



**Look Forward:
The Ruby Bridges Story**



January 17 - 26, 2025

at the New Hazlett Center for Performing Arts

Welcome to the Second Production of Our 28th Season

“Strength, Voices, and Hope”



We hope you will experience the magic of storytelling on stage as we continue to fulfill our mission to entertain, engage, and inspire, and remain dedicated to bringing literature and history to life in ways that only live theatre can offer.

Each production this season will feature unique elements to enhance your visit, including lobby displays and special guest appearances. They are designed to spark meaningful conversations with your family and friends, creating positive memories that will enrich your theatre experiences.

One part of the Prime Stage experience is producing American premieres by excellent writers, especially when producing true stories about African-American historical figures who made significant impacts on our history.

Natalia Temesgen's script *Look Forward: The Story of Ruby Bridges* was found, selected, and designed to inspire and educate, as it entertains you and your family.

In the production, Ms. Temesgen wrote this line for Lucille Bridges, Ruby's mother, "When we live in harmony together, we shine a bright light in the darkness creating a path for peace and the hope to look forward." Our hope is that this production will spark that light for you as you share enjoyment with others and help build audiences and leaders for today and the future.

Thank you for joining us and we hope you enjoy the performance!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.
Producing Artistic Director

Prime Stage Theatre

Presents

Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story

Written by Natalia Temesgen

Directed by
Linda Haston

Featuring:
John Dolphin
Sarah Kobuck
Daniel LaMond
Saniya Lavelle
Richard McBride
Eric Molina
Stacia Paglieri
Joylette Portlock
DeVaughn Robinson
Savannah Wiles

Production Manager
Alexis Hawk

Scenic Designer
Livi Mosca

Technical Director
Alex Barnhart

Lighting Designer
Christopher Brown

Sound Designer
Samantha Magill

Costume Designer
Meg Kelly

Properties Designer
Alex Keplar

Dramaturg
Rebecca L. Godlove

Dialect Coach
Lisa Bansavage

Voice Coach
Toni Schlemmer

Stage Manager
Emma Moore

Production Stage Manager
Jason Kmetic

This Production was made possible by special permission with Anbessita Productions.

Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story

The year is 1960. An extraordinary 6-year-old named Ruby Bridges becomes the first African American student to attend an all-white grade school in New Orleans, Louisiana. Experience her remarkable journey as she discovers the true promise of America while blazing a trail for generations to follow.

THE CAST

In alphabetical order

Federal Marshal	John Dolphin
Narrator	Sarah Kobuck
Federal Marshal	Daniel LaMond
Ruby Bridges	Saniya Lavelle
Abon Bridges	Richard McBride
Dr. Coles.....	Eric Molina
Mrs. Henry	Stacia Paglieri
Lucille Bridges	Joylette Portlock
NAACP Rep. & Narrator	DeVaughn Robinson
Pam	Savannah Wiles

Setting:

New Orleans, Louisiana 1960 -- Ruby's home,
William Frantz Elementary, and other community locales.

Run Time:

Approximately 75 minutes and no intermission

ARTISTIC AND DESIGN STAFF

Director.....	Linda Haston
Producing Artistic Director	Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.
Production Manager	Alexis Hawk
Scenic Designer	Livi Mosca
Technical Director	Alex Barnhart
Lighting Designer	Christopher Brown
Sound Designer	Samantha Magill
Costume Designer	Meg Kelly
Properties Designer	Alex Keplar
Dramaturg	Rebecca L. Godlove
Dialect Coach.....	Lisa Bansavage
Voice Coach.....	Toni Schlemmer
Stage Manager.....	Emma Moore
Assistant Stage Manager	Jason Kmetic
Carpenter	Michael Boone
Master Electrician and Light Board Operator.....	Anthony Clayton
Audio Describer.....	Nathan Ruggles
Real-Time Live Captioner	Anna Cillo
Photographer	Laura Slovesko
Videographer.....	Brandon Pierce
New Hazlett Box Office Manager.....	Nathan Wagner
New Hazlett House Manager	Lauren N. Wijangco

Please silence all cell phones. The use of any recording device, either audio or video, and the taking of photographs, either with or without flash, is strictly prohibited.

PRIME STAGE THEATRE WOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING:

Andrew Carnegie Free Library & Music Hall in Carnegie
Carnegie Mellon University
Downtown Pittsburgh Lions Club
GPAC / Great Pittsburgh Arts Council
Little Lake Theatre
LAMP / Library of Accessible Media for PA
North Hills Shaler Library
Point Park University
New Hazlett Theater Staff and Volunteers
Prime Stage Theatre Staff and Volunteers

RECYCLE GLASSES

Prime Stage Theatre in Partnership with the Downtown Pittsburgh Lions Club will be collecting **usable glasses that give new life** during the run of our productions.



Refractive errors can be easily corrected with eyeglasses, yet millions living in low and middle income countries lack access to basic eye care services. Lions have recognized the urgent need for corrective lenses and collect usable glasses in their communities to support the Lions Recycle for Sight Program.



The Pittsburgh Lions Club, established in 1920, is the oldest Lions Club in Pennsylvania. Focusing on the Downtown and Uptown neighborhoods of Pittsburgh, the Club is open to any interested persons who live or work in Pittsburgh and want to join the Lions' mission "to serve."

The Pittsburgh Lions Club is actively recruiting for new members who live and/or work in the Downtown and Uptown neighborhoods. Conscious of busy schedules, our club aims to choose strategic service projects and fundraising campaigns that allow busy, civic-minded professionals to participate. We are currently planning for 2024 and open to ideas from new members. Join us and be a part of the Future of The Lions.

Lions Clubs International is the world's largest service club organization with more than 1.4 million members in approximately 46,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas around the world.

EVERY DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

When you donate to Prime Stage Theatre, you support our mission, productions, programs, staff, and care about the arts.

The Power of Live Theatre is Invaluable.

Donations can be made:

- In the lobby with our QR code
- On our website under "Support"
- By mail to Prime Stage Theatre, PO Box 99446, Pittsburgh, PA 15233



ACCESSIBILITY

At Prime Stage Theatre we believe everyone should be able to enjoy the experience of live theatre and what is happening on stage. We are committed to providing an environment that is inclusive and welcoming to all patrons. Access for patrons using wheelchairs or walkers is available. We ask that you identify any special seating needs with the Box Office staff when reserving your tickets in advance on-line or by calling the New Hazlett Box Office 412.320.4610

Assistive Listening

Assistive Listening Devices for patrons who need additional amplification are available for all performances. Please visit the Box Office upon arrival to obtain a device.

Audio Description Performance, *The Last Sunday of each production with On-Stage Pre-Show, Actor Voice ID, and Touch Tour at 1:30, Audio Pre-Show at 2:15 and Performance at 2:30PM*

Audio Description (or AD) helps to make visual imagery accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired. Visual elements can include costumes, sets, and character appearances, along with action, gestures, facial expressions, and other visually important images. It's used to enhance understanding and enjoyment of live performance.

This equipment was made available to the community thanks to the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council through a grant from the Allegheny Regional Asset District.

Real Time Live Caption Performance, *The Last Sunday of each production at 2:30*

Anna Cillo of Advanced Realtime Captioning Solutions will provide our patrons with real-time live captions for patrons who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Sensory Inclusive Performance, *The Last Saturday of each production at 2:30PM*

Our performances are designed as a family experience. We offer a quiet area and our patrons have access to Sensory bags designed to assist the needs of adults and children. The bags are filled with items that may help lessen sensory overload and engage. The bag items are also easily cleaned and sterilized for multiple uses.



ACCESSIBILITY STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

Anna Cillo, Realtime Captioner

Advanced Realtime Captioning Solutions is owned and operated by Anna Cillo, who has been providing captions and real-time court reporting in western Pennsylvania and the surrounding states since 2009. Anna Cillo is a member of the NCRA, the Association of Court Reporters and Captioners, and a graduate of CCAC. She worked as the staff captioner for the Pittsburgh Pirates from 2014-2022 and has provided captions for the Pittsburgh Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association throughout her career. Advanced Realtime Captioning Solutions was founded in 2018 in response to the demand for captioning in and around the City of Pittsburgh. We have provided captions and consulting to many organizations and individuals within the City of Pittsburgh and the surrounding areas. Some organizations we have worked with include Carnegie Mellon University, The Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, The Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Duquesne University, City Theater, The Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Temple Sinai, The Heinz History Center, and have been working with the Center for Hearing and Deaf Services for many years.

Nathan Ruggles Audio Describer

Nathan has provided Audio Description (AD) services for Prime Stage patrons who are blind and visually impaired since 2017. Together they received the 2022 Award for Achievement in Audio Description for Theater from The American Council of the Blind (ACB). Founder and Principal of Audio Describe Pittsburgh!, he provides AD for the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust Broadway Series and Pittsburgh CLO, and serves theaters and venues in the greater Pittsburgh area and beyond. He has also worked with organizations such as Film Pittsburgh, the Children's Museum, Andy Warhol Museum, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. He has trained through the Audio Description Institute, Audio Description Access, Audio Description Coalition, VSA Pennsylvania, and the Kennedy Center Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD). Beyond writing and narration, he furnishes comprehensive services that include recording, consulting, and technical support, bringing his unique background in professional stage acting, voice over, broadcast radio, podcast production, arts administration, political advocacy, and radio reading services.

SLB Radio congratulates Prime Stage on its 28th Season of Strength, Voices, and Hope



SLB's Youth Media Center on the Northside has free programs for teens from Allegheny County and beyond.

Visit ymc.slbradio.org for more details.





FEDERAL GALLEY

Every time you buy a ticket to a Prime Stage Theatre show, you can enjoy draft beers and craft cocktails just around the corner for an exclusive discount!

Show your Prime Stage Theatre ticket to receive **10% off** at the bar on the night of the performance!

Explore the menu at
www.federalgalley.org



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walk from the
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PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY



www.brandonpiercemedia.com

PLAYWRIGHT

Natalia Temesgen is a playwright, TV writer/producer, and Associate Professor of Creative Writing at Columbus State University. Her plays have been produced in Atlanta, Boston, Philadelphia and New York City. She has written TV episodes for "Dear White People" (Netflix), "Julia" (Max), and "Reasonable Doubt" (Hulu).

Natalia was a 2021 Artist in Residence and recipient of the Film Focus Fellowship at Serenbe Institute. She received the American Playwriting Foundation's 2019 "Relentless Award" Honorable Mention for "Lawnpeople," a political drama dealing with immigration, identity, and motherhood. MFA: NYU Tisch www.nataliant.com



DIRECTOR



Linda Haston directed last season's production of *The Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott*. In previous seasons, she directed *Sojourner* and *Harriet Tubman and The Underground Railroad*. Having begun her professional career in New York, she has directed and performed on the stages of local Pittsburgh and Regional theatre companies, which include Off the Wall Theater, Quantum, City Theatre, Bricolage, New Horizon, The Public Theatre, PICT, Arcade Comedy Theatre, and Prime Stage Theatre. She has performed her acclaimed one-woman show *Mother Lode*, written by Virginia Wall Gruenert, Artistic Director of Off the Wall Theatre Productions, in Rep at Carnegie Stage and, in 2018, performed it in New York. In June of 2023, Linda performed it in Reykjavik, Iceland. She has performed with Prime Stage Theatre in *To A Kill Mockingbird*, and *The Miracle Worker*. Recently, she performed in the acclaimed *Fat Ham* at City Theatre, which also went to TheatreSquared in Fayetteville, Arkansas. Linda is also the Education

Director and Teaching Artist for Prime Stage's Educational outreach programming, which features the Literacy in ACTION (LACT) Teacher Support System. It has been an honor and great pleasure to direct a stellar cast for this important piece of *Looking Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story*.

DRAMATURG STATEMENT

The world into which Ruby Bridges was born was a rapidly changing one. Just months before her birth, the U. S. Supreme Court declared that "separate but equal" facilities for Blacks and Whites were no longer legal. The decision, which was delivered after *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, began the arduous and often protested process of integration in the American South. The Bridges family would ultimately go on to play a notable role in that process, with Ruby being the first Black student to attend an all-White school in New Orleans.

During interviews in her adult years, Ruby has indicated more than once that, at the time, she did not fully understand the gravity of her situation. She stated that the fuss and crowds surrounding William-Frantz Elementary were "like Mardi Gras", and she was affected more by loneliness than fear, at least in the beginning.

Fortunately for little Ruby, she was not truly alone. She had a sensible and kind teacher, Mrs. Barbara Henry, whose Boston upbringing taught her that there was no reason Black and White children should have to learn in separate schools. She also had an invested psychologist, Dr. Robert Coles, who would later write a book about young Ruby's life. She also had two loving parents in Lucile and Abon, and her family's strong Christian faith served as a reminder that God, too, was always with her.

It was with the innocence of a six-year-old that Ruby marched into the history books, but we must remember – we are not as far removed from the America of 1960 as we would like to believe. If we were, Ruby Bridges would not have to continue to advocate for civil rights and equality, as she does even today. Though the laws permitting segregation have been stricken from the records, racism has never taken a day off. Today, civil rights advocates come from every race, religion, gender, and social class, which is proof that progress is being made, but there is still a long road to walk before Mrs. Henry's "Love Your Neighbor" machine is fully operational.

"I now know that experience comes to us for a purpose, and if we follow the guidance of the Spirit within us, we will probably find that the purpose is a good one." - Ruby Bridges



Saniya Lavelle, Ruby Bridges



Joylette Portlock, Lucille Bridges



Richard McBride, Abon Bridges



Stacia Paglieri, Mrs. Henry



DeVaughn Robinson, NAACP & Narrator



Eric Molina, Doctor Coles



Sarah Kobuck, Narrator



Daniel LaMond, Federal Marshal



Savannah Wiles, Pam



John Dolphin, Federal Marshal

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

John Dolphin, Federal Marshal

John is a local actor, playwright, and teaching artist. He was last seen in *Great Expectations* as Mr. Pumblechook and Mr. Wemmick. Previous Prime Stage productions include: *A Wrinkle in Time* and *The Boxcar Children* and *The Miracle Worker*. Other acting credits include: *The Servant of Two Masters* at the Pittsburgh Savoyards (nominated best supporting performer in a play by Broadway World Pittsburgh), *Painting Lessons* for the CSA Series at the New Hazlett Theatre, and understudy for the role of (The Legionnaire / Mike) in *What the Constitution Means to Me* at City Theatre. Other local credits include The Pittsburgh New Works Festival, The Young Playwrights Festival, and The New Renaissance Theatre. He has performed at the Studio Arena Theatre in Buffalo where he also worked as a teaching artist. His favorite role at the Studio Arena was Whit in *Of Mice and Men*. NYC credits include productions at the Off-Center Theatre, The New Theatre, The American Folk Theatre and The Music Theatre Lab.

Sarah Kobuck, Narrator

Sarah is thrilled to be making her Prime Stage Theatre debut! A recent graduate with a BFA in Acting from Point Park University, she is excited to step into her first post-graduation theater production. In addition to *Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story*, Sarah's recent credits include portraying Darlene in the feature film *Grind* and appearing in a commercial for Common Ground Alliance. She is proudly represented by The Talent Group. Sarah would like to express her gratitude to her family, her boyfriend Jack, and her best friends Lizzie and Ariela for their unwavering love and support. She also extends her thanks to director Linda Haston for this incredible opportunity, the entire production team, fellow cast members, and to the stage manager Emma Moore and ASM Jason Kmetc for their dedication and hard work.

Daniel LaMond, Federal Marshal

Daniel is happy to make his Prime Stage debut and grateful it was with this cast and crew! Credits include: Marvin from *Falsettos*, Pirelli from *Sweeney Todd*, Tilden from *Buried Child*, Antonio from *The Merchant of Venice*, and Sheriff Earl in *All Shook Up*. So thankful for my unending support from my family and my love Betsy.

Saniya Lavelle, Ruby Bridges

Saniya is a talented young artist attending Pittsburgh Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA). A passionate writer, actor, dancer, and singer, she aspires to become both an author and an actress. Saniya is a proud member of the Alumni Theater Company (ATC). In addition to performing original plays with ATC, Saniya has portrayed Zonia Loomis in Pittsburgh Playwright Theatre Company's *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*. In 2024, she took on the roles of Young Nettie and Young Olivia in Pittsburgh CLO's production of *The Color Purple*. Saniya is thrilled to portray Ruby Bridges, honoring her legacy of courage and integration in schools through the theater.

Richard McBride, Abon Bridges

Richard is thrilled to be working with Prime Stage. Richard studied musical theatre at Point University from 2007-2011. Richard is elated to be back at the New Hazlett. Richard was previously seen at the New Hazlett as Kwabene Entinde in *Sunsum is Spirit*, and as Larry Fuller in Monteze Freeland's *Kalopsia*. Past Theatre roles in Pittsburgh include Starveling in *Midsummer in Harlem*, BoBo in *A Raisin in the Sun*, and Mercer Ellington and Billy Strayhorn: *Something to Live For*, all a Pittsburgh Public Theatre. Richard has also been seen as Lt. Brannigan in Pittsburgh CLO's *Guys and Dolls*, *Youngblood* in Pittsburgh Playwrights *Jitney*, *an Apostle* and New Season in PMT's *Jersey Boys*, and Captain Davenport in *A Soldiers Play* (Phoenix Arizona). Richard is grateful for this opportunity to keep this historic story alive.

Eric Molina, Dr. Coles

Eric is thrilled to make his debut with Prime Stage! Previous shows include *Buried Child* at Throughline Theatre Company, *Escape to Margaritaville* and *Matilda* at Little Lake Theatre, and *Urinetown* and *The Play That Goes Wrong* at Center Theatre Players. A graduate of Temple University with a B.A. in theater, Eric is a tour actor with Saltworks Theatre Company. He also performs throughout Pittsburgh with companies such as the Dinner Detective Murder Mystery Show, Penny Arcade at Arcade Comedy, and I Pierogi. Eric extends his heartfelt appreciation to his friends, family, and his fellow creatives throughout Pittsburgh. Special shoutout to the patron associates at New Hazlett!

"Don't follow the path. Go where there is no path and begin the trail. When you start a new trail equipped with courage, strength and conviction, the only thing that can stop you is you!" – Ruby Bridges

ACTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Stacia Paglieri, Mrs. Henry

Stacia is thrilled to be back with Prime Stage and honored to tell this important story alongside such a talented cast and crew. She was most recently seen in The Young Playwrights Festival at City Theatre and has enjoyed working with Prime Stage Theatre in *The Miracle Worker* as Kate Keller, and the world premiere of *Frankenstein* as Mary Shelley. Stacia is also a filmmaker and holds a BFA in acting with a minor in musical theater from Point Park University. She would like to thank Linda for her graceful leadership, and her loved ones, whose support means the world.

Joylette Portlock, Lucille Bridges

Dr. Joylette Portlock is thrilled to return to the stage as Lucille in *Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story*. This play is a departure from her most recent role, as executive director of the nonprofit Sustainable Pittsburgh, where she served for six years before departing in December 2024. Portlock holds a Ph.D. in Genetics and an undergraduate degree in biology. In addition to roles in productions as an undergraduate and in graduate school that included Greta/Tootsie #2 in *Grand Hotel*, as Imani/Sandra in *Love's Light in Flight*, and extra work in films *The Matrix Reloaded* and *The Matrix Revolutions*. Portlock appeared as Clemma Diggins in *Proposals* with Second Stage Theater in Medford, MA, as well as writing, directing, and starring in 34 episodes of the *Don't Just Sit There - Do Something!* series of short YouTube videos about climate change, filmed here in Pittsburgh

DeVaughn Robinson, NAACP Rep. & Narrator

DeVaughn is a founding member of the Alumni Theater Company and a winner of the honorable Shyne Award. DeVaughn began his career when he was 12 when his first original play *Backstage Stories* was performed twice in 2008 during Carnegie Mellon University's *Playground* series and again by the Alumni Theatre Company starring Bill Nunn. In 2010, DeVaughn directed, co-wrote, and starred in Alumni Theater Company's original musical *Reign* where he starred as "Reign". In 2011, DeVaughn won 1st place in the Regional August Wilson Monologue Competition in Pittsburgh and placed 3rd in the national's in New York. In 2013, DeVaughn was one of the winners for the Shakespeare Monologue Competition at the Pittsburgh Public Theater for his portrayal of *Hamlet*. In 2017, he made his film debut in Steeltown Entertainments *Rehabilitation of the Hill* directed by Demetrius Wren starring Harry Lenix. In 2020, DeVaughn began his own theatre company called DreamTheatre(@dreamxtheatre). DeVaughn recently returned to the stage this year starring as "Dun" in A Public Fit Theatre Company's production of *Pipeline*.

Savannah Wiles, Pam

Savannah is thrilled to make her debut with Prime Stage in *Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story*. Her passion for theater shines through in her regional performances such as Shirley Jones: *A Gala Celebration* (Youth Chorus), Melinda Cratchit in *A Musical Christmas Carol*, Marta von Trapp u/s and Brigitta von Trapp u/s with *The Sound of Music*, and as a Munchkin in *The Wizard of Oz: 75th Anniversary Summer Under the Stars* all with Pittsburgh CLO. She also appeared as Shprintze in *Fiddler on the Roof* in Concert with Pittsburgh CLO and the Pittsburgh Symphony. Savannah's educational theater credits include Mrs. Winifred Banks in *Mary Poppins Jr.*, Amanda Thripp in *Matilda Jr.*, Pooh in Disney's *Winnie the Pooh*, Kids. She trains at Pittsburgh CLO Academy of Musical Theater. Outside of theater, Savannah is an outstanding 6th grade student and enjoys participating in her community soccer club, swim club, and playing trombone in the school band. She is grateful for the love and support of her family, friends, and mentors. She is delighted to share this powerful story with you.



"The greatest lesson I learned that year in Mrs. Henry's class was the lesson Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to teach us all: Never judge people by the color of their skin. God makes each of us unique in ways that go much deeper." – Ruby Bridges

ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

Lisa Bansavage, Dialect Coach

Lisa is delighted to be working on her twelfth production with Prime Stage Theatre. As an actor, her career spans Broadway, Off Broadway, regional theatre, film, television and national commercial credits including *Master Class*, *Sideman*, *Turn of the Screw*, *A Man for All Seasons*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Grace & Glorie*, *Mastergate*, *Red Scare on Sunset*, *The Changeling*, *The Country Wife*, *A View from the Bridge*, *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*, *The Sisters Rosenweig*, *Night of the Iguana*, *Mississippi Burning*, *Married to the Mob*, *Three Men and a Baby*, *The Fisher King*, *Diary of Anne Frank*, *The Loman Family Picnic* and a third of the full Shakespearean canon as well as a role opposite Sir Anthony Quayle in the BBC-London production of *An Exchange of Gifts*. She is a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University's theatre conservatory and holds a Masters from The University of Pittsburgh where she was the Merrill Fellow. Her most recent New York performance was as Elizabeth Jackson, Rebekah Baines Johnson and Virginia Clinton in *First Mothers: The Women Who Raised America's Presidents*.

Alexander Barnhart, Technical Director

Alex is a Theater artist and educator from Pittsburgh, PA. A graduate of Slippery Rock University's BA Theater-Design and Technology, class of 2014. Graduate of Kent State University's MFA Theater- Design and Technology, class of 2021. Alex has been working as a Designer, Educator, and Technical Director for various companies and universities in Pittsburgh and beyond including Prime Stage Theater, Kinetic Theatre, Carnegie Mellon University, Kent State, Wilkes, and Slippery Rock University. Over the years, they've had the opportunity to work on a number of incredible solo and collaborative projects. Thriving on creative challenges and building long-term relationships with artists and students along the way, Alex is always leaving an impactful impression behind.

Christopher Brown, Lighting Designer

Christopher is a lighting designer from Washington, DC. He will graduate from Seton Hill University with a B.A. in Theatre Design and Technology with a concentration in Lighting Design. Upon graduating, he is looking at exploring his career options in lighting. Projects that Chris work includes Seton Hill's *Little Shop of Horrors*, Fall Dance Concert 2023, and coming up in the spring *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and *Rose Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott* for Prime Stage Theatre last season.

Rebecca L. Godlove, Dramaturg

After two decades of pursuing other hobbies, Rebecca now enjoys working with the wonderful performers, directors, designers, and writers who make up the theatre community in Pittsburgh. Rebecca works for Prime Stage Theatre as a dramaturg and teaching artist. In her spare time, she writes, crafts, and volunteers as a Book Fairy at local libraries to encourage children's literacy. She lives in Scott Township with her family and their cadre of beloved rescue cats.

Alexis Hawk, Production Manager

Alexis is thrilled to be taking over this season and joining Prime Stage Theatre. She is involved with the National Tour of *Spamilton* as Tour Manager, Assistant Tour Manager and previously as Covid Compliance Officer. She has been seen both on and off the stage at several theatre's, including Little Lake Theatre, South Park Theatre and Stage 62. She is a graduate of California University of Pennsylvania where she received her Bachelor's Degree in Theatre and Associate's Degree in Graphic Design and Multimedia. Many thanks to her friends, family and partner for supporting her in all of her endeavors.

Meg Kelly, Costume Designer

Meg is the costume designer for Prime Stage Theatre's 28th season and also costumed our Annual Cemetery Walk. Previously she was the costumer for *Pride and Prejudice*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Thespis*, *Amahl* and the Night Visitors, *The Gift of the Magi*, and *A Christmas Carol* for the Pittsburgh Savoyards and has also assisted on (and performed in) quite a few G&S shows over the years. Megan also worked with South Park Theater and Resonance Works here in Pittsburgh as well as the Ogunquit Playhouse in Maine.

Alex Keplar, Properties Designer

Alex is a Pittsburgh based scenic and properties designer. She is a graduate of Point Park University's Conservatory of Performing Arts and is excited to be working with Prime Stage again as their Resident Properties Designer! Some of her recent credits include *Sweeney Todd* (Scenic Designer, Pittsburgh CAPA), *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *39 Steps* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *The Sunshine Boys* (Scenic Designer, South Park Theatre), *The Amazing Lemonade Girl* (Properties Master, Prime Stage Theatre), *Angels in America* (Properties Master, The Pittsburgh Playhouse), and *Little Children Dream of God* (Scenic Designer, The Pittsburgh Playhouse). She would like to thank her friends and family for all of their support!

ARTISTIC AND DESIGN BIOGRAPHIES

Jason Kmetc, Assistant Stage Manager

Jason has been working in theater for 20 years. He started with Prime Stage theater in 2005, and has worked with them on and off for the last 19 years. He has also worked for Disney, and other production companies in California. Jason has returned to Pittsburgh to go back to his passion of theater. Some of Jason's credits include: *The Long Road Today/ El Largo Camino Del Hoy* (Lighting Technician/First Assistant Stage Manager), *Apsis Requiem* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Gypsy* (Stage Manager), *Of Mice and Men* (Assistant Stage Manager), *15 Min of Fame* (Assistant Director/Stage Manager), *Fifth Feeling: A Performance Ritual* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Westfield Mall Holiday Show 2014* (Lighting Designer/Stage Manager), *Miracle Worker* (Stage Manager), *The Boxcar Children* (Stage Manager), Jesse Factor's *The Marthadyssey* (Stage Manager), *Almost 40 and Single* (Stage Manager), and most recently *The High School Drama Awards* (Production Stage Manager). Jason would like to thank his parents for their continued support, and a thank you to his writer in crime, Nick Comunelli!

Samantha Magill, Resident Sound Designer

Samantha is excited to be part of another Prime Stage Theater production! Her past work with Prime Stage includes sound design for *The Boxcar Children*, *The 39 Steps*, *The Lion*, *The Witch*, and *The Wardrobe*, *The Miracle Worker*, *Witness for the Prosecution*, and *Great Expectations*. She has also contributed her sound design talents to the New Hazlett CSA program, South Park Theatre, and Pittsburgh Public Theater. A proud graduate of IUP (class of 2021), Samantha is an active member of SoundGirls' Pittsburgh chapter, which supports and inspires the next generation of women in audio. Samantha is deeply grateful to Prime Stage, her friends, family, and her cat for their continued support.

Emma Moore, Stage Manager

Emma is excited to be continuing this season with Prime Stage! She last worked as the Stage Manager for Prime Stage's *Great Expectations*. Before that Emma has worked as a Stage Manager for The Summer Company production of Theater of Blood, Pittsburgh New Works Festival for both Duquesne Red Masquers and The Summer Company. She worked with Prime Stage Theater last season on *The Miracle Worker*. Emma is a recent graduate from Duquesne University's Theater Arts program, she was an active member of the Red Masquers during her time there. Her next production is *Sweeney Todd* with the Duquesne Red Masquers! During the day Emma works for Carnegie Science Center as an Audio/Visual Coordinator. She hopes you enjoy the show!

Livi Mosca, Scenic Designer

Livi recently graduated from Slippery Rock University with a B.A. in Theatre Design and Technology. During her time at SRU Livi worked in areas such as Scenic, Costumes, and Props. Having recently been the Scenic Designer for their production of *Tragedy: a tragedy*. During the summers, Livi would work at Porthouse Theatre in their Scene Shop and maintaining the facilities. She is currently employed as a Scenic Artist at Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center. Livi is very excited to have the opportunity to work with Prime Stage to tell the story of Ruby Bridges!

Toni M. Schlemmer, Voice Coach

Toni is a classically trained soprano with a B.A. of Arts in Music. She has studied voice with Dr. Kenneth H. Phillips, Dr. Jack C. Clinard, and Mr. Jeffrey Howell among others. She has been a soloist with the West Virginia Symphony as well as university orchestras throughout West Virginia. She has taught music in public schools in PA and WV. Toni has performed with several professional theatre companies in the tri-state area. Among them: Front Porch Theatricals, Pittsburgh Musical Theatre, Pittsburgh CLO and Lincoln Park Performing Arts Center. Since 1986, Toni has been the Director of Fine Arts at Calvin Presbyterian Church in Zelienople. She created a creative arts and theatre ministry for the church and community, producing and directing musicals with adults and youth for 30 years. Toni teaches private voice, piano, and music theory. This is her second show at Prime Stage Theatre and she is thrilled to work with this talented cast and company!

"If you really think about it, if we begin to teach history exactly the way that it happened – good, bad, ugly, no matter what – I believe that we're going to find that we are closer, more connected than we are apart." – Ruby Bridges

MY SISTER'S LIPSTICK



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**MY SISTER'S
LIPSTICK**
BY ANNA KING SKEELS

A tale of sibling bonds,
queer repression, and
a Judy Garland obsession

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Our Education Outreach Programs



*Literacy in
ACTion*

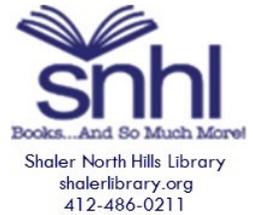
*Resource Guides
Act-48 Workshops
Global Class Room
and Much More!*

*Student Matinee
Field Trips*



SUGGESTED READING LIST

If this play has piqued your interest, why not check out a book or movie and explore more? Your public libraries have many online resources you can access from home through Libby or Hoopla. Check your library's website for help in getting started.



Children's Books

***This is Your Time* by Ruby Bridges**

Civil rights activist Ruby Bridges shares her story through text and historical photographs.

***I Am Ruby Bridges* by Ruby Bridges**

Ruby Bridges tells her story as never before and shares the events of the momentous day in 1960 when Ruby became the first Black child to integrate the all-white William Franz Elementary as a six-year-old little girl- a personal and intimate look through a child's lens at a landmark moment in our Civil Rights history.

***Dear Ruby, Hear Our Hearts* by Ruby Bridges**

A compilation of letters from concerned young students about today's issues, including bullying, climate change, gun violence, and racism. Reading Ruby's intuitive and inspirational responses, young readers will embrace the courage to be brave, bold, and confident.

***Ruby Bridges Goes to School: My True Story* by Ruby Bridges**

Ruby tells the story of how she helped end racial segregation in the New Orleans public school system when she was in the first grade.

***Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges**

A picture book that recounts the story of Ruby Bridges and her involvement in the integration of her school in New Orleans in the 1960s.

***The Story of Ruby Bridges* by Robert Coles**

Quiet words and moving illustrations tell the true story of the brave six-year-old who integrated into a whites-only school in New Orleans in 1960.

***Ruby Bridges: She Persisted (series)* by Kekla Magoon**

A chapter book biography of Ruby Bridges.

***Ruby Bridges: My Itty-Bitty Bio Series* by Kelisa Wing**

This biography for early readers examines the life of Ruby Bridges.

***Ruby Bridges* by Madeline Donaldson**

Part of the History Makers Bios series. The author also documents Bridges' adult life, highlighting her community activities in recent years.

***Shaking Things Up: 14 Young Women Who Changed the World* by Susan Hood**

Introduces fourteen revolutionary young women-each paired with a noteworthy female artist- to the next generation of activists, trailblazers, and rabble-rousers.

***The Story of Civil Rights* by Wil Mara**

A history of race relations in the U.S. includes coverage of slavery, abolition and segregation as well as the events of the Civil Rights movement, discussing subjects ranging from protests and speeches to legislation and the famous people around the world who helped promote equal rights.

***Enough! 20 Protestors Who Changed America* by Emily Easton**

From Samuel Adams to the students from Parkland, march through history with heroic revolutionary protesters who changed America.

Teen Books

***And We Rise* by Erica Martin**

A poetic exploration of the Civil Rights Movement in 1950s-1960s America with historical photos interspersed throughout.

SUGGESTED READING LIST

***Separate But Equal* by Anne Wallace Sharp**

Learn about the issue of civil rights in education.

***This Promise of Change: One Girl's Story in the Fight for School Equality* by Jo Ann Allen Boyce**

In 1956, one year before federal troops escorted the Little Rock 9 into Central High School, fourteen-year-old Jo Ann Allen was one of twelve African American students who broke the color barrier and integrated Clinton High School in Tennessee.

***A Mighty Long Way: My Journey to Justice at Little Rock Central High School (adapted for Young Readers)* by Carlotta Wall LaNier**

A personal account of the nation's most famous school integration recounts the author's decision to attend Little Rock's all-white Central High and describes how subsequent events affected her family's belief about dedication, perseverance, and sacrifice.

***I Rise* by Marie Arnold**

Fourteen-year-old Ayo must decide whether to take on her mother's activist role when her mom is shot by police. As she tries to find answers, Ayo looks to the wisdom of her ancestors and her Harlem community for guidance.

Adult Books

***The Spirit of Freedom* by Marty Gitlin**

This book shines a light on the unsung women of the Civil Rights Movement, women who overcame enormous odds to fight for the rights of Black Americans.

***A Most Tolerant Little Town* by Rachel Louise Martin**

An intimate portrait of a small town living through tumultuous times, this propulsive piece of forgotten civil rights history- about the first school to attempt court-ordered desegregation in the wake of Brown v. Board- will forever change how you think of the end of racial segregation in America.

***The Wilmington Ten* by Kenneth Robert Janken**

In February 1971, racial tension surrounding school desegregation in Wilmington, North Carolina, culminated in four days of violence and skirmishes between white vigilantes and black residents.

***A Girl Stands at the Door* by Rachel Devlin**

A new history of school desegregation in America, revealing how girls and women led the fight for interracial education.

***Moonrise Over New Jessup* by Jamila Minnicks**

It's 1957, and after leaving the only home she has ever known, Alice Young steps off the bus into all-Black New Jessup, where residents have largely rejected integration as the means for Black social advancement.

Check Out These Movies...

***Ruby Bridges* (1998)**

This film presents the real-life tale of young Ruby Bridges. *(Rated TV-PG)*

***The Hate U Give* (2018)**

Starr witnesses the fatal shooting of her childhood best friend Khalil at the hands of a police officer. Now, facing pressure from all sides of the community, Starr must find her voice and stand up for what's right. *(Rated PG-13)*

***The Long Walk Home* (1990)**

Two women, black and white, in 1955 Montgomery Alabama, must decide what they are going to do in response to the famous bus boycott led by Martin Luther King *(Rated PG)*

(Descriptions condensed from Amazon.com, Wikipedia, and GoodReads)

The Hillman Center for the Performing Arts congratulates the nominees and celebrates all of the young artists participating in the Prime Stage Theatre Drama Awards.



Perform at the Hillman

The Hillman Center's Richard E. Rauh Theater is a state-of-the-art, 600-seat performance space. We also have the Peter J. Kountz Black Box Theater, that seats 200, for smaller performances, as well as an outdoor plaza. These spaces are designed for high-quality presentations of the arts, and provide ample space for groups to meet, practice and perform.

Learn more at thehillman.org/rentals

High School Drama Awards



Becoming a Participating School for our 6th Annual Drama Awards

Scan the QR code to register or visit our website at
www.primestage.com/dramaawards



For more information email dramaawards@primestage.com

Our High School Drama Awards are designed to reward excellence in high-school drama for non-musical productions: one act or full length. We will accept participating schools on a first come, first served basis.

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OUR SINCERE THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT.

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THE MISSION OF PRIME STAGE THEATRE

To bring great literature and history to life through the transformative process of live theatre – to entertain, inform, enrich, and inspire audiences with engaging programs that deliver long-lasting benefits to theatregoers, families, students, and educators of our region.

OUR VISION

Employs the engaging immediacy of live theatre to enrich the lives of our patrons, fostering empathy and community connection, opening the mind to new perspectives, and instilling qualities of imagination, creativity, curiosity and wonder.

TEACHER ADVISORY COUNCIL

We believe that literacy and the theatre can lift people up, inspire opportunities, and present new ways of seeing the world in positive ways. Effective teachers help students connect literature to their own world. Students discover literature, enjoy reading, and vicariously "live in" the literature. Talented artists bring stories from the pages to life by providing multi-sensory experiences. Our adaptations of literature, historical figures, and programs are selected and produced to meet those goals.

AMBASSADORS

They encourage conversations with patrons, resulting in continued patronage and support and promoting Prime Stage Theatre throughout the Pittsburgh region.

prime
stage

THEATRE CO

Our Season of Strength, Voices, and Hope!



Great
Expectations

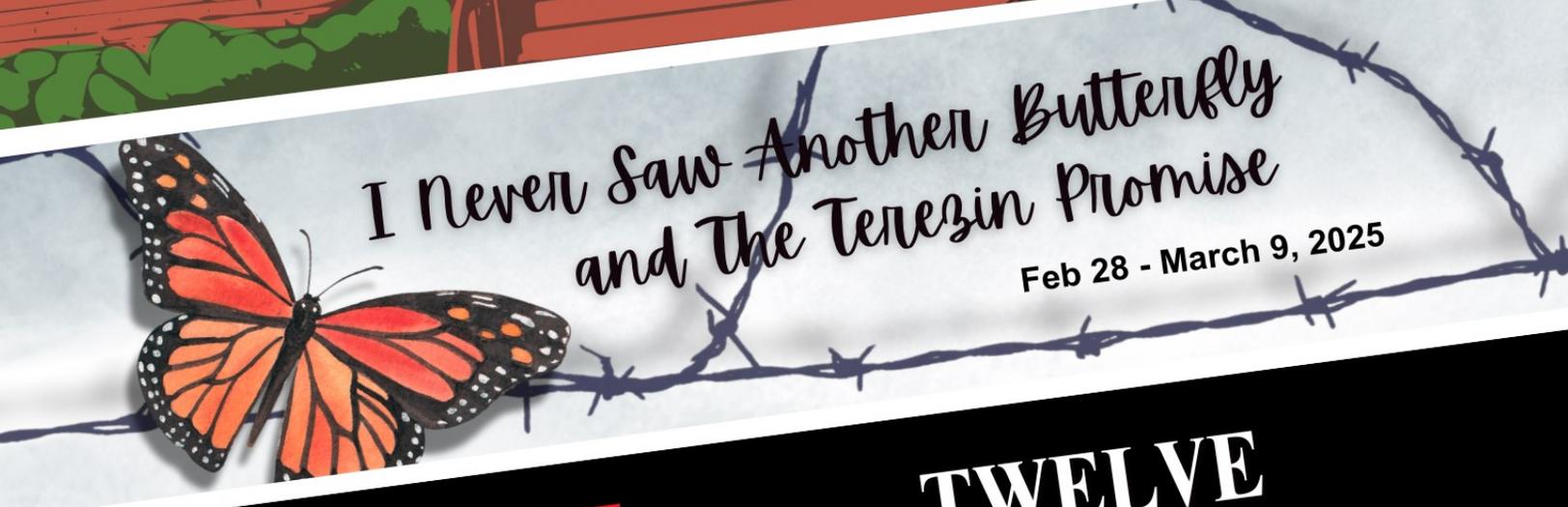
November 1 – 10, 2024

Look Forward:



The Ruby Bridges Story

January 17 – 26, 2025



I Never Saw Another Butterfly
and The Terezin Promise

Feb 28 - March 9, 2025



TWELVE
ANGRY MEN

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