



The Wizard of Oz





What's Next at NWT



BKLYN

FEB 2 - FEB 17

Feb 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17

Winter Main Stage Production, ages 18 & up

Bklyn the Musical is a play within a play that explores the dark side of fame, the flip side of the "American Dream", and the raw reality of PTSD. When life challenges us and the journey isn't what we expected, you gotta ask yourself, "Do you believe in happy endings?"

Produced by Scott Prisand and Mark Schoenfeld

Original Broadway Production produced by Jeff Calhoun, John McDaniel and Producers Four

BKLYN The Musical is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing, LLC. (www.broadwaylicensing.com)



THE PROM APRIL 12 - APRIL 28

April 12, 13, 19, 20, 21, 25, 26, 27, 28

Spring Production

Struggling Broadway stars head to small-town Indiana to support Emma Nolan, who faces opposition from the homophobic PTA in her quest to attend prom with her girlfriend, all while hoping to revive their own careers in the process.

Book & Lyrics by Chad Beguelin

Book by Bob Martin

Music by Matthew Sklar

THE PROM is presented through special with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide 11890 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.theatricalrights.com



RISE!

Students from our
Free After-School Program
PRESENT

DISNEY'S FROZEN, JR. MAY 2 - MAY 5

May 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

RISE! Blackbox Production

Do you want to build a snowman? You'll love this fanciful and heartwarming stage adaptation of the top-grossing animated film of all time! Join Anna, Elsa, and all of your favorite characters as they embark on an epic, ice-filled journey of self-discovery, camaraderie, and the real meaning of true love.

Music & Lyrics by: Kristen Anderson-Lopez & Robert Lopez

Book by Jennifer Lee

Based on the Disney film written by Jennifer Lee and directed by Chris Buck & Jennifer Lee

Disney's Frozen Jr. is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com



NEAR WEST THEATRE PRESENTS



"AND THE DREAMS THAT YOU DARE TO DREAM REALLY DO COME TRUE."

NOVEMBER 17 - DECEMBER 3, 2023

PERFORMANCES: NOVEMBER 17, 18, 25, 26, 30 & DECEMBER 1, 2, 3

ASL PERFORMANCE: NOVEMBER 18 | SENSORY PERFORMANCE: NOVEMBER 30

FALL INTERGENERATIONAL PRODUCTION, RECOMMENDED FOR AGES 5 & UP

RUNTIME: 2 HOURS AND 20 MINUTES, 15-MINUTE INTERMISSION

BY L. FRANK BAUM

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY HAROLD ARLEN AND E. Y. HARBURG

BACKGROUND MUSICAL BY HERBERT STOTHART

THE WIZARD OF OZ IS PRESENTED BY ARRANGEMENT WITH CONCORD

THEATRICALS ON BEHALF OF TAMS-WITMARK LLC.

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THIS PRODUCTION OF THE WIZARD OF OZ CONTAINS FOG, HAZE, STROBE LIGHT EFFECTS,
RAPID PROJECTIONS, & LOUD WEATHER EFFECTS.

Photographing, videotaping or recording audio or images of this production, including by camera, cell phone, or other device, is strictly prohibited.

THE TEAM

TRINDAD SNIDER
DIRECTOR

MATTHEW DOLAN
MUSICAL DIRECTOR

ANDREA BELSER
CHOREOGRAPHER

JULIE BILLINGHURST
STAGE MANAGER

CAMERON MICHALAK
SCENIC DESIGNER

JEREMY PAUL
LIGHTING DESIGNER

DAVID GLOWE, JR.
COSTUME DESIGNER

VENCHISE PHILLIPS
PROPS MASTER

JAN SNIDER
HEAD SEAMSTRESS

PERREN HEDDERSON
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

JOSHUA CARABELLO
SOUND DESIGNER

EMILY HEHNEN
ASST. TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

MICHAEL STIEN
PRODUCTIONS & RENTALS MANAGER

ANGELA WARHOLIC
ASST. STAGE MANAGER

JAMES ROMEO
SOUND TECHNICIAN

JEN HITMAR-SHANKLAND
CHARGE SCENIC ARTIST

EMILY FERRER
ASST. SOUND TECHNICIAN

AMY AUST
MAKEUP ARTIST

KATE LEAGUE WESTON
DRAMA THERAPIST



THE TEAM

MUSICIANS

PERCUSSION PAT BOLAND
BASS JASON STEBELTON
VIOLIN ERIN ROSS
TRUMPET SHANE NILAND
TROMBONE AARON PHILLIPS
REEDS KEITH TURNER
FLUTE EMILIO ROSARIO

STAGE CREW

RED BOOSE, ROSS FERTEL, MARTHA LOUGHRIDGE, RUSSELL MILLER,
MARISSA NAZARIO

PUBLICITY

PRODUCTION PHOTOS..... AMBER PATRICK
PRODUCTION ART DESIGNER..... NOAH HRBEK

SPECIAL THANKS

TIN MAN COSTUME DESIGNER
STEVE NANARTOWICZ

PROPS
AARON PHILLIPS - PROPS

BICYCLE
MASON ADKINS & SIXTH CITY CYCLES

COSTUMES
SYDNEY NOELLE WARREN
ANTHONY SAVAGE WILLAMS
HANNAH ARMENTA

THE CAST

Dorothy	Elisa Gauntner
Scarecrow/Hunk	Amaya Moore
Tin Man/Hickory	Perren Hedderson
Lion/Zeke	Jordan Cooper
Aunt Em/Glinda	Bethany Beckham
Uncle Henry/The Emerald City Guard	Christian McGinnis
Almira Gluch/The Wicked Witch	Anna Loehrke
Professor Marvel/The Wizard of Oz	Shamus Dickinson
Pit Singers	Amara Alberto, Margaret Chapman, Andrea Huynh, CC Pantalone, Sam Pantalone, & Phil Pantalone
Tornado	Sara Danielle Chapman, Julianna Blischak, Brooke Cicerchi, Demi Eidson, Michael Emery Fox, Olivia Moore, Kathryn O’Sullivan, Loren Sciulla, Dani Scaggs, & Moth Teets
Munchkins/Monkeys	Harlann Caraballo, Melora Dodge, Maxine Eadie, Vivienne Eadie, Ascencion Garcia-Prignitz, Guadalupe Garcia-Prignitz, Piper Kane, Rose Shakarian Kvidera, Nick Maistros, Lucia Millard, Clayton Obertacz, JosieO’Leary, Reese Riechel, Yamini Sridhar, Abigail Strozewski, Esther Tan, Teddy Tan, Lydia Whitehouse, & Brayden Yancy
Crows.....	Amanda Bender, Noah Hrbek, Connor Kaboski, Keco Kent, Anthony “Bones” Kruse, & Robert Zombar
Trees	Richie Gagen, Sandra Gay-Chapman, Tom Hill, Donnell James, & Carole Leiblinger-Hedderson
Poppies	Julianna Blischak, Joshua Browning, Brooke Cicerchi, Demi Eidson, Michael Emery Fox, Michayla King, Simone Larson, Olivia Moore, Samuel Moyer, Kathryn O’Sullivan, & Mack Van Lier

THE CAST CONT'D

Ozians Amanda Bender, Julianna Blischak, Joshua Browning,
Sara Danielle Chapman, Brooke Cicerchi, Michael Emery Fox,
Demi Eidson, Ritchie Gagen, Sandra Gay-Chapman, Tom Hill,
Noah Hrbek, Donnell James, Connor Karboksi, Keco Kent,
Michayla King, Anthony “Bones” Kruse, Simone Larson,
Carole Leiblinger-Hedderson, Olivia Moore, Samuel Moyer,
Ron O’Leary, Kathryn O’Sullivan, Dani Scaggs, Loren Sciulla,
Moth Teets, Mack Van Lier, & Robert Zombar

Winkie General Keko Kent

Winkies Joshua Browning, Michael Emery Fox, Donnell James,
Connor Karboksi, Michayla King, Anthony “Bones” Kruse,
Simone Larson, Samuel Moyer, Ron O’Leary, & Mack Van Lier

Nikko Noah Hrbek

Jitterbugs Amanda Bender, Demi Eidson, Julianna Blischak,
Michael Emery Fox, Kathryn O’Sullivan, Loren Sciulla

Ghostly Figures Sara Danielle Chapman, Brooke Cicerchi,
Olivia Moore, Dani Scaggs, Moth Teets

SIGNATURE ADS

~~-\$50- Over the Rainbow -~~\$50-
~~The Eidson Family~~
~~Rachael and Aaron Kane~~
~~Melanie Shakarian and Peter Kvidera~~

~~-\$25- Gates of the Emerald City -~~\$25-
~~Brandi Larsen~~

SCENES & MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

OVERTURE.....ORCHESTRA WITH CHORUS

SCENE 1: THE KANSAS PRAIRIE

SCENE 2: THE RAINBOW

OVER THE RAINBOW DOROTHY

SCENE 3: KANSAS

SCENE 4: GYPSY CARAVAN

SCENE 5: THE TWISTER

SCENE 6: MUNCHKINLAND

MUNCHKINLAND MUSIC SEQUENCE..... GLINDA, DOROTHY, & MUNCHKINS

DING DONG! THE WITCH IS DEAD..... GLINDA, DOROTHY, & MUNCHKINS

SCENE 7: THE WICKED WITCH

YELLOW BRICK ROAD MUNCHKINS

SCENE 8: SCARECROW - THE CORNFEILD

SCENE 9: CROWS IN THE CORNFEILD

IF I ONLY HAD A BRAIN..... SCARECROW, DOROTHY, & CROWS

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD DOROTHY & SCARECROW

SCENE 10: TINMAN WITH APPLE TREES IN FRONT OF HIS GARDEN

IF I ONLY HAD A HEART TINMAN, DOROTHY, & APPLE TREES

SCENE 11: WANT TO PLAY BALL?

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD (REPRISE) DOROTHY, SCARECROW, & TINMAN

SCENE 12: THE LION - WILD FOREST

LIONS, TIGERS, AND BEARS DOROTHY, SCARECROW, & TINMAN

IF I ONLY HAD THE NERVE..... COWARDLY LION, DOROTHY,
SCARECROW, & TINMAN

WE'RE OFF TO SEE THE WIZARD (REPRISE) DOROTHY, SCARECROW,
TINMAN AND LION

SCENE 13: POPPIES

POPPIES DOROTHY, SCARECROW, TINMAN, LION,
GLINDA, & CHORUS

SCENES & MUSICAL NUMBERS CONT'D

ACT II
ENTR'ACTEORCHESTRA WITH CHORUS

SCENE 1: OUTSIDE THE GATES OF EMERALD CITY

SCENE 2: THE TOWN SQUARE, EMERALD CITY
THE MERRY OLD LAND OF OZ DOROTHY, TINMAN, SCARECROW,
LION, GUARD, & OZIANs

SCENE 3: THE WIZARDS CHAMBER
IF I WERE KIND OF THE FOREST LION, DOROTHY, TINMAN, & SCARECROW

SCENE 4: THE GATES OF EMERALD CITY

SCENE 5: THE WITCH'S CASTLE
MARCH OF THE WINKIES WINKIES
WINKIES EXIT WINKIES

SCENE 6: THE HAUNTED FOREST
JITTERBUG DOROTHY, TINMAN, SCARECROW,
LION, JITTERBUGS, & GHOSTLY FIGURES
JITTERBUG REPRISE JITTERBUGS & GHOSTLY FIGURES

SCENE 7: FLYING MONKEYS

SCENE 8: THE WITCH'S CASTLE

SCENE 9: MAIN GATE OF THE WITCH'S CASTLE
WINKIES MARCH REPRISE WINKIES
OVER THE RAINBOW DOROTHY

SCENE 10: THE WITCH'S CHAMBER
OVER THE RAINBOW DOROTHY
DING DONG! THE WITCH IS DEAD REPRISE WINKIES

SCENE 11: THE WIZARD'S CHAMBER

SCENE 12: THE BALLOON

SCENE 13: FAREWELL TO OZ

SCENE 14: THE KANSAS PRAIRIE

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

THERE'S TRULY NO PLACE LIKE HOME, AND FOR ME, AS WELL AS COUNTLESS OTHERS, THAT SENTIMENT HAS ALWAYS BEEN SYNONYMOUS WITH NEAR WEST THEATRE. FOR OVER 45 YEARS, THIS ORGANIZATION HAS SERVED AS A HOME FOR MANY.

The Wizard of Oz to me has always been a story about resilience and never giving up even when obstacles of any kind are thrown your way. In most journeys in life, we overcome those obstacles because of the friendship and the people who love and support us. The people who are willing to walk to the end of the world with us and face any witch or wizard in our path.

Throughout my 35-year journey with this organization, I've been fortunate to encounter numerous scarecrows, tin folk, and lions who changed my life forever. They challenged me to think beyond what is right in front of me and to see the gift within any problem. Their unconditional love demonstrated that, with love, anything is achievable. Moreover, they instilled in me the courage to embrace new experiences and fearlessly confront mistakes. They also helped me find the courage to try something new and to never be afraid to make a mistake.

Over the past few years, quite a few of those friends, who traveled down many yellow brick roads with me have made their journey over the rainbow, and even though they are no longer here their presence is forever felt. As the holidays approach, many of us are missing family and friends who are somewhere over the rainbow. While it's natural to miss their presence, it's equally crucial to celebrate those who continue to share this journey with us. Let us strive to embody the spirit of scarecrows, tin folk, and lions for others, extending the same love and support that makes the journey worthwhile.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Trinidad".

Trinidad Snider
Artistic Director



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GET TO KNOW THE CAST

Amara Alberto (*Pit Singer*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be making her stage debut with Near West Theatre! Previously, she has been seen haunting the area with the *Historic Haunts Walking Tour* (2021: Tour Guide, 2022: Velma West, 2023: Twilight Zone Host). Amara would like to thank everyone for coming to support the show, and her friends, family, and this amazing cast and crew for supporting her on the road to Oz! This one's for the Beans.

Bethany Beckham (*Aunt Em/Glinda*) (She/Her) is thrilled to make her Near West debut and return to the stage after a long hiatus! She is excited to play a good witch after last appearing in *Into the Woods* (Witch) which earned her a Jimmy Award nomination. Other favorite roles: *Beauty and the Beast* (Belle) and *The Wedding Singer* (Julia). When she is not onstage, you can find her at the climbing gym, buying more houseplants, or spending time with her partner Alicia, their dog Leo and one-eyed cat Alfie. She would like to thank her family for their support and introducing her to the Land of Oz at a young age.

Amanda Bender (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be back on stage at Near West Theatre. You've probably seen her face around a Cleveland stage or two. She would like to thank Tee for being the best, most supportive girlfriend, friends and family for being such wonderful humans, the production staff and cast for being so talented, her mom for being the best mom ever, and you, the audience, for supporting local theatre! Follow her shenanigans on all social media @AmandaNicole328 and enjoy the show!

Julianna Brahce (*Featured Dance Ensemble/ u/s Aunt Em/Glinda*) (She/Her) is so grateful to be joining the Near West community with this project. Over the past decade, she has been seen on stage in numerous productions with the Ohio Shakespeare Festival in Akron. She has also performed locally at Coach House Theatre, Porthouse Theatre, Weathervane Playhouse, the University of Akron, and Kent State University, her alma mater. Julianna would like to thank her husband for his endless encouragement.

Joshua Browning (*Ensemble*) is a freshman at Lakewood High School who is having fun in their first production at Near West Theatre! Their most recent credit is *Romeo and Juliet* (Prince Escalus) at Lakewood High School. When not doing Theatre, they enjoy hiking, playing the cello, and playing with their dogs.

Harlann Caraballo (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is the youngest of 3. She first took the stage with Tri-C's Creative Arts Dance Academy in 2022. Currently, her favorite style of dance is Jazz. Harlann found NWT when she visited for a play with her dad and brother and is excited to take the stage with new friends. Harlann enjoys swimming, playing volleyball and jumping on trampolines. She loves her pet chickens.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Maggie Chapman (*Pit Singer/ u/s Almira Gulch/Wicked Witch*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be joining Near West Theatre for the first time! Her most recent credits include: *Newsies* (Seitz), *Beauty and the Beast* (Silly Girl), and *Seussical* (Wickersham) all with Fairview Park Fine Arts & Theatre Association. Maggie has been doing theater for 13 years, but is excited to branch out and do shows with other communities. She is so proud to be a part of this production and cannot wait to continue her involvement with Near West!

Sara Danielle Chapman (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited to return home to the Near West Theatre stage where she is not only joined by old friends, but her mama as well. Sara would like to thank the sisterhood of the traveling brain cell and the current holder of said brain cell for writing this bio for her. While the entire sisterhood won't be on stage with each other this time, she knows they will be in the audience – cheering at an appropriate decibel – for the rest of the sisterhood, cast, and production team of this incredible production of *The Wizard of Oz*. She would like to thank her friends and family for always believing in and supporting her in her pisces ways. She would like to dedicate this performance to Hannah and her grapefruit and kiwi, and as always, Kevin Kelly. #TPOG

Brooke Cicerchi (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited for her first show at Near West Theatre! This is Brooke's first show in over 10 years! When Brooke is not on stage she enjoys cooking, spending time with friends/family, and cheering on our Cleveland sports teams! She wants to thank her friends and family for their support. Enjoy the show!

Jordan Cooper (*Lion/Zeke*) (He/Him) is thrilled to be onstage again at Near West!! He was last seen in *Hairspray* (Edna Turnblad) a decade ago! Most recently he was the Director and Music Director of *The Last Five Years* downstairs in the black box. Jordan wants to send a massive thank you to his supportive family and he would like to dedicate this performance to the memory of Kevin Kelly. #TPOG

Shamus Dickinson (*Professor Marvel/The Wizard*) (He/Him) couldn't be more excited to be in his first ever stage acting role at Near West Theatre. Over the years, he has worked behind the scenes at Tri-C West, The Liminis and many other venues. No stranger to the stage, he has been performing as Cleveland's Tallest Drag Queen, Veranda L'Ni, for over 15 years. He would like to thank his husband Paul, family and friends for their support.

Melora Dodge (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited to be in her second production at Near West! She was last seen in *The Music Man* (Ensemble). Melora also acted in Domaba Theatre's Kidfest, and was selected in the Kidfest for her original play, *The Mysterious Glasses*. She is in third grade, and enjoys playing piano, forest school, cats, and rainbows.

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Demi, your brains and courage are amazing, but your heart is the most beautiful of all! Shine bright! Love You!

Demi. our bright. shining star! Break a leg! love you. Grandma and Papa

Melora - We are so proud of you! Love, Mom, Dad, Mazzy, + Ozma

**LUCIA, SHINE THAT BRIGHT LIGHT IN OZ!
LOVE, MAMA, PAPA, MILES, PALOMA, MATILDA, CLEMENTINE**

YOU'RE AWESOME LUCIA! LOVE YOU, GRAMMA

*Anna: Wicked onstage, wonderful off. You are amazing!
Love - Matt, Kiwi, and Mojo*

SWEET MELORA, HAVE FUN AND BREAK A LEG! LOVE, GRANDMA & GRANDPA

**Gussie! Congrats on your 1st show!
Love, Mom, Brian, Cooper, Harrison, Finnegan, Miles & Tayto**

SUNI, WE LOVE YOU! -MOM, BRIAN, COOPER, HARRISON, FINNEGAN, MILES, AND TAYTO

Good luck, Nick! Mom, Dad, Sam and Fli

*Michayla, We are Over the Rainbow Proud of You! - Love
Papa and Grandma*

Mickey, You already have brains, heart and courage! - Love Mom

SIMONE: CONGRATS ON YOUR FIRST NEAR WEST SHOW! WE LOVE YOU.

*Piper: Break a leg! We can't wait to see you on stage!
Your biggest fans. Mom. Dad. and Sydney*

**There's no place like Near West for our munchkins! We love you
Estee and Teddy! ~ Mama, Papa, and Jack Jack**

**YAMINI: SO PROUD AND GLAD TO SEE OUR MUNCHKIN AND OZIAN! -
AMMA, APPA, AND PADFOOT**

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Maxine Carolina Eadie (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is appearing here for her first theater production. When not performing, Max enjoys playing the guitar, drawing, and playing with her dog Roxie! She is also a budding comedian. Max is a second grader at Birchwood School of Hawken. She would like to thank her family and friends for their support.

Vivienne Aurora Eadie (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited for her theater debut with Near West Theatre! When not on stage, Vivi loves playing piano, dancing, and playing with her dog Roxie. She is a fourth grader at Birchwood School of Hawken. Vivi would like to thank her family and friends for their support in this and all her other adventures.

Demi Eidson (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is happy to be returning to Near West Theatre! She is an 8th grader at Lewis F Mayer Middle School! Her most recent credits include: *A Christmas Carol* (Young Soloist) at Great Lakes Theatre, *The Music Man* (Amaryllis) at Fairview Park Fine Arts Theatre and *Cinderella* (Ensemble) at Near West! When Demi is not singing or dancing on stage she enjoys cheer, and competes with her dance team at Sound Motion Dance Academy! Demi would like to thank her family and friends for always supporting her, especially her biggest fan, Amari!

Michael Emory Fox (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (He/Him) is excited to be making his Near West debut. Other favorite roles include *Beauty and the Beast* (Lumiere) at Cassidy Theatre, *Spring Awakening* (Melchior) at Kent State Stark, *Puffs* (J. Finch) at Broadview Heights Spotlights, and *The Rocky Horror Show* (Columbia) at Akron Civic Theatre, Michael would like to thank his incredible mother for being an amazing support system since day one, his dad for watching *The Wizard of Oz* with him over 1000 times and his amazing boyfriend Richie for taking this journey down the yellow brick road with him. As always, Minnie, this one is for you.

Richie Gagen (*Ensemble/ u/s Hickory/Tin Man*) (He/Him) is so excited to be making his Near West Theater debut in *The Wizard of Oz*! Other previous theatre credits include *Beauty and the Beast* (Maurice) and *Rent* (Gordon/Mr. Grey/Cop/Others) at Cassidy Theater, *Puffs* (Oliver Rivers) at Broadview Heights Spotlights, as well as roles at Blank Canvas Theatre and Beck Center for the Arts. When not performing, Richie is never too far from the stage by working as an office assistant at Playhouse Square. Much love and thanks to his fantastic cast mates, especially his wonderful boyfriend Michael.

Ascencion Garcia-Prignitz (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is Suni's third show at Near West Theater after being in the children's ensemble in *The Music Man* in 2022 and *The Little Mermaid* in 2021. She has also played the part of Tommy in Upstage Theater's 2023 production of *Matilda*. Suni is a fifth grader at Urban Community School. She also plays soccer and rugby and is a Girl Scout. Her favorite thing to do is read, read, read.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Guadalupe Garcia-Prignitz (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is making her Near West Theater debut in *The Wizard of Oz*. She is in third grade at Urban Community School and loves to read and dance. She has previously been in productions of *The Nutcracker* and various dance shows. When she isn't dancing, playing soccer and rugby, or being a Girl Scout, she loves to read and play with her siblings.

Elisa Gauntner (*Dorothy*) (She/Her) is FREAKING OUT! She currently follows her own yellow brick road at BW studying Art Management and Theatre/Dance. Recently she's been a part of *Bring It On* (Stunter/Jackson Dance Crew) at Near West Theatre and *Legally Blonde* at Westlake High School. She is incredibly grateful for the support she receives from the community, FAMILY (!), friends, professors, and people she looks up to. She wants to thank Trinidad for pushing her to audition and, of course, the beautiful production team and cast for showing her that she had the ruby slippers all along! She truly loves you all <3

Sandra Gay-Chapman (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is very honored to take part in Near West Theatre's production. Sandra caught the "bug" over thirty years ago in East Cleveland's production of the *Gospel at Colonus* - a Greek tragedy in Gospel Form. She was also pregnant with her daughter Sara, who was "bitten" by the bug! Her big debut was in the 2009 NWT production of *The Wiz* (Glinda the Good Witch). 2019 was a great year; three generations performed in *Big Fish*; mother, daughter and grandson were cast. Thanks to Sara and others for their continued support and encouragement.

Tom Hill (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is delighted to return to NWT for his 4th production. He was last seen here in *Big Fish* (Older Edward Bloom) and previously in *Beauty and the Beast* (Maurice) and *Scrooge the Musical* (Ghost of Christmas Present.) Other favorite shows/roles include: *Producers* (Max Bialystock), *Forum* (Pseudolus), *Plaza Suite* (Sam/Jesse/Roy), *Hairspray* (Edna), *My Fair Lady* (Alfred P. Doolittle), and more. Tom is a retired financial advisor. Thanks to this cast, crew, and production team, and to his family for putting up with his addiction to the stage.

Perren Hedderson (*Hickory/Tinman*) (He/Him) is pleased as punch to be on stage again here at NWT! It's been a while. His last show was in the old space as Wilbur Turnblad in *Hairspray*. Much love to Sarah, Kellen, and Asa! He hopes they have fun watching the show!

Noah Hrbek (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is thrilled to be a part of this production, and getting to work with such an incredible group of people. Noah was last seen on the Near West stage last fall in *The Music Man* (Olin Britt). Off stage, he does the production art for NWT, and is very excited to be creating projections for this show. He is also overjoyed to be acting alongside his daughter Lydia again. Thanks for supporting live theater and enjoy the show!



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GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Andrea Huynh (*Pit Singer/ u/s Dorothy*) (She/Her) is excited to make her theater debut at Near West! After years of dance, piano, and guitar, she can't wait to enter the world of musical theater. She is a family medicine resident physician and believes that self expression, creativity, and community are all essential to living a fulfilling life. Andrea would like to thank her husband Jonathan, her parents and siblings, family and friends who have shown unconditional love and support as she continues to follow her dreams! To Oz!

Donnell James (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is so excited to be returning to NWT. His most recent credits are *Head over Heels* (Dametas) at NWT. When he is not on stage he is a Clinician at an Orthodontics office. In his free time he enjoys writing and directing short films. I would like to thank my friends and family for their constant support.

Piper Kane (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is delighted to be making her Near West Theatre debut! Piper is in 4th grade at Kensington Intermediate School. Her past Theatre credits include *Willy Wonka Kids* at Cassidy Theatre, *Beauty and the Beast* at Lakewood Congregational Church, and *Bugsy Malone and The Real Valkyries of Valhalla* at Beck Center. In her free time Piper enjoys playing volleyball, swimming, and spending time with her sister. Piper would like to thank her family for all their love and support!

Connor Karboski (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is so excited to be back onstage at Near West! His recent credits at Near West are *The Music Man* (Conductor/Constable) and *Cinderella* (Jean-Michel). When not at Near West he is a barista, an aspiring author, and a cat dad. He would like to thank the production team and the whole cast for the magic they were able to create together.

Keco Kent (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is very excited to make his musical debut in Near West Theater's rendition of *The Wizard of Oz*. He recently worked with P.U.R.E. Productions on *Married to the Church* at Playhouse Square. Keco studied Theatre Performance through Cuyahoga Community College and film acting through 1st Team Actors Studio. For fun, Keco enjoys writing music for filmmakers and studying Japanese. He wants to thank his family and friends for their support and Near West Theater for putting this show together.

Michayla "Mickey" King (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is a consummate theater artist, with a profound passion for the stage. Their journey in the world of Theatre began at a young age, and since then, they've dedicated themselves to the craft. With a diverse range of skills, from acting to directing and stage design, Mickey has left an indelible mark on the theatrical landscape. As a tireless advocate for inclusivity and diversity in the arts, Mickey aims to create spaces where all voices can be heard and celebrated.

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OUR CONTINUUM OF IMPACT



Near West Theatre & Urban Community School partnered, in 2021, to create a new in-school residency for students that focused on social and emotional growth and development. Since then, Near West Theatre has **expanded to four additional schools** and developed a roster of **nine teaching artists** in addition to a dedicated education program manager.



Near West Theatre launched **Ohio's first Drag Story Hour** with Veranda L'Ni in 2019. Since then, NWT has given away more than **500 childrens books** to families, **streamed the program to more than 2,000 households**, and proudly advocated for **LGBTQ+ expression and artistry**.



NWT Artistic Director Trinidad Snider **launched a new partnership with the Benjamin Rose Institute** in 2022 to bring theatre arts experiences to senior citizens who are often underserved by the arts but for whom the benefits of arts participation are myriad.

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Anthony "Bones" Kruse (*Ensemble*)

Simone Larsen (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is a freshman at Lakewood High School. She is excited to be joining the Near West community by being in *The Wizard of Oz*! She recently appeared in *Once Upon A Mattress* (Ensemble) at Beck Center for the Arts. She would like to thank her family for supporting her all the way.

Carole Leiblinger-Hedderson (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is returning to the stage after many years, first appearing in NWT's *The Sound of Music* in 1994. Soon after, she joined the staff as Business Director for 14 years and Stage Manager for 10 of those years. She was on-stage as part of the ensemble and several walk-ons but her love was being behind the scenes, working with hundreds of amazing teens on crew. She is thrilled to share the stage with her son Perren in this production and several old friends. Grateful for the support of her family - you are priceless to me. Now off to OZ!!

Anna Loehrke (*Almira Gultch/Wicked Witch*) (She/Her) is making her Near West Debut! Anna and her husband Matt moved from Montana where Anna grew up and received her BA in Theatre from the University of Montana. Anna is thrilled to portray this iconic role which was played, in the movie; by Margaret Hamilton who is from Cleveland! Thank you to the cast, crew, and pit for making this an incredible production. Enjoy the show!

Nick Maistros (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is excited to be a part of this amazing cast. Past performances include *The Little Mermaid* (Ensemble) and *The Music Man* (Ensemble) here at Near West Theatre. Nick is in 7th grade at Urban Community School. He enjoys musical theater, sports and annoying his brothers Sam and Eli. He'd like to thank his family for supporting him.

Christian McGinnis (*Uncle Henry/Emerald City Guard*) (He/Him) is overly excited to return to Near West Theatre. His most recent credits are: *The Duck Variations* by David Mamet (Director), *Oliver Twist* (Ensemble) at Near West Theater. Also, *Song Of The Seekers* (Levi), and *Imagine Home* (Pastor Byron) at Cleveland Public Theatre, *Metamorphoses* By Mary Zimmerman (Vertumnus) at Shaker Heights High School, *West Side Story* (Jet) at Cleveland Heights High School, and *Damn Yankees* (Rocky) at Roxboro Middle School. Christian loves to sleep and Tiktok. Christian would like to thank his family and friends.

Lucia Millard (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled for her first performance at Near West Theatre. She is a fifth grader at Campus International School where she performed in *Frozen Jr.* (Snow Chorus). When Lucia is not on stage, she enjoys creating art, playing with her siblings, and playing cello. Lucia has loved her experience in the Land of Oz and hopes you will too!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Amaya Moore (*Huck/Scarecrow*) (She/Her) is beyond ecstatic to return to Near West's intergenerational shows! She is currently a senior at Saint Joseph Academy, and loves making jewelry and spending time in nature when not performing. Some of her previous shows include *All Shook Up* (Ensemble) at Near West, and *Godspell* (Judas) at Saint Joes. Amaya is joyous knowing she will be a part of introducing and reintroducing the magic of Oz to all who see this show. Enjoy every moment!!

Olivia Moore (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is super honored to be a part of *The Wizard of Oz*. She is in 8th grade at Our Lady of Mount Carmel. She's been a part of Near West for as long as she can remember. In 2018 she was in *Carnival* (Ensemble). She took a break for a while and did the rise programs that they offer here. Later in 2022, she returned for *The Music Man* (Ensemble). The most exciting part about this play is that she gets to do it with her amazing sister Amaya Moore. She prays her dad will be able to come and watch her perform. She really hopes you enjoy this production!!

Samuel Kazu Moyer (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is excited to find Near West after a recommendation from a fellow cast member. He is new to the acting world and is jumping head first into the drama, no pun intended. He goes to Menlo Park Academy. He participates in Mock Trial and has been playing the cello for 5-7 years. He wants to thank all the cast members for being supportive and creating a good work environment. A final thanks to all who supported him in getting out of his comfort zone and finally getting an acting assignment for him to grow. Please enjoy the Wizard of Oz.

Kathryn O'Sullivan (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited to be returning to the Near West stage. Previously she first took to theater in Cleveland by hitting the NWT stage in *The Little Mermaid*, *Cinderella*, *The Music Man* (Ethel Tofflemire), and most recently the 2023 Benefit! In her free time she is usually volunteering for numerous other productions and events at NWT while also finding time to continue to dance for fun. Kathryn wants to thank her friends and family for the ever present support and is looking forward to making more theater friends in this production. See you all in Oz and enjoy the show!

Clayton Obertacz (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is grateful to be returning to his favorite place, the Near West Theatre stage after appearing in last year's production of *The Music Man* (Winthrop). Clayton is a fourth grader at Onaway Elementary School in Shaker Heights and loves music, dancing and video games. He wishes to thank this entire cast and production team for making his theatre journey so welcoming and supportive. This performance is dedicated to the love of his life (mom), his wingman (Elliot), and chauffeur (dad).

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Josie O'Leary (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) loves being in musicals at Near West Theatre! It started when she was three and saw her sister, Sophie, in *Shrek the Musical*. Josie listened to that soundtrack so many times that her parents had to hide the CD. *The Wizard of Oz* is Josie's fourth musical at NWT. It has been a year since *The Music Man*, so Josie is thrilled to be back on stage with her theater family. She even got her dad to audition with her!

Ron O'Leary (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) has enjoyed Near West Theatre's productions for over 20 years, especially when his daughters Sophie and Josie were performing and his daughter Celia was on crew. He is thrilled to be performing in *The Wizard of Oz*—the first musical he has been in since high school. Ron and his family live in Ohio City. In addition to theater, Ron enjoys running, tennis, sailing, and listening to his wife, Jennifer, sing with the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus.

CC Pantalone (*Pit Singer*) (She/Her) is thrilled to join her family and her larger NW family for another delightfully chaotic adventure in creative bliss! Returning to the theater is all the fault of 3.1415; thank you son! Enjoying the Theatre is multiplied by your father; thanks Hubby! To the audience: thank you for completing the circle of creativity. Wishing you the peace that passes all understanding!

Phil Pantalone (*Pit Singer*) (He/Him)

Sam Pantalone (*Pit Singer*) (He/Him)

Reese Reichel (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is very excited to perform with this exceptional cast and crew. She is in 6th grade at St. Mark school. Her previous Near West roles include *Cinderella* (Ensemble), *The Music Man* (Gracie Shinn) and she has performed in Historic Haunts. Other roles include *The Little Mermaid, Jr* (Chef Louis) and *High School Musical, Jr.* (Martha Cox). She wants to thank her family and friends for their support and her dogs, Chase and Roxy, for their unconditional love.

Dani Scaggs (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is thrilled to be back on the Near West stage. She most recently performed here in *The Little Mermaid*. Dani is a 2020 graduate of Westlake High School where she performed in several musicals including *Oklahoma* and *Mama Mia*. As a child, she was also in *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Ensemble) and *The Wizard of Oz* (Munchkin). Dani would like to thank Trinidad for giving her this opportunity. She thanks her family and friends for their support and she hopes everyone enjoys the show.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Loren Sciulla (*Featured Dance Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited to be part of her first show at Near West Theatre! Loren is no stranger to the stage! She has done most shows at Curtain 440 in Chardon, OH. She was also a member of the Singing Angels Children's Chorus and even got to perform as a singer in the Cleveland Ballet's *Nutcracker*. Some of her credits include *Little Women* (Jo March), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hermia), and *Legally Blonde* (Paulette). She is so grateful to everyone at Near West for being so positive and supportive and creating a wonderful environment for the theater community. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Rose Shakarian Kvidera (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited for the first time acting in a musical at Near West Theatre! She was in *Historic Haunts* earlier last month and was a crew member for *The Music Man* in 2022. Rose is an eighth grader at Campus International school and loves to bake, fence, and watch the Studio Ghibli movies in her free time. Rose wants to thank her family for driving her too and from practices, and the wonderful cast of *The Wizard of Oz* for all their support throughout this process.

Yamini Sridhar (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is so excited to be cast in this production of *The Wizard of Oz*. She is currently an eighth grader at Campus International School. A show at Near West is always one of the most exciting things for her. Her current favorite musical is *SIX The musical*. She is a 13 year old who loves playing games and watching movies with her dog.

Abigail Strozewski (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is an eleven-year-old student in 6th grade who is eager to be in her first production at Near West. Abby has also been in *Once Upon a Mattress* (*Ensemble*) and can't wait to be in even more shows! Outside of school and Theatre, Abigail plays the guitar and violin, reads, and makes paper dinosaur claws. She is an avid Chipotle and dog lover. She would like to thank her family for all the support and her sister for getting her into theater as her "agent."

Esther Tan (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is ecstatic to be back on stage with another amazing production at Near West Theatre. After last year's *The Music Man* (*Ensemble*) she couldn't wait to return. Esther is a current eighth grader at Campus International School. When not on stage, Esther is probably laughing, crocheting and singing. She thanks everyone for coming out to support the show!

GET TO KNOW THE CAST CONT'D

Teddy Tan (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is excited to be performing with his sister in his first show at Near West Theatre as part of the ensemble. Previously he was in *The Lion King* (Tree/Crew) production at school. When not on stage, Teddy embodies munchkin and flying monkey anyway. He is a current fourth grader at Birchwood School and loves math and sports.

Moth Teets (*Featured Dance Ensemble/ u/s Huck/Scarecrow*) (they/them) is thrilled to be back at Near West! They are a senior at Cleveland School of the Arts and their most recent shows include *We Are One* (Bianca/Camilla), *Say His Name* (Audra Kelly), and *Spring Awakening* (Martha/Moritz/Prof. Starver)! While they're not on stage, they enjoy watching Spider-Man, reading, and playing with their pets. Moth thanks all of those that have come to see and show their support!

Mack van Lier (*Ensemble*) (they/them) is super excited to be a part of this production. They started their theater journey in *Once On This Island Jr.* (*Ensemble*), and more recently have been in *The Music Man* (*Ensemble*) and *The Fantasticks* (*The Mute*), all at NWT. They're currently a senior at the Mastery School of Hawken, and enjoy drawing, writing, and being so, so silly in their free time. They'd like to thank their parents and brother, as well as the whole NWT community for being supportive and amazing. :-)

Lydia Whitehouse (*Ensemble*) (She/Her) is excited to be in this production. She loves *The Wizard of Oz* and has watched the movie countless times. She is glad she gets to do this show with so many friends and great people. She was in *The Music Man* (*Ensemble*) at NWT last year and had a blast then too. She has also been a part of RISE! She loves drawing, running, music, and many other things. Lydia hopes her family and friends who are not in the show have a great time watching!

Brayden Yancy (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) is very excited to be performing in his first production at Near West Theatre. He is a second grader at Pleasant Valley Elementary School and is apart of the STEM Program. When Brayden is not on stage he enjoys dancing, singing, and gymnastics. Brayden would like to thank his family friends for all their support and cannot wait for opening night!!

Bob Zombar (*Ensemble*) (He/Him) was last seen on the NWT stage in *Big Fish*. 2023 marks his 30th anniversary with NWT. He first appeared in the 1993 musical production of *A Christmas Carol* (Nephew). He has participated onstage, backstage or as a volunteer in local community theater for over 40 years. Some favorite credits at NWT include *Oliver* (Bill Sykes), *Finian's Rainbow* (Senator Rawkins), and *The King and I* (Kralahomme). ENJOY this production of a timeless classic.

GET TO KNOW THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Andrea Belser (*Choreographer*) (she/they/he) is a Performing/Teaching Artist from Cleveland with a Bachelor's in Theater Studies, emphasizing in Dance and Applied Voice, from Wright State University. Andrea teaches various dance, acting/musical theater to all ages and abilities around Northeast Ohio, and continuously works on and off stage as an actor, dancer, singer, choreographer, stage manager, and dresser. Choreographer credits include *Jesus Christ Superstar* at Willow's Edge Creations, *Spring Awakening* at Blank Canvas Theatre, and *The King of Animals* at Talespinner Children's Theatre.

Julie Billingham (*Stage Manager*) (She/Her) is excited to continue her second season at Near West Theatre in the Land of Oz! She has previously been the SM at Near West for *Cinderella*, *The Music Man*, *The Last Five Years* and the past two NWT Benefits. She has worked at other theaters in NE Ohio including French Creek Theatre, LCCC, LCMT and TrueNorth. Some of her past favorites include *She Loves Me*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Big Fish*. She is excited to take you on a magical journey down the yellow brick road with an amazingly talented group of actors and production staff! This is truly a labor of love by everyone involved. Teamwork makes the dream work!!



ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Joshua Caraballo (*Sound Designer*) (He/Him) has been with Near West Theatre since 38th and Bridge and looks forward to the Fall Intergenerational Production slot every year. It officially feels like the beginning of the holiday season when Near West puts on their fall show that Josh looks forward to so much. His previous designs for the Intergenerational Productions include *Little Mermaid*, *Scrooge*, and *A Christmas Story the Musical*. Josh also worked on the prerecorded production of *Les Miserables* and has supported the theatre during fundraisers and many live events. Josh is excited to see and support many of his friends, co-designers, and even his daughter and a close friend of the family on stage for this production. He is very proud of Harlann for trying something new and furthering her love of performance art. Just look for the cutest munchkin with no teeth, that one is her. Josh is a full-time Lead Theatre Technician at Tri-C. Other design credits include work with Beck Center, Baldwin Wallace, and Tri-C's Jazzfest Productions.

Matthew Dolan (*Musical Director*) (He/Him) is so happy to be 'coming home' to Near West Theatre. A Cleveland based music director, composer, arranger, and conductor, with over 50 stage productions to his credit. He is the recipient of a "Superior Achievement" designation for Music Direction by the Cleveland Critics Circle. Favorite productions include: *American Psycho* (Blank Canvas Theatre), *Floyd Collins* (BCT), *Avenue Q* (BCT), *Assassins* (Near West Theatre), *Urinetown* (Oberlin College). World premiers include: *33 1/3* (Sportelli/Turvey, Dobama Theatre) and *Land of Oz* (Brant/Motta, Dobama Theater), where he served as Music Director; and *Light It Up!*, (Jason Michael Webb/Lelund Thompson) where he served as Music Assistant/Keyboard 2. As a composer, Matthew's work has been heard on the podcasts "Generative Spirits" and "Beyond the Habit." As an arranger, Matthew's work spans a wide variety of genres, and has been performed by high school, collegiate, and community ensembles across the northeast Ohio region. Matthew is the current Director of Music at Rocky River United Methodist Church. He also serves as accompanist for the Vocal Music Departments of St. Ignatius High School and Cleveland Heights High School. Matthew holds a Bachelor's degree in Music Theory and Composition, and a Master's degree in Choral Conducting, from the University of Akron.

Emily Ferrer (*Assistant Sound Technican*) (She/Her) is so excited to be back for her 5th show at NWT. Recent NWT Productions include *The Music Man*, *All Shook Up*, *Head Over Heels*, and *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Other recent productions include *Addams Family*, *Richard III*, *Blithe Spirit*, and *James and the Giant Peach Jr.*

David Glowe Jr. (*Costumer Designer*) (He/Him) is honored to return to Near West, where every experience here allows him to grow and share his talents. In the past, he has worked on many other productions locally and nationally such as *Sesame Street*, *Smokey Joe's Café*, *The Producers*, *9 to 5*, *Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Hairspray*, and *Legally Blonde*, to name a few. At Near West he has never seen a group of people more open and willing to give so much of themselves to allow others to shine and grow. David would like to thank Near West for providing him with opportunities to grow and develop relationships that are lasting. He cannot forget to lift up his three boys Nathan, Max, and Lincoln for their support and understanding.

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Perren Hedderson (*Technical Director*) (He/Him) has been with Near West Theatre for many years, starting as a young teen acting and helping construct the sets. He is now the Technical Director and a freelance Projection Designer. He has also worked in film here in Cleveland and for a few years in New Mexico. Credits include *We Will Rock You* (projections) at Blank Canvas Theatre, *Chess* (projection design) at Near West, and a side music project called Triage. He's a Dad now too with two kids. Love to Sarah, Kellen, Asa, and Sab!

Emily Hennen (*Assistant Technical Director*) (She/Her) graduated from Ohio University with a BFA in Production Design and Technology in 2016 and has been with Near West full time since 2018. Occasionally, she also works as a sound and video technician for Near West events and performances, and she is thrilled to continue working with such a talented and creative team.

Noah Hrbek (*Projection Designer*) (He/Him) is thrilled to be a part of this production, and getting to work with such an incredible group of people. Noah was last seen on the Near West stage last fall in *The Music Man* (Olin Britt). Off stage, he does the production art for NWT, and is very excited to be creating projections for this show. He is also overjoyed to be acting alongside his daughter Lydia again. Thanks for supporting live theater and enjoy the show!

Jenny Hitmar-Shankland (*Scenic Charge*) (She/Her) has been painting for Near West Theatre since 2002. She paints as a scenic artist throughout Northeast Ohio but considers Near West one of her families. She has taught scenic painting at Baldwin Wallace University and regularly paints their mainstage shows. She has painted for the Cleveland Play House for seven years, and now operates under her business name Fresco Scenic Studio. She loves how close the Ohio theater community is and also has painted for Cleveland Opera Theater, Parade the Circle, Blank Canvas, Ballet Theater of Ohio, Carousel Dinner Theater, Sign Stage, and Chagrin Arts Academy. She is proud to have painted the Lobby mural for Near West Theatre, and grateful for the continual trust from an organization that allows her to throw large amounts of liquid around its beautiful stage. Love to her husband and two children who are growing up here.

Cameron Caley Michalak (*Scenic Designer*) (He/Him) is a Cleveland-based Scenic Designer, Technical Director, Artist, and Builder. Regional design credits include: Cleveland Play House productions of *Watching Butterflies*, *These Mortal Hosts*, *Venus in Fur*, *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*, and *A Soldier's Tale*. CWRU/CPH MFA Acting Program's design credits include *The Liar*, *Passage*, *A Philadelphia Story*, *The Three Sisters*, *The Misanthrope*, and *The Winter's Tale*. Cleveland Ballet's *The Nutcracker Suite*, *Alice*, *Provocativo*. Selected local credits include *When Farah Cries* (Borderlight I.T.F.); *What We Look Like*, *John*, *Appropriate*, *The Effect*, *The Night Alive* (Dobama); *Les Misérables*, *Mary Poppins*, *The Wiz*, (Near West Theatre); *Meteor Shower*, *Really Really* (Beck Center); *Bubly Black Girl* (Karamu) and after at least 24 years with *M.A.D. Factory Kinky Boots*, *Aida*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Hairspray*. Cameron recently completed his MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Goddard College, and acts as Technical Director and Instructor for Cleveland State University's Department of Theatre and Dance.

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ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Jeremy Paul (*Lighting Designer*) (He/Him) is director, designer, and interdisciplinary artist. As the founder and Executive Artistic Director of Maelstrom Collaborative Arts since 2006, Jeremy has led the creation of the original productions *Four Futures*, *The Wandering*, *Inferno*, *Who We Used To Be*, *Don't Wander Off*, *Broken Codes*, *The Turing Machine*, *The Grand Celebration of the Celestial Mystery*, *TingleTangle*, *Code: Preludes*, *The Excavation*, and *Marble Cities*. He has directed the world premieres of *Tall Skinny Cruel Cruel Boys*, *Black Cat Lost* and *My Barking Dog* as well as the regional premiere of *Inoculations*, *Anna Bella Eema*, and *Stranded on Earth*. Jeremy graduated from Wesleyan University in Connecticut with dual majors in Theater and Film, and has post-graduate training with the Pig Iron Theatre Company, New World Performance Lab and the Celebration Barn International School for the Performing Arts. Jeremy is a recipient of CPAC Creative Workforce Fellowships in 2012 and 2016. He recently joined the faculty of the Cleveland Institute of Music as the inaugural Interdisciplinary Artist in Residence.

Venchise Phillips (*Props Master*) (She/Her) is excited for another Near West Theatre show! Prop Designer credits at NWT include *Head Over Heels* and *All Shook Up*, and *Of Mice and Men* and *One Man Two Guvnors* at Blank Canvas Theatre. Recent on-stage credits include *Zombie Prom* (Ramona Merengue/Ensemble) and *Comma* (Nurse) at Blank Canvas, *Escapegoat* (Isabela) at The Cleveland Playhouse, *The Music Man* (Mrs. Squires) at NWT, and *Puffs: Or Seven Increasingly Eventful Years at a Certain School of Magic and Magic* (Megan Jones) at Broadview Heights Spotlights Theater. Love to Aaron, now and for always. Enjoy the show!

James Romeo (*Sound Technician*) (He/Him) is elated to be given the opportunity to return back to Near West Theatre for another main stage production. Recent productions include *Avenue Q* (Cleveland State University), *The Last Five Years* (Near West Theatre), *Bring It On* (NWT), *Head Over Heels* (NWT), *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (CSU), *Ain't Misbehavin* (NWT), *Music Man* (NWT), *Sweeney Todd* (CSU), *All Shook Up* (NWT), CSU Spring 2022 Dance Concert, *Richard III* (CSU), *She Loves Me* (CSU), and *Blithe Spirit* (CSU).

Trinidad Snider (*Director*) (She/Her) started her NWT career at the age of 15 in the summer teen production of *FAME*. Since then, she has had the honor and privilege to be both onstage and behind the scenes in various theaters in the Cleveland area and beyond for the past 35 years. Most recently, she directed the spring production of *Head Over Heels* at Near West and was seen on stage in the World Premiere production of *Land of Oz* at Dobama Theatre. Trinidad is also a proud member of the board at Dobama Theatre. She is so grateful to the NWT staff and board for all their support and hard work. She is incredibly thankful for this community. She would like to send love to her family, Michael, Kirstin, Colin, Dylan, and Michaela. See you over the rainbow, Kevin & George. #TPOG

ARTISTIC TEAM CONT'D

Michael Stein (*Production Manager*) (He/Him) is in his seventh year at NWT as PM/ RM. His 40+ year career in theatre has taken him across the U.S. from Maine to California but mostly in Ohio as the Stage Manager/Production Manager/Lighting Designer at the Carousel Dinner Theatre in Akron, OH. Prior to returning to Near West Theatre in 2016, he was the Production Manager at the Palace Theater in Wisconsin Dells, WI. Michael was thrilled to return to Lighting Design for The Last Five Years in our Black Box Theatre! His past lighting designs at NWT include *Les Miserable School Edition*, *The Web of Anansi*, 1776, *Carnival*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Once on this Island* 2009, *Secret Garden* 2010, *The Wiz* 2010, *Rent* 2010, *Willy Wonka* 2011, *A Christmas Story the Musical*, *Move On!*, *Urinetown* and many of the yearly Benefit performances. He was also the Co-Lighting Designer for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Mary Poppins*. As always, he thanks and sends love to his wife Carlie.

Angela Warholic (*Assistant Stage Manager*) (She/Her) is as excited as ever to come back home to Near West Theatre. Angela was born and raised in Cleveland and is a 2020 graduate of Cleveland State University with a major in Theater, and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in Labor Relations and Human Resources. She has been working as a stage manager in the Cleveland area since 2019 and has had the pleasure of working with such companies as Cain Park (*Ragtime*), Heights Youth Theater (*Guys and Dolls*), Near West Theater (*Addams Family*, *Big Fish*, *Cinderella*, *Music Man*), Brecksville Theater (*Legally Blonde*), and North Coast Men's Chorus (*Shoeless*). You may have also seen her on stage at Near West in *The Little Mermaid* and *Historic Haunts*, or Broadview Heights Spotlight's *Our Town*. As always, she would like to thank James Kisicki for his faith and support that have sustained her even after his passing.

Kate League-Weston (*Drama Therapist*) (She/Her) Kate is a teacher, drama therapist, glitter enthusiast and avid collector of stories. When not on stage, she and her wife spend their days drinking copious amounts of coffee and playing all supporting roles to their precocious three-year-old, Maisie. Many thanks to Jordan and NWT for this opportunity and to Kelsey, I love you more.



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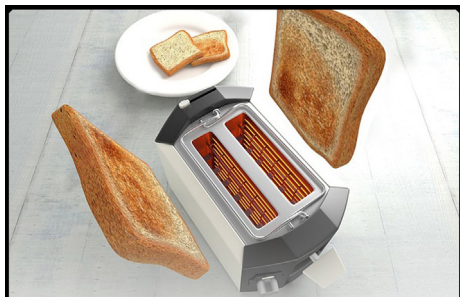


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Near West Theatre builds loving relationships and engages diverse people in strengthening their sense of identity, passion, and purpose, individually and in community, through accessible, affordable and transformational theatre arts experiences.

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