

Believe NYC and Educational Travel Adventures

PRESENT:

**ARTS**  
for **AUTISM**

A Concert to Benefit Autism Speaks

HOSTED BY KELLI O'HARA

JUNE 19TH 2017

**Gershwin Theatre**

New York City



## A WORD FROM THE PRODUCERS



Michael Holzer



Jacquie Carnahan

One year ago, we came together at the Gershwin Theatre for the very first Arts for Autism concert. Dozens of Broadway actors joined more than 150 young performers to take part in a show that inspired, educated and entertained us. It was uplifting to see so many passionate artists collaborate to raise awareness, encourage acceptance and to celebrate the power of the arts. We also witnessed the Broadway debut of Gina Hitsos, a young singer with autism who found her voice through the magic of music. There was an infectious feeling of love, excitement and optimism as everyone left the theatre that night.

After a year of planning and projects we are back!

We have many new and exciting developments since last June. After debuting a special arrangement of “Defying Gravity” in last year’s concert, we released a music video to share the beautiful message with an even wider audience. In February, we ventured out to the Ice Plant Recording studios in Queens with three former Broadway Elphabas from *Wicked* to reimagine the song we know and love. You can find the video on our website at [ArtsForAutism.net](http://ArtsForAutism.net).

In May, we joined Autism Speaks at MetLife Stadium for the Northern New Jersey Walk. We were thrilled to be there and show our support. Jacquie and our talented musicians serenaded and entertained the walkers; it was wonderful to see firsthand the positive impact that music can have.

Now it’s June, and here we are again at the Gershwin Theatre. Kelli O’Hara is back along with some fresh faces from Broadway’s hottest shows of the season. Mina Cuesta, a 17-year-old vocalist on the autism spectrum, will make her Broadway debut tonight when she joins Kelli O’Hara for an unforgettable duet of the classic song, “Climb Every Mountain.”

Over the past few years, our little idea has grown from what seemed like an impossibility to an annual event touching the lives of countless people. The performers and their families, the Broadway community, fans of our Facebook Page, and you, the audience, have all been advocates and supporters of this important cause. We are grateful for your support and are happy that together we can make a difference.

We have a fantastic show planned with incredible talent so sit back, relax and enjoy. Thank you again for coming and being a part of Arts for Autism!

*Jacquie and Michael*

# GERSHWIN THEATRE

221 West 51<sup>st</sup> Street



Hosted by Kelli O'Hara

## ***starring***

Stephanie J. Block	Christopher Jackson	Adrienne Warren
Jennifer Laura Thompson	Teal Wicks	Abby Mueller
Betsy Struxness	Sasha Hutchings	Carleigh Bettiol
Kelvin Moon Loh	John Michael Dias	Garrett Long
Heather Tepe	Scott Difford	Jacque Carnahan

## ***and Broadway Choir***

Alicia Albright	Emilie Battle	Oak Onaodowan
DeMond B. Nason	Warren G. Nolan Jr.	Paul Pilcz
Danielle Erin Rhodes	Libby Servais	Paige Sommerer
	Eric Van Tienen	

## ***and Student Performing Groups***

Adams Davy – Texas  
American Expression of Dance – Utah  
Avanti Music Academy – Colorado  
Class Act Productions – Texas  
From Stage to Screen Performing Arts Academy – New York  
Moving Youth Dance Company – New Jersey  
Neighborhood Music Stapleton – Colorado  
Upper Falls Dance Academy - Maryland

Orchestrations and Vocal Arrangements  
Assaf Gleizner

Stage Management  
Gregg Kirsopp

Production Staff  
Jessica Freedman, Aiden Dreskin  
Matt Kurzyniec

Show Announcer  
Patrick Newton

Music Direction by  
Sonny Paladino

Directed by  
David Alpert



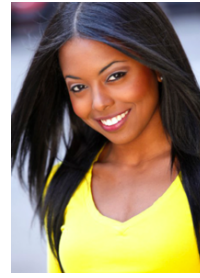
Kelli O'Hara  
Tony Award Winner  
"The King and I"



Stephanie J. Block  
Tony Award Nominee  
"Falsettos"



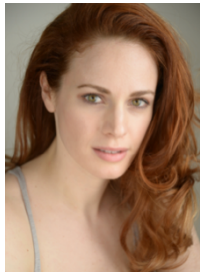
Christopher Jackson  
Tony Award Nominee  
"Hamilton"



Adrienne Warren  
Tony Award Nominee  
"Shuffle Along"



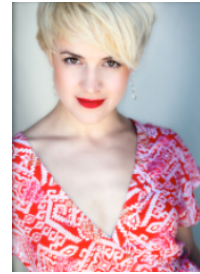
Jennifer Laura Thompson  
"Dear Evan Hansen"



Teal Wicks  
"Finding Neverland"



Abby Mueller  
"Beautiful"



Betsy Struxness  
"Hamilton"



Sasha Hutchings  
"Hamilton"



Carleigh Bettiol  
"Hamilton"



Kelvin Moon Loh  
"The King and I"



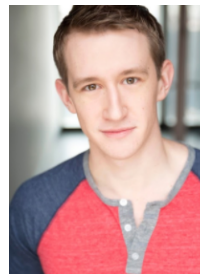
John Michael Dias  
"Beautiful"



Garrett Long  
"Dear Evan Hansen"



Heather Tepe  
"Matilda"



Scott Difford  
"Matilda"



Jacque Carnahan  
"Cinderella"



Emilie Battle  
"Sistas the Musical"



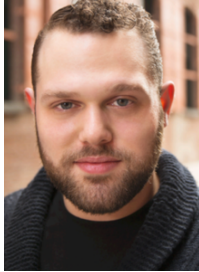
Oak Onaodowan  
"Hamilton"



DeMond B. Nason  
"Walmartopia"



Warren G. Nolan Jr.  
"Raisin"



Paul Pilcz  
"Bye Bye Birdie"



Danielle Erin Rhodes  
"Murder for two"



Libby Servais  
"Wicked"



Paige Sommerer  
"South Pacific"



Eric Van Tielen  
"Les Misérables"



Alicia Albright  
"Wicked"



Keve Wilson  
"A Gentleman's Guide  
to Love and Murder"



Mina Cuesta  
Broadway Debut

## STUDENT PERFORMERS

### ADAMS DAVY

#### Tony Smith, Director

Ashley Axom • Caterina Ballatori • Brooke Bickham • Emma Dantzler  
Addison Doss • Gracen Fisk • Alina Garcia • Laney Grant • Meridian Harrap  
Mikayla Hutchins • Laura Krus • Megan Medearis • Julia Miles • Lauren Moore  
Katrina Mueller • Halston Paret • Amaya Perez • Tsvetalina Pourciau  
Brelain Preyer-Prado • John Antonio Teodoro • Madison Tulaba  
Emily Van Eaton • Cahlyn Velasco • Sara Wojta • Erinn Wood • Aislinn Wood

### AMERICAN EXPRESSION OF DANCE

#### Anne Weichers, Jenna Hughes & Chase Wise, Directors

Caitlyn Bath • Nicole Christiansen • Ellie Crook • Olivia Crook • Isabella Dean  
Anna Fankhauser • Demeree Frost • Abigail Gray • Jada Hardcastle  
Samantha Harkness • Sadie Jensen • Katie Johnson • Sarah Knowlton  
Demi Lassig • Drew McCubbins • Madison Moody • Emma Moody  
Shelby Olson • Paris Rasmussen • Paige Rasmussen • Sophia Roberts  
Abigail Roberts • Samantha Robison • Kali Simons • Gracie Stronk  
Kate Weichers • Kennedy Wilson • Grace Woolley

### AVANTI MUSIC ACADEMY

#### Amra Tomsic, Director

Emma Bowman • Kathryn Crandall • Eswari Duggirala Maren Fuller • Marina  
Gleeson • Amisha Gupta • Carter Hogan • Zoë Howell Sona Kalatardi • Ella  
Lucas • Ainsley Mchenry • Summer Novak  
Thearin Pyeatte • Savannah Spencer

### CLASS ACT PRODUCTIONS

#### Keith Brumfield, Director

Anna Ballis • Grant Bottorff • Emily Freeman • London McDaniel  
William Nowlin • Wiley Sadlier • Mercer Sadlier • Alexa Sage  
Gwendolyn Schroder • Addison Smith • Kaden Smith • Zander Smith  
Mica Swingholm • Evan Troup • McLain Weaver

### MOVING YOUTH DANCE ACADEMY

#### Lisa Rumbauskas & Debbie Cury, Directors

Isabella Albano • Madeleine Caccavale • Hanna Campiglia • Alethea Cladis  
Sara Decresce • Cassidy Deegan • Isabella Estrella • Diana Mincolla  
Kayleigh Pender • Allaistar Mairead Regan • Caroline Schafer  
Charlotte Schwartz • Gabriella Stawinski • Emma Sugrue  
Charlotte Willis • Theodora Jin Yoon

## **NEIGHBORHOOD MUSIC STAPLETON**

### **Skye Barker-Maa, Director**

Olive Bartlett • Alexia Blandon • Maya Boley • Brielle Cornier • Jordan Davis  
Jossilyn Fazendin • Kylie Hanson • Jack Heller • Davey Lippert  
Cheslea Lopach • Amelia Modesitt • Alex Reeves  
Natalie Sieren • Ella Ward

## **FROM STAGE TO SCREEN PERFORMING ARTS ACADEMY**

### **Michael Radi, Musical Direction**

### **Gene and Jennifer Forman, Studio Directors**

Elizabeth Becker • Deziree Franco • Samantha Greenberg • Serena Heddell  
Frank Randazzo • Isabel Segal • Sonia Snyder • Briana Sparacino  
Mara Sparacino • Stacy Wiener

## **UPPER FALLS DANCE ACADEMY**

### **Julie Foley & Judith Daniel, Directors**

Meg Bowen • Cate Bowen • Samantha Burton • Mia Butta • Cady Keller  
Tori Levush • Madelyn Mullahey • Victoria Murphy • Ava Patino • Eliana Pearce  
Elizabeth Peary • Kimberly Peary • Morgan Perzan • Cetta Redmer  
Stephanie Scalchunes • Sophia Walper • Rachel Walper  
Madeline Wasson • Vittoria Wills • Victoria Young

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO...**

- Our sincerest thanks to Kelli O'Hara for going above and beyond for this event. We thank you for your willingness to help whenever asked and for your generosity of spirit, support and dedication.
- Thank you to those who shared their stories on stage: Katie and Finley Hazeldine; Sally, Mike and Brian Curci; Stacy and Sheryl Wiener
- Laura Lee Williams and Jackie Cuesta for sharing your stories
- Composer, Scott Evan Davis for our inspiring finale, "If The World Only Knew" and his amazing work with the students of P94M The Spectrum School
- Kerry Magro, award-winning national speaker and author
- Andrew Duff, multi-media producer, Autism Speaks
- Sarah Baroody, Felipe Maya, Kristen Apen and the staff at Autism Speaks
- The parents of all our student performers
- Irene & Sam Holzer for their enthusiasm and bringing the Riviera crowd- again
- Brenda and Gerry Carnahan and the Mielkes for traveling cross-country to be here
- The staff at Educational Travel Adventures; Joanne Hartobey for everything she does to help these things happen and Robert Boka for everything technical
- The Believe NYC Artistic team
- Everyone at 321 Management & the Gershwin Theatre
- All the Broadway performers, musicians and our fabulous directing
- Thanks to all of our friends and families for your advice and support
- For anyone we have missed... THANK YOU!

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

- “Everybody Says Don’t” .....Teal Wicks, Broadway Choir  
Musical: *Anyone Can Whistle* and the Arts for Autism Company  
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
Choreography by Antionette Dipietropolo
- “Telephone Hour” .....Broadway Choir, Avanti Music Academy  
Musical: *Bye Bye Birdie* and Neighborhood Music Stapleton  
Music and Lyrics by Lee Adams and Charles Strouse
- “Alexander Hamilton”  
“Schuyler Sisters”  
“My Shot” .....Carleigh Bettioli, Sasha Hutchings, Betsy Struxness  
Musical: *Hamilton* and Adams Davy  
Music and Lyrics by Lin-Manuel Miranda
- “The Wizard and I” .....Stephanie J. Block  
Musical: *Wicked* Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz
- “Heart & Music” .....Kelvin Moon Loh, Broadway Choir  
Musical: *A New Brain* and Class Act Productions  
Music and Lyrics by William Finn
- “When I Grow Up”  
“Naughty”  
“Revoltin’ Children” .....Scott Difford, Betsy Struxness, Heather Tepe, Adams Davy  
Musical: *Matilda* and From Stage to Screen Performing Arts Academy  
Music and Lyrics by Tim Minchin
- “Joint Is Really Jumpin’ At Carnegie Hall” .....Jacque Carnahan  
Movie Musical “As Thousands Cheer” and American Expression of Dance  
Music and Lyrics by: Blane, Martin and Edens  
Dance arrangement by Assaf Gleizner  
and Jacque Carnahan
- “Something Wonderful” .....Kelli O’Hara  
Musical: *The King and I* Music and Lyrics by Rodgers and Hammerstein
- “I Believe” .....Shining Stars  
Special appearance with students Gina Berry, Brian Curci, Ryan Fay, Sean Fay,  
Adam Fleissner, Josh Moreines
- “Pure Imagination” .....Keve Wilson and Upper Falls Dance Academy  
Musical: *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* Music and Lyrics by Leslie  
Bricusse and Anthony Newley
- “We Gotta Get Out” .....John Michael Dias  
Musical: *Beautiful, the Carole King Musical* Music and Lyrics by Barry Mann  
and Cynthia Weil



“Beautiful”.....Abby Mueller  
Musical: *Beautiful, the Carole King Musical* Music and Lyrics by Carole King

“Climb Every Mountain”.....Kelli O'Hara and Mina Cuesta  
Musical: *The Sound of Music* Music and Lyrics by Rodgers and Hammerstein

“She Used to be Mine”.....Adrienne Warren  
Musical: *Waitress* and Moving Youth Dance Company  
Music and Lyrics by Sara Bareilles

“Anybody Have a Map”.....Jennifer Laura Thompson and Garrett Long  
Musical: *Dear Evan Hansen* Music and Lyrics by Pasek and Paul

“If the World Only Knew” .....Christopher Jackson  
and the Arts for Autism Company  
Music and Lyrics by Scott Evan Davis in collaboration  
with the students at P94 Spectrum School

All Orchestrations by Assaf Gleizner

All Vocal Arrangements by Assaf Gleizner with the exception of those below:  
“If the World Only Knew”  
Vocal Arrangement by David Snyder

**ORCHESTRA**

Music Director/Conductor: Sonny Paladino  
Piano: Assaf Gleizner  
Guitar: Kevin Ramessar  
Drums: Grant Braddock  
Oboe: Keve Wilson  
Bass: Alex Eckhardt  
Trumpet: Jonathan Heim  
Saxophone/Clarinet/Flute: Daniel Glaude

We wish to express our gratitude to the Performers' Unions: Actors' Equity Association, American Guild of Musical Artists, American Guild of Variety Artists and SAG-AFTRA through Theatre Authority, Inc. for their cooperation in permitting the Artists to appear on this program.

# WHO'S WHO

## **KELLI O'HARA**

Kelli O'Hara has unequivocally established herself as one of Broadway's great leading ladies. Her portrayal of Anna Leonowens in the critically acclaimed revival of *The King and I* recently garnered her a Tony Award for Best Leading Actress in a Musical, along with Drama League and Outer Critics nominations.

A native of Oklahoma, Kelli received a degree in opera, and after winning the State Metropolitan Opera Competition, moved to New York City and enrolled in the Lee Strasberg Institute. She made her Broadway debut in *Jekyll & Hyde*, followed by Sondheim's *Follies*, *Sweet Smell of Success*, and *Dracula*. She then moved from one critical and commercial success to another, winning Tony, Drama Desk, and Outer Critics Award nominations for her outstanding performances in *The Light in the Piazza*, *The Pajama Game*, *South Pacific*, *Nice Work if You Can Get It*, and *The Bridges of Madison County*.

Among her extensive credits in TV, film, regional theater, and opera, recent highlights include her performance as Mrs. Darling in NBC's live telecast of *Peter Pan* and her Metropolitan Opera debut in the production of *The Merry Widow*. Kelli has also sold out her solo show at Carnegie Hall and Town Hall and performed with symphonies and orchestras across the country.

## **DAVID ALPERT**

David is excited to return as the director of the Arts for Autism concert, working with all of the amazing students for this important cause. Broadway: *IF/THEN*, *The Trip to Bountiful*, *The Best Man*, *Guys & Dolls*. ALSO: *Talley's Folly* (Roundabout), *Old Friends* (Signature), Kushner's *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide...*(Guthrie), *Flashdance* (1st National). New York: *A Little Night Music* (NYU), *Death Note* (Frank Wildhorn), *A Scythe of Time* (NYMF, Best Director Nomination), Idina Menzel at Radio City Music Hall (Creative Consultant), *Tonya & Nancy* (NYMF). Regional: *Vayna & Sonya...*, *Urinetown*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Fully Committed*, *Baby with the Bathwater*. Every year, David presents the "Living for Today" concert series benefiting Gilana's Fund. He has had the great pleasure to work with some of Broadway and Hollywood's leading actors including Angela Lansbury, James Earl Jones, Cicely Tyson, Betty Buckley, LaChanze, John Larroquette, Idina Menzel, Danny Burstein, Jefferson Mays, Vanessa Williams, Elizabeth Ashley, John Stamos, Cuba Gooding Jr., Blair Underwood, and Candice Bergen.

David graduated summa cum laude from Western Michigan University with a BA in Directing, as well as a BA in Stage Management. Upon graduation he was awarded both of the Department's top honors: the Presidential Scholar, and the Conspicuous Achievement in Theatre Award, and in 2016 was selected as a Distinguished Alumni. David is the Artistic Director of Headline Programming for BroadwayCon. [www.david-alpert.com](http://www.david-alpert.com) @directfromdavid

## **JACQUE CARNAHAN**

Jacque is the Artistic Director of Believe NYC, a non-profit arts organization, and is co-producer of tonight's annual Broadway benefit concert, *Arts For Autism*. Her

one woman show: *From Main Street to 42nd Street* has been performed at 54 Below, Symphony Space, The Triad and venues around the country including The Berkshires, Dallas, and Los Angeles. Broadway Concerts: *Sondheim at Seven* honoring Stephen Sondheim for the Irish Repertory Theatre at Town Hall. Off-Broadway: *A Child's Christmas In Wales* at Irish Repertory Theatre, *Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice* at NYMF, *The Baker's Wife* at The York Theatre, *The Boyfriend*, *Irene*, and *Primrose* all at Musicals Tonight!. National Tour: *Cinderella* (swing), Regional: *The Bakers Wife* (Paper Mill Playhouse), *A Little Night Music* (Baltimore CenterStage), *Pirates of Penzance* (Goodspeed Opera House), *Cinderella* (Ogunquit Playhouse), *Beauty and the Beast* (Gateway Playhouse). Jacque is a graduate of Idyllwild Arts Academy and holds a BFA, cum laude from the Boston Conservatory.

### **SONNY PALADINO**

Music Supervisor for the new Broadway Musical, *Natasha, Pierre and the Great Comet of 1812*. Music Director for the upcoming Broadway revival of *Smokey Joe's Café*. Recent credits include: Associate Conductor; *The Last Ship* (written by 16 time Grammy Award winner, Sting), and the TONY winning best revival: *Pippin*. Other Broadway credits, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Billy Elliot*, *Grease*, *Priscilla*, *Queen of the Desert*, *Guys and Dolls*, *Mama Mia*, *Promises, Promises*, *Addams Family*, *Women on the Verge*. Music Supervisor for *Disney's High School Musical* (Milan/Italy tour.) 1st National Tours: *Disney's High School Musical*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* and *Grease*. Arrangements and orchestrations for *The Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra*. Work with Alicia Keys, Ke\$ha, Matthew Morrison. As a composer: *The Return of the Blue Cat* (with poet F.D. Reeve.) TV: *The X- Factor* (Australia), *The Next Big Thing*. Music Director and arranger for the hit group *The Doo Wop Project*, which travels around the country performing classic Doo-Wop music and contemporary songs in that style. [www.thedoowopproject.com](http://www.thedoowopproject.com) B.F.A. in Jazz Piano from CUNY City College.

### **ASSAF GLEIZNER**

Born and raised in Israel, Assaf Gleizner has been working as a composer, Music Director, orchestrator, and arranger both in NYC and around the world for the past 10 years. Assaf's favorite credits include:

Broadway: *Arts For Autism - Featuring Kelly O'Hara, Julia Murney* (Gershwin Theater) Orchestrator, Arranger. Off-Broadway: *90210! The Musical* (Theater 80) Composer, Orchestrator. *Katdashiens! Breaks the Musical* (Theater 80) Music Director, Orchestrator. *Full House* (Canada & Theater 80) Music Director, Orchestrator. *Yankee Peddler* (Actors Temple) Music Director, Orchestrator. *Flak House* (Actors Temple) Orchestrator. *The Travels* (NYMF) Music Director, Orchestrator. *I Battled Lenny Ross* (Ensemble Studio Theater) Music Director. Regional: *The Swingaroos* (Florida Studio Theater) Composer, Music Director. *Cassandra* (Proctor's Theater) Music Director, Orchestrator. Other: *Show Choir! The Musical - Featuring Christiane Noll* (NYC) Orchestrations. *The Wolf*, (NC & NYC) Orchestrator. Assaf is also a member of the *BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop*.



ETA is a student tour company providing exciting, unique educational programs throughout the world. Programs offered include performance tours, educational tours, language and cultural immersion programs, service learning opportunities

and short-term faculty led programs. Enriching lives and opening minds... [www.ETAdventures.com](http://www.ETAdventures.com)



Believe NYC is an educational arts organization that produces performances and workshops for performing arts students throughout the United States. The Believe NYC mission is to provide aspiring young artists a personalized theatre experience that allows them to visualize their future possibilities in theatre, music and dance. Over the last six years, productions of *From*

*Main Street to 42nd Street* and *From the Band Room to Broadway* have inspired thousands of young artists from all over the world. Believe NYC events are lead by New York's finest artists in their fields. We believe dreams are achievable and we give students the opportunity to believe it, too. [www.Believe-NYC.com](http://www.Believe-NYC.com)



Autism Speaks is dedicated to promoting solutions, across the spectrum and throughout the life span, for the needs of people with autism and their families. Through partnerships and collaboration, Autism Speaks is dedicated to increasing understanding and acceptance of people with autism; being a catalyst for research breakthroughs; increasing early-childhood screening and intervention; improving the transition to adulthood; and ensuring access to reliable information and services throughout the life span. Autism,

or autism spectrum disorder, refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. We now know there is not one autism but many subtypes, and each person with autism can have unique strengths and challenges. Most are caused by a combination of genetic and environmental influences, and many are accompanied by issues such as GI disorders, seizures and sleep disturbances. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates 1 in 68 children is on the autism spectrum. [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

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Videography Provided by:

