

uptown  
MUSIC THEATER HIGHLAND PARK



# Seussical™

SEPTEMBER 2 - 11, 2022

NORTHWOOD THEATER, 945 NORTH AVE  
HIGHLAND PARK, IL

# CAST

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Cat In The Hat ..... Christopher Finch  
Horton The Elephant ..... Michael Kirby  
Jojo ..... Elin Seiler  
Gertrude McFuzz ..... Sydney Hendrix  
Maizie LaBird ..... Jeanmarie LaPointe  
Bird Girls.....Josie David, Madison Taylor,  
..... Rebecca Watson, Jeri Hart  
Wickersham Bros .....Jeff Marc Grossman,  
.....Henry Gessner, Jamie Davidson  
Sour Kangaroo ..... Marianne Embree  
Mrs. Mayor ..... Kimberly Karlin  
Mr. Mayor ..... Al Katz-Mariani  
Gen. Genghis Khan Schmitz ..... Matt Canon  
Ensemble.....Faith Bas, Amanda Carol,  
.....Paxton Cobb, Molly Dibble,  
.....Samantha Gassel, Hailey Gordon, Jamie Gross,  
....Tahlia Herbst, Michaela Hutchinson, Maizie Landfear,  
.....Daniel Ornelas, Emma Pell, Gabriella Rausa,  
.....Rick Schram, Corey Truger, Sue Vani,  
.....Nathaniel Vodak, Hayley Yussman



SEUSSICAL

Music by STEPHEN FLAHERTY Lyrics by LYNN AHRENS

Book by LYNN AHRENS and STEPHEN FLAHERTY

Co-Conceived by LYNN AHRENS, STEPHEN FLAHERTY, and ERIC IDLE

Based on the Works of DR. SEUSS

Seussical is presented through special arrangement with MTI International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

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## CREATIVE

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Director .....	Debbie Goldman
Music and Orchestra Director .....	Marty Karlin
Choreographer .....	Sarah Makkawy
Assistant Director/ Props .....	Sue Jacobson
Technical Director .....	Chris Morgan
Stage Manager .....	Abigail Rakocy
Set Designer .....	Bob Silton
Costume Designer .....	Martha Shuford
Sound Designer .....	Rich Neumann
Lighting Programmer .....	Zack Sanders
Lighting Operator .....	Abra Chusid
Spotlights .....	Juniper Behun, Eli Austin
Crew .....	Aria Caldwell, Dan Olbur
Producer .....	Larry Mason
Executive Producer.....	Jamie Davidson

## ORCHESTRA

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Reeds.....	Theresa Lams, Jim Franklin
Trumpet.....	Sharon Stine
Keyboards.....	Jason Hill, Rex Meyer
Violin .....	Melissa Arbetter
Cello .....	Rhea Davis
Guitar .....	Bill Dejon
Bass .....	John Summers
Drums .....	Paul Betz

Uptown Music Theater of Highland Park is a not-for-profit corporation  
and an affiliate of the Park District of Highland Park.

This production is made possible by a grant from  
**Highland Park Community Foundation.**



Special thank you to the  
**Park District of Highland Park,**  
**The Art Center Highland Park**  
and to **North Shore School District 112.**



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## **UPTOWN DONATIONS**

We rely on the generosity of theater patrons to help support future Uptown Music Theater of Highland Park productions. Ticket sales only partially cover the costs of our productions.

If you would like to make a donation, please visit -  
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***The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited. No flash photography.***

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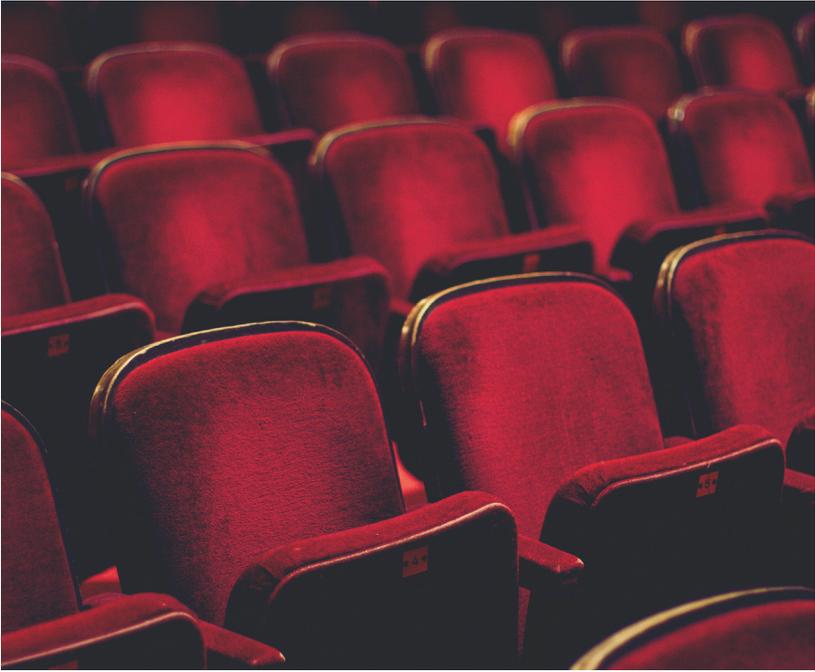
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Thank you to Uptown Music Theater Highland Park for your dedication to creating theatrical experiences that are meaningful, accessible and inclusive.

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Rosenblum | Korach | Morris team

847.681.2329

[Rosenblum-Korach-Morris-Team@mesirov.com](mailto:Rosenblum-Korach-Morris-Team@mesirov.com)

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# MEET THE CAST

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## **Christopher Finch (Cat In The Hat)**

Christopher L. Finch is pleased to serve as your host and MC for this production of Suessical the Musical. Chris has been seen as Lord Farquaad in Shrek the Musical, Marcellus Washburne in The Music Man, Pharaoh in Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat and Nicely-Nicely in Guys and Dolls. Chris and his family are Libertyville residents. He wishes to thank everyone for their love and support this summer!



## **Michael Kirby (Horton)**

Michael Kirby (Kirby) is a Vocal Performance and Music Education major at Roosevelt University and will be graduating in December. Some of Kirby's past performances were as Joe in Deerfield Family Theater's Schoolhouse Rock Live!, as the ensemble in Roosevelt University's Considering Matthew Shepard, and as Jud in Glenview Theatre Guild's Oklahoma!. Kirby loves spending time with friends, watching movies, and streaming at [Twitch.tv/KirbyontheMic](https://www.twitch.tv/KirbyontheMic). Kirby is very excited and proud to play Horton.



## **Elin Seiler (Jojo)**

Elin is thrilled to be making her Uptown Music Theater debut as JoJo, an all-time favorite role! Other theater credits include CTWS, CYT, and StagePlay. This holiday season, you can see her in "A Christmas Story, The Musical" at Marriott Theatre. She would like to thank Uptown for this amazing opportunity, the directing team for their encouragement and guidance, her family for their love and support, and her little brother, who always shares his "big thinks" with her. Prov. 17:22.



## **Sydney Hendrix (Gertrude McFuzz)**

Sydney (she/her) is a Chicago based actress and graduate of the University of Kentucky, with a B.A. in Theatre and Arts Administration. Sydney would like to thank her husband Nick, her family, and friends for their constant love and support. Previous credits include Aquata in The Little Mermaid (Jessamine County Arts), Florinda and Bakers Wife U/S in Into the Woods (Distilled Theatre Company), and Martha Dunnstock in Heathers (Red Hen Theatre Company).



**Jeanmarie LaPointe (Mayzie LaBird)**

Jeanmarie is so excited to be a part of this cast and thrilled to be back for her first show since the start of the pandemic. Some notable roles include: Wednesday (The Addams Family), Miss Andrews (Mary Poppins), Mrs. Gibbs (Our Town), Little Red (Into the Woods), and Maria (Twelfth Night). She has her BA in Musical Theatre Performance from Plymouth State University and studied acting at the Gaiety School of Ireland.



**Josie David (Bird Girl)**

Josie is thrilled to be returning to the stage as one of the Bird Girls in the wonderful world of Dr. Seuss! She received her Bachelors degree in Musical Theatre from The Dobbins Conservatory at Southeast Missouri State University in 2020. Josie has most recently played Katherine in Newsies, and her favorite role was playing Mille in Thoroughly Modern Millie. In her free time, you can find Josie biking through Chicago, marathon training, or playing piano!



**Madison Taylor (Bird Girl)**

Madison is ecstatic to be making her Uptown Music Theater and Chicagoland debut. After spending the better part of four years getting her BFA in musical theatre down in Georgia, she is thrilled to be in Chicago (a place she has always wanted to call home). Some of her favorite roles she has played in the past are Carrie in "Carousel", Deb in "Ordinary Days", and Baker's Wife in "Into The Woods". Madison hopes you enjoy the show and would like to thank her family for the endless support.



**Rebecca Watson (Bird Girl)**

Rebecca is thrilled to be a part of Uptown Music Theater's Seussical. Although she does not like green eggs and ham, she does enjoy performing in local musical productions, spending time with family and friends, and rocking out with her 80's cover band, High Stakes as the lead vocalist. Rebecca would like to thank her family for their continuous support and the production staff for the opportunity to perform alongside such an amazing cast and crew!



### **Jeri Hart (Bird Girl)**

Jeri is thrilled to join Uptown Musical Theater for their inaugural production! Jeri has performed in numerous Chicago-area musicals including Hello, Dolly!, Mary Poppins, Bonnie & Clyde, Urinetown, and more! Jeri is a 5th grade teacher in Northbrook, IL. She would like to thank the entire cast and production team!



### **Jeff Marc Grossman (Wickersham Brother)**

Jeff started acting in plays at summer camp, his first as a munchkin in "The Wizard of Oz". He studied film and acting at Michigan State University before moving to Los Angeles where he acted in various productions and performed improv at Groundlings and Upright Citizens Brigade. Seussical is one of Jeff's favorite musicals, so he is very excited to get to perform in this production and with such an amazing cast!



### **Henry Gessner (Wickersham Brother)**

Henry is thrilled to be part of his childhood favorite musical! Previous credit: Freckleface Strawberry (Harry). Other favorites include ...Spelling Bee (Leaf), Schoolhouse Rock Live! (Tom), Pinkalicious the Musical (Peter), Annie (Bert Healy), Mamma Mia! (Ensemble), Madagascar (Melman), Little Shop of Horrors (Seymour), Starmites (Diggety). In 2019, Henry sang in the vocal chorus of The Scarlet Pimpernel at Lincoln Center. Offstage, he enjoys watching movies, playing his piano, and going really hard at karaoke nights. He thanks his family and friends for their love and support, and all the monkeying around in the process.



### **Jamie Davidson (Wickersham Brother)**

Jamie is a Highland Park resident and dedicates his performance to everyone harmed by the recent tragedy. Recent roles include George in Schoolhouse Rock (Deerfield Family Theater), Rooster in Annie (Deerfield Family Theater), Scarecrow in The Wizard of Oz (Centerstage), Judah in Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, and Tackaberry in How to Succeed in Business... (Music Theater Works). He is the founder of Uptown Music Theater of Highland Park.



**Marianne Embree (Sour Kangaroo)**

Marianne is making her debut with Uptown Music Theater. She is thrilled to be performing again after the Covid break! Her local performances include Spamalot (Lady of the Lake), Steel Magnolias (M'Lynn), Footloose, (Vi), Into the Woods (Witch) and Brigadoon (Meg). Most of Marianne's professional experience is in musical theater. She traveled the nation performing in shows such as Guys and Dolls (Sarah), The Secret Garden (Rose), City of Angels (Alaura) and Will Rogers Follies (Betty Blake).



**Kimberly Karlin (Mrs. Mayor of Whoville)**

Kimberly is so excited to return to the stage with this amazing group! Favorite past roles include: "Thoroughly Modern Millie" (Miss Dorothy); "Fiddler..." (Tzeitl); "Hello, Dolly!" (Ermengarde; all GTG), "Alice in Wonderland" (Alice; winner of the Illinois AACT festival; HPP), and "Noises Off" (Poppy; BroadwayWorld award; BGPD). Kimberly is a proud graduate of Second City, and is officially funny now. Break a leg to the cast and crew! Love to my family!



**Al Katz-Mariani (Mr. Mayor of Whoville)**

Al is a middle school teacher in Gurnee. He is stoked to be working with Uptown Music Theater on their first mainstage production after appearing in their TYA debut last summer, Freckleface Strawberry (Danny). Recent credits include Theater D's Don't Dress for Dinner (Robert) and Almost Maine, GTG's Oklahoma (Will Parker), and CenterStage Lake Forest's Brigadoon (Charlie Dalrymple). Thanks to the production staff- we are here!!



**Matt Canon (General Genghis Kahn Schmitz)**

Matt is thrilled to return to the stage with his debut with Uptown Music Theater. Some previous favorite performances include Oklahoma and Joseph (Glenview Theater Guild) and Evita, Noises Off, and Shrek (Big Deal Productions). Matt has also directed Schoolhouse Rock Live (Deerfield Family Theater) and Our Town (Big Deal Productions). Matt also directed the independent film Party Favors, currently playing at festivals around the country. Many thanks to everyone at Uptown Music Theatre for making this show a wonderful experience. Hey, that choreographer is kinda cute.



### **Faith Bas (Ensemble)**

Faith is thrilled for her first Uptown Musical Theater production! Recently, Faith starred in *The Mistletones* at Six Flags Great America, and *Legally Blonde* at Beverly Theatre Guild. Her proudest roles include, Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde* and Ariel in *The Little Mermaid*. Faith majored in Musical Theatre at Roosevelt University (CCPA). When not on stage, Faith is the founder of Faith Fairytales, Party Princess Entertainment company. She sends lots of love to her partner Adrian & family!



### **Amanda Carol (Ensemble)**

Amanda is delighted to be back onstage in her first UMTHP performance. She has previously appeared in several Deerfield Family Theater productions, including *Schoolhouse Rock Live!* and *Annie*, and CenterStage's production of *Shrek*. When Amanda isn't on stage, she can usually be found belting out show tunes with her daughters or pursuing one of her far-too-many hobbies. Many thanks to Chas for taking on extra parenting duties and to Emmaline and Genevieve for being (mostly) understanding about Mom's busy rehearsal schedule. Thanks also to the cast, crew, and especially the production staff for including Amanda on this fantastical romp through the *Jungle of Nool!*



### **Paxton Cobb (Ensemble)**

Paxton is thrilled to be making his first appearance with Uptown Musical Theater in their production of *Seussical the Musical*. Paxton has previously been in Buffalo Grove's Big Deal Productions. Including *Mary Poppins Jr.*, *Guys and Dolls Jr.*, *Evita*, *Elf Jr.*, *Matilda Jr.*, and most recently *Moana Jr.* Paxton is in 8th Grade at Woodlawn Middle School. Paxton would like to thank the cast and production staff for such an amazing experience.



### **Molly Dibble (Ensemble)**

Molly is an 11 year old actress who has a passion for theatre, music, and art. Molly has been acting she was 5 years old, and has done print, tv, commercials, and recently her career in Musical Theater has taken off. Molly has been seen in Music Theatre Works production of *Ragtime*, Big Noise Theatre she played Little Red in *Into the Woods*, and her first performance here at Uptown Music Theater in *Seussical*. During her free time, she likes to play on her nintendo switch, she loves writing, art, and music.



### **Sammi Gassel (Ensemble)**

Sammi is honored to be a part of this show. If you want to read her bio, here you go! (Okay, I'll stop). Favorite roles include Schoolhouse Rock Live! (Shulie), Shrek (3 Blind Mice), and Madagascar (Foosa Leader/Steak). She has also produced Seize the Stage -- a musical revue that benefits the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Chicago. Love to everyone at Uptown Musical Theatre, her family (even you, Katie) and friends, and Twyla!



### **Hailey Gordon (Ensemble)**

Hailey Gordon is an 8th grader at Cooper Middle School in Buffalo Grove. She has been performing with local community theater programs since she was 9. Some of her favorite shows have been Moana with Big Deal productions and Little Shop of Horrors with Deerfield Family Theater. In her free time, she enjoys hanging out with friends and biking. She wants to send a huge shout out to the whole cast and crew for a great show!



### **Jamie Gross (Ensemble)**

Jamie, an elementary school speech-language pathologist, has been in love with theater for her entire life, but only started performing a few years ago. Since 2019, she's been in various performances, both musical and otherwise: Newsies, Chess, Necessary Targets, and Spelling Bee. Jamie also teaches Buffalo Grove's littlest actors at the park district! Thanks to everyone for supporting her theater passion, and hugs to the cast and crew of Seussical for this incredible experience!



### **Tahlia Herbst (Ensemble)**

Tahlia is so excited to be part of this amazing cast. Some of her favorite roles have included Moana Jr. (Hei Hei), Beauty and the Beast Jr. (Silly Girl), Madagascar Jr. (Marty), Annie (Molly), and High School Musical Jr. (Gabriela). Tahlia is a seventh grader at Hawthorn Middle School South. In her free time, she loves dancing, singing, and spending time with her friends. Tahlia would like to thank her friends and family for all their support!



**Michaela Hutchinson (Ensemble)**

Michaela is very excited to be in this year's production of Seussical. She is 12 years old and has been in shows such as, The Wizard of Oz, Lion King and more. She enjoys singing in her school's A Cappella group, and swimming. Outside of acting, she is a serious ballet dancer and performer.



**Maizie Landfear (Ensemble)**

Maizie is from La Grange Park and is excited to start 7th grade. She loves performing on stage and in front of the camera and has appeared on Showtime and Apple TV. In her free time she loves to sew, read and be outside. Big thank you to the cast and crew of Seussical for this opportunity--as well as her family and friends, Tracey Ford and her dog Olive.



**Daniel Ornelas (Ensemble)**

Daniel is so excited to be making his first appearance on the Uptown Music Theater stage in Seussical! Daniel is a graduate of Saint Viator High School and is currently working towards a B.A. in Musical Theatre from North Central College. His most recent roles include Gomez Addams in The Addams Family and Jon in Do You Feel Anger? at North Central.



**Emma Pell (Ensemble)**

Emma is thrilled to be making her Uptown Music Theatre debut in Seussical! Some of her favorite credits include Belle in Beauty and the Beast, Laurie in Oklahoma, Baker's Wife in Into the Woods, Mabel in Pirates of Penzance, Josephine in HMS Pinafore, and Casilda in The Gondoliers. Emma studied theater at UC Berkeley and Trinity College Dublin.



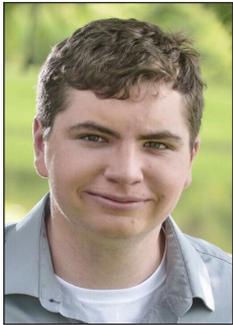
### **Gabbi Rausa (Ensemble)**

Gabbi is in 8th grade at Hawthorn Middle School South. Her most recent performances include Beauty and the Beast Jr. (as Belle) and Matilda Jr. (as Matilda). Gabbi is having an amazing experience with the very talented Seussical cast and crew. She looks forward to her future in musical theater.



### **Richard Schram (The Grinch, Ensemble)**

Rick is making his Uptown Music Theater debut with Seussical. Favorite roles have included Captain Hook (Peter Pan), Franz Liebkind (The Producers), Pappy Yokum (L'il Abner), Erronius (A Funny Thing...Forum), King Sextimus (Once Upon a Mattress), Mysterious Man (Into the Woods), and Tigger (Winnie-the-Pooh). Proud husband to Mary Louise, Dad to Kari and Derek, and Pop to Julianne and Colin. Thanks to the entire production team for allowing me to join this incredible ensemble.



### **Corey Truger (Ensemble)**

Corey is absolutely ecstatic to be doing his first production with Uptown Music Theater. This past fall/winter season, Corey assistant directed the Maple Middle Schools production of Addams Family young@part and was a scare actor at Six Flags Great America. Corey is a graduate from the College of Lake County with an associates degree in the arts. When not doing theatre, Corey can be found attempting to help in special education classrooms as a teaching assistant. Corey would like to thank everyone who believed in him even when he struggled to believe in himself.



### **Sue Vani (Ensemble)**

Sue the Who's excitement grew, for her dream of doing "Seussical" had finally come true. For 13 years, the stage has been like a home ... full of friends and great memories, Sue's never felt alone. Her students and daughters have heard many a Seuss book ... Now, that magic is HERE ... Come, let's have a look! Thanks to all who have come to see her yelp, dance, and sing ... Your love and support truly mean everything. And, now it is time ... Let your imagination run loose ... Oh, the things you can think when you think about Seuss!



### **Nathaniel Stephen Arthur Vodak (Ensemble)**

Nathaniel is thrilled to be making his UMTHP debut, and thanks Deb, Marty, Sarah and the Seussical team. At age 6, he played JoJo in Seussical Jr.; other featured roles have included Nigel in Matilda the Musical (HPP), and Boy in Into the Woods (BNT). He is a proud member of Gus Giordano youth company. Nathaniel is grateful for the support of his teachers David and Tuesdai, as well as his friends Amelia, Matthew, David, Francis & especially Tommy.



### **Hayley Yussman (Ensemble)**

Hayley is elated to be making her Uptown Music Theater debut! Previous credits include the role of Faith in "In The End" with Women's Theatre Alliance, and musical sketches with Conservatory. When she's not making music, you can find her napping with her many pets. She would like to thank all of her musical teachers and mentors, as well as her friends, family, and partner, for supporting her on all her journeys.

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## **MEET THE PRODUCTION STAFF**

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### **Debra Goldman (Director)**

Debra has happily spent her summer in the Jungle of Nool and Whoville. She is thrilled to bring theater to the community and create community with theater. She has directed and/or choreographed over 35 productions for many Chicago area theaters. Favorites include Annie, Little Shop of Horrors, Noises Off (Best Revival of a Play and Best Director Awards), Shrek, Brigadoon, Uptown's first production, Freckleface Strawberry and many more. When not 'playing,' Debra is a licensed and registered dance/movement therapist and counselor working with special needs adults for Clearbrook.



### **Marty Karlin (Music and Orchestra Director)**

Marty is delighted to return to Uptown Music Theater for the second year in a row. He has worked as Music/Orchestra/Vocal Director with numerous groups throughout the suburbs. Some of his favorite productions include Music Man, Into The Woods, Annie, Man of La Mancha, South Pacific, My Fair Lady, Beauty and the Beast and more. Many thanks to wife Nanci for her support, and this amazing cast and staff.



**Sarah Makkawy (Choreographer)**

Sarah is thrilled to be returning as choreographer for Uptown Music Theater's *Seussical the Musical*! After having choreographed UMTHP's production of *Freckleface Strawberry* last summer. Most recently, Sarah was assistant choreographer for Highland Park Player's Fall 2021 production of *Matilda*! She has been performing for years with the Highland Park and Northshore community. Some favorite performance credits include Deerfield Family Theater's *Annie* and Highland Park Players' *Pinkalicious*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *On the Town*.



**Sue Jacobson (Assistant Director/Props Manager)**

Sue is thrilled to be part of this Amazing production of *Seussical the Musical*. Sue knows How Lucky She Is to be working with this Amazing Production Staff. Sue has previously been AD for adult and youth productions in Buffalo Grove, Deerfield, Lake Forest, and Highland Park. She also spent time on stage in various ensembles, including in *Seussical* with Big Deal Productions (Debra Goldman, Director). Enjoy Seuss! Seuss! Seuss!



**Chris Morgan (Technical Director)**

Chris is thrilled to be part of Uptown Music Theater's inaugural musical as Technical Director. Over the last twenty years Chris has worked productions with Glenview Theatre Guild, North Shore Theater of Wilmette, Deerfield Family Theater, and Highland Park Players. Chris is also founding member of Uptown's Board of Directors where he serves as their Treasurer. Chris would like to thank all of the technical production team who volunteered after this program went to print for stepping in to make *Seussical* happen!



**Abigail Rakocy (Stage Manager)**

Abby is working on becoming a well-rounded thespian, and is excited to work behind the scenes for *Seussical*! Past performing credits: *Sylvia* (All Shook Up), *Auntie Em* (Oz), *Dragon* (Shrek), *Reno Sweeney* (Anything Goes), *Joanne* (RENT). Thank you so much to the welcoming staff at UMTHP, and thank you to Ben for everything.



### **Bob Silton (Set Designer)**

Bob Silton (Scenic Designer) is excited to design his second production for Uptown Music Theater, after Freckleface Strawberry. Bob has served as Artistic Director for Encore Theatre in Libertyville, Production Manager for Music Theater Works in Wilmette, and Venue Manager for LaJolla Playhouse in San Diego. He has worked with The Marriott Theatre, Drury Lane Theatre, Metropolis Performing Arts Centre, Northwestern University, The Performers School, Big Noise Theatre, Sarah Hall Theatre, & Big Deal Productions. Bob will tour this year with RuPaul's Drag Race star, Ginger Minj.



### **Martha Shuford (Costume Designer)**

Martha Shuford has been costuming kids and adults for the past 20 years in the Chicago area. Currently serving as the President of the Board of Directors of Big Noise Theatre, Martha still costumes several shows a year. Most recent projects include Into The Woods, James and The Giant Peach, Xanadu, 9 to 5, Steel Magnolias and A Year With Frog and Toad, with Big Noise Theatre. Thanks to everyone at Uptown for making me feel welcome! Break legs everyone!



### **Richard Neumann (Sound Designer)**

Richard is very happy to be designing for Uptown Music Theater again. He has worked with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, North Shore Dance Center, The National High School Institute, Columbia College, School District 73.5, The Stradivari Society, BigNoise Theater, Solomon Schechter Middle School, Skokie JCC, Chicagoland Jewish High School, Highland Park Players.



### **Larry Mason (Producer)**

UMTHP Board Member Larry has been performing as an actor, singer, and drummer in the Chicagoland area for over forty years. Off-stage, Larry is a Goldberg Segalla LLP Partner where he dedicates his trial and appellate practice to insurance and reinsurance coverage, complex commercial litigation, environmental and toxic torts, and professional liability defense. Larry is grateful for the amazing Seussical professional team and spectacular cast for making this production so special.

# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**- COMING SOON -**

**SAVE THE DATE!**

**4th Annual Uptown Music Theater Cabaret  
Evening of Saturday, December 17, 2022  
Details to come at [UMTHP.ORG](http://UMTHP.ORG)**