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Vol. CXI, No. 6 2023-2024 April 26-May 12, 2024

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New Book by Douglas Carter Beane,
Original Book by Oscar Hammerstein II
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Music Direction by Jeffery Brewer
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Scott Simon and Barry Gibb
Directed and Choreographed by Whitney Branan\*\*
Music Direction by Jeffery Brewer
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Adult: \$35 Member/Senior/Military: \$30 \*Student: \$15

\*Student tickets are available to those 18 and under as well as college students with a valid ID.

\*\*A member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society.

Call the Box Office at 901.682.8323 for reservations or order tickets online at www.theatrememphis.org

#### From the Executive Producer...



I want to pay loving tribute and appreciation to our Stage Set organization. From its creation in 1965, Stage Set has demonstrated the validity of the vision of its founders by creating an organization "to promote, assist and help sustain the programs of Theatre Memphis through volunteer service." The list of Stage Set's accomplishment highlights in support of their mission over the past 60 years include:

- One of the first women's clubs in the city to offer membership open to all.
- One of the first organizations in the city to sponsor fundraising trips abroad. Stage Set escorted travelers to London, Moscow, Madrid and Yugoslavia in addition to regular theatre trips to

New York and other American cities.

- Initiated a Community Relations Project to produce traveling productions on family life that performed at local clubs and organizations.
- Created a School Theatre project that produced children's plays and sent them on tour to local schools, the forerunner of our ShoWagon troupe.

Stage Set members have been "the hostess with the mostest" for countless Theatre Memphis events. They regularly provided Sunday night suppers for the cast of each production when TM was producing 7 shows a week as well as suppers on our two day performances of our annual A Christmas Carol. In the past, they have provided food, drink, flowers and servers at opening night receptions.

Stage Set's financial contribution to TM has been equal to their contribution of time, talent and services. The money raised through trips and other events have helped support special projects at TM throughout the years including support of building campaigns, stage equipment, sponsorships of shows and equipment for the kitchen. They have also worked on sets, costumes, props, mailings and any activity that might need additional support. Stage Set will always hold a special place in the hearts of Theatre Memphis for their outstanding support of the theatre's many endeavors.

We look forward to seeing you at our season magical finale of Rodgers & Hammerstein's CINDERELLA (The Broadway Version)! And, our 2024-25 season has something for everyone. Please take advantage of renewing or purchasing your season subscription as soon as possible as we offer a 60% savings over single ticket prices. We are currently offering \$10 off of our already low price of \$150. So, for \$140, you will receive 7 tickets to use for any of our next season's shows excluding our 47th annual holiday favorite, A Christmas Carol. Our season will feature Grease, A Midsummer Night's Dream, The Mousetrap, Inherit The Wind, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, rumors, Silent Sky and Ain't Misbehavin'.

There are not enough words to express my sincerest appreciation for your continued support of our beloved Theatre Memphis. Our incredible staff and volunteers work very hard to present the very best in theatre presented by and for our community. However, we do not take anyone or anything for granted. We are proud of our history and look forward to an extraordinary future because of you. Without the enthusiastic endorsement and support of our Memphis community, we could not accomplish our important goals! THANK YOU!!



4

645<sup>th</sup> Production 103<sup>rd</sup> Year

## THEATRE MEMPHIS

Steel Magnolias

#### By Robert Harling

Directed by Jerre Dye

Lighting Design
Nicole Northington

Costume Design
Kathleen R. Kovarik

Scenic & Properties Design Jack Netzel-Yates

Sound Design

Jason Eschhofen

Wig, Hair & Make Up Design Buddy Hart

Assistant Director

Jared Thomas Johnson

Stage Manager
Tiffany McClung

Production Manager/Technical Director

Michael Compton

Originally produced by the W.P.A. Theatre, New York City, 1987. (Kyle Renick, Artistic Director)

Season Presenting Sponsor: **First Horizon Foundation/ArtsFirst**Show Sponsor: **Dorothy O. Kirsch** 

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The taking of photographs and the videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited. Your cooperation is appreciated. Wheelchair accessible restrooms are located off the north and south lobbies. Hearing reinforced headsets are available at the Box Office.

Please ask the House Manager or an Usher for assistance.

Please be advised that this production contains gunshot sound effects.

Poster/Cover Created by Missy McClendon Production Photos by Carla McDonald

#### **Cast of Characters**

Truvy Jones	Alice Berry
Annelle Dupuy-Desoto	
Clairee Belcher	Jeanna Juleson
Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie	Taylor Ragan
M'Lynn Eatenton	Lindsey Roberts
Ouiser Boudreaux	Sally Stover



Alice Berry



Hiawaratha Jackson



Jeanna Juleson



Taylor Ragan



Lindsey Roberts



Sally Stover



Jerre Dye Director

Theatre Memphis has received special funding from the TN Nonprofit Arts & Culture Recovery Fund. Several of our projects are being supported, in whole or in part, by federal award number SLFRP5534 awarded to the State of Tennessee by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

#### Who's Who

Alice Berry (Truvy Jones, Fight/Combat Choreographer) graduated from the University of Memphis with a BFA in Theatre Performance and an MFA in Directing. She is honored to play the role of Truvy in this beautiful play and is so excited to be back in (her favorite place) the rehearsal room with Jerre and Tiffany along with new friends. She was last seen at GCT as Vivian in WIT and at Theatre Memphis reprising the role of Lily in CICADA. As Co-founder and Artistic Director of Voices of the South, she has been blessed to spend twenty-five plus years creating new work with a gifted group of artists. VOTS has afforded Alice many amazing adventures both on stage and off – deeply enriching her life artistically and personally. Alice counts the performance of Place of Enchantment for Mardy Murie on the homestead porch at the foot of the Grand Tetons as a highlight. She is also grateful for those who dedicate their time, passion, and talents to the VOTS Writer's Cabaret. "Enjoy the show!"

Jerre Dye (Director) is a Chicago-based director, librettist, playwright, actor, and recipient of the Award for Dramatic Literature from the Fellowship of Southern Writers. Theatre Memphis audiences might remember his direction of last season's CICADA or his portrayal of Cyrano in Rostand's Cyrano de Bergerac. Other directing credits include Dr. Jekyll AND MR. HYDE for Theatre Memphis, THE FALLING AND THE RISING at The Ailey Theatre in New York, Marie-Stéphane Bernard's Sounds of My Life, Failure: A Love Story, EQUIVOCATION for Athens West, as well as dozens of productions for Voices of the South, like SISTER MYOTIS (off-Broadway) and PRE-SENT PRES-ENT. His writing for opera includes the upcoming, Woman With Eyes Closed for Opera Philadelphia with Pulitzer and Grammy award-winning composer Jennifer Higdon, PRETTY LITTLE ROOM for Opera Memphis with composer Robert Patterson, THE FALLING AND THE RISING with composer Zach Redler, TAKING UP SERPENTS for Washington National Opera with composer Kamala Sankaram, THE TRANSFORMATION OF JANE DOE for Chicago Opera Theatre with composer Stacy Garrop, Summer Place for Chautauqua Opera, and Ghosts of Crosstown for Opera Memphis. He is currently developing an immersive experience for Opera On Tap/ New York and serving as a librettist mentor for the Seattle Opera Creation Lab. His plays include: Cicada, Distance, Short/Stories, Threads, The New Adventures of Hansel AND GRETEL, THE UGLY DUCKLING, WILD SWANS, and an adaptation of Stravinsky's A SOLDIER'S TALE with Iris Orchestra. He is the former Artistic Director for Voices of the South and an ensemble member of Rivendell Theatre in Chicago.

**Hiawaratha Jackson** (Annelle Depuy-Desoto) is performing in her fourth play at Theatre Memphis. She is so pleased and honored to be part of such a beautiful, loving cast. She is an Ostrander Award winning actress and has also been nominated for an Irene Ryan Award. She has been in commercials, done voiceover work, and performed in numerous plays. She would like to thank Mrs. Debbie Litch, Mr. Jerre Dye, and Jared T. Johnson for this wonderful opportunity. Thank you to her family and friends who have always supported her. "Thank you to YOU for coming to this play! I cannot wait to meet you afterwards so we can have a cuppa cuppa cuppa!!!"

#### Who's Who

**Jared Thomas Johnson** (Assistant Director) is thrilled to have the privilege to watch and learn from the artists in this production. He thanks Jerre for the masterclass and the cast/crew for being such a joy. Jared acknowledges the TM culture and the focus on the volunteer experience. "This was such a joy! It is just special and magical to be at TM. And Jerre lead us with love and kindness and inspiration." Jared will return to TM next season to direct AIN'T MISBEHAVIN'.

Jeanna Juleson (Clairee Belcher) has been a member of the Memphis theatre community since arriving here in 1985. Recent TM shows include MARY POPPINS, RAGTIME, ARSENIC AND OLD LACE, and THE SECRET GARDEN. In 2011, she worked with Jerre Dye on ANGELS IN AMERICA and is honored and delighted to work under his direction. "Creating the magic of this production with our talented designers and dedicated stage management and crew is a joyous collaboration. The ladies of our cast are lovely, fun, fierce, and deeply connected. It is a bond that lives beyond this stage. My performance honors all the beautiful *Steel Magnolias* I have been blessed with in my life. I love you more than my luggage!"

**Kathleen R. Kovarik** (Costume Designer) is the Costume Shop Manager at The University of Memphis. She has worked as a costume designer and technician at theatres in Ohio, Utah, Colorado, and Tennessee. Before coming to U of M, she worked for five and a half years as a Resident Costume Designer and Costume Shop Supervisor at Playhouse on the Square. She has her MFA in Costume Design from Kent State University. She is excited to be returning for her second design at Theatre Memphis, her first being last season's Sherlock's Last Case. Thanks to her family and friends for their love and support!

**Max McClung** (Assistant Stage Manager) is pleased to be working at Theatre Memphis again, especially to be assisting his mother in stage managing this production. Previous stage management credits include Macbeth and assisting on numerous Theatre Memphis productions, such as Ragtime and Urinetown.

**Tiffany McClung** (Stage Manager) is tickled pink to be stage managing at Theatre Memphis once again. She has been in the booth for shows like 1776, CICADA, RUTHLESS!, and THE SECRET GARDEN among others. Tiffany earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Theatre from The University of Memphis back when Jesus was just a baby. She pastors Peace Lutheran Memphis, a church on Jackson Avenue where Annelle, Ouiser, and Marshall would all be welcome! She is mom to Max who is Assistant Stage Manager Extraordinaire with whom Tiffany loves to work and who is graduating from Crosstown High School in just a few weeks! Tiffany loves watching Jerre Dye work and has been blown away by this amazing cast. She is grateful for this opportunity and knows you will enjoy every second of the show.

**Taylor Ragan** (Shelby Eatenton-Latcherie) is tickled pink to be making her Theatre Memphis debut! After spending the last 10 years in Los Angeles, she has returned to her Memphis roots, and is working as the Director of Plays at St. Mary's.

#### Who's Who

Lindsey Roberts (M'Lynn Eatenton) This is Lindsey's second visit to Chinquapin Parish having played Shelby in Germantown Community Theatre's production of STEEL MAGNOLIAS in 2012. To say that she is extremely honored and excited to revisit this amazing play with such an exceptional cast and crew is an understatement. These women are a dream to work with on stage. They must be made of steel or something! Favorite Theatre Memphis credits include Verges in MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING, Tanya in MAMMA MIA!, Anytime Annie in 42ND STREET, Nancy in OLIVER!, Velma Kelly in CHICAGO, and Tess in CRAZY FOR YOU. A very special thanks to the incomparable Debbie for the opportunity to be a part of yet another unparalleled TM production, and to Jerre, "I am truly humbled that you trusted me with this role. Thank you for the discovery, the love, and the life that you put into this production and into us. It has been an absolute pleasure to take this journey of love and friendship with you."

**Sally Stover** (Ouiser Boudreaux) has been a part of the Memphis theatre community since the disco era, and in the past 40+ years has worked with just about every theatre in the area. Her resume, if she ever got around to writing one, would include appearing on stage at Bartlett Community Theatre, Circuit Playhouse, Germantown Community Theatre, the Harrell Theatre in Collierville, Playhouse on the Square, Theatre Memphis, and TheatreWorks. An Ostrander winner (Best Actress in a Musical, ZOMBIE PROM, Circuit Playhouse, 2001; still the most fun anyone has ever had with other people watching), Sally's day job for the last 30 years has been as a fundraiser for WKNO. "Call with your pledge now!"

A very special thank you to Karren Baker, Mariah Chase, Dignity Memorial for providing the opening night flowers, Scott Duff, Christi Gray Hall, Doug Hardin, Buddy Hart and High Maintenance Salon, Playhouse on the Square Costume Department, Katy Stanfield, Steve Swift, Tracy Thomas, The University of Memphis Costume Department, Cecelia Wingate, Sherronda Whitmore Johnson for Beautiful: The Carole King Musical

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#### STEEL MAGNOLIAS CREW

**Stage Manager** Tiffany McClung

Ashley Selberg

**Assistant Stage Manager** Max McClung

**Fight/Combat Choreographer** Alice Berry

Stage Crew/Dressers
Christiana Leibovich, Jabria Randle

Costume Construction Cathy Bascom, Connie Douglass, Amie Eoff, Julia Horne, Brigette Hutchison, Pam Johnson, Kathleen R. Kovarik, Pam Key, Geri Meltzer, Gracen Rawlinson, Set & Properties Construction
Melissa Andrews Justin Asher

Melissa Andrews, Justin Asher, Debbie Branan, Michael Compton, Jason Eschhofen, Jan Gill, David Horne, Maggie Jackson, Mark Kimberling, Doug Laurie, Dan Lehman, Jack Netzel-Yates, Nicole Northington, Jeffrey Posson, Chelsea Robinson, Abi Wiggins, Dargan Wilson

**Lighting Crew** Tarenzo "Zo" Davis, Kaylee Webb

Auditions
David L. Allen, Lisa Chang,
Amy Mulroy, Jeffrey Posson,
Cathy Richardson





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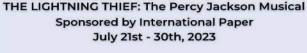




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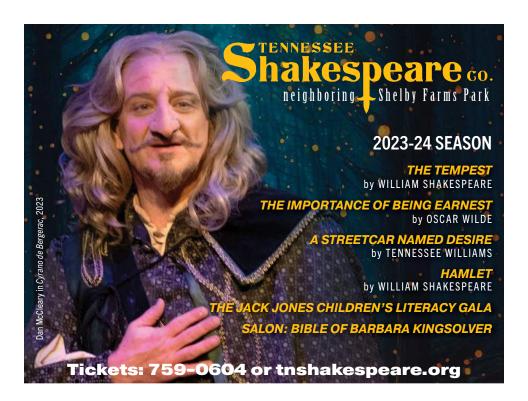
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Awadagin Pratt:
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Sunday, Mar 3, 3pm
University of Memphis
Harris Hall

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#### THEATRE MEMPHIS ARTISTIC STAFF

Becky Caspersen (Director of Stage Management, Outreach and Volunteer Engagement), a native of St. Louis, was transplanted in Memphis circa 2012 and has never looked back. After 25 years as a free-lance lighting designer/stage manager, 5 years as Production Manager for Opera Memphis, and a 3-time complete failure at retirement, she found a soft landing here at TM in April 2022. She is the wife of one amazing jazz bassist/music director (Carl), mother of three fierce (and artsy) women warriors (Gigi, Anneka, and Via), and the caretaker of 2 Great Pyrenees (which keep her well stocked in lint rollers). Becky is thankful to Theatre Memphis for providing her with a wonderful theatre "work family" and a safe place to hide her chocolate.

Michael Compton (Production Manager/Technical Director) This is Mr. Compton's 20th season as Production Manager for TM. He earned his BS in Technical Theatre from Illinois State University and was previously the Technical Director for the Players Theatre in Sarasota, FL. Ostrander Awards include lighting design for Thoroughly Modern Millie, the Behind the Scenes Award for the 2006-2007 season, and the 2021 Janie McCrary Putting it Together Award.

Amie Eoff (Resident Costume Designer) is pleased to be the Resident Costume Designer at TM. From 2012-2014, she served as the Costume Shop Supervisor at Rhodes College, and in 2012, she completed her fourth season as the Resident Costume Designer for Circuit Playhouse. During her career, Amie has been nominated for several Ostrander Awards for Best Costumes and won for Present Laughter; Bloody, Bloody, Andrew Jackson; The Producers; 1776; Shrek The Musical; Side Show; Cats; and Ragtime. She holds an MFA in Costume Design from the University of Southern Mississippi. She has also worked on cruise ships with Jean Ann Ryan Productions and has designed for the Hangar Theatre in New York.

Jason Eschhofen (Resident Sound Designer) has a BA in Voice Performance and Studio Recording Technology from Bowling Green State University and an MM in Voice Performance from the University of Memphis. Some of his favorite credits include The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee (Theatre Memphis, music direction); Ruthless! The Musical (Theatre Memphis, music direction); Days of Rage (Playhouse on the Square, sound design); and Murder for Two (Playhouse on the Square, Marcus Moscowicz, co-music direction, sound design/recording/engineering). Additionally, Jason has been the Music Director for the High School Musical Theatre Awards at the Orpheum since 2017 and the Music Director for the Ostrander Awards since 2019. He has won Ostrander Awards for Best Musical Direction (Nine, University of Memphis), Best Sound Design (Urinetown the Musical, Theatre Memphis), and the Larry Riley Rising Star award.

Maggie Jackson (Assistant Technical Director) is excited to be joining Theatre Memphis for its 101st season. After the honor of being Stage Manager for RAGTIME, she is thrilled to continue her work with this wonderful community as the Assistant Technical Director. She would like to thank the TM staff, directors, and the cast and crew for the opportunity to be a part of such an amazing production and season. Lastly, she would like to thank her family and friends for all their love and support.

Jack Netzel-Yates (Resident Scenic Designer/Properties Master) received his BFA in Theatrical Design and Production from Oklahoma City University in 2010. Now entering his tenth year with TM, he has previously worked for venues such as The Kalamazoo Civic Theatre, Light Opera Oklahoma, Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, City Rep., Ballet Memphis, and Tennessee Shakespeare Company. Jack has designed over 67 productions for TM, received 49 Ostrander Award nominations, and won Best Scenic Design for his work on THE HEIRESS (2014), THE PRODUCERS (2015), BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (2016), HAIRSPRAY (2018), CATS (2019), THE SECRET GARDEN (2021), and URINETOWN THE MUSICAL (2021). Most recently, Jack received the American Association of Community Theatre Award for Scenic Design of the Decade for THE DROWSY CHAPERONE (2018). He would like to thank his friends and family for all of their continued love and support, especially his husband, Terry.

Nicole Northington (Resident Lighting Designer) is excited to join Theatre Memphis for her first season as the Resident Lighting Designer. She began participating in technical theatre as a freshman in high school and went on to receive her BA in Dramatic Arts in 2019 from Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, Tennessee. During her time in Nashville, she worked with many organizations including Nashville Children's Theatre, TPAC, Nashville Opera, and more. After graduating, she moved to Memphis in August 2019 to complete three seasons at the Circuit Playhouse. Some of her favorite designs include TORCH SONG, SONGS FOR A NEW WORLD, THE GOODBYE LEVEE, and NAT TURNER IN JERUSALEM. This and every show she does is dedicated to her late father, LJ Northington. For every day he drove her to play rehearsal to every show he saw, his support is what got her here today.

Chelsea Robinson (Stage Management, Outreach and Volunteer Engagement Manager) has been part of the Theatre Memphis family since 2008 where she has been stage managing, working backstage, volunteering, and performing for many years and was a member of the ShoWagon acting troupe during the 2012-2013 season. She received her BFA in Design and Technical Production from The University of Memphis and received the Larry Riley Rising Star Award at the 2015 Ostrander Theatre Awards in Memphis. Chelsea is so excited to work with the incredible staff at Theatre Memphis and all of the amazing casts, crews, stage managers, and volunteers for the upcoming seasons.

#### THEATRE MEMPHIS ARTISTIC STAFF

Karon Samuels (Outreach and Education Programs) currently serves as Program Coordinator for The Cooler, Outreach Coordinator for Memphis Black Arts Alliance, and Education and Outreach Associate with Theatre Memphis. She also serves as a Read2Lead Theatre Instructor with Memphis Dream Center, a local non-profit that seeks to empower Memphis youth by encouraging a love of reading. A proud graduate of Howard University's Fine Arts program, Karon has spent much of her career elevating and celebrating black storytelling and marginalized voices, working with local art nonprofits that support her personal mission of art accessibility and equity. She is also an artist in her own right, gracing stages in musicals, plays, spoken word sets, and operas in Memphis and the DMV area. Karon is proud to play her part in creating a unique and sustainable creative ecosystem in Memphis. She hopes to see the creatives in our city leave a lasting, socially impactful influence in modern media, both onstage and behind the scenes.

Ashley Selberg (Costume Shop Manager) was born and raised outside of Memphis, TN. She attended O'More College of Design and received a BFA in Fashion Design. While in college, she interned at Nashville Repertory Theatre and fell in love with costuming. After graduating, she became a costume technician for Ballet Memphis under head designer Bruce Bui. Since then, she has worked for other theatres and film production companies on shows like Bluff City Law and Women of the Movement. In 2022, she won the Ostrander Award for Best Costumes and Best Wig and Makeup for The Secret Garden at Theatre Memphis. She also competes in Cosplay, winning Best in Show at MTAC 2018 and Best Group at MTAC 2022. "Costuming is my passion; there is just something magical about helping an actor, dancer, or everyday person feel special by creating the perfect costume that brings everything together."

Abi Wiggins (Stage Management, Outreach & Volunteer Engagement Assistant) Having always been dramatic, Abi surprised no one when she chose to study theatre, first at Northwest Community College and then Mississippi University for Women. She worked summers at Carey Dinner Theatre, was a carpentry intern at Playhouse on the Square, and recently produced a feature film. Some of her favorite credits include backstage crew for PRISCILLA: QUEEN OF THE DESERT (Playhouse on the Square), Juliet in ROMEO AND JULIET (NWCC), Assistant Director for WAKERS: AN AUDIO DRAMA (Bedrock Productions), and Executive Producer for TWENTIES (Clandestine Pictures).

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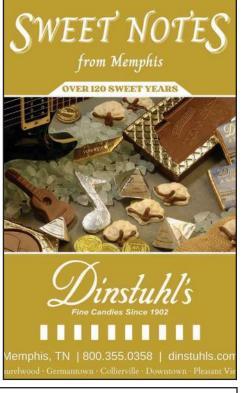


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Gail Berkowitz
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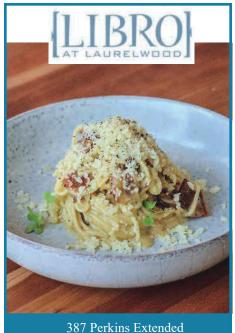
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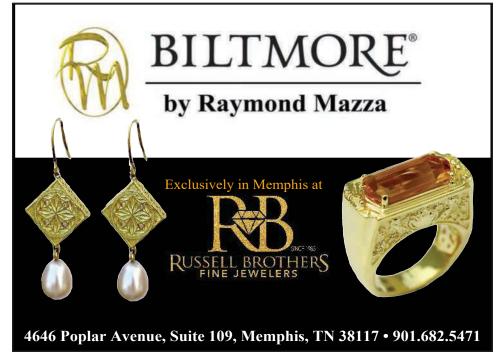
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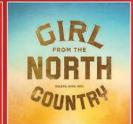
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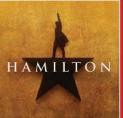
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