

CLYDE'S

== BY LYNN NOTTAGE ==



FORWARD
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FORWARD THEATER COMPANY

presents the Wisconsin premiere of

CLYDE'S

by **Lynn Nottage**

Directed by **Jake Penner**

Scenic Designer
Keith Pitts**

Lighting Designer
Jason Fassl**

Costume Designer
Jason Orlenko**

Composer & Sound Designer
Joe Cerqua**

Props Master
Pamela Miles

Stage Manager
Sarah Nicholson*

.....
15th Anniversary Season sponsored by:



Clyde's is generously sponsored by:

Findorff



In-kind support provided by Grand Appliance, Metcalfe's Market and Wisconsin Cutlery.

This play was supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts, and The Evjue Foundation, Inc., the charitable arm of *The Capital Times*.

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* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.



** Member of United Scenic Artists Local 829



FORWARD THEATER CO.

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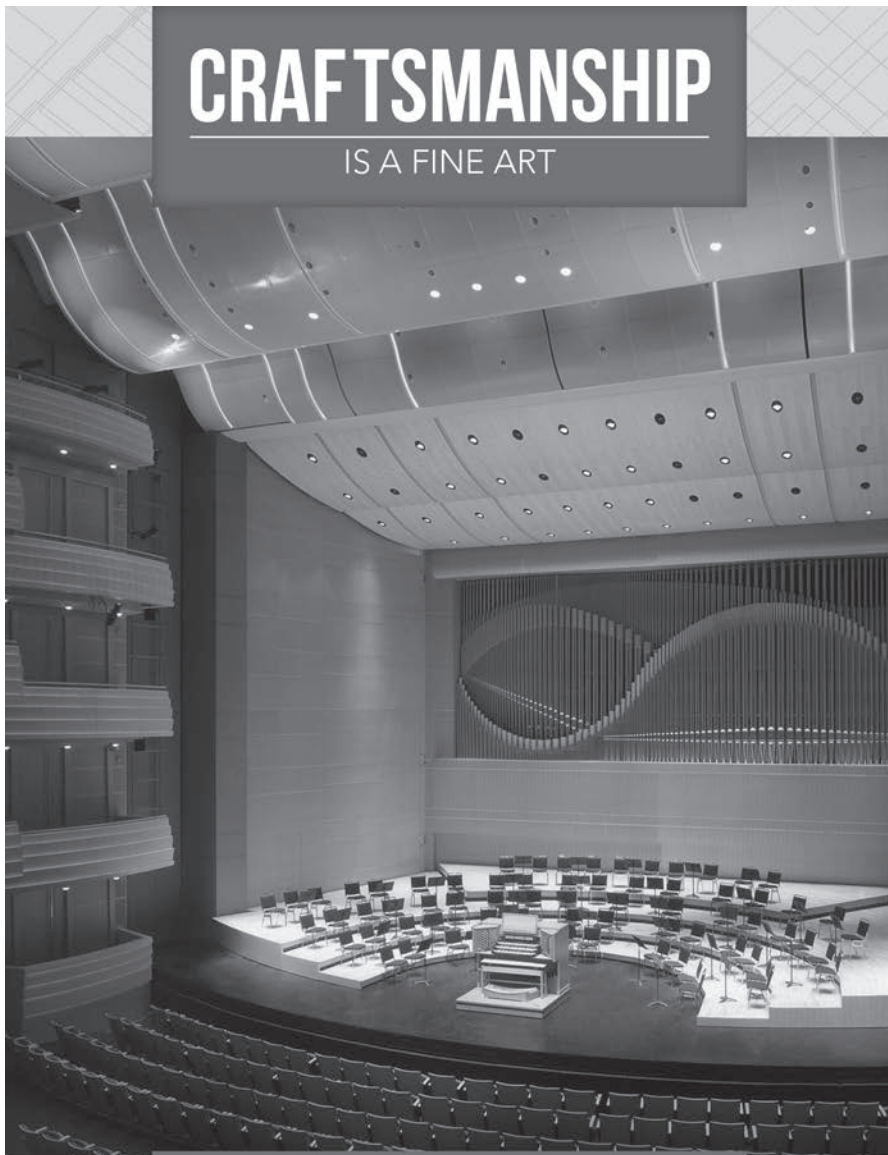
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FROM THE DIRECTOR...JAKE PENNER

There's a practice in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition called 'Sand Mandala,' in which monks who've trained for years in the art form create intricate geometric patterns representing the Universe, or the Enlightened Mind, or Wisdom, or Impermanence by tapping colored sand from tiny brass funnels onto a flat surface one single grain at a time. The work takes days and is often performed by several monks simultaneously, all laboring in concert, each hunched over the chalk outline of the design to come, silent. It's a breathtaking process to watch unfold and absolutely devastating in its final moments when the monks, their mandala finally complete, destroy their design in less time than it would take to tie a kitchen apron around your waist. The creation of the mandala is meant to represent our journey from ignorance to enlightenment; the mandala's destruction, the ultimate impermanence of all things.

There are no sand mandalas in *Clyde's* — no monks, no geometric shapes signifying the Eternal. There are instead five formerly incarcerated people toiling together in the kitchen of a roadside diner, hunched over their cutting boards making sandwiches for truckers.

But they, like the mandala-shaping monks, understand — some more than others — that though the sandwich is impermanent, the energy derived from a sandwich is not. That energy will live on in the form of health for the trucker who's eaten it. The trucker will then steer the food shipment to its destination, which will contribute to the livelihoods of all those in the supply chain that came before. Which will allow for the farmer who began the process to continue farming, thus starting the life-sustaining cycle over again.

So it had better be a *good* sandwich. It had better be made with all the love and care pertinent to all those innumerable people who will be affected by the creation of that sandwich downstream. And these people will of course fail at this, and question its validity, and rage against the unknowable orchestrator of their predicament. But they will, despite all this, do it anyway. Because they know, in their soul, it's just what's to be done.

Like any good spiritual practice.

FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR...JEN UPHOFF GRAY

Welcome to the second show of Forward's 15th season, the delicious and devilish *Clyde's* by the brilliant Lynn Nottage. We are so proud to be bringing you the Wisconsin premiere of this play. *Clyde's* is right in our sweet spot here at Forward — it's funny, entertaining to watch (c'mon, they're making all those sandwiches there in front of you!), deeply thought-provoking, and a powerful platform for intentional community engagement. For many years the Madison area has struggled to improve the level of support for formerly incarcerated folks here in our community. We are grateful to be partnering with JustDane, a nonprofit making great strides on these issues, and encourage you to get to know their work (and to purchase some of their cookies out in the lobby - yum!). This is what theater **of, by, and for** a community should be, and it's what we aspire to every season. Thank you for supporting what we do!

FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS...DAVE CHAIMSON

We are thrilled you've joined us for the second of four incredible shows we have for you this season!

Clyde's was written by Lynn Nottage, the only woman who's twice won the Pulitzer Prize for drama (*Ruined* and *Sweat*). She's long been credited with writing plays about complex characters and intense relationships that explore social issues in a complicated world.

It's been our goal at Forward Theater not only to entertain but also to provide profound experiences that create opportunities for discussion. And while watching our shows provides you with distinctive individual thoughts about what you're seeing on stage, being able to share those with others is what makes live theater so unique. We all see, hear, and take away varying perspectives, and through dialogue with others, we realize how differently we consume the same things in front of us.

Even more impressive is your sharing these viewpoints with us every show as we greet you in the theater. We love hearing about your relationship with Forward Theater and how we can continue to shape and improve what we do for you over the next 15 years. Whether you're a single-ticket buyer or a season subscriber, we appreciate your ongoing support of professional theater that challenges us all.

Like the characters in *Clyde's*, who have faith in other futures that have been formed and nurtured in the most unexpected places, we're very thankful you've put your trust in us to bring theater into your lives throughout this season and many more to come.

Thank you again for coming today and supporting us. Please continue to share your love of Forward Theater with others you know who will enjoy what we offer our community.



FROM THE ADVISORY COMPANY...DEPUTY JONO DE LEON

Season 15! Part Two!

Sandwiched seductively center(ish) sits *Clyde's*. A play about how food relates to the human condition and experience. If *Garbologists* was about what we throw away and who is responsible for removing our waste, *Clyde's* is about those in off-the-beaten-path places that create amazing food that we tell our friends about and become a travel blogger for just so that we can continue to search for that "perfect place", where the fries are crisp, the sandwiches are just right, and the drinks are always your preferred temperature. *Clyde's* takes a peek behind the kitchen door and shows us the humanity behind the people who prepare our food.

Forward is excited to present this Lynn Nottage play as it was one of the most produced plays in 2022. Lynn Nottage is a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner who brings together a cast of formerly incarcerated individuals in the back kitchen of *Clyde's*, a sandwich shop that provides a second chance for these characters and also a way to express their own creativity and soul through the art and service of cooking. We hope to delve deeper into the relationships we have with each other, with our pasts, and with the systems that influence how we move forward in modern America. The Advisory Company spent an entire meeting talking about our relationship to food, working in the food industry, and how food brings us together and is a key component in our meetings.

While we're talking about food, start thinking now about your perfect sandwich: Hot? Cold? Veggie? Meatball? Is it a meatball sub? It is a question that is asked of our characters throughout the play and defines them as individuals. Maybe make plans with friends to find that perfect sandwich spot in town (*after the show*), while you're there, make plans to see our upcoming shows or consider buying tickets for your friends and family!

A CLOSER LOOK...ADVISORY COMPANY MEMBER MIKE FISCHER

American Hunger

People ask me: Why do you write about food, and eating and drinking? Why don't you write about the struggle for power and security, and about love, the way others do? . . . It seems to me that our three basic needs, for food and security and love, are so mixed and mingled and entwined that we cannot straightly think of one with the others. So it happens that when I write of hunger, I am really writing about love and the hunger for it, and warmth and the love of it and the hunger for it. . . it is all one.

– M.F.K. Fisher, *The Gastronomical Me* (1943)

Human beings are the only animals that cook. Therefore cooking is one of the things that makes us human. What better way to focus on the human being and its complexity but to focus on one of the things that defines us as human?

– Playwright Richard Nelson, on characters preparing and eating meals in his plays (2016)

Clyde's – the comedy by two-time Pulitzer-winning playwright Lynn Nottage that you're about to see – unfolds in the kitchen of a truck stop sandwich shop.

But don't let this humble setting – or the ostensibly simple food that's made there – fool you.

It's not just that the sandwiches you'll hear described – including a grilled confection featuring blue cheese, spinach, habaneros and candied apples, as well as pulled pork with pickled onions and blueberry compote on a soft pretzel roll – are unlike any you've ever seen or tasted.

Or that Montrellous – one of the shop's employees – is alternately described as the "John Coltrane of sandwich making," a "sensei," and a "Buddha" who sees a good sandwich as his "strength," his "victory," and his "freedom."

For as Montrellous tells his co-workers – every one of them a formerly incarcerated person, whose back stories are alternately harrowing, heartbreaking, and inspiring – the sandwich isn't just the "most democratic of all foods," "a complete meal that you can hold between your fingers."

As Montrellous points out, creating a sandwich is also an invitation to invention and collaboration which says a great deal about our relation to each other and the world. Kind of like theater itself.

The Art of Food

Long before the emergence of what we now call dinner theater – or, in the restaurant world, celebrity chefs performing the art of cooking in open kitchens – food and theater enjoyed an intimate relationship, with each other as well as other art forms involving song and dance. Their fusion was expressed through banquets and masques, tournaments and pageants, mystery play cycles and festivals.

Food wasn't an afterthought. It was integral to representing and expressing our hopes and dreams for the way we lived and the world we wanted to build.

Perhaps that's why Nottage's *Sweat* (2015) – a play which shares a character with *Clyde's* – unfolds in a bar.

It's certainly why Nottage's *Crumbs From the Table of Joy* (1995) – a play in which some characters are so impoverished that they're starving – imagines a sumptuous banquet, even as one character "ravenously bites into [a] sandwich, fighting to force down the half-chewed chunks of food" while a second "greedily stuffs" everything from crumbs to cabbage into her mouth.

The sandwiches dreamed into being in *Clyde's* function much like the bountiful banquet in *Crumbs*; in each case, such dreams of plenty offer refuge from a broken and hungry world.

The employees in *Clyde's* work for a satanic boss who harasses and beats them, belittling their dreams and continually reminding them that as convicted criminals they're lucky to even have a job; it's worth noting here that Wisconsin remains among the overwhelming majority of American jurisdictions allowing an employer to not only ask about convictions on a job application, but also frequently deny employment on the basis of such convictions.

Boss Clyde has no use for her employees' artsy sandwiches; ham-and-cheese on white or tuna on rye is good enough for her. She's about speed rather than process and quantity rather than quality.

"Our kitchens and other eating places more and more resemble filling stations," Wendell Berry warns in *What Are People For?* (1990). Berry continues: "Life is not very interesting; we seem to have decided. 'Let its satisfactions be minimal, perfunctory, and fast.'"

Slow Food

In what we eat as well as how we watch – at table and in the theater – we increasingly turn to instantly gratifying, easily digestible meals, consumed with minimal thought, effort, or attention; even as they fill us up, they paradoxically leave us empty and hungry (thank you, social media).

We're degrading our experiences. We're shortening our lives. We're failing to take the time to truly see and share with each other.

Conversely, *Clyde's* is a play which Nottage herself described in an interview last year as being about "community, healing, creativity, mindfulness and forgiveness" – while living in a country which she described in a 2018 interview as having "lost [its] narrative. We can't project our future because we don't know where we are going."

Might Montreilous and his coworkers offer us a way forward?

Even as Clyde warns her employees that she'll "make sure you go back to whatever hell you came from" if they "disappoint me by having aspirations," those employees quietly persist in their collective quest to make the perfect sandwich, without regard to how long that takes or what it might cost.

"My characters are always questioning and challenging the world within which they live," Nottage wrote in a 2004 introduction to a volume of her plays. "They are unsettled souls, striving to make sense of their surroundings, and ultimately refusing to surrender to expectations."

Will the characters in *Clyde's* be able to hang on and hold out, insisting that they deserve more than crumbs from the American dream? *Clyde's* will make you hunger for their sandwiches. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could actually taste them, as we finally break bread together?

– *Written in memory of Richard Wright. Chicago, October 5, 2023*



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**IS PROUD TO SUPPORT
FORWARD THEATER COMPANY
AND THEIR PRODUCTION OF
*CLYDE'S.***

ACCESSIBILITY AT FORWARD THEATER

Forward Theater's mission is to expand the cultural life for Madison-area audiences, which means inviting *all* of our community in to access and enjoy live, professional theater. Forward is proud to provide:

- [Assistive Listening Devices](#), which amplify sound through either a receiver and headphones, or a T-coil/Induction Loop (for those with compatible hearing aids or cochlear implants).
 - o Tip: Come early to sit and test your device, and keep your phone away from the device to avoid interference.
- [ASL-interpreted performances](#), offered on the third Saturday matinee of each production. Designated seating that offers an unobstructed view of the ASL interpreter is available as a ticket option.
- [Audio Description](#) - Exact dates TBD. Please contact us if interested.
- [Large print programs](#).
- [Courtesy wheelchairs](#).
- [Family Assist/Gender Neutral Restrooms](#).

You can access these devices and services at the coat check in the Playhouse lobby.

We are continuing to add services to enhance the experience of live theater for guests with disabilities, through realistic action steps and authentic relationship building. Would you like to utilize or learn more about these services? Have feedback or suggestions? Contact us: Audience Services 608-234-5001 x1 | Email: bcollins@forwardtheater.com

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledging Ho-Chunk Nation's ancestral lands, Forward Theater and Overture Center for the Arts celebrate the rich traditions, heritage, and culture that thrived long before our arrival. We respectfully recognize this Ho-Chunk land and affirm that we are better when we stand together.

We encourage you to visit ho-chunknation.com to learn more.

FTC'S 2023-2024 SEASON BUDGET

Thank you for purchasing a ticket to this production!

We are grateful to everyone who supports our work through ticket sales and other financial gifts. Key among our founding values is transparency. To that end, we share with you our annual budget, as an organization's budget is its clearest expression of its priorities. Producing professional theater is not inexpensive, but we consider carefully how we spend each dollar. And we are proud that such a significant amount of our spending is done locally, in support of local artists and local businesses. Thank you for your part in making it all possible!

People

Artistic personnel & benefits \$210,518
(93 actors, directors, designers)

Production personnel \$173,890
(62 crew and technical support)

Staff, benefits, payroll taxes \$543,659
(6 full-time, 1 part-time)

Accounting staff & consultants \$32,730

Community Connections \$10,680
(La Follette HS teaching artists; EDI & Anti-Racism efforts; other Outreach Programming)

Playwright Royalties \$64,862

Productions

Sets \$20,500

Costumes \$8,550

Lighting \$2,800

Props \$10,800

Sound \$270

Playbills \$9,600

Storage space \$4,200

Set building space \$8,944

Miscellaneous \$10,350
(scripts, auditions, transportation)

Venue

Theater rental \$69,656

Rehearsal space rental \$14,611

Venue equipment rental \$10,800

Security fees \$3,520

Box office fees \$114,399
(includes sales taxes)

Company Expenses

Artist housing \$4,350

Hospitality \$6,015

COVID-19 Safety expenses \$6,000

Operations

Office space rental \$45,500

Operational expenses \$19,828

(copier, internet, phone, database, supplies)

Insurance \$15,500

Payroll & Audit services \$19,700

Banking \$16,265

(incl. credit card processing fees)

Organizational memberships \$4,620

Marketing/Development

Marketing \$86,650

(advertising, graphic design, etc.)

Development/

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Total 2023-2024 Operating Budget: \$1,600,017



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CLYDE'S

by Lynn Nottage

CAST (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

Clyde	Dana Pellebon
Jason	Sean Langenecker
Montrellous	Dimonte Henning*
Rafael	Ronald Román-Meléndez*
Letitia	Nadja Simmonds

Place & Time:
Berks County, PA

Understudies:
Laura McMillan, Matt Reines, and D. Eric Woolweber

*Performers appear courtesy of Actors' Equity Association,
the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.

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ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES



Dimonte Henning (Montrellous) is grateful to be back at Forward Theater and be a part of *Clyde's*. Dimonte is an actor, director, and theater

producer and received his formal theater training at UW-Milwaukee with additional training from Milwaukee Rep's Emerging Professional Residency. He is a Founding Member of the Milwaukee Black Theater Festival and performing arts organization, Lights! Camera! Soul! Some of his favorite directing credits include: *Dream, Quickie! Dream!, Black Nativity, The Niceties, and Pretty Fire*. Dimonte's national regional theater credits include: *Seven Guitars*, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park; *Toni*

Stone, Alliance Theatre; *Stick Fly*, Writers Theatre; *The Island & Deathtrap*, Milwaukee Chamber Theater; *Skeleton Crew*, Forward Theater Co.; *Our Town, A Christmas Carol, & Dreamgirls*, Milwaukee Repertory Theater; *The Wiz & The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, First Stage. Dimonte has several TV and commercial credits including: Guest starring roles on NBC's *Chicago PD* (Seasons 4&6), Disney's *Encore!*, WI Lottery, UBER, Inpro Designs, and Harley-Davidson.



Sean Langenecker (Jason) is no stranger to the kitchens or stages of Madison, but *Clyde's* marks their first time cooking with



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World on Fire on Masterpiece

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Forward. Five fave roles: Hedwig in *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, Madison Performance Collective; The Third Man in *The Baltimore Waltz*, Strollers' Theatre; Glen/da in *Attack of the Killer B's*, Broom Street Theater; Charlie in *Scrooge in Rouge*, StageQ; Mozart in *Amadeus*, Strollers' Theatre. They have also directed several shows including *Men on Boats* and *Ripcord* for Strollers'; *The Birds* (with Matt Reines) and *The Revolutionists* for Mercury Players. Their first original play, *Weak End of the Burnt Piano*, will premiere next May at Broom Street Theater.

Laura McMillan (Clyde u/s, Letitia u/s) is thrilled and honored to be a part of this amazing production. Her most notable credits include: *A Christmas Carol*, Children's Theater of Madison; *Peter Pan*, Children's Theater of Madison; *The Revolutionists*, Mercury Players Theatre; *Little Shop of Horrors*, Edgewood College; *Broadway at Paliku*, Paliku Theater. Laura would like to thank her family and friends, especially her girlfriend, Cassie, and best friend, Scott, who have always given nothing but their love and support throughout her career.



Dana Pellebon (Clyde) is grateful for this opportunity to be back on stage. As Executive Director of RCC Sexual Violence Resource Center and a Dane

County Board Supervisor, her plate has been full but the thought of the perfect sandwich of art brought her back to performing. Her activism extends to all aspects of her life including art. She is a theater professional and has directed, acted, and produced theatrical works locally, regionally, and in New York. She is a co-founder of the Loud N Unchained Black Theater Festival, a founder of the local burlesque scene with Foxy Veronica's Peach Pies, and the principal of the Madison

Theatre Collective. She is also the Director of Theatrical Programming at the upcoming Center for Black Excellence and Culture. She would like to thank the Forward artistic staff for their generosity, her co-workers for their flexibility, and her family for their undying support.



Ronald Román-Meléndez (Rafael) Ron is thrilled to be making his Forward Theater debut! Locally, he was seen on stage this summer at American

Players Theatre in its productions of *Our Town*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Born and raised in Guaynabo, Puerto Rico, he has worked nomadically across the country since moving away from home. Regional Credits include: *The River Bride*, *The Rivals*, *Love's Labour's Lost* (American Players Theatre); *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Equivocation*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and the world premiere of Julianne Wick Davis' musical *The Willard Suitcases* (American Shakespeare Center); *Villette* (Lookingglass Theater); *Short Shakes! Twelfth Night* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre); *Calabasas Street*, *A Christmas Carol* (Children's Theatre of Madison). Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers.



Nadja Simmonds (Letitia) is incredibly excited to work on this delicious production! After leaving her hometown of Cincinnati, Nadja went

on to receive her theater training at Marquette University. Past Forward credits include The Nina in *Airness*, Kat/Amelia in *Mary Jane* and *46 Plays for America's First Ladies*. Acting and directing credits include Montana Shakespeare in the Parks, Next

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Act Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse, Florentine Opera Company, Milwaukee Rep, Northern Sky Theater, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, First Stage, Northern Sky Theatre, CATCO, and Children's Theater of Madison. Film: *Pretty Pickle*. Nadja is a proud member of Forward's Advisory Company and Literary Committee. You can catch her next in *The Lightning Thief* at First Stage, and directing *Bronzeville*

Bohème with Florentine Opera. Lots of love goes to her family and those continuously fighting for justice and equality. Black Lives Matter. www.nadjasimmonds.com

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Joe Cerqua (Composer & Sound Designer) is a freelance composer, producer, vocalist and sound designer. He is thrilled to be the Resident Composer and Sound Designer at Forward Theater where he has previously composed and designed sound for *Artemesia*, *Airness*, *Feeding Beatrice*, *Russian Troll Farm: A Workplace Comedy*, *The Amateurs*, *46 Plays...*, *Lewiston/Clarkston*, *Lifespan of a Fact*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *For Peter Pan*, *Mary Jane*, *Life Sucks*, *Skeleton Crew*, *Marjorie Prime*, *Learning to Stay*, *Outside Mullingar*, *4000 Miles*, *Mr. Burns*, *The Flick*, *Silent Sky*, *Vanya and Sonia...*, *The Other Place*, *From Up Here*, *Or, Red*, *Sons of the Prophet*, *Good People*, *44 Plays for 44 Presidents*, *Love Stories*, *In the Next Room...*, *Going to St. Ives*, *Why Torture is Wrong...*, and *The Farnsworth Invention*. He has composed music and/or designed sound for over 300 productions in Chicago, nationally, and internationally. Recent projects include original music and sound design for American Players Theatre, The Clarence Brown Theater, and Forward Theater. Joe is the Producing Director/Composer in residence for the Cerqua Rivera Dance Theatre, a critically acclaimed 13-piece jazz orchestra and 10-member dance company. He is the Creative Director and Producer for the Music Department at Columbia College Chicago.

Jason Fassel (Lighting Designer) *Clyde's* marks Jason's 10th FTC production including *Heisenberg*, *Fun Home*, *Good People*, and *Red*. Over the last decade, Jason has consumed mass quantities of electricity at American Players Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Milwaukee Ballet, First Stage, Skylight Opera Theatre, Northern Sky Theater, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Children's Theater of Madison, Peninsula Players, Next Act Theatre, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, and many others. Jason is member of Scenic Artists Local #829, Milwaukee Stage Employees Local #18 and a proud graduate of the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point. Portfolio and information at www.AntiShadows.com

Abbi Hess (Assistant Stage Manager) is grateful to be back for a fourth season with Forward Theater Company! Past favorite credits include: *Bare* and *The Amish Project* (Outskirts Theatre Co.); *Mamma Mia* (Lake Country Playhouse); *Next to Normal* and *Hamlet: A Cover* (Carroll University); *2 Pianos 4 Hands* and *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Milwaukee Rep); *Every Brilliant Thing* and *Imbroglia* (Great River Shakespeare Festival); *Airness* and *Artemisia* (Forward Theater). Thank you to friends, family, and the companies/SM teams that allow her to live this magical, theatrical life!

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

Pamela Miles (Props Master) is delighted to return to Forward for her eleventh season. She is so proud to be a part of this generous and courageous company. Pamela lives in Spring Green, WI where she has worked in the paint shop at American Players Theatre for fifteen seasons. Some other regional theaters she has painted for include: Arizona Broadway Theatre, Children's Theater of Madison, Madison Ballet (*Dracula: A Rock Ballet*) and Madison Opera (*She Loves Me, Tahiti/Sins*). She completed her first outdoor mural in Spring Green during the summer of 2021 on the side of the Slowpoke Lounge & Cabaret. Pamela has previously performed the role of Props Master for the Black Theatre Troupe in Phoenix, AZ and for American Players Theatre's 2016 production of *Mary's Wedding*. She would

like to extend a hearty THANK YOU to everyone who continues to support the arts throughout this pandemic!

Sarah Nicholson (Stage Manager) is delighted to join the team here at Forward! She spent her summer just down the road stage managing *Once Upon a Bridge* and *Mala* at American Players Theatre. Other credits include productions with Asolo Rep, Shakespeare & Company, Arts Center of Coastal Carolina, Orlando REP, and Orlando Shakes, as well as work with Disney Live Entertainment at Walt Disney World. She is a proud graduate of the University of Central Florida, where she earned her BFA in Stage Management.

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PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

Lynn Nottage (Playwright) is a playwright and a screenwriter, and the first woman in history to win two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama. Her plays have been produced widely in the United States and throughout the world. Recent work includes the book for *MJ the Musical* (Broadway); the libretto for the *Intimate Apparel Opera* (LCT); *Clyde's* (Broadway, 2ST, Goodman Theatre); and co-curating the performance installation *The Watering Hole* (Signature Theatre). Past work includes *Sweat, Ruined*, the book for *The Secret Life of Bees*; *Mlima's Tale*; *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark*; *Intimate Apparel*; *Fabulation, or the Re-Education of Undine*; *Crumbs from the Table of Joy*; *Las Meninas*; *Mud, River, Stone*; *Por'knockers*; and *POOF!*. She has also developed *This is Reading*, a performance installation in Reading, Pennsylvania. Ms. Nottage is a member of the Theater Hall of Fame, and the recipient of a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellowship (among other awards). She is also an Associate Professor at Columbia University School of the Arts and is a member of the Dramatists Guild. www.lynnnottage.net



Jason Orlenko (Costume Designer) is delighted to return to Forward where he has previously designed *Mom*, *How Did You Meet the Beatles?* A

Milwaukee based designer, his work there includes *Mamma Mia*, *Noises Off*, *Newsies*, *Kiss Me Kate* at Skylight Music Theatre; *Beehive*, *My Way*, *The All Night Strut*, *Souvenir* at the Milwaukee Rep; *Cost of Living*, *Photograph 51*, *The Violet Hour* for Renaissance Theaterworks. Additional design work includes Utah Festival Opera & Musical Theatre, Next Act Theatre, First Stage, Rep of St. Louis, Milwaukee Chamber, Milwaukee Opera Theatre, In Tandem Theatre, Cardinal Stage. Other credits include the Hangar Theatre, Illinois

Shakespeare Festival, the Florentine Opera, and 4 summers at American Players Theatre. Upcoming designs: *The Mousetrap* at Next Act, *The Wolves* at Renaissance, and *Xanadu* at Skylight. Jason currently resides in Milwaukee with his husband Brick, where he is Assistant Professor of Costume Design at UW-Milwaukee. www.jasonorlenko.com

Jake Penner (Director) is a Los Angeles-based director and arts administrator and former member of Forward Theater Company's Advisory Company. Recent credits include: *Anton's Shorts* (American Players Theatre); *Heathers: The Musical* (University Theatre, UW-Madison); *Clarkston*, *Skeleton Crew* (Forward Theater Company); *The Taming* (Edgewood College); *Carrie, The Musical* (Capital City Theatre); *The Light* (PBS-Wisconsin, Chicago/Midwest Emmy® Award win). Jake is a former Artistic Associate at American Players Theatre. Thanks as always to Jen Uphoff Gray and the whole team at Forward Theater. For Madison.


Keith Pitts (Scenic Designer) Keith Pitts' relationship with Forward Theater began in 2013 when he designed his first show, *Good People*. Fast-forward to today, he finds himself back in Madison at Forward Theater designing for the sixth time; he is thrilled to be collaborating with so many familiar artists. Keith is deeply grateful to all those who have supported his growth as an artist through opportunities and collaborations over the years. Currently residing in Kalamazoo, MI, with his family, Keith wears multiple hats. He is a dedicated educator in the Art and Education departments at Western Michigan University. In parallel, Keith is pursuing his Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, with a research focus on the intersection of creativity and pedagogy. This commitment to academic growth is augmented by

PRODUCTION ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES CONT.

his continued engagement in an active studio art practice. Keith is an alumnus of two respected institutions, Northwestern University and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Kevin Zimmer (Technical Director) is a Master Craftsperson/Scenic Engineer who has worked with Forward since 2009 season and a Core Tech Member at APT since 2010 as Scene Shop Supervisor. Madison Credits: Madison Repertory Theater and Children's Theater of Madison (Master Carpenter and Deck Chief),


Madison Opera (M. Carp/ATD), Madison Ballet (Carp), Four Seasons (TD), FTC (M. Carp). My dark years was Arizona Broadway Theater (TD and Shop Supervisor). Other Credits: St. Louis City Museum (Welder/Sculptor); St. Louis Shakespeare Company (Scenic Charge Artist); St. Louis Black Repertory, and The MUNY. Was a Former Member of IASTE B-2 and has been overhire for Local 251 and 6. Some fun Backstage Roles: Snoring Drunk: *Or*; Thief: *Diary of Anne Frank*; Bus Boy: *Fully Committed*. Work Hard and Play Hard. Thanks to all for supporting the Arts. 65.



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As we celebrate our 15th Season we are so grateful to all who make Forward Theater possible. Our community partnerships, innovative programming and artistic quality would not happen without the support from our generous donors. Whether you have made a first-time gift or you have faithfully supported Forward Theater throughout the years, you are part of our theater community and Forward's history. Thank you.

We are pleased to recognize contributions to the annual fund received between October 1, 2022 – October 12, 2023. If you notice any errors in acknowledgement or have questions about donation options, please contact Sarah Milestone at 608-234-5001 or smilestone@forwardtheater.com. To make a tax-deductible donation to Forward Theater online or learn about donor benefits, visit our website at forwardtheater.com. To mail in a contribution, please use the following address: Forward Theater, P.O. Box 14574, Madison, WI 53708.

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COLLEEN BURNS MEMORIAL FUND 2023-2024 HONOREE

The inimitable Colleen Burns, a professional actress for more than 30 years, was instrumental in the creation of Forward Theater Company in 2009. Colleen's enormous talent, her laughter, her dedication to her art, and her long friendships with her professional colleagues will be the legacy that lives on in all our hearts. Proceeds from this fund underwrite the salary for one actress per season as a tribute to Colleen, who brought so much joy to Madison audiences.



This season, Dana Pellebon (Clyde in *Clyde's*), is the fund's honoree. This is Dana's first mainstage production at Forward.

To make your own contribution to continue to celebrate Colleen's legacy, please contact Sarah Milestone at 608-234-5001 or smilestone@forwardtheater.com, or make an online donation and note "Colleen Burns Memorial Fund" in the comment section.

THANKS TO OUR FRIENDS OF FORWARD THEATER VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers help Forward Theater by staffing events, helping with mailings and other office support. If you would like more information, please visit our website at Forwardtheater.com or contact Company Manager Celia Klehr at 608-234-5001.

2023-2024 Volunteers:

Tammy Albrecht
Rima Apple
Michele Brucker
Audra Chaimson
Pamela Crapp
Carla Di Iorio
Michael Di Iorio
Dennis Dorn
Dolores Gohdes

Paul Gohdes
Kathleen Harker
Kathryn Lederhause
Mary Metz
Sue Milch
Tess Mulrooney
Margaret S. Murphy
Kathie Nichols
Deb Nies
Hannah Nies

Michelle Pribyl
Barb Sandford
Frank Schneeberger
Lynda Sharpe
Daryl Sherman
Dot Steele
Cheri Teal
Beth Whittemore
Christina Wood

Housing provided by:

APT Apartments
Deb Jenson
Kris Knight
Tim Lardinois
Amy Quan Barry
Anne and Buck Rhymes

Nancy and George Shook
Julie Swenson
Scott Thornton
Voyager Extended Stay
Samuel White

SPECIAL THANKS

Jennifer Fischer
Leo Kropywiansky
Nathan Mergen

Joan Herzing
Julia Steege Reimann

The Forward Theater Opening Night Party is generously provided by 107 State.

Spring Green, WI

AMERICAN PLAYERS THEATRE

2024 SUMMER SEASON

THE HILL ▲

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Robert Ramirez

RING ROUND THE MOON

By Jean Anouilh, Adapted by Christopher Fry

Directed by Laura Gordon

MA RAINEY'S BLACK BOTTOM

By August Wilson

Directed by Gavin Lawrence

DANCING AT LUGHNASA

By Brian Friel

Directed by Brenda DeVita

KING LEAR

By William Shakespeare

Directed by Tim Ocel

THE TOUCHSTONE ▼

WOLF AT THE DOOR

By Marisela Treviño Orta

Directed by Melisa Pereyra

The World Premiere of

THE VIRGIN QUEEN

ENTERTAINS HER FOOL

By Michael Hollinger

Directed by Aaron Posner

CONSTELLATIONS

By Nick Payne

Directed by Vanessa Stalling



James Ridge, *Artion's Shorts*, 2023. Photo by Liz Lauren.

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