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The
Chattanooga Theatre Centre
presents

Giant Steps

AN URBEAN MUSICAL

book by
ERIC H. WEINBERGER

music & lyrics by
MICHAEL DEXTER

director & choreographer
LOUIE MARIN-HOWARD

assistant director
RODNEY VAN VALKENBURG

music director
ISMAEL SANDOVAL

scenic design
SHANNON SINGLEY
WILLIAM SPRATT

lighting design
JEFF DAVIS
SHANNON SINGLEY

costume design
TINITA COULTER

sound design
GARY MAY

accompanist
AMANDA CAGLE

stage manager
ANGIE GRIFFIN

assistant stage manager
HANNAH ENGELBRECHT

Cover photography and headshots by Brad Cansler

THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS & SUPPORTERS

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Founded in 1923, the Chattanooga Theatre Centre is dedicated to enriching the cultural, intellectual, and emotional development of people of all ages by providing high-quality theatrical experiences and creating opportunities to engage in them. To join us in this mission, call 423.267.8534 or visit us at TheatreCentre.com to find out how you can take part.

CAST

in order of appearance

Jermaine "J" Johnson ..... MATEO TIBBS

Nikki Johnson ..... CHARLENE HONG WHITE

Abraham Hatchet ..... JAMIE GIENAPP

T-Bone ..... KALEB HOLLINGS

The Vendor ..... NICOLE COLEMAN

Belle ..... ALYSSA WATTS

Miss Olive ..... DAWN HENDRIX

Melody Pastel ..... KaSHYA DUNIGAN

Self-Defense Master ..... CHEROKEE ELLISON

Police Woman ..... ALEASE DAVIS

Roberta Weinberger-Hernandez ... PAIGE HAWKINS

Ensemble ..... ALEASE DAVIS,
CHEROKEE ELLISON, PAIGE HAWKINS,
AYANIA HUNTER, KAI-ANYA KENLY,
HAYLEY LEWIS, GIADA PUHLMAN
and NATAVIUS SMITH

BAND

ISMAEL SANDOVAL (conductor),
AMANDA CAGLE, GORDON INMAN, AMY SHANNON,
NATHAN SHEW and BEN VAN WINKLE

CREW

HANNAH ENGELBRECHT, MAGGE HUDGINS,
MARIBETH MADONIA, MAXWELL PUHLMAN,
ALYSSA ROBINSON, LINLEY ROGOWSKY
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SONGS

Prologue	INSTRUMENTAL
"Gotta Move"	J, T-BONE, ENSEMBLE
"Super-Hero J!"	J
"You've Got Life"	VENDOR, J
"Knock Some Sense Into His Head"	NIKKI
Beanstalk Theme	INSTRUMENTAL
"This Is a Miracle"	MISS OLIVE, ENSEMBLE
"The Climb"	ENSEMBLE
"Shooting Star"	MELODY
"Passing Star"	INSTRUMENTAL
"Rewind"	HATCHET
"Beautiful"	NIKKI, FEMALE ENSEMBLE
"Leave Us Alone" **	SELF-DEFENSE MASTER, J, ENSEMBLE
"Nobody's Fool"	BELLE
"You Don't Know What You're Missin'"	T-BONE
"This Is New"	J, MELODY
"I'll Never Be the Popular Guy"	HATCHET
"Leave Us Alone" (Reprise)	INSTRUMENTAL
"Beautiful" (Reprise)	INSTRUMENTAL
The Fight|The Chase	INSTRUMENTAL
"The Good Team"	J
"This Is a Miracle" (Reprise)	NIKKI, J, MELODY, BELLE, ENSEMBLE

** *Cherokee Ellison, Choreography Consultant, "Leave Us Alone"*

SETTING

The inner city of a major American metropolis.
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MEET THE CAST

NICOLE COLEMAN (The Vendor) has entertained audiences at the CTC, Backstage Dinner Theater, Clarence Brown Theatre, and the Center for Creative Arts. Memorable shows include *Jack and the Wonderbeans, Bye-Bye Birdie, Little Shop of Horrors, Martin Said So, Steel Magnolias, Jake's Women, To Kill a Mockingbird, The Wiz, Civil War Christmas, Southern Exposure, Steel Toes and Hired Hands* and the CTC touring production *Plant, Grow, Pick.* In the 2017-2018 season, she joined the backstage crew at CTC as assistant stage manager for *Beauty and the Beast* and *Hello Dolly.* Nicole invites you to sit back, relax, and enjoy this urban twist on Jack and the Beanstalk.

ALEASE DAVIS (Bootsy/Police Commissioner/Ensemble) is a Chattanooga native with acting experiences that include TV commercials and stage and theatre productions. This is her second performance with the CTC. Her first was in *Blues for Mister Charlie* (Grandmother). She also performed in Eve Ensler's *The Vagina Monologues* at Barking Legs Theatre. Other performances include *A Rose Is Still a Rose* and *The Shoe Type of Woman.* Alease has written several children's plays and co-written many stage plays as a member of Pneuma Christian Center International's Creative Arts and Drama Ministry. For the past eight years, she has been employed with the City of Chattanooga Head Start/ Early Program as a Family Support Advocate. "I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to Michael Dexter and Louie Marin for selecting me to help make their vision come to life." Zechariah 4:10

KaSHYA DUNIGAN (Melody Pastel) is making her first appearance at the CTC. She is in the eighth grade at the Center for Creative Arts studying musical theatre. Her love for the arts began in elementary school while attending Barger Academy of Fine Arts, where she was Annie in *Annie Jr.* and Rafiki in *The Lion King Jr.* She was also in the ensembles of *Seussical Jr.* and *Shrek Jr.* at CCA. She gives a special thank you to every teacher who has helped to cultivate her creative gifts: Juana Wilson Roberts, Michael Mitchell, and Felicion McMillion-Diakhate at Barger Academy and Neshawn Calloway and Cody Murphy at CCA. She would like to say thank you to all of her family and friends for their love, support, and sacrifice with rides to and from rehearsals. "My performance is dedicated to the person that daily prayed a prayer of protection over me, my late great-grandmama, Mrs. Willie H. Tipton."

AARON "CHEROKEE" ELLISON (Self-Defense Master/Ensemble) was born and raised in Chattanooga. His performance credits include dancing with Chattanooga hip-hop group the Hot Boys, which served as an opening act for Three Six Mafia and other Hangtime events. He had a speaking role in the movie *Remember the Titans.* He continued to sharpen his skills at Barking Legs Theater. Cherokee currently studies Capoeira Angola Palmares under Mestre Gulliver. He and his wife own Move N Groove Kidz, a movement and music company that offers classes at preschools and K-12 schools. They also founded and direct MNGK Garvey Program, a non-profit that offers movement and music to children at participating preschools for free, as well as Capoeira Chattanooga, which offers free or low-cost classes to ages 6 and up.

JAMIE GIENAPP (Abraham Hatchet) returns to the CTC stage after appearing most recently in *Little Women, Working* (MVP Award), and *Lobby Hero.* He made his CTC debut in *Mary Poppins,* where his turn as George Banks won him honors for Best Supporting Actor and Best Debut Performance in a Musical. Jamie works with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office and enjoys woodworking, weightlifting, CrossFit, and sports. Other aspirations are to study dance. He would like to thank his wife, children, family, and employer for their support so that he can pursue his passion for theatre.

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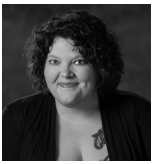
PAIGE HAWKINS (Roberta Weinberger-Hernandez/Ensemble) is so excited to be performing for the first time at the CTC. She is returning to the stage after more than four years away and is honored to be a part of this world premiere. Past performances include Gloria in *Boeing Boeing,* Rona Lisa Peretti in *The 25th Annual Putman County Spelling Bee,* Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing,* and Miss Casewell in Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap.* Paige would like to thank her husband for all of his encouragement during this process, and her family and friends for their support.



DAWN HENDRIX (Miss Olive) is thrilled to return to the stage following her award-winning role in *Working: A Musical.* Previously, she fed the birds in *Mary Poppins,* ran a burlesque theater in *Newsies*, sang her heart out in *Sister Act,* got her heart broken in *Love/Sick,* went *Into the Woods* as Snow White, and was a poor French woman in *Les Misérables.* This show is dedicated to two of Dawn's biggest cheerleaders, her mother Irma and her best friend Adam. "Mom, you gave me a voice and taught me to use it. Adam, you helped me realize just exactly what to say. I love you both! And to Michael, thanks for trusting me with this role. You are a star!"

KALEB HOLLINGS (T-Bone) has appeared in many musicals like Shere Kahn in *The Jungle Book,* ensemble in *Addams Family,* and Babkak in *Aladdin Jr.,* which was presented at the CTC in February. He is a rising senior and vocal major at the Center for Creative Arts. He enjoys performing because when acting he gets to take a break from his real life and become someone else, someone exciting. His goal is to be a famous singer and actor, whilst also getting a doctorate in marine biology. He would like to thank his mom for always being there for him and encouraging him to follow his dreams, Neshawn Calloway for being an amazing vocal coach and mentor, and Michael Dexter for being his favorite eighth grade teacher and for always seeing the potential Kaleb has to be amazing.

AYANIA HUNTER (Ensemble) is a rising senior at Silverdale Baptist Academy. This is her first time working with the Chattanooga Theatre Centre, and it's been an adventure! She has an immense love for reading with a growing book collection to show for it. She would like to thank her family for their support and God and the directors for this amazing opportunity.

KAI-ANYA KENLY (Mr. Rumple/Ensemble) This is Anya's first show at the CTC and hopefully the first of many. They're a graduate of Cohulla Creek High and a recent freshman at Dalton State College, pursuing theater at a professional level. They're so excited for the opportunity and want to thank Michael for the ability to bring the show to life for the first time, Louie and Ismael for their wonderful direction, Angie for being a great stage manager, and their family for being so patient with them singing around the house. Enjoy the show!

HAYLEY LEWIS (Ensemble) is honored to be in the world premiere of *Giant Steps.* She recently graduated from STEM School Chattanooga and will be studying psychology at UTC come fall. She has performed in several CTC productions, including *Little Women* (Young Beth), *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Lucy), and *A Wrinkle in Time* (Meg). "The cast and story are wonderful," she states. "The world can be a dark place, and we're here to shine a light on the value of love and hope." She would like to thank her friends and family for their undying support.

GIADA PUHLMAN (Miss Garcia/Ensemble) is making her CTC debut but has previously appeared in Gilbert & Sullivan's *Iolanthe* at the Colonnade Center. She is also the lead singer/songwriter of My Father's Daughter. Giada works in water fowl rescue and is privileged to work with the Chattanooga Zoo, Opie Acres, and Little Ponderosa Zoo. She would like to thank Michael Marin-Howard, Louie Marin-Howard, Angie Griffin, Rodney Van Valkenburg, and Ismael Sandoval for allowing her to be a part of this magnificent production and the cast and crew for being so welcoming, kind, and thoughtful. She is honored to be part of such a beautiful and insanely talented cast!

NATAVIUS SMITH (Ensemble) is 14 years old and grew up in Chattanooga. He is the youngest of two brothers and grew up with him (Edward Taylor) and his mother (Catreece Butts.) He went to Brown Academy and now attends Chattanooga Preparatory School. He recently graduated from the ninth grade and is an all-time musical lover. Some of his interests are drawing, singing, acting, and storytelling. "This is my first musical or play-like production, and I am just happy to be here."

MATEO TIBBS (Jermaine "J" Johnson) is an upcoming college freshman musical theater major at the University of Memphis and is very excited for his first performance at CTC. A recent graduate of CCA, he has been in many ensembles like the Choo Choo Kids and the jazz ensemble. He has been in multiple shows like *Once On This Island* (Agwe), *Hairspray* (Gilbert), *Godspell* (John the Baptist/Judas), *Footloose* (Ren McCormack), *Addams Family* (Lucas), and *Chicago* (Billy Flynn). He wants to thank Michael and Louie for this opportunity to be in this musical!

ALYSSA WATTS (Belle) is very excited to be making her return to CTC after her debut in *Almost, Maine* and *Working.* Alyssa's favorite roles include Squeaky Fromme in *Assassins*, Abigail Williams in *The Crucible*, and Libby in *I Ought to Be in Pictures.* She would like to thank Louie, Michael, Ismael, and Rodney for believing in her and giving her this opportunity, and huge thanks to this cast for being so supportive. She'd also like to thank her husband for his continuous support and love. Enjoy the show!

CHARLENE HONG WHITE (Nikki Johnson) is honored to make her CTC debut as the first Asian-American actress in a lead role in a CTC production. A 2022 graduate of Chattanooga State's Professional Actor Training Program, Charlene's past theatre roles include *Bye Bye Birdie* (Mrs. McAfee), *Pride and Prejudice* (Charlotte), *The Game's Afoot* (Aggie), *Voices of the New Belarus* (Marina Karabanova/Igor Losik), and *Bride on the Rocks* (Andrea). Charlene is incredibly grateful to Michael, Louie, and Ismael for inviting her to be part of their creative vision in bringing this beautiful work to life. Thanks so much to this fabulous team for believing in her! When not rehearsing for a show, Charlene enjoys thrifting and restoring vintage wear, drinking bubble tea, and playing board games with her family and friends. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM

TINITA "LINKA" COULTER (Costume Design) has interned, volunteered, and served as costume designer for a handful of plays over the past several years at the CTC. Productions include *Alabama Story, Xanadu, Lés Miserables, The Amen Corner, Fences,* and *Little Shop of Horrors.* This award nominee for "Best Designer" started her education at Alabama A&M University but finished at Tennessee State University, where she majored in family and consumer science with a concentration in design. Tinita started making custom garments under Linka Exclusive Plus Size

Fashion and has now migrated to the business named Twined Living, where she has added event coordinator, set designer, and sewing instructor to her list of accomplishments.

JEFF DAVIS (Co-Lighting Designer) has served as Technical Director with UTC Theatre Division. Jeff has also served as Production Manager and Technical Director at the Ocala Civic Theatre, where he supervised the scene shop crew of 10 to 15 volunteers and designed lighting for 4 to 5 productions per season. Jeff holds a Master of Fine Arts Degree from the University of Alabama and has worked professionally and academically in theatre for the past 15 years.

MICHAEL DEXTER (Music & Lyrics) is a Chattanooga native and a graduate of CCA. Michael received his BM in musical theater from the University of Miami Frost School of Music. He also holds an additional BM in vocal music education and a Master's in Education: Principal Licensure from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Michael is an Advanced Composer in the NYC Lehman Engel BMI Musical Theater Workshop and a member of Broadway producer Ken Davenport's Theater Makers Studio. Michael originated the role of Ethan in the Off-Broadway production of *Wanda's World* and several roles in *Finding Nemo: The Musical* at Disney's Animal Kingdom. He has appeared in *Lés Miserables* (Jean ValJean), *Eve Apart* (The Serpent), *The Beth Falcone Songbook* (Lincoln Center), *Dreamgirls* (Little Albert: Benefit Concert for ReVision Theatre, Asbury, NJ), *Smokey Joe's Café* (Victor: Europe & Middle East Tours). *Giant Steps: An Urbean Musical* has had one 29-hour reading directed by Lynne Taylor-Corbett presented at Ripley Grier Studios, one full-staged reading directed by Jeremy Dobrish presented at Ripley Grier Studios, and one full-glorified staged reading directed by Billy Porter presented at the University of Texas at Austin. Michael is thrilled to debut the very first production of *Giant Steps: An Urbean Musical* in his hometown. He is busy composing the music for a brand new musical called *Sugarlips Shinehot,* an adaptation of Toure's book *Soul City.* Michael is also composing music and lyrics to a brand new opera called *Apology*, which will be an adaptation of Plato's *The Apology of Socrates.* Michael lives in Chattanooga and heads the theatre program at the Chattanooga Preparatory School. "My best pal Eric is no longer with us, and I miss him more than you know. I promised Eric that we would go all the way! This is for you, Eric!"

HANNAH ENGELBRECHT (Assistant Stage Manager) After acting in high school, Hannah began working behind the scenes. Working with the UTC Theatre Department, she has gained experience in set and lighting design and is now making her stage management debut at the CTC. She has worked on several of UTCTC's productions and plans to work on the next season as well. Outside of theatre, Hannah works in marketing and is working on her second novel. After college, she hopes to pursue a career in either stage management or lighting design. Hannah would like to thank her family and friends for supporting her as she pursues her passion for theatre. She would also like to thank the CTC family for being so welcoming and making rehearsal so fun.

ANGIE GRIFFIN (Stage Manager) moved to Chattanooga in 2016 and *Fiddler on the Roof* was her first show at CTC. Since then she's worked on *Miracle on 34th Street,* Festival of New Plays, *Peter and the Starcatcher, Beauty and the Beast,* and *Barefoot in the Park.* Before relocating, Angie was very active in her hometown community theatre, Pensacola Little Theatre. She's been lucky enough to work in various roles (stage manager, lighting assistant, sound design/engineer, props) for such shows as *Ragtime, 1776, Peter Pan, Beauty and the Beast,* and many more. When not at the theatre, she's either studying or enjoying the outdoors.

LOUIE MARIN-HOWARD (Director/Choreographer) is proud to be making the Chattanooga Theatre Centre's production of *Giant Steps: An Urbean Musical* his directorial debut. He returns this summer to the Theatre Centre after serving as choreographer for last year's Broadway World Nashville's Best Musical *Working: A Musical.* Louie graduated from the University of Florida New World School of the Arts. He received his B.F.A. in 2005. Louie was a scholarship student of the Martha Graham Center of Contemporary Dance and Jennifer Muller/ The Works School. He has performed with Dance NOW Miami, Freddick Bratcher and Co., Sasha Soreff Dance Theater, Amanda Selwyn Dance Theater, Paskal Rekoert/ Flexicurve, Graham II, and Carolyn Dorfman Dance (CDD), for whom he continues to coach and teach. Locally, Louie has taught Masterclasses at Chattanooga Center for Creative Arts, Chattanooga Dance Theater, Baylor School, Ballet Esprit, and the Chattanooga Theatre Centre. For the last two years, Louie has been working with Hamilton County's Dance Chair (Retired) Karen Wilson and other local teaching artists to curate ProjectDance, a new program aimed at introducing dance to Hamilton County's elementary schools. Louie is the Director of Dance at Normal Park Museum Magnet Upper School, where he teaches fourth through eighth grade ballet, jazz dance, and modern dance. This spring, Louie was appointed Director of Outreach and Education for the highly acclaimed performance art nonprofit organization, the Pop-up Project, here in Chattanooga. Louie would like to thank the Chattanooga Theatre Centre, Rodney Van Valkenburg, Angie Griffin, Ismael Sandoval, William Spratt, and Tinita Coulter for their support, generosity of spirit, and incredible hard work. He would love to dedicate this production to his husband, Michael Marin-Howard. "You've waited a long time for this, my love. It's beautiful, like you."

GARY MAY (Sound Design) became involved in the audio department at the CTC during the 2016 production of *Miracle on 34th Street* and has subsequently assisted nearly all productions and events at the theatre since. Outside of CTC shows, he remains busy doing freelance work with local sound engineers/theatres around Chattanooga and North Georgia.

ISMAEL SANDOVAL (Music Director/Conductor) is a Mexican-American conductor who has directed several ensembles across the East Coast, all invested in the pursuit of bringing people together in the beauty and power of music. Ismael is currently the assistant conductor of the Chattanooga Symphony & Opera (CSO), the music director of the CSO Youth Orchestras, music director at First Christian Church of Chattanooga, and orchestra director at Lee University. Ismael is a collaborator and a bridge builder between various organizations, and his efforts span across many disciplines and genres. In his efforts to give back to our community and promote the profound impact that music can have on people, Ismael frequently brings music to life in unorthodox performance venues such as homeless shelters, assisted living facilities, hospitals, parks, and anywhere else where music might be needed. Ismael is also passionate about helping to establish a true sense of community with the groups that he works with through meaningful musical experiences. Ismael received his Master's of Music degree in orchestral conducting from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee under the tutelage of Bruce Hangen and received his B.M. in music education and B.M. in composition from the University of Florida.

ERIC H. WEINBERGER (Book) Plays: *Class Mothers '68* starring Priscilla Lopez at Luna Stage Company in NJ and Off–Broadway (Star Ledger Award for Best New Comedy in NJ), *Six Hands* at Yale University and Luna Stage, *The Nightwatchman* at Luna Stage, *Lady Bird, Pat & Betty: Tea For Three* with and starring Elaine Bromka touring the country since 2004. Musicals: *Wanda's World* produced Off-Broadway by Amas Musical Theatre (Drama Desk Award nomination

for Outstanding Book of a Musical, Lucille Lortel Award nomination for Outstanding Musical) and published by Theatrical Rights Worldwide, *...And Then I Wrote A Song About It ,* world premiere at Luna Stage, 2010 and produced by The Diversionary Theatre in San Diego, CA, 2011, *Brothers, Boyfriends and Other Criminals,* world premiere at Zach Theatre, 2011. The Eric H. Weinberger Award for Emerging Librettists is a juried cash and production grant given annually to support the early work and career of a deserving musical theatre librettist. It commemorates the life and work of playwright/librettist Eric H. Weinberger (1950-2017).

MEET THE STAFF

RODNEY VAN VALKENBURG (Executive Director) started his career at the Little Theatre in 1983 as the first full-time Youth Theatre director. He served for more than 18 years as Director of Programs and as Director of Education. Before coming back to the CTC in 2020, he was Vice President of ArtsBuild. Highlights at the CTC include the Youth Theatre representing the U.S. at the International Theatre Camp in Zelenograd, Russia. Rodney also served as Artistic Director of the camp in Narva, Estonia. He has directed over 80 plays at the CTC, including many Youth Theatre productions, *Vintage Hitchcock, Boeing, Boeing,* and *Annie.* He has also been seen onstage in *It's a Wonderful Life, Newsies, A Room with a View, Les Misérables, The Producers,* and *Anything Goes.* Rodney has been a participant in the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Partners in Education program since 2003 and served on the program's Advisory Committee. He served as the coordinator for the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Ensuring the Arts for Any Given Child site, also through the Kennedy Center. Rodney has also served as a grant panelist with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Tennessee Arts Commission. He serves as Tennessee State Captain for the Americans for the Arts' National Arts Action Summit in Washington, D.C. He is a past president of the Tennessee Theatre Association and served on the executive committee of the Southeastern Theatre Conference. He received his MFA in Acting and Directing from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Rodney shares his passion for theatre with his wife, Julie, and son, Jake, who lives in Atlanta.

R. SCOTT DUNLAP (Director of Productions) is an alumnus of CTC's Youth Theatre program, graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in 1996, and was a member of their 1997 Acting Company. This season marks his 26th with the CTC. He was Youth Theatre Designer from 1997 until 2000. He has been onstage in numerous CTC productions, including Miss Hannigan in *Annie*, Roger DeBris in *The Producers,* and the Baker in *Into the Woods.* In 2008, he received the Best Actor award for Estrogon in *Waiting for Godot* at the Tennessee Theatre Association Community Theatre Competition. He would later return to receive the 2012 Best Director and Best Production awards for *The 39 Steps.* His long history of directing CTC shows often includes designing his own productions. Some of his favorites include *Almost Maine, The Best Man, Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson, Camelot, Dark of the Moon, Dividing the Estate, Hair, Love/Sick, Mr. & Mrs. M, Peter and the Starcatcher, Pig Farm, Ring Round the Moon, A Room with a View, The Importance of Being Earnest, Xanadu,* and *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* in 2005, 2009, and 2018.

BECKI JORDAN (Volunteer Coordinator) joined the CTC staff in September 2019, but has been associated with the CTC since 1975, when she first performed in *An Evening with the Other Sex.* Since then, she has appeared in dozens of shows, both here and on other stages. As a volunteer, she has worked onstage and backstage and has served on CTC's Board of Directors. A ten-time CTC Award winner, Becki appeared most recently at CTC in *Sordid Lives.* Other favorite roles include *The Laramie Project, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike,*

The Importance of Being Earnest, The Book of Liz, Rumors, That Other Woman's Child, Fiddler on the Roof, Crimes of the Heart, and *Children of a Lesser God.*

CRIS KING (Costume Shop Manager) is thrilled to begin as CTC's costume shop manager! Cris joined the CTC family performing in the 2021 production of *Vintage Hitchcock* and later volunteered in the costume shop. She joined the team officially just in time to help with *Aladdin Jr.* Cris hails from Birmingham, AL, and moved to Chattanooga with her beautiful girlfriend Ramsay in 2019. Together they raise two rowdy black cats, Finn and Poe.

RICARDO C. MORRIS (Group Sales & Events Manager) is a native of Chattanooga and a 1980 graduate of Howard High School. Ric attended Tennessee State University where he received his B.S. degree in Speech Communication and Theatre. After graduation Ric taught theatre, English, and dance at Hixson High. He left teaching to attend Yale University where he earned an M.F.A. in Arts Administration. This school year Ric has taken on a full-time position as the Theatre Arts teacher at his alma mater The Howard School. He is the founder and CEO of Chattanooga Neighborhoods Arts Partnership (ChattaNAP), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for Chattanoogans one neighborhood at a time. To date the Chattanooga Festival of Black Arts & Ideas: Juneteenth Commemoration Day is the organization's largest and most successful program. Ric has appeared in several productions at CTC, including *The Wiz, Hello Dolly, A Chorus Line, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, The Boys Next Door, Dreamgirls* and *The Names of the Dead.* At CTC he has directed *A Streetcar Named Desire, Blues for an Alabama Sky, Bourbon at the Board,* August Wilson's *Fences* in 1997 and 2019, *The Amen Corner,* and *Having Our Say.*

KITTY MURAKAMI (Box Office Assistant) is a relative newcomer to Chattanooga, having moved here from Ocala, Florida, in 2015. She was raised in upstate New York, graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Pharmacy, and has lived in great places like Denver and Maui. Her first and only experience with theatre (other than high school plays) started as a costume shop volunteer at Ocala Civic Theatre for two years. After retiring as a pharmacist and moving to Chattanooga, she continued volunteering at CTC in the costume shop. After finally

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being offered a part-time Box Office Assistant position in 2016, she was thrilled to become a part of the CTC family. “It has been an honor and a privilege as well as a wonderful learning experience to be involved with this organization. CTC is blessed to have such an amazing facility, talented dedicated staff and volunteers, and such supportive patrons.”

CHUCK TUTTLE (Director of Education & Innovation) holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in Children’s Theatre and Creative Drama from the University of Texas at Austin and has over 30 years of experience doing theatre with and for young people. His professional background includes serving as Director of Education at Austin Theatre for Youth in Austin, Texas, and Children’s Theatre Workshop in Pleasanton, California. Chuck has taught theatre classes to all ages in acting, playwriting, technical theatre, Shakespeare, voice, movement, improvisation, and comedy, among others. As an actor, he has taken on the roles of Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol,* Joaquin in *El Californio,* Simon in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle,* and Billy Crocker in *Anything Goes,* which he performed in Hokkaido, Japan. His directing credits include *Waiting for Godot, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, The Nightingale, The Crucible, Once on This Island, God of Carnage, A Year With Frog and Toad,* and *Go, Dog, Go!* Chuck has written several stage adaptations, including *Plant, Grow, Pick* for CTC’s Theatre for the Very Young program. He has collaborated with composer Michael Huseman to create short musicals for CTC’s Summer Musical Performance Training Academy. As sponsor and advisor of CTC’s teen interest group, TheatreQuest, he contributes to and directs The Alphabet Plays, an ongoing series of plays for young children.

JULIE VAN VALKENBURG (Marketing Director) has been a member of the CTC team since 2017, transitioning her 30 years of volunteer experience at the theatre into her dream job at her home away from home. She brings over 35 years of experience in marketing and communications to the role. As a volunteer, she has worked onstage and backstage, including lending a hand as a stage manager and as a box office, costume shop, scene shop, and special events volunteer. Appearing most recently in last fall’s *Barefoot in the Park,* she is honored to have received CTC awards for performances in *Dearly Departed, Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, And Miss Reardon Drinks a Little, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike* (also Audience Favorite Actress), and *A Room with a View.* Julie has appeared on other stages in *August: Osage County, The Laramie Project, Hamlet*, and others. She shares her love of theatre with her husband, Rodney, and son, Jake.

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