

ARDEN THEATRE COMPANY

HOLY GRAIL OF MEMPHIS

WORLD PREMIERE



By
**Michael
Hollinger**

Arden
THEATRE CO.

JAN 16 - FEB 23

On the Arcadia Stage

Production Sponsor:



Honorary Producers:

Monica and Philip Rosenthal

2025/26

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Assassins (2023), Ladysitting (2024), Intimate Apparel (2024), Once on This Island (2024), What the Constitution Means to Me (2023), The Lehman Trilogy (2024), POTUS (2024). Photos by Ashley Smith, Wide Eyed Studios.

WELCOME

From the Producing Artistic Director



Welcome to the world premiere of Michael Hollinger's *Holy Grail of Memphis*. We first worked with Michael when we produced *An Empty Plate in the Cafe du Grand Boeuf* at St. Stephen's Alley back in 1994. A thirty-year collaboration still going strong.

The process of working on a new play is exciting. Things are constantly changing: scenes rewritten; characters clarified; scenes again rewritten; themes strengthened; scenes rewritten yet again. At its best, it is a thrilling and extraordinarily collaborative process. New plays are also risky, so we are always working to create a community around the development of new work — artists who are inspired by the challenge; audiences who are willing to take a leap into the unknown; funders willing to invest in possibility.

One of the first funders to support our new play work was the Independence Foundation, led by Susan Sherman and Judge Phyllis Beck. When we moved into this building, they asked us what our next dream was, and we said to be an artistic home for playwrights: to commission, develop, and, most importantly, produce new work. Susan and Judge Beck believed in passion and promise, and the Independence Foundation became the most fervent supporter of our commitment to new plays and musicals. Great theatre communities need great artists and great supporters. Susan Sherman and Judge Beck were that for us — and for so many other artists and organizations throughout this region. As they retire, I hope they know how amazing they have been — and that their example inspires all of us to work for a better, more vital, more creative future.

This is the time of year we ask you to take a Leap of Faith and subscribe to our 2025/26 season. We aren't announcing next year's shows yet, but we promise you five great stories brought to life by some of your favorite Philly theatre artists. To all of you who have been Leap of Faith subscribers for years, thank you! And if you haven't done so before, take the leap. You will see shows you've been dying to see and also be surprised by something that you might never have seen otherwise. It's risky — and it's worth it.

Great theatre communities also need great audiences. Thank you for being here. Thank you supporting this new play.

Enjoy.

A Message

From our Production Sponsor



Happy New Year and welcome (or welcome back) to the Arden!

Whether this is your first Arden experience or you are a regular, I hope you know that great stories (told and yet untold) need to be shared. We're lucky to count Philadelphia-based playwright and teacher Michael Hollinger as an expert storyteller in our midst. And the Arden has served as a wonderful partner in bringing those stories to life. In fact, Michael is one of the most produced playwrights in the Arden's history, with this play being the theatre's 10th premiere of Michael's work! Fox Chase Bank Charitable Fund has proudly been a Production Sponsor of six of those Hollinger productions: *Incorruptible* (1995), *Opus* (2006), *Ghost Writer* (2010), *Under the Skin* (2015), the musical *TouchTones* (2017, co-authored with composer Robert Maggio), and now *Holy Grail of Memphis*.

While Fox Chase Bank Charitable Fund has supported a wide sampling of Arden productions over the years, we're especially excited by the new frontier of empowering and enabling the Arden and its creative partners to continue to develop and produce new plays. The Board of Directors of Fox Chase Bank Charitable Fund is delighted to continue its legacy of support for Michael Hollinger's new work at the Arden.

Cheers,

Tom Petro
Chairman

Fox Chase Bank Charitable Fund



FOX CHASE BANK®
Charitable Fund

Accessibility Services

The Arden complies with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and laws to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities who visit our theater. We invite you to visit ardentheatre.org/plan-your-visit/accessibility for more details about our services and offerings.



Accessible Seating & Seating Requests

Removeable seats for wheelchairs & Accommodations for comfort, mobility, & hearing or vision needs



Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs)

Amplification of all onstage sounds. Ask Box Office to borrow. Available with headphones or a t-coil neck loop.



Open Captioning (OC)

Text display of all dialogue and sounds. Available select Friday & Saturday performances.



Audio Description (AD)

Live verbal commentary of all visual elements. Ask Box Office for access. Available select Friday & Saturday performances.



NEW! Smart Caption Glasses (SCG)

Wearable, customizable closed captioning glasses. Available 1 week after Opening Nights. Ask Box Office to borrow.



Large Print Programs

Enlarged-text printed programs for low-vision patrons. Ask Box Office to borrow.



Shadow American Sign Language (ASL) Interpretation

Live ASL interpretation shadowing the action of the show. Available at select Children's Theatre performances.

We encourage any feedback and suggestions regarding our accessibility services to ensure we're doing the best we can. Please contact Tanner Richardett, Audience Services Manager, at trichardett@ardentheatre.org

A Message from our Honorary Producers



Welcome to the Arden Theatre Company, and here's to making 2025 another exciting year of live theatre!

Phil and I are, what we would call, mishpocha! Family to Terry, Amy, and the Arden. So, we are delighted to support this world premiere production of *Holy Grail of Memphis* by Michael Hollinger, a playwright whom, I would dare to say is as near and dear to the Arden as we are (if we do say so ourselves!).

As a Board member—and having had the privilege to appear on Arden's stages as an actor—I know this company is guided by its core values when it comes to business and creative decision-making. Two of those important values are on full display with the decision to include this production in the 2024/25 season: commitment to the Philadelphia artistic community; development of new work. Celebrated Philadelphia playwright Michael Hollinger has been a prime example of a creative partner who enables the Arden to turn those values into great theatre, starting with their first world premiere of *Café Du Grand Boeuf* (1994) all the way to today with the premiere of *Holy Grail of Memphis*.

We are proud to sponsor Michael Hollinger's *Holy Grail of Memphis*, a moving, resonant story about the value of art and our personal and collective responsibility in owning and sharing it. What could be timelier? We're so happy you came to the Arden today. Enjoy and come again!

Monica & Philip Rosenthal

Special Thanks to Robert and Risa Lavizzo-Mourey for their support of ASL interpretation for this production.

Arden Theatre Company is proud to partner with **Hands UP Productions** to provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpreted performances for Arden Children's Theatre each year. Hands UP has been providing high quality interpreting services for performing arts and cultural events in the Philadelphia area since 2007.

In addition to their work on *Peter Pan* and *The Hobbit* this season, Hands UP will also be providing live ASL interpretation for performances of *Holy Grail of Memphis*, on **Friday, February 21 at 7pm** and **Saturday, February 22 at 2pm.**

More information on Hands UP and upcoming signed performances is available on their website – handsupproductions.com



Rachel McGarry and Donna Ellis from Hands Up Productions rehearsing for the Arden's 2024 production of *Pinocchio*.

A Note

From the Playwright



At its heart, this play is about listening: how we listen and what we choose to hear. This relates to music, of course, but also to all human interactions, within and between cultures.

The initial spark for *Holy Grail of Memphis* was an April, 2022 article in The New York Times about the recent discovery of some long-lost recordings by the country singer George Jones. I loved the idea that there might be amazing music on these tapes but that they were so old they might be destroyed in the process of playing them for the very first time.

I'm not a particular fan of George Jones but I have long been interested in the historic inequity of white producers exploiting Black artists within the recording industry. This shifted the focus of my theatrical inquiry to a little recording studio in Memphis and a legendary (if fictional) bluesman named Alfred "Deaf Duck" Mason.

As the play's characters began to emerge, they wound up embodying many cultural divides, between generations, genders, ethnicities, abilities, and geographies. As a result, every combination of characters produces both friction and the opportunity to listen better and more empathetically. This, I hope, will be part of the takeaway for audiences as they leave the theater and return to their lives.

Finally, a few words of thanks to:

- Terry Nolen, Jonathan Silver, Nick Hatcher, and the entire hardworking, resourceful staff of Arden Theatre Company
- The intrepid, generous cast and crew of this world premiere production (as well as workshop guest artists Frank X and Eric Mills)
- The cast of the first Villanova University reading -- Sydney Curran, Ben Fickinger, James Ijames, AJ Johnson, Noelle Diane Johnson, Deb Schrager, and Frank X – and my Theatre Department colleagues for their support
- The students in my 2024 graduate Playwriting class
- Kevin Minbiole and the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences for the Faculty Research & Development Grant that supported my travel to Memphis
- The Deaf-Hearing Communication Centre
- For dramaturgical, educational, legal, emotional and moral support: Megan Bellwoar, L. Feldman, David Friedlander, Jim Hawkins, Deborah Zoe Laufer, Taj Rauch, and Heidi Rose

And thanks to YOU for watching (and, most of all, listening)!

Michael Hollinger

ARDEN THEATRE COMPANY PRESENTS

HOLY GRAIL OF MEMPHIS

by Michael Hollinger

Scenic Designer
LUCIANA STECCONI+

Costume Designer
LEIGH PARADISE

Lighting Designer
J. DOMINIC CHACON+

Sound Designer
JOHN STOVICEK

Director of Artistic Sign Language
DANIEL BRUCKER

ASL Interpreter
HANDS UP PRODUCTIONS

Assistant Director
CASIE GIRVIN

Stage Manager
ALEC E. FERRELL*

Directed by TERRENCE J. NOLEN[^]

Production Sponsor:



Honorary Producers:
Monica and Philip Rosenthal

Special Thanks to:
Robert and Risa Lavizzo-Mourey
for their support of ASL interpretation
for this production

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Arden Theatre Company receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



+ Member of United Scenic Artists
Local USA 829

* Member of Actors' Equity Association,
the Union of Professional Actors and
Stage Managers in the U.S.



[^] The director is a member of the Society
of Stage Directors and Choreographers,
Inc., an independent national labor union.

Cast of Characters

Newton "Newt" Stover II.....Matteo Scammell*
 Lee Hara.....Erin Malimban*
 Derek Benoit.....Newton Buchanan*
 Gigi Robbins.....Kishia Nixon*
 Sheila Wojciechowski.....Mary Martello*
 Alfred "Deaf Duck" MasonFred Michael Beam*

UNDERSTUDIES

Christopher Cauffman Cooke (Newton "Newt" Stover II), Kaitlyn Zion (Lee Hara), Sterling Calhoun (Derek Benoit), Kaitlyn Robinson (Gigi Robins), Stacy Skinner (Sheila Wojciechowski); Charvez Grant (Alfred "Deaf Duck" Mason)

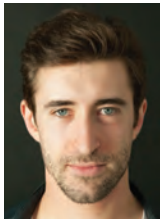
Arden Theatre Company is a professional company employing members of Actors' Equity Association.
 *Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

Please check houseboards for any program changes.

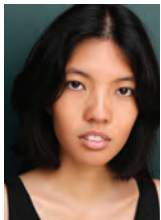
Taking pictures and/or making visual or sound recordings is expressly forbidden.

Actors' Equity Association (AEA), founded in 1913, represents more than 45,000 actors and stage managers in the United States.

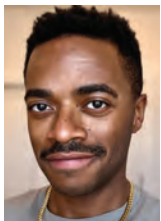
Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. www.actorsunion.org



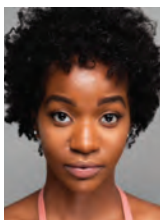
MATTEO SCAMMELL (Newton "Newt" Stover II) Arden: *The BFG (Big Friendly Giant), Assassins, Charlotte's Web, A Streetcar Named Desire, The Legend of Georgia McBride, Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*. Regional: *The Good Person of Setzuan, Our Class, Blood Wedding, Romeo and Juliet, The Cherry Orchard, Fairview (Wilma Theater); Smoke, Really, Buzzer, Wolf Play (Theatre Exile); and The Comedy of Errors, The Last Match (Lantern Theater Company); The Hairy Ape (EgoPo Classic Theater); Detroit, Hand to God, Sweat, Empathitrax (Philadelphia Theatre Company); 27, PROM, The Adults, O Monsters, Hello Blackout! (New Paradise Laboratories); Other Desert Cities, Escape to Margaritaville (Walnut Street Theatre)*; Film/Television: *Scabs, I Am That, Traffickers (Amazon)*; Education: BFA, UArts. Awards: 2017 Barrymore - Actor in a Lead Role; 2020 Independence Foundation Recipient. Love to Lee and our families!



ERIN MALIMBAN she/they (Lee Hara) Arden debut. Regional: *Girlfails (The Lemonade Stand), The Pigeon (The Strides Collective); All Eyes on Tomorrow (ArtSake Theatre Company)*. Education: Brown University, BA Theatre Arts. Thanks to Kuya, Caitlin, Ana, Michael, and Jeff.



NEWTON BUCHANAN he/him (Derek Benoit) Arden: *The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)*. Regional: *Children of The Sun (Philly Artist Collective); RENT, Othello, Next to Normal (New Light Theatre); One Man, Two Guvnors, HONK! (Delaware Theatre Company); Twelfth Night: O Lo Que Quieras, Romeo and Juliet, The Merry Wives of Windsor, The Merchant of Venice (Delaware Shakespeare); Cry It Out (Simpatico); Cymbeline (Revolution Shakespeare); A Streetcar Named Desire (Deep Blue Theatre); Noises Off (Curio Theatre Company); By The Way, Meet Vera Stark (Second Stage Theatre)*. Newton is a 2023 finalist for the F. Otto Hass award for emerging artists, and is a Co-Founder of New Light Theatre, and The Black Theatre Alliance of Philadelphia. Instagram: @newtron_bomb @newlighttheatre"



KISHIA NIXON (Gigi Robins) Arden: *The BFG (Big Friendly Giant)* and *Clyde's*. Most recent credits: *Amsterdam (Theater Ariel); Green Eyes, The Strange Play (Tennessee Williams Festival); Say It Ain't So (Revolution Shakespeare); Fabulation or the Re-education of Undine, The Comedy of Errors (Lantern Theater Company); The Comedy of Errors (Shakespeare in Clark Park); Delaware Young Playwrights (Delaware Theater Company); Life is a Dream, Three Sisters Two (EgoPo Classic Theater); Upon Re-Entry, La Ronde (Die Cast Collective); A Twist of Water (Passage Theatre Company); Spies!! Even More Spying (Philadelphia Fringe Festival); Aggy the Adventurer (Act II Playhouse)*. Education: BFA in Acting (Arcadia University). Kishia is happy to be back at the Arden! You can catch her at The National Constitution Center in Freedom Rising! I love you, Jyouus. As always, this is for you, Dad, RIP.



MARY MARTELLO (Sheila Wojciechowski) Some favorite Arden productions: *Gypsy*, *Red Herring*, *Café Puttanessa*, and *Sweeney Todd*. Mary has been a regional theatre artist for over 50 years. In Philadelphia she has worked at Walnut Street Theatre, Arden Theatre Company, Lantern Theater Company, Azuka Theatre, Act2, 1812 Productions, InterAct Theatre Company, People's Light Theatre Company, and Wilma Theatre, and most recently in *Lovesong* at Inis Nua. Mary has performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra, created several cabarets (*Songs My Mother Taught Me* at the Arden), won five Barrymore Awards, and is a Lunt-Fontanne Fellow. Mary recently directed *Tea for Three: Lady Bird, Pat & Betty* at Act II, *Macbeth* at the Ritz Theatre Company, and assisted Bernard Havard on *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. More details at marymartello.com. Thanks to all the amazing artists in the Philadelphia theatre community.



FRED MICHAEL BEAM (Alfred "Deaf Duck" Mason) Arden debut. Deaf Broadway: Armand in *Once on This Island* (Lincoln Center), *Sweeney Todd* in *Sweeney Todd* (Lincoln Center). Regional: *Oh, Fiagro!* (National Theater of the Deaf), *The Mad Dancer* (Jewish Community Center), *By The Sphere of Music* (Goodman Theater), *Miracle Worker* (Arena Stage), *Underachiever* (Kennedy Center), *A Streetcar Named Desire* (SignRise Cultural Theater), *Sea Princess* (SignRise Cultural Theater) *A Christmas Story* (Mt. Pisgah Church), *The Wonderful World of Oz* (National Technical Institute of the Deaf), *Hip Hop Anansi* (Imagination Stage, Bethesda, MD), *Liang and The Magic Painting Brush* (Imagination Stage), *Othello* (Gallaudet University Theater). Film/Television: *Safe in The City* (KC Production Co.), *Somalia* (Jade Production Co.), *West Wing* (CBS), *Secret Dream* (Invisible Hands International, Inc.), *Little Lonely Monster* (Hear My Hands, Inc.), *New Kaptain Kangaroo* (CBS), *Deaf Mosaic* (PBS), *The Wild Zappers/Deaf Culture* (Japan Broadcast). Education: National Theater of the Deaf, Rochester Institute of Technology, Folger Theater, Joy of Motion, International Association of Black in Dance Conference; Thanks to my immediate family, Jerome Cushman, Jeff Pecot, The Wild Zappers/National Deaf Dance Theater, Sue Gil Doleac, Tim McCarty, Marcia Freeman, Aaron Kelstone, and the Deaf Community for making me the artist I am.

TERRENCE J. NOLEN (Director/Producing Artistic Director) is Co-founder and Producing Artistic Director of Arden Theatre Company. Favorite Arden productions include all-Philadelphia casts of *August: Osage County*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, and *Hedda Gabler*; and such musicals as *Next to Normal*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Pacific Overtures*, *Violet*, and *Caroline, or Change*. Terry directed the inaugural production of Arden Children's Theatre, *Charlotte's Web*. He has directed seven world-premiere plays by Michael Hollinger, three by Dennis Raymond Smeal, three by Michael Ogborn, two by Rogelio Martinez, and Bruce Graham's *Something Intangible*. Terry has been nominated for 27 Barrymore Awards for his directing work at the Arden and received awards for *The Baker's Wife*; *Sweeney Todd*; *Opus*; *Winesburg, Ohio*; *Assassins*; *Something Intangible*; and *Fun Home*. He directed Michael Hollinger's *Opus* at Primary Stages in New York and was nominated for a Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Director. His short film *The Personal Touch* was nominated for an Emmy Award.

MICHAEL HOLLINGER (Playwright) Arden: *An Empty Plate in the Café Du Grand Boeuf*, *Incorruptible*, *Tiny Island*, *Red Herring*, *Tooth and Claw*, *Opus*, *Ghost-Writer*, *Under the Skin*, and the musical *TouchTones* (co-authored with composer Robert Maggio). Regional: *Sing the Body Electric* (Theatre Exile); *Hope and Gravity* (City Theatre); *Cyrano* (translated, and co-adapted with Aaron Posner at Folger Theatre); and the musical *A Wonderful Noise* (co-authored with Vance Lehmkuhl at Creede Rep). Awards: ATCA/Steinberg New Play Citation, an L.A. Drama Critics Circle Award, a Mid-Atlantic Emmy, an Edgerton Foundation New American Plays Award, the Frederick Loewe Award for Musical Theatre, four Barrymore Awards (including the F. Otto Haas Award for an Emerging Theatre Artist), nominations for Lucille Lortel and John Gassner awards, and multiple fellowships from the Independence Foundation and Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Education: Professor of Theatre at Villanova University (where he received his MA in Theatre), Artistic Director of Villanova Theatre, and a proud alumnus of PlayPenn and New Dramatists. He shares a life with actor/teacher/director Megan Bellwoar and their children Benjamin and Willa.

CASIE GIRVIN (Assistant Director) is a Philly-based director, actor, singer, circus artist and teacher. Casie is the Artistic Director of The Circus Opera Company, and won the 5 Star Fringie Award this season for their premiere circus opera, *The Tire Swing*. She most recently Assistant Directed *The Lehman Trilogy* at the Arden, and made her Arden debut as Charlotte in the 2022/2023 production of *Charlotte's Web*. Other regional credits: *Shakespeare In Love* (Capital Repertory Theatre.) *Bernstein Mass* (Philadelphia Orchestra), *Make Bank*, *Bodies*, *Annie*, *The Full Monty*. Outside of theatre, Casie teaches voice and acrobatics. Proud Temple Owl. @casiegirvin www.casiegirvin.com

Who's Who

LUCIANA STECCONI (Set Designer) Regional: *Oh Happy Day!* (Baltimore Center Stage); *Fat Ham* (a co-production between Huntington Theatre Company and Alliance Theatre), *The Virgin Queen Entertains Her Fool* (American Players Theatre); *What Will Happen to All That Beauty?* (Contemporary American Theater Festival); *At the Wedding* and *John Proctor is the Villain* (Studio Theatre); *The Art of Burning* (a co-production between Huntington Theatre Company and Hartford Stage); *Witch* (Huntington Theatre); *Faith Healer* and *Waiting for Godot* (Barrington Stage Company); *Murder on the Orient Express* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre); *Antonio's Song* (Contemporary American Theater Festival, Milwaukee Repertory Theater and Goodman Theatre), among others. She has also designed for Everyman Theatre, The Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Signature Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Round House Theatre, Folger Theatre, and many others. She is an Associate Professor in Scenic Design, and serves as the Design and Production Area Head, at Emerson College. www.lucianastecconi.com

J. DOMINIC CHACON (Lighting Designer) Arden: *The BFG* (*Big Friendly Giant*), *Clyde's*. Regional: *BLACK WOOD* (Gunnar Montana Productions); *All My Mothers Dream in Spanish*, *Young Money* (Azuka Theatre); *A Shadow that Broke the Light* (Simpatico Theatre); *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Delaware Theatre Company); *Minor Character* (Wilma Theater); *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (Florida Studio Theater); *Life is a Dream* (EgoPo Classic Theatre); *A Year With Frog and Toad* (Cardinal Stage Company); *Thurgood*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Walnut Street Theatre). Education: Temple University, MFA.

LEIGH PARADISE (Costume Designer) Arden: *Intimate Apparel*, *Red Riding Hood*, *Ladysitting*, *Pinocchio*. Regional: *Once Upon a Bridge* (Inis Nua); *A Case for the Existence of God* (Theatre Exile); *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (Lantern Theater Company); *This is the Week That Is* (1812 Productions); *The Elephant in the Room* (co-design, Azuka Theatre); *Last of the Red Hot Lovers* (Walnut Street Theatre); *TOWN, TJ Loves Sally Forever* (Theatre Horizon); *Bayard Rustin Inside Ashland* (People's Light). Leigh Paradise has also worked as a technician in various costume shops throughout the region for over 20 years. Thanks to Rebecca Callan (DeSales University), Rosemarie McKelvey (Villanova University), Sarah Ochocki (People's Light) for letting me run through your stocks; Morgan Porter for being my additional hands; and Stephanie Shaw and the Arden Costume Shop for all their help and hard work. Special thanks to Marla Jurglanis, Bridget Brennan, and LeVonne Lindsay for being the best sounding boards and teachers; and to my very own Mr. Marc, who always helps me see myself better.

JOHN STOVICEK (Sound Designer) Arden: *Tooth and Claw*, *Ellen Foster*, *The Dragon*; (as actor:) *Sweeney Todd*, *Jaques Brel is Alive and Well & Living in Paris*, *Working*. Regional: Villanova Theatre (resident designer (2013-2020)), Act II Playhouse, Delaware Theatre Company, The Philadelphia Shakespeare Company, Drexel Co-op Theatre, DeREP, Amaryllys Theatre Company.

DANIEL BRUCKER (Director of Artistic Sign Language) was born and raised in Schenectady, NY. Growing up in an American Sign Language environment at home, Daniel also attended mainstream schools through his entire childhood. In 2005, he enrolled in Rochester Institute of Technology, majoring in Film / Video / Animation, with a stagecraft track. After graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2010, he immediately started graduate school in National Technical Institute for the Deaf's Master of Science in Secondary Education of Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. He graduated with a Master's degree in 2012, and eventually moved to Philadelphia, PA where he has been living for over 11 years. Daniel has been a consultant for ASL interpreting teams with various theatrical productions in the Greater Philadelphia area in the last six years. This is his debut as the Director of American Sign Language for a professional theatrical production.

HANDS UP PRODUCTIONS (ASL Interpreter) In 2003, Donna Ellis and Brian Morrison met for the first time in Philadelphia while interpreting the Broadway hit, *Chicago* at the Merriam Theatre. In 2007, with countless partnered productions under their belts, they embarked on a new adventure, Hands UP Productions. 18 seasons later, they have provided accessible, high quality interpreted theatre for the Deaf community throughout the Philadelphia region. Their combined theatrical interpreting experience includes hundreds of Broadway tours, regional productions and exploratory performance pieces. Hands Up Productions is thrilled to be partnering with The Arden Theatre and wishes the cast and crew a successful run! Rehearsal interpreters: Donna Ellis, Brian Morrison, Rachel McGarry, and Kate Riehl. Performance interpreting team: Kathryn MacKavanaugh, Allwyn Baskin and ASL Coach, Malik Paris

ALEC E. FERRELL (Stage Manager) Arden: *Intimate Apparel*, *Once on this Island*, *Ladysitting* (World Premiere), *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Clyde's*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Into the Woods*, *The Snowy Day and Other Stories* by Ezra Jack Keats, *No Child...*, *My General Tubman* (World Premiere), *Indecent*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *Once, Fun Home*, *Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye*, *Touch Tones* (World Premiere), *Gypsy*, *The Legend of Georgia McBride*, *The Secret Garden*, *Metamorphoses*, *Macbeth*, *La Bête*, *Three Sisters*, *Parade*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Next to Normal*, *August: Osage County*,

ALEC E. FERRELL (cont.) *Ghost-Writer* (World Premiere), *Blue Door*, *My Name is Asher Lev* (World Premiere). Regional: Trinity Repertory Company, Adirondack Theatre Festival, Theatre Horizon, Eugene O'Neill Theater Center. International: [untitled project] #213 (Edinburgh Festival Fringe). Proud Member of AEA, SMA. Love and thanks to the family!

AMY L. MURPHY (Managing Director) A Philadelphia native, Amy co-founded the Arden in 1988 with Terrence J. Nolen and Aaron Posner. She is especially proud of the Arden Professional Apprentice program and its contribution to the Philadelphia cultural community. She completed the Executive Program for Nonprofit Leaders-Arts. Amy has served on the Board of the Cultural Alliance and Theatre Philadelphia. She has served on panels for the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey State Arts Council, Theatre Communications Group and the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. Amy was named a Hepburn Fellow 2008-9 by the Katharine Houghton Hepburn Center at Bryn Mawr College.

ARDEN THEATRE COMPANY Founded in 1988, Arden Theatre Company is dedicated to bringing to life great stories by great storytellers—on the stage, in the classroom, and in the community. We create and produce new work through the Independence Foundation New Play Showcase. The Arden Professional Apprenticeship program trains future theatre leaders, and Arden Drama School classes teach children and teens about the craft of making plays. Our access program, Arden For All, makes our work available to the entire community through subsidized tickets and books for economically disadvantaged young people, and our Arden Arts Scholarship Fund provides scholarships for Arden Drama School classes and camps. The Arden has received 13 *Philadelphia Magazine* “Best of Philly” Awards, the Arts & Business Council’s Arts Excellence Award, six *City Paper* “Reader’s Choice” Awards, four *Philadelphia Inquirer* “Theatre Company of the Year” citations, 77 awards and 440 nominations from the Theatre Philadelphia’s Barrymore Awards for Excellence in Theatre, and was named “Best Theatre Company” by *Philadelphia Weekly* in 2009. Arden Theatre Company, a professional, nonprofit 501(c)(3) theatre company, is a member of the Theatre Communications Group, the League of Resident Theatres, Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Old City Arts Association.

Arden Theatre Company wishes to thank Minsitry of Awe (MoA), Beth Applebaum, Garrett Zuercher, Dr. Brian Andrew Cheslik, Stephanie L. Rogers, Jack Jason, Monique "Prof. MoMo" Holt, and Andressa Royer.

Q. In Arden Theatre Company’s 37 years, _____ World Premieres have been produced, in keeping with our mission to bring to life great stories by great storytellers – on the stage, in the classroom and in the community.

- A.** 10
- B.** 36
- C.** 48
- D.** 62

Turn the page for the correct answer...

Playwrights Commissioned for New Works at the Arden

Greg Banks
Stephen Belber
Rachel Bonds
Lorene Cary
Laura Eason
Kash Goins
Jacqueline Goldfinger
Robi Hager
Jordan Harrison

Michael Hollinger
James Ijames
Laura Jacqmin
Rogelio Martínez
Wendy MacLeod
Michael Ogborn
Aaron Posner
Iraisa Ann Reilly
R. Eric Thomas

Michael Hollinger & the Arden

Over the last 37 years, the Arden has produced 48 World Premieres!
Holy Grail of Memphis marks the Arden's 10th new work by Michael Hollinger.
And in the last 30 years, the Arden has presented 13 of Hollinger's works.

1994 - An Empty Plate in the
Café du Grand Boeuf *

1996 - Incorruptible*

1998 - Tiny Island*

2000 - Red Herring*

2004 -Tooth & Claw*

2005 - Opus*

2007 - An Empty Plate in
the Café du Grand Boeuf

2010 - Ghost Writer*

2012 - Cyrano

2014 - Incorruptible

2015 - Under the Skin*

2017 - Touchtones*

2025 - Holy Grail of Memphis*

* World Premiere



2024/25

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26 N 3rd Street
267.687.2533
cafetolia.com
@cafetolia

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10 S 2nd Street
215.627.0666
cubalibrerestaurant.com
@cubalibrephiladelphia

The Franklin Fountain*

116 Market Street
215.627.1899
franklinfountain.com
@franklinfountain

Fork

306 Market Street
215.625.9425
forkrestaurant.com
@forkrestaurant

Forsythia*

233 Chestnut Street
215.701.4883
forsythiaphilly.com
@forsythia_philly

Fringe Bar*

140 N Christopher Columbus Blvd
215.375.7744
fringebarphilly.com
@fringebarphilly

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215.625.0988
highstreetonmarket.com
@highstreethoagies

Khyber Pass Pub*

56 S 2nd Street
215.238.5888
khyberpasspub.com
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267.239.5673
lasbugambiliasphilly.com
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267.979.3473
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National Mechanics*

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The Plough and the Stars*

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Positano Coast

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212 Walnut Street 2nd Floor
215.238.0499
positanocoast.net
@positanocoastphilly

Race Street Cafe*

208 Race Street
215.627.6181
racestreetcafe.net
@racestreetcafe

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52 S 2nd Street
267.606.6313
royalboucherie.com
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For complete restaurant descriptions visit: ardentheatre.org/dining

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Pictured: Intern Dean Bruce (center) on the set of *The BFG* with actors Jessica Money (right) and Jo Vito Ramirez (left)

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ARDEN CHILDREN'S THEATRE

THE HOBBIT

Based on the novel by

J.R.R. Tolkien

Adapted for the stage by

Greg Banks

Directed by

Rebecca Wright

APRIL 2 - MAY 25

For tickets: 215.922.1122

ardentheatre.org

Most enjoyed by ages 7 and up.

Staff

Artistic	Producing Artistic Director.....	Terrence J. Nolen
	Associate Artistic Director.....	Jonathan Silver
	Artistic Assistant.....	Nick Hatcher
	Commissioned Playwrights.....	Kash Goins, Robi Hager Rogelio Martinez, Iraisia Ann Reilly
Administrative Management	Managing Director.....	Amy L. Murphy
	General Manager.....	Clayton Tejada
	Business Manager.....	Paola Cruz
	Audience Services Manager.....	Tanner Richardett
	Facilities and Office Manager.....	Larry Brooks
	Arden Professional Apprentices.....	Abby-Jeanne Ruger, Ashley Austin, Haley Hartline, Ian Gaskin, Malena Rivera, Zycara Jones
Marketing	Director of Marketing and Communications.....	Mike Hogue
	Marketing Manager.....	Erika Byrnison
	Communications Manager.....	Aseal Saed
	Publicist.....	En Route Marketing
	Marketing and Group Sales Associate.....	TJ Harris
Development	Director of Development.....	Jessica Abel
	Manager of Individual Giving.....	Orelí B. Uzdavinis
	Development Coordinator.....	Tylar Benedetto
Education	Education Outreach Manager.....	Josh Thorps
	Drama School Manager.....	Elise D'Avella
	Education Associate.....	Francine Odri
	Teaching Artists.....	TJ Harris, Campbell O'Hare, Brennen Malone, Jessica Money, Julianna Babb, Cindy Paul, Andrea Rose Cardoni, Marie McVeigh Ella Kahan, Katie Hahn, Zoe Hollander, Katherine Perry, Adam Howard, Charis Duke, Eliana Fabiyi, Eliana Pinckney, Gina Giachero, Jake Collins, Jordan Hunter-Fidalgo, Lexi Schreiber, Nadia Ra'Shaun Tanaquil Marquez, William Daniels, Daniel Matarazzo, Hallie Berger, Riley Irvine, Lydia Hassell, Nina Gold
	Box Office Manager.....	Jason Blacketer
	Assistant Box Office Manager.....	Amanda Adams
Front of House	House Manager.....	David Demnicki
	Front of House Associate.....	Kathryn Bondi
	Front of House Assistants.....	Adiah Hicks, Becky Fleckner, Catey Midla, Chelsey Gaskins, Dalia Cousineau, Emily Hernandez, Erica Lowry, Glynnis Nadel, Jenny Glickman, Jill Chase, Laura Duffy, Mads Klemm, Margaux Cattelona, Morgan McNulty, Skyler Gonzalez, Syaera Cort
	Production Manager.....	Kate Nelson
	Technical Director.....	Evan Lewis
Production	Assistant Technical Director.....	John Winter
	Electrics Supervisor.....	Martin Stutzman
	Sound Supervisor.....	John Kolbinski
	Costume Supervisor.....	Stephanie Shaw
	Properties Supervisor.....	Shane Dreher
	Charge Scenic Artist.....	Brit Bannon
	Production Assistant.....	Kylen Bailey
	Assistant to the Stage Manager.....	Malena Rivera
	COVID-19 Safety Managers.....	Clayton Tejada, Jonathan Silver
	Electricians.....	Anna Ryabova, Heather Pynne
	Electrics Programmer.....	Ethan Paone
	Audio Engineer.....	AJ Bloomfield
	Stitcher.....	Amanda Carano, Peter Adams
	Carpenter.....	Anna Ryabova
	Rehearsal ASL Interpreters.....	Donna Ellis, Brian Morrison, Rachel McGarry, Kate Riehl
	Performance ASL Interpreters.....	Kathryn MacKavanaugh, Allwyn Baskin, Malik Paris

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JAMES SUGG

REALTOR®
Actor & Sound Designer

The CCSJ Team is proud to continue our *Support the Arts Initiative*, donating to local performing arts organizations for every closing. Whether you're on-stage, behind the scenes, or in the audience, choose the REALTOR®s who support our arts community.



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