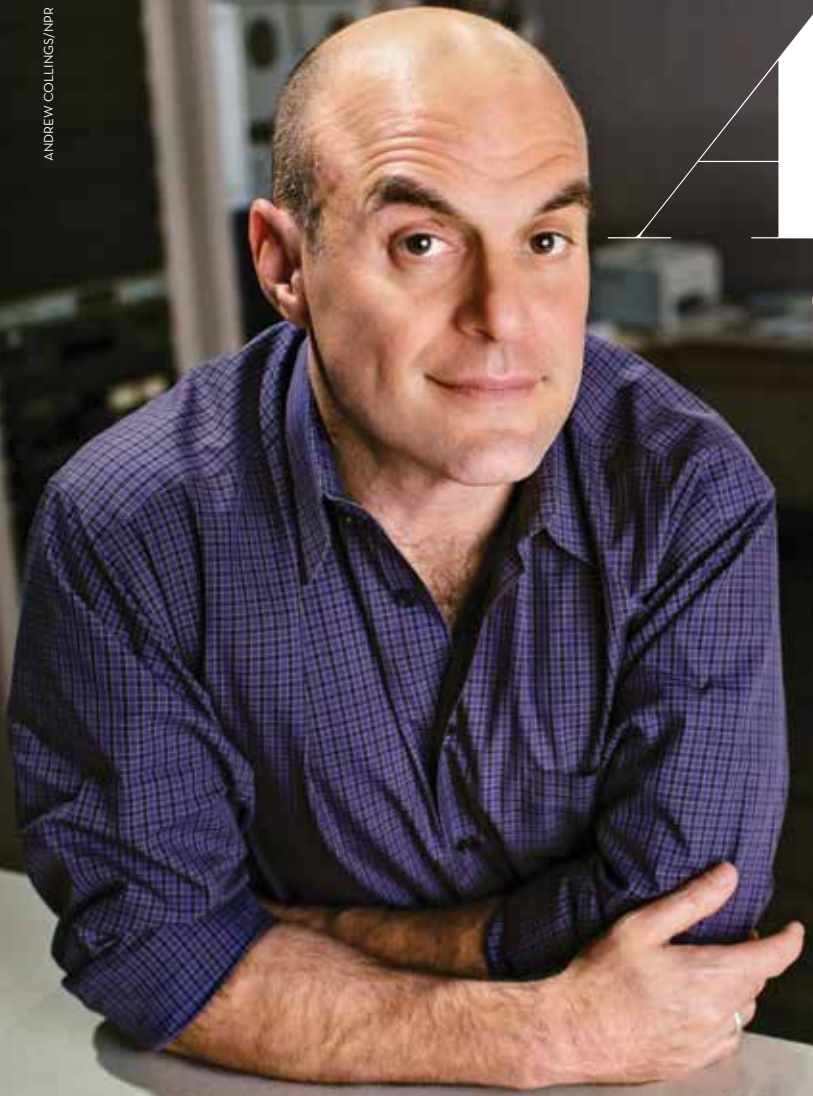


Agenda

BY MARY MURRAY



Q&A

PETER SAGAL

PBI: What will *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me* listeners find most surprising about your play, *Most Wanted*?

Sagal: Considering what *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me* is, they're going to find a distinct lack of interest in current events. It's obviously funny. But I think what's most surprising is that it's not entirely funny; it's [also] serious. If there's one thing the play is probably about is really, to quote Cher, turning back time. There are a lot of people in the play who, in a variety of ways, are stuck in the past, either through stubbornness or desperation or illness. In a weird way, when they run away they're trying to turn back time and deny the consequences of what's happened in their lives.

***Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me* has been on air for almost 20 years. How has the show evolved during that time?**

In terms of its format, the show has been very much the same over the years—and I'm still standing. The thing that has changed is, of course, the news. From Clinton to Bush to Obama to now, there have been significant changes and there's always

ON AIR

Peter Sagal—or, at least, his voice—is most recognizable as the host of the NPR news quiz show *Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me*, which airs weekly to an audience of nearly 3 million listeners. But this Harvard University graduate is also a playwright, *Game of Thrones* podcaster, and accidental contributor to the screenplay of *Dirty Dancing 2: Havana Nights*. From November 30 to December 17, **Theatre Lab** at Florida Atlantic University will stage the premiere of *Most Wanted*, a comedy Sagal wrote more than 20 years ago. It follows Frank and Doris, a retired couple who kidnap their granddaughter and go on the lam in Florida. Sagal recently spoke with *PBI* about his play, quiz show, and legacy. Boca Raton (561-297-4784, fau.edu/theatrelab)

something interesting to talk about. And we've all seen a change in our cast. Especially over the last few years, we've been doing our best to revitalize the show by bringing in younger, more diverse voices. ... What's really become interesting is this relationship we have with our listeners. People rely on us. We're in constant dialogue with [them]. We know what they're listening to, because we listen to public radio, too. We're making jokes for them and with them come the weekend.

Given your diverse résumé, what achievements do you hope appear on your tombstone?

I always thought my obituary was going to lead with, "The guy who wrote *Dirty Dancing 2: Havana Nights* without meaning to." Because I'm me, I hope I get a laugh. Maybe I should have the words in really tiny type so that you have to step up close to the gravestone and peer down and it would say, "Get off of me!"



**SAGAL SHARES WAIT WAIT...DON'T TELL ME BEHIND-THE-SCENES
DETAILS AT PALMBEACHILLUSTRATED.COM/PETERSAGAL**