



College of  
Arts & Sciences  
Theatre and Dance

# SHOOTING STAR



# SHOOTING STAR

## ORIGINAL MUSIC AND LYRICS

Billy Griffin

## BOOK AND ADAPTED LYRICS

Seth Panitch<sup>†</sup>

## MUSIC ARRANGED BY

Greg Pliska

## DIRECTOR

Seth Panitch<sup>†</sup>

## MUSIC DIRECTOR

Henry Lewers

## STAGE MANAGER

Marissa Councill

## CHOREOGRAPHER

Alvon Reed\*

## LIGHTING DESIGNER

Libby Zamiska

## SOUND DESIGNER

Benjo J. Verge

## CINEMATOGRAPHER

Tristan Hallman

## PROPS MASTER

Teila Vchatzer

## TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Matthew Stratton



\*Appearing through an Agreement between The University of Alabama  
Department of Theatre and Dance and Actors' Equity Association, the  
Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

# DIRECTOR/PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES



It is 1972, and the lead singer of “The Sensations,” the most explosive R&B group of the time, quits to try his luck as an actor in Hollywood. Young Billy Griffin, his voice and attitude forged on the desperate streets of race-torn Baltimore, puts his dreams where his mouth is, fleeing the comfort of home for the brilliant lights of “Motown” Detroit. To the shock of Billy, and the entire music industry itself, he is given the ultimate golden ticket- the microphone at the head of “The Sensations”, although the reality turns out to be a few degrees removed from the dream. Billy must reinvigorate a rapidly aging band that has lost its mojo,

keep a malevolent music producer at bay, negotiate the incredible tidal forces of fame in the kaleidoscopic Disco world of 1970’s Los Angeles, and most importantly, battle with the demon of his own explosive ego, which ultimately threatens to choke off the memory of why Billy went into music in the first place...

Performed as a “Dream Concert” by an older Billy as he struggles to make sense of the meteoric fall of his “Star,” *Shooting Star* is an immersive experience for both Billy and the audience, as they revel in his music, his dancing, his dizzying highs, and his self-destructive lows, through a dramatic interpretation of Billy Griffin’s real life R&B library, including such massive hits as “Love Machine”, “Oblivion”, and “Mean Machine”. Through this interactive cathartic journey with the audience, in which viewers will be invited to dance, sing, and interact directly with the characters, we are able to communally consider the ultimate question- if the Road to Hell is paved with good intentions, what is the Road Back paved with?

*Shooting Star* is a new play, developing, literally, right before your electronic eyes, and this socially distanced company of students, faculty, professionals, and even Billy himself, are thrilled to show you a number of selections in scene, song, and dance in this “Virtual Workshop.” I designed the play to be interactive, so we do invite you, should you remember a tune or two from Billy’s extensive library, to sing, dance, or just tap a toe along with us, should the spirit of communal theatre move you.

-Seth Panitch,<sup>†</sup> SDC, Dramatists Guild



The Director is a member of the  
**STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS  
SOCIETY**, a national theatrical labor union.

CAST

Billy	CHRISTIAN ANDREW HATCHER
Hope	JALYN CROSBY
Ozzie/Henry	CHRISTIAN TRIPP
Fawna	MALLORY WINTZ
Sonny/Emma	PETRILLA PROCTOR
Alessandro/Morgan	JEREMIAH PACKER
Quentin/Terry	MARCUS JOHNSON
Leo	NICHOLAS REESE
Cartier	TOBY MUSTARD
Special Agent West	SAM NELSON
Mr. "B"	EVAN HART
Ozettes	EMMA CLAIRE DYKES
	CAITLIN BRIANNA HICKS
	KYNNEDI PORTER
	PETRILLA PROCTOR
	CAITLIN BRIANNA HICKS
	SAM NELSON
	EMMA CLAIRE DYKES
	EVAN HART
	CAITLIN BRIANNA HICKS
	TOBY MUSTARD
	SAM NELSON
	AUSTIN PHILLIPS
	PETRILLA PROCTOR
	ANYSA WILSON

# CAST



**CHRISTIAN ANDREW HATCHER (Billy)** is a Senior dual-degree student studying Criminal Justice and Theatre with a concentration in Musical Theatre. Christian thanks God for all his blessings. He's been in many shows here at UA but instead of listing those, would love to thank everyone that has made this experience possible. He thanks the cast and crew for their hard work and, most of all, Seth Panitch and Billy Griffin for allowing him to tell this story!

**JALYN CROSBY (Hope)** is a Sophomore BFA Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre from Montgomery, Alabama. Previous UA credits include: *The Pirates of Penzance* (Ensemble). Other credits include: *The Four Little Girls* (Addie Mae Collins). Jalyn is incredibly thankful for this opportunity.



**CHRISTIAN TRIPP (Ozzie/Henry)** is a third year MFA student, with a concentration in Acting from Richmond, VA. Previous UA credits include: *The Christians* (Pastor Paul), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Jack Worthing), *Bahkkai* (Dionysos) other credits include: Flagstaff Shakespeare Festival 2018/2019 & Camden Shakespeare Festival 2019. Check him out at [christiantripp.com](http://christiantripp.com).

**MALLORY WINTZ (Fawna)** is an MFA student in her 2nd year. Previous UA credits include *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Gwendolyn) and *The Merchant of Venice* Documentary (Gobbo)!



**PETRILLA PROCTOR (Sonny/Emma)** is a Senior Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre from Huntsville, Alabama. She says she is so thankful to be a part of this production. Some of her previous UA credits include *Mr. Universe*, *Pirates of the Penzance*, and *Single Rider*. She wanted to give a special thanks to Seth for casting her in this. Roll Tide baby!

**JEREMIAH PACKER (Alessandro/ Morgan/ Billy U/S)** is a native of Fayetteville, N.C. and in his third and final year of pursuing his MFA in Theatre with a concentration in Acting. Previous UA credits include: *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Pistol/Caius U/S), *Intimate Apparel* (George) and *The Merchant of Venice* (Gratiano). He sends much love and thanks to his family, Seth, the amazingly talented creative team, and of course Mr. Griffin; your incredible artistry and story has paved the way for artists like me! Thank You! [www.jeremiahpacker.com](http://www.jeremiahpacker.com)





# CAST



**MARCUS JOHNSON (Quentin/Terry)** is a Sophomore BFA in Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre from Atlanta, GA. This is Marcus's 3rd show here at UA with his debut being the *Pirates of Penzance*. Other credits include UA's production of *Legally Blonde*. He is so blessed to be a part of this amazing production because it allows black voices to be amplified on film. He is extremely excited for future opportunities with the program.

**NICHOLAS REESE (Leo)** is a Senior majoring in Vocal Performance from Enterprise, AL. Previous UA credits include: *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Mr. Ostrovsky) and *The Pirates of Penzance* (Frederic). Other credits include: *Choir Boy* (Ensemble/Swing), *West Side Story* (Tony), and *Die Fledermaus* (Alfredo).



**TOBY MUSTARD (Cartier/Reporter/Audience/Quinten/Terry U/S)** is a Senior Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre from Houston, TX. Previous UA credits: *The Pirates of Penzance* (Pirate Ensemble) & *Legally Blonde* (Ensemble/Emmett U/S). Other credits: *A Chorus Line* (Al) and *West Side Story* (Jet). He thanks his family and friends for their constant support.

**SAM NELSON (Special Agent West/Leonard U/S)** is a third year MFA Theatre Candidate with a concentration in Acting from Boise, ID. Previous UA credits include: *The Merchant of Venice* (Antonio), *The Pirates of Penzance* (Major-General Stanley), *The River* (The Man), *Grit* (Moynihan, et al.), *The Christians* (Elder Jay) and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Falstaff). [www.Sam-Nelson.net](http://www.Sam-Nelson.net)



**EVAN HART (Mr. B/Ensemble & Ozzie/Cartier U/S)** is a third year MFA in Theatre Candidate with a concentration in Acting from New York, NY. Previous UA credits include: *The Merchant of Venice*, *Legally Blonde*, *The Servant of Two Masters*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Fried Green Tomatoes*, *Little Women*, and *Lighting Martha*. Regional Credits: two seasons at Texas Shakespeare Festival, George Street Playhouse, Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival, Arena Theatre, and Fort Wayne Civic. Proud Equity Membership Candidate.

**EMMA CLAIRE DYKES (Asst. Cinematographer/Ozzette/Ensemble/Fawna U/S)** is a Sophomore BFA in Theatre major with dual concentrations in Acting and Musical Theatre from Dacula, GA. This is Emma Claire's UA acting debut! Other credits include *Bye Bye Birdie* (Kim), *Fiddler on the Roof* (Chava), and *It's a Wonderful Life* (Violet).



# CAST



**CAITLIN BRIANNA HICKS (Ozette/Reporter)** is a second year MFA Theatre Candidate with a concentration in Acting from Troy, AL. Previous UA credits include: *The Merchant of Venice* (Antonia), *Hand to God* (Margery), *The Servant of Two Masters* (Beatrice), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Lane 4/Gwendolyn U/S), and *The River* (The Woman). Caitlin would like to thank Seth for allowing her the opportunity to be a part of this original musical!

**AUSTIN PHILLIPS (Reporter/Audience/Alessandro/Morgan U/S)** is a Senior BA in Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre and a minor in General Business from Roswell, GA. Previous UA credits include: *Legally Blonde* (Kiki/Ensemble) and *Little Women* (Laurie). Other credits include: *Catch Me If You Can* (Ensemble) and *Grease* (Ensemble) at Tent Theatre. Austin would like to thank his friends, family, and mentors for their love and support!



**KYNNEDI PORTER (Asst. Choreographer/Ozzette)** is a Senior BA Theatre major with a concentration in Musical Theatre from Tuscaloosa, AL. Professional credits: *Beauty and the Beast* (Babette), *The Color Purple* (Nettie U/S), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Dance Captain). Kynnedi sends thanks to her family and the entire creative team for all of the support!

**ANYSA WILSON (Reporter/Audience/Hope U/S)** is a Sophomore BFA in Theater major with a concentration in Musical Theatre. This is Anysa's UA acting debut! Other credits include *Evita* (Eva), *Les Misérables* (Cosette), and *Hello Dolly* (Mrs. Irene Molloy).



*The Importance of Being Earnest*  
Fall 2019  
Photo by Porfirio Solorzano

# PRODUCTION STAFF

**SETH PANITCH<sup>†</sup> (Director/Book/Lyrics)** is Professor of Acting and heads the MFA and BFA Acting programs at the University of Alabama. A professional Director, Actor, Playwright and Filmmaker, Seth has worked internationally in Havana, Cuba with the Ministry of Culture (directing productions of *The Merchant of Venice*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Beyond Therapy*, and *Alcestis Ascending*); Off-Broadway at the 59E59 Theatre, American Place Theater, Westbeth Theater Center, Harold Clurman Theatre, Samuel Beckett Theatre, and Urban Stages Theatre; regionally at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival (three seasons), Utah Shakespearean Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival and Idaho Repertory Theatre; and in Los Angeles at the Globe Playhouse, Odyssey Theatre, Ventura Court Theatre, Complex Theatre and the Hillside Repertory Company. His plays *Separate and Equal*, *Hell: Paradise Found* (published by Broadway Play Publishing Inc.), *Alcestis Ascending* and *Dammit, Shakespeare!* have received critical success in New York and Los Angeles productions, as well as productions in Havana, Cuba by the Cuban Ministry of Culture. Seth wrote, directed, and performed in the feature film *Service to Man*, which was awarded Best Picture at eight national and international film festivals, and is distributed by Freestyle Entertainment Pictures. His documentary *A Night in the Theatre* has been published by Insight Media, and his second documentary *Company HavanaBama: Directing Across the Gulf* was screened by the 15th Annual Sidewalk Film Festival. Seth has been awarded the Southeastern Conference (SEC) Faculty Achievement Award, the University of Alabama's Blackmon-Moody Outstanding Professor Award, the Burnum Distinguished Faculty Award, the Alabama National Alumni Association's Outstanding Commitment to Teaching Award, and was named the 2010 Druid Arts Educator of the Year. He was also awarded a Leadership Board Faculty Fellowship from 2009-2012. At the University of Alabama, Seth has directed *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Hamlet*, *Tartuffe*, *Seven Guitars*, *Twelfth Night*, *Othello*, *Into the Woods*, *Henry V*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Heiress*, *Saint Joan*, *Animal Crackers*, *Fifth of July*, *The Government Inspector*, *Enemy of the People*, and *Moby Dick*, and performed as a guest artist in *Misalliance*, *Moon Over Buffalo*, *A Flea in Her Ear* and *Blithe Spirit*. Seth received his MFA in Classical Acting at the University of Washington's Professional Actor's Training Program and is a member of both the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers and the Dramatists Guild of America. [www.sethpanitch.com](http://www.sethpanitch.com)

**GREG PLISKA (Arranger/Music Supervisor)** is a composer, conductor and orchestrator whose diverse career includes award-winning work in theater, film, television and other media. His recent orchestration work includes new themes for CBS Evening News, Face the Nation and IMAX, as well as scores for the films *Manhattan Night*, *The Infiltrator* and the TV nature series *Life*. He was music director for the Tony-winning play *War Horse*, and is orchestrator for the off-Broadway musical *Trevor*, opening in April. Greg's compositions include music for the off-Broadway comic hit, *The Government Inspector* as well as the Broadway play *Sylvia*. He has scored several Shakespeare in the Park productions, including a collaboration with Steve Martin on a bluegrass *As You Like It*. Greg is currently developing a new piece, *A Most Dangerous Man*, based upon the life of labor leader and civil rights activist Walter Reuther. Greg is arranger/orchestrator for the indie-folk band Hem, and has worked with dozens of recording artists, including Carly Simon, Duncan Sheik, James Iha, Michael Stipe, Karen Elson, Cat Power, Jim Salestrom and Tony Trischka. He is a veteran puzzle constructor and occasionally appears on NPR's *Ask Me Another*. He lives in Manhattan with his wife, Jessica, and their two puzzling children.

**MARISSA COUNCILL (Stage Manager)** is a Sophomore BFA Theatre major with a concentration in Design/Technical Theatre from Huntsville, AL. Previous UA Credits include: *The Pirates of Penzance* (Asst. Stage Manager) and *Legally Blonde* (Asst. Stage Manager). She thanks her family, friends, and the entire UA stage management team for their support.



# PRODUCTION STAFF

**CHRIS MUELLER (Scenic Design/Scenic Charge)** is thrilled to be joining The University of Alabama this year as the new Scenic Design Instructor. He recently received his MFA in Scenic Design from Indiana University and received his B.F.A. in Technical Theatre from the University of Idaho in 2011. Chris is originally from Portland, Oregon, but he has been privileged to work across the nation at theatres including Flat Rock Playhouse, Idaho Repertory Theatre, Theatre West, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and more. For more information, visit his website at [chrismuellerdesigns.com](http://chrismuellerdesigns.com).

**MATTHEW STRATTON (Technical Director)** has recently joined the faculty here at The University of Alabama. Matthew comes to us from Vanderbilt University, where he spent 10 years and enjoyed having the opportunity to bring many artistic adventures to life through engineering, designing, and teaching. Some of his most memorable productions include *Kid Simple: A Radio Play in the Flesh*, *Dead Man's Cellphone*, and *Metamorphoses*. Matthew has also worked with Glimmerglass Opera and the McLeod Summer Playhouse. He is excited to bring his perspective and talents to the Theatre and Dance Department.

**ALVON REED\* (Choreographer)** is an Assistant Professor of Musical Theatre at The University of Alabama. Mr. Reed holds a degree in Spanish from Coe College and an MFA in Dance with an emphasis in Choreography from the University of Iowa. As a professional artist, Alvon's performance credits include Nike, PUMA, Levi's Jeans, Microsoft, Norwegian Cruise Lines, Inland Pacific Ballet, Nevada Ballet Theatre, Opus Dance Theatre, and Jennifer Muller/The Works. Alvon performed in Arena Stages' first multi-ethnic production of *Oklahoma* under the direction of Molly Smith. Additional performance credits include, *Iphigenia* with Marion Schoevaert and *Othello* with Eloy Barragán. As an instructor, Mr. Reed has taught at prestigious dance institutions both nationally and internationally. Institutions include The Milwaukee Ballet School, The Ailey School, Butler Ballet, Tanzprojekkt München, and Theatreakademie Prinzregenten in Munich to name a few. He has choreographed musicals for Theatre Cedar Rapids, the Department of Theatre Arts at Coe College, Revival Theatre Company, Department of Theatre at the University of Iowa, and the Department of Theatre and Dance at Cornell College. Musicals include *Shrek The Musical*, *The Little Mermaid* (Awarded Best Choreography in 2016), *Sister Act The Musical*, *Peter Pan*, *Newsies*, *American Idiot*, *Big Love*, *Hattie Mae's Juke Joint* (an original musical about juke joint life in post-war America), *EVITA*, *Ragtime*, *9 to 5*, *Rent* and *Rocky Horror Picture Show*. Alvon is a proud member of the Actor's Equity Association (AEA).

**BENJO J. VERGE (Sound Designer)** is a first year MFA Theatre Candidate with a concentration in Design and Technical Production from Nashville, TN. Previous UA credits include: *Merchant of Venice* (Asst. Sound Designer and Videographer).

**LIBBY ZAMISKA (Light Designer)**

**TEILA VOCHATZER (Props Master)** is a second year MFA in Theatre Candidate with a concentration in Scenic Design from Pinehurst, NC. Previous UA credits include: *The Merchant of Venice* (Scenic Designer), *Intimate Apparel* (Scenic Charge), *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Props Master), *Mr. Universe* (Props Master/Scenic Charge) and *Hand to God* (Scenic Designer/Props Master/Scenic Charge).

**TRISTAN HALLMAN (Cinematographer)** is a senior from Northport, Alabama majoring in Creative Media and Theatre with a concentration in Acting (BFA). Tristan has worked in cinematography for over 6 years now. He currently works as the lead videographer for Alabama Gymnastics. He holds awards for "Best Cinematography" and "Best Editing" at the Dance Alabama! Film Festival for his film "*Energies of Woman*" (2019) and also won "Best of The Fest" for the dance film "*A.I.*" (2019) in the Dance Alabama! Film Festival.

# PRODUCTION ASSTS. AND CREW

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Asst. Stage Managers

Asst. Lighting Designer/Master  
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Asst. Cinematographer

Asst. Scenic Designer

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Scenic Charge

Sound Board Operator

Props Crew

Stage Crew

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KENNEDI GRANT

CARIDAD GUY

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For more information, visit [theatre.ua.edu/askingthearts](http://theatre.ua.edu/askingthearts)

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- Support student artists and faculty
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- Extend the education and outreach of the UA Theatre Program
- Function as an Advocacy group for the Theatre Program

...and have a great time in the process!

Contact:

**DIANNE TEAGUE** 205-765-3793 · [teague.dianne15@gmail.com](mailto:teague.dianne15@gmail.com)

**CAMILLE MENDLE** 205-886-7565 · [camille.mendle@gmail.com](mailto:camille.mendle@gmail.com)



# SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT



**Austin Phillips** is a Theater major with a concentration in Musical Theatre and a minor in General Business. He is on the philanthropy committee for Alpha Psi Omega and has been working with The Flourish this semester to produce three original radio shows. Additionally, Austin has been working with the Broadway Dreams Foundation, a nonprofit organization supporting arts education around the world. He has been involved with Broadway Dreams for five years, and has been an executive intern, performed at the New York City Industry Showcase, as well as been involved with the

annual Broadway Dreams gala.

Austin has had multiple roles at UA, most notably in *Shooting Star* (Ensemble/Alessandro/Morgan U/S), *Legally Blonde* (Kiki/Ensemble), *Little Women* (Laurie), and *Alabama Repertory Dance Theatre* (Dancer). Austin says, "I am grateful for the numerous opportunities provided to me. I most recently worked on a project with Stacy Alley, collaborating with musical theatre playwrights Kerrigan and Lowdermilk to create a 7-minute number with four actors following all COVID protocols. I also worked with Alvon Reed on a pas de trois to benefit the Iowa Relief Fund, after the travesty that hit Iowa this summer. Sophomore year, thanks to Dr. Justin P. Cowan, I was the lead of a new musical that came straight from off-Broadway called *Single Rider*. The musical theatre class of 2021 worked with writers Sami Horneff and Amanda D'Archangelis to do a staged reading of the show. All of these were amazing experiences and great insight into approaching new projects!"



*Little Women*, Fall 2018  
Photo by Porfirio Solorzano

This winter, Austin plans to (safely) travel to Long Island, NY to perform with 29 other seniors from college programs across the country in a winter intensive called LINK. At LINK, Austin will be performing in an industry showcase while working with resident directors of Broadway shows, Broadway choreographers, music directors and writers, as well as casting directors and agencies. Austin is super excited for this opportunity and to represent UA! He will return to UA in the spring to play the role of Georg in *Spring Awakening*. After graduation, Austin intends to complete a performance internship with Maine State Music Theatre. From there, he plans to move to New York, continue his training in Musical Theatre, and pursue a career as a performer.

# SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS

## **Benefactor (\$20,000+)**

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Kym Hoffmann  
Don Noble & Jennifer  
Horne  
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Cindy Calhoun  
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Dr. Rona J. Donahoe  
Tammy Dran  
Emma Claire Dykes  
Mary Easley  
Therrin Eber  
Dawson Estes

Sonja Fincher  
Cody Floyd  
Lee Freeman  
Alison George  
Kendra Giles  
Mira and James E.  
Griffith, Jr.  
Lana Hagan  
Lauren Hailey  
Lori A. Hales  
Austin Hanover  
Ned Hart  
Jessica Hatfield  
John Heins  
Daniel Henderson  
Allison Hetzel  
Caroline Hill  
Grayson Hill  
Lexi Hivner  
Brandon Hobbs  
Lindsay Howard  
Patricia Hubbs  
Alaina Jones  
Lucy Kaufman  
Jeane Kemp  
Bethany Knight  
Lisa Kuchuk  
Laura Leverett  
Michael Lynch  
Sherry McColgin  
Heather McCraney  
Utz McKnight  
Mary Meares  
Ann Marie Meeker  
James Merrell  
Jerry Mims  
Tammy Mixon  
Santiago Morales

Charlotte Mustard  
Teagen Nabity-Grover  
Matthew Nash  
Marie Nearing  
Ana Nettles  
Arie Nettles  
Joseph Newman  
Gary Pacos  
Laura Pacos  
Maria Pacos  
Cassandra Pierce  
Dalton Pridmore  
Morgan Potts  
Stephanie Puffer  
George Rable  
Lauren Richardson  
Liz Richardson  
Lisa Gerios-Rohl  
Liz Savage  
Mary Sealey  
Dr. Craig Shwery  
Barbara Smith  
Harrison Smith  
Doug Starzec  
Skye Travis  
Theodore Trost  
Margaret Turner  
Julie E. Vaughn  
Melvin Waits  
Sandra Webb  
Thomas Weida, in honor  
of Dr. Jane Weida and  
Cindy Spitko  
Tara Williams  
Kathy Yarbrough  
Victoria Yeager



College of  
Arts & Sciences  
Theatre and Dance

2020-2021 SEASON

## WHAT'S NEXT?

### Theatre

*Antigone*  
*Spring Awakening*

March 2021  
May 2021

### Dance

*Spring ARDT*  
*Dance Alabama! Film Festival*

March 2021  
April 2021



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