

WESTCOAST BLACK THEATRE TROUPE

NATE JACOBS
FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
PRESENTS

•
: **Broadway** :
: **IN BLACK** :
• •

Created and Adapted by
Nate Jacobs

Costume Designer
Darci Collins

Wig Designer
Travis McCue

Properties Designer
Annette Breazeale

Production Manager
James “Jay” Dodge II

Production Stage Manager
Juanita Munford*

Assistant Stage Manager
Travis Ray*

Set Designer
Adam Spencer

Sound Designer
Patrick Russini

Lighting Designer
Ethan Vail

Music Director
Matthew McKinnon

Choreographer
Donald Frison

Director
Nate Jacobs

March 10–April 24, 2022



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Tourist Development Tax Revenues.
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Culture, the Florida Council of Arts and
Culture, and the State of Florida.



** Member of Actors' Equity
Association (AEA), the Union of
Professional Actors and Stage
Managers in the United States.*

CAST

Syreeta S. Banks*
Ariel Blue
Brian L. Boyd
Derric Gobourne Jr.
Dale Hill
Brentney J
Delores McKenzie
Michael Mejia-Mendez*
Raleigh Mosely II
Leon S. Pitts II*
Helen Jane Planchet*
Katherine Taylor
Jai Shanae
Stephen White Jr.

**Member of Actors' Equity Association (AEA), the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States*

MUSICIANS

Our live band plays backstage!

Music Director/Piano **Matthew McKinnon**
Drums **Alex Durant**
Guitar **Brad Foutch**
Auxiliary Keys **Courtland Green**
Bass **Amber Robinson**

WBTT TEAM

Founder and Artistic Director.....	Nate Jacobs
Executive Director.....	Julie Leach
Development Associate.....	Regina Belvin
Artist Relations Associate and Assistant Box Office Manager.....	Ariel Blue
Resident Property Master	Annette Breazeale
Master Seamstress.....	Darci Collins
Production Manager/Resident Music Director.....	James “Jay” Dodge II
Marketing and Communications Director	Scott Ferguson
Development Director	Debra Flynt-Garrett
Resident Choreographer.....	Donald Frison
Finance Manager	Robert Grant
Box Office Associates.....	Arnette German, Naquila Gregory, Margaret Lindsey
Resident Sound Engineer	Alexander Judd
Custodian.....	Gerald Law
Stage Hands.....	Andrea Coleman, Nacari Kearney, Amber Myers
House Associate	Mydra McKinnon
House Manager	Myllanna McKinnon
Production Assistant/Assistant to the Artistic Director.....	Michael Mendez
Box Office Manager	Eleanor Miller
Production Stage Manager	Juanita Munford
Resident Lighting Designer.....	Michael Pasquini
Wardrobe Manager, Lead Stage Hand.....	Adrienne Pitts
Sound Technician	Caleb Miller
Associate Managing Director	Travis Ray
Resident Sound Designer	Patrick Russini
Technical Director.....	Shane Streight
Education Director and Artistic Associate.....	Jim Weaver
Photography	Sorcha Augustine
Web Consultants	Bryan Gordon, Louis Libert
Media Relations	Sharon Kunkel, Wordslinger Marketing & PR
Graphic Design	Paula Murray, Artefact Design
Videography	James Berry Films, Bill Wagy Productions

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Broadway shows have had a significant influence on American popular culture, and many careers have been launched from those stages. *Broadway in Black* salutes the musicals and performers who changed the face of Broadway through their creative productions and incredible talent.

In 1921, *Shuffle Along* became the first Broadway musical written and directed by African Americans. The surprise hit by composer Eubie Blake and lyricist Noble Sissle was a milestone in Black musicals and became a model for similar shows for years to come. We hope you were able to attend our season opening production of *Eubie!*, but in case you missed it we have included a few highlights from that show.

The musical revue *Blackbirds of 1928* established Bill “Bojangles” Robinson as the premier tap dancer of the times. The show’s success was noteworthy because it was proof that White audiences enjoyed watching shows with, about and often created by African Americans.

For the next two decades, Black performers began to appear more frequently in Broadway musicals that were written by White composers: Todd Duncan and Anne Brown starred in *Porgy and Bess* (1935), Maurice Cooper in *The Swing Mikado* (1937), and Harry Belafonte in *Carmen Jones* (1943).

Decades later, African American producers, playwrights, directors and actors found success in such award-winning shows as *The Wiz* (1975) featuring Stephanie Mills, *Ain’t Misbehavin’* (1978) starring Nell Carter, *Eubie!* (1978) with Gregory and Maurice Hines, *Purlie* (1980) with Melba Moore, and *Bring in Da Noise, Bring in Da Funk* (1996), which launched Savion Glover’s career.

I originally created *Broadway in Black* in the summer of 2017. Patrons have been asking us to bring it back ever since. This production is updated to include highlights from more shows, including *Tina: The Tina Turner Musical*, *Summer: The Donna Summer Musical* and *The Scottsboro Boys*, and features some bright new talents alongside many of your favorite WBTT performers. Throughout the show you will enjoy the creative touch of our resident choreographer, Donald Frison.

Thank you for joining us for *Broadway in Black!*

—Nate Jacobs

MUSICAL NUMBERS ACT ONE

On Broadway (<i>B. Mann-C. Weil-J. Leiber-M. Stoller</i>)	Ensemble
Black and Blue (<i>F. Waller-H. Brooks-A. Razaf</i>)	Ensemble
Broadway Blues (<i>E. Blake-N. Sissle</i>)	Ensemble
Shuffle Along (<i>E. Blake-N. Sissle</i>)	Ensemble
I've Got to Be a Rug Cutter (<i>D. Ellington</i>)	Male Ensemble
I'm Just Wild About Harry (<i>E. Blake-N. Sissle</i>)	Ariel, Syreeta, Delores
Old Man River (<i>J. Kern-O. Hammerstein II</i>)	Raleigh
It Ain't Necessarily So (<i>G. Gershwin-I. Gershwin</i>)	Male Ensemble
Summertime (<i>G. Gershwin-I. Gershwin</i>)	Syreeta
Bess, You Is My Woman Now (<i>G. Gershwin-I. Gershwin</i>)	Brian & Delores
Happiness is a Thing Called Joe (<i>H. Arlen-Y. Harburg</i>)	Syreeta
Taking a Chance on Love (<i>D. Vernon-T. Fetter</i>)	Jai
Dat's Love (<i>G. Bizet-O. Hammerstein II</i>)	Katherine
Wheels of a Dream (<i>L. Ahrens-T. McNally</i>)	Raleigh & Delores
Your Daddy's Son (<i>L. Ahrens-T. McNally</i>)	Helen
Sophisticated Lady (<i>D. Ellington-M. Parrish</i>)	Stephen, Michael, Raleigh, Derric
Mood Indigo (<i>D. Ellington-B. Bigard-I. Mills</i>)	Ariel, Katherine, Syreeta
In a Sentimental Mood (<i>D. Ellington-M. Kurtz</i>)	Ariel, Katherine, Syreeta
Hit Me With a Hot Note (<i>D. Ellington-D. George</i>)	Helen
It Don't Mean a Thing (If it Ain't Got That Swing) (<i>D. Ellington-I. Mills</i>)	Ensemble
I'm Gonna Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter (<i>J. Young-F. Ahlert</i>)	Leon
Two Sleepy People (<i>H. Carmichael-F. Loesser</i>)	Leon & Ariel
I've Got My Fingers Crossed (<i>J. McHugh-T. Koeler</i>) ...	Brentney & Ensemble
How Ya Baby (<i>F. Waller-J.C. Johnson</i>)	Michael & Ensemble
Ain't Nobody's Business If I Do (<i>P. Grainger-E. Robbins</i>)	Syreeta & Ariel
Someday (<i>J. DiPietro-D. Bryan</i>)	Katherine, Delores, Helen
Five Guys Named Moe (<i>J. Bresler-L. Wynn</i>)	Brian, Michael, Leon, Raleigh, Stephen
Saturday Night Fish Fry (<i>L. Jordan-E. Walsh</i>)	Brian, Michael, Leon, Raleigh, Stephen
Weary (<i>E. Blake-A. Razaf</i>)	Katherine & Ensemble
Roll Jordan (<i>E. Blake-A. Razaf</i>)	Syreeta & Ensemble

MUSICAL NUMBERS ACT TWO

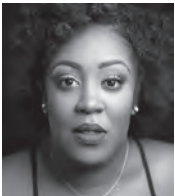
Bubbling Brown Sugar (<i>D. Holgate</i>).....	Ensemble
There'll Be Some Changes Made (<i>B. Overstreet-B. Higgins</i>)	Ariel & Ensemble
Sweet Georgia Brown (<i>B. Bernie-M. Pinkard-K. Casey</i>)	Jai, Raleigh, Michael
Walk Him Up the Stairs (<i>G. Geld-P. Udell</i>)	Syreeta & Ensemble
I Got Love (<i>P. Udell-G. Geld</i>)	Delores
Waiting For Life to Begin (<i>S. Flaherty-L. Ahrens</i>)	Katherine, Raleigh, Stephen
Mama Will Provide (<i>S. Flaherty-L. Ahrens</i>)	Syreeta, Dale, Jai, Raleigh, Brentney, Stephen, Katherine
Ease on Down the Road (<i>C. Smalls</i>).....	Helen, Leon, Brian, Derric
So You Wanted to Meet the Wizard (<i>C. Smalls</i>)	Michael & Ensemble
No Bad News (<i>C. Smalls</i>)	Ariel, Dale, Jai, Brentney, Stephen
Home (<i>C. Smalls</i>).....	Helen
When I First Saw You (<i>T. Eyen-H. Krieger</i>).....	Raleigh & Katherine
We are Dreamgirls (<i>T. Eyen-H. Krieger</i>).....	Katherine, Jai, Brentney
And I'm Telling You I'm Not Going (<i>T. Eyen-H. Krieger</i>)	Syreeta
Steppin' to the Bad Side (<i>T. Eyen-H. Krieger</i>)	Male Ensemble & Katherine, Jai & Brentney
The Color Purple (<i>S. Bray-B. Russell-A. Willis</i>).....	Syreeta, Ariel, Delores, Helen
Push Da Button (<i>S. Bray-B. Russell-A. Willis</i>).....	Jai & Ensemble
I'm Here (<i>S. Bray-B. Russell-A. Willis</i>)	Delores
Commencing in Chattanooga (<i>F. Ebb-J. Kander</i>)	Brian, Raleigh, Leon, Stephen
Go Back Home (<i>F. Ebb-J. Kander</i>)	Stephen, Brian, Raleigh, Leon
Bad Girls (<i>D. Summer-B. Sudano-J. Esposito-E. Hokenson</i>)	Syreeta, Katherine, Jai, Helen
Proud Mary (<i>J. Fogerty</i>)	Ariel, Brentney, Helen
Make Them Hear You (<i>L. Ahrens-S. Flaherty</i>)	Ensemble
Simply the Best (<i>M. Chapman-H. Knight</i>)	Delores & Ensemble

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SYREETA S. BANKS* is an accomplished singer/actress from Sarasota who developed her love of performing as a small child singing in her great-grandparents' church choir and watching her

mother perform in many local theatre productions. She appeared with WBTT this season in *EUBIE!* and last season in *Sistas in the Name of Soul*. Her previous work at WBTT includes roles in *Love Sung in the Key of Aretha*, *The Amen Corner*, *Black Nativity*, *Broadway in Black* and *Girl Groups: The '60s Explosion*. Although she earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Florida A&M University, Syreeta chose to pursue her dream of becoming a professional singer/actress. She has been seen performing in area theatres and singing as Zawadi in the Festival of the Lion King show at Disney's Animal Kingdom. "To God be the glory for all the things He has done!"



ARIEL BLUE is a well-known member of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe. Her many appearances on the WBTT stage include *Sistas in the Name of Soul*, *A Motown Christmas*, *The Amen*

Corner, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *Rockin' Down Fairytale Lane*, *Dreamgirls* and *Soul Man*. She has produced two of her own one-woman shows, most recently, *The Bluelight Special*. Ariel has worked consistently with WBTT since her breakout role in *Ain't Misbehavin'* in 2010. Other memorable shows include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Avenue Q*, *The Wiz*, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues*, *All Shook Up*, *Disenchanted*, *Love Sung in the Key of Aretha*, and *Beehive: The Musical*. In 2019 Ariel appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. She has performed as a vocalist in the Connelli Circus in Switzerland and with the Florida Studio Theatre Improv. Ariel was also a contributing performer for the Sarasota-Manatee community's Suffragist Project in 2020. Spearheaded by Florida Studio Theatre, the local initiative was part

of a nationwide celebration of the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote. She is a graduate of Stetson University with a major in communications and a minor in theatre. In addition to performing, Ariel is WBTT's Artist Relations Associate and Assistant Box Office Manager.



BRIAN L. BOYD was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale. He is a graduate of Florida A&M University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theatre Performance. Brian was voted

BroadwayWorld Vocalist of the Decade for Sarasota in 2020. He presented his Young Artist Program, *A Rhapsody Revelation* in 2019. His WBTT appearances include *EUBIE!*, *Caroline, or Change*, *The Amen Corner*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *Raisin*, *The Mountaintop*, *A Motown Christmas*, *In The Heights*, *Broadway In Black*, *Dearly Departed*, *Black Nativity*, and *How I Got Over: A Tribute to Mahalia Jackson*. Brian performed with the troupe at the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, NC in 2017. Other regional credits include *Ragtime* (Coalhouse Walker Jr.), *Smokey Joe's Cafe* (Ken) and *Motones Vs. Jerseys*. Brian is the Co-Director of M.A.D. Music Acting Dance Inc. with fellow artist Brentney J. This past December, Brian and Brentney presented their annual M.A.D. fundraiser, *Holidays in Harmony*, at WBTT. Brian is also the Artistic Director of his own company, The Enigma Artistic Experience LLC.



DERRIC GOBOURNE JR. has appeared in WBTT's productions of *Joyful!* *Joyful!*, *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God*, *Black Nativity*, *Raisin*, *A Motown Christmas*, *In the Heights*, *Soul Man* and *Rockin' Down*

Fairytale Lane, among others. In 2019 he appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. He made his debut appearance with WBTT as the talented Little Stevie Wonder in *Best of Stevie Wonder* in the summer of 2013. A graduate of Manatee High School and a self-taught musician, Derric has set his sights on becoming the greatest entertainer of all time. So it's no coincidence that the title of his 2020

* Member of Actors' Equity Association (AEA), the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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WBTT Young Artist Program was *The Greatest Entertainer*. In June 2018, Derric released his debut album, *Supremacy*, which was rereleased in Japan under the P-Vine Record Label. In 2020 he released a holiday album, *Oh, What Fun!* The albums are available on every digital platform, including iTunes, Amazon Music, YouTube, Spotify and Google Play Music.



DALE HILL is a Bradenton-born Florida native and resident. He is a full-time dancer, actor and singer. Dale studied at the top-ranked Manatee School for the Arts and plans to pursue a degree in musical

theatre. He is thrilled to be making his professional acting and singing debut in *Broadway in Black*. Dale has been dancing since he was 11 years old, and has shared the stage with such performers as Derric Gobourne Jr. Christopher Eisenberg, Sam Wolfe, Here Come the Mummies, Ari and the Alibis and many more. With such a dynamic performance background, it made sense to include musical theater in his repertoire. That dream has come true, thanks to Nate Jacobs of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe!



BRENTNEY J is a native of Atlanta and an alumna of Bethune-Cookman University. Although she received her BS in Chemistry and MPH Certification from Georgia State University, her best chemistry has

always been on the stage. She has been featured in television and film projects, but her love for performing thrives on the stage. Her niche for musical theatre has allowed her to perform at WBTT in shows including *A Motown Christmas*, *The Amen Corner*, *Raisin*, *Black Nativity*, *In the Heights* and *EUBIE!*. She has also been seen in a production of *Chicago: The Musical* (Columbus, Ga.) as a Cell Block Girl, and *Ain't Misbehavin'* (Venice, Fla.) as Charlene. She launched M.A.D. Music Acting Dance Inc. with fellow artist Brian L. Boyd. Their mission is to educate, create, and inspire art through music, acting and dance. Her hope is to create triple-threat performers who can take their talents anywhere!



DELORES MCKENZIE is a singer, actress and voiceover artist. She was born and raised in Sarasota and currently lives in New York City. She was a principal production singer for Norwegian Cruise Lines

for seven years, traveling to ports from Puerto Rico to Israel. Last year Delores made her television debut on Oxygen's *Monster Preacher*. She was recently chosen to be the voice of Royer Studios Anti-Tobacco and Vaping campaign against teen tobacco use. Just to name a few of her theatre credits, Delores has played Sarah in *Ragtime*, Bess in *Porgy and Bess*, and Tuptim in *The King and I*. She appeared at WBTT this season in *EUBIE!* and *Joyful! Joyful!* and was featured in last summer's outdoor production of *Sistas in the Name of Soul*. She is thrilled to be working with WBTT again!



MICHAEL MEJIA-MENDEZ* is in his 12th season with WBTT; he appeared in *Joyful! Joyful!* in December. A talented actor and singer, Michael received stellar reviews and a Handy Award (Jay Handelman,

Herald-Tribune) for his performance as Usnavi in WBTT's 2017 production of *In the Heights*. In addition to performing with Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, Michael serves as Production Assistant and Assistant to the Artistic Director. He earned rave reviews for his impressive work in *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *Soul Man* and *Soul Crooners*. He starred as Harry Belafonte in the Troupe's 2014 hit, *Harry and Lena*, was Seymour in the 2015 blockbuster *Little Shop of Horrors* and played the title role in 2016's *The Wiz*. In 2019 he appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. He has a featured role in *Playing Through*, a new movie about groundbreaking Black golf champion Ann Gregory. In 2014, Michael was awarded a prestigious John Ringling Towers Fund grant in the performing arts category by the Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County. In January 2019 he was honored with an Impact Award from Visible Men Academy in the Arts category. The awards "shine a light on visible men...who mentor,

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educate and inspire underserved boys in our community.”



RALEIGH MOSELY II was featured in this season's holiday show, *Joyful! Joyfull*, and last season in WBTT's outdoor production of *Light Up the Night*. He appeared in WBTT's 2019 production of *A*

Motown Christmas at the Sarasota Opera House and in WBTT's staging of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival in the summer of 2019. He was also seen in WBTT's 2018-2019 production of *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, and in 2017-2018's *In the Heights*, among other shows. Raleigh made his WBTT debut in the summer 2017 production of *Broadway in Black*. Born and raised in Miami, he earned his BFA in musical theatre from the University of Central Florida. His other theatre credits include *In the Heights* (Orlando Shakes), *Violet* (Garden Theatre), *Ragtime* (Titusville Playhouse), *Hair*, *Oklahoma*, and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*. Raleigh's single, "Why'd You Have to Go?" is available on all streaming platforms. "You can win as long as you keep your head to the sky." Peace and Light.



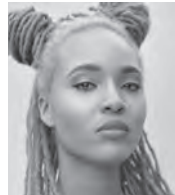
LEON S. PITTS II* is a longtime WBTT troupe member. He has performed in several of its productions, including *Joyful! Joyfull*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *Soul Man*, *The Wiz* (Tin Man), *Hot Mikado*, *Soul*

Crooners, *Love Sung in the Key of Aretha* and *The Fabulous 5*. In 2019 he appeared in WBTT's production of *Soul Man* at the National Black Theatre Festival. Leon has danced and choreographed many local shows and concerts, and spent the summer of 2005 in Tucson, Ariz., and Coral Springs, Fla., where he appeared in *Five Guys Named Moe* (as No Moe).



HELEN JANE PLANCHET* is making her WBTT debut in *Broadway in Black*. Some of her favorite credits include: *Princess Elena's Musical Grand Arrival* at Disney California Adventure

(Princess Elena), Disney's *When You Wish at Tuacahn Amphitheatre* (Kala, Muse), *It Shoulda Been You* at Musical Theatre Guild (Annie), and *Legally Blonde* at Theatre 13 (Kate/Chutney). Helen Jane's voice can also be heard on *Snowtopia* ("Snowflakes") and *Brassino Isles* ("Can You Feel the Sunshine") by the Game Brass on Spotify and Apple Music. "Thanks to my family, my husband, Jim Keith and the Movement Agency. Proud member of Actor's Equity." TikTok/Instagram: HelenJP1313



JAI SHANAE was born in Tampa. She is a multi-talented artist who has an infinite love for the arts. Jai's exhilarating experiences include working at WBTT with Founder and Artistic Director Nate Jacobs.

She appeared this season in *EUBIE!* and in past seasons as Tammi Terrell in *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, and played various roles in *Little Shop of Horrors*. Jai portrayed a Hunnie in *Jelly's Last Jam* at the National Black Theatre Festival in 2019. She also has the starring role in the film *Killer Date Night*, written and directed by Michael Kinsey. Jai wishes to continue her education with the goal of having a platform to provide a safe artistic space for battered women and children.



KATHERINE TAYLOR was born in Atlanta, and attended Tri-Cities High School. She majored in Theatre at Clark Atlanta University, then attended Texas State University, majoring in Performance and Production. Some of

her college theatre roles include Charlayne in a production of *In Real Life*, Lady in Red in the choreo-poem *For Colored Girls*, and the third witch in *Macbeth*. At WBTT this season, Katherine appeared in *Joyful! Joyfull*. In addition to her love of musical theater, Katherine has a passion for jazz singing, which she performs professionally.

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STEPHEN WHITE JR.

hails from Peoria, Illinois and is a 2020 graduate of Bethel University in Mishawaka, Indiana. He majored in musical theatre and was the first Region 3 Musical Theatre Award recipient in the

Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival. Some of his credits include *The Color Purple* at the Cornstock Theatre and Dreamgirls at the Eastlight Theatre. He recently was a featured vocalist at Busch Gardens in Williamsburg, Virginia. He is excited to be making his debut at WBTT and proud to share this moment with such an amazing team. Follow Stephen on Twitter @Stevefromig_



NATE JACOBS (Creator, Adapter and Director) is Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe's Founder & Artistic Director. He is a driving force in Florida's theatre scene. A graduate of Florida A&M University, Nate founded

Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe in 1999. He has written, composed, directed and performed in many shows, as an actor, singer, dancer and comedian. He works extensively in the community, training and mentoring youth in the performing arts. As a result of his outstanding contributions to young people, the Sarasota County Branch NAACP Youth Council recognized Nate as one of its 2012 Men of Valor. In the spring of 2013, he was inducted into the Community Video Archives Hall of Fame for his significant contributions to the arts and education. In 2015, Nate was recognized as a Champion of Diversity for the arts during the *Biz(941)* and *La Guña* magazines' Unity Awards Luncheon, and was honored with the prestigious Larry Leon Hamlin Producer Award during the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C., "for his contributions to Black theatre specifically and American theatre in general." In 2017, Goodwill Manasota named him a Community Ambassador of the Year. In 2018, the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County honored Nate with the Arts Leadership Award for Artistic Achievement. In 2019 he brought *Soul Man* to the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C. — WBTT's fourth appearance there. In 2021 Nate

received the Perfect Pitch Award from Key Chorale, which recognized him as a driving force in the arts and for his collaborations with other arts organizations, including *American Roots: The Gospel Experience*, a series of concert performances with WBTT performers and Key Chorale presented in three area churches in the fall of 2019.



MATTHEW MCKINNON

(Music Director) most recently served as Music Director for *Joyful! Joyful!*, this season's holiday show at WBTT. His love of music started as a child; he began studying the cello

at the age of 5. He was accepted into Berklee College of Music and attended Florida A&M University, majoring in Music Education. Matthew has written and arranged music for several solo artists and choirs. He has been fortunate to perform and share the stage with such great entertainers as Kirk Franklin, James Ingram, Peabo Bryson, Keri Hilson and others. Matthew serves as Minister of Music for Bethlehem Bible Church. He also teaches private voice and piano lessons. Matthew is married to his lovely wife, Nilaja.



DONALD FRISON

(Choreographer) An accomplished choreographer, dancer and singer for over 30 years, Donald has enjoyed great success. He was a dancer for the NBA Memphis

Grizzlies Dance Team and a five-time champion on the syndicated talent competition television show *Star Search* with Ed McMahon. His theatre credits as a performer include *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Cats*, *It Ain't Nothin' But the Blues* and *The Music Man*. For WBTT he choreographed *Your Arms Too Short to Box with God* in 2020, among many other shows throughout several seasons. "As WBTT's Resident Choreographer I strive to keep the vision growing," Donald says. "I've been fortunate to have had my work showcased at the National Black Theatre Festival with two shows, *How I Got Over* and *Soul Man*. I am so proud and honored to be part of such an amazing company with a wonderful vision. Thank you, Nate

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and Julie, for trusting me and my gift. Thank you to the staff and trustees for all your love and support. I thank God for blessing me with a gift to give to the world. May God bless all of you!"



JAMES "JAY" DODGE II (Production Manager/Resident Music Director) has served as WBTT's Production Manager and Resident Music Director for over a decade. A producer, composer, arranger and songwriter,

Jay oversaw the production and music for three of WBTT's four appearances at the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C. He began playing the bass at age 13 and, through the years, has directed several band ensembles and accompanied many singers with his smooth melodic bass playing. He has traveled with the renowned Westcoast Gospel Chorus of Florida and The HLP Love Campaign, touring the U.S., Europe, Africa and the Caribbean, and performing a holiday show at the White House. His local and national TV appearances include Fox, NBC, BET and the CW Network. Jay has worked with a wide variety of artists, including recording sensation Terrell Carter, Kermit Quinn of the vocal group Blackstreet, Broadway stars Melba Moore and Chester Gregory, international recording artist Frank McComb, and gospel greats Hezekiah Walker, Kim Burrell, Shirley Caesar, Albertina Walker, Dorothy Norwood, Kurt Carr, Byron Cage, Richard Smallwood and Bishop Walter Hawkins. Jay holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music Performance from Florida International University. He is a loving husband to his wife Renae and father to his two boys, Jay and Kai.

JUANITA MUNFORD* (Production Stage Manager) is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association. She has extensive experience as a stage manager. A native of Manchester, N.H., Juanita attended St. Michael's College in Winooski, Vt. After working in St. Michael's Playhouse, she moved to Sarasota in 1983 and became the stage manager for more than 90 shows at the Asolo Repertory Theatre. Juanita's first WBTT show as stage manager was *Marvin Gaye: The Man and His Music* in 2011 and she has served in that role ever since. She loves working

with Nate Jacobs and all the amazing people at WBTT.

TRAVIS RAY* (Assistant Stage Manager) is WBTT's Associate Managing Director. He earned a BA in theatre performance from Alabama State University, one of the nation's oldest Historically Black Colleges and Universities. He continued his professional actor training at the Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film/Nebraska Repertory Theatre at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He also holds an MFA in theatre management/arts administration from the University of Alabama. Travis has worked with the Alliance Theatre, Atlanta Coalition of Performing Arts, the King Tut Exhibit, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, the Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Tyler Perry Studios. In August 2021 he conducted a WBTT Master Class, *Who is August Wilson?*, exploring the work of the renowned playwright. He recently participated in Gulf Coast Community Foundation's Gulf Coast Board Institute, receiving high-level governance training. Travis is the owner of handcrafted bow tie and accessory brand, Dapper Bowtique®. Follow his brand on Clubhouse, Facebook, and Instagram by searching "@dapperbowtique."

ANNETTE BREAZEAL (Properties Designer) is WBTT's Resident Property Master. She has designed props for area stages including Banyan Theatre Company and the FSU Conservatory at the Asolo Theatre. In addition, she has worked as art director and production designer for national and international feature films and music videos. She would like to thank Nate Jacobs for the opportunity to work with such a talented and inspirational group of theatre artists.

DARCI COLLINS (Costume Designer) was born and raised in Minnesota, where she learned how to sew from her mother. Darci has a Bachelor of Science degree in Interior Design, with a minor in Costume Construction. Her heart has always been in the theatre. She worked as a seamstress for theatres in Minnesota and Massachusetts. Since moving to Florida five years ago, she has worked in Sarasota theatres as a seamstress. Darci is very happy to be working for Westcoast Black TheatreTroupe in a position she loves.

CAST AND CREATIVE

TRAVIS McCUE (Wig Designer) was born and raised in Sarasota. He graduated from Booker High School and attended State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota. At WBTT he has created wigs for *EUBIE!*, *Caroline, or Change*, *A Motown Christmas*, *Rockin' Down Fairytale Lane*, *Soul Man*, *The Mountaintop*, *Raisin*, *Marvin Gaye: Prince of Soul*, *Black Nativity*, *The Amen Corner* and *Love Sung in the Key of Aretha*. "I love what I do — creating one-of-a-kind looks that help make the characters in plays come to life for the audience."

PATRICK RUSSINI (Sound Designer) has worked as a professional sound designer, audio technician and sound engineer since 2012. His audio artistry has showcased the signature sound of Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe shows since he joined the staff in 2016 as Sound Engineer; he was recently named Resident Sound Designer for the company. Patrick has traveled twice with WBTT Founder and Artistic Director Nate Jacobs and other troupe performers and production staff to the National Black Theatre Festival in Winston-Salem, N.C., ran sound for WBTT's *70s Soul Party* at Ed Smith Stadium in Sarasota, and worked with rock legend Alice Cooper, blues/gospel/rock singer/songwriter guitarist Jonny Lang, and many other artists. Patrick is happy to be part of the WBTT team.

ADAM SPENCER (Set Designer) designed the sets for WBTT's 2021 production of *Pipeline* and for this season's *EUBIE!* Adam received his BA in Theatre from Chadron State College and MFA in Theatrical Design from Illinois State University. He has served as Technical Director, Resident Designer and Scenic Design Professor at Louisiana Tech University and University of Houston-Downtown. Adam has worked at venues including Asolo Rep's Terrace Stage (scenic design) Playhouse on the Square (scenic design), Theatre Under the Stars (assistant lighting and assistant scenic design) and associated Humphreys School of Musical Theatre (lighting and scenic design), Main Street Theatre (scenic design), Lexington Children's Theatre (lighting and scenic design), Birmingham Children's Theatre (resident designer and technical director) and Olney Theatre Center (props design).

ETHAN VAIL (Lighting Designer) Credits include: Urbanite Theatre: *At the Wake of a Dead Drag Queen*, Asolo Repertory Theatre: *Grand Horizons*, *Fannie: The Music and Life of Fannie Lou Hamer*, *Camelot*; The Players Centre for the Performing Arts: *Head Over Heels*, *All Shook Up*; Millbrook Playhouse (Mill Hall, Penn.): 65 productions, including the regional premiere of *Fun Home*. He was the 2013 recipient of the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology's Young Designers, Managers & Technicians Award, sponsored by Barbizon Lighting Company, for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a production he designed for Purdue University.

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OUR MISSION

Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe was founded in December 1999 as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Our mission is to produce professional theatre that promotes and celebrates African American history and experience, engages a broad base of patrons and audiences, supports the development of a dynamic group of aspiring artists and builds self-esteem in youth of color.

Tax-deductible gifts from generous individuals, businesses, and foundations underwrite WBTT's annual operating budget. Your support helps to keep tickets affordable and provides funds to mentor new local talent and to develop high-quality productions. In addition, your gifts allow us to offer theatre experiences to an underserved population.

Thank you!

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