, where he performed in the play *War Stories* in 2012. He recently received his Master’s in English from the University at Albany. His thesis, *Ten Klicks South of Whiskey*, is a play about a cavalry unit in Iraq and their entrance into the world of mythology through an unprecedented reputation for war-making. The play is being produced at Averill Park High School on November 13, 2015. Ryan lives in Rotterdam with his wife, Heather, and their two children.

**MICHELLE TAYLOR** (*Tecmessa*) enlisted in the Army in 1984 as a Military Police Officer. She trained at Fort McClellan, AL, where she earned her Police Officer Certification; she was assigned to the Seneca Army Depot in 1985. Shortly after this assignment she went on reserve status from 1986 until 1992, when she was honorably discharged from her service. After 1992 she continued to support her husband, also serving in the army as Military Police Officer. They lived in Germany for two years, during which her husband worked in US Customs. Upon returning to the States, Michelle stayed home to care for their newborn son. Three wonderful grandchildren and an amazing son and daughter in-law complete their family. She is the owner of Logo Wearhaus in Ballston Spa, NY, which specializes in screen printing, embroidery, and promotional products, and she takes pride in providing clients with excellent customer service.

**ROBIN TEMPLE** (*Chorus*) grew up in Buffalo, NY. The son of an Episcopal priest, Robin graduated from high school in 1964, attended college the following year, and flunked out handsomely after discovering girls and beer. He was drafted in 1965 and enlisted in the US Air Force, where he was an Aircraft Electrical Repairman for four years. His last year of service was at Tan Son Nhut AB in Vietnam. After service he attended community college and transferred to Empire State College and graduated in 1972 with a Bachelor’s degree. For 12 years he was a Social Services Program Specialist with the NYS Department of Social Services. In the late 70s Robin was on the Fort Ann School Board of Education, serving as its President for four years. In 1986 he left state service for the first time and became Director of The Washington County Veterans Service Agency. In 1995 he was appointed Deputy Director of the NYS Division of Veterans Affairs by Governor George Pataki. Robin finally retired from state service in 2001, but has stayed active in veterans’ issues and is very excited to have given birth to Veterans’ Voices with his good friend, Charlie Bearce. Robin and his wife Maureen have been married for 43 years and live in Fort Ann, where they are raising their granddaughter, Alexis, whom they adopted ten years ago.

*Photo credits: Paul Pines, Meg Hagerty ([Glens Falls Post-Star](http://www.poststar.com/))  
Veterans’ Voices logo by Maureen Temple and Casey Lumbra ([SUNY Empire State College](http://www.sunsips.edu/))
DAN WILCOX (Chorus) was drafted into the Army in 1969, but was in the lucky half of his training class and served at Ft. Knox, KY. He is the host of the Third Thursday Poetry Night at the Social Justice Center in Albany, NY, and is a member of the poetry performance group, 3 Guys from Albany. As a photographer, he claims to have the world’s largest collection of photos of unknown poets. Dan has been a featured reader at all the important poetry venues in the Capital District and throughout the Hudson Valley, and he is an active member of Veterans for Peace.

Veterans’ Voices: Ajax in America

A staged reading of Sophocles’ Ajax
Discussion and reception to follow

Thursday, November 12, 2015 ● 7:00 p.m.
Skidmore College
Gannett Auditorium ● Palamountain Hall
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866

Veterans’ Voices is a local group of armed-forces vets interested in how ancient literature elucidates the trauma of warfare. On November 12, the group will perform excerpts from Sophocles’ quintessential war tragedy, Ajax.

The play tells the story of the dishonored soldier, Ajax, cheated of his due in the Trojan War and humiliated before his wife and fellow soldiers. His suicide remains one of the most shocking acts ever dramatized on the Greek stage, and one that resonates with an equally shocking statistic: each day, on average, 22 American veterans choose to end their lives.

The members of Veterans’ Voices hope to engage the audience in a broad conversation about the human cost of war from antiquity to modernity, and to raise awareness of the challenges our veterans face when they return home from war — as well as the challenges faced by their families, caregivers, and communities. This extraordinary event is free and open to the public.

CAST:

Ajax ................................................................. Ryan Smithson
Tecmessa ....................................................... Michelle Taylor
Messenger ...................................................... Charles Bearce
Chorus ......................................................... Charles Bearce, Robin Temple, and Dan Wilcox
Director ....................................................... Paul Pines

Please direct inquiries to: Charles Bearce (cgbearce@nycap.rr.com)

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Veterans’ Voices logo by Maureen Temple and Casey Lumbra (SUNY Empire State College)
VETERANS’ VOICES PRESENTS

AJAX IN AMERICA

This interpretation of Greek tragedies through the lens of local modern-day warriors will raise awareness of the problems our veterans face when they return home from war, and the challenges faced by their families, caregivers and communities.

NOV 12, 2015 7 P.M.

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CAST:
AJAX...............RyAN SMITHSON
TecMessa...........MiCHELLE TAYLOR
CHORUS..............ROBIN TEMPLE, DAaN WILCOX, cHAAnLES BAREcE
MESSANGER.........cHAAnLES BAREcE

DIRECTED BY PAUL PINES