

PRESENTS



Fitting In

Written by

Patrick W. Lord and Megan Thrift

Directed by

Patrick W. Lord

Original Music Composed by

Emily Erickson

with production by nai

MARCH 10-25, 2023

Fitting In is funded in part by:
The City of Alexandria
The National Endowment for the Arts
Virginia Commission for the Arts



About Arts on the Horizon:

Arts on the Horizon is a professional, non-profit theatre company with a unique and specific focus of providing performances and education programs for young people ages 0 to 6 years old.

We were the first theatre company in the country to focus our work solely on this age range. Arts on the Horizon values intelligent, innovative, and original work for very young audiences that is accessible, affordable, inspiring and joyful. We believe the arts play an important role in children's lives. The results can be seen in their development of critical thinking skills, self-confidence, and independence.

Each nonverbal production Arts on the Horizon commissions incorporates elements that connect to various child developmental milestones. Knowing that a young child's brain develops as they explore the world around them through sight, touch, and sound, Arts on the Horizon intentionally creates a sensory-rich environment with each production, utilizing vibrant imagery, music, sound effects, movement, and tactile moments where children are able to interact with the different objects used in the performance. Often, we incorporate repetitive physical movement in our storytelling, as new experiences repeated a number of times help children make connections, which shape the way they think, feel, behave, and learn now and in the future. Additionally, Arts on the Horizon's productions demonstrate and model the importance of cooperation and creativity, empathy among the characters, conflict resolution through teamwork, and the excitement of exploring new places and engaging in new activities.

Each arts education program includes creative drama exercises which focus on refining and developing fine and gross motor skills, expanding vocabulary and problem-solving skills, and serving as a catalyst for creative play outside of class. All classes and camps focus on creative expression; tactile, kinesthetic, and auditory learning skills; developmentally appropriate movement; and storytelling.

Whether your children attend a performance or take one of our classes, we are here to foster them in a safe, creative environment that promotes the positive. We're not in the business to produce better actors but to help nurture better human beings.



Fitting In

ARTISTIC TEAM



Patrick W. Lord (*Co-Creator, Director, and Set/Props Designer*) is thrilled to be back at Arts on the Horizon and making his directorial debut with this new show. He previously designed projections for *Outside the Lines*.

Patrick works largely as a projection designer across the country, including designing the National Tours for *On Your Feet* and *Hairspray*. His work creating theatre for young audiences has included multiple critically acclaimed world premieres at the Kennedy Center, with playwrights like Lauren Gunderson, Fin Kruckemeyer, and Laura Schellhardt. Patrick has designed all across the country but locally you may recognize his work at theatres like Shakespeare Theatre, Olney Theatre, Everyman Theatre, Synetic Theater, 1st Stage, Theater Alliance, and many more. He also is the author of a children's book *Start with a Spark*, available through DC bookstore Politics and Prose. More about him and his work can be found at www.patrickwlord and more photos of his dog are available on his instagram @pwlord

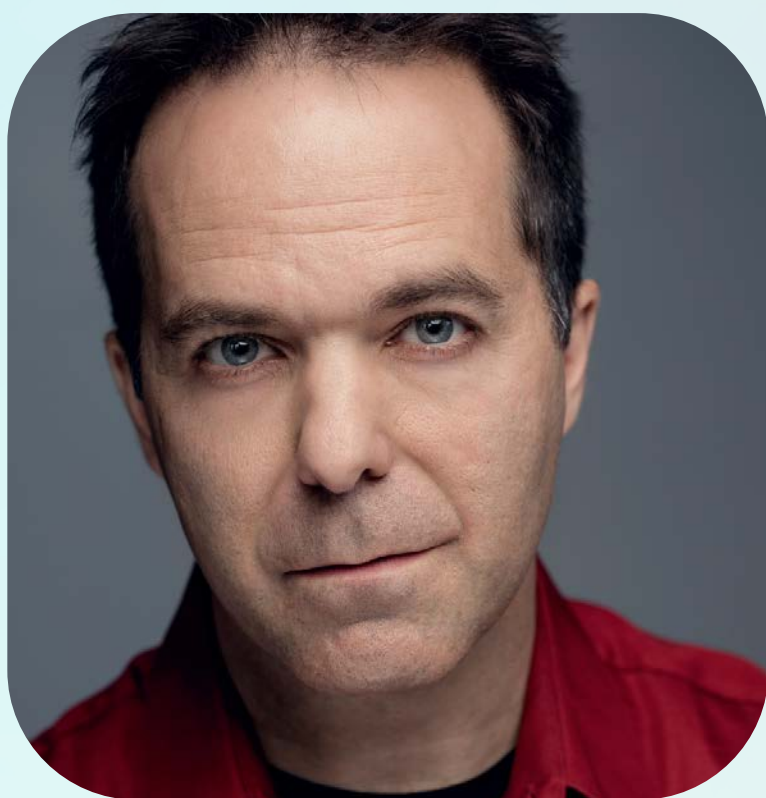


Megan Thrift (*Co-Creator*) has worked as a multidisciplinary theatre artist and full-time educator for the past eighteen years in D.C., Maryland, North Carolina, and Virginia. She has worked on over 30 productions in the DC theatre scene primarily at Keegan Theatre and Theatre Alliance. Most of the time, she is a high school theatre teacher and the artistic director of the student driven Rambunctious Theatre Company. Additionally she works with educators in Mosul, Iraq to develop their pedagogy, shape community building programs, and learn to support the psychological health of themselves and their students. Degrees: B.A. in Theatre and M. Ed Cert in Theatre Education K-12 from George Mason University.

ARTISTIC TEAM (CONT.)



Jeannette Christensen (*Costume Designer*) is a Helen Hayes nominated costume designer, illustrator, and fashion stylist based in Baltimore, MD. Selected design credits include: The Broadway national tour of *On Your Feet! The Story of Emilio and Gloria Estefan* 2022-2023 and the national tour, world premiere of *Don't let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* Also for the Kennedy Center - the world premieres of *Show Way*, *How to Catch a Star*, and *Earthrise*. Gala Hispanic Theatre, DC - *Jardin Salvaje*, *On Your Feet!*, *La Casa de la Laguna*, *Ella es Tango*, *El Perro de Hartelano*, *Picasso*, and *Que las Hay!* Adventure Theater MTC - *Elephant & Piggie: We are in a Play!* (Helen Hayes Nominated - Outstanding Costume Design), *Blueberries for Sal*, and *Luchadora*. Theater Alliance Films- *The Blackest Battle*, *Quadrant Series*, and *Protest in 8*. Olney Theater Center - National Players Tour 70 and *Thanksgiving*. Other regional credits include 4615 Theatre, Pointless Theatre, Imagination Stage, Monumental Theatre, Dance Exchange, and Mosaic Theatre. She has assisted with costume designs for American Players Theater, Roundhouse Theatre, Folger Theatre, Wolf Trap Opera, and Studio Theater. She has worked as a costume designer/mentor with Arizona State University, University of Maryland, Bowie State University, American University, and George Washington University. She recently launched her own sustainable clothing brand, called *Ronni-X*. Education: BA in Design & Production from Arizona State University, MFA in Design from the University of Maryland. Find more of her work at jchristensendesign.com.



Matthew Pauli (*Puppet Designer*) is a performer based in Maryland. He toured six seasons as a clown with Big Apple Circus spent five years as a principal puppeteer with Beale Street Puppets, based in Baltimore. At Imagination Stage in Maryland he built the Brontosaurus for *Lulu* and the *Brontosaurus*, *Bunnicula* for two different productions of *Bunnicula*, and giants for a production of *The BFG*, and the humans for *101 Dalmations*. He built puppets for *Mary Poppins* at Olney Stage. He has built full size puppets of children for the Smithsonian, as well as for Spooky Action Theater's production of *The Oldest Boy*. His basement currently contains a full-size rhino that a person can ride.




Natalie Cutcher (*Dramaturg*) is a local theatre maker, educator, and proud company member of Arts on the Horizon. In addition to teaching summer camps and leading storytimes with AOTH, she's worked on a handful of productions wearing hats ranging from director, playwright, actor, deviser, and props refurbisher. Productions include *Snow Day*, *Point A to Point B*, *By the Seashore*, *Jingle Journey*, and *Squeakers and Mr. Gumdrop*. She has roots in stylized, physical theatre including Commedia dell'Arte and Clowning, but also gained a love for rich, poetic language after completing her MFA with Shakespeare Theatre Company Academy. If you're a fan of podcasts, keep an eye out for Season 5 of the sci-fi, radio-drama *EOS 10* dropping spring 2023.

ARTISTIC TEAM (CONT.)



Amber Smithers (*Props Artisan and Winter/Spring Arts on the Horizon Emerging Artist*) has recently graduated from the University of Maryland with a B.A. in Theatre. She is a Theatre Practitioner, who was a part of The National Players Tour 73's production of *Much Ado About Nothing* as (Beatrice/Borachio). She is also a local playwright whose work has been produced by Adventure Theatre's *Q-fest*, as well as We Happy Few. Amber is ecstatic to be working with Arts On the Horizon as an Emerging Theatre Artist this season.

A hand-drawn illustration of a rocket ship in flight, with a trail of smoke behind it. The drawing is in a simple, sketchy style with pink and red outlines. There are small star-like symbols scattered around the rocket.

Dean Leong (*Lighting Designer*) is a freelance Lighting Designer from the Washington DC area. Recent design credits include: Lighting: *Our Town*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and *The Wolves* with CUA Drama Dept. *A Tuna Christmas*, *BURST*, and *Ghost Light* with Parlor Room Theater Co. *The Infinite Tales*, *Museum 2040*, and *Tempered: A Caberet* with 4615 Theatre Co. *Chemical Exile: Synthesis*, *Dracula: A Feminist Revenge Fantasy*, *Really* with Rorschach Theater Co. Scenic: *The Wolves* with CUA Drama Dept. *Museum 2040* with 4615 Theater Co. He would like to thank his wife and daughter for their love and support. To view more of his work you can visit: www.deanleongdesigns.squarespace.com



Kaitlyn Shifflett (*Stage Manager*) is a current student at George Mason University pursuing a B.F.A in Theater performance and a minor in Dance. She is a working actor/stage manager/mentor in the wonderful niche world of physical theater. Past credits include *Romeo & Juliet* (Synetic Teen Co.), *Hamlet* (CUA), *Host and Guest*, and *Dracula* (Synetic Theater). Kaitlyn is excited to be working with Arts on the Horizon for this magical production of *Fitting In* this spring.

CAST



Emily Erickson (*Middlest and Composer*) is an actor, teaching artist, voice coach, and multi-instrumentalist based in DC. Her recent credits include *People, Places & Things* (Studio Theatre), *Our Black Death* (Taffety Punk), *Much Ado About Nothing* (Chesapeake Shakespeare), *Man Covets Bird* (Spooky Action), *Richard II* (Her Majesty & Sons), *This Beautiful Future* (TheaterLab), *Fantastagirl and the Math Monster* (Adventure Theatre), *Julius Caesar* (Academy for Classical Acting), and *Working: A Musical* (Labor Heritage Foundation). Emily serves on the NTI faculty at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center and works as a teaching artist at Shakespeare Theatre Company and Round House Theatre. Proud MFA graduate of The Academy for Classical Acting at STC/GWU. BFA: NYU. emilynerickson.com / @emierickson



Pablo Guillen (*Oldest*) is an actor and fashion lover, born and raised in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. He trained at the National School of Dramatic Arts of Honduras, Miami Dade College, The Carpetbag Brigade Physical Theater, and Odin Theater. Some of his credits include Teatro de la Luna: *A Lecture for an Academy*, *GO*; Gala Hispanic Theater: *Seneca*; Synetic Theater: *The Tempest*, *The Miraculous Magic Balloon*, *Cinderella*, *Snow Queen* (understudy role), *The Servant of Two Masters*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Host and Guest* (understudy role). *Arts on the Horizon: Birds of a Feather*, *Squeakers & Mr. Gumdrop*.



Graciela Rey (*Youngest*) DC area credits include: GALA Hispanic Theatre: *On Your Feet! ¡En español!*. Olney Theatre Center: *Beauty and the Beast*. Flying V Theatre: *Vanishing Girl*. Imagination Stage: *Paper Dreams* and *The Snow Queen*. Rorschach Theatre: *¡Nails! A Happy, Gay, Latinx Play* and *Klecksography*. Adventure Theatre: *Make Way for Ducklings*. REGIONAL: Gloucester Stage Company: *Athena*. Graciela has a BA in Musical Theatre from American University. Find her online at www.Gracielarey.com and @graci_rey.

CAST (CONT.)



Covenant Babatunde (*Middlest Understudy*) is a DMV choreographer, dancer, and actor who has presented work at several venues in the East Coast. She's recently presented work in concerts hosted by Glade Dance Collective, Light Switch Dance Theater, Anacostia Arts Center, and performed as Stepsister in Synetic Theater's *Cinderella*. Covenant has a BA in Creative Writing and a minor in Musical Theatre from the University of Mary Washington. Her strong background in writing has greatly influenced her as an artist - with her focal point always being the creation of well-rounded characters and thought-provoking stories. As best said by two of her favorite spoken word artists: "Turn off the music, listen to the quiet. Whisper: Thank you for stopping by."



Rebecca Ballinger (*Youngest Understudy*) Past credits include *The Playboy of the Western World* at Solas Nua, *The Outsider* and *Shakespeare in Love* at Keegan Theatre, *A Civil War Christmas* and *The Member of the Wedding* at 1st Stage, *Every Christmas Story Ever Told* and *Beehive* at NextStop Theatre, as well as *Make Way for Ducklings* and *Fairytales in the Sun* at Adventure Theatre. She also understudied *Heroes of the Fourth Turning* at Studio Theatre. Upcoming: *Audrey* at Creative Cauldron. Becca has a BA in Theatre from the University of Maryland. RebeccaBallinger.com



Joshua Lucas (*Oldest Understudy*) is a DC based actor, dancer, and teaching artist. He has worked primarily with Synetic Theater, credits include *The Tempest*, *Snow Queen*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Shakespeare Revue*, *Cinderella* (understudy), *Servant of Two Masters* (understudy), *Midsummer Nights Dream*, *Host and Guest*, and *Dracula*. Other credits include Round House Theater: *The Tempest* (Caliban understudy) and Arts on the Horizon: *Birds of a Feather* (understudy)

ARTS ON THE HORIZON'S 2022-23 SEASON EMERGING ARTIST FELLOWS

Amber Smithers
Andres Jovel
Marcus Smith
Nathan Leituala

Arts on the Horizon's 2022-23 season Emerging Artist Fellowship program is funded in part by an Aurand Harris Theatre Grant from the Children's Theatre Foundation of America.

Aurand Harris Grants and Fellowships are made possible through an endowment established by the late Aurand Harris and administered by the Children's Theatre Foundation of America. Aurand Harris, one of this nation's most published and performed playwrights for children and youth, enormously enriched the literature of American children's theatre. Plays such as "Androcles and the Lion," translated into 10 languages, "The Arkansaw Bear," "The Toby Show," "Rags to Riches," and "To Ride a Blue Horse," are but a few of his plays that fill stages in this country and abroad. Harris's writings, informed by his studies in Kansas and at Northwestern University and by his teaching initially, in the Gary, IN school system, and subsequently, for over thirty years at Grace School in New York, have captured the spirit and interests of children for generations. Harris had a deep concern for artists, particularly playwrights, who devote their careers to creating quality theatre for young audiences, and for theatres who produce theatre for children. Through his foresight and generosity, the Children's Theatre Foundation of America has been able to establish Aurand Harris Fellowships for artists serving young people and grants for small and mid-sized theatres throughout America. We congratulate Arts on the Horizon for being an Aurand Harris 2022- 2023 Grant recipient.

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Special thanks

Kylene King, Building Momentum, and Robert Humphrey