

THE THANKSGIVING PLAY



Graphic created by Riley Williams, age 7
Second Grade, Bruce Elementary School

THEATRE MEMPHIS presents "THE THANKSGIVING PLAY"
By **LARISSA FASTHORSE** ■ Directed by **JARED THOMAS JOHNSON**

Sponsored by **DR. THOMAS W. RATLIFF**

with additional support by **JIM & LINDA BRIGANCE**

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• The Thanksgiving Play addresses adult social content and themes of violence. Not suitable for children under 16 •

NOVEMBER 7-22

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IN THE NEXT STAGE AT THEATRE MEMPHIS

THE THANKSGIVING PLAY

Directed by **JARED THOMAS JOHNSON**

Executive Producer **DEBBIE LITCH**

Production Manager/TD
MICHAEL COMPTON

Resident Costume Designer
AMIE EOFF

Resident Lighting Designer
NICOLE NORTINGTON

Resident Scenic and Props Designer
JACK NETZEL-YATES

Resident Sound Designer
EMILY LUCE

Assistant Technical Director
MAGGIE JACKSON

Assistant Director and
Intimacy Choreographer
SHERRONDA WHITMORE JOHNSON

Costume Shop Manager
ASHLEY SELBERG

Stage Manager
CHRISTINA HENDRICKS

CAST

Logan	JAMIE BOLLER-RAUP
Jaxton	HUGH BOLLER-RAUP
Ensemble/Jaxton u/s	SEAN DODDS
Caden	FRANKLIN KOCH
Ensemble/Logan u/s	LAUREN LAWSON
Alicia	ELIANA MABE
Ensemble/Caden u/s	CHARLES RATCLIFF
Ensemble/Alicia u/s	MELISSA WALKER

Please be advised that this production contains gunshot sound effects and addresses adult social content and themes of violence.

Not suitable for children under 16.

This play was recommended to be on our 2025-26 season through our Read to Relate program.

"The Thanksgiving Play" Broadway Premiere Produced by Second Stage Theatre, New York, 2023 Carole Rothman, Artistic Director, Khady Kamara, Executive Director Playwrights Horizons, Inc., New York City, produced the World Premiere of "THE THANKSGIVING PLAY" in 2018 "THE THANKSGIVING PLAY" was commissioned and originally produced by Artists Repertory Theatre Damaso Rodriguez, Artistic Director Sarah Horton, Managing Director Portland, Oregon"

"The Thanksgiving Play" Playwrights Horizons is dedicated to cultivating the most important American playwrights, composers, and lyricists, as well as developing and producing their bold new plays and musicals. Tim Sanford became Artistic Director in 1996 and Leslie Marcus has been Managing Director since 1993. Under their decades of leadership, Playwrights builds upon its diverse and renowned body of work, counting 400 writers among its artistic roster. In addition to its onstage work each season, Playwrights' singular commitment to nurturing American theater artists guides all of the institution's multifaceted initiatives: our acclaimed New Works Lab, a robust commissioning program, an innovative curriculum at its Theater School, and more. Robert Moss founded Playwrights in 1971 and cemented the mission that continues to guide the institution today. André Bishop served as Artistic Director from 1981-1992. Don Scardino succeeded him and served until 1996. Over its 47-year history, Playwrights has been recognized with numerous awards and honors, including six Pulitzer Prizes, 13 Tony Awards, and 39 Obie Awards.

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY



JAMIE BOLLER-RAUP

(Logan) is stoked to make her Next Stage debut! Favorite acting credits include Viola in *Shakespeare in Love* (Playhouse on the Square), Mash in *Stupid F#@*ing Bird* (Circuit Playhouse), and Betty 2

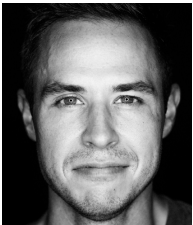
in *Collective Rage* (FEMMemphis). Directing credits include *Eurydice* (New Moon), *Small Mouth Sounds* (New Moon), and *Dance Nation* (LoneTree Live, Ostrander for Excellence in Direction). Up next she will be directing *sex/work* for Playhouse on the Square's New-Works@TheWorks. Many thanks to Jared for letting her play a parody of herself and to her husband who she loves being in love with on-stage.



HUGH BOLLER-RAUP

(Jaxton) is excited to return to the Next Stage! Previous acting credits include: Jonathan in *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Theatre Memphis, Ostrander award winner for Outstanding Production of a Play

and Best Ensemble), Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Theatre Memphis), and John Proctor in *The Crucible* (National Players Tour 70). Hugh is grateful for the community he has found here at Theatre Memphis. Above all, he is thrilled to be sharing the stage again with his beautiful wife Jamie for the first time since they met on-stage in 2018.



SEAN DODDS (Ensemble/Jaxton u/s) proudly served eight years in the Marine Corps with multiple deployments before pursuing his passion for the culinary arts. He attended the Culinary Institute of America, and worked in

fine dining in New Orleans, his favorite city where he met his wife Anna, a baker. Currently a private chef and certified Level One Sommelier, Sean finds joy in the outdoors—

hiking, fishing, camping, and road tripping—and in creating art through painting, writing, filmmaking, and more. Sean is thrilled to make his debut at Theatre Memphis, bringing his storytelling spirit and creative energy to the stage.



CHRISTINA HENDRICKS

(Stage Manager) is happy to be stage managing *The Thanksgiving Play* with this crazy group of amazing actors. Her favorite SM credits include *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Altar Boyz*, *Spelling Bee*, and *Immediate Family* to name a few. Chris would

like to thank Jared and Sherronda and her amazing cast and crew for being so amazing each and every day. I couldn't be more proud. Much love goes out to my mom and friends for their constant love and support.



JARED THOMAS

JOHNSON (Director) is an award-winning choreographer & director from Memphis, Tennessee. Jared made his directorial debut at Theatre Memphis (TM) winning multiple Ostrander Awards for Best Direction, Ensemble & Production in 2022 for

American Son. Other notable credits include *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, and Playhouse on the Square's *Fat Ham*, *Pass-over*, and *The Scottsboro Boys* (2023 Best Production). Jared's fav credits as AD: *Silent Sky*, *The Play that Goes Wrong*, and *Guys and Dolls* at TM. As Choreographer: *Spelling Bee*, *The Producers*, *Falsetto's*, *Boy from Oz*, and *Altar Boyz*. Jared's favorite acting credits are Mister in *The Color Purple* at Hattiloo Theatre and Oberon in TM's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Jared thanks this incredible cast and crew for leaning into their superpowers to be good humans, comics, actors, and artists. Jared is inspired to tell stories that move, inspire, and spark needed conversations, but more importantly use art to journey into the lives of underrepresented communities: women, queer folk, black people, telling their stories authentically and lovingly.

Poster/Program Design by Missy McClendon
Production Photos by Carla McDonald
Program Layout by Michael Gravois

WHO'S WHO IN THE COMPANY (cont.)



SHERRONDA WHITMORE JOHNSON (Assistant Director & Intimacy Choreographer) is a storyteller dedicated to creating collaborative communities through stage management, intimacy choreography, directing

and committed to the physical and emotional safety of actors. Her credits include *Musical Comedy Murders of 1940*, *Hamlet*, *Something Rotten!*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, and *A Raisin In The Sun* (Theatre Memphis); *Lion King Jr.*, *The Color Purple* (Hattiloo Theatre); *Skeleton Crew* (Circuit Playhouse). Gratitude to Theatre Memphis for supporting intimacy work, to Jared for modeling excellence, to the most brilliant flock of turkeys - Break all the drumsticks!



FRANKLIN KOCH

(Caden) is just happy to be here! Franklin is a speech language pathologist working in the Memphis Shelby County Schools, and keeper of two charming and attractive cats. He was last seen in *Hamlet* at Theatre Memphis.



LAUREN LAWSON

(Ensemble/ Logan u/s) is over the moon to work in this production with such amazing artists! Holding an MA in Applied Linguistics from Georgia State University, her love of language and art knows no bounds—she's performed in German with the RC Deutsches Theater and invents words to amuse her sons ("Shut the goosack and have another sproingle"). Recently seen in GCT's *Little Women*, Lauren performed in over 25 Michigan productions. Favorite roles include Adele in *Self-Torture and Strenuous Exercise*, Karnack in *Public School Invasion*, and the Scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*. Offstage, she stars as an AP Language teacher and devoted mom to Jamal and Aziz.



ELIANA MABE (Alicia) is a Colorado native, Rhodes College alumna, and the Education Director at Germantown Community Theatre. Recent performance credits: Mariel in *Tragedy Sound* (POTS), Texas in *Cabaret* (GCT), Ashlee in *Dance*

Nation (LoneTree Live) — Ostrander Winner: Best Ensemble, and Sully/ensemble in *A Monster Calls* (New Moon) — Ostrander Winner: Best Ensemble. She portrayed Alicia last year in TM's Read to Relate series, and she's stoked that *The Thanksgiving Play* was chosen this season. Eliana is incredibly thankful for this cast and crew for the opportunity to...well, you'll see. This play is being performed on the historic Homelands of the Quapaw and Chickasaw Nations.

(elianamabe.com — @creatively.eliana)



CHARLES RATCLIFF

(Ensemble/ Caden u/s) is excited to return to the Theatre Memphis Next Stage with *The Thanksgiving Play*. He was seen in Theatre Memphis's staged reading of *Blues for Mr. Charlie*, as well as productions of *Inherit the Wind* and *The Glass Menagerie*. Other credits include *Dance Nation* with Lone Tree Live and *The Comedy of Errors* at Tennessee Shakespeare Company. Outside of the theater, Charles is a Speech-Language Pathologist, Vocologist, and Speech Scientist with a deep passion for communication. Charles also taught in the field of Communication Sciences and Disorders, combining his love for performance with a dedication to empowering academic scholarship.



MELISSA WALKER (Ensemble/ Alicia u/s) loves Thanksgiving. It is by far her favorite holiday. She is honored to share the stage with this hilarious cast and crew and so grateful to Jared for this opportunity to play. May we all continue to try our

well-meaning best to be our best. Love to Kinon. So much.

SPECIAL THANKS to Tammy Holt, Sean Dodds, and St. Mary's Episcopal School