CHRISTMAS AT THE LOCAL

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

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

NOV 29, 2022 - JAN 1, 2023 • RITZ THEATER

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THE LOCALS
Phinehas Bynum
Spencer Chandler*
Bradley Greenwald*
Jason Hansen†
Elizabeth Reese*
Matt Riehle
Quinn Shadko
&
Joy Dolo* as The Proprietor
Understudy: Erin Nicole Farste

THE PRODUCTION TEAM
Co-Director .................................................. Larissa Kokernot
Co-Director .................................................. Peter Rothstein**
Music Director and Orchestrations ................. Jason Hansen†
Dramaturg .................................................... Elissa Adams
Scenic Designer ............................................. Benjamin Olsen
Costume Designer ........................................... Amber Brown
Lighting Designer .......................................... Marcus Dilliard*
Sound Designer .............................................. C Andrew Mayer*
Props Designer ............................................. Abbee Warmboe
Director of Production & Operations .............. Allen Weeks
Associate Production Manager ..................... Kyia Britts
Production Stage Manager ............................. Shelby Reddig*
Assistant Stage Manager ................................. Austin Schoenfelder
Technical Director ........................................ Bethany Reinfeld
Associate Technical Director ......................... Eric Charlton
Lighting Supervisor & Light Board Operator .... Jessica Mrovka
Audio Supervisor & Sound Board Operator ...... Nicholas Tranby
Scenic Charge .............................................. Sara Herman
Scenic Artist ................................................ Lizzie Tredinnick
Welsh Consultant ......................................... Hywell Roberts
COVID Compliance Officer ......................... Megan Fae Dougherty
Dresser/Laundry .......................................... Ash Kaun
Light & Sound Board Operator Swing ............ Lea Brucker
Dresser Swing .............................................. Bronson Talcott
Stage Management Swing .............................. Chloe Volna-Rich*
Carpenters .................................................. Whitley Cobb, Kade Gundlach, Will Rafferty, Dane Styczynski
Electricians .................................................. Kevin Champion, Shannon Elliott, Richard Graham, Andrew Norfolk, Corey Piper, Corinne Steffens, Tristan Wilkes

ASL/Audio Described Performance:
Thursday, Dec 15 at 7:30 pm

Open Caption Performances:
Friday, Dec 30 at 7:30 pm
Saturday, Dec 31 at 2:00 pm
Sunday, Jan 1 at 2:00 pm

*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
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FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

The best-selling author and inspirational speaker Simon Sinek states: “Over the last few decades, we’ve drifted apart. We used to do more things together. We attended church and other places of worship. We met up with friends and neighbors and met new people through bowling leagues and at our local rec centers. But these days, church attendance is down dramatically and bowling leagues and rec centers have all but disappeared. Add in the rise of digital communication and increased demand for remote work and we are left feeling lonelier and more apart than at any other time in recent history. Yet our intense desire to feel a sense of belonging remains – it’s an innate human need.”

A sense of belonging is at the heart of Christmas at the Local. The Local is a gathering place where people come together to raise a glass, to make music, to share stories, to unearth memories and to rejuvenate the soul before heading back into the larger world. In creating this new holiday musical we have tried to meet this particular moment. We’ve learned so much in the past few years about the power of togetherness, and on this occasion we finally, and gratefully, practice hospitality rather than enforce social distancing.

Creating Christmas at the Local has been a fruitful gathering of friends and artists. It began about five years ago - I was driving home from a late rehearsal; I turned on MPR and was immediately transported. Cerys Matthews and Mason Neely had composed a ballet marrying Dylan Thomas’ marvelous A Child’s Christmas in Wales with music that was playful, surprising, beautiful and wholly original. We reached out to Cerys and Mason asking if we might adapt their score, which was written for full orchestra, into a chamber piece that would be performed by a group of actor-musicians. They agreed and we immediately got to work.

We invited the über-talented Jason Hansen to create new arrangements and orchestrations, reimagining the score with a more folk vocabulary. I asked my old friend and collaborator Larissa Kokernot to co-direct. I first learned of the Dylan Thomas story through Larissa, who has made the telling of it part of her holiday tradition for decades. Then in 2019, we gathered a multi-talented group of performers to be a part of its development in our NEXT Festival. We had slated the world premiere for December 2020, but then the world changed.

When we came back to the work with new eyes, we decided to expand it, turning it into a double bill. Latté Da’s Associate Artistic Director and Director of New Work Elissa Adams suggested we include Maya Angelou’s profound poem “Amazing Peace.” Thankfully the Angelou estate agreed, and we asked the extraordinary Chastity Brown to compose an original score. We then included designers, craftspeople, technicians and language consultants into our ever-expanding circle. And now, finally, we add the most important ingredient: YOU, the audience. Welcome to the Local. I’m so glad you’re here.

- Peter Rothstein

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 Halls)  
Music: Traditional Welsh  
Words by Thomas Oliphant

Ar Gyfer Heddiw’r Bore  
Traditional Welsh Plygain

Suo Gan  
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

All of the music in Christmas at the Local was arranged and orchestrated by Jason Hansen.

Theater Latté Da is grateful for the generous support of our anonymous Production Sponsor.
Theater Latté Da is in its 25th 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 83 Mainstage productions, including 13 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 Latte Da’s commitment to IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access).
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.

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.

It has taken a long time for that idea to become a reality, but that Christmas decoration was the start of me falling in love with Dylan and his work. Since then I’ve read just about everything he wrote, and for the past five years, I’ve been performing little excerpts and readings of poetry live as well as on my radio show. The strange thing is not that I came back to this great work, but why I left it for so long. Especially as my uncle Colin Edwards had done so much to preserve the memory of Dylan.

Colin, who died in 1994, was a radio journalist and documentary film-maker. Less than a decade after Dylan died, aged only 39 in 1953, Colin set about putting together the largest body of interviews on tape about Dylan and recorded conversations with just about anyone who had come into contact with him. In all, he collected more than 200 hours of tape recordings. Most of all, they explicitly challenged the two-dimensional, cartoon version of Dylan, the womaniser and drinker that was already emerging just a few years after his death. He was never just that and the first-hand testimonies of those who knew him best reveal a much more complicated, and contradictory, man.

So Dylan has always been present in my life and when the time came, it seemed the most natural thing to combine his work with music. It is probably no coincidence that among my other favourite poets both WB Yeats and Robert Burns were collectors of songs.

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. It veers towards the classical and is performed by some of the country’s leading players: Catrin Finch on harp, Alice Neary on cello, and David Adams on violin. 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
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, 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 who 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.

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.

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 (“sessions” in Welsh) 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 Cast**

**PHINEHAS BYNUM**  
**KEYS**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: All is Calm, Candid.  
**OPERA:** Minnesota Opera: Edward Turune, Carmen, The Anonymous Lover, La traviata, Silent Night, La rondine, Thais, Rigoletto, Dead Man Walking, Don Pasquale, Don Giovanni; Mill City Summer Opera: Così fan tutte, Carmen, Suweezy Todd; Skylark Opera: The Most Happy Fella, Don Giovanni. TRAINING: B.A., St. Olaf College.

**SPENCER CHANDLER**  
**(ACCORDION) THEATER LATTÉ DA:** debut.  
THEATER: Guthrie: Indecent; Open Eye: Tucker’s Robot, Hair Ball!  
A Bigfoot Musical Adventure, The Amazing Cowboy; Fringe: Surge; Broadway: Slava’s Snowshow; World Tour: Slava’s Snowshow; Off-Broadway: Slava’s Snowshow, A Klezmer’s Tale, An American Family, Songs of Paradise; Toronto: Death of a Salesman; New York Regional: ART; Hamlet; National Tours: Slava’s Snowshow, The Prince & the Pauper, The Miser. TV: Law & Order, Law & Order: Criminal Intent, Deadline, Jonny Zev; FILM: Mandy: A Question of Faith, Signals Crossed, The Things You Don’t Say, Another Time Maybe, Young Goodman Brown. TRAINING: B.A. UCLA, University of Vienna; UPCOMING: I’ll Have a Bluegrass Christmas (With You), an album of nine original songs for the holidays. spencerchandler.com

**JOY DOLO**  
**THE PROPRIETOR**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: NEXT Festival.  

**BRADLEY GREENWALD**  
**BARITONE**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: Twelve Angry Men, La Bohème, 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 Song & Letters; Jungle Theater: I Am My Own Wife, The Mystery of Irma Vep; Ten Thousand Things Theater: My Fair Lady, As You Like It; Children’s Theatre 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 Three Penny Opera, Cabaret; James Sewell Ballet: Nutcracker (not so) Suite. AWARDS: Minnesota State Arts Board Music Fellowship, McKnight Fellowship for Theatre Artists, Ivey Award (I Am My Own Wife), ALSO: Libretto adaptation of A Wrinkle in Time, opera by Libby Larsen; Johnny Schicchi, adaptation with Steven Epp for NEXT Festival 2022.

**JASON HANSEN**  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR/ORTHRESTRATIONS/Piano/Guitar/Mandolin**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: Merrily We Roll Along, Jelley 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 Theatre Company: Cinderella, How the Grinch Stole Christmas, Dr. Seuss’s The Sneeches; Mixed Blood Theater: Passing Strange, Next To Normal, Avenue Q; Guthrie Theater: Guys and Dolls, Othello; History Theater: Sweet Land; Stages Theater Company: 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’ (Music Director, Associate Director); AWARDS: 2018 MN Theater Award (Latté Da’s Assassins)

**ELIZABETH REESE**  
**FLUTE/SAXOPHONE**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: Twelve Angry Men, Once, Assassins, Five Points, Man of La Mancha, C., NEXT Festival. THEATER: Artistry: Memphits; Chanhassen Dinner Theaters: Jesus Christ Superstar; History Theater: Sweet Land; 7th House Theater: Hairs, 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).

**MATT RIEHLE**  
**GUITAR/MANDOLIN/PERCUSSION**  THEATER LATTÉ DA: Twelve Angry Men, Once, Assassins, Five Points, Man of La Mancha, C., NEXT Festival. THEATER: Artistry: Memphits; Chanhassen Dinner Theaters: Jesus Christ Superstar; History Theater: Sweet Land; 7th House Theater: Hairs, 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: La Bohème. THEATER: Guthrie Theater: A Christmas Carol; Minnesota Opera: Edward Turune, 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, Candid; 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
named the 2015 Artist of the Year by the Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, 5th Avenue Theater, the ZACH Theatre, Orchestra, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Seattle’s Opera, Ten Thousand Things, Minnesota the Children’s Theatre Company, Minnesota collaborations include the Guthrie Theater, 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. TRAINING: B.F.A in Musical Theatre, Rockford University. UPCOMING: Children’s Theatre Company: Corduroy.

The Creative Team

LARISSA KOKERNOT (CO-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 Theatre, 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.

PETER ROTHSTEIN (CO-DIRECTOR) has directed 82 mainstage productions for Theater Latté Da, including 13 world premieres. Other collaborations include the Guthrie Theater, the Children’s Theatre Company, Minnesota Opera, Ten Thousand Things, Minnesota Orchestra, Utah Shakespeare Festival, Seattle’s 5th Avenue Theater, the ZACH Theatre, Boston Lyric Opera, Florida Grand Opera, and Asolo Repertory Theatre. Peter was named the 2015 Artist of the Year by the Star Tribune, Theater Artist of the Year by Lavender, and Best Director by City Pages. He has received nine Ivey Awards and a New York Drama Desk Award for his docu-musical All Is Calm. He has been awarded grants and fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, Theatre Communications Group, the Minnesota State Arts Board and the McKnight Foundation. He holds a B.A. in Music and Theater from St. John’s University and a Master of Fine Arts in Directing from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. www. Peter-Rothstein.com.

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 away, 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, mixin and orchestration of Bendith’s 2016 self-titled release, which won the Best Welsh Language Album of the year in 2017.
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 Die* (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

(SET DESIGNER)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *Twelve Angry Men: A New Musical* (Set Designer), *C., Gypsy, All is Calm, Sweeney Todd, Into the Woods, Steerage Song (Properties)*. 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: Chicago Opera Theater: *The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing* (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, a designer at Lazor/Office, and a partner in Lagom Modular. @benjaminolens

C ANDREW MAYER

(SOUND DESIGNER)

THEATER LATTÉ DA: *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, Twelve Angry Men: A New Musical, Merrily We Roll Along*, NEXT Up & NEXT Festival (Producer). THEATER: Director of New...
AUSTIN SCHOENFELDER (ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER) THEATER LATTÉ DA: (Assistant Stage Manager) Merrily We Roll Along, Jersey’s Last Jam, La Bohème. THEATER: Chanhassen Dinner Theatres; Spotlight Operator 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.

ABBEE WARMBOE (PROPS DESIGNER) THEATER LATTÉ DA: Merrily We Roll Along, Twelve Angry Men, Jersey’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 Carol. PETERSEN, Ragtime, Gypsy THEATER: Guthrie Theatre: The Little Prince, Emma, Sweat, Vietgone; History Theatre: Runestone, Gordon Parks; Penumbra Theatre: Thurgood; Mixed Blood Theatre: Animale; Old Log Theatre: The Play That Goes Wrong; Pillsbury House: What to Send Up When It Goes Down; Ten Thousand Things Theatre and Freestyle Films: Handprints; Theater Mu: Today Is My Birthday. Other recent collaborations include Chanhassen Dinner Theatre, Interact, MN Opera, Ordway Center, Park Square Theater, Penumbra Theatre, University of MN. Abbee is a 2020-2021 McKnight Theatre Artist Fellow at the Playwrights’ Center.


BETHANY REINFELD (TECHNICAL DIRECTOR) describes Technical Direction as “Building worlds for characters to come to life”. 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: Twelve Angry Men, Jersey’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 Theatre, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. TRAINING: The College-Conservatory of Music at University of Cincinnati.


Play Development at Children’s Theatre Company (1998-2017); Sundance Theatre Lab; Playwrights’ Center; TRAINING: MFA in Dramaturgy, UC San Diego.

SHEILA WATKINS (DUPLICATION SERVICES) THEATER LATTÉ DA: Merrily We Roll Along, Twelve Angry Men, Jersey’s Last Jam, La Bohème. THEATER: Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: Spotlight Operator 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.

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BURNING PATIENCE | Loring Playhouse | 2003
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OH S#!%!, I’M TURNING INTO MY MOTHER | Illusion Theater | 2004

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KNOCK!* | Minnesota Fringe Festival | 2004
A CHRISTMAS CAROLE PETERSEN | Loring Playhouse | 2004
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A CHRISTMAS CAROLE PETERSEN | Loring Playhouse | 2006
SUSANNAH | Loring Playhouse | 2007

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LA BOHÈME | Southern Theater | 2007
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Theater Latté Da was envisioned by Co-Founder and Artistic Director Peter Rothstein as a home for the future of the American musical. TLD has lived this vision since our beginning, with 13 of our 25 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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**Jazz with Connie Evingson**
Wednesday, December 7, 6:30 pm
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Wednesday, February 1, 6:30 pm

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**Sue Scott’s Island of Discarded Women Live Podcast**
Sunday, December 11, 7:00 pm
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**It’s a Wonderful Life**
Screening of the classic holiday film
Sunday, December 18, 4:00 pm
Admission is Free
Shop our Holiday Market, featuring local artists, from 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

**The Belle of Amherst**
Starring Linda Kelsey & directed by Craig Johnson
Friday, January 13, 7:00 pm
Saturday, January 14, 7:00 pm
Sunday, January 15, 3:00 pm

Information & tickets available at womansclub.org
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RESTROOMS
We have fully remodeled our lobby and 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.

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.

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 Wednesday night & Sunday matinee performances when they are required. This policy is subject to change.

Photo & 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.
HELLO, DOLLY!

BOOK BY MICHAEL STEWART
MUSIC & LYRICS BY JERRY HERMAN
BASED ON THE PLAY THE MATCHMAKER BY THORNTON WILDER

DIRECTED & CHOREOGRAPHED BY KELLI FOSTER WARDER
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