

25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

# METROPOLIS



Disney and CAMERON MACKINTOSH's

# MARY POPPINS



A STAGED CONCERT

February 20 to March 9, 2025

in collaboration with



featuring



# THE CAST



**LAURA SPORTIELLO**  
Mary Poppins



**EVAN BRADFORD**  
Bert



**JAMES SPANGLER**  
Admiral Boom  
Von Hussler  
Ensemble



**RACHEL CARRERAS**  
Miss Andrew  
Bird Woman  
Ensemble



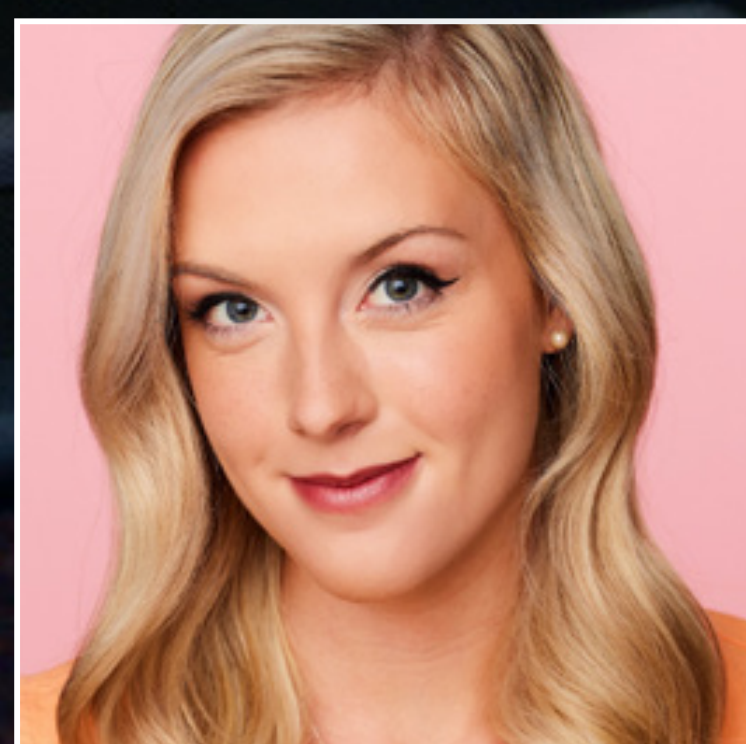
**LANAH VURNAKES**  
Michael Banks  
Youth Ensemble



**MOLLY HAMADA**  
Michael Banks  
Youth Ensemble



**ABBEY LORIA**  
Katie Nana  
Ensemble  
u/s Mary Poppins



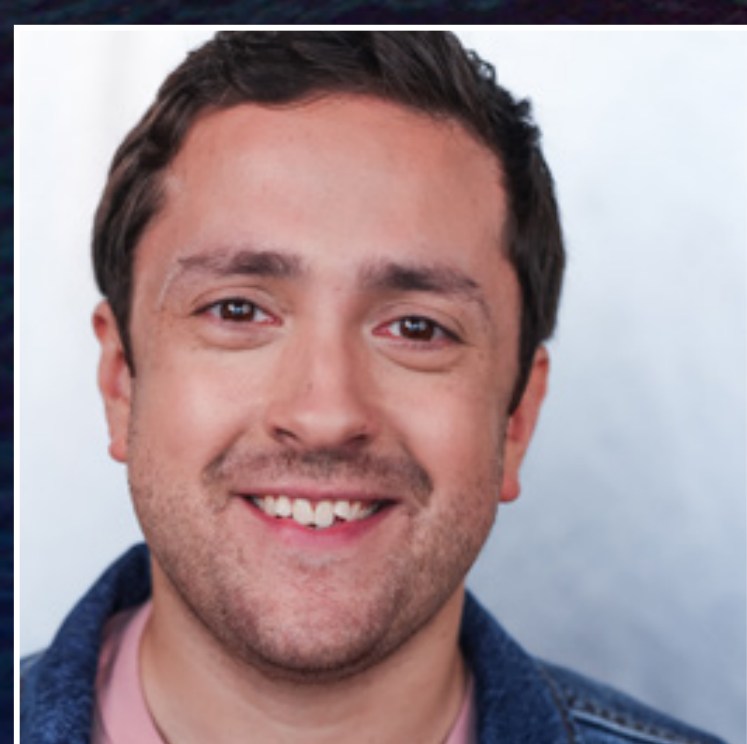
**KAITLIN FEELY**  
Miss Lark  
Ensemble  
u/s Winifred Banks



**NICHOLAS IAN**  
Neleus  
Ensemble



**RACHAEL DEC**  
Mr. Punch  
Ensemble  
u/s Mrs. Brill



**NICK ARCEO**  
John Northbrook  
Ensemble



**DESMOND WALKER**  
Policeman  
Ensemble



**MORGAN SCHOENECKER**  
Valentine  
Ensemble



**MOLLY BREMER**  
Ensemble | u/s Valentine  
u/s Mr. Punch  
u/s Teddy Bear



**ROHAN DEGALA**  
Youth Ensemble



**CECE FAUST**  
Youth Ensemble



**RACHEL FITZGERALD**  
Youth Ensemble



**TYLER GILLESPIE**  
Youth Ensemble



**JOJO NABWANGU**  
Youth Ensemble



**AUDREY PANICO**  
Youth Ensemble



**GRACE PANICO**  
Youth Ensemble



**EMMA RITTER**  
Youth Ensemble



**DREW LONGO**  
George Banks



**MEGHAN McCANDLESS**  
Winifred Banks



**ELEANOR MERRICK**  
Jane Banks  
Youth Ensemble



**GENEVIEVE JANE**  
Jane Banks  
Youth Ensemble



**MAI HARTWICH**  
Mrs. Brill  
Ensemble



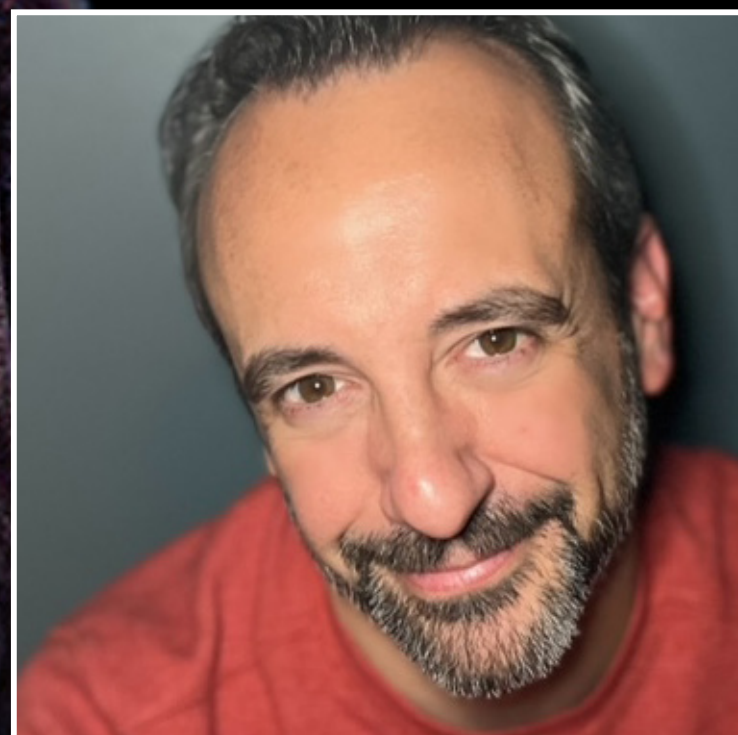
**NATALIE HENRY**  
Mrs. Corry



**SAM SHANKMAN**  
Robertson Ay  
u/s Bert



**SOPHIE MURK**  
Miss Smythe | Ensemble  
u/s Bird Woman | u/s Ms Andrews  
u/s Mary Poppins



**BRIAN JAMES**  
Bank Chairman  
Park Keeper | Ensemble  
u/s George Banks



**INDIA HUY**  
Teddy Bear  
Ensemble  
u/s Mrs. Corry



**HENRY CARTAYA**  
Ensemble | u/s Adm. Boom  
u/s Policeman | u/s Park Keeper  
u/s Bank Chrmn. | u/s Von Hussler



**ETHAN LUPP**  
Ensemble | u/s Robertson Ay  
u/s Policeman | u/s Neleus  
u/s John Northbrook



**ALEX STETKEVICH**  
Ensemble | u/s Katie Nana  
u/s Miss Lark  
u/s Miss Smythe



**ELSIE CHRISTIANSEN**  
Youth Ensemble



**CAROLYN MICHAEL**  
Youth Ensemble



**BAILEY MYETT**  
Youth Ensemble



**CALVIN MYETT**  
Youth Ensemble



**ANDREW MONTESANO**  
Youth Ensemble



**PATRICK SYLVIA**  
Youth Ensemble



**SAM TRANI**  
Youth Ensemble



**SOPHIE TUCKER**  
Youth Ensemble



**MILES WENDT**  
Youth Ensemble



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This program is partially supported  
by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council

Illinois  
**ARTS**  
Council

To view a full program, including cast and crew bios, head to the show page on our website, or scan the QR code.



Mary Poppins is presented through special arrangement with Music Theater International (MTI).  
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

Executive Director/Interim Artistic Director **DAVID VICTOR**,  
Associate Artistic Director **TIFFANY GATES**,  
and **METROPOLIS PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE**  
present

Disney and Cameron Mackintosh's  
**MARY POPPINS**  
**A STAGED CONCERT**

A Musical based on the stories of  
**P.L. Travers** and the **Walt Disney Films**

Original Music and Lyrics by  
**Richard M. Sherman** and **Robert B. Sherman**

Book by **Julian Fellowes**

New Songs and Additional Music and Lyrics by  
**George Stiles** and **Anthony Drewe**

Co-Created by **Cameron Mackintosh**

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

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**DANNY KAPINOS**

Assoc. Music Director  
**KEVIN ZHOU**

Casting Director  
**ROBIN HUGHES**

Asst. Stage Manager  
**ZOE SCHMIDT**

Sound Designer  
**BILL FRANZ**

Costume Coordinator  
**ALEXANDRA RAFFINI**

Dance Captain  
**RACHAEL DEC**

Youth Coordinator  
**LUCAS BANKS**

Add'l Props Design  
**TRAVIS HOYING**

Music Director  
**AARON KAPLAN**

Choreographer  
**TIFFANY GATES**

Stage Manager  
**KYLE ASCHBRENNER**

Lighting Designer  
**DAN FRANK**

Sound Engineer  
**SEAN SLABER**

Dance Captain  
**MORGAN SCHOENECKER**

Dialect Coach  
**KATI SCHWABER**

Props Designer  
**ALEXANDRA RAFFINI**

A2/Run Crew  
**TREVOR TURNER**

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 Catherine Schulewitz, Sara Schuring, Matthew Sheble, Monica Stark



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## SPRING BREAK CAMPS



## SUMMER BREAK CAMPS





Music Director/Conductor ..... Aaron Kaplan  
Associate Music Director/Keyboard 1: ..... Kevin Zhou  
Keyboard 2 ..... Nathan Urdangen  
Flute/Piccolo ..... Carlyn Lloyd  
Oboe/English Horn ..... Reed Cawley  
Clarinet/Bass Clarinet/E-flat Clarinet ..... Kaitlin Pucci  
French Horn 1 ..... Emma Sepmeier  
French Horn 2 ..... Erika Hollenback  
Trumpet 1 ..... Michael Leavens  
Trumpet 2 ..... Stephon Owens  
Trombone 1 ..... Ian Fitzwater  
Trombone 2 ..... Rob Hackl-Blumstein & Stephanie Lebens  
Drums ..... Debbie Katz-Knowles  
Percussion ..... Ben Heppner  
Guitar ..... Michael Lockler  
Cello ..... Julia Wen & Jessica Hudson  
Bass ..... Eric von Holst

Original Orchestrations by William David Bohn

A vertical poster for the 25th Anniversary Gala. The background is black with a gold Art Deco border and scattered gold starburst effects. At the top, it says "25th ANNIVERSARY METROPOLIS" with a stylized leaf logo below. The main text reads "25TH ANNIVERSARY GALA THE ROARING 20s". At the bottom, it provides the date "Saturday April 12, 2025", the location "Sanfilippo Estate, Barrington, IL", and the website "metropolisarts.com/gala". A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY  
**METROPOLIS**

25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY  
**GALA**  
THE ROARING 20s

Saturday April 12, 2025  
Sanfilippo Estate, Barrington, IL  
[metropolisarts.com/gala](http://metropolisarts.com/gala)

# — CAST —



**NICK ARCEO** (he/him)

*John Northbrook*  
*Ensemble*

Nick is on the Metropolis stage for the third time after *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* in 2019 and *The Rocky Horror Show* concert last Halloween! Favorite credits: *On the Twentieth Century* (Blank Theatre

Company); *Assassins* (Theo Ubique - Jeff Award for Best Ensemble); *A Man of No Importance* (Pride Arts); *Plaid Tidings* (Towle Theater); *Pippin*, *Parade*, *Funny Girl* (Revival Theatre Company)

[nickarceoactor.com](http://nickarceoactor.com) 

[@nickarceo](https://www.instagram.com/nickarceo) 



**MOLLY BREMER** (she/her)

*Ensemble | u/s Valentine*

*u/s Mr. Punch | u/s Teddy Bear*

Molly is practically perfectly jolly to be back at Metropolis after playing Ella in *Rogers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* this fall! Regional credits include:

Eliza Doolittle in *My Fair Lady*, Belle in *Beauty & the Beast* (Cortland Repertory

Theatre), *A Christmas Carol: The Musical Ghost Story* (NCCA Jean's Playhouse), *Cabaret*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (Hangar Theatre). She received her BA from Princeton University, and is a proud alum of The Chicago Academy for the Arts. Love and thanks to her Mom, Dad, and family; as well as to Andy, Allyson, & Jay.

[mollybremer.com](http://mollybremer.com) 

[@mollybremer](https://www.instagram.com/mollybremer) 



**RACHEL CARRERAS** (she/her)

*Bird Woman | Miss Andrew*  
*Ensemble*

Rachel is thrilled to be back on the Metropolis stage after playing Marie in *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* and Mrs. Squires in *The Music Man in Concert*. Other credits include: *Jekyll and Hyde* (Lucy Harris), *Honky Tonk Angels*

(Angela), *Into the Woods* (The Witch), *I Do! I Do!* (Agnes), *Something Rotten* (Bea Bottom), and *Spring Awakening* (Wendla). Up next you can find Rachel performing in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Esmeralda) with the Highland Park Players. She would like to thank her family and friends for their unending love and support! Zeph 3:17

[rachelcarreras.com](http://rachelcarreras.com) 

[@rachel.carreras](https://www.instagram.com/rachel.carreras) 





## **HENRY CARTAYA** (he/him)

*Ensemble | u/s Policeman  
u/s Admiral Boom | u/s Von  
Hussler | u/s Bank Chairman  
u/s Park Keeper*

Henry is incredibly happy to be a part of this awesome community again at Metropolis Performing Arts Center and the company of *Mary Poppins*. Having recently graduated with a BFA in Music Theatre from Illinois Wesleyan University, he is very grateful to be able to present his authentic self on stage and to be apart of such a talented cast. Special thanks to Mom, Dad, and Harry! Enjoy the show!

[henrycartaya.com](http://henrycartaya.com)



[@cartaya2](https://www.instagram.com/cartaya2)



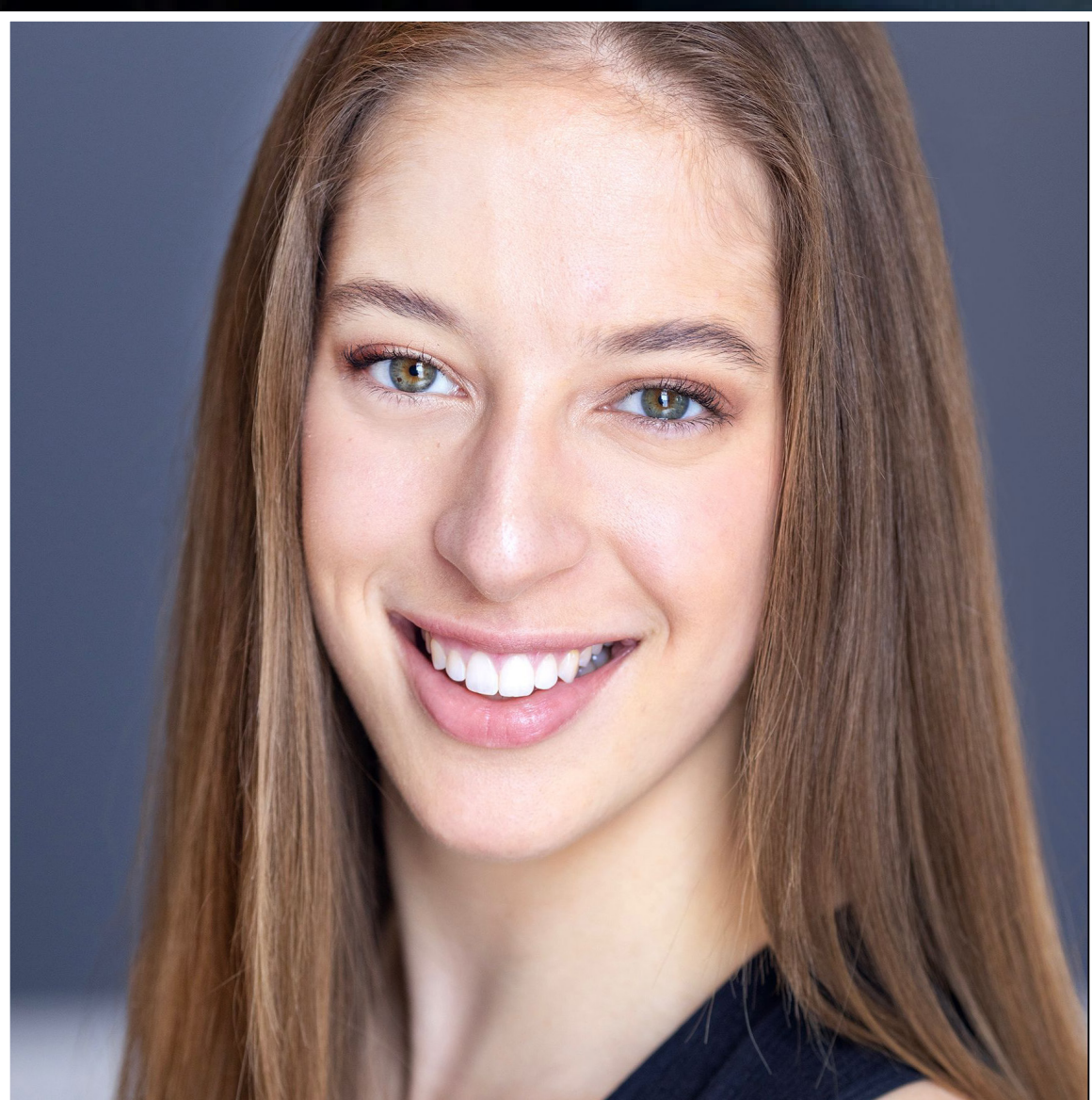
## **ELSIE CHRISTIANSEN** (she/her)

*Youth Ensemble*

Elsie is thrilled to be in another production show with MPAC! Recent show credits include: *A Christmas Carol* (MPAC) *Cowgirl Fish in SpongeBob: The Musical* (SOPA), *Glee: Walkin' On Sunshine* (SOPA), Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical The Musical*, *Frozen Jr.*, Mal in *Disney's*

*Descendants: The Musical*, Elf #2 in *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* (Expressions Performing Arts Academy). Outside of theater, she enjoys playing the piano, studying dance, reading, and spending time with friends and family, especially her two dogs. Elsie would like to thank Mom and Jan for inspiring (and driving) her.

[@elsiechristiansen](https://www.instagram.com/elsiechristiansen)



## **RACHAEL DEC** (she/her)

*Mr. Punch | Ensemble  
u/s Mrs. Brill | Dance Captain*

Rachael is delighted to perform on the Metropolis stage again, and she was last seen in *Cinderella* (Ensemble, Dance Captain). Other recent credits include *The Little Mermaid* at Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, and *Anything Goes* and

*Broadway in Your Backyard* at Porchlight Music Theatre. She is a 2023 Music Theatre graduate of Northwestern University, where she participated in countless performance and choreography opportunities. Rachael is currently seeking representation.

"To my friends and family - All my love, always."

[rachaeldec.com](http://rachaeldec.com)



[@rachaeldec](https://www.instagram.com/rachaeldec)





**CECE FAUST** (she/her)

*Youth Ensemble*

Cece is a student at South Middle School in Arlington Heights, IL. Recent show credits: *Spongebob the Musical: School Edition*, *Madagascar Jr.*, *SOPA Cabaret*, *Little Red Robin Hood*, *How (Not) to Be a Wizard*, and *Cinderella*. Cece is a competitive cheerleader and plays basketball and softball. She received a Judge's Choice Award in the Duet Acting at the 2024 IESA Area 3 Speech Contest. Love and thanks to Mom, Dad, The Sisters, all my Friends and my dog Ollie.

@cecefaust



**KAITLIN FEELY** (she/her)

*Miss Lark | Ensemble*

*u/s Winifred Banks*

Kaitlin is excited to be making her debut with Metropolis! Most recent credits: *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* (Athenaeum Center Theatre), *Avenue Q* (Williams Street Repertory), Audrey in *Little Shop of Horrors* (Ramsey Theatre Company), Kira in *Xanadu* (Skylight Music Theatre), and Ilona in *She Loves Me* (Citadel Theatre). Kaitlin has a BFA in Music Theatre & minor in Mathematics from Illinois Wesleyan University. Many thanks to her wonderful cast and team and her exceptional family and friends. Up next: *Titanique* with Porchlight Music Theatre!

@kaitlinfeely



**RACHEL FITZGERALD** (she/her)

*Youth Ensemble*

Rachel is a sophomore in high school. Recent credits: "Featured Ensemble" *Les Miserables School Edition* (Schaumburg on Stage), "Featured Ensemble" *All Shook Up* (Schaumburg Summer Theater), "Narrator" *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Schaumburg on Stage) "Youth Ensemble" *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Big Noise Theater), "James" *School of Rock* (Highland Park Players). Love and gratitude to her family, her coach Adam, and best friends!

@rachel\_fitz.gerald





## TYLER JAMES GILLESPIE

### *Youth Ensemble*

Tyler is thrilled to be back on stage at The Metropolis Theatre! Last year, Tyler starred as Winthrop in *The Music Man in Concert* and performed in previous Metropolis School of Performing Arts productions including *Stuart Little*, *Finding Nemo Jr.* & *Sing*.

When Tyler is not on stage he is usually on a court or field working on his other passions—basketball, football & baseball!



## MOLLY HAMADA (she/her)

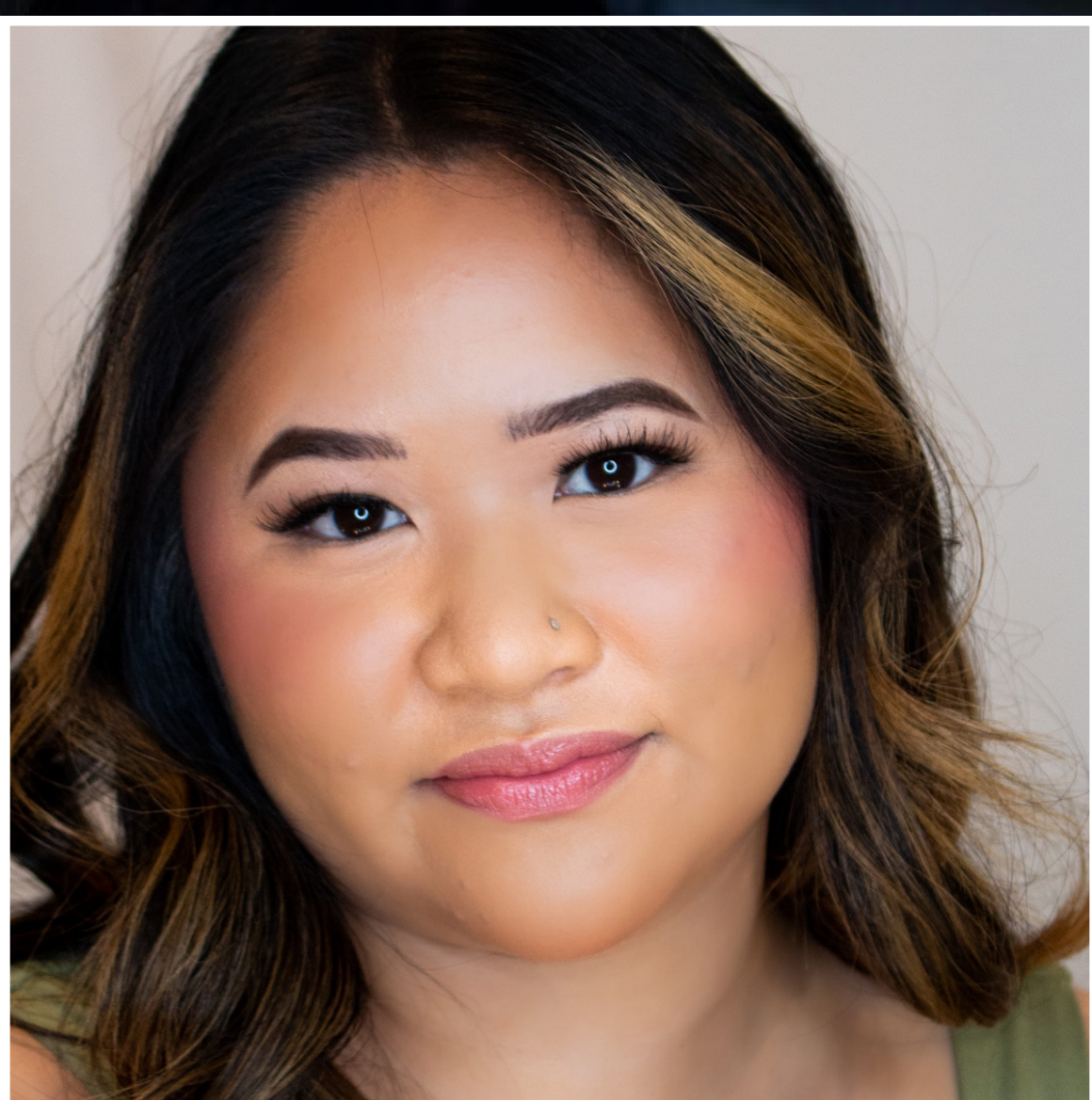
### *Michael Banks*

### *Youth Ensemble*

Molly is thrilled to be back at Metropolis for this wonderful show! Molly is an Arlington Heights sixth-grader who loves to act, sing and dance. Molly trains at Metropolis School of Performing

Arts, Actors Training Center, Green Room Studio Chicago, and VoiceLife Studios. Her favorite credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Metropolis PAC, 2024+2022), *South Pacific* (Skokie Theatre), *The Music Man in Concert* (Metropolis PAC), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Big Noise Theatre), and a Walgreens Halloween commercial. Molly is grateful for her supportive family, friends, coaches, and agents at DDO Artists Agency. Thanks to Metropolis and the *Mary Poppins* team for this unforgettable experience.

@mollyhamada



## MAI HARTWICH

### *Mrs. Brill | Ensemble*

Mai is thrilled to be making her Metropolis Performing Arts Centre debut. After moving from the east coast, Mai has been a Chicago based actor since 2020. Recent Chicagoland credits include: “Christmas Eve” in *Avenue Q* (Williams Street Repertory), “Imelda

| u/s Lily Garland” in *On the Twentieth Century* (Blank Theatre Company), *New Faces Sing Broadway 1984* (Porchlight Music Theatre), and “Ensemble | u/s Elizabeth” in *Young Frankenstein* (Mercury Theater Chicago). Up next, she will be seen as “Sarah Spencer | u/s Camilla” in *Diana the Musical* (Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre). She would like to thank her husband, her family, and her dog for all their love and support.



## **NATALIE HENRY** (she/her)

*Mrs. Corry | Ensemble*

Natalie is delighted to be back at MPAC in *Mary Poppins* with this cast! She recently graduated college in May 2022 from Columbia College Chicago. This is Natalie's third time on the MPAC stage after *Sister Act - Sister Mary Patrick* and *Ragtime - Ensemble*. Recent credits: *The Little Mermaid - Arista/Gull/Ensemble* (Drury Lane); *Young Frankenstein - Ensemble* (Mercury Theatre); *Cabaret - Rosie* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Little Shop of Horrors - Urchins u/s* (Citadel Theatre). Natalie is from Pella, Iowa where she and her twin sister were adopted into an amazing family who support them achieving their dreams in theatre.

@natsokool

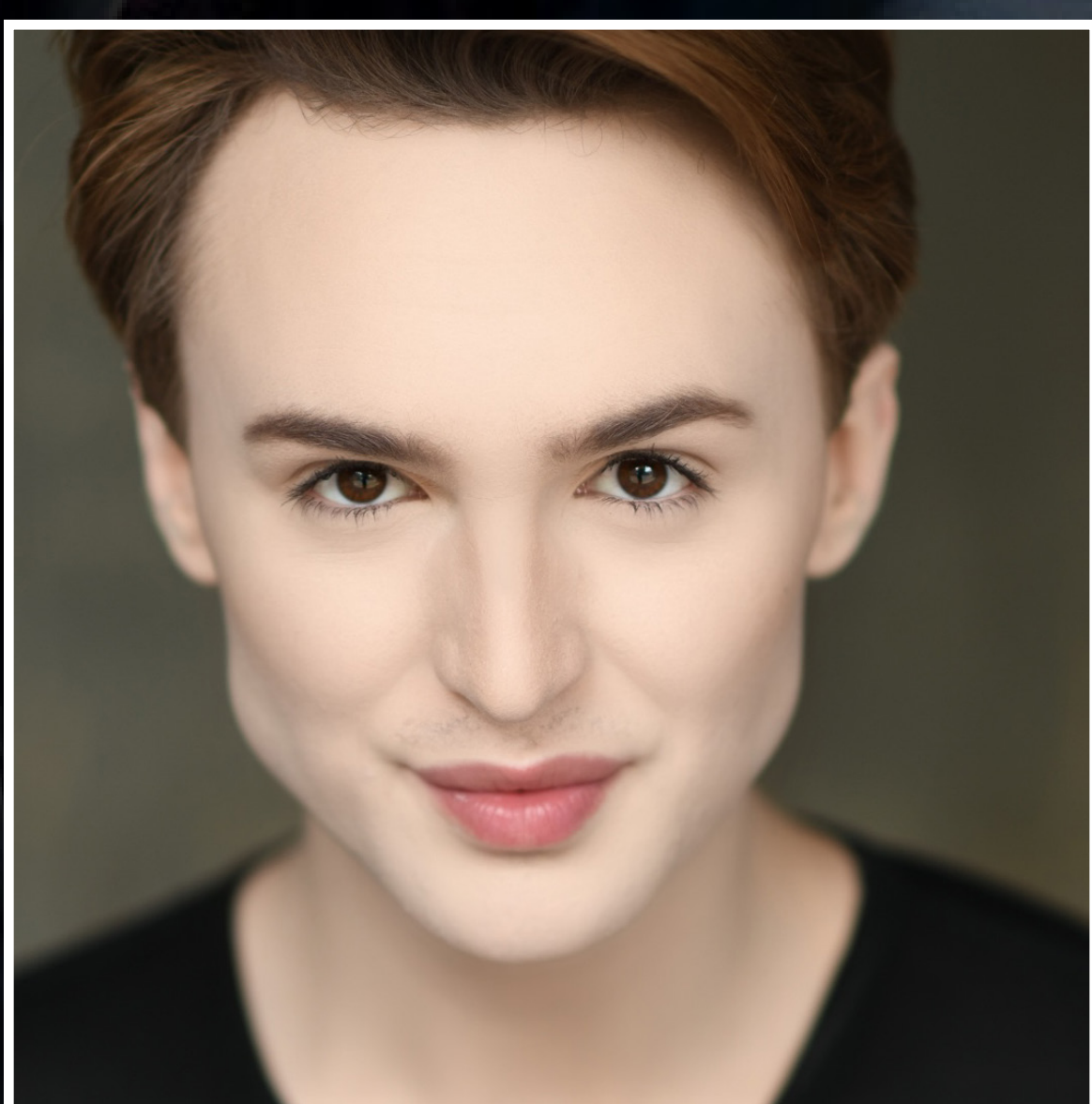


## **INDIA HUY** (she/her)

*Teddy Bear | Ensemble  
u/s Mrs. Corry*

India is thrilled to be making her Metropolis debut! A graduate of the American Music and Dramatic Academy in NYC, she recently appeared in Uptown Music Theatre's production of *Les Misérables* (Ensemble | u/s Cosette) and will be in *Sweet Charity* (Helene/frug dancer) at Blank Theatre later this spring. You can catch her on Saturday Night Live every now and then with hosts such as Keke Palmer, Timothee Chalamet, and Pedro Pascal. She's grateful for the warm welcome, and is excited to continue her journey in the vibrant Chicago theater scene!

@indiahuy\_



## **NICHOLAS IAN** (any)

*Neleus  
Ensemble*

Nicholas is way too ecstatic to be joining this "practically perfect" cast in their Metropolis debut! Recent credits include: *The Secret Garden* (Theo Ubique), *On the Twentieth Century* (Blank Theatre), *TwiHard: A Twilight Parody Musical* (54 Below/Otherworld Theatre) and *Crazy for You*, *25<sup>th</sup> Annual PCSB*, *Songs for a New World*, *She Loves Me*, *Turn of the Screw*, *La Bohème* and *Don Giovanni* (Lyric Theatre @ Illinois). Additionally, they are a drag artist in the city and have performed globally in Australia, Sweden, and Estonia. This summer, you can find them in the midwest premier of *Diana: The Musical* with Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre! They would like to thank their loved ones, their friends, and this cast for making every day a jolly holiday.

thenicholasian.com



@thenicholasian





## BRIAN JAMES

*Bank Chairman | Park Keeper | Ensemble u/s George Banks*

Brian was recently seen in *The Music Man in Concert* (Metropolis Performing Arts Centre) as Charlie Cowell, and in *Les Misérables* (Uptown Theater

Company) playing several characters, including a star turn as the pimp. Eternal gratitude to Tiffany, Harrison, and Evelyn for their endless love and support.



## GENEVIEVE JANE (she/her)

*Jane Banks*

*Youth Ensemble*

Genevieve is thrilled to return to Metropolis! Credits: Paramount—*Frozen* (Young Elsa), *Sound of Music* (Brigitta) and *School of Rock* (Shonelle); Fireside—*Matilda* (Lavender); Metropolis—*The Music Man in Concert* (Amaryllis); Big

Noise—*Dragons Love Tacos* (Kid). Film: *In the Jungle* (Lizzie), *Sometimes I Imagine Your Funeral* (Young Chloe). Commercials: Pizza Hut and Hansons. Gratitude to Gretel Mink and Jo's Footwork Studio for the training. And thank you to Paonessa Talent for the support and believing in me, and to the directors, crew, and entire Metropolis team for the opportunity!

[genevievejane.com](http://genevievejane.com)



[@starringgenevievejane](https://www.instagram.com/starringgenevievejane)



## DREW LONGO (he/him)

*George Banks*

Drew is thrilled to be back onstage at Metropolis! Originally from the Chicagoland area, he holds a BFA in Drama from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. Previous credits: *The Prom* (Highland Park Players); *Million Dollar Quartet* (MPAC); *A Study in*

*Scarlet*, *Henry V* (Promethean Theatre Ensemble); *The Lady's Not for Burning* (Theo Ubique). He's incredibly grateful to Kevin, AL, UD, Joe, and Wendy for their love and support. Most especially his wife and best friend, Meg, who has been the most encouraging partner a guy could ask for. Precision and order!



**ABBEY LORIA** (she/her)

*Katie Nana*

*u/s Mary Poppins*

Abbey is thrilled to be returning to the Metropolis stage after being seen as Charlotte in *Roger's & Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Some other recent credits include: *She Loves Me* (Citadel Theatre), *New Faces Sing Broadway 1951*

(Porchlight Music Theatre), *On the 20th Century* (Blank Theatre) and *Children of Eden* (Broadway in Chicago). She has her BFA in Musical Theatre and a Minor in Peace Studies from UWSP.

[abbeyloria.com](http://abbeyloria.com)



[@abbey.loria](https://www.instagram.com/abbey.loria)



**ETHAN LUPP** (he/him)

*Ensemble | u/s Policeman*

*u/s Northbrook | u/s Neleus*

*u/s Robertson Ay*

Ethan is psyched to be making his Metropolis Debut! Ethan is a Chicago based actor that most recently appeared as a member of The Four C Notes at Florida Studio Theatre.

Chicago Credits include Robert in *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Surging Film and Theatrics), *Shrek The Musical*, *The Producers* (Music Theatre Works). Before that he graduated from Millikin University with a BFA in musical theatre. He couldn't be happier to work with such awesome people on such a magical show. To Mom, Dad, Elliott, Emma, and Sami...Thank you for the support!

[@etrain2314](https://www.instagram.com/etrain2314)



**MEGHAN McCANDLESS** (she/her)

*Winifred Banks*

Meghan grew up in Medford, Oregon where her father is the Executive Director of a local theatre. She first joined the family business at 5 years old, when she was the tiniest spider in MCT's *The Wiz of the West*. After that, she continued to do at least one show a

year until 2020 when she was forced to stop. This is her second time in a show since then. Notable previous roles include Rusty in *Footloose* (Norwegian Cruise Lines), Kate Monster in *Avenue Q* (Triangle Productions), Natalie in *Next to Normal* (Artist's Repertory Theatre), and a whole bunch of shows at her alma mater, Northwestern University. This is her seventh time playing a mother. Thanks for coming to the show!



## ELEANOR MERRICK

*Jane Banks*

*Youth Ensemble*

Eleanor is a dedicated young performer who began her training at The Performer's School in Highwood, IL, known for its rigorous performance programs and productions at the Skokie Theater. She has taken on a variety of roles that showcase her versatility, including the Artful Dodger in *Oliver Jr.*, the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz Jr.*, Peter Pan in *Peter Pan Jr.*, Simba in *The Lion King Jr.*, and Louisa in *The Sound of Music*. Stepping into her first professional production, Eleanor continues to develop her craft and passion for musical theater. She's so grateful to her parents and family for always supporting her, cheering her on, and letting her chase her dreams on stage!



## CAROLYN MICHAEL (she/her)

*Youth Ensemble*

Carolyn has graced the stage in numerous productions here at Metropolis. Some of her notable roles include Young Anna in *Frozen Jr.*, Amanda Thripp in *Matilda Jr.*, and the Cat in the Hat in *Seussical Jr.* with the Metropolis School of Performing Arts.

She loves to sing and continues to hone her craft with voice lessons and participation in her middle school choir. She's enrolled in dance lessons at Dance and All That Jazz Studio, and she's even taken trapeze lessons! Carolyn enjoys swimming, biking, roller skating, and planning parties with her friends when not on stage. She is excited to be a part of the *Mary Poppins* cast and looks forward to performing in the show!

@carolynjtheater



## ANDREW MONTESANO (he/him)

*Youth Ensemble*

Andrew is 12 years old and in the 7th grade at Thomas Middle School. He has been a Metropolis School of Performing Arts student for three years and has been a part of many productions including *Willy Wonka Jr.*, *Spamalot Jr.*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, and

most recently *SpongeBob: The Musical*. Andrew would like to thank his Mom, Dad and sisters, Mallory and Jillian and all of his SOPA friends for supporting him.



**SOPHIE MURK** (she/her)  
*Miss Smythe | Ensemble*  
*u/s Mary Poppins | u/s Miss*  
*Andrew | u/s Bird Woman*

Sophie is a local actor, teaching artist, and political organizer. She is a co-founder of The Olde School Shakespeare Collective. Recent acting credits: *Taming of the Shrew*, *Twelfth Night* (OSSC),

*Junie B Jones* (Young People's Theater Chi), *Gay Card* (PrideArts), *Merrily We Roll Along* (Blank Theater Co), *Titanic*, *As You Like It*, *A Christmas Carol* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater).

@sophie.murk 



**BAILEY MYETT** (she/her)  
*Youth Ensemble*

Bailey is a resident of Mount Prospect. She most recently starred as Isobel in her school's production of *Imagine a Dragon*. Bailey runs cross county and is a member of a competitive cheer team where she is a three (3) time State Champion. Love and thanks to Mom, Dad, Calvin and Ryan.

@baileymyett 



**CALVIN MYETT** (he/him)  
*Youth Ensemble*

Calvin is a Mount Prospect resident. He is a member of his school's a cappella group, and was a lead in the school production of *Space Pirates*. Calvin plays the guitar, runs cross country and plays travel soccer year round. Love and thanks to Mom, Dad, Bailey and Ryan.

@calvinmyett 



**JOJO NABWANGU** (she/her)  
*Youth Ensemble*

Jojo is excited to be making her MPAC debut! She has previously been seen in *Winnie the Pooh* and *The House At Pooh Corner* at the Morton Arboretum (Inkwell Arts and Learning), *Billy Elliot* (Paramount), and *Gypsy* (Marriott), and most recently as Junie B Jones

at Ovation Academy For The Performing Arts. She is a proud company member of Inkwell Arts and Learning. She would like to thank Gray Talent Group, her parents, sister Lya, and dog Teddy, and Metropolis for giving her this opportunity!

actorsaccess.com 





## AUDREY PANICO

### Youth Ensemble

Audrey has been performing on stages since she was 2 years old. Audrey trains at Arlington Dance Academy, plays trumpet with her school's Wind Ensemble, and will play Mal in *Descendants the Musical*. Recent credits include: *Nutcracker* at Schaumburg Prairie Center for the Arts and *Donovan's Daughters* at her school. Audrey also dances with her school's competitive dance team. When she isn't performing or training, Audrey can be found solving Algebra problems. Audrey is grateful for her mom, dad, and little sister, who is a fellow cast member.



## GRACE PANICO

### Youth Ensemble

Grace has been performing on stages since she was 5 years old. Her favorite stage is Metropolis Performing Arts stage where recent credits include *SpongeBob Squarepants: Schol Edition*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, *How (Not) to be a Wizard*, and various Cabaret productions. Grace will play Genie at her school's spring musical *Aladdin*. Grace trains regularly at Metropolis School of the Performing Arts and plays the flute with her school's band. Grace has recently taken her performance skills to the ice rink, where she trains in figure skating. Grace is grateful for her mom, dad, and big sister, whom she is thrilled to share the Metropolis stage with in *Mary Poppins*.



## ROHAN RHYS (they/them)

### Youth Ensemble

Rohan is excited to return to the Metropolis stage in *Mary Poppins*. Most recently, they originated the role of Milo in the world premiere of *Milo Imagines the World* at Chicago Children's Theatre. Recent work also includes performances in *Carousel* (Music Theater Works), *Ragtime* (Metropolis Performing Arts Centre), and numerous productions at the Metropolis School of Performing Arts—such as *Matilda Jr.*, *Little Red Robin Hood*, and *Finding Nemo Jr.* Rohan continues to develop their craft at the Metropolis School of Performing Arts and the Actors Training Center. Outside of theater, they enjoy cosplay, gaming, Dungeons & Dragons, and volunteering with local nonprofits. Rohan is deeply grateful to their agent at Talent X Alexander, Christine Greer at Voice Life Studios, and their family for their unwavering support.

@rohanrhys1





## EMMA RITTER

### *Youth Ensemble*

Emma is thrilled to join the cast of *Mary Poppins*. Emma has performed in numerous productions with Metropolis School of the Performing Arts, That's Entertainment Performing Arts, and Schaumburg on Stage including *Annie Jr.*, *SpongeBob: The Musical*, *Frozen Jr.*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, *Willy Wonka Jr.*, and the *Magic Treehouse*. Special thanks to Mom and Dad and to her teachers Tiffany Gates, Kristina Finch, Nathan Brown, Caitlin Hubick and Colleen Sherrier for all of their support. A huge shout out to Auntie Alyssa Martin for her endless guidance, encouragement and love.

[@emmacatherineritter](#)



## MORGAN SCHOENECKER (she/her)

### *Valentine | Ensemble*

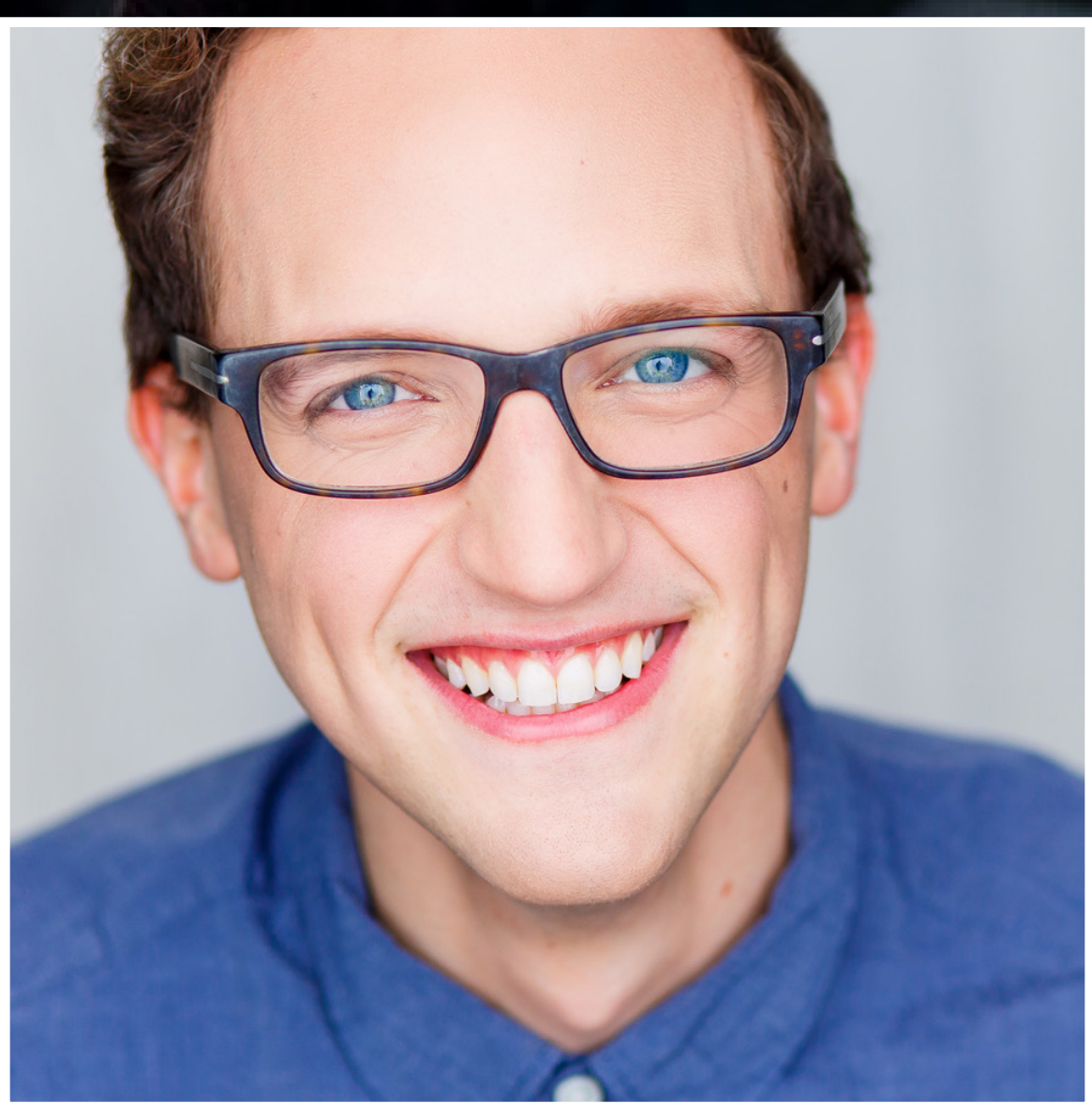
### *Dance Captain*

Morgan is thrilled to be back at Metropolis! Originally from Minneapolis she is now based in Chicago. Morgan graduated from Columbia College Chicago with a BFA in Musical Theater. She has been seen on the Metropolis stage previously in *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* and *Xanadu*! Other favorite credits include: *Legally Blonde* (Music Theater Works), *On The Twentieth Century* (Blank Theater Company) and *Adrenal!ne* (Six Flags Great America.) Morgan is represented by Talent X Alexander!

[morganschoenecker.com](http://morganschoenecker.com)



[@morgan.schoenecker](#)



## SAM SHANKMAN

### *Robertson Ay*

### *u/s Bert*

Sam is making his Metropolis debut. Originally from Memphis, Sam is a Chicago-based actor and music director. Some recent credits include *Falsettos* (Court/Timeline); *The Flying Lovers of Vitebsk* (Northlight); *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Mary Poppins*, *South Pacific*, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, *Holiday Inn*, *Shrek* (Drury Lane); *Young Frankenstein* (Mercury Theater Chicago); *Little Shop of Horrors* (Citadel); as well as work with Marriott Theatre, Theatre at the Center, Porchlight, Chicago Shakespeare, Blank Theatre Company, Northbrook Theatre, and Young People's Theatre of Chicago. Sam is represented by Stewart Talent and a graduate of Northwestern University. Thankful to Danny for this opportunity!

[@samshankman](#)





**JAMES SPANGLER** (he/him)  
*Admiral Boom | Von Hussler Ensemble*

James is thrilled to be at Metropolis for the first time! Some of his favorite roles include Man In Chair (*The Drowsy Chaperone*), Herby (*Gypsy*), Archibald Craven (*The Secret Garden*), Pseudolous (*A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*), Sal (*Those The River Keeps*), and Malcolm (*The Full Monty*). James would like to thank his spouse Kate and daughter Janine for their constant love and support! You push me to be a better human everyday! I love you!

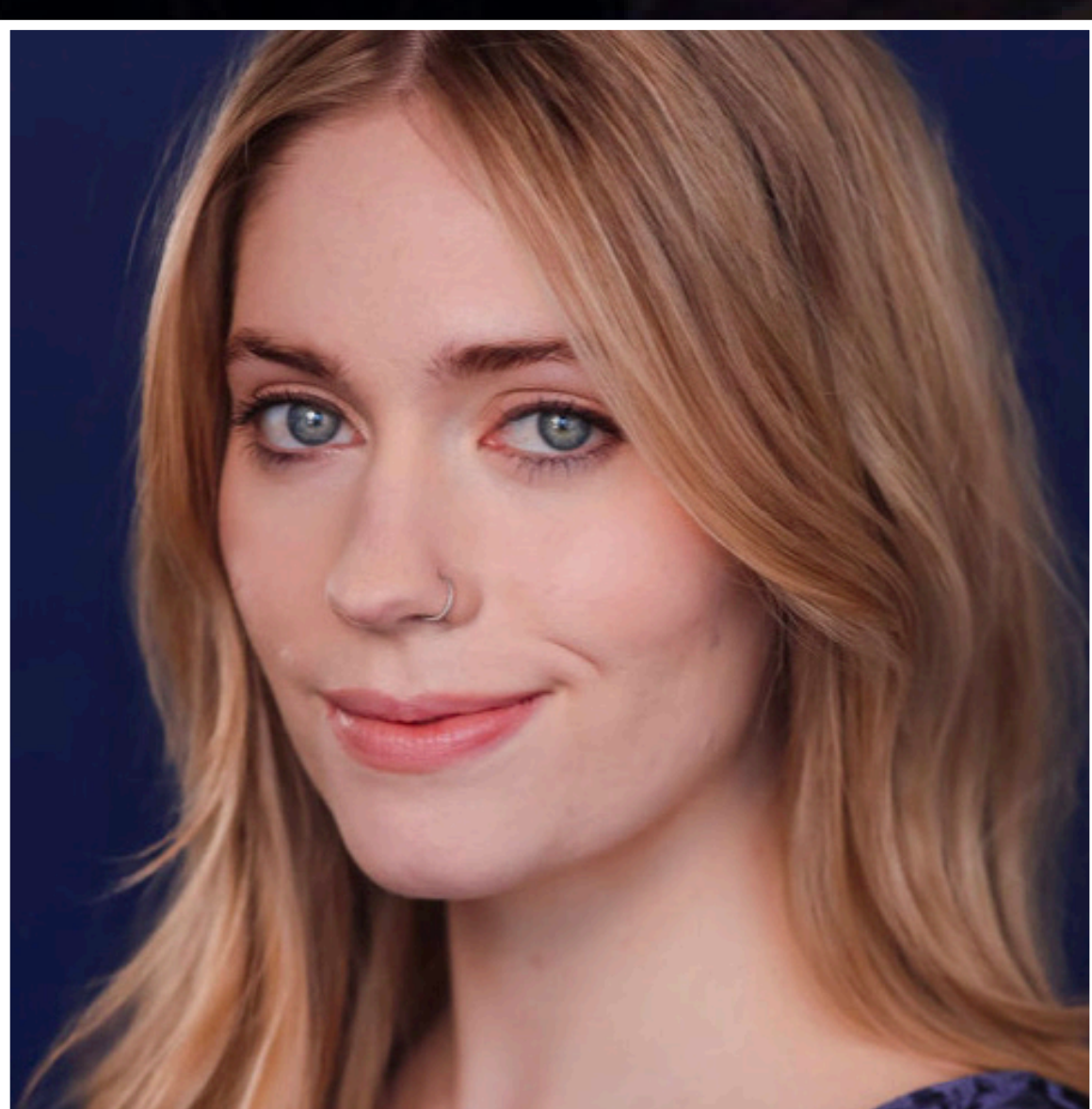


**LAURA SPORTIELLO** (she/her)  
*Mary Poppins*

Laura is delighted to bring everyone's favorite flying nanny to life! She returns to MPAC having last appeared as Maggie in *A Chorus Line*. Originally from Naperville, Laura has spent the last 10 years as a professional actor in Chicago. Select credits include *Assassins*, *Once Upon a Mattress* (Theo Ubique); *On the 20th Century* (Blank Theatre); *MotherFreakingHood!* (Mercury); *Sunset Boulevard* (Porchlight); *Ragtime*, *Gypsy*, *My Fair Lady*, *Guys & Dolls* (Music Theater Works); *Grand Hotel* (Kokandy); *City of Angels in Concert*, *Guys & Dolls* (BrightSide); *Scapin* (Citadel); *Cabaret* (Big Noise); *It Shoulda Been You*, *The Fantasticks*, *Ruthless!* (ATI). She spends her days as the VP of Development at Hunden Partners, a placemaking and destination real estate advisory firm. Laura is a proud graduate of Ball State University and is represented by Grossman & Jack Talent. Unending gratitude to Drew and my cherished family and friends!

[laurasportiello.com](http://laurasportiello.com) 

[@laura.ann.sport](https://www.instagram.com/laura.ann.sport) 



**ALEX STETKEVICH** (she/her)  
*Ensemble | u/s Miss Smythe  
u/s Miss Lark | u/s Katie Nana*

Alex is a Chicago-based artist, originally from Southern California, with a BFA in Musical Theatre from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University. She recently performed in the Chicago/Midwest premiere of *Alice By Heart* with Kokandy Productions (Jeff Award Nomination, Best Ensemble). Other theatre credits include *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Olive), *Into the Woods* (Rapunzel), and *Pirates of Penzance* (Kate). Much love to her family and friends!



## **PATRICK SYLVIA** (he/him)

### *Youth Ensemble*

Patrick is in 6th grade at Thomas Middle School. He is very excited to be a part of this production after having a wonderful experience performing in *The Music Man in Concert* here on the Metropolis stage. Prior roles at MPAC include: Nemo in *Finding Nemo Jr.* and Michael in *Matilda the Musical Jr.* Patrick would like to thank his family and everyone at Metropolis for all their support!

@patricksylvania22



## **SAM TRANI**

### *Youth Ensemble*

Sam is an 8th grader making his MPAC debut. Recent show credits: *Frozen Jr.*, *Newsies*, *Sweeney Todd* (BAMtheatre). Sam has been part of the award winning BAMtheatre's Conservatory performance group and attended Junior Theatre Festival the last four years. Thank you to Dan, Melanie, Julie and Bravo Talent for their continued support. Break a leg to all the cast!



## **SOPHIE TUCKER** (she/her)

### *Youth Ensemble*

Sophie is currently a sophomore at Prospect High School and is so excited to be back on the Metropolis stage! She was most recently in MPAC's production of *A Christmas Carol* as Martha Cratchit. Other recent credits include: part of the Youth Ensemble in *The Music Man in Concert* (Metropolis Performing Arts), Lee Bouvier in *Grey Gardens* (Big Noise Theater), Little Sally in *Urinetown* (Metropolis School of Performing Arts) and part of the Youth Ensemble in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Big Noise Theater). Sophie is so grateful for all the support from her parents and family, and her coach Samara! She has had an amazing time working on this production and hopes you enjoy the show.

@sophie\_tucker





**LANAH VURNAKES** (she/her)

*Michael Banks*  
*Youth Ensemble*

Lanah is thrilled to return to the MPAC stage where she played Tiny Tim in *A Christmas Carol* in 2022. Recent credits include playing Young Cosette in *Les Misérables* (Uptown Music Theatre), *Baby June in Gypsy* (Brightside Theatre), *Marta von Trapp in The Sound of Music* (Big Noise Theatre). Other credits include: *Ragtime* (Highland Park Players), *Hello Dolly* (Rising Stars Theatre) and a national Kohl's commercial. Lanah is in 6th grade and wishes to thank her friends, teachers, agents at DDO, talent manager Randi Rosen, and her loving family for their unwavering support!



**DESMOND WALKER** (he/him)

*Policeman*  
*Ensemble*

Desmond is so excited to be making his MPAC debut in *Mary Poppins*. He is recent graduate from Utah Valley University's BFA Musical Theatre program. His most recent credits are Rapunzel's Prince in *Into the Woods* (UVU), Theseus in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Renaissance Now), and various roles in *Hamlet* (Renaissance Now) which he got to perform in NYC this past summer. So much love to Desmond's friends and family for their love and support towards his passion.

[desmond-walker.weebly](http://desmond-walker.weebly)



[@desmondwalkerofficial](https://www.instagram.com/desmondwalkerofficial)



**MILES WENDT** (he/him)

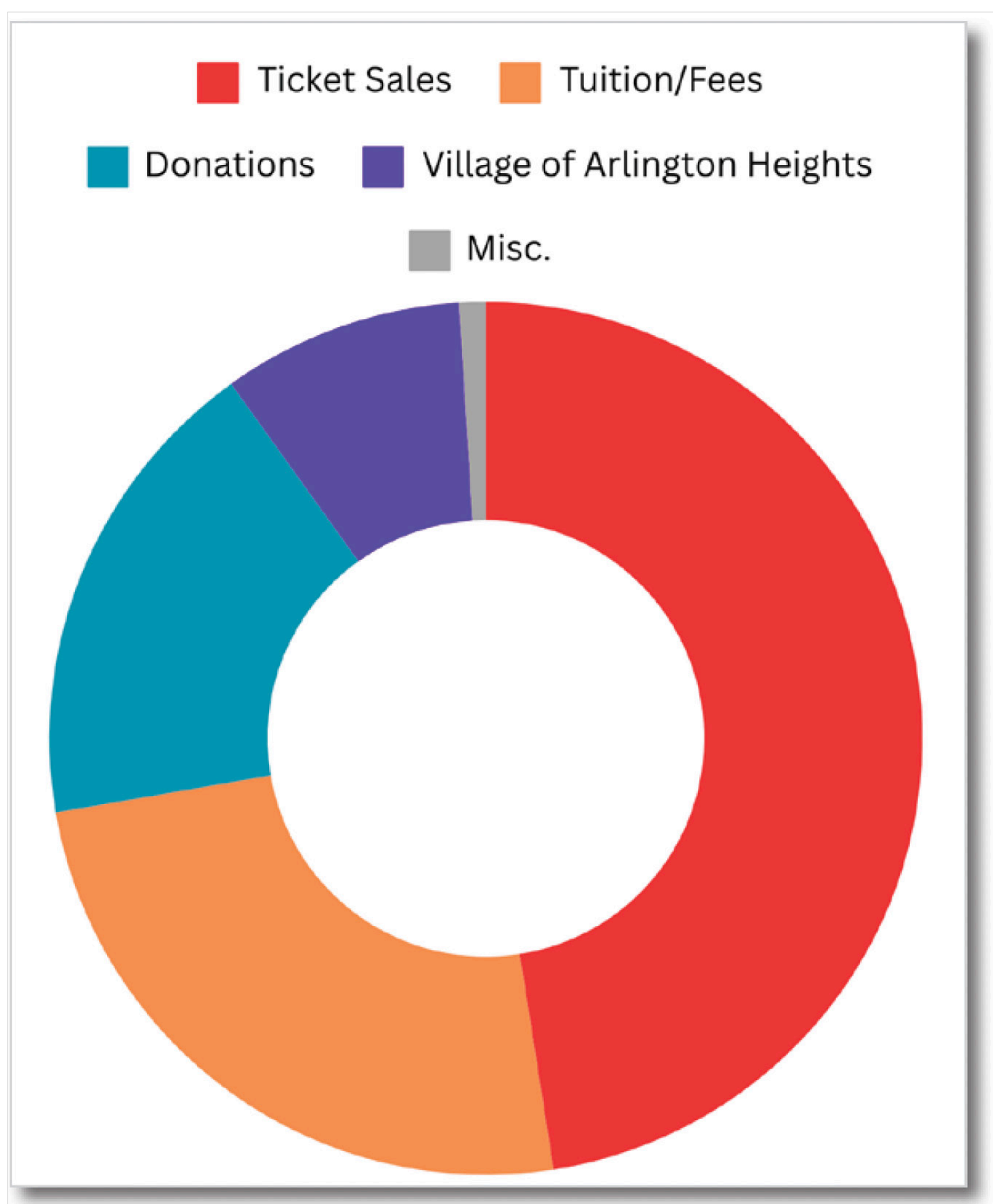
*Youth Ensemble*

Miles is thrilled to return to the MPAC stage. Recent show credits include: *A Christmas Carol* (Metropolis); *The Music Man in Concert* (Metropolis); *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Big Noise Theater); and many Metropolis School of the Performing Arts performances. He can also be seen in a recent WeatherTech commercial ("Stinky Mats"). When he is not on the stage, he loves competing for his Ninja team, playing basketball, and practicing piano, trombone and dance. Thank you to all of his teachers, coaches and family for helping him get here, Metropolis for this opportunity, and his wonderful agents at Talent X Alexander.

[@milesoliverwendt](https://www.instagram.com/milesoliverwendt)



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## — CREATIVE TEAM —

### DANNY KAPINOS

*Director*

Danny is delighted to return to Metropolis, where he was once a student of the School of Performing Arts. He is the Artistic Director of Blank Theatre Company, where he has directed *A Bright Room Called Day*, *On the Twentieth Century*, *Promises, Promises*, *Merrily We Roll Along*, *She Loves Me*, and more. As an assistant director, he has worked at Writers' Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Windy City Playhouse, and Filament Theatre. He is a Jeff Award nominee, a Northwestern alum, and an Associate Member of SDC.

## AARON KAPLAN (he/him)

### Music Director

Aaron enjoys a multifaceted musical career as a conductor, Jeff-nominated musical director, cellist, music educator, and arranger. He earned a master's degree in orchestral conducting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign under the tutelage of Donald Schleicher, as well as his bachelor's degree in cello performance and bachelor's degree in music education with high honors also from the University of Illinois. Aaron is the artistic director/conductor of the JAM Orchestra, a Chicago-based ensemble dedicated to performing a diverse repertoire of classical, Broadway, swing, and film music, and also conducts for the Elgin Youth Symphony Orchestras and the Music Institute of Chicago. A dedicated teacher, Aaron is an orchestra director at Glenbrook North and Glenbrook South High Schools. A passionate advocate of American musical theatre, Aaron has been the music director/conductor for over 95 productions (the majority with complete orchestration) including *West Side Story*, *On the Town*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Les Misérables*, *RENT*, *Chess*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *The Producers*. His work has been recognized with 3 Jeff-Award nominations for Music Direction: *The Wild Party* (2022), *Promises, Promises* (2023), and *On the Twentieth Century* (2024). Upcoming projects include *Sweet Charity*, *Passion* (Blank Theatre Company), and *Hairspray* (Uptown Music Theatre of HP). Special thanks to Kevin, Danny, Kyle, Tiffany, David, Zoe, Lucas, the wonderful cast and the fantastic orchestra. Thank you for supporting live theater, live music, and the arts in the community!

[aaronskaplan.com](http://aaronskaplan.com)



[@askcello](https://www.instagram.com/askcello)



## KYLE ASCHBRENNER

### Stage Manager

Kyle is a Director, Dramaturg & Stage Manager from Central IL and based in Chicago since 2019. Kyle is very excited to be returning to Metropolis this year for this special production! Recent credits include: *In The Heights* (SM, The Miracle Center), *Cruise* (Director, Stage Left Theatre), *Open* (AD/Dramaturg, Stage Left Theatre), *Man of the People* (AD/SM, Stage Left Theatre), *A Town Called Progress* (AD/SM, Promethean Theatre Ensemble), *The Addams Family* (SM, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre), *On the Twentieth Century* (SM, Blank Theatre), *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* (SM, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre), *A Bright Room Called Day* (SM, Blank Theatre). Much love to all of my family and friends for their support.

## LUCAS BANKS (he/him)

### Youth Coordinator

Lucas is an Illinois State University graduate from Des Plaines, IL. Recent Show credits through Metropolis Theatre: *Madagascar Jr.*, *Xanadu Jr.*, *Spamalot Jr.*, *SpongeBob the Musical: School Edition*, *The Music Man in Concert*, *Finding Nemo Jr.*, *How (Not) to Be a Wizard*, and *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella*. Other credits include: *Personal Library*, *Oleana*, and *Us/Them*. Lucas describes himself as "human". Love and thanks to Zoe, Ron, and Karen.

## **BILL FRANZ** (he/him)

*Director of Production / Sound Designer*

is thrilled to be working with everyone on this production of *Mary Poppins A Staged Concert* here at Metropolis. He hopes all of you watching the show will enjoy it as much as we all did making it. He would like to thank the cast, crew and designers for all of their hard work on this one. He would also like to give love and thanks to JB and BB.

@soundtrunk



## **TIFFANY GATES** (she/her)

*Choreographer*

*Associate Artistic Director / Education Director*

Tiffany has been a theater artist for over 35 years. Her passion for the performing arts has given her the opportunity to wear many hats over her long career. She has not only been a singer, dancer, and actor in over 150 productions, but also a director, music director, choreographer, and producer. Credits in New York: Lincoln Center, The Triad; Regionally: Great Lakes Theatre, Cain Park, Carousel Dinner Theatre, Beck Center for the Arts, Music Theater Works, Metropolis, and Folks Operetta, to name a few. Tiffany is also a national touring musician and choral conductor. She has been a private voice instructor and theater educator for over 25 years, having taught here at Metropolis since 2005. She has a deep interest in performing arts education, having been a child performer herself. Tiffany has had the privilege to perform with and learn from a plethora of wonderfully talented and knowledgeable professionals in the industry, including Oscar Winner, George Chakiris. She graduated from Ohio Northern University with a degree in Vocal Performance, studied at The Circle in the Square Theatre School, the only acting conservatory on Broadway, and is a member of Actors' Equity.

## **ROBIN M. HUGHES**

*Casting Director*

Director, producer, and actor, Robin began professionally at The Guthrie with Garland Wright (*Christmas Carol*), acting in Joanne Akalaitis' world premiere of *The Rover*, and working on Akalaitis' *The Screens* and *Pravda* with Goodman's Robert Falls. Awarded Steppenwolf's Acting Fellowship, Robin was in *The Ballad of Little Joe* (world premiere) directed by Tina Landau and worked with Anna Shapiro (*Side Man*), David Cromer (*Orson's Shadow*), Jessica Thebus (*Whispering City*), John Malkovich (*Hysteria*), and Terry Kinney (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*). Regional: Victory Gardens, Little Theatre On the Square, Williams Street Rep, Paramount, Griffin, Circle, Light Opera Works, New Millenium, Bailiwick, Mary-Arrchie, Circa 21, G&S Light Opera, and Phipps Center. Robin has worked at Metropolis as Artistic Director, Producer, and Director of Production and has directed and acted in many Metropolis productions. She is an ISU MFA and Steppenwolf School grad, and proud member of SDC.



# JAM ORCHESTRA

## Live Orchestra

The JAM Orchestra is a unique ensemble that strives to present music at the highest quality to a broad spectrum of audience-goers. We aim to perform all works, from classical music to Broadway and film scores, with the utmost musical integrity including original orchestrations and instrumentation, the way they were meant to be heard. Inspired by the John Wilson Orchestra in the United Kingdom, our goal is to make the orchestra experience accessible to everyone by creating programs that honor both familiar music as well as shed a light on underrepresented musical works and composers. Featuring some of the finest musicians in Chicago, the JAM Orchestra strives to create a distinctive and rewarding musical experience for all involved. Since its inception in 2018, the JAM Orchestra has thrilled audiences with its distinct genre-defying sound, eclectic programs pairing audience favorites with underheard rarities, and the heart of the group: virtuosic musicians who love to make music together. Previous programs include *Beloved Broadway with Nathan Gunn and Friends* (2025), *Les Misérables* (2024), *The Hunchback of Notre Dame - Concert Version* (2023), *Dr. Seuss at the Opera Kid's Concert* (2022), *Marvelous Moment: The Music of Stephen Sondheim* (2022), *Music in Masks* (2021), a concert featuring the string section performing a wide array of string literature from classical music, film and Broadway; *Summer Serenade* (2019) which featured the ballet music of Copland and Shchedrin with the Strauss Oboe Concerto, and *Holiday Swing 1 and 2* (2018/2019) which featured the Ellington/Strayhorn Nutcracker Suite, Irving Berlin's White Christmas, and holiday favorites from movies, TV, and the stage. In 2024, the JAM Orchestra served as the orchestra for *Ragtime - In Concert* with Highland Park Players and Metropolis' first 'in Concert' venture, *The Music Man*.

[jamorchestra.org](http://jamorchestra.org)



[@jamorchestra](https://www.instagram.com/jamorchestra)



## ALEXANDRA RAFFINI (she/her)

### Properties Designer & Costumes Coordinator

Alex is so excited to join a production team as a designer for a change! This is her first opportunity as Costume Coordinator, and her second as Props Designer after this past Halloween's MPAC & JAM Orchestra collaboration of *Richard O'Brien's The Rocky Horror Show: In Concert*. This marks Alex's eleventh production at Metropolis overall, and recent credits include: *Sister Act* (ASM), *Cabaret* (ASM), *A Christmas Carol* (ASM), *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (SM), *Ragtime* (SM), *Xanadu* (Crew Swing), *The Addams Family* (ASM), *9 to 5: The Musical* (ASM), *Million Dollar Quartet* (Crew Swing), and *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* (ASM). During the day, she serves as the Artistic Operations Manager of MPAC and oversees the *Metropolis Presents* series programming. Looking forward to more MPAC opportunities on the horizon!

[@archaeopteralyx](https://www.instagram.com/archaeopteralyx)



## ZOE SCHMIDT (she/her)

### Assistant Stage Manager

Zoe is an Illinois State University graduate from Des Plaines, IL. Recent Metropolis show credits: *SpongeBob the Musical: School Edition*, *Madagascar Jr.*, *9 to 5: The Musical*, *The Music Man in Concert*, and *A Christmas Carol*. Zoe is a School of Performing Arts alum and now works with MPAC as the Associate Education Director and Youth Improv Instructor. Love and thanks to Lucas, Mom, and Dad.

## KEVIN ZHOU (he/him)

### Assistant Music Director

Kevin is a Chicago musician born in Canada. Huge thanks to Aaron Kaplan for involving Kevin in the show! Recent show credits: *The Addams Family*, *Music Man in Concert*, *Cinderella* (Metropolis), *Ragtime in Concert* (Highland Park Players), *Promises, Promises*, *On The Twentieth Century* (Blank Theatre Company), *Les Mis* (Uptown Players). U of I Alum and loves to cook and start new music projects in his free time.

[kevinjzhou.com](http://kevinjzhou.com)



[@kevpo.zhou](https://www.instagram.com/kevpo.zhou)



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— 25<sup>TH</sup> —  
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# METROPOLIS



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# Marquee

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## MARQUEE BENEFACTOR \$1,000-\$2,499

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 Harry & Kathy Malone  
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 Jean Threadgill  
 Harry Trumfio

25<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

# METROPOLIS MAIN STAGE



# ROCK AGES



Photo from the Rock of Ages 2022 UK Tour

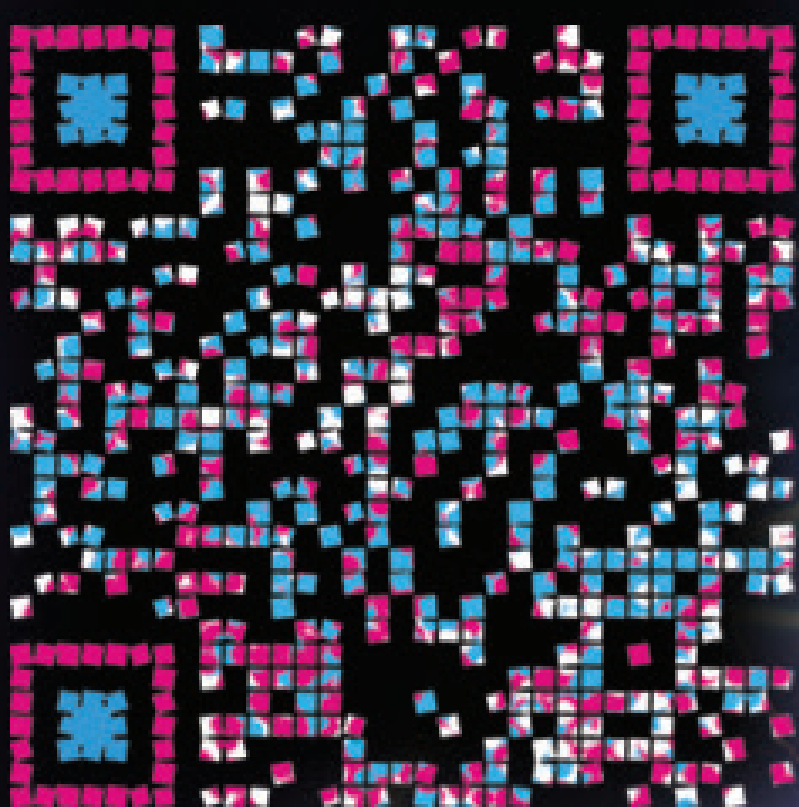
ROCK OF AGES is presented by  
arrangement with Concord Theatricals.  
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Relive the epic 80's with this jukebox musical  
smash hit featuring the decade's raddest rock  
anthems you know and love from **Bon Jovi,**  
**REO Speedwagon, Journey, Foreigner,**  
**Poison, Pat Benatar, and more.**

*\*Leg warmers and big hair optional*

**May 1 – May 25, 2025**

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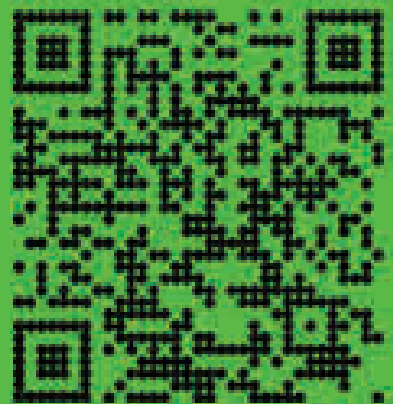
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847.577.2121





# ROCK OUT @ METROPOLIS

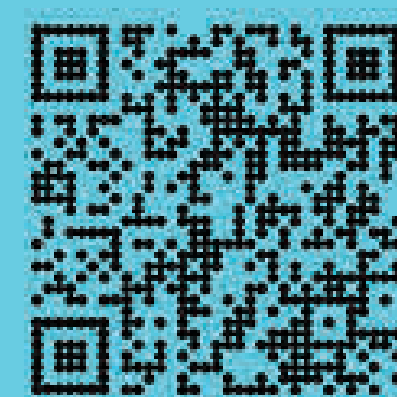
## HEARTACHE TONIGHT A TRIBUTE TO THE EAGLES!



MARCH 14  
7:30PM



## CREOLE STOMP



MARCH 30  
2:00PM

## SECOND HAND NEWS A TRIBUTE TO FLEETWOOD MAC



APRIL 4  
7:30PM



## AN OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN TRIBUTE



## ALWAYS OLIVIA



APRIL 5  
7:30PM

## ELVIS MY WAY STARRING BRANDON BENNETT



JUNE 13 • 7:30PM  
JUNE 14 • 2:00PM

