



# WHOA, NELLIE!

THE OUTLAW KING OF THE WILD MIDDLE WEST

BOOK, LYRICS AND MUSIC BY  
JOSEF EVANS

DIRECTED BY LAURA LEFFLER

MUSIC DIRECTED BY AMANDA WEIS

CHOREOGRAPHY AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTION BY  
JOEY MILLER

MAY 17–JUNE 8, 2025



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Season Opens May 24



## WELCOME



Hello and welcome to *Whoa, Nellie! The Outlaw King of the Wild Middle West*, our final show of the 2024-25 Season. We plan to ride fast and furious into summer with the premiere of Josef Evans' whirlwind musical about the life and times of the enigmatic and relentless "Nellie King."

History Theatre is proud of the wonderful new work that audiences have seen this season. If you have appreciated the unique blend of history, entertainment, and exceptional storytelling by Minnesota's most creative artists, please consider making a fiscal year-end donation. Every contribution helps us continue our mission and provide discounted tickets to over 5,000 students throughout the year.

Thank you again for being a part of History Theatre's family. And we hope to see you in July to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Jeffrey Hatcher and Chan Poling's hit musical *Glensheen*. Marjorie is back again!

- Karen Mueller, Managing Director

A black and white promotional image for History Theatre. On the left, a man with a beard and a leather jacket looks upwards. On the right, a woman in a costume with large, flowing sleeves and a headpiece has her arms raised. The text "HELP MAKE" is above a large "h" logo, followed by "istory" in a bold, sans-serif font. Below this, the text "Make a gift to History Theatre with your end-of-year tax-deductible donation." is displayed. At the bottom, it says "Visit [historytheatre.com/donate](https://historytheatre.com/donate)" and "Please give by June 30, 2025. Thank you!"

HELP MAKE

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# history theatre

## WHOA, NELLIE!

### THE OUTLAW KING OF THE WILD MIDDLE WEST

Book, Lyrics and Music by

**JOSEF EVANS**

Directed by **LAURA LEFFLER**

Music Directed by **AMANDA WEIS**

Choreography and Associate Direction by **JOEY MILLER**

Orchestrator  
**ROBERT ELHAI**

Sound Designer  
**C ANDREW MAYER#**

Stage Manager  
**STACY MCINTOSH\***

Scenic Designer  
**JOEL SASS**

Properties Designer  
**REBECCA JO MALMSTROM^**

Assistant Stage Manager  
**GIANNA HASEMAN**

Lighting Designer  
**GRANT E. MERGES**

Costume Designer  
**BRYCE TURGEON**

Dramaturg  
**CATHERINE CHARLES  
HAMMOND**

### PRODUCTION TEAM

Production Manager ..... **Lee Johnson**  
Intimacy Coordinator ..... **Sophie Peyton**  
Fight Choreographer ..... **Annie Enneking**  
Dance Captain ..... **Thomas Bevan**  
Master Electrician ..... **Nick Walberg**  
Assistant Master Electrician ..... **Bevibel Harvey**  
Stage Electricians ..... **Nick Fetting, Kevin Champion, Dante Benjergdes,**  
..... **Sam Brown, Alan Donahue, Andy Glischinski, Jenna Lory, Lucas Martin**  
Technical Director ..... **Gunther Gullickson**  
Associate Technical Director ..... **Evan Sima**  
Carpenters ..... **Phong Mai, Caleb Terry**  
Scenic Charge ..... **Erika Soukup, Hannah Litzinger**  
Costume Assistant ..... **Meghan Kent**  
Open Captioner ..... **Laura Wiebers**  
Audio Descriptor ..... **Laurie Pape Hadley**  
ASL Interpreters ..... **Linda Gill, Nella Titus**



The Director is a member of the  
STAGE DIRECTORS AND  
CHOREOGRAPHERS SOCIETY.  
A national theatrical labor union.

\* Appearing through an agreement between History Theatre and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States  
† Member, Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, Inc.  
• Member, Twin Cities Musicians Union Local 30-73, American Federation of Musicians  
# Member, United Scenic Artists Local #829  
^ Member, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees



## WHO'S WHO

### THE ENSEMBLE (in alphabetical order)

Edward Loudon, Ensemble .....	Thomas Bevan
Julian Eltinge, Ensemble .....	Jay Owen Eisenberg*
Aida Walker, Ensemble .....	Erin Nicole Farsté
The Child, Ensemble .....	Grace Hillmyer
Bert Williams, Ensemble .....	John Jamison II*
John Durham, Ensemble .....	Tod Petersen*
Nellie King .....	Em Adam Rosenberg
Annie Oakley, Ensemble (U/S Nellie King) .....	Leslie Vincent
Nellie Bly, Ensemble .....	Therese Walth*

### UNDERSTUDIES

Elena Glass\*, Charlotte McDaniel, Adam Qualls\*, France A. Roberts

### THE MUSICIANS

Guitar, Bass and Mandolin .....	Kyle Simons Baker•
Drums .....	Corey Fitzgerald•
Cello .....	Audrey Q. Snyder•
Piano .....	Amanda Weis•



THOMAS BEVAN



JAY OWEN EISENBERG



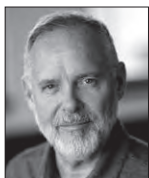
ERIN NICOLE FARSTÉ



GRACE HILLMYER



JOHN JAMISON II



TOD PETERSEN



EM ADAM  
ROSENBERG



LESLIE VINCENT



THERESE WALTH



ELENA GLASS U



CHARLOTTE MCDANIEL  
U



ADAM QUALLS  
U



FRANCE A. ROBERTS  
U

## SETTING

**A faded Midwestern vaudeville stage of the late 1800s**

*This production will be performed with one 15-minute intermission*

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

Notorious Nellie .....	Bert and Company
Ride 'Em Cowboy .....	Nellie King and Company
Boom Town .....	Company
Lady Hawkshaw .....	Aida, Bert and Company
Who Cares? .....	Julian, Bert and Company
Hysterical Damsels.....	John, Bert, Julian, Edward
You Gotta Be Crazy (Not to Go Crazy).....	Nellie Bly, Annie, Aida
Whatever Suits the Moment .....	Nellie King and Company
Ne'er So E'er.....	Aida, John
Set Me Free .....	Nellie King and Company
Notorious Nellie (reprise).....	Company

### ACT TWO

Nellie, Come Home .....	Bert, Edward, John, Julian
If You Find Yourself in Florida .....	Nellie King, Edward
When the Wicked Stage Ain't Wicked.....	Aida, Bert, Nellie King
Boom Town (reprise) .....	Company
Sober in the Slammer Again .....	Nellie King
The Pace That Kills .....	Company
Set Me Free (reprise) .....	Nellie King
The Day Won't Wait .....	Nellie King, The Child
Ne'er So E'er (reprise) .....	Aida and Company
Finale.....	Company

## PLAYWRIGHT



While researching small-town Minnesota history for a previous show, I developed a fascination with the so-called “journalism” of the late 1800s. Its showy prose, whimsical turns of phrase and penchant for wild hyperbole and half-truth (the latter increasingly parallel to our current media landscape) felt like fertile linguistic ground for a future project, and upon discovering the sensationalist tale of Nellie King, I was sure I’d discovered the engine that could drive a musical. What I didn’t expect was the many ways Nellie’s story intersected with concerns of the present, or the powerful, poignant reckoning that emerged with deeper research.

*Whoa, Nellie!* is about many things, but firstly this: a charismatic and complicated person in pursuit of fame as a means of achieving love, acceptance and transcendent immortality. Nellie entered the public sphere at a pivotal moment in American history, where vaudeville and newspapers’ popularity expanded to create the country’s first mass culture, and with it the modern notion of celebrity. It’s a role Nellie was only too happy to inhabit (she carried her news clippings with her and would proudly share them with officers during her many arrests) as she willingly embraced the larger-than-life persona of a “wily and scandalous female cowboy detective.”

Underneath that showy veneer, though, a more complex human story emerges - one that raises potent questions around an array of issues that resonate in the present tense (addiction, mental health, gender identity and gender inequity, to name just a few). Nellie’s story is largely forgotten, but in this theatrical resurrection her spirit returns to ask us for absolution, or at least understanding, as her misadventures are considered through the lens of historical hindsight and proper social context. As she puts it in the play, “I think these folks might just catch up with my particular brand of nonconformity.” Here’s hoping you do, with a lot of laughter, toe-tapping joy and maybe a stray tear along the way.

My deepest gratitude goes out to History Theatre for continuing to champion new work like *Whoa, Nellie!*, supporting art that lives equally in the past and the present - posing questions, touching souls and pushing all of us to move through the world with a fuller, better sense of the ground on which we stand.

- Josef Evans

## SPECIAL THANKS

MJ Leffler, The Costume Collective, Eastridge High School, Viterbo University, Urban Growler Brewery Company, Howdy Partner Dance, PaddleBridge

## THE CAST

### THOMAS BEVAN (he/him)

Edward Loudon/Ensemble (Dance Captain)

**History Theatre:** *The Boy Wonder*. **Theater:** Broadway National Tour: Chicago. Radio City Music Hall: Radio City Christmas Spectacular. Off-Broadway: *Sayonara*. Regional Theatre: North Carolina Theatre: *Legally Blonde*; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: *The Prom*, *Hairspray*, *West Side Story*; Theatre L'Homme Dieu: *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *I'm Proud of You*; Transcendence Theatre Company: *This Magic Moment*; Duluth Playhouse: *Next to Normal*. **Film:** *The Last Five Years*. **Television:** *Me Hereafter*. **Training:** BFA Musical Theatre, UW-Stevens Point; Kimball Studio NYC. **Upcoming:** Duluth Playhouse: *Waitress*.

### JAY OWEN EISENBERG\* (he/him)

Julian Eltinge/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Regional Theatre:** Guthrie Theater: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; Theater Latté Da: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *NEXT Festival*; Jungle Theater: *RICH DOGS (w/WeAreMarried)*, *The Courtroom*, *Small Mouth Sounds*; Penumbra Theatre: *The White Card*; Mixed Blood Theater: *Hir*, *Charm*; Pillsbury House + Theatre: *~[almost equal to]*; Open Eye Figure Theatre: *Constance in the Darkness*; frequent collaborator with The Playwrights' Center. **Off-Broadway Theater:** Ars Nova: *2 ROSSES (w/WeAreMarried)*; The Public Theater: *The Record*; Atlantic Theater Company: *Books Cook!* **Other:** Writer, director, cultural consultant, and teaching artist with arts organizations across the Twin Cities. **Awards:** 2017 Minnesota State Arts Board Artist Initiative Grant. **Training:** BFA, New York University Tisch School of the Arts. **Upcoming:** Guthrie Theater: *Cabaret*; Lyric Arts: *Significant Other*; Edinburgh Festival Fringe: *Knight, Knight*; Open Eye Figure Theatre: *Great American Pastime*. [jay-eisenberg.com](http://jay-eisenberg.com)

### ERIN NICOLE FARSTÉ (she/her)

Aida Walker/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** *Not In Our Neighborhood*, *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*. **Theater:** Theatre Latté Da: *The Color Purple*, *Falsettos*, *We Shall Someday*; Children's Theatre Company: *Corduroy*; Yellow Tree Theatre: *In The Next Room*, *Passing Strange*. **Film:** *Climate Futures*, *Power Out*. **TV:** *I Was There*. **Voice Over:** *Tomorrow*, *The Void Podcast*.

### GRACE HILLMYER (she/her)

The Child/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** *I Am Betty (Understudy)*. **Theater:** Artistry: *Godspell*, *The 25th Annual...Spelling Bee*; Lyric Arts: *Kinky Boots*, *The Girl on the Train*; Minneapolis Musical Theatre: *Analog and Vinyl*. **Other:** Education Associate, Artistry; Freelance Theater Educator, Artistry; Park Square Theatre; Stages Theatre Company; Zephyr Theatre; Social Media Content, Trademark Theater. **Training:** BA Theatre Arts, UMN-Twin Cities. **Upcoming:** Zephyr Theatre: *Robin Hood*; Open Eye Theatre: *Lizzie* *the Musical*. IG: @gracehillmyer

### JOHN JAMISON II\* (he/him)

Bert Williams/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*. **Theater:** (Selected) Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: *Beautiful: The Carol King Musical*, *A Night at the Theater - A Tribute to Queen*; Artistry: *Godspell*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*; Theatre Latté Da: *Five Points*; Children's Theatre: *Milo Imagines The World*; *The Wiz*; *Wizard of Oz*, 2015-16 Performing Apprentice. [johnjamisonii.com](http://johnjamisonii.com)

### TOD PETERSEN\* (he/him)

John Durham/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** *Sweet Land*, *Teen Idol*. **Theater:** Theatre Latté Da: *R&H's Cinderella*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *A Christmas Carole Petersen*, *Gypsy*, *A Man of No Importance*, *Parade*, *Oh \$#!% I'm Turning Into My Mother*; Chanhassen Dinner Theatres: *The Prom*, *The Music Man*, *Footloose*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Newsies*, *Holiday Inn*; Ordway Center: *The Sound of Music*; Children's Theater Company: *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*; Artistry: *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*; Duluth Playhouse: *La Cage aux Folles*; Theatre L'Homme Dieu: *Once, I'm Proud of You*.

### EM ADAM ROSENBERG (they/them)

Nellie King

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** Guthrie Theater: *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, *Henry V*, *Hamlet*; Trademark Theater: *Ostentatious Outlaws of Neehai Valley*; Artistry Theater: *Rent*; The Gray Mallard Theater Co.: *Romeo and Juliet*, *Twelfth Night*; Theatre Pro Rata: *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Orlando*, *Top Girls*; Minneapolis Musical Theatre: *Hands on a Hardbody*; The Birth Play Project: *Mary's Wondrous Body*. **Awards:** Best Performer In A Play, 2024 BroadwayWorld Minneapolis/St. Paul Awards, *Romeo and Juliet*, The Gray Mallard Theater Co. **Training:** Gaiety School of Acting; B.A. Theatre Arts, UMN-Twin Cities. **Upcoming:** Theatre Latté Da *NEXT Festival: The Homefront*; Third Space Theater, Minnesota Fringe; Children's Theatre Company: *Treasure Island*. [emrossetheatre.com](http://emrossetheatre.com) IG: [emmlsnbits](https://www.instagram.com/emmlsnbits)

### LESLIE VINCENT (she/her)

Annie Oakley/Ensemble (U/S Nellie King)

**History Theatre:** *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*; *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story*. **Theater:** DalekoArts: *Once*; Park Square Theatre: *Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Talent Pageant*; *The Diary of Anne Frank*; Artistry: *Victor/Victoria*; Bryant-Lake Bowl: *A Very Die Hard Christmas*. **Training:** B.M. Catholic University. **Upcoming:** Album release Oct. 2025. [lesliedellavincen.com](http://lesliedellavincen.com), IG: [leslievincentmusic](https://www.instagram.com/leslievincentmusic)

### THERESE WALTH\* (she/her)

Nellie Bly/Ensemble

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** Artistry: *Crazy for You*; *Shrek*; *Memphis*; Chanhassen Dinner Theatre: *Mama Mia*, *Sister Act*, *Grease*, *Hairspray*, *Bye Bye Birdie*; Guthrie Theater: *The Music Man*; The Ordway: *Broadway Songbook*; *Gershwin*; *Jungle Theater: Urinetown*, *The World Goes 'Round*. **Other:** Hill-Murray School Artistic Theatre Director, Choral Music Teacher.

## UNDERSTUDIES

### ELENA GLASS\* (she/her)

**History Theatre:** *Beyond the Rainbow*, *Christmas of Swing*, *Runestone*. **Theater:** Ordway: *Mamma Mia!*, *Annie*, *The Sound of Music*, *Broadway Songbook*; *Comden & Green*; Artistry: *Godspell*; Nautilus Music Theatre: *Stations of the Heart*; Old Log Theatre: *Lend Me a Tenor*; Theatre Elision: *Ruthless*, *Pins & Needles*; Yellow Tree Theatre: *One Man, Two Guvnors*. **Other:** Hive Collaborative and Lush Lounge & Theatre: *Loudly*, *Clearly*, *Beautifully* (Elena's one-woman show); certified intimacy coordinator. **Training:** Bachelor of Music, New York University. **Upcoming:** *History Theatre: Glensheen*; *The Forst Inn: Loudly, Clearly, Beautifully*. [elenaglass.com](http://elenaglass.com). IG: @eglass789

### CHARLOTTE MCDANIEL (she/her)

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** Penumbra Theatre (FLEX); Classical Actors Ensemble: *Much Ado About Nothing*;



## CAST/MUSICIANS/CREATIVE TEAM

UMN/Park Square Theatre: *The Ferryman*. **Training:** BFA Acting, UMN/Guthrie Theater. [charmdaniel.com](#)

### ADAM QUALLS\* (he/him)

**History Theatre:** *The Defeat of Jesse James*, *Glensheen*, *Lord Gordon Gordon*. **Theater:** *Children's Theatre Company: The Grinch*, *Shrek the Musical*, *Jackie & Me*; *Theater Latté Da: Peter & the Starcatcher*, *Cabaret*; *Park Square Theatre: Great Expectations*, *Oliver Twist*; *Ordway Center: Annie*; *Artistry: You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, *Into the Woods*; *Jacques Brel Is Alive & Well & Living in Paris*.

### FRANCE A. ROBERTS (he/him)

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** *Theater Latté Da: The Color Purple*; *Artistry: Crazy For You*, *Shrek: The Musical*, *Footloose*, *Victor/Victoria*; *Lyric Arts: Kinky Boots*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *The Wedding Singer*; *Minnetonka Theatre: The Sound of Music*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Sister Act*. **Award:** 2021 Minnesota Teacher of the Year finalist. **Training:** BS, Elementary Education, Moorhead State University; Masters, Hamline University. **Upcoming:** *The Music Man*. [lyricarts.org](#)

## THE MUSICIANS



### KYLE SIMONS BAKER\* (he/him)

Guitar, Bass, Mandolin  
**History Theatre:** *I Am Betty*, *The Boy Wonder*, *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story*. **Theater:** *Old Log Theater, Music Director: Escape to Margaritaville*, *Once Upon A Mattress*, *Million Dollar Quartet*;

*Chanhassen Dinner Theatre, Pit member sub: Grease, Newsies, Mamma Mia, Footloose, The Prom, Jersey Boys*; *Theater Latté Da: Next to Normal*; *Park Square Theatre: Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Talent Pageant*; *Old Log Theatre: Million Dollar Quartet, Ghost: the Musical, Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder*; *Theater Mu: Again*; *Lyric Arts: The Wedding Singer*; *Jungle Theater: Ride the Cyclone*.



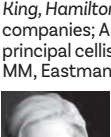
### COREY FITZGERALD\* (she/her)

Drums  
**History Theatre:** 1968: *The Year That Rocked the World*. **Theater:** *Triassic Parq, MMT, Kinky Boots, Lyric Arts*.



### AUDREY Q. SNYDER\* (she/her)

Cello  
**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** *The Bridges of Madison County National Tour, Marriott Theatre Lincolnshire: The Bridges of Madison County, Oklahoma, Oliver*; *Broadway in Chicago: The Lion King, Hamilton sub; Hamilton: And Peggy and Angelica companies*; *Artistry: Crazy for You*. **Other:** *Touring principal cellist, The Who, 2019-2023. Training:* BM and MM, Eastman School of Music. [audreysnyder.com](#)



### AMANDA WEIS\* (she/her)

Music Director/Piano  
**History Theatre:** *The Boy Wonder, Raw Stages: The Boy Wonder, Whoa, Nellie!*. **Theater:** *Minneapolis Musical Theatre: High Fidelity, Daddy Long Legs, Triassic Parq; Duluth Playhouse: Jersey Boys*,

*Into the Woods*; *Opera Reading Project: Transformations*; *Journey North Opera: Ghosts Behind the Glass*; *Hawaii Performing Arts Festival: Don Giovanni*; *Lyric Arts: Kinky Boots*; *Open Window Theatre: Foshay! The Musical*, *National Tour Nick JR LIVE*, others. **Other:** *Teaching Artist: Guthrie Theater, Children's Theatre Company. Upcoming: Fringe Festival; Tompkins Square; Open Eye Theatre: Lizzie Borden*. [weisamanda.com](#)

## THE CREATIVE TEAM

### JOSEF EVANS (he/him)

Playwright, Composer, Lyricist

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** *Open Eye Theatre: (musicals, book/music/lyrics) Holiday Ham, Loch Mess, Hair Ball, Log Jam, Constance in the Darkness*; (musical, book) *Strumpley Peter*; (plays) *To The Moon!*, *Nothing is Something*; *Guthrie Theater (co-presented): Home Street Home (Zamya Theater)*, *Love in a Time of Rinderpest (Bedlam Theatre)*; *In The Heart of the Beast Theater: Hot Corn*; *Bedlam Theatre: Superlatives of Excellence, The Million Dollar Museum, The Turducken, The Hole at the Bottom of the Holiday, What God Said On Tuesday, The Haunted Spoon*; *George Mason University/UMBC: The Only Americans Welcome*; *Zamya Theater (devised with the company): A Prairie Homeless Companion, There's No Place Like Home, Ten You Win/Ten You Lose, Little (Foreclosed) House on the (Stolen) Prairie, Act Before Midnight: A Random Collection of Everyday Americans*. **Other:** *Founding Artist, Zamya Theater Project*; *Former director, Theater Corps. Awards:* 2015 Ivey Award, "Overall Artistic Excellence," *Nothing is Something*; *City Pages "Top Ten Shows of the Year" for To The Moon!, Strumpley Peter*; *CLEARCorps/USA Distinguished Service Award (for creation of Theater Corps)*, *Washington DC. Training:* *English/Theatre, University of Notre Dame*; *Playwriting, University of Washington-Seattle, Change/Exchange Artist Residency, Los Angeles Poverty Department*; *Theater of the Oppressed/Forum Theater, Brecht Forum with Augusto Boal*; *Master Class: Edward Albee, Marsha Norman*; *Member, Dramatists Guild*. [josefevans.com](#) IG: @showsbyjoe

### LAURA LEFFLER (she/her)

Director

**History Theatre:** *Superman Becomes Lois Lane, The Boy Wonder*, multiple workshops. **Theater:** *Artistry: Sweet Charity*; *Park Square Theatre: Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Talent Pageant*; *Twin Cities Horror Festival: Schaulust*; *Umbrella Collective: Ex-Gays, Penelope, The Awakening*; *Guthrie Theatre, Theatre de la Jeune Lune, The Moving Company*, *Twenty Percent Theatre Company, The Playwrights' Center*; and more. **Awards:** *Best Director, CityPages 2018. Training:* MA, *University of Kansas*; BA, *Baker University*, study abroad at *Harlaxton College*. **Upcoming:** *History Theatre: Hungry Like the Wolf*. [lauraleffler.me](#)

### JOEY MILLER\* (he/him)

Choreographer/Associate Director

**History Theatre:** *The Boy Wonder. Theater:* *Directing/Choreography: Theater Latté Da: Fun Home*; *Great Theater: Beauty and the Beast*; *Theater L'Homme Dieu: Beautiful*; *CDT: Prom*; *Artistry: Shrek*; *The Ordway: Gotta Dance*; *The Old Log: Gentleman's*

## CREATIVE TEAM

*Guide...Murder*; Cedar Summerstock: *Forever Plaid*, *Seussical*. Performing: Guthrie Theater: *Little Shop of Horrors*; CDT: *Footloose*, *Mamma Mia!*, *Holiday Inn*, *Newsies*, *Beauty and the Beast*; Artistry: *Songs for a New World*; *The Ordway*: *West Side Story*, *A Chorus Line*, *White Christmas*, *Pirates of Penzance*. **Training:** BFA Music Theatre, Viterbo University. **Other:** Producing massage therapist; AEA. @jdmbbodywork

### ROBERT ELHAI (he/him)

Orchestrator

**History Theatre:** *Dirty Business* (composer), *Glensheen*, *Sweet Land*, the musical, *Lord Gordon Gordon*, *The Defeat of Jesse James*, *Blended 和*: *The Kim Loo Sisters* (arranger). Composed scores for Nautilus Music Theater, Theater Latté Da, Jungle Theater, Fortune's Fool Theater. Arranged/orchestrated operas, musicals, and concert works performed around the world. Orchestrated over 200 film, TV and game scores. Tony and Drama Desk nominee for *The Lion King*. **Training:** BA Carleton College, MM Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, DMA Yale University School of Music. robertelhai.com

### JOEL SASS (he/him)

Scenic Designer

**History Theatre:** *The Defeat of Jesse James*, *Dirty Business*, *Gloria*, *The Paper Dreams of Harry Chin*, *Runestone! A Rock Musical*; *Courting Harry* (directing and designing). **Theater:** Guthrie Theater, Theatre Latté Da, Park Square Theatre, Jungle Theater, Artistry, Open Eye Theatre, California Shakespeare Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and others.

### GRANT E. MERGES (he/him)

Lighting Designer

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater** (selected): Theater Latté Da: *Scotland, PA*, *Falsettos*, *Merrily We Roll Along*; *Jungle Theater*: *Hand to God*; *Penumbra Theatre*: *Black Nativity*; *Chenango River Theatre*: *Picasso at the Lapin Agile*, *Lend Me a Tenor*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; *Stages Theatre Company*: *The North Star*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *The Hobbit*; *Artistry*: *The Music Man*, *Noises Off*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*; *Minneapolis Musical Theatre*: *Night of the Living Dead*, *The Story of My Life*, *Big River*; *Paul Bunyan Playhouse*: *Young Frankenstein*, *Footloose*, *Little Shop of Horrors*; *GREAT Theatre*: *Descendants*, *Grease*, *Newsies*; *River Valley Dance Academy*: *The Snow Queen*, *The Nutcracker*; *University of Northwestern*: *The Lightning Thief*, *Peter Pan*, *Into the Woods*; *Century College*: *Rent*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Macbeth*; *Concordia University*: *Die Fledermaus*. **Education:** MFA, Minnesota State University, Mankato.

### C ANDREW MAYER\* (he/him)

Sound Designer

**History Theatre:** Over 80 shows including *I Am Betty*, *Blended 和* (*Harmony*): *The Kim Loo Sisters*, *The Defeat of Jesse James*, *Not For Sale*, *Not in our Neighborhood!*, *Gloria*: *A Life*, *Dirty Business*, *Teen Idol*: *The Bobby Vee Story*, *All the Way*, *Watermelon Hill*, *Glensheen*, *Hiding in the Open*, *Tyrone and Ralph*, *A Piece of the Rope*, *Hmong!* *The CIA Secret Army*. **Theater:** *Jungle Theater*, *Pillsbury House*, *Theater Latté Da*, *Theater Mu*, *Illusion*, *Six Points*, *Lyrical Opera Kansas City*, *Opera Colorado*, *Everyman* (Baltimore), *ACT* (San Francisco), many others. **Awards:** McKnight Theatre Artist Fellow, Audelco Award for Carlyle Brown's *Pure Confidence*. **Other:** Producing Director, Acadia Repertory Theatre, Mount Desert Island, Maine.

### REBECCA JO MALMSTROM\* (she/her)

Properties Designer

**History Theatre:** *The Boy Wonder*, *Blended 和* (*Harmony*): *The Kim Loo Sisters*. **Theater:** *Theater Mu*: *Fifty Boxes of Earth*, *Film with We'll fix it in Post Productions*; *Guthrie Theater*: over 100 productions as the Shopper/Buyer and Artisan in the Prop Shop. **Awards:** St Paul Pioneer Press Peeps Contest video winner, 2015. **Training:** Theater and Art History, UMN-Morris. IG: Duckie Ugllings

### BRYCE TURGEON (he/him)

Costume Designer

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** NYC Off-Broadway: *Five The Musical*; *Ogunquit Playhouse*: *Little Shop of Horrors*; *Virginia Stage Company*: *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*; *Virginia Stage Company*: *Dream Girls*; *Virginia Stage Company*: *Legend of Georgia McBride*; *Timberlake Playhouse*: *We Will Rock You*. **Other:** *Florence d'Lee Studios*; *Rupaul's Drag Race* Seasons 9-14, *Rupaul's Drag Race All Stars*, *Drag Race UK*, *DragKnificent on TLC*, *The Madonna Celebration Tour*, 2019 *Met Gala*; *Featured in Vogue*, *Vogue Germany*. **Awards:** Best Fashion Designer, New York Nightlife Awards, 2019, 2020; Broadway World Main Awards for Best Costume Design for *Little Shop of Horrors*, 2024. **Training:** BFA, Theatre Design and Technology, Viterbo University. bryceturgeondesigns.com. IG: Florencedlee

### CATHERINE CHARLES HAMMOND

Dramaturg

**History Theatre:** *Superman Becomes Lois Lane*, *Raw Stages*: *Hungry Like The Wolf*. **Theater:** *Hamline University*: *Fab-U-Land*; *Trademark Theater*: *Ostentatious Outlaws of Neehai Valley* (reading); *Jungle Theater*: *RICH DOGS (w/WeAreMarried)*. **Other:** *Trans Voices Cabaret*. catherinecharles.com.

### SOPHIE PEYTON (she/her)

Intimacy Coordinator

**History Theatre:** *Raw Stages*: *Ms. Millet*, *The Highwaymen*, *Superman Becomes Lois Lane*. **Theater:** *Park Square Theatre*: *Jefferson Township Sparkling Junior Talent Pageant*; *Mixed Blood Theatre*: *Song of Summer* and *Interstate*; *Theater Mu*: *The Kung Fu Zombies Saga*, *Hells Canyon*; *Artistry*: *Sweet Charity*; *RAHS*: *John Proctor is the Villain*; *ARCC*: *Ride the Cyclone*. **Other:** director, producer, dramaturg Leadership member, SURJ-TC; core organizer, MN Artist Coalition, MN Theater Accountability Coalition; Operations Director, @ConstellationArtsCollective. **Training:** B.A. Temple University. Upcoming: Theatre in the Round: anthropology by Lauren Gunderson

### ANNIE ENNEKING (she/her)

Fight Choreographer

**History Theatre:** *Diesel Heart*, *Secret Warriors*. **Theater:** *Guthrie Theater*: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Skeleton Crew*, *The History Plays*, *A Raisin in the Sun*; *University of Minnesota*: *James I*, *As You Like It*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Hamlet*; *Theater Latté Da*: *Man of La Mancha*, *Cabaret*; *Jungle Theater*: *Hand to God*, *Noises Off*, *The Effect*; *Park Square Theatre*: *Of Mice and Men*, *Cyrano*; *Theater Mu*: *Cambodian Rock Band*, *Man of God*; *Shakespearean Youth Theatre*: *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Julius Caesar*; *Dark & Stormy Productions*: *Extremities*, *Fool for Love*; *Theatre Pro Rata*: *Bernhardt/Hamlet*, *Three Sisters/No Sisters*; *St Olaf*: *The Effect*. **Music:** *Annie and the Bang Bang*. **Teaching:** *University of Minnesota*. **Awards:** *Jerome Foundation*, 2010 McKnight Theater Artist Fellowship.



\* Appearing through an agreement between History Theatre and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States

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## CREATIVE TEAM

### STACY MCINTOSH\* (she/her)

Stage Manager

**History Theatre:** Debut. **Theater:** Children's Theatre Company (70+ productions), Cort Theatre, New Victory Theater, The Old Globe, Alliance Theatre, Guthrie, Mixed Blood and Illusion Theaters and Marin Theatre Company. **Other:** Stage Manager, NHL Winter Classic, NHL Stadium Series and 2018 Super Bowl pregame event; Artist Hospitality Manager, the Basilica Block Party, The Taste of Minnesota. **Awards:** Minnesota Theater Award. **Training:** B.A., University of Northern Iowa. **Upcoming:** Sod House Theater: *Five More Minutes*; Children's Theatre Company: *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

### GIANNA HASEMAN (she/her)

Assistant Stage Manager

**History Theatre:** *Handprints*, *The Root Beer Lady*. **Theater:** Park Square Theatre: *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*; New Arab American Theater Works: *Rosette*; Gremlin Theatre: *Apples In Winter*, *The Thin Place*; Twin Cities Theater Camp: *Matilda The Musical*, *The Music Man*, *The Logic Pit*; UMN Theatre Arts & Dance Dept: *Energy & U*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Moliere One Acts*, *She Kills Monsters*. **Training:** B.A. Theatre Arts, UMN-Twin Cities. **Upcoming:** Twin Cities Theater Camp: *Something Rotten! Jr.*



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*Whoa, Nellie!* introduces five celebrities of Nellie King's era to help re-enact her story. Though far more famous than Nellie (in their day as in ours), each of these historical figures echoes her life in certain aspects of their life, work, or struggles.

Compiled by Catherine  
Charles Hammond



### **ANNIE OAKLEY (1860–1926)**

Annie Oakley was a sharpshooter who rose to fame as a headliner in the popular touring attraction *Buffalo Bill's Wild West*. Her acts included shooting playing cards and even dimes out of the air, and she performed record-breaking feats of marksmanship throughout her life. She also advocated for women's knowledge of firearms as a form of self-defense.



### **NELLIE BLY (1864–1922)**

Nellie Bly was a reporter whose influential work helped establish the tradition of investigative journalism. She is known for traveling around the world in a record-setting 76 days, and for exposés in which she spent time undercover as a factory worker and a lunatic asylum inmate in order to report on the inhumane conditions in those settings.

## **GENDER DIVERSITY IS OLD NEWS.**

I mean that for as long as there have been women and men, there have been those who live between, across, or beyond those categories. Testimony of their lives comes to us from cultures around the world and throughout history.

I mean "old news" in a literal sense, too: the pages of 19th-century U.S. newspapers abound with sensational

accounts of gender nonconforming individuals. In many cases, our sole knowledge of their stories comes to us in the form of journalistic coverage. (This is often supplemented by arrest records - ordinances against appearing in clothing of the "opposite" sex were commonplace well into the late 20th century.)

Sifting through the biases and ambiguities of the available evidence, we find a diverse cast of gender-bending characters. Certain figures lived their lives in accordance with a deeply felt inner sense of identity. Others temporarily disguised themselves across gender lines as means to an end - safety, employment, entertainment. Some stepped outside the



**BERT WILLIAMS  
(1874–1922)**

Bert Williams was one of the most famous American entertainers of his era, a celebrated comedian who produced shows and played roles that challenged stereotypes and broke racial barriers for Black entertainers in vaudeville, musical theatre, and early film. Williams was particularly known for a woeful, down-on-his-luck stage persona, exemplified in his hit song “Nobody.”



**AIDA OVERTON  
WALKER  
(1880–1914)**

Aida Overton Walker was a vaudeville and theatre performer known for solo acts as well for performing alongside her husband, George Walker, and Bert Williams in shows such as *In Dahomey*, the earliest musical written and performed by Black artists to play at a major Broadway theatre. After George’s death, she performed parts of his acts and garnered acclaim for her portrayals of male characters.



**JULIAN  
ELTINGE  
(1881–1941)**

Julian Eltinge was a female impersonator who achieved great fame in vaudeville, theatre, and silent film. His career spanned the rise and decline of female impersonation as a popular, generally respected vaudeville genre; beginning in the 1920s it moved into nightclubs and attracted increasing scrutiny and repression. Offstage, Eltinge presented as a straight, masculine man and took a combative stance toward rumors about his sexuality.

\*\*\*\*\*

bounds of prescribed gender for ambiguous or multiple reasons.

So it is with Nellie King, whose press coverage (and carceral record) point to a defiantly free-spirited individual who certainly leveraged male presentation for practical purposes, but who seems to have taken a certain amount of glee in it, too. To the reporters of the day, she was “notorious,” a “wily adventuress,”

“cowboy queen and girl detective,” which is to say, “a young lady of uncertain social standing and masculine propensities.” To those of us seeking, and finding, our gender-expansive forebears in the historical record, she’s a singularly fierce and lawless ancestor among the uncountable many who came before us, one who flouted the norms of her time in parks, parlors, and prison cells, on stages, street corners, and

stolen horses. And who, in her own words, “made a dandy-looking boy-man, too.”

In our era of rising vitriol, when federal policies and executive orders explicitly cast us as representatives of a dangerous new ideology, it’s nice to be reminded that we are, in fact, old news.

- Catherine Charles Hammond,  
Dramaturg





Welcome to History Theatre and the joys of springtime in Minnesota. Coming together to enjoy a rollicking musical can be a real balm in what are, for many of us, challenging times.

Sharing stories has that effect too, and we've opened the heart's

floodgates all year long working with our community partners.

Members in our Vail Communities groups just put on a beautiful show on our stage where they told their tales as people with a mental health diagnosis. Their raw honesty, resilience, and sense of humor do go a long way toward obliterating the stigma many dealing with mental illness still face. Amazing work, truly.

Students at Minnesota Independence College and Community are also getting into the work and reflecting on what it's like to be autistic and neurodivergent adults. I cannot wait to see their wonderful results.

Last but not least, our Seats to Stage program works with high school students at Humboldt, Avalon School, and AGAPE. These young people explore the chapters of their lives that haven't been written yet and think about the history they want to make as they grow up. Seeing them grow makes me both encouraged and inspired.

Think about your own story while you enjoy a new piece of history come to life on the History Theatre stage. What role do you play in history? What do you hope the future will hold?

*Paul de Cordova, Education Manager*

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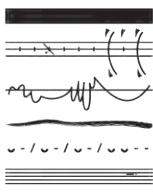


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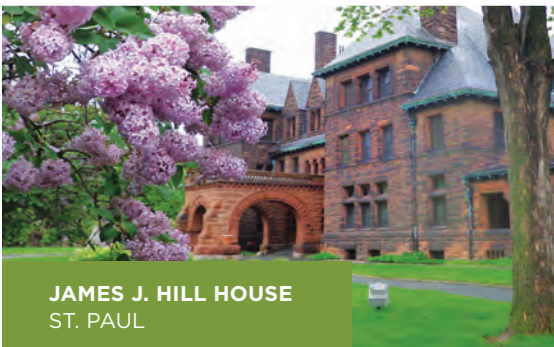
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