

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee
*Co-Produced by Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts,
and Allerton Park and Retreat Center*

Allerton Music Barn
September 27 & 28, 2018 at 7:30p

Music and Lyrics by William Finn
Book by Rachel Sheinkin
Conceived by Rebecca Feldman
Additional Material by Jay Reiss

Originally Directed on Broadway by James Lapine

Originally produced on Broadway by
David Stone, James L. Nederlander, Barbara Whitman, Patrick Catullo,
Barrington Stage Company, Second Stage Theatre

LYRIC
T H E A T R E

@ I L L I N O I S

Director of the School of Music

Dr. Jeffrey Magee

Head of Music Staff

Michael Tilley

Director

Sarah Wigley

Music Director

Noah Scott Larson

Assistant Director

Katie Burke

Lighting Designer

Miyka'el Hutchins

Co-Sound Designer

Nora Simonson

Co-Sound Designer

Miyka'el Hutchins

Stage Manager

Lauren Harders

Production Manager

Maddie Martín

Co-Directors of Lyric Theatre

Julie and Nathan Gunn

Rona Lisa Peretti

Anna Benoit

Vice Principal Douglas Panch

Ethan Miles Perry

Mitch Mahoney

Nole Jones

Olive Ostrovsky

Colleen Bruton

William Barfée

Phillip-Andrew Monnett

Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre

Caroline McKinzie

Marcy Park

Logan Piker

Chip Tolentino

Corey Barlow

Leaf Coneybear

RJ Schlesinger

Cover for All Female Roles

Rachel Weinfeld

Cover for All Male Roles

Nic Koch

Audience Participation/Improv Specialist

Emily Albert-Stauning

Welcome to Lyric Theatre @ Illinois— a vibrant community that embraces a wide range of opera and musical theater.

We are proud to represent the breadth and depth of sung theater in our MainStage productions, Preview series, workshops and masterclasses. The 2018-2019 season has stellar examples of so many of the great works we love: the hilarious and poignant satire of modern striving, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*; the beloved, romantic, tragic Italian opera *La Bohème*, the profound and starkly beautiful *Rape of Lucretia*; and the zany tap-dancing Gershwin musical *Crazy for You*.

It is our privilege to partner with Oscar and Tony winning composing team Richard Maltby and David Shire and with Beth Morrison Productions in the development of new work for our national stages, and to be raising a new generation of performers, composers, and directors.

We are excited to announce new degrees in Lyric Theatre, which teach flexibility, creativity, and wellness to the generation of singers, actors, dancers, and creators which will be the next leaders in the opera and musical theater worlds.

Happy 50th Birthday, Krannert Center! And thank you for the opportunity to teach, perform, and collaborate with artists from different generations and cultures, from community members to Grammy winners, across musical styles and forms to bring stories to life on the stage.

Julie and Nathan Gunn
Co-Directors, Lyric Theatre @ Illinois

Director's Note

Competition. Whether it is soccer, tee-ball, gymnastics, painting, or even... spelling, we learn about "winners" and "losers" at a very early age and quickly realize that we will do whatever it takes to be the former and not the latter. Competition can catch each of us at our most vulnerable, most exalted, most crestfallen, and certainly our most gawky and floundering.

At the 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, William Finn's genius sheds light on each awkward pre-teen's microcosm of transformation given rivalries, victory, hope, ethics, loss, and unfamiliar feelings of lust that happen throughout each student's prevailing love of words. As each speller confronts his or her own "slightest bit bizarre" selves, we invite you to dive into the hilarity, poignance, innocence, and overall wackiness that makes *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* so special. I'd have to agree with Chip's parents in that "just being here is winning."

Sarah Wigley
Director



Corey Barlow (Chip Tolentino) is a sophomore studying Acting. He has performed in Cary-Grove High School's *Months on End* (Ben), *Peter and The Starcatcher* (Alf), *Sabrina Fair* (David), *Anything Goes* (Sailor), *Joseph & The Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat* (Joseph), and was nominated for Best Actor in the 2016 Illinois High School Musical Theatre Awards for Topher in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*, and again in 2017 for Che in *Evita*. He was seen in Illinois High School Theatre Festival's *Sweeney Todd* (Company) and he performed *The Last Five Years* (Jamie) in concert for his senior recital. Here at the University of Illinois, he has appeared in Penny Dreadful Player's *Love, Sex, Death, and Cake* (Aaron), Lyric Theatre's *Don Giovanni* (Don Ottavio cover/Ensemble) and *She Loves Me* (Busboy).



Anna Benoit (Rona Lisa Peretti) is currently a junior pursuing a degree in Lyric Theatre under the instruction of Professors Sarah Wigley and Dawn Harris. Last spring, Anna performed in the ensemble and covered Amalia in Lyric Theatre @ Illinois' production of *She Loves Me*. Anna has also performed in numerous regional productions including *Mamma Mia*, *Newsies*, and *Sister Act* at the Legacy Theatre in Springfield, Illinois. She has also been seen in several productions with the Springfield Ballet Company, and the Springfield Municipal Opera. Favorite roles include Sister Mary Robert in *Sister Act*, Liesl in *The Sound of Music*, Sally Brown in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*, and Arabian Coffee in *The Nutcracker*. Anna is very involved in Lyric Theatre @ Illinois' outreach program and participates in Women's Glee Club.



Colleen Bruton (Olive Ostrovsky) is a senior receiving her BMA in Lyric Theatre at the University of Illinois this Spring. She will be the first graduate of this new program offered through the School of Music. Colleen studies under Sarah Wigley and previously under Yvonne Redman. Highlights of her previous stage credits include: *She Loves Me*, *The Secret Garden*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *The Light in the Piazza*, and *Don Giovanni*. Colleen is also a member of the UI Chamber Singers, with whom she premiered a work at Lincoln Center this past Spring.



Nole Jones (Mitch Mahoney) is a singer and actor from Birmingham, Alabama. Favorite appearances have included *She Loves Me* (Georg Nowack) *The Light in the Piazza* (Fabrizio Naccarelli) with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois, and *Ragtime* and *Show Boat* with the Utah Festival Opera. Nole served as assistant director of Lyric Theatre @ Illinois' 2018 production of *Don Giovanni*, directed by Nathan Gunn. He completed his Master of Music in Voice Performance and Literature at the University of Illinois in May of 2018, and also holds Bachelor's degrees in both Music and Theatre from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Nole teaches Musical Theatre Voice at Illinois Wesleyan University's School of Theatre Arts.



Nic Koch (Cover for All Male Roles) is a sophomore and student of Professor Dawn Harris, has previously been seen on stage in LTI's productions of *She Loves Me* (Arpad Cover/Ensemble) and *Don Giovanni* (Ensemble) of Spring 2018. During the summer of 2018, he played for three separate musical pit orchestras (Flute/Oboe) and participated in Bloomington-Normal's Princess Coronation and Celebration, performing as Flynn Rider from Disney's *Tangled*. He is a double major in Lyric Theatre and French Language/Studies, and is a proud member of UIUC's Chamber Singers. Previous roles include Elwood P. Dowd (*Harvey*), Phil Davis (*White Christmas*), King Arthur (*Spamalot*), and Schroeder (*You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*).



Caroline McKinzie (Logainne Schwartzandgrubenierre) is a sophomore pursuing a BMA in Lyric Theatre. Last year, she appeared in the ensemble of Lyric Theatre @ Illinois' *She Loves Me*, and as Catherine in Illini Student Musicals' *Pippin*. Previous roles include the Leading Player in *Pippin*, Bonnie in *Anything Goes*, and Little Red in *Into The Woods*. Caroline played Johanna in the IHSTF All-State production of *Sweeney Todd*. Caroline also received second place at the Chicago region NATS Musical Theatre auditions. She is a student of Yvonne Redman and Sarah Wigley.



Phillip-Andrew Monnett (William Barfée) is a junior at the University of Illinois pursuing his BFA in Acting. Hailing from Houston, Texas, he is honored and thrilled to be making his Lyric Theatre debut in *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* and to be exploring, digging, and sharing the life of William Barfée. Previously, he was seen as Sir Andrew Aguecheek in Illinois Theatre's *Twelfth Night* and in various Armory Free Theatre and Penny Dreadful Players' shows on campus, a few being *Midsummer Nightmare*, *The Flick*, and *Metamorphoses*.



Ethan Miles Perry (Vice Principal Douglas Panch) is a senior actor from Detroit, Michigan. Previously, he has been in Illinois Theatre's productions of *Mr. Burns, a Post-Electric Play* (dir. Lisa Gaye Dixon), *Romeo & Juliet* (dir. Robert G. Anderson), and *Assassins* (dir. J.W. Morrisette), and later this semester he will be in *Marat/Sade* (dir. Laura Hackman). Outside of Illinois Theatre, he's been in *She Smashes Screens* (dir. Athanasia Giannetos), *We Are Proud to Present...* (dir. Kevin Woodrow), and *Kindred* (dir. Alexandra Smith) with the Armory Free Theatre. Outside of theatre entirely, Ethan is one of the core members of Protagonist Pizza Productions, an Urbana-Champaign based film production company dedicated to spreading love and a passion for filmmaking! Be on the lookout for new work coming from the company! He appreciates everyone coming out and hopes you enjoy the show!



Logan Piker (Marcy Park) is a Sophomore Lyric Theatre major, currently studying with Yvonne Redman and Sarah Wigley. She made her Lyric Theatre @ Illinois debut last spring as an ensemble member and Ilona cover in *She Loves Me*. Additional past credits include Ayah in Prairie Fire Theatre's 2018 production of *The Secret Garden* and Frastrada in University High School's 2017 production of *Pippin*. She's extremely grateful to be working alongside such a talented group of artists, and can't wait to continue growing with the Lyric Theatre program!



RJ Schlesinger (Leaf Coneybear) is currently pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in History with minors in Music and Education. He made his LTI debut last Spring in *She Loves Me* (Café Guest, Shopper). He has also been featured in local productions around the Chicagoland area, including the Chicagoland premier of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Quasimodo), *West Side Story* (Action), *Chicago* (Amos Hart) and *Next to Normal* (Dr. Madden).



Rachel Weinfeld (Cover for All Female Roles) has found a home for herself as a versatile crossover singer in both the opera and musical theatre worlds. Originally from Lansing, Michigan, Rachel is currently pursuing her master's in voice performance and literature at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign where she is studying with Yvonne Redman and Sarah Wigley. This past summer she performed Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance* with the Midwest Institute of Opera and she made her Lyric Theatre @ Illinois debut in the spring as Amalia Balash in *She Loves Me*. In 2017, Rachel received her undergraduate degree in music from Ball State University where she performed many mainstage roles with the Ball State Opera Theatre including Susanna in *Le nozze di Figaro*, Belinda in *Dido & Aeneas*, and Adele in *Die Fledermaus*. Rachel also performed in Salzburg, Austria as Bastienne (Mozart's *Bastien und Bastienne*) with the Franco-American Vocal Academy. She is so excited to be a part of the Bee here at Allerton and will also be seen this fall at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts performing alongside Nathan and Julie Gunn as a part of their concert, *An Evening on Broadway*.



Sarah Wigley (Director) has enjoyed every moment of this "bee" process and continues to be enchanted by the collaboration that unites Allerton Park, the School of Music, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and Lyric Theatre @ Illinois in bringing this show to each of you tonight! Wigley is a Clinical Assistant Professor of Voice for the Lyric Theatre department at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana, where she instructs Lyric Theatre Studio and Musical Theatre Repertoire while maintaining a voice studio of over 20 students. Frequently stage directing both opera and musical theatre, directing credits with Lyric Theatre @ Illinois include *She Loves Me*, *Kiss Me Kate*, [title of show], *A Psalm of Silence*, and Associate Directing *Don Giovanni* with Nathan Gunn. Wigley holds an MM in Voice Performance from Colorado State University and a BM in Voice from the University of Minnesota. While residing in Minneapolis, Wigley performed professionally with regional companies such as the Guthrie Theatre, the Skylark Opera, the Mystery Cafe, the Minnesota Centennial Showboat, and the Minnesota Opera. Ms. Wigley's Denver credits include roles such as Aldonza in *Man of La Mancha* (Open Stage Theatre), Emma in *Jekyll and Hyde* (Inspire Creative Theatre), Dolores in *The Wild Party* (Ignite Theatre), and Miss Scarlett in *Clue-The Musical* (Candlelight Dinner Playhouse). Sarah Wigley has served as faculty for the Musical Theatre department at the University of Northern Colorado as well as Parlando School for the Arts in Boulder, Colorado, and has had several students appear on Broadway and in national tours and regional theaters across the nation. As a contemporary voice specialist, Ms. Wigley frequently presents workshops concerning flexible voice technique and crossover training for both studio voice teachers and choral educators. Sessions ranging from "Crossing Over: Contemporary Voice Technique for Solo and Ensemble Singing" to "Crossing Genres: A Classical Singer's Guide to Jazz" have energized the International Congress of Voice Teachers, the National Association for Teachers of Singing, Illinois Music Education Association, Iowa Choral Directors Association, and Minnesota Music Education Association as well as numerous high schools and colleges nationwide.

Noah Scott Larson (Music Director) is a local musician, Music Director, and composer/arranger. He has previously studied Violin Performance at UIUC with Professor Nelson Lee. Area Music Direction credits include: *Memphis: The Musical* (Parkland College Theatre Productions), *Fun Home* (The Celebration Company at the Station Theatre), *Billy Elliot The Musical* (Twin City Theatre Company). He has also worked as co-Music Director and co-Orchestra Director with Illini Student Musicals and was the Youth Summer Theatre Music Director for the Urbana Park District from 2016-2018.

Katie Burke (Assistant Director) is a senior pursuing a B.F.A. in Theatre Studies and B.A. in Communication. This is her first production with Lyric Theatre at Illinois. With Illinois Theatre, she has been assistant dramaturg for *Failure: A Love Story*. Katie is also a Board Member of the Celebration Company at the Station Theatre where she previously directed *Silent Sky* and will direct *MAMMA MIA!* this upcoming November. She hopes you enjoy the show & sends positive vibes to all the wonderful spellers onstage!

Konrad Ciolkosz (Lighting Designer) is a junior studying Lighting Design and Technology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He most recently designed Hope Summer Repertory Theater's *Dragon Pack Snack Attack* and The Celebrations Company's *Cock* at the Station Theater in Urbana. He is thrilled to be joining the Lyric Theatre company for this fabulous musical.

Nora Simonson (Co-Sound Designer) is a senior in the Sound Design and Technology program at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She recently spent the summer with the Berkshire Theatre Group as an assistant audio engineer and mixed their production of *Hair*. Previous design credit include *The Minotaur* and *Travesties* (assoc.) with Illinois Theatre and *[title of show]* and *She Loves Me* with Lyric Theatre.

Miyka'el Hutchins (Co-Sound Designer) is a Junior BFA Theatre student with a focus in Sound Design. During his time at University of Illinois, he has found Urbana-Champaign to be somewhat of a second home, alongside his original residency of Atlanta, Georgia. He continues to maneuver through the world of theatre discovering the harmonious relationship between life and sound. This exploration has proven to heighten his understanding of sound, not only in the classroom but in his exterior endeavors as well; implicating his knowledge of sound across the various sectors of sound.

Lauren Harders (Stage Manager) is a junior pursuing her BFA in Stage Management at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her recent credits include Assistant Stage Manager for *Twelfth Night* and *November Dance 2017* at Krannert Center, stage crew for *Madame Butterfly* and Philip Glass' *The Trial* at Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, as well as Production Assistant for *The Cunning Little Vixen* and the Stage Management intern for *Don Giovanni* at Opera Steamboat. She is ecstatic to be the stage manager for this production and to have the opportunity to work with such a talented and lively company.

Maddie Martín (Production Manager) is a senior pursuing a degree in Stage Management. At the Krannert Center, she has served as the Stage Manager for *All the King's Men*, and *A Psalm of Silence* and as an Assistant Stage Manager for the productions of *Kiss Me, Kate*, *November Dance*, *Failure: A Love Story*, and *Twelfth Night*. Maddie was the Assistant Production Coordinator for The Illinois High School Theatre Festival '17 (IHSTF) and is the Production Coordinator for IHSTF '19. Professionally, Maddie was the Assistant Stage Manager for Definition Theatre Company's *An Octoroon* (in association with Goodman Theatre) and, for *Byhalia Mississippi* (Remounted in Steppenwolf Theatre's 1700 Theatre). Currently, Maddie serves as The Assistant to the Artistic Director at Definition Theatre Company.

Lyric Theatre @ Illinois Honor Roll
January 2013 – March 2018

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