



# We Pedal Uphill

Stories from the States

*written, directed & scored by Roland Tec*

## ***Director's Statement***

I love my country. It was chosen for me by my immigrant parents, which may in part explain why my relationship to it is so fraught with emotion.

For the past several years, life in the U.S. has felt a bit like being on a hijacked ship that is sailing toward an unknown and frightening destination. As an artist stuck on the vessel that is post-9/11 America, I felt I had to create some kind of work to try and understand the country I call home.

In all my work -- both theatre and film -- I have always focused my attention on the details of human interaction and although the inspiration for making WE PEDAL UPHILL was this unique period in our history, the stories in it are personal, specific, human. I have tried to bring to life a variety of characters who, like me, find themselves on either side of ever-widening gaps in our culture.

In a way, I see this film as a kind of impressionist portrait of America. In it I have tried to put a human face on a few of the struggles taking place around me, here, on this ship that drifts to parts unknown.



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### *about the Writer/Director/Composer*

In 1998, Roland Tec was the first artist to be represented simultaneously in both the music and the film sections of the prestigious South by Southwest festival in Texas—at one end of town he could be seen performing on stage with his opera company while down the road, screenings for his feature film, **All the Rage** were sold out. Such range is typical of his career, which began in both music and theatre and later expanded to include film. Prior to his move to New York in the Spring of 2000, he served as Artistic Director of one of Boston's most daring theatre companies, New Opera Theatre Ensemble, which produced new work in such unlikely venues as the Boston Public Library, the Charles Hayden Planetarium, and the Danco Furniture Showroom and was described by The Boston Globe as "one of the major contributors to the city's cultural landscape." His first opera, **Stained Glass**, premiered at Harvard's historic Sanders Theatre while he was still an undergraduate. As director of New Opera Theatre Ensemble, six more original works would follow.

It was after being commissioned to score Marian Chang's short film, **Secretarial Pool**, that Tec became interested in making films of his own. In 1995 his short, **Hooking Up**, an exploration of the language of the one-night stand, toured to numerous film festivals internationally, putting Tec in touch with many of the investors who would help finance his feature film debut, an adaptation of his own play, **A Better Boy**.

**All the Rage** (Strand Releasing) which Tec wrote, directed and scored, was hailed as "one of the sharpest, sexiest and most amusing satires of gay life ever filmed" by the Los Angeles Times and toured to festivals spanning five continents before its U.S. theatrical release. It is widely considered a hallmark of Queer Cinema and continues to inspire new audiences through vigorous DVD sales.

His play, **Bodily Function** has won numerous awards, among them the 2000 Albee Award and 2001 O'Neill (finalist) and was produced in 2002 at The Culture Project in New York City. Shortly after his move to Manhattan, Tec co-wrote (with friend John Yearley) and directed the downtown hit, **Gratuitous Nudity** and was awarded a residency at the Byrdcliffe Artist Colony in Woodstock, which later commissioned his short play **Sniffing Out the Impostors** for its centennial.

In 2004, Tec wrote and directed the stage play, **The Wreck Behind Us**, based on the true story of the 1969 death of soap star Evelyn Beckett. He is currently at work on its film adaptation, which like his current film, **We Pedal Uphill**, breaks the traditional mold of narrative feature film structure.

In addition to his film work, Tec is currently adapting **Bodily Function** for television and he also recently finished composing music for Katherine Burger's gothic musical comedy, **Legends of Batvia**. He also just completed his latest full-length play, **The Personal Effects of Annie Solomon**, which was workshopped at New York's Abingdon Theatre.

Tec is the recipient of numerous grants and commissions from such organizations as Concorde, Harvard University, the Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers, and the Ann & Gordon Getty Foundation, among others. Roland is a proud member of Circle East, The Workshop at The Neighborhood Playhouse, the Society of Stage Directors & Choreographers and the Dramatists Guild. He has taught or lectured on a variety of topics at numerous colleges and universities, among them: Brandeis University, Boston University, and Harvard College.



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### Outline

(total running time: 111 minutes)

*We Pedal Uphill* paints a sobering portrait of a country at odds with itself—America, post-9/11.

After the second election of George W. Bush, Writer/Director Roland Tec began taking notes. Clipping news stories from the country he saw transforming before him, Tec let his imagination roam where the headlines left off. And so were born the 13 vignettes that make up this penetrating look at a country lost in a haze of post-catastrophic neurosis. From the PR handlers scouring the redwood forest for the perfect spot for a presidential photo op to the gay teenage son of a right-wing politician to the hurricane that brought so many of vastly different backgrounds together (albeit too briefly), the characters fleshed out in this tapestry of modern American life will haunt us for years and make us wonder what has become of “The Land of the Free.”

#### **PARANOIA (COLORADO)**

A man on his way to work in the morning moves with extreme caution, constantly looking over his shoulder. Is he paranoid? Is he phobic? Not at all! As he arrives at the radio station, all is revealed.

#### **MY TIE (MISSISSIPPI)**

A mother worries that her son, prone to controversy and speaking his mind, will meet the same end as her husband—a violent death.

#### **A BLACK THING (TENNESSEE)**

An African-American singer records a song, the content of which only starts to trouble her weeks later as she hears it on her car radio.

#### **SUBTRACTION AND DIVISION (OHIO)**

The secretary to an election official questions the number of voting machines listed in an affidavit and quickly learns that it's best to ignore the details three days before an election.

#### **EARTH DAY (CALIFORNIA)**

Among the world's oldest trees, a group of PR handlers argue over the perfect spot for a Presidential Photo Op.

#### **ONE WRONG TURN (LOUISIANA)**

One man drives half a day in order to thank another for saving his life. The reunion is not what he expected.

#### **IF A COW WAS A PIE (OKLAHOMA)**

A Powerpoint presentation outlines the cost-saving benefits of using “all” the parts of slaughtered cattle when feeding prison inmates.

#### **CAUTION: TRAIN CROSSING (NEBRASKA)**

Mortimer Reede sees to it that a railroad report he doesn't much care for, gets buried.

#### **THE MOUSE (FLORIDA)**

Two gay men at opposite ends of the food chain discover they both work for the same company during a one-night stand in an Orlando hotel room.

#### **WHAT'VE WE GOT TO LOSE? (CONNECTICUT)**

The walls of a deserted factory that at its peak employed 10,000 workers, echo with the struggles, fears and hopes of the souls that passed briefly through its halls.

#### **TREASON (NEW MEXICO)**

The very bridge where Julius and Ethel Rosenberg supposedly sold atomic secrets to the Soviets is the final stop on a guided tour of downtown Santa Fe.

#### **WHAT HAPPENED TO RITA? (MASSACHUSETTS)**

A shell-shocked librarian returns to work after a 3-month absence, the nature of which is shrouded in mystery.

#### **WE DIG A BIG HOLE (ALABAMA)**

After hearing his dad's radio interview suggesting that in order to dispose of banned library books, “we dig a big hole,” Kyle does just that, before leaving home for good.

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### Selected Cast Biographies

#### POLLY ADAMS

Film, recent featured roles: *People I Know* with Al Pacino, *The Juror* with Demi Moore and Alec Baldwin, *New York Crossing* with Giancarlo Giannini, *Celebrity* dir. by Woody Allen, *Uptown Girls* with Brittany Murphy, and *David and Layla*. TV featured roles on: 6 *Law & Orders* (incl. CI and SVU), *New York News* with Mary Tyler Moore, *The Wright Verdicts* with Tom Conti, *Now and Again*, *Players*. Soaps: principal roles in *The Edge of Night*, *Search for Tomorrow*, *All My Children* (4 1/2 years total.) Broadway: *Zalmen or The Madness of God* (by Elie Wiesel, lead), *Lost in Yonkers* (1st National tour, Gert), and leads in numerous Off-Off Broadway, Stock and Regional plays for the last 25 years - most notably at the Ensemble Studio Theatre, where she is a founding member. Most recently, she starred in the Universal Studio film, *United 93* (directed by Paul Greengrass) as Debbie Welsh.

#### JENNY BACON

Off Bway: *Omnium Gatherum* (Variety Arts), *Orphan of Zhao* (Lincoln Center), *Carson McCullers* (Playwrights/Women's Project), *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Most Fabulous Story Ever Told*, *More Stately Mansions* (New York Theater Workshop), *Arabian Nights* (Manhattan Theatre Club). Regional: *Last of the Boys* (McCarter), *All My Sons* (Westport), *Mary Stuart*, *Phaedre* (Court Theatre, Jeff Award Nominations), *Molly Sweeney*, Morning Star (Steppenwolf Theatre, Jeff Award Nominations), Baltimore Waltz, Three Sisters (Goodman Theatre, Jeff Award Nomination), *A Doll's House* (Seattle Rep, Backstage West Award), *Cymbeline* (California Shakespeare Festival, Goodman Award), *Molly Sweeney* (Arena Stage, Helen Hayes Nomination). Film: *In God's Hands*. TV: *Law & Order*, *Law & Order SVU*, *Law & Order Criminal Intent*, *Moment of Rage*, *The Untouchables*.

#### JUDITH BARCROFT

Judith Barcroft, a graduate of Northwestern, has appeared in seven Broadway shows, including *Dinner at Eight* directed by Sir Tyrone Guthrie, *Plaza Suite* directed by Mike Nichols, *Elephant Man* with David Bowie, and *Betrayal* directed by Harold Pinter. She is well known to TV audiences as Lenore on *Another World* (5 years), Anne on *All my Children* (6 years) and Charlie in *Spencer for Hire* and can be seen on Soapnet in *Ryan's Hope*, *The Edge of Night*, and *As the World Turns* (with Meg Ryan). Her film credits include: *The Right Moves*, *Born Beautiful* and *Yours Always, Sam* directed by Dave Coleman.

#### MARYLOUISE BURKE

Film credits include *A Prairie Home Companion*, *Sideways*, *Must Love Dogs*, *Mona Lisa Smile*, *Meet Joe Black*, *One True Thing*, *Angie*, *Jeffrey*, *Celebrity*, *The Baxter*, *Series 7*, *Ira and Abby*, and Adam Rapp's *Blackbird*. TV appearances include *Hope and Faith*, *Law & Order* and *Law & Order: SVU*, *One Life to Live*, and the TV movies *Amy and Isabelle* (Oprah Presents), *My Sexiest Mistake* (Oxygen), and *Diary of a City Priest* (PBS). Onstage, she has performed in the recent Broadway revival of *Into the Woods* and has originated roles in the debut productions of a host of new plays - receiving a Drama Desk Award for *Fuddy Meers* and a Drama Desk Nomination for *Kimberly Akimbo* Off-Broadway, and a Backstage West Garland Award for the South Coast Rep production of *Kimberly Akimbo*. Her regional stage work includes La Jolla Playhouse, Hartford Stage, Long Wharf, McCarter Theatre, and NY Stage & Film, and the national tour of *Lettice and Lovage* with Julie Harris.

#### NAT DEWOLF

Theater: *Burn This* (Huntington Theater - IRNE Best Supporting Actor 2004), *Betty's Summer Vacation* (Playwrights Horizons, Huntington Theater), *Take Me Out* (Broadway, NYSF), *The Accident*, *Tartuffe* (ART). He co-wrote and co-starred with Laura Kirk in the film *Lisa Picard is Famous*, which made its world premiere at the 2000 Cannes Film Festival. Other film and television includes: The Merchant-Ivory produced *Heights*, *Trick*, *Law & Order SVU* (twice), and *Ed*.

#### DAVID DRAKE

David Drake is New York-based actor, writer and director. He won an Obie Award for his autobiographical solo play *The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me*, which ran a year Off-Broadway before its year-long international tour. David subsequently starred in the feature film version of his play. His most recent solo show, *Son of Drakula* premiered at NY's Dance Theater Workshop in 2002 and was praised by the New York Times as "a dazzling, inventive...terrific new one man show." Other Off-broadway appearances include *Pageant*, *End of the World Party*, *The Boys in the Band*, *A Language of Their Own* at the Public and succeeding Charles Busch in *Vampire Lesbians of Sodom*. Other film credits: *Longtime Companion*, *David Searching*, *It's Pat*, and *Philadelphia*. On TV David has guest-starred on *NY Undercover* and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. As a stage director, david workshopped Edmund White's *Terre Haute* at the Sundance Theater Lab 2005.

#### ALVIN EPSTEIN

Alvin Epstein, former Artistic Director the Guthrie Theater and Associate Director of Yale Repertory Theater, has performed leading roles in over 100 plays, including: *Marat/Sade*, *Enrico IV*, *Richard II*, *Antigone*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, *Loot*, *Ivanov*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *In the Jungle of Cities*, *The Bacchae*, *Man and Superman*, *Tartuffe*, *Henry IV*, *The Tempest*, *Henry V*, and *What the Butler Saw*. A specialist in the works of Beckett, he played Clov in the American Premiere of *Endgame* and last season returned to the play to rave reviews, this time as Ham at the Irish Repertory Theater in New York. On Broadway, he performed with the troupe of Marcel Marceau and played the Fool to Orson Welles' *King Lear* and Mr. Peachum in the *Threepenny Opera* (opposite Sting) and co-starred with Martha Schlamme in *A Kurt Weill Cabaret*, which also toured the United States and South America. Among his Numerous Off-Broadway credits are: *Tuesdays with Morrie*, *The Madwoman of Chaillot*, and *Dynamite Tonight!* (for which he won an Obie Award). Most recently, he toured in *Kurt Weill: Songs Degenerate and Otherwise* and then scored a huge success in the title role of *King Lear*, with the Actors Shakespear Company. Mr. Epstein has also taught at the American Repertory Theater Institute for Advanced Theater Training and has directed over twenty productions. Among his numerous awards have been the Brandeis Creative Arts Award, the Elliott Norton Award for sustained excellence, and the Jason Robards Award for dedication to the theater. He is currently sharing the Broadway stage with Alfred Molina in Patrick Marber's *Howard Katz* to rave reviews.



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### The Production Team

#### **CHRIS ARRUDA [OHIO PRODUCER]**

Chris has been a producer for the past 18 years. Much of his experience has been in the advertising world as a producer of broadcast commercials. He has won several awards for his work in this field including two Gold Clios, Addys, and most recently a Gold Effie Award. His client list includes such companies as McDonalds, Procter & Gamble, Pfizer, and Sony. For the past 5 years, Chris has worked at the worldwide headquarters of Saatchi and Saatchi Advertising, where he produces spots for some of their most important clients.

#### **BRAD CARPENTER [CONSULTING PRODUCER]**

After completing a five-year run with HBO's cultural phenomenon *Sex And The City* as Associate Producer, Brad served as Associate Producer in charge of Post Production for the Bravo hit series *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*, through its final season. Currently, he is Associate Producer in charge of Post Production for the NBC hit series, *30 Rock*.

#### **DARREN CHILTON [PRODUCER]**

Darren Chilton began his theatrical career in 1999 with the Austrian opera company Pons Artis helping to stage the New York debut of their opera Pierrot Lunaire. Darren has also worked with Russian multi-media artist group artek media, Chris Ajemian (*The Curtain of Light*), David Gordon (*Private Lives of Dancers*), Ain Gordon (*93 Acres of Barley/Art, Life, and Show-Biz*), John Kelly (*The Paradise Project*), and Mabou Mines (*Carla Lucia*).

#### **DAVID HEATH [COLORADO PRODUCER]**

David's eclectic background lies primarily in the legal and financial arenas. He has worked as a paralegal for Debevoise & Plimpton, Thacher Proffitt & Wood, and Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker and as an investigator for the Oregon Federal Public Defender. In 2001 he helped coordinate Yale University's 300th birthday celebration.

#### **KELLY LAWMAN [MASSACHUSETTS PRODUCER]**

Kelly is a producer at WGBH, Boston's public television affiliate. She has a versatile background in film, television and theatre production with a range of credits including feature films, documentaries, shorts, children's programs, and music videos for PBS, CBS, Showtime, BBC, the Democratic National Convention, independent release and others.

#### **HAYDEE SABOGAL [NEW MEXICO PRODUCER]**

Haydeé Sabogal is a journalist and producer with experience in print, internet and television. She has worked as researcher and associate producer for documentaries and TV magazines for PBS, NBC, FOX and the BBC. Her work includes PBS' human rights series *Rights and Wrongs* and Michael Moore's Emmy Award winning *TV Nation*.

#### **JOHN R. TILLEY [EXECUTIVE PRODUCER]**

John Tilley has over two decades of experience as an international and domestic distributor, marketer, and licensor of independent feature films and documentaries. At Ben Barenholtz' Libra Films [1975-1978], as head of United Artists Classics [1978-81], as co-founder and owner of Cinevista, Inc. [1981-1996], he has marketed, distributed and licensed the films of Pedro Almodovar, Derek Jarman, David Lynch, Ken Loach, Paul Morrissey, Jonathan Demme, Brian De Palma, and M. Night Shyamalan among many others. In 1997, John co-founded ProActive Film Marketing whose goal was to empower independent film makers. ProActive's clients included Ken Loach's Parallax Films, Film 4, the British Council and British Screen Finance. With the advent of DVD and its revitalization of independent and specialized film on video, John helped establish new home video distribution entities at Picture This! Entertainment and later at Overseas/First Look Films. Since 2000, John has been in charge of home video distribution and marketing for Strand Releasing, certainly one of the most independent and adventurous film distributors on the current scene. At Strand, John is currently supervising the DVD release of Roland Tec's first feature film *All the Rage*.



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## Critical Praise for the Work of Roland Tec

**“One of the sharpest, sexiest, most amusing satires of gay life ever filmed!**

**... *All the Rage* plays like a contemporary *Vanity Fair*.”**

**—KEVIN THOMAS, LOS ANGELES TIMES**

**“Tec has a way of writing very exciting material, teasing the audience and providing scenes brimming with a quiet sadism a bit reminiscent of Pinter.”**

**—MICHAEL LAZAN, BACKSTAGE**

**“*Rage* erupts with on-target gay satire!”**

**—BOB GRAHAM, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE**

**“An intelligent, provocative cinematic debut ...  
... marked by a trenchant wit!”**

**—DEREK WILSON, JOHANNESBURG STAR**

**“His writing is rich, giving his actors great material to work with ...  
*The Wreck Behind Us* beautifully explores the trappings of fame.”**

**—AMY RHODES, SHOW BUSINESS WEEKLY**

**“A diverting, delicious and finally damning story, with crisp dialogue, crisper editing and a dynamic use of film and video, Tec creates characters who evoke both desire and disgust.”**

**—CARRIE RICKEY, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER**