

Contact: Bob Bartlett
(301) 643-4099
bobbartlettjr@gmail.com
www.bob-bartlett.com
www.byrdlandrecords.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A PLAY IN A RECORD STORE?!
LOVE AND VINYL to be Staged at Byrdland Records in Union Market in Washington, DC
to run from February 13 - March 9, 2025

A new play about browsing for records and romance in the digital age!

(Bowie, MD)—Maryland-based playwright and long-time professor of theatre at Bowie State University, Bob Bartlett, is no stranger to staging his work in unusual locations. A few years ago, he premiered his time-bending comedy, *The Accident Bear*, which sold out its five-week run to critical acclaim, at a working coin-operated laundromat in historic downtown Annapolis, Maryland. During Covid he staged his play *Three Strangers Sitting Around a Backyard Firepit at Two in the Morning Listening to Bruce Springsteen's Nebraska* in the backyard of his central Maryland home, and last fall staged his horror play *Lýkos Anthrōpos* at Washington, DC's historic Congressional Cemetery for sixteen sold-out performances. In the summer of 2023, he produced his latest play, a romantic comedy, *Love and Vinyl*, at KA-CHUNK!! Records in downtown Annapolis for a five-week sold out run, with subsequent productions in record stores in Dallas and Austin, Texas. He now brings *Love and Vinyl* to DC's hippest record store, Byrdland Records, just in time for Valentine's Day and featuring some of the city's strongest comedic actors.

The Helen Hayes Award-winning Bartlett says the idea to create site-specific theatre, which he believes has the potential to engage audiences in more immediate ways than theatre staged in traditional spaces, came while he was living in a downtown walk-up on Maryland Avenue in Annapolis over a decade ago. "I've always been drawn to theatre produced in unique locations," he notes. "And more than simply Shakespeare in the park." Always on the lookout for compelling locations where acts of theatre and storytelling can happen, Bartlett often writes with specific spaces in mind. "I'd long dreamed of inviting audiences to walk into a record store to see a play." A one-time owner of a record store in the late eighties, Bartlett has long been a fan of films like *High Fidelity* and *Empire Records*, and of smart romantic comedies about the lovelorn who have given up on finding love. He couldn't be more excited to bring *Love and Vinyl* to Byrdland Records and Union Market, one of the fastest growing entertainment and dining destinations in the city.

Bartlett wrote *Love and Vinyl* on a dare from colleagues who challenged the avowed bachelor to write a romantic comedy about vinyl lovers, like himself, who had forever sworn off romantic love. "While I was living downtown in Annapolis in the early '10s, I frequented the seriously cool KA-CHUNK!! Records, which is just a couple shops from the location of the laundromat where I staged my first site-specific play, *The Accident Bear*, and thought I'd write the play for

KA-CHUNK!!, a shop and world I know well. “Approaching an owner about staging a play in their business is always an adventure, but the KA-CHUNK!! team - and now Byrdland Records - loved the idea.” “Record stores,” Bartlett adds, “are numinous, nostalgic spaces where we discover new music, friends and sometimes lovers while browsing for records, a ritual we almost lost to digital music,” beliefs and sentiments he mines in his play. “The opportunity to share the play with audiences at Byrdland Records,” he adds, “is truly special, and opening the run of the play around Valentine’s Day is romantically writ in the stars.”

About Byrdland Records (byrdlandrecords.com)

Byrdland Records is a vinyl records and music store from the team behind Songbyrd Music House and the newest addition to Union Market.

About Songbyrd Music House (songbyrddc.com)

Songbyrd Music House (aka “Songbyrd”) is a 150-capacity live music venue, bar and restaurant in Washington, DC’s Union Market neighborhood and member of the National Independent Venue Association (“NIVA”). Songbyrd was named Washington D.C.’s Best New Venue in 2016, Best Place for Dinner and Live Music by the Washington City Paper in 2017, 2018 and 2019, Best New Location in 2021 and is rapidly growing market share and building interest from music-forward Washingtonians and beyond.

About Union Market District (unionmarketdc.com)

Union Market District’s distinct authenticity permeates everything around it. From roots born over 200 years ago, this place continues as a unifier for community, a textural gathering place with soul. Creativity is inspired here, stories are shared and celebrated, and consequential strangers are vital to our neighborhood.

About *Love and Vinyl* at Byrdland Records

LOVE AND VINYL by Bob Bartlett

A new play about browsing for records and romance in the digital age! Best friends Bogie and Zane visit their local record store and leave with so much more than a stack of vinyl in this really smart romcom.

"A charming and sophisticated romcom ... *Love and Vinyl* is a must-see!", "A quirky, funny, sometimes sad, but always real conversation about love, life, and loneliness." – MD Theatre Guide

"If you have fond memories of browsing at Tower Records ... you would do well to get to [*Love and Vinyl*]." – Broadway World

***Love and Vinyl* to Open February 13, 2025 – page 3**

"*Love and Vinyl* is fascinating and funny, and an entertaining way to spend a couple of hours. In American entertainment, so much is a rehash of something else. It's refreshing to experience a fresh story alongside a fresh format." – DC Theatre Arts

"If you have fond memories of browsing at Tower Records ... you would do well to get to [*Love & Vinyl*]." – Broadway World

"Speaks to the power of friendship and the balm of hearing music played on a turntable." – Onstage NTX

"Witty dialogue reveals the inner depths of these funny, sweet, lonely people." – Onstage NTX

Love and Vinyl features regional actors James J. Johnson, Carlos Saldaña, and Rachel Manteuffel.

Love and Vinyl will run Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at 8:30 PM from February 13 - March 9, 2025 at Byrdland Records, 1264 5th Street NE, Washington, DC 20003.

Love and Vinyl runs 85 minutes with no intermission. Because of the uniqueness of the venue/performance space, the production seats only thirty guests per performance. Audience seating is provided. No late seating.

Press photos are available at www.bob-bartlett.com and email (bobbartlettjr@gmail.com).

Advanced online ticket sales only. The play features comedic dirty language. Street and garage parking. Plenty of local bars and restaurants.

Byrdland Records
1264 5th Street NE
Washington, DC 20002

TIX:
bob-bartlett.com
byrdlandrecords.com

HI-RES PRESS PHOTOS:
<https://www.bob-bartlett.com/love-and-vinyl-tix>

INFO:
bobbartlettjr@gmail.com

Artist Bio

Bob Bartlett's (writer/producer) plays include three new full lengths, *Love And Vinyl* (Kitchen Dog Theatre), *Mediocre White Men*, and *A Boy On A Bed*; *Union*, a sometimes fiction chronicling Walt Whitman's years living and loving in Washington, DC during the Civil War; *E2*, a contemporary reimagining of Marlowe's *Edward II*, which premiered last season at Maryland's Rep Stage; *Swimming With Whales* (1st Stage – six Helen Hayes Awards Nominations; 2016 O'Neill Finalist); *Happiness (And Other Reasons To Die)* (The Welders); *The Accident Bear* (The Avenue Laundromat); *The Regular* (2020 O'Neill Finalist; 2020 Seven Devils Playwrights Conference); *The Orbit Of Mercury* (2017 O'Neill Finalist); *Bareback Ink*, a queer reimagining of the Ganymede myth, which recently had runs at the Capital and Edinburgh Fringe Festivals and NYC's Hard Sparks. Recently, Bartlett has been producing his own site-specific work: his play *The Accident Bear* had a successful run in the Avenue Laundromat in Downtown Annapolis; during the first year of covid, he staged his play *Three Strangers Sitting Around A Backyard Firepit At Two In The Morning Listening To Bruce Springsteen's Nebraska* in his backyard; he recently staged his horror play, *Lýkos Anthrōpos*, in a wooded clearing in the middle of the woods on a farm in Maryland and for six weeks last fall at Historic Congressional Cemetery in Washington, DC; his romcom *Love And Vinyl* premiered in the summer of 2023 at KA-CHUNK!! Records in downtown Annapolis; and he wrote the covid-inspired, twelve-episode *Duck Harbor* with EM Lewis for 1st Stage in Tysons which aired in 2021. Bartlett is an affiliated artist with the National New Play Network and a member of The Dramatists Guild of America. He lives in Central Maryland in an old farmhouse and is a founding member of The Welders, a Washington, DC-based, producing playwrights collective who were recognized with the 2016 John Aniello Award for Emerging Theater Company by theatreWashington's Helen Hayes Awards. He earned the MFA in Playwriting at Catholic University of America, and he is a soon-retiring member of the theatre faculty at Bowie State University in Maryland, where he teaches dramatic literature, playwriting, and screenwriting. He is the recipient of the 2022 University System of Maryland Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Research, Scholarship, or Creative Activity. (bob-bartlett.com)

###