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VIRGINIA REPERTORY THEATRE 2022/2023 SEASON PACKAGES Signature and Barksdale Seasons Click or Call: VIRGINIAREP.ORG 804-282-2620





The Jefferson Hotel February 25, 2023



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Managing Director Phil Whiteway Artistic Director of Community Desirée Roots Artistic Director of Education Todd D. Norris Artistic Director of Programming Rick Hammerly



Steel Magnolias

By Robert Harling

STEEL MAGNOLIAS is presented by special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service Inc., New York

SCENIC DESIGN Frank Foster COSTUME DESIGN Sue Griffin & Marcia Hailey

LIGHTING DESIGN Matt Landwehr SOUND DESIGN Will Fisher & Julie Fulcher-Davis

STAGE MANAGEMENT Emily Kimoto

DIRECTION
Julie Fulcher-Davis

SEASON SUPPORT





THE	SHUBERT	
	FOUNDATION	NC

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CAST

Shelby	Rachel Rose Gilmour
Clairee	Jan Guarino
M'Lynn	Stephanie Tippi Hart
Ouiser	Kathy Northrop Parker
Truvy	Lanaya Van Driesen
Annelle	Nakia Young-EL

FOR THIS PRODUCTION

Assistant Stage Manager	Amber Hooper
Assistant Lighting Designer	Dennis Cheeks
Scenic Artist	Rowan Sullivan
Photographers Aaro	n Sutten, Tom Topinka
Videographer	Austin Lewis

The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

Please be aware that there will be a gunshot sound effect in this production.

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Tracy Coogle, Kelly Coogle, Keith Fitzgerald, and Don "SPD" Warren, Jr.

DEDICATION

Jennifer Louise Clevenger

With great affection and respect, we dedicate this production of *Steel Magnolias* to the memory of Jennifer Louise Clevenger, nee Frank, who acted with Virginia Rep in several locations, including here at Hanover Tavern. She and her husband Jeff were/are favorite crowd-pleasers with audiences at almost every theatre in town.

By day, Jennifer thrived as a Senior Business Analyst with the Markel Corporation. By night, she achieved equal success as one of the funniest, quirkiest, most lovable actors to tread the RVA boards. Cherished by her fellow theatre artists, Jennifer left us far too soon. Her warm and energized spirit will be remembered forever.





Rachel Rose Gilmour, she/her/hers, (Shelby) is thrilled to be back on the Hanover stage after recently playing Corrie Bratter in Virginia Rep's *Barefoot in The Park*. Rachel just spent the Summer in Cape Cod, MA performing in *School of Rock* the musical with Cape Cod Theatre Company. Select favorite Richmond shows include 5th Wall Theatre's *The Toxic Avenger* (Sarah), *Lizzie* (Lizzie), *Murder Ballad* (Narrator); Quill Theatre's

The Great Gatsby (Daisy); Swift Creek Mill's *Cyrano De Bergerac* (Roxane); RTP's *Sondheim on Sondheim* (Vanessa Williams); and *Forbidden Broadway* at The Dogwood Dell. Rachel can also be seen in commercials as the spokesperson for Loyalty Automotive! www.rachelrosegilmour.com



Jan Guarino (Clairee) feels so happy to be returning to the boards in one of her favorite plays! She was last here in the world premiere of *Bonnie and Claire* written by her favorite playwright, Bo Wilson. She had the privilege to direct *Barefoot in the Park* (the first show back after the shutdown), and before that she was in *The Charitable Sisterhood Christmas Spectacular* for Virginia Rep at the Tavern. She has also

directed (among others) *Where's Charley?, The Wizard of Oz,* and *They're Playing Our Song* for Virginia Rep. A familiar face and voice in Richmond-area advertising, Jan is perhaps best known as spokesperson for Haynes Furniture. She would like to thank Julie for giving her the chance to work with this amazing cast of women.



Stephanie "Tippi" Hart, she/her/hers, (M'Lynn) While Tippi has been acting for over 40 years, she is thrilled to be making her Richmond acting debut in this beautiful play about her home state. She grew up in North Louisiana and lived there until she graduated from Louisiana Tech University with her bachelor's in Theatre. After many years living in many places and thinking she could do anything but theatre, she came back to Ruston to

get her master's in theatre. After becoming a Ph.D. candidate in theatre at Arizona State University, she moved to Richmond where she teaches at VCU. Her work as a fight/intimacy director has been seen at VCU, Richmond Triangle Players, The Conciliation Lab, and Apple TV's *Swagger*.



Kathy Northrop Parker (Ouiser) is thrilled to be making her debut on the Hanover Tavern stage as Ouiser. Kathy has been acting professionally close to 40 years in the Richmond area having worked with Virginia Rep, Richmond Triangle Players, Swift Creek Mill, and Chamberlayne Actors Theater. Some of her acting credits include L'il (*Last Summer at Bluefish Cove*), LaVonda Jean (*Sordid Lives*), Odette Annette Barnett

(Southern Baptist Sissies), Charlotte (Moon Over Buffalo), Martha (Arsenic & Old Lace) and Sister (Damn Yankees). Kathy is also a voiceover artist and can be heard on TV and radio. She is a graduate of Shenandoah College & Conservatory (Shenandoah University) where she majored in voice and received her degree in music therapy.



Lanaya Van Driesen, she/hers/they, (Truvy) couldn't feel more privileged to make her Virginia Rep debut in this "bucket list" show! Local credits primarily include Richmond Triangle Players: *Collective Rage* (Betty 1); *Cabaret* (Frauline Kost & later Sally Bowles); *Musical of Musicals, The Musical* (June); *Title of Show* (Susan) (RTCC Best Musical award [tie]); *This Beautiful City* (RTCC Peoples Choice award). Stage B

Theatre's: *Baby Makes Seven* (Ruth). Outside of RVA: *Annie Get Your Gun* (Annie Oakley), Niagara, NY; *Frog and Toad* (Toad), Alexandria, VA; *The Imaginators*, Blacksburg, VA; and the collaborative tour between her alma mater, Virginia Tech and Opera Roanoke for *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris*. My love and gratitude to Ashley, my kids, friends, family and EAB for their incredible support!



Nakia Young-EL (Annelle) is no stranger to the stage. A Maryland native, she spent most of her childhood and teenage years performing in community theater and school productions. Some of her favorite productions in which she has performed in include *The Wiz, The Lion King,* and *The Diary of Anne Frank.* She is so excited to be making her debut with Virginia Rep.

Frank Foster (Scenic Designer) is a Richmond Designer who holds an M.F.A. in Scenic Design from VCU. He has designed scenery for several original productions, including Barter Theatre's *Huck Finn*, Cumberland County Playhouse's *Funny, You Don't Look Like A Grandmother*, and Playhouse on the Square's production of *A Closer Walk with Patsy Cline*. Frank's local credits include Virginia Rep's *The Music Man* and *Blues in the Night*; The Production Company's *August Snow*; Riverside Center's *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner, Nunsense, Camelot, Bright Star, Annie, South Pacific, The Color Purple, On Golden Pond,* and *OKLAHOMAI*; RTP's *The Inheritance, The Normal Heart, I Am My Own Wife, It Shoulda Been You, The Boy from OZ, La Cage aux Folles, Angels In America, Psycho Beach Party,* and *Cabaret*; and Swift Creek Mill's *Gaslight, Cyrano de Bergerac,* and *Dracula,* and numerous musicals at Dogwood Dell. Other favorite credits include Barnum, Drood, Big River, *Little Shop of Horrors, Footloose, Singing in the Rain, Laughter on the 23rd Floor, Tommy, Godspell,* and *Once Upon A Mattress.*

Sue Griffin (Costume Designer) has headed up the Virginia Rep costume department for the last nineteen years. Over this time, the shop has produced costumes for more than 300 shows, from traveling fairy tales to major musicals. With the help of the full time shop, hundreds of costumes, wigs, shoes and hats are sent out on a stage or packed up on tour. Some of the most memorable shows include 1776, Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, The Color Purple, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, and A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder.

Marcia Miller Hailey (Costume Designer) has been working in Richmond theatres for over 30 years, and now currently works in the costume shop at Virginia Rep as a Cutter/Draper. She has also worked for the Richmond Ballet, Virginia and Utah Shakespeare Festivals, and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. She recently designed the world premiere of *Bonnie and Claire* and co-designed *Beehive: The '60s Musical* and *Mamma Mia!* for Virginia Rep. She is very excited to be back at Hanover Tavern where some of the shows she designed include *Forever Plaid, Erma Bombeck: At Wit's End, Miracle on South Division Street, Charitable Sisterhood, Charitable Sisterhood Christmas Spectacular, Last of the Red Hot Lovers,* and *Boeing Boeing.*

Matt Landwehr (Lighting Designer) Is a graduate of Minnesota State University-Mankato with a B.S. in Theatre Technology. After serving as the Associate Lighting Designer for Playhouse on the Square in Memphis, TN and the Lighting Director for the Historic Tibbits Opera House in Coldwater, MI, he moved to Richmond to serve at Theatre IV/Barksdale Theatre as Production Electrician and Lighting Designer. After a multi year run as Technical Director for SPARC's Live Art concert series he now works for Henrico Theatre as Technical Director.

Dennis Cheeks (Assistant Lighting Designer) is originally from Columbia, SC and is now the full-time Lighting Apprentice for Virginia Rep. He attended Furman University in Greenville, SC where he obtained his B.A. in Theatre Arts. While at Furman University, he was the light designer for many shows including *Do You Feel Anger, On the Verge, LATE, A Cowboy Song,* and *Chicago*. He was also the Assistant Lighting Designer for *The Wolves* (The Warehouse in Greenville, SC). He is very grateful to work on this show and collaborate with such amazing people. It has been a real privilege and pleasure to help tell this story!

Will Fisher (Sound Designer) Richmond native Will Fisher is the Audiovisual Supervisor at Virginia Repertory Theatre, Director of Technology and Media at River Road United Methodist Church, owner of Fire At Will Photography, and the proud father of a baby boy named Elliot. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Music with a focus in Audio Engineering and Digital Recording and a minor in Media Studies from Virginia Commonwealth University. *Steel Magnolias* is Will's debut as a sound designer for a theatre production.

Emily Kimoto (Stage Manager) is excited to make her stage managing debut at Virginia Rep this year. She is a graduate of SUNY New Paltz with a B.A. in theatre tech. Some of her most recent show credits are *On Your Feet, Something Rotten, Singing in the Rain,* and the debut of *Million Dollar Quartet Christmas,* all at the Phoenix Theatre Company. Emily would like to thank her family, friends, and mentors who helped her make her dream come true.

Amber Hooper (Assistant Stage Manager) studied theater at Eastern Mennonite University where she served as stage manager, costume assistant, and various other backstage roles for many shows during her four years in undergrad. Her recent credits include being Assistant Stage Manager for *Barefoot in the Park*, *Dear Jack Dear Louise*, a member of the deck crew for *Pipeline*, and the light board operator for *Ella and Her Fella Frank* at Virginia Rep.

Julie Fulcher-Davis (Director and Sound Designer) Julie Fulcher-Davis is an award winning actress and director. Julie is also a composer, lyricist, voice-over talent, and drummer. She teaches Acting at the University of Richmond and was the founding Artistic Director of The Illuminated Stage Theatre Company. She attended Shenandoah University to pursue her B.A. in Theatre, then furthered her training in NYC. Her musical scores are heard all over the country with Virginia Rep's national touring company. Her favorite work to date as an actor is crafting sixteen characters in the one woman show *The Search For Signs Of Intelligent Life In The Universe* under the direction of Robert Throckmorton. Her work as director garnered her a RTCC nomination for *Facing East* and a win for *Every Brilliant Thing*. Julie is a member of AEA, BMI and the Dramatist Guild. Julie has a new single release. Check it out here: https://song.link/ WalkingEachOtherHome.

Robert Harling (Writer) Robert Harling made his directorial debut with The Evening Star for Paramount, which he also wrote for the screen based on Larry McMurty's novel. The Evening Star reunited Shirley MacLaine and Jack Nicholson and co-stars Juliette Lewis, Bill Paxton, Scott Wolf, Miranda Richardson, and Marion Ross. The Evening Star is the continuation of one of the most beloved and acclaimed movies of our time. Terms of Endearment. Before launching a successful stage and screenwriting career, Robert graduated from Tulane University School of Law, but instead of taking the bar exam, he opted to become an actor in New York. After years of productive work as an actor in voiceovers and commercials, Harling was inspired to write the highly acclaimed stage play Steel Magnolias, which was based on events from his personal life. Steel Magnolias continues to thrive in theatrical productions throughout the world. Immediately bridging a career from stage to screen, Harling adapted his original play into the popular film of the same title, which starred Sally Field, Julia Roberts, Shirley MacLaine, Olympia Dukakis, Dolly Parton, and Daryl Hannah. Over the years, Mr. Harling has become a much sought-after screenwriter: other credits, to name a few, include Soapdish, which was based on Harling's acting experience and starred Sally Field, Whoopi Goldberg, and Robert Downey Jr., and First Wives Club for Paramount, starring Bette Midler, Goldie Hawn, and Diane Keaton.



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LEADERSHIP



PHIL WHITEWAY

Managing Director

Phil is a key leader in Virginia's nonprofit arts management community. He co-founded Theatre IV in 1975 as Virginia's first

professional theatre for young audiences. In 2001, he assumed the role of Managing Director of Barksdale Theatre. In 2012, he provided staff leadership as Theatre IV and Barksdale merged to form Virginia Rep, Central Virginia's flagship professional theatre. Under his management, Phil's companies have received the first *Excellence in Instruction Award* from the Virginia Board of Education, the *Dominion Shining Star Award* from Virginians for the Arts, and the 50 for 50 Arts Inspiration Award from the Virginia Commission for the Arts.

Phil was a founding member of the boards of the Richmond Arts Consortium and the Broad Street

Association. Under his staff leadership, Theatre IV purchased and renovated our historic November Theatre, receiving the *Community Builders Award* from the Central Richmond Association for its contribution to downtown revitalization. Phil is a graduate and past board member of Leadership Metro Richmond. He has served on the Governance Board of Partners in the Arts and as treasurer of Virginians for the Arts.

Phil has received the Voice of the University Award from his alma mater (University of Richmond), the Theresa Pollak "Lifetime Achievement Award" from Richmond Magazine, and the Governor's Award for the Arts from Tim Kaine. In 2000, Phil was included by Style Weekly among the "100 Most Influential Richmonders of the 20th Century."

Phil consults on arts management both locally and nationally. He is forever grateful for the love and support of his wife, Donna, and their four adult children—PJ, Jennings, Alex, and Gordon.



DESIRÉE ROOTS

Artistic Director of Community

Desirée has showcased her triple threat talent for over 35 years as an active member of the Gospel,

Jazz, and Theatre scenes regionally, nationally, internationally, and in Richmond, VA where she grew up. She started singing in church when she was four, and started her professional theatrical career at age 13. Growing up in a musical family, it was only natural that she follow in her performing parents' footsteps.

Desirée has performed throughout the East Coast with orchestras, jazz ensembles, and as leader of her own ensembles. She's been the opening act for internationally renowned artists including Boney James, Brian McKnight, the late Phyllis Hyman, and B. B. King. She is a Grammy nominated recording artist and has produced shows she wrote including *Ella at 100* in honor of the First Lady of Jazz, Ms. Ella Fitzgerald's 100th birthday. She received the Theresa Pollak award for "Vocal Excellence" in 2014. Along with performing, Desirée has had a long standing career in the corporate and nonprofit sectors. Upon receiving her B.A. from Virginia Union University, she initially embarked on a teaching path. This quickly evolved into other opportunities such as a Programming Manager for Richmond Jazz Society, Inc., Booking Manager for Downtown Presents (now Venture Richmond), and client liaison for Drake Beam & Morin, a Fortune 500 corporation. She has also been an educator and music facilitator privately and within the Henrico and Richmond Public school systems for over 20 years.

Desirée began her association with Virginia Rep as a high school intern when the company was Theatre IV with the unique mission "to seek national-caliber excellence equally in four areas: the arts, education, children's health, and community leadership."

These four pillars of service are what drew her to become *Artistic Director of Community* — "working with the theatre company I love to serve the community I love."



RICK HAMMERLY

Artistic Director of Programming

Rick has worked as an award-winning, DC-based actor, director, filmmaker, and arts manager for

over three decades.

He received a 2018 Helen Hayes Award for his direction of *Lela & Co.* and a 2020 Helen Hayes Award nomination for his direction of *Agnes of God*, both for Factory 449. Other directing credits include *Dizzy Miss Lizzie's Roadside Revue's The Brontes* (New York Musical Theatre Festival), *Reykjavik* (Rorschach Theatre), *Emilie: La Marquise du Châtelet Defends Her Life Tonight* (WSC Avant Bard), *Driving Miss Daisy* featuring Karen Grassle (Riverside Center for the Performing Arts), *Junie B. Jones Is Not a Crook* (Adventure Theatre MTC), *Dead Man Walking* (American University) and *Closet Land* (Factory 449). In 2015/16, he was selected to participate in The Shakespeare Theatre Company's inaugural Directors' Studio program.

As an actor, he has performed Off-Broadway and regionally, receiving a Helen Hayes Award for his turn as Hedwig in Signature Theatre's production



TODD D. NORRIS

Artistic Director of Education

Todd is an American theatre director, educator, writer, and actor. He recently served as president of

the International Museum Theatre Alliance and continues to act as an advisor.

Todd comes to Virginia Rep from the Children's Museum of Indianapolis, IN — the world's largest children's museum — where he worked since 2013, serving as Director of Interpretation and then Associate Vice President of Interpretation and Family Programs. In these roles, he was responsible for fiscal management, artistic direction for its professional children's theatre seasons, coordinating holistic approaches to gallery performances, and overseeing quality for hundreds of daily programs.

From 2003-2013, Todd worked at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, eventually becoming Senior Manager of Performance Interpretation. While at Colonial Williamsburg, he also acted in several episodes of their Emmy-Award winning of *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, as well as nominations for his work in *Angels in America* (Signature Theatre), *Me and Jezebel* (MetroStage) and *Oliver!* (Adventure Theatre MTC). For ten years, he played Mr. Fezziwig in Ford's Theatre's annual production of *A Christmas Carol* and was most recently seen as Miss Tracy Mills in Round House Theatre's *The Legend of Georgia McBride*.

His debut film, *signage*, which he wrote, directed, and produced, has screened in over 60 film festivals worldwide, receiving 6 film festival awards and was subsequently licensed by MTV's LOGO Channel.

He is a founder and the current Producing Artistic Director of Factory 449, the recipient of multiple Helen Hayes Awards, including the John Aniello Award for Outstanding Emerging Theatre Company, and the Executive Director of the Washington Area Performing Arts Video Archive (WAPAVA).

Rick is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC) and Actors' Equity Association (AEA). He received a B.A. in Theatre from the University of Virginia, an M.A. in Film & Video Production from American University, and has completed the coursework for an M.A. in Arts Management, also from AU.

Electronic Field Trips and directed and performed in many evening programs and special events.

Favorite previous directing assignments include Humble Boy, Tales of Olympus, Eleemosynary, and The Santa Clues.

He has taught and directed at several schools including The College of William and Mary, Christopher Newport University, Alice Lloyd College, and Wright State University.

He was born in Columbus, OH, and received his M.F.A. in Acting from University of Louisville and his B.A. in Theatre Performance, with a minor in music, from the University of Findlay. He is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

Todd will focus on programs for children, families, and schools including touring programs and arts in education. He and Desirée Roots will co-lead Virginia Rep's award-winning Community Health + Wellness program, which creates, implements and assesses model projects that demonstrate how theatre can be used as an effective tool in addressing critical educational and societal challenges.

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Virginia Repertory Theatre's History of Action in Support of Racial Equity

Since its founding as Barksdale Theatre (1953), Virginia Rep has maintained a steadfast commitment to racial equity. We proudly acknowledge the roles of our audience, artists and Boards in this hard-won legacy of progress toward inclusion, diversity, equity and access.

- **1954** In partnership with VUU, and in open defiance of Virginia's Jim Crow Laws, Barksdale welcomes Virginia's first fully integrated audience since Reconstruction.
- **1968** Barksdale casts Carl Lester as Persil-le-Noir in *Irma La Douce*, marking RVA's first hiring of a Black actor in a major supporting role, not as a servant, in a major theatre.
- **1973** To critical acclaim and sold-out houses, Barksdale stages Lorraine Hansberry's *To Be Young, Gifted and Black* as RVA's first major production focusing on Black experience.
- **1975** Theatre IV's founding mission commits to excellence in "four equal areas: the arts, education, children's health and community leadership," putting EDA front and center.
- **1978** Barksdale welcomes a guest production of *The River Niger*, a realistic family drama firmly rooted in contemporary Black experience another first.
- **1980** Theatre IV places *A Raisin in the Sun*, staged by Black director Amini Jahari, in its inaugural season again, a first. In subsequent seasons, we produce 42 additional mainstage shows focusing on Black or Latin experience.
- **1981** Theatre IV produces its first touring instructional play based on Black History, *Bound for Freedom*, casting Tony Cosby, Kelvin Davis and Eloise Libron in its resident touring company. In subsequent years, we create 12 additional Black History instructional titles, touring them to schools statewide and nationally.
- **1986** Theatre IV purchases and renovates the historic Empire Theatre, formerly the Booker T, as our permanent home.
- **1997** Martha Gilbert elected President of the Theatre IV Board of Directors, the first Black Board President of a major nonprofit arts organization in Virginia.
- **2002** Theatre IV presents *Buffalo Soldier* as the first professional theatre production to be staged in the Pentagon, as a morale booster following 9/11.
- 2009 Barksdale and Theatre IV jointly stage Virginia's first Hispanic Theatre Festival.
- **2020** Virginia Rep Board creates IDEA Committee: Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access.
- **2021** Katrinah Carol Lewis named Interim Co-Artistic Director, followed by the permanent appointment of Desirée Roots as Artistic Director of Community.

The rest of Virginia Rep's Social Justice efforts, including our Anti-Racism Statement, can be found on our website at va-rep.org/anti-racism.html.

OUR MISSION

Our Mission: To entertain, challenge and uplift our communities through the power of live theatre. To that end, we seek national caliber excellence in the arts, education, and community health and leadership.

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We thank the many individuals and institutional funders who have made charitable contributions in the past year. The following lists reflect contributions to our annual operating fund between September 1, 2021 - August 31, 2022. If you would like to join these supporters by donating to our nonprofit theatre, please visit www.virginiarep.org to **DONATE NOW** or mail your contribution check to Virginia Repertory Theatre, 114 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23220. Corrections to this list or questions about donating should be directed to our Development Office at (804) 783-1688 x1263.

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Thank you for your support.

Top to bottom: Maggie Roop, Irene Kuykendall, and Lexi Langs in *Crimes of the Heart*; Durron Marquis Tyre and Aly Wepplo in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; Joe Pabst, Steve Boschen, Ford Flannagan, and Levin Valayil in *The Fabulous Lipitones*; CJ Bergin and Tyler Stevens in *Broadway Bound*. Photos by Jay Paul and Aaron Sutten.