**ABOUT THE ALLIANCE THEATRE**

Founded in 1968, the Alliance Theatre is the leading producing theater in the Southeast, reaching more than 165,000 patrons annually. The Alliance delivers powerful programming that challenges adult and youth audiences to think critically and care deeply. The Alliance Theatre is a recipient of the Regional Theatre Tony Award® in recognition of sustained excellence in programming, education and community engagement.

Known for its exemplary artistic standards and national role in creating significant theatrical works, the Alliance has premiered more than 120 original productions, professionally launching important American musicals with a strong track record of Broadway, touring and subsequent productions, including the Tony Award winners *The Color Purple*, based on the novel by Alice Walker; *Aida* by Elton John and Tim Rice; and Alfred Uhry’s *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*. Additional significant musical premieres include *Sister Act: The Musical*, Twyla Tharp’s *Come Fly Away*, *Bring It On: The Musical*, Stephen King and John Mellencamp’s *Ghost Brothers of Darkland County, Zorro, Harmony* by Barry Manilow and Bruce Sussman, *Tuck Everlasting, Born for This: The BeBe Winans Story*, *The Prom, Troubadour, Becoming* *Nancy, Maybe Happy Ending*, and most recently, *Trading Places* directed by Tony Award-winner, Kenny Leon.

The Alliance also creates and nurtures the careers of emerging writers through the Alliance/Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition, producing the world premiere for the competition winner as part of the regular season. The Alliance is deeply committed to Atlanta artists, showcasing locally based artists on a nationally watched stage, and sustaining Atlanta’s artistic community through the Reiser Atlanta Artists Lab, providing developmental support and production resources for an annual roster of locally sourced performance projects.

The Alliance’s dedication to providing access to the arts is reflected in its commitment to creating new work for all ages, and to bringing that work into classrooms and communities across Atlanta and throughout the region. More than 90,000 students each year experience age-specific professional performances and participate in acting classes, drama camps and in-school initiatives through the Alliance Theatre Acting Program and Education Department. The Alliance’s groundbreaking Kathy and Ken Bernhardt Theatre for the Very Young performances offer professionally produced, fully interactive theater for infants and toddlers; the Palefsky Collision Project invites high school artists to create and perform new civic-minded theater based on a classic text; and community acting classes and skill-building workshops engage professional artists, young actors, business leaders and curious learners of all ages. Twice recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for leadership in arts education, the Alliance Theatre Institute equips classroom teachers with theatrical techniques that link directly to school curriculum and have been empirically proven to improve student learning.

**MISSION**

Atlanta's national theater, expanding hearts and minds on stage and off.

**VISION**

The Alliance Theatre will lead the national field by deeply engaging with its local community, modeling radical inclusion and catalytic experiences on our stages, in our classrooms, and throughout Atlanta.

**VALUES**

We believe that acknowledging and embracing differences in identity is essential to a dynamic cultural conversation. This is why we are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of our organization and programming.

**THE ALLIANCE THEATRE’S COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION, DIVESITY, EQUITY, AND ACCESS**

**THE FOLLOWING STANDARDS HAVE EITHER BEEN PUT INTO PLACE OR ARE IN PROCESS AT THE ALLIANCE THEATRE:**

* Mandatory anti-bias training for all staff, Board of Directors, cast and crew members of all productions moving forward
* Developing an anti-bias training program for the entire Woodruff Arts Center including the security and parking garage staff
* Having the Director of Diversity, Equity, & Engagement serve as the point of contact for all BIPOC cast & crew members to report to when they need a source outside of the rehearsal room for specific matters
* An EDI Task Force representative to serve on the hiring team to review all job notices, incoming resumes and be a part of all phone and Zoom/in person interviews to create more equitable hiring procedures and increase the diversity of our theater's staff
* Instituting a Stage Manager fellowship program for Graduate student, BIPOC stage managers to work with us for a yearlong residency to increase minority access into the field and provide the necessary professional opportunities
* Instituting a Production Assistant fellowship program for BIPOC undergrad students or recent high school graduates with backgrounds in theater to jump start their careers in the local community and provide them essential exposure and contacts
* Working with the Woodruff Arts Center to open our rehearsal rooms and Blackbox spaces for free usage to BIPOC organizations for meeting spaces, rehearsals, presentations and productions
* Increasing camp accessibility by providing scholarships to those in need of financial assistance
* Creating an equitable internship that includes compensation
* Creating and evaluating all scripts and curriculum through an anti-racist, equitable, and inclusive lens
* Recruitment, retention, and support of Black, Indigenous, Teaching Artists of Color

 **PROGRAMS SUPPORTING THE ALLIANCE’S COMMITMENT TO IDEA:**

* [The Spelman Leadership Internship & fellowship](https://www.alliancetheatre.org/content/spelman-leadership-fellows)
* [The National Vision BIPOC Stage Management Fellowship](https://www.alliancetheatre.org/content/national-vision-bipoc-stage-management-fellowship)
* [The Alliance Theatre’s Allyship Training Program](https://www.alliancetheatre.org/content/allyship-training)
* [The Kenny Leon Internship](https://www.alliancetheatre.org/content/internships)

**INDIGENOUS LANDS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

In the sincerest efforts to gain further understanding of the history that has brought us to reside on this land and to accept the knowledge that colonialism is a current and ongoing process, under which we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation, we hereby acknowledge this native land of the Muscogee Creek Nation.

To acknowledge this nation, who were forcefully removed from this land under the Indian Removal Act of 1830, is to understand who we are in the context of our past, present, and future. We carry the knowledge of this ancestry with us through this process and in all we do.

**ABOUT THE COCA-COLA STAGE AT ALLIANCE THEATRE**

### “[THE COCA-COLA STAGE] IS A DAZZLING ADDITION TO THE WOODRUFF ARTS CENTER, A BIRTHDAY PRESENT WORTHY OF THE ALLIANCE’S 50TH ANNIVERSARY, AND AN OPULENT HOME FOR ITS WORLD-CLASS THEATER.**”****– THE ATLANTA JOURNAL-CONSTITUTION**

When the Alliance Theatre set out to redesign its main performance space there were several items on the wish list. The new space had to be acoustically perfect for spoken word and musicals, with state-of-the-art technology used in live theater. The new space needed to provide an intimate seating chamber for audience members that removed all separation from audience and performers to create a truly shared experience. It needed to have good interior flow (the orchestra and balcony levels were completely separated in the old Alliance main stage, which opened in 1968.) And it needed to be beautiful.

The Alliance found everything it was looking for in the design from Trahan Architects, led by founder Victor F. “Trey” Trahan and partners Leigh Breslau and Brad McWhirter, including the touch of an artist. The interior of the Alliance Theatre chamber is wrapped with beautiful, steam-bent oak, in the style of celebrated furniture and design artist [Matthias Pliessnig](http://www.matthias-studio.com/). Pliessnig’s pieces can be seen in permanent collections at the Museum of Art and Design in New York, the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington D.C., and the James A. Michener Art Museum.

Pliessnig worked closely with Trahan to design the woodwork in the Alliance’s new space. The complexity and scale of Pliessnig’s designs quickly necessitated the investigation of 3D projection and modeling for creation and installation, which until now had only been used to calibrate manufacturing processes. Two companies stood out that could deliver this kind of work – CW Keller + Associates, expert fabricators for creating all the steam-bent wood elements for the space, and FARO Technologies, who uses industry-leading projector and scan data technology for precision installation. While this technology has been used in aerospace for years, the integration of the projector with scan data (as FARO has done, relevant for build and site install) was not available until very recently.  ​

The walls and ceiling of the chamber and lobby are lined in solid stock wood. Each 1/2” x 1/2” rift sawn oak strand is sourced from fallen trees. This system creates very little waste and beckons patrons to engage directly with each element in a physical way. Over time the wood will patina and age by dynamic use and human touch. Finished in hand rubbed dye and fireproof finishing, the surfaces of the project are works of art in and of themselves. By achieving a high level of precision, this modeling interface enables the true artistry and craft of each element to translate into the final installation.

Not only is the bent wood beautiful, it produces acoustically tuned forms that amplify the artistry performed onstage. The acoustician on the project is Richard “Rick” Talaske, president and principal acoustics consultant for the firm TALASKE | sound thinking. Architect, Acoustician, and Artist combine precise digital modeling with the craftsmanship of steam bending oak. Deep exploration into steam bending techniques produced balcony and side terraces which perform acoustically, with whisper-sensitive precision, and ergonomically. The final material system is a marriage of contemporary digital technology and time-tested hand craft.

Completing the Alliance’s wish list, Trahan delivered a design that reduced the size of the orchestra pit and moved the audience as much as 15 feet closer to the stage. This, combined with reducing seat count from 770 to 650 and curving the seating bowl and balcony, has created a more intimate room where audience members can better connect with the actors and each other. Two interior staircases provide access to the balcony level from inside the theater, and interior ramps allow ADA seating at three levels of the theatre – lower orchestra, orchestra, and balcony.

Outside of the Coca-Cola Stage, the Alliance renovation also includes additional artist support spaces, including two new rehearsal halls, new dressing rooms and green room spaces, and a new costume shop.

##### ***“AS A RESULT OF THIS TRANSFORMATION, THE ALLIANCE IS GOING TO BE ABLE TO OFFER OUR PATRONS, OUR ARTISTS, AND THE CITY OF ATLANTA AN ICONIC AND DEFINING SPACE IN WHICH TO EXPERIENCE AND MAKE THEATER. OUR PATRONS HAVE BECOME ACCUSTOMED TO TRANSFORMATIVE THEATER ON OUR STAGE, AND NOW THROUGH THE EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY OF THIS DESIGN, OUR ARCHITECTURE WILL MATCH AND ENHANCE THAT ARTISTRY.”*–SUSAN V. BOOTH, FORMER JENNINGS HERTZ ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

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#### **A BY-THE-NUMBERS LOOK AT THE ALLIANCE THEATRE'S COCA-COLA STAGE**

###### 770 TO 650 SEATS, MOVING THE AUDIENCE 15 FEET CLOSER TO THE STAGE

###### TWO SENSORY-FRIENDLY SPACES

###### FIVE NEW DRESSING ROOMS FOR PERFORMERS

###### 212 WOODEN PANELS

Watch a time-lapse video of the renovation [*here*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJ8lmMKQJH4&t=1s).View the new seat map [*here*](https://www.alliancetheatre.org/sites/default/files/Coca-Cola-Stage-Seat-Map_0%20copy_0_0.jpg).

**AWARDS AND ACCOLADES**

Distinguished AIA Interior Architecture [*Award*](https://archinect.com/news/bustler/8219/aia-interior-architecture-awards-seven-projects-distinguished-with-top-honors), 2021Dezeen Award [*Nomination*](https://www.dezeen.com/awards/2020/shortlists/coca-cola-stage-alliance-theatre-trahan-architects/) for Civic and Cultural Interior of the Year, 2020

**BIOS**

**Mike Schleifer, Managing Director**

Mike Schleifer joined the Alliance Theatre in 2014 as the General Manager and in 2016 assumed the role of Managing Director. During his time at the Alliance, Mike has led the administrative and producing team on over 100 productions including bringing *Tuck Everlasting* and *The Prom* to Broadway. He was one of the architects of the “On the Road” season while a multi-million-dollar renovation of the Coca-Cola Stage was underway. Mike is excited to have started the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee at the Alliance and to serve on the board of the League of Resident Theatres and Kenny Leon’s True Colors Theatre Company. Prior to Atlanta, he spent 13 years at Baltimore’s Center Stage working in several roles including Associate Producer, Production Manager, and Resident Stage Manager. While in Baltimore, Mike was an adjunct faculty member at Towson University and has guest lectured all over the country. Mike began as a Stage Manager and has dozens of stage management credits between his time in New York and working regionally. Mike is married to theater director and educator Laura Hackman and is the proud father of two boys, Jack and Ben.

**Christopher Moses, Dan Reardon Director of Education & Associate Artistic Director**

Christopher Moses has been working in professional theatre education for over 15 years. In January of 2011, Chris took on the position of Director of Education at the Alliance Theatre, overseeing the Alliance Theatre Institute (twice recognized as an Arts Model by the Federal Department of Education), Theatre for Youth & Families, and the Acting Program. Since taking over this position, Chris has expanded the reach and impact by making the Alliance Theatre Education department a vital resource for advancing the civic agenda of Atlanta. This work is accomplished through deep and sustained partnerships with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Atlanta, Atlanta Public School System, Fulton County Public System, the Anti-Defamation League, the YMCA, the City of Atlanta, the Alzheimer’s Foundation, Emory’s Center for Autism, the Children’s Restoration Network, the Latin American Association, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, and the High Museum of Art. Under his leadership, the Alliance launched its Kathy & Ken Bernhardt Theatre for the Very Young program, which provides fully interactive professional theatre experiences for children of all abilities from ages newborn to 5 years old, the Alliance Teen Ensemble, which performs world premier plays commissioned for and about teens, and Alliance@Work, a professional development program designed for the business sector—the latest offering of which uses theatre practice to create a culture of civility in the workplace. In 2014, Chris added the title Associate Artistic Director, and has continued to expand the Alliance’s education offerings. During his tenure in this position, the Alliance has produced over a dozen world premiere plays for young audiences, including *Pancakes, Pancakes* by Kenneth Lin, *The Dancing Granny* by Jireh Breon Holder, and *The Lizard & El Sol*. Currently, the Alliance serves over 100,000 students pre-k – 12th grade each season, as well as over 4,000 adults through its extensive education offerings. Chris looks forward to leading this department and expanding their continued efforts to provide a national level of theater and arts education to the Atlanta community. Chris serves as a board member for TYA/USA, the national service organization for Theatre for Youth, and Working Title Playwrights and is on the Board of Advisors for the Atlanta Speech School, and the Atlanta Public School’s Partners for Education.

**Tinashe Kajese-Bolden, BOLD Associate Artistic Director**

Tinashe Kajese-Bolden is the BOLD Associate Artistic Director at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. Tinashe is a Princess Grace Award 2019 Winner for Directing, and Map Fund Award recipient to develop her devised new work *All Smiles* centering the experience of children on the Autism Spectrum. Most recently, she was Co-Director with Susan V. Booth for *Everybody*. Tinashe held a salaried creative and Director’s Shadow position during the pre-production, pilot, and 2nd episode development of the TV Series “Our Kind of People” (Fox Studios) under Lee Daniel’s production company and was Director Shadow on the season finale of “BMF.” Select directing productions include *Toni Stone* (co-production Milwaukee Repertory Theater and the Alliance Theatre), *School Girls, Or the African Mean Girls Play* (Kenny Leon’s True Colors Theatre), *Ghost* (Alliance Theatre), *Native Gardens* (Virginia Stage Company), *Pipeline* (Horizon Theater), *Nick’s Flamingo Grill* (World Premiere at the Alliance Theatre, Hertz Stage), *Eclipsed* (Synchronicity Theatre, Best Director Suzi Bass Award). Upcoming projects: *The Many Wondrous Realities of Jasmine Starr-Kidd* (2022/23 Alliance/Kendeda National Playwriting Competition Winner, World Premiere - Alliance Theatre). As a director and actor, she has worked on and off Broadway, including The Imperial Theatre, Primary Stages, 59E59 Theatre, Classical Theatre of Harlem; and regionally at Yale Rep, Woolly Mammoth Theater Co, Cincinnati Playhouse, The Geva Theatre, CTG’s Kirk Douglas Theatre, among others, as well as recurring roles on TV/Film (*Suicide Squad 2*, Marvel’s “Hawkeye,” CW’s “Valor,” “Dynasty,” HBO’s “Henrietta Lacks,” Ava Duverney’s “Cherish the Day,” among others.) She proudly serves on the ARTS-ATL Artist Advisory Council. “My mission is the pursuit of what connects our different communities and how we create art that serves that.”

**Jody Feldman, Associate Producer and Casting Director**

Jody Feldman began her theater career as an actress in Atlanta before moving into administration as the Assistant General Manager at Frank Wittow’s Academy Theatre. It was at the Academy that Feldman realized the importance of theater to a city’s cultural values and identity. Feldman started her career at the Alliance as casting director in 1991 and added producer to her title and responsibilities in 2001. She has cast and produced more than 250 productions at the Alliance, encompassing a range of world premieres that include *The Last Night of Ballyhoo* by Alfred Ury, *Blues for An Alabama Sky* by Pearl Cleage, *The Geller Girls* by Janece Shaffer, *In the Red and Brown Water* by Tarell Alvin McCraney, more than 20 years of Kendeda National Graduate Playwriting Competition-winning plays, such world and regional premiere musicals as *Aida*; *The Color Purple; Sister Act: The Musical; Bring It On: The Musical; Tuck Everlasting; Ghost Brothers of Darkland County; Harmony, A New Musical; The Prom; Trading Places*, and finally exciting new plays developed specifically for children and families, which is integral to the expansion of audience and mission for the Alliance. Jody is most proud of the thriving Alliance community engagement and partnerships that recognize theatrical work as a catalyst for civic conversation and connection.

**Lawrence Bennett, Director of Production**

Lawrence Bennett hails from Houston, TX. Before coming to the Alliance, he served as the Director of Production at the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, where he worked with Hana Sharif, the first Black woman to be the Artistic Director of a LORT Theatre. Lawrence is one of only four Black people to ever be a director of production at a LORT institution. Previous to working at The Rep, Lawrence was the Associate Production Manager at Baltimore Center Stage. Prior to working in production management, he spent ten years working as a technical director at various colleges across the country, including the University of Texas, University of South Florida, and others. He has also worked all over the country at various summer stock theatres including Williamstown Theatre Festival, Utah Shakespeare Festival, and Opera Theatre of St. Louis. Lawrence serves as Vice Commissioner of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) for the Management Commission for the United States Institute for Theatre Technology (USITT), a national organization that promote dialogue, research, and learning among practitioners of theatre design and technology and includes members at all levels of their careers. As well as co-chairing the EDI and membership committees for the Production Managers Forum, which is the network for Production Managers of non-profit theatre, dance, opera companies and educational theatres in North America, Lawrence has worked with titans of the theatrical community, including, but not limited to Kwame Kwei-Armah, Hana Sharif, Stephanie Ybarra, David Stewart, Rick Noble, Cary Gillett, Dennis Dorn, Amelia Acosta Powell, Robert Ramirez, and others. Lawrence received his MFA from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and his BFA from the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. Lawrence is married to his partner, Dominica, and they have a baby boy named Henry.