

# ALLSMLES THEATRE FOR THE VERY YOUNG



# SEPTEMBER 4 - 15 CREATED BY ALLIANCE THEATRE



### presents

# **ALL SMILES**

## **Created by Alliance Theatre**

Originally developed and produced by the Alliance Theatre (Atlanta, GA) as part of the Kathy and Ken Bernhardt Theatre for the Very Young series, January 2023.

Directed by Terra Hodge

Scenic and Props Design by Denise Schumaker

Costume Design by Elspeth McClanahan

Sound Elements and Composition by Multiband Studios

Stage Management by Dylan Bailey

ALL SMILES Is produced through special arrangement with the Alliance Theatre, a division of the Robert W. Woodruff Arts Center, Inc., 1280 Peachtree Street NE, Atlanta, GA 30309.

Any video and/or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

# **Sponsors**

Thanks to our media sponsor, Triangle Family Magazine.



This program is funded in part by the City of Raleigh based on recommendations of the Raleigh Arts Commission..



All Smiles is supported by the United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, as well as the N.C. Arts Council, a division of the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.





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Special thanks to David Watts for website maintenance and Zoe Wright for program assistance.

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# Welcome to the theatre!

RLT is proud of its long history of serving Raleigh and the surrounding communities with rich educational programming, a beloved Family Series on its stages and the multiple levels of engagement that a community theatre by and for the people provides. It seems impossible we have had a missing puzzle piece, right?

Well, we have - a theatre experience for our littlest audience members - ages 0-5. Theatre for the Very Young (TVY) has been a thriving part of theatre-making in the UK for several decades. Research shows young children exposed to the joys of theatre learn empathy, experience improved language skills and develop critical thinking. Their capacity to translate the mostly non-verbal, interactive experience of TVY is spectacular to watch.

Thank you for joining us for this inaugural production of TVY at RLT. We hope you enjoy All Smiles!

With gratitude,

Michele Weathers Executive Producer



Me and my husband, Todd, along with our little theatre lover, Peyton Rose (2008)

# **Letter from the Director**

Theatre for the Very Young (TVY) engages an audience that hasn't had many opportunities to enjoy a theatre experience in this area. All Smiles, created by the Alliance Theatre, welcomes babies, toddlers, and preschoolers to visit a theatre space to enjoy a performance, which may be the first exposure to theatre for some. I am excited that Raleigh Little Theatre is at the forefront of providing these shows to the Triangle community.

The show All Smiles takes place inside the imagination part of a brain, where there is a machine that produces images of smiles. The characters Sense and Mo are neurons that work in the brain to produce these smiles. Neurons are nerve cells that are responsible for all the actions the body and brain performs. Sense is a sensory neuron that signals the brain to help with stimuli from our five senses (sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste). Mo is a motor neuron that controls voluntary and involuntary movement in our bodies. This explanation of neurons and their function may be too advanced for our young audiences to understand, but it is the foundation on which the narrative was created and characters were developed.

When the machine that produces the smiles breaks, the neurons enlist the audience to help them create smiles. This performance is mostly non-verbal and very interactive. It is designed to be a sensory-friendly space that supports cognitive development of our young audiences and encourages them to get out of their seats to engage in creative play with our performers.

We have three amazing theatre professionals in this production. Each performer is a teaching artist with Raleigh Little Theatre's Education Department. Stacie Alston, Dylan Bailey, and Gerardo Elizondo all have extensive experience in working with young children, and they bring a level of expertise that was needed to produce RLT's first TVY show. I am honored and grateful to have assembled this amazing cast. The process of rehearsing this show with them has been a joy. Being that the show is mostly nonverbal, we took a deep dive in exploring using our bodies, facial expressions, and gestures to effectively convey different emotions and the narrative. We had fun embracing our inner child to fully meet the needs of our audience.

Even though this theatrical performance is designed for the very young, it's an experience that the entire family can appreciate and enjoy. From the moment audience members walk through our doors, they are encouraged to engage in creative play. We have pre-show activities before each performance. There will never be a dull moment when experiencing All Smiles at RLT. Thank you for supporting Theatre for the Very Young and Raleigh Little Theatre.

Sealed with a SMILE! Terra Hodge Director

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# **Cast & Production Team**

Cast Mo Sense

Gerardo Elizondo

**Stacie Alston** 

**Dylan Bailey** 

### **Production Team**

Director

Boss

**Costume Designer** 

Scenic and Props Designer

Production Manager/ Technical Director

Costume Shop Manager

Assistant Technical Director

**Stage Manaer** 

**Terra Hodge** 

**Elspeth McClanahan** 

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# **Cast Biographies**



**STACIE ALSTON** (Sense) a Raleigh native, is no stranger to the world of theatre. She earned her Master of Fine Arts in Theatre Arts with a focus in Acting from the University of Idaho. Her passion for Shakespeare led her to London, where she studied at the prestigious Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts. Stacie is thrilled to be part of Raleigh Little Theatre's first Theatre

for the Very Young production, *All Smiles*. She extends heartfelt thanks to the Lord, her family, and friends for their unwavering prayers and support.



**DYLAN BAILEY** (Boss) is an actor, playwright, stage manager, and teaching artist. He holds a BFA in Theatre for Youth from East Carolina University. He works extensively throughout the Triangle Area as a teaching artist and as a standardized patient with Duke, NC State, and the American Board of Anesthesiology. He served as Seed Art Share's Education Director

for several years. He loves writing plays for young audiences in his free time!



**GERARDO ELIZONDO** (Mo) is a Costa Rican actor who graduated from the faculty of Dramatic Arts in the Costa Rican University. He recently moved to the Triangle area to learn about the theatre experience in the United States. Gerardo has played characters like Macbeth, Richard the Third, Kassandra, the old man in *The Chairs* by lonesco and many others. He also has experience

as a director in several productions like A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Dance of Death, and Dopamine Overdose, a play he wrote as part of his formation process. And recently he has worked as a teaching artist with RLT. Gerardo has worked as a lighting, set and costume designer as well as a producer in several plays.

# Production Team Biographies

**TERRA HODGE** (Director/RLT 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 for the past 13 years 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 this year's International Black Theatre Festival in Winston Salem, NC.

**DENISE SCHUMAKER** (Scenic Designer/Props Designer) has designed costumes, props and sets for theatre, dance, opera, and tours, plus film and television, for over 35 years. She was honored with an Emmy® nomination in 2010. Recent work includes *Sister Wives Tell All* on TLC, the film *Bloodspawn* (2024), *The Little Mermaid Jr* for STAR (Special Theatre Arts of Raleigh), *Grand Horizons* for Honest Pint Theatre Company, *Henry V* for Theatre in the Park, and *Something Rotten!* for Raleigh Little Theatre.

**ELSPETH MCCLANAHAN** (Costume Design) is thrilled to be combining her two worlds, theatre and preschool, for this production. For 15 years, she has found joy in teaching littles. Some of her RLT Credits include *Elephant and Piggie*, *Nate the Great*, *What We're Up Against*, *Into the Woods*, *She Kills Monsters*, *Misery*, and *Our Town*. She received her bachelor's in Theatre from Radford University. Her design of *Hair* earned an honorable mention for costume design at the 1999 Elliot Norton Awards in Boston. Some other credits include La Cage *aux Folles*, *Grease*, *Will Rogers Follies*, *West Side Story*, *42nd Street*, to name a few. Special thanks to her family for their support, the staff of RLT, NRUM Preschool, and Terri Schaffer and Nicole Weatherford.

# Production Team Biographies

**DYLAN BAILEY** (State Manager) is an actor, playwright, stage manager, and teaching artist. He holds a BFA in Theatre for Youth from East Carolina University. He works extensively throughout the Triangle Area as a teaching artist and as a standardized patient with Duke, NC State, and the American Board of Anesthesiology. He served as Seed Art Share's Education Director for several years. He loves writing plays for young audiences in his free time!

**DENNIS R. BERFIELD** (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.

**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 (Go Wolfpack!). 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, daydreaming about Halloween, or watching Disney movies with her tiny best friend Emmie. She's excited to introduce Emmie to the wonderful world of theatre at *All Smiles*!

# Production Team Biographies

JENNY MITCHELL (Costume Shop Manager) is the Costume Shop Manager here at Raleigh Little Theatre. She is thankful to have such a dedicated group of volunteers and coworkers to work with on this, and every, production. Her most recent credits include: Something Rotten!, Kinky Boots, Trouble in Mind, Curtains, and Junie B. Jones Is Not A Crook.

MICHELE WEATHERS (Executive Producer) joined RLT in November 2023. Prior to that, she was the Executive Director and Senior Advisor at Carolina Ballet from 2017-2023. Other leadership experience includes positions at PlayMakers Repertory Company (UNC-Chapel Hill), Barrington Stage Company (Pittsfield, MA) and North Carolina Theatre (Raleigh, NC). NY 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. Professional development includes DEI training with artEquity. Michele is a member of the League of Professional Theatre Women and is a Theatre grant panelist for the NEA. Her daughter, Peyton Rose, is a rising senior at Enloe High School.

ALI WOOD (Assistant Technical Director) could be found both on-stage and backstage when there was a show while she was growing up. From skits that her grandfather wrote for their church to the local community theatre, she was always involved and loved the art. Her most recent endeavor was working as an Entertainment Stage Technician for Walt Disney World. She hopes to continue spreading her love and joy of Theatre with everyone she meets.

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Marie Berry

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