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# Steel Magnolias

By  
Robert Harling



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By  
**Robert Harling**

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### *Director's Notes...*

When Robert Harling wrote *Steel Magnolias*, he wasn't trying to craft a commercial hit. He was trying to survive his grief.

Harling has said he wrote the piece in just ten days, an act of love, remembrance, and emotional necessity. What began as a way to process loss became something much larger: a celebration of women whose strength is both unyielding and tender. Women who are, as the title suggests, delicate as magnolias and strong as steel.

At its heart, *Steel Magnolias* is about community. The beauty salon is more than a setting; it is a sanctuary. It is where women gather to tell the truth, to laugh, to argue, to mourn, and, most importantly, to show up for one another. In a culture that often overlooks female friendship, this play elevates those bonds as powerful, sustaining, and heroic.

The play is important because it refuses to separate humor from heartbreak. It understands that laughter is not the opposite of grief; it is often how we survive it. These characters are flawed, stubborn, generous, and deeply human. They remind us that strength does not mean hardness; it means remaining open-hearted even when life is painful.

After 39 years, this story still resonates because we are still navigating illness, loss, and uncertainty. We are still asking who will sit beside us when everything changes. *Steel Magnolias* answers clearly: our people will.

As a director, I am moved by the radical kindness in this play. It celebrates everyday heroism; the courage to love fiercely, to forgive quickly, and to stand by one another no matter what.

Thank you for joining us. May you leave reminded of the steel within you, and the magnolias who make you strong.

*Elizabeth T. Murff*  
Steel Magnolias Director



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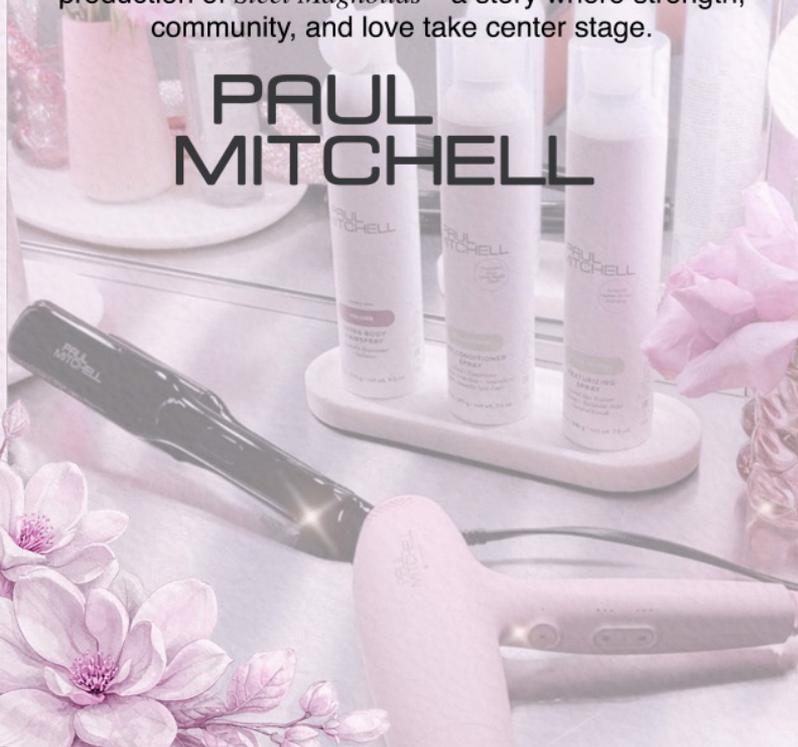
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# Meet The Cast



**Rachel Bolam** (Annelle Dupuy-Desoto) is thrilled to be making her Athens debut in a dream show. Her recent credits include *Va Va Voom* (Jess) - *Playwrights' Round Table*, *Allie Kazan and the Magic Mansion* (Swing) - Orlando Family Stage, *Matilda* (Ensemble) - Theatre South Playhouse. To my family and

Ethan, thank you for your support! IG: @rachelebolam



**Sherrie Childs** (Clairee Belcher) This is Sherrie's debut at the Athens. She took a fourteen-year sabbatical from the stage to rear her son and become an RN. She is thrilled to be back on stage after retiring. Some of her credits include General Matilda B. Cartwright 2025, Sarah Brown 1990 in *Guys and Dolls*, M'Lynn in *Steel Magnolias* 2006, Olive in *The Odd Couple* - female

version, Amanda in *The Glass Menagerie*, Mrs. Higgins, Cockney in *My Fair Lady*, second maid in *My Fair Lady*, and Nettie Fowler in *Carousel*. She is enjoying all that the Entertainment Industry has for her now and in the future and is giving God all the glory. She is excited to be in such a classic show with a group of classy and talented women. Laugh and cry (sometimes at the same time), whatever you do, sit back, have fun, and enjoy the show (they have had fun preparing it for you).



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The Athens Theatre has partnered with **Visit Salzburg**, the breathtaking Austrian city where this beloved story was born, and we are deeply grateful for their generosity and shared passion for bringing this timeless story to life.

While we can't reveal every detail just yet, this **remarkable collaboration** will help us send the season out on a truly unforgettable note. Music, beauty, history, and a very special cultural experience are all part of the celebration as we prepare to honor one of the most cherished musicals of all time **in a way only the Athens Theatre can**.

**Stay tuned.**



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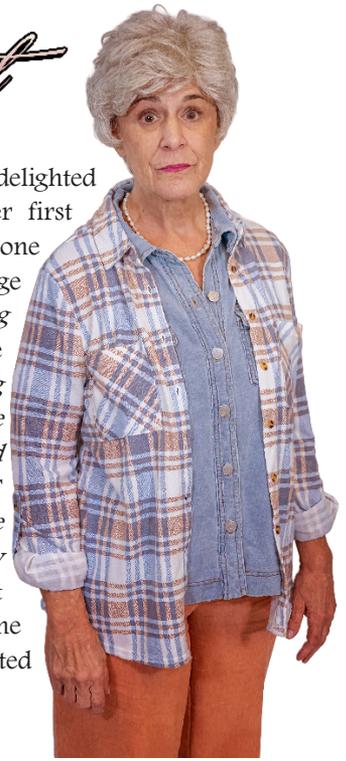
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# Meet The Cast



**Lynne Edinger** (Ouiser Boudreaux) is delighted and honored to be performing in her first Athens Theatre production – and in one of her favorite shows! Recent stage experience includes *Crazy Little Thing Called Horror* (Swamp Monster - The Swamp Monster), *Crazy Little Thing Called Murder* (Peggy - Visiting the Truth); *Trial of the Wicked Witch* (Evil Stepmother), *Gladys in Wonderland* (Gladys) at Breakthrough Theatre Company; and PRT Native Voices (Professor - *Something is Rotten on the Stage in Glenmark*), PRT Launch (Marion - *Friendly Skies*), and PRT Juneteenth (Dorothy - *The Funeral*) at Playwrights Round Table. Lynne would like to thank the Director and Staff of *Steel Magnolias* and the very talented fellow actors with whom she has the privilege to work.



We'll be announcing our Spring Fundraiser soon,  
and while we'll be sharing all the details in the next few weeks...

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# Meet The Cast



**Sara Humbert** (Truvy Jones) is delighted to be playing Truvy Jones (yes, with a “v”). She returns to the Athens Theatre since playing Annie Wilkes in *Misery*. Favorite roles include Mrs. White in *Clue*, Dottie/Ms. Clackett in *Noises Off!*, Madame Thernardier

in *Les Miserables*, Florence and Olive in *The Odd Couple - Female Version*. Gretchen in *Boeing Boeing*, Penelope Pennywise in *Urinetown*, Haley in *Bad Dates* and Annette in *God of Carnage*. When she’s not delivering big hair and bigger opinions, she works as an ICU dietitian, helping people heal one bite at a time. She also teaches yoga at a brewery; proving balance sometimes comes with a side of hops. Like Truvy, she believes laughter is essential, community is everything, and life is best handled with strong roots, a flexible spine, and great hairspray. Many thanks to God, her family, her fur babies and friends for their endless love and support. Enjoy the show, Sugar!



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# Meet The Cast



**Robin Neill** (M'Lynn Eatenton) is happy to be back performing on the Athens stage. You may remember her from *Clue* as Mrs. Peacock or Sister Mary Lazarus from *Sister Act*. Thanks to all the cast and crew and The Athens Theatre for being able to create this little world of these Six Steel Magnolias. For Scott.



**Andrea Oliveras** (Swing Annelle and Shelby) is thrilled to be making her Athens Theatre debut in such a beautiful show! Some of her most recent credits include Marcy Park in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (City Repertory Theatre), Annabeth Chase in *The Lightning Thief* (Daytona State College), and Lucy Van Pelt in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* (Daytona State College).

Andrea thanks her friends and family for their endless support, and the cast and crew for this unique experience. Lastly, she thanks Seth Kirk, her loving partner for always believing in her and encouraging her to reach for the stars. IG: @\_mxriemooon



**Molly Schoolmeester** (Swing Truvy and M'Lynn) is tickled pink to be back on the Athens stage with the cast of *Steel Magnolias*! She is a BFA recipient in Performing Arts, Vocal Performance and Dance from SCAD, an emerging Intimacy Director with IDC, and a certified Actor Combatant with SAFD. Some of her favorite previous roles include Stella Kowalski in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Pippi in *The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical*, Darlene Seward in *The Great American Trailer Park Christmas Musical*, Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, and Milady/Constance in *The Three Musketeers*. The two roles she is most proud to hold however, is "Daughter" to Marla and Rick, the most supportive parents she could have ever asked for, and "Wife" to Henry, her best friend and life partner.



Thank You Mike Kitai for making us look good!

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-JOE HEARN



# Meet The Cast



**Allison Young** (Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie) is thrilled to be performing back at the Athens Theatre in such a wonderfully heartfelt show. She graduated from the University of Central Florida with degrees in Theatre Studies and Entertainment Business Management.

You may have seen her on the Athens stage this season in *Holiday Inn* (Susie/Ensemble), *Legally Blonde* (Ensemble/ US Brooke Wyndham/Enid), and *Grease* (Ensemble/ US Marty) or around Central Florida in *Puffs!* (Theatre South Playhouse), *Vanities* (The Ritz Sanford), and *9-5* (Breakthrough Theatre). She is forever grateful for the love and support of her family, dear friends, and the incredible team here at the Athens Theatre. A very special thank you to her own mother, who embodies the true meaning of unconditional love.



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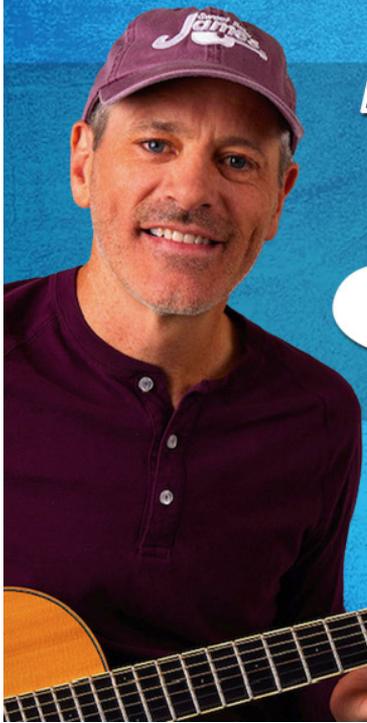
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# Steel Magnolias

## ~ Cast ~

Rachel Bolam .....Annelle Dupuy-Desoto  
Sherrie Childs .....Clairee Belcher  
Lynne Edinger ..... Ouiser Boudreaux  
Sara Humbert.....Truvy Jones  
Robin Neill.....M'Lynn Eatenton  
Andrea Oliveras ..... Swing Annelle & Shelby  
Molly Schoolmeester .....Swing Truvy & M'Lynn  
Allison Young..... Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie  
Michael Truilo ..... Radio DJ Voice-over

## ~ Production Team & Technical Crew ~

Director ..... Elizabeth T. Murff  
Prop Design/Scenic Build/TD..... Tori Oakes  
Scenic Design & Scenic Charge Artist..... Michael Brewer  
Costume Design .....Amy Uppercue & Amanda Tyler  
Wig Design..... Taylor Whiteman  
Lighting Design..... Annmarie Duggan\*  
Lighting Director ATD.....Nicholas Hogan  
Sound Design ..... Alberto Meza  
Stage Manager.....Avery Tyler  
Assistant Stage Manager/  
Deck Chief .....Megan Quiroga  
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~ Act II ~

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Scene 2: November

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# Meet The Production Team



**Elizabeth T. Murff** (Director) After many years of living in Central Florida, Elizabeth currently resides in Auburn, Alabama, where she received her BFA in Theatre. Audiences will perhaps remember her as Daisy in the Athens production of *DRIVING MISS DAISY*. Primarily known as an actor, it is a privilege to sit on the other side of the proscenium and present her vision of this heartwarming play. It is wonderful to be reunited with the best production team ever! As always, gratitude to Rives and Rocco for their continued support. Elizabeth would also like to thank you all for supporting the Arts in Volusia County. Without you the magic doesn't happen.



**Avery Tyler** (Stage Manager) is excited to be part of the *Steel Magnolias* team! Athens Theatre stage management credits include: *Legally Blonde*, *Grease*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, *Misery* and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Some favorite shows she has been the ASM for include *Beauty and the Beast*, *White Christmas*, *Noises Off*, *Young Frankenstein*, and *Rock of Ages*. She also stage manages and teaches technical theater with the Athens Theater Youth Academy. Outside of the Athens, Avery teaches English and assists with theater and dance at Deltona High School. She would like to thank the cast, crew, and production team for all their hard work as well as thank the audience for supporting the arts in their community.



**Megan Quiroga** (Assistant Stage Manager/Deck Chief) is super excited to be a part of *Steel Magnolias*. This is her eighth show at the Athens Theatre. Her assistant stage manager credits include *Legally Blonde*, *By the Skin of Our Teeth* and *A Rebel without a Cause* at Penguin Point Productions, as well as *A Christmas Carol*, *Dracula*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, and *The Full Monty*, here at the Athens Theatre! Megan has graduated Seminole State College with her A.A. and is excited to continue her technical theatre work in central Florida. Megan is so honored to ASM for *Steel Magnolias* and hopes you all enjoy the show!



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# Meet The Production Team



**Michael S. Brewer** (Scenic Design/Scenic Charge Artist) is a 1987 graduate of Wright State University in theatre design and technology. He started working as a scenic artist in regional theaters, the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta, La Jolla Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse, and Cleveland Playhouse. He is currently based in Ohio and has been designing for local theaters there. At the Athens Theatre, he has designed *Guys and Dolls*, *A Christmas Story*, *Clue*, *Elf*, *I love you, You're Perfect*, *Now Change*, *Ragtime*, *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Cinderella*, *Youth Edition*, *Legally Blonde* and recently, *Alice in Wonderland, Jr.*



**Tori Oakes** (Prop Design/Scenic Build/TD) is a Central Florida based technical director and scenic designer. She is, as always, happy to be working at the Athens Theatre. Previous designs at the Athens include *Full Monty*, *Misery*, *Margaritaville*, *Rock of Ages*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *Ragtime*, *Shrek TYA Version*, *Elf*, *Chicago*, *Mamma Mia!*, *The Fantasticks!*, *9 to 5*, *Into the Woods*, *The Producers*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *The Wedding Singer*, *Oklahoma!*, *Arsenic & Old Lace*, *Aladdin, Jr.*, *Sister Act*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *James and the Giant Peach*, *A Christmas Carol*, *The Addams Family*, *Cabaret*, and *White Christmas*. Tori is the owner of Misfit Toys Theatrical LLC, an Orlando based production company that, in addition to building scenery for Athens Theatre productions, provides various scenic and properties services for a number of theatrical organizations from Central Florida to New England. Tori holds an MFA in theatre from the University of Central Florida.



**Annmarie Duggan\*** (Lighting Design) is excited to return to the Athens Theatre after previously designing *Grease*, *Rent*, *Into the Wood*, *Clue*, *Ragtime* and *Hunchback*. Ms. Duggan has designed more than four hundred productions in her career. Which included the Off-Broadway production of *Clue the Musical* (Players Theatre). Regional Credits: American Girl Place Theatre, Chicago, LA, and New York, Skylight Music Theatre, Maine State Music Theatre, Fulton Operas House, Pittsburgh Playhouse and Potsdam Music Theatre to name a few. Ms. Duggan is a Professor at the University of Pittsburgh; she teaches in the areas of Lighting Design and Stage Management. Ms. Duggan also works in application development for theatre professionals. You can find more information about her design work and mac applications at [www.amddesignonline.com](http://www.amddesignonline.com).

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# Meet The Production Team



**Nicholas Hogan** (Lighting Director/ATD) A Florida-based Lighting Professional is excited to be working on his fourth season here at the Athens Theater. A few of his favorite designs at the Athens Theatre include: *Dracula*, *White Christmas*, *Jimmy Buffett's Escape from Margaritaville*, and *Misery*.



**Alberto Meza, Jr.** (Director of Sound) is thrilled to be joining the Athens Theatre team as the Director of Sound! His credits at Athens include *Alice in Wonderland, Jr.*, *Legally Blonde*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *Holiday Inn*. He is from Jackson, Mississippi and has served as the Resident Sound Designer/Engineer & Projections Designer/Engineer & Company Liaison for over 5 years at Mississippi's only Regional Professional Theatre, New Stage Theatre. Some of his regional credits include *Come From Away*, *The Mountaintop*, *Million Dollar Quartet Christmas*, *Gaslight*, *Elf The Musical*, *Every Brilliant Thing*, *Sound of Music*, *9 to 5*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Little Women: The Musical*, and *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. He is a graduate from Belhaven University located in Jackson, MS where he received his BFA in Theatre with honors, with a minor in Film and received design, acting, and film awards during his time there. He joined New Stage Theatre's team as their resident designer shortly after graduating and quickly branched out and started designing Lighting, Sound, and Projections for multiple theatres and universities around the Jackson area. Alberto takes great pride in being able to uphold and provide great sound and quality to all of Athens' shows and limited engagements! He would like to thank his Athens' family for welcoming him in with open arms as he transitions into his new life in Florida!



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# Meet The Production Team



**Amanda Tyler** (Co-Costume Design, House Manager) A native Floridian, Ms. Tyler studied film and theatre production at Valencia College. She began working in theatre in 1993 at Seaside Music Theatre in Daytona Beach as Wardrobe Supervisor, Assistant to the Resident Costume Designer, and Costume Rentals Manager. She finds herself out from behind the curtain for the first time as the Athens House Manager. Amanda joined the Athens family in 2023 and is excited to help this incredible organization continue to grow and move forward. She takes great pride in the work she does alongside the many dedicated Athens Theatre volunteer ushers while helping to bring amazing art to this historic DeLand stage. She hopes that you enjoy the show!



**Amy Uppercue** (Co-Costume Design, Costume Shop Manager) has been working behind the scenes at the Athens Theatre since 2011 and has loved being a part of all the magic that has been created on our stage. Favorite costume design credits include *Footloose: Youth Edition*, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *Legally Blonde: the Musical*, and *Footloose*. In addition to running the Athens Costume Shop, Amy is also a teaching artist for the Athens Theatre Youth Academy, and serves on the board of the National League of Junior Cotillion West Volusia Chapter and the DeLand Choir Parents Association. So much love to C, HK, AB and B.



**Taylor Whiteman** (Wig Design) is thrilled to return to the Athens Theatre. Her most recent projects have included Wig Design and playing the character Enid Hoopes in *Legally Blonde*, and has also appeared as Jovie in *Elf* and in the ensemble of *Sweeney Todd* (u/s Beggar Woman). A Central Florida-based actor and licensed cosmetologist, Taylor enjoys working both on stage and behind the scenes. She would like to thank her parents, friends, and her two cats, Winter and Shakespeare, for their endless love and support.



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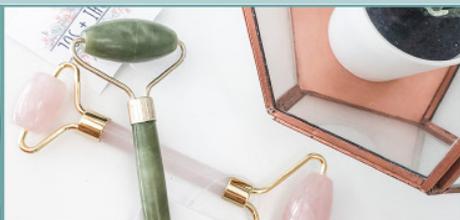
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# Meet The Administrative Team



**Alexa Baldwin** (Executive Director) is a graduate of Kent State University with her BFA in Musical Theatre. After twelve years of working in the theatre industry and managing the offices of several companies, Alexa became the Director of Marketing and Operations for the Sands Theatre Center (DBA - Athens Theatre) in July of 2011. In 2021, she was made the theatre's Executive Director. She has dedicated her life to working

with an incredible family of co-workers and volunteers to make the Athens Theatre a representation of what community theatres can strive to be—both onstage and off. In addition to her theatre family, she is fortunate to have an incredible husband and daughter who are endlessly patient and supportive with all things Athens Theatre. Mrs. Baldwin thanks everyone in the cast, crew, production team, and ALL the staff for the tireless hours they spent making tonight's magic happen. She hopes that you enjoy the show and come back to visit us again soon.



**Frank Ramirez** (Producing Artistic Director) is a passionate and accomplished entertainment professional with over three decades of experience spanning nearly every facet of the performing arts industry. His multifaceted career has included work as a stage manager, director, union representative, general manager, and creative leader. Since joining the Athens Theatre in 2018, Frank has directed numerous acclaimed productions and now proudly serves as the Producing Artistic

Director. He is honored to help steward this historic and vibrant cultural landmark in the heart of Downtown DeLand. Frank's previous work includes collaborations with Broadway and Off-Broadway productions, professional regional theatres, and theme park entertainment. He has also worked internationally through his role with *The Jim Henson Company* and Heather Henson's *IBEX Puppetry*, serving as Company Manager for large-scale theatrical tours across the United States, Canada, China, Kazakhstan, and Indonesia. A committed mentor, Frank has served as a guest artist instructor in Stage Management at SUNY Potsdam's Crane School of Music, sharing his expertise with the next generation of theatre professionals. His career reflects a deep dedication to storytelling, community, and the transformative power of the arts.



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# Meet The Administrative Team



**Santi Gabino** (Director of Marketing and Communications) After many years of visiting and being captivated by its charm, Santi Gabino Jr. relocated to DeLand in the summer of 2022. A South Florida native, he spent over 11 years as the Executive & Marketing Director of a successful event venue in Homestead, FL. During that time on his family's estate, he hosted nearly 100 weddings, welcomed magazine shoots for publications such as *Allure Bridal* and *Modern Bride*, and oversaw TV filming for networks including Nickelodeon and Telemundo. As a pioneer in South Florida's agritourism industry, he launched a popular Farm-to-Table dinner series featuring celebrated local chefs.

At the Athens, Santi leads the development of marketing materials, public communications, media outreach, and social media strategy, as well as innovative collaborations and themed campaigns that connect productions to brands, businesses, and cultural organizations locally, nationally, and globally. He is active in the community, serving on the MainStreet DeLand board and several committees and charities that support the growth and vitality of the region. Outside of work, Santi enjoys cooking, painting, and giving in to the irresistible temptation of buying things he absolutely doesn't need at any yard, garage, or estate sale that crosses his path.



**Craig Uppercue** (Director of Community Relations) A Stetson University (BM/BME) & Grand Canyon University (M.Ed.) alumnus, Mr. Uppercue has taught for 20 years in the public school systems of Florida, currently serving as a Fine Arts specialist in Volusia County Schools. Mr. Uppercue has been with the Athens Theatre since 2011 and had the wonderful privilege of serving as Artistic Director for 10 years. He is now honored to be playing a continued part in the life of the theatre. Craig is the Music Director of the Off-Broadway

National Tour *The Rock & The Rabbi* and performs with the show when available. Other performing opportunities include Broadway and Off-Broadway credits such as *The Witnesses Musical* (Original Cast member), *The Lion King*, *Songs for a New World*, and numerous national tours throughout the U.S. He is actively involved with many professional symphonies and maintains an active performing schedule with professional artists throughout the nation. Craig and his wonderful wife, Amy, live locally, enjoying every moment as they watch their three daughters grow up!

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# Meet The Administrative Team



**Mike Kitaif** (Photographer) Mike has been passionate about photography since high school and is proud to be photographing for the Athens Theatre. Along with photographing other local theaters, he spent eight seasons capturing images for the UCF Marching Knights. When not in the theater, Mike develops software for Cardinal Systems that collects 3D data from photographic and laser sources which is utilized by mapping professionals, civil engineers, and NASA. With a wife and daughter on stage, Mike's love for theater photography blossomed naturally, becoming a 12-year passion. He's honored to have the best seat in the house during photo sessions and is deeply grateful to the actors, crew, directors, and everyone who contributes to make the magic of theater happen.



**Grace Boynton** (Development Director) Grace has a background in both the performing arts and nonprofit development. After graduating from the University of Central Florida in 2020, Grace discovered her passion for nonprofit work and has since made significant contributions to organizations like Planned Parenthood and United Against Poverty, managing yearly budgets of over two million dollars and producing annual fundraising efforts. As the Development Director for the Historic Athens Theatre, she gets to blend her artistic insights with strategic fundraising expertise to support the theater's mission and ensure its continued success in the community. You may recognize Grace as a performer at the Athens Theatre in shows like *Legally Blonde*, *RENT*, *9 to 5*, and *The Wedding Singer*.

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# Meet The Administrative Team



**Shonda L. Thurman** (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advocate) Born and raised in Flint, MI, Ms. Thurman holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Roosevelt University, in Chicago, IL, and Stephens College in Columbia, MO. She also holds a theatre management certification from Tiffany Vega Management. Shonda is currently the curriculum manager for the Orlando Family Stage and current co-chair for the Juneteenth Lunch and Learn: Facts of Freedom. Her performance credits range from local to all over the country in national tours. In her roles as a DEIA, performer, director, and educator she believes that everyone deserves a voice, their stories told and heard, and themselves represented in whatever arena they choose. "I am not a teacher; I am an awakener." – Robert Frost.



**Roberta (Bobe) Kenemer** (Resident Graphic Artist) is a graduate of Ringling College of Art & Design (formerly Ringling School of Art) majoring in Graphic Arts & Illustration. After relocating to Volusia County in 1982, Bobe worked for a small publishing company and as a Cartographer before accepting a position at Tennant Printing Company in DeLand. She gained extensive experience in the Graphics Department of various printing companies, along with numerous freelance projects, before assuming her role with the Athens Theatre in the fall of 2019. As the sole image designer for the theatre and the Athens Theatre Youth Academy, her graphic design skills play an integral role in the theatre's visual identity. She takes immense pride in being part of the Athens Theatre family and eagerly anticipates the opportunity to contribute to the creative journey of each upcoming production and event.

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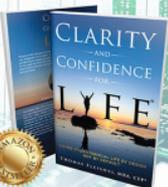
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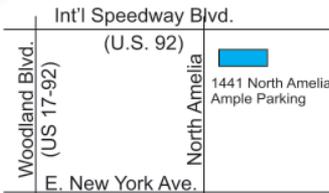
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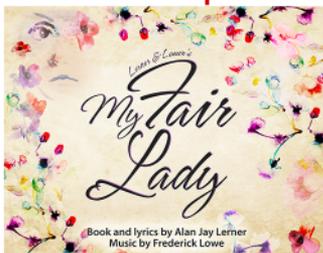
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