



#### **MISSION**

To create exceptional, innovative, and adventurous theatre and educational programming that advances the national dialogue on sexual and gender identity, and challenges and entertains audiences in Chicago and beyond.

#### VISION

To be a nationally recognized, intergenerational, and community-focused LGBTQIA arts organization by creating theatre that fosters awareness, understanding, and celebration of all forms of sexual and gender expression.

#### **AFT STAFF**

Megan Carney
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Alana Parvey Zalas MANAGING DIRECTOR

Dylan Toropov
DIRECTOR OF INDIVIDUAL GIVING & SPECIAL EVENTS

Benjamin Sprunger
DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL GIVING

Mia Vivens
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

Donny Accosta
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF ABOUT FACE YOUTH THEATRE

Will Rogers
MARKETING COORDINATOR

Amy Sheahan
EDUCATION ASSOCIATE

David Rosenberg
PUBLIC RELATIONS

## A MESSAGE FROM

## ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MEGAN CARNEY



Thank you for a phenomenal 22nd year!

In our 2017-18 season we demonstrated many ways to harness the innovative tools of making theatre and creating space for brave dialogue.

Though I have a long history with About Face Theatre, this marks my first year as the Artistic Director and I am thrilled to be leading this organization and cultivating our role as a vital cultural asset in Chicago and a unique producing environment in which artistic collaborators, community stakeholders, board, and staff can thrive.

I stepped into my position while our first show of the year was already in rehearsal and it's been a tremendous season. This year was notable for the ways that we expanded our circle of collaborators, championed new voices, and embraced education at the core of the organization. From our mainstage productions highlighting nuanced stories of queer lives and histories, to our new work series featuring queer women's voices, to our touring show in Chicago Public Schools, we are strongly delivering on our mission to advance dialogue about gender and sexual identity.

Together we are well positioned to forge new territory as an organization, build strong partnerships, and create dynamic theatre. I know from my own experience that About Face Theatre offers the chance to participate in something bigger and more lasting than the run of a play. AFT offers shared creative experiences that go right to the heart, ripe with meaning, inviting us to imagine, and then create, a better world.

Thank you for being a part of it and making this work possible.

Sincerely.

Megan Carney Artistic Director

## A MESSAGE FROM

## BOARD PRESIDET BECKY HUINKER



This year marked the completion of the leadership transition—onboarding Megan Carney as the new Artistic Director, to immediate positive impacts. The transition was a very demanding time for our board, and began eight months before Megan even started. We provided leadership and direction for the company while we also contemplated what we needed from the next leader. We took time and invested in outside guidance to facilitate meaningful involvement from all stakeholders—youth, artists, staff and board. We analyzed the company, clarified and agreed on our values, goals and desired leadership attributes. A core team represented by each group cast a wide net and put talented candidates through a rigorous process. We believe the investment paid off and helped draw Megan back to the company. She articulated a fresh and clear vision, and after nearly a year at the helm, she has demonstrated that our goals are achievable.

Some board members extended their service to see the hiring process through, and a core group remained to usher in the new era. We added four new members, all of whom have immediately embraced leadership, including two youth member representatives. We also welcomed two graduate student board fellows, who helped with a significant governance project.

The boardroom has a renewed sense of energy and passion as Megan has stepped into the center. During her first year, the board has shifted its energies to help improve the health and balance of the organization, and to collaborate with Megan to attract support and resources. We focused on financial sustainability and enhancing all governance protocols so each member has a clear understanding of their role, and immediately participates in ways meaningful to them and AFT. We adopted new policies, revised recruitment and onboarding protocols, adopted new job descriptions for artist and youth members, and developed a comprehensive Board Member Agreement.

With the transition search and onboarding process finally behind us, we are excited to build upon the foundation and momentum created in 2018 to help AFT achieve its goals.

Sincerely,

Becky Huinker

About Face Theatre, Board President

# ABOUT FACE **BOARD & ARTISTS\***

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE BOARD

Becky Huinker

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Aaron Kacel
VICE PRESIDENT

Derek Blin
TREASURER

Ophelia A. Harkness

SECRETARY

Rob Abernathy
Erik Burns
Maxwell Koziol
Kyla Norton
Jimbo Pestano
Anthony Priore
Charles Rhee
Geoff D. Robinson
Anthony Ruth
Heather Vickery

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Stephanie Jensen Pavlina Plasilova

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Denis Weil

#### YOUTH TASK FORCE

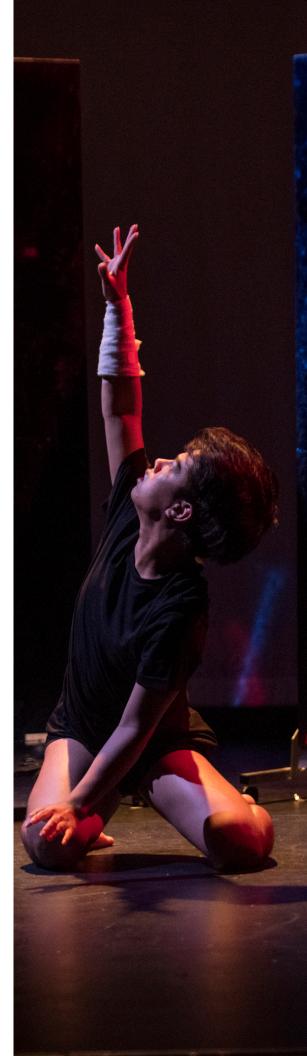
Via Haman Ophelia A. Harkness Sharon Pasia Jimbo Pestano

#### **ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES**

**Patrick Andrews** William Boles **Scott Bradley Precious Davis** Philip Dawkins **Scott Duff** Scott Ferguson John Francisco Keira Fromm Sarah Gubbins David Hyman **Bob Kuhn** Elizabeth Ledo Kelli Simpkins Arturo Soria Benjamin Sprunger **Daniel Stermer** Paul Oakley Stovall Mieka van DerPloeg Alex Weisman

## ARTISTIC ASSOCIATES EMERITI

Amy Beck Alexandra Billings Joel Butler Megan Carney **Brad Cawley** Geoffrey M. Curley Jane C. Cho Shelley Echerd Mitchell Fain Steve Futterman Brian Goodman **Zavier Hairston** Kyle Hall Ted Hoerl Eric Hoff Jessica Hudson Patricia Kane **SK Kerastas** Julia Fabris McBride James McKay Amy Matheny Jacob Padron **Andre Pluess** Rebecca Rugg Tanya Saracho



## 2017/18 PROGRAMMING

## MAINSTAGE SHOWS



SIGNIFICANT OTHER

by Joshua Harmon
Directed by AFT Artistic Associate
Keira Fromm
A co-Production with Theater Wit
JEFF RECOMMENDED

"A Stellar cast"
-Chris Jones, CHICAGO TRIBUNE

"There's not a misstep or misplayed moment in the whole glorious production"

-Jack Helbig, CHICAGO READER

SPACE: Theater Wit ATTENDANCE: 2,317

Jordan Berman is a single gay man in New York City. Mr. Right is nowhere on his horizons. As he's nearing his 30s, his close group of girlfriends begin getting married en masse. What happens when you feel like life is leaving you behind but you're still expected to be at the forefront cheering on your friends on their perfect wedding day? Significant Other is a bittersweet comedy about friendship, single-hood and hoping you're not the one choking on car exhaust as the "Just Married" sign disappears from view.



time IS ON OUR SIDE
by R. Eric Thomas
Directed by AFT Artistic Director
Megan Carney

"Gear-shifting between campy hippopping and grounded history-telling is no small task and director Megan Carney's cast of Maggie Scrantom, Rashaad Hall, Esteban Andres Cruz and Riley Mondragon meet the challenge with grace." —Aaron Hunt, NEWCITY STAGE

SPACE: Theater Wit ATTENDANCE: 1,123

Besties Annie and Curtis struggle to produce their queer history podcast until the discovery of a secret family journal launches their high stakes adventure to unravel mysteries of the early LGBTQ rights movement. Hopping from the Underground Railroad to Rosa Parks to Celebrity Jeopardy, this hilarious and moving story of friendship, family, and love redefines how personal the political can get.



BULL IN A CHINA SHOP
by Bryna Turner
Directed by AFT Artistic Associate
Keira Fromm
JEFF RECOMMENDED

"A perfect kickoff to Gay Pride Month, this is an entertaining, educational and motivational play"

-Karen Topham, CHICAGO ON STAGE

SPACE: Theater Wit ATTENDANCE: 1,340

Determined to teach the women of Mount Holyoke College that there is more to life than marriage, Mary Woolley takes her role as President very seriously. However, her partner, Jeannette Marks, is more interested in igniting a revolution that extends beyond the hallowed halls of the university. This fast paced feminist comedy is a chronicle of bravery, romance, and the reinvention of women's education during the suffrage movement. Class is in session!



## SCARY STORIES TO SAVE YOUR LIFE

Written and performed by The About Face Youth Theatre Directed by Associate Director of AFYT Donny Acosta

"Sometimes funny and sometimes genuinely scary, these alternately expressionistic and surreal nightmare scenarios express the performers' emotional responses to current events in a surprisingly potent way without resorting to message-y preaching."

-Albert Williams, CHICAGO READER

SPACE: The Center on Halsrted

ATTENDANCE: 343

In a world of disappearing protections and increased violence against LGBTQ+ youth across the country, AFYT is serving up a collection of real life stories of survival, resistance, and victory against the dark side.

### 2017/18 ARTISTIC PROGRAMMING

## ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING

# DUT BABES ON FRUNT STAGE

Since 2013, AFT's OUT FRONT series has presented workshops and readings of new work exploring LGBTQIA themes.

For our 22nd season, in recognition of the under representation of women's voices in theatre, we present BABES ON STAGE, a showcase of new work by emerging LGBTQIA women-identified playwrights.

In the summer of 2017, we put out a national call for new plays by queer women writers and received 85 plays from around the country. Reading the plays and getting to start conversations with so many writers has already been a phenomenal success. We hope to have ongoing relationships with these writers and to find ways to continue to support them and their work going forward.

In order to select plays for this year's OutFront series, AJ Schwartz, Curator, and Cari Meixner, Artistic Intern, recruited a team of 12 readers and divided up the scripts. Through a rigorous process of reading and discussion, the team narrowed it down to four plays, three received public readings in 2018.

These three plays were selected for their success in furthering the dialogue on gender and sexuality, pushing the boundaries of dramatic structure and form, and centering women/femmes in their storytelling. They are each exceptional for also creating opportunities for us to meet new actors and directors through this process.

## **BABES ON STAGE**

## READINGS

#### **#SISTERNEIGHBORS**

Written by Hannah li-Epstein



Directed by Anna Sung-En Medill



Set in a six unit building in Chicago, #sisterneighbors follows the interconnected lives of a rambunctious and devoted chosen family of queer folks as the news sinks in that their home has been sold and they will all have to move. The play splits the audience during the first act and reunites them for the second creating an immersive and unpredictable experience of the story.

#### **BREAK**

Written by Gemma Cooper-Novack



Directed by Chika Ike



The triangle of lesbian relationships at the center of Break reveal a complex entanglement of love, desire and mental illness. With quick dialogue and a structure that moves backward in time, this story, rooted in hope, explores the impacts of bipolar disorder on intimacy, trust, and long-term relationships.

#### TINY THIN WOMAN INSIDE

Written by Courtney Meaker



Directed by Elizabeth Swanson



Tiny Thin Woman Inside is nestled in a vibrant surreal world of competitive dieting, The Biggest Loser, and our unending obsession with weight loss. Given contradictory messages around sexuality, obesity, food, sugar, fat, and health, how do we manage to live in our queer bodies?

## 2017/18 EDUCATION

## & OUTREACH

About Face Theatre's Education Department includes 3 main programs:

ABOUT FACE YOUTH THEATRE, AFT'S OUTREACH TOUR, and YOUTH TASK FORCE.





- 16 Number of youth participants in 2017-2018
- 16 Average age of participants
- 50% of participants that identify as POC
- 31% of participants that identify as transgender/gender non-conforming
- 31% of participants that are current high school students
- 31% of participants that are current college students

ABOUT FACE YOUTH THEATRE (AFYT) is an affirming and inclusive theatre and activism program.

Through workshops with special guests, a rigorous rehearsal process and public performances of an original play, LGBTQ+ youth and their allies ages 13-24 explore and expand their understanding of personal identities, current events, history, and leadership styles.

#### **AFYT TESTIMONIALS**

"AFYT has helped me find the importance of sharing my narrative as a queer person of color."

"I felt like an 'okayish' actor before but after working with Donny, Mia, and other ensemble members who are highly skilled, AFYT has made me really realize how much I can push myself to make myself better."

AFT'S OUTREACH TOUR provides performances and workshops to schools and organizations as an entertaining, compelling, and necessary approach to starting dialogue about bullying, diversity, and intersecting identities.

Our standard format includes a performance followed by a talk-back; however we do offer more in-depth break-out discussion sessions or hands-on storytelling workshops with the audience following the performance.

#### **AFT'S OUTREACH BY THE NUMBERS**



- 24 Number of performances in FY18
- 10 Number of schools visited
- 8 Organizations & Parks
- 4,155 Number of students, teachers, and community members in FY18

THE YOUTH TASK FORCE (YTF) is AFT's youth leadership committee, comprised of 4 ensemble members who are committed to the group's work. YTF leads the AFYT ensemble by selecting show topics/themes, facilitating workshop activities, organizing social excursions, and taking leadership roles during the show and throughout the company.

#### **2018 YOUTH TASK FORCE**









- Via Haman
- Ophelia A. Harkness
- Sharon Pasia
- Jimbo Pestano

#### THIS YEAR, YTF MEMBERS:

- Joined the board!
- Took leadership roles such as dance captain, makeup and costume artist, and props design for *Scary Stories*.
- Led exercises and mentored fellow ensemble members.
- Led discussions after Scary Stories.

## APRIL 2018 WONKA BALL AT

## SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE: THE EXPERIENCE

ATTENDEES: 350 FUNDS RAISED: \$85,000











## 2017/18 FINANCIALS

#### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

\* for fiscal year ending August 31, 2018. Pre-audit results.

| " for fiscal year ending August 31, 2018. Pre-audit results.   |   |
|--|---|
| Revenue  Earned Revenue  | FY18*   |
| Ticket Sales & Memberships<br>Education Income<br>Rentals & Other  | \$ 65,570.11<br>\$ 14,025.00<br>\$ 65,711.56  |
| Contributed Revenue  |   |
| Government Foundations Corporate Sponsorships Individuals - Board Individuals - Other Special Events In-Kind | \$ 34,170.00<br>\$ 209,964.74<br>\$ 20,897.03<br>\$ 58,837.77<br>\$ 137,497.26<br>\$ 83,986.04<br>\$ 4,330.32 |
| Total Revenue  | \$ 685,989.83   |
| Expenses Production & Performance  | \$ 210,952.01   |
| Other Expenses Personnel Marketing Operations Facilities Business  | \$ 315,205.20<br>\$ 35,978.29<br>\$ 59,365.47<br>\$ 55,683.59<br>\$ 14,924.57                                 |
| Total Expenses   | \$ 692,109.13   |
| Net Income   | (\$ 6,119.30)   |

## 2017/18 DONORS

About Face Theatre relies on individual, corporate, foundation and government contributions from our community to support our mission to create exceptional and innovative theatre. Without this support, we would not be able to develop exciting new work in collaboration with the finest emerging and established artists in the nation, nor would we be able to provide exceptional educational programming to LGBTQI youth and their allies. Below is a list of our supporters who donated from September 1, 2017 through August 31, 2018. We work diligently to keep our donor lists accurate and up-to-date. Please bring any unintentional errors, additions, or corrections to the attention of Dylan Toropov at dylan@aboutfacetheatre.org

#### INDIVIDUAL **SUPPORTERS**

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Michael Leppen

#### \$10.000-\$19.999

Erik Burns and Benjamin Sprunger **Becky Huinker** 

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\$1,000 - \$4,999 **Anonymous** Geoffrey A. Anderson Jim Andrews and Rich Cohrs Jim Bennett and Terry Van Der Hoek Philip Burgess and Jim Nutter Ryan Burns and Justin Kesselring Megan Carney Victoria and Edmund Carney Debra Chinnapillai Judge Tom Chiola (Retired) Kenneth Creech Christopher Dionesotes and Sam **Portaro** Pat Ewert and Susan Blake Julia Fabris McBride Greta Ferkel **Brent Fisher and Jim Rinnert** Dr. Wayne Franklin Ted Grady Michael Halberstam and Jack Segal Jason Held and John Sanders John Kander Elizabeth A. Kimball

David Maier and Matt McGrane Daniel and Anita Mauro Dr. Dwight McBride Robert McCamant John Morse and Wesley Broquard Timothy O'Keefe **Edward Potocek** Anthony Ruth Paul Semper and Eric Medina The Shapiro Grynsztejn Family Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation Stephen Lowell Swanberg Heather Vickery and Bernadette Smith

Debra Shore

**Thomas Sinkovic** 

\$500 - \$999 **Anonymous** Michael J. Alexa Cheryl Lynn Bruce and Kerry Marshall Kathleen and Evan Caliento Greg Cameron and Greg Thomson - In Honor of Tony Priore Bill Chamberlain and Howard Heyman Victor L. Corder Darwin Corrin Eileen Dordek and Chris Landgraff Toby Eveland and Brian Johnson Em Hall Kierstin Hays Drew and Anne Kent Kris Knaak Hal Kugeler and Ed Flood Zachary LaMaster Ken Luskin Gary Metzner **Tony Miner** Steve Monaghan Chris Parkinson Mark Pellegrino Clark Pellett and Robert Kohl Robert Riesman and Rachel Kaplan Chris Schmidt and Diego Rocha Roche Schulfer and Mary Beth Fisher Mike Sullivan and Mark Robertson Richard Sypniewski Willa Taylor Paul Winberg and Bruce Czuchna **Douglas Wright** Alana Zalas

#### \$100 - \$499

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Kristin Patton

Michael Pauken

Jonathan Pearl

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Alexia Ward

Liz Weber

Joan Wells

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Casey J. Horton

Amy Hutchison

Nick Hutson

Peggy and Bill Horan

James Huttenhower

Significant Other

Ellen Wiggins and Kathleen Powers

James Wiltshire Jr. Raymond Wohl Brian Woodworth

**Greg Woulf** 

\$1 - \$99

Anonymous (x80) Jonathan Abarbanel Susie Alexander

- In Memory of Ben Alexander

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Lauren Czajkowski - In Memory of

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Halfpipe Stinkybuns-Campbell-

Dunphy

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Mark Brown Photography Mark Toland Mind Reader The Marriott Theatre Marty's Martini Bar

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Raven Theatre Company

Redtwist Theatre

Rembrandt Chamber Players Remy Bumppo Theatre Company Rivendell Theatre Ensemble Robert Jeffrey Hair Studio

Roy's Furniture Sacred Art

SafeHouse Chicago

Salon Echo

Schubas/Tied House

Second City

The Service Club of Chicago

Shariana Images

Shattered Globe Theatre

Shedd Aguarium Shubert Foundation

Sideshow Theatre Company

Sidetrack Silk Road Rising Skydeck Chicago Skylight Music Theatre

Social Venture Partners Chicago, Inc.

SoFo Tap Soul Cycle Split-Rail Stan's Donuts

Steep Theatre Company Stella Barra Pizzeria

Steppenwolf Theatre Company

STK Chicago Storytown

Strawdog Theatre Company

Studio Us Sunda

Swirlz Cupcakes

Svbaris T-Mobile Taylor's Tacos Tejas Yoga

That Little Mexican Cafe

Theater Wit

Theatre at the Center

Theatre Communications Group

Theo Ubique Cabaret

Thousand Waves Martial Arts and

Self Defense Center

**TimeLine Theatre Company** 

Trattoria DOC **Uncommon Ground** 

Unicreamer **United Airlines** 

United Way of Metropolitan Chicago

UnitedHealth Group **Uptown Underground** Vanille Patisserie **Velvet Fox Productions** 

Venicci

Vero Design + Build Vickery & Co.

Victory Gardens Theater

Vincent

Walter E. Smithe WCPT-FM WGN-TV

Wick's Park Bar & Grill Wilde Bar & Restaurant

Windy City Performing Arts/Gay Chorus and Windy City Treble Quire

Windy City Playhouse

Women and Children First Chicago

Wonderful Giving Writers' Theatre Yoga Now Chicago

**Zanies** 





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