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Contents

JANUARY 2023

WELCOME 2

THE PROGRAM 4
Including Cast, Who's Who and Credits

BILLDER BLOCKS 20
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AMERICA'S OLDEST THEATRE – PHILADELPHIA'S MOST POPULAR THEATRE COMPANY

WALNUT STREET THEATRE

825 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107

Dear Theatregoer,

Happy New Year! We're delighted that you've joined us as we begin another exciting year of live performances, and we look forward to what 2023 has in store for America's Oldest Theatre!

Next on our Mainstage, we'll travel to the Mississippi Delta in Tennessee Williams' Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. In this great American drama, long-hidden truths emerge, and the veneer of Southern gentility slips away during a family birthday celebration. This captivating piece is proof of the enduring relevance of Williams' work.

We will conclude our 214th season by bringing summer to Philadelphia early. Kick off your flip-flops and set your clock to island time with Jimmy Buffett's *Escape to Margaritaville!* This heartwarming musical comedy features both original songs and well-loved Jimmy Buffett classics, including "It's Five O'Clock Somewhere," "Fins," "Volcano," "Cheeseburger in Paradise," and more! I am proud to say that I am a Jimmy Buffett fan, and you will be too after this song-filled island adventure.

Beyond our Mainstage productions, there's plenty more excitement around the theatre. This spring, we will welcome another Walnut Street Theatre for Kids production with the delightful story of Disney's *Frozen JR.* With an empowering message of love and understanding, this stage adaptation of the Academy Award-winning film is perfect for all ages.

Additionally, classes for all ages at our Theatre School will soon be underway for the spring and summer semesters. I encourage you to review our offerings should you or someone you know want to sharpen any theatrical skills, as many of our Theatre School alumni go on to extraordinary careers in the entertainment industry.

Lastly, we are excited that our Education Department will resume in-person Touring Outreach performances this year, in addition to current Adopt-a-School partnerships. These initiatives bring exciting and imaginative programs directly to schools in the area, making a positive impact on students, and they would not be possible without patrons such as you. Thank you!

For now, sit back, relax, and enjoy the comedy of Neil Simon – whose legendary career started here at the Walnut with *Come Blow Your Horn!* We love having you at the theatre and look forward to seeing you again soon!

Sincerely,

Bernard Havard,
President and Producing Artistic Director



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AMERICA'S OLDEST THEATRE – PHILADELPHIA'S MOST POPULAR THEATRE COMPANY

WALNUT STREET THEATRE

825 WALNUT STREET • PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107

BERNARD HAVARD

President and Producing Artistic Director

January 10 – February 5, 2023

LAST OF THE RED HOT LOVERS

by **NEIL SIMON**

Scenic Design
BRIAN FROONJIAN

Costume Design
LEIGH PARADISE

Lighting Design
SHON CAUSER

Sound Design
ELIZABETH ATKINSON

Wig Design
CARISSA THORLAKSON

Director of Production
SIOBHÁN RUANE

Stage Managers
PATRICK DAVID EGAN
MATTHEW LUPPINO

Associate Artistic Director
BRIAN KURTAS

Directed by
JENNIFER CHILDS

MARK D. SYLVESTER
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CAST

(in order of appearance)

Barney Cashman.....SCOTT GREER*
Elaine Navazio..... GRACE GONGLEWSKI*
Bobbi Michele..... JESSICA BEDFORD*
Jeanette Fisher.....SUSAN RILEY STEVENS*

UNDERSTUDIES

CARLY BELKO (Bobbi Michele), KATIE FLANAGAN (Jeanette Fisher),
MADELEINE GARCIA (Elaine Navazio), MATTHEW RYDZEWSKI (Barney Cashman)

* The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the theatre union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

Artwork by Brandon Havard. Photo of Scott Greer by John Flak.

Last of the Red Hot Lovers is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

SETTING: An apartment in New York's East Thirties.

ACT I

A late afternoon in December, 1969

ACT II

A late afternoon in August, 1970

ACT III

A late afternoon in September, 1970

There will be one 20-minute intermission between Act II and Act III

CAST



**Jessica
Bedford**



**Grace
Gonglewski**



**Scott
Greer**



**Susan Riley
Stevens**

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

JESSICA BEDFORD (*Bobbi Michele*)
Previous WST credits: *A Woman of No Importance*, *Meteor Shower*, *And Then There Were None* and *The Prescott Method*. Other credits: Theatre Horizon, The Lantern Theatre Co., The McCarter Theatre, Delaware Theatre Co., 59E59, People's Light & Theatre Company, Act II Playhouse, PA Shakespeare Festival, Tiny Dynamite, and Bristol Riverside Theatre. Jessica is a professor of Theatre at DeSales University. Love to SC & our boys.

GRACE GONGLEWSKI (*Elaine Navazio*)
Off-Broadway: *The Guys* – The Flea Theatre with Tom Wopat directed by Tommy Kail (of *Hamilton* fame). Regional Theatre: Arena Stage, Arden Theatre (28 roles), Cape May Stage, Cape Cod Playhouse, Delaware Theatre, Folger Shakespeare, Interact, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival (10 seasons), Orlando Shakespeare Festival, Philadelphia Theatre Company, 1812 Productions and The Wilma. Thanks to The Walnut and the brilliant Jen Childs for this fun ride! Love to Silvia and Eric.

SCOTT GREER (*Barney Cashman*)
Favorites at the Walnut: *Laughter...* ('97 and '17), *Buddy*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*. NY: The Pearl Theatre. Regional: Milwaukee Rep., Arizona Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, 1812 Productions, Arden, InterAct, Wilma and many others. 6 Barrymore Awards. 2014 "Best of Philly," Philadelphia

Magazine. Thanks to Mark and Bernard. Love to Jen and Lily.

SUSAN RILEY STEVENS (*Jeanette Fisher*)
Thrilled to be back on the Walnut Stage! Walnut: *Blithe Spirit*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *Noises Off*, *Fallen Angels*, *God of Carnage*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Regional: 1812 Productions, PA Shakespeare Festival, People's Light, Act II Playhouse, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Dallas Theatre Center, Portland Stage Company, and Asolo Repertory Theatre. M.F.A.; Yale School of Drama.

NEIL SIMON (*Playwright*) (1927-2018) is widely regarded as one of the most prolific and performed playwrights in theatre history. In addition to *Lost In Yonkers*, which won a Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize, his plays and musicals include *Come Blow Your Horn*, *Little Me*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *The Odd Couple* (1965 Tony Award), *Sweet Charity*, *The Star-Spangled Girl*, *Plaza Suite*, *Promises, Promises*, *Last of the Red Hot Lovers*, *The Gingerbread Lady*, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue*, *The Sunshine Boys*, *The Good Doctor*, *God's Favorite*, *California Suite*, *Chapter Two*, *They're Playing Our Song*, *I Ought to be in Pictures*, *Fools*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *Biloxi Blues* (1985 Tony Award), the female version of *The Odd Couple*, *Broadway Bound*, *Rumors*, *Jake's Women*, *The Goodbye Girl*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *London Suite*,

WHO'S WHO

Proposals, Hotel Suite, The Dinner Party, 45 Seconds from Broadway, Oscar and Felix, and Rose's Dilemma.

JENNIFER CHILDS (*Director*) is the Producing Artistic Director for 1812 Productions: Philadelphia's All-Comedy Theatre Company. For 1812, she has created over 25 original works of comedic theater including the tribute to Jackie Gleason *To the Moon*, the holiday musical *The Carols* and the annual political humor show, *This Is the Week That Is*. She played Prudie in the Walnut's production of *Pumpboys and Dinettes* and is thrilled to be making her mainstage debut! Next up directing *Broads* and *The Play That Goes Wrong* at 1812. Thanks to Bernard, Mark and Brian for this opportunity. Love to Scott and Lily.

BRIAN FROONJIAN (*Scenic Design*) is thrilled to be designing at the Walnut Street Theatre, where he is currently the technical director. He has been designing and creating professional theater for over fifteen years. Notable theater companies he has designed for include The New Candlelight Theater, SurfFlight Theater, The Sandbox Theater and The American Theater for actors in NYC. Brian would like to congratulate the entire production on an amazing job. Special thanks to his wife Fallon and his two sons, Caleb and Colton.

LEIGH PARADISE (*Costume Design*) is a freelance costumer based in southeastern PA, and is delighted to work for Walnut Street Theatre on this project. Recent design credits include *This Is the Week That Is* (1812 Productions), *Town* (Theatre Horizon), *Bayard Rustin: Inside Ashland* (People's Light), and *TJ Loves Sally 4 Ever* (Theatre Horizon). She would like to thank the Walnut Street costumes team for all their help and her family for their unending patience and support.

SHON CAUSER (*Lighting Design*) Walnut credits: *Blithe Spirit, Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of The Speckled Band, A Woman of No Importance, A Comedy of Tenors, The Humans, Kate, Arsenic and Old Lace, God of Carnage, Good People, Driving Miss Daisy, Elf, Love Story, Jerry's Girls, It's a Wonderful Life, Plaid Tidings, Glass Menagerie, Vivian, Greater Tuna, The Mystery of Irma Vep.* Regional credits: Lantern Theater, Fulton

Theater, 1812 Productions, Inis Nua, Theatre Horizon, Delaware Theater Company, Maples Rep, Boise Contemporary Theater, Penobscot Theater. M.F.A., Lighting Design, Temple. Thanks: Bernard, Jen, Mark, Siobhan, and the whole Walnut family. For Lori.

ELIZABETH ATKINSON (*Sound Design*) is delighted to be returning to Walnut Street Theatre. Liz is currently based in Philadelphia after many years in Pittsburgh where she was Resident Sound Designer at the City Theatre Company. Her freelance career includes regional theatre credits at The Wilma, Arden Theatre Company, Applied Mechanics, InterAct Theatre Company, Yale Repertory Theatre, Hartford Stage, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, and Merrimack Repertory Theatre. She is a faculty member at Swarthmore College, and previously at Point Park University and Carnegie Mellon University. Liz has also had the honor of exhibiting at the 2007, 2011 and 2015 Prague Quadrennials.

CARISSA THORLAKSON (*Wig Design*) is a New Jersey-based freelance wig and makeup designer. You may have seen her recent work in *Cinderella* and *Rocky* here at Walnut Street. She has also designed for New York City Center, The Old Globe, A.R.T., McCarter Theatre Center, Hartford Stage, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Two River Theatre, Bay Street Theater, Delaware Theatre Company, Olney Theatre Center, and The Princeton Festival. She has served as a wig and makeup artist across the country. Carissa also creates custom medical wigs, cosplay wigs, and teaches classes in wigs and makeup. You can find her at CThorwigs.com and @wigician.

PATRICK DAVID EGAN (*Stage Manager*) Walnut: *Cinderella*. Broadway: *Fun Home, Newsies*. Off Broadway: Taylor Mac's *The Hang*, Howard Crabtree's *When Pigs Fly, Giant, Fun Home, Barbecue, Privacy, Southern Comfort, The Mystery of Love and Sex, When It Happens to You*. National Tours & other credits: *Roman Holiday, War Horse* First National Tour, 25th Anniversary Production of *Les Misérables, Newsies, Billy Elliot, Finding Neverland*, The Kennedy Center, Paper Mill Playhouse, Bucks County Playhouse, Barrington Stage Company, Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. Love to BG! @whiskuponastarnj

WHO'S WHO

MATTHEW LUPPINO (*Stage Manager*)

Matthew is thrilled to be back at the Walnut this season. WST credits: *Rocky, Blithe Spirit*. Broadway: *Bandstand, The Illusionists: Turn of the Century & Live on Broadway*. Additional NYC: The Public Theatre, The Pearl Theatre Company, The Flea. Select Regional: People's Light, Montana Repertory Theatre, Geva Theatre Center, Hangar Theatre, Barrington Stage Company, and 4 seasons with Shakespeare & Company. Matthew is an alum of The College of New Jersey and a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

SIOBHÁN RUANE (*Director of Production*)

This is Siobhán's tenth season at the Walnut. With over 20 years in the business, Siobhán has worked internationally as a Production Manager and Stage Manager. Previously, Siobhán held the faculty position of Stage Management Advisor at Florida State University's School of Theatre. Additional credits include *Cirque du Soleil*, Norwegian Cruise Line, *Cirque Productions*, and various regional theatres. Siobhán holds an undergraduate degree from

Rutgers University, an MFA from the University of Delaware, and is (proudly!) originally from the Jersey Shore.

BRIAN KURTAS (*Associate Artistic Director*)

has been associated with the Walnut Street Theatre since 2007. He began his career here as a performer and in the professional apprenticeship program, and has since dedicated himself to bringing artists together. He now serves our artists and audiences in the various capacities of casting, directing, programming, and literary management, as his function is to identify the highest quality of artists for our historic theatre. His vision behind unforgettable live experiences and storytelling has become a creative solution from the stage to the screen - He spent 4 seasons as the Executive Producer of Gretna Theatre, has worked on television networks and films including TLC and HGTV, and helped create events and entertainment for brands such as T-Mobile and Walmart while at Live Nation. Originally from Lancaster, Brian is a proud Temple alum and a member of the Casting Society of America.



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WHO'S WHO

MARK D. SYLVESTER (*Managing Director*) Mark is proud to be celebrating his 29th season at the Walnut. His extensive career has spanned Summer Stock to Broadway as an actor, stage manager, box office treasurer, theatre manager, marketing and public relations director and general manager. After several years working with commercial theatre, he has devoted his career to non-profit theatre companies since 1987. To date, Mark has been associated with more than 500 stage productions. An avid collector of musical theatre recordings, his collection contains over 3,500 cast albums from around the world. Widely regarded as a theatrical marketing expert, Mark lectures and consults with organizations internationally. He has served on several boards including seven years with the National Alliance for Musical Theatre where he now holds the honorary position of Board Emeritus and the Advisory Committee of Samuel French, the international play publisher and licensing company. With Bernard Havard he co-authored the book *Walnut Street Theatre*. Since he joined the Walnut in 1994, it became the most subscribed theatre company in the world.

BERNARD HAVARD (*President and Executive Producing/Artistic Director*) *Vox Populi* (The Voice of the People) was written on the Walnut Playbills in the 1800s. Whenever the Walnut has strayed from a populist program, the theatre has gone bankrupt. When I came here 40 years ago, we had no programs and no audience. Today we enjoy the largest subscription of any theatre in the world. So, my thanks to our loyal audience and a warm welcome to newcomers who enjoy and believe in what we do. I have tremendous admiration for the artists who have dedicated their lives to the theatre and the Walnut, in particular. Our theatre is a non-profit 501-C3 institution, and we rely on contributed income to extend our reach into the community. Last season we reached more than 150,000 students in our city schools. We have 20 trustees who give their time, wisdom, and contributions to help guide this historical treasure. I came to the Walnut in 1982, and I am as excited now about our future as I was in the beginning. My heartfelt thanks to all who enter this theatre. For my biography, go to About Us on our website at WalnutStreetTheatre.org.

COMING ATTRACTIONS AT THIS THEATRE!

MAINSTAGE

Our 2022–23 Season includes

- Tennessee Williams' *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (starts Feb. 14, 2023)
- Jimmy Buffett's *Escape to Margaritaville* (starts Mar. 28, 2023)

WST FOR KIDS

- *Disney's FROZEN JR.* (April 15–May 7, 2023)

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The mission of the Walnut Street Theatre Company is to sustain the tradition of professional theatre and contribute to its future viability and vitality. It does so through the production and presentation of professional theatre; the encouragement, training and development of artists; the development of diverse audiences; and the preservation and chronicling of its theatre building, a National Historic Landmark.



Walnut Street Theatre is a member of the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Citizens for the Arts in Pennsylvania, and the league of Historic American Theatres.



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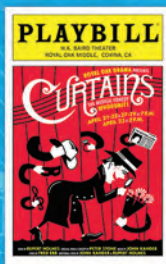
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