

*Rubber City
Theatre*

Irving Berlin's

White Christmas

**BOOK BY DAVID IVES
& PAUL BLAKE**

**MUSIC & LYRICS BY
IRVING BERLIN**

EJ Thomas Hall

December 21-22

**BASED UPON THE PARAMOUNT PICTURES FILM
WRITTEN FOR THE SCREEN BY NORMAN KRASNA,
NORMAN PANAMA, AND MELVIN FRANK**





EDWIN J. THOMAS
PERFORMING
ARTS HALL

*Rubber City
Theatre*

Dane CT Leasure Executive Artistic Director

PRESENTS

Irving Berlin's
White Christmas

Music and Lyrics

Irving Berlin

Book

David Ives and Paul Blake

Original Stage Production Direction

Walter Bobbie

Orchestrations

Larry Blank

Dance & Vocal Arrangements

Bruce Pomhac

Original Scenic Design

Jenna Jaminson

Claire Voyt

Lighting Designer

Jonathon Hunter

Costume Designer
Irene Mack-Shafer

Intimacy Director

Julia Fisher

Sound Engineering

Eugene Rogers

Music Director

Will Hamilton

Stage Manager

Jayshon Austin

Associate Choreographer

Brandon Briggs

Assistant Choreographer

Isabelle Bailey

Choreographer

Megan Gargano

Assistant Director

Erin Riffle

Director

Dane CT Leasure



The Director is a Member of the
**STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS
SOCIETY**, a national theatrical labor union.

IRVING BERLIN'S WHITE CHRISTMAS is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals. www.concordtheatricals.com

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Jared and David Sparks-Lee

Lana Sugarman

Trish

Arnie Tunstall

The Vinograds

Natalie Zenczak

Sharon Alberson

CAST

BOB WALLACE	JAY SIGLER
PHIL DAVIS.....	BRANDON BRIGGS †
BETTY HAYNES	CASEY VENEMA
JUDY HAYNES.....	MIKAELA RAY
GENERAL WAVERLY	ERIC MANSFIELD
MARTHA WATSON.....	SHARON JACKSON
SUSAN WAVERLY	TUESDAY RIAZI-FULKMAN
RALPH SHELDRAKE/EZEKIEL FOSTER/JIMMY	CHRIS SIMMONS
“CHORUS KIDS”	
RITA.....	EMILYANN DUSTMAN †
RHODA/MRS. SNORING MAN	ISABELLE BAILEY †
MIKE/MR. SNORING MAN.....	RYAN DULANEY
SCOOTER.....	JAMES NEWTON
SARAH/SOLIDER/CLUB GIRL	EMILY KAPLAN †
TESSIE/SOLIDER	MOLLY BAGATTO †
KATHLEEN/DANCE CAPTAIN	MAKENNA ZELENAK †
DONNA/SOLIDER/SECERTARY	MEGAN DELANEY †
SEAMSTRESS	KENDRA STRICKLAND
ASSISTANT SEAMSTRESS	KIMBERLY HASLAM
GLORIA	AVA BUTCHER^
MARIA	CASSANDRA KOMLANC^
MARTY	KENNEDY ROBINSON^
LORETTA.....	NORAH BARUA^
DEBBIE	ABBY SCHULLO^
GALE	ALI KNAUF^
CONNIE	EMMA PLETCHER^
MARY	KYLIE JACOBS^

FEATURED YOUNG PERFORMERS

ENSEMBLE	AUNA BUDACOV^
ENSEMBLE	ADELINE RICKER^
ENSEMBLE	PENNY RICKER^
ENSEMBLE	MEREDITH RAMBLER^
ENSEMBLE	SAVANNAH MENESES^
ENSEMBLE	JUNIPER COFFIELD^
ENSEMBLE	LILY BURNS^
ENSEMBLE	SOPHIA KEARNS^
ENSEMBLE	ELLA BELL PETERS^
ENSEMBLE	SONYA BARUA^
ENSEMBLE	GRACE ANTONUCCI^

The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, during the show is strictly prohibited.

Please turn off all electronic devices before the performance begins.

Production Crew

WARDROBE KENDRA STRICKLAND,
KIMBERLY HASLAM, LYSANDER MILLS
FLYMAN ERIC STEELE
STAGE CARPENTERS ROB LEEPER, LEE LANGFORD
PROPS JIM HATHY
LIGHT BOARD OPERATOR JULIE SUMY
PRODUCTION AUDIO ENGINEER..... EUGENE ROGERS
FIRST AUDIO..... STEVE SAVANYU
SECOND AUDIO/STAGE RIGHT STAGE MANAGER PEYTON ROBINSON^{(RCT}
Student Intern)
SPOT JOHN BRYG, ROSE



BACKSTAGE EMPLOYEES AND SHOP EMPLOYEES ARE REPRESENTED BY
THE INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES.
(I.A.T.S.E.) LOCAL 48.

† University of Akron Student

^ UA's Dance Institute Student

Artistic

Executive Artistic Director

Resident Intimacy Director

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Casey Robinson

Erika Rylow (Vice-President)

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Director of Production

Eugene Rogers

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Wardrobe Department Head

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Costume Shop Assistant **Kimberly Strickland-Haslam**

Kendra Strickland

Irene Mack-Shafer

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Lighting & Sound Department Head

Lighting Student Apprentice

Eugene Rogers

Peyton Robinson

Scenic

Scenic Department Head

Carpenter

Properties Artisan

Rob Leeper

Eric Steele

Logan Thompson

For the "old man."
We love and miss you!
Counting our blessings
everyday because of you.
In Memory of Dana K. Leasure

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Act I

Scene 1: Somewhere on the Western Front of World War II - Christmas Eve 1944

HAPPY HOLIDAY Bob, Phil, Sheldrake

WHITE CHRISTMAS..... Bob, Phil, Sheldrake and GIs

Scene 2: The Ed Sullivan Show - 1954

HAPPY HOLIDAY/LET YOURSELF GO Bob, Phil, and Chorus

Scene 3: Backstage

LOVE AND THE WEATHERBob and Betty

Scene 4: Jimmy's Back Room - Later that evening

SISTERS Betty and Judy

THE BEST THINGS HAPPEN WHILE YOU'RE DANCING Phil, Judy, Quintet

Scene 5: A Train Car - later that night

SNOW Phil, Judy, Bob, Betty, Snoring Man, Mrs. Snoring Man, Passengers

Scene 6: The Front Desk of the Columbia Inn in Vermont

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A GENERAL.....Martha, Bob, and Phil

Scene 7: The Barn Rehearsal Hall - Next Day

LET ME SING AND I'M HAPPYMartha

Scene 8: The Front Porch of the Inn - that night

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS INSTEAD OF SHEEP.....Bob and Betty

Scene 9: Ralph Sheldrake's office and Columbia Inn

Scene 10: Barn Rehearsal Hall

BLUE SKIES..... Bob and Chorus

Act II

Scene 1: Onstage at the Barn Theatre - next day

I LOVE A PIANO Phi, Judy, Chorus

Scene 2: Betty's Room at the Inn

FALLING OUT OF LOVE CAN BE FUNMartha, Betty, Judy

Scene 3: Barn Rehearsal Hall

SISTERS (REPRISE).....Bob and Phil

Scene 4: The Regency Room, New York

LOVE, YOU DIDN'T DO RIGHT BY ME/HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN...Bob and Betty

Scene 5: Ed Sullivan Show

OLD MAN Bob and Chorus

Scene 6: The Front Desk at the Inn

LET ME SING AND I'M HAPPY (REPRISE) Susan

Scene 10: Barn Theatre

HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN (REPRISE)Bob and Betty

THE OLD MAN (REPRISE) Bob, Phil, Sheldrake and GIs

WHITE CHRISTMAS..... The Company

I'VE GOT MY LOVE TO KEEP ME WARM The Company

This production is performed with one 20 minute intermission.

CAST



Casey Venema



Mikaela Ray



Jay Sigler



Brandon Briggs



Sharon Jackson



Eric Mansfield



Tuesday Riazi-Fulkman



Chris Simmons



Isabelle Bailey



Emilyann Dustman



Ryan Dulaney



James Robert Newton



Molly Bagatto



Makenna Zelenak



Megan Delaney

Emily Kaplan

CAST



Kendra Strickland



Kimberly Haslam



Ava Butcher



Cassandra Komlanc



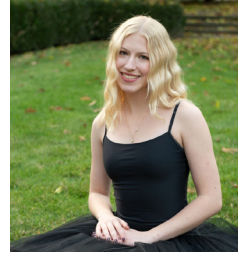
Kennedy Robinson



Norah Barua



Abby Schullo



Ali Knauf



Emma Pletcher



Kylie Jacobs

Support Rubber City Theatre's 2024 Season!

*Announcement
coming soon!*



WHO'S WHO

ISABELLE BAILEY (Rhoda) is a third-year Computer Engineering student at the University of Akron, and is thrilled to be back on stage. She was last seen as multiple roles in Eric Mansfield's "The Baron of Brown Street" at Rubber City Theater earlier this year; and this summer in the adult ensemble in "Matilda" and as Virtue in "Anything Goes". She has been in many University of Akron productions, including multiple roles in "Macbeth", Bobbie James in "Concord Floral" and Jamie in "Athena". Some other favorite roles include Sally Jackson in "The Lightning Thief", and the Cat in the Hat in "Seussical", both at Rubber City Theater.

NORAH BARUA (Loretta) is fourteen years old and was born in Akron, Ohio. She attends Revere Middle School and is currently in eighth grade. Norah is in her school's student council and yearbook club. During the summer, she volunteers at her school's Safety Town program. When she was five, she began taking ballet classes at the University of Akron Dance Institute. Since then, she has picked up styles of dance such as tap, jazz, pointe, and contemporary. Norah began performing at the age of seven when she was part of the cast of The Snow Maiden. She has also had several roles in The Akron Nutcracker. Additionally, this past year, she participated in the Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival.

MOLLY BAGATTO (Tessie) (all pronouns) is a senior at The University of Akron pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance. They started dancing at the age of three at The University of Akron Dance Institute and graduated from their pre-professional program in 2020. At the Dance Institute, Molly trained in mainly ballet and jazz. In 2019, she danced the role of the Snow Queen in the Dance Institute's biannual classical ballet production of The Snow Maiden. Molly has performed in many productions with The University of Akron Dance Company, as well as in productions with Terpsichore, The University of Akron's student-run dance club. She also performed in the Akron All-City Musical for three years of high school, which included the shows Mary Poppins, Jesus Christ Superstar, and Aida (West Side Story - show did not run due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

BRANDON BRIGGS (Phil Davis) is an actor, dancer, singer, director, and choreographer. He started his interest in the performing arts at the early age of 6 years old and from then on he majored

in dance and minored in drama at the Cleveland School of The Arts, professionally danced for GreeneWorks Project, and attended Karamu House of Performing Arts. Brandon graduated from Bedford High School in 2020 and is currently a senior at the University of Akron studying Theatre. Some of Brandon's choreography credits are Anything Goes and Amahl and the Night Visitors along with White Christmas. Some acting credits include Macbeth in Macbeth, Just Joey in Concord Floral and Donkey in Shrek: The Musical. Some Directing credits include The Beggar and the King, Little Theatre's production of Hamlet and Pipeline.

AVA BUTCHER (Gloria) Ava has been dancing with the University of Akron Dance Institute since the age of four. She has performed in multiple performances of The Snow Maiden and The Akron Nutcracker. As a 7th grader, she was asked to perform in Norton High School's production of The Wizard of Oz. She performed a pointe duet/solo, as well as, being an ensemble cast member. She has also performed in all spring plays at her middle school. Ava is currently an 8th grader and is in National Junior Honor Society, Student Council, Builders Club, PALS Leaders, Speech & Debate, Choir, and Concert Band.

MEGAN DELANEY (Donna/Secretary) Megan grew up dancing in Youngstown, Ohio. She danced in numerous Nutcrackers. She was also in the Youngstown Playhouse's production of Fiddler on the Roof as well as her high school's production of Bye Bye Birdie. She graduated from Poland Seminary High School in 2020 and is currently getting her BFA in Dance at the University of Akron. She is set to graduate this May.

RYAN DULANEY (Mike) is very excited about his first performance with Rubber City Theatre. His previous credits include Oklahoma! (Cord Elam), All in the Timing (Mark), and The Wizard of Oz (Scarecrow). Ryan has worked for Nordonia Drama over the last five years, where he has held many roles including production assistant, associate pit conductor, and vocal coach for Dazzle awards students. He is thrilled to be returning as the program's music director this year and even more thrilled to be able to work with Chris and Megan on this project. Ryan dedicates this performance to Lucy.

EMILYANN DUSTMAN (Rita) Emilyann Dustman (She/Her) is a dance educator, choreographer, and performer, pursuing her

WHO'S WHO

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance at The University of Akron. Emilyann served as an Artistic Director with Tempo Dance Company, showcasing her choreography, helping manage productions, and teaching multiple age groups. She also serves as an instructor at various competitive and pre-professional studios. Emilyann has been involved in several outreach projects, including the Akron After School outreach programs with Weathervane Theatre and Pointillism Jazz. She has been a dedicated performer, showcasing her versatility in various productions, including Rubber City Theatre's White Christmas and multiple UADC Performances. Emilyann has had the opportunity to experience residencies through NCC Akron with renowned choreographers and accepted a scholarship to attend Groundworks 2022 Winter Intensive. Emilyann has showcased her choreographic works at various events, including Cleveland Dance Project's 12th Seasonal Showcase and the All Ohio Dance Festival.

KIMBERLY HASLAM (Asst. Seamstress) is a Full Time Costuming Manager at Walt Disney World for their nightly production of FANTASMIC! When she is not working for the mouse, she visits Ohio to assist in making costumes for RCT's productions. Kimberly has always had a foot on the stage and has been in numerous productions over the years. This will be her first role since 2010 where she performed in University of Akron's Eurydice's. One may have seen Kimberly dancing with her sister Kendra in Wandering Aesthetics open mics over the last few years, as it's another skill she enjoys. Tolentino: *Oklahoma!* (Will Parker); Western Reserve Playhouse: *Little Women* (Professor Bhaer); Players Guild Theatre: *The Full Monty* (Harold Nichols).

KYLIE JACOBS (Mary) is 14 years old and is a freshman at Copley High School. She has been dancing since she was 3 years old and started attending the University of Akron Dance Institute at the age of 10. Her main focus is ballet, but also enjoys other styles of dance including tap, jazz, contemporary, and pointe. At her Copleyl she is involved with Key Club (volunteer work), and Passion (bible study). She also plays clarinet in the Copley marching band and takes piano lessons. Her past dance performances include The Akron Nutcracker and The Snow Maiden.

SHARON JACKSON (Martha) (she/her/hers) is excited to be back at Rubber City Theatre and performing at EJ for the first time! She was last

seen on an RCT stage as Mrs. Phelps in Matilda and in the booth as the stage manager for What's Wrong With Me? Sharon has been on and backstage for more years than she cares to count. She spent 6 summers touring with the CAST Touring Company. Three years as a performer and three years as the stage manager and assistant tour manager. Some of her favorite past onstage productions include Sour Kangaroo (Seussical), Fat Pig (Helen), Sweeney Todd (Mrs. Lovett), Nunsense (Sister Regina), and The Pillowman (Tupolski). She wouldn't have been able to do this show without the express permission of her dog, so thank you Sir Winthrop for making this show possible! And thanks to all of you for supporting live theatre!

EMILY KAPLAN (Sarah) is from Independence, Ohio. She currently attends the University of Akron pursuing a major in biomedical engineering and a minor in dance. Emily danced at Revolutions Dance Academy for 14 years and competed for 10 years. During high school, she helped create set pieces for Independence's High School drama club.

ALISON (ALI) KNAUF (Gale) is an advanced dancer with the University of Akron Dance Institute Dance Company. She first set foot on stage at the age of three as an audience participant during The Dance Institute's Interactive Children's Program at the Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival. She has studied dance for over 8 years, 7 of which have been with Dance Institute (including summer intensives). This past summer she also had the opportunity to attend class at Broadway Dance Center in NYC. Performances have included The Snow Maiden, The Akron Nutcracker, The Little Nutcracker with Ohio Contemporary Ballet, and The Cleveland Dance Festival, as well Heinz Poll Festivals throughout Akron every summer. In addition to her dance training, she has also performed with the Hudson Community Children's Chorus as well as Young Actors Studio. Ali is an honor student and senior at Hudson High School. One of her favorite pastimes is attending Broadway musicals, so she is thrilled to be part of White Christmas.

CASSANDRA KOMLANC (Maria) Born in Akron, Ohio, Cassandra Komlanc began her ballet studies at the age of seven and has been dancing for nine years. She trains at The University of Akron Dance Institute and takes ballet, pointe, tap, modern, jazz and contemporary. She recently performed at the Cleveland Dance Fest. Previously,

WHO'S WHO

she has performed in many productions of the Akron Nutcracker, dancing with Ohio Contemporary Ballet, Snow Maiden, and Heinz Poll. She tried out and was accepted to The Movement Project Summer Intensive. She was also accepted into the DI Dance Company. In the spring, she will perform as a soloist for two movements in The Carnival of the Animals. She also enjoys playing the flute in marching band and Wind Ensemble, pitching for her summer softball team and being 1st Singles Varsity on the tennis team at Copley High School. Many thanks to her parents and dance teachers for their support.

ERIC MANSFIELD (Waverly) returns for a second year to the beloved role of General Waverly, a character with whom he can identify having served 20 years as a U.S. Army officer, including a deployment to Iraq. Previous RCT acting credits include A Christmas Carol (Bob Cratchit) and Lear (Gloucester). Other stage credits include Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (Pharoah, Jacob) and A Christmas Carol (Jacob Marley) with Weathervane Playhouse. Audience members will recognize Eric as a three-time Emmy winner during his 20 years with WKYC-TV and WAKC-TV. Eric has also collaborated with RCT as a playwright with the AEA world premieres of Love in Reserve (2021) and Baron of Brown Street (2023), which received the Jean Kennedy Smith National Playwrighting Award (2nd Place) from the Kennedy Center. Eric thanks his family, specifically his amazing wife, Lisa, for their continued support of his time as a writer and performer.

JAMES ROBERT NEWTON (Scooter) (he/him) is very excited to be returning to Rubber City Theatre in their production of White Christmas! He was previously in their summer production of Anything Goes as Lord Evelyn Oakleigh. James is a junior musical theatre major at Wright State University, with credits including Kelly the Destroyer vs. The Springfield Cobras (Shinn), The Gondoliers (Ensemble, u/s Duke of Plaza-Toro), Sister Act (Ensemble, u/s Monsignor O'Hara), and Arcadia (u/s Bernard). He would like to thank the entire production team for this wonderful opportunity, and his family and friends for their endless support. Enjoy the show!

EMMA PLETCHER (Connie) Emma Pletcher is a high school dancer who has been dancing for a total of nine years. She began her training at the age of seven at her school taking exclusively tap classes. The following year she began to train at the UA Dance Institute. She is currently training in ballet, pointe, tap, jazz, and contemporary. She has received the opportunity to dance in productions with companies such as Ohio Contemporary Ballets (formerly known as Verb Ballet) and former company NEOS Dance Theatre. With Dance Institute she has also enjoyed the privilege to dance in Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival, Cleveland Dance Festival, The Akron Nutcracker, The Snow Maiden, and more shows. She has also done summer intensives with UA Dance Institute, The Movement Project, and Ohio Conservatory. With her training she hopes to one day pursue a career in professionally dancing.

MIKAELA RAY (Judy Haynes) is truly "counting her blessings instead of sheep" being back with Rubber City Theatre in this production of White Christmas! She was last seen on stage with RCT this past summer in Matilda (Miss Honey) and Anything Goes (Erma Latour)! Her other recent credits include Zombie Prom (Toffee), Of Mice and Men (Curley's Wife) and The Last Starfighter (Maggie) at Blank Canvas Theatre, as well as School of Rock (Rosalie Mullins) and Fun Home (U/S Med. Alison/Joan) at Cain Park. She'd like to wish everyone a very Happy Holiday and a bright new year! Instagram: @heymikaelaray Website: mikaelaray.com

TUESDAY RIAZI-FULKMAN (Susan) is honored to be joining the talented cast of White Christmas this year. She is 9 years old and loves being on stage. Her favorite roles include Nigel (Matilda, RCT), Molly (Annie Jr., RCT), and Hermey the elf (Rudolph Jr., RCT). When she is not on stage she loves hanging with her friends, playing video games and making up performances with her little sister Quincy. A special shout out to her voice teacher Ron Hazlett and her loving family. To the cast, thanks for the all support, break a leg!

KENNEDY ROBINSON (Marty) is a 14-year-old homeschooled student and has been dancing for 2 years. Kennedy started dancing at Robert's Conservatory of Dance and became a student at the Dance Institute a few months later. Kennedy's favorite style of dance is ballet, and she hopes to be

WHO'S WHO

a professional ballerina. She also enjoys tap, jazz, and contemporary. She has had the opportunity to dance in Nutcracker with a Kick, the Akron Nutcracker, and Heinz Poll. Kennedy is very excited to dance in White Christmas with RCT! 1 Peter 5:7-Casting all your cares on Him, for He careth for you.

ABBY SCHULLO (Debbie) Abby has been dancing with The University of Akron's Dance Institute for the past 6 years. She has performed in The Akron Nutcracker, Heinz Poll Summer Dance Festival and various showcases with DI. She started dancing with DI at the age of 5 and plans to continue dancing with her DI family! She is currently attending her first year at Hudson Middle School. Abby is excited to join the cast of White Christmas, where she can indulge in her love of dance!

JAY SIGLER (Bob Wallace) is pleased to be acting again with Rubber City Theater. He previously performed in Anything Goes (Elisha Whitney), On the Line (Robert Sheridan), Romeo and Juliet (Lord Capulet), A Christmas Carol (Ebenezer Scrooge), and Pippin (Charlemagne). Additionally, he has performed on stage at local theaters from Canton to Cleveland. He has also performed out of-state in Virginia, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., and West Virginia. Favorite roles include: CCP: The Drowsy Chaperone (Robert Martin), Forever Plaid (Sparky), Hello Dolly! (Cornelius Hackl), South Pacific (Luther Billis), Baby (Nick), Bright Star (Jimmy Ray), Dirty Rotten Scoundrels (Lawrence Jameson); Weathervane Playhouse: Young Frankenstein (Frederick Frankenstein), It Shoulda Been You (Albert), Spamalot (Sir Robin), The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Chip Tolentino), Oklahoma! (Will Parker); Western Reserve Playhouse: Little Women (Professor Bhaer); Players Guild Theatre: The Full Monty (Harold Nichols).

CHRIS SIMMONS (Ralph Sheldrake/Ezekiel Foster) Chris Simmons is thrilled to be returning to the Rubber City Theatre stage, for the first time in almost five years, in White Christmas. Previous RCT credits include: Guys and Dolls (Nicely Nicely Johnson), Aida (Zoser), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Nick Bottom) and A Christmas Carol (Ebenezer Scrooge). He has been an active part of RCT since their inception in 2013, as an actor, director, designer and board member. Chris is currently in his 11th year as Director of Drama at Nordonnia High School, his alma mater, and is so grateful to be able to share this

experience with Ryan and Megan, his Nordonnia Drama partners in crime. During his time at Nordonnia, Chris is honored to have been a three-time recipient of the Nordonnia Schools Foundation Superintendent's Award, as well as the recipient of a Dazzle Award from Playhouse Square. For my "Old Man", who always loved the Snow.

KENDRA STRICKLAND (Seamstress) Miss Strickland has been in the entertainment industry for the last 30 years mainly dancing for a variety of groups, acts, and venues. She's also been in the costume industry for the last 20 years producing costumes for dance, theatre, and opera at The University of Akron. More recently she acquired the role of the RCT Costume Department Head as of December 2020. Kendra has been a card-carrying member of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stagehand Employees since 2009. She is thrilled to be making a cameo appearance onstage as the "seamstress" amongst her job duties backstage running the costume changes for this White Christmas production.

CASEY VENEMA (Betty Haynes) is a freelance performer, director, and intimacy choreographer focused on bringing unheard and experimental narratives to the stage. Rubber City Theatre performance credits: Anything Goes (Reno Sweeney), What's Wrong With Me (Mezzo 1), Sweeney Todd (Pirelli), and Enemy of the People (Company Understudy). Other recent performance credits: Jacket of Blue (Francesca) at Cleveland Public Theatre, School of Rock (Ms. Bingham/Patty U/S) at Cain Park, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder (Miss Barley/Woman 3) at CVLT, Cabaret (Fritzie/Fraulein Kost) at Blank Canvas, The Twelfth Night (Sebastian) at Geauga County Arts, The Rocky Horror Show (Janet) at the Stocker Arts Center, Sanzaru (Morgan) at Playwrights Local, and When Push Comes to Shove (Hanka) at Bucknell University. Next up for Casey: co-intimacy directing AT THE WAKE OF A DEAD DRAG QUEEN at Dobama Theatre. Follow along with Casey's artistic adventures at www.caseyvenema.com or on Instagram @caseyvenem8.

MAKENNA ZELENAK (Kathleen/Dance Captain) is currently in her last year at The University of Akron where she will graduate in the spring of 2024 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance and a Bachelor of Arts in Child/Family Development. She is also the president of the student organization, Terpsichore Dance Club. Makenna has been

WHO'S WHO

dancing for sixteen years and grew up training at the Meneer School of Dance. She performed in pre-professional productions with the Ballet Theatre of Ohio from age four up until high school graduation including *The Nutcracker*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Coppelia*, and *The Little Mermaid* at the Akron Civic Theatre. She is also currently a Teaching Artist with ArtSparks and a ballet teacher at Meneer School of Dance. Makenna is grateful for this opportunity to perform with Rubber City Theatre at EJ Thomas Hall!

DANE CT LEASURE (Director) (he/him/his) is the founder and Executive Artistic Director of Rubber City Theatre. Primarily a director, Dane has directed productions ranging from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to *Pippin*. In recent years, Dane has turned to new works, particularly musicals in development. His most recent directing credits include, *White Christmas* (RCT), *Macbeth* (UA), and *Sweeney Todd* (RCT). He is an associate lecturer and area coordinator in Theatre Arts at the University of Akron. He holds a M.Litt and MFA from Mary Baldwin University in Shakespeare and Performance and is pursuing his Ph.D. in Theatre from Bowling Green State University. Dane is a proud member of Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers. #UniteEmpowerProtect

MEGAN L. GARGANO (Choreographer) is a native of Cleveland, Ohio where she began her training in 2003 at the Royal School of Ballet under the direction of Joanne Hughes Morscher. In addition, Megan studied at The Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts, BalletMet, performed with The Pennsylvania Ballet and participated in several dance festivals throughout Ohio. In 2012, Megan received her BEA in Performance and Choreography from Ohio University School of Dance. While studying at OU, Megan performed the reconstruction of Alwin Nikolais piece *Noumenon Mobilus*, under the direction of Alberto del Saz. She has performed in faculty works by Mickie Geller and guest work by Adriana Durant, Stefanie Batten Bland and Sean Curran. July 2010 Megan studied at the Laban Centre in Greenwich, London where she furthered her studies in Limon and Release Techniques, choreography and contact improvisation. In 2009, Megan co-founded The Movement Project, a professional dance company located in Cleveland,

whose mission is to challenge perspectives, evoke social change and bridge communities through the power of movement. TMP has produced over 40 evening length concerts, has created over 60 new works, produced 6 original dance films, and has performed at various venues such as Cleveland Public Theatre, The Breen Center, Dumbo Dance Fest in NYC, Baldwin Wallace University, Ohio University and Transformer Station. In 2019, TMP collaborated, performed and produced a sold-out concert with Pam Tanowitz and her NYC company Pam Tanowitz Dance at Pilgrim Church in Tremont. As a choreographer with TMP, Megan has created over 24 works since 2009. In 2013, Megan joined as choreographer for Nordonía Drama. (Nordonía High School) In 2017, Megan joined Weathervane Community Playhouse as choreographer for Disney's *The Little Mermaid* under the direction of Chris Simmons. In 2022, Megan made her choreographic debut with Rubber City Theatre in Irving Berlin's *White Christmas* at The Goodyear Theater.

JULIA FISHER (Intimacy Director) (she/her) is an intimacy director, playwright, actor, and director, and her work has been seen in professional theatres throughout Northeast Ohio. She is a Teaching Artist and Curriculum Developer with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, where she is in the final stages of certification, and she has intimacy directed over 10 productions at Rubber City Theatre (where she is the Resident ID), as well as productions at Ensemble Theatre, convergence-continuum, Ohio Shakespeare Festival, Cleveland Public Theatre's Test Flight, Broadview Heights Spotlights, Ohio Northern University, and the University of Akron. www.juliachristinefisher.com

JONATHON HUNTER (Lighting Designer) is no stranger to the company having designed nearly 20 productions for the company. He currently serves as the production manager for the Department of Dance at The Ohio State University. He has previously worked in this area for Cleveland Play House and Weathervane Community Playhouse as well as with numerous dance companies across the region. He received his BA from The University of Akron and his MFA from The University of Virginia.

IRENE MACK-SHAFER (Costume Designer) has designed and created costumes for Dance, Theatre, Musical Theatre, and Opera for 30

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years. Currently, she is resident costume designer with Rubber City Theatre and also Business Agent for IATSE Local 48. Favorite recent costume designs include RCT's *White Christmas* and Cleveland State University's *Skin of Our Teeth*.

JAYSHON AUSTIN (Stage Manager) is a freshman in the Sports Studies: Coaching program at the University of Akron. This is his debut with Rubber City Theatre. He is a recent graduate of the Cleveland School of the Arts (Theatre Major). He recently stage managed for the University Theatre's production of Little Theatre's Production of Hamlet. From NE Ohio, he has been a part of Beachwood Community Theatre Heights Youth Theatre, Mercury Theatre Company, Dobama Theatre, and Playhouse Square. Jayshon would like to thank the cast and crew for their hard work and dedication. He is grateful to Professor Leasure, Brandon Briggs, and Erin for all they've taught him. Go Zips!

ERIN RIFFLE (Assistant Director) is thrilled to join the creative team at RCT for this year's *White Christmas*. She first found her love of stage management as a volunteer for youth theater in 2004 and hasn't looked back. Erin has been working on productions behind the scenes at RCT since 2015 and has loved having a chance to help stage this year's performance

DAVID IVES (Book) has been active in the American theatre for 50 years. His shows include *All In The Timing*, *Time Flies*, *Venus In Fur*, *New Jerusalem: The Interrogation of Baruch de Spinoza*, and four verse adaptations of French comedies, as well as radio plays that are available online at PlayingOnAir.org. He collaborated with Stephen Sondheim on Sondheim's last musical, which will premiere in the not-too-distant future.

PAUL BLAKE (Book) produced the Broadway, London and touring productions of *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*. After 22 seasons as the Executive Producer of the legendary St. Louis MUNY, where he produced and/or directed more than 150 shows, Mr. Blake is currently enjoying his Emeritus status. Mr. Blake's Tony-nominated Irving Berlin's *White Christmas* (co-writer & co-producer) played two highly successful seasons on Broadway and has become a holiday favorite in theatres across the country. Mr. Blake's revival production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Sunset Boulevard*, which starred Glenn Close, played a

sold-out season at New York's Palace Theatre. In June of 2023, he will be presenting *Roman Holiday*, with songs by Cole Porter (co-writer & co-producer), at the Theatre Royal Bath, England.

IRVING BERLIN (Music and Lyrics) With a life that spanned more than 100 years and a catalogue that boasts over 1,000 songs, Irving Berlin (1888-1989) epitomized Jerome Kern's famous maxim that "Irving Berlin has no place in American music – he is American music." Berlin wrote scores to 13 Broadway musicals, contributed to seven revues, wrote songs for 12 classic Hollywood movie musicals and created many of the most well-known popular songs of the 20th century. Born in Russia, he immigrated to the Lower East Side, where he started as a singing waiter and soon became a lyricist, composer and music publisher. An intuitive businessman, Irving Berlin was a co-founder of ASCAP, founder of his own music publishing company and builder of the Music Box Theatre to house his Music Box Revues. For his paean to his beloved country, "God Bless America," he established a fund which receives all revenue for the song and distributes it to the Boy and Girl Scouts.

WHO'S WHO



IATSE Local 48 is the Chartered representative of The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, Its Territories and Canada, AFL-CIO,

CLC, (I.A.T.S.E.) in Akron, Ohio. Our jurisdiction runs halfway to Steubenville and Columbus on the South, halfway to Cleveland on the North, halfway to Warren/ Niles on the east; and halfway to Toledo and Lima on the West.

Local 48 currently represents 93 full members, 9 retired members (including 4 Gold Card Retirees and about 100 extras. We have more active members now than at any time prior to 1980. Among the disciplines covered are, Carpentry, Set Building, Lighting, Electrics, Fly's, Rigging, PowerPoint/Computer operation, Sound, Props, Carpet Laying, Fork Lift operation, Truck Loading, Video and Wardrobe. Local 48 was chartered September 9, 1897, and has served the needs of Akron's Theaters for more than 100 years.

E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall, built by The University of Akron and a group of dedicated community leaders, opened in October 1973 to rave reviews. This facility is owned and operated by The Univer-



sity of Akron for use by students and faculty of The University and by community and civic organizations active in the performing arts. The Hall also serves as home to The Akron Symphony Orchestra, Tuesday Musical Association, Children's Concert Society and Akron Youth Symphony. The Hall was named in honor of Edwin J. Thomas, retired Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, long-time member of The University's Board of Trustees and a leading driving force for community progress for more than a half century. This three-level auditorium, featuring continental seating (no center aisle), has a seating capacity of 2,955. One of the focal points of the building is the movable 44-ton ceiling which can close off either the Flying Balcony or both the Flying Balcony and Grand Tier creating a one, two or three level auditorium. Located in Goodrich Lobby and weighing in excess of 40 tons are the 27 chrome Witzman Counterweights which balance the ceiling in the house and are computer controlled. The configuration of the counterweights determines the position of the ceiling in the house. The entire transformation takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

MISSION STATEMENT

Rubber City Theatre's mission is to bring affordable and professional theatre to the Akron area. Together, our family of wildly talented artists and storytellers create innovated, intimate productions that open the eyes and hearts of our audiences in an intentionally accessible, inclusive and safe space.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

As a step toward honoring the truth and achieving healing and reconciliation with those Indigenous peoples who were affected most by the Doctrine of Discovery* and broken treaties, we acknowledge the traditional Ottawa and Wyandot lands on which we now stand, and on which the city of Akron was built.

**The Doctrine of Discovery is a principle of international law dating back to the late 15th century that specifically sanctioned and promoted the conquest, colonization and exploitation of non-Christian territories and peoples. Hundreds of years of decisions and laws continuing right up to our own time can ultimately be traced back to the Doctrine of Discovery — laws that invalidate or ignore the rights, sovereignty or humanity of Indigenous peoples in the United States and around the world.*

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Katie Logsdon, President and Mrs. Miller, Dr. Marc Reed, Dean Mitchell McKinney
The University of Akron's School of Dance, Theatre, and Arts Administration,
UA Dance Institute



Rubber City Theatre is a professional company in residence at The University of Akron.