# THE LEGACY THEATRE 2023 SEASON

# Designer BEAUTY BEAST BEAST

THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

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# COWING NEXLI

## September 14 - October 1

" An unexpected, gut-busting hit that makes you laugh till you cry!" - The New York Times

# YAJA HT Zada The Zada Taht GNOAW

### by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer & Henry Shields

A farce of epic proportions, this hilarious play within a play is part Monty Python, part Sherlock Holmes and is a global phenomenon that's guaranteed to leave the entire family aching with laughter!

Visit LegacyTheatreCT.org or Call (203) 315-1901 THE LEGACY THEATRE 128 Thimble Islands Road, Branford, CT

# Letter from the Managing Director



Can it really be nearly 30 years since "The Beast" took over Broadway?

That seems impossible to me.

Back in 1994, I was a second year MFA grad student at the Yale School of Drama. I was spending the spring semester in NYC "on fellowship" with Marshall B. Purdy who had served as a company manager on several Broadway productions and had recently hung out his own shingle for general management services to producers mostly navigating off-Broadway productions. Marshall and I subsequently got the call from Stuart Thompson (another successful Broadway GM who left us too early) that UK producer, Bill Kenwright wanted to

transfer his current West End (of London) production of the Almeida Theatre Company's *Medea* "over the pond" to Broadway. Stuart said yes, Marshall said yes, and I was suddenly splitting my days between the famous Theatre Guild building (where I'd spend my mornings in Marshall's offices), afternoons at 1501 Broadway (then and still renowned as the industry beehive building) and evenings at the Longacre Theater working on my first Broadway show. Exciting times for me!

New York City was excited about an impending new player on Broadway that spring as Walt Disney Theatrical Productions was about to make their big entrance on the Great White Way. The anticipation was riddled with industry-wide questions: How would Disney take the uber popular animated movie (the first feature film in the history of the Oscars nominated for Best Picture in 1991), and bring it to life on the stage?

*Beauty and the Beast* opened on April 18, 1994, at the Palace Theatre and made one of the biggest theatrical splashes the commercial theatre had ever seen. (It ran for over 13 years there). Critics and audiences were quick to embrace it and Disney had found a new place to do what it had done so well since Walt founded the company with his brother Roy more than seven decades earlier: Bringing quality storytelling to life as entertainment for family audiences of all ages.

And now it's our turn to tell that tale and to do it in a much more intimate and cozy venue than Disney ever imagined possible. And while that might be considered a challenge, that's also our special advantage inside the walls of this historic theatre building, within this wonderful seaside village of Stony Creek. The anticipation has returned to me just as it was back then, and I can't wait to see what Keely (as director) and the entire *Beauty and the Beast* company have in store for us.

So, I will be right there along with you, to enjoy this classic story told in a new and inventive way. The legacy continues...

Jeff Provost Managing Director, Legacy Theatre

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# Letter from the Artistic Director



Our Dear, Cherished Audiences,

I am especially delighted to invite you to imagine with us this "tale as old as time" here at the Legacy Theatre! This story is one of ultimate transformation: how life choices, including kindness or rejection, can create literal character, and how ultimate love, which is such a mystery and magical force, can renew, strengthen, and enlighten not only the self but all those around us. This theme of "transformation" is one that I have sought to highlight from the first moment of rehearsals, and it is my hope that as you watch this familiar tale unfold, we will all consider the breadth of our own actions toward others and how kindness and ultimate love can heal all things. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to present this grandiose family production to our beloved community, and hope that as generations of audiences enjoy this spectacular feast, it will become a cherished memory within the walls of the Legacy Theatre!

With warmth and gratitude, Keely

Keely Baisden Knudsen Artistic Director & Co-Founder, Legacy Theatre



Gift Certificates and Merchandise are Available at the Box Office!

# At This Theatre







c. 1890s

c. 1930s

c. 1930-1940s

- 1866 A small, non-denominational church was built at 128 Thimble Islands Road in the village of Stony Creek in Branford.
- 1900 A fire damaged the property.
- 1914 The land is sold to William Howd and the foundations were laid for a silent movie theater called Idle Hour Moving Pictures.
- 1923 A theater group belonging to the Stony Creek Church of Christ called the Parish Players was forming.
- 1928 The Parish Players purchased the movie theater space, and repurposed it to "live" theater for the first time. Productions included the world premiere of *Death Takes a Holiday* as well as Private Lives, Merrily We Roll Along and Pygmalion.
- 1938 Orson Welles wrote and directed a silent film to accompany his direction of William Gillette's 1894 comedy *Too Much Johnson* at what was now the Stony Creek Theatre.
- 1946 The theater building became home to Panix/Materna-Line, Inc., a designer and manufacturer of corsets and the like.





Stony Creek Theatre production of Too Much Johnson (1938)

# At This Theatre







1946

c. 1980s - 2010s

1961 Grace Weil established the space as the Stony Creek Puppet Museum with life-sized Sicilian puppets direct from performances in Italy. Grace Weil's son, Jim, and Italian Salvatore Macri, were the next to put their mark on the theater. With their rare and cherished skills of puppetry, the Italian puppets came to life.

1970s-

- 2010s Classes and theater were in abundance under Jim Weil, Barry Fritz, the Alliance Theatre, Joe Davis and others. Passing on the legacy of theatre to others is a stronghold of the Legacy Theatre, which purchased this theater in 2013--and now you are part of its ongoing Legacy.
- 2021 Legacy Theatre, a repertory company with a conservatory arm, opened the restored theatre for performance and training. From nothing but a dream and a vision to now teams of committees, boards of directors and advisors, actors and teachers, this shoreline gem has been restored and revitalized. We at Legacy invite you to continue with us as we commemorate the past and spotlight the future of this special stage.



Jim Weil (1960s-1970s)

## Explore more about AT THIS THEATRE on the Legacy website! *Photos, video and more!*

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Music by ALAN MENKEN

Lyrics by HOWARD ASHMAN & TIM RICE Book by LINDA WOOLVERTON

Originally Directed by ROBERT JESS ROTH Originally Produced by DISNEY THEATRICAL PRODUCTIONS Original Music Supervision and New Arrangements by MICHAEL KOSARIN Dance Music Arrangements by GLEN KELLY Orchestrations by DANNY TROOB

with

NIA ALSOP DAVID BELL KIERSTEN BJORK NATE BLOOM NIKO CHARNEY PATRICK CLIFFORD DAN FRYE JOSHUA HEGGIE\* SUSAN KULP MELANIE MARTYN JILLIAN MILLETTE ROBERT PETERPAUL\* BELLA PACHECO RARICK JOSIAH ROWE SCOTT A. TOWERS

Master Carpenter RICH BURKAM Assistant Props Designer COLLEEN CALLAHAN Projection Slide Design MATT KIZER DESIGN LLC

Sound Designer & Projection Programmer ADAM JACKSON Scenic & Lighting Designer JAMIE BURNETT

Costume Designer JIMMY JOHANSMEYER

Assistant Stage Manager NICK FETHERSTON Production Stage Manager SARAH PERO

Choreographer PAOLA PACHECO RARICK Music Director CATHYANN RODING

Director KEELY BASIDEN KNUDSEN

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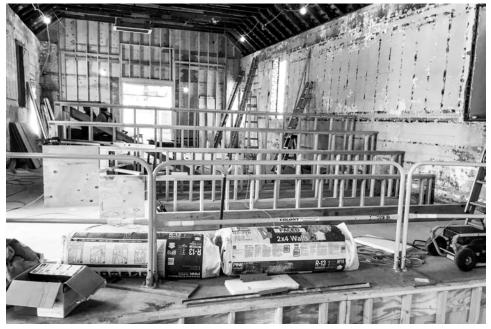


DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST is presented through special arrangement with MUSIC THEATRE INTERNATIONAL (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Costumes provided by PANTOCHINO PRODUCTIONS. Originally designed for the stage by JIMMY JOHANSMEYER.



\* The Actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.





## WE ARE PROUD TO SUPPORT THE LEGACY THEATRE 2023 SEASON

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#### Cast in alphabetical order by Actor

Madame de la Grande Bouche, La Fille, Castle Staff	
Maurice, Narrator	DAVID BELL
Enchantress, Madame D'Arque, La Fille, Wolf, Castle Staff	
Lumiere, Crony	NIKO CHARNEY
Chip, Boy	PATRICK CLIFFORD
Prince, Beast	DAN FRYE
Ensemble, Wolf, Gargoyle, Castle Staff	JOSHUA HEGGIE*
Mrs. Potts, Villager	SUSAN KULP
Belle	MELANIE MARTYN
LeFou, Wolf, Castle Staff.	ROBERT PETERPAUL*
Babette, La Fille	BELLA PACHECO RARICK
Cogsworth, Crony	JOSIAH ROWE
Gaston	SCOTT A. TOWERS

#### Swings: NATE BLOOM & JILLIAN MILLETTE

\* The Actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

## Orchestra

Conductor	
Flute	ELAINE THOMA
Trumpet	. KENNETH TEDESCHI, STEVE PERRETT
Violin	CHRISTINE M. COHEN
Keyboard	BLAKE MEYER HANSEN
Bass	JORDAN BRINT, MIKE ASSETTA
Drums/Percussion	NATHANIEL DOBAS, NANCY LUDENA

## Scene

TIME: Eighteenth Century PLACE: France

DISNEY'S BEAUTY AND THE BEAST runs approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes, with a 15-minute intermission.

## Contact Legacy Theatre

Box Office: (203) 315-1901 (Mon-Fri 10am-3pm) Email: Info@LegacyTheatreCT.org Website: www.LegacyTheatreCT.org Gift Certificates available online or through the Box Office.



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## **Musical Numbers**

#### ACT ONE

#### Overture

"Prologue"	Belle, Villagers
"No Matter What"	
"Maurice Travels"	Maurice
"Wolf Chase 1"	Maurice, Wolves
"Me"	
"Belle" Reprise	Belle
"Belle" Reprise	Belle
"Home" Tag	
"Gaston"	Gaston, LeFou, Villagers
"Gaston" Reprise	Gaston, LeFou
"How Long Must This Go On?"	Beast
"Be Our Guest"	Lumiere, Chip, Mrs. Potts, Castle Staff
"If I Can't Love Her"	Beast

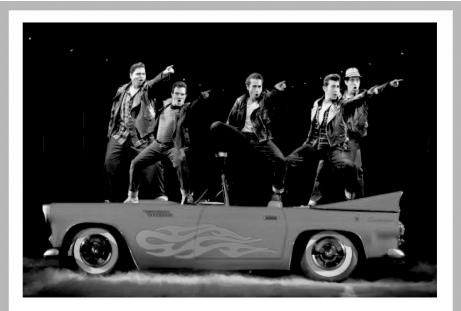
#### THERE WILL BE A FIFTEEN-MINUTE INTERMISSION

#### ACT TWO

#### Entr'acte

"Wolf Chase 2"	Belle, Wolves, Beast
"Something There"	Belle, Beast, Lumiere, Mrs. Potts, Cogsworth, Chip
"Human Again" Lumiere, Cogsworth, Mrs	s. Potts, Chip, Babette, Madame de la Grande Bouche
"Beauty and the Beast"	Mrs. Potts
"If I Can't Love Her" Reprise	Beast
"A Change in Me"	Belle
"The Mob Song"	Gaston, Madame D'Arque, Villagers
"Home" Reprise	Belle
"Transformation / Finale"	Belle, Prince, Ensemble





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## Who's Who



NIA ALSOP (Madame de la Grande Bouche, La Fille, Castle Staff) is a sophomore Musical Theatre major at MSM. Her musical journey began at an early age when her parents recognized her singing ability at her 6th birthday when she sang back her reply to the

song, "How old are you?" with the perfectly pitched, " I'm sililixxx years old." Since then, she studied Classical Voice at Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Some of her favorite credits include *Into the Woods* (The Witch) and *Big Fish* (Older Sandra). She is thrilled to be performing and hopes that you enjoy the show!



DAVID BELL (Maurice, Narrator) has been active regionally for many years as a musician and actor. He previously appeared on the Legacy stage as George Wilson and other characters in *The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play.* He was the music director for three Legacy

productions: Just Desserts, Joan Joyce, and A Christmas Carol (for which he also arranged the music). As an actor, he has appeared at Ivoryton Playhouse (Children of Eden/ The Father; Taming of the Shrew/Lucentio; You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown/Schroeder), with the Orange Players (Guys and Dolls/Sky Masterson), East Lyme Regional Theatre (Footloose/Rev. Moore), Center Stage (I Hate Hamlet/John Barrymore; Anything Goes/Evelyn Oakleigh), and many others. He won an Outstanding Contribution by a Leading Actor award for his performance at the 2007 New Works New Haven Festival. In his other lives, David is an accompanist, singer, church organist, choir director, hiker, biker, and cat owner (or perhaps the cat owns him).



KIERSTEN BJORK (Enchantress, Madame D'Arque, La Fille, Wolf, Castle Staff) To read Kiersten's bio, please view page 27. even started his own blog, "howihearit.com" where he shares his journey with hearing loss. Niko thanks his mom and dad for their endless support and love, his family, and all of his teachers. Lastly, he thanks the entire cast and creative team at the Legacy Theatre for making this such a special time!



PATRICK CLIFFORD (*Chip, Boy*) lives in Guilford, CT and will start 8th grade at Adams Middle School in the fall. He attended Allegro Performing Arts Academy while in elementary school and realized his love of the stage! He previously appeared in The Guilford

Youth and Family Services production of *Really Rosie* as Chicken Soup and in *Seussical the Musical Junior* as Jojo. In addition to acting, Patrick plays ice hockey with the Wallingford Hawks and loves gaming.



DAN FRYE (Prince/Beast) couldn't be more excited to be back at the Legacy for such a fantastic show. His previous Legacy credits include You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown (Snoopy), The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play (Nick), A Christmas Carol (Fred), and The Tales

of Christopher Robin and Winnie-the-Pooh (Eeyore). Big thanks to the tremendous cast and crew for this phenomenal experience. Here's to many broken legs!



JOSHUA HEGGIE (Ensemble, Wolf, Gargoyle, Castle Staff) is super stoked to be back at Legacy after being seen as Leonard "Reaper" Barnett in Masters of Puppets earlier this season! It has been a while since he was seen in the NYMF Roofless, locally at STONC as Jim in Big

*River*, or as Harker in *Dessa Rose* at the New Rep in Boston; and he couldn't be happier. He is so blessed and lucky to be surrounded by the most amazing family, great friends, and outstanding colleagues. Gratitude, awe, and appreciation for all of the Medics, EMTs, Nurses, Police, Firefighters, Military, and school personnel. You keep us safe, help raise our kids, and enrich our community and culture. Thank you.



NIKO CHARNEY (Lumiere, Crony) is ecstatic to join the Legacy Theatre's company as "Lumiere" in Beauty and The Beast. Niko is currently studying musical theatre at the prestigious Manhattan School of Music and will be returning to complete his junior year in

the fall. Apart from Musical Theatre, Niko is active in hearing loss advocacy throughout the music community and has



SUSAN KULP (Mrs. Potts, Villager) is happy to be back at Legacy Theatre after appearing in their 2021 production of Just Desserts (Jean). Recent credits: Angels in America (Angel), Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf (Martha) Madison Lyric Stage; Away We Go (Snooky),



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## Who's Who

Pantochino Productions; *Barbecue* (Lillie Ann), Collective Consciousness Theatre; *Songs for a New World* (Woman 2), FUSE Theatre; *Annapurna* (Emma), NHTC; Susan is a company member with New Haven Theater Company (NHTC); dabbles in commercial, print and VO work and "acts" a Simulated Patient/SP Educator for Quinnipiac & Yale University Medical & Nursing schools. Grateful for our audience and the chance to work with this talented cast and the Legacy team.



MELANIE MARTYN (Belle) is thrilled to be returning to the Legacy stage to fulfill a dream role! Born and raised in Maryland, she grew up primarily as a dancer before going off to Boston College to earn her BA in Theatre Arts. She's lived and trained in London, New

York City, Los Angeles, and Seattle. Past Legacy credits include Ophelia in *Hamlet*, Amanda in *Private Lives*, and Corie in *Barefoot in the Park*. She also works in film as an actress and producer and currently has many projects in development to be released in the near future. She and her husband currently live in New York City with their dog, and were ecstatic to welcome their daughter into the world in May! IG: @Melanie\_martyn.



ROBERT PETERPAUL (LeFou, Wolf, Castle Staff) is an actor, singer, writer and host of The Art of Kindness podcast on the Broadway Podcast Network. He is thrilled to be making his Legacy debut with such a wacky role. Recent theatre credits: Newsies at Westport Country

Playhouse, *Beauty & the Beast* at WPPAC, *Spelling Bee* at ACT and being a company actor at the historic Downtown Cabaret Theatre. Film/TV credits: CBS' *Bull* and *The Late Show with Stephen Colbert*, Netflix's *King Cobra* and the upcoming Amazon film *Sitting in Bars with Cake* starring Yara Shahidi. He thanks the entire Legacy company, his wife Cassie and you, dear patron, for supporting theatre arts. Say hi: robertpeterpaul.com / @robpeterpaul on social media.



BELLA PACHECO RARICK (Babette, La Fille) is ecstatic to make her debut on the Legacy Theatre stage! Her favorite roles include Anna in A Coney Island Christmas (Ivoryton Playhouse), Velma in Chicago (Shoreline Theatre Company), Maggie in Maggie

(Katherine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center) and Ensemble in *For Madmen Only* (Manhattan School of Music). She would like to thank her family and friends for supporting her in all her artistic endeavors, especially her father and her mother Paola, who she enjoys working with and appreciates immensely. She cannot thank her enough for her influence on her theatre experience. Instagram: @bellararick, YouTube: @isabellararick4888



JOSIAH ROWE (Cogsworth, Crony) is delighted to be a regular at Legacy Theatre, where he has played roles ranging from Claudius in Hamlet to Tom Buchanan in The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play to Bob Cratchit in A Christmas Carol. Legacy's young

audiences might also remember him as *Custard the Dragon* or *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Other past roles include Atticus, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Landmark Community Theatre, Thomaston); Scarecrow, *The Wizard of Oz* (Thomaston Opera House); Bhaer, *Little Women*, Lefou, *Beauty and the Beast* (Hartford Children's Theatre); and the Pirate King, *Pirates of Penzance* (Alliance Theatre). He has also appeared in *Amadeus* and *The Producers* (Warner Theatre); and *Macbeth, Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *The Learned Ladies* (Capital Classics). However, his favorite role is Daddy to Ashlin (11), Diana (8) and Verity (4). Love and thanks to Erin.



SCOTT A. TOWERS (Gaston) is a Branford native making his Legacy Theatre debut. He currently produces the BHS Performing Arts Spring Musicals. Scott obtained his Bachelor of Science in Music Ed. Voice Concentration from WCSU, where

he was classically trained in opera, and was the Principal Tenor. He has his Master of Science in Higher Education Administration from Post University and currently works at WCSU. Previous performing credits: Reverend Shaw Moore - Footloose, Comfort Counselor - The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, Roger De Bris - The Producers, Corny Collins – Hairspray, Tamino - The Magic Flute, Rinuccio – Gianni Schicchi, and Frederic – The Pirates of Penzance. Scott is so happy to revisit Beauty and the Beast, which will always have a special place in his heart.



NATE BLOOM (Swing) is super excited to be performing with Legacy Theatre! He is a recent graduate of Western Connecticut State University with a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre. He previously worked with Legacy on their production of The Musical of Musicals

(The Musical!) (Run Crew). Prior performances include

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## Who's Who

WCSU's *Head Over Heels* (Basilius), WCSU's *Sweat* (Stan) and WCSU's *The 1940s Radio Hour* (Stanley). He has also recently worked at Hamden Hall Country Day School as the Assistant Director for their productions of *The Mojo Jojo Cabaret* and *Oh, Kay!* 



JILLIAN MILLETTE (Swing) is excited to be making her professional debut with the company of Beauty and the Beast! She recently graduated from the American Musical & Dramatic Academy where she received her acting and musical theatre training. Jillian would

like to thank her family and friends for their immense support. She would also like to thank the entire company of *Beauty and the Beast* and staff at Legacy Theatre for making this beautiful show/opportunity possible.

KEELY BAISDEN KNUDSEN (Director) To read Keely's bio, please view page 26.

CATHYANN RODING (Music Director & Conductor) was the Director of Choral Music at Branford High School for 32 years before retiring in June 2017. Over the years, her groups performed in various places in the U.S. and Europe, as well as raising money for countless organizations in Branford. Cathyann was the Musical Director, Choreographer, and Conductor of Branford High's Spring Musical. Some of her favorites include productions of *Phantom of the Opera*, *In the Heights, Les Misérables*, and *Titanic*. Awards and honors that she is proud of include Branford's Citizen of the Year, Branford's Teacher of the Year, the Branford Education Hall of Fame, and is truly humbled that the Branford High School Auditorium has been named after her. She is incredibly happy to be working at Legacy Theatre on this production of *Beauty and the Beast*!

PAOLA PACHECO RARICK (Choreographer) was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She was exposed to art at an early age by her father who was a writer and renowned director in Argentina. She has extensive training in Ballet, Tap, Musical Theatre, and Lyrical dance. Paola danced competitively for 10 years and was a member of nationally recognized, awardwinning dance companies. She holds a BS in corporate communications from Southern CT State University. Paola has choreographed for various theatre companies over the last decade. She serves/served as choreographer for Shoreline Theatre Company, Artful Living Productions, and Branford High School to name a few. Some of Paola's favorite choreography credits include, Hairspray, Mary Poppins, Chicago, Anything Goes and The Producers. Most recently, Paola choreographed *The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!)* here at Legacy. Aside from her countless shows she has choreographed, she is Artistic Director and Owner of Studio One Dance Center in Branford for the past 15 years.

JAMIE BURNETT (Scenic & Lighting Designer) is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, recipient of the 2005 New Haven Arts award, and Founding member of The Elm Shakespeare Company. Lighting Designer at Elm Shakespeare for 26 years and Set Designer until 2009. Lighting Design credits include International Festival of Arts and Ideas 2018, Requiem for an Electric Chair; Iseman Theater 2017, Never Stand Still. CCT: Skeleton Crew, Rasheeda Speaking, Jesus Hopped the A Train, Sunset Baby, Topdog/Underdog. SCSU: Stop Kiss, Much Ado About Nothing, The Boyfriend, and Our Country's Good. SHU: In The Heights, Jesus Christ Superstar. Citywide Open Studios: New Haven Armory; Projects2k: Stamford Train Station Façade Lighting; Designer/Production Manager for Terra Tractus (The Earth Moves) (2005), Terra Mirabila (2001), Terra Lumina and Terra Continuum (1999): performed in the Stony Creek Granite Quarry; PNM's Branford Luminata (2010) lighting Branford Green Town Hall. His company, Luminous Environments, specializes in theater and TV studio renovations and public art installations involving specialized lighting. Recent projects: Branford High School's Cathyann Roding Auditorium, Fairfield Community Theatre, and Legacy Theatre.

JIMMY JOHANSMEYER (Costume Designer) is excited to be back at The Legacy Theatre, after being seen in Just Desserts. Most recent design credits include The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!), The Great Gatsby: A Live Radio Play, Pirate Schmiratel, Rough Crossing, Saturday Night Fever, Newsies, The 39 Steps, La Cage Aux Folles and Footloose. His work has also been seen at Cortland Repertory Theatre, Allenberry Playhouse, Penobscot Theatre Company, Downtown Cabaret Theatre, Gateway Playhouse, Theatreworks New Milford, Stamford Center for the Arts, The Emelin Theatre, Tampa's Gorilla Theatre, The Theater Barn and at Off-Broadway's American Theater for Actors. Jimmy is also co-founder and producer of the awardwinning Pantochino Productions Inc. in Connecticut.

ADAM JACKSON (Sound Designer) is thrilled to be a part of Legacy's third season! Adam has worked on over 50 productions as an actor and designer. He has done technical theatre design work for Walsh Intermediate School, the Branford High School Fall Play and Spring Musical, Ivoryton Playhouse, WCSU Opera, and Elm Shakespeare Company. He is also the resident technical supervisor at Shoreline Theatre Company where he particularly enjoys working on

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# across this world in can." – Julie Andrews





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## Who's Who

the summer camp shows. Adam recently graduated from Western Connecticut State University with a BS in Music Education and a concentration in classical trombone. He runs sound for The River Church in Danbury and occasionally has the pleasure of being invited into theatre classes to speak to students about the joys of technical theatre!

RICH BURKAM (Master Carpenter) came to Connecticut to study music and music recording at UNH. He played in bands such as 4:20, Space Cushion, and Over The Line. His studies continued, learning to be a luthier under Barry Lipman and Chris Tatalias, giving him a taste for fine woodworking. Richard now owns a woodshop that makes fine furniture, in a space which is shared with lighting designer Jamie Burnett. Together they have built sets for many production companies, including Elm Shakespeare, Yale Baroque Opera Project, and many small black box theater productions.

SARAH PERO (Production Stage Manager) To read Sarah's bio, please view page 27.

NICK FETHERSTON (Assistant Stage Manager) To read Nick's bio, please view page 29.

ACTOR'S EQUITY ASSOCIATION (AEA) was founded in 1913, and AEA represents more than 50,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org

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Managing Director Artistic Director & Co-Founder KEELY	BAISDEN KNUDSEN
Co-Founder STEPHANIE	
Business Manager	. KIERSTEN BJORK
Production Manager	SARAH PERO
Development Manager A	ANNE RUNOLFSSON
Producer of Broadway Concert Series & Community Arts Coordinator	COLIN SHEEHAN
Community Outreach	MARY LEE WEBER
Box Office Manager	NICK FETHERSTON
Box Office Associate MELISS	SA STARKWEATHER
Front of House Manager & COVID Safety Manager	JEFF ZEITLIN
Front of House Alternates RICH AFRAGOLA, KIERSTEN BJORK, CHRIS LEMIEUX,	KELSEY MULLIGAN,
KENNY PELPHREY, NICK FETHERSTON	
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Legacy Volunteers, TYCO, The Stony Creek Community, The Bjork Family, Brian W. Knudsen, Nancy Smith, Don Weinbach, Joe Landry, Christensen Landscaping (Lawn Company), Auntie Bella (Cleaning)



JEFF PROVOST (Managing Director) was a Founding Advisory Committee member of the Fairfield Theatre Company (FTC), eventually becoming their first Managing Director while successfully leading their "FTC Moves Downtown" capital campaign. He

was the first Director of Marketing & Public Relations at Westport Country Playhouse during Joanne Woodward's earliest seasons as Artistic Director and held the same title at Hartford Stage during Michael Wilson's new artistic leadership. He created and managed the subscription-driven Family Broadway Series at the "new" Oakdale Theatre, during the time that they became the largest theatre in New England. Jeff held management positions at the Williamstown Theatre Festival and Yale Repertory Theatre, as well as Off-Broadway and on, with the 1994 Tony-awardwinning production of *Medea*, featuring Dame Diana Rigg. As an arts marketing consultant, Provost was invited to be a guest lecturer/presenter for the Connecticut Commission on the Arts.

After holding management positions in the non-profit arts and commercial entertainment industries, Provost joined Red 7 Media in Norwalk where he helped launch the Event Marketing Institute. He founded PRO Management LLC in 2015 where he worked with a wide variety of clients including the Experiential Designers & Producers Association, the Healing NET Foundation, and McDonald's.

He completed his undergraduate degree at The Catholic University of America in Washington DC., followed by graduate work at Yale University, where he earned his master's degree in Theatre Management. When not enjoying his lifelong passion for live theatre, Provost volunteers his time with the Make-A-Wish Foundation's CT Chapter where he performs magic under the stage name of "Mr. Jeffo". Jeff and his wife Traci were very happy to have recently become Branford residents this year and are enjoying being a part of the shoreline community this summer.



KEELY BAISDEN KNUDSEN (Artistic Director & Co-Founder) An awardwinning director, Keely has performed, directed, and choreographed internationally in plays, musicals, operas, and dance companies in hundreds of theatrical productions

and has performed in 48 of the United States and in the UK. Realizing her vision of a new theatre company on the Connecticut Shoreline, Keely's ideals of inspiring, inclusive work that uplifts the human spirit and connects communities formalized in the creation of the Legacy Theatre with Co-Founder Stephanie Stiefel Williams, a performing colleague and dear friend.

Keely has directed, choreographed, and taught a myriad of performing arts courses at such institutions as Quinnipiac University, Yale University, Fairfield University, Hartt School of Drama, Southern Connecticut State University, Westminster College, and was the Director of Education of New Haven's acclaimed Elm Shakespeare Company for several years. Additionally a composer/lyricist and playwright, she is a member of ASCAP and a writer/curator for Rewls Productions (www.rewlsproductions.us). Her directing has been heralded by the Arts Paper as "...visually striking, emotionally moving" and "captivating" and of her direction of Hamlet it was said, "Knudsen has made the notoriously difficult Shakespearean language accessible." Her creation of the Wheel Life Theatre Troupe has been an especially rewarding program as she acts and directs with those who ambulate with crutches and wheelchairs.

Her BFA is from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, at which she graduated first in the class, and she received her Masters Degree in Drama on full scholarship from The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow. Keely, her husband Brian, and five children (Saviah, Liviana, Wynter, Emery, and Reeves) reside in Guilford, CT.



STEPHANIE STIEFEL WILLIAMS (Co-Founder & Chairperson of the Board) is an active and versatile performer in musicals, concerts, and plays and has appeared in numerous locations throughout the Northeast. A member of Actors' Equity Association, she has

appeared professionally in a variety of roles at venues such as Broadway's Marriott Marguis, Legacy Theatre, Hartford Stage Company, Foxwoods' Fox Theatre, Atlantic City's Tropicana, Turning Stone Casino, and the Garde Arts Center. Among these roles, her favorites include Aldonza in Man of La Mancha. Anita in West Side Story. Lola in Damn Yankees, Maria in The Sound of Music, and Guenevere in Camelot. Although her professional focus has been in musical theatre, she also has been engaged frequently as a concert soloist, as well as an a cappella ensemble singer. Locally, Stephanie is a proud founder, repertory member, and trustee president at Legacy Theatre where she has starred in the critically-acclaimed productions of The Musical of Musicals (The Musical!), I Do! I Do!, and Barefoot in the Park. She also appeared as a featured vocalist in the wildly popular Mack is Back!.

In addition to her work with Legacy, Stephanie sits on the Performing Arts Advisory Council at the University of Notre Dame and has been a member of the Board of Trustees at the Goodspeed Opera House. She has become involved on a producing level with critically-acclaimed productions

of *Gypsy* and *Showboat* in London's West End, the revival of *Sweeney Todd* in New York, and Broadway's *Escape to Margaritaville*. As a former Miss Connecticut, she represented our state at the Miss America Pageant in Atlantic City. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, magna cum laude, from Fairfield University and a Juris Doctorate with honors from the University of Connecticut School of Law. Stephanie is the proud mother of two adult children, Valerie and Rick, and lives in Guilford with her wonderful husband, Luke.



KIERSTEN BJORK (Business Manager) is thrilled to join the company of Beauty and the Beast in this incredibly fun and multifaceted track! Kiersten has performed with companies such as Legacy Theatre, Shoreline Theatre Company, Theatre

Fairfield, and more. Favorite performing credits include Footloose (Ethel McCormack), The Spitfire Grill (Percy), [title of show] (Susan - BroadwayWorld Award Nomination: Best Performer/Musical), Joan Joyce! (Young Joan Joyce - BroadwayWorld Award Nomination: Best Performer/ Musical), Chicago (June/"Squish"), A Christmas Carol (Fan/ Mrs. Fezziwig/Others), Woman and Scarecrow (Auntie Ah - BroadwayWorld Award Nomination: Best Performer/ Play), Titus Andronicus (Demetrius), A Princess Tea (Evil Queen), The Tales of Custard the Dragon (Ink), Fortinbras (Laertes), Authenticity (Alice), and The Tales of Christopher Robin & Winnie-the-Pooh (Rabbit). Kiersten has also worked on numerous productions from the creative and technical sides, with favorites being Rabbit Hole (Scenic Designer), The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime (Master Carpenter), and I Do! I Do! and The Last Five Years (Assistant Stage Manager).

At Legacy, Kiersten worked as the Theatre Manager for the past two years and is excited to be a part of this third season in a role that covers everything from marketing and communications to finance and administrative work! She is a 2021 graduate of Fairfield University, graduating summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa with degrees in Theatre and English. In addition to her work with Legacy, Kiersten does freelance theatre work as a stage manager, technician, and carpenter for the Quick Center for the Arts and Theatre Fairfield. She is also the Communications Specialist for the Branford Community Foundation, a Theatre Critic with the Connecticut Critics Circle, and a Book Reviewer for Booktrib.



SARAH PERO (Production Manager) Born and raised in New Haven, CT, Sarah has been involved with local community and professional theatre for 20+ years. Acting at the age of 10, and directing at 16, Sarah received her BFA in Theatre, with a concentration in directing from the University of Rhode Island. Right after college, Sarah was a part-time drama teacher in New Haven Public Schools and also taught theatre classes with Performing Arts Programs (South Windsor, CT). Sarah then worked at the Music Theatre of CT (Norwalk, CT) School of Performing Arts, wearing many hats as Administrative Manager, Teaching Artist, Director, Music Director, and Choreographer for the school. Sarah also managed the Box Office and was the Resident Sound Designer for MTC's Professional Main Stage. Following MTC, Sarah worked as Administrative Manager at the Downtown Cabaret Theatre (Bridgeport, CT). As a Production Stage Manager for various Theatre Productions in Rhode Island and Connecticut, some of her favorites include: Tick, Tick Boom; Little Women: The Musical; and You're a Good Man Charlie Brown. Most recently, Sarah served as the Production Stage Manager for multiple Legacy productions in the 2021, 2022, and 2023 seasons. Sarah is thrilled to officially join the Legacy team as Production Manager.



ANNE RUNOLFSSON (Development Manager) has entertained audiences worldwide for the past 35 years. A veteran of the stage and concert venues, her Broadway and National tour appearances include: Phantom of the Opera (Carlotta), Victor/Victoria (Stand-

by for Julie Andrews and Liza Minnelli), Les Misérables (Fantine), Cvrano: The Musical (Roxane), The Secret Garden (Lili), Aspects of Love, and James Joyce's The Dead (Gretta). As a soloist, Anne has performed at such iconic venues as The Hollywood Bowl, Carnegie Hall, Radio City Music Hall (with tenor Jose Carreras), The 02 Arena (London, with Julie Andrews), The Concertgebouw (Amsterdam), The Kennedy Center, Wolf Trap and countless others. Anne was awarded New York City's prestigious MAC award for Best Female Singer. Her cabaret appearances include Birdland, 54 Below, The Green Room 42, 92nd Street Y. The Russian Tea Room. Rainbow and Stars, and Hollywood's Cinearill and Gardenia. Show recordings include: Les Misérables International Cast, Listen to My Heart, and You Oughta Be On Broadway, and a solo album At Sea. Anne co-wrote and performs in two shows with singer/actress daughter Tess Adams; The Story Goes On: A Broadway Family Journey and Heroine's Song. Anne made her directorial debut in December 2021 in Los Angeles with My Unauthorized Hallmark Movie Musical. She has also appeared on NBC's The Blacklist. Anne is principal partner of Runolfsson Entertainment which includes "Sing With Anne," a vocal coaching practice. She has taught voice and performance at the Orange County School for the Arts in California and New York University.

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COLIN SHEEHAN (Producer of Broadway Concert Series & Community Arts Coordinator) is a local arts enthusiast and serves as the Arts, Culture & Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Branford, Director of The Branford High School Performing Arts'

Spring Musical, and Co-Founder and Co-Artistic Director of Branford Parks and Recreation Shoreline Theatre Company. He graduated from Branford High School and continued his studies at Wagner College with a B.A. in Theatre and Speech Performance. In 2003, he made his Broadway debut in the closing night production of *Les Misérables*. In '99, Colin appeared numerous times on *The Rosie O'Donnell Show* and worked for three seasons on *The Wendy Williams Show*. Colin has produced, directed, hosted, and performed in the tri-state area and abroad with Broadway Cruises, Nickelodeon Cruises, and R Family Vacations Cruises. Colin is a philanthropist and has hosted, produced and raised funds and awareness for many organizations in Branford and beyond.



MARY LEE WEBER (Community Outreach) is a Marketing and Communications consultant who has lived in Branford since 1988. She held the position of Director of Marketing and Community Development for the ABC affiliate WTNH-8 for 17 years where she

was responsible for non-traditional revenue and community partnerships. With a local creative team she Executive Produced a short documentary for the Stony Creek Museum called Born at The Water's Edge. It features interviews and information about the Thimble Islands and the history of Stony Creek including brief segments about Legacy Theatre, the Stony Creek Fife and Drum Corps and the Quarry. Mary Lee also helped with the Legacy Theatre productions while they were in residence at the Stony Creek Museum in 2018-19. She joined Legacy to help with Marketing and Community Outreach and is thrilled to play even a small part in helping Legacy bring theatre back to Stony Creek.



NICK FETHERSTON (Box Office Manager) is an actor operating out of the New Haven area. He is a graduate of Quinnipiac University with a degree in Theater Studies and is also an alumnus of The National Theater Institute at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center.

Previous Legacy Theatre acting credits include Lysander in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Rosencrantz in Hamlet, and a brief cameo as The Prince in this year's A Princess Tea. Other notable credits include Don John/The Sexton in Much Ado About Nothing (Capital Classics), various roles in the 2019 New Play Festival (The Barrow Group NYC), Albert in Goldfish (New Haven Theater Company), and Mr. Bingley in *Pride and Prejudice* (The Little Theatre of Manchester). Nick is also the Box Office Manager here at The Legacy Theatre (he might've sold you a ticket to this very show). He is also an instructor for a variety of acting classes that Legacy provides. He thanks you for supporting his work and hopes you enjoy the show! Website: nickfetherston.com Instagram: @nfetherstonblue



MELISSA STARKWEATHER (Box Office Associate) An enthusiastic theatre lover, Melissa Starkweather has accrued a wide variety of experiences throughout the country and abroad. From her early years performing children's roles with Tulsa Opera to her current work as a

choral singer and music teacher, Melissa is dedicated to the advancement of live performance in our community. Melissa earned her Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance with a minor in Theatre from Belmont University, where she interned with Nashville Opera's education department. During her time in Nashville, she worked as a Box Office Assistant at Tennessee Performing Arts Center and developed a love of helping to provide community members with an all-around positive theatre experience. She then sought out a Master of Music degree in Opera Theatre at University of South Carolina, where she began working as an administrative assistant and stage manager for FBN Productions, a local children's opera company, and furthered her box office and front of house experience at Koger Center for the Arts. After graduating, Melissa has worked as a freelance stage manager, performer, and classroom music teacher. Recently, she served as a Production Management Apprentice for Berlin Opera Academy's productions of Le Nozze di Figaro, The Crucible, and Die Zauberflöte. Some of her favorite roles include Rosalinde in Die Fledermaus (Belmont Opera Theatre), Susannah in Susannah (Opera at USC), Ham in Nove's Fludde (Tulsa Opera), and Ghost of Christmas Past in A Christmas Carol (American Theatre Company). Additionally, Melissa will soon be singing in Handel's Messiah with New Haven Symphony Orchestra. Melissa is so excited to join the team at Legacy Theatre and hopes to continue to provide patrons with an excellent, uplifting experience at the theatre.





JEFF ZEITLIN (Front of House Manager) A long-time resident of Guilford, CT, Jeff's love of theatre was taken to the next level when his daughter was a part of the Guilford High School Theatre Arts program. Jeff served as a Board Member of the school's Theatre Arts

Parents Support. He then became the Box Office Manager and Front of House Advisor for GHSTA. He continues in that volunteer role today. Along with his wife, Alyson, he was an usher at The Ivoryton Playhouse. Most recently, he was a House Manager at The Katherine Hepburn Cultural Arts Center ("The Kate") in Old Saybrook. He first became aware of The Legacy Theatre when attending a couple of fundraisers a few years ago. He was taken by the plans for the historic building and the prospect of bringing high quality Broadway productions and performers to the shoreline. Jeff's community involvement also extends to Guilford A Better Chance where he is a member of the Board of Directors. When not at the theatre, Jeff is Loyalty Manager for IKEA in New Haven, focusing on Public and Community Relations. Jeff looks forward to welcoming theatre-goers from near and far to The Legacy Theatre!

## Support Legacy Theatre

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, Legacy Theatre relies on the generosity of our donors and supporters to bring performances, classes, job opportunities and more to the shoreline community. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation today, or supporting us through other avenues. Please contact Kiersten Bjork, Business Manager, at kiersten@legacytheatrect.org with any questions.



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- The Legacy Theatre Guild is comprised of dedicated members of the Shoreline East community who come together as a group to support the work and mission of the Legacy Theatre in Stony Creek, CT.
- These "cheerleaders for the performing arts and the creative process" freely give their time and talents to help the full and part-time staff at the Legacy with self-contained service projects; beautifying or updating a neglected or dated area within our actor housing, assembling printed materials for a bulk mailing campaign, helping to prepare or serve cast and company dinners or summer cookouts, etc.
- Active members quickly become part of the Legacy family, gathering when called upon to help in the true spirit of giving. A veritable and enthusiastic "theatre club of volunteers," Legacy Guild members can soon become the backbone of the not-for-profit arts organization.

For more information Contact Managing Director, Jeff Provost JProvost@LegacyTheatreCT.org



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