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A GHOST STORY OF CHRISTMAS

BY CHARLES DICKENS
ADAPTED AND ORIGINALLY DIRECTED BY MICHAEL WILSON
DIRECTED BY RACHEL ALDERMAN

COMING SOON!
November 29 – December 28, 2019
hartfordstage.org  860-527-5151
“Trust yourself, you know more than you think you do” was Benjamin Spock’s famous advice to parents when he published *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* in 1946. In the mid 20th century the number of books on parenting was already so vast that this was radical advice: you don’t need a book to tell you about how to care for an infant and raise your child. Spock’s book nonetheless sold 50 million copies before his death in 1998, and it is impossible now to count how many books are published, selling well, giving parents advice on how to raise children “correctly.”

*Cry it Out*, as a title, comes from one such bit of advice, in regards to a child’s first months and the (at times) endless calling from their cradles. In Molly Smith Metzler’s play, it is the women, the new mothers, who most need to “cry it out” as they lack connection and support and confidence at the beginning of their parenting careers. The wonder of these beginnings, of the little talked about “fourth trimester”, is at the center of *Cry It Out*, with the joys and fears of suddenly becoming a parent.

For some of us this play will serve as a reminder of those terrifying and gorgeous months, for others a discovery of a part of life that isn’t often in the limelight. Regardless of where we are in our lives, *Cry it Out* is a play full of wit and empathy, a chronicling of experiences that helps us all learn more about what it means to raise a human, and to become more of one.

*Cry It Out* is having a national moment as it is being produced at many regional theatres across the country and engaging dialogue about parenting, childcare, and the personal journey of many new parents on all parts of the economic strata. We at Hartford Stage are thrilled to be a part of this national conversation. You can see in our Upper Lobby display of the theatre many different experiences from local community members of their first few months of being a new parent. Clearly being a new parent is the beginning of an exciting journey, and one which merits closer attention. How wonderful that we have Molly Smith Metzer’s play to help illuminate this time of life.

We want to thank Don Allan at Stanley Black & Decker, Rick & Beth Costello, and Federman, Lally, & Remis for their generous support of this production.

Thank you for joining us, and enjoy the show.

Sincerely,

Melia Bensussen  
*Artistic Director*

Cynthia Rider  
*Managing Director*
Stanley Black & Decker is Proud to Support the Hartford Stage

For 175 years, Stanley Black & Decker has been for the makers and creators, the craftsmen and the caregivers, those doing the hard work to make the world a better place. We are focused on delivering societal good through our innovations and business model approach, with a heightened focus on diversity and inclusion, environmental impact and improving the communities where our employees live and work. We want to thank the Hartford Stage for their efforts to benefit our community.
MELIA BENSUSSEN
Artistic Director

CYNTHIA RIDER
Managing Director

HARTFORD STAGE
PRESENTS

CRY IT OUT

By MOLLY SMITH METZLER

Directed by RACHEL ALDERMAN

WELCOME & ENJOY THE SHOW!

Please turn off your cell phones before the show.

Photography or video recording of any kind is prohibited without prior written permission.

Accessible seating for patrons with mobility requirements available in the front row of sections B & F.

For your eating and drinking pleasure, snacks, soda, wine, beer, and mixed drinks are available at our concessions bar on both levels.

You are welcome to bring drinks with you to your seat, but please, no drinks with ice. The servers at concessions will be happy to remove ice from your drinks if you do not finish before it is time to go into the theatre.

HARTFORD STAGE ASSISTED LISTENING DEVICES

If you are using a Hartford Stage Listening Device, please remove your own personal hearing aid or make sure you turn it off if you leave it in your ear. When you remove the Hartford Stage device from your head, please make sure the volume is turned off on the device. Taking these steps will reduce the amount of static feedback from the listening system.

MAT GARAGE PARKING

There is an automated parking system for the MAT Garage, which is adjacent to Hartford Stage. Please note the procedure below and see the Box Office with any questions.

1. Retain the Parking Ticket you receive as you enter the MAT Garage adjacent to Hartford Stage.

2. Visit the Hartford Stage Box Office to purchase a Parking Voucher/Validation Ticket for only $6.50.

3. When exiting the MAT Garage, INSERT your Parking Ticket, then SCAN your Parking Voucher/Validation Ticket when prompted.

WHEN THE GATE GOES UP, YOU CAN BE ON YOUR WAY!

The MAT Garage is owned and operated by the Hartford Parking Authority.

OPEN CAPTIONED PERFORMANCES

For patrons who are deaf or have hearing loss. Free with admission.

Cry It Out Nov. 10, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
A Christmas Carol Dec. 14, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
Pike St. Jan. 26, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
Jane Eyre Mar. 1, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
The King's Speech Apr. 5, 2:00 & 7:30 pm
Ah, Wilderness! May 24, 2:00 & 7:30 pm

AUDIO DESCRIBED PERFORMANCES

For patrons who are blind or have low vision. Free with admission.

Cry It Out Nov. 16, 2:00 pm
A Christmas Carol Dec. 14, 2:00 pm
Pike St. Feb. 1, 2:00 pm
Jane Eyre Mar. 7, 2:00 pm
The King's Speech Apr. 11, 2:00 pm
Ah, Wilderness! May 30, 2:00 pm
**Setting** Port Washington, New York

Lina .................................................................................................................................................. Evelyn Spahr
Jessie .................................................................................................................................................. Rachel Spencer Hewitt
Mitchell ............................................................................................................................................... Erin Gann
Adrienne ........................................................................................................................................... Caroline Kinsolving

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**THERE WILL BE NO INTERMISSION.**

Assistant Director ......................................................................................................................... Jasmine B. Gunter
Assistant Scenic Designer ............................................................................................................ Daniel Russo
Assistant Lighting Designer .......................................................................................................... Erin MacDevitt
Assistant Dramaturg ..................................................................................................................... Sally Lobel
Production Assistant ...................................................................................................................... Lizzy Gordon
Supporting Production Assistant ................................................................................................... Rachel Canowitz

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Special thanks to the parents and babies that have stopped by rehearsals to interact with our cast:

Lisa, Mark, & Kaia Myrick • Costanza & Mailén Segovia • Alicia Michtom
Robyn and Adam Gostomski • Jennifer & Emmaline Roberts

---

The actors and stage managers employed in this production are members of Actors’ Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.

The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

Artists subject to change.

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**CRY IT OUT**
In 1993, the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was signed into law, providing eligible employees with up to 12 weeks job-protected leave for the birth of a child or in order to care for a family member with a serious health condition. To be eligible, the employer must employ at least 50 employees within a 75-mile radius, and employees must work a minimum of 1,250 hours in a year and have worked for that employer for at least twelve months. But, according to a survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor, more than 40% of Americans do not work for employers that meet those requirements.

FMLA leave is entirely unpaid, making the United States the only industrialized country not to offer paid family leave on a national level. However, eight states have stepped in to offer their workers some degree of compensated leave with Connecticut being the latest. As one of the most expansive family leave programs in the country, it offers up to 12 weeks paid leave with a possible two additional weeks in the event of serious pregnancy related health complications. This consideration is particularly noteworthy when you consider over 700 women die from complications related to pregnancy each year in the United States, with an additional 50,000 women suffering life-threatening complications of some sort. Again, more than in any other industrialized country in the world.

Within the last few years, the growing need for mandated paid leave at the
federal level has led to proposed plans from several United States senators. One of the things stalling implementation is the question of how to pay for such a program. One plan proposes employers and employees pay into a general fund via payroll contributions much like they do for insurance benefits. Others would allow employees to draw from their accumulated Social Security benefits to cover the cost, ultimately hurting their future retirement funds. With options like these, it comes as no surprise that when you consider socioeconomic status, the choice of whether or not to stay home with your newborn isn’t always a choice. The burden of unpaid family leave is so great that one-fourth of new mothers go back to work within two weeks of giving birth—a full four weeks earlier than the doctor-recommended postpartum recovery period.

The impact of socioeconomic status on parenthood worsens when the cost of childcare is factored in. If the cost of childcare is less than 7% of a family’s annual income, it is considered affordable according to the US Department of Health and Human Services. Yet, the average working family paying for childcare in the United States spends about 40% more than what is considered affordable. Childcare is unaffordable for many families and simply out of reach for low-income families who spend more than one-third of their income on childcare annually. In Connecticut, the annual cost of infant care is $15,501,
How big a bite does child care take?

Infant care costs as a share of income in Connecticut

HHS affordability standard: Child care should cost no more than 7% of a family’s income.

For a Minimum Wage Worker

73.8%
$15,501 of $21,008

For a Median Family with Children

18.3%
$15,501 of $84,824

which is 25% more expensive than in-state tuition for a four-year public college and 10% more expensive than the average rent.

Societies all across the globe have been facing socioeconomic struggles for generations. But, in the United States, so few people are having children that at the current rate, the population can no longer replace itself in the next generation. And the cost of childcare may well be a contributing cause.

Cry It Out does not offer answers to the socioeconomic problems facing parents in our society, but it does give us four complex and vastly different approaches to parenthood and shed light on the realities of what it means to be a parent in today’s world. As playwright Molly Smith Metzler states in a recent interview, “People talk about going back to work after you have a child like it’s always a choice. Or they make it a feminist issue, making new mothers feel like they’re stuck in the 1950s if they want to stay home, or they’re cold-hearted careerists if they don’t want to stay home. We make it black and white, and we’re so judgmental. But it’s a very complicated, personal, emotional, and financial thing...We don’t actually talk about it, but it’s a socioeconomic issue in this country, who gets to have the luxury of choice.”
The Parent Artist Advocacy League: Supporting Parents, Onstage and Off

BY SALLY LOBEL, ASSISTANT DRAMATURG

Over the past several years, parent advocacy groups have sprung up nationwide. Many of these groups aim to support working parents in particular disciplines, and the theatre is no exception. Theatre often requires long hours, including 12 hour tech days, as well as rehearsal on the weekends and during holidays and school vacations. This kind of schedule poses particular challenges for parents, requiring them to be away from their families for long stretches of time. In response, the theatre community has begun to form advocacy groups for parents in the arts.

Rachel Spencer Hewitt, who plays Jessie in Cry it Out, is the founder of the Parent Artist Advocacy League for the Performing Arts (PAAL), the major organization dedicated to supporting parent artists in the theatre community. To address theatre’s unique challenges, PAAL offers resources, including a best practices handbook for artists and employers, grants (such as the first-of-their-kind National Childcare Grants) chapter city communities, and a national list of family-friendly theatres across the country. This year, PAAL will be hosting their first summit in New York, “where decision-makers, leaders, and institution representatives can exchange resources, raise questions, and share experiences in a guided workshop.” You can learn more about PAAL’s work and access resources by visiting paaltheatre.com.

Rachel Spencer Hewitt says: “Becoming a mother in the performing arts gave me first-hand exposure to where support lives, where it lacks, and now - how it can be replicated and improved. PAAL’s ultimate goal is to elevate the national standard of care for caregivers in our field to directly impact intersectional parity and give artists and institutions a home-base for sustainable support and growth.”
ERIN GANN MITCHELL
Hartford Stage Debut. **Off Broadway** I’m Not the Stranger You Think I Am (Theatre for One); Ping Pong (The Public Theater); Scenes From a Marriage (New York Theatre Workshop); The Vaults (New Georges); We Are Proud To Present... (Soho Repertory Theatre); Apple Cove (WP Theater); The Aliens (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); The Cherry Orchard (Atlantic Theatre Company); Stars (Soho Repertory Theatre).
**Regional** Translations (Studio Theatre); First Day (Kitchen Theatre Company); The Persians, Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare Theatre Company). **Film** The Surrogate; The Hurt Locker. **Television** Blue Bloods; BrainDead; Alpha House; Law & Order. **Education** The Juilliard School – Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting.

CAROLINE KINSOLVING ADRIENNE
Hartford Stage Debut. **Off-Broadway** Monica: This Play is Not About Monica Lewinsky, Word Play, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, All in the Timing **Regional** Venus in Fur (SDRep - Critic’s Circle Best Actress Nomination); Tartuffe (Shakespeare Theatre NJ); Peer Gynt (Boston Symphony); Twelfth Night (The Old Globe); Private Lives (International City Theatre); Chapter Two (Ensemble Theatre and Laguna); Little Women (North Coast Rep); Taming of the Shrew, Twelfth Night, As You Like It (Kingsmen); Almost, Maine (Colony), Love/Sick (Arc Stage), Last Gas (Shadowland). Coriolanus (Shaw Theatre), Love, Loss and What I Wore (with Christine Baranski and Mia Farrow). **Film** The Watcher, Krankenhaus, The Pink Conspiracy, Break, The Adventures of Umbweki, Noobz, Puppy Love, The Collaboration. **Television** Medium, Criminal Minds (with Tim Curry), Cold Case, Satisfaction, My Crazy Ex, Sam Has 7 Friends, Headhunters (Pilot), Whistleblowers (Pilot), The Blue Marble (Pilot). **Education** Vassar College, Stella Adler, Yale Drama Intensive, RADA. She thanks Alexa, Pamela, Meg, Audra and Sally for talking with her, and Susan for birthing her.

EVELYN SPAHR LINA
Hartford Stage **Henry V.** **Off-Broadway** Light Shining in Buckinghamshire (New York Theatre Workshop). **National Tours** Remarkably Normal. **Regional** Richard III (Shakespeare Theatre Company) **Film** The Post. **Television** Vinyl. **Education** NYU

RACHEL SPENCER HEWITT JESSIE
Hartford Stage Debut. **Broadway** King Charles III. **Off-Broadway** The Seagull, A Civil War Christmas, Peter and the Starcatcher. **Regional** All’s Well That Ends Well, A Servant of Two Masters, Strange Interlude, Much Ado About Nothing (STC); Fly By Night (TheatreWorks). **International** Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (Vienna). **Film** Return to the Hiding Place. **Education** Yale School of Drama. **Awards** Pierre Andre-Salim Award.
MOLLY SMITH METZLER
PLAYWRIGHT
Metzler is the author of Cry it Out, Elemeno Pea, The May Queen, Carve, Close Up Space and Training Wisteria. Her regional credits include: Northlight Theatre, Actors Theatre of Louisville, South Coast Repertory, Boston Playwrights’ Theatre, The Eugene O’Neill Theater Center, Chautauqua Theater Company, City Theatre, PlayMakers Repertory Company, Geva Theatre Center, Mixed Blood Theatre Company and more. In New York City: Manhattan Theatre Club (MTC). Metzler’s awards include the Lecomte du Nouy Prize from Lincoln Center, the Harold and Mimi Steinberg National Student Playwriting Award from The Kennedy Center, the Association for Theatre in Higher Education’s David Mark Cohen National Playwriting Award, the Mark Twain Prize for Comic Playwriting and a finalist nod for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize. She is a proud alumna of the Ars Nova Play Group, the Dorothy Strelsin New American Writers Group at Primary Stages and the Cherry Lane Mentor Project. In television, Metzler has written for Casual (Hulu), Orange Is the New Black (Netflix), Codes of Conduct (HBO), and is currently a writer/producer on Shameless (Showtime). She is also a screenwriter, currently adapting Ali Benjamin’s award-winning novel The Thing About Jellyfish into a film for OddLot Entertainment with Made Up Stories and Pacific Standard (Reese Witherspoon’s company). Metzler was educated at the State University of New York at Geneseo, Boston University, New York University’s Tisch School for the Arts and the Juilliard School. She lives in Los Angeles and Kingston, N.Y.

RACHEL ALDERMAN
DIRECTOR | ARTISTIC ASSOCIATE AT HARTFORD STAGE
Hartford Stage A Christmas Carol—A Ghost Story of Christmas; Assistant/Associate Director: The Flamingo Kid (dir. Darko Tresnjak), A Christmas Carol—A Ghost Story of Christmas, Ether Dome (also at Alley, La Jolla Playhouse and Huntington, dir. Michael Wilson), Gem of the Ocean (dir. Hana Sharif). Other Directing Credits Include Gross Domestic Product (Hartbeat Ensemble); Freewheelers, The Library Project, Head Over Wheels and iMarvel (all with A Broken Umbrella Theatre), Stories of a New America (Collective Consciousness Theater). She is a founding ensemble member of the award-winning A Broken Umbrella Theatre, with whom she has created 12 original, site-specific, spectacle-theatre works inspired by the history of New Haven, CT. Education Proud graduate of Muhlenberg College. Rachel sends love to her husband, 2 sons and the village of friends, family and babysitters who make it all possible.

KRISTEN ROBINSON
SCENIC DESIGN
Hartford Stage Debut. Off-Broadway In the Green (LCT3); [PORTO] (WP Theater); Heart of Darkness (Baryshnikov Arts Center); Minor Character (Under the Radar Festival). Regional Everybody Black and The Thin Place (Humana Festival at Actors Theatre of Louisville); Miller Mississippi (Long Wharf Theatre); Familiar (Steppenwolf Theatre); A Flea in Her Ear (Westport Country Playhouse); Ethel (Alliance Theatre). Education M.F.A. from Yale University. Professional Positions Assistant Professor of Scenic Design at Purchase College. Awards A Princess Grace Fellow.
**BLAIR GULELDE**

**COSTUME DESIGN**

**Hartford Stage**  *A Lesson From Aloes.* The 2019/2020 Season marks her 7th year as Hartford Stage’s Costume Shop Manager.  *Theatre*  *Girlfriend, The Wolves, Raging Skillet* (TheatreWorks);  *Santaland Diaries, November, And Then There Were None, Intelligence Slave, The Crucifer of Blood, Underneath The Lintel* (Alley Theatre); Kenan Fellow (Kennedy Center). Blair was a resident Costume Design Assistant with The Alley Theatre for 7 seasons, in addition to assisting at The Santa Fe Opera and Goodspeed Musicals.

**MATTHEW RICHARDS**

**LIGHTING DESIGN**

**Hartford Stage**  *The Engagement Party, A Lesson from Aloes; Heartbreak House; The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey; The Comedy of Errors; Romeo & Juliet; Reverberation; Hamlet; Macbeth; La Dispute; Twelfth Night; Bell, Book & Candle. Broadway*  *Ann, Off-Broadway*  *Is God Is at Soho Rep; Theatre For A New Audience, Lincoln Center, MCC, Play Company, Playwright Horizons, Rattlestick, Second Stage. Opera*  *Macbeth for LA Opera. Regional*  *Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Baltimore Center Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, Dallas Theater Center, Ford’s Theatre, The Goodman, The Guthrie, The Huntington, La Jolla Playhouse, Long Wharf, The Old Globe, Shakespeare Theatre, TheaterWorks Hartford, Westport Playhouse, Williamstown, Yale Repertory Theatre. Education*  *University of Massachusetts and The Yale School of Drama. matthewrichardsgdesign.com*

**KARIN GRAYBASH**

**SOUND DESIGN**

**Hartford Stage**  *Detroit ‘67, The Piano Lesson, Having Our Say. Theatre*  Karin has created numerous sound designs for Regional Theater and Off-Broadway including Berkeley Repertory, Dallas Theater Center, Yale Repertory, McCarter, Arena Stage, Long Wharf, Folger Theatre, Portland Stage, Two River Theater and the Alliance. Her conceptual sound design for  *Popsicle’s Departure* has been produced internationally. She is recipient of the Bay Area Theatre Critics Award for the sound design of  *Polk County* at Berkeley Repertory Theatre. Karin is the original live sound consultant for the multi-media production  *Freedom Rising* at the National Constitution Center. Many of her soundscapes can also be heard at The Franklin Institute’s new exhibit entitled  *Your Brain*.  *Professional*  *Sound Supervisor for the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University.*

**SHAILA SCHMIDT**

**DRAMATURG**

**Hartford Stage**  *Debut. Regional A Nighttime Survival Guide (Boise Contemporary Theater); Everyman Shift (And All The Rest); Orlando; A 3rd Annual Horrific Puppet Affair; Bloody, Bloody Andrew Jackson (HomeGrown Theatre). Academic Baltimore, Come My Beloved, Spell #7, What of the Night?, Infants of the Spring, Runaways (UMass Amherst); Consider the Oyster, The Misunderstanding, boom, An Adult Evening of Shel Silverstein, Becoming: An Evening of Short Plays, The Language Archive, Hamlet (Boise State University). Education MFA Dramaturgy from University of Massachusetts, Amherst (in progress); BA Dramatic Writing, Boise State University. Professional Positions Assistant Stage Manager, Boise Contemporary Theater; Resident Dramaturg, HomeGrown Theatre; Production Assistant/Stage Manager, Idaho Shakespeare Festival.*
LAURA STANCZYK, CSA
CASTING
Hartford Stage Detroit ’67, The Engagement Party, Henry V, Make Believe, A Lesson from Aloes, Seder, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Having Our Say. Broadway Side Show, After Midnight, A Night With Janis Joplin, Don’t Dress For Dinner, Master Class, Follies, Lombardi, Ragtime, Impressionism, The Seafarer, Radio Golf, Coram Boy, Translations. Off-Broadway Little Rock (The Sheen Center); Poison (Origin Theatre Company); Fetch Clay Make Man (NYTW); A Thick Description Of Harry Smith (P73), The Cripple of Inishmaan (Atlantic Theater Company), Me Myself & I (Playwrights Horizons); Brother Sister Plays (Public Theatre); Flight (DR2 Theatre); The Glorious Ones (Lincoln Center); Tryst (Promenade Theatre). Regional The Kennedy Center, Royal George, Drury Lane Theatre, Signature Theatre, McCarter Theatre, Miami New Drama, Shakespeare Theatre of DC, among others. Education/Training NYU Tisch School of The Arts. Awards Nominated six times for Artios Awards for Excellence in Casting, and won for the Broadway Revival of Follies.

KELLY HARDY
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER

CHANDALAE NYSWONGER
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER
Hartford Stage 2 years as a Production Assistant, working on shows including: Hamlet, Anastasia, Reverberation, Rear Window, Romeo and Juliet, Kiss Me, Kate. Broadway Anastasia. Off-Broadway Merrily We Roll Along (Roundabout); Twelfth Night (Classic Stage Company); Jesus Hopped the “A” Train (Signature Theatre); Somebody’s Daughter (Second Stage); Fiorello! (Berkshire Theatre Group). Regional Private Lives (Dorset Theatre Festival); Hair, At Home at the Zoo, The Mystery of Irma Vep, Oklahoma! (Berkshire Theatre Group); A Civil War Christmas, Wild With Happy, dance of the holy ghosts (Center Stage).

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Call (860) 380-5006 to schedule your no-obligation tour today.
THE COMPANY

MELIA BENNSUSEN
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
Melia Bensussen joined Hartford Stage in the summer of 2019 as the sixth Artistic Director of the organization. A homecoming of sorts, her first professional theatre experience was assisting Emily Mann on Hartford Stage’s production of A Doll’s House. She then returned to Hartford Stage in 2003 to direct Edwin Sanchez’s production of Diosas. Since then she has directed extensively at leading theatres throughout the country, including productions at the Huntington Theatre Company, Sleeping Weazel, Shakespeare & Company, Actors’ Shakespeare Project, La Jolla Playhouse, Baltimore Center Stage, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the New York Shakespeare Festival, Manhattan Class Company, Primary Stages, Long Wharf Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Merrimack Repertory Theatre, People’s Light and Theatre Company, Bay Street Theatre and Playwrights Horizons, among others. Raised in Mexico City, Melia is fluent in Spanish and has translated and adapted a variety of texts, including her edition of the Langston Hughes translation of Federico Garcia Lorca’s Blood Wedding, published by Theatre Communications Group. She has received an Obie Award for Best Director (Off-Broadway’s top honor), as well as receiving several awards from the Princess Grace Foundation, including their Statue Award for Sustained Excellence in Directing. A graduate of Brown University, Melia previously served as the Chair of the Performing Arts Department at Emerson College, and currently serves as the Chair of the Arts Advisory Board for the Princess Grace Foundation. She also serves on the executive board of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC). Melia loves directing new works as well as classics, viewing every production as an opportunity to introduce an audience to a new story and a different perspective. She is thrilled to be a part of this great theatre, and a new resident of Hartford.

CYNTHIA RIDER
MANAGING DIRECTOR
Cynthia Rider joined Hartford Stage in the summer of 2019 as the eighth Managing Director of the organization. Previously, she served as the executive director at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (OSF). While at OSF, she successfully worked with the board in the creation of a ten-year strategic plan, oversaw an increase in contributed income of more than 20 percent, and participated in artistic initiatives that resulted in three OSF-commissioned plays moving to Broadway, with one winning the Tony Award for Best Play (All The Way) and another winning the Pulitzer Prize (Sweat). Additional highlights of Rider’s successful tenure at OSF include the creation of the Access for All campaign, which renovated the courtyard in front of OSF’s theatres and added an elevator and wheelchair seating to the Bowmer Theatre, and the opening of the new Hay-Patton Rehearsal Center—all while producing a repertory season of eleven productions in three theatres, managing an annual operating budget of $40 million and offering a number of educational and community engagement programs for audiences and students. Prior to joining OSF, Cynthia Rider spent nine years at Kansas City Repertory Theatre as Managing Director and, earlier, as Associate Director for Advancement and Administration. Her experience also includes six years as Executive Director of the Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey. She served as Associate Director, later promoted to Acting Director, of the Massachusetts Manufacturing Partnership, which worked to strengthen small and medium-sized manufacturers across the state. Rider’s theatre experience also includes time spent on the stage. After graduating from Boston University, she started her theatre career as a resident company member, guest artist and young company actor at the Alley Theatre in Houston.
ELIZABETH WILLIAMSON
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Elizabeth Williamson is in her eighth season at Hartford Stage. In addition to serving as Associate Artistic Director, she also leads new play development for the company. Hartford Stage as Dramaturg: The Flamingo Kid, The Engagement Party, Make Believe, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Heartbreak House, Romeo and Juliet, Anastasia, The Body of an American, Rear Window, An Opening in Time, Hamlet, Reverberation, Macbeth, Somewhere, A Song at Twilight, Twelfth Night, Man in a Case, A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder and others; as Director: Cloud 9, Seder, Henry V; as Translator/Adapter: La Dispute. Broadway as Dramaturg: A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder (Tony Award for Best Musical), Anastasia, The Inheritance. London’s West End as Dramaturg: The Body of an American (Primary Stages), A Song at Twilight (Westport Country Playhouse), Touch(ed), In, Find and Sign, The Tempest and others (Pioneer Theatre Company), M. Proust (Steppenwolf), Meistofele (Theatre de la Jeune Lune); as Director: The Life and Death of Pier Paolo Pasolini (Act French Festival, Abingdon), The Floating World (HERE), Rare Bird (Babcock Theatre), Owners (Alter), The Second Amendment Club (AMS), The Maids (FringeNYC). Education BA Theatre and Comparative Literature, Bennington College; MSt European Literature, Oxford University; trained at the École Internationale de Théâtre Jacques Lecoq. Awards NEA Fellowship in Literary Translation.
Winter Youth Studio Classes go on sale November 1st.
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SHORT TAKES: NEWS FROM HARTFORD STAGE

A LOOK AT OUR LOBBY: 4TH TRIMESTER: THE RAW AND THE RIDICULOUS
(REAL MOMENTS FROM THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF NEW PARENTHOOD)

The 4th Trimester starts on the day of birth and lasts until a baby is three-months-old. A term popularized by Dr. Harvey Karp of the books, website and blog titled *The Happiest Baby on the Block*, it primarily refers to the tremendous and rapid growth that happens to a baby once outside of the womb. But what about the parents? Hartford Stage celebrates the raw, ridiculous, magical and messy with a photography exhibition depicting the real moments of new parenthood during the 4th Trimester.

FREE BABYSITTING PILOT PROGRAM

Hartford Stage has partnered with Christ Church Cathedral to develop a free babysitting pilot program. Offering reliable, convenient babysitting for parents eager to relax and enjoy a live theatre performance, the pilot program will be available during the November 2 & 3 matinee performances of *Cry It Out*. For more information on the program, visit hartfordstage.org.

COMING NEXT: A CHRISTMAS CAROL—A GHOST STORY OF CHRISTMAS

The magic of Charles Dickens’ heartwarming classic will return for its 22nd year. Come see Connecticut’s favorite family holiday tradition and spend some time with Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Bob Cratchit, Jacob Marley and the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future as they bring *A Christmas Carol* to life on stage. The sixth annual Sensory Friendly performance of *A Christmas Carol* will be held on Saturday, December 7, at 2 pm. For more information, visit www.hartfordstage.org/sensory-friendly.

TINY TIM HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

Help Hartford Stage feed members of our local community this holiday season. The annual Tiny Tim Holiday Food Drive, held on behalf of Hands On Hartford, will begin on Friday, November 29, and run through Saturday, December 28. Non-perishable food donations can be dropped off at Guest Services on performance dates of *A Christmas Carol—A Ghost Story of Christmas*. Suggested items include canned soups, boxed cereal and oatmeal, canned fruit and vegetables, peanut butter and jelly, canned tuna, and boxed pasta.

SECOND ANNUAL HARTFORD STAGE OPEN

Despite the rainy weather, 80 golf enthusiasts participated in the Second Annual Hartford Stage Open at Keney Park Golf Course on Thursday, September 12. More than $38,000 was raised in support of Hartford Stage’s artistic and educational programs. Mark your calendar for next year’s tournament: September 17, 2020.
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Kacey Skurja, Scenic Artist
Carrie Peters, Carpenter

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Samantha Donnelly Company Manager
Athena Ellis Associate of Facilities & Operations/Stage Supervisor
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Bartlett, Brainard and Eacott
Hartford Stage enters its 56th season beginning an exciting new chapter. Newly-appointed Artistic Director Melia Bensussen and Managing Director Cynthia Rider will continue the theatre’s legacy of artistic excellence by creating theatrical works that enlighten, entertain, and educate.

Renowned for producing innovative revivals of classics, as well as provocative new plays and musicals, Hartford Stage has earned many of the nation’s most prestigious awards, including the 1989 Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theatre. Additional national recognition includes honors from the Outer Critics Circle, Drama Desk, American Theatre Wing (OBIE), and the New York Critics Circle.

Hartford Stage has produced over 80 world and North American premieres, including the new musical *Anastasia*, which enjoyed a two-year run on Broadway; *A Gentleman’s Guide to Love and Murder*, winner of four 2014 Tony Awards, including Best Musical and Best Direction of a Musical; and Quiara Alegría Hudes’ *Water by the Spoonful*, winner of the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. Other notable premieres include *The Engagement Party* by Samuel Baum; *Make Believe* by Bess Wohl; *The Age of Innocence* by Douglas McGrath; *Seder* by Sarah Gancher; *Rear Window*, adapted by Keith Reddin, and starring Kevin Bacon; *An Opening in Time* by Christopher Shinn; *Reverberation* by Matthew Lopez; Big Dance Theatre’s *Man in a Case* with Mikhail Baryshnikov; and *Breath & Imagination* by Daniel Beaty. Nationally-renowned titles include the New York transfers of *Enchanted April; The Orphans’ Home Cycle; Resurrection* (later retitled *Through the Night*); *The Carpetbagger’s Children*; and *Tea at Five*.

The leading provider of theatre education programs in Connecticut, Education @ Hartford Stage offers student matinees, in-school theatre residencies, teen performance opportunities, theatre classes for students (ages 3-18) and adults, after school programs and professional development courses. Education @ Hartford Stage programming reaches approximately 21,000 Connecticut students annually.
The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training

Now in its sixteenth year, The Hartt School/Hartford Stage Partnership in Training offers a unique alliance of an undergraduate acting conservatory program and a respected professional theatre—one of only two such collaborations in the country. This partnership helps ensure that acting students at the Hartt School receive rigorous training and bring their skills, imagination and intellect to the demands of a professional theatre setting. Hartford Stage staff and guest artists lead classes and workshops and faculty and students appear in Hartford Stage productions. Hartt students have been seen in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, A Christmas Carol, A Midsummer Night’s Dream, Noises Off!, To Kill a Mockingbird, Antony & Cleopatra, Snow Falling on Cedars, The Crucible, The Tempest, Twelfth Night, Hamlet, Anastasia, The Comedy of Errors, The Age of Innocence, Henry V and The Flamingo Kid.*

The University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships at Hartford Stage

Linking one of the most respected graduate programs in theatre with the Tony Award winning Hartford Stage, the University of Massachusetts Graduate Internships give Master of Fine Arts students in design, directing and dramaturgy the opportunity to work alongside the country’s most exciting artists. The Graduate Internships provide a valuable professional testing ground for students and are a natural complement to the practical, hands-on approach of UMass’ graduate program. In turn, Hartford Stage is enriched by the participation of the next generation of theatre artists. UMass students have worked on *Boeing-Boeing, Zerline’s Tale, Gee’s Bend, Motherhood Out Loud, The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, Snow Falling on Cedars, The 39 Steps, Macbeth, Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike, Hedda Gabler, Reverberation* and *Cry It Out.*

Capital Community College

This season will mark the ninth season of the One Play Program—a partnership between Hartford Stage and Capital Community College, designed to give the entire college community the opportunity to come together around one play each semester. In addition to offering discounted tickets for students and faculty, the program also brings members of each production’s creative team to the College to interact with students. Last season, 601 Capital students saw a performance at Hartford Stage, many reporting it was their first time at the theatre. This season’s One Play productions are *Cry It Out* and *Jane Eyre.* During the 2017-2018 academic year, in partnership with Hartford Stage and other Hartford theatre companies, Capital began to offer a new associate’s degree in theatre.
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