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We are particularly proud of our collaboration with Gulfshore Playhouse. Not only does Gulfshore Playhouse contribute to a wealth of arts in our community through exceptional theatre, but also the Education programs serve our area's children through a variety of opportunities. Beyond the programs created to give students performance opportunities and enhance their education through theatre arts, Gulfshore Playhouse Education partners with Collier County Public Schools to nurture theatre programs in our area schools, and much more.

Our partnership with Gulfshore Playhouse is a way of extending our firm's high level of commitment to the arts, enriching the communities in which we serve.

We hope you enjoy tonight's performance and continue to support Gulfshore Playhouse, an exceptional cultural resource and treasure for our community.



Sincerely,

**Jason Hunter Korn** *Managing Shareholder, Dentons Cohen & Grigsby, Florida* 

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# Dentons Cohen & Grigsby proudly supports Gulfshore Playhouse in its 2022-23 season.

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#### A Letter from the Founder

Welcome to the 2022–2023 season at Gulfshore Playhouse. We're thrilled to bring you a season of resonant, relevant, human stories, told expertly by professional artists from around the world just for you.

While we survived the blows Hurricane Ian dealt to our fair city, we did encounter severe damage to the apartments where we house our visiting artists, and negative impact to

our construction site. I have no doubt we will emerge stronger than ever, but we will be producing in the Norris Center a little longer than expected. No matter where we are producing, we are committed, as always, to create thought-provoking, joyful, and intriguing theatre that will stir your soul, make you laugh, or perhaps stretch you outside your comfort zone. Despite whatever winds may blow, I am most grateful that we are able to gather together safely once again, share our thoughts and feelings with our fellow theatre-goers, and enjoy the magic that only live, professional theatre can provide.

This season, you'll travel from the world of Arthurian legend to 1960s Detroit and Manhattan, to 1980s Louisiana, and even venture to modern day Florida. Along the way, you'll meet a plethora of incredible characters you are sure to fall in love with, and perhaps relate to in unexpected ways. Get the latest gossip from the fast-talking ladies at Truvy's beauty salon in *Steel Magnolias*. Witness how the lives of past generations carry into the present in *Mud Row*. Return for a brief and shining moment to the beloved musical *Camelot*. Take a hilarious, nostalgic tour of Corie and Paul's less-than-idyllic NYC apartment in *Barefoot in the Park*. And finally, have your heart warmed by the eccentric characters in *Morning After Grace*.

Whether you come to see one or all five of our productions this season (and I hope you do!), our hope is always that you will experience something transformative and memorable. Theatre connects us with one another, as well as with ourselves, in a way no other artform does. This is your chance to experience a New York-caliber experience right in your own backyard. I can't wait to see you at the theatre.

Warmest regards,

**Kristen Coury** 

Founder and Producing Artistic Director





#### Lead from the heart

Supporting the performing arts is leadership that benefits the community for generations to come. We're committed to helping artists share their creative results in ways that educate, inspire and entertain. It's leadership that comes from the heart.



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#### A Letter from the Chairman

Welcome to the 2022-2023 season at Gulfshore Playhouse!

I have the great honor to serve as the Chairman of the Board during this thrilling time in Gulfshore Playhouse history. An incredible season awaits, featuring top-tier talent hired from across the country to create the thoughtful, entertaining, and joyful productions you are about to witness.



The Gulfshore Playhouse staff, led by CEO & Producing Artistic Director Kristen Coury and COO & Managing Director Joel Markus, has grown to continue to meet the high expectations we have for our future. We have worked hard to attract and retain skilled professionals in creating these high quality productions. We are blessed with this wonderful group of people who are passionate about creating great theatre.

We have a very special, dedicated, and committed Board of Directors who give generously of their time, talent, and resources to support the mission and strategies of Gulfshore Playhouse. We are so grateful our community continues to grow with generous donors and curious patrons who sustain and inspire us. Theatre is a truly collaborative artform, and all of us are working together to make Gulfshore Playhouse a world-class LORT theatre (League of Resident Theatres, the highest level of professional regional theatres).

Gulfshore Playhouse Education continues to transform our community through many initiatives. Not only does The Conservatory offer students the chance to learn and perform using theatre techniques from professionals, we also partner with Collier County Public Schools and other area organizations to make sure every student in our region has the opportunity to experience theatre.

Because of your continued support, our fiscal year ended financially strong, our Capital Campaign continues to meet fundraising goals, the artistic quality of our productions received high praise, and construction on the new theatre complex is proceeding with great excitement.

I hope that you find this season captivating, entertaining, and inspiring. Thank you for being a part of our community and for being here today. Please tell your friends, family and colleagues about all of the opportunities for engagement the Gulfshore Playhouse offers.

Enjoy the show!

Sincerely, **Steve Akin**Chairman of the Board





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#### A Letter from the Mayor

History is in the making, right here in Naples, FL.
Gulfshore Playhouse produces its 2022-2023
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Gulfshore Playhouse Baker Theater and Education
Center, in 2024. Their new home is fully under construction
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project continues. The City is grateful to its leaders, donors,
theatre enthusiasts, professional performers, and exceptional
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leading the way in the live performing arts scene. You will find
Gulfshore Playhouse will enrich your quality of life here
in Naples. I hope you enjoy the season!

Many Blessings,

**Mayor Heitmann** *Mayor of the City of Naples* 



# The Annual Fund for Artistic Excellence



With your help we're putting Naples on the map for professional theatre.

From rip-roaring laughter to difficult subjects delivered with grace, Gulfshore Playhouse is a place where theatre lovers share exceptional experiences. Your gift helps us unite talented professionals from around the country to create unforgettable performances and support the next generation of theatre artists through our Education programs.

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For more information, contact Kimberly Dye at kdye@gulfshoreplayhouse.org



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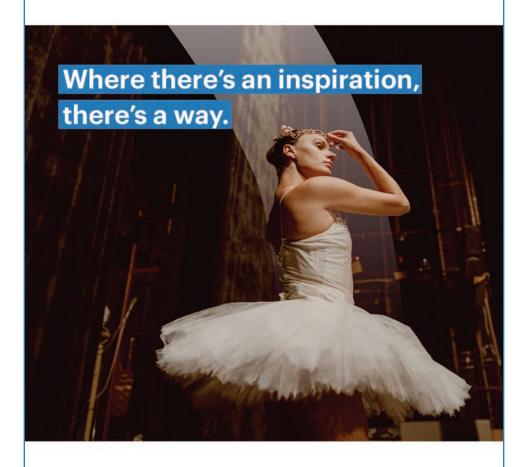
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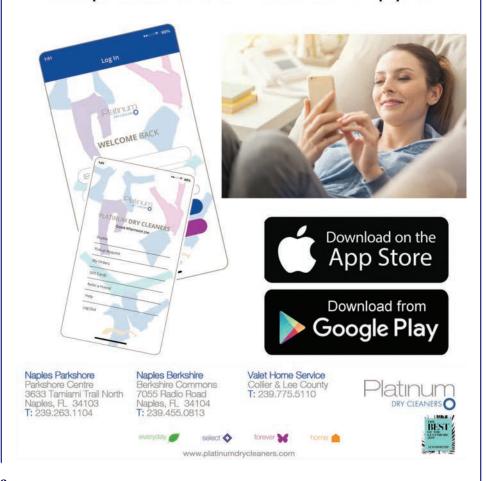


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If you are interested in naming Gulfshore Playhouse in your plans, we encourage you to discuss your options with an attorney, financial advisor, or estate-planning expert. Planned gifts may offer you additional benefits such as tax benefits, additional income, and flexibility to alter your plans should your circumstances change.

If you would like to notify us of your intent or discuss your options, please contact Kimberly Dye:

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GULFSHORE PLAYHOUSE

# Morning After Grace

Carey Crim

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO GO OUT WITH A BANG.

APR 27-MAY 14, 2023

DIRECTED BY
Kristen Coury

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WILLIAM PARRY MAUREEN SILLIMAN RAY ANTHONY THOMAS

With -

Scenic Design **KRISTEN MARTINO\*\*** 

Costume Design TRACY DORMAN\*\*

Lighting Design **DALTON HAMILTON\*\*** 

Sound Design

CHRISTOPHER COLUCCI

Fight Choreographer

**KODY C. JONES** 

Production Stage Manager

**KELLI KAREN** 

Director of Production **RAY INKEL** 

COO & Managing Director JOEL MARKUS

Directed by

**KRISTEN COURY** 

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The video or audio recording of this performance by any means is strictly prohibited.

Morning After Grace is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by TRW PLAYS 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.trwplays.com

The actors and stage manager employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States. (\*\*) Denotes member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829





### Cast of Characters

Ollie ...... Ray Anthony Thomas

### Setting

A well-appointed home in a retirement village on Florida's Suncoast. Present day.

### Run Time

Two hours and 15 minutes including one intermission

Gulfshore Playhouse operates under agreements between the League of Resident Theatres (LORT), a consortium of regional theatres throughout the League of Resident Theatres

a Consoruum or regionar anadres along the union nation; Actors Equity Association (AEA), the union nation; ACTORS Equity ASSOCIATI

of professional actors and stage managers in the United States; the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC), an independent national labor union; and United Scenic Artists (USA), a union of scenic, costume, lighting and sound designers.

The National Alliance for Musical Theatre, founded in 1985, is a not-for-profit organization serving the musical theatre community. The 165 organizational members and 75 individual members, located throughout 33

states and abroad, are some of the leading producers of musical theatre in the world, and include theatres, presenting organizations, higher education programs and individual producers.



Gulfshore Playhouse is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American Theatre.



Gulfshore Playhouse is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network.



Actors' Equity Association (AEA) was founded in 1913 as the first of the American Actor unions. Equity's mission is to advance, promote and foster the art of theatre as an essential component of our society. Today, Equity represents more than 40,000 actors, singers, dancers and stage managers working in hundreds of theatres across the United States. Equity members are dedicated to working

in the theatre as a profession, upholding the highest artistic standards. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions and provides a wide range of benefits including health and pension plans for its members. Through its agreement with Equity, this theatre has committed to the fair treatment of the actors and stage managers employed in this production. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. For more information, visit www.actorsequity.org.





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### About the Cast



WILLIAM PARRY (Angus) is happy to return to Gulfshore Playhouse and the pleasure of

working with Kristen Coury again, having appeared here as Joe Keller in All My Sons, Col. Pickering in *My Fair Lady*, as well as several New Works Festivals, William's first show in NYC was the original Jesus Christ Superstar. He also originated roles in the Broadway productions of the rock musicals. Sg. Peppers... and Rockabye Hamlet, directed by Gower Champion, as well as Into the Light, The Leaf People, and Agamemnon at Lincoln Center. Also on Broadway: James Lapine and Stephen Sondheim's Sunday in the Park with George and Passion (both filmed for PBS), Camelot (HBO) as understudy to Richard Burton and Richard Harris. Gypsy, directed by Sam Mendes and starring Bernadette Peters, and Groundhog Day. His numerous Off-Broadway credits include John Weidman and Sondheim's Assassins at Playwrights Horizons, and their Road Show at the Public. Also at the New York Shakespeare Festival: The Knife, Cymbeline, Dispatches, and Wonderland in Concert (with Meryl Streep). Bill has also performed in the National Tours of A Few Good Men, The King and I, and Titanic (as Capt. E.J. Smith). In addition to the above-mentioned All My Sons, favorite regional productions include All The Way, Saint Ioan, The Rainmaker, The American

Clock, Biloxi Blues, and Blanco! at Goodspeed, where he and Maureen Silliman first met. Film and Television credits include In & Out, Domestic Disturbance, "Spencer for Hire", "One Life to Live", and several episodes of "Law and Order" and "The Pretender." For radio listeners, two seasons on Garrison Keillor's A Prairie Home Companion.

Recent: the premiere of Knoxville, a new musical by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty, directed by Frank Galati at the Asolo Theater in Sarasota.



MAUREEN SILLIMAN (Abigail) is excited to be returning to Gulfshore Playhouse having

previously appeared in Love Letters, Native Gardens, My Fair Lady, Vanya and Sonya and Masha and Spike, Miss Keller Has No Second Book and many New Works Festivals. She was on Broadway in Shenandoah, I Remember Mama (with Liv Ullman), and Is There Life After High School?, and Off-Broadway in The Umbrellas of Cherbourg (NY Shakespeare Festival), Marathon Dancing, Reckless, Blue Window (also on the West Coast - LA Drama Critics Award) and Three Postcards. Maureen toured with Fiddler on the Roof (as Golde opposite Theodore Bikel), The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds (with Shelley Winters - NJ Drama Critics Award) and The Gingerbread Lady. Her regional credits include Falsettos

(Pittsburgh Public), The Belle of Amherst, The Real Thing, Uncle Vanya, The Beauty Queen of Leenane (Two River Theater), Zhivago (La Jolla Playhouse), The Cocktail Hour, A Shayne Maidel (Delaware Theater Company), Company (Huntington Theater), The Rothschilds, Rags (Coconut Grove Playhouse), The Goat (Southern Rep) and Pure Confidence (Cincinnati Playhouse -Acclaim Award). Maureen was in the films Blue Window (PBS), Reckless and Childhood's End, and on TV in "Law and Order", "Feds", "Dixie: Changing Habits", "Sanctuary of Fear" as well as two years as Pam Chandler on "Guiding Light". Most recently, she had a recurring role on the new Apple TV series "Hello Tomorrow"



RAY ANTHONY THOMAS (Ollie) Upcoming Broadway: I Need That (with Danny DeVito

and his daughter Lucy DeVito).
Recent credits: Broadway: American Buffalo, Trouble In Mind, Jitney, The Crucible, Race. Off-Broadway: The Trees; Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Moscow, Wolunteer Man (Obie Award). Television: "Law & Order," "Flatbush Misdemeanors," "New Amsterdam," "Social Distance," "High Maintenance." Film: The Untitled Novelist Project, The Rest of Us, Isn't it Romantic, Harbinger, Shutter Island, Trouble With the Curve.





### About the Creative Team

CAREY CRIM (Playwright) is an East Coast based playwright and resident artist at the Purple Rose Theatre Company. Her play Never Not Once was the winner of the 2017 Jane Chambers award and a finalist for the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference. It opened to critical acclaim at The Purple Rose Theater and went on to Theatre Aguarius in Ontario, The Rubicon Theatre in Los Angeles and then on to The Park Theatre in London. Conviction premiered at Bay Street Theatre starring Sarah Paulson, Garret Dillahunt and Elizabeth Reaser. It then opened at The Rubicon in a co-production where it was nominated for an Ovation award for best new play. Her earlier works, Growing Pretty, Wake and Some Couples May ... all received world premieres at The Purple Rose Theatre Company. Wake received a West Coast Premiere at the SeaGlass Theatre in Los Angeles where it was a critic's pick. Carey adapted it for the screen and the feature film, starring Jo Koy, James Denton and Myndy Crist, has won numerous festival awards and was released October 8th. It is currently available on Amazon Prime. Her play Morning After Grace ran to sold out houses at The Purple Rose Theatre Company starring Randolph (Randy) Mantooth. It went on to Asolo Repertory Theatre, The Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Shakespeare and Company, The Barter Theatre, Indiana Repertory

Theatre and is slated for many more. *Paint Night* will open at The Purple Rose in April and *The Last Broadcast* was recently seen in Urbanite Theatre's Modern Works Festival in Sarasota, Florida. She is a three-time finalist for Miami City Theater's short play competition and won the competition in 2011. She has been a finalist for The Heideman award and a three-time finalist in the Samuel French OOB festival. Carey is a graduate of Northwestern University.

### **KRISTEN COURY** (Director)

Kristen Coury is the CEO and Producing Artistic Director of Gulfshore Playhouse. She founded the Playhouse in 2004, after moving to Naples from New York City. Under her leadership, the Playhouse has grown to a staff of 50, an annual budget of \$6.8M with no debt, and led the charge to create a \$66M state-of-the-art Theatre and Education Center at the gateway to downtown Naples, which will be open to the public in late 2024.

While in New York, she worked on Broadway for Walt Disney Theatrical's production of *Beauty and the Beast*, both nationally and internationally, and for Andrew Lloyd Webber's company, The Really Useful Group, working on *Sunset Boulevard* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. She has directed over 40 productions for The Playhouse.

Kristen made her feature film directorial debut with *Friends* 

and Family, a comedy starring Tony Lo Bianco, Anna Maria Alberghetti, and Tovah Feldshuh, which was released around the US and Europe. Kristen has directed several new works, produced a CD, and worked on a variety of musicals in various stages of development. Kristen is also a frequent investor in Broadway productions, most recently the A Beautiful Noise: The Neil Diamond Musical.

Kristen is a member of the board of the Greater Naples Chamber of Commerce, and served one term on the board of Theatre Communications Group, the national advocacy group for professional theatres. Kristen was named one of the Top 100 Most Influential Business Leaders in Collier County in 2022 and 2023. Additionally, she was named a "Leading Lady" by Naples Illustrated in 2018, one of the Men and Women of the Year by Gulfshore Life in 2013, a "Star in the Arts" by the United Arts Council of Collier County in 2011, and one of the "Top 40 Professionals Under 40" by Gulfshore Life Magazine in 2008.

### KRISTEN MARTINO (Scenic

Designer) is excited to be returning to Gulfshore Playhouse after previously designing several shows including Camelot, Higher, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, The Revolutionists, and The Price. Kristen has most recently been a freelance scenic designer based in Chicago, but is spending the 2022/2023 school year as the

Assistant Professor of Scenic Design at University of South Florida. Kristen's work has been seen around the Chicago area at theatres including Drury Lane Theatre, The Goodman, Steppenwolf, and Porchlight Music Theatre. Kristen has spent the last several years assisting prominent designers in the Chicago area which has given her the opportunity to work on museum exhibits and theatrical productions internationally including the 2020 West End production of The Prince of Egypt. Kristen was also a part of the team selected to represent the United States by designing the USA's Emerging Artist Exhibit for the 2019 Prague Quadrennial. Kristen is the recipient of the 2022 USITT Rising Star Award and a proud member of USA829.

### kristenmartino.com

### **TRACY DORMAN** (Costume

**Designer**) has designed productions at regional theater and opera companies around the country. She has designed at Asolo Repertory Theatre, Maltz-Jupiter, Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, The Cleveland Play House, Syracuse Stage, GEVA, Milwaukee Rep, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Drury Lane (Chicago), Kansas City Rep, Manhattan School of Music, Virginia Opera, Kentucky Opera, Opera Omaha, Chicago Opera Theatre, Glimmerglass, and New York City Opera. From 2005-2008 she was an associate costume designer on the CBS daytime drama "As the World Turns," for which she won a 2007

Emmy Award for Costume Design. Tracy continues to work in TV along with her theater and opera work; most recently she has worked on "Law & Order:SVU" (NBC), "West World" (HBO), and "The Equalizer" (CBS). Please visit Tracy's website for a more extensive listing of production credits.

tracydorman.com

**DALTON HAMILTON** (*Lighting* 

Designer) works around the country as a designer, associate, and programmer. His work has been seen on stage at the following Regional Theaters: Bay Street Theater, Gulfshore Playhouse, Tuacahn Amphitheatre, Ogunquit Playhouse, Nashville Rep, FreeFall Theatre, American Stage, and City Springs Theatre Company. Dalton has also been an Associate Designer for numerous theme park shows at Busch Gardens Williamsburg under Lighting Designer Ken Billington for the past 8 years. Other credits include The Prince of Egypt (US Assistant, West End) with LD Mike Billings, and Rogers: The Musical, Hawkeye Series (Marvel Studios: Disney+) with LD Mike Wood. Proud member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829

daltonhamiltonlightingdesign.com

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### **CHRISTOPHER COLUCCI**

(Sound Designer) is happy to be returning to the Gulfshore (previously: Steel Magnolias, The Lady Demands Satisfaction, Skylight, An Enemy of the People, In The Next

Room, and Moon Over Buffalo, et al). Christopher is a Philadelphiabased sound designer, composer, guitarist, photographer and video designer whose pre-pandemic theater work includes over 250 shows in Philadelphia and beyond. Recent work: Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Walnut Street Theater); Charlotte's Web (Arden Theater Company) and The Last Parade (InterAct Theater Company). Next Up - Twelfth Night and a trip to the Prague Quadrennial in June. 2016 Pew Fellowship in the Arts; 8 Barrymore Awards for Outstanding Original Music and Sound Design; Independence Fellowship in the Arts (2012, 2019); MA in Philosophy from Western Kentucky University. BA in Philosophy/Theology from Eastern University.

- soundcloud.com/cmsound
- tinyurl.com/yd89tm64
- @cmcolucci\_photo

### KODY C. JONES (Fight

Choreographer) holds a Master of Fine Arts degree in acting from Western Illinois University and Secondary Education and Acting degrees from University of Michigan. He has acted and directed professionally for over 15 years in Chicago and the Midwest where he held the position of artistic director of Shawnee Summer Theatre and Fargo-Moorhead Community Theatre, and spent the last 7 years as Director of Education at Florida Repertory Theatre. He now works as a freelance director and fight choreographer and is the owner of Elevate Acting Studio in Fort

Myers. He is happy to be a part of this production and the team at Gulfshore Playhouse.

**KELLI KAREN** (Production Stage Manager) is thrilled to return to Gulfshore Playhouse after successful runs of Mud Row and Radio Golf. Her credits include: Freedom Rider (Crossroads Theatre Company, Alabama Shakespeare Festival), Production Team for A Night With Crossroads Theatre Company: Honoring Denzel Washington (Crossroads Theatre Company). Off-Broadway: Fly (The New Victory). Selected Regional Credits: School Girls (American Stage), Fly (Pasadena Playhouse, Crossroads Theatre Company, Oprah Winfrey Theatre Smithsonian), Handle With Care, Straight White Men, Clever Little Lies, Fly, Taking Shakespeare, Daddy Long Legs, Monty Python's Spamalot, Smokey Joe's Cafe, Perfect Wedding, Next Fall, Next To Normal, Shear Madness, The 39 Steps, Ruined, Edward Albee's Occupant (Florida Studio Theatre). This performance is dedicated to my parents, Chakoo, TPFers, Bill Buttaggi and Franklin.

with an annual budget of over \$16 million. Joel has played integral roles in the production of hundreds of plays over ten seasons at the Indiana Repertory Theatre, four years at Geva Theatre Center in Rochester, NY, five summers at the Weston Playhouse in Vermont, American Players Theatre in Spring Green, Wisconsin, and North Shore Music Theatre in Beverly, Massachusetts. Joel is a graduate of Indiana University and originally from Miami, Florida.

### JOEL MARKUS (COO & Managing Director) is thrilled to be in his fifth

Director) is thrilled to be in his fifth season as Gulfshore Playhouse's Managing Director. Joel's 25-year career has taken him to some of our nation's leading professional regional theatres. Previously, he spent seven years at The Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia, America's oldest professional theatre



### From the Director

From the moment Carey Crim's delightful new play was sent my way, I knew we had to produce it. As it became clear to me that we could also potentially cast two of our Gulfshore Playhouse favorites, Maureen Silliman and Bill Parry, then I knew I had to direct it as well.

This play is deceptively simple. And it is also deceptively funny. It sneaks up on you. In one little 90-minute nugget, *Morning After Grace* covers everything from sex to death and everything in between. Real conversations we each have every day are present including sexual orientation, infidelity, busting stereotypes, and finding new love at any age.



What a joy it has been to be in the room with these wonderful actors (including, now, our new friend and wonderful actor Ray Anthony Thomas) finding the heart and soul, the funny and the sad in this beautiful piece. Carey somehow finds a way to introduce deep thoughts into a play while still allowing us, as viewers, to bubble happily along the surface, dive deep when we want to, and, finally, come up for air, discovering that it was all very worth the swim.

There are so many things that happen and that are discussed in this play. Things that ring true in my own life, and those of my loved ones. I have no doubt you will find a few topics to which you can relate. That's the beautiful thing about gathering in a room full of people and watching the world onstage unfurl before your very eyes. Before you realize it, their story has become your story...and that's the ultimate truth of it. We're all in this together.

-Kristen Coury, Director





### Dramaturgical notes

Gulfshore Playhouse Literary
Manager Audrey Zielenbach
recently had a chance to speak
with Carey Crim about her play
Morning After Grace. Read more
of that conversation below.

Q: Tell us about your journey in theatre. How did you become interested in playwriting? How does your experience as an actor inform your writing?

A: I grew up in a local children's theater in Michigan. It was my second home. Then I went to Northwestern University where I continued to study acting and theater. After graduation, I worked in London for six months and spent a short stint in LA. When I returned home, I got my equity card doing Arcadia. I continued doing regional theater and commercials. Soon after moving to New York, I started writing my own audition monologues. I made up the name of a playwright and play because I didn't want people to know I had written my own. But I started getting better feedback on the monologues themselves than the auditions. One night, after what I thought was a particularly good audition, a director called. I hadn't booked the job, but he liked the monologue so much that he had sent his assistant out to Drama Bookshop to find it. But she was unable to find my nonexistent play written by a phantom playwright. It was raining and I felt

guilty he had this poor assistant out looking for it so I fessed up. He told me if I ever did write that play, he'd like to read it.

Unfortunately, by the time I did write that play, I had lost the director's name and contact information. I thank him, wherever he is. So, I mounted a production in New York with my theater group at the time (Write Club) and got my first agent from that production. The following season, it was produced at The Purple Rose Theater.

I've been told I write characters actors want to play and I'm sure that comes from being on the other side of things for so long. I know a lot of playwrights who started out as actors that began writing in order to write great roles for themselves. I realized pretty early on that wasn't my goal. I'm happiest in my "role" as playwright. But I love actors. I love writing for actors. First reads are one of my favorite parts of the whole messy process.

Q: Can you tell us a little bit about the inspiration behind *Morning After Grace*? Where did the "seed" of the idea come from?

A: The inspiration came from a number of places. The play was a commission by the Purple Rose to write for two specific actors: Randy Mantooth and Michelle Mountain. Lynch Travis then came in as Ollie. Randy had been on the TV show "Emergency" in the Seventies and, though he had just turned seventy himself and battled cancer, he was still very much the same guy that

girls had posters of on their walls and boys on their lunch boxes. I wanted to write a story for him that let him be all those things while still navigating grief and aging and love. The same went for Abigail and Ollie. They were characters of a certain age and, though that informed them, it did not define them. Abigail's life might seem ordinary at first but is anything but. Ollie's journey with his father came to me a little later in the writing process but became one of my favorite parts of the story.

Around the time the commission came in, my dad and stepmom had moved into a retirement community. So I paid a lot of attention to that world whenever I went to visit and had many interesting and often hilarious conversations. Many of them ended up in the script. Also, I am just a generation behind the Boomers so I thought of my own life and how I hope to move through it as I age. Also there are so many incredible talents out there that are over sixty. It's a privilege to write for them.

Q: From inception to present day, what has been the most rewarding part of working on *Morning After Grace*?

A: Talking to actors after the show about what it meant to them to bring these three people to life. The joy and connection they seem to find with one another and with the audience. Especially these days when we feel so disconnected.

Q: Your work spans a wide range of genre and thematic content.

Are there any common threads

between them, certain questions that you find yourself revisiting? How is Morning After Grace similar or different from your other work?

A: I lost my mom when I was seventeen so I write about grief a lot. Not always as obviously as *Morning* After Grace but it's usually in there somewhere. Grief and second chances and what it takes to come back from something that seems impossible to come back from. And I tend to tackle forgiveness a lot because I think it is such a powerful thing but there is a cost. A cost of forgiveness, of letting go, as well as a cost to holding on. I have a new play called The Islanders that is about two lost lonely people who have been thrown away by mainstream society just trying to connect and how difficult and terrifying that can be. So connection is also a big one for me. And laughter is such a connecting force.

What are some things you hope the audience will reflect upon as they watch the show?

A: That, yes it is a play about coming to terms with growing older but really it's about how we choose to live. This unlikely trio comes together, heals one another, and each one is better because of it.

Read the full interview with Audrey and Carey online by scanning the QR code here



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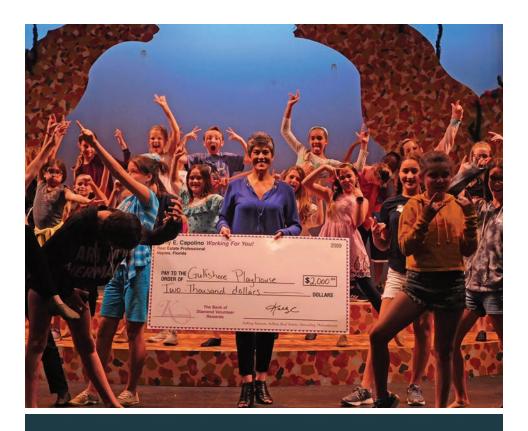
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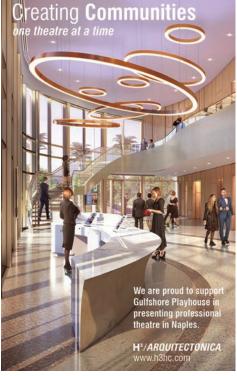
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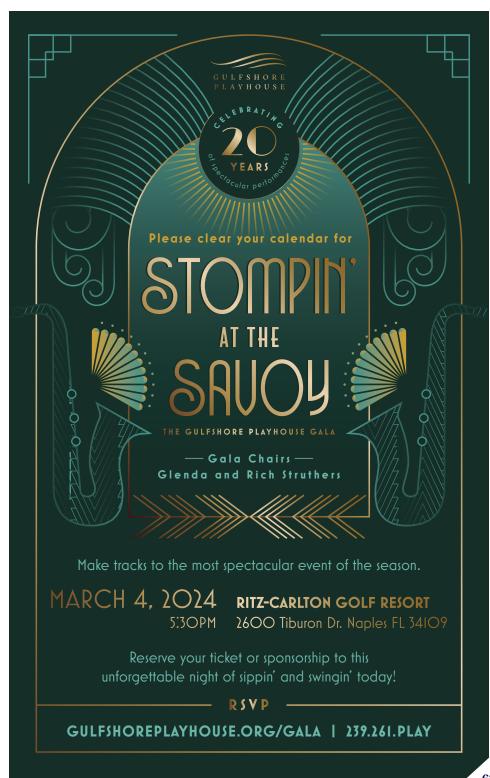
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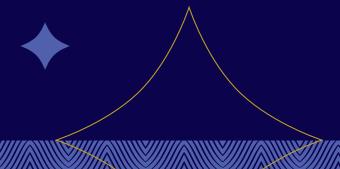
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### GULFSHORE PLAYHOUSE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

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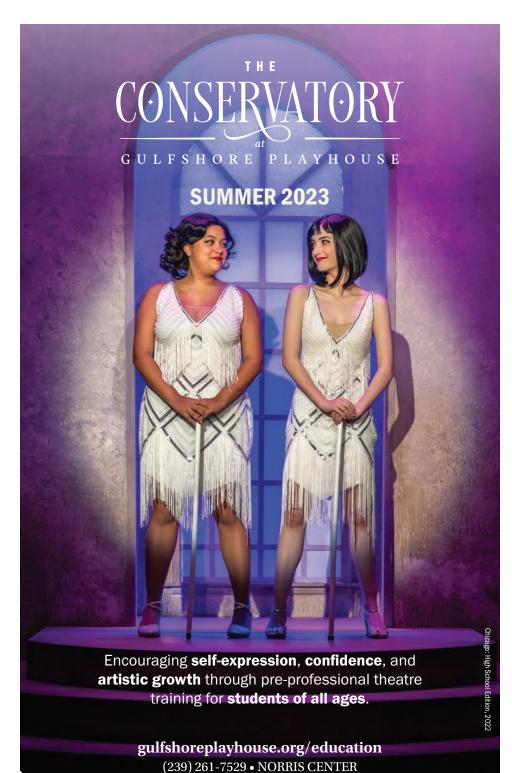
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FIRE NOTICE: The exit indicated by a red light and sign nearest to the seat you occupy is the shortest route to the street. In the event of fire or other emergency, please do not run—WALK to that exit.



The Norris Center is accessible, and accommodations for wheelchair-bound patrons can be made. Please see house management for proper assistance.

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### SUMMER CONSERVATORY PRODUCTIONS AND CLASSES

### SPELLING BEE

Music & Lyrics by William Finn Book by Rachel Sheinkin • Conceived by Rebecca Feldman Directed by Steven Calakos

PERFORMANCES: May 20-21 & 23-25, 2023

Six spellers enter; one speller leaves! At least the losers get a juice box. **Students 13-18** will rehearse and perform this

hilarious Tony®-winning musical.

This production is recommended for middle school audiences and older

UNDER
THE SEA

June 5-9, 2023, 9am-12pm Showcase Performance: June 9 at 11am Ages 5-7 · Tuition \$300

For a week, your child will get to grow in their skills through dance, song, and acting, through the music of *The Little Mermaid* and more!



Music and Lyrics by Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez Directed by John Perine PERFORMANCES: June 22-23, 2023

Inspired by the 2003 movie of the same name, students **ages 8-13** get the opportunity to be a part of this regional premiere! *Finding Nemo JR*. brings a vibrant underwater world to life on stage in a story full of family, friendship, and adventure.



Based on the series by Stephen Hillenburg Book by Kyle Jarrow Musical Production Conceived by Tina Landau Directed by Dann Dunn PERFORMANCES: July 20-23, 2023

Students **ages 13-18** train in music, movement, and acting while rehearsing and performing this Tony\*-winning musical. Are Ya Ready Kids? Grab your jellyfish nets and Krabby Patties, and get ready for an underwater adventure with your favorite sponge!



— Tickets and Info –

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