

**CHARLES SEARCE** (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. As a Naval Flight Officer, he flew as a C-130 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 Ebbets Field and passed the early 60s on the Lower East Side of New York. He shipped out as a Merchant Seaman, spending September 1965

**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, *Ghost 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 Clicks South of Whiskey* is a play about a cavalry unit in Iraq and their entrance into the world of mythology through an

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.

## A staged reading of Sophocles Ajax

Discussion and reception to follow

Thursday November 12, 2015 · 7:00 p.m.

### Skidmore College

Gannett Auditorium Palamountair 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 all.

