

# RE-ENVISIONING JOAN

A silhouette of a statue of Joan of Arc on horseback, holding a flag aloft. The scene is set against a dramatic sky with orange and blue clouds, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The statue is dark and stands out against the lighter, colorful background.

NIAGARA  
UNIVERSITY  
THEATRE

# NIAGARA UNIVERSITY THEATRE

Elizabeth Ann Clune Center for Theatre

2025-2026 Season



Oct. 2-5  
**RE-ENVISIONING JOAN**  
by Mara Neimanis



Oct. 30-Nov. 2  
**WITCH**  
by Jen Silverman



Nov. 20-23  
**RIDE THE CYCLONE**  
by Jacob Richmond &  
Brooke Maxwell



Jan 23-24  
**SHORT PLAY FESTIVAL**  
by Various Playwrights  
All Student-Directed



Feb. 27-Mar. 1  
**BURST**  
by Rachel Bublitz  
All Student Produced



Mar. 26-29  
**HURRICANE DIANE**  
by Madeline George



Apr. 23-May 3  
**GODSPELL**  
by John Michael-Tebalak  
and Stephen Schwartz



For further information and tickets:

<http://theatre.niagara.edu/> [boxoffice@niagra.edu](mailto:boxoffice@niagra.edu)  
716.286.8685

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY THEATRE

presents a production of

# RE-ENVISIONING JOAN

Written by Mara Neimanis

Direction and Aerials by  
**MARA NEIMANIS**

Aerial Sculpture  
**TIM SCOFIELD**

Costume Design  
**MAUREEN STEVENS**

Sound Design  
**CHRIS BALLARD**  
Class of '08

Lighting Design  
**DARIN KEESING**

Stage Manager  
**BRIEGE LENNON**  
Class of '27

Assistant Stage Manager  
**ESTRELLA ORSI**  
Class of '29

Presented in the William P. and Marie Leary Theatre in the Elizabeth Ann  
Clune Center for Theatre Oct. 2 - 5

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Any video and/or audio recording of this production  
is strictly prohibited.

# Cast

ENSEMBLE #1	MIGUEL CASTAÑEDA
ENSEMBLE #2	JULIA CIANFRINI
ENSEMBLE #3	MAX DECKER
ENSEMBLE #4	BRIANNA GARCIA
ENSEMBLE #5	GRACE GORDON
ENSEMBLE #6	JAMES DAVID MAXIM

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# Scenes

SCENE 1:	THE HEARING
SCENE 2:	THE LISTENING
SCENE 3:	ANGEL/HUMAN
SCENE 4:	FROM SAINT JOAN, George Bernard Shaw
SCENE 5:	THE SIEGE OF ORLÉANS
SCENE 6:	JOAN SPEAKS
SCENE 7:	TRIAL 1
SCENE 8:	TRIAL 2

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## Place

Various locations  
in France

## Time

1429-1431

THE VIDEO RECORDING OR OTHER  
VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF  
THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY  
PROHIBITED.

# Director's Note



**Mara Neimanis**

Director

*"In memory of my mother,  
Naomi Neimanis"*

In writing and creating  
Re-Envisioning Joan

My chief objectives in creating Re-Envisioning Joan included empowering student voices, outlining various viewpoints of Joan of Arc through aerials, and investigating the relevancy of Joan's story in 1431 to the life our students face now. In this piece, George Bernard Shaw's viewpoint as a feminist, critic, anti-war activist, and playwright of his time served as a launch pad, as well as the actual transcript of Joan's trial, but what kept on revealing itself in this process for me was the theme of voices. What voices did Joan hear, and what are we hearing now? How did those voices guide her to act and what voices cause us to act now? Are they the truth? Are they propaganda? As Joan was on trial then, our students face a new America where science, democracy, social programs, voting rights, women and LGBTQ rights and race are changing viewpoints. As a cast, we hope to encourage the following questions: What voices are you listening to and why? What are you consuming? What is dictatorship and what is democracy? What is nationalism? And, like Joan, what are the things that need to be confessed before we can move on with God, planet, humanity, and leadership?

I have worked with a magnificent cast. They have tackled the emotional, physical, and creative process of this piece in every moment of rehearsal and they have claimed ownership of what they are hearing and acting upon. I am so enormously proud of them as performers and people. I hope they are as inspirational for you as they have been for me. We burn for you.

-Mara Neimanis

# Production

Producing Artistic Director	<b>Steve Braddock</b>
Technical Director	<b>Jackie Renaud</b>
Head of Costume Production	<b>Jenna Damberger</b>
Costume Shop Supervisor	<b>Yamilex Holguín Pérez</b>
Asst. Costume Designer	<b>Hannah LaRuez</b>
Asst. Technical Director	<b>Sam Prezioso</b>
Props Acquisition	<b>Wyatt Fleury</b>
Swing Technician	<b>Bayleigh Clark</b>
Sound Technician	<b>Hailey Westendarp</b>
Head Electrician	<b>Brittany Konruff</b>
Light Board Technician	<b>Kale Kurek</b>
Deck Crew	<b>Elizabeth Flickinger</b>
Turntable Operator	<b>Brian Cunningham</b>
Wardrobe Head	<b>Jessica Spengler</b>
Wardrobe Crew	<b>Lillian Jarzabek</b>
Box Office Supervisor	<b>Emily Weber</b>
Box Office Manager	<b>Marilyn Deighton</b>
Box Office Personnel	<b>Emily Conti, Matthew Denman, Ella Franke, Millie Glamatovic- Mckinstry</b>
Front of House	<b>Paris Moffitt, Mitchell Stutz</b>
Costume Construction Crew	<b>Brian Cunningham, Koral Davis, Nico V. Scirri, Emma Lessord</b>
Costume Shop Assistants	<b>Jessica Spengler, Kate E. Thompson, Faith Leader, A'mya Hemphill</b>
Light Crew	<b>Warren Adams II, Elizabeth Ortiz, Tanner Watkeys</b>
Set Construction Crew	<b>James Arnold, Miguel Castaneda, James David Maxim, Nico V. Scirri</b>
Work Study Carpenters	<b>Sophie Chaney, Sara Conrad, Ella Hartzell, Kylie Porto, Aidan Strack, Addison Wilson</b>
Publicity/Playbill Coordination	<b>Kim Neiss</b>
Social Media	<b>Emily Weber</b>
Graphic Design	<b>Suzanne Karaszewski</b>
Production Photographer	<b>Mark Duggan</b>
Headshot Photographer	<b>Brian Rock</b>

# NIAGARA UNIVERSITY PLAYERS

The Niagara University Players is a student theatre organization that has been in existence for over sixty years and organizes social activities (Thanksgiving dinner, Christmas party, Kris Kringle gift exchange, annual Players Banquet and more), fundraisers and community service activities. The NU Players also present an all-student-run production once a year. This year's production was:

## BURST

by Rachel Bublitz

**Feb. 27 - Mar. 1, 2026**

Any NU student is eligible for membership.  
contact: [nuplayers1964@gmail.com](mailto:nuplayers1964@gmail.com)



## NU PLAYERS 2025-26 BOARD OF OFFICERS

Co-Presidents

**Sam Prezioso,  
Briege Lennon**

Vice President  
Co-Treasurers

**Jada Stewart  
Bayleigh Clark,  
Paige Tomlinson  
Ryan Needham**

Secretary  
Publicity

**Brianna Garcia  
Kale Kurek, Brian  
Cunningham**

Banquet/Soiree

**Finn Fleury  
Hannah LaRuez  
Jacob Beaudoin, Jairus  
Drayton**

Community Service  
Apparel  
Co-Head Events

## PLAYERS PRESENTS

Artistic Director  
Asst Artistic Director  
Technical Director  
Asst. Technical Director

**Lillian Jarzabek  
Max Decker  
Sam Prezioso  
Jacob Beaudoin**

Peer-Elected Student Advocate

**Paige Tomlinson**



NU Theatre invites you to return for our upcoming productions of:



# Witch

by Jen Silverman

**Oct. 30 - Nov. 2**



Book, Music, & Lyrics by Jacob Richmond  
& Brooke Maxwell

**Nov. 20 - 23**



For information on our full season lineup, and to reserve tickets, please visit our website:

**<https://theatre.niagara.edu/>**

or contact our box office:

**Ph: (716) 286-8685**

**Email: [boxoffice@niagara.edu](mailto:boxoffice@niagara.edu)**



# Department of Theatre & Fine Arts

## Academic Year 2025-2026

### Theatre

**Chris Ballard**  
(Sound)  
Sound Coordinator

**Amanda Benzin**  
(Dance)

**Steven Braddock**  
(Acting)  
Artistic Director of NU Theatre

**Jayson Clark**  
(Lighting)  
SPF Production Manager

**Jenna Damberger**  
(Costume)

**Aurora Deeds**  
(Voice)

**Marilyn Deighton**  
(Costume)

**Teodoro Dragonieri**  
(Physical Theatre)

**Jon Elston**  
(Playwriting)

**Yamilex Holguín Pérez**  
(Costume Shop Supervisor)

**Joe Isgar**  
(Voice)

**Darin Keesing**  
(Scenic/Lighting Design)  
Production Manager

**Anna Krempoltz**  
Intimacy Choreographer

**Dr. Robyn Lee**  
(Acting/Directing)

**Kate LoConti Alcocer**  
(Effective Speech)

**Gary Marino**  
(Dance)

**Dr. Bridget Moriarty**  
(Voice)  
Music Director

**Mara Neimanis**  
(Physical Theatre)

**Kim Neiss**  
Administrative Assistant

**Dr. Dave Peterson**  
(Theatre History)

**Jackie Renaud**  
Technical Director

**Patty Rihn**  
Guest Lighting Designer

**Dr. Kahlil Sarikey**  
(Music Theory/Guitar)

**Salvatore Scamacca**  
(Voice)

**Maureen Stevens**  
(Design/Production)  
Costume Designer

**Amy Teal**  
(Voice)

**Paul Todaro**  
(Acting/Speech)

**Steven Vaughan**  
(Acting/Stage Combat)

**Terri Filipis Vaughan**  
(Dance)  
Chair, Dept. of Theatre & Fine Arts

**Leanne Vida**  
(Voice)

**Phil Wackerfuss**  
(Dance)

**Emily Weber**  
Administrative Assistant  
Box Office Supervisor

### Fine Arts

**Randy Andropolis**  
(Music History)

**Sonya DeLazzer**  
(Art History)

**Jessica DiPalma**  
(Art History/Museum Studies)

**Nancy Knechtel**  
(Art History)

**Katherine Sehr**  
(Drawing)

**John Sauter**  
(Urban Sketching)

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY THEATRE PRESENTS

# The Class of 2026

# BFA SHOWCASE

Directed by Robyn Lee  
Musical Direction by Bridget Moriarty



Help Send the NU Theatre Class of 2026 to New York City!

The class of 2026 is heading to NYC to share their talents with casting directors, agents, and industry professionals. But we can't do it without your help! Your donation helps cover the cost of student travel and housing, and performance venue fees.



<https://theatre.niagara.edu/shows/showcase/>

# CASTELLANI ART MUSEUM OF NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

Ed Wong-Ligda, American, (detail) *Waterfall*, 2, 2019, oil on canvas, 22 x 34 in.,  
Image courtesy of Ed Wong-Ligda Studio.



## Fall 2025 @ CAM

This fall at the Castellani Art Museum, connect with art in ways that fit your life—from wellness in the galleries to hands-on crafting, talks, music, and film. Take a midday pause with Yoga@ CAM and The Art of Mindfulness and join CAM Meets programs including *Forged in Bronze* (a conversation with sculptor Susan Geissler) and *Myths in Music* (a concert inspired by Jessica Gadra). Create in our Folklife Workshops (wirework jewelry; beaded ornaments) and explore new exhibitions at our October 23 reception for *Dignity: Art as a Lens for Social Justice* and *Ed Wong-Ligda: Landscapes of Memory and Mortality*. Cap the season at our Holiday Art Market (Dec 12–13). Scan the QR code to learn more and register now.

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#### Hours:

Wednesday 11 a.m.–5 p.m.  
Thursday 1–7 p.m. Friday–  
Sunday 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

#### Suggested admission: \$5

(Free for CAM Members  
and Children 12 and under)

[www.castellaniartmuseum.org](http://www.castellaniartmuseum.org)  
[@castellaniartmuseum](mailto:@castellaniartmuseum)  
7 Varsity Drive Niagara  
University, NY 14109



# Biographies of Theatre Students, Faculty, Staff & Guest Artists 2025-2026

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**WARREN ADAMS II**, a freshman from Buffalo, NY, is a Theatre Performance major and ASL sign language minor. Hometown Buffalo, New York. Credits. Cinderella (ensemble), Mamma Mia (Sam Carmichael), the Outsiders (Darry), Your A Good Man Charlie Brown (Schroder), Richard III (Richard) and voice acted in season 3 of Sister Justine's Saints Tales.



**JAMES ARNOLD**, is a freshman from Ithaca, NY. They are a Theatre Performance major, and are still deciding on minors. Favorite credits include: Urinetown (Officer Barrel), The Prom (Tom Hawkins), Mean Girls (Mr. Duvall), and High School Musical (Ms. Darbus). Offstage credits include: The Tempest (Director), Footloose (Assistant Director), and Little Shop of Horrors (Stage Manager). James also teaches with The Hanagar Theatre's Next Generation School of Theatre where they received the Erin Aljoe Schlather Inspiration award for their contributions to the program.

**CHRIS BALLARD** (Adjunct Lecturer, Sound, Sound Designer) is an '09 Graduate of NU Theatre with a BFA in Design Technology. After graduation Chris served as the Audio Coordinator at Shakespeare In Delaware Park for 14 seasons. He also spent 8 years as an Audio Engineer at the Seneca Niagara Casino. He has also been a Stagehand and Audio Engineer at UB Center for the Arts, IATSE 121, BAV Services, and a number of other theatres and production companies around the Buffalo Region. He is currently working as an AV Specialist for M&T Tech in downtown Buffalo. Chris has also designed sound for Road Less Traveled Productions, Iroquois High School and Grand Island High School. He is extremely excited to be back at Niagara as the Sound Designer, Coordinator and Adjunct Professor



**JACOB BEAUDOIN**, a junior from Canandaigua, NY, is a Theatre Performance Major at Niagara University. NU credits A Dolls House (Torvald), The Loveliest Afternoon (Man), Company (Peter) Other Collegiate credits: Eurydice (Interesting Nasty Man/Lord of the Underworld), Machinal (Doctor, Judge, Priest). Outside Credits: Bad Auditions on Camera (Casting Director) and, at Canandaigua Academy The Spongebob Musical (Mr. Krabs), The Laramie Project (Dr. Cantway, Rob DeBree), Mamma Mia (Father Alexandrios), Almost Maine (Pete), All Shook Up (Ensemble). Offstage credits: Allegheny College Playshop Head Over Heels (QLab Operator).



**LANDON BOVA**, is coming from Tonawanda, NY and majoring in Theatre Performance with a minor in Film Studies. Landon has worked in shows at his high school St. Joseph's Collegiate Institute in such shows as NOISES OFF, JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR, THE MOUSETRAP, and GUYS AND DOLLS to name some, playing the roles of Garry, Pilate, Sgt. Trotter, and Big Jule respectively. He is excited to begin his first year in the Niagara University Theatre Department and looks forward to the years to come!

**AMANDA BENZIN** (Adjunct Lecturer, Dance) is a somatically conscious, rhythmically and passionately driven educator, Emmy-Award-winning performer, choreographer, scholar-artist, and administrator originally from Buffalo, New York. She holds an MFA in Dance from CU Boulder with concentrations in performance, choreography, somatics, women and gender studies and pedagogy. She graduated summa cum laude from the University at Buffalo with a BFA in Dance and minor in Business Administration. Her research and choreography have recently been presented at ACDA, Alma College, DSA's Conference at University of Malta, Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities, Life in Motion Film Festival, and BMCA's Conferences at Smith College, Texas State University, University of California, Santa Barbara, and Denison University. Most recently Benzin served as Assistant Professor of Dance and Dance Program Coordinator at Colorado Mesa University. She is currently the Assistant Director of The Baldy Center for Law and Social Policy at the University at Buffalo School of Law as well as an Adjunct Instructor at NU and UB.



**STEVEN BRADDOCK** (Artistic Director, Acting) has directed over 30 productions for NU Theatre, including Company, A Doll's House, Rent, Much Ado About Nothing, A Sondheim Tribute, Measure for Measure, Peter & The Starcatcher, Cabaret, An Ideal Husband, Little Shop of Horrors, Chicago, Julius Caesar, Sweeney Todd and Damn Yankees. Prior to coming to NU, he served for eleven years as the Artistic Director of the Gifford Family Theatre, a professional Theatre for Young Audiences in Syracuse. He has worked as Director of Education for Syracuse Stage and Asst. Director of Education at the Huntington Theatre Company in Boston. Mr. Braddock has taught acting at Le Moyne College, Syracuse University, Anna Maria College and Worcester (MA) State College. A member of Actor's Equity, Steve has been seen locally at Shakespeare in Delaware Park, and regionally at theatres throughout the northeast. He has also appeared in numerous commercials as well as voiced characters in multiple audiobooks. Mr. Braddock's professional affiliations include Actor's Equity, Theatre for

Young Audiences USA, American Association of Theatre & Education, Theatre Communications Group and U.S.I.T.T. Steve received his M.F.A. in Acting from the University of Southern California.



**MIGUEL CASTAÑEDA** is a junior pursuing a Theatre Performance major and an English minor through the NU Honors Program. NU Onstage Credits: Rent (Steve / Ensemble), 2024 Short Play Festival's Pass Go: A Monopoly Play (Zach), It's A Wonderful Life: The Radio Play (Joe Marty / Mr. Carter). Back home, he has been involved with the Broadway Theatre Troupe of Ateneo: Between Lands (Co-director / Jhemee), Broadway on Shuffle: Vol. 3 (Music Director) and Repertory Philippines: Spelling Bee (Barfée), The Emoji Musical (ASM / Production Intern). Other Credits: Pippin (Ensemble), Mothers and Sons (Stage Manager), Fun Home (ASM). Sending much love back home. Lipad!

**SOPHIE CHANEY**, a senior from Erie, PA, is pursuing a Theatre Design/Production major. Sophie also works in the NU Theater Scene Shop and assists with all show builds. NU credits: 22' Short Play Festival's After You (Stage Manager), Cabaret (Assistant Technical Director), Art (Stage Manager), Fun Home (Assistant Scenic Charge), 24' Short Play Festival's 10,000 Cigarettes (Director), Anne Frank (Scenic Charge), and Rent (Assistant Scenic Design), A Doll's House (Scenic Charge), 8 Women & a Murder (Assistant Scenic Design), Mothers and Sons (Scenic Design), The Seagull (Scenic Charge), and Company (Assistant Scenic Design). Outside Credits: Shea's 710's Newsies (Scenic Charge), Irish Classical's The Loved Ones (Assistant Scenic Charge).



**JULIA CIANFRINI**, a senior from Lancaster, NY, is currently studying Theatre Performance with a minor in ASL and Deaf Studies. NU credits: Seagull (Nina), A Doll's House (Nora), Rent (Maureen), Much Ado About Nothing (Dogberry), Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley (Jane), A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder (Evangeline/Ensemble), N.U.R.T. 2023 & 2025 (Yellow & Blue), Sondheim Tribute Revue (Ensemble), Company (Hair & Makeup Designer), 8 Women (Hair & Makeup head), NU Short Play Festival 2024 (Wardrobe Head + Swing Tech), Art (Assistant Stage Manager). Recent outside credits: Teal's Niagara Theatre's Coraline (Other Father), SDP's The Comedy of Errors (Luciana).



**BAYLEIGH CLARK**, a senior from Elbridge, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with minors in Design/Production and Spanish through the Honors Program. Graduating in December 2025, Bayleigh is excited to be joining Carnival Cruise Lines as their Backstage Technician. NU credits: Seagull (Boris Trigorin), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Navigational Officer), Much Ado About Nothing (Antonia), The Diary of Anne Frank (Stage Manager), Company (Sound Mixer), Eight Women and a Murder (Sound Designer), A Doll's House and A Doll's House, Pt. 2 (Dramaturg). Outside credits: Gruesome Playground Injuries (ASM) at D'Youville University and Assistant Director at French Woods Festival.



**JAYSON D. CLARK** (Guest Lighting Designer/Adjunct Production Manager), a 2012 graduate of NU, has professionally designed lighting for over 25 productions, including NU Theatre's *The Pajama Game*, *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Wrestling Season*, *Bat Boy: the Musical*, *Urinetown the Musical*, and the *Short Play Festivals 2013 through present*. Other recent design credits include *Detour*, *Uncle Vanya* and *He Who Gets Slapped* (Torn Space Theatre), *Accidental Death of an Anarchist* (Subversive Theatre), and *Hamlet* (BAVPA). Jayson also served as a technician for *A More Perfect Union* performed off-Broadway. As a sound technician, Jayson has worked for numerous local and national bands, including *The Steve Miller Band*, *Cute is What We Aim For*, *Alice Cooper*, *We the Kings*, *Ethnic Heritage Ensemble*, *OAR*, and Grammy Award Winner *Walt Whitman Jr.* Jayson is the Technical Director in residence for *Torn Space Theatre*, specializing in site-specific installation theater. He is also a multi-instrumentalist musician, who has recently appeared on stage in *Once* and *Pump Boys and Dinettes* at *MusicalFare Theatre*, as well as appearing in several local musical groups, including the bluegrass band *The Rear View Ramblers* and *Erie Lackawanna Railroad*.



**EMMA CORRENTI**, a sophomore from North Tonawanda, NY, is pursuing a major in Theatre Performance. NU Credits: *The Seagull* (Peter Sorin), *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (assistant stage manager), *Company* (swing tech). Outside Credits: *Mama Mia* (Ensemble), *Legally Blonde* (Aaron Schultz), *Almost Maine* (Sandrine), *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (Muriel Eubanks), *Ranked* (Sarah).



**BRIAN CUNNINGHAM** is an actor from Lyndonville, NY. Brian has recently been seen in Buffalo as Dormouse (*Alice by Heart*) with *Bellissima Productions* and Angel (*Kinky Boots*) as well as Josh (9 to 5) with *The Lockport Palace Theatre*. Brian holds an Associates Degree from SUNY Niagara in Theatre Art. Brian has most recently been seen at Niagara, as Paul (*Company*), Krogstad (*A Doll's House*) and Man #3 (*The Diary of Anne Frank*). Other College/Educational credits include *Macbeth* (Macbeth), *Aaron* (*First Date: The Musical*), *Fat/Fayette/Grady* (*Waiting for Lefty*), *East/Dave* (*Almost, Maine*), *George Spelvin* (*The Actor's Nightmare*), *Laure* (*Little Women: The Musical*), *Harry* (*Mamma Mia*), *TJ* (*Sister Act*), *Pugsley* (*The Addams Family*), *Lefou* (*Beauty and the Beast*), and *Big Julie* (*Guys and Dolls*). Community credits include *Oklahoma!* and *It's a Wonderful Life: The Musical* (Lake Plains Players). Brian would like to thank his family and friends for their unwavering support. IG - @bri\_2342

**JENNA DAMBERGER** (Adjunct Lecturer, Costume) is the Head of Costume Production at Niagara University.





**KORAL DAVIS**, a sophomore from Wareham, Massachusetts, is pursuing a Theater Performance Major, with minors in Dance and Writing Studies. NU Credits: 2025 Short Play Festival's Smile (Woman) and A Bottle of Vodka (Judy), Company (April). Outside Credits: With Wareham High School, Heathers: The Musical (Veronica Sawyer), An Experiment ("Courageous"), Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street (Johanna), and You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown (Lucy Van Pelt). Korall was awarded "Excellence in Acting" for her performance in An Experiment by the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild.



**MAX DECKER**, a sophomore from Buffalo, NY, is a Theatre Performance major. NU Credits, Return to the Forbidden Planet (Ensemble) and Mothers and Sons (Cal). Outside credits, Kinky Boots (Angel), twice. Once at OFC Creations in Rochester, and at the Historic Palace Theatre in Lockport. Also at the Palace, Pippin, White Christmas (2023), Sister Act, Young Frankenstein, and many more. Max is the Assistant Artistic Director of the NU Players and had big things in store for the 2026-2027 NU Season. Outside of school, Max is a model with Presence Models and Talent Atlanta, and MMG Models located in NYC.

**AURORA DEEDS** (Adjunct Lecturer, Voice) is an adjunct private voice lesson instructor at NU.



**MATTHEW DENMAN**, a sophomore from Amherst, NY, is currently pursuing a Theatre Performance major. NU credits: Return to the Forbidden Planet (Sound), and Seagull (Assistant Stage Manager). Outside Credits: The Addams Family (Uncle Fester), Anything Goes (Captain), and The Wizard of Oz (Emerald City Guard) at Sweet Home, and Grease (Roger) at Sacred Heart.



**TEODORO DRAGONIERI** (Adjunct Professor, Physical Theatre) is a multi-disciplinary artist and educator who has developed acclaimed programs for all levels of education. He has worked with arts organizations, cultural institutions, theatre companies, and museums. Teodoro has served Indigenous communities, individuals with special needs, LGBTQ, at-risk, and street-cultured youth. He has led workshops, presented lectures, performed, and shown his artwork internationally. He is the artistic director of Zanni Arte, a company dedicated to promoting interdisciplinary arts initiatives and fostering the use of masks, in theatre and education. The recipient of several Exemplary Practices Awards for arts programming, the Theatre Ontario Michael Spence Award, and The Harold Award (from Toronto's Independent Theatre and Dance communities.)



**JAIRUS DRAYTON**, a sophomore from Williamsville, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major who is thrilled to be able to be part of this department. NU credits: Return to the Forbidden Planet (Ensemble), and The Seagull (Assistant Stage Manager). Outside credits: Sheas 710 DREAMGIRLS (Ensemble) and, at Buffalo opera house, Joshua's Boots (Ensemble), At Williamsville North High school, Legally Blonde (Warner), Mamma Mia (Pepper), and Joseph and the amazing technicolor dreamcoat (Judah).

**JON ELSTON** (Adjunct Lecturer, Playwriting) is the award-winning author of over forty plays and musicals, produced in Buffalo, NYC, Washington D.C., and online. In 2002 Elston co-founded Buffalo's Road Less Traveled Productions, where he supported the development of hundreds of new plays and the production of nearly forty world premieres by WNY playwrights. He also founded in 2013 and continues to run the Alleyway Teen Ensemble, a seasonal program supporting students (ages 11-18) as they write or devise and produce original short plays. Elston has taught and directed at the University of Buffalo, SUNY Niagara, Medaille College, Villa Maria, and the University of Omaha, as well as in WNY schools as a theatre instructor and certified ELA teacher. Currently he teaches at SUNY Erie and is thrilled to return to NU to teach Playwriting.



**FINNLEY FLEURY** is a sophomore from Novato, CA, pursuing a Theatre Performance major and Women's Studies minor at Niagara University. NU Credits: 2025 Short play Festival's Kill Me, Please! (Stan), Mothers and Sons (Will Ogden), and Company (Spot Op). Outside credits: Young Frankenstein (Bob), Into the Woods (Ensemble), Romeo & Juliet (Nurse/ Romeo Understudy), Cabaret (Victor), Follies (Featured Dancer/ Young Buddy Understudy), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Puck), Seminar (Douglas), Once Upon A Mattress (Ensemble/ Dauntless Understudy), and White Christmas (Ensemble). Offstage credits: Rent (Props Manager), Stupid Fucking Bird (Props Assistant), and God of Carnage (Stage Combat Choreographer).



**WYATT FLEURY**, a sophomore from Novato, CA, is pursuing a Theatre Performance and Psychology Major. NU Credits: 2025 Short Play Festival Foul Territory (Owen), Forbidden Planet (Prop Acquisition), Company (ASM/Waiter), Mothers and Sons (Props Acquisition). Outside credits: Young Frankenstein (Ensemble/Igor u/s), Romeo and Juliet (Benvolio), Into the Woods (Ensemble), Stupid F\*\*\*ing Bird (Conrad u/s, Prop Designer), Cabaret (Bobby), Follies (Ensemble), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Nick Bottom), Once Upon a Mattress (Minstrel) Offstage credits: Follies (Assistant Director/Prop Manager), Seminar (Intimacy Coordinator/Assistant Director), Rent (Backstage Crew/Prop Manager/Alt Spotlight Operator).



**ELIZABETH FLICKINGER**, a junior from Northville, NY, is pursuing a Theater Design and Production major as well as a Communications major at Niagara University. NU credits: Discovering Me, Embracing We (Assistant Stage Manager), Fun Home (Light Board Operator), The Taming (Sound Tech), RENT (Assistant Stage Manager), A Doll's House (Props Acquisition), Eight Women and a Murder (Stage Manager), Seagull (Stage Manager), Company (Light Board Operator) Outside Credits: At Northville Central School, Beauty and the Beast (Crew), The Little Mermaid (Crew), Little Women (Stage Manager), 101 Dalmatians Kids (Student Director), Guys and Dolls Jr. (Stage Manager), Frozen Kids (Student Director), Lion King Kids (Student Director), and Footloose (Stage Manager).



**BRIANNA GARCIA** is from Lockport, NY. She is a senior at NU pursuing a major in Theatre Performance through the Honors program. NU credits: A Doll's House, Part 2 (Nora), Eight Women and a Murder (Gaby), RENT (Mimi), Much Ado... (Conrade), Short Play Festival (Director), Mothers and Sons (Hair & Makeup Head). She is the publicity head for the NU Players and runs their social media accounts. This summer, Brianna attended the Powerhouse Theatre Program at Vassar College thanks to the generosity of her professors, Ed Cheetham, and the Friends of NU Theatre. Much love to her family for all of the support <3.



**GRACE GORDON**, a sophomore from Blasdell, NY, is pursuing a major in Theatre Performance. NU Credits: Seagull (Masha), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Audio 2), and Company (Props Acquisition). Outside Credits: Alice by Heart (Alice), Heathers the Musical (Martha), Hadestown: Teen Edition (Fate 1), Company (Amy), The Prom (Dee Dee Allen), and more. Offstage Credits: Irish Classical Theatre Company's Crocodile Fever (Props Apprentice) and the short film Love and Rodents (Casting Assistant).



**ELLA HARTZELL**, a sophomore from Tonawanda, NY, is pursuing a major in Theatre Design/Production with a second major in Communications & Media Studies. NU credits: A Doll's House Part 2 (Assistant Scenic Charge), Seagull (Assistant Scenic Charge). Outside credits: High School Musical (Sound Tech), Leader of the Pack (Sound Tech), Mamma Mia (Stage Manager), Grease (Stage Manager), Crocodile Fever (Carpenter).



**ISAAC HOHL**, a senior at Niagara University from Kennesaw, GA, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a Dance minor. NU credits: Company (Harry), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Cookie), RENT (Benny), Discovering Me, Embracing We (Dancer), and Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder (Ensemble) Outside credits: ROCeltic: Sláinte, Raise a Glass to 5 Years! (Dancer), Roger and Hammerstein's Cinderella (Sebastian), Peter Pan (John Darling), Into the Woods (Wolf/Mysterious Man), and The Little Mermaid (Chef Louis/Ensemble).



**YAMILEX HOLGUÍN PÉREZ** (Costume Shop Supervisor) is a theatre artist from Northern México with an undergraduate degree in Theatre Arts from New Mexico State University. They designed the costumes for NU's *The Taming* and have performed for various companies in the Buffalo area including a bilingual tour with Shakespeare in Delaware Park and a play with Alleyway Theatre. They were a stitching/wardrobe apprentice for The Santa Fe Opera for two years and became part of the wardrobe staff on her third summer there.

**JOSEPH ISGAR** (Adjunct Lecturer, Voice) is a Buffalo-based music director, voice coach, and accompanist. Recent credits include *Legally Blonde* (Musicalfare), *Tick, Tick,...Boom!* (SGT), *Gutenberg!* The Musical (D'Youville Kavinoky), *Murder Ballad* (RLTP), *Reefer Madness* (O'Connell and Company), *The Addams Family* (O'Connell and Company), and *Beauty and the Beast* (TOY). He is also an in-class accompanist for UB Music Theatre and West Seneca East High School. Joe works frequently with WNY high school students on their spring musicals, including schools in Lancaster, West Seneca, Lockport, and Williamsville. This season, he will be working on Charmagne Chi's *Blue XMas* and *Sweet Charity* at the D'Youville Kavinoky Theatre *Crazy For You* at the Lancaster Opera House. Many thanks to the students at staff at Niagara University for all their support and assistance.



**JADEN HANNIFORD**, a freshman from Syracuse, NY, is a Theatre Performance major. PSLA @ Fowler Performing Arts Credits: *Cinderella: Enchanted Version* (Fairy Godmother), *SIX: Teen Edition* (Anne Boleyn), *The Little Mermaid* (Flounder & Chef Louis), *Disenchanted the Musical* (Cinderella), *SpongeBob the Musical* (Mr. Krabs), *Ranked, A Musical* (Jacquie), *Moana Jr.* (Chief Ancestor #3 & Tamatoa) Offstage credits: *The Little Mermaid* (Jr. Dance Captain) She is the winner of the Syracuse Youth Advisory Council's Civic Service Project. Jaden has also been recognized by The United States District Courthouse for singing during Naturalization Ceremonies.



**LILLIAN JARZABEK**, a senior from Conesus, NY, is currently pursuing a theatre performance major and a dance minor. NU credits: *Company* (Sarah), *Return to the Forbidden Planet* (Gloria), *Rent* (Ensemble), *Discovering Me*, *Embracing We* (company dancer), *Art* (Marc), *Dancing in the Light* Showcase (choreographer), *Much Ado About Nothing* (assistant stage manager), *Us & Them: Aerial Investigations* (prop runner), *Everybody* (prop runner). Outside credits: *Sweet Charity* (Rosie), *Into the Woods* (The Witch), *A Chorus Line* (Ensemble, Kristine U/S). Lillian is also the NU Players Artistic Director. Follow her on instagram @lil\_jarzy.

**DARIN KEESING** (Assistant Professor, Scenic/Lighting Design) joins Niagara University for the 2025-26 season. Darin previously taught design and production at Wittenberg University, where he designed scenery, lighting and/or sound for 25 productions including *How I Learned to Drive*, *Angels in America, Part One*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Spring Awakening*, *Chicago*, *The Tempest*, *Eurydice*, *She Kills Monsters*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Machinal*. Darin has been designing scenery and lighting professionally for over 25 years. Recent designs include *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *Falsettos*, and *Merrily We*

Roll Along (Available Light Theatre), School Girls; or, the African Mean Girls Play, Mothers and Sons and Master Class (Contemporary Theatre of Ohio), and Little Shop of Horrors (Short North Stage). Darin received an MFA in Stage Design from Northwestern University.



**MARISSA KOHLBACHER**, is a freshman from Cheektowaga NY, pursuing a major in Theatre Performance with a minor in Dance. Credit: Addams Family (Feature Dancer/Ensemble)



**BRITTANY KONRUFF**, a senior from Cincinnati, OH., is pursuing a BFA in Design/Production with a concentration in Light Design. Most recently, she served as the lighting programmer for Chautauqua Theatre Company. NU credits: Lighting Designer (Mothers and Sons, Engagements), Assistant Light Designer (Company), Lead Electrician (The Seagull, A Dolls House Pt2, Eight Women & a Murder, Return to the Forbidden Planet, A Dolls House), Assistant Lead Electrician (Rent), Light Board Op (Anne Frank, Much Ado About Nothing). Professional credits: Chautauqua Theatre Company – Light Tech/Programmer (The Witnesses, Execution of Justice, The Light and The Dark, Fabulations, Birthday Candles), Irish Classical Theatre Company – Rigger/Programmer (Dracula, Private Lives, The Price).



**KALE KUREK** is a senior Theater Performance major from Hamburg, NY. NU Credits: Seagull (Yevgeny Dorn), The Taming (Patricia), Short Play Festival 2024, Fun Home (John), Short Play Festival 2023, Art (Yvan), A Gentleman's Guide (...) (Head Usher), Much Ado (...) (House Manager), The Diary of Anne Frank (Sound Board Operator), Company (Dramaturge, Sound Board Operator), Mothers and Sons (Artistic Director), Short Play Festival 2025 (Director), Engagements (Assistant Artistic Director, Sound Board Operator). Outside Credits: Coraline the Musical (Mr. Bobo), Keyhole Theatrics (Assistant Artistic Director), Lockport Palace Theater (Spot Light Operator). @kalekurek on ig! <3



**PENNY LANE**, a freshman from Niagara Falls, NY, is pursuing Theatre Performance major through Niagara University. Outside credits: Frozen jr.(ensemble), Freaky Friday one act edition (ensemble), Back Cover (Madison then), Ranked (Maya), a Charlie Brown Christmas (Sally), 1984 (Julia), Freaky Friday (Ellie), and The Anxiety Project (ensemble). Offstage credits Willy Wonka jr. (stage manager), and Jesus Christ Superstar (stage crew).





**HANNAH LARUEZ**, a junior at Niagara University from Rochester, NY. She's pursuing a theatre design/technology major, concentrated on costume design, and minor in dance. NU Credits: Discovering Me, Embracing We (Ensemble Dancer), Engagements (Costume Designer), A Doll's House (Wardrobe Head), Mothers and Sons (Costume Designer), Company (Assistant Costume Designer). Outside School Credits: White Christmas (Ensemble), The Prom! (Kaylee/Dance Captain), Jersey Boys (Spotlight Operator), Newsies (Wardrobe Head), Lion King Jr (Build Lead/Costume Design), Coraline:The Musical (Stage Manager), and more! Hannah also works at OFC Creations Theater Center as a Wardrobe Head/Costume Designer. Hannah would especially like to thank her momma for always pushing her to follow her dreams!



**ROBYN LEE, Ph.D.** (Assistant Professor, Acting) moved to Buffalo in 2018 after two decades of working as a professional actor and director in NYC and regional theatre and six years teaching theatre at a performing arts high school in New Jersey. Locally, she has taught theatre courses at Niagara and UB, served as Managing Director of Alleyway Theatre, and has continued to work professionally as an actor and director, earning Artie Award nominations for Best Actress in a Musical (Adult Alison in Fun Home at MusicalFare/ Shea's 710) and Best Director (Berserker at Alleyway Theatre). Robyn contributed a chapter to the edited volume, Theatre and the Macabre, published in 2022 by the University of Wales Press and she is currently completing her doctoral dissertation in Theatre and Performance at UB. Last spring, Robyn directed NU's production of The Thanksgiving Play by Larisa Fasthorse. She is delighted to bring Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley to the Leary Theatre stage in collaboration with the wonderful Theatre and Fine Arts students and faculty.



**BRIEGHE LENNON**, a junior from Buffalo, NY, is pursuing a BFA in Theatre Performance and a BA in English through the Niagara University Honors Program. NU Credits: Much Ado About Nothing (Oatcake), The Diary of Anne Frank (Assistant Stage Manager), Eight Women and a Murder (Augustine), A Doll's House Part 2 (Anne Marie), Company (Props Acquisition), NURT (Pink). Outside credits: The Winter's Tale (Emilia/Mopso), Romeo and Juliet (Sound Playback), As You Like It (Apprentice) at Shakespeare in Delaware Park. She is thrilled for another year at Niagara!



**KATE LOCONTI-ALCOCER** (Faculty Fellow, Effective Speech) has been a Theatre Educator and Artist for over thirty years with focuses in: Acting, Directing, Classical Text, and Oral Communication. Prior to joining the Faculty of NU, Kate held the positions of Executive Artistic Director of Irish Classical Theatre Company (ICTC), and Theatre Arts Program Coordinator for SUNY Niagara. Kate has had the great fortune of performing internationally in Spain, London, and Venezuela, as well as nationally with Classic Stage Company, The Goodman, Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, and Shattered Globe. Locally, she has worked with many prestigious theatre companies, and has been a voice-over-artist for over two decades. Her work has been awarded by the Buffalo | Toronto Public Media Artie Awards (4 nominations, 2 Outstanding

Leading Actress Awards, and the Katharine Cornell Award), Buffalo Spree Magazine (Best Production of a Play), and Blue Dog Press (Best in Show). During her tenure at Irish Classical, the Company was awarded Buffalo Business First's IDEA Award, Deaf Access Services' Language Access Award, and an American Advertising Award for Excellence in Cinematography (Production Trailers). Ms. LoConti Alcocer holds an MFA in Acting with Honors from Columbia University, where she received the Bob Hope Fellowship.



**EMMA LESSORD** is a freshman from Rochester, NY, pursuing her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre Performance. Outside credits: The Addams Family (Wednesday Addams), Mean Girls High School Edition (Janis Sarkisian), Mary Poppins (Ensemble), The SpongeBob Musical (Ensemble/Swing). She has previously attended Geva Summer Academy in Rochester, and has also competed in the NYC Bound competition through Stars of Tomorrow.



**AYDEN MACNEIL**, a junior from Niagara Falls, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a minor in Theater Design and Production. NU credits include ASM for Company, light crew for Much Ado About Nothing, Fun Home, Rent, Diary of Anne Frank, NU Dance Theatre: Discovering Me, Embracing We and The Taming. Outside Credits include Grease: Kenickie (NFHS), Clue: Mr.Green (NFHS), Brighton Beach Memoirs: Eugene (NFHS), Beauty and the Beast: Ensemble (Theatre in the Mist), Outside of NU Ayden works part time as a cashier for Arby's.



**GARY MARINO** (Adjunct Professor, Ballet, and Choreographer) Gary began his formal training in the music department of SUNY at Albany, then went on to study dance with Melissa Hayden, Elizabeth Carroll, Edward Vilella, Kay Mazzo and Peter Martins at Skidmore College. He also studied jazz with Rhett Dennis at the Luigi School in New York as well as modern with Ethel Winter of the Martha Graham School. Mr. Marino began performing with the Skidmore Dancers, Saratoga Ballet Company, Schenectady Civic Ballet, Buffalo Repertory Ballet Co. and Camelon Dancers. At Artpark he choreographed and appeared in La Traviata and Rigoletto. His choreographic experience also includes numerous ballets for the Buffalo Repertory Ballet Co. Previous teaching experience includes Skidmore College, New York State Summer School of the Arts, Darlene Ciglia Dance Project, Royal Academy of Ballet, Union College, Steppin Out Dance Academy, Performing Arts, Lockport City Ballet, Classical Ballet of Western New York, Dawn Marie's Dance Works, Dance Spectrum, Ballet Regent School, David DeMarie's and Mary Alice's Dance Studio in Orchard Park and SUNY at Albany and Buffalo, among others. Currently, Mr. Marino is also on faculty at American Academy of Ballet, Spezio's Dance Dynamics, and Niagara University. In addition, he has judged numerous dance competitions in the U.S. and Canada including Cutting Edge, Dance Masters of America, and Western New York Dance Championships. Recently he has performed with Configuration Dance Theater in Michael Shannons ballet "Been there Done That" and as the Merlin character in "Arthur". In addition, he has created a new ballet in collaboration with Peter Bennett on Jackie Gleasons "Gigot"



performed at Niagara University. Many of his students have gone on to join ballet companies and touring companies. In addition to teaching classical Vaganova technique in ballet, he has coached both figure skating for the Buffalo Skating Club and gymnastics at Gleasons Gymnastics. Most recently he will be appearing on the new season of Dance Twins to air on the lifetime network this fall. Other talents involve composing music for dance and has produced a ballet class recording with pianist Guy Boleri.



**JAMES DAVID MAXIM**, a senior from Corning, NY, is happy to be back at NU pursuing his BFA in Theatre Performance with a minor in Theatre Design/Production. At Niagara University Theatre he has performed in Company (Larry), Much Ado About Nothing (Don John), Peter and the Starcatcher (Black Stache), and The Thanksgiving Play (Jaxton). Last summer, James David had the pleasure of working as a Show Operations Intern at Sight & Sound Theatres in Lancaster, PA. In the summers of 2023 and 2024 he worked as a Stage Operations Apprentice at the Glimmerglass Festival in Cooperstown, NY. IG: @j.david\_maxim



**PARIS MOFFITT** is a senior from Gasport, NY. She is pursuing a degree in Theatre Arts & Performance with a focus in Stage Management. NU Credits: Peter and the Starcatcher (Smee), Short Play Festival '23, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder (Ensemble), N.U.R.T '23 ("Pink" Ensemble), A Sondheim Review (Ensemble/Assistant Stage Manager), Fun Home (Assistant Stage Manager), Short Play Festival '24, The Taming (Stage Manager), RENT (Mrs.Cohen/Ensemble), N.U.R.T '24 ("Light Blue" Ensemble), Schoolhouse Rock Live! (Dori), A Doll's House (Stage Manager), Eight Women and a Murder (Beatrice), Pillow (Director), Smile (Stage Manager), Company (Susan). Outside Credits: In London England for NU's study abroad program, As You Like It (Phoebe/Touchstone), at Teal's Niagara Theatre, Coraline the Musical (Miss Spink), at the Lockport Palace Theatre, Scrooge The Musical (Ensemble & Cratchit Child), Suessical The Musical (Ensemble), The Wizard of Oz (Munchkin & Ensemble), Joseph And The Technicolor Dreamcoat (Ensemble), The Little Mermaid, Jr. (Ursula), and at Barker, Jr/Sr High School, Mary Poppins (Ensemble), Mamma Mia! (Ali), Addams Family (Grandma Addams), Little Women (Marmee). Paris was nominated for a Kenny Award in the category Outstanding Dramatic Performance for Marmee. She would like to thank her family for their unending support and love, which allows her to follow her dreams and share the love of live theatre. @paris.moffitt



**BRIDGET MORIARTY** (Associate Professor, Voice, Music Director), the Sharon Onevelo Watkinson Endowed Professor of Theatre & Vocal Performance, is the full-time music director at Niagara University and coordinator of the vocal curriculum. Recent NU credits include Company, Rent, Fun Home, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, Peter & the Starcatcher, and Cabaret. Other credits include The Fitzgerald's of St. Paul at Irish Classical Theatre Company (Artie Award), Spring Awakening (Syracuse Area Live Theatre Award) and Cabaret with Syracuse Summer Theatre at The Oncenter, La Cage aux Folles (SALT Award), and The Little Mermaid, with Redhouse Arts Center, Hair and Avenue Q (SALT Award) with Covey Theatre Co., and Les Misérables with the Wit's End Players. Bridget also received the

SALT Award for Lead Actress in a Musical for her portrayal of Lucille Frank in Parade. In 2016 Bridget was a national finalist in the National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Award competition. Bridget received a Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of North Carolina Greensboro, a Master of Music from Syracuse University, and a Bachelor of Music in music education from The Crane School of Music at SUNY Potsdam.



**RYAN NEEDHAM**, a sophomore from Hammond, IN, is majoring in Theater Specializations in Dramaturgy with a Design and Production minor. NU Credits: 8 Women and a Murder (Assistant Stage Manager), 2025 Short Play Festival's Foul Territory (Stage Manager), as well as Last Dance (Camden), Mothers and Sons (Bud), and The Seagull (dramaturg).



**MARA NEIMANIS** (Adjunct Lecturer, Physical Theatre) creates a signature style of Apparatus Based Theatre using mounted and suspended steel sculpture with 5 published aerial plays and tours. Mara has performed, toured, taught and collaborated with a variety of institutions and theatre companies here and abroad including Pixar (Richmond CA), Dell'Arte International (Blue Lake CA) Teatro Abya Yala (San Jose, Costa Rica) The New Market Theatre (Brighton England) as well as Artpark, Cal Arts, MICA. She has received grants and commissions from The Studios of Key West, The Cherry Arts Space, Ithaca, The Robert W Deutsch Foundation, Rhodes Ellis Rabb Visiting Artist Initiative, The Native Cultures Fund and Ink People of Northern California to name a few. She has received 2 Maryland State Arts Council Individual Artist Awards for both her plays, Air Heart and Naomi's Flight. Presently, Mara is on the Mid Atlantic Arts Touring Arts Roster selection of 6 artists to tour the East Coast and is being commissioned by The Cherry Arts Space to create a new aerial piece which will be performed in the summer of 2025. Mara has just signed a proposal in collaboration with Rutledge Press, London on a new book about gravity, clown, aerials and creating identity. Mara is a Guild Certified Feldenkrais Practitioner and combines the method with aerial skills.



**KIM NEISS** (Administrative Assistant-Academics) graduated from Drury University in Springfield, Missouri, with a bachelor's degree in Multimedia Production/Journalism. Right after college, Kimberly found a love and passion for working in live theatre. She moved here from Dallas, TX, where she was privileged to work as a Production Manager at a Small Professional Theatre. Kimberly has worked as a stage manager/production manager in over 30 productions, including the Off-Broadway run of The Life & Slimes of Marc Summers and the Off-Broadway run of Mama, I'm A Big Girl Now. She is currently stage managing shows at The Alleyway Theatre. She is excited to support the NUTS during this season and can't wait to watch the stories come to life on stage.



**ESTRELLA ORSI**, a freshman from Lewiston, NY, is pursuing a Theater Performance major, with a minor in women's studies. In school credits: Little Shop of Horrors (Chiffon), Shrek the Musical (Donkey), Chicago (Velma), and Fiddler On The Roof (Fruma-Sarah/Ensemble). The stage rendition of And Then There Were None (William Blore), and a short from True West (Austin) in Lew-ports Fall Shorts. Outside Credits: Teals Niagara Theater- Into the Woods Jr. (Baker), and Mean Girls Jr. (Cady). She's been singing on stage since she was 7 and was a nominee for her high school freshman performance as Chiffon.



**ELIZABETH ORTIZ**, a freshman from Lyons, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a minor in ASL and deaf studies. ELIZABETH has been in The Little Mermaid (Ensemble), Shrek The Musical Jr. (Pig 2), Tobermory (Tobermory), The Addams Family Musical (Ensemble), Clue (Wadsworth), Little Shop Of Horrors (Ensemble), Mean Girls (Mr. Heron/Glen Coco), Almost, Maine (Gayle/Dave), and Grease (Miss Lynch). ELIZABETH has won two ELENBES. One for Best Original Poster, Drama, and one for The Show Must Go On. Both for the show Almost, Maine.



**DAVE PETERSON, PhD** (Associate Professor, Theatre History) is an associate professor of theatre at Niagara University, having joined the faculty in the Fall 2020. Dave teaches courses in theatre history and theory, in addition to directing in the NU theatre season. Recent works including Fun Home, Everybody, Machinal, and Good Kids. He currently serves as a co-advisor for the undergraduate theatre group, the NU Players, and has directed NU's professional summer youth theatre touring ensemble, Niagara University Repertory Theatre. Dave's recent scholarly work has focused on the American playwright Lorraine Hansberry with an essay in Comedy Studies and a production review in the Black Theatre Review. Previous publications include work on clowning and Shakespeare in journals such as Comparative Drama and Contemporary Theatre Review. Dave has presented work at conferences such as the Mid America Theatre Conference, The Association for Theatre in Higher Education, and the American Society for Theatre research. He holds a PhD in Theatre History and Performance Studies from the University of Pittsburgh, an MA in Theatre from Michigan State University, and a BA in History and Theatre from the University of Michigan.



**ALEJANDRO PEREZ**, a freshman from Grand Island, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major. Outside credits: Miracle on South Division Street (Stage Manager), Spongebob Squarepants (Patrick Star), and, at Grand Island, Something Rotten (Shakespeare), Cinderella (Jean Michel), High School Musical On Stage! (Troy Bolton), The Wizard of Oz (The Cowardly Lion)



**SAM PREZIOSO**, a senior from the Hudson Valley, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a minor in Theatre Design/Production. NU credits: Company (Marta & Assistant Technical Director), Mothers & Sons (Technical Director), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Ensemble/Monster), RENT! (Ensemble), Much Ado About Nothing (Balthasar), Everybody (Stuff/Senses). Outside credits: The Taylor Theatre's Kenan Christmas Cabaret. Offstage credits: Finger Lakes Opera's Rigoletto (Load In/Strike Crew), Irish Classical Theatre's The Loved Ones and The Fitzgerald's of St. Paul (Scenic Assistant), Shea's 710/Kavinoky Theatre's Newsies (Scenic Assistant), Overhire for IATSE Local 10 (Stagehand). She recently studied and performed in NU's Study Abroad program in London and is the Senior Co-President of the NU Players.



**JACKIE RENAUD** (Technical Director) graduated from Niagara University with a B.F.A. in Design and Production with a concentration in Technical Direction. Her most recent credits are: Assist. Lighting Supervisor for Chautauqua Theatre Company, Assist. Lighting Designer for Or, (Irish Classical), Assist. Lighting Designer for Crocodile Fever (Irish Classical), Assist. Stage Manager for The Hatmakers' Wife, The Wanderers, Kindertransport, and Tuesdays with Morrie (Jewish Repertory Theatre), Live Audio Mixer and Assist. Lead Electrician for The Fitzgeralds of St. Paul (Irish Classical), Sound Engineer for Dracula: A Comedy of Terror (Irish Classical), Stage Operations Staff for 2024 Season (Glimmerglass Festival).



**HAYLEE SALMONSEN**, a junior from Syracuse, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a minor in Communications. NU Offstage credits: Fun Home (Stage Manager), Peter and the Starcatcher (Assistant Stage Manager). Outside credits: Hamlet (Stage Manager/Sound, Paid) with Syracuse Shakespeare in the Park (2024), Two Gentlemen of Verona (Stage Manager, Paid) with Syracuse Shakespeare in the Park (2024).

**KAHLIL SARIKEY** (Adjunct Professor, Music Theory/Guitar) joined the Theatre Department faculty as the theory/musicianship instructor. He also holds a position at Buffalo State College as instructor for guitar lessons, guitar ensemble, music theory, and aural skills. While recently completing his Doctor of Musical Arts in Guitar Performance and Literature with a music theory minor at the Eastman School of Music, Dr. Sarikey was awarded a teaching assistantship. His educational credits also include a Bachelor of Arts in Music from Buffalo State College and a Master of Music degree from the Eastman School of Music. He was awarded a performers certificate while attending Eastman, a prestigious award given to those who exemplify the highest levels of performance. Mr. Sarikey has performed in several competitions taking first prize in the Eastman Guitar Concerto competition and second prize in the Great Lakes Guitar Society competition. He has participated in master classes with world-renowned artists such as Roland Dyens, Roberto Aussel, and Eliot Fisk.

**SALVATORE SCAMACCA** (Adjunct Lecturer, Voice) pursued his education at Nazareth University, earning both his Master in Voice Performance & Pedagogy and his Bachelor in Music Education degrees. Salvatore's stage experience includes roles such as "Tom" (Un Ballo...), "Jason" (Bare), and "Enjolras" (Les Mis). He sings regularly with Harmonia and Incipio chamber choirs, has toured Poland and Québec, and has performed as part of the backup choir for Josh Groban. He spends his free time refining his piano skills and gardening. Upcoming Performances: Sweeney Todd, Sweeney Todd (Lockport Palace, 10/23-26); Professor Bhaer, Little Women (Lockport Palace, 11/20-23).



**NICO SCIRRI** is a junior, double majoring in Theatre Specialization and Communications/Media Studies with a minor in Film Studies. He is originally from Gasport, NY. Credits include: The Wizard of Oz (Stage Crew), The Lion King (Stage Crew), Tune into Murder (Stage Crew), Mulan (Stage Crew), The Legend of Robin Hood... Sort Of (The "Thin Friar")

**JESSICA SPENGLER**, a junior from West Seneca, NY., is pursuing a Theater Design and Production major at Niagara University. NU credits: The Seagull 2025 (Wardrobe head), A Doll's House Pt.2 2025 (Stitcher), Mothers and Sons 2025 (Wardrobe head), 8 Women and a Murder (Wardrobe crew/Stitcher), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Hair and Makeup Head) 2024, Rent 2024 (Stitcher). Outside credits: College Light Opera Company (CLOC) Summer season 2025 (Costume technician, Wardrobe crew) and MusicalFare Theaters Waitress (Wardrobe head).



**JADA STEWART**, a sophomore from Traverse City, MI, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major. NU Credits: Seagull (Ilya Shamrayev) and A Doll's House (Assistant Stage Manager). Outside Credits: Twelfth Night (Maria), Guys and Dolls (Arvide Abernathy), Kiss me, Kate! (Man 2), A Midsummer Night's Dream (Peter Quince), and Radium Girls (Kathryn). Offstage Credits: Elephant's Graveyard (Co-director), and Ark5 (Stage Manager).



**MAUREEN T. STEVENS** (Associate Professor, Costume, Hair & Make-Up Designer) received her B.S. from Buffalo State College in Apparel and Textile Technology and her M.F.A. in Theatre with an emphasis in Costume Design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Previous to joining the faculty at Niagara University, her career has spanned many facets of costuming and areas of the country including: Assistant to the Operational Costume Coordinator for the Walt Disney World Company in Orlando, Florida. At Niagara, Ms. Stevens has designed or coordinated more than 100 productions. Professional design credits include: The Strudel Lady and The Whipping Man at the Jewish Repertory Theatre, the premiere of Over the Tavern at Studio Arena Theatre, The Taming of the Shrew and Two Gentlemen of Verona at The Colorado Shakespeare Festival in Boulder, CO, and It's a Wonderful Life – the Radio Play at Buffalo's Kavinoky Theatre.





**ALEX SYLVESTER** is a junior from Lancaster, NY, pursuing a Theatre Performance major. NU CREDITS; Return To The Forbidden Planet (Captain Tempest), Engagements (Ryan, Asst. Tech Director), Mothers and Sons (Asst. Tech Director). OUTSIDE CREDITS; Jersey Boys (Joe Pesci/Ens), Tarzan (Terk), 9 to 5 (Dwayne/Ens), Anastasia (Tsar/Male Swing), Mean Girls (Aaron Samuels). Last summer, Alex served as Production Assistant Intern at the Historic\ Palace Theatre in Lockport, NY. Alex would like to thank LeBron James for being an inspirational basketball player.



**AMY TEAL**, (Senior Lecturer, Voice) a senior lecturer in the theatre department, teaches vocal performance classes to the juniors and freshman, as well as private voice students. She enjoys a busy and diverse teaching and performing career in the WNY region and is the proud owner of her own children's theatre and music academy in Niagara Falls, Teal's Niagara Theatre & Music, in residence at the Niagara Arts and Cultural Center. Ms. Teal has performed as a classical artist, with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, Opera Lytes, Opera Sacra, Cheektowaga Symphony, Amherst Chamber Ensemble, Genesee Valley Orchestra and Chorus, Erwin H. Johnson and Buffalo Opera Unlimited. A crossover artist, equally at home on the musical theatre stage, amy has performed roles with many Buffalo theaters and at ArtPark and is the proud recipient of a Tanys Award for Outstanding Vocal Performance as the narrator in Joseph with TITM. A passionate educator, Amy believes in creating strong relationships with her students and she was honored to be included in "Who's Who Among America's Teachers", as a "teacher who made a difference".



**KATE E THOMPSON**, a senior from Bradford, PA, is pursuing a Theatre Performance major with a minor in Theatre Design & Production. NU credits: RENT (Ensemble). Offstage credits: NU's Company (Spot Op), Mothers & Sons (ASM), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Wardrobe Crew), The Taming (Props Run), Much Ado About Nothing (Swing Crew), A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder (Follow Spot), Peter and the Starcatcher (Wardrobe Crew), Cabaret (Follow Spot). She also works in NU's Costume Shop.



**PAUL TODARO** (Adjunct Professor, Acting) graduated from Niagara University's Theatre program in 1987 and moved to New York where he worked with the Independent Theatre Company at House of Candles Theatre on Manhattan's lower east side. Paul acted and directed the plays of Shakespeare, Beckett, Brecht, Pinter, Strindberg and, in 1992, became the Artistic Director of the company. In 1993, House of Candles was named the Best Off-Off Broadway Theatre Company by the New York Press. In 1997 Paul returned to Buffalo and began teaching acting at NU. Locally he has worked as an actor and director at Studio Arena, Artpark, The Kavinoky Theatre, Shakespeare in Delaware Park, and for several years, he was an artist in residence for the Irish Classical Theatre. Paul has also appeared as a guest artist on the NU stage as Grandpere in The Happy Time and Teyve in Fiddler on the Roof. He appeared in The Sound of Music at Artpark during the summer of 2012, and was in Red for 710 Main Theatre.



**PAIGE TOMLINSON**, a junior from Hamburg, NY, is pursuing a Theatre Performance and English double major. NU credits: Company (Kathy), Return to the Forbidden Planet (Miranda), Rent (Ensemble), and 2024 Short Play Festival. Outside credits: Alice in Wonderland (Tall Alice) and, at Frontier High School, Mamma Mia (Ensemble), A Killer Party (Lily Wright), Sister Act (Tina/Featured Nun), Clue: On Stage (Miss Scarlet), and Beauty and the Beast (Silly Girl/Belle Understudy).



**TERRI FILIPS VAUGHAN** (Chair, Professor, Dance, and Choreographer) has choreographed over 45 musicals and 20 concert works at Niagara University. During this time, she had the privilege of working alongside the great musical team of John Kander and the late Fred Ebb. Terri has worked as a freelance teacher, choreographer and theatre director for numerous schools, community groups, studios and professional companies. She has choreographed numerous musicals professionally, working at such places as; Artpark, Shakespeare in Delaware Park, Jewish Repertory Theatre, Hope Summer Repertory Theatre and the Rochester Association of Performing Arts (RAPA), OFC/Rochester Lyric Theatre and O'Connell and Company. Highlights include South Pacific at Artpark starring Tony Award winner Mark Jacoby and choreographing world premiere musical Two Tickets to Paradise written by and starring rocker Eddie Money at RAPA. She has set concert choreography at SUNY Buffalo, SUNY Fredonia, Texas Woman's University, Grand Valley State College and Hope College. She was the co-founder of InSync Dance Theatre, a professional tap and jazz company based in Michigan for which she choreographed and performed. She has also worked professionally as a director for musical theatre and theatre for young audiences. She graduated summa cum laude with an MFA in dance from the Texas Woman's University and cum laude with a BA from Hope College. Terri also served as a judge for the Cutting Edge Dance Competitions around the United States. Terri has taught dance educator at numerous National Dance Education Organization Conferences across the U. S. in both tap and musical theatre.

**STEPHEN VAUGHAN** (Adjunct Professor, Acting) Steve's Directing credits include Geneva Light Opera, Nickel City Opera, Eastman School of Music, and the Lyric Opera Theater of Rochester. At Shakespeare in Delaware Park his credits include: Taming of the Shrew, Twelfth Night, Comedy of Errors, As You Like It, Julius Caesar, Merry Wives of Windsor, Love's Labors Lost and King Lear. He has also directed Blithe Spirit at the Irish Classical Theater, and Tally's Folly, Visiting Mr. Green, Bad Jews, Holiday Shorts and The Beau Jest at Jewish Repertory Theater of Buffalo. Recently Steve directed an all-female version of 1776 and Glorious for O'Connell and Company. Steve has directed numerous productions at the University level including Niagara University, Genesee Community College and Niagara Community College. Additionally, Steve is a freelance stunt coordinator and fight director with over a thousand theater, film, opera and TV credits. He teaches theater at SUNY Fredonia, and Acting for the Camera at Niagara University.





**TANNER WATKEYS**, a freshman from Traverse City, Michigan with a major in Theater Performance and no current minor. No current NU credits. Outside credits: all at West Senior High, Murder in the House of Horrors (Dan), Wind in the Willows (Don), Lego Batman Keychain (Mikale), Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (Willy Wonka), The Curious Savage (Titus), 26 Pebbles (Michael), The Wizard of Oz (Tin Man). Backstage credits: Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat (lights).

**LEANNE VIDA** (Adjunct Professor, Voice) is thrilled to be back at NU for another season of voice lessons! Upon completion of an Honours Bachelor of Music in Voice Performance at Brock University, she attended Western University Canada to complete two graduate degrees: a Master of Music in Voice Performance and Literature, and a Doctor of Musical Arts in Voice Performance. Leanne has extensive operatic, music theatre, and recording credits, and has performed throughout Canada, the United States, and Europe. In addition to her teaching studio at Niagara University, she is also the adjunct professor of voice at Brock University, a music instructor at Ridley College, and maintains a small home teaching studio. An active performer, Leanne sings in 2 choirs (Avanti Chamber Singers, The Edison Singers), 3 bands (High Fidelity, Temple of Night, Minuscule), and frequently performs as a soprano soloist and session musician. Recent research projects include a curriculum of Canadian Art Song, and the development of a meditation technique for singers and performers. When not making music, Leanne can be found at her local yoga studio, cultivating her wild perennial garden, or immersed in a Dungeons and Dragons campaign.

**PHIL WACKERFUSS** (Adjunct Lecturer, Dance) is an actor, choreographer, teacher, and bodyworker from Chicago, IL. He received his BA in Theatre Arts from Illinois Wesleyan University, graduated from the Chicago School of Massage Therapy, and earned his Masters of Fine Arts in Dance at The University at Buffalo, which focused on research of psychological flow states, ritual dance, and electronic dance art. Phil has performed with various theater and dance companies across the country including First Folio Shakespeare Festival in Chicago, VADCO Modern Dance, INASIDE Chicago Jazz Dance, and LehrerDance. He has been a guest artist in The Nutcracker for the American Academy of Ballet, Neglia Ballet, Configuration Ballet, and Niagara Ballet. Shakespeare in Delaware Park is a favorite performing opportunity where he played Puck in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and Caliban in "The Tempest", and Clown in "Winter's Tale". You can also see him fire dancing with Pyromancy circus troupe, organizing dance jams with Buffalo Contact Improv, and many creative projects at ArtPark.



**EMILY WEBER** (Administrative Assistant-Production) is here for her first season with the Niagara University Theatre and Department of Theatre and Fine Arts. She is so excited to be here and share her passion for education in the arts. She received a B.A. in Theatre/Journalism from St. Bonaventure University. Originally from Buffalo, Emily spent the last three years working as a box office representative for Shea's Performing Arts Center. She has also worked with several of the regional theatre companies both as a performer and a teaching artist, including The Lancaster Opera House, Second Generation Theatre, and O'Connell and Company. Additionally, she has been a teacher at Lancaster Dance Center for the past four years teaching varying styles including tap, jazz, modern, hip hop and musical theater. Emily will begin work in the ensemble of White Christmas with MusicalFare this fall. She will also be in O'Connell and Company's production of Curtains this spring.



**JAREESA YOUNG** is a junior majoring in Theatre Performance from Buffalo, NY.

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