



### A MUSICAL REVOLUTION





# E L W S S THE MUSICAL

Written by: Sean Cercone and David Abbinanti Musical Arrangements and Orchestrations by:
David Abbinanti

#### Directed and Choreographed by Keith McCoy

Scenic/Lighting Designer	Matthew Swindell
Costume Designer	Alex Allison
Properties Designer	Patti Fenzel
Sound Designer/Audio Engineer	Julianne Slaton
Assistant Engineer/A2	Caleb Huneycutt
Musical Director	Debbie Anderson
Conductor/Rehearsal Accompanist	Ethan Ray Parker
Technical Director	Walter Pigford
Assistant Technical Director	David Jones
Production Stage Manager	Jess Adams
Assistant Stage Manager	Shepherd Leak
Costume Shop Assistant Manager	Mollie Lipkowitz
Production Technician	Scottie Scott
Deck Chief/Props Assistant	MH Harrison
Scenic Artist	Katie Andreachi
Child Advocate	Jasper Howell
Fly Captain	Jessica Speice
ASM Intern	Lois Drury

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#### THE CAST



Daniel Durston **ELVIS** 



**Ben Tante** KID ELVIS



Michael Turner KID ELVIS



Mila Bolash **GLADYS** 



Bruce Laks COL. TOM PARKER



**Christopher Hager** VERNON/ENSEMBLE



Christian Becerra SAM PHILLIPS/ **ENSEMBLE** 



W. D. Fordy Hunter Henrickson Trey Byars
SCOTTY MOORE (GUITAR) BILL BLACK (BASS) DJ FONTANA (DRUMS)
ELVIS U/S



**Hunter Henrickson** 





Alvetta Smith BETTY/ENSEMBLE



Courtlyn Holt **ENSEMBLE** 



Lexi Angel DIXIE/ANN-MARGRET/ PRISCILLA/ENSEMBLE



Micaiah Byrd **ENSEMBLE** 



**Brian Luedtke ENSEMBLE** 



Larren Woodward **ENSEMBLE** 



Clarence Edmond **ENSEMBLE** 



**Maxwell Hopkins ENSEMBLE** 



**Greysen Trippe ENSEMBLE** 



**Gregor Patti ENSEMBLE** 



Terrance McQueen **ENSEMBLE** 

#### THE BAND

Plano/Conductor	Ethan Ray Parker
Reed 1	John Inzetta
Reed 2	Jason Thorne
Trumpet	Brandon Fortson
Trombone	Andrew Markel
Guitar 1	Sam Wilson
Guitar 2	Nattakarn Kijrattanakarn
Guitar Sub	Sean Powers
Bass	Joe Elder
Drume	Trey Byers

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#### FROM THE DIRECTOR

Thank you for joining us for the opening production of the Springer's 2023-24 season. We begin with a production that pays homage to the King of Rock and Roll, Elvis Presley. His passionate spirit, charismatic personality, and chart topping music have left an indelible mark on the world, and it is an honor to bring his story to life on our stage.

"Elvis: A Musical Revolution" is more than just a musical; it is a celebration of a cultural icon who transcended boundaries. Our dedicated cast and crew have meticulously crafted each moment to capture the essence of Elvis. From his childhood in Mississippi, to his early days in Memphis to the electrifying performances in Las Vegas, you will witness the evolution of a legend.

Bringing Elvis to life on stage has been a labor of love. Our actors, musicians, and creative team have left no stone unturned in their pursuit of authenticity, aiming to transport you back to the period in American history that made Elvis a true icon.

But our dedication to this season doesn't stop with the production itself. We are delighted to announce a new series of opening weekend events that will enhance your theatre experience. From Springer Unplugged, a live lunch with members of the cast, to the Springer Saturday Encore, a post show performance, to the Springer Speaks, a cast talk back with the audience - all in the relaxing, intimate environment of the Springer Saloon. We hope you will join us for what will become a new Springer tradition each opening weekend.

As we raise the curtain on this new season, I want to express my gratitude to you, our cherished audience. Your support and passion for the arts fuel our creative endeavors, and it is your presence that brings the magic of the theatre to life. Thank you for joining us on this incredible journey as we celebrate Elvis, his music, and the enduring power of live theatre.

So, sit back, relax, and get ready to be transported into the world of Elvis Presley. We hope you enjoy the show and the exciting opening weekend events that await you.

With warmest regards,

Keith Patrick McCoy
Associate Artistic Director

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#### CAST BIOS

**DANIEL DURSTON** (Elvis) most recently appeared in the CBS televison network reality show "Big Brother" and is a professional Elvis tribute artist at *Legends in Concert* in Las Vegas. Daniel originated the role of Elvis Presley in the World Premiere of *Elvis: A Musical Revolution* and is honored to revive the role here at Springer Opera House. Other Elvis Presley credits include: *Million Dollar Quartet Christmas* (world premiere, originated), *Million Dollar Quartet* (AEA national tour) and *Adam Ruins Everything* (TruTV).

**BEN TANTE** (Kid Elvis) is making his Springer mainstage debut in *Elvis a Musical Revolution*. He previously appeared as James in the Springer's Children Theater production of *James and the Giant Peach*. Ben has attended the Springer Theatre Academy since 2017 and currently serves as a member of the Student Advisory Board. He is an eighth-grade honors student at Richards Middle School, where he enjoys wrestling and playing lacrosse. Ben would like to thank his family for their continued support!

MICHAEL TURNER (Kid Elvis) is an 11 year old sixth grader at Creekside Elementary. He has attended the Springer Theatre Academy and this is his first time in a mainstage production at the Springer Opera. Michael loves acting and would like to pursue his dreams in theatre arts.

MILA BOLASH (Gladys Presley) is thrilled to be joining Elvis: A Musical Revolution in her Springer debut. She is a 2020 graduate of East Carolina University and The Tepper Semester with a BFA in Musical Theatre and certification in The Meisner Technique. She recently completed her apprenticeship with The Atlanta Shakespeare Tavern Playhouse. Some of her recent favorite roles include Snout (A Midsummer Night's Dream), Witch (Macbeth), and Gobbo (The Merchant of Venice). She would like to thank her friends and family for their love and support.

**BRUCE LAKS** (Colonel Tom Parker) is thrilled to be making his Springer debut. He lives in Denver where he acts, directs, produces shows and pays the bills as a substitute teacher. Bruce is a theatre grad from Florida State who interned at the Alabama

Shakespeare Festival and taught drama for fourteen years in Arizona and Colorado. His favorite credits are Cyrano (Cyrano de Bergerac), John Adams (1776), Malvolio and Sir Toby Belch (Twelfth Night), Oscar Madison (The Odd Couple), Guildenstern (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead), Bobby Gould (Speed-the-Plow) and Vanya (Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike). Bruce currently is in early planning to produce and act the role of President Harry S. Truman in the one-man play Give 'Em Hell Harry in late 2024. He thanks his partner, Lisa, for her love, the adventures and autonomy to live his dream in the theatre.

CHRISTOPHER HAGER (Vernon) is making his Springer debut in Elvis A Musical Revolution. Recently finishing his run with Fiddler on the Roof National Tour, he has performed in almost every state in America and parts of Canada. Since graduating from Youngstown State University, he has traveled the world, and isn't stoping anytime soon. Some of his favorites include Lancelot (Spamelot), Gaston (Beauty and the Beast), and Sweeney Todd (Sweeney Todd).

CHRISTIAN BECERRA (Sam Phillips) is excited to return to the Springer for his tenth production! He is currently a local working actor and retired US Army Veteran. You may have previously seen him as the Dentist (Little Shop of Horrors), Bob Wallace (White Christmas), and Tinman (Wizard of Oz). Other favorite credits include Aaron (First Date), Henry/Dan (Next to Normal), and Dr. Coles (Look Forward: The Ruby Bridges Story).

W.D. FORDY (Scotty Moore/Elvis u/s) is excited to be making his Springer Theatre debut! He is a Berklee College of Music alum and current teacher at School of Rock in Clark,NJ. Back in the Garden State, W.D. recently played Johnny Cash (Million Dollar Quartet) and Moritz (Spring Awakening). He also toured the country in punk bands you've never heard of!! Big thanks and hugs go out to his family, friends and collaborators who have been so supportive of all his pursuits.

HUNTER HENRICKSON (Bill Black) is thrilled to be making his Springer Opera House Debut as Bill Black in *Elvis: A Musical Revolution!* Hunter is a multi-instrumentalist actor who has been traveling around the United States performing in various plays, musicals and actor-musician shows for the past decade. Previous credits include Carl Perkins (*Million Dollar Quartet*), Joe B. Mauldin (*Buddy! The Buddy Holly Story*), Michael (*Ring of Fire*), and Jesus (*Jesus Christ Superstar*).

TREY BYARS (DJ Fontana) is a freelance artist based out of Columbus, Georgia. He is an alumnus of Columbus State University where he studied percussion and jazz. He is versed in a plethora of genres and is known for his ability to play what is stylistically appropriate while still applying his own unique voice on drums. Trey is excited to return to the Springer Opera House where he has performed in many musicals such as The Producers, Sister Act, Avenue Q, Dreamgirls, Million Dollar Quartet, Newsies, Mamma Mia!, Evita, Elf, Chicago, Walkin' The Line, and Escape to Margaritaville. He has also performed at theaters across the nation including: Westcoast Black Theatre Troup, The Legacy Theatre, and Lake Dillon Theatre.

ALVETTA SMITH (Betty/Ensemble) is excited for her debut performance at the Springer Opera House in Elvis: A Musical Revolution. As she is no stranger behind a microphone or on a stage, she has been performing since her childhood and sharing her talents worldwide (all over the United States, as well as Germany and Japan). Alvetta graduated from Converse College, with a Bachelor of Arts degree, in Music (Voice Performance) and Business Administration. Her prior performance experience includes the hit stage show Big Band Beat in the Broadway Music Theater Stage at the Tokyo Disney Resort. As a former Fine Arts Department employee of Dorman High School (Roebuck, SC) she additionally served as the Director of Dorman's Got Talent for several years, Director of Rumpelstiltskin, Co-Director of Annie the Musical, Music Director for Shrek the Musical, Alice in Wonderland Jr., The Wizard of Oz, Honk, Jr., Mary Poppins, Frozen, Jr., Matilda, Beauty & the Beast and Little Shop of Horrors.

**COURTLYN HOLT** (Dixie/Ann-Margret/Ensemble) is "All Shook Up" to be in her 13th show at the Springer! You may have recently seen Courtlyn

in the Springer's productions of Little Shop of Horrors (Audrey), White Christmas (Rhoda), Guys and Dolls (ensemble), The Bodyguard (Ensemble), Shrek the Musical (Gingy/Sugar Plum Fairy), both productions of Evil Dead (Linda), Winter Wonderettes (Cindy Lou), and The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas (Eloise). Some of her other favorite credits include Legally Blonde (Elle Woods), Pippin (Fastrada), and Cabaret (Fritzie). Courtlyn would like to thank her mentors, friends, her fella, family and the Springer Opera House for their constant love and support!

**LEXI ANGEL** (Priscilla Presley/Ensemble) is a NYC- based artist and thrilled to be making her Springer debut with these beautiful humans! She graduated with a BFA in musical theatre from Ball State University and can recently be seen doing some commercial work with the Merle Norman Beauty Studio. Mom, Ashton, Prayther Family, Ball State faculty, dearest family, and friends... thank you for all your love and continuous support.

MICAIAH BYRD (Ensemble) is very excited to be making her Springer debut! She is currently a sophomore at Columbus State University pursuing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Performance and a Minor in Dance. She most recently performed as Nana Teacake (*The Last Stop on Market Street*), and in the ensemble (*Firebringer*) on the CSU Mainstage. Other notable performances include Pilar (*Legally Blonde*) and Gabrielle Gardner (*A Chorus Line*).

BRIAN LUEDTKE (Ensemble) is making his 5th appearance on the Springer Mainstage. He has been a volunteer and stage performer at the Springer's No Shame Theater since it began in 2009, and is a current Springer Board Member. He holds a Bachelor in English and Speech and Theater from the University of Nebraska, at Kearney, and a Masters in Public Administration from Columbus State University. He also volunteers for the Historic Columbus Foundation, The Linwood Cemetery Foundation, American Legion Post #251 in Nebraska, and serves on the board of directors for the Historic District Preservation Society.

### **CAST BIOS**

LARREN WOODWARD (Ensemble) is thrilled to be a part of the 2023-2024 Season. You may recognize her from roles she played in past Springer shows such as Angel (Best Little Whorehouse in Texas) and Rita (White Christmas), among others. Some of her other favorite credits include Katherine Plumber (Disney's Newsies) and Miss Honey (Matilda). When not performing on the stage herself, Larren takes joy in teaching future performers to shine. She completed her MEd at Columbus State University in Theatre Education in 2022. Most recently, Larren has participated in Springer Theatre Academy and the Summer Learning Experience throughout Muscogee County Schools. Special thanks to Mom, Dad, Trey, Jeffrey, and Eevee for being the wind beneath her wings. Enjoy the show!

CLARENCE EDMOND (Ensemble) is excited to be making his Springer debut. He trained in vocal performance with the collegiate choral at Alabama A&M University, where he also became a member of music fraternity, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia Fraternity of America, Inc. Some of his favorite past credits include show choir performances, Estampie Natalis and Magnificat by John Rutler, performed at Carnegie Hall. You can catch Clarence performing at various venues within the city and surrounding areas. He looks forward to amazing adventures ahead with his new Springer family.

MAXWELL HOPKINS (Ensemble) is super excited to be a part of this amazing production! He is a graduate of Columbus State University and received a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Performance in spring of 2021. He is very glad to be performing live theatre at the Springer again and kicking off a great new season. Maxwell has performed in other works at the Springer Opera House such as their productions of Escape to Margaritaville, Elf: The Musical, Mamma Mia!, and as Sniper in Newsies. In addition to his work at the Springer, Maxwell has also performed as Sam Byck at Muddy Water Theatre Company during their production of Assassins. Maxwell would like to thank his parents, Brian and Mandy, for loving and supporting him throughout his college and professional career and encouraging him to always follow his dreams, as well as the amazing cast and crew involved in this production!

**GREYSEN TRIPPE** (Ensemble) a recent graduate from the Schwob School of Music, is over the moon excited to make his Springer debut! He's very thankful to be able to get back to the thing he loves and cherishes most. Greysen's most recent credit was Vernon/Mr. Chow in CSU Theatre's *Last Stop on Market Street: The Tour.* He hopes you enjoy the show!

GREGOR PATTI (Ensemble) is a theatre and film actor originally from Jackson, Mississippi. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting for Stage & Screen in 2021 from the University of Mississippi. While in undergrad he appeared in several productions including Fly By Night, Assassins, Urinetown, & a NY production of Romeo & Juliet at NYSaF Powerhouse. He also directed several productions including Crimes of the Heart, Romeo & Juliet, & IX. His most recent film credits include John Carter in The Jacksons (Lead, Snakebird Productions), Chase's Friend in Where the Crawdads Sing (Featured extra, Sony), and Sam (Lead, Michael Cherry) in his first NYC film Lear's Shadow. His most recent theatrical credits include playing Silvius in As You Like It - his London theatrical debut, and RENT with the Nashville Repertory Theatre. When he is not performing, Gregor spends his time writing poetry and music and recently published his first volume of poetry in the form of a zine titled "When Spring Comes at Last: a S.A.D. Zine"

TERRANCE MCQUEEN (Ensemble) is thrilled to be making his Springer Opera House debut. Terrance was born and raised in Tifton, Georgia, and studied musical theatre at Valdosta State University. Past stage credits include Othello (Othello), Donkey (Shrek The Musical), Plankton (The SpongeBob Musical), and Rum Tum Tugger (Cats).

# WC BRADLEY COMPANY

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#### PRODUCTION BIOS

**KEITH MCCOY (Director)** has worked successfully as a theatre professional for more than twenty years and is now the Springer's Associate Artistic Director. He is a native of Portsmouth, Va., and graduate of Norfolk State University. Keith Patrick McCoy is a creative, skilled professional actor, director, choreographer, writer, and arts educator. As a performer his endeavors have allowed him to work in all types of venues, from indoor to outdoor, regional theatres, summer stock companies, national tours, and theme parks throughout the United States. He has also performed at The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, the largest arts festival in the world and takes place in Scotland's capital city.

MATTHEW SWINDELL (Scenic & Lighting Designer) is the Springer's Director of Production. He graduated from Columbus State University with a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology. He has worked on many Springer productions over the past ten years in a variety of different roles including Director, Scenic Designer, Lighting Designer, Technical Director, and Road Manager for the Springer's touring company, Springer Theatricals. You may also remember Matthew from his time on stage as Teddy Roosevelt in the Springer's 2017 production of Newsies.

JULIANNE SLATON (Sound Designer/Audio Engineer) is a graduate of CSU where she earned a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology with a focus on Sound Design and Audio Engineering. She started at the Springer as a volunteer and transitioned to working here full time for the 2015 production of A Chorus Line. She has since enjoyed working as the Resident Sound Designer and Audio Engineer for almost every Springer production thus far, and looks forward to all of the future productions to come.

CALEB HUNEYCUTT (Audio Engineer) is pursuing a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology with a focus in sound at Columbus State University. He has previously worked backstage on Singin' in the Rain, The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas, The Evil Dead, and Shrek the Musical, and is now thrilled to step behind the board as sound engineer for Elvis: A Musical Revolution!

PATTI JO FENZEL (Props Designer) earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theater Design and Technology from CSU in 2010 and has worked in theaters around the country including Florida Repertory Theater, Texas Shakespeare Festival and Opera New Jersey.

MH HARRISON (Deck Chief/Props Assistant) is a 2019 Graduate of Columbus State University, where they earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theater Design and Technology and a Minor in Studio Art. MH currently works at the Springer as a Stage Manager, Deck Chief, and resident MH.

JESS ADAMS (Production Stage Manager) earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Columbus State University in 2016. They are the former Production Manager / Production Stage Manager of Majestic Repertory Theatre, an immersive theatre in Las Vegas, NV. Jess leads the Springer's stage management team and serves as the primary stage manager for the Mainstage Series. Previous credits include The Bodyguard, Mother of Rain, ACE: The Eugene Bullard Story, Million Dollar Quartet, Kudzu: The Musical, Jackie & Me, Last of the Red Hot Lovers (Springer Opera House); The Manson Family: an opera, Sweeney Todd (Majestic Repertory Theatre).

SHEPHERD LEAK (Assistant Stage Manager) started working as a volunteer for Mary Poppins in 2014. Since then, he worked on many shows including The Producers, Beauty and the Beast, Sweeney Todd, The Little Mermaid, Elf The Musical, The Color Purple, and many more. He is proud to have worked as Fly Captain and an Assistant Stage Manager here at the Springer for nearly a decade.

**DEBBIE ANDERSON (Musical Director)** has prepared choral and instrumental ensembles at the Springer since 1998. Her acting credits with the Springer include Why, Baby, Why: The Music of George Jones and Tammy Wynette (which she helped create and restage), The King & I (Anna Leonowens), The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas (Miss Mona), Phantom (Belladova), Honky Tonk Angels (Angela), Ragtime (Mother) and Damn Yankees (Meg). Debbie also serves as adjunct voice faculty for the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University.

ETHAN RAY PARKER (Rehearsal Accompanist) has appeared on the Springer stage as Buddy the Elf (Elf the Musical), and Jerry Lee Lewis (Million Dollar Quartet). He has also enjoyed playing in the pit for the Springer's productions of Beauty and the Beast, The Little Mermaid, and Newsies, and teaching classes with the Springer Theatre Academy. Other favorite credits include Pump Boys and Dinettes (Rocky Mountain Repertory Theatre), Hello, Dolly! (Peach State Summer Theatre), Sweeney Todd (Springer Opera House), and The Buddy Holly Story (Georgia Ensemble Theatre).

ALEX ALLISON (Costume Designer) has worked as a costume and wig designer across the US with notable companies such as the York Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival (BTF), Norwegian Creative Studios and others. He is currently the Resident Costume Designer at the Springer Opera House. Upcoming Productions: On Cedar Street (BTF). Theatre Credits include: Hoagy Carmichael's Stardust Road (World Premiere) (York Theatre NYC), Shrek the Musical, White Christmas, The Bodyguard, Little Shop of Horrors (Springer), Grease (Temple Theatre). He worked on Jersey Boys, Swing the Musical and Warren Carlyle's Havana! At Norwegian Creative Studios.

MOLLIE LIPKOWITZ (Assistant Costume Shop Manager) is a graduate of Vassar College with degrees in Drama and Psychology. Originally from Miami Beach, Florida,

she has worked in theaters around the country including the Williamstown Theatre Festival, The Glimmerglass Festival, and Portland Stage Company in both costume shop roles and backstage wardrobe positions. She is grateful to do work that she loves, and to love her work.

**AVANT JOHNSTON** (Wardrobe Supervisor) is a hair and makeup artist from Columbus. Her credits include wig supervisor at Goodspeed Musicals, prop master at Jean's Playhouse, wig stylist at Ogunquit Playhouse, scenic artist at Sharon Playhouse, props artisan at Utah Festival Opera, scenic artist at Springer Opera house, costume supervisor at Schwob School of music, and wardrobe and hair technician at RiverCenter for the Performing Arts.

WALTER PIGFORD (Technical Director) is from Georgia, graduating from Georgia Southern University Armstrong Campus (previously known as Armstrong State University) with a BA in theater. After graduating he lived in NYC for 4 years working on the Off-Broadway circuit and working full time as the Assistant Technical Director at Pace University. He has worked at various regional theaters around the country but is glad to be back in his home state bringing theater to the Columbus community.

**DAVID JONES (Assistant Technical Director)** is a graduate of Columbus State University with a BFA in Theatre Design and Technology. This is his fourth full season at the Springer, beginning as the TD for Springer Theatricals, and transitioning to Master Carpenter. He is the Technical Director for the Children's Theatre Series.

SCOTTIE SCOTT (Production Technician) earned a BA in Theatre from the University of Motevallo in 2019. During their time there, they focused in technical theatre where they developed a passion for it. They became particularly fond of work with stagecraft and lighting. Scottie has worked with the IATSE Local 78 crew since 2017 as well as volunteered with the Red Mountain Theatre Company out of Birmingham. Scottie hopes to eventually go to graduate school for technical direction and one day instruct undergrad students on the technical aspects of theatre in a similar fashion as they were instructed as an undergrad.

JESSICA SPEICE (Fly Captain) graduated from Columbus State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Design/Tech with a background in fly system operation, scenic construction, and scenic design. In addition to her work on Elvis: A Musical Revolution, she has worked on productions at both CSU and the Springer and often works as a freelance stage technician at the RiverCenter for the Performing Arts. You may have seen Springer shows she has worked on such as Escape to Margaritaville, Guys and Dolls, The Play That Goes Wrong, and White Christmas.

JASPER HOWELL (Child Advocate) is a homegrown professional actor and teaching artist from Columbus. He is currently the seasonal Youth Advocate for all mainstage productions at the Springer. He was a Springer Theatre Academy student for 14 years and has been a teacher for the last 6 years. He grew up with a velvet painting of Elvis in his kitchen and hopes you enjoy the show!

# THEATRE COURTESIES

#### **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

No doubt we have all been distracted by a cell phone or watch alarm ringing or lighting up when attending the theatre. Out of consideration for your fellow audience members, we ask that you turn off all elctronic devices that emit noise or light. Thank you.

#### ALLERGY ALERT

For the safety of those with allergies, please refrain from the use of scented perfumes, colognes, or lotions before coming to the theatre.

#### **LATE SEATING**

We endeavour to minimize the distraction for our patrons and actors when seating latecomers. If you arrive late for a performance, you will be seated at the first appropriate moment in the show in designated latecomer seating. You are welcome to move to your assigned seat at intermission.

#### **EMERGENCY EXITS**

We ask that you please take a moment to identify the exit nearest you, so you can safely exit in the event of an emergency.

#### **TALKING**

Please refrain from talking to your neighbor during the performance, as it can be distracting to other audience members as well as the performers on stage.





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Paul R. Pierce (Producing Artistic Director) has led the Springer Opera House as producing artistic director since 1988, taking the State Theatre of Georgia in new artistic directions while expanding its audience and influence throughout the nation. For over 30 years, Paul has directed and produced more than 300 comedies, dramas and musicals at the Springer. A Rome, Ga. native with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Georgia, he is also an Equity actor who has performed in over 1,000 American and Canadian cities with stock, regional, touring and children's theatre companies. Paul is the author of nine plays and *The Springer Ghost Book*.

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WE AT THE SPRINGER OPERA HOUSE WISH TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GREAT RESPECT THAT THE LAND UPON WHICH WE ARE FORTUNATE TO MAKE ART IS THE ANCESTRAL HOME OF THE MUSCOGEE (CREEK) PEOPLE, WHO THRIVED THROUGHOUT THE SOUTHEASTERN PART OF THIS CONTINENT FOR MILLENNIA.

As U.S. Treaties with this sovereign nation were routinely broken and settlers poured into muscogee lands, twenty-two million acres in Georgia and Alabama were ultimately stolen through fraud, deceit and outright theft. In 1836, theU.S. Army began rounding up Muscogee families and forcing them westward with little more than the clothes on their backs.

LOCALLY, 15,000 MUSCOGEE WERE GATHERED AT FORT MITCHELL AND THEN MARCHED 750 MILES TO FORT GIBSON, OKLAHOMA. SOME 3,500 DID NOT SURVIVE THE THREE-MONTH JOURNEY. UPON ARRIVAL, EACH FAMILY WAS GIVEN A BLANKET AND ESSENTIALLY ABANDONED THERE.

Despite this brutal history, the offspring of those survivors have built a vibrant social, educational, political, agrarian, economic and artistic life with Okmulgee, Oklahoma as the capital of the modern Muscogee nation.

The Springer is adjacent to "Mother Town" Coweta and "Peace Town" Cusseta, two ancient centers of Muscogee culture. Others have walked these paths before us.

FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE MUSCOGEE PEOPLE CAN BE FOUND AT MUSCOGEFNATION.COM

