



RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE

# DIVAS!

# LAS VEGAS

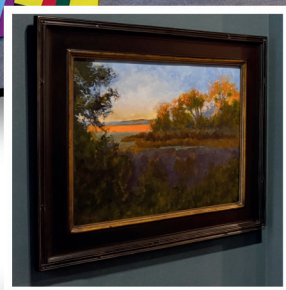
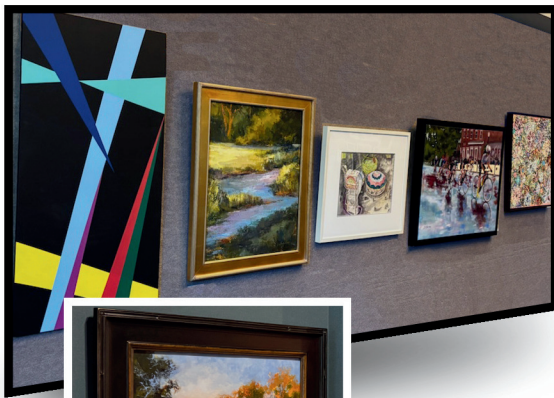
20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Final Curtain

Join us as we celebrate 20 years of Glitz, Glam & Giving  
Directed by Alison Lawrence

**Saturday, May 2, 2026**

# Spotlights, + Brushesrokes

The Arts are Exploding at Raleigh Little Theatre!



Now, in addition to the incredible **art on stage**, enjoy the wealth of fine art on our lobby walls and in display cases.

Curated by local artists **Jean Corbett**, **Eileen Hendren**, and **Scott Jamison**, the exhibit features original pottery, landscapes, still lifes, abstracts, and much more from **award-winning local talents**.

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THEATRE



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presents

# ***DIVAS!***

***SATURDAY, MAY 2, 2026***

**DIRECTED BY ALISON LAWRENCE**

**MUSIC DIRECTED BY CHRISTIAN L. STAHR**

**CHOREOGRAPHED BY FREDDIE-LEE HEATH**

Special Thanks:

Kirstie Spadie - North Carolina Dance Institute

North Raleigh Arts & Creative Theatre

Bart Ramsey - Bart's Old North State Barbecue

David McCluthcley - Saint David's Episcopal School

Raleigh Charter High School Drama Department

Nancy Rich

Catherine Delaney - Wakefield High School

Will Lilly - Videography

Sue Castro for SOOO much help on everything!

# WELCOME!

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## Good evening Friends!

Welcome to our 20th and final Divas! fundraiser at Raleigh Little Theatre - a night where the spotlight isn't just on our Divas but on all of YOU who help keep this incredible theatre alive and thriving. Extending a special thanks tonight to Alison Lawrence for her boundless creativity, dedication, and tireless leadership of Divas over the years.

For almost 100 years, Raleigh Little Theatre has been a place where stories come to life, where talent is nurtured, and where lasting friendships are formed. But here's a fact: ticket sales alone are not enough to sustain our productions, maintain our historic space, and provide opportunities for aspiring artists. It's your support—through donations, sponsorships, and volunteer efforts—that allows us to effectively engage the community we have been charged to serve.

Tonight, as we come together in celebration of two decades of Divas!, we ask you to consider the role you play in keeping YOUR community theatre alive. Every contribution, big or small, makes a lasting impact. Your generosity ensures that our community continues to have a cultural hub to call its own.

So let's raise our glasses, enjoy an evening of entertainment, and invest in the future of Raleigh Little Theatre. Because this isn't just a theatre—it's a home. And with your help, it will continue to be for years to come.

With gratitude,



Michele Weathers  
Producing Artistic Director



# CAST

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**Staci Sabarsky** (2006)  
**Katherine Anderson** (2007)  
**Katie Hennenlotter** (2010)  
**Greg Moore** (2012)  
**Kevin O'Barr** (2012)  
**Brian Fisher** (2015)  
**Jess Barbour** (2017)  
**Dee Penven-Crew** (2019)  
**Alec Donaldson** (2021)  
**Tina Morris-Anderson** (2022)  
**Benaiah Adesoji** (2023)

Introducing  
**Ryder Kalmus**  
**Rusty the Diva Dog**

# THE DIVAS RAT PACK BAND

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Keys  
**Christian L. Stahr**

Bass  
**Joe Wimberley**

Drums  
**Scott Lane**

Trumpet  
**Christian McIvor**

Saxophone  
**Terry Blalock**

# THE DIVA DANCERS

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Alex Cordaro

Cassie Vanchot

Kara Hodges

Lauren Hodges

Rhiannon Karp

Tia Garrison

Alyssa Ferrec (understudy)

Aurora Strickland (understudy)



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# PRODUCTION TEAM

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Director

**Alison Lawrence**

Musical Director/Arranger

**Christian L. Stahr**

Choreographer

**Freddie-Lee Heath**

Scenic Designer

**Paul Andrew Orsett**

Costumer

**Maggie Rasnick**

Lighting Designer

**Marshall McCall**

Spotlight Operators

**Marisa Stubanas**

**Pinch Stroud-Lepine**

Sound Design

**John Maruca**

**Kristen Stinnett**

# PRODUCTION TEAM

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Sound Board Operator

**Kristen Stinnett**

Deck Crew

**Whitney Glomb**

**Lauren Smith**

Stage Manager

**Alex Gromo**

**Assistant Stage Manager**

**Blue Wise**

Props Design

**Alyssa Petrone**

Headshots and Show Photography

**Jeannine Borzello**

Master of Ceremonies

**Clay Aiken**

# DIVAS! 2026 COMMITTEE

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Event Planner

**Alison Lawrence**

Finance Officer

**Leon Sabarsky**

Marketing/Fundraising

**Sue Castro**

Silent Auction

**Stephanie Toney**

Reception

**Annie Meadows**

Flowers/Diva Gifts/Crown & Pins

**Dee Penven-Crew**

Front of House

**Amy Hellmers**

Elvis

**Billy Thomas**

Rat Pack Volunteers

**Anne Miesel**

**Devon Bennett**

**Greg & Susan Bentley**

**Ianthe Lambie-Osborne**

**Judy Dove**

**Lee O'Connell**

**Mike McGee**

**Rick Meadows**

**Suzanne Ruggles**

**Terra Hodge**

Rat Pack Load-In Crew

**Dakota Heer**

**Don Bean**

**Gary Bossert**

**Nasseer Naji**

# HISTORY OF DIVAS

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In 2004, the idea for a fundraiser for RLT originated from a small group of volunteers that wanted to help Raleigh Little Theatre raise funds for the new year. Knowing that actors are often in competition for roles, they came up with the idea to start a fake fight between a group of actors and spin this drama into a night of glitz, glamor, and celebration of all-things RLT.

The volunteers realized that by providing their own costumes, performing without a set, and using basic lighting and minimal rehearsals, the money from ticket sales for the evening would all be profit for RLT. At the end of an evening of celebration and performance, the audience could vote to crown the winning Diva of the night. One original Diva took it a step further: "Why not let the audience vote with their dollars?" That idea was the final touch - Divas! as we now know it was born.

Since 2004, Divas! has been raising money for the theatre every year with the exception of 2009, 2011, and 2014, making 2026 the 20th anniversary. In that time, Divas! has raised over \$850,000 for RLT programs, including a record-breaking \$100,000 year in 2021, making it the most successful fundraiser ever at RLT!

# PAST WINNING DIVAS

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2004

Rebecca Johnston

2005

Yolanda Rabun

2006

Staci Sabarsky

2007

Katherine Anderson & Don  
Smith

2008

Martie Todd Sirois

2010

Katie Hennenlotter

2012

Greg Moore & Kevin O'Barr

2013

M. Dennis Poole

2015

Brian Fisher

2016

Rebecca Johnston

2017

Jess Barbour

2018

Emily Spain

2019

Dee Penven-Crew

2020

Emily Steinhoff James

2021

Alec Donaldson

2022

Tina Morris-Anderson

2023

Benaiah Adesoji

2024

Aya Wallace

2025

Dustin Bowles



— SINCE 2006 —

DESIGN • EVENTS • FLORAL



*Congratulations on*  
**20 years of DIVAs!**



*We have been honored to play a role.*



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# SPONSORS

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**David & Judi Wilkinson**

**Debbie & Larry Robbins**

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**Don Reynolds**

**Edward Jones**

**Fran & Ed Anderson**

**Georgia & Alec Donaldson**

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# SPONSORS

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**Judy & Kent Dove**

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**Mark Steward &**

**Freddie-Lee Heath**

**Maurice Littleman**

**Nancy & Terry Brenneman**

**Neil & Mary Saunders**

**Robyn Bissette**

**Thomas, Judy & Tucker, P.A.**

**Towne Bank**

**Victoria Wheeler**

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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Welcome to the 20th and FINAL Raleigh Little Theatre's *Divas!* I would like to THANK ALL our audiences and donors, large and small, for your support through our 20 years of fun, mayhem and money! Throughout our 20 years, the *Divas* have raised over a million dollars for RLT! How amazing is that? Volunteers who are performers first and uncomfortable fundraisers last have raised over a Million Dollars!!

Along with the 20th Anniversary, we will also be taking the FINAL Curtain call for the *Divas!* Event. It has been my pleasure and my honor to have been on this glorious ride for all 20 years - the first year as a competitor and 19 years of directing/creating the *Divas!* show. I am grateful for every minute filled with *Divas!* stuff.

Our theme this year is *Divas!* Las Vegas 2026. Our competitors are all past WINNING *Divas* with one wild card. After all "it's Vegas, Baby!" As I searched the pictures from the past to put together a retrospective, I am reminded of the beginnings of this fundraiser. The first *divas* were 12 women who were a core group of performers that courageously stepped outside their comfort zone to raise money for our beloved RLT and it just grew from there - each *Diva* finding their hidden fundraiser. I hope that tonight, as we close the curtain on *Divas!*, that you will celebrate and honor tonight's contestants and ALL the other casts and crews that have participated, by applauding and cheering and generously DONATING to them. **They are the true volunteers and the role models for what a community theatre should look like.**

For me, this moment is bitter/sweet.

**Bitter...** because it has been 20 years of creative excitement and joy that I won't have any more in this form.  
... because the process of building/creating a script/show is exhausting and exhilarating for 3 months of the year.  
... because of the shared experience of live theatre with hundreds of beautiful and dedicated performers working together that I won't experience like this anymore.

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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**Sweet...** because of all the memories and friendships that now enrich my daily life.

... because I had the chance to see a good performer grow into a fabulous performer from the confidence they gained by learning to ask...if you don't ask, you'll never know.

... because I LOVE doing this and I am really good at it!

So, you may ask, am I gonna cry? You betcha!

Will I celebrate all the people and all the success and all the fun we have? You betcha!

Eventually, the "bitter" will blend into the "sweet" and that's what will stay with me always.

My hope is that you will celebrate ALL the "sweet" of *Divas!* Las Vegas 2026 tonight. Enjoy the reception, bid on the fabulous things in the Silent Auction, cheer and applaud and VOTE GENEROUSLY for your favorite Diva to win the ULTIMATE DIVA CROWN and continue the legacy of *Divas!*

I am the ultimate winner because we have all shared a wonderful live experience.

Thank you for 20 years of *DIVAS!*

*"So make this moment last because the best of times is NOW!"*

*Jerry Herman*

Alison Lawrence  
Event planner/Show Creator/Director -  
DIVAS! Las Vegas 2026



# ***DIVAS! 2026 - SONG LIST***

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## **ACT 1**

It's the DIVAS! (Adaptation from "Jerry's Girls!").....The 2026 Divas  
with the Diva Dancers

Golden (from "K-Pop Demon Hunters").....Katherine Anderson  
with Jess Barbour & Clare Sherk

For Once in My Life (Lyrics by Ronald Miller,  
Music by Orlando Murden).....Alec Donaldson

The Rose (Music & Lyrics by Amanda McBroom).....Jess Barbour\*\*  
with Staci Sabarsky & Katherine Anderson

Can't Help Falling In Love (Music & Lyrics by George Weiss,  
Hugo Peretti & Luigi Creatore).....Kevin O'Barr

Risk It All (Music & Lyrics by Peter Hernandez, Dernst Emile II, James  
Fauntleroy II & Philip Lawrence).....Ryder Kalmus  
with Alex Cordar, Dancer

Special Surprise Guest.....TBA

My Way (Lyrics by Paul Anka, Music by Jacques Revaux &  
Claude Francois).....Benaiah Adesoji

## **INTERMISSION**

The silent auction will close at the end of Intermission.  
Bid generously and bid often!

# ***DIVAS! 2026 - SONG LIST***

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## **ACT 2**

DIVAS! Las Vegas (Adaptation of “Viva Las Vegas,” Music & Lyrics by Doc Pomus & Mort Shuman!!).....The Divas & the Diva Dancers

RLT Homesick Blues (Adaptation from “Tennessee Homesick Blues,” Music & Lyrics by Dolly Parton!!!).....Katie Hennenlotter

I Made It Through the Rain (Music & Lyrics by Barry Manilow, Jack Feldman, Bruce Sussman, Drey Shepperd & Gerard Kenny)  
.....Greg Moore  
with Ryder Kalmus and the Diva Dancers

Ironic (from “Jagged Little Pill”) .....Staci Sabarsky  
with Benaiah Adesoji, Katie Hennenlotter & Ryder Kalmus

Crazy (Music & Lyrics by Brian Burton, Thomas Callaway, Gianpiero Reverberi & Gianfranco Reverberi).....Tina Morris-Anderson  
with the Diva Dancers

Blow, Gabriel, Blow (from “Anything Goes”).....Dee Penven-Crew  
with The Oakwood Awesomettes &  
The Historic Oakwood Second Line Band, Krewe of Sister Margot

The Best of Times (from “La Cage aux Folles”).....The Divas  
with the Diva Dancers  
AND 20 years of Divas cast & crew members

### **Crowning of RLT’s 2026 Ultimate Diva!**

\*\*non-competing Diva

! New words by Alison Lawrence

!! New words by Paul Orsett

!!! New words by Katie Hennenlotter

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**BENAIHAH ADESOJI** is a local performance artist and creative based in Raleigh. He began competing for the *Divas!* crown in 2019, finally snatching the crown and the title in 2023. Benaiah can be remembered for his roles in past RLT productions such as *Sister Act*, *Three Little Birds*, and perhaps most notably for his turn as King Darling III in RLT's annual production of *Cinderella*. Though he would love to add another "win" to his credit, Benaiah knows that the TRUE

winner is all of the souls touched and lives enriched by Raleigh Little Theatre! Benaiah is especially grateful to Alison Lawrence, all of the Divas past and present, and Raleigh Little Theatre for being a second home and safe space.



**KATHERINE ANDERSON** is happy to be back for Divas Las Vegas, as a 2007 Co-Diva winner. Katherine first became involved with RLT 20 years ago, starting on stage playing Cunegonde in *Candide* in 2006. She then competed in Divas 2007. Other roles at RLT include Cinderella in *Cinderella* in 2007, Hope in *Urinetown*, Franca in *The Light in the Piazza* (Cantey Award for supporting actress), and Evangeline in *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*. Lately,

Katherine has done a lot of music directing, including at RLT: *Avenue Q*, *Pippin*, *Divas*, *Cinderella*, and most recently *1776*. Katherine loves RLT and feels a special connection here as her first theatre home. Thanks to Mom and Dad for your constant support of me and my music and theatre life, and a huge thank you to Alison Lawrence for putting this big show together with so much time, love, and creativity for so many years.

# CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**JESS BARBOUR** won Divas in 2017. She grew up at Raleigh Little Theatre taking classes as a child, acting in shows like *Sweeney Todd*, working as Teaching Artist and then as Interim Education Specialist, and choreographing and directing several shows, including *Curtains*. Jess holds a BFA in Theatre from Elon University and studied under Bill Esper at The Esper Studio in NYC. By day, she balances working as a Standardized Patient Trainer at the American Board of Anesthesiology

and serving as the Artistic Director of North Raleigh Arts & Creative Theatre.



**ALEC DONALDSON** was the winning 2021 Diva and is very happy to take up the Diva challenge again - and for the last time! He has been in productions at Raleigh Little Theatre, Burning Coal Theatre and North Raleigh Arts and Creative Theatre. In real life, he is a corporate and securities lawyer at Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton. Please support RLT and help Alec win another crown!



**BRIAN FISHER** has appeared at NRACT as Judge Roan in Parade, drag queen Tray Sophisticay in *Everybody's Talking About Jamie*, and a Phantom in *The Rocky Horror Show*. Other credits include: Raleigh Little Theatre — *Little Shop of Horrors* (Seymour), *Spamalot* (Patsy), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Rocky), *Caroline, or Change* (Stuart), *Snoopy* (Charlie Brown), *Sweeney Todd*, *Cabaret*, *Divas* (2015 winner); Theatre in the Park — *A Christmas Carol* (Lamplighter), *Godspell* (All

Good Gifts); NC State Theatrefest — *Side By Side By Sondheim*. Thanks to the awesome friends who support and cheer me on and thank YOU for choosing local community theatre. Enjoy the show!

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**KATIE HENNELLOTTER** is always happy to be making music and acting up at RLT. When she auditioned for *Winnie the Pooh* at RLT in 1986 (at the age of six), she never imagined the role that RLT would play in her life. Sadly, *Winnie the Pooh* was not to be. She saw herself as “Eeyore,” but the casting directors saw her as “audience member.” Not to be deterred, Katie reappeared nineteen years later in the orchestra pit playing viola for 2005’s production of *Carousel!*. In 2006, Katie returned to the orchestra, playing violin for *Candide*. This turned out to be a good decision as she married the guy playing “Candide” and had three really great kids. In 2007, Katie played electric bass in *The Full Monty* and then moved up onto the stage to play “America” in 2008’s production of *Radio Gals*. She remained onstage playing upright bass in the stage band for 2009’s *Cabaret*. In 2010, Katie’s star rose when she was crowned 2010’s RLT Diva. She immediately followed that act starring onstage as “Clara” in *The Light in the Piazza* (2010). 2011 saw Katie back in the orchestra playing bass for *The Boy Friend*, and in 2012, she crowned Kevin O’Barr and Greg Moore as her successors to the Diva crown. Katie then went back to the orchestra playing viola for 2013’s *Spring Awakening*. FINALLY! In 2014, Katie took the year off, but soon came back to Emcee 2015’s Divas with co-diva, Kevin O’Barr, after which she competed for the second time in 2016, after playing violin in the orchestra for Sweeney Todd. Katie began to slow down after Divas 2016, returning as a past Diva for the 2017, 2018, and 2023 competitions. To make a long story short, over the past 21 years, Katie has been on or under the RLT stage for all but six of those years, and being at RLT still never gets old.



**RYDER KALMUS** is thrilled to be joining the Divas! Las Vegas show at Raleigh Little Theatre at only 11 years old. He has been singing since he could speak, and his love for performing has only grown louder over the years. Aside from many school shows and solos this past year, Ryder discovered a passion for community theatre and has already taken on memorable roles including Jack in *Into the Woods Jr.*, Michael Hobbs in *Elf the Musical Jr.*, and an enthusiastic octopus in *SpongeBob the Musical Jr.* He is thrilled and grateful for the chance to perform on the Raleigh Little Theatre stage.

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**GREG MOORE** - Some places just define you, and Raleigh Little Theatre plays an integral role in defining Greg's myriad connections to Raleigh, his home now for 36 years. RLT's stage and volunteer opportunities (RLT Board member emeritus) have established a creative, supportive space for one or more productions in Greg's 20s (*Cinderella*), his 30s (*Once Upon a Mattress*), his 40s & 50s (being a Diva with Kevin O'Barr & emceeing Divas numerous times), and

his recent senior/retired activities with RLT's Dancing Man Productions partnership (*Guys and Dolls Sr*). It is with great pride that this Divas finale rightfully finds him performing for the first time in his Sexy Sixties! Like other divas defying gravity throughout decades - Dolly and Cher to name just two - Greg can no longer share the spotlight and must claim his solo RLT Diva-dom from his beloved partner in all things, Kevin. (See Rusty entry if your allegiances are torn!) This Diva proudly stands by his unwavering support of our community's Crown Jewel, Raleigh Little Theatre!



**TINA MORRIS-ANDERSON** was crowned Raleigh Little Theatre's Diva in 2022. She has performed in many Triangle theatrical productions, including *Parade* (Minnie), *Fairview* (Beverly), *Chicken & Biscuits* (Baneatta), *The Face of Emmett Till* (Mamie), *The Dance on Widow's Row* (Magnolia), *Bourbon at the Border* (May), *Bright Star* (Alice), *Cinderella* (Fairy Godmother), *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Nell), *Ghost: The Musical* (Oda Mae) and *Hairspray* (Motormouth Maybelle).

Tina's directing credits include: *I Saw Him* (The Fountain of Raleigh Fellowship), *By the Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* (NRACT), *Mahalia*, *A Gospel Musical* (NRACT) and most recently, *Don't Bother Me*, *I Can't Cope* (NRACT). Tina has been a featured vocalist with the North Carolina Symphony and the Raleigh and Durham Symphony Orchestras, and performed in the North Carolina Opera's *Porgy and Bess*. A member of the Deep River Singers, she performed at Carnegie Hall in 2023. Tina lives in Raleigh with her husband Paul Anderson; they have two talented sons, Paul II and Noah.

## CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**KEVIN O'BARR** has been very privileged to work with many talented singers and performers at Raleigh Little Theatre and other theatres in the area. He hopes that you will generously support RLT and play a part in creating the next generation of talent in the area. He has been in the orchestra pit for hundreds of shows, mostly the decade playing for *Cinderella*. His first show with RLT was in 1998 assisting with *Forever Plaid*. His two appearances on stage were an emergency understudy appearance in 1940's *Radio Hour* and in *The Full Monty*. He is honored to share the stage with these beautiful DIVAS.



**DEE PENVEN-CREW**, 2019 Diva, began her long association with RLT in 1979 when Managing Director extraordinaire, Linda Bamford, hired her as the Secretary/Box Office Assistant. One of Dee's first tasks was to summarize every season using RLT's extensive archives that were, at the time, stored in many cardboard boxes. Those summaries were used heavily in the writing of Guy Munger's book, *Curtain Up*, which celebrated 50 years of RLT. Dee worked for RLT for 10 years and was then involved in a volunteer capacity: on the stage many times, building costumes, been a prop mistress, dresser, painted sets, demolished sets during strike, sold tickets, run the front of house, sold concessions, served on the Board of Directors and play-reading committee, and more! There are too many favorite stage roles to mention but one stand-out has to be included: in 1995, Dee won her one and only Cantey Award, playing 11 roles in *The Dining Room* (A.R. Gurney). She's also proud of the fact that she performed in the RLT 50th Anniversary Gala held at the Civic Center AND the RLT 75th Anniversary Largest Cast Party held at the Kerr Scott Building at the NC State Fairgrounds. Dee's current goal is to be here long enough to participate in some way with the RLT 100th Anniversary in 10 years. Here's to Raleigh Little Theatre and their continued success!

# CAST BIOGRAPHIES

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**STACI SABARSKY** is a proud graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill and currently teaches high school theatre. Her first job in theatre education was at RLT as part of their faculty for over 8 years where she taught ages 5-90! Favorite performances include: *Marmee in Little Women The Musical* (Southern Wake Players), *Williamina in Silent Sky* (Burning Coal Theatre), Claire in *Proof* (Innovocative Theatre), Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (The Gilbert Theatre),

Maureen in *Rent* (The Gilbert Theatre), Debra in *The Smell Of The Kill* (Temple Theatre), Annabella/Pamela/Margaret in *The 39 Steps* (Raleigh Little Theatre), Belinda/Flavia in *Noises Off* (Theatre in the Park), Nancy in *Frozen* (Raleigh Ensemble Players), and Diana in *Lend Me A Tenor* (Actor's Comedy Lab). Much love and many thanks to Leon and Alison for their support and encouragement over the years.



**RUSTY THE DIVA DOG** - Having basked in the glow of lesser canine prodigies like Lassie, Toto, and that annoying mutt, Sandy, belonging to some red-headed-orphan, Rusty claimed his rightful Diva status in the mid 20-teens at Raleigh Little Theatre with his dads, Greg & Kevin! He is appalled that his loving dads are competing against each other this year! Since he loves them almost as much as the amazing Raleigh Little Theatre community, he invites your

support for his continuing Diva-hood if you just cannot decide between his two dads. He knows this is a ruff decision, so just vote for him!



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# PRODUCTION TEAM

## BIOGRAPHIES

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**ALISON LAWRENCE** (Director) is an award winning actress, director and voice teacher with over 30 years of experience. She lives in Raleigh with her four-legged family. She maintains a successful private Voice studio, The Singer's Art, here in Raleigh as well as teaching private voice lessons through The Temple Theatre in Sanford. Ms. Lawrence received her B. A. degree in Voice performance. Ms. Lawrence has been awarded 4 Cantey performance awards from Raleigh Little Theatre as well as being honored

to receive the Haskell Fitz-Simons Distinguished Performer Award. She has also been the recipient of numerous FORSCOM Festival (Military Performance Awards) awards for her work as a performer, director and musical director while working on Ft. Bragg. Ms. Lawrence also had the honor of joining Clay Aiken's Joyful Noise Tour in 2005 as Beverly Ledford and the community theatre liaison. She located and recruited community theatre actor/singers to perform as the chorus in the show in the 32 cities that were visited on the tour. Most recently Ms. Lawrence was seen on stage as Charity person/Laundress in *A Christmas Carol* at Temple Theatre in Sanford, Dr. Eve in NRACT'S production of *Sordid Lives*, and as Erronius in *A Funny Thing Happened On the Way to the Forum*. Ms. Lawrence was seen at PlayMaker's Repertory Theatre: Ensemble in *She Loves Me*, at RLT; Mother Superior in *Sister Act*, Gladys in *Memphis*, Stepmama in *Cinderella* (4 years), Director of 19 years of DIVAS! Fundraisers (and a three-time DIVAS! loser), Theatre in the Park as Florence Foster Jenkins in *Glorious: The True Story of Florence Foster Jenkins*, Judy Steinburg in *It Shoulda Been You*, NC State Theatrefest; Gerde in *The Hollow*, Actors Comedy Lab; Sister Acacious in *The Divine Sister*, NRACT with Actors Comedy Lab; *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. Justice Theatre Project; as Big Edie in *Grey Gardens*, and Emma Goldman in *Ragtime*. You can contact her through email: [thesingersart@att.net](mailto:thesingersart@att.net) or Facebook: The Singer's Art Vocal Studio. Adopt a pet! It will change you for GOOD.

# PRODUCTION TEAM

## BIOGRAPHIES

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**CHRISTIAN L. STAHR** (Musical Director/Arranger) Raleigh Little Theatre: Music director and orchestrator for *Cinderella* and composer for *Música, Música, Máximo, Música*. Burning Coal Theatre: Music director for *Sunday in the Park with George, A Little Night Music, Merrily We Roll Along, Once, and My Fair Lady*, and composer for *Copenhagen*. Playmakers Repertory Company: Music director for *Pippin*. TAP: Music director for *The Addams Family*. In his hometown of Sarpsborg, Norway, Christian composed and music directed the musicals *St. Olaf the Lucky One* and *4Real*. He is also the composer of the piano album *When Light Returns*, available on Spotify. In New York City, he served as Director of Culture at the Norwegian Seamen's Church and pianist for the Dramatists Guild Fund. He holds an MFA from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. Christian is thrilled to be back at Raleigh Little Theatre working with this amazing team and these extraordinary Divas! He is deeply grateful to his family and friends for their love and support - especially his wife, Sarah Lynn Winter, and their cats, Dwight and Norman. Learn more at [www.stahrmusic.com](http://www.stahrmusic.com)



**FREDDIE-LEE HEATH** (Choreographer) is honored to have worked on this show, where he gets to help performers bevel their way onto the stage, which he thinks is a needed life skill. Thanks & love to Kirstie Spadie and the lovely dancers from North Carolina Dance Institute for bringing all the glamour to our show! His upcoming choreography projects include DPAC's *Rising Stars, School of Rock, Hello, Dolly, Frozen, and Evil Dead*. He is so grateful for the partnership with RLT, with Dancing Man Productions, be sure to see *Singing in the Rain, Sr*. It was a joy to spend time with this bunch of Divas-thank you for your love of RLT. Thanks & love to Alison Lawrence for your work on this show over the years-you are a treasure!

# PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

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**PAUL ANDREW ORSETT** (Scenic Designer) is a distinguished theatre educator, director, and arts advocate with nearly four decades of experience in arts education and theatrical production. He earned a Master of Arts in Directing from Roosevelt University and a Bachelor of Music Education from East Carolina University. Throughout his career, Mr. Orsett has taught theatre, technical theatre, music, marching band, and colorguard, inspiring generations of students through both classroom instruction and

performance. He served for twenty-four years as Theatre Arts Teacher at Wakefield High School in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he directed major productions, produced educational matinees, and sponsored International Thespian Society Troupe #6326. His professional experience also includes leadership roles with Charlotte Repertory Theatre and the Arts Council of Wilson. In addition to his work in education, Mr. Orsett has been actively involved with Winter Guard International, Drum Corps International, and numerous professional arts organizations, including service as Executive Director of the Atlantic Indoor Association.



**ALEX GROMO** (Stage Manager) has been involved in theater since his college years at Syracuse University where he played Creon in *Antigone* and Orgon in *Tartuffe*. After college, he moved behind the scenes in several community theaters up and down the east coast. Alex has served as Stage Manager of RLT's Divas! six years in total. He has also been a part of various crews including lights, sound, props and deck for over two dozen productions over the past several years.

# PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

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**CLAY AIKEN** (Master of Ceremonies) is one of Raleigh Little Theatre's most notable alumni. He first graced the RLT stage in the annual production of *Cinderella* in 1994 and again in '95 and '96. In 2002, America fell in love with Clay's extraordinary talent and undeniable charisma on the second season of Fox's *American Idol*. His journey on the show became a cultural phenomenon, drawing nearly 40 million viewers for the finale – the highest rated episode of live, regularly-scheduled television of the 21st century.

Clay's music career ignited like a wildfire. In the first seven years of his career, he racked up a combined 6 million in record sales, a number only amplified by tens of millions more who tuned in to his performances on tours and TV and solidified his status as a beloved artist and a national treasure.

Beyond his recording accomplishments, Clay has captivated audiences on stages across America. He has headlined 12 national tours and performed on some of the biggest and most prestigious stages in the world. In 2005, his Joyful Noise Tour also advocated for Community theatres throughout the nation by inviting members of a community theatre in the 30 something cities where the shows were, to participate in the show by providing 12 actors to be the ensemble members. The audiences were encouraged to support community theatre because of the inclusivity, creative encouragement and "safe place" they provide. Raleigh Little Theatre participated in shows in Charlotte and Raleigh.

Clay has also excelled beyond the pop music world. His Broadway debut in 2008 in Monty Python's *Spamalot* earned rave reviews. He later returned to Broadway in 2018 for the co- headlining show *Ruben & Clay's First Annual Christmas Carol Family Fun Pageant Spectacular Reunion Show*.

# PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

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Beyond his entertaining career, Clay has remained deeply committed to giving back and has been a tireless advocate for children with disabilities. In 2003, he built upon his pre-Idol experience as an elementary special education teacher by co-founding the National Inclusion Project to help advocate and provide for the inclusion of children with disabilities. As a UNICEF ambassador, Clay dedicated ten years to improving the lives of children worldwide. To advocate for child protection and access to education around the world, he traveled to disaster zones and warzones in Afghanistan, Somalia, Indonesia, Mexico, Uganda, and Kenya.

Clay has also ventured into the world of politics, running for a Congressional seat in the North Carolina House of Representatives in 2014 and again as a U.S. House seat in 2022.



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# RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE

## STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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**MICHELE WEATHERS** (Producing Artistic Director) (she/her/hers) Previously: Executive Director and Senior Executive Advisor at Carolina Ballet (2017-2023), Managing Director at PlayMakers Repertory Company (2014-2016), Managing Director at Barrington Stage Company (Pittsfield, MA) and North Carolina Theatre (1991-2004). NYC credits include: *In the Heights*, *High Fidelity*, *Orson's Shadow*, and *Red Light Winter*. In 2019, she was recognized with TBJ's Women in Business Leadership Award and, in 2024, she was a member of the inaugural group of award winners for Raleigh Magazine's Impact 50. DEI workshops: artEquity and Emerging Equity. Michele is a member of the League of Professional Theatre Women. Her daughter, Peyton Rose, is a freshman at Michigan State University. Go Green! Meredith College grad. She is incredibly proud of RLT's place in the community.

**DENNIS R. BERFIELD** (Scenic Designer/Production Manager/Technical Director) is from South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He received degrees in Theater and Communication Studies at the Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Scenic Design and Technology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Dennis has worked at various regional and off-Broadway theaters as a Scenic Artist, Carpenter, Master Carpenter, Scenic Designer, Assistant Technical Director, and Scenic Coordinator. After working professionally for a number of years, Dennis became an adjunct professor at Millikin University in Decatur, IL, and went on to become the Technical Director at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania.

**TERRA HODGE** (Director of Education) (she/her) is the Director of Education at Raleigh Little Theatre. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Education from North Carolina Central University and her Master of Arts degree in Media Arts from Long Island University, Brooklyn Campus. Prior to joining RLT, Terra was the Theatre Arts teacher at Culbreth Middle School in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She was named the 2017-2018 Culbreth Teacher of the Year and was named an Honor Teacher for Chapel Hill - Carrboro City Schools. Terra has worked as a teaching artist, actor, and director with many local theatre companies. She is the director of Agape Theatre Project's production of *Crowns* that was featured at the 2024 International Black Theatre Festival in Winston Salem, NC.

# Enjoy the performance!



**Brandon J Miller, CFP<sup>®</sup>**  
Financial Advisor

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# RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE

## STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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**JENNY MITCHELL** (Resident Costume Designer/Costume Shop Manager) brings all her experience to Raleigh Little Theatre to work with volunteers to create the costumes for each production. Past work includes designs for *Kinky Boots*, *Something Rotten*, *Hadestown: Teen Edition*, and *Witch*. among so many others. She is thrilled to contribute to this production and help bring its visual world to life.

**MEGAN FARRELL** (Marketing Manager) joined the Raleigh Little Theatre team in August 2019. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Marketing from North Carolina State University. Megan grew up a theater kid and loves getting to "play" on the admin side of the performing arts now as an adult. When she's not at the theatre, Megan is likely cheering on the Dodgers, watching horror movies, or going on adventures with her tiny best friend Emmie.

**HELEN NOWLAN-WALLS** (Development Manager) spent most of her life in the UK and Canada and moved to NC in 2023. She has been working in non-profit development for more than 20 years and has spent her career focussed on diversity, equity, and inclusion. She has a BA in English & Theatre and is thrilled to be returning to her theatre education and performance roots at RLT. Outside of work, Helen can be found driving her kids to their various rehearsals, wrangling her basset hound Daphne Honeybutt, watching murder mysteries, and playing video games whenever time allows it. Helen has been struck by lightning twice and hit by a double decker bus - all while riding a bicycle. Helen is no longer allowed to ride a bicycle.

**ALI WOOD** (Assistant Technical Director) could be found both on-stage and backstage while she was growing up. From skits her grandfather wrote for church to performing at the local community theatre, Ali was always involved. However, during her college years, she found lighting and swapped over to the dark side. After graduating, Ali worked as an Entertainment Stage Technician for Walt Disney World and now she continues her career as the Assistant Technical Director here at Raleigh Little Theatre where she hopes to continue spreading the love and joy of theatre with everyone she meets.

# RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE

## STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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**CANDACE SPENCER** (Education Programs Specialist) is an accomplished African American theatre professional passionate about nurturing young artists. She holds a BA in Theatre from Greensboro College and an MFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Louisville. Candace has expanded her artistic perspective through a six-month study abroad program in London, where she explored theatre and dance. While pursuing her MFA, Candace gained four years of experience teaching introductory acting classes to undergraduates, and she developed on-camera acting skills during her undergraduate studies. She is skilled in drama instruction, on-stage and on-camera acting, and stage directing. Her dedication to youth development is not only evident in her teaching experience, but also in her work with young artists at a summer camp in Los Angeles, California.

**DENISE SCHUMAKER** (Associate Costume Shop Manager) has designed costumes, props and sets for theatre, dance, opera, and tours, plus film, television, and MrBeast, for over 35 years. She was honored with an Emmy® nomination in 2010. Recent work includes *Polyfamy* on TLC, the horror film *Bloodspawn* (2024), *Pippin* for Theatre in the Park, *The Marriage of Figaro* for NC Opera, *The Magic Flute* for Elon Opera Workshop, and RLT's Theatre For the Very Young production of *All Smiles*.

**EMMA CLEMENTS** (Jack Hall Scholar) is a local director and producer. They are very excited to return to the RLT team for the 2025-2026 season as the Jack Hall Scholar! They recently graduated from UNC-CH, where they held several student leadership and production roles, including Executive Director of Production for Pauper Players' 2022-2023 season. Emma also serves as the Artistic Director for Boy With Box Theatre Company, a new small-budget theatre company in Chapel Hill.

# RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

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**MAGGIE GINA** (Administrative Intern) is a senior at NC State majoring in Business Administration with a minor in arts entrepreneurship. Since she first picked up a trumpet at age 9, she was immediately drawn to a world of music and creativity, helping her realize she needed the arts to be forever a part of her life! Maggie is very excited to be a part of RLT and is grateful for the chance to gain real-world experience in marketing/administration and see first hand what it means to bring a performance to life. When not in the theater, Maggie can usually be found spending time with friends and family, studying, or in and out of practice rooms.



**Poyner Spruill**<sup>LLP</sup>

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

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# RALEIGH LITTLE THEATRE

## STAFF

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Producing Artistic Director  
**Michele Weathers**

Production Manager/Technical Director  
**Dennis R. Berfield**

Director of Education  
**Terra Hodge**

Costume Shop Manager/Resident Costume Designer  
**Jenny Mitchell**

Marketing Manager  
**Megan Farrell**

Development Manager  
**Helen Nowlan-Walls**

Assistant Technical Director  
**Ali Wood**

Associate Costume Shop Manager  
**Denise Schumaker**

Education Programs Specialist  
**Candace Spencer**

Interim Box Office & Front of House Supervisor  
**Morgan Harris**

Box Office Associates  
**Jackson Griffin**  
**Jada Smith**  
**Joel Schaer**  
**Nic Johnson**

Jack Hall Scholar  
**Emma Clements**

Administrative Intern  
**Maggie Gina**

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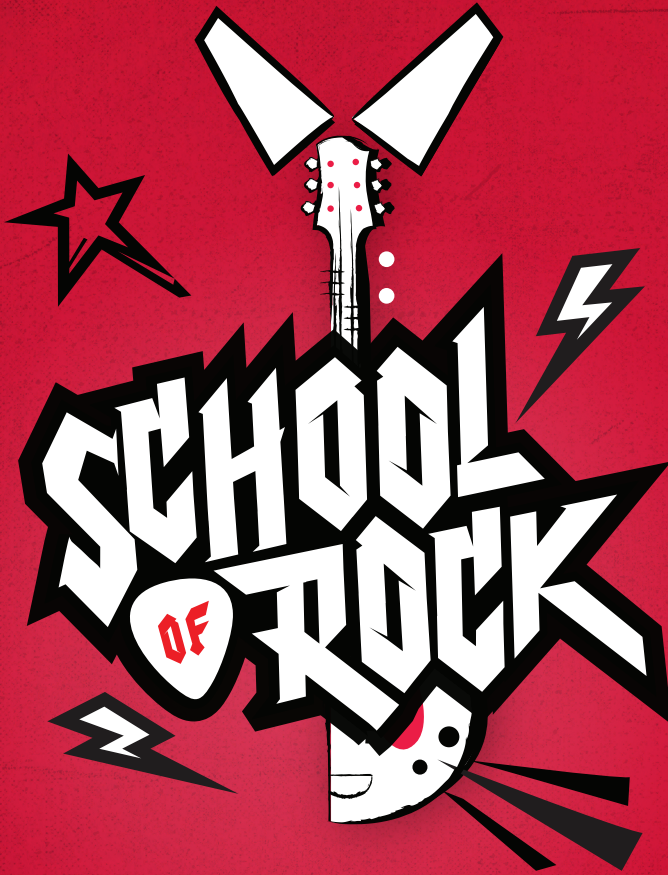
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