


2022/2023

50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

ST. LOUIS' PREMIER THEATER FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES



BOLD,
BRAVE,
CURIOUS!

WORLD PREMIERE BY MARIAH L. RICHARDSON

DIRECTED BY KATHRYN BENTLEY

SEPTEMBER 9 – OCTOBER 16, 2022

WELCOME TO METRO THEATER COMPANY'S PRODUCTION OF

BOLD, BRAVE, CURIOUS!

How exciting it is to be bringing theater back into schools this year – and how wonderful to be doing so with this heartfelt and engaging world premiere from Mariah L. Richardson!

At the start of our 50th anniversary season, it is a delight to be working with Mariah once again. As a performer and a writer, Mariah has been involved with Metro Theater Company for nearly four decades. Eleven years ago, the character of Madeline Delilah captivated audiences in a play MTC commissioned called *Delilah's Wish*.

Mariah not only wrote that play, but she starred in it as well – a true tour de force! In this special anniversary year, MTC is looking back to our roots and looking forward to our future. By sharing the next chapter of Delilah's story with a new generation of young people, *Bold, Brave, Curious!* does just that. We are so glad you are here to be part of that journey with us!

While most performances of *Bold, Brave, Curious!* will take place as part of our school touring program, thanks to our friends at HEC-TV, we are thrilled that audiences will be able to enjoy a streaming version of the show from all corners of the country – and that families can gather in St. Louis to see it live during the final weekend of its tour, at the Sun Theater in Grand Center, as part of a “pay-what-you-wish” weekend with our mainstage production of *Seedfolks* across the street at the Grandel Theatre.

However you may be joining us, we hope you will be inspired by this beautiful story and the bonds of friendship between Delilah, Lupe, and Stanley.

ENJOY THE SHOW!



JULIA FLOOD
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



JOE GFALLER
MANAGING DIRECTOR



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

If you have ever had a best friend, you know how special that can be!

Best friends are there for each other through sadness, disappointment, pain, and happiness. You can tell your deepest secrets to your bestie and know that they will treasure that secret like it's their own. Best friends are there for you even when you don't even know how much you need them.

I am so glad that you are joining us for *Bold, Brave, and Curious!* You will get to meet 3 best friends, 3 amigos, who come together for a great adventure! They learn that their love for each other is greater than they imagined.

Even though the actors make it look easy, it takes a lot of hard work to do a play! You must have a team of people working together. I am thankful to have had the opportunity to work with such talented actors, Naomi, Hailey, and Mason, and with our awesome stage manager, Isabelle. Also, we wouldn't be able to do this without our creative team of designers who made sure that the costumes, music, props, and set were perfect! I'm also grateful that I got to work with my dear friend, playwright Mariah L. Richardson, and that we all get to be part of Metro Theater's 50th anniversary!

Thank you for being a terrific audience member! Remember friends are special gifts so treasure them always!

ENJOY THE SHOW!

KATHRYN BENTLEY
DIRECTOR

BOLD, BRAVE, CURIOUS!



THE CAST

(in alphabetical order)

DELILAH
Naomi Blair

STANLEY
Mason Brown

LUPE
Hailey Medrano

DESIGN & PRODUCTION TEAM

DIRECTOR
Kathryn Bentley

STAGE MANAGER
Isabelle Scheibe

SCENIC DESIGNER
Nicholas Kryah

SCENIC ARTIST
Cristie Johnston

PROPS MASTER
Tajha Necole Silas

COSTUME DESIGNER
Nathan Lessly

COMPOSERS
Syrhea Conaway

COMPOSERS
Colin McLaughlin

DRAMATURG
Gaby Rodriguez

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Jimmy Bernatowicz

**TECHNICAL
DIRECTOR**
Erik Kuhn

**ARTISTIC ADMINISTRATION
COORDINATOR**
Julia Hogan Laurenson

**FRONT OF
HOUSE STAFF**
HOUSE MANAGEMENT
Teresa West

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



NAOMI BLAIR (SHE/HER) | DELILAH

Naomi Blair is proud to be working with Metro Theater Company. Her recent credits include the premier production of *The COVID Mysteries* and *She Kills Monsters* with the Washington University in Saint Louis Performing Arts Department. Naomi graduated in May from Washington University in Saint Louis with a bachelor's degree in English and a concentration in creative writing. In her free time, Naomi enjoys reading science fiction and writing creative non-fiction.



MASON BROWN (HE/HIM) | STANLEY

Mason Brown has been stuck in his imagination since childhood. Whether playing knights and dragons in his yard with his siblings, reading loads of books, or acting onstage with family and friends, storytelling is in his DNA! Following his passion, Mason earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in acting from Southeast Missouri State University's Dobbins Conservatory of Visual and Performing Arts. Since then, he has worked with several local community and professional theater companies, including playing the title role in the Dobbins Conservatory production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Orpheus in Bankside Repertory Theatre's production of *Eurydice*. He shares weekly adventures with his friends and family playing games of Dungeons & Dragons. He has also served as the life enrichment coordinator at Bethesda Orchard, a senior living community in Webster Groves, for the past few years. Mason also stays active promoting his YouTube channel (@masonb316) and is always looking for his next grand adventure!

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



HAILEY MEDRANO (SHE/HER) | LUPE

Hailey Medrano is honored to be returning to Metro Theater Company after previously being seen in *The Very Hungry Caterpillar/La Oruga Muy Hambrienta*, *The Hundred Dresses*, and *Frida Libre*. Hailey is based in New York City and was most recently in the world premiere of a new play, *Love La Familia*. She also spent the summer as a teaching artist at Seattle Children's Theatre's Drama School. Hailey is grateful to return to the Midwest, where she has performed with theaters like St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, Great River Shakespeare Festival, Rebel and Misfits Productions, Black Mirror Theatre, and Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts. Hailey is a graduate of the Movement Theatre Studio (NYC) and Webster University, where she received her B.F.A. in acting.



PHOTO BY JENNIFER A. LIN

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



KATHRYN BENTLEY (SHE/HER) | DIRECTOR

is a community-focused artist and an associate professor of theater at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE) as well as the director of the SIUE Black Studies program, director of SIUE's IMPACT Academy, and the artistic director of SIUE's Black Theater Workshop. She has performed and directed with numerous theater companies regionally and nationally, notably directing the 2019 Shakespeare in the Streets production *Love at the River's Edge* with St. Louis Shakespeare Festival. From 2018-2021, she was the artistic director of Bread and Roses Missouri's Workers' Theater project, where she directed the company's first full-length productions of *Jailbird* in 2019 and the radio drama *Mrs. Palmer's Honey* in 2021. She currently serves as an advisory board member for the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, where she has been a consultant involved in programming and facilitation for the last 20 years. She is a CDFT (Certified Diversity Facilitator)™ with NCCJ St. Louis and conducts diversity and inclusion trainings throughout the metropolitan area. In 2020, she was granted the Saint Louis Visionary Awards' Outstanding Working Artist award. In 2000, she was instrumental in developing the CHIPS In Motion program at CHIPS Health and Wellness Center in North St. Louis. This program continues to utilize performance to teach the community about pertinent health and wellness issues. Kathryn commits herself to community-engaged arts collaborations, striving to create compassionate artistic experiences and using theater to lift social consciousness.



ISABELLE SCHEIBE (SHE/HER) | STAGE MANAGER

is excited to return to Metro Theater Company after working as assistant stage manager on *Last Stop on Market Street* during MTC's 2021-22 Season. Isabelle graduated from Stephens College with a B.F.A. and is currently studying for a master's in arts management at Colorado State University. When she is not studying, you can find Isabelle working as the theater tech assistant/stage manager at Missouri Baptist University. Isabelle recently finished working on the St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* as the associate production manager. Isabelle's stage management work at Missouri Baptist University includes *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*, *Big Fish*, *Peter & the Star Catcher*, *A Doll's House*, and *Into the Woods*.

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



NICHOLAS KRYAH (HE/HIS) | SCENIC DESIGNER

It's an understatement to say that Nicholas Kryah wore lots of artistic hats in his 37-year tenure with Metro Theater Company. From the day Zaro Weil hired him in 1977 through 2014, when he stepped down from his post as MTC's resident artist, Nick did it all. He gave over 5,500 performances in roles ranging from Atticus Finch (*To Kill a Mockingbird*) and Babe Ruth (*Jackie and Me*) to a Fat Lie (*Arm in Arm*) and Emcee Dog (*Go, Dog. Go!*). He wrote plays: *Beowulf*, *Iceman*, *A Short Hike on a Long Trail*, *Stix & Stonz*, and *Talkin' Trash*. He directed productions: *Tomato Plant Girl*, *New Kid*, *Delilah's Wish*, and *Long Road to Freedom*. He served as both actor and stage manager for 14 years of MTC's tours. He designed and built 30 sets that fit in a van yet filled a stage. Tours to Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Italy, and Taiwan required figuring out how to re-build and pack those sets to ship via air cargo. Nick did that, too. A master organizer and fastidious craftsman, Nick managed MTC's production, construction, and storage space. He knew where every single tool, prop, musical instrument, and costume piece was stored. When MTC moved to its current home in Grand Center, Nick single-handedly built the sprung floor in the large rehearsal hall and designed and built out the scene shop and costume/props storage area. Nick also taught. It is impossible to count the thousands and thousands of young people and educators Nick inspired with his imaginative workshops in school classrooms.

Now, when he isn't traveling or gardening, Nick is in his studio painting, making books, and tapping into the four-year-old that he believes lives inside each of us. His play *Everything is Round* had recent productions at Pollyanna Theatre in Austin and Magik Theatre in San Antonio, Texas. *My Name is Loofa Tutu* is slated for production next season. He created the collages for MTC's 2021 virtual production of Idris Goodwin's *Jacked!* Nick is thrilled to be part of MTC's 50th Anniversary Season, designing for the return of one of his favorite characters, Madeline Delilah, in Mariah L. Richardson's *Bold, Brave, Curious!*

Nick is a graduate of the Conservatory of Theatre Arts (now renamed the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts) with a B.A. from Webster University and an M.A. in dramatic literature, theory, and criticism from Michigan State University. With Carol North, he was honored with the Arts and Education Council's 2014 Lifetime Achievement in the Arts award.

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



TAIJHA NECOLE SILAS (SHE/THEY) | PROPS MASTER

is a native of Alexandria, Louisiana. She has a Bachelor of Science in theatre with a concentration in performance, directing, and musical theatre from Northwestern State University. Taijha is a faithful sister and alum of Phi Mu Fraternity Kappa Iota Chapter, where she served as a committee head every year of her collegiate career as well as the vice president of Greek life at NSULA. Taijha has been performing for more than 10 years with training in music, dance, acting, directing, and tech. Taijha has performed in shows such as *Hairspray*, *Rock of Ages*, *Sister Act*, and *Behind the Sheet*. She has also directed selections from *Love/Sick*, *Sealed for Freshness*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Outsiders*. In her career, she has performed professionally as a dancer and host for the Peanuts Block Party at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. She is currently an acting fellow with The Black Rep, where she wears many hats by acting with the touring company in *Stamping*, *Shouting, and Singing Home* and *Turn-Up*, and making graphics for the social media platform. Taijha's technical credits include props design and stage management. Taijha has designed props on productions such as *Fireflies*, *Jitney*, *Matilda the Musical*, and MTC's *Bold, Brave, Curious!* She is grateful for the opportunities presented to her and hopes to continue her career in theatre for a long time! Instagram @t.n.i.s Facebook @Taijha Silas.



SYRHEA CONAWAY (SHE/HER) | COMPOSER

is a multi-instrumentalist, composer, producer, and music instructor in St. Louis. She has performed and spoke for TEDx Gateway Arch, the Arts and Education Council of St. Louis, moderated conversations with Damon Davis for USDAC and RAC's Culture/Shift 2016 as well as St. Louis Blues Society's Race and Blues series. She's produced live sound design for the Peabody Award-winning podcast *To the Best of Our Knowledge*. Conaway, the DJ-in-residence of 2019 at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, has returned to Metro Theater Company after making her acting debut in MTC's production of *Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure* and, most recently, as composer, musician, and cast member of MTC's production of *In My Granny's Garden*. Currently, she composes original music for classical music organizations, local theater companies, and performs regularly in the region as Syna So Pro. Instagram @synasopro Facebook @synasopro.

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



COLIN McLAUGHLIN (HE/HIS) | COMPOSER

is a St. Louis-based actor, musician, playwright, and teaching artist, who has worked with Bread and Roses Missouri, St. Louis Shakespeare Festival, A Call to Conscience: Interactive Theater for Social Change (C2C), Intersect Arts Center, and COCA. He was last on stage this spring as Charles Kettering in *Big Machine* at COCA. This fall, he portrays Andrej in RS Theatrics' production of *Once*. Colin comes from a family of musicians and is an experienced songwriter well-versed in the traditions of jazz, blues, and folk music. He wrote the original jazz score for *Mrs. Palmer's Honey*, an 8-part audio play produced by Bread and Roses Missouri premiering later this year. Colin is a resident teaching artist with St. Louis Shakespeare Festival at Sumner High School, a project assistant at CHIPs Health and Wellness Center, and a proud member of The Art Collaborative. He received a Bachelor of Science in social work from Saint Louis University in 2018.



NATHAN LESSLY (HE/THEY) | COSTUME DESIGNER

is a recent St. Louis transplant and is excited to be returning to Metro Theater Company after serving as the costume assistant for *In My Granny's Garden* and *Last Stop on Market Street* during MTC's 2021-22 Season. He spent his childhood in Spearfish, South Dakota, where he was involved in multiple productions at the historic Matthews Opera House, including *Clue: The Musical*, *Red*, and *Deadeye's Wild West*. He went on to study costuming and musical theatre at the University of Central Oklahoma, where he worked on *The Pirates of Penzance* and (appropriately) *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Currently, he utilizes his sewing skills by stitching for local clients and designers and sewing clothes for himself. Nathan's designs focus on sustainability, using recycled materials, and giving new life to second-hand pieces!

DESIGN & PRODUCTION BIOGRAPHIES



GABY RODRIGUEZ (SHE/HER) | DRAMATURG

returns to Metro Theater Company after making her debut in MTC's production of *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show* during the 2020-21 Season. Gaby has several directing credits to her name, including *Suffer the Children* (COCA), *Fefu and Her Friends* (Theatre Nuevo), *Refuge* (Campfire Theatre Festival), *Miss You Like Hell* (Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts), and *Dear Kitty... Querida Ana...* (In The Margin Theatre Company). She associate directed *Seussical™* through Theatre Under The Stars' Public Works Houston initiative. She is also an ensemble member with In The Margin Theatre Company and a teaching artist at COCA and Asolo Repertory Theatre. Gaby is a native of Santiago de Cuba, Cuba and Houston, Texas, and holds a B.A. in directing from the Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University.

METRO THEATER COMPANY PRODUCTION STAFF

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Bold, Brave, Curious! model
by Nicholas Kryah

BOLD, BRAVE, CURIOUS!



MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT

MARIAH L. RICHARDSON (SHE/HER) | PLAYWRIGHT

Mariah L. Richardson is a playwright and director. She is the author of 12 plays, with the most recent, *The Ville: Avengence!*, staged as a production of St. Louis Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeare in the Streets (SITS). Her new play, *Bold, Brave, Curious!*, a Madeline Delilah story, which was commissioned by Metro Theater Company, makes its world premiere this fall. Mariah has directed plays and five films. She is also a staff writer and the voice for a new animated series, *Drawn In*, for Nine PBS, which premiered in Summer 2022. Mariah is currently teaching first-year acting at Webster University's Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts. Mariah received a B.A. in communications from the University of New Mexico and an M.F.A. from Smith College in playwriting.

METRO THEATER COMPANY LEADERSHIP



JULIA FLOOD (SHE/HER) | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

has directed *Digging Up Dessa*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *The Girl Who Swallowed a Cactus*, *The Hundred Dresses*, *Frida Libre*, *Bud, Not Buddy*, *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*, *The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane*, and *In This Corner: Cassius Clay*, *Out of the Box*, *Talkin' Trash*, *Afflicted: Daughters of Salem*, *Unsorted*, and *Say Something, Do Something!* for Metro Theater Company since she moved to St. Louis to become artistic director in February 2014. Previously, Julia spent 16 years as artistic director of Eckerd Theater Company in Clearwater, Florida where she commissioned such plays as *Vote?*, by Eric Coble, provoked by Florida's role in the 2000 presidential election, and *Battledrum* by Doug Cooney with Lee Ahlin, a musical about the effects of war on young people through the lens of Civil War drummer boys, subsequently produced at Metro Theater Company. A graduate of Northwestern University, Julia spent seven years as a resident member of the Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble in Pennsylvania, a unique artist-led ensemble founded under the guidance of legendary acting teacher Alvina Krause, before following a freelance career as actor/director/playwright/teacher. Julia served on the national board of directors of Theatre for Young Audiences/USA from 2011 to 2019, and brings more than 40 years of experience to her role as artistic director of Metro Theater Company.



JOE GFALLER (HE/HIM) | MANAGING DIRECTOR

joined the Metro Theater Company team in 2019. During his tenure to date, Metro Theater Company has seen dramatic growth in both its audience base and its donor base. In partnership with Artistic Director Julia Flood, he has co-led the company through its recent evolutions during the COVID-19 pandemic, from its virtual programming to its safe return to live performances. Prior to joining the MTC team, Joe received national recognition for his work in building young, diverse, and national audiences for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis during his tenure as director of marketing and public relations – and for expanding OTSL's civic footprint as the producer of the company's Opera Tastings series, through artist community tours, and the creation and growth of its Engagement + Inclusion Task Force. His career has also included roles with the American Repertory Theater, the Alliance Theater, and 7 Stages, and consulting projects for the National Blues Museum, the Utah Symphony, and the documentary film *Flint: The Poisoning of an American City*. He has directed over two dozen professional or university productions, including regional premieres by David Mamet, Caryl Churchill, and others. A graduate of Harvard University, he also serves as adjunct faculty at Webster University in the Arts Management and Leadership MFA program.

BOLD, BRAVE, CURIOUS!

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Without you, Metro Theater Company's work would not be possible. We include a list of all supporters who have made contributions or pledges between July 1, 2021 and September 1, 2022.

We regret any inadvertent omissions from this list. If you made a pledge or a gift and do not see your name listed here, please contact Individual Support and Events Manager Bailey Pashia at bailey@metroplays.org.

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The Carol North and Nicholas Kryah Benefactor Society was established to honor four decades of leadership by Artistic Director Carol North and Resident Artist Nicholas Kryah.

Members of the Benefactor Society contribute a minimum of \$1000 annually to ensure that Carol and Nicholas' legacy of meaningful artistic work for young audiences continues to grow.

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Steve and Maryalice Gallagher

In honor of Mary Tonkin

Mary Schoolman

In honor of Peggy O'Brien

Jeff Buchek and Marissa Strathearn



MISSION STATEMENT

Inspired by the intelligence and emotional wisdom of young people, we create professional theater, foster inclusive community, and nurture meaningful learning through the arts.

STAFF

Julia Flood Artistic Director

Joe Gfaller Managing Director

Karen Bain
Education Director

Erik Kuhn
Technical Director

Sarah Thompson
Director of Communications
and Media

Jennifer Lin
Content Marketing
Manager

Gen Zoufal
Resident Teaching
Artist

Jimmy Bernatowicz
Production Manager

Bailey Pashia
Individual Support and
Events Manager

Eleanor Marsh
School Bookings and
Audience Services
Manager

Aubrey Felty
Teaching Artist Fellow

Julia Hogan Laurenson
Artistic Administration
Coordinator

Michele Mosley
Grants Manager

McKinley Seale
Admin & Operations
Associate

Britni Eggers
Graphic Designer

Tyler White
Bookkeeper

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Coleen Trentmann (President)

Julius B. Anthony

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Sarah Richmond

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Darci Madden (Secretary)

Julia Flood*

Laura Lancia

Pamela Washington, Ph.D.

John D. Weil (CFO)

Joe Gfaller*

Anatoli Lataria

Michael Williams

Joseph Albitar

Kristin Guehlorf

Maurice Mahone

*ex officio, non-voting

EMERITUS MEMBERS

David Bentzinger

Camille Greenwald

Susan W. Nall, Ph.D.

Zaro Weil

Marlene Birkman, Ph.D.

Marcia Kerz

Joseph M. Noelker

Lynn Rubright

Terry Bloomberg

Daniel Jay

Peggy O'Brien

Mary Ellen Finch, Ph.D.

Ken Jones

Mary Tonkin

Susan Gamble

Ellen Livingston

Anabeth C. Weil

Nancy Garvey

James R. Moog

FOUNDERS

Metro Theater Company is St. Louis' premier professional theater for youth and families and St. Louis' third-oldest professional theater company. Since 1973, Metro Theater Company has been creating productions that respect young people's intelligence, tell compelling stories, stimulate curiosity and provoke thoughtful reflection. The Company has reached a total audience of more than two million and has a national reputation for excellence in the field of professional theater for young audiences. Metro Theater Company has received major honors and awards, both locally and nationally. The Company is not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization and is a proud member of the Theatre Communications Group (the national service organization for non-profit professional theaters), Theatre for Young Audiences/USA (the U.S. chapter of the international association of theaters for young people), and Missouri Citizens for the Arts.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



THESE QUESTIONS ARE GREAT TO USE ON THE RIDE HOME OR ANY TIME AFTER YOU HAVE WATCHED THE PERFORMANCE!

1. How would you describe the friendship of Stanley, Delilah, and Lupe? How would you describe your friendships? What do they have in common?
2. What is the most important quality you look for in a friend?
3. Stanley, Delilah, and Lupe can't move through the doorway to the attic until they say the words "bold," "brave," and "curious." What do those words mean to you (without looking them up)?
4. How did it feel the last time you were brave or bold?
5. Stanley finds a typewriter in the attic. Have you ever discovered something in your house that has been replaced by newer technology? Did you know what it was? If not, how did you find out?
6. Stanley and Delilah get in an argument after she finds out he stole money. How do you resolve disagreements with your friends?
7. When was there a time you forgave someone or were forgiven for something?
8. Lupe says friends make you feel like you belong. Where is a place you feel like you can truly be yourself?
9. How can you show people you care about them without buying them a gift?
10. What causes Stanley, Delilah, and Lupe to finally be able to get out of the attic and through the portal?

SAVE THESE DATES!

Metro

**THEATER
COMPANY**

1973 **50** YEARS 2023

WE ARE

50

Let the celebration begin!

**BE A PART OF OUR 2022/2023
50TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON**

SEP 9 - OCT 16:

Bold, Brave, Curious!

WORLD PREMIERE

School Tour & The Sun Theater

FEB 5 - MAR 5:

Spells of the Sea

WORLD PREMIERE

The Grandel Theatre

OCT 9 - NOV 6:

Seedfolks

The Grandel Theatre

APR 2-16:

Go, Dog. Go!

The Big Top