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RISE

THE RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

CONCEIVED BY **MARIAH BURKS**

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY NWT'S 2021 RISE CAST

FALL YOUTH PRODUCTION, AGES 7 – 16
OPENING NIGHT: SEPTEMBER 11, 7:30PM
ON DEMAND: SEPTEMBER 12 – 19

THE TEAM

DIRECTED BY

MARIAH BURKS

ASST. DIRECTOR / STAGE MANAGER

NIGERIA GOULD

CINEMATOGRAPHER & TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

PERREN HEDDERSON

ASST. TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

EMILY HEHNEN

LIGHTING DESIGNER

JACK-ANTHONY INA

SOUND DESIGNER

MATT TOROK

PRODUCTION & RENTALS MANAGER

MICHAEL STEIN

BEST BOY

RUSSELL MILLER

EDITING

MARIAH BURKS & PERREN HEDDERSON

DRAMA THERAPIST

DR. ERIN SHEPLAVY

ART CONCEPT / ART DESIGN

MARIAH BURKS / NOAH HRBEK



THE CAST

Evangelina Calderon
Jayla Carter
Xavier Kirk
Megan Kless
Deshay Lloyd
Penelope Markowitz
Violet Markowitz
Christopher Moore
Amaya Moore
Olivia Moore
Charlie Morrison
Frankie Morrison
Vivi Morrison
Josephine O'Leary
Sophie O'Leary
Kai Pennington
Avery Pyo
Meredith Richardson
Jada Sikora
Yamini Sridhar
Serenity Walker
Ronald Watkins
Lydia Whitehouse
Julia Ziel

America: Through the Looking Glass Alumni

Mo Eutazia Dugger
Rachel Drotar
Coletta Gruss
Xavier Reminick

DIRECTOR'S LETTER

Friends,

This production is quite special. There are kids and teens, as well as adult Near West Theatre veterans, which makes this an intergenerational summer production. Which, I don't think has happened at NWT in a very long time. What an honor, joy, and privilege it has been to step into this new role at a place that has felt like home to me for almost 2 decades. The cast is nothing short of brilliant. Each moment will have you wondering if there is more and what you can do to be part of the solution and not the problem. Thank you for tuning in. Enjoy the show and remember that America is always under reconstruction 'til further notice.

Mariah Burks

Director



SPECIAL THANKS

to the following people for helping us put this show together

ROB GRANT
MEGHAN HONACKI
JODI KIRK
EMILY KLESS
ERIN SHEPLAVY
KATE WHITEHOUSE



**& every single parent and guardian for your flexibility,
trust, and support in this process!**

SCENES

State of the Human Address I
Where Are They Now?
Memory Lane Ep. 01
Yesterday
People Can Change
The Cost of Friendship
Stressed Out!
Boundaries
The Divide
Lessons
Memory Lane Ep.02
Try To Remember
React TV
State of the Human Address II
Flesh Failures / Let The Sunshine In

MUSICAL NUMBERS

Yesterday

Performed by Yamini Sridhar and Josie O'Leary
Music & Lyrics by Paul McCartney and John Lennon

Try To Remember

Performed by Lydia Whitehouse and Penelope Markowitz
Lyrics by Tom Jones
Music by Harvey Schmidt

Let the Sunshine In

Performed by Cast of Rise
Featured Soloists: Ronald Watkins Jr., Jada Sikora,
Sophie O'Leary and Amaya Moore
Lyrics by James Rado and Gerome Ragni
Music by Galt MacDermot

HISTORY & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Detroit Shoreway neighborhood has long been diversely populated. With the 19th century influx of settlers from Europe seeking industrial jobs, communities of German, Irish, and Italian ancestry found home here. These cultures hold space in our neighborhood to this day, along with the later additions of Black, Hispanic, and Puerto Rican community members. It is important to recognize that prior to 18th century colonial seizure and settlement, native peoples owned and occupied this land.

Near West Theatre acknowledges those of the Shawnee, Miami, Erie, Ottawa, Potawatomi ("POT-ah-WAH-toe-me"), and Haudenosaunee ("HOH-den-no-SHOWN-ee") Confederacy whose lands we stand on, and the nearly 28,000 Native American people who live in Northeast Ohio today; your neighbors, coworkers, classmates, friends, and community members, who represent over 100 tribal nations.

GET TO KNOW THE CAST

Evangelina Calderon will be featured in the scene “People Can Change.” This is her fifth time doing Rise. In her free time she likes to paint and watch TV. She hopes that after people watch the play they will actually try to get up and make a change in the little ways they can.

Jayla Carter is really excited to play the role of Luna in “Stressed Out” in *Rise: The Reconstruction Project*! Jayla loves dancing, acting and playing video games in her free time. She is going into the seventh grade this fall and lives in Cleveland, Ohio with her family. Jayla loves her family and wants to make them proud.

Xavier Kirk is a 16-year-old 10th grade student from Wooster High School. This is his first year at Near West Theatre. He enjoys reading in free time. He wants to thank his mother and his brother Adam for teaching him to love theater.

Megan Kless is a 16-year-old junior at Mayfield High School and is excited for her first NWT show because her mom is a NWT alum too. Some of Megan’s favorite shows that she has been in are *Annie* (Kate), *Beauty and The Beast* (lead dancer), and *Crazy For You* (Patsy). Megan is also a member of Mayfield’s show choir and plays soccer. Megan would like to thank her family and friends, Trinidad, Mariah, Nigeria, Anthony, Sarah, and Warren for inspiring her to do this show.

Deshay Loyed likes to go by her nickname, Shay. She was born in Cleveland, Ohio and is 14 years old. She has seven siblings and amazing parents. Ever since she was young, she always wanted to be an actress so that she could entertain others and become known all around the world for being an amazing person and actress.

Penny Markowitz is a third grader at Millridge Elementary School, and this is her first show ever (besides the ones she puts on in the living room at home)! She is almost nine, and enjoys art, dancing, anime, chicken nuggets, and her puppy, Maggie. Penny is very excited to come to Near West Theatre and actually be IN a show with her sister, Violet, and her friends Vivi & Frankie.

Violet Markowitz is very excited to be participating in *Rise: The Reconstruction Project*. They are going into seventh grade and like to sing, skateboard, and play guitar. Their first show at Near West Theatre was *Mary Poppins*, but they also did other shows at their school. Violet is also very excited to be doing the production with their sister Penny and their best friend Charlie.

Amaya Moore is 15 years old and attends Saint Joseph Academy. She is incredibly euphoric to be a part of this production, where she learned so much about herself and reclaimed her love for theatre once again. In the past she’s participated in *Anyone Can Whistle*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* (The Chairman), and *Rise: The Isolation Project*. Besides theatrical arts, Amaya loves creative writing, skateboarding, and making jewelry and stickers. Because of this production, she cherished the hope she regained for this country, the awareness she hopes to bring you all, and the change she hopes to see. Enjoy!



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CAST

This is **Christopher Moore's** third show at Near West Theatre. Christopher loves to watch anime. His favorite animal is a giraffe and his favorite color is red. The school he goes to is Horizon Science Academy on Denison. Christopher has four siblings: three sisters and one brother. His favorite season is winter.

Olivia Moore is 11 years old, they go by they/he/she. He wants to be a fashion designer. Her best friends are Kohl and Zariah. Kohl goes to school with them but Zariah doesn't. Zariah and Olivia met when Olivia's mom introduced her to her friend (Zariah's mom) and Zariah. Olivia is a very sarcastic being, and she is an ambivert. They also enjoy making bracelets.

Charlie Morrison is a seventh grader at Hawken School and is thrilled to be making her debut at Near West Theatre. She has appeared in *Annie* and *The Little Mermaid* at Chagrin Valley Little Theatre as well as *Honk!* at the Fine Arts Association. She is currently playing the role of Tabby in the 2021 production of *Murder by the Falls* at the Chagrin Valley Little Theatre. Charlie enjoys art, writing and playing a variety of instruments. She would like to thank her fellow *Rise* castmates for inspiring and supporting her.

Frankie Morrison is a third grader at Lawrence School and is thrilled to be acting alongside her twin sister, Vivien, and her big sister, Charlie. Frankie has performed in *Annie* at the Chagrin Valley Little Theatre and is currently playing the role of Kat in their production of *Murder by the Falls*. Frankie enjoys taking care of animals, bird watching, and playing violin. Frankie would like to thank her teacher, Miss Cummings, for inspiring her and giving her confidence.





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Vivien Morrison is a third grader at Hawken School who enjoys acting, art, playing piano, and singing. Her favorite credits include *Annie* (Molly) at The Chagrin Valley Little Theatre, *Frozen Jr.* (Olaf), *Annie Jr.* (Annie) and is currently playing the role of Kitty in the 2021 production of *Murder by the Falls* at CVLT. Her special talents include comedy and unicycling. Vivi would like to thank Near West Theatre for giving her this amazing opportunity.

Jojo O'Leary This is Jojo's first show at Near West Theatre but she has seen all of the plays that her sister Sophie has been in. She just turned nine on September 7th so be sure to wish her a happy birthday! She loves to dance because it's a great way to express herself and get out her giggles. She would like to thank her sibling Celia, who helped her be a little less scared of new things and helped her to see people in a different way. She also wants you to know that her dog Ollie is the best because he is cute and tiny!

Sophie O'Leary is a junior at Saint Joseph Academy, and she is so excited to be a part of *Rise: The Reconstruction Project*! Sophie has always loved acting and telling stories through performing, but she first became involved in theater at Near West Theatre in 2015. Since then, she has participated in 17 shows at NWT. Sophie also plays cello in her school orchestra and is involved in her school's theater program. She would like to thank her incredibly supportive friends and family and the amazing team of *Rise* for being so wonderful to collaborate with! She hopes you love the show!

Kai Pennington is so excited to be participating in another show as a Near West veteran!! Kai has been in a lot of shows at NWT including: *Xanadu*, *Carnival*, *Anyone Can Whistle*, *The Addams Family*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, and most recently, *Les Misérables*! Kai hopes you have a great time watching *Rise*! Kai wants to thank the brilliant Mariah Burks, the most communicative stage manager, Nigeria Gould, and his fellow castmates for one of the best summers he's had in a long time! Enjoy!

Avery Pyo is excited to be part of her first production with Near West Theatre. When Avery started performing six years ago, she couldn't have predicted all the talented people that would be part of that journey. Avery has performed in the Great Lakes Theater productions of *The Music Man* and *A Christmas Carol*. Avery would like to thank her family for supporting her passion for performing in live theater. When not performing she enjoys spending time with her friends and family. Avery will be entering the seventh grade this fall in Brunswick.

Cecilia Richardson is a rising fifth grader at Campus International School. She has previously played Lucky the Puppy in the ill-fated 2020 production of *101 Dalmatians*, cancelled due to COVID. She has also performed in numerous shows at Talespinner Children's Theatre. This is her first NWT show. She likes bunnies and stuffed animals. "Thanks to Mom and Dad for helping me try something new!"



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CAST

Jada Sikora is a gal from Akron, Ohio trying desperately to cling to her sanity, and be LESS MISERABLE. (Hey you could make a musical outta that title!) Jada is namefluid, so you can call her whatever name you want, male or female. *Little Shop of Horrors* lives in her head rent free, along with many other things.

Yamini Sridhar is a sixth grader at Campus International School (CIS). She plays Violin and loves experimenting with songs she plays. She is CRAZY about dogs, and is a big book worm. She is also a BIG Harry Potter fan. You can often see her reading a book in bed with her dog or watching a movie.

Serenity Walker will be playing the role of a student in “People Can Change” in this show. Her favorite color is dark red. She is also learning how to play guitar. Her favorite band is Stray Kids. She wants people to learn from “People Can Change” is to think before they go and do something to someone else.

Ronald Watkins Jr prefers to be called **Ronald Stephens**. He’s 14 years old in ninth grade, and will be going to Shaker Heights High this school year. This is his second performance with the great Near West Theatre. He’s only had a few years of experience in acting and production. Film and theater are two of his passions and he is very eager to learn and grow more.

Lydia Whitehouse is so happy to be in her first show at NWT because there is singing and dancing. When she’s not having fun at theater, she loves drawing, playing piano, running, building with LEGO sets, watching movies, and playing games. She also loves animals. Hugs and kisses to all her family!

Julia Ziel is beyond happy to be a part of *Rise* again this year and is overwhelmed by this experience. Besides *Rise*, Julia was last seen in *Honk!* at Beck Center and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* at Near West. She would like to thank the entire *Rise* staff for leading by example and guiding all of the cast through this tough time, as well as thank the Village of extraordinary humans that help raise her up and never let her fall. A special shout out to MJ, who will no doubt be on the NWT stage one day!



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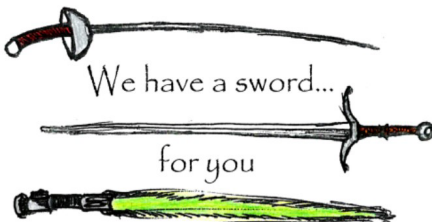
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GET TO KNOW THE ARTISTIC TEAM

Mariah Burks (Director) is a Cleveland, OH native and has had a long standing relationship with Near West Theatre for 20 years. Her works have mainly been seen at Cleveland Play House, where she was most recently set to play the titular role of Antigone pre-pandemic. Some other credits include; *Clue: A New Comedy* (The Cook); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Logainne). An alumni of the CWRU/CPH MFA Acting Program. A graduate of Bowling Green State University's Musical Theatre Program. Recipient of the National Irene Ryan Acting Award at the Kennedy Center (ACTF) in Washington, DC. Other regional and local theatre work includes: *Caroline, or Change* (Tantrum Theatre) and *Ragtime* (Cain Park). Instagram: @magical_mariahb

Nigeria Gould (Assistant Director/Stage Manager, she/her) is so grateful to have this experience stage managing this phenomenal cast. She is a NWT Vet (her first show being *Hairspray* in 2012 and final performance in *Hair* in 2015). Cleveland native and alumna from the Ohio State University with a degree in Theatre and Minors in Women's Studies and Nonprofit Studies. During her time in the pandemic, she has truly learned art of radical care and the value of patience. She thanks her mom, family, and community for continuously pouring into her.

Perren Hedderson (Technical Director/Cinematographer) has been with Near West Theatre for many years, starting as a young teen acting and helping construct the sets. He is now the Technical Director and a freelance Projection Designer. He has also worked in Film here in Cleveland and for a few years in New Mexico. Credits include *We Will Rock You* (projections) at Blank Canvas Theatre, *Chess* (projection design) at Near West, and a side music project called Triage – look for an EP dropping soon. He's a Dad now too with a son. Love to Sarah, Kellen, Asa, and Sab!

Emily Hehnen (Assistant Technical Director) graduated from Ohio University with a BFA in Production Design and Technology in 2016 and has volunteered with Near West on and off since 2010. Her credits as a carpenter there include *Spring Awakening*, *Carrie The Musical*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Occasionally, she also works as a sound and video technician for Near West events and performances, and she is thrilled to continue working with such a talented and creative team.

Jack-Anthony Ina (Lighting Designer) Jack-Anthony Ina (Lighting Designer) is thrilled to be designing his first production with Near West Theatre! He is a director, designer, and stage manager with over 150 credits throughout Northeast Ohio and New York City. Jack is a proud graduate of Baldwin Wallace University. Recent Credits: *Kinky Boots* (Production Stage Manager), *Secrets @54 Below* (Director), *Newsies* (Director/Music Director), *The Scottsboro Boys* (Production Stage Manager), *Memphis* (Lighting Designer), *He's Lost His Marbles* (Director), *Amélie* (Production Stage Manager)

Dr. Erin Sheplavy (Drama Therapist) is a Clinical Psychologist and Drama Therapist. She works as a therapist and consultant with children, adolescents, young adults, schools, theatres, and organizations. As a NWT alumni, Erin is so grateful to have had the opportunity to return to the theatre to help the *Rise* team and cast learn more about exploring, identifying, and managing emotions in a healthy way while rehearsing the show.

Michael Stein (Production & Rentals Manager) is happily entering his sixth year at NWT as PM/RM. His 40+ year career in theatre has taken him across the U.S. from Maine to California but mostly in Ohio as the Stage Manager/Production Manager/Lighting Designer at the Carousel Dinner Theatre in Akron, OH. Prior to returning to

ARTISTIC TEAM, CONT'D

Near West Theatre in 2016, he was the Production Manager at the Palace Theater in Wisconsin Dells, WI. His lighting designs at NWT include *Carnival*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Once on this Island* (2009), *Secret Garden* (2010), *The Wiz* (2010), *Rent* (2010), *Willy Wonka* (2011), *A Christmas Story the Musical*, *Move On!*, *Urinetown*, and many of the yearly Benefit performances. He was also the Co-Lighting Designer for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and *Mary Poppins*. "As always, thanks and love to my wife Carlie."



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and we love you! Mama and Daddy-ya**

Chris, break a LEG & <3- BigGurl,
Sean, Jace & Sissy

Good luck, Yamini and crew! May the force be
with you! Love, Chichiya

Very proud of all of you, especially my son
Ronald for hanging in there and finding some-
thing he loves and sticking with it!! Thanx kid.
I love you!

**YUMMY YAMINI! WONDERFUL! THRILLED AND
PROUD OF YOU. LOVE, GRANDPARENTS**

Jayla, Break A Leg! Love, Grandma

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HAVE ACHIEVED! LOVE, GRANDMA AND
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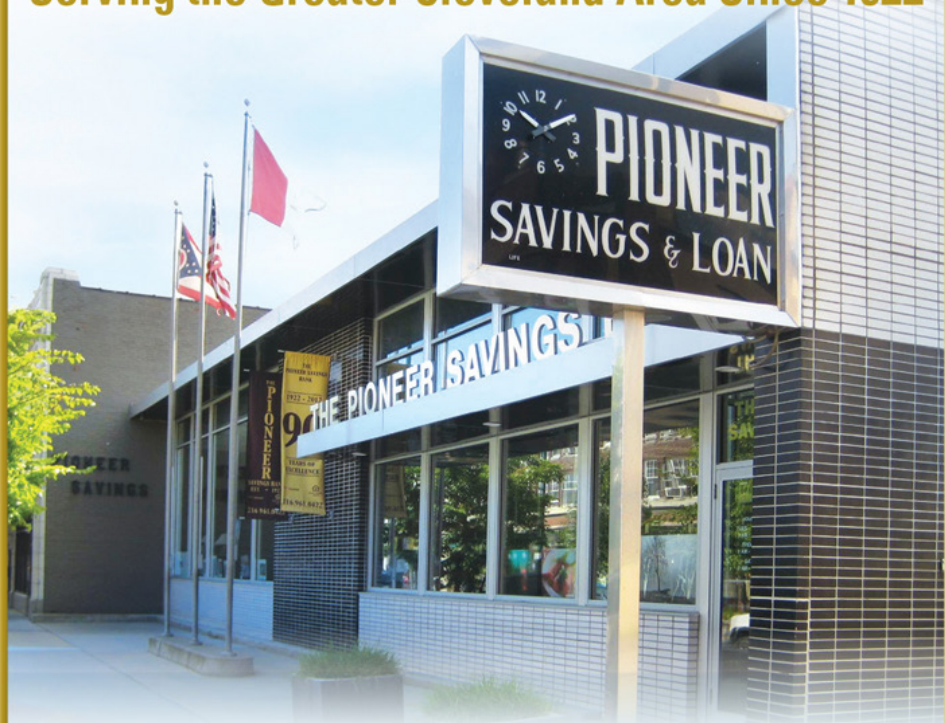
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2021/2022 SEASON: **EVOLVE**

BREAKOUT SESSION (OR FROGORSE) OCT 28 - NOV 13

Written by Nikkole Salter. Directed by Beth Wood.

Inspired by Cleveland's Consent Decree with the U.S. Department of Justice, a corporate training company is vying for a city contract for De-escalation and Anti-bias Training with Cleveland's Police Department.

10 MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT: 9 QUIRKY PLAYS FOR THE HOLIDAYS DEC 2 - 18

Directed by Caitlin Lewins. Short plays by local & national artists.

This holiday season, CPT shares humor, heart, and a party-like celebration, wrapped in a montage of short holiday (or non-holiday) plays.

MASRAH CLEVELAND AL-ARABI مسرح كليفلاند العربي WINTER 2022

Created by the ensemble members of Masrah Cleveland Al-Arabi with Raymond Bobgan & Faye Hargate. Directed by Raymond Bobgan.

This bilingual, original production emerges from the personal stories, cultural narratives, and life experiences of the ensemble.

PANTHER WOMEN: AN ARMY FOR THE LIBERATION FEB 4 - 26

Written & Directed by India Nicole Burton.

Follows three prominent women who were members of the Black Panther Party and Black Liberation Movement, and explores the lives and unique experiences of Black women in America.

TEATRO PÚBLICO DE CLEVELAND (TPC) SPRING PRODUCTION SPRING 2022

TPC's spring show, selected by the company, seeks to connect with a broad audience through a powerful experience of cross-cultural work.

HOW THE BABY DIED MAR 18 - APR 9

Written by Tori Keenan-Zelt. Directed by Beth Wood.

A darkly visceral, absurdly comic play about parenting, pregnancy, abortion, and women's physical self-agency.

THE ABSOLUTELY AMAZING AND TRUE ADVENTURES OF MS. JOAN EVELYN SOUTHGATE APR 22 - MAY 14

Written & Performed by Nina Domingue, 2019 Nord Family Foundation Playwright Fellow. Directed by Nathan Henry.

A chronicle of Joan's life through her 519-mile walk from Ohio to Canada.

CANDLELIGHT HYPOTHESIS SPRING 2022

Text by Raymond Bobgan, *Candlelight Hypothesis* jointly created by Raymond & Cleveland CORE Ensemble. Directed by Raymond Bobgan.

A bold, multi-layered, and highly physical performance through an ever-evolving ensemble process.

STATION HOPE MAY 28, 2022

A jubilant community event at a historic Underground Railroad site celebrating Cleveland's social justice history through powerful art and performance.

Art doesn't just
reflect life. It
makes it
brighter, every
day.



We're proud to support Near West Theatre and the joy you bring
to our community every day.



Make today the day.®



Our youth have shown
incredible leadership and
resilience while navigating
the pandemic.

NWT is committed to ensuring that they continue to have opportunities to create and to use their voices. We are committed to continuing programming that transforms lives.

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Near West Theatre builds loving relationships and engages diverse people in strengthening their sense of identity, passion, and purpose, individually and in community, through accessible, affordable and transformational theatre arts experiences.



NEAR WEST THEATRE IS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING ORGANIZATION

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