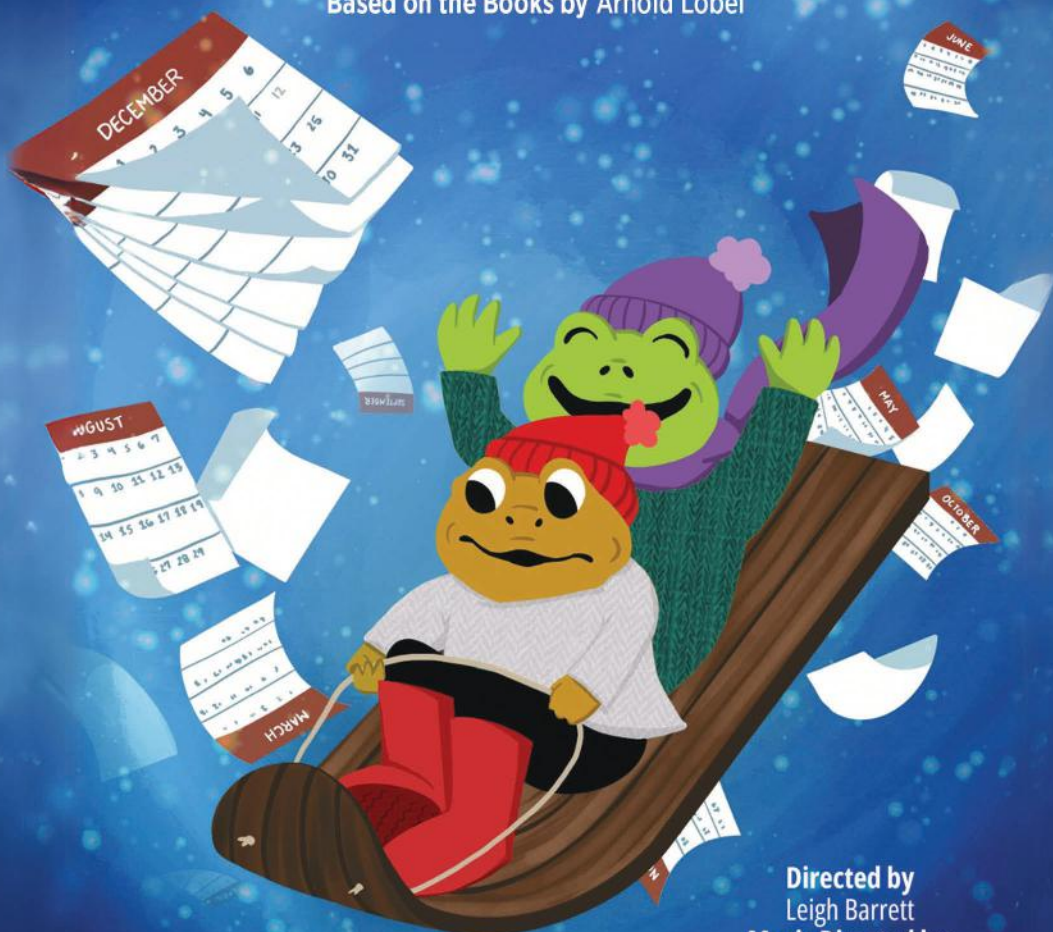


# A YEAR WITH FROG & TOAD

NOVEMBER 30 - DECEMBER 15, 2024

Music by Robert Reale Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale  
Based on the Books by Arnold Lobel



Dec 8 & 14

VISIT [WHEELLOCKFAMILYTHEATRE.ORG](http://WHEELLOCKFAMILYTHEATRE.ORG)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Directed by  
Leigh Barrett  
Music Directed by  
David Freeman Coleman  
Choreographed by  
Brad Reinking


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# Land Acknowledgment

We, the Wheelock Family Theatre Team, would like to recognize that the land where Wheelock Family Theatre sits is the unceded homeland of the Massachusetts people, whose name was appropriated by the Commonwealth, and their neighbors the Nipmuc and Wampanoag Peoples. We honor and respect Massachusetts elders past, present and emerging as well as all indigenous peoples still connected to this land on which we gather.


- Jamie Aznive, Assistant Director for Audience Services & ADA Coordinator
- Lisa Joyce, Social Media Assistant
- Jeri Hammond, Director of Education & Community Engagement
- Ben Lieberman, Technical Director
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BOSTON    BROOKLINE    CAMBRIDGE    DOVER    NATICK    NEEDHAM    NEWTON    SUDBURY    WAYLAND    WELLESLEY    WESTON

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# A Note from the Executive Director

November, 2024

A warm welcome to Wheelock Family Theatre! This season we're telling stories that celebrate the power of friendship. I'm excited to share with you the heartfelt and joyous musical, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, making its return to our stage 9 years later after delighting Boston area audiences in the spring of 2016.

*A Year with Frog and Toad*, adapted from Arnold Lobel's beloved books, invites us into the world of Frog and Toad, a world where the top of an acorn can be a bowl, and the oversized cattails provide the perfect playground for the two friend's many adventures. The themes of friendship, kindness, and acceptance are explored throughout Frog and Toad's year-long adventures, reminding us all that when you're surrounded by those you love, anything is possible.

I'm thrilled to welcome Leigh Barrett back to WFT, making her WFT directorial debut with this production! I've long admired Leigh as a performer, and have had the privilege of directing her twice at WFT in *Little Women the Broadway Musical* and *The Addams Family*. Her work as a director emulates who she is as a performer: empathetic, playful, and generous. I've enjoyed seeing Leigh and her collaborators create a community of storytellers with this intergenerational cast, centering joy, acceptance, and growth in their process.

As we enter into this annual time of togetherness, I want to thank you for being here with us today. WFT is honored to be your home for professional theater for all ages. As I look towards 2025, our work here continues and feels more vital than ever. I hope you will join us for the remainder of our season, enroll a student in an upcoming class or make a gift to our annual fund - all ways to ensure live theater can continue to transform lives.

With gratitude,  
Nick Vargas  
Executive Director, Wheelock Family Theatre



Tickets & Subscriptions	(617)353-3001	WFTtix@bu.edu
Group Sales	(617)353-1451	WFTgroup@bu.edu
Classes	(617)353-2994	WFTed@bu.edu
Casting	(617)353-1783	WFTcast@bu.edu
Contributions	(617)353-1466	korr@bu.edu



Boston University; Fenway Campus, 180 Riverway, Boston, MA 02215  
[www.wheelockfamilytheatre.org](http://www.wheelockfamilytheatre.org)

## ADVISORY BOARD

Charles G. Baldwin, Gracie Brakeman, Maggie Gold Seelig, Mikhail Higgins, Liveda Johnson,  
Susan Kosoff, Shelagh Leahy, Holly Oh, Myran Parker-Brass, Rudina Seseeri, Jane Staab,  
Jerry Wheelock, Harvey Young

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# A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD

*In alphabetical order*



Hazel Bradley



Alan Cid



Luna Odessa  
Coleman-Brown



Delaney Anne Cuthbert



Addy DeFeo



Ewan Dixon



Kristian Espiritu\*



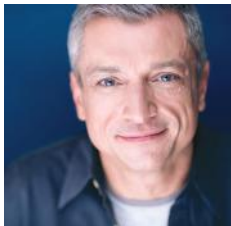
Maia Ettinger



Nora Gao



Maeve Kennedy



Will McGarrah\*

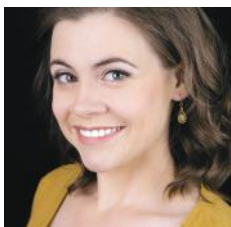


Todd McNeel Jr.





Gray Oliveira



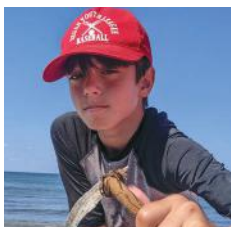
Katie O'Reilly



Anthony Pires Jr.\*



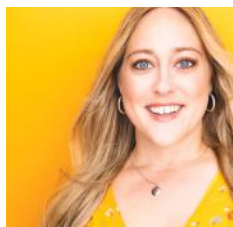
Scarlett Robillard



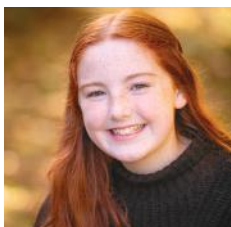
Jerbie Schlechter



Morgan Sharmaboro



Tader Shipley



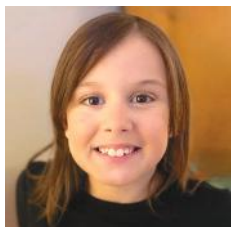
Katie Starmer



Zoe Vidanovic



Aixin Ella Wang



Clare Warren

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association

# A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD

Book and Lyrics by **Willie Reale**

Music by **Robert Reale**

Based on the books by **Arnold Lobel**

Director <b>Leigh Barrett</b>	Choreographer <b>Brad Reinking</b>	Music Director <b>David Freeman Coleman</b>
Sound Designer <b>Alex Berg</b>	Props Designer <b>Saskia Martinez</b>	Scenic Designer <b>Jenna McFarland Lord</b>
Costume Designer <b>Chelsea Kerl</b>	Lighting Designer <b>Deb Sullivan**</b>	Associate Director <b>Phoebe Singer</b>
Production Stage Manager <b>Fanni Horvath*</b>	Assistant Stage Manager <b>Cassie Lebeau</b>	Assistant Stage Manager <b>Anika Nayak*</b>

## THE CAST

*In alphabetical order*

Ensemble	<b>Alan Cid</b>
Ensemble	<b>Kristian Espiritu*</b>
Toad	<b>Will McGarrahan*</b>
<i>Understudy</i> Frog, Toad, Ensemble	<b>Todd McNeel Jr.</b>
<i>Understudy</i> Ensemble	<b>Katie O'Reilly</b>
Frog	<b>Anthony Pires Jr.*</b>
Ensemble	<b>Tader Shipley</b>
Moles	<b>Hazel Bradley, Luna Odessa Coleman-Brown, Delaney Anne Cuthbert, Addy DeFeo, Ewan Dixon, Maia Ettinger, Nora Gao, Maeve Kennedy, Gray Oliveira, Scarlett Robillard, Jerbie Schlechter, Morgan Sharmaboro, Katie Starmer, Zoe Vidanovic, Aixen Ella Wang, Clare Warren</b>

The taking of photographs and use of video or audio recording devices is strictly forbidden. Please turn off all electronic devices. Please, no eating or drinking in the theatre.

*Please ask the House Manager for individual sound enhancement devices.*

**A YEAR WITH FROG AND TOAD is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. [www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)**

Wheelock Family Theatre is a program of the BU College of Fine Arts, a member of ArtsBoston, MASS Creative, Cultural Access New England (CANE) and the Massachusetts Cultural Council's UP Initiative.



\*Member of Actor's Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Manager in the United States. WFT is operating under the terms of a Developing Theatre's Program of Actor's Equity Association. The contract used is a Letter of Agreement.

\*\*Member of United Scenic Artists 829

## SPECIAL THANKS

John Eldridge, Taylor Ness, Kiran Raza, Actors' Shakespeare Project, The Calderwood Pavillion, Think Outside the Vox, Brandeis University, Franklin Romero & the Fenway BU Facilities Team, BU School of Theatre Scene Shop, Sanjeev Joshi & the Fenway Campus Mailroom Staff, College of Fine Arts Staff and Faculty.

## MUSICAL PROGRAM

<i>Opening- A Year With Frog and Toad.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Birds
<i>Spring.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Birds
<i>Seeds.....</i>	Toad
<i>The Letter.....</i>	Snail
<i>Getta Loada Toad.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Turtle, Mouse, Lizard
<i>Underwater Ballet.....</i>	Band, Turtle, Mouse, Lizard
<i>Alone.....</i>	Frog
<i>The Letter #2.....</i>	Snail
<i>Cookies.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Birds
<i>Leaves- A Year With Frog and Toad.....</i>	Birds
<i>He'll Never Know.....</i>	Frog, Toad
<i>Shivers.....</i>	Young Frog, Mother Frog, Father Frog, Toad, Frog, Large & Terrible Frog
<i>Snow Ballet.....</i>	Band, Moles
<i>The Letter #3.....</i>	Snail
<i>Down the Hill.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Moles
<i>The Letter #4.....</i>	Snail
<i>I'm Coming Out of My Shell.....</i>	Snail
<i>Toad to the Rescue.....</i>	Toad, Moles
<i>Merry Almost Christmas.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Company
<i>Finale.....</i>	Frog, Toad, Company

## ORCHESTRA

Keyboard 1/Conductor  
**David Freeman Coleman**

Drums  
**Hector Saint-Hillaire**



**Wheelock Family Theatre**

**EDUCATION**

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# WHEELOCK FAMILY THEATRE AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY

## STAFF

Asst. Dir. for Audience Services; ADA Coordinator	<b>Jamie Aznive</b>
Social Media Assistant	<b>Lisa Joyce</b>
Dir. of Ed & Community Engagement	<b>Jeri Hammond</b>
Asst. Dir. of Ed & Community Engagement	<b>Marie Libbin</b>
Technical Director	<b>Ben Liebersson</b>
Administrative Director	<b>Keith Orr</b>
Executive Director	<b>Nick Vargas</b>
Production Manager	<b>Steve Vieira</b>

## PRODUCTION TEAM

Front of House Manager	<b>Molly Bercutt</b>
A2/Deck Electrician	<b>Nate Morrissey</b>
Lead Carpenter	<b>Elliott Purcell</b>
A1/Audio Engineer	<b>Bekah Rudinec</b>
Casting Supervisor	<b>Carolyn Saxon</b>
Production Electrician	<b>Lawrence A. Ware</b>
Carpenter	<b>Jeffrey Petersen</b>
Electricians	<b>Han Taub, Gwen Trueblood</b>
Youth Supervisor	<b>Eva Murray</b>
Consultant	<b>Beth Peters</b>
Wardrobe Supervisor/Costume Shop Manager	<b>Marissa Wolf</b>

## ACCESS TEAM

Director of Artistic Sign Language	<b>Takiyah “Taki” Harris</b>
ASL Interpreters	<b>Cassie Heath, Ember Hope Spera, Jess Meyer</b>
In-Show Audio Describer	<b>Melissa A. Watkins</b>
Pre-Show Audio Describer	<b>Jill Robbins</b>
Captioning	<b>Alyse Jessica Clinton, <i>Formatter</i></b>
	<b>Neil Gustafson, Brian Masters</b>

**We wish to thank all the people who have joined us since the program went to press.**

## EDUCATION PROGRAM FACULTY

Lindsay Albert, Esme Allen, Steve Bergman, Danny Bolton, Matthew Brettschneider, Alex Brodsky-Benedetti, Jenn Butler, Corinne Calderbank, Alisa Cassola, Stephanie Charlton, Alyse Clinton, Amber Crossman, Laura DeGiacomo, Yasmeen Duncan, Maddie Finkelman, Moe Finnerty, Jon Goldberg, Lauren Grill, Katie Gustafson, David Jiles, Jr., Audrey Johnson, Bryan Landgren, Alex Leondedis, Jen Lewis, Dev Luthra, Rachel Maddox, Saskia Martinez, Lily Midnight, Isabel Molettieri, Eva Murray, Anika Nayak, Jordan Oczkowski, Merritt O’Keefe, Juanita Pearl, Matt Phillips, Josie Ross, Anna Ricciutti, Emily Schmid, Miranda Slingluff, Han Taub, Annabel Wall, Shira Weiss, Jennifer White, Mabel White, Thalia Wolff

## WORK STUDY STUDENTS AND INTERNS

Kathleen Campbell, Maggie Cavanaugh, Matthew Cox, Damoya Compass, Sophie Cutler, Diego Cazorla-Garcia, Weston Danks, Gabi David, Ayanna Dunlop, Natalie Fadlon, Ann Flynn, Madison Forrest, Sam Freifeld, Becky Gray, Lauren Grill, Jayden Huang, Alexis Hutchings, Jessica Jara, Alexander Johnson, Lauren Kelly, Frankie LaBelle, Aaron Lamm, Eli Kartunen, Mary Mahoney, Stephanie Mutuku, Arize Nwike, Merrit O’Keefe, Syndey O’Toole, Prince Okonny, Eden Ornstein, Natalie Ottaviano, Taylor Paine, Nathan Persamperi, Sarah Pollock, Grace Rogers, Ceil Shandell, Arik Smith, Julia Smith, Yijin Sun, Yasmin Tinaz, Emmaly Thompson, Ella Vogel, Arden Zemler Wu, Killian Zhang



## WHO'S WHO

### CAST

**HAZEL BRADLEY (Mole)** is excited to make her mainstage WFT debut. She is an 8th grader at Meridian Academy. Past credits at WFT include Assistant Stage Manager (*Disney's The Little Mermaid Jr.*), Ensemble (*Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr.*), Grandpa George (*Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka Jr.*), and John Northbrook (*Disney's Mary Poppins Jr.*) as well as Stage Manager for Meridian's production of *Too Much Light Makes the Baby Go Blind*. Away from the theater, she enjoys participating in soccer and track. She thanks her family, teachers, and friends for all their support.

**ALAN CID (Bird, Lizard, Large and Terrible Frog)** is thrilled to be back again at WFT! Past WFT credits include: u/s Patrick, u/s Ensemble (*The SpongeBob Musical*) and u/s Captain Cook, u/s Ensemble (*Mr. Popper's Penguins*). Other credits: Swing - Reg, Gary (*The Full Monty*) Umbrella Stage Company, u/s Anthony/Swing (*Sweeney Todd*) Moonbox Productions, Jetsam/Ensemble (*Disney's The Little Mermaid*) Reagle Music Theatre, u/s Pablo, TJ, Joey (*Sister Act*) Lyric Stage, Caveman/Ensemble/u/s Andy (*As You Like It*) Boston Conservatory. Alan is a senior at the Boston Conservatory for a BFA in Musical Theater. Special thanks and love to mom, dad, and all of my supportive friends! :) Instagram: @itmightbealan

**LUNA ODESSA COLEMAN-BROWN (Mole)** is nine years old and lives in Cambridge. She enjoys reading and playing soccer and has a passion for music. *A Year with Frog and Toad* is her first professional production and Luna is grateful to WFT for the opportunity.

**DELANEY ANNE CUTHBERT (Mole)** Previous credits include: Balloon Girl (*Gypsy*) A Common Thread Theatre Company and Jojo (*Seussical the Musical*) Metrowest Community Theater (EMACT DASH Award Winner for Best Performer in a Musical), Squidward (*The SpongeBob Musical Jr.*) Performing Arts Connection, and Medda (*Disney's Newsies Jr.*) Performing Arts Connection. Film: Dottie (*Deuce*) Margot Budzyna.

**ADDY DEFE0 (Mole)** is thrilled to be back with WFT and is an aspiring theater kid represented by

WSM Talent! Some of her favorite credits include: Winnie Foster (*Tuck Everlasting*) The Footlight Club, Lack (*Make Way for Ducklings The Musical*) WFT, and *ChristmasTime* with Reagle Music Theatre. She also recently worked on an Indie film called "Shattered Ice" and went to New York in the summer and fall to perform with BAA for their *Don't Tell Mama Cabaret* and summer showcase! She wants to thank her whole family (especially her mom and dad) and all of her friends for supporting her. Also, thank you to her vocal coach (Eva Kendrick), her acting coaches (Fran Weinberg, Amanda Fawell) and her dance coaches at TEDS.

**EWAN DIXON (Mole)** is a seventh grader at Amos Lawrence School. His previous credits include playing Lumiere (*Disney's Beauty and the Beast*), Don John (*Much Ado About Nothing*), and James (*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*) at Artbarn. When he's not acting, he loves to dance, hang out with his friends, and play video games. He would like to thank his family, friends, and teachers for all of their support!

**KRISTIAN ESPIRITU\* (Bird, Mouse, Squirrel, Snail/Dance Captain)** is a proud queer Filipino theater maker and artist. Select credits: (*Here Lies Love*) The Public. (*School of Rock*) 1st National tour. Regional: (*Romeo & Juliet*) A.R.T.; (*The Heart Sellers*) The Huntington Theatre; (*Assassins, The Drowsy Chaperone*) Lyric Stage Company; (*Mr. Popper's Penguins*) WFT; (*Interstate*) East West Players, (*The Rise and Fall of Holly Fudge*) Merrimack Repertory Theater, (*Once on This Island*) Pioneer Theater Company, (*Little Shop of Horrors*) Music Theatre of Connecticut. Also, Disney Cruise Line, Leviathan Lab, New York Musical Festival, New York Classical Theatre. Intimacy Directing: Chuang Stage, Hovey Players, Sullivan Rep. TV: *Love Life*, *Ray Donovan*, *Hunters*, *Younger*. They are also a pole dancer and fiber artist. IG: @kriscendo. www.kristianespiritu.com.

**MAIA ETTINGER (Mole, Young Frog)** is thrilled to return to the stage at WFT where she played a mole and a bird in *A Year with Frog and Toad* when she was eight. Favorite credits include: Cassidy (*Appropriate*; EMACT DASH award for Best Youth Performer in a Play) Hovey Players; Meg (u/s) (*A Wrinkle in Time*), Pack/the Kid on Scooter (*Make Way for Ducklings, The Musical*), Swing

(*Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*), and Glow Worm/Ensemble (*Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach*) WFT; Jenny Hill (*Big Fish*), Golde (*Fiddler on the Roof*), JoJo (*Disney's Newsies*), and Amanda Thripp (*Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*) Watertown Children's Theater; Up next, Maia will be performing as Belinda Cratchit/Fan in *Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol* with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company!

**NORA GAO (Mole)** first started acting through a series of acting camps and workshops at WFT. Recent credits: Twin #1 (*Peter Pan*) Arlington Children's Theater and enjoyed contributing to the summer camp show (*Annie*) Brave Arts Theater. Besides acting, Nora is a member of the Arctic Aquatic swimming team and her favorite book is Harry Potter.

**MAEVE KENNEDY (Mole, Young Frog)** is excited to be making her debut at WFT! This is the second time she's been in *A Year with Frog and Toad*, having previously played Young Frog/Mole at Acting Out! Theater Company. Past favorite roles include (*Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*) and Ursula (*Disney's The Little Mermaid, Jr.*) Acting Out! Theater Company; French Narrator (*The SpongeBob Musical: Youth Edition*) North Shore Music Theater; Troll (in the pilot production of *Between the Lines, Jr.*) Broadway Workshop NYC. Maeve resides in Wilmington, MA with her parents, cat, frog, and toads.

**WILL MCGARRAHAN\* (Toad)** makes his WFT debut. Previously he played Izzard the Lizard (*The Somebodies*) Bethlehem Public Library in Delmar, NY in 1972 and Mr. Toad (*The Wind and the Willows*) Gloucester Stage Company in Gloucester, MA in 2006. He has worked locally at SpeakEasy Stage Company, Lyric Stage of Boston, Huntington Theatre, Umbrella Stage Company, Moonbox Productions, New Rep, Central Square Theatre, and Greater Boston Stage Company. He has a few IRNE Awards and an Eliot Norton award. He would like to dedicate his performance to all the Frogs and Toads out there, especially Larry Coen, who played Toad at Wheelock Family Theatre in 2016.

**TODD MCNEEL JR. (Understudy Frog, Toad, & Ensemble)** WFT: Ensemble/Puppeteer (*Mr. Popper's Penguins*), Coalhouse u/s & Booker T. Washington u/s (*Ragtime*). The Huntington:

Stretch u/s & Millie u/s (*Toni Stone*). The Barnstormers Theatre: Lancelot (*Camelot*). Lyric Stage: Man II (*A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder*), Mr. McQueen (*Urinetown*). New Repertory Theater: Joseph Hewes (1776). The Boston Pops: Booker T. Washington (*Ragtime*). Moonbox Productions: Ensemble & Sweeney u/s (*Sweeney Todd*). Boston Lyric Opera: Chorus (*Carousel*- upcoming), McNeel is a proud recipient of the Emerging Talent Artist award from the Kurt Weill Foundation/Lotte Lenya Competition and holds degrees from Ouachita Baptist University (BA) and Emerson College (MA). Instagram: @TODDY\_MACK

**GRAY OLIVEIRA (Mole)** is thrilled to be making his WFT debut in *A Year with Frog and Toad*! His love for theater began at ArtBarn Community Theater, where he starred as Spring Toad (*A Year with Frog and Toad*), Father Filippo (*My Son Pinocchio*), and Petey (*Pirates Past Noon*). Most recently, he was part of ArtBarn's Out of the Box touring production, bringing theater-for-social-change to local schools. When he's not on stage, he loves reading, playing video games, cheering for the Red Sox & Celtics, and enjoying JP Licks with his two bulldogs, Trudie & Ruthie.

**KATIE O'REILLY (Understudy Ensemble)** is thrilled to be back at WFT! Recent credits include (*The Addams Family*) WFT, (*Urinetown*) Lyric Stage Boston, Agnes Gooch (*Mame*) Reagle Music Theater, Maria (*Twelfth Night*) Moonbox Productions, Mrs. Anderssen (*A Little Night Music*) and Franca in (*The Light in the Piazza*) NextDoor Theatre.) Opera: (*Così fan tutte*) Opera 51, (*The Werewolf*) WholeTone Opera, (*Little Women, Hansel and Gretel*) MassOpera, and (*The Turn of the Screw*) Opera Brittenica. Katie teaches voice at the Community Music Center of Boston and All Newton Music School.

**ANTHONY PIRES, JR.\* (Frog, Father Frog)** is excited to be back at WFT. You may have seen him recently as Fester (*The Addams Family*), Mr. Wormwood/Escapologist (*Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*), and Coalhouse (*Ragtime*). Other recent credits include Dan (*Next to Normal*) and Company (*Ain't Misbehavin'*) Central Square Theater/Front Porch Arts Collective; Officer Lockstock (*Urinetown*) and Chaliapin (*Preludes*) Lyric Stage Boston; Tonton/Storyteller (*Once on This*

*Island*) Speakeasy Stage Company; Company (*Ain't Misbehavin'*) Greater Boston Stage Company; Mr. Franklin/Joop/Hugo (*Passing Strange*) Moonbox Productions. Anthony is proud to be a Black-CapeVerdean Boston native and 2 time Elliot Norton Award Recipient. Special thanks to his friends and family for all their support! Website: [www.anthonypiresjr.com](http://www.anthonypiresjr.com) Instagram: @anthonypiresjr

**SCARLETT ROBILLARD (Mole)** started acting in the 3rd grade and has loved it ever since, performing in 8 musicals to date. Recent credits include Ms. Harding (*Express Yourself*) Art Barn/ Out of the Box; Chip (*Disney's Beauty and the Beast*) and Stradale (*Much Ado About Nothing*) Art Barn. Scarlett is thrilled to be making her WFT debut with *A Year with Frog and Toad*!

**JERBIE SCHLECHTER (Mole)** is honored to make his first musical debut as a Mole at WFT. He has enjoyed the arts from a young age and found a passion for musicals engaging in programming at WFT the past year. He is incredibly thankful to his family and his camp counselors for the encouragement and opportunity. He takes great pride in creating an original song at camp that was used in the student showcase.

**MORGAN SHARMABORO (Mole)** is ecstatic to be making their mainstage WFT debut! Some favorite musical theater credits include: Sailor/ Chef/Gull (*Disney's The Little Mermaid Jr.*) WFT; Maurice (*Disney's Beauty & The Beast Jr.*), Augustus Gloop (*Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka*), Lord Montague (*Romeo & Juliet Kids!*) Artbarn Community Theater; Trudy (*Follow the Leader*), Gina (*Tech Message*) Out of the Box Touring Troupe/ Artbarn Community Theater. They have been a practitioner of Bharatanatyam (Indian classical dance) at the Triveni School of Dance since age 5 and enjoy taking both voice and piano lessons at The Brookline Music School.

**TADER SHIPLEY (Bird, Turtle, Squirrel, Mother Frog)** is thrilled to be back at Wheelock Family Theatre! WFT credits: *The Wizard of Oz*. Other favorite credits include: (*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*) Moonbox Productions; (*All Shook Up*) Reagle Music Theatre; (*The Full Monty*) Umbrella Stage Company, (*How I Learned to Drive* and *The Taming of The Shrew*) Actors' Shakespeare Project; (*Dolly Parton's Smoky Mountain Christmas Car-*

*ol*) Emerson Colonial Theatre; and (*The Donkey Show*) American Repertory Theatre. When not in the theatre, Tader can be found singing in a duo with her partner in music and life, Maxfield Anderson. All my love to mom, dad, and Max. Website: [tadershipley.com](http://tadershipley.com)

**KATIE STARMER (Mole)** is excited to "dig in" to her WFT debut in *A Year with Frog and Toad*! Selected prior credits include Dot (*Dot and the Kangaroo JR*), Pugsly (*The Addams Family Young@ Part*), and Audrey (*Descendants: The Musical*) with Wellesley Theatre Project as well as *Imagine a Dragon* and *What Do You Do With an Idea* at Interlochen Arts Camp. Katie has studied cello with the Suzuki School of Newton (Alyssa Lawson) since 2017 and currently studies voice at Noel Smith Voice Studio (Stephanie James) and with the Voices Boston Children's Choir (Dan Ryan).

**ZOE VIDANOVIC (Mole)** is thrilled to join the Wheelock Family Theater community! Previous credits include (*Disney's Aladdin* and *Disney's Mary Poppins*) John R. Pierce School, as well as *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Snow Queen* at Arlekin Studio. Besides acting, Zoe is an avid musician; she plays the piano, sings, and has performed pieces by Naomi Scott and by Lady Gaga.

**AIXIN ELLA WANG (Mole)** is a 7th-grade student in Brookline who began participating in theater programs at age six. In 5th grade, she took on the role of Hippolyta in her school's production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. More recently, she portrayed the Witch in *The Chronicles of Narnia* as part of the WFT's winter program.

**CLARE WARREN (Mole)** is thrilled to be joining the cast of *A Year with Frog and Toad* for their WFT mainstage debut! Clare's favorite past roles include Chip (*Disney's Beauty and the Beast Jr.*) WFT Summer Program, Grasshopper (*Roald Dahl's James and the Giant Peach*) and Amanda Thripp (*Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*) Florida Ruffin Ridley School. Clare has been passionate about musical theatre since the second grade and is excited to bring their love of performing to this production. Many thanks their family, friends, and castmates for their support!

## PRODUCTION & CREATIVE TEAM

**LEIGH BARRETT (Director)** was last seen on The WFT stage as Alice in *The Addams Family*, she is thrilled to be making her WFT directorial debut. Most recently Leigh directed (*The Full Monty*) The Umbrella Stage Company. Other directing projects include (*Sister Act*) and (*The Last Five Years*) Lyric Stage Boston; (*Closer Than Ever*) New Repertory Theatre, (*Hairspray*) RTW; (*Urinetown*) Northeastern University; *Into the Woods*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *The Addams Family*, *Forever Plaid*, *Spamalot*, and several summers for the Lyric First Stage program. she gives masterclasses in auditioning and navigating a balanced life in this crazy biz as well as mentoring & meeting artists where they are on their career journey. She is a consent forward artist pursuing certification in trauma informed performance coaching. This summer she completed the EDI Cohort Certification Program with Inclusive Stages™. The proud recipient of the 2018 Elliot Norton Prize for Sustained Excellence and the 2018 Norton Award for Outstanding Actress in Gypsy and Souvenir (Lyric Stage). She also received the Elliot Norton Award in 2004 and 2008. She is the founder of "Carols for a Cure" raising funds for Type One Diabetes Research. Many thanks to this incredible group of humans for sharing so much of their time, trust and talents

with me in this process. Much Love to HB & the boys. [LeighBarrett.com](http://LeighBarrett.com)

**ALEX BERG (Sound Designer)** is a freelance sound designer and composer in the greater Boston area. Credits include shows at North Shore Music Theatre, Lyric Stage Boston, The Umbrella Stage Company, ACT of Connecticut, Theatre by the Sea, Prescott Park Arts Festival, Barrington Stage Company, Kavinoky Theatre, and Shakespeare in Delaware Park.

**DAVID FREEMAN COLEMAN (Music Director)** is excited to return to WFT after music directing last season's *The Addams Family* and *Roald Dahl's Matilda the Musical*. Associate Professor at Berklee College of Music, Lecturer of Music at Tufts University. Recent Music Direction: (*South Pacific* and *Disney's The Little Mermaid*) Reagle Music Theatre; (*The Boy Who Kissed the Sky*) Company One; (*Sister Act*) Lyric Stage Boston; (*Jelly's Last Jam*) Long Wharf Theatre; (*Ain't Misbehavin*) Central Square Theater/Greater Boston Stage Company/Front Porch Arts Collective; (*A Strange Loop*, *Once on this Island*, *Choir Boy*) 4 Elliot Norton Award Nominations for Outstanding Music Direction and 1 win for 2023. Learn more at [www.davidcoleman.com](http://www.davidcoleman.com).

## Wheelock Family Theatre 2024/2025 Season Continued

*A celebration of the power of friendship*



**TAKIYAH “TAKI” HARRIS (Director of Artistic Sign Language)** is an artist, speaker, and art educator, who holds a unique role as the director of artistic sign language. Their involvement in the community arts in the Boston area is a testament to their passion for the arts. They generously volunteer their time to work at museums, leading ASL tours and conducting art workshops. Their journey as a director of artistic sign language has taken them to various Broadway theaters, including WFT, A.R.T., Huntington Theater, Art Emerson, and Citizen House.

**CASSIE HEATH (ASL Interpreter)** is honored to be a part of the WFT’s *A Year with Frog and Toad team*! Cassie graduated from Texas State University in 2019 with a BA in Theatre. Her previous work with Wheelock Family Theater includes *Mr. Popper’s Penguins* and *A Wrinkle in Time*. She could not be more grateful to the ASL team for making it a wonderful experience. Many thanks to Taki, Ember, Jess, WFT, and her amazingly supportive family, friends, and mentors!

**FANNI HORVATH\* (Production Stage Manager)** is thrilled to be back at WFT! She is very grateful to have worked with such a talented and fun cast and production team! She has previously worked with Central Square Theatre, Boston Playwrights’ Theatre, Arts Emerson, FTLO Theatre, Two Sharp Quills Productions, Pariah Theatre Company, Mel’O Drama School of Acting, Eastern Nazarene College, and South Shore School of Theatre. When not in the theater, you will find her “stage managing” in real life while on staff at Harvard University’s Theater, Dance & Media program. She would like to thank her wife, Allison, who is always her biggest supporter.

**CHELSEA KERL (Costume Designer)** returns to WFT having previously designed *Roald Dahl’s Willy Wonka*, *Roald Dahl’s James and the Giant Peach*, and *Gooney Bird Greene and Her True Life Adventures*. Select recent designs include: (*Witch*) Huntington Theatre Company; (*Pass Over*) SpeakEasy Stage Company/Front Porch Arts Collective, (*Greater Good*) Company One Theatre/ART. Education: MFA in costume design from Boston University, BA from the University of Maryland. [chelseakerl.com](http://chelseakerl.com).

**CASSIE LEBEAU (Assitant Stage Manager)** graduated with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in technical theatre with a concentration in stage management from SSU. Previous stage management/assistant stage management credits include (*A Wrinkle in Time* and *Bud, Not Buddy*) WFT; (*Guys and Dolls*, *Titanish*, *All Is Calm: The Christmas Truce of 1914*, *Clue On Stage*, and *Little Women: The Broadway Musical*) Greater Boston Stage Company; (*Pericles*) Commonwealth Shakespeare Company; and (*Gloria*) Gloucester Stage Company.

**SASKIA MARTINEZ (Props Designer/Scenic Charge Artist)** is a Boston-based scene designer and scenic artist. In addition to teaching, their WFT credits include *The SpongeBob Musical*, *A Wrinkle in Time*, *The Addams Family*, and *Little Women: The Broadway Musical*. Boston area credits: (*Emma*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *King Hedley II*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*) Regional scenic artist credits include the Huntington Theatre and South Coast Repertory Theatre. They are a graduate of Boston University. See their work at [saskiamartinez.com](http://saskiamartinez.com).

**JENNA MCFARLAND LORD (Scenic Designer)** Previous WFT designs: *In the Heights*. Jenna has designed for institutions including Boston Lyric Opera, SpeakEasy Stage Co., Gloucester Stage Co., Lyric Stage Boston, Actors’ Shakespeare Project, New Repertory Theatre, Greater Boston Stage Co., She has also designed Off-Broadway at La Mama and The New York Playwrights Lab. Jenna won the Elliot Norton Award for her design of *BLKS* in 2022. Ms. McFarland Lord is currently the set design teacher at the Boston Arts Academy, a public high school for the arts.

**JESS MEYER (ASL Interpreter)** is honored to be back at WFT as part of the *A Year With Frog and Toad* interpreting team! They have interpreted at WFT (*SpongeBob the Musical*, *Make Way for Ducklings the Musical*), Broadway in Boston (*Come From Away*), and Seacoast Repertory Theatre (*Parade*). Jess has a BFA in Theatre and Performance with a minor in Deaf Studies from Emerson College and an ASL Interpreter Certificate from Northern Essex. They would like to send a huge thank you to Taki, Ember, Cassie, Wheelock Family Theatre, the entire Frog and Toad team, Jordan, and their incredible support system. Enjoy the show!



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**ANIKA NAYAK\* (Assistant Stage Manager)** is so glad to be back with WFT! As a Boston-based stage manager and teaching artist, some of her most recent credits include (*The SpogeBob Musical* and *Alice by Heart*) WFT, (*MONKEY, A Kung Fu Puppet Parable*) White Snake Projects, (*Once Upon A Carnival*) Moonbox Productions, as well as international projects including Anikaya Dance Theatre's (*Conference of the Birds*).

**BRAD REINKING (Choreographer)** returns to WFT after appearing as Lumiere (*Disney's Beauty and the Beast*), Harry Houdini (*Ragtime*), *Shrek*, *Billy Elliot*, and *Make Way For Ducklings the Musical*. Recent credits include choreographing (*Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*) Moonbox Productions, directing and choreographing (*Disney's Descendants*) The Company Theatre, and choreographing (*The Wizard of Oz*) Rochester Opera House. Regional credits include Trinity Repertory Company, North Shore Music Theatre, The Hanover Theatre, Lyric Stage Boston, Wagon Wheel Theatre, and many others. Brad lives in Boston, MA with his partner, Drew, and their Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, Belle. For more information, please visit [bradreinking.com](http://bradreinking.com).

**JILL ROBBINS (Pre-Show Audio Describer)** has served as both a secondary and a primary describer at The Huntington for eight seasons. Jill previously worked at WGBH's Media Access Group, where she wrote descriptive audio for programs such as Masterpiece, American Experience, and Nova, as well as special projects such as the U.S. Congressional Visitors Center Virtual Tour. She holds an M.Ed. in Special Education/Visual Disabilities from Vanderbilt University and is a graduate of the American Repertory Theatre Institute for Advanced Theatre Training at Harvard and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**PHOEBE SINGER (Associate Director)** is a multidisciplinary artist from the Boston area. Previous directing credits: (*Troilus and Cressida*) Sarah Lawrence College. Stitching/Dressing credits include (*Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *The Sound of Music*, *Escape to Margaritaville*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *Frozen*) North Shore Music Theatre. BA Sarah Lawrence College. Many thanks to Leigh and the company

**EMBER HOPE SPERA (ASL Interpreter)** is thrilled to join the interpreting team for *A Year with Frog*

and *Toad*, marking their third collaboration with the WFT! Previously, Ember interpreted *Mr. Popper's Penguins* and *A Wrinkle in Time*, the first of which ignited their passion for theatre interpretation. A Massachusetts native, CODA, and full-time freelance interpreter, Ember holds a BA from UMass Amherst. They earned their American Sign Language Interpreting Certificate from Northern Essex. Special thanks to Takiyah, Cassie, and Jess, WFT, and the Frog and Toad team! Gratitude also goes to Trav, Mom, Dad, and Amira for their constant love and support.

**DEB SULLIVAN\*\* (Lighting Designer)** is a Boston-based lighting designer with off-broadway, regional, local, touring and educational credits. Recent theatrical designs include: (*Emma*) Actors' Shakespeare Project, (*Urinetown*) Lyric Stage Boston, (*Save the Whāles*) Northeasters, (*Jesus Christ Superstar*) BOCO@Berkley, and (*The Islanders*\*) Shakespeare and Company. Deb has also created work with Actors' Theatre of Louisville, Alliance Theatre, Berkshire Theatre Festival, Brandeis University, Concord Academy, Dorset Playhouse, Everett Dance, Huntington Theatre Company, Gloucester Stage Company, Greater Boston Stage, Meridian Academy, Moonbox Productions, New Repertory Theatre, Providence Festival Ballet, The Public Theater/NYSF, Trinity Repertory Company, Womens' Project Theatre, The Curley K8/BPS and many more. Ms. Sullivan is the parent of a teenager, a member of IATSE United Scenic Artists Local 829, the resident lighting designer of a radio station and persisting. Contact info and portfolio at [www.dlsullivanld.com](http://www.dlsullivanld.com)

**MELISSA A. WATKINS (In-Show Audio Describer)** is a writer and former vocalist who began providing audio description for the Boston theatre and dance community in 2022. You may have previously heard her voice in your headphones at The Huntington, A.R.T., Berklee Performance Space, and the Emerson Cutler Majestic Theatre. You can find her writing and other art on all the socials: @equalopportunityreader

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\*Member of Actor's Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors & Stage Managers in the United States. WFT@BU is operating under the terms of a Developing Theatre's Program of Actor's Equity Association. The contract used is a Letter of Agreement.

\*\*Member of United Scenic Artist 829.

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