

# Ripples

## from the Community Circle Players at Riverwalk Theatre

Season 30 • Number 7  
February, 2019

228 Museum Dr. • PO Box 12249 • Lansing, MI 48901 • 517-482-5700 • Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10 am to 5:30 pm • e-mail: [RWT@riverwalktheatre.com](mailto:RWT@riverwalktheatre.com) • web site: [RiverwalkTheatre.com](http://RiverwalkTheatre.com)



Public transportation may be the world's great equalizer – a place where people from all walks of life come together on their way to somewhere else.

New York's A Train – the longest route in the city – is the setting for a series of short plays that transport us, bringing humor and humanity along for the ride. *The A-Train Plays* come to Riverwalk's Black Box Theatre February 14-17 and 21-24, directed by long-time actor but first-time director, Doak Bloss.

Each short play was written during a subway ride in New York City as part of an artistic challenge. Plays in the collection are by David Riedy, Craig Pospisil, Anthony Pennino, Renee Flemings and Stephen O'Rourke.

In them, various people confront the messy, interesting, frustrating and exhilarating parts of life while in transit.

In the early 2000s, Lawrence Feeney originally came up with an idea for short plays – including mini-musicals – written fast while in motion. On an early morning ride, he watched a homeless man change his shoes without ever letting his feet touch the floor.

"At that point, I wished I had a pen so I could write that personality trait down," he told NPR in a 2006 interview, "so I wouldn't forget it and could

maybe use it later in a performance."

His next thought: Wishing he had playwright friends Reidy and Pospisil with him.

And the thought after that: "What if we put a couple of writers on a train, and in the time it takes to go from end to end, they have to come up with a script?" We will experience the result of this experiment on Riverwalk's Black Box stage, performed by an ensemble cast that includes Heath Sartorius, Cassie Little, Jesse Frawley, Anna Szabo, Anasti Her and Ndegwa McCloud.

"Could I be any happier with my cast of *The A-Train Plays*?" asks Director Doak. "No, I could not. I especially love how none of them ever seems to be satisfied with their own performance. They are thoughtful, applied, and inventive."

Black Box shows are 7 pm Thursdays, 8 pm Fridays and Saturdays, and 2 pm Sundays. It's general seating so arrive early for best seats. Tickets are available at the door however reservations guarantee admission, in case of a sellout. Reserve online or call 517-482-5700.

Doak hopes "...that within the humor and sadness of these characters, you also find hopefulness. We did."

*Kathleen Lavey*

### WHAT'S ON AT RIVERWALK

- February 14-17 & 21-24 - **THE A-TRAIN PLAYS** - exploring connection - Director: Doak Bloss
- 👉 March 14-17 & 21-24 - **THE ELEPHANT MAN** - powerful drama - Director: Amy Rickett
- A** March 17-18, Sun/Mon. 7 pm **AUDITIONS for Hairspray** Director: Sarah Hayner; Music Director: Angie Schwab
- March 28-31 & April 4-7 - **A BEHANDING IN SPOKANE** - black comedy - Director: Heath Sartorius
- 📺 April 26 - May 5 - 7 pm Fridays; 2 & 7 pm Saturdays; 3pm Sundays - **THE WIZARD OF OZ** - Director: Tom Ferris; music director: James Geer; with All-of-us Express Children's Theatre; performed at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center 819 Abbot Rd.
- May 9-12 & 16-19 - **FREUD'S LAST SESSION** - intriguing debate with C.S. Lewis - Director: Rob Roznowski
- 🎵 June 6-9 & 13-16 - **HAIR-SPRAY**, musical comedy - Director: Sarah Hayner; Music: Angie Schwab

👉 **PLAYS:** 7 pm Thurs.; 8 pm Fri. & Sat.; 2 pm Sun. Fri./Sat./Sun. \$15 (\$12 sr/student/military) **Bargain Thursdays \$10/\$8**

🎵 **MUSICALS:** 7 pm Thursdays; 8 pm Fri./Sat.; 2 pm Sundays \$24 (\$20 sr/student/military) (\$12 age 12 & under)

■ **BLACK BOX SHOWS:** 7 pm Thursdays; 8 pm Fridays & Saturdays; 2 pm Sundays \$12 (\$10 sr/student/military) **Bargain Thursdays \$10/\$8**

**A AUDITIONS** - More info at [RiverwalkTheatre.com](http://RiverwalkTheatre.com)

★ **SPECIAL EVENT:** see website

# Chitty Chitty Does Bang Bang-Up Job

Prior to opening night, Facebook friends with anyone involved with this show began seeing #chittygiddy on everyone's posts. It turns out that was pretty appropriate. This cast and crew were absolutely high energy and the audience quickly picked up on this giddiness. From the curtain speech that featured a pet pug, to the final bow, there was non-stop fun!

This production, based on the MGM Motion Picture, was adapted for the stage by Jeremy Sams and Ray Roderick with Music and Lyrics by Richard M. Sherman. Brian Farnham can and should be very proud of his first-time foray into directing! His cast and crew, led by Ben Holzhausen as Caractacus Potts, and Sarah Hayner as Truly Scrumptious, gave their all. Also many talented young people added to the challenge of bringing this show to the stage. Phineas Reed and Isabella Edmonds-Hogan as Jeremy and Jemima Potts were delightful as were the many others in the talented youth ensemble.

Rounding out the amazing talent in this show were Bob Purosky as Grandpa Potts (companion to aforementioned Pug, Edison), Greg Martin and Laura Croff

as the Baron and Baroness Bomburst, Jean Burk as the Toymaker, and Tim Edinger as the Childcatcher, all above and beyond delightful and funny. Two more that deserve a definite shout out are Boris Nikolovski and Jimmy McCormick as Boris and Goran, the "bad guy" thieves/spies who showed up often – each time in a different hilarious disguise, with a Monty Python flashback that brought huge cheers.

It was fun to hear young audience members laugh and interject *uh-oh's* or *ouches* at just the right times. Many swayed and danced to the music that I'm sure was new to them. Those of us with fond memories of this film recognized the music brought magically to life by the delightful sounds of Angie Constien-Schwab and her Orchestra!

The set, designed by husband and wife team Aja and J.J. Jenks, reminded me of the old

*Let's Make a Deal* game show. Every time the curtain opened, something new was revealed like an intricate

puzzle with discoveries behind each piece. The set building team, led by Bob Nees, brought the vision to reality and the set crews succeeded in making it all look easy!

Huge kudos to Costume Designer and first-time Lead Costumer, Theresa Dunn. She and her team rose to the challenge! The same can be said for the Props team of Brian Farnham and Jean Burk pulling double-duty, and Invention builder, David Schwab — so many moving parts! One can only imagine how many lights and sound cues designers, Ted Daniel and Troy Boyd, programmed, with techs, Cambray Sampson and Joe Lancour, handling them expertly. And let's hear it for Choreographer, Amanda Tollstam. This huge cast, made up of many youth and first-time performers moved around with amazing timing. *Me Ol' Bamboo* number was particularly impressive.

A review of this show would not be complete without mentioning Chitty Chitty Bang Bang herself! This car was a definite scene stealer and the special effects used to make her even more believable were spot on!

This was absolutely a great show. I hope you were able to see it!

Diane Cooke

THIS PHOTO ONLY BY KURT WANAMAKER



Jimmy McCormick

Boris Nikolovski



Ben Holzhausen & Sarah Hayner



Laura Croff



Greg Martin



Isabella Edmonds-Hogan

Phineas Reed



Bob Purosky

Ben Holzhausen

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**Musical  
by Mark  
O'Donnell,  
Thomas  
Meehan,  
Marc  
Shaiman  
and Scott  
Wittman**

**Directed by Sarah Hayner**

**Audition Dates: Sun & Mon,  
March 17-18, 2019, at 7 pm.  
Production Dates: June 6-16, 2019**

In 1962 Baltimore, plus-sized teen Tracy Turnblad fulfills her dream to dance on *The Corny Collins Show*, then uses her newfound fame to launch a campaign to integrate the show. This comedy with a conscience, sings and dances its way through the injustices of America.

**Tracy Turnblad:** (16-25\*, mezzo/belt, Caucasian) A “pleasantly plump” teenager, who dreams of fame and fights to racially integrate *The Corny Collins Show*. Strong dancer.

**Edna Turnblad:** (30-50\*, second tenor/baritone, Caucasian) Tracy’s kind, and slightly emotional, plus-sized mother (a drag role)

**Wilbur Turnblad:** (30-50\*, baritone, Caucasian) Tracy’s goofy dad, owns Har-De-Har Hut joke shop. Encourages Tracy (Caucasian, 30-50\*)

**Link Larkin:** (16-25\*, second tenor/baritone, Caucasian) Teenage heartthrob and a *Corny Collins Show* Council Member who falls in love with Tracy. Handsome, clean-cut, goodhearted and down-to-earth, strong dancer.

**Penny Pingleton:** (16-25\*, mezzo/belt, Caucasian) Tracy’s slightly dorky, devoted, and perky best friend.

**Seaweed J. Stubbs:** (16-25\*, tenor, African-American) A hip “Negro Day” dancer and the son of Motormouth Maybelle who falls in love with Penny. Strong dancer.

**Amber Von Tussle:** (16-25\*, mezzo/soprano, Caucasian) Bratty, selfish princess of *The Corny Collins Show*, will do anything to win the Miss Teenage Hairspray pageant. Strong dancer.

**Velma Von Tussle:** (30-50\*, mezzo/belt, Caucasian) Amber’s scheming mother and producer of *The Corny Collins Show*, who pushes her daughter to seek the stardom that she never had.

**Motormouth Maybelle:** (30-55\*, mezzo/belt, African-American) The owner of a downtown record shop and the host of “Negro Day” on *The Corny Collins Show*. Self-described as “big, blonde and beautiful.”

**Little Inez:** (13-18\*, high mezzo belt, African-American) Seaweed’s spunky younger sister, a talented dancer turned away from *The Corny Collins Show* because she is African American. Strong dancer.

**Corny Collins:** (20-35\*, tenor, Caucasian) The charismatic and confident host of *The Corny Collins Show*.

**Prudy Pingleton:** (30-50\*, mezzo, Caucasian) Penny’s overprotective and often close-minded mother. Might also be cast to play additional ensemble roles.

**The Dynamites:** (16-25\*, African-American) Female trio that sings on “Negro Day”, similar to The Supremes.

**Corny Collins Dancers:** (16-25\*, Caucasian) IQ, Shelly, Brenda, Sketch, Fender, Tammy, Lou Ann and Brad. Strong dancers.

**Ensemble:** Additional roles will be played by members of a multi-racial ensemble. “Negro Day” dancers, Prison Matron, Doll House singers, Mr. Pinky, etc.

\* Note: Ages are guidelines only

**Come to auditions prepared to sing, dance, and read from the script. Bring sheet music (16-32 bars) to a song of your choice in the style of the show. Accompanist provided. Wear appropriate clothes and shoes to learn and perform choreography.**

**PERUSAL SCRIPTS for all shows are available at the Riverwalk office, Tuesday - Friday, 10 am - 5:30 pm. Call 517-482-5700 to check availability: [rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com](mailto:rwt@RiverwalkTheatre.com) audition forms are available online at [www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html](http://www.riverwalktheatre.com/auditions.html)**

**MSU Spartan Quilters - Lobby Artists**

The MSU Spartan Quilters is an interest group within the MSU Community Club, established in the early 1980s with 8 to 10 members, and now has over 35. The group has kept pace with the advancements in quilting, moving away from traditional quilting methods to new techniques that include fiber painting, convergence, high tech tucks, fiber banners, art scrolls, and sashiko. Everyone enjoys expanding their quilting knowledge and learning new techniques. Besides creating artwork for their own enjoyment, they donate the proceeds of their sales to the MSU Endowed Scholarship Fund and donate quilts for other charitable projects. They also create quilts for the comfort of members experiencing health issues. Spartan Quilters is a caring and close-knit group.



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**Star** — \$500-999, Ripples, voting, program listing, six comps, name on theatre seat

**Angel** — \$1000+, Ripples, voting, program listing, 12 comp tickets, name on a theatre seat and on the donor board in the lobby

Go to [riverwalktheatre.com](http://riverwalktheatre.com). Click “more” then “get involved” to join online. Or just mail/give a check to Mike at the office. We’re 501c3 tax deductible. If you’re already a member, recruit a NEW member today!

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Ripples is published by Riverwalk Theatre, 228 Museum Dr., P.O. Box 12249, Lansing, MI 48901. Submit info to Editor Jane Zussman (jszussman@gmail.com) or Riverwalk Manager Mike Siracuse (rwt@riverwalktheatre.com) office hours: Tuesdays thru Fridays, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Reservations and info at: 517-482-5700 or RiverwalkTheatre.com



## Riverwalk Theatre

P.O. Box 12249 • Lansing MI 48901

Next to Impression 5,  
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# The A-Train Plays

Playwrights:  
 David Riedy, Craig Pospisil,  
 Anthony Pennino,  
 Renee Flemings  
 and Stephen O'Rourke

Directed by Doak Bloss

## February 14-24, 2019

Thursdays: 7pm  
 Fri/Saturdays: 8pm  
 Sundays: 2pm

Tickets:  
 Adult: \$12  
 Military/Senior/Student: \$10

Reserve tickets:  
[www.RiverwalkTheatre.com](http://www.RiverwalkTheatre.com)  
 or 517-482-5700

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