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# CAST



COURTNEY  
JONES



STELLA ROSE  
HOYT



CHRISTOPHER  
KALE JONES



NEIL FRIEDMAN



DAN  
KLARER



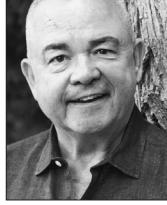
MICHAEL  
KINGSTON



SAM  
SHANKMAN



HOPE ELIZABETH  
SCHAFER



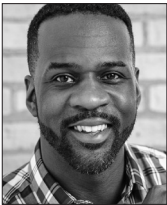
RICK  
RAPP



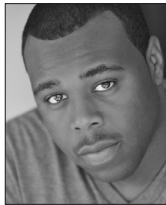
MATTHEW  
HUSTON



MICHAEL  
POTSIC



CHRIS  
CARTER



TREQUON  
TATE



HALEY JANE  
SCHAFER



RACHEL  
KLIPPEL



VERONICA  
GARZA



ASHLEY  
LANYON



AMIR  
HENDERSON



LILIANA  
RENE



ETHAN  
SOLIS



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# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

**COURTNEY JONES** (*Doris*) is thrilled to be working with Theatre at the Center. Most recently she could be seen as Dyanne in *Million Dollar Quartet* at Timberlake Playhouse. Other Chicago productions include *Ragtime* at Griffin Theatre, Cleo in *Most Happy Fella* with Theo Ubique, *First Lady Suite* at Circle Theater, Maureen in *Rent* (Jeff Award for Production- Musical), Claire in *Ordinary Days* at Boho, and Kate McGowan in *Titanic* with Griffin Theatre. Courtney has also worked regionally with Chicago Shakespeare, Writers' Theatre, House Theatre, Strawdog and Signal Ensemble. Courtney holds a BFA in musical theater from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and is represented by Gray Talent. [courtneymariejones.com](http://courtneymariejones.com)

**STELLA ROSE HOYT** (*Susan*) is thrilled to be back at Theatre at the Center this holiday season. She was last seen here in 2016 playing orphan Molly in *Annie Warbucks* for the holidays. Stella has been performing throughout the Chicagoland area since age 4. Last fall, she had the honor of playing Small Alison in the Chicago premiere of *Fun Home* at Victory Gardens directed by Gary Griffin. Other favorite roles include Mary Claire in *The Christmas Schooner* at Mercury Theatre, Young Cosette in *Les Miserables* and Jane in *Mary Poppins* at Oak Lawn Theatre. Stella is a 6th grader from the area and enjoys hanging out with friends, playing with her cats, and listening to all kinds of music. She thanks her Mom, Dad, Grandma, brother, GP and Dane for supporting her in everything she does. Thank you to Gray Talent for their guidance and Linda for this amazing opportunity.

**CHRISTOPHER KALE JONES** (*Fred*) is thrilled to be making his Theatre at the Center theatrical debut. TATC audiences may remember him from his one-man Bobby Darin tribute in June titled *DARIN: Bobby's Biggest Hits*, presented in conjunction with the Artists Lounge Live Series, as well as numerous appearances at the fondly-remembered Star Plaza Theatre with his group, PBS favorite, *Under The Streetlamp*. Perhaps best known for playing Frankie Valli in the first National Tour of *Jersey Boys* (including a "Tonight Show" appearance), other Chicago-area credits include: *The Ballad of Little Jo* (Steppenwolf), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Joseph...Dreamcoat* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *The King and I*, *Peggy Sue Got Married*, *Aladdin* and *The Wizard of Oz* (Marriott Theatre). Chris is a graduate of Northwestern, a member of Actor's Equity Association, and thankful to be partnered with Gray Talent Group. A big thank you to his talented actress wife, Jenna Coker-Jones, for always reminding him to believe. To Presley Rose Jones, daddy dedicates this show to you. [christopherkalejones.com](http://christopherkalejones.com) and [@chriskalejones](http://@chriskalejones).

**NEIL FRIEDMAN** (*Kris Kringle*) is happy to be working at Theatre at the Center, where he was seen last December as George Bailey's father Tom in *A Wonderful Life - The Musical*. Chicago area credits include: Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, The Marriott Theatre, The Court Theatre, Porchlight Theatre, Steppenwolf, Drury Lane, The Goodman Theatre, and Peninsula Players. Regional credits include: The People's Light Theatre, PA; The Fulton Theatre, PA; Utah Shakespeare Festival; Capitol Repertory, NY and The New Victory Theatre, NY. Neil is a proud recipient of Chicago's Joseph Jefferson Award. [neilfriedman.info](http://neilfriedman.info)

**DAN KLARER** (*Marvin Shellhammer*) is excited and grateful to make his TATC debut. Recent credits include roles in *Miss Holmes*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Living On Love*, *Lord Arthur Savile's Crime*, *Peter* and *The Starcatcher* all at Peninsula Players as well as *Enemy of the People* (Goodman); *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Santaland Diaries* (Third Avenue Playhouse); *Whistling In The Dark: A Sherlock Holmes Adventure* (Artists' Ensemble); *Guys On Ice* (Go Fish). He holds a master's degree from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow and is an Associate Instructor with Dueling Arts International. Happy Holidays!

**MICHAEL KINGSTON** (*Mr. Macy*) is making his TATC debut. Chicago credits include *Caroline or Change* (Firebrand Theatre), *Leave Me Alone* (The Story Theatre), *Pillars of the Community* (Strawdog), *The Minutes* (Steppenwolf Theatre) and *Ideation* (Jackalope - Jeff nominee - Ensemble), *Bat Boy* (Griffin - Jeff nominee - Ensemble), *Hairspray* (Paramount), *The Light in the Piazza* (Jeff winner - Best Production), *Pippin* (Boho - Jeff nominee - Supporting Actor/Musical) and *Fiorello!* (TimeLine - Jeff nominee - Supporting Actor/Musical). He has also worked with Drury Lane, Porchlight, Red Tape, Theo Ubique, The Neo-Futurists and Hell In A Handbag. Michael performed the role of Harry in the 2014-15 North American tour of *Flashdance the Musical*. TV credits include "Chicago PD" and "Chicago Fire." He is a cabaret performer when time permits and is represented by Gray Talent Group. This performance is for his mentors and my amazingly supportive family and friends. Twitter: [mkcabaret](https://twitter.com/mkcabaret)

**SAM SHANKMAN** (*Mr. Sawyer, Ensemble*) is thrilled to return to TATC for the holidays after last season's production of *Big River*. Recent Chicago credits include *Spring Awakening* (Blank Theatre), *South Pacific* (Drury Lane), *Curious George* (Northbrook Theatre), *Madagascar* (Chicago Shakespeare), *Shrew'd!* (First Folio), *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* (Emerald City), *A Year With Frog and Toad*, *The Hundred Dresses*, and *Elephant and Piggie's We Are in a Play* (Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts). Sam hails

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# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

from Memphis, TN, where some of his regional work includes *Speech and Debate* and *Spring Awakening* at Playhouse on the Square. Graduate of Northwestern University. Proudly represented by Stewart Talent. IG: @smshankman

**HOPE ELIZABETH SCHAFFER** (*Miss Crookshank, Ensemble*) is so grateful to be making her TATC debut with her sister Haley in *Miracle on 34th Street – The Musical*, and she will also appear in TATC's children's show this holiday season *The Holiday Shop!* Hope was last seen in *Anything Goes* at Music Theatre Works as an Angel and understudying Reno Sweeney. Hope is a 2018 graduate of CCPA at Roosevelt University where she earned her BFA in musical theatre. Other Chicago/Illinois credits include: *The Most Happy Fella* in the ensemble and u/s Rosabella as well as in *Sweeney Todd* as Johanna at Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre, where both productions were nominated and won multiple Joseph Jefferson awards. Other favorite show credits include *Evita*, *Carousel*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Cinderella* all at Timber Lake Playhouse. She also played Liesl in *The Sound of Music* (Brightside Theatre), as well as Cobweb in CCPA's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Some of Hope's favorite roles have included Yonah in *Children of Eden* and Hope in *Urinetown*. So much love to her family and good friends!

**RICK RAPP** (*Judge Martin Group, Ensemble*) returns to TATC for his third show with this company and he is so pleased to be back, having appeared as Joseph last year in *It's A Wonderful Life The Musical* and Senator Evergreen in *Nice Work If You Can Get It* in 2016. He recently appeared as Elijah Whitney in *Anything Goes* at Music Theatre Works, where he performs regularly. Rick is also the voice of Mr. Monopoly for online and casino gaming. A retired English and Drama teacher, Rick has also performed in scores of shows throughout the Chicago area. Recent favorites include Hucklebee in *The Fantasticks*, Carriere in *Phantom* and Big Daddy in *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*. When not performing, Rick works with Habitat for Humanity and will be heading to Bolivia in the spring to build shelters for childhood cancer patients.

**MATTHEW HUSTON** (*Tammany, Ensemble*) is excited to make his TATC mainstage debut! He has previously worked on a number of TATC's theater for young audiences productions. Recent Chicago credits: *Yank: A WWII Love Story* (Jeff-award nomination) and *Priscilla: Queen of the Desert* with Pride Films and Plays, *Anything Goes* and *Gypsy* with Music Theatre Works, along with a variety of cabarets including his self-produced show. Many thanks to Linda, Bill, and Richard for this opportunity! Matthewhuston.net

**MICHAEL POTSIC** (*Thomas Mara Sr., Ensemble*) is very excited to be returning to TATC for Christmas where he was previously seen in holiday runs of *A Christmas Carol: The Musical* in 2013 and *Annie Warbucks* in 2016. Other favorite Chicagoland credits include *Rent* (Paramount Theatre), *Parade* (Writers Theatre), *Floyd Collins*, *Parade* (BoHo Theatre), *Assassins* (Kokandy Productions) and can be seen behind the piano at *Baby Wants Candy*, a fully improvised musical. Michael has contributed music and lyrics to AlphaBet Soup Productions, The Second City and his musical *Flight* will be making its world premiere in Chicago this May. Michael is also known as Michael's Music Machine, a children's pop recording artist. He's debut album, *Michael's Music Machine* is now available on iTunes, Spotify, and CDBaby. His second release is due in 2019. michaelismusicmachine.com.

**CHRIS CARTER** (*Climber, Ensemble and Dance Captain*) has appeared on the TATC stage in *The Wiz*, *42nd Street* and *Guys and Dolls*. He is a graduate of Grand Valley State University with a liberal arts degree in dance. Chris has traveled all over performing/directing and choreographing. Some of his credits include: *Dreamgirls* and *In The Heights* (Porchlight), *Sweeney Todd*, *Godspell*, *Secret Garden*, *Pirates Of Penzance* (GVSU), *Show Boat* and *Oklahoma* (Lyric Opera Chicago) as well as in the cast of *Show Boat* at both the Grand Opera of San Francisco and Houston. You might also know him from *Hairspray* (Drury Lane Oakbrook), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Paramount Theater), *Duke Ellington's Queenie Pie* (Chicago Opera Theater), *Oliver!*, *Carousel* and *Brigadoon* (Light Opera Works), *Smokey Joe's Café* (Circle Theater) and *Wild Party* (Actor's Theater). Chris has been the choreographer for the Grand Rapids Civic's SRT for the past four years. His other credits include national tours, commercials, industrial and concert work. As a former scholarship student of The Debbie Allen Dance Academy in California, he moved to Chicago in 2009 to expand his mind and resume. A fan of challenges and hard work, Chris is always looking forward to new experiences.

**TREQUON TATE** (*Alvin, Ensemble*) was in TATC's fall hit run of *Ghost –The Musical*. He holds a BFA from the University of Southern Mississippi. He is also a proud alumnus of the Emerging Professional Acting Residency program at the Milwaukee Repertory Theater. His regional and Chicago credits include works with Phoenix Theatre, Clarence Brown Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Hope Summer Repertory Theatre, Fireside Theatre, Porchlight Music Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, Black Ensemble Theater, Emerald City Theatre, The Broadway

# WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Playhouse, Chicago Opera Theatre, Congo Square, Haven Theatre, FWD Theatre Project and Court Theatre. Trequon is a proud member of the American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA).

**HALEY JANE SCHAFFER** (*Miss Sims, Ensemble*) is thrilled to be making her Theatre at the Center debut to join her sister in this cast! She has been seen at the Paramount Theatre in *Elf the Musical*, *Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *Mamma Mia* and in the staged reading of *The Secret to My Success*. Haley has performed in theaters across the country, such as the Fireside Theatre, Lyric Stage, Little Theatre on the Square, Wagon Wheel, Lyric Theatre of Oklahoma and Norwegian Cruise Lines. Love and thanks to her friends, family and David for their love and support.

**RACHEL KLIPPEL** (*Mrs. Finfer, Ensemble*) is pleased to be working with Theatre at the Center for the first time on this holiday delight. Chicago credits include Joanna in *Sunset Boulevard*, *Beaches* and *Sweeney Todd* (Drury Lane Oakbrook), Rita and Young Julia in James Joyce's *The Dead* (Court Theatre), Clara in *The Light in the Piazza* and *Sophie in Master Class* (Theo Ubique), Mrs. Segestrom in *A Little Night Music* (BoHo Theatre Company) as well as Timeline Theatre and Emerald City Theatre Company. Regional credits include Aggie in *The Game's Afoot* and Celeste in *Sunday in the Park with George* (Peninsula Players, Door County WI). Special thanks to Linda and the creative team for this opportunity! Up next: *A Gentlemen's Guide* at Porchlight. [rachelklippel.com](http://rachelklippel.com)

**VERONICA GARZA** (*Hendrika's Mom, Ensemble*) is so happy to be back at TATC. You previously saw her as Prudie Cupp in *Pump Boys and Dinettes* in 2016. Veronica is a Jeff Award winner for her work in *Tonya and Nancy*. She has also gathered two more Jeff nominations for her work in *A New Brain* and *9 to 5 The Musical*. Veronica is enjoying her newly married life with her husband John Leslie. Merry Christmas!

**ASHLEY LANYON** (*Clara, Ensemble and u/s Doris*) was previously seen in *Nice Work if You Can Get It* at TATC in 2016. Chicago credits include: *South Pacific* and *Crazy For You* (Drury Lane Oakbrook), *Elf* (Paramount Theater Aurora) and *Mary Poppins* (Mercury Theater Chicago). Regional credits include: *South Pacific* (Westchester Broadway Theater, NY); *Le Cabaret Grimm* (New York Music Theatre Festival) and three seasons at Peninsula Players in Door County, WI. Proud graduate of The Boston Conservatory. Love to Harter, Charley and my forever supportive family!

**AMIR HENDERSON** (*Harry, Ensemble*) is making his Theater at the Center debut. He is a 4th Grader and native of Chicago where he attends The Chicago Waldorf School. Some of his hobbies are learning new languages and travel. Amir thanks his parents, his brother along with his entire family and friends for support and believing in him.

**LILIANA RENE** (*Hendrika, Ensemble*) is thrilled to return to Theater at the Center, where last year she was Zuzu in *A Wonderful Life*. She's been seen on the Chicago Lyric Opera stage several times, with her most favorite role being Young Elizabeth in *Anna Bolena*. Liliana discovered her love for the arts at Maywood Fine Arts. She thanks the cast and crew at Theater at the Center, her Maywood Fine Arts family, her Granna and Grandpa, her four sisters, and her dog Toby.

**ETHAN SOLIS** (*Tommy, Ensemble*) is thrilled to be making his TATC debut this Christmas season. Some of his favorite onstage roles he has performed include Charlie in *Willy Wonka Kids*, Chip in *Beauty and the Beast*, Zazu in *Lion King Kids* and Arty Kurnitz in *Lost in Yonkers*. He has also discovered a love for on-screen acting and was chosen to portray the part of Young Collector in *The Collector* web series by Aspire Productions. Ethan would like to thank TATC for giving him this opportunity!

**RAEGAN SMEDLEY** (*u/s Hendrika*) is very excited to be involved in her first production with Theatre at the Center. Her past performances include *A Christmas Story* as Little Nancy and Randy u/s, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* in the Children's Chorus, *Meet Me In St. Louis* as Tootie Smith, *The Wizard of Oz* as the Barrister Munchkin, *A Christmas Carol*, as both a Cratchit child and the Ghost of Want, *Annie* as Molly, all at the Memorial Opera House in Valparaiso as well as *I Never Saw Another Butterfly* as a child of Terezin at 4th Street Theater in Chesterton and *How To Eat Like A Child* at Chicago Street Theater in Valparaiso and *The Wizard of Wonderland* as the Cowardly Lion at Crown Point Community Theater. And during the summer, she was in the July run of *Annie* at Footlight Players in Michigan City. When not on stage, Raegan enjoys playing the piano, guitar and ukulele.

