

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI



Adapted by **JOHN WOLBERS** Directed by **JULIA FLOOD**

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

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Metro Theater Company is a professional theater for young people and families and a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. It 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, as well as a proud Cultural Partner of the School District of Clayton. Metro Theater Company receives financial assistance from the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; Missouri Humanities Council, a state agency; the Regional Arts Commission; the Arts and Education Council; and numerous corporations, foundations and individuals.

WELCOME TO METRO THEATER COMPANY'S PRODUCTION OF *IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE*

"Every time a bell rings, an angel gets their wings."

Metro Theater Company has been blessed with many angels – teachers who take on extra work to make it possible for their students to see a live performance; parents, grandparents, and caregivers who make sure their children have the opportunity to experience the magic of theater; generous donors and funders whose gifts mean that every child will share this same opportunity; and dedicated artists, technicians, administrators, volunteers and staff whose tireless efforts bring the work to life.

We are grateful for each and every one of you.

Now is the season of gratitude. As the days grow shorter and the year approaches its end, we reflect on the generosity of the community that sustains us and gives us wings, and we are inspired by the young people whose curiosity and wonder give us purpose.

In that spirit of gratitude, we offer this new telling, set in St. Louis, of the well-loved story, *It's a Wonderful Life*: a play full of imagination, hope, unexpected kindness, and the celebration of community.

George Bailey's guardian angel says, "...Strange, isn't it? Each person's life touches so many others." It's true. None of us is alone. Each one of us plays an indispensable role in creating the world we live in, in shaping the wonderful community we know St. Louis can be.

Thank you for sharing in this celebration with us.

Happy Holidays!

FROM ALL OF US AT METRO THEATER COMPANY



JULIA FLOOD ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



JOE GFALLER MANAGING DIRECTOR "EVERY TIME A BELL RINGS, AN ANGEL GETS THEIR WINGS."



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We are grateful to the generous support of so many in our community. Without you, Metro Theater Company's work would not be possible. We include below a list of individual supporters who have given since July 1, 2018.

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List current as of October 25, 2019. 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 Development Associate Lauren Brooks at lauren@metroplays.org. "EVERY TIME A BELL RINGS, AN ANGEL GETS THEIR WINGS."



THE CAST

KMTC Radio St. Louis personality / It's a Wonderful Life radio play character(s)

NICOLE ANGELI

Ruby Vandenboom / Mr. Gower, Mr. Potter, Mrs. Hatch, Charlie, Bert & Tommy

ALICIA REVÉ LIKE June Kelly / Mary Hatch

ROXANE McWILLIAMS

Minnie Hoople / Bridgekeeper, Tilly, Ma Bailey, Mrs. Thompson, Doris & Janie

CARL OVERLY, JR. Chester Collins / Announcer, Pop, Uncle Billy, Ernie, Pete, Mr. Welch & Harry

PRODUCTION TEAM

DIRECTOR STAGE MANAGER PRODUCTION MANAGER/TECHNICAL DIRECTOR SCENIC DESIGNER SCENIC PAINTER COSTUME DESIGNER LIGHTING DESIGNER SOUND DESIGNER PROPERTIES MASTER Julia Flood Sarah Rugo Erik Kuhn Jamie Perkins Cristie Johnston Lou Bird Catherine Adams Rusty Wandall Katie Orr





ABRAHAM SHAW Walter Bell / George Bailey

MINDY SHAW Vera Hayes / Clara, Mrs. Davis & Zuzu

CHRIS E. WARE

Floyd Rogers / Sam Wainwright, Randall, Mr. Martini & Sheriff

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



NICOLE ANGELI

(Ruby Vandenboom / Mr. Gower, Mr. Potter, Mrs. Hatch, Charlie, Bert & Tommy) is not only a familiar face in the St. Louis theater community, she's also a familiar face at Metro Theater Company, assisting with school

engagement when she's not on stage. Nicole has worked with numerous local theater companies. Her regional credits include: *Photograph 51* (West End Players Guild), *Doctor Faustus, or the Modern Prometheus* and *First Impressions* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble), *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler* and *A Doll's House* (Stray Dog Theatre), and *Wild Oats* (St. Louis Shakespeare). She is a five-time nominee and two-time St. Louis Theater Circle Award winner for Outstanding Ensemble: *First Impressions* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble) and *Arcadia* (West End Players Guild).



ALICIA REVÉ LIKE

(June Kelly / Mary Hatch) is happy to be back with Metro Theater Company where she was last seen in *The Hundred Dresses* and *Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure*. Like is a proud graduate of the University of

Missouri in Columbia with a BA in music. She won the St. Louis Theater Circle Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Drama for her performance as Clarissa in The Black Rep's production of *Miss Julie, Clarissa and John*. Other credits include *To Kill A Mockingbird* (St. Louis Rep) and *The Wiz* (Coterie Theatre). She is also a company member of the show *American Musical* at the Sheldon Concert Hall. For more information, visit aliciareve.weebly.com.



ROXANE McWILLIAMS

(Minnie Hoople / Bridgekeeper, Tilly, Ma Bailey, Mrs. Thompson, Doris & Janie) is beginning her twelfth season with Metro Theater Company. Some favorite shows with MTC are Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates, Out of the Box, Interrupting Vanessa, Unsorted, Tomato Plant Girl, New Kid, and Go, Dog. Go! She was the musician in The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane. Roxane received her BFA in acting from the University of Connecticut and her M.Ed in curriculum design from the University of Missouri–St. Louis, and holds a Missouri teaching certificate in speech and theater.



CARL OVERLY, JR.

(Chester Collins / Announcer, Pop, Uncle Billy, Ernie, Pete, Mr. Welch & Harry) has worked with Metro Theater Company several times, most recently as Lefty Lewis/ Steady Eddie in *Bud, Not Buddy* and Corky Baker in *And In This*

Corner...Cassius Clay. His recent credits include *Of Mice and Men* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble), *Torn Asunder* (The Black Rep), *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Mustard Seed Theatre), *Trash Macbeth* (ERA), *Shakespeare in Love* (Insight Theatre), *Oedipus Apparatus* (West End Players), *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabler* (St. Louis Shakespeare), and *The World Begun* (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis). Carl holds a BA in theatre from Eastern Kentucky University and was named a Rising Leader of Color by Theatre Communications Group. He is a three-time award winner of the St. Louis Theater Circle Awards.



ABRAHAM SHAW

(Walter Bell / George Bailey) is making his Metro Theater Company debut. The St. Louis native is no stranger to the local theatre scene. Stage credits include *Dreamgirls* (Stray Dog Theatre), *The Crucible* (Stray Dog Theatre), *The Drowsy*

Chaperone (Overdue Theatre), *Lost in the Stars* (Union Avenue Opera), and *All is Calm* (Mustard Seed Theatre). He is the National Society of Arts and Letters St. Louis Chapter's First Place Chapter Drama Competition winner. He was also awarded Second Place in Drama at the national level in Washington D.C.

CAST BIOGRAPHIES



MINDY SHAW

(Vera Hayes / Clara, Mrs. Davis & Zuzu) is delighted to make her Metro Theater Company debut in *It's a Wonderful Life*. A recent transplant from Washington, D.C., her Midwest stage credits include *Insane Sisters* (Bluff City Theater)

and It's a Wonderful Life (Bankside Repertory Theater Company). D.C. area performances include the world premiere of Marc Acito's The Secrets of the Universe (And Other Songs) (The Hub Theatre), The Small Room at the Top of the Stairs (Spooky Action Theater), Oblivion (Unexpected Stage Company), Collaborators (Spooky Action Theater), Stories From the Fringe: Women Rabbis Revealed (touring), and Silent Sky (Silver Spring Stage). Mindy trained at Trinity Rep. Conservatory and is also a voiceover actor. mindyshawactor.com; IG-#postcardsfromthemiddle



CHRIS E. WARE

(Floyd Rogers / Sam Wainwright, Randall, Mr. Martini & Sheriff) is a multi-talented artist who is a former Marine, actor, poet, guitarist, and vocalist. He was the 2014 St. Louis Poetry Slam Champion, and his work is published in *Crossing*

the Divide, an anthology of St. Louis poetry compiled by Dr. Michael Castro. His work with Metro Theater Company includes Bud, Not Buddy and the world premiere tour of Games Dad Didn't Play by Jeremy Schaffer. Other regional credits include Romeo and Juliet, Love at the River's Edge and The World Begun (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis), The Last Days of Judas Iscariot (Mustard Seed Theatre), and As You Like It (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble). He served as musical director for Of Mice and Men (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble).

MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT



JOHN WOLBERS has adapted many plays for the stage, including a parody of *The Lord of the Rings* series (with his now wife, Elizabeth Henning) and thirteen of Shakespeare's plays. He is the author of two original works: *The Playing Ground* and *Doctor Faustus, or the Modern Prometheus*, which received a St. Louis Theater Circle Award nomination for Outstanding New Play.

John has worn many hats over the years. He joined Metro Theater Company in 2007 as an actor in *Hana's Suitcase*, became resident teaching artist in 2012, and transitioned to producing associate in 2018. Each year, he interviews teachers and students across St. Louis to write scenes of realistic middle school bullying for Metro Theater Company's innovative violence prevention program, *Say Something, Do Something.*

Passionately dedicated to fostering equity, accessibility and support for the local arts community; John has worked for over a decade in the St. Louis region as a professional actor, director, producer, playwright, and teaching artist. He is a three-time acting nominee and two-time St. Louis Theatre Circle Award winner for Outstanding Ensemble: *First Impressions* (Slightly Askew Theatre Ensemble) and *Arcadia* (West End Players Guild).

CATHERINE ADAMS (Lighting Designer) is thrilled to return to Metro Theater Company as lighting director. She is currently working towards a BFA in lighting design from the Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University. She has worked with Metro Theater Company for the past three years on a variety of productions. She was assistant lighting designer and master electrician for *The Hundred Dresses*, assistant lighting designer and master electrician for *Wonderland: Alice's Rock & Roll Adventure*, and lighting programmer and master electrician for *Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates*.

LOU BIRD (Costume Design) is pleased to be returning to Metro Theater Company to design It's a Wonderful Life. Other designs for Metro Theater Company include The Hundred Dresses, Bud, Not Buddy, Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates, The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane, And in This Corner...Cassius Clay, Afflicted: Daughters of Salem, Jackie & Me, Unsorted, Super Cowgirl and Mighty Miracle, Battledrum, Tomato Plant Girl, The Giver, To Kill a Mockingbird, Go, Dog. Go!, New Kid, and Hana's Suitcase. Lou's many design credits include STAGES St. Louis, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Imaginary Theatre Company, and Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. Lou is associate professor at Saint Louis University where he teaches costume design and construction, as well as stage combat.

JULIA FLOOD (Artistic Director / Director) has directed 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 director of Theatre for Young Audiences/USA from 2011 to 2019, and brings more than 35 years of experience to her role as artistic director of Metro Theater Company.

ERIK KUHN (Production Manager / Technical Director) is a St. Louis-based actor, technician, and stage combatant. While working in the scene shop at Washington University in St Louis, he also began serving as a technical director for various student projects and developed an interest in working in technical theater, while continuing to study acting. After graduating with his degree in drama, he also began studying stage combat with the Society of American Fight Directors and Dueling Arts International. As a freelance theater professional, he has served as a technical director. designer, carpenter, electrician, fight director, stage combat instructor, and actor on innumerable productions and workshops with educational institutions and professional companies across St. Louis. He first worked with Metro Theater Company as assistant technical director to Nick Krvah on 2012's Jackie and Me. After that production, he continued to contract with the company in various capacities before joining the team full-time in 2017.

KATIE ORR (Properties Master) is a designer, theatre-marketing aficionado, and recent grad from Stephens College with a BFA in theatre arts. As a theatre advocate and native St. Louisan, it has been her dream to bring local theatre into the limelight. There are so many incredible companies that get swept under the rug, and that is why she is back in St. Louis to further her mission as a committed designer, artist, and advocate in the St. Louis community. Design credits include *The Brothers Grimm Spectaculathon* and *Shakespeare in Love* at Insight Theatre Company, and *Brighton Beach Memoirs* at the New Jewish Theatre. www.katiemicorr.wixsite.com/technician JAMIE PERKINS (Scenic Designer) is a native of St. Louis, with degrees in music and choral conducting from Washington University in St. Louis and Webster University. Previously, Jamie has worked as a scenic carpenter for the Performing Arts Department at Washington University and Union Avenue Opera, and is entering his seventh year as designer and carpenter for Youth Sing Praise, a summer musical theater camp for teens. Recent design credits include Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at Youth Sing Praise and Death Tax at Mustard Seed Theatre. Jamie currently works as the technical director and ensembles coordinator for the Department of Music at Washington University. He is excited to join the team at Metro Theater Company for this production!

SARAH RUGO (Stage Manager) is in her fourteenth season with Metro Theater Company and in that time has stage managed 14 touring productions and 14 mainstage productions for the company. After earning her BFA in musical theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory in Virginia, she completed an internship with Lexington Children's Theatre before moving to St. Louis to work for Metro Theater Company in 2004. In addition to taking Metro Theater Company's touring productions to hundreds of local and regional schools and community centers. Sarah has overseen mainstage productions in venues such as the Missouri History Museum (And In This Corner...Cassius Clay, Afflicted: Daughters of Salem, Battledrum), Wydown Middle School (The Boy Who Loved Monsters and the Girl Who Loved Peas), Clayton High School (Interrupting Vanessa), the West County YMCA (Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse), COCA (Go, Dog. Go!) and Edison Theatre (Hana's Suitcase, To Kill a Mockingbird, The Giver, Jackie and Me). Her other favorites include Earth Songs, New Kid, and Delilah's Wish. In past years, Sarah spent her summers stage managing for Union Avenue Opera. She has also worked for Opera Theatre of Saint Louis and Shenandoah Summer Music Theatre. Sarah thanks her husband, Adam, and her parents for their unending love and support, and her Aunt Donna for childcare.

RUSTY WANDALL (Sound Design) is excited to return to Metro Theater Company for It's a Wonderful Life. He is currently head of sound design at Webster University and the sound supervisor at the Repertory Theater of St. Louis. In 2016, Rusty was honored with the St. Louis Theater Circle Award for his work on Antony and Cleopatra with Shakespeare Festival St. Louis. He has also worked with Variety Children's Theatre, Opera Theatre St. Louis, Hot City Theatre, and Mustard Seed Theatre in St. Louis, as well as theatres across the country. Rusty holds a Master of Fine Arts in sound design from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He would like to thank God for his countless blessings, including his son Corey, and his wife Marian for her unending love and support.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Metro Theater Company would also like to thank the following individuals, businesses, organizations, agencies and institutions who have given generously of their time, talents and services in support of our mission:



Dr. Kelvin Adams Nicole Angeli Antique Radio Collectors and Historians of Greater St. Louis Dr. Elizabeth Baker Yemi Akande-Bartsch Booksource Matt Cowley Marlene Davis Britni Eggers Nancy & Tom Garvey Dr. Keon Gilbert Chris Hansen Scott Hanson Trov Hargrove John Inchiostro **BJ** Jacobsmeyer Dr. Paula Knight Kranzberg Arts Foundation Nancy and Ken Kranzberg Andrew Kuhlman







QUESTIONS FOR THE RIDE HOME

- 1. What did you think of the sound effects made by the Foley artist in the play? What would the play have been like if there weren't sound effects?
- 2. Why do you think Walter decides to jump in and play George Bailey? What's a time that you saw someone who stepped up, or you stepped up, to help out your community?
- **3.** What's a time that you made someone feel good because you noticed something kind or helpful that they did? And vice versa!
- **4.** In the play, George gets very stressed out and responds negatively to his family. What are some healthy ways you can deal with stress?
- **5.** If you could travel back to any point of your life, when would it be and why?
- **6.** Most of the actors play multiple characters in the radio play. What were some of the ways you noticed the actors portrayed these different characters?
- **7.** The Foley artist used different objects to create sound effects. Have you ever used objects around your house to create sounds? If so, what and how?
- 8. What are the small things that make your life wonderful?
- **9.** In the world of the play, listening to a radio play is a very common family tradition. What fun traditions do you have with your family?
- **10.** George is a part of many different communities: the staff at the Building and Loan, Bedford Falls, his family. What communities are you a part of?
- At the end of the play, the town of Bedford Falls rallies around George and his family to help him save the Building and Loan. When has your community stepped up to help someone out?



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Our education programs are designed and conducted with the belief that every person has creative potential, that the arts are a powerful tool to reach all learners, and that theater experiences have the power to create community and promote democratic dialogue.

CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENT

We can customize a residency to bring your core academic curriculum to life. We use drama and arts-based learning techniques connected to national and state standards to explore a variety of academic content areas.

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH DRAMA

This award winning residency examines scenarios of exclusion, bullying and prejudice (easily integrated with any Social Studies unit) and helps students develop positive strategies to deal with these challenging issues.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In lively, hands-on sessions, educators will explore and apply drama-based instructional strategies to bring curriculum, community building and/or character education to life.







FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT Education Director, Karen Bain karen@metroplays.org or call at 314.932.7414 x110



COME SEE US AT THE 2020 SUMMER OPPORTUNITIES FAIR SATURDAY, JAN 25 | 10 A.M. – 3 P.M. | MICDS

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY IN THE ARTS is what Metro Theater Company (MTC) Summer Camps are all about.

Whether it's playing with sculpture, storytelling and song at Creative Arts Camp, or learning how to audition for a play at Summer at SLU, MTC's professional teaching artists bring fun and growth through the arts to campers of all ages.As one of St. Louis' oldest and most respected theater companies, MTC brings the best in arts and theater to all of our camps.

QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY OF METRO THEATER COMPANY'S CAMPS?

Visit **metroplays.org** or contact **Karen Bain** at Metro Theater Company 314.932.7414 x110 or e-mail karen@metroplays.org



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Beginner campers entering grades 6-8 LOCATION: SLU, Midtown

Grand Theater Camp: ADVANCED MIDDLE SCHOOL

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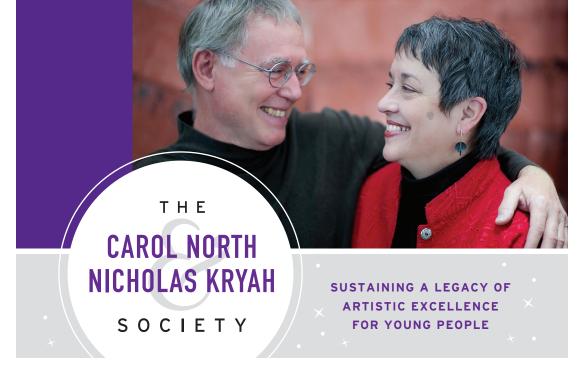
LOCATION: New City School, Central West End *Campers must be age 4 by July 29 to enroll

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The Carol North and Nicholas Kryah Society was established to honor four decades of leadership by artistic director Carol North and resident artist Nicholas "Nick" Kryah, and to ensure their legacy of meaningful artistic work for young audiences will flourish.

Inaugurated in 2013 through the generous founding gift of Elizabeth L. Green



SOCIETY MEMBERS MAKE IT POSSIBLE

for Metro Theater Company to maintain resources essential to the highest quality of artistic and education programs for young people. Become a Society member today!

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Contact Lauren Brooks at lauren@metroplays.org or 314.932.7414 x120 for more information



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