



# OAK

BY TERRY GUEST



Alleyway  
Theatre

*Dickens' timeless tale  
in a joyful new production*

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

**ON STAGE DECEMBER 11-28**

## ALLEYWAY THEATRE

Chris J Handley, Executive Artistic Director

presents

# OAK

by TERRY GUEST

Featuring

DASIA CERVI    P.K. FORTSON  
VERNIA SHARISSE GARVIN    EMBER TATE-STEELE

Scenic Design  
JUSTIN LAHUE

Lighting/Sound Design  
EMMA SCHIMMINGER

Costume Design  
E.L. HOHN

Properties Design  
QUINCEY MIRACLE

Asst Stage Manager  
AMARYA SHARPE

Technical Direction  
EMMA SCHIMMINGER

Stage Managed by  
KIMBERLY NEISS

**DIRECTED BY  
DAWN M. SIMMONS**

Season 46. Our 182nd Production.  
October 24 - November 15, 2025  
October 29, Opening Night

ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE  
National New Play Network



OAK is produced at Alleyway Theatre as part of a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere. Other Partner Theaters are Urbanite Theatre (Sarasota, FL) and Phoenix Theatre Cultural Centre (Indianapolis, IN). For more information, please visit [nnpn.org](http://nnpn.org)

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Alleyway is a member of the National New Play Network, Theatre Communications Group, Theatre District Association of WNY, and the Theatre Alliance of Buffalo. We regularly employ artists belonging to Actors' Equity Association, United Scenic Artists 829, and Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

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Rehearsal photography by  
Sara Kow-Falcone

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**WHAT WE DO**

Alleyway Theatre is a professional theatre company and collaborative incubator for bold, visceral new theatre. Education & development programs foster the talents of emergent artists from Western New York and beyond ... embracing fearlessness, theatricality, humanity, and authenticity. Founded in 1980, the company currently occupies the 1941 former Greyhound Bus Terminal in Buffalo's historic Theatre District. **You may not know... Alleyway is part of 1% of theatres across the country focused primarily on the development and production of new plays and musicals.**

**NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT**

Alleyway's foremost audience served are playwrights. Our Alleyworks series continues to grow, focusing on the development of new plays and the artists who create them. The program encourages playwrights, both local and national, with artistic and financial support as they create daring new theatre through collaborative and one-to-one partnerships. Most readings, workshops, and productions are open to the public.

**EDUCATION**

Alleyway Education offers year-round professional training for adults and teens in devising and development, playwriting and performance, bringing a community of emerging artists together in our spaces.

**PRODUCTION**

Entering year 46, Alleyway's programming consists of six major productions each season, with additional performances in our smaller cabaret space. We present works by local and national, emerging and established playwrights. Our work was recognized in 2022 on National Public Radio's Morning Edition, as one of only six theatres profiled nationwide. We partner regularly with theatres across the country, bringing new ideas to WNY and conversely, sharing the theatre created right here in Erie County with the rest of the country. Alleyway's Mazumdar New Play Award and National New Play Network Rolling World Premieres launch the Theatre and Erie County onto the national scene. Tony Nominee Alex Brightman's THE LIFE AND SLIMES OF MARC SUMMERS was developed here in September 2023, and opened a commercial run off-Broadway in February 2024. Terry Guest received the David Goldman Fund for New American Plays Award in 2022 for his THE MAGNOLIA BALLET, a NNPN RWP.

**THE COMPANY**



Dasia Cervi



P.K. Fortson



VerNia Sharisse Garvin



Ember Tate-Steele

Peaches ..... VerNia Sharisse Garvin  
*Pickle & Big Man's mama*

Pickle ..... Ember Tate-Steele  
*the eldest cousin, just turned 16*

Big Man ..... P.K. Fortson  
*the youngest cousin, 9*

Suga ..... Dasia Cervi  
*the middle cousin, 15*

OAK is performed without an intermission

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When you donate now, you'll join your neighbors to support tomorrow's American theatre, being created at Alleyway Theatre today! You help us not only sustain but also expand our impact, bringing innovative and engaging theatre to Buffalo and beyond.

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Alleyway is part of 1% of theatres nationwide dedicated exclusively to producing new works. Our mission relies on generous giving by individuals like you. When you give, you join our community of early adopters and, amplifying each other's impact, assist us in leveraging critical support from corporations, foundations, and government organizations.

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PROVIDE ESSENTIAL OPERATING RESOURCES

Help us continue our mission by providing the necessary funds to support educational programming, staff, and capital improvements.

SUPPORT ACTIVE PLAYWRIGHTS

Your dollar goes further than just Alleyway. Full professional productions bring a playwright's dream to life and position their plays with the potential for future licensing opportunities from small towns to Broadway. Each year we explore over 1,500 scripts. This careful curation process ensures a diverse and captivating season for our audiences.

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*We gratefully acknowledge the support of the following organizations and individuals whose contributions make the promise of original and innovative theatre a reality in Western New York.*

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# CORAL REEFS AND TAKING RISKS

*An interview with Terry Guest on hope through history*

BY AURORA REAL DE ASUA

*Terry Guest and I had the opportunity to chat over zoom, while he was in Chicago, opening the midwestern premiere of OAK. The following is a transcript of our conversation:*

**Aurora Real de Asua:** What I love about OAK is the relationship it has to ghosts, monsters, and the mystical realm. What is your relationship to ghost stories?

**Terry Guest:** Great question! I grew up in the South - I'm from Georgia - which has a lot of old indigenous cities, artifacts, cultures and legends. There's so much trauma and darkness in the land. Everything from the Trail of Tears, which started in Georgia, to enslavement, to the Civil War. So I grew up in a place where ghost stories abounded. From a very young age my imagination was piqued by death and the gothic. And my mother loves horror movies. That combination created the freak that you see today.

**AR:** When you were coming up with Odella, did you go back to the Georgian myths that you grew up with?

**TG:** I invented the myth, but it is certainly an amalgamation of different influences. In the play there's a whistling aspect, which comes from stories I had heard living in Georgia, from Cherokee and Sioux mythology. And there's a bunch of enslavement stories that are blended together.

**AR:** How did the idea for OAK come to you?

**TG:** When I realized the ending - that this is going to be a play about a kid who leaves home - everything

else fell into place.

**AR:** When did the Southern Gothic tone come to you?

**TG:** Most of my work is in that tone. I would love to be spoken about in the same breath as Faulker and Flannery O'Conner and Tennessee Williams.

**AR:** What was the hardest part to write?

**TG:** This is the closest thing to autobiography that I will ever get. It was really hard - not hard to write, but to see. Hard to hear back. OAK is one of my earlier plays so I didn't think anybody would read it. For real! I felt like a total dunce in rehearsal, being like "why did I write this, why did I put it out there so plainly!" As I'm writing more, I'm becoming more thoughtful.

**AR:** Would you say you're a character in the play?

**TG:** I'm every character in the play. For example - there's a decision that a character makes at the end that many people have found to be upsetting. But the character has to make that choice because that is the choice that I made. You can be critical, you can debate if it's right or wrong, but it is truth.

**AR:** I love the way OAK touches on childhood. Peaches says "I grew up

fast so that you could stay a child as long as I want". And there's another line: "Childhood is a short time that can last forever if you let it." What was the moment when you realized you had left childhood?

**TG:** I had a particularly challenging childhood. I could not wait to get out of my house and be in control of myself. When I actually did, I feel like my childhood began. So eighteen through twenty five? That's when I was a child.

**AR:** When did theater become a part of your life?

**TG:** I did my first play in ninth grade. It was a musical theater review and I had one moment in the show, during a song from HAIR. I was supposed to walk across the stage and sit and sway. The night of the show I did a black power first and the audience applauded. And I remember thinking ohh. Oh I like this. I got in trouble. But a star was born!

**AR:** You write, you direct, you act, you lead a theater company...how has being



on different artistic forefronts shaped the way that you write?

**TG:** I can be smart about how I'm making choices. Not to say I'm a writer who thinks "I'm going to write something to be produced" because that's a los-

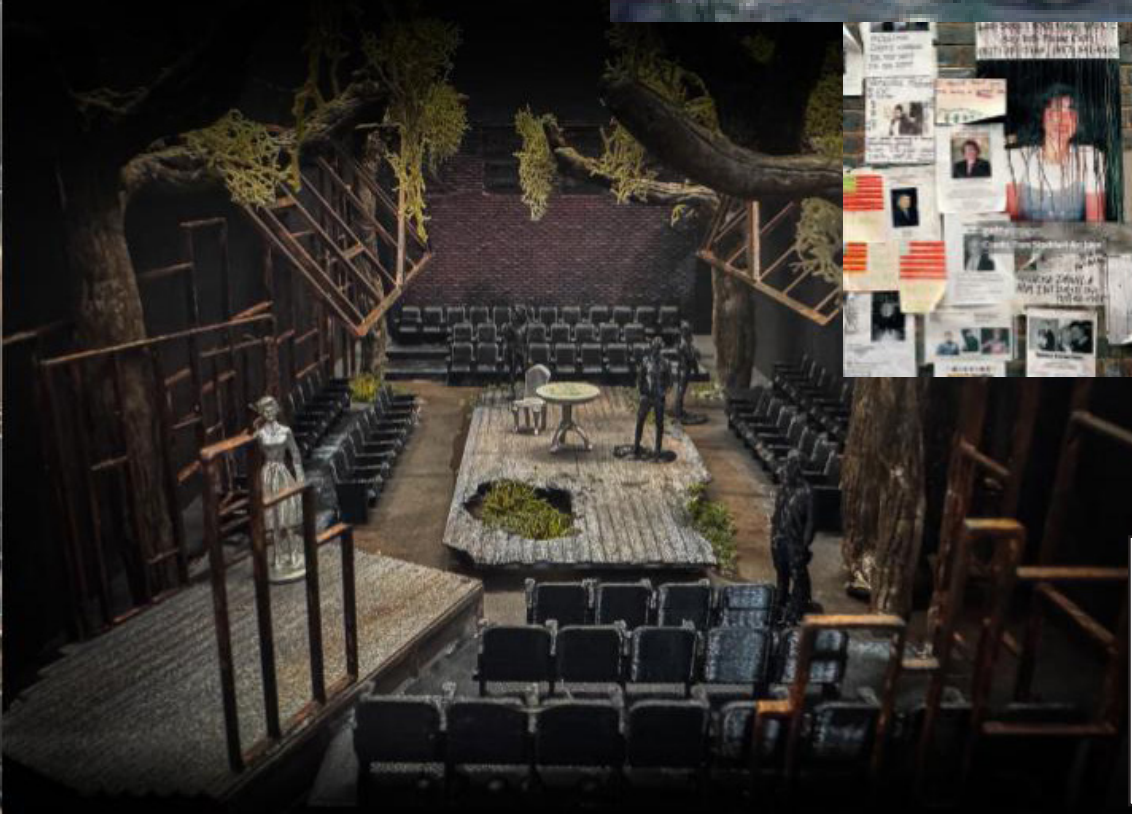
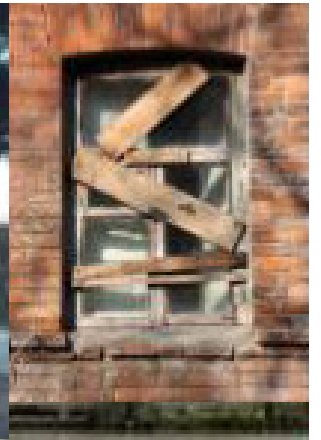
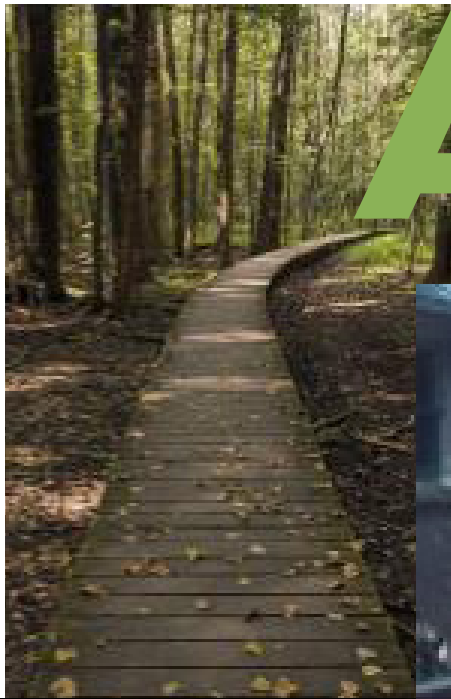
*continued p12*

Working on the scenic design of OAK, we sought to create a world where nature and architecture collide, holding the characters of the play within its grasp. For the architectural container, we pulled from abandoned and decaying Southern Georgian houses, stud wall construction, and fenced enclosures. The space is wrapped in chain link, aged brick, and colors worn down from years of rain and tragedy. This frame is then overrun with large Southern oak trees and branches coming down from above, draped in southern moss and glistening from the seemingly endless rain. It is within this environment that the “snatching season” becomes a very real and dangerous threat.

Another important aspect of the scenic design was a feeling of total immersion for the audience. Setting the play in the round allows every single nook and cranny of the theater to hold potential for something exciting to occur right in front of you, and each seat will get a unique experience when viewing the play. Once you walk through those doors, you enter Odella’s world. Try not to get snatched!

# AWT/BTS

*Behind the Scenes with Our Scenic & Props Designers*



Big Man’s Library Card, used late in the narrative, was based off of similar library cards from rural Georgia. Although nearly imperceptible by the audience, the string of numbers underneath the barcode at the bottom of the card is an alphanumeric cipher. When you count out the letters in the alphabet, A = 1, B = 2, and so on, it can be decoded. But... do you even want to know what it says?

Similar obscured nods can be found in the missing posters plastering this liminal space. If you can’t find them, try calling on a friend.

STATE OF GEORGIA

 **CREEKSIDE**

*Living Oak Public Libraries*



continued from p9

ing battle. But before, I spent a lot of time writing projects that will never become real without millions of dollars. And I don't want to have to exist in a world where I need millions of dollars for my plays to be produced.

AR: Do you have lodestone plays that you turn to? Plays that inspire you?

TG: Yes, but they're so boring! ANGELS IN AMERICA, of course. MARCUS, OR THE SECRET OF SWEET, by Tarell Alvin McCraney. Also THE BROTHERS SIZE, which is done much more frequently. But Marcus really does something to me. And then, like I said, Tennessee Williams, so THE GLASS MENAGERIE. I've always wanted to play Laura. And THE COLORED MUSEUM, by George C Wolfe! And then a load of musicals.

AR: If you had to perform in a musical for ten months straight, every night, which musical would it be, and what part?

TG: I would have so much being in the ensemble of RENT I just want to do "La Vie Boheme" and hang out backstage with the other weird queers.

AR: We're both from Chicago. Anything percolating about what it means to work in that city?

TG: Something that I often stay is that storefront theater scene acts as

a coral reef for larger professional theaters. Coral reefs purify. If you can make it to the shore, you're ready for the big time. Because there's not a lot of money in Chicago storefront theater, people are willing to take risks on someone with potential. Have you felt that about Chicago?

AR: Yes, about the store front scene especially. So you said OAK was an early play. How has your writing changed?

TG: This was maybe the fourth full play that I had written. It was the first that I wrote with any intentional understanding of story structure. With OAK, something I wanted to play with the difference between a main character and a protagonist.

*And then Terry and I got cut off my disastrous Wifi. We reconnected several days later, over email.*

AR: We left off at the difference between protagonist and main character - could you break this down for me, and how each affects the way you shape your stories?

TG: I'm so sorry we got cut off!! Okay okay okay, so the way I think of it: the protagonist is the character whose story arc illuminates the themes of the play. The main character is the character that we spend the most time with. In most cases the protagonist is the main char-

acter but not always. For example: *The Favourite* is a movie about how power corrupts. The queen is undoubtedly the main character. HOWEVER she is the same at the beginning as she is at the end. It is the story arc of the servant who corrupts herself to become closer to the queen that teaches us (the audience). So the servant character (named Abigail) is the protagonist.

AR: What are you excited to work on next? What idea, format, story?

TG: I'm excited to continue to work on musicals!!! I have written two so far and I found both experiences to be LIFE GIVING! I also want to try to write and make a short film because you gotta try to write and make a short film at least once in your life right?

AR: Paul Michael Thompson, who runs The Story Theatre with you, told me you were a two-time winner of a Southern Storytelling competition. What were those experiences like and how have they shaped your understanding of telling stories through theater?

TG: OMG! PAUL! Okay so I was a part of a storytelling group called 'Tellers (I had nothing to do with the name) and we would go to these National Southern Storytelling Festivals held in Tennessee every year. It was incredible. I still pull from some of the old Appalachian and African-American folklore that I heard at these festivals. The things that sticks

with me the most though how engrossing many of these storytellers were without lights, costumes, set, etc. It taught me that our imaginations are the real magic.

AR: What brings you hope these days? What motivates you to keep creating, in a moment that feels very destructive?

History. I often reflect on my enslaved ancestors and how bleak things must have felt for them. They had no reason to believe that their children or children's children would ever be free but they hoped. And we know that they still created music, cuisine, dance, art, fashion and culture that continues to resonate even today! And because of their hope I have the privilege to be sitting here, eating a banana, drinking an espresso and talking to you about art. How beautiful is that? So I choose to continue to create music, cuisine, dance, art, fashion and culture because I have hope that things will get better.

*Aurora Real de Asua's play WIPEOUT played at the Alleyway in September 2024 after its NNPN Rolling World Premiere and prior to its Washington DC debut. She is a playwright, filmmaker, and performer, and like Terry, she received the David Goldman Fund for New American Plays Award.*



OAK, written by Terry Guest, is a bold statement of African American mytho-poetry. It reclaims the centuries-old narratives of the “Boogey-Man” or “snatching” of Black children, women, and men, especially in the South. Guest’s work moves beyond simple realism, transforming historical trauma into a necessary, active myth that confronts institutional silence.

In OAK, Terry Guest reminds us of the burden of place and memory. During enslavement, abolition, and Reconstruction, there have been Africans in America who found they could not leave the land they were living on. Today, for some, this reality has not changed. A strong connection with the land, family, unresolved history, collective trauma, and grief has rooted many of us to poverty shadowed small towns and forgotten urban communities that we cannot seem to break free of. We crave an American dream, a way of life that is promised yet feels and looks unattainable; so, we settle for the reality and let go of the dream. For many women, the responsibility of children, parents, and siblings, compounded with the traditional roles Black women have played, has made it less likely to find opportunities to run away from home, move on from the past, grow and prosper, or leave of our own free will to be better or different from our mothers, sisters, fathers, brothers, and peers.

According to the Department of Justice, in 2022 Black children made up 31%

# MYTH AND MEMORY

*The Archive of the Oak, Root of Erasure*

BY ANNETTE DANIELS-TAYLOR

of missing children cases but only 14% of the nation’s population. These cases often remain cold and unsolved due to institutional neglect, media silence, and the historical devaluation of Black life. The modern disappearance echoes through the woods and valleys of foundational trauma of slavery, where Black bodies and identities were routinely disappeared through separations by auctions, inheritance, and death. OAK functions as a critical text that reclaims this narrative by integrating real-world trauma into the spiritual frameworks of African American folklore, positioning the titular Oak as a sacred, albeit burdened, ancestral archive.

The playwright’s choice to welcome the audience to Oak, (the town and the metaphor) is the play’s first and most profound dramaturgical assertion. The Oak tree, traditionally in African and Indigenous American history, is seen as a symbol of resilience, safety, and freedom, renowned for supporting more life forms than any other native tree. This resilience metaphorically represents the enduring strength of the Black community. However, this life-affirming potential is brutally corrupted by the memory of the “Hanging Tree,” a marker connecting contemporary disappearances to the violence and terror also rooted in the veins of the land of the South, creating an unbearable historical duality.

In OAK, the Oak is

not a dynamic object but the stagnant, immovable structure of historical violence. It is the enduring structure—the architecture of white supremacy—that archives the trauma. Even if we do not see the physical tree, its name forces the audience to confront the idea of the Oak as savior and slayer and that continues to sanction the modern-day silence surrounding cold cases. The Oak is forever watching and living with and through the family in the play, the characters in the town of its namesake, and surrounding the energy of the audience. The play asks: Does the spirit know the difference between how it receives its freedom? Or is the relief of finding freedom, by any means necessary, enough?

While the world of OAK is the grounded, silent archive of structural trauma, the swampy dark creek is the liminal space where that trauma becomes active, flowing, and vengeful in the figure of Odella. Odella’s story is the specific mythological consequence of Oak’s structural failure. She is not a creature of pure malice, but a woman running from enslavement who drowns in the creek, her promise to return and free her infant irrevocably broken.

Odella, the snatcher, is the ultimate manifestation of the maternal wound caused by slavery’s violence. Her haunting of the creek during the rainy season—the recurring cycle of grief—is her desperate, perpetual, and tragically corrupted effort to fulfill her lost promise. By snatching the children of the present, she is symbolically claiming the infant she could not save, and also demonstrating the way that historical trauma continually reasserts itself into



the modern lives of the town’s inhabitants. She acts as a mythological echo, confirming that the violence enacted against Black women and children centuries ago is not over; it has simply changed agents. Odella and the creek are the nature nurturers, breathing life, flowing water, and regenerating themselves with the living blood and flesh of its fear-filled inhabitants who continue to bear witness to the truths of America’s gifted freedoms.

The dramaturgical necessity of OAK lies in the response of the living characters, the Black family. In a world where police and media have failed, the play demands that the community perform its own spiritual forensics. The characters who investigate the disappearances



must assume the role of the Griot—the cultural historian and keeper of lineage.

Their quest is not merely to find the missing, or end the curse but to achieve resolution for Odella, and themselves, thereby breaking the cycle of snatching. This means resisting the easy, surface-level narrative of the “monster” and digging into the ancestor’s true story: the woman who was betrayed by the nation and the land’s structural violence. By digging into Odella’s history—the failed escape, the abandoned infant—the characters attempt to reclaim the narrative and restore the humanity of the original victim. Their act of remembrance transforms the stage into a ritual space where the community performs the investigative and restorative work that institutions have long neglected, ensuring that the missing children and the tragic ancestor are spoken of, acknowledged, and finally integrated into the historical archive of the Oak.

Terry Guest’s OAK ultimately asserts that the crisis of missing Black persons is a spiritual and historical condition rooted in the foundational trauma of the land. By centering the Oak—the symbol of both life-giving sustenance and historical execution—Guest forces the audience to confront the structural failure of a system built upon violence. The play transforms passive knowledge of statistics into active witness of a deep-seated historical and contemporary injustice. OAK doesn’t just stage a haunting; it stages an intervention, compelling the audience to acknowledge the full, corrupted history held by the land and compels us to assume the Griot’s duty of ensuring that no more names are erased from the archive.

*Annette Daniels-Taylor teaches at SUNY Buffalo State and is a previous New York State Public Humanities Fellow. She appeared at the Alleyway in THE NATURAL HORSE and her play REMEMBER? was presented as part of Buffalo Quickies 2024.*

ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE  
National New Play Network



Alleyway is proud to be a member of the National New Play Network, supporting the Rolling World Premiere production of OAK.

National New Play Network is an alliance of professional theaters that collaborate in innovative ways to develop, produce, and extend the life of new plays. NNPENvisions a robust, equitable, and inclusive new play ecology that reflects a broad range of aesthetics, and strives to pioneer, implement, and disseminate ideas and programs that revolutionize the way theaters and audiences encounter new work.

Since its founding in 1998, National New Play Network has grown into a vital force for new work in the American theater, serving over 110+ Member Theaters as well as artists and audiences around the world.

NNPN’s National Showcase of New Plays, initially presented in 2002, was the Network’s first program aimed at creating a new play pipeline that spanned the US. In 2004, NNPEN launched the pilot of what has become its paradigm-shifting Rolling World Premiere program. As NNPEN’s membership, funding, and programmatic offerings have grown, emergent innovations include season-long Residencies within Member Theaters for rising administrative leaders, a dedicated fund for theater-makers working to develop new plays across institutions, and more. The New Play Exchange®, launched in 2015, is the world’s largest online library of scripts by living writers, and features unprecedented opportunities for direct connection among playwrights, readers, and producers.

NNPN’s current Strategic Plan centers its commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Network’s dedication to new plays remains the center of its work, but the future NNPENvisions is one that is robust, inclusive, and equitable for all theater-makers and audience members.

# WHO’S WHO

**TERRY GUEST** (playwright) is an award winning playwright, actor, director and producer. His play THE MAGNOLIA BALLET had its National New Play Network (NNPN) rolling world premiere in 2022 and has since gone on to win two Jeff Awards, the NNPEN Best New American Play Award, and was featured on NPR. Terry went on to direct his play MARIE ANTIONETTE AND THE MAGICAL NEGROS at the Story theater which won three Jeff Awards (including Best Director and Best New Play for Terry). Other plays include: MILO IMAGINES THE WORLD, AT THE WAKE OF A DEAD DRAG QUEEN, OAK (2024 NNPEN Rolling World Premiere), NIGHTBIRDS (Goodman New Stages Residency 2024), ANDY WARHOL PRESENTS: THE COCAINE PLAY, and A GHOST IN SATIN (Williamstown Theatre Festival). As an actor Terry has worked at regional theaters including Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf, Alliance Theatre, About Face Theatre and Actors Express. He is a Governing Ensemble member at The Story Theatre, a Hermitage Fellow and a teaching artist at Jackalope, Writers Theatre and Chicago Children’s Theatre.

## THE ACTING COMPANY

**DASIA CERVI (SUGA)** is so excited to be working with Alleyway for the first time in their production of OAK. Some of her favorite credits include Deloris Van Cartier in SISTER ACT at the Lockport Palace Theater, Crystal in LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS at the Lancaster Opera House, Uhura in KHAN!!! at O’Connell & Company and more. Dasia is also known on Tik Tok as “Dasia Karlee,” a singer-songwriter and music performer @dasiakarlee27. She would like to give a GIANT thank you to the people who have supported her from day 1.

**P.K. FORTSON (BIG MAN)** considers it a true honor to be a part of this production, as well as to return to the Alleyway stage. Select credits: THE LAST CROISSANT, MONSTERS OF THE AMERICAN CINEMA (Buffalo United Artists); THE FOLKS AT HOME, BUFFALO QUICKIES (Alleyway Theatre); LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS (Lockport Palace Theatre); WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE (American Repertory Theater of WNY). Film: *Marshall*. For Aniyah and Rosha, always.

**VERNIA SHARISSE GARVIN (PEACHES)** attended highschool at Buffalo Academy for Visual and Performing Arts where

she fell in love with performance. In 2011, she studied at the NYSSSA: School of Theatre. Later, she went on to graduate cum laude with a Bachelor’s of Arts in Theater. As a lover of improv, in 2018, she began her journey with ComedySportz Buffalo where she is currently a player on their Pro roster. When she’s not acting, she’s being a super cool Social Studies Teacher. She has been seen in the two most recent productions of BUFFALO QUICKIES at the Alleyway. Since then, she’s been a part of various productions including THE ROYALE at The Paul Robeson Theater, 12 MO’ ANGRY MEN at Ujima, and has had her directorial debut at First Look Theater for their annual New Play Reading Festival. VerNia is very grateful and feels blessed to be a part of the Buffalo theater community. As always she thanks her Mother for being her Number 1 fan!

**EMBER TATE-STEEL (PICKLE)** holds a BFA in theatre performance from Niagara University. She has worked on productions such as VIOLET (Music hall singer), DISENCHANTED! (Princess Who Kissed the Frog), COOKIN AT THE COOKERY (Young Alberta), TWELFTH NIGHT (Ensemble), BEAUTIFUL (Little Eva/Shirelle) and CROWNS (Wanda) at Musicallyfare she has also performed STEW (Nelly) and 12 MO ANGRY MEN (Juror 6) at Ujima and

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THE LOVED ONES (Gabby) at Irish Classical. She is extremely grateful for the opportunity to work at Alleyway! She would like to thank her family and especially her Husband Sean for loving and supporting her.

## CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAM

**DAWN M. SIMMONS** (Director) is honored to be making her Alleyway Debut in her hometown of Buffalo, NY where she used to House Manage for Irish Classical Theater Company and Shakespeare In Delaware Park. An Elliot Norton Award winning director, producer, writer, educator, and consultant, now based in Boston, Massachusetts, Ms. Simmons' regional credits include: Boston Symphony Orchestra, Handel and Haydn Society, The Alliance Theatre, The Huntington, JAG Productions, Play On Shakespeare, The Hangar Theatre, WAM Theater, Wheelock Family Theater, Lyric Stage Company of Boston, Central Square Theater, New Repertory Theatre, Gloucester Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, SpeakEasy Stage Company, and Actors' Shakespeare Project. Dawn serves as Artistic Director of SpeakEasy Stage, is a founder of The Front Porch Arts Collective, and a proud member of SDC.

**E.L. HOHN** (Costume Design) is a designer, dramaturg and textile artist. Recent costume design credits include WOMEN LAUGHING ALONE WITH SALAD with Post Industrial Productions, CROCODILE FEVER with Irish Classical Theater Company, PRIDE AND PREJUDICE with Tantrum Theatre in Athens, Ohio, and ROMEO & JULIET: ABRIDGED (tour) and THE WINTER'S TALE (mainstage) with Shakespeare in Delaware Park. Recent prop design credits include THE BOOK OF WILL with Road Less Traveled Productions, and DORIAN and DRACULA: A COMEDY OF TERRORS with ICTC. They hold an MFA in Costume Design from The University of Texas at Austin, and were an Exhibited Designer in the USITT Emerging Artists Pavilion at the 2019 Prague Quadrennial. They are a member of BICA School and Wingspace Theatrical Design.

**JUSTIN LAHUE** (Scenic Design) is a Bos-

ton based theatre artist and filmmaker. Previous collaborations include work with the Westport Country Playhouse, Wellfleet Harbor Actors Theater, Harbor Stage Company, Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, Speakeasy Stage, Harvard University, Boston Conservatory, Company One, Northeastern University, Seacoast Repertory Theatre, and the Tank (NYC). He is the recipient of a 2022 Broadway-World Boston award (Best Professional Scenic Design for STRAIGHT WHITE MEN), 2022 Cannes Film Award and regional Emmy nomination (Art Direction for NOT ON THIS NIGHT) as well as a 2025 Elliot Norton Award nomination (Outstanding Scenic Design for TARTUFFE). BA in Theatre from Suffolk University and a proud member of USA-829. For more information on his work, please visit [www.justinlahue.com](http://www.justinlahue.com).

**QUINCEY MIRACLE** (Properties Design) is a visual artist working in multimedia sculpture, immersive installation, and performative action. Their work combines sculptural methods such as body casting with techniques borrowed from costume design, game development, and home construction. With a Jack-of-all-Trades approach, they create physical manifestations of complex emotional states, memories, and interactions. Quincey received their BFA in Studio Art with a concentration in sculpture from Central Washington University and their MFA in Sculpture and Extended Media from the University at Buffalo.

**KIMBERLY NEISS** (Production Stage Manager) ALLEYWAY: As Production Stage Manager: THE COTTAGE, MURDER OF ROGER ACKROYD, BLACK BEAR ISLAND, WIPEOUT, THE NATURAL HORSE, THE LIFE & SLIMES OF MARC SUMMERS, KRAGTAR! THE AMERICAN MONSTER MUSICAL, THE ALEPH COMPLEX, BURST, THE OREGON TRAIL, BERSERKER. BUFFALO: Shea's 710's ONCE ON THIS ISLAND (Assistant Stage Manager). REGIONAL: N/A OFF-BWAY: THE LIFE & SLIMES OF MARC SUMMERS Production Stage Manager), MAMA I'M A BIG GIRL NOW (Production Stage Manager). FILM/TV: *Puppy Bowl XXI and XXII* (Assistant Stage Manager). Originally from Missouri and coming from Dallas, Texas, Kimberly has lived in Buffalo for almost 5 years now. She has had the privilege of

working with Alleyway Theatre since 2021 where she has spent much of her time thinking "I can't believe I get paid to do this". She holds a bachelor's degree in Multimedia Production/Journalism from Drury University and has never once used it. In her free time, Kimberly can be found at her husband's baseball games, going to the farmers market, and watching *Wheel of Fortune* at 7:30pm, Monday-Saturday.

**EMMA SCHIMMINGER** (lighting & sound design, technical director) is an Artie Award winning theatrical designer and technician, specializing in lighting design and production/stage management. She is a Buffalo native who moved back to the area after spending a decade working in New York City. While there, she worked as a freelance lighting designer and at several private secondary schools in Manhattan as a designer, stage manager, technical director and faculty member. Emma also took time to travel to London in order to achieve her Master's degree. Upon returning to Buffalo, she became Shakespeare in Delaware Park's Resident Lighting Designer and has designed lighting for several other local theatre companies. Most recently, she was the Production Manager

at UB's Center for the Arts. Artvoice Artie award winner for Outstanding Lighting Design 2014, 2004. BA: State University of New York at Buffalo; MA: Royal Central School of Speech And Drama, University of London.

**CHRIS J HANDLEY** has served as Executive Artistic Director at Alleyway Theatre since 2020. Onstage in THE COTTAGE, PHILOSOPHUS, NAVIGATORS, UNHOLY TRINITY, and REEFER MADNESS. As director: THE MURDER OF ROGER ACKROYD, KRAGTAR!, THE OREGON TRAIL. BUFFALO: 6 Artie Award nominations and 1 win. Musicals, Shakespeare in Delaware Park, Jewish Rep, Lancaster Opera House. OFF-BWAY: Creative Consultant on LIFE AND SLIMES. FILM/TV: *Empire, Celebrity Ghost Stories*. Chris spent 4 years singing 40s tunes on the American Queen Steamboat wearing more sequins than he cares to remember, has an Acting MFA from Indiana University Bloomington, and has been on faculty at SUNY Fredonia for 7 years where he teaches Acting and Directing. Chris is a past President of the Theatre District Association, once had salad with Cloris Leachman, and has always wanted to be a circus ringmaster.

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# UPCOMING

November 1

## THE PEOPLE SPEAK

Screening and Panel Discussion on  
Censorship, Free Speech and the Performing Arts

November 2

## PLAY PRACTICE

Adult training class for professional performers

November 21

## ALLEYWAY AFTER DARK

World-class magic and illusionists

December 6

## ALLEYWAY TEEN ENSEMBLE

Teen theatre makers devise and create their own work

December 11 -28

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Our tradition continues with this joyful new adaptation

Plus, don't miss these National Theatre Live  
Film Showings on the Alleyway Big Screen:

December 31: THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST

January 1 and 4: THE FIFTH STEP

January 11 and 12: INTER ALIA

January 1 and 5: MRS. WARREN'S PROFESSION

## SPRING SEASON TO BE ANNOUNCED

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