Dear Friends,

Parade marks the final production of our 25th Anniversary Season! We’re thrilled to bring you this Tony Award-winning musical from acclaimed composer Jason Robert Brown and book writer Alfred Uhry, directed by Gary Griffin. We pleased to continue the WT tradition of injecting new life into great American musicals by giving them an intimate staging that draws audiences into the action. In this case, we’re doing that quite literally by seating two dozen audience members on the stage! You can visit writerstheatre.org/parade-on-stage for more information on how to participate in this unique opportunity.

We’re also excited to have announced our upcoming season, which is filled with both compelling new works, such as Lydia Diamond’s Smart People and Trevor the musical, as well as great classics like Oscar Wilde’s The Importance of Being Earnest, Sam Shepard’s Buried Child and Eugene O’Neill’s A Moon for the Misbegotten. We’ll also welcome internationally recognized director Claudio Valdés Kuri as he stages his one-man adaptation of Miguel De Cervantes masterwork, Don Quixote.

In this issue of the Brief Chronicle, we’ll learn a little bit more about composer Jason Robert Brown and book writer Alfred Uhry, and how the project that became Parade came to be. We’ll also get some context for the piece, by exploring the realities of Atlanta during the time of Reconstruction, including the unfortunate realities of racism and anti-Semitism that play an important role in this story.

In the back half of this book, we’ll talk to director Gary Griffin about his history with Jason Robert Brown and why Writers Theatre is a good fit for this piece, and we’ll hear from members of the cast about what resonates most for them about the story of Parade. You’ll also hear about the 11th year of our tour of The MLK Project: The Fight for Civil Rights which reached more than 7,800 students this year, in more than 30 schools across Chicagoland.

We’re glad to have had you with us for this 25th Anniversary season, and can’t wait for next year, which features some of our most exciting projects to date. As we continue to explore our new home and all that it has to offer, we hope that you’ll continue to join us for the journey!

With deepest thanks for your love and support,

Michael Halberstam
Artistic Director
Kathryn M. Lipuma
Executive Director
STATE OF THE ART

From Michael Halberstam, Artistic Director

Here we are at the end of our first full season in our new home and we have a powerful piece of theatre to bring you as our grand finale. Parade tells the story of Leo Frank, accused of a murder he didn’t commit by an angry community who eventually decide to take the law into their own hands.

So, what on earth would compel the authors to turn this gut-wrenching story into a musical? And why produce it now?

“We must invest heavily in the soul of the nation by embracing empathy, compassion, and inclusive thought and feeling.”

Firstly, I should focus on the obvious. The score is breathtaking. The unlikely subject matter pushes the boundaries of contemporary musical theatre and straddles the boundary between Broadway and the opera. The stakes are enormous and the score rises to the occasion. Cut from the same mold as Sondheim’s Sweeney Todd and Britten’s Peter Grimes, Parade walks a razor’s edge, separating the intimate and the epic and—as with those two iconic compositions—builds to a devastatingly personal climax.

Speaking of the personal, there is a story inside the story—the tale of Leo and Lucille. On the surface, they would seem to be a mismatched couple and yet, over the course of Leo’s wrongful imprisonment (at least according to Uhry and Brown), they come to know and trust each other, ending up at the center of a compelling and deeply moving love story.

The more epic narrative strikes at the heart of the state of our nation. What sent Leo Frank to his fate ultimately was prejudice—specifically anti-Semitism. As we yet again see intolerance of other cultures and racism overtly coming to light all around us (including a terrifying rise in anti-Semitism) it is vital that we examine the core values that have always given America such shining potential. Parade reminds us that, at the center of every horror story of unchecked bias resulting in violence, there are human beings who laugh when they are tickled and bleed when they are pricked. America is a nation of immigrants—some who came here willingly seeking a better life, some who came in chains, subjected to brutal degradation. We have fought two civil wars in order to right injustice. Our first was against tyranny from an unjust monarchy. Our second was to ensure the abolition of slavery. If we are to avoid a third, it seems to me that we must invest heavily in the soul of the nation by embracing empathy, compassion, and inclusive thought and feeling. We must also embrace art. I believe that art is the most compelling medium by which empathy and compassion can be communicated. This season has explored politics, racism, misogyny, gender and sexual identity and I hope it has been a useful point of meditation for you in helping to ask the right questions.

And now? On with the show.
Alfred Uhry was born in Atlanta, Georgia to a Jewish middle class family. After graduating from Brown University, he moved to New York to pursue a career as a bookwriter and lyricist for musical theatre. An early supporter of his was the composer Frank Loesser (Guys & Dolls) who employed Uhry at his publishing company for several years. The writer worked on several musicals at the beginning of his career, some more successful than others, but the work wasn’t satisfying enough creatively or financially. Uhry related this in an interview with Thomas Cott in 1999, saying “I was shaving. And most guys, when you shave, you don’t really look at yourself, you just kind of do it. But all of a sudden I looked at myself in the mirror, with my face full of soap, and I said, ‘I don’t want to do this anymore.’ [...] I had four kids, and I was trying to make a living of some sort. And I was teaching school part-time, and I thought, ‘Well, I’ll just go
teach school full-time.’ But meantime, I had an idea—I had never written a play, but I had an idea for a play, a little bitty play about my grandmother and her chauffeur, and I wrote it, and my life changed.”

And I said, ‘Well, probably because of Leo Frank.’ He said, ‘Tell me the story.’ And I did. And he jumped up out of his chair, literally, […] and he said, ‘This is the musical I have been looking for. This is the musical I want to do.’”

Prince had recently come to know a young composer, Jason Robert Brown, who was primed for a breakthrough success. In 1995, Brown debuted with a show called *Songs for a New World* which was a collection of songs he had written while working as a pianist and music director on other composers’ shows. Brown talked about the work in another interview Cott conducted in 1999, explaining “It was stuff that I had written for shows that I had never finished because they were terrible ideas. […] And then I also started writing other songs that I just thought would be fun. I was working at piano bars and thought, ‘Oh this would be good for this singer to do.’ And somehow the songs just all started making sense together, with kind of an emotional narrative to the whole piece.” *Songs for a New World* was directed by Daisy Prince, Hal’s daughter, which got him introduced to the producer/director. After working as a pianist and then music director on some projects of Prince’s, Brown was invited to a meeting with Alfred Uhry to talk about what would become the musical *Parade*.

Following this considerable success, Uhry was talking to legendary producer/director Hal Prince about working on a musical again after years away from the genre. As Uhry described it to Cott, “I was talking to [Prince] about *Ballyhoo*. And he said, ‘I wonder why those Atlanta Jews were so desperately assimilating?’
‘Because I’m Southern, and I know that those people suffered. I know that they were defeated. I know that their lives were ruined, and they had believed in that cause with all their heart and soul, and that they lost.’

number. Uhry remembered “I really was moved to tears by it, and still am. I told [Brown] when I started this, that I didn’t want this to be some sort of noble thing about this Jewish man who was brought down by vicious rednecks, because I didn’t see it that way. Because I’m Southern, and I know that those people suffered. I know that they were defeated. I know that their lives were ruined, and they had believed in that cause with all their heart and soul, and that they lost. And not only did they lose, they went home, they lost their farms. They had been moved to town, and they had to put their little kids to work. It was a hard thing. And I told him some things about the South, he read some things about the South, and then he wrote that amazing song. And I called Hal and said ‘Sign him.’”

After several years of readings and workshops, Parade premiered on Broadway at Lincoln Center Theater’s Vivian Beaumont Theatre in December 1998 and ran until February before closing. However, several months later both authors won Tony Awards for their work, taking home Best Book and Best Score. In response, a national tour was organized in 2000 that went to seven major American cities. Chicago was intended to be a stop, but the engagement was cancelled after the downtown venue at which the tour was booked changed ownership. Although there have been several non-Equity productions at storefront Chicago
theaters, WT’s production will be the first local production by an Equity theatre company.

When Griffin first saw the Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols Theatre at Writers Theatre during the company’s Grand Opening festivities, he knew that this was the place.

In the years after Parade debuted, Brown would continue to compose highly regarded and successful musicals, including The Last Five Years (2001), 13 (2007), The Bridges of Madison County (2013) and Honeymoon in Vegas (2013). He won a second Tony Award, also for Best Score, in 2014 for Madison County. Uhry continued to work on both plays and musicals. He collaborated again with Hal Prince on LoveMusik in 2007 (earning a Tony nomination for Best Book) and again with Brown on My Paris in 2015.

Nine years after it premiered in New York, a major remount of Parade was produced at London’s Donmar Warehouse under the direction of Rob Ashford, who engaged Uhry and Brown to revisit the musical. The show was condensed from a cast and orchestra of more than 60 down to 15 actors and 9 musicians. Brown and Uhry reworked sections of the script and even introduced some new songs. The production was a hit and received several Olivier Award nominations. The Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles brought the revised version over to the U.S. in 2009, and the musical has been widely produced around the country ever since.

The enduring love for Parade led to a one-night concert staging at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall in February 2015, the first professional showing of the musical in New York since its debut in 1999. Brown directed the 28-piece orchestra himself, and the concert staging was directed by Chicago’s own Gary Griffin. Griffin had previously directed the world premieres of two other Brown musicals, Trumpet of the Swan and Honeymoon in Vegas. Following the success and acclaim of the one-night concert, Griffin and the authors began to discuss mounting a full production of Parade that Gary would direct with the authors’ continued consultation. When Griffin first saw the Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols Theatre at Writers Theatre during the company’s Grand Opening festivities, he knew that this was the place.

These many years since its original production, the writers are thrilled to see that the musical still has a life and that audiences are still moved by it. "I don’t spend a whole lot of time thinking, 'Gee, it should have run a lot longer on Broadway,'” said Brown to Playbill the day before the 2015 concert. “I mean, it was a musical about a terrible, terrible event. It is a very sad piece of work, so I don’t know that it needed to be The Book of Mormon — that’s not what it was, but we got to tell it, and we’re still getting to tell it, and that means everything in the world to me.”
The true story of Leo Frank is one that divided a post-Civil War America socially, politically, regionally and racially. It stands as one of the first highly publicized cases of anti-Semitism in the United States.

After the end of the Civil War in 1865, the state of Georgia was left in economic pieces and public morale was broken. As the 40,000 newly freed blacks started fleeing to growing cities like Atlanta, the fields were left empty of workers, and cotton (the state’s traditional money crop) was neglected. This migration also led to blacks competing with white workers for jobs in booming factories.

In the late 1800s, Jews only made up 1% of Atlanta’s population. However, they owned more than 10 percent of Atlanta’s retail businesses. The Fulton Bag and Cotton Mill, one of the city’s larger employers, was built in 1881 by the Elsas family, who were German Jewish immigrants. With the racial divide between whites and blacks occupying such a prominent place in society, the Jewish community experienced little discrimination for most of the 1800s.

That began to change at the dawn of the 20th century. As blacks acquired more rights, wealth and education, white leaders of Atlanta expanded Jim Crow laws to maintain the racial divide amongst working class whites and blacks. On September 22, 1906, Atlanta newspapers reported four alleged assaults upon black women, drawing State militia guard to an intersection in downtown Atlanta. September 1906. Source: Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.

The Atlanta press falsely report on four different black assaults on white women, drawing State militia guard to an intersection in downtown Atlanta. September 1906. Source: Kenan Research Center at the Atlanta History Center.
local white women, none of which were ever substantiated. A crowd of whites soon became a mob that disrupted and damaged black communities, leading to reportedly forty deaths of blacks in what is now known as The Atlanta Race Riots. Fears of continued disorder prompted white civic leaders to seek dialogue with black elites to lessen the racial divide.

The dialogue also addressed the poor working conditions and improper treatment of workers in factories such as the National Pencil Factory and the Elsas family’s Fulton Bag Factory. Jews were then blamed for the use of child labor, the low wages and the grueling work hours. Multiple strikes were organized in response. The largest strikes were against the Fulton Bag Factory, though those strikes ultimately failed in 1915.

Leo Frank became a victim of this anti-Semitic hatred in one of the most famous court cases of the early 20th century. A Jew of German ancestry, Frank was raised in Brooklyn and attended Cornell University. He later moved to Atlanta to help supervise the National Pencil Factory, where his uncle was part owner. It was there that he met Lucille Selig, a daughter of a prominent German Jewish family. On November 30, 1910, the two married in an arranged marriage, typical of the times, and enjoyed a high social status amongst the Southern Jewish community.

On April 26, 1913, Mary Phagan, a thirteen-year-old employee of the Pencil Factory, went to receive her paycheck from Frank. Later that night, Mary was found dead in the factory. The shock of the murder resonated throughout Atlanta and all of Georgia. Detectives disregarded two notes found at the scene, identifying the murderer as “a long, tall negro black that hoo it was,” neglected to test blood found on the basement floor and Mary’s jacket, and instead arrested Frank and charged him with the murder. Anti-Semitism and a resentment of Yankee northerners was clearly a motivating factor in the arrest. In the words of historian John Higham, Frank was "a symbol of the northern capitalist exploiting southern womanhood."

Leading the trial against Frank was Solicitor Hugh Dorsey. Dorsey obtained testimony from Mary’s friend George Epps, who said that Mary told him Leo Frank had made advances at her. He also obtained testimony from other employees at the factory who claimed they saw Frank flirt with other female workers. An affidavit from Nina Formby, the owner of a local brothel, stated that Frank made calls to her place of work on the day of the murder in an attempt to reserve a room for himself and a girl.

The most important testimony came from Jim Conley, the likely murderer and the “tall negro” mentioned in the notes found on Mary’s body. Conley, however, was coached during long sessions with Dorsey and Conley’s own lawyer to modify his original statement which had been made on May 24th to the police. In the revised affidavit, Conley claimed that Leo Frank asked him to guard the door while he was alone with Mary. However, things went wrong when Mary fell against a machine in the room, dying instantly. Leo Frank then proceeded to ask Conley for help in disposing of the body. The two dragged Mary’s body to the elevator and dumped it in the corner of the basement. It was only afterwards, to disrupt the police’s investigation, that Frank asked Conley to write the two murder notes found on Mary’s body.
The defense called more than one hundred witnesses to attest to either Frank’s good behavior or Conley’s reputation for lying. Defense attorney Reuben Arnold argued that Frank was a victim of rampant anti-Semitism and told jurors that “if Frank hadn’t been a Jew he never would have been prosecuted.” On August 18, 1913, Leo Frank underwent four hours of testimony which included his personal history and account of the night of Mary’s murder. He finished his testimony with the words, “I have told you the truth, the whole truth.” However, the jury found Leo guilty and sentenced him to be hanged.

Leo’s wife, Lucille, led the fight for an appeal. With new evidence, such as hair found on Leo belonging to another girl that was not Mary, and a rescinded testimony from the brothel owner that Frank had never requested a room the day of the murder, Lucille was able to gain the attention of John M. Slaton, the Governor of Georgia. Governor Slaton, to the dismay of the white Atlanta public, reviewed the case and decided to grant Frank clemency after finding the testimonies given during the trial to be false. Slaton reduced Frank’s sentence to life in prison, hoping to fully absolve him when the public uproar died down.

The Leo Frank case revealed the deep rooted anti-Semitism that festered alongside racism in Atlanta and the country as a whole. It unsettled the Jewish community in Atlanta, who no longer felt as safe as they previously had. The case divided the nation, with The New York Times proclaiming Frank innocent, while southern populist publishers such as Tom Watson called for Frank’s execution. Watson even threatened to give his important endorsement for governor to Hugh Dorsey if Slaton gave Frank clemency, and did so when Slaton commuted Frank’s death sentence. Slaton went on to lose the election, and Dorsey became Georgia’s new governor.

After the trial, 3,000 Jews fled Georgia out of fear, while 33 men founded the Georgia chapter of the KKK, naming it the Knights of Mary Phagan. However, inspired by these events, members of the Atlanta Jewish community created the Anti-Defamation League to fight future anti-Semitism. In 1986, the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles posthumously pardoned Leo Frank, based on new testimony from a man who claimed to have seen Jim Conley take Mary’s body to the basement. Lucille Frank spent the rest of her life in Georgia, where she died in 1957.
AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

Join us for these exciting engagement events, tailored to enhance your WT experience! For more information and to RSVP visit writerstheatre.org/events.

SUNDAY SPOTLIGHT

Are you curious about the world that surrounds your favorite productions? Our Sunday Spotlight series offers you access to the finest speakers, academics and cultural leaders. Each event extends the conversation on our stages by featuring an expert in an area connected to the play. Past audiences have discussed ghost stories and their legacies for The Hunter and The Bear with Randall Colburn, culture writer for The AV Club and Consequence of Sound, and explored the diverse history of black theatre in America with Northwestern University professor Harvey Young.

Save the date for the Sunday Spotlight for Parade on Sunday, June 18th following the matinee performance.

THE MAKING OF …

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes? The Making of… series offers you an insider view of what goes into creating each production at WT. Enjoy a short and lively presentation by our designers and other experts, who will walk you through the process of preparing for and executing a show. Past events have featured the legacy of ghost stories on film and stage for The Hunter and The Bear, how the choreography of Company came together and what it was like for the cast of Arcadia to be the first performers in the Nichols Theatre.

Save the date for The Making of… Parade on Monday, June, 26th at 6:30pm.

WT FILM SERIES

Join us at The Wilmette Theatre for a special screening of Harper Lee’s Pulitzer Prize-winning autobiographical novel, To Kill a Mockingbird, translated into an Academy Award-winning film by Horton Foote in 1963. Tickets are available for purchase at wilmettetheatre.com/writers-theatre. This event is held at the Wilmette Theatre: 1122 Central Ave, Wilmette IL, 60091

Save the date for the WT Film Series on Sunday, June 18 at 6:00pm.
PRE-SHOW CONVERSATION: UP CLOSE
Join us at 6:45pm before every Thursday evening performance (excluding previews and any extension weeks) of every production in the Alexandra C. and John D. Nichols Theatre for a 15-minute primer on the context and content of the play facilitated by a member of the WT Artistic Team.

POST-SHOW CONVERSATION: THE WORD
Join us after every Tuesday evening performance (excluding previews and any extension weeks) of every production in our 16/17 Season for a 15-minute discussion of the play facilitated by a member of the WT Artistic Team.

POST-SHOW CONVERSATION: THE ARTIST
Join us after every Wednesday evening performance (excluding previews and any extension weeks) of every production in our 16/17 Season for a 15-minute discussion with actors from the production facilitated by a member of the WT Artistic Team.

HAPPY HOUR AT WT
Remember that our Concessions Center is open for an hour before and after our performances. You are welcome to enjoy a snack or beverage and discuss the play in the Litowitz Atrium, on our Grand Gallery Walk or on the Stephanie and Bill Sick Rooftop Terrace.
Writers Theatre and select North Shore libraries are proud to present the twelfth annual From Page to Stage series. This comprehensive series of special events, lectures, workshops, and performances are designed to enhance and enrich your appreciation of Parade.

All events are FREE of charge and open to the public. Reservations are requested to secure your seat: RSVP online at writerstheatre.org/fpts or by calling the Box Office at 847-242-6000. Dates, times and locations of programming are subject to change.

FROM PAGE TO STAGE Kickoff
Monday, May 15 at 7pm
Hosted by the Glencoe Public Library at Writers Theatre
325 Tudor Court, Glencoe
glencoepubliclibrary.org

Featuring: Members of the Writers Theatre Artistic department and Parade creative team

TRIVIA NIGHT: Musical History Pop Quiz
Thursday, May 25 at 7pm
Hosted by the Highland Park Public Library
494 Laurel Ave., Highland Park
hplibrary.org

Featuring: Chris Jones, Chief Theatre Critic and a Sunday Culture Columnist of the Chicago Tribune

...FAIR TREATMENT TO ALL: The Anti-Defamation League
Sunday, June 11 at 2pm
Hosted by the Wilmette Public Library
1242 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette
wilmettelibrary.info

Featuring: Jessica Gall, Associate Regional Director of Anti-Defamation League Chicago

FILM SCREENING: The People v. Leo Frank
June 22, 2017 at 6:30pm
Hosted by the Glenview Public Library
1930 Glenview Rd., Glenview
glenviewpl.org
WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS: From Leo Frank to Today
Wednesday, June 28 at 7pm
Hosted by the Vernon Area Public Library
300 Olde Half Day Road, Lincolnshire
vapld.info

Featuring: Judy Royal, Staff Attorney for the Center on Wrongful Convictions

FROM OUR FRIENDS AT THE ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER:
*WT Subscribers get 30%-off Museum admission!

BOOK & AUTHOR: Two Among the Righteous Few
Sunday, June 4 at 2pm

Author Marty Brounstein reveals a riveting story of courage during the Holocaust, when Frans and Mien Wijnakker, a Catholic couple in a small town, saved the lives of over two dozen Jews in southern Holland, among them Mr. Brounstein’s in-laws. A book signing will follow. Free with Museum admission.

BOOK & AUTHOR: Why?: Explaining the Holocaust
Sunday, June 18 at 2pm

Peter Hayes, Professor of Holocaust Studies (emeritus) at Northwestern University, provides insights to his new book Why? With decades of experience in the classroom, this leading scholar shares a bold new exploration of commonly asked questions about the Holocaust, and explains why our understanding of the Holocaust must continue to evolve. Book signing will follow. Free with Museum admission.

BILL GRAHAM AND THE ROCK & ROLL REVOLUTION
July 16 – November 12, 2017

Take an electrifying trip through the 1960s-1980s and learn about the extraordinary life and career of rock’s greatest promoter, Bill Graham, the Holocaust refugee who promoted countless music legends - including The Grateful Dead, Santana, and Jimi Hendrix - and produced humanitarian concerts such as Live Aid to raise the consciousness of the world.

From Page to Stage is generously sponsored by RANDY L. AND MELVIN R. BERLIN
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IN CONVERSATION: GARY GRIFFIN

Literary Manager Bobby Kennedy sits down with director Gary Griffin to talk about his relationship with composer Jason Robert Brown and what has brought him to Writers Theatre to direct Brown’s musical, Parade.

Bobby Kennedy: Can you tell us about your history with composer Jason Robert Brown and how you became involved with the 2015 concert reading of Parade at Lincoln Center?

Gary Griffin: I worked with Jason [Robert Brown] first on Trumpet of the Swan, which is a concert piece with an orchestra and actors, at the Kennedy Center in 2008. And then subsequently, we worked heavily on Honeymoon in Vegas for a few years. We did Honeymoon in an out-of-town tryout in 2013, and were getting ready to do it on Broadway, and he called me and asked me about this concert performance of Parade in New York. I have to say, it was one of the most flattering conversations I’ve ever had, because I know how important the piece is to Jason, and I knew to do it again in New York City was going to be a big deal. It was incredible but of course with incredible honor comes incredible responsibility so I also had a little freak out like “oh my god.” We had about a 50-piece orchestra, a 200-person chorus. We presented it for one night, and it was one of those performances where it went by very fast, but it does allow you a little taste of the piece. I already loved Parade, but to work on it and learn about what’s behind the writing from Alfred and Jason felt like the greatest tease. I made a point that now I really need to do a full production of this and share what I learned from the creators. Michael Halberstam and I are always having conversations about work, and I came back from that experience and said “I would really love to do a production in Chicago.” It was something that just felt right for many reasons. Particularly, to really find the essential production that I was hoping to create at Writers. And happily, Michael jumped on board and shared the same enthusiasm for the material and the intent.
**BK:** How are you approaching the piece for the Nichols Theatre at WT?

**GG:** What we’ve done is designed the production very specifically. I can’t think of any other theatre it would work in; we really have embraced the environment. The feel of the production has to do with the ingredients and the sort of intrinsic power of the piece; not that you do expansion or reduction. I hate both of those words. It’s about finding the scale that is accurately suited for the experience, so the show has the greatest power in that environment with that number of people. I did *Parade* for 3,000 people [at Lincoln Center], but I know that it can also be smaller. There was something essential to me about this scale that I thought “this is an opportunity to present the epic language of the show at the same time as a very, very personal, private, intimate world of the show.” And this is very much in response to the theatre that WT has created. It is an opportunity to give voice to both aspects of the piece.

**BK:** For being someone so well known for their direction of musical theatre, WT audiences have only seen you work on plays here before. Do you approach directing a musical any different than directing a play?

**GG:** I think that question’s kind of lovely. Because most of my life I’m telling people, “hey I do plays!” To have someone say, “can you talk about the fact that you direct musicals?”—It’s great. Well, I approach them differently somewhat based on what their demands are. Stories that I think make effective musicals are stories that are harder to contain with just words. The story is asking for a more heightened expression. Then you add music, and then if it’s even more heightened you add dance. You can “musicalize” anything, but the stories that really effectively work as a musical are the ones where you sense that the characters’ souls say “tell me with more than what you’ve got available.” And that’s what makes a great musical.
**BK:** Is there anything in the piece that you are finding particularly resonant today, almost 20 years after it premiered? What do you hope audiences will take away from seeing it?

**GG:** I’ve done a lot of plays, and this seems to be a theme of mine, about very charged trials. I did *Never the Sinner*, which is about Leopold and Loeb; I did *Execution of Justice* with Dan White and Harvey Milk. I’m somewhat drawn to these pieces. Because we’re removed from the hysteria of the trial in a way, maybe we can hear more, we can understand more of what seems to be an unconscionable result. How did that happen? It didn’t happen from a dramatic villain, it happened out of human beings being human beings. One of the reasons I really wanted some of the audience on stage was I wanted to keep the awareness that we’re all in the same room. It isn’t those Southern people up there who are separate from us. Those people are at the parade, they’re at the trial. And we were at the parade, we were at the trial. These were not Hollywood villains. The men who lynched Leo Frank were not Hollywood villains. They were people who were trying to deal with a problem. And what we’re attempting to do with the design is to make the room very bright, so all of us are in the space, negotiating about what to do with this man. A lot of great plays are about a threat to a way of life. Many of us right now feel a threat to our way of life, and I think that’s why *Parade* feels relevant now. What happened to Leo Frank is the way people respond when their way of life feels threatened.

**BK:** But the musical is not just about prejudice and violence, is it?

**GG:** No, one of the big things that is very important to me is that there’s a love story that permeates this play. The Franks in the beginning are struggling. Then this awful thing happens, and it unifies them and grows into a powerful love. We never would have known this love story if this awful thing hadn’t happened to them. If this were a classic American musical, Leo would be released and go home and that would be it. But because of humanity, he doesn’t. And the play asks one more question: what does this woman do with all of this? It is to me Lucille’s story. A woman who sees herself as adrift and ineffectual becomes a powerful person. Love wins in this play. The fact that, even in the end, Lucille still believes “I am Mrs. Leo Frank.” That’s the story.
“Is there something that your character experiences in *Parade* or about the play in general that really resonates with you and intersects with your life?”

**Zoe Nadal** (Monteen/Ensemble)

In light of the recent increase in anti-Semitic acts and speech in our country and around the world, I feel that this show is particularly timely. *Parade* is a musical that forces you to acknowledge, confront and respond to anti-Semitism. This show highlights how easy it is to be manipulated into blaming others for tragedies due to our own ignorance or unwillingness to empathize. As a Jewish woman, playing the role of someone who is complicit in the scapegoating of a Jewish man will be a special acting challenge for me.

**Leryn Turlington** (Iola Stover/Ensemble)

Jason Robert Brown’s music has shaped me as a vocalist more than any other composer, yet I’ve never been in a show of his. I’m beyond thrilled to learn, explore and hear this music every day and allow it to shape me further, this time in the context of a complete and full story.
Devin DeSantis (Britt Craig/ Young Soldier/ Ensemble & u/s Leo Frank)

I think we can all relate to the notion that we fear what we don’t understand. In the current climate of our country, there is nothing more important than trying to understand and accept those that are different from us.

Jonah D. Winston (Newt Lee/Riley)

The attitudes of the people in the production, particularly the people of color and their relationship with the reality of the world in which they live really resonates with me. We have come so far as a country but still continue to experience our own sort of growing pains. At times it still feels like the black experience means to keep your head down and polish your smile so as to appear "nonthreatening."

Eunice Woods (u/s Minola "Minnie" McKnight/Angela)

More than anything, I like that this show challenges me to think about the assumptions I make about others.
COMING SOON:
TREVOR
the musical
In March, Writers Theatre hosted a Lab production of this new musical. The authors and creative team worked with a cast of 18, including 14 teens, to rehearse and present the musical for WT staff and U Rock Theatricals producers and supporters. This July, the *Trevor* team will regroup and start rehearsal on this exciting world premiere.
January and February marked the eleventh year of Writers Theatre’s touring educational production *The MLK Project: The Fight for Civil Rights*. This one-woman show, written by Yolanda Androzzo and first commissioned by Writers Theatre in 2006, follows Chicago student Alaya’s personal transformation through studying the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s legacy of nonviolence. Alaya gets into frequent fights and uses violence as an outlet, but after meeting several Chicago-based Civil Rights activists she learns to “turn anger into action” and to express herself through writing hip hop instead of using her fists.

In addition to featuring the stories of both celebrated and unsung Civil Rights Movement heroes, *The MLK Project* also connects this history to recent and current events in the United States that have kick-started a modern-day civil rights movement. As a new focus
on systemic racism and oppression emerges in response to injustice and intolerance in communities across the country, the program engages students in this national dialogue and empowers them to, like Alaya, find their voice in the current struggle.

**The MLK Project 2017 Tour:**

...reached 7,800 students and teachers during 40 performances

...traveled to 32 schools across the Chicagoland area

...served 21 schools through Communities in Schools of Chicago, an organization that provides free programs and services for schools in underserved communities that address students’ unmet needs

...collaborated with several community organizations including the Chicago History Museum, Youth & Opportunity United (Evanston), two juvenile detention centers and the Mercy Home for Boys and Girls.

Many students and adults who attended performances of this year’s tour noted the importance of Alaya’s story – and the stories of those she interviews – being continuously shared across communities and generations. One student insightfully declared, “I think that Dr. King’s dream is still alive – but we have to listen to each other and know our history in order to keep moving forward.”
Writers Theatre is committed to making our Theatre accessible for everyone. We are proud to offer Access Subscriptions and the following services:

For People with Mobility Difficulties
- Accessible parking spaces outside each theatre venue.
- Accessible entrances to each theatre venue.
- Wheelchair accessible seating.

Depending on your preference, you may transfer into a theatre seat or request to have the theatre seat removed to remain in the wheelchair. When purchasing your tickets, let the Box Office know if you would like the theatre seat removed.

For People Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
We are pleased to offer assistive listening devices in each of our performance spaces. Contact the Box Office with questions or for advance reservations. Assistive listening devices are offered free of charge.

In all performance venues in our new theatre center, we have t-coil induction loop technology. For anyone with a telecoil built into their hearing aid, by switching it on you will be able to hear our performances with additional amplification and clarity.

Box Office: 847-242-6000
We are happy to connect you with scripts for our shows to read prior to your attendance. For details, review our Script Policy at writerstheatre.org/script-policy or contact the Box Office.

For People Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision
Large print programs are available by prior request. Contact the Box Office at least two weeks prior to your scheduled performance with this request.

Braille programs are available by prior request through the Box Office. Contact the Box Office at least two weeks prior to your scheduled performance with this request.

We can accommodate seating needs for guests with service animals. Contact the Box Office to request this accommodation.

Writers Theatre offers ASL-Interpreted and Open-Captioned performances on select dates for each production. A complete listing of dates for the current season can be viewed at writerstheatre.org/accessibility. For additional information on accessibility services and subscriptions, contact access@writerstheatre.org or 847-786-9334.

The Accessibility Fund is a gift of Doris Conant and the Conant Family Foundation.
CONCESSIONS CENTER

WINE

Red
Gainey Merlot ................................................................. $10
Girasole Pinot Noir ............................................................. $12
The Seventy Five Wines Cabernet Sauvignon. ................ $14

White
Terre Gaie Claris Pinot Grigio ........................................... $8
Raymond Vineyards R Collection Chardonnay ................. $10
Yorkville Cellars Sauvignon Blanc .................................... $12

Sparkling
Charles de Fere Cuvée Jean Louis Blanc de Blancs (187ml—single serving) ........................................ $12
L. Mawby Blanc de Blancs (375ml—half bottle) ................ $27
Joseph Perrier Cuvée Royale Brut (375ml—half bottle) ........ $60

BEER
Half Acre Daisy Cutter ..................................................... $6
Half Acre Seasonal IPA .................................................... $6
Two Brothers Ebel’s Weiss ............................................... $5
Two Brothers Domaine DuPage ....................................... $5
LIQUOR
A selection of Koval and other premium liquors

$5 FEATURE SPECIAL
While supplies last
Ford’s Gin
Cana Brava Rum
James Pepper 1776 Rye Whiskey
Famous Grouse Scotch
Rebel Yell Small Batch Whiskey

Premium Snacks

NOIR D’ÉBÈNE CHOCOLAT ET PÂTISSERIE
Chocolate Chip Cookies ............................................................ $5
Raisin Oatmeal Cookies ............................................................ $5
Chocolate Brownies with Marshmallow & Caramel ................... $6

ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS
Coffee (Regular, Decaf) ............................................................... $3
Rishi Hot Tea (Chamomile, Earl Grey, Peppermint) ...................... $2
Soda (Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Ginger Ale) ................................. $2
Water ...................................................................................... $2
Hershey’s Chocolate Bar ............................................................ $2
Pretzels .................................................................................. $2
Almonds .................................................................................. $3
CUSTOM COCKTAILS

Enjoy a custom cocktail from our Concessions Center—specially created for each of our productions by Mixed metaPours!

Parade

GEORGIA PEACH

KOVAL Bourbon
KOVAL Barreled Peach Brandy
Peach nectar
Mint leaves garnish

All of our signature cocktail creations are designed by WT Cocktail Consultant Cheryl Rich Heisler & Glencoe-based Mixed metaPours.

312-613-7499 | www.mixedmetapours.com
STAY IN TOUCH WITH WRITERS THEATRE
JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Share your thoughts on the show!

- Take this survey about Parade: bit.ly/WTParade
- Write a review of your experience on Yelp: bit.ly/WTonYelp

Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/writers-theatre
Follow us on Twitter: @WritersTheatre
Follow us on Instagram: @writers_theatre

Check in to Writers Theatre on Swarm
Sign up for our email list to receive news updates, backstage stories, photos, videos and more: writerstheatre.org/email

Follow our company on LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/writers-theatre
Join our circle on Google+

We look forward to hearing from you!
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- Private Event
- Student Matinee
- Pre-Show Conversation: Up Close
- Post-Show Conversation
- The Making of...
- Sunday Spotlight
Box Office and Performance Venues
325 Tudor Court
Glencoe, IL 60022

Administrative Office
321 Park Avenue
Glencoe, IL 60022

Artistic Director
Michael Halberstam

Executive Director
Kathryn M. Lipuma

Student tickets only $20 (with valid student ID).
Ticket discounts are available for groups of 10 or more.
Call 847-786-3519 for more details.