



CHRISTMAS AT THE LOCAL

FEATURING DYLAN THOMAS' *A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES*
COMPOSED BY CERY MATTHEWS AND MASON NEELY
AND "*THE LONGING FOR AMAZING PEACE*"*
MUSIC BY CHASTITY BROWN AND TEXT BY DR. MAYA ANGELOU

PRODUCTION BY PETER ROTHSTEIN AND LARISSA KOKERNOT
DIRECTED BY LARISSA KOKERNOT
MUSIC DIRECTION AND ORCHESTRATIONS BY JASON HANSEN



THEATER MUSICALLY

NOV 21 - DEC 31, 2023 • RITZ THEATER

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FEATURING DYLAN THOMAS'
A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES
COMPOSED BY CERYS MATTHEWS AND MASON NEELY
AND
"THE LONGING FOR AMAZING PEACE"[#]
MUSIC BY CHASTITY BROWN AND TEXT BY DR. MAYA ANGELOU

THE LOCALS

Phinehas Bynum
Spencer Chandler*
Bradley Greenwald*
Jason Hansen†
Elizabeth Reese*
Matt Riehle
Quinn Shadko
&
Joy Dolo* as The Proprietor

Proprietor Understudy: Erin Nicole Farsté

THE SET LIST

Getting Ready for Christmas Day
by Paul Simon

What Christmas Means to Me
by Allen Story, Anna Gordy Gaye & George Gordy

Fairytale of New York
by Shane Mac-Gowan & Jem Finer

River
by Joni Mitchell

Christmas at the Ale House
by The Irish Rovers

In the Bleak Midwinter
Music by Gustav Holst
Words by Christine Rosetti

A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES
Words by Dylan Thomas
Music by Cerys Matthews and Mason Neely

Interludes

Nos Galan (Deck the Hall)
Music: Traditional Welsh
Words by Thomas Oliphant

Ar Gyfer Heddiw'r Bore
Traditional Welsh Plygain

Suo Gân
Traditional Welsh Lullaby

All Through the Night
Music: Traditional Welsh
Words by Sir Harold Boulton

THE LONGING FOR AMAZING PEACE

Words by Dr. Maya Angelou
Music by Chastity Brown

THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director and Co-Creator **Larissa Kokernot**
Music Director and Orchestrations **Jason Hansen†**
Co-Creator **Peter Rothstein****
Dramaturg **Elissa Adams**
Scenic Designer **Benjamin Olsen**
Costume Designer **Amber Brown**
Lighting Designer **Marcus Dilliard^**
Sound Designer **C Andrew Mayer^**
Props Designer **Abbee Warmboe**
Production Stage Manager **Shelby Reddig***
Assistant Stage Manager **Austin Schoenfelder**
Stage Management Swing **Joelle Coutu***
Dresser **Ash Kaun**
Dresser Swing **Bronson Talcott**
Technical Director **Bethany Reinfeld**
Associate Technical Director **Eric Charlton**
Lighting Supervisor & Light Board Operator **Andrew Norfolk**
Audio Supervisor & Sound Board Operator **Nicholas Tranby**
Light & Sound Board Operator Swing **Corinne Steffens**
Director of Production & Operations **Allen Weeks**
Associate Production Manager **Christian Erben**
Audio Supervisor & Sound Board Operator **Nicholas Tranby**
Lead Carpenter **Whitley Cobb**
Scenic Charge **Sara Herman**
Carpenters **Katie Edwards, Rachel Klusky,
Tyler Nordberg, Ada Packiewicz, Kris Schmidt Jacquelin
Stauder**
Electricians **Sasha Blinnikova, Kurt Jung, Ada Packiewicz,
Corinne Steffens, Tristan Wilkes**

*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers

**Member of SDC, the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union

^Member of the United Scenic Artists, a national union that represents designers and scenic painters for the American theater

†Member of Twin Cities Musicians Union, American Federation of Musicians

WELCOME TO THE LOCAL

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

For decades now my mother's outgoing voicemail message has greeted me with, "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with us."

It is always at this time of year, as the darkness grows longer with each passing day and the cold sets in, making the outside world seem less welcoming, that my longing for peace grows as well. And despite the realities of harsh weather and bad driving conditions, my desire to go to the theater also grows at this time of year. The theater offers a space to gather. *Christmas at the Local* was created to lift up the immense power in the act of gathering — of coming together.

Gathering is a radical act. And when it comes to gathering at this time of year, the idea of peace beginning with us takes on a particular potency.

I have had my own tradition around reading *A Child's Christmas in Wales* to friends, family and neighbors for over three decades now. It is a story I love for its imagery, for its evocation of a child's memory of holiday traditions and rituals, for the gift of joy and nostalgia it offers. Now, with the creation of *Christmas at the Local* and all the artists involved, this story has expanded in glorious and awesome directions. Returning to The Local this year has been a joyous and nourishing act of re-creation.

Thank you for gathering with us this year at The Local and for bringing your own longing for joy and peace, for stories and music, for being together. Thank you for your radical act, its beauty and its power.

- Larissa Kokernot

"On this platform of peace, we can create a language
To translate ourselves to ourselves and to each other."

Dr. Maya Angelou, *Amazing Peace*



Theater Latté Da is grateful for the generous support of our anonymous Production Sponsor.

ABOUT THEATER LATTÉ DA



THE CAST OF FALSETTOS (2023). PHOTO BY DAN NORMAN.

Theater Latté Da is in our 26th season of presenting original and reimagined musical theater.

Theater Latté Da is the leading nonprofit professional theater in the Twin Cities that exclusively produces musical theater. Since our inception, TLD has presented 91 Mainstage productions, including 14 world premieres and 14 area premieres. Each has garnered critical acclaim and earned its artists and TLD a host of awards, including: seven IVEY Awards for overall excellence, National Endowment for the Arts, the Gabriel Award for Broadcast Excellence, the American Theater Wing National Theater Company Award and 2019 Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience.

Our Mission

Theater Latté Da creates new and impactful connections between story, music, artist, and audience—exploring and expanding the art of musical theater.

Our Values

We believe in work that is bold, inclusive and collaborative; we act with integrity and gratitude.

BOLD We make bold choices in support of our mission and vision, both on and off stage. By illuminating the unseen, giving voice to the unheard, and empathizing with the unknown, we open eyes, ears and hearts.

INCLUSIVE We believe in creating an environment where a diverse group of voices are welcomed to fully participate. We are inspired and strengthened through equitable partnerships. We actively work to make musical theater accessible to everyone.

COLLABORATIVE We believe musical theater to be the most collaborative of art forms, incorporating music, drama, poetry, dance and design. We are inspired and strengthened through inclusive partnerships with artists, organizations and our diverse community, and embody a collaborative spirit in all we do.

INTEGRITY We hold ourselves to the highest standards of artistic and fiscal integrity. We are committed to honesty, equality and transparency in all aspects of our administration and art.

GRATITUDE We are grateful for our artists, audiences, donors, board and staff. We recognize that each individual plays an important role in this organization's success, and we actively seek out opportunities to acknowledge each person's contribution.

Our Commitment to Anti-Racism

Theater Latté Da is committed to recognizing, addressing, and opposing racism and discrimination in our work, art, community, and industry. We affirm our resolve to actively create an anti-racist arts organization demonstrating our commitment through action. We believe in the power and impact of equitable, inclusive environments and value the lived experiences of our collaborators. We will hold each other accountable to honor this commitment, in the rehearsal room, the office, the theater and the board room.

Our Land Acknowledgement

The Ritz Theater sits on the ancestral homelands of many First Nations Tribes, including most recently the Dakota, and the Anishinabe People. We gratefully, and humbly acknowledge the Native Peoples on whose Ancestral Homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native Communities who make their home here today.

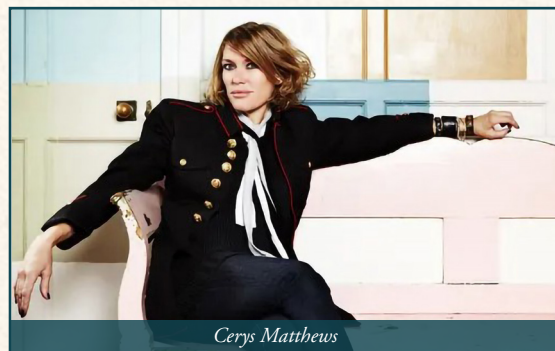


Scan the QR code to learn more about Theater Latté Da's commitment to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access).

CERY'S MATTHEWS ON DYLAN THOMAS

Dylan Thomas...was the most musical of poets. His work is so full of rhythm and melody that one of life's great pleasures is to read him aloud, feeling those syllables roll around your mouth while the rhythms find their ebb and flow.

I was brought up in Swansea. Our house enjoyed almost the same view over the crescent of Swansea Bay as had Dylan's childhood home in Cwmdonkin Drive. I knew about Dylan and I read his work. But the idea that I should set his work to music didn't come until about 10 years ago, when I was living far from Swansea, in South Carolina.



Cerys Matthews

It was Christmas and on our tree was a decoration in the form of a miniature book of Dylan's story-cum-memoir *A Child's Christmas in Wales*. I don't keep still very often, but I was heavily pregnant at the time and so I sat down and read it from beginning to end. I'd enjoyed it as a youngster, but that day in America, as I joined Dylan in his recollections of Christmases past – "I can never remember whether it snowed for six days and six nights when I was 12 or whether it snowed for 12 days and 12 nights when I was six ..." – it suddenly seemed even more brilliant, capable of evoking Christmas anywhere in the world, no matter where you are from. And as I was reading it, I also thought of Prokofiev's wonderful children's story set to music, *Peter and the Wolf*. I've always loved that marriage of music and narration, and I thought then that *A Child's Christmas* could, and should, also dance with music.

In Welsh, as in Hebrew and Somali, a single word covers both poetry and music. The early Welsh bards would compose their verses at the harp. It was performed poetry from the beginning, so I was never nervous that adding music was the equivalent of drawing a moustache on the Mona Lisa.

But you have to get it right. You have to have music that works with the rhythm and the feel of the verse. Just as America was important to Dylan's story, so it has been important to this project, as I began work with composer and arranger Mason Neely, from Chattanooga, Tennessee. I wanted the music for *A Child's Christmas* – subtitled "An adventure with orchestra" – to be in keeping with something like the great Bernard Herrmann soundtracks for Hitchcock's films. As a scored piece, with more formal arrangements and composition, it is a new level of musical ambition for me.

Rereading and relistening is always rewarded with Dylan Thomas. Words and sounds combine to be simultaneously fresh and familiar, as befits a poet and performer who never prefaced his readings with any explanation beyond a simple "I am going to read aloud now."

- Cerys Matthews

Excerpted from *The Guardian*; October 24, 2014

THE HISTORY OF A CHILD'S CHRISTMAS IN WALES

In 1945 the producer of the BBC radio program *Children's Hour* wrote to Dylan Thomas suggesting a talk entitled "Memories of Christmas." Thomas thought that this was "a perfectly good title to hang something on," and by the autumn he had finished work on a reading for the show. Almost five years later,



Dylan Thomas in 1946.

Photograph: Francis Reiss/Getty Images

Thomas revisited "Memories of Christmas," folding in sections of an essay written in 1947 for the British publication *Picture Post* titled "Conversation about Christmas." In 1950, he sold the work to

Harper's Bazaar for \$300 which published it under the title "A Child's Memories of a Christmas in Wales."

On his 1952 tour of America, Thomas was approached by the founders of a new record label called Caedmon about making a recording of his poetry. Thomas recorded five of his poems – enough to fill only one side of the record. When asked what they might use to fill up the LP's B-side, rather than more poetry, Thomas offered his Christmas story.

One year later, Thomas died in New York aged 39. First published in book form in 1954, *A Child's Christmas in Wales* sold modestly at first, but went on to become one of Thomas' best-loved works. Thomas' original 1952 recording of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* was a 2008 selection for the United States National Recording Registry which credits it with launching the audiobook industry in the United States.

WRITING TO MAYA: CHASTITY BROWN ON *AMAZING PEACE*

“There is a video recording of Dr. Maya Angelou reading *Amazing Peace* during a White House Christmas event. It begins with an intro by the orchestra and then fades in to just her voice, her words. While she is speaking there is no need for a symphony or accompaniment.

I spent days listening to this recording on repeat. In my wildest dreams, I could never have imagined being extended the honor to compose a piece like this. It felt like walking barefoot on holy ground.

What I realized was that Maya’s voice was resonating a C# throughout the whole reciting of the poem. That became my first thread, my anchor. From that moment I created an ambient drone in the same frequency. It is consistent throughout my composition as the undercurrent, ever present. And in that way she is the root and the bloom of this new work.”

- Chastity Brown



Maya Angelou reciting her poem “On the Pulse of Morning” at the 1993 Presidential Inauguration of William J. Clinton.
U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C.
January 20, 1993. (William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum)

Best known for her autobiography, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Dr. Maya Angelou was also a prolific and widely-read poet, including her poem, *On the Pulse of Morning*, written at the invitation of President Bill Clinton and read at his 1993 inauguration. Angelou also wrote other “occasional” poems, including *A Brave Startling Truth* (1995), which commemorated the founding of the United Nations, and *Amazing Peace* (2005), read by Dr. Angelou at the White House Christmas tree-lighting at the invitation of President George W. Bush, on December 1, 2005.

THE LOCAL: A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE PUBLIC HOUSE



Temple Bar, Dublin, Ireland

By 1760, there were 2,300 public houses (commonly referred to by the shortened version of the name – the “Pub”) in Dublin, a city which became famous for its public houses and their colorful names. Most people during that time period were illiterate, so pubs were identified by the bright symbols on their signs that would eventually become their names. Names like The Flying Horse, The Sots Hole, Three Candlesticks and the Blue Leg. The public house was designed as a place where the common man could enjoy the local community and get a drink.

The poor classes, which made up a majority of the people in Dublin, couldn't afford the private clubs that the upper class frequented. Each pub would acquire their own regular clientele who would affectionately call the pub their “local.”

Pubs would have a reputation for attracting certain groups like tradesmen, poets, politicians, businessmen and revolutionaries.

The 19th century is when pubs began to look and feel a little more like the Irish Pubs we know and love today. They became the center of the community and social life, and they hosted wakes, weddings, christenings and holiday celebrations. Publicans were respected members of the community and barmen worked as apprentices under them with the hopes of one day owning their own pub. Barmen were required to be mediators for debates, sports and political commentators, confidants, and above all else, hospitable.

The regulars of a particular pub usually knew each other and comfortably slipped into their roles as storyteller, comedian, listener, sage and rabble-rouser.

In the later part of the century the classic Victorian aesthetic with high copper tiled ceilings, large mirrors, ornate carpets, chandeliers and long polished bars becomes popular in Dublin pubs.

Between 1845 and 1855, 1.5 million Irish immigrated to the United States due to the Great Hunger, with many more to follow in the coming decades. The United States already had an established pub and tavern industry that dated back to the very beginning of the colonies, when public houses doubled as meeting halls and court houses due to the complete lack of actual government infrastructure. Eventually the Revolutionary War would be sparked in conversations held in Boston Taverns. When Irish immigrants arrived in the United States they were often told to go straight to the local “Irish Pub.” Their fellow Irish immigrants could help them settle, find work or locate family members. The Irish pub in the United States was just as much a center of community, and oftentimes it was a way to connect with the culture of Ireland and a lifeline back home. Irish immigrants opened pubs in Boston, Chicago, NYC...all over the United States, and eventually all over the world.



O'Shea's Pub, Carlow, Ireland

Like everything in history, the evolution of the pub wasn't always pretty. Women were not allowed in Irish pubs for a very long time with the exception of female street vendors that earned their spot at the bar. Eventually lounges were put in the back of bars for couples and finally women were allowed in all together. There were periods of time when pubs were known for their drunken debauchery, criminal elements and working men spending all their wages on drinks... but a great modern pub has a “come as you are” attitude with a culture of hospitality and a dedication to quality. It should be the center of a small community and attract many local characters, but be welcoming to newcomers.

- Mike Reardon; The Brew Enthusiast

SEISIÚN: THE PUB AS A MUSICAL HUB



Musicians at May Kelly's Cottage, North Conway, NH

Seisiún (“sessions” in Irish) are informal gatherings of Irish traditional musicians that happen mostly in pubs. They are wonderful, spontaneous musical events that now can be found all around the world. If you were to come across one you would find musicians sitting around a table usually engaged with each other in a way that you might expect them to be having a friendly game of cards. You might even think that they’re a “band” but looks would be deceiving. Lovely bouncy tunes would be coming out of the circle and everyone that’s playing them knows the intricate melodies. And sometimes a song is called for and the room becomes quiet so the song can be heard.

The tunes played are from a living tradition of Irish dance music that dates back about 300 years. Reels, jigs, hornpipes, etc. are played with grace and agility and occasionally a slow air or a waltz will be lovingly performed for everyone’s enjoyment. The instruments might include fiddles, flutes, accordions, uilleann pipes, concertinas, tin whistles, mandolins, banjos, bodhráns, guitars and sometimes piano.

Seisiúns are usually open to anyone that wants to join in provided they already know how to play Irish traditional music. And if anyone sings Irish ballads or songs most hosts will be happy to “shush” the crowd so the song can be heard. And you never know...dances might even break out from time to time.

- Marie and Patsy McArdle of May Kelly's Cottage

“A good Seisiún can leave you walking on air, send you home happy, and keep your mind filled with music for a whole week.”

- Irish musician Charlie Lennon



The White Horse Tavern, New York City

BIOGRAPHIES

The Cast



PHINEHAS BYNUM (KEYS)
THEATER LATTÉ DA:
*Christmas at the Local, All
is Calm, Candide*, NEXT
Festival. OPERA: Minnesota
Opera: *Edward Tulane,*

*Carmen, The Anonymous Lover, La traviata, Silent
Night, La rondine, Thaïs, Rigoletto, Dead Man
Walking, Don Pasquale, Don Giovanni*; Mill City
Summer Opera: *Così fan tutte, Carmen, Sweeney
Todd*; Skylark Opera: *The Most Happy Fella, Don
Giovanni*. TRAINING: B.A., St. Olaf College.



SPENCER CHANDLER
(ACCORDION) THEATER
LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the
Local*. THEATER: Guthrie:
Indecent; Open Eye: *Molly
and the Magic Boot, Tucker's*

*Robot, Hair Ball! A Bigfoot Musical Adventure,
The Amazing Cowboat*; Fringe: *Surge*; Broadway,
Off-Broadway and WorldTour: *Slava's Snowshow*;
Off-Broadway (in Yiddish): *A Klezmer's Tale,
An American Family, Songs of Paradise*; Toronto:
Death of a Salesman; New York Regional: *ART,
Hamlet*; National Tours: *The Prince & the Pauper,
The Miser*. TV: *Law & Order, Law & Order:
Criminal Intent, Deadline, Jonny Zero*; FILM:
*Mendy: A Question of Faith, Signals Crossed,
The Things You Don't Say, Another Time Maybe,
Young Goodman Brown*. Currently training at the
Minnesota Center for the Alexander Technique.
spencerchandler.com



JOY DOLO (THE
PROPRIETOR) THEATER
LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at
the Local*, NEXT Festival.
THEATER: Ten Thousand
Things Theater: *Mlima's Tale,*

*Good Person of Szechwan, Fiddler on the Roof,
Changelings*; Guthrie: *Twelfth Night, The Bluest
Eye*; The Jungle: *Every Brilliant Thing, Fly By
Night*; Children's Theatre Company: *Morris
Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress, Snow White,
The Hobbit, Pinocchio, Snowy Day*; The Moving
Company: *Four Seasons, Liberty Falls* (film);
Mixed Blood: *Is God Is*; Pillsbury House Theatre:
Marcus: Or the Secret of Sweet. Blackout Improv:
Improv. TRAINING: BA Metropolitan State.
PODCAST: Host and Writer for APM Studios
"Forever Ago" podcast; UPCOMING: Season 4
Forever Ago. Available on all streaming services.
CONTACT: joydolo.org



BRADLEY GREENWALD
(BARITONE) THEATER
LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the
Local, Twelve Angry Men, La
Bòhème, Puttin' On The Ritz,
A Little Night Music, Steerage*

Song, Oliver!, C. (also book and lyrics), NEXT
Festival. THEATER: Open Eye Figure Theater:
*The Longest Night, Dear Lenny: Bernstein's Life in
Songs & Letters*; Jungle Theater: *I Am My Own
Wife, The Mystery of Irma Vep*; History Theatre:
The Boy Wonder; Ten Thousand Things Theater:
My Fair Lady, As You Like It; Children's Theater
Company: *A Year With Frog & Toad, The 500
Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*; Park Square: *The
Pirates of Penzance*; Artistry: *A New Brain, Follies*;
Frank Theatre: *The Threepenny Opera, Cabaret*;
James Sewell Ballet: *Nutcracker (not so) Suite*.
AWARDS: Minnesota State Arts Board Music
Fellowship, McKnight Fellowship for Theater
Artists, Ivey Award (*I Am My Own Wife*). ALSO:
libretto adaptation of *A Wrinkle in Time*, opera
by Libby Larsen. UPCOMING: *Johnny Skeekey*,
Theater Latté Da (co-writer, co-director, cast).



JASON HANSEN (MUSIC
DIRECTOR/ORCHESTRATIONS/
PIANO/GUITAR/MANDOLIN)
THEATER LATTÉ DA:
*Falsettos, Next to Normal,
Hello, Dolly!* (orchestrations),

*Christmas at the Local, Merrily We Roll Along,
Jelly's Last Jam* (orchestrations), *Bernarda Alba,
Hedwig and the Angry Inch, A Little Night
Music, Once, Assassins, C., Into The Woods, Our
Town, Aida*; NEXT Festival: *The Last Babushka,
A Child's Christmas In Wales*; THEATER:
Children's Theater Company: *American Tail,
Cinderella, How The Grinch Stole Christmas, Dr.
Seuss's The Sneetches*; Guthrie Theater: *Into The
Woods, Guys and Dolls, Othello*; Mixed Blood
Theater: *Passing Strange, Next To Normal, Avenue
Q*; History Theater: *I Am Betty, Sweet Land*;
Stages Theater Company: *Once on This Island,
Tuck Everlasting*; Theater Mu: *Twelfth Night, A
Little Night Music*; Chanhassen Dinner Theaters:
Newsies; Ten Thousand Things: *Romeo & Juliet*;
Arkansas Repertory Theater: *The Gift Of The
Magi*; Northern Sky Theater, Illusion Theater,
Artistry, TigerLion Arts, Open Eye Figure
Theater, Jungle Theater, the MN Fringe Festival,
the Hennepin Theater Trust; *Alive & Kickin'*;
AWARDS: 2018 MN Theater Award (Latté Da's
Assassins).



ELIZABETH REESE (FLUTE/
SAXOPHONE) THEATER
LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at
the Local*, NEXT Festival.
THEATER: Guthrie
Theater: *A Christmas Carol*

('08, '14, '15, '19); Ten Thousand Things:
Iphigenia at Aulis, Into the Woods; Children's
Theatre Company: *The Sneetches, Cinderella*;
American Players Theatre: *Once Upon a Bridge,
A Midsummer Night's Dream, Cyrano de Bergerac,
Three Sisters*; Texas Shakespeare Festival: *Macbeth,
Noises Off, My Fair Lady*; Oregon Shakespeare
Festival: *Education Tour ('18)*; Music Theater
Heritage: *Cats, Oklahoma*. TRAINING:
University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theater BFA
Actor Training Program. @e.reese



MATT RIEHLE (GUITAR/
MANDOLIN/PERCUSSION)
THEATER LATTÉ DA:
*Next to Normal, Christmas
at the Local, Twelve Angry
Men, Once, Assassins, Five*

Points, Man of La Mancha, C., NEXT Festival.
THEATER: Artistry: *Memphis*; Chanhassen
Dinner Theaters: *Jesus Christ Superstar*; History
Theatre: *Sweet Land*; 7th House Theater: *Hair,
Jonah and the Whale*; Torch Theater: *Dangerous
Liaisons*; Yellow Tree Theater: *Flowers for the
Room*. MUSIC: Jonny James and the Hall of
Fames (Zeppelin, Queen, Beatles, and Pink
Floyd Tributes).



QUINN SHADKO (VIOLIN)
THEATER LATTÉ DA:
NEXT Festival, *Christmas
at the Local, La Bohème*.
THEATER: Guthrie Theater:
A Christmas Carol; Minnesota

Opera: *Edward Tulane, The Italian Straw Hat, La
Rondine*; Park Square Theatre: *The Diary of Anne
Frank, Snow Queen, Of Mice and Men*; Skylark
Opera Theatre: *The Fantasticks, Don Giovanni,
Candide*; Hennepin Theatre Trust: *The Realish
Housewives of Edina*; Old Log Theater: *Cowgirls*;
Theatre Elision: *Ghost Quartet*; DalekoArts:
Once; Lyric Arts: *Guys and Dolls, Godspell*; Actors
Theatre of Minnesota: *The Doyle & Debbie Show*;
Artistry: *La Cage aux Folles*; Minneapolis Musical
Theatre: *Mame, Happy Days*; Lakeshore Players:
Mary Poppins; Appearances with Minnesota
Orchestra, Minneapolis Pops Orchestra, and The
Gilbert and Sullivan Very Light Opera Company.
TRAINING: B.A., Rice University; M.M., New
York University.



ERIN NICOLE FARSTÉ
(UNDERSTUDY FOR
PROPRIETOR) THEATER
LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, We
Shall Someday, Christmas at
the Local*, NEXT Festival.

THEATER: Children's Theatre Company: *Corduroy*; Yellow Tree Theatre: *In the Next Room, Passing Strange*; History Theatre: *Not In Our Neighborhood, Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*; Guthrie Theatre: *Dining With the Ancestors*; Artistry Theatre: *Footloose*; Old Log Theatre: *Beehive*; Park Square Theatre: *Antigone*.

The Creative Team



LARISSA KOKERNOT
(DIRECTOR) has 40+ years of
experience in the professional
theater as both an actor and
director. Locally, Larissa has
acted and directed at the

Jungle Theater, The Children's Theater, The Playwrights' Center, Guthrie Theater, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Ten Thousand Things and Eye of the Storm Theater, where she was Artistic Associate for 7 years. Larissa spent over a dozen years in Los Angeles, where she was part of the founding Artistic Circle of the award-winning site-specific company Chalk Repertory Theater. Regionally, Larissa has directed at 59E59, 54 Below, Indiana Repertory Theater, Chautauqua Theater Company and Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Larissa holds a B.A. from Brown University and an M.F.A. in directing from UCSD. She lives in Minneapolis with her husband, writer Karl Gajdusek, and two sons, Kade and Nick.



CHASTITY BROWN
(COMPOSER) A respected
Minneapolis singer/
songwriter with a soulful,
folk-tinged style, Chastity
Brown had already amassed

an impressive catalog by the time her fourth album, 2012's *Back-Road Highways* brought her more widespread acclaim. Along with tours of the U.S. and Europe, Brown's subsequent albums began to take on a more deeply layered sound, incorporating elements of rock and pop into releases like 2017's *Silhouette of Sirens* and 2022's powerful *Sing to the Walls*. The latter is a sonically expansive album; it mines the roots of Americana, folk, and soul music, but Chastity's stories are delivered in a style that

feels remarkably timely, modern, and forward-thinking. The album took a surprisingly hopeful tone, channeling personal and political upheaval into a potent and revelatory set of songs. After surviving the isolation of the early pandemic and witnessing the global racial reckoning that manifested itself in the riots mere blocks from her South Minneapolis home, even she is surprised to hear the way *Sing To The Walls* turned out. "It's a love album, in a way I didn't plan on," Chastity says. "My new works do not serve sorrow, and in that way, it's my trying to emulate Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*—seeking personal spiritual fulfillment while rejecting expectations. What matters to me is thriving—and in order to do that, it's been necessary to try to embrace some joy."



CERYS MATTHEWS
(COMPOSER) is a musician,
author and broadcaster. She
hosts and programs an award
winning radio show on BBC 6
music every Sunday, the Blues

Show on BBC Radio 2 each Monday at 9pm and co-hosts Radio 4's new music show *ADD TO PLAYLIST* with Jeffrey Boakye, airing each Friday. Cerys founded the Good Life Experience festival with Charlie and Caroline Gladstone in 2014. She has curated and composed for theatres, including the National Theatre, London and the Tate Modern and was artistic director for the opening ceremony of the World Music Expo 2013. She was awarded an inaugural St. David Award for her services to culture from the First Minister of Wales in 2014 and the same year, was awarded an MBE for her services to music. Cerys was a founding member of multi-million selling band Catatonia and sings on the perennial winter favorite "Baby It's Cold Outside" with Sir Tom Jones. She was born in Cardiff on April 11, 1969 and her interests span science, nature, music, art, literature, and sports.



MASON NEELY
(COMPOSER) is an American-
born, UK-based record
producer, drummer,
orchestral arranger and
multi-instrumentalist who

has produced and arranged for and toured with artists including Lambchop, Cerys Matthews, Sufjan Stevens, Saint Etienne, Diane Birch, Julian Ovenden, Lee Mead, Leigh Nash, DM Stith, Gulp, Laura Wright, Martyn Joseph, Louise Dearman, Natalie Duncan, Colorama,

Paper Aeroplanes, and The Gregory Brothers. He has served as a composer, arranger and musical director for the BBC, RTÉ and S4C networks and scored advertisements for Best Buy, Cisco Systems, Domino's Pizza and Crispin, Porter and Bogusky. As an orchestral arranger, he has done pieces for the BBC and RTÉ Orchestras, the BBC Proms, the London Sinfonietta and the National Orchestra of Wales and the Welsh National Ballet. In early 2013, he became a regular contributor on Cerys Matthews' Sunday morning BBC Radio 6 Music broadcast. He composed the music for S4C series *Lan A Lawr* and features *Beca* and *Y Streic a fi* in early 2015. He has also received two awards from the National Eisteddfod of Wales: the first in recognition of Cerys Matthews' 2007 release *Awyren=Aeroplane* (which he produced and co-wrote) and the second for his production, mixing and orchestration of Bendith's 2016 self-titled release, which won the Best Welsh Language Album of the year in 2017.



PETER ROTHSTEIN
(CO-CREATOR) serves as the
Producing Artistic Director
for Asolo Repertory Theatre
where he directed *Man of La
Mancha, Sweeney Todd* and

Ragtime. He works extensively as a director of theater, musical theater, opera and new work development. For 25 years Rothstein served as the Founding Artistic Director of Theater Latté Da. Other collaborations include the Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company, Ten Thousand Things and Seattle's 5th Avenue as well as the Minnesota Opera, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera and Chicago Opera Theater. Rothstein is the creator of *All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, which had its Off Broadway debut in 2018 receiving the Drama Desk Award for Unique Theatrical Experience, and has been seen around the globe airing on PBS. Rothstein served on the board of directors for the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, Alive and Kickin' and the Twin Cities' Ivey Awards. He has been a panelist and evaluator for the Playwrights' Center, the McKnight Foundation, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre's Festival of New Musicals. He holds degrees in Music and Theater from St. John's University and an MFA in Directing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

BIOGRAPHIES



DYLAN THOMAS was born in Swansea in 1914. After leaving school he worked briefly as a junior reporter on the *South Wales Evening Post* before deciding to embark on a freelance literary career. He rapidly established himself as a remarkable personality and one of the finest poets of his generation. *18 Poems* appeared in 1934, *Twenty-five Poems* in 1936, *Deaths and Entrances* in 1946 and *In Country Sleep* in 1952. His *Collected Poems* was published in 1952. Throughout his life Thomas also wrote short stories, his most famous collection being *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*. He also wrote film scripts, was a celebrated broadcaster of radio features and talks, lectured widely in America, and wrote the radio play *Under Milk Wood*, first broadcast posthumously in 1954. The highly successful lecturing tours of America in the early 1950s were made possible by his fame but were also necessary for financial reasons. In 1953, on the fourth of those visits, and shortly after his thirty-ninth birthday, he collapsed and died in New York. His body is buried in Wales at Laugharne, his home for many years. In 1982 a memorial stone was unveiled in 'Poets' Corner' in Westminster Abbey.



MAYA ANGELOU was born Marguerite Johnson in St. Louis, Missouri, on April 4, 1928. She grew up in St. Louis and Stamps, Arkansas. She was an author, poet,

historian, songwriter, playwright, dancer, stage and screen producer, director, performer, singer, and civil rights activist. She was best known for her seven autobiographical books, beginning with *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (Random House, 1969), which was nominated for the National Book Award, to *Mom & Me & Mom* (Random House, 2013). Among her volumes of poetry are *A Brave and Startling Truth* (Random House, 1995); *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou* (Random House, 1994); and *Just Give Me a Cool Drink of Water 'fore I Diiie* (Random House, 1971), which was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. In 1959, at the request of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Angelou became the northern coordinator for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. From 1961 to 1962 she was associate editor of *The Arab Observer* in Cairo, Egypt and from 1964 to 1966 she was feature editor of the *African Review* in Accra, Ghana. In 1993, Angelou

wrote and delivered a poem, "On The Pulse of the Morning," at the inauguration for President Bill Clinton at his request. In 2000, she received the National Medal of Arts, and in 2010 she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President Barack Obama. The first black woman director in Hollywood, Angelou wrote, produced, directed, and starred in productions for stage, film, and television. Angelou was twice nominated for a Tony Award for acting: once for her Broadway debut in *Look Away* (1973), and again for her performance in *Roots* (1977). Angelou died on May 28, 2014, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where she had served as Reynolds Professor of American Studies at Wake Forest University since 1982.



BENJAMIN OLSEN (SCENIC DESIGNER)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the Local, Twelve Angry Men: A New Musical* (Set Designer), *C., Gypsy, All is Calm, Sweeney Todd, Into the Woods, Steerage Song* (Properties). **OPERA:** Chicago Opera Theater: *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing* (Set Designer). **THEATER:** Artistry: *The Last Five Years, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, All My Sons, Phantom, God of Carnage, La Cage aux Folles* (Set Designer); Stages Theater Company: *Annie, The Little Mermaid* (Set Designer). **UPCOMING:** Theater Latté Da: *Stones in His Pockets, Johnny Skeekey* (Set Designer). **MINNESOTA OPERA:** *Trouble in Tahiti, Service Provider* (Set Designer). **TRAINING:** B.A., St. Olaf College; M.Arch., Yale School of Architecture. Benjamin is a broadminded design practitioner focused on designing the next generation of attainable housing. He is the co-founder of Office Hughes Olsen and a partner in Lagom Modular. @ benjamindavidolsen



AMBER BROWN (COSTUME DESIGNER) THEATER

LATTÉ DA: *Christmas At The Local, We Shall Someday*. **THEATER:** Pillsbury House Theatre: *We Wake, What/ Washed Ashore/ A stray, bull-jean, Great Divide III: She Persists, Great Divide II: Plays on the Politics of Truth, Almost Equal To, The Great Divide: Plays for a Broken Nation*; Illusion Theater: *We Take Care of Our Own, Five Minutes of Heaven*; Mixed Blood Theatre: *Interstate, Autonomy, Corazón Eterno, Agnes Under the Bigtop*; Old Log Theater: *The Play That Goes Wrong, The Emperor's New*

Clothes; Park Square Theater: *Aubergine*; Gremlin Theater: *Journey's End*; Bucket Brigade: *Life Goes On*; Full Circle Theater: *Under This Roof*; 7th House Theater: *Rhinoceros*; Macalester College: *Distracted, 12 Ophelia's, Accidental Death of an Anarchist*. As Costume Supervisor: **THEATER LATTÉ DA:** *Falsettos, Next to Normal, Hello, Dolly!, Merrily We Roll Along, Twelve Angry Men, Jelly's Last Jam, La Bohème, All is Calm*.



MARCUS DILLIARD (LIGHTING DESIGNER)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the Local, A Little Night Music, Assassins, Man of La Mancha, Peter and the Starcatcher, C., All is Calm, Our Town, Cabaret, Steerage Song, Aida, Song of Extinction, Violet, The Full Monty, Old Wicked Songs, Susannah*. **THEATER:** Guthrie Theater, Minnesota Opera, The Jungle Theatre, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, Children's Theatre Company, Ordway Music Theater. **AWARDS:** Sage Award, Ivey Award, McKnight Foundation Theater Artist Fellowship (2). **TRAINING:** M.F.A. in lighting design from Boston University, Professor at University of Minnesota Department of Theatre Arts and Dance.



C ANDREW MAYER (SOUND DESIGNER)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the Local, Jelly's Last Jam, Chicago, A Little Night Music, Five Points,*

Assassins. **THEATER:** Guthrie, Minnesota Opera, Jungle Theatre, History Theatre, Mixed Blood, Park Square, Children's Theatre Company, Pillsbury House, Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company, Great River Shakespeare Festival (Winona), Arkansas Rep (Little Rock), ACT (San Francisco), Philadelphia Opera, Opera Colorado, Everyman Theatre (Baltimore). **AWARDS:** 2008-09 McKnight Artist Fellowship, Audelco Award for *Pure Confidence* at 59E59 (NYC); Producing Director, Acadia Repertory Theatre, Mount Desert Island, Maine.



ELISSA ADAMS (DRAMATURG) THEATER

LATTÉ DA: *C., Lullaby, Assassins, Five Points, Underneath the Lintel, Once, A Little Night Music,*

Hedwig and the Angry Inch, To Let Go And Fall, Chicago, Bernarda Alba, Jelly's Last Jam,

BIOGRAPHIES

Twelve Angry Men: A New Musical, Merrily We Roll Along, Christmas At The Local, Hello Dolly!, Next to Normal, Falsettos, NEXT Up & NEXT Festival (Producer). THEATER: Director of New Play Development at Children's Theatre Company (1998- 2017); Sundance Theatre Lab; Playwrights' Center; TRAINING: MFA in Dramaturgy, UC San Diego.



ABBEE WARMBOE (PROPS DESIGNER) THEATER

LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, Next to Normal, Hello Dolly!, Christmas at the Local, Merrily*

We Roll Along, Twelve Angry Men, Jelly's Last Jam, La Bohème, Bernarda Alba, All Is Calm, Chicago, To Let Go and Fall, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, A Little Night Music, Once, Underneath the Lintel, Five Points, Assassins, Man of La Mancha, Six Degrees of Separation, Peter and the Starcatcher, A Christmas Carole Petersen, Ragtime, Gypsy. Other collaborations include Penumbra Theatre, History Theater, The Guthrie Theater, Pillsbury House Theater, Old Log Theater, Mixed Blood Theater, among others. Abbee is a 2020-2021 McKnight Theater Artist Fellow at the Playwrights' Center.

SHELBY REDDIG (PRODUCTION STAGE

MANAGER) THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, Next to Normal, We Shall Someday, Hello, Dolly!, Christmas at the Local, Merrily We Roll Along, Jelly's Last Jam, La Bohème, Puttin' on the Ritz.* THEATER: Children's Theatre Company: *Snow White, The Hobbit, Corduroy*; MN Opera: *Albert Herring*; Mixed Blood Theatre: *Prescient Harbingers, The Mermaid Hour: Remixed*; Perseverance Theater: *A Christmas Carol*; Jungle Theater: *Fly By Night: The Musical*; Stages Theater: *Charlotte's Web*. TRAINING: BA in Theater and English from St. Olaf College.

AUSTIN SCHOENFELDER (ASSISTANT STAGE

MANAGER) THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, Hello, Dolly!, Christmas At The Local, Merrily We Roll Along, Jelly's Last Jam.* THEATER: Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: (Spotlight Operator) *Jersey Boys, The Prom, Footloose, The Music Man*; Park Square Theatre: (Asst. Stage Manager) *Holmes and Watson*, (Run Crew) *The Rocky Horror Show*; The Duluth Playhouse: (Asst. Stage Manager) *Sweeney Todd*; The Round Barn Theatre: (Production Stage Manager) *Mamma Mia, Plain and Fancy, Annie*; Zenith City Horror: (Stage Manager) *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*; Prairie Repertory Theatre: (Stage Manager)

The Sound of Music, Smokey Joe's Cafe, Hairspray, Sister Act. TRAINING: BFA in Technical Theatre from the University of Minnesota Duluth.



JOELLE COUTU (STAGE MANAGEMENT SWING)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Next To Normal, NEXT Festival 2023: The Tears of La Llorona, Love Them First,*

Workshop: Blackout. THEATER: Illusion Theater: *We Take Care of Our Own, Present*; Lyric Opera of the North: *Cavalleria Rusticana*; Skylark Opera Company: *Three Decembers, Eugene Onegin, Amahl and The Night Visitors*; History Theatre: *Runestone! A Rock Musical, Not in Our Neighborhood*; Gilbert and Sullivan Very Light Opera Company: *Pirates of Penzance.* TRAINING: B.A. in Theater and Television Design, Valparaiso University.



BETHANY REINFELD (TECHNICAL DIRECTOR)

describes Technical Direction as "Building worlds for characters to come to life in". She holds a M.F.A. in Theater

and Drama with a specialization in Technical Direction from UW - Madison. She also has a B.F.A. in Design Tech with an emphasis in Technical Direction and Scenic Design from UMD. She has worked with Mixed Blood Theater, Normandale Community College, Yellow Tree Theater, Jungle Theater and Sesame Street Live/VEE Corporation to list a few.

NICHOLAS TRANBY (AUDIO SUPERVISOR)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, Next to Normal, Hello Dolly!, Christmas at the Local, Merrily We Roll Along, Twelve Angry Men, Jelly's Last Jam, La Bohème, All Is Calm, Once, Chicago, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Candide, A Little Night Music, Man of La Mancha, Peter and the Starcatcher, Ragtime, Gypsy, Assassins, Five Points.* THEATER: Sound, Video and Lighting Associate at Children's Theatre Company for 4 years including *Shrek: The Musical, Pinocchio, Alice in Wonderland* and *Robin Hood*; Head Audio Engineer for international tours of *The Wedding Singer* and *The Wizard of Oz*; Other venues have included Guthrie Theater, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. TRAINING: The College-Conservatory of Music at University of Cincinnati.



ANDREW NORFOLK (LIGHTING SUPERVISOR)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Christmas at the Local, Hello, Dolly!, We Shall Someday, Next to Normal, Falsettos.* DANCE:

The Cowles Center: *Who Brought the Humbug.* OPERA: The Santa Fe Opera: *Carmen, The Barber of Seville, Falstaff, Tristan Und Isolde, M. Butterfly* LIGHTING DESIGN: Lyric Arts: *The Pavilion.* UMD Theatre: *MAXA - The Maddest Woman In The World, The Little Prince*; Stage 2 Theatre Company: *Firebringer, The Spoon River Project, The Trail to Oregon.* TRAINING: B.F.A. in Theatre, Lighting Design Emphasis, University of Minnesota - Duluth.



CORINNE STEFFENS (TECH SWING) THEATER

LATTÉ DA: *Falsettos, We Shall Someday, Hello, Dolly!, Merrily We Roll Along, NEXT Festival, Twelve Angry Men,*

Jelly's Last Jam, La Bohème. THEATER: US National Tour: *All is Calm 2022, Emojiland the Musical*; Guthrie Theater: *Shane, Into the Woods, Vietgone*; Jungle Theater: *Cambodian Rock Band*; as well as Twin Cities Fringe, Twin Cities Horror Fest, and teaching & designing for school theater programs across the cities



SARA HERMAN (SCENIC CHARGE) THEATER LATTÉ

DA: *Next to Normal, We Shall Someday, Hello, Dolly!, Christmas At The Local, Merrily We Roll Along, Twelve*

Angry Men, La Bohème, Jelly's Last Jam, Chicago, Peter and the Starcatcher. THEATER: Minnesota Opera: *Dinner At 8*; Mill City Opera: *Cosi Fan Tutti*; Jungle Theater: *Fly By Night*; Circus Juventas: *Twisted, Hugge, Steam, Nordrsaga, Alice in Wonderland, 1001 Nights.* TRAINING: B.A. University of MN Morris, Colbalt Studios.

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next

25 X 25



Love Them First (2023). Photo by Morgan Gray

Theater Latté Da was envisioned by Co-Founder Peter Rothstein as a home for the future of the American musical. TLD has lived this vision since our beginning, with 14 of our 26 mainstage seasons including world premieres. Our NEXT 20/20 campaign allowed TLD to support the development process for 20 new works over five years. We are incredibly grateful to the donors who made this robust endeavor possible.

TLD is embarking on an even more ambitious milestone. Through NEXT 25x25, we will invest in the future of the great American Musical and its playwrights, composers, and lyricists through world premieres, the annual NEXT Festival, our NEXT Up development program, and NEXT Generation commissions.

To make a gift in support of NEXT 25x25, please contact Hilary Smith, Director of Development, at hilary@latteda.org for more information.

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THINGS TO KNOW



RESTROOMS

We have fully remodeled our lobby restrooms to make them All Gender restrooms. Each contains five fully private stalls with ADA accessible facilities.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessible Seating: Accessible seating is available at the Ritz Theater in Row E, Sidebar P, and Sidebar Q. All other seating requires stairs for access.

Courtesy Wheelchairs: Courtesy wheelchairs are available for use for patrons who may have mobility challenges. Please see our House Manager or Box Office Manager for use.

Bariatric Chairs: Bariatric chairs are available at the Ritz Theater in Sidebars P and Q.

ASL Interpreted Performances: We offer ASL-interpreted performances for every production during our season. These performances are usually offered the second Thursday in each production.

Audio Described Performances:

Professional audio describers provide narration of on-stage action, costumes, and scenery during the performance. Listening devices are available for patrons to use during the AD scheduled performances.

Open Caption Performances: We offer open captioning for select weekend performances. Captions of the text are displayed on a screen near the stage, more easily read from our sidebar seats. Check the performance calendar for the open captioning dates or call the Box Office at 612.339.3003 for details.

Assistive Listening Devices: We offer assistive listening devices for all performances. Please stop at the Box Office to check one out for use during the performance.

Braille Programs: Please see an usher or our Guest Services Manager to request a braille program for any performance.

Large Print Programs: Large print programs are available upon request. Please see the Box Office or request a copy from an usher.

AUDIENCE INFO & POLICIES

COVID-19 Policy: As of the start of this season at the Ritz Theater, we are no longer requiring proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test result. Masks are welcome but optional, EXCEPT for select Sunday matinee performances when they are required. This policy is subject to change.

Photos & Video: Photos of the set are allowed before or after the show and during intermission, but not when artists are onstage. Video or audio recording of any kind is strictly prohibited.

Phones: The ringing of cellular phones or texting is highly disruptive during a performance. These devices should be turned off during the performance.



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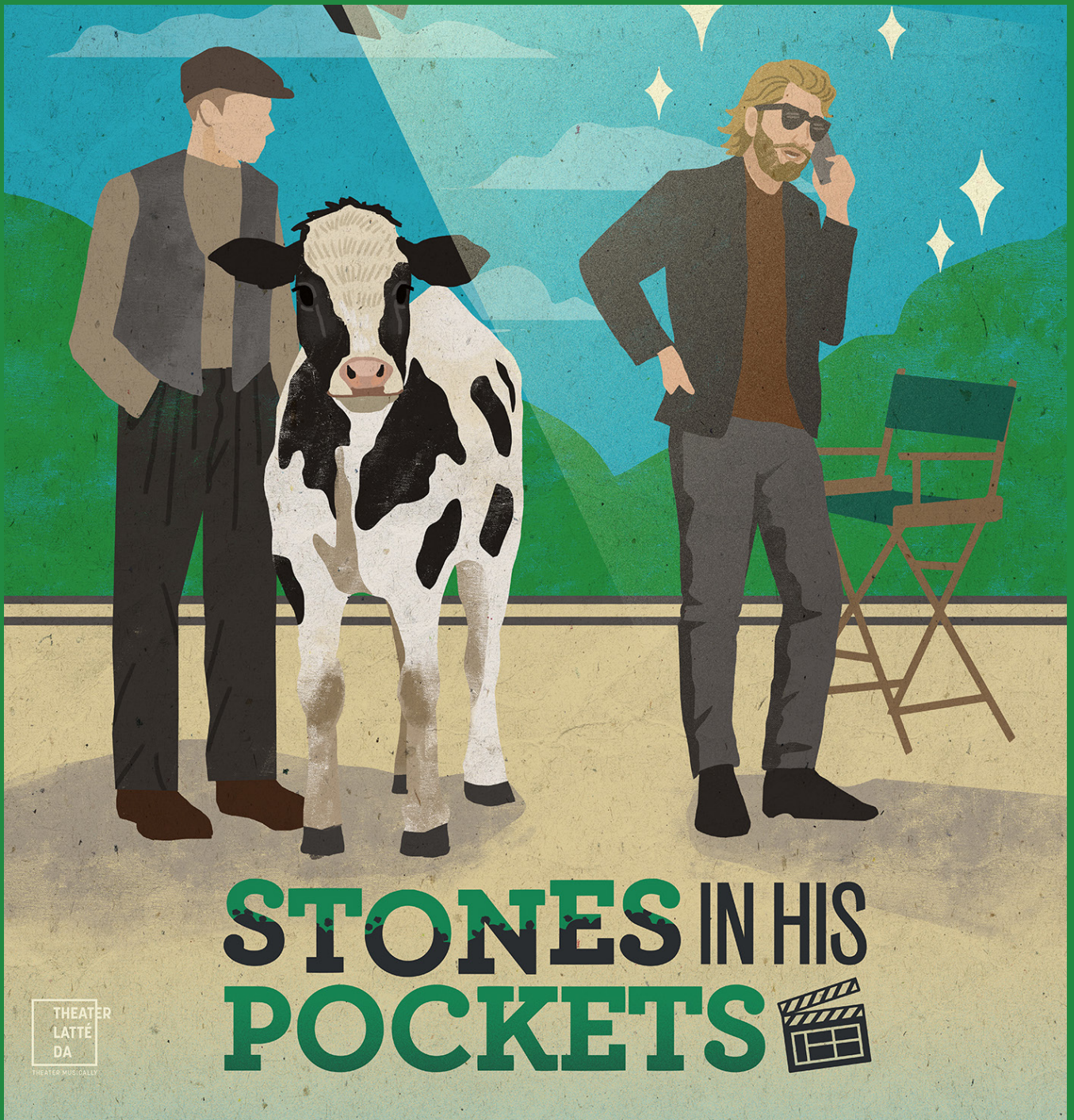
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STONES IN HIS POCKETS

BY **MARIE JONES**

DIRECTED BY **MARCELA LORCA**

MUSIC DIRECTION AND COMPOSITIONS BY **JASON HANSEN**

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