



Book & Lyrics by: CHARLIE SOHNE

Music by: TIM ROSSER

Directed by: TONY SPECIALE

Musical Direction by: CRIS O'BRYON

Choreography by: NEJLA Y. YATKIN

Featuring

SITTICHA CHAIYAHAT M. KEALA MILLES, JR.

TROY IWATA* JONATHAN RAVIV*

KORAY TARHAN

Resident Stage Manager

MONICA PERFETTO

Lighting Designer Costume Designer Set Designer
WEN-LING LIAO SHIRLEY PIERSON SEAN FANNING

Properties Designer Sound Designer Fight Choreographer
BONNIE DURBEN KEVIN ANTHENILL GEORGE YÉ

Executive Artistic Director General Manager
MATT M. MORROW MATT HARDING

Production Sponsors
ROB GRANAT & AL MAZUR

IMMERSIONARY
THEATRE

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States, appearing under a Special Appearance Contract.

The Boy Who Danced on Air

By Charlie Sohne & Tim Rosser

Present Day Afghanistan

FEATURING

Sittichai Chaiyachat	FEDA
Troy Iwata*	PAIMAN
M. Keala Milles, Jr.	ZEMAR
Jonathan Raviv*	JAHANDAR
Koray Tarhan	THE UNKNOWN MAN

BAND

Guitar	PJ Bovee
Bass	Jay Hemphill
Violin	Natalka Kytasty
Percussion	Dan Ochipinti

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

A Song He Never Chose

Little Dance

For a Night

Kabul

With Him Around Me

All That I've Known

Play Your Part

With Him Around Me (Reprise)

Into Your Hands

A Song He Never Chose (Reprise)

A Boy of My Own

ACT II

Denying the Sun

What You Did to Me

In the City

I Can See It

A Song He Never Chose (Reprise 2)

I Know How You Feel

A Song He Never Chose (Finale)

Feda's Song

Run time is approximately 2 hours, with one 10-minute intermission.

Supported in part by the National Fund for New Musicals, a program of the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, with funding from Kathryn & Raymond Harbert - www.namt.org

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NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHTS

It's now been over five years since we saw "The Dancing Boys of Afghanistan," the PBS Frontline documentary that set us on the path to researching and writing *The Boy Who Danced on Air*. Watching the film was instantly destabilizing: the existence of bacha bazi flew directly in the face of a lot of what we thought we knew. Given the fact that child sexual abuse is such a common part of the practice, as we researched more, we were stunned to find men who considered themselves deeply religious talking about the practice using the language of tradition and morality. It caused us to look closely at our own society and moral structures, and how things can often get the stamp of moral significance or veneration because they've been around for a while.



Charlie Sohne & Tim Rosser

We immediately knew we wanted to write this show as a love story between two of the dancing boys, a relationship that would be outside of what's acceptable in the context of the practice. We were passionate about telling a story of these two boys' courageous fight to break free from the lives that had been forced upon them. Over the course of writing the show, however, something surprising happened. While the boys' journey remains the heart of the show, we found ourselves relating deeply to the struggle of Jahandar, one of the boys' masters. What began as a fairly clear-cut story became more complicated. Jahandar's belief in the value of tradition isn't unfounded - as he talks about during "Kabul," he's seen first hand the destruction that rapid change can bring. Watching him balance his faith in rules and tradition with his conflicting feelings about Paiman has become one of the most moving and unsettling parts of the show for us. We've both had moments in our lives when we found our deeply held beliefs in conflict with our feelings, and seeing that conflict play out in Jahandar has allowed us to deeply connect with him as a character, even while disagreeing with his actions. We've sincerely tried to portray his struggle fairly, and we hope that, over the course of the evening, we're able to communicate the connection we feel to this world and these characters.

THE COMPANY

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director	Tony Speciale
Musical Director	Cris O'Bryon
Choreographer	Nejla Y. Yarkin
Resident Stage Manager.....	Monica Perfetto
Set Designer	Sean Fanning
Costume Designer	Shirley Pierson
Lighting Designer	Wen-Ling Liao
Sound Designer	Kevin Anthenill
Properties Designer.....	Bonnie Durben
Fight Choreographer	George Yé
Master Carpenter	Scott Amiotte
Carpenters	Mike McCulloch, Skyler Sullivan
Charge Artist.....	Syd Stevens
Associate Choreographer	Daniel Marshall
Mix Engineer	TJ Fucella
Assistant Stage Manager	Maybelle Covington
Lighting Assistant.....	Michael Ekema-Nardella
Makeup Special Effects.....	Peter Herman
Makeup Special Effects Assistant.....	Francia Cohen
Scenic Seamstress	Vibiana Tran
Consultant	Mejgan Afshan

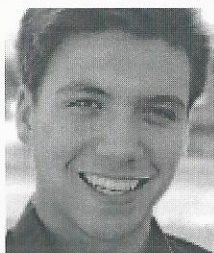
SPECIAL THANKS

San Diego Rep, Cortney Cloud, Ashleigh Scott, Jake Bradford, Josh Bradford and Kevin Phan

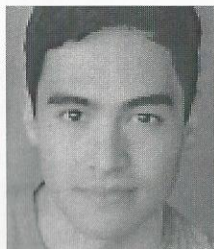
Diversionsary Theatre is a proud member of:



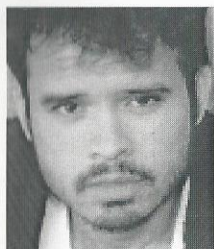
THE COMPANY



SITTICHA CHAIYAHAT (Feda) is thrilled to make his debut with Diversionary Theatre. Recent credits include *Spring Awakening* (Palomar College); *Les Miserables*, *Into The Woods*, and *Shrek The Musical* (Star Repertory Theatre); *Tarzan* (Moonlight Youth Theatre). He would like to thank all of his friends and family for their support as well as the cast and creative team. Enjoy the show!



TROY IWATA* (Paiman) is thrilled to be back in California for his Diversionary Theater debut. Previous credits: *Joker* (Off-Off-Broadway); *The Lightning Thief* (National Tour); *The Taming of the Shrew* (American Coast Theatre Company); *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Newport Theatre Arts Center); *Legally Blonde* (Vanguard University). Film/TV: *Time After Time* (ABC), *Orange is the New Black* (Netflix). Special thanks to Tim & Charlie for this beautiful story and for filling my first years in New York with more performing and less catering.



M. KEALA MILLES, JR (Zemar) is honored and excited to work with Diversionary Theatre for the very first time, and as part of this remarkable rolling world premiere. Local credits include *Rope: the Musical* (independent); *Geeks: The Musical* and *The Elaborate Entrance of Chad Deity* (ion Theatre), *Water by the Spoonful* (The Old Globe Theatre), *John Doe: The Musical* (independent). Also in the films: *Slap Worthy* and *Alien Story* (2AMB Productions). Thank you Emma, I couldn't do it without you.



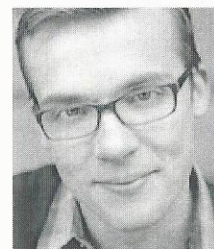
JONATHAN RAVIV* (Jahandar) This is Jonathan's Diversionary debut. Selected New York credits include: *Martyrs Street* (Theater For The New City); *The Ragged Claws* (Cherry Lane Theatre) and *My Name Is Asher Lev* (The Westside Theatre). Selected regional credits include: *Love's Labour's Lost* (Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey); *Oklahoma!* (Portland Center Stage); *Homebody/Kabul* (Curious Theater Company); *Arabian Nights* (Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and *The Light In The Piazza* (Arena Stage, Weston Playhouse and The Goodman Theater). He has also performed regionally at Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival and in Chicago at Steppenwolf Theater, Writers' Theatre, Marriott Theatre Lincolnshire and Drury Lane Oakbrook. Jonathan's television credits include: *The Blacklist*, *Zero Hour* and *Pan Am*. He would like to thank everyone at Diversionary, Tony, Tim and Charlie as well as the cast and crew for this experience.

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THE COMPANY



KORAY TARHAN (The Unknown Man) is honored and humbled to make his Diversionary debut in this stunning and poignant show. As a recent Columbia College Chicago graduate, Koray has been seen in *Cabaret* (Lewis Family Playhouse) as the Emcee, *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Candlelight Pavilion) as Chip, and has just become a recipient of the Bruce E Coyle Acting Internship at the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. Koray would like to thank his family for always providing the love and support that helps fuel his passion for performing. Enjoy the show.

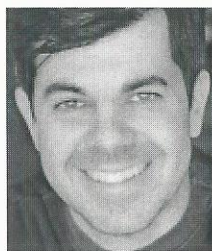


TIM ROSSER & CHARLIE SOHNE (Playwrights) received the 2015 Jonathan Larson Award, ASCAP's 2015 Mary Rodgers/Lorenz Hart Award and the 2014-2015 Dramatists Guild Fellowship. They were writers in the Civilian's R&D Group and ASCAP's Johnny Mercer Project. Full-length shows include: *Run Away Home* (2015 Rhinebeck Retreat, 2016 Yale Alumni Residency), *The Boy Who Danced On Air* (NAMT 2013, world premiere at the Diversionary Theatre, San Diego 2016), *The Profit of Creation* (Yale Institute for Music Theatre), *Talk To Me* (N.Y. City Children's Theater Commission). Other: *Truth Slash Fiction* (Austin Film Festival Script Competition Finalist, in production with Royal Prospects), *A Better Me* (written for 24 Hour Musicals, featuring Edie Falco). Their songs have been performed in NY, L.A., Seattle, London, Paris and at the Kennedy Center (DC). Separately, Charlie's had shows at The O'Neill and NYS&F, while Tim's conducted performances of *A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder* on Broadway, music directed *Broadway Backwards*, and associate music directed Andrew Lipka's *I Am Harvey Milk*.



TONY SPECIALE (Director) is an award-winning creator of new work, and the Artistic Director of Abingdon Theatre Company in New York City. As the founder of Plastic Theatre, he conceived, co-authored and directed the world premiere of *Unnatural Acts* (Classic Stage Company—Drama Desk Award nominee, GLAAD Media Award nominee). NYC directing credits: *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Westside Theatre/Dixon Place), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* featuring Bebe Neuwirth, Christina Ricci and Taylor Mac (Classic Stage Company); *Handbook for an American Revolutionary* (The Gym at Judson); and *Remembering Mr. Maugham* (Clurman Theatre). Regional directing credits: *The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey* (Kirk Douglas Theatre), Barry Manilow's *Harmony* (Alliance Theatre/Ahmanson Theatre) and *Romeo and Juliet* (Actors Theatre of Louisville). Speciale served four seasons as Associate Artistic Director of Classic Stage Company. He studied musical theatre at The Boston Conservatory and holds an M.F.A. in Directing from Columbia University. He is also the proud recipient of a Princess Grace Theatre Honorarium, British Writers' Guild Award and a Suzi Bass Award. tonyspeciale.com

THE COMPANY



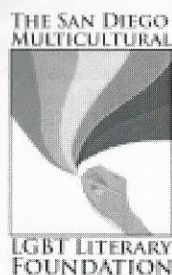
CHRIS O'BRYON (Musical Director) Select projects: *End of the Rainbow* (Intrepid); *The Grift*, *Chasing The Song*, *Hoover Comes Alive* (LJP); *The Constant Wife*, *Grinch*, *Odyssey* (Old Globe); *Big Fish*, *Phantom*, *Legally Blonde*, *Beau Jest* (Moonlight); *Forbidden Broadway* (Tour); *Storyville*, *Respect* (SDRep); *Twelfth Night*, *The Foreigner*, *Festival of Christmas* (Lamb's Players); *Ragtime*, *Footloose* (SDMT); *Odd Couple*, *Tomfoolery* (North Coast Rep); *Full Monty*, *Altar Boys*, *Oklahoma* (Welk); *Brooklyn Boy*, *Moonlight & Magnolias* (SRT). Recently, he was Music Director of the 2nd annual Campus Superstar at the Jacobs Recital Hall (Qualcomm), and adjudicated shows for the 2016 Ben Vereen Awards

and the Spring NATS competition. He is creating a new cabaret show at Martini's Above 4th on June 14. He maintains a private training studio, and specializes in an intuitive approach to finding your authentic voice. www.vocalcoachstudio.com



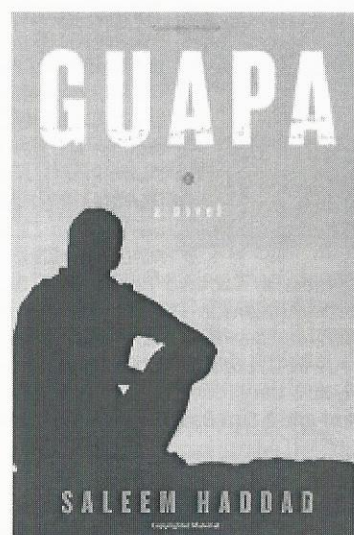
NEJLA Y. YARKIN (Choreographer) Award-winning choreographer Nejla Y. Yarkin is a 2008/2010 and 2014 Princess Grace Choreography fellow, was named by Dance Magazine as one of "Top 25 to Watch in 2005" and "Outstanding Emerging Artist" by the D.C. Mayor's Arts Award Committee 2006.

Her recent dances have been inspired by stories of events of significant places in the world. Such was the case with: *The Berlin Wall Project* or *Oasis: Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About The Middle East but Were Afraid To Dance*, and *Dancing Around The World* a moving site-specific work which traveled around the world from April 2015 to April 2016 visiting 20 countries. For more information please visit ny2dance.com



The San Diego Multicultural LGBT Literary Foundation recommends:
Interested in learning more about the LGBT experience in the Middle East?

Check out "Guapa," which tells the story of Rasa, a young gay man coming of age in the Middle East. Now available everywhere, including your local library.



THE COMPANY

MONICA PERFETTO (Resident Stage Manager) is proud to have joined Diversionary for their 2015-2016 season. Recently at Diversionary: *Now or Later*, *In the Va Va Voom Room*, *A Civil War Christmas*, *Bright Half Life* and *A New Brain*. Elsewhere: *RENT* (Southwestern College), *Annie* (California Youth Conservatory), *Much Ado About Nothing*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *All My Sons*, *Macbeth*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream the Musical* (Intrepid Shakespeare Company). As Production Assistant: *The Fox on the Fairway*, *Side by Side*, *Chapter Two* (North Coast Repertory Theatre). Monica is a graduate from the University of San Diego and holds a BA in Theatre Arts and Performance Studies.

SEAN FANNING (Scenic Designer) is a Southern California-based scenic designer with a career spanning over 40 productions on local stages. Previously for Diversionary: *Birds of a Feather*, *Pippin*, and *Harmony, Kansas*. Elsewhere: *Full Gallop*, the Globe for All tour of *All's Well That Ends Well*, *A Doll's House*, *Kingdom*, and *Plaid Tidings* (The Old Globe); *My Manana Comes* (Marin Theatre Company); *The Oldest Boy*, *Everybody's Talkin': The Music of Harry Nilsson*, *Honky* (Craig Noel Award nomination), *In the Heights*, and *Walter Cronkite is Dead* (San Diego Repertory Theatre); *Hay Fever*, *The Vortex*, *Dogfight*, *The Whale*, *Sons of the Prophet*, *Pageant*, *Maple and Vine*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Travesties*, and *Shakespeare's R&J* (Cygnet Theatre Company); *South Pacific*, *Jane Austen's Emma*, and *Little Shop of Horrors* (Summer Repertory Theatre); and *The Improv at Harrah's* and *Menopause the Musical* (Harrah's Las Vegas). Mr. Fanning holds an M.F.A. in Scenic Design from San Diego State University. See more of his work at www.seanfanningdesigns.com.

SHIRLEY PIERSON (Costume Designer) is delighted to return to Diversionary Theatre with *The Boy Who Danced on Air*. Previous work with Diversionary includes: *Now or Later*, *Harmony, Kansas*, *Pippin*, *Next Fall*, *when last we flew*, *The Further Adventures of Hedda Gabbler* and *Marry Me A Little*. Shirley is a San Diego based award winning costume designer. Amongst her show credits in San Diego County are – The Old Globe: *Ken Ludwig's Baskerville*, *Rich Girl*, Cygnet Theatre: *Parade* (Craig Noel Outstanding Costume Design Winner), *Spring Awakening*, *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Craig Noel Outstanding Costume Design Nominee), *Assassins*, *Glass Menagerie*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Cabaret*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Private Lives*, *History Boys*. She is a faculty member of the Performing Arts Department at Palomar College and received her MFA in Theatrical Design from San Diego State University. You may view her work at shirleypiersondesign.com.

WEN-LING LIAO (Lighting Designer) makes her Diversionary debut with *The Boy Who Danced on Air*. Her selected credits: *Milk Like Sugar* (Huntington Theatre Company); *Sense and Sensibility* (Dallas Theater Center); *Appropriate* (SpeakEasy Stage Company); *Luna Gale* (Stoneham Theater); *Grounded* (Nora Theater Company); *La Traviata* (Long Island Opera); *A Nice Indian Boy* (East West Players); *I and You* (Marin Theatre Company); *The Exit Interview* (San Diego Repertory Theatre); *Scarlet Stone* (Tirgan Festival/Toronto); *Dis or Der* (HERE Art Center); *BodyParts/In Spite of It* (TANZINOLTEN/Switzerland); *Riz Flambe and Riz Souffle* (Avignon Off-Festival/France) and *Toi* (Taipei Fringe Festival/Taiwan). Wen-Ling was the company lighting designer for Patricia Rincon Dance Collective. Education: She earned her MFA from University of California, San Diego and BA from National Taiwan University. wenlingliao.com

KEVIN ANTENILL (Sound Designer) Previously designed Diversionary Theatre's *Amazons and Their Men*, *Tru*, *Regrets Only*, *bare: a pop opera*, *Thrill Me*, *She-Rantulas From Outer Space - in 3D!*, *The Further Adventures Of Hedda Gabbler*, *Birds of a Feather*, *Next Fall*, *Harmony, Kansas*, *Pippin*, and *Marry Me a Little*. He is the Resident Sound Designer at The San Diego Rep, previously designed sound for *Rapture Blister Burn*, *My Manana Comes*, *The Oldest Boy*, *Violet*,

THE COMPANY

Everybody's Talkin', Honky, Steal Heaven, Red and Zoot Suit, and composed music for *Uncanny Valley*, and *In The Next Room*. Other design and music credits include The Old Globes's *All's Well That Ends Well*, Cygnet Theatre's *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Travesties*, and *Maple and Vine*, San Diego Musical Theatre's *Ragtime* and *La Cage Aux Folles*, Intrepid Theatre's *End of the Rainbow* and *Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf*.

BONNIE DURBEN (Properties Designer) Diversionary productions; *Now or Later*, *A New Brain*, *Baby With The Bathwater* and *She-Rantulas from Outer Space: in 3D!* Other venues: *Winter's Tale*, *Quality of Life*, *Music Man*, *All Shook Up*, *The Graduate*, *The Normal Heart*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Drowsy Chaperone* and *Next to Normal*. Member of The Society of Property Artisans and Managers

GEORGE YÉ (Fight Choreographer) At Diversionary: *Now or Later*. Other: *Two Gentleman of Verona*, *Twelfth Night*, *Time and the Conways*, *Double Indemnity*; *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *2013 Shakespeare Festival*, *Allegiance the Musical*, *August: Osage County*, *God of Carnage*, *The Whipping Man*, *Dancing in the Dark* (The Old Globe); La Jolla Playhouse: *Up Here*, *The Ether Dome*, *Kingdom City*, *Peter and the Star Catchers*, *Blood and Gifts*, *Hands on a Hard Body*, *A Dram of Drummhicit*. Other favorites include: *Oedipus El Rey*, *Claybourne Park* (San Diego Rep); *True West*, *Fool for Love*, *The Motherf*cker with the Hat*, *Shakespeare's R&J*, *Communicating Doors*, *Bug* (Cygnet Theatre). Feature: *The King's Guard* with Ron Pearlman and Eric Roberts. George is head of performance training at San Diego Mesa College, MFA, SAJD, AEA.

PJ BOVEE (Guitar) PJ Bovee is a freelance musician and entrepreneur and is thrilled to be making his Diversionary debut (except for a one-nighter several years ago)! A handful of PJ's favorite theatre credits include: *Tick, Tick ... BOOM!* (Stone Soup Theatre), *The Light in the Piazza* (Lamb's Players Theatre), *A Chorus Line* (San Diego Musical Theatre), *Little Shop of Horrors* (Cygnet Theatre), *In the Heights* (San Diego Junior Theatre), and *Everybody's Talkin': The Music of Harry Nilsson* (San Diego REP). You can hear him in orchestra pits all around town and see him in his Jazz group or his band Rockett Trio. PJ and his wife live in nearby North Park with their super cute pug named Walter. "Thank you to Tim, Charlie, Cris, and everyone at Diversionary for being such beautiful people and inviting me to help share this amazing work!"

JAY HEMPHILL (Bass) is from Long Beach, California and is extremely excited to join the production of *The Boy Who Danced On Air*. This is some of his favorite music he has gotten the chance to perform. He has been playing bass for nine years in many different styles. Trained in jazz, he branched out to classical and folk music and is currently playing all around Long Beach and LA. He is also an aspiring songwriter, poet, and lyricist, providing lyrics for many bands and artists in Long Beach.

NATALKA KYTASTY (Violin) started her violin career in the Kiev School of Music For Gifted Children. She studied violin at the Kiev Tchaikovsky Conservatory with Elena Buchinskaya, a pupil of the famous David Oistrakh. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees in solo, chamber and orchestra performance and in pedagogy. She toured with Kiev Chamber Orchestra throughout the Soviet Union. She was also a member of a Ukrainian Contemporary Composers Ensemble - Kiev Camerata, and State Radio and TV Symphony Orchestra. Since immigrating to the US, she has played with San Diego Chamber Orchestra, Orquesta de Baja California, Lyric Opera San Diego, and has been a member of Kensington Trio.

THE COMPANY

DAN OCHIPINTI (Percussion) is a self-taught musician with over thirty years' experience in performing, recording and composing. Born in Sacramento and began playing drum set at age 13. Worked in rock and jazz groups in Sacramento. Moved to Seattle, WA. in 1985 and began working and recording with various original rock, acoustic, world-beat, and ethnic groups. Relocated to San Diego in 2006 where his musical journey continues to this day.

Dan's musical universe is large; having played percussion in many genres of music including American rock, folk and jazz, African pop, Celtic folk and rock, Middle Eastern, Brazilian, Latin American, Italian, and Eastern and Western European folk. Sacred music and pagan music. Dan specializes in fusing ethnic hand percussion with the drum set.

To date, Dan has recorded on fourteen CDs, and has co-produced three CDs. He has also composed and performed music for modern dance, theatre, television and video. Long-time house drummer for VISION church in Mission Gorge. Drums and percussion for Persian violinist Bah'man Sarram. Dan also enjoys singing lead and backing vocals.



MATT M. MORROW (Executive Artistic Director) most recently directed the West Coast Premiere of Jordan Harrison's *Amazons and Their Men* at Diversionary Theatre. Prior to joining Diversionary, Matt was the Associate Artistic Director of City Theatre Company, a LORT theatre in Pittsburgh, PA. With City he directed the Regional Premiere of Jessica Dickey's *Charles Ives Take Me Home*, the World Premiere of Tami Dixon's *South Side Stories*, Kim Rosenstock's *Tigers Be Still*; and workshops of the new musical *The Shadow Sparrow* by Anton Dudley, Keith Gordon and Charlie Sohne, and *Don't You F*cking Say A Word* by Andy Bragen for City's Momentum Festival of

New Works.

He has developed new work with The Sundance Theatre Institute, The Banff Centre, American Conservatory Theater, Lincoln Center, PlayPenn, and Page 73 Productions in residence at the Yale School of Drama. His work as a director has been seen in NYC at Amas, Playwrights Horizons, Urban Stages, EST, HERE, Dixon Place, Cherry Lane, The York, The Tank, NYC Int'l Fringe, Midtown Int'l Festival, among others. Matt is currently developing Jennifer Haley's *Froggy* and has served as The John Wells Professor of Directing at Carnegie Mellon University's School of Drama (Graduate & Undergraduate Directing programs), and is a member of the Lincoln Center Director's Lab. He holds a BFA in Directing from Carnegie Mellon University. www.mattmmorrow.com



management.

MATT HARDING (General Manager) joined the Diversionary team in October of 2013, and has extensive experience in LGBT community organization, nonprofit marketing, hospitality and events. He most recently worked as Director of Marketing at the Greater San Diego Business Association and holds a certificate in Nonprofit Marketing. Matt's experience includes creating and leading Tucson, Arizona's 2005 - 2006 Pride on Parade events; leading Tucson's GLBT Chamber of Commerce through a name and brand change and growth of 40% in membership; Senior Sales manager positions at some of Tucson's leading convention hotels, and an extensive background in hospitality