



ALICE BY HEART

SEPT 4-21

MUSIC BY DUNCAN SHEIK

LYRICS BY STEVEN SATER

**BOOK BY STEVEN SATER
AND JESSIE NELSON**

DIRECTED BY LEDA HOFFMANN

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Theatre of Ohio**

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We seek to inspire a community of empathy and have a responsibility to recognize the ways in which we benefit from colonization, both historical and ongoing. A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and celebrates the resilience and strength that all Indigenous people have shown worldwide.

We acknowledge that in Central Ohio, we are on the traditional homelands of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe, and Cherokee Indigenous nations who have strong ties to these lands. Today, individuals from a broad range of Indigenous backgrounds call Columbus and central Ohio home.

We recognize generations who contributed their traditions, hopes, and spirit to make the history that led to this moment. While some have lived on this land for more generations than can be counted, others arrived here hoping for a better life, while others were forcibly taken and brought here against their will. Acknowledging the truth of these realities is critical to building mutual respect and connection.



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A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In times of crisis, when the world shakes beneath our feet, we return to story.

Alice by Heart begins in one such moment, deep beneath the streets of London in the midst of the Blitz. During this eight-month stretch of World War II, the city was bombed almost nightly, and families took shelter wherever they could. Thousands slept in the Underground stations. In the quiet hours between air raids, people passed the time however they could: singing, talking, and telling stories to drown out the terror above.

It is in that setting, a train platform turned sanctuary, that this musical unfolds. But while the war may be the backdrop, it is not the focus. This is not a history lesson. It's a memory. A dream. A coming-of-age journey wrapped in wonder. The characters may invoke Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but this isn't a retelling— it's a reimagining. A story about why we tell stories in the first place.

At its heart, *Alice by Heart* asks: what do we hold onto when everything around us is falling apart?

For the characters in this show, particularly for Alice and her closest friend Alfred, story becomes both an escape and a mirror. As Alice journeys through her imagined Wonderland, we see her wrestle with something more terrifying than air raids: the fragility of love, memory, and identity. She is growing up in a world that offers no easy path forward. And yet, she dares to hope. She dares to imagine something beautiful. She dares to hold on.

That's what drew me to this piece — not just its heart-stopping music or poetic imagery (though both are extraordinary), but its emotional courage. This is a show that believes in beauty during darkness. In silliness alongside sorrow. In imagination as resistance.

That's a message we could all use right now.

Because let's be honest — life doesn't come with a map. And growing up (no matter your age) is never as straightforward as we hope. *Alice by Heart* leans into the mess, the grief, the love, the laughter, and the absurdity, and reminds us that sometimes the best way through is to embrace the story, however wild it gets.

It's a show full of heart and humor, strange tea parties and tender moments. It's theatrical in all the best ways — surprising, a little weird, and deeply human.

I'm so grateful to the brilliant artists and collaborators who've brought this world to life, and to you, our audience, for jumping down the rabbit hole with us. May it leave you with a little more curiosity, a little more empathy, and a renewed belief in the magic of live theatre.



Leda Hoffmann
Artistic Director

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**The
Contemporary
Theatre** of Ohio

Leda Hoffmann
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Christy Farnbauch
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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AND JESSIE NELSON**

**Leda Hoffmann
DIRECTOR**

**Jonathan Collura
MUSIC DIRECTOR**

**Nicholas Wilson
CHOREOGRAPHER**

**Aidan Edwards
ASSOCIATE CHOREOGRAPHER**

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SCENIC DESIGNER**

**Kelsey Gallagher
LIGHTING DESIGNER**

**Mary Yaw McMullen
COSTUME DESIGNER**

**Dave Wallingford
SOUND DESIGNER**

**Lonelle Yoder
PROPS DESIGNER**

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INTIMACY AND VIOLENCE DIRECTOR**

**Melissa Lusher
DIALECT COACH**

**Jackie Benedict★
STAGE MANAGER**

**Ellie Price★
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER**

ADDITIONAL PRODUCTION STAFF

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ASSISTANT
DIRECTOR**

**Robbie Wilt
ASSISTANT
LIGHTING DESIGNER**

**Jesse Charles
ASSISTANT
SOUND DESIGNER**

**Emma McCalla
SOUND
MIXER**

**Nicole Hunter
A2/WARDROBE**

**Audra Franke
FOLLOW SPOT
OPERATOR**

**Leah Pfefferle
FOLLOW SPOT
OPERATOR**

**Cora McMullen
ASSISTANT
COSTUME DESIGNER**

Set Built by CCT Scenic

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

CAST

**ALICE SPENCER/
ALICE**



**ELISE
PARKS** she/her

**ALFRED/
WHITE RABBIT**



**ETHAN
ZINK** he/him

**RED CROSS NURSE/
QUEEN OF HEARTS**



**NOELLE
ANDERSON** she/her

**HAROLD/
MAD HATTER**



**DREW
EBERLY** he/him

**TABATHA/
CHESHIRE CAT**



**JO MICHELLE
SHAHER** they/
them

**DODGY/
DUCHESS**



**JUSTIN
KING** he/him

**CLARISSA/QUEEN
OF DIAMONDS**



**SAMMANTHA
ROBINSON** they/she

**NIGEL/
DORMOUSE**



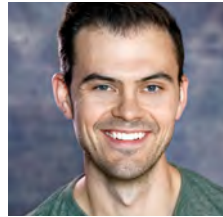
**WINNONA
MADDREY** she/her

**ANGUS/
CATERPILLAR**



**NICHOLAS
MCINTURFF** he/they

**DR BUTRIDGE/
KING OF HEARTS**



**TRENT
ROWLAND*** he/him

BAND

Jonathan Collura **CONDUCTOR/KEYS**
Tom Regouski **REEDS**
Luis Gonzales **GUITAR**
Mathew Kinnear **CELLO**
Ben Reineke **DRUMS**

SPECIAL THANKS

Sarah Reese
Wright State University
BalletMet
National Veterans Memorial and Museum

ALICE BY HEART is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Orchestrations by Duncan Sheik. Additional Orchestrations by Simon Hale. Vocal Arrangements by Jason Hart. *Alice by Heart* was first commissioned and produced by National Theatre Connections in 2012. Developed with the Assistance of Theatre Aspen, Aspen, Colorado. A workshop production of *Alice by Heart* was presented by New York Stage and Film & Vassar at The Powerhouse Theater, Summer 2018. New York Premiere at the MCC Theater February 26, 2019. Artistic Directors: Robert LuPone, Bernard Telsey, & William Cantler. Executive Director: Blake West.



*Appearing through an Agreement between
this theatre, and Actors' Equity Association,
the Union of Professional Actors and
Stage Managers in the United States.

CAST BIOS

ELISE PARKS [SHE/HER] (**Alice Spencer/Alice**) is a junior musical theatre major at Wright State University from Kent Island, MD. Previous credits: *Saving Cinderella* (Droite/Stepsister, Springboro Performance Center), *By the Bog of Cats* (Catwoman, WSU), *Carrie* (Ensemble, WSU), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Margaret & Conrade u/s, WSU), *The Addams Family* (Wednesday, KIHS), *The Little Mermaid* (Ariel, KIHS). Elise has a massive passion for teaching and has spent the last three summers directing at the Kent Island Theatre Camp. She would like to thank her cast, crew, family, friends, teachers, Ms. B, Mr. Reagan, and Lee. Remember... theatre is magic! IG: eliserpsings

ETHAN ZINK [HE/HIM] (**Alfred/White Rabbit**) a Columbus-based actor, is thrilled to be making his debut with The Contemporary! Some of his favorite credits include *Spring Awakening* (Georg, Short North Stage) and *Newsies* (Davey, Gallery Players). After a hiatus due to some health issues, he couldn't be more thrilled to be coming back to bring this beautiful show and character to life! He'd like to extend a huge thank you to his friends and family for their love and support, and to Leda, Jonathan, Nicholas and the entire cast and crew of *Alice By Heart* for this amazing experience! Instagram: ethanzink3

NOELLE ANDERSON [SHE/HER] (**Red Cross Nurse/Queen of Hearts**) A Columbus native, Noelle Anderson has worked as a professional performer for nearly 25 years as a singer, musician, and actor. Some of her favorite past roles include Jean in *POTUS*, and Maureen in *Rent*. In her off time, she runs a web design and branding agency (Sage Nine Creative) with her husband Brandon, and they both spend too much time spoiling their Jack Russell Terrier, Archie.

TRENT ROWLAND* [HE/HIM] (**Dr. Buttridge/King of Hearts**) is a Columbus-based actor, musician and educator. Favorite credits include *Million Dollar Quartet* (Elvis, Geva Theatre/Casa Mañana Theatre/Center REP/Arkansas Repertory Theatre) and the Todd Haynes films *Carol* and *Dark Waters*. He is thrilled and grateful to be performing with The Contemporary for the first time! Enormous thank you for the warm welcome back into the theatre community! Love to Emily (who is incredible) and the family! IG: @trentarowland / @silvercaveband

DREW EBERLY [HE/HIM] (**Harold/Mad Hatter**) has worked in Columbus theatre for 20 years as an actor, director, teacher, and songwriter. As a company member of Available Light Theatre, Drew has collaborated on and performed in original works including *Wild Strawberries*, *Dear Piqua*, *The Body Show [feels like]*, *Down & Out in the Magic Kingdom*, and *Skyscrapers of the Midwest*. In January 2026, he will be performing in AVL's *John Cage 101* at The Ohio State University Wexner Center for the Arts. Drew has released two full length albums of original songs: *Dance Class* and *Bailiwick*. His favorite moments, by far, are his adventures with his son, Elliott, and husband, Ben.

CAST BIOS (CON'TD)

JUSTIN KING [HE/HIM] (**Dodgy/Duchess**) is so happy to be part of another Contemporary season! Previous credits include *Big Fish* (The Contemporary), *Camelot* (The Human Race Theatre), and his original work at the Cincinnati Fringe Festival with his production company, Ben & Justin Present. Many thanks to the incredible staff at The Contemporary for consistently fostering a warm and fulfilling artistic experience. @jkaaaang @benandjustinpresent

WINNONA MADDREY [SHE/HER] (**Nigel/Dormouse**) is so excited to return to The Contemporary for *Alice by Heart*! The last time Winnona was with The Contemporary was in *Big Fish* in 2024 (Mermaid). Winnona has also recently been seen in *A Chorus Line* at Short North Stage (Sheila), *Beauty and the Beast* at Actors Theater of Columbus (Lettice), *Legally Blonde* at Big Walnut HS (Choreographer) and *The Color Purple* at Short North (Ensemble). Off the stage, Winnona operates Little Leaders Learning Center, a preschool in the Worthington area.

JO MICHELLE SHAFER [THEY/THEM] (**Tabatha/Cheshire Cat**) is very excited to be returning to The Contemporary's stage with this beautiful show! Jo is a non-binary actor/singer based in Columbus, OH. Previous credits include: *The Witch-Big Fish* (The Contemporary), *Ghost - Ghost Quartet* (Available Light), *#7 - The Wolves* (The Contemporary), *Pamela - Head Over Heels* (The Contemporary), and *Magenta - The Rocky Horror Show* (Short North Stage). Jo would like to thank this incredible team for a magical time down the rabbit hole. @jordanmshafer

NICHOLAS MCINTURFF [HE/THEY] (**Angus/Caterpillar**) is elated to return to The Contemporary, after appearing here as Noel Gruber in *Ride the Cyclone*. Most recently, they were seen as Mozart in Gallery Players' production of *Amadeus*. Other recent highlights include Baby John in *West Side Story* on the Ohio Theatre stage (Opera Columbus and BalletMet); Righteous Brother and u/s Barry Mann in *Beautiful* (Gallery); and Logan in *Chicken & Biscuits* (Actors' Theatre of Columbus). Nicholas graduated from Muskingum University, where they studied music and theatre. They would like to thank their cast, crew, production team, Luke, and the Columbus theatre community.

SAMMANATHA ROBINSON [THEY/SHE] (**Clarissa/Queen of Diamonds**) is a current senior acting major at Otterbein University. She is trained vocally via Kate Merryman (The empowered singer voice studio) and recent credits include *The Laramie Project* (Track 6, Otterbein Theatre and Dance), *Kinky Boots* (Pat, Weathervane Playhouse) She is so grateful for this opportunity, as this is one of her last shows in Ohio before her move to New York! She hopes you enjoy the show!

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS

LEDA HOFFMANN [SHE/HER] (Director) is in her sixth season as The Contemporary's Artistic Director. The Contemporary directing credits include *Wife of a Salesman*, *Big Fish*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *POTUS*, *9 to 5*, *Indecent*, *Head Over Heels*, *Mr Burns: a post-electric play*, and *An Iliad*. Leda's work as a director has been seen across the country at Milwaukee Rep, Provincetown Theater, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival, Door Shakespeare, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Jedlicka Performing Arts Center, Northbrook Theatre, The Alchemist Theatre, Max and Louie Productions, Riverside Theater Iowa City, Case Western, Ohio State, and University of Miami. Before moving to Columbus, Leda was Artistic Director at Strawdog Theatre Company in Chicago and Leda served on Milwaukee Rep's artistic staff for seven years, working in the Education and Literary departments and founding Milwaukee Rep's Community Engagement Department. Leda is a proud graduate of Grinnell College, a former Milwaukee Rep directing resident, Hartford Stage apprentice, SDCF Observer and a member of Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab. Upcoming: *The Jack of Hearts Club* (Provincetown Theater), *A Christmas Carol* (American Shakespeare Center, The Contemporary), and *Primary Trust* (The Contemporary). www.ledahoffmann.com

JONATHAN COLLURA [HE/HIM] (Music Director) is so excited to be working on this beautiful show with the amazing and talented team. He is part of the adjunct voice faculty, as well as an accompanist, in the theatre department at Wright State University. He also performs and directs/music directs with several groups around the Columbus area, including the New Albany Youth Theatre and the Abbey Theatre of Dublin. He is also the owner of Chonny Bakes, his home bakery business.

NICHOLAS WILSON [HE/HIM] (Choreographer) Born and raised in Ohio, Nicholas is passionate about sharing stories through movement and theatrical productions, especially in his hometown. His work has been seen on The Contemporary stage with *POTUS*, *The Worries of Wesley*, and *Fat Ham*. Favorite performance credits include Hud (*Hair*), Jeffrey (*Godspell*), Ichabod Crane (*Sleepy Hollow: An American Ghost Story – Original Production*), and Buck (*No Return: The Deadly Dance of Bonnie and Clyde – Original Production*). Behind the scenes, Nicholas serves as Production Manager for Short North Stage, and he has been the Production Director for Overnight Brew: The 24-Hour Theatre Festival and Dance Captain/Assistant Choreographer for Shadowbox Live. In 2019, he was named Columbus's Best Supporting Actor (Professional) by BroadwayWorld, and in 2023, he was nominated for Columbus Business First's 40 Under 40 and recognized as a Columbus Makes Art Brand Ambassador. Nicholas continues to pursue his mission of blending artistry and community impact.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS (CON'TD)

AIDAN EDWARDS [HE/HIM] (Associate Choreographer) is honored to be making his professional choreography debut under the guidance of one of his most inspiring friends, Nicholas Wilson. Performance Credits: *Singin' in the Rain* (u/s Don Lockwood-Shenandoah Summer MT), *A Chorus Line* (Al-Short North Stage), *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Jersey Boys*, *Legally Blonde*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Aidan is a current senior at Wright State University pursuing a BFA in Acting with a Musical Theatre Concentration and a Dance Minor. WSU Credits: *Carrie*, *...Spelling Bee*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Cabaret*, *On the Town*. Up Next: Co-Choreographer/*Swing of The Wedding Singer* at Wright State University. Thanks to Nicholas, Leda, the outstanding stage management team, his family, and his chosen family for their support. For Erica. Insta: @acedwards04; Website: aidan-edwards.com

KATHERINE SIMON [SHE/THEY] (Scenic Designer) is a Columbus based scenic designer. Previous scenic design work includes *Last Five Years*, *Fat Ham*, and *Good Grief* (The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio); *You Will Get Sick* (Available Light); *The Moors* and *She Kills Monsters* (OSU). Katherine has been on staff at theatres such as Milwaukee Rep, Shattered Globe Theatre in Chicago, and Waukesha Civic Theatre. Katherine holds an MFA in Scenic Design from OSU and is a proud alumna of Vassar College. Upcoming set designs: *The Grown-Up* and *Lucky Stiff* (Denison University). katherinesimondesign.com

KELSEY GALLAGHER [SHE/HER] (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer working out of Dayton Ohio. Her most recent credits include *Fat Ham* at The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio, *The Comeuppance* at The Human Race Theatre and *Julius Caesar* at The Magnolia Theatre Company.

MARY YAW MCMULLEN [SHE/HER] (Costume Designer) is delighted to be working with The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio as the Costume Designer for *Alice By Heart*. She works as a freelance Costume Designer, Director, and Educator. Mary is currently teaching as Adjunct Faculty at The Ohio State University's Department of Theatre, Film, and Media Arts for Fall '25. Some of her more recent costume designs locally and out of state are *School of Rock* and *The Sleepwalker of Holstenwall* with Columbus Children's Theatre, *Luchadora*, *Indecent*, *Skeleton Crew*, and *Big Fish* with The Contemporary, *The Importance of Being Earnest* with Otterbein University, and *The Old Man and The Old Moon*, *As You Like It*, *Twelfth Night* and *Great Expectations* with Door Shakespeare in Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin. Mary holds a B.A. in Theatre and M.F.A. in Theatrical Design and Production from The Ohio State University. She is a founding troupe member of GhostBox Productions in Coshocton, Ohio. Mary thanks family for their support and excitement for all things theatre.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS (CON'TD)

DAVE WALLINGFORD [HE/HIM] (**Sound Designer**) is a freelance sound designer, audio engineer, and founding company member of Available Light Theatre. When not in a theatre, he can be found either running sound in a TV production truck at a professional sports arena for the likes of Fox Sports, CBS, NBC, Bally Sports, FanDuel Sports, Red Bull, ESPN, and Apple TV; or in a race car. Some shows he has designed at The Contemporary include *The Last Five Years*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *9 to 5*, *Head Over Heels*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Avenue Q*, *Story of My Life*, *Evil Dead: The Musical*, and *The Last Smoker in America*.

LONELLE YODER [SHE/HER] (**Props Designer**)

JESSICA MORGAN [SHE/HER] (**Intimacy and Violence Director**) is thrilled to be in her fifth season with The Contemporary having previously worked on *Indecent*, *Head Over Heels*, *9 to 5: The Musical*, *POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *Big Fish*, and most recently, *Wife of a Salesman*. She is a central Ohio native and has a BA in Theatre from Kent State and an MFA in Acting from Ohio State. Jessica is now based in Morgantown, West Virginia where she is the Head of Graduate Acting and Associate Professor of Stage Movement for the BFA/MFA Acting programs at West Virginia University. Additional professional work includes The Contemporary American Theatre Festival (CATF), Cumberland Theatre Company, Vintage Theatre Company, and Greenbrier Valley Theatre. In addition to her production work, she teaches workshops on consent and intimacy practices for theatre training programs and companies. Jessica has trained with the Society of American Fight Directors (SAFD), is a Certified Intimacy Director with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators (IDC), and is a member of Actors' Equity Association (AEA).

MELISSA LUSHER [SHE/HER] (**Dialects Coach**) is a tenured Professor of Acting, Speech, and Dialects at Otterbein University, where she also serves as the Director of the BFA Acting Program. She holds an M.F.A. in Acting from the combined program of Carnegie Mellon University and the Moscow Art Theatre, a B.F.A. in Acting from Carnegie Mellon, and is a certified teacher of the Michael Chekhov acting technique through GLMCC. Melissa has served as a dialect coach at many area theatre companies including The Contemporary, Short North Stage, The Abbey Theatre of Dublin, and Actors' Theatre of Columbus. Favorite directing credits include *Natasha*, *Pierre* and *the Great Comet of 1812*, *Everybody*, *A Lie of the Mind*, *Chicago*, *"Master Harold"...* and *the Boys*, *Rumors*, *The Crucible*, *RENT*, and *The Greeks: The Murders*. Favorite acting credits include Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, Barbara in *August: Osage County*, Goneril in *King Lear*, and the title role in *Miss Julie*.

PRODUCTION STAFF BIOS (CON'TD)

JACLYN (JACKIE) BENEDICT* [SHE/HER] (**Stage Manager**) is excited to be a part of The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio's *Alice By Heart*. Recent stage management credits include *The Last Five Years* (The Contemporary), *A Christmas Carol* (The Contemporary), *Big Fish* (The Contemporary), *Ride the Cyclone* (The Contemporary), *Beauty and the Beast* (Butterfly Guild), *The Sleepwalker of Holstenwall* (Columbus Children's Theatre), *POTUS* (The Contemporary), *The Wolves* (The Contemporary), *Sound of Music* (Butterfly Guild), *Prima Donna* (The Contemporary), and *Cinderella* (Butterfly Guild).

ELLIE PRICE* [THEY/THEM] (**Assistant Stage Manager**) is excited to work with the Contemporary once again! They are a recent graduate from the Ohio State University with a BA in Theater. Some favorite credits include The Contemporary's production of *Ride The Cyclone*, as well as Noah Bennett's *The Phil Mitchell Radio Hour* at the Atlanta Fringe Festival.

TYLA DANIEL [SHE/HER] (**Assistant Director**) is honored to join this production as Assistant Director. A passionate theater-maker, she is drawn to creating stories that are vibrant, diverse, and emotionally resonant—work that celebrates joy while exploring socially relevant themes. Her creative focus lies in telling heartfelt stories that reflect the world we live in and the world we hope to build. As a performer, Tyla appeared in Contemporary's production of *Fat Ham* which deepened her commitment to storytelling that challenges norms and uplifts underrepresented voices. Tyla believes in the transformative power of theater to connect, heal, and inspire. She carries with her the words of the legendary Maya Angelou: "We may encounter many defeats, but we must not be defeated."

***ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION (Equity)** founded in 1913, is the U.S. labor union that represents more than 51,000 professional Actors and Stage Managers. Equity fosters the art of live theatre as an essential component of society and advances the careers of its members by negotiating wages, improving working conditions and providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. Actors' Equity is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. #EquityWorks

MUSICIAN BIOS

TOM REGOUSKI [HE/HIM] (Reeds) is excited to return to the Columbus theatre scene after making his Broadway debut at *Old Friends* starring Bernadette Peters, Lea Salonga, Beth Leavel, and Gavin Lee. He has premiered woodwind parts for production across the country including the New York Times critic's pick *Then She Fell*, Andrew Lipka's *Unbreakable*, *Eleanor of Aquitaine* by Adam Gopnik and David Shire produced by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and *Songs of the Phoenix*, a song cycle featuring works by composers including Stephen Schwartz, Ingrid Michaelson and Stephen Sondheim. As a Klezmer-clarinet soloist, Tom performed for *We Are Here* at Carnegie Hall. He has also performed with *The Color Purple* National Tour, The Weston Theater Company and alongside artists such as Kristin Chenoweth, Matt Doyle, Lauren Molina, J. Harrison Ghee, Alice Ripley, Bryce Pinkham, Kate Bladwin, and Scarlett Strallen. Next up: *Some Like It Hot* National Tour.

LUIS GONZALES [HE/HIM] (Guitar) is a Central-Ohio based guitarist and music educator. Originally from Southern California, Luis settled in Columbus after completing his Music Education studies at Ohio Wesleyan University. Luis has since enjoyed playing in various musicals around town and is thrilled to work with The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio again after playing guitar for *Ride The Cyclone* during the 23-24 season!

MATHEW KINNEAR [HE/HIM] (Violin) is excited to be returning to The Contemporary Theatre as a musician. Previously, Mathew has appeared on stage with The Contemporary as Mr. Moritz Godowsky (*Indecent*), as well as in the pit for *Big Fish* and *The Last Five Years*. Mathew appears frequently in pit orchestras throughout downtown Columbus, appearing as a regular violin, viola, and cello call for Short North Stage, and CCT. This season you can catch Mathew in the pit for many productions including *Come From Away* and *Miss Saigon* (Short North Stage) as well as *Cabaret* and *Guys and Dolls* (CCT). Mathew also regularly performs in the pit for the CAPA Marquee Awards at the Ohio Theatre in May each year. By day, Mathew is an orchestra director in Gahanna-Jefferson Schools, teaching at the middle school and high school level.

BEN REINEKE [HE/HIM] (Drums) is a drummer and percussionist based in Columbus, Ohio. Originally from Dayton, he graduated from Miami University in 2020 with a degree in Music Performance. He performs with a variety of ensembles across Ohio, most notably with the Dublin Silver Band and the Miami Valley Symphony Orchestra, and he is also a regular sub with the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. In addition to his performance work, Ben teaches percussion at Columbus Academy. He is also the drummer for Blucone, a Columbus-based band known in the local music scene. He can be found on Instagram @bcrthatsme or contacted at reinekeben@gmail.com for any inquiries.

THE CONTEMPORARY STAFF BIOS

LEDA HOFFMANN [SHE/HER] (Director and Artistic Director) is in her fifth season as The Contemporary's Artistic Director. The Contemporary directing credits include *Wife of a Salesman*, *Big Fish*, *Ride the Cyclone*, *POTUS*, *9 to 5 The Musical*, *Indecent*, *Head Over Heels*, *Mr Burns: a post-electric play*, *An Iliad*, the reading of *George and the Hidden Dragon*, and the virtual production of *A Columbus Christmas Carol*. Previously, Leda was Artistic Director at Strawdog Theatre Company in Chicago. Before that, Leda served on Milwaukee Rep's artistic staff for seven years, working in the Education and Literary departments and founding Milwaukee Rep's Community Engagement Department. Leda's work as a director has been seen across the country at Milwaukee Rep, Provincetown Theater, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival, Door Shakespeare, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Jedlicka Performing Arts Center, Northbrook Theatre, The Alchemist Theatre, Max and Louie Productions, Riverside Theater Iowa City, Case Western, Ohio State, and University of Miami. Leda is a proud graduate of Grinnell College, a former Milwaukee Rep directing resident, Hartford Stage apprentice, SDCF Observer and a member of Lincoln Center Theater Directors Lab. www.ledahoffmann.com

CHRISTY FARNBAUCH [SHE/HER] (Executive Director) became The Contemporary's executive director in April 2020. She is a highly respected leader in central Ohio's arts and cultural sector, as well as nationwide. Her professional journey has included managing funding and programs for the Ohio Arts Council, building community partnerships for Hilliard City Schools, managing a first-of-its-kind national study of jazz audiences, and serving as executive director of an association for women business owners. She founded her consulting business in 2006 to support nonprofits and small businesses through strategic planning, board development, and fundraising. Her entrepreneurial and innovative mindset has led to the creative transformation of organizations while strengthening their governance structures. Christy holds degrees from Otterbein University in music performance and business administration.

STEVE HILLER [HE/HIM] (Education Director) became The Contemporary's education director in April 2023. He has over 15 years experience working in non-profit with a focus on youth and family programming and development, training and leadership and fostering community partnerships. Steve has chaired and served on different advisory boards and currently serves as a board member for a Columbus non-profit organization. He also has over 10 years of experience working in secondary and post-secondary education. Steve was born in Seoul, Korea and has lived most of his life in Ohio. He has a bachelor's degree in education from Ohio State and is a buckeye for life. In his free time, Steve enjoys playing piano and acoustic guitar, various outdoor activities, trying new foods and spending time with family and friends.

THE CONTEMPORARY STAFF BIOS *(CON'TD)*

MAUREEN PENKO [SHE/HER] (Production Manager) is a production manager and theatre administrator with a focus on safe, inclusive, and engaging art. She brings experience from various organizations throughout Ohio, New York, and Vermont. Maureen was born and raised in Northeast Ohio, always enjoying the ability to engage with the arts community she has called home. She holds a bachelor's degree in theatre production from Point Park University in Pittsburgh, PA. In her free time, Maureen enjoys exploring various libraries, walking, cooking, and spending time with her cat, family, and friends.

ALEXA BAKER [SHE/HER] (Marketing Manager) is a Columbus-based multi-hyphenate artist. She holds a Bachelor of Music degree in Vocal Performance from Gettysburg College and a Masters in Classical Vocal Performance from the Manhattan School of Music. She is currently on faculty at Ohio Dominican University, teaching theatre and acting, and is an active teaching artist. As a performer, she has been seen on stage throughout Columbus with companies such as The Contemporary Theatre of Ohio, Available Light Theatre, CCT, and Actors' Theatre of Columbus. Prior to moving to Columbus, Alexa was the Associate Director of Youth Programs at Steps on Broadway dance studio in New York, NY. In addition to her arts background, she was the Events Coordinator for two-Michelin Starred restaurant Aquavit and managed social media for brands that include Zaftig Brewing Company and The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society.



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