

NEWS RELEASE: After Finding Acting Success in Hollywood, Pittsburgh Native Returns Home

For Immediate Release
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After Finding Acting Success in Hollywood, Pittsburgh Native Returns Home

Central Catholic Grad Brian Ceponis Bringing Atticus Finch to Life Next Month in Prime Stage Season Opener "To Kill a Mockingbird"

Brian Ceponis is like most people in that he wakes up in the morning and goes to work. Unlike most people, though, his co-workers have names like Clint Eastwood, Martin Sheen, Mark Harmon, and Michael Bay.

The 44-year-old Hampton native, Central Catholic graduate and one-time employee at Confluence Technologies resigned from his job there and moved with his wife, Stephanie, to Los Angeles to pursue his dream of acting. Since then, he has appeared in such blockbuster films as "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Transformers: Dark of the Moon" and popular television series "The West Wing," "Monk" and "NCIS."

Next month, Ceponis returns to the stage for the first time in many years as one of modern literature's most beloved characters, stalwart lawyer Atticus Finch, in "Prime Stage Theatre's production of "To Kill a Mockingbird," previewing November 4, opening November 5 at the New Hazlett Theatre on the North Side. The play, which launches the organization's 20th anniversary season, continues through November 13. Information and tickets are available at www.primestage.com.

The entire journey has been a dream come true for Ceponis.

"Working with Martin Sheen and Mark Harmon were amazing experiences," he says. "In addition to being great actors, both are real gentlemen who treat their fellow cast and crews with utmost respect. They make it a real joy to go to work." He says that Bay, his director on "Transformers," was very friendly and accommodating as well, and recalls the day Eastwood being very soft-spoken and easygoing when the director first approached him on the set of "Flags of Our Fathers."

Things were going well in Hollywood. Then, Ceponis and his wife made the decision last year to return home to Pittsburgh. "We have a son now, and we wanted to raise him here," he says. "Our families are in Pittsburgh, so we can all spend time together."

The move also allows Ceponis to act in local projects, while flying to L.A. when opportunities arise. He continues to be in demand in Hollywood and will return there in January to act in a new project in which he's just been cast. He's also working on "Pivot," a series that's currently being produced in Pittsburgh and looks forward to acting in films shot here as well. Rare for a Pittsburgh actor, he's does this full time, earns a living and is thrilled to be back in his hometown.

Now, in mid-October, Ceponis is deep into rehearsals for "Mockingbird" and enjoying every minute of it. He considers himself blessed to be working with a talented cast, director and crew. Like his character, Atticus Finch, the small-town Alabama attorney who defends an African-American man accused of murder, Ceponis is an accomplished professional for whom family comes first and doing the right thing, regardless of how unpopular it might be, is paramount.

Throughout the fall, Ceponis and his fellow cast members are also participating in a variety of community events as part of the National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read, which provides free, public literature-based programs in a number of locations.

Brian Ceponis is available for media interviews. To arrange, please contact John Fries at johnfries@comcast.net or 412-760-2299.