

A funny and moving tribute to resilience and hope



*Every*  
**BRILLIANT**  
*Thing*

By Duncan Macmillan  
With Jonny Donahoe

Directed by Francine Thomas Reynolds

March 14 – 26, 2023

Sponsored by



Costume Designer  
Caleb Blackwell

Lighting Designer  
Matthew McMurtry

Scenic Designer/  
Technical Director  
Richard Lawrence

Production  
Stage Manager  
Clara Seitz

Technical Director  
Richard Lawrence

Sound Designer  
Alberto Meza

Properties Designer  
Jenna Kahley

# *Every* **BRILLIANT** *Thing*

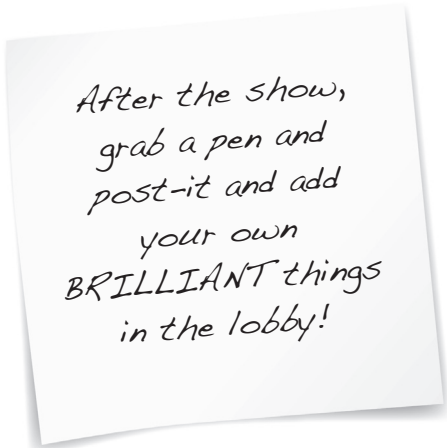
*EVERY BRILLIANT THING* is presented by special arrangement with  
Dramatists Play Service, Inc. New York

*EVERY BRILLIANT THING* was first produced by Paines Plough and  
Pentabus Theatre, on 28 June 2013 at Ludlow Fringe Festival. The play had  
its North American premiere at Barrow Street Theatre, New York, on 6  
December 2014, where it was presented by  
Barrow Street Theatre and Jean Doumanian Productions.

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author's rights and actionable under United State Copyright Law.

*There will be no intermission.*

In conjunction with our production of  
***Every Brilliant Thing***, New Stage Theatre  
invites YOU to help us come up with a list  
of BRILLIANT things that bring joy and  
light into your life.



*After the show,  
grab a pen and  
post-it and add  
your own  
BRILLIANT things  
in the lobby!*

**Content warning:** mentions of suicide and suicidal ideation.

***Every Brilliant Thing*** grapples with the highs and lows of despair and joy in our lives as humans, and speaks openly about depression, mental illness, and suicide. If you or someone you know is in crisis or thinking about self-harm or suicide, there is help available. Resources are in this playbill and available in the New Stage lobby during the performances of the show.

## THE CAST

ALI DINKINS +

RAY MCFARLAND\* ++

+Performing March 15, 25, 26, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. and March 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 24, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.

++Performing March 18, 19, 22, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. and March 14, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 2023 at 7:30 p.m.

\*The actor appears through the courtesy of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**DUNCAN MACMILLAN:** Plays include: *People, Places, and Things* (2015-2017, National Theatre/Wyndham's Theatre, West End); *1984*, adapted from George Orwell (2013-2017, Headlong/Nottingham Playhouse Theatre Company, West End, Broadway, international tours, co-adapted/co-directed with Rob Icke); *Every Brilliant Thing* (2013-2017, Paines Plough/Pentabus Theatre, Edinburgh Festival, UK and international tours, HBO); *City of Glass*, adapted from Paul Auster (2017, 59 Productions, HOME, and Lyric Hammersmith); *2071*, co-written with Chris Rapley (2014-2015, The Royal Court/Hamburg Schauspielhaus); *The Forbidden Zone* (2014-2016, Salzburg Festival and Schaubühne Berlin); *Wunschloses Unglück*, adapted from Peter Handke (2014, Burgtheater Vienna); *Reise Durch, Die Nacht*, adapted from Friederike Mayröcker (2012-2014, Schauspiel Köln, Festival d'Avignon, Theatertreffen); *Lungs* (2011-2016, Paines Plough and Sheffield Theatres/Studio Theatre, Washington, DC); and *Monster* (2006, Royal Exchange Theatre).



Find Newstage on Facebook,  
Twitter, and Instagram!

## THE CAST



**ALI ROGERS DINKINS** has considered New Stage her theatre home since moving back to Mississippi as a young newlywed. As a mother of four, it's no surprise that her two favorite New Stage roles were the title characters in *Lilly's Purple Plastic Purse* and *The Velveteen Rabbit*. New Stage subscribers have seen her in *Morningside*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventures of the Suicide Club*, *The Miss Firecracker Contest*, *All My Sons*, *Boeing! Boeing!*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *First Baptist of Ivy Gap*, *Shiloh Rules*, *Skin of Our Teeth*, *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* and *It's a Wonderful Life: Radio Play*. Dinkins completed her undergraduate work at Baylor University and graduate work at Wayne State University, both in acting. She was a member of the Hilberry Acting Company in Detroit, MI for two years. Dinkins has spent most of her career teaching students of all ages, using her acting skills in a range of roles from preschool librarian to adjunct theatre professor at Millsaps College. Outside of the theatre Dinkins loves to take walks, linger over meals, learn new things and travel with her favorite person, John.



**RAY MCFARLAND\*** has appeared in numerous national tours and regional theatre productions of plays and musicals across the United States and in over forty productions here at New Stage including: *Clue*, *Sister Act*, *And Then There Were None*, *Hairspray*, *The Foreigner*, *Bright Star*, *Forever Plaid*, *Tuna Christmas*, *Red White and Tuna*, *Driving Miss Daisy*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, as the title character in *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure*, and *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Suicide Club*. McFarland also works in television commercials and industrial films as an on-camera actor and as a voice-over artist. He recently retired from teaching acting and technical theatre classes for twenty-three years at St. Andrew's Episcopal School where he also directed the Upper School theatre productions and served as the director of the Center for the Performing Arts.

## THE PRODUCTION STAFF

**FRANCINE THOMAS REYNOLDS** (Artistic Director/Director) has been the artistic director at New Stage since 2006 and has worked as a theatre artist for 35 years. She recently directed *The Sound of Music*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time*, *I Just Stopped By to See the Man*, *The Debate for Democracy*, *Pipeline*, *Bright Star*, *Hell in High Water*, *Sweat*, *Shakespeare in Love*, *Silent Sky*, and *Best of Enemies*. Favorite acting roles include Dr. Katherine Brandt in *33 Variations*, Polly in *Other Desert Cities*, Lucille in *Dividing the Estate*, and Edna Earle in Eudora Welty's *The Ponder Heart*. She has directed a variety of shows including *All The Way*, *The Whipping Man*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Our Town*, *Red*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Hairspray*, *Mahalia: A Gospel*



Stay and meet the cast after *Every Brilliant Thing* following the show on Wednesday, March 15 and Wednesday, March 22 after the evening performances. Audience members may ask questions of the actors, director and designers in an informal setting.

**Musical, *The Great Gatsby*, *Lombardi*, *Boeing, Boeing*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Gee's Bend*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Annie*, *A Soldier's Play*, and *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*.** Reynolds is a 2022 recipient of a Directing Fellowship from the Mississippi Arts Commission. She served three terms on the board of directors for the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for American theatre; and is on the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee for the Mississippi Theatre Association. She was a session leader for the 2018 and 2017 TCG National Conference Conventions and panelist for the 2022, 2020, and 2016 Mississippi Community College Creative Writing Association Contest. She was a speaker for the 2021 Story State, [www.storystate.msstate.edu](http://www.storystate.msstate.edu), produced by Mississippi State University. Originally, from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Reynolds enjoys living in Jackson with her husband, Chuck.

**CALEB BLACKWELL** (Resident Costume Designer) is native of Magee and is excited to return to the New Stage family! Blackwell holds a B.A. in theatre from the University of Southern Mississippi and has worked all over the South and Mid-South, including Wayside Theatre (resident designer) and Playhouse on the Square (designer for the second stage). Season 57 will mark the eleventh season he has teamed up with New Stage. Past favorite credits include *The Sound of Music*, *Hairspray*, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Beauty and the Beast*, and *Bright Star*. Much love to his family and friends for the love they've shown at the start of this new adventure.

**CLARA SEITZ** (Production Stage Manager) previously served New Stage as assistant technical director and scenic artist. She left in 2016 to pursue a nomadic lifestyle of working on a cruise ship. She is a graduate of Mississippi University for Women (and smart men too) where she earned a B.A. in theatre. Her previous New Stage credits include stage management for *Pipeline*; lighting design for *Constellations*, scenic design for *A Wrinkle in Time*, props design for *All the Way*, costume design for *Dog Sees God*, and sound design for *Mrs. Mannerly*. She is excited to be back at New Stage, and working with all these wonderful people on such a brilliant show.

**RICHARD LAWRENCE** (Technical Director) serves as the vice president of Fondren Theatre Workshop and has appeared in *A Christmas Memory* at New Stage, FTW's *The Rocky Horror Show*, *Buck Nekkid for Jesus*, directed FTW's *Every Christmas Story Ever Told*, and most recently appeared as Trekkie Monster in *Avenue Q*. He was also the director of the widely successful productions of *Cabaret* and *Company*, which were joint productions of FTW and Actor's Playhouse of Pearl, with support from New Stage. Lawrence has been seen in New Stage productions of *The Trip to Bountiful* and UnFramed's *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *The Weir*, *Circle Mirror Transformation*, and *Dublin Carol*. Lawrence has won three Best Set awards at Mississippi Theatre Association conferences, and has also won Best Set at Southeastern Theatre Conference.

**ALBERTO MEZA** (Resident Sound and Projection Designer) is a graduate of Belhaven University 19' with a BFA in Theatre. He is from Brandon, MS and is excited to work in the only regional theatre near his hometown. He began working with New Stage Theatre since January 2020 and has continued to work here for over the past 3 years. Some of his regional design credits for both sound and projections include: *Pipeline*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *A Christmas Carol*, *I Just Stopped by to See the Man*, *A Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*, *9 to 5*, *Clue*, and *The Sound of Music*. He has also worked with Belhaven University Theatre as their professional guest artist as the Sound Engineer/Designer for their main stage productions, *Wizard of Oz* and *The Spitfire Grill*. Meza was also the streamer and editor behind the *Thursday Night Virtual Plays*, *Conversations*, & *Cocktails* that was presented over the virtual season at New Stage Theatre.

**JENNA KAHLEY** (Properties Designer/Production Associate) is from Rockford, Ill. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Belhaven University. She's previously worked for Gateway Playhouse in Bellport, NY.

**MATTHEW MCMURTRY** (Lighting Designer) is a senior theatre major at Belhaven University. His recent work with New Stage includes *The Glass Menagerie*, *Clue*, and *9 to 5: The Musical*. He served as the lighting designer for New Stage's summer camp productions of *Frog and Toad*, *Kids* and *Children of Eden, Jr*. McMurtry has also served as lighting designer for Belhaven University's productions of *Steel Magnolias* and *The Burial at Thebes*.

**ANTONIO JUAREZ** (Production Associate) is very excited to be taking his first few steps in the world of theatre. He is a recent graduate of Hinds Community College where he studied simulation and animation. He was raised in the Brandon area and first became involved with theatre at Northwest Rankin High School where he created costumes and set design for a production of *The Zombie Prom*. Most recently, Juarez was the set designer for New Stage Theatre's Unframed Series production of *Sunset Baby*. He has found working in the theatre fulfilling and has been working at New Stage Theatre since November 2021.

### CREW

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR . . . . . Claire Porter\*  
 PRODUCTION ASSOCIATE . . . . . Antonio Juarez  
 ASSISTANT COSTUMER . . . . . Nina Frost  
 RUNNING CREW . . . . . Tim Magee\*, Claire Porter\*, Austin Russell\*, RaKaela Thompson\*

*\*Member of the Associate Artist Company*

## THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

**DAWN BUCK** (Managing Director) has worked on staff at New Stage for more than 20 years. She began her career at New Stage in the fall of 1981 as a box office assistant. Since that time, she has worked as box office manager, audience services director, house manager, bookkeeper, business manager and marketing director. Buck's other professional artistic

credits include the USA International Ballet Competition, the Thalia Mara Arts International Foundation – World Performance Series presenting a series of performing artists including American Ballet Theatre, Aquila Theatre of London, Joshua Bell, Alvin Ailey, Cirque Eloize, Wynton Marsalis, and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. She attended Belhaven University and is an alumnus of Leadership Jackson and a graduate of Dale Carnegie. Buck also completed a residency on theatre management at the Eugene O’Neill Center through a grant from the Foundation for the Extension and Development of Professional American Theatre (FEDAPT). Prior to serving on the staff of the USA International Ballet Competition, she worked with America Reads - Mississippi overseeing and training 270 AmeriCorps members who provided one-on-one tutoring in reading for students in primary K through the 3rd grade across the state. Buck also worked with Imageworks - Films for Business, assisting with the production of commercials, documentaries and training videos. She resides in the Heatherwood neighborhood with her husband David and has two sons who live in the big “N” cities of New York and Nashville.

**BILL MCCARTY III** (General Manager), a graduate of the University of Mississippi, has extensive background in wholesale and retail sales and real estate property management with the Jitney Jungle supermarket chain. The company was founded by his Grandfather Will McCarty and two Holman cousins in 1919. The families grew the business into a profitable billion dollar Mississippi-based company led by Bill McCarty Jr, his father, Henry Holman and many talented associates which sold in 1996. During his grocery career, Jack Stevens and Ivan Rider recruited Bill in 1973 to run a follow-spotlight for *The Gershwin Show* at the theatre’s original Gallatin Street location. He has continued to volunteer with New Stage for more than 48 years in all areas including production, lighting and sound design, back-stage, and for New Stage fundraising events. He is involved in the day-to-day management, maintenance, and production for the theatre and serves on the Board of Trustees as a lifetime member. His favorite design credits are *A Christmas Carol* (1984), *Greater Tuna* (1986), *The Gin Game* (1987), and *A Streetcar Named Desire* (1990).

**MELISSA TILLMAN** (Director of Business Services) is a graduate of Belhaven University where she received a B.A. in technical theatre. She served as the audience services director and marketing director at New Stage, has worked as a box office associate at Lawlor Events Center in Reno, Nevada, and assisted with many box office activities at Belhaven University. Tillman has stage managed many shows in several parts of the country, including Las Vegas and Tennessee. Her stage managing credits include *Oklahoma!*, *Meet Me in St. Louis*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Taming of the Shrew*, and *Love’s Labours Lost*; and *Noye’s Fludd* and *La Boheme* with the Mississippi Opera. This is Tillman’s seventeenth season with New Stage. She currently resides in Madison with her husband, Kyle, their son, River, and their dog Vash.

**JERIANNA SHAW (Marketing Director)** is a graduate of Mississippi State University where she received a B.A. in communication studies. This is her first season with New Stage Theatre. She currently resides in Jackson with her partner, Gray, their daughter Poppy, and their two cats in the yard, Pepperoni and Salami.

**XERRON X. MINGO** (Education Director) is a graduate of Florida A&M University. Mingo was born in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands and recently resided in New York City where he worked as a health & safety manager for productions on Apple TV and HGTV. He also worked as a testing secretary and production coordinator for television shows with LIONSGATE and Apple Music Reviews. For the past ten summers, Mingo has worked at Raquette Lake Camps teaching musical theatre to students from all across the world. He recently made a return to the stage and served as choreographer while playing the role of Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol* at New Stage in 2021. He has worked professionally at a plethora of regional theatres in a handful of states. Some of his past credits include *Matilda* (Rudolpho/Choreographer), *Hell In High Water* (Cephus), *Sister Act* (TJ), *Shakespeare in Love* (Wabash/Frees), and Disney's *Beauty & The Beast* (Monsieur Dar'que). Moreover, *The Wiz* (The Lion) and *The Hot Mikado* (Pooh-Bah) at the GLOW Lyric Theatre in Greenville, S.C. He was in *Black Nativity* (Narrator) at Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe, *The Great Society* at Asolo Rep, and *Hairspray* (Gilbert) at American Stage. Mingo continues to live in the light and could not be more blessed to do so at New Stage Theatre.

**LIZZY DELP** (Box Office Manager) is a graduate of Belhaven University where she received a BFA in acting, a B.A. in English, and a minor in vocal performance. During her last few years of school, Delp served as Belhaven's special events coordinator, an administration/production intern for Opera Mississippi, and the president of Alpha Psi Omega, the national honor society for theatre students. During her time at Belhaven, Delp acted in nine productions, including *The Illusion*, *Women of Lockerbie*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. She also directed a short feminist play called *The Twelve Pound Look*. Prior to attending Belhaven, Delp was a pre-professional ballet dancer, teacher, and choreographer. She was the resident choreographer for the Community Learning Project, and assistant to Broadway choreographers Jennifer Paulson Lee and Brandon Powers. In the U.S., she trained at Newtown Centre of Classical Ballet, Open World Dance Foundation, and Broadway Dance Center. Additionally, she trained for one summer at Moscow State Academy of Choreography. Delp is very excited to be with New Stage as box office manager, and is grateful to serve the Jackson community!

**BETTY WONG** (Box Office Assistant/Education Assistant) begins her 18th season at New Stage. She continues to enjoy traveling to schools and towns throughout the state with the Professional Apprentice Company to provide live theatre experiences for students and adults of all ages. When not on the road, you can find her in the box office. She has also served for many years as a volunteer in other areas of the theatre. Her professional work experiences in education and her passion for live theatre have contributed to the growth and expansion of New Stage's Education Department. She has served as a consultant to school districts throughout the state of Mississippi. Wong has a B.S. in educational psychology from Mississippi State University, a M.Ed. from Delta State University, and recently won the 2019 Exemplary Arts Service Award from the Mississippi Alliance for Arts Education.

**CARLA MARSH** (House Manager) received her B.A. in criminal justice with an emphasis in juvenile justice from Jackson State University. She is pleased to be returning to New Stage for her nineteenth season. Marsh is employed full time with the Hinds County Sheriff's office.



COMING NEXT

# FENCES

By August Wilson

April 18-30, 2023

American Classic

Set against the backdrop of 1950's Pittsburgh, August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize winning drama tells the story of Troy Maxson, a one-time star of the Negro baseball leagues who now works as a garbage man, holding court and expounding on life from the chair in his backyard. Due to his race, Troy was denied his shot at the big league, so when his son Cory wants his own chance to play ball, will Troy's bitterness and resentment threaten to tear their relationship apart? *Fences* explores the walls we build around ourselves and our loved ones, while also illuminating one family's struggles in a racist society.

*Recommended for 14 and older. Contains adult themes, subjects, and language.*

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"Universal enough to touch a chord in  
every human heart."

- The New York Times

## Mental Health Resources

If you are having thoughts about suicide, please call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), text 741-741, or reach the Department of Mental Health at 1-877-210-8513.

[www.contactthecrisisline.org](http://www.contactthecrisisline.org)

Local Hotline: 601-713-4357



Mississippi

NAMI Mississippi offers free resources, classes, and support groups for individuals impacted by mental illnesses.

Learn more at [namims.org](http://namims.org)!



The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a national network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in the United States. We're committed to improving crisis services and advancing suicide prevention by empowering individuals, advancing professional best practices, and building awareness.

## Discussing Mental Health

### Mental Health and the Creative Mind Initiative

Panel Discussion

March 18 following the 2:00 p.m. performance.

### National Alliance on Mental Illness Mississippi

Panel Discussion

March 25 following the 2:00 p.m. performance.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The staff of New Stage Theatre wishes to thank the following individuals and companies for the generous donation of time and resources to this production and the 57th season.

Destin Benford

Darby Frost

Connie Taylor

Greg Campbell

Andrew Prince

Larry Wells

Hannah Fields

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to get updates on events, casting, and more!

## **New Stage depends on the support of volunteers to keep the curtain rising.**

You can make a difference by giving a few hours of your time. Some jobs require a regular commitment throughout the season, say once or twice per show; others are assigned “as needed.” If you have a little free time and want to get involved, there are many opportunities available from ushering to scenic painting, poster hanging to ticket taking.

### **There is bound to be a job for YOU!**

Check out our website at [www.newstagetheatre.com/about/volunteers](http://www.newstagetheatre.com/about/volunteers)



# 2022-2023 SEASON CONTRIBUTORS

It all begins here. The following individuals, corporations and foundations have made generous contributions to New Stage Theatre. Their gifts provide a major portion of the funding necessary to present the productions you enjoy on our stages, the educational programs we offer and help the theatre maintain its standing as one of the nation's best professional regional theatres. Please take a moment to read the list. They deserve your recognition.

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*During performances, the box office  
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Saturday: 4:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

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