

Believe NYC and Educational Travel Adventures

**PRESENT:**

**ARTS**  
for **AUTISM**



**HOSTED BY ADAM AND ARIELLE JACOBS**

**JUNE 20, 2022**

**Gershwin Theatre**  
New York City



## A WORD FROM THE PRODUCERS



Michael Holzer



Jacque Carnahan

Three years ago, we gathered in this theatre for an amazing concert and we announced our excitement about our fifth annual show scheduled for 2020. We all know how the rest of that story goes! 2020 – CANCELED; 2021 – VIRTUAL; and 2022 – We’re finally BACK!

For many of you, tonight might be your first time in a Broadway theatre since the start of the pandemic. Some of you bought your tickets the first day they went on sale and others may have needed some convincing. Some of the empty seats represent those who are not yet comfortable to return. Some represent those who we have lost since we were last here. We are thankful to be in the theatre again and excited and delighted that you have joined us tonight.

Planning a one-night concert with dozens of professional actors and hundreds of student performers is no easy task and our team has been at work for months to bring you tonight’s show. Along the way we have moments of joy, excitement, inspiration, delight and of course a little stress. The result of countless hours of planning, practice and rehearsals will dazzle and impress you for the next ninety minutes.

As always, the show will feature actors on the autism spectrum. Autistic actress, Naomi Rubin, will join our host Arielle Jacobs as they sing “For Good” from *Wicked*. They’ll be accompanied by the composer and songwriter himself, Stephen Schwartz. We’ll also see Actionplay, a theatre company dedicated to providing autistic, neurodivergent, and disabled teens and young adults equal access to the theatre-making process, perform a number from their original musical, *Surface*.

Funds raised from tonight’s performance will be granted to organizations that improve the lives of people impacted by autism and we cannot thank you enough for your support.

And now, prepare to be entertained and inspired. Enjoy the show!

*Jacque and Michael*

# GERSHWIN THEATRE

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

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**Hosted by Adam Jacobs and Arielle Jacobs**

***starring***

Jacque Carnahan  
Gay Marshall  
Abby Mueller

Natalie Charle Ellis  
Gabrielle McClinton  
Zachary Noah Piser  
Brynn Williams

Kevin Smith Kirkwood  
Kevin Moon Loh  
Marty Thomas

***Arts for Autism Choir***

Justin Campbell  
Jessica Freedman  
Jillian Jameson  
Danielle Erin Rhodes

Kenneth Francoeur  
Jeff Goble  
Jayson Kerr  
Laura Snell

Michael Ray Fisher  
Melanie Goerlitz  
Jennifer Lorae  
Eric Van Tienen

***Arts for Autism Dancers***

Hannah Balagot  
Justin Geiss  
Morgan Rose-Johnson

Rhaamell Burke-Missouri  
Nigel Hall  
Sarah Warrick

Marjorie Failoni  
Regan Jackson

***Student Performing Groups***

Action Play – New York  
Avanti Music Academy – Colorado  
Bethany Caldarona Performance Studio – Michigan  
Lake Travis High School – Texas  
POYDS Dance Company – Colorado  
West End Academy of Dance – Virginia  
Young Actors Theatre – Florida

Orchestrations and Vocal Arrangements  
Keiji Ishiguri & Kevin Leahy

Stage Management  
Gregg Kirsopp

Production Staff  
Laura Axelrod, Kyle Brand  
Justin Geiss, Steven West

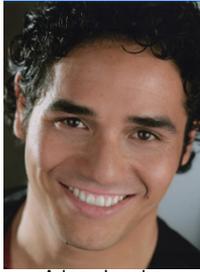
Show Announcer  
Alex Pepperman

Associate Director  
Morgan Rose-Johnson

Social Media  
Becca Brown

Music Direction by  
Paul Staroba

Directed by  
Natalie Malotke



Adam Jacobs  
*Aladdin, The Lion King  
Les Misérables*



Arielle Jacobs  
*Aladdin, Wicked  
In the Heights*



Kevin Smith Kirkwood  
*Kinky Boots*



Gay Marshall  
*Jacques Brel*



Gabrielle McClinton  
*Paradise Square*



Kelvin Moon Loh  
*Beetlejuice*



Abby Mueller  
*Six*



Zachary Noah Piser  
*Dear Evan Hansen*



Natalie Charle Ellis  
*Beetlejuice*



Marty Thomas  
*Wicked*



Brynn Williams  
*Spongebob*



Justin Campbell  
*Carmen*



Kenneth Francoeur  
*Jersey Boys*



Michael Ray Fisher  
*Rocktopia*



Jessica Freedman  
*New World Stages*



Jeff Goble  
*Sweeney Todd*



Melanie Goerlitz  
*Carnegie Hall*



Jillian Jameson  
*The Sound of Music*



Jayson Kerr  
*Evita*



Jennifer Lorae  
*Parade*



Danielle Erin Rhodes  
*The Buddy Holly Story*



Laura Snell  
*Avenue Q*



Eric Van Tielen  
*Les Misérables*



Hannah Balagot  
*West Side Story*



Marjorie Failoni  
*Escape to Margaritaville*



Justin Geiss  
*Cats*



Nigel Hall  
*Young Frankenstein*



Regan Jackson  
*Kinky Boots*



Morgan Rose-Johnson  
*School of Rock*



Sarah Warrick  
*A Chorus Line*

# STUDENT PERFORMERS

## ACTIONPLAY

**Aaron Feinstein, Executive Director**

**& Jackson Tucker-Meyer, Program Director**

Nick Amodio • Adelaide DeSole • Ethan Donn • Ben Dworken  
Samantha Elisofon • Lev Garfein • Sandy Gladstone-Karpe  
Shafer Gootkind • Lexi Spindel • Edison Weinstein

## AVANTI MUSIC ACADEMY &

## POYDS DANCE COMPANY / KASH DANCE & CHOREOGRAPHY

**Amra Tomsic & Kayleigh Schadwinkel-Hickman, Directors**

Giselle Alvariza • Allison Cook • Cassidy Gangl • Alessa Jackson  
Dashiell Keiffer • Braiden Kirkegaard • Norah Koppenhauer • Paige Mabbutt  
Corinne Nolan • Summer Novak • Levi Randolph • Mia Schuessler  
Nicole Siegler • Sandi Smith • Lauren Terhune • Eden Trent  
Nya Trey • Callie Tysdal • Lauren Veldhuizen • Vihana Verma  
Disha Verma • Victoria Xikes

## BETHANY CALDARONA PERFORMANCE STUDIO

**Bethany Caldarona, Director**

Julieta Amoroz • Damian Barkas • Landen Bermudez • London Bermudez  
Ryan Buyers • Sophia Caldarona • Shaelyn Carroll • Connor Currie • Ella Darket  
Casper Dickey • Jade Downey • Kara Downey • Robert Fitzgibbon  
Elyse Friedrich • Adyson Gedrich • Spencer Goodman • Alina Hazime  
Montana Jones • Samantha Jones • Gina Karkoski • Samantha Karoub  
Nat Koelzer • Mirabella Koponen • Claire Kurpinski • Emma Latimer  
Aubrey McCurdy • Avery McKelvey • Sophia Mijat • Snigdha Nair • Elliott Ryan  
Piper Ryan • Emily Schaf • Kendall Schulz • Kathryn Schwalk  
Joseph Smentowski • Ryan Tatone • Lucille Wilson • Charlie Winter  
Christian Woods • Nathaniel Zerbonia

## LAKE TRAVIS HIGH SCHOOL

**Le Ahlee Fletcher, Nikki Guckian & Adam Poynor, Directors**

Gabrielle Anderson • Miranda Bach • Caroline Baker • Haley Beckstead  
Eva Berry • Jayama Biagini • Anneliese Carle • Allison Chow • Makena Cox  
Susan Crumbley • Elena Davis • Parker Devine • Ainsley Ellett • Adam Ellett  
Bryn Farley • Autumn Forgey • Emily Gryder • Olivia Hoffman  
Kinsey Jacobsen • Nicholas Joran • Kate Kingsley • Jaelyn Knoll  
Sydnee Lauritzen • Alyssa Leavitt • Alejandra Lopezcepero • Kyra Lowrance  
Addison Muck • Lance Najera • Olyvia Owen • Jessica Paine • Kenna Phillips  
Estella Reschke • Callie Roth • Kathryn Schanen • Ashley Schneider  
Ella Swinford • Sophie Thompson • Tyler Tramonte • Jaice Trottier  
Claire Tudor • Teresa Vandersand • Skylar Vlaming • Emilia Warren  
Kathryn Williamson • Mirthe Wilmlink • Alan Yost • Zoe Zaman • Joey Zhang

## **WEST END ACADEMY OF DANCE**

### **Madison Ellington and Lisa Rumbauskas, Directors**

Marita Allen • Claire Blankenship • Lily Bowman • Addison Burtch  
Wesley Burtch • Peyton Carroll • Kathryn Dau • Hannah de Witt  
Tannin Forsyth • Regan Foster • Jazmine Foster • Clara Gould • Riley Guyer  
Lauren Hagin • Lauren Handley • Celia Hearn • Lily Hennesey • Esmarie Henry  
Christopher Hopkins • Meredith Hopkins • Emily Huneycutt • Elizabeth Jackson  
Hannah Jiancristoforo • Rose Keiper • Stella Kush • Mabry Lenzi  
Sydney Lenzi • Jackie Liang • Kaia Menear • Ryan Parsons • Ella Rankin  
Anna Schaeffer • Elizabeth Schardt • Michayla Semp • Ryland Ward

## **YOUNG ACTORS THEATRE**

### **Sarah Roy, Executive Director & J. Scott Handley, Artistic Director**

Olivia Bahmer • Tyler Brown • Hailey Bull • Claire Camp • Hailey Cleary  
Kiera Davis • Emily Dunson • Grantham Durham • Ava Estep • John Evans  
Cameron Greene • Aidenn Hafez • Parker Johnson • Nolan Johnson  
John Marty • Dorothy Matthews • Savannah Mejia • McKenna Noel  
Graham Reece • Gabriella Rieder • Maximilian Schrader • Sydney Sherry  
Noble Sissle, IV • Jenna Sokolow • Megan Stokley • Ansley Tamplin  
Baia Terracciano • Spencer Thomas • Isla Welge • Emily Weller • Carson Whitis

## **THANKS TO:**

- Thank you to all the performers, musicians and the production team for your hard work and talent.
- Thank you to the staff at ETA and Believe NYC who are behind the scenes and on the ground making this weekend and this show possible.
- We would like thank everyone at the Gershwin Theatre and 321 Theatrical Management for sharing their home with us today.
- Thank you to the families of the students and their directors for supporting them.
- From Michael and Jacque... thank you to our families for always supporting us and being here tonight.
- For anyone not mentioned that helped make this day possible, THANK YOU TOO!

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

- “Sing” ..... Marty Thomas and the  
*By Pentatonix* Arts for Autism Company  
Music and Lyrics by Mitchell Grassi, Scott Hoying,  
Kevin Olusola, Martin Johnson and Sam Hollander  
Vocal Arrangement and Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri
- “What is This Feeling?” ..... Adam Jacobs and Arielle Jacobs  
*Wicked* Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri
- “Morning Glow” ..... Avanti Music Academy, POYDS Dance  
*Pippin* Company and the Arts for Autism Choir  
Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri
- “Out There” ..... Zachary Noah Piser  
*The Hunchback of Notre Dame* Music by Alan Menken  
Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
Orchestration by Kevin Leahy
- “Grease Medley” ..... Kenneth Francoeur and The Bethany  
*Grease* Caldarona Performance Studio  
Music and Lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey  
Orchestration by Kevin Leahy
- “Heart of Stone” ..... Abby Mueller and West End Academy of Dance  
*Six* Music and Lyrics by Toby Marlow and Lucy Moss  
Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri
- “Something’s Coming” ..... Adam Jacobs  
*West Side Story* Music by Leonard Bernstein  
Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim  
Orchestration by Kevin Leahy
- “Bring Me to Light” ..... Young Actors Theatre  
*Violet* Music by Jeanine Tesori  
Lyrics by Brian Crawley  
Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri
- “The New World” ..... Natalie Charle Ellis, Kevin Smith Kirkwood,  
*Songs for a New World* Kelvin Moon Loh and Brynn Williams  
Music and Lyrics by Jason Robert Brown  
Orchestration by Kevin Leahy

“Selkie-Free” .....Natalie Charle Ellis and Actionplay  
*The Surface* Music by Or Matias  
 Lyrics by Jackson Tucker-Meyer  
 Orchestration by Kevin Leahy

“Kinky Boots Medley” .....Kevin Smith Kirkwood  
*Kinky Boots* and Lake Travis High School  
 Music and Lyrics by Cyndi Lauper  
 Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri

“Breathe Easy” .....Gabrielle McClinton  
*Paradise Square* and cast of *Paradise Square*  
 Music and Lyrics by Larry Kirwan,  
 Jason Howland and Masi Asare  
 Orchestration by Kevin Leahy

“Chanson” .....Jacque Carnahan, Gay Marshall and Stephen Schwartz  
*The Baker’s Wife* Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
 Orchestration by Kevin Leahy

“For Good” .....Arielle Jacobs, Naomi Rubin and Stephen Schwartz  
*Wicked* Music and Lyrics by Stephen Schwartz  
 Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri

“If The World Only Knew” .....Zachary Noah Piser, Emily Weller and the  
 Arts for Autism Company  
 Music and Lyrics by Scott Evan Davis in collaboration  
 with students from P94M Spectrum School  
 Vocal Arrangement and Orchestration by Keiji Ishiguri

**ORCHESTRA**

Music Director/Conductor: Paul Staroba  
 Piano: Adam Rothenberg  
 Guitar: Craig Magnano  
 Drums: Josh Priest  
 Bass: Marc Schmied  
 Trumpet: Dan Urness  
 Reed One: Todd Groves  
 Reed Two: Steve Lyon

Music Copyist: Daniel Gittler

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

## **ADAM JACOBS**

Adam is best known for his work as a stage actor having originated the title role of "Aladdin" in Disney's ALADDIN on Broadway (Grammy and Drama Desk nominations) as well as starring as "Marius" in LES MISÉRABLES and "Simba" in THE LION KING. He began his early career as a pianist at the SF Conservatory of Music then discovered his love for theater while attending St. Ignatius College Preparatory. He studied drama at the American Conservatory Theater in SF as well as the California State Summer School of the Arts in Valencia. He went on to receive a BFA in Theater from NYU Tisch while getting his on-camera training from Stonestreet Film and Television Studios, Carter Thor Studio in LA, and Ellen Novack in NYC. Adam, his wife Kelly, and their sons Jack and Alex now make their home in Chicago.

## **ARIELLE JACOBS**

A California native, Arielle Jacobs was most recently seen as Princess Jasmine in Disney's Broadway hit musical ALADDIN. Prior to that, she played Nessarose in the Broadway cast of WICKED. She also starred on Broadway as Nina Rosario in the four-time Tony & Grammy award winning Broadway musical IN THE HEIGHTS, opposite composer/creator Lin-Manuel Miranda. Off-Broadway, she has starred in two world-premiere plays by Pulitzer-winning playwright and director Nilo Cruz; entitled SOTTO VOCE (as Lucila Pulpo) and FARHAD OR THE SECRET OF BEING (as Farhad, a young Afghan girl who was raised as a boy to avoid social exile but then reaches puberty and struggles with the limitations of becoming a woman in the Middle East.) Jacobs was seen in the original National Touring companies of IN THE HEIGHTS (Nina) and Disney's HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL (Gabriella), in Shakespeare Theatre Company's production of TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: A ROCK OPERA (Julia), and in Dreamcatcher Theatre's production of INTO THE WOODS (Baker's Wife), opposite Broadway legend Tituss Burgess as the Witch.

## **NATALIE MALOTKE**

Natalie Malotke is a director, choreographer, creative event producer and teaching artist living in New York City. Credits include: CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY (Choreography Team on Broadway and National Tour), BYGONE LOVE for China Broadway Entertainment, CANDIDE at Carnegie Hall, and I MARRIED AN ANGEL at City Center all alongside Joshua Bergasse. LITTLE DANCER at Lincoln Center with Susan Stroman, and REALLY ROSIE at City Center with Leigh Silverman. Regional directing and choreography credits at The Engeman (ROCK OF AGES, KINKY BOOTS & ONCE), Pittsburgh Music Theatre, Northern Stage, TexArts and Wagon Wheel. National tour of DANIEL TIGER'S NEIGHBORHOOD LIVE! Resident director and choreographer for Nickelodeon Experience Design events worldwide. Industrial and corporate events for Hermès, Target, Bloomberg Philanthropies and The Robin Hood Foundation. TV: Choreography: SNL Season 47 with Jason Sudeikis and Billie Eilish; PBS, A CAPITOL FOURTH. Faculty at Broadway Dance Center and AMDA. University of Michigan grad. @nataliemalotke

## **PAUL STAROBA**

Originally from Santa Rosa, California in the heart of the wine country in the Sonoma Valley. After receiving his Bachelor's degree in Piano Performance from the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, he took a leap of faith and moved to New York City to pursue a career in professional theatre. He is currently the Associate Conductor of COMPANY starring Katrina Lenk and Patti Lupone on Broadway. Other conducting credits include... Broadway: A CHRISTMAS CAROL, MY FAIR LADY, WAR PAINT, A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE TO LOVE AND MURDER, NEXT TO NORMAL, A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC, and GREY GARDENS; Off-Broadway: THE MAD ONES, DEAR EVAN HANSEN, FAR FROM HEAVEN, CARRIE, THE BLUE FLOWER, TAKE ME ALONG, HAPPINESS, and SAVED.

## **JACQUE CARNAHAN**

Jacque produced her first one woman show at the age of 14 at the San Luis Obispo Little Theater in California. Since then, she has become a sought-after event producer and brings a feeling of joy and celebration to every project. At thirteen, she dreamed of attending Idyllwild Arts Academy, and with the help of her community, she raised over \$40,000 to apply towards her tuition. It seemed fundraising was in her blood! She attended The Boston Conservatory and earned a BFA cum laude in Musical Theatre, which helped launch her career in NYC. Jacque's theatre credits include performances Off-Broadway at the Irish Repertory Theatre and the York Theatre, the National Tour of CINDERELLA, and regional appearances at The Paper Mill Playhouse, Goodspeed Opera House, and Baltimore Center Stage. Jacque has performed her one woman show and in concert at venues such as 54 Below, Green Room 42, Symphony Space, and Alice Tully Hall. A true maven, Jacque's connection to the Broadway community is reflected in the extensive list of Broadway talent who have participated in her events. Jacque is a self-starter and truly believes anything is possible with the right people in the room. Many have inquired how tonight's annual Broadway benefit concert, ARTS FOR AUTISM, ended up at the Gershwin Theatre. Jacque's reply: "I called them. You never know until you ask." [www.jacquecarnahan.com](http://www.jacquecarnahan.com)

## **ELAINE HALL – KEYNOTE SPEAKER**

Referenced by the New York Times as the "child whisperer," Elaine Hall had a successful career in Hollywood as a TV and film acting coach. Her life changed dramatically when her son, adopted from a Russian orphanage, was diagnosed with autism. When traditional therapies did not work for him, she developed an innovative, creative methodology to reach him. These methods now evidence-based, became the backbone of The Miracle Project® a fully inclusive, expressive, performing arts, and social skills program which was profiled in the HBO Two-Time Emmy winning film Autism: The Musical and in Autism: The Sequel. Elaine's work is endorsed by leading autism experts and replicated across the globe.

Considered a pioneer in creating neuro-diverse theater, film and religious education programs, Elaine has been featured in the New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, the Boston Globe, The Jewish Journal, Ha Aretz, The Mighty, the Huffington Post, and has appeared on CNN, CBS, NPR, HBO, Today.com, OWN, among others.

Elaine, who identifies as neurodiverse herself for her sensory sensitivities and different way of thinking, lives in Santa Monica, California with her husband Jeff Frymer, a marriage and family therapist. Her son, Neal Katz, uses his iPad as a communication device and has given presentations with her across the country.' She has received numerous honors for her work and was named on the Forward 50's list of Remarkable People doing Remarkable Things in 2020. Elaine is committed to changing the way the world perceives 'ability.'

# ARTS for AUTISM GRANTS

Each year funds raised from the Arts for Autism benefit concert will be distributed in the form of grants between \$1,000 and \$5,000. We are passionate about the arts and how they can positively impact everyone. For this reason, we have established the Arts Access Grant to ensure that each year at least one of our grants will be used specifically to expand access to the arts for people impacted by autism. The Community Access Grant can be used more broadly for any project (including arts-related) that improves the lives of people impacted by autism and we will grant as many as possible until funds raised are exhausted. Arts organizations may apply for both grants. Grants are available for any U.S. based organization or individual and people on the autism spectrum are encouraged to apply. Funds granted must be used within twelve months of being awarded. Our newly formed advisory board will review and approve grant applications.

If you are interested in applying or know someone who may benefit from a grant, please look for details and the application on our website, [ArtsForAutism.net](https://ArtsForAutism.net).

## GRANT ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS:

Christine Biernacki: Attorney and Mom of two autistic children

Deborah Bonomo: Speech Language Pathologist

Andrew Duff: Autistic actor from the new TV series; As We See It

Jill Frutkin: Actor and creator of theater curriculum for Stages on the Sound

Jayson Kerr: Broadway Actor

Andy Paris: Emmy nominated actor and writer known for The Laramie Project and Uncommon Sense

Dr. Jennifer Trachtenberg: Pediatrician and mom of autistic son

Correy West: Broadway Actor



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**Believe NYC** is an educational arts organization with a passion to inspire performing arts students to follow their dreams through performance opportunities, workshops, and masterclasses. Believe NYC events include the annual *Arts for Autism* benefit concert, *Hope for the Heroes* album recording and performance in Nashville TN, as well as the *New Voices Festival* at Lincoln Center that will launch in 2023. The unique combination of arts education, performance, and service is unlike any other in the field. Learn more at [www.believe-nyc.com](https://www.believe-nyc.com)