

CREATED BY THE CIVILIANS
WRITTEN BY STEVEN COSSON & JIM LEWIS
MUSIC & LYRICS BY MICHAEL FRIEDMAN
DIRECTED BY MATT M. MORROW

FEATURING

**THEO ALLYN*, VICTOR E. CHAN*, MICHAEL LOUIS CUSIMANO*,
KIM HEIL, TONY HOUCK, JASMINE JANUARY**

MUSIC DIRECTOR
TONY HOUCK

COSTUME DESIGNER
ELISA BENZONI

SOUND DESIGNER
MATT LESCAULT-WOOD

STAGE MANAGER
TAYLOR TODD

SCENIC DESIGNER
JUSTIN HUMPHRES

LIGHTING DESIGNER
CURTIS MUELLER

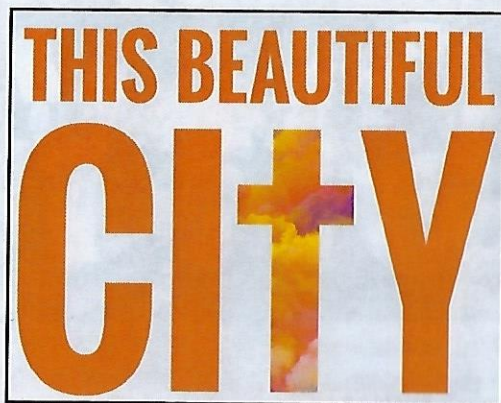
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THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY

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MUSIC & LYRICS BY MICHAEL FRIEDMAN
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FEATURING

(IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

**THEO ALLYN*, VICTOR E. CHAN*, KIM HEIL, TONY HOUCK,
JASMINE JANUARY, MICHAEL LOUIS CUSIMANO***

PLACE

Colorado Springs, Colorado.

TIME

Leading up to and after the 2006 election.

*Run time is approximately two hours and fifteen minutes including
one 15 minute intermission.*

THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY was developed from the interviews conducted by Emily Ackerman, Marsha Stephanie Blake, Brad Heberlee, Stephen Plunkett, Alison Weller, and the authors.

Commissioned and developed by The Civilians (Steven Cosson, Artistic Director; Marion Friedman, Managing Director) with the assistance of the Sundance Institute, Colorado College, and Center Theatre Group.

Development supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and Z-Space Studio, San Francisco, CA.

World Premiere co-produced by the 2008 Humana Festival of New American Plays at Actors Theatre of Louisville and by the Studio Theatre in Washington, DC as part of its 2008 Opening Our Doors Initiative.

THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY was co-produced by Center Theatre Group, LA, 2008 and Vineyard Theatre, NY, 2009.

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

When we lost composer Michael Friedman last year, the national theatre community was shocked and heartbroken. Michael died from complications resulting from HIV/AIDS. He was only 41.



It is an understatement to say that Michael was beloved in the theatre community; he had an abundance of talent, and the promise of his career was epic. The fact that his life was cut short by HIV/AIDS snapped us back to the epidemic of the 80's and 90's, when we lost so many promising artists in their prime.

Although I didn't know him personally, I felt compelled to honor him, and the significance of his life and death. And so we delved into his canon (fairly extensive for one so young). I was amazed with what I found in *THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY*. I knew in my bones the moment I read the last word of the script that we had to program it.

We all talk about what a chaotic, polarizing time we are living in. These past few years have been a rough ride, especially for the LGBT community, and especially for our Trans and immigrant communities. What can we do with so much vitriol in the world? How can we begin to invest in common ground when we feel like we are constantly being attacked?

For me, *THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY* is the answer. This piece was created when The Civilians went to Colorado Springs to investigate the Evangelical movement in 2006. This was when the culture war was reaching a fever pitch around a national push for and against Gay Marriage, and Colorado Springs was ground zero.

Many of the words presented in *THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY* are direct transcriptions from hundreds of interviews The Civilians conducted with the people of Colorado Springs. There is undeniable power in the honesty and authenticity of their voices. How the authors have curated and interlaced their stories into a portrait of a community at odds with itself is deeply resonant, especially right now. And Friedman's score vividly captures God-rock at its most potent, and the humanity of a community in crisis.

THIS BEAUTIFUL CITY is about how we create community and

how important community is to our individual well being. If we are not taking care of each other, we are not taking care of ourselves. This show is also about being heard, and how vital it is to feel like you have a voice in the world. While this production is not an endorsement of any one point of view, it does seek to endorse the human spirit, our need to be seen and heard, to listen and understand, and how we value each other.

There are many voices in this piece that I disagree with, and many that I love and cherish. With listening comes understanding. And with understanding comes power. This season at Diversionary, we are choosing power, and to be inspired.

This revival honors Michael Friedman. Here's to remembering him, remembering the HIV/AIDS epidemic, remembering that we are part of a resilient community, and that we can get through this together. Thanks for being here.

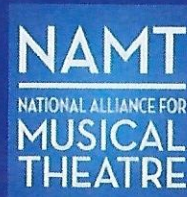
Warmly,



Matt M. Morrow
Director &
Executive Artistic Director

P.S. Tell your friends!

Diversionary Theatre is a proud member of:



PRODUCTION TEAM

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 Scenic Designer Justin Humphres
 Costume Designer Elisa Benzoni
 Lighting Designer Curtis Mueller
 Sound Designer Matt Lescault-Wood
 Projection Designer Blake McCarty
 Technical Director Walks Tall Keith
 Master Electrician Bianca Alexa Vo
 Production Assistant Josie Gerk
 Sound Mixer Leslie Fisher

BAND

Tony Houck Music Director/Keyboard
 Nobuko Kemmotsu Drums
 Michael Loius Cusimano Guitar
 Jay Hemphill Bass

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Bonnie Durban, Cygnet Theatre, New Village Arts, Kent Swedell,
 Robin Reed, Stu Schwartz and San Diego's awesome Usher Corps.

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*Di Carpinelli, Anna Curren, Howard Finnecy, Carol Ann Flanagan, Dan Haslam,
 Joan Loomis, Lindy & Rick Miles, Deborah Pantoni, Pat Shank, and Julie Ustin*

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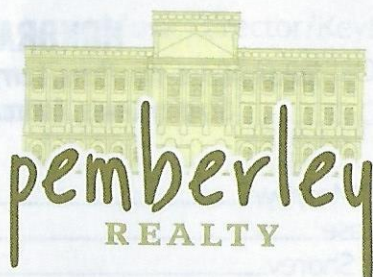
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THE COMPANY



THEO ALLYN* (ENSEMBLE) is delighted to be making her Diversionary Theatre debut! An actor, writer and improviser, she recently made the cross-country trek from Chicago to Southern California. In Chicago, her work has been seen most recently at Second City and the Goodman Theatre. Regionally Ms. Allyn has worked with City Theatre, Pittsburgh Public Theatre, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical, Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera, and Bricolage. Training includes the Atlantic Theatre Company Acting School and NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. Recent film credits include *Progression*, written and directed by Sam Turich and Gab Cody. Recent television appearances include Chicago Fire.



VICTOR E. CHAN* (ENSEMBLE) Diversionary Theatre debut. Regional Credits: (Reprise 2.0) *Sweet Charity* starring Laura Bell Bundy, (San Diego REP) *Evita*, *In The Heights*, *The Who's Tommy*, *Celebration Of The Lizard* (La Jolla Playhouse) *Miss You Like Hell*, (East West Players) *Chess*, (Disney Creative Entertainment) *Crush in Finding Nemo the Musical* (original cast album), *Frozen -Live at the Hyperion*, (Starlight Theatre) *Engineer in Miss Saigon*, (American Stage Theatre Co.) *Riff Raff in Rocky Horror Show*, (SD Opera) *Moby Dick*. Movies: "The Birth Of An Alien", "Heart Of Mind", "Platypus: The Musical", "The Syndicate." TV: "The Oscars 2018" (ABC), "Bent" (NBC), "NCIS: Los Angeles" (CBS). Love to his wife Michelle, and sons: Gabriel, Elijah, and Dorian. Proud member of AEA. @VictorEChan



MICHAEL LOUIS CUSIMANO* (ENSEMBLE) is happy to return to Diversionary where he was seen last season in *Homos*, or *Everyone in America* and in the staged readings of *The Boys in the Band* and *The Homosexuals*. Elsewhere in San Diego: *Once*, *Big Fish*, *American Rhythm*, *North of Normal* (Lamb's Players); *The Rocky Horror Show*, *On the Twentieth Century* (Cygnet Theatre); *Spamalot* (Moonlight Amphitheatre). Los Angeles and other SoCal credits: *Metamorphoses* (Santa Barbara Ensemble Theatre); *The 39 Steps* (Glendale Centre Theatre); *Grease* (Cabrillo Music Theatre). Michael has also performed in the NYC Fringe and Brooklyn BEAT Festivals, and is a BFA graduate of Carnegie Mellon School of Drama. Thanks to Matt and the whole Diversionary family and love to Donny!



KIM HEIL (ENSEMBLE) is proud to make her San Diego theatre debut on the Diversionary stage! She returns to the theatre after a 17-year hiatus, having served as an administrator and producer for The Old Globe and San Diego Junior Theatre, as well as San Diego Repertory Theatre, where she is currently the Associate Producer and Casting Director. In her previous life as an actor, Kim made many appearances at East West Players and CLO of South Bay Cities, among others. Kim

holds an M.A. in Performance Studies from New York University. This is for Jason, Katrina and Tristan.



JASMINE JANUARY (ENSEMBLE) is a graduate from the illustrious Howard University where she received her BFA in Musical Theatre. Her recent credits include *Qulili* (Blindspot Collective), *Avenue Q* (NVA), *American Idiot* (Southwestern College), *Buddy Holly: The Buddy Holly Story* (Intrepid Theatre Company/NVA), and *Father Comes Home from the War* (Intrepid Theatre Company). She's also a headliner performer in many *The Stars of the Future Cabarets* (Leigh Scarritt Productions) and various performances throughout San Diego. She is elated to be making her debut with Diversionary Theater!

She thanks her incredible family, friends, and mentor, Miss Leigh Scarritt for always believing in her and pushing her to her excellence. This craft is truly Jasmine's passion and she can't ever explain how full her heart throughout this journey. Her mantra: "Live in your truth, be grateful, and expect divine favor."

TONY HOUCK (ENSEMBLER AND MUSIC DIRECTOR) is reveling at returning to Diversionary. Diversionary: *Marry Me A Little*; *Thrill Me*; *Bare: a pop opera* (Critic's Circle Nom). Elsewhere: *Legally Blonde*; *The Secret Garden*; *The Buddy Holly Story*; *1940's Radio Hour*; *Oklahoma* (New Village Arts); *The Test* (SD Fringe festival winner for Best Musical); *Bring It On* (SDMT). Tony is also an accomplished pianist and has played for *In The Heights* (Southwestern College); *Big River*, *Sylvia* (New Village Arts); *Lady Day at Emerson's Bar and Grill*, (ion Theatre); *Altar Boyz* (Diversionary). He also played for B Squared starring Broadway's Brad Bradley; and the Human Dignity Gala featuring Seth Rudetsky and Andrea Martin. Tony is a graduate of AMDA. He also plays trumpet and french horn. He plays for many auditions around town and does vocal coaching for many of San Diego's local artists as well as being

a teaching artist at San Diego Junior Theatre. He has also been on stage in some Diversionary favorites like *YANK!*, *Scrooge in Rouge* (Craig Noel Award); *Harmony, Kansas*; and *Twist*, just to name a few.

THE CIVILIANS (PLAYWRIGHT) is the center for investigative theater led by Artistic Director Steve Cosson, supporting the development and production of new theater from creative inquiries into the most vital questions of the present. Since its founding in 2001, The Civilians has supported the creation of thirteen original shows produced at numerous theaters in New York and across the country. Works by the company have toured extensively to arts presenters and festivals with presentations in over forty cities nationally and internationally. The Civilians received an Obie in 2004 and the company's work has been included in top ten lists in the New York Times, The New Yorker, and Time Out New York. The Civilians expands the scope of American theater

and champions innovation by tackling complex and under-explored subjects. The company provides a home for a multidisciplinary group of artists and partners with regional theater and arts presenters in New York, nationally, and internationally.

MICHAEL FRIEDMAN (COMPOSER LYRICIST) was a founding Associate Artist of The Civilians, and has been the composer/lyricist for the company's *This Beautiful City*, *(I Am) Nobody's Lunch*, *Gone Missing* and *Canard, Canard, Goose?* He also wrote music and lyrics for *Saved*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *The Brand New Kid*, *God's Ear*, *The Blue Demon*, and *Alice in Wonderland*. With Steve Cosson, he was the co-author of *Paris Commune*. He also scored the ballet *Love Stories* for New York City Ballet's Benjamin Millepied. His music has been heard at the New York Shakespeare Festival, New York Theatre Workshop, The Roundabout Theatre Co., Second Stage, Soho Rep, Theater for a New Audience, Signature, and The Acting Company. Regionally Friedman has written music for such companies as Hartford Stage, Humana Festival, A.R.T., Berkeley Rep, Dallas Theatre Center, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Portland Center Stage. Friedman's compositions have also been performed internationally in productions at London's Soho and Gate Theatres, and the Edinburgh Festival. Film/TV work includes "On Common Ground," "Beloved," "Emile Norman: By His Own Design," "Floaters," and "Affair Game." He was also the dramaturg for the Broadway revival of *A Raisin in the Sun*, directed by Kenny Leon. He was an Artistic Associate at New York Theatre Workshop, a Princeton University Hodder Fellow, and a recipient of a MacDowell fellowship. He received a 2007 Obie award for sustained excellence. Michael passed away Fall 2017 from complications related to HIV/AIDS. He was only 41. Taken far too early, this production honors him.

STEVEN COSSON (CO-PLAYWRIGHT) founded the Civilians in 2001. He worked with the company as co-writer and director of *Paris Commune*, produced at The Public Theater, and previously produced in La Jolla Playhouse's Page to Stage series. He also worked with the Civilians as co-writer and director of *This Beautiful City* which premiered as a co-production of the 2008 Humana Festival and Studio Theatre, with productions in the 2008-2009 season at Center Theatre Group (Mark Taper Forum) and The Vineyard Theatre. He was the writer/director of the long-running hit *Gone Missing* which was included in New York Times critic Charles Isherwood's Best of 2007 list, as well as *(I Am) Nobody's Lunch*, which won the 2006 Fringe First award at Edinburgh, published by Oberon Books. He also directed the company-created *Canard, Canard, Goose?* Cosson's work with The Civilians has also been produced at A.R.T., Actors Theatre of Louisville, HBO's Aspen Comedy Festival, London's Gate Theatre, and Soho Theatre, among many others. Cosson has directed and developed many new plays, including Neal Bell's *Shadow of Himself*, Mat Smart's *13th of Paris*, Tommy Smith's *Air Conditioning*, Anne Washburn's *Communist Dracula Pageant*, the world premiere of Peter

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

THE COMPANY

Morris' *Square Root of Minus One*, the U.S. premiere of Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life*, the U.S. premiere of Sarah Kane's *Phaedra's Love*, *The Time of Your Life*, *Serious Money*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, *Guys and Dolls*, and others. He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Colombia, a MacDowell Fellow, and Resident Director at New Dramatists.

JIM LEWIS (CO-BOOKWRITER) won Tony and Drama Desk nominations for Best Book for a Musical for his adaptation of Gabriel Garcia Marquez' *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*. Also with Graciela Daniele, he wrote *Dangerous Games* and *Tango Apasionado*. Other credits include Ballet Hispanico's *Nightclub* (libretto); Philip Glass' *Les Enfants Terribles* (narration); and Paul Dresher's *The Tyrant* (libretto), while his translations include Ionesco's *The Chairs* and Ibsen's *Lady from the Sea*. Mr. Lewis also served as production dramaturg for Past Forward (with Mikhail Baryshnikov); Anna Deavere Smith's *House Arrest*; Lincoln Center's *Woza Afrika* Festival; *WASTE* (Obie winner); *Cymbeline* (with Bartlett Sher); and *Still/Here* at BAM (2003). He was the program director at The American Center in Paris and a resident dramaturg for the Guthrie Theater, Second Stage Theatre, and INTAR Theatre. Mr. Lewis' show *Fela!*, with Bill T. Jones, completed a sold-out run Off-Broadway at 37 Arts and moved to Broadway in 2009.

MATT M. MORROW (DIRECTOR) (see below under Executive Artistic Director)

TAYLOR TODD (STAGE MANAGER) is so happy to be stage managing at Diversionary this season! Some of her stage management credits include *Bull in a China Shop*, *Mystery of Love and Sex* (Diversionary); *Bachelorette*, *Tarrytown*, *Gutenberg! The Musical!* (Backyard Renaissance); *Father Comes Home from the Wars* Parts 1, 2, & 3, *Perfect Arrangement*, *ART*, *Woody Guthrie's American Song*, *End of the Rainbow* (Intrepid); *Final Draft* New Play Festival (New Village Arts); *Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story* (Co-production with Intrepid & New Village Arts); *The Seagull* (Old Globe/University of San Diego MFA); and *Anton's Shorts*; *Three Brief Comedies* by Chekhov (University of San Diego). Credits as an assistant stage manager include *Cardboard Piano* (Diversionary); *Parlour Song* (Backyard Renaissance); *Oliver!* (Cabrillo Stage, Santa Cruz); and *Anatomy of Gray* (University of San Diego). Taylor graduated from the University of San Diego with a degree in Theatre Arts and Performance Studies.

JUSTIN HUMPHRES (SCENIC DESIGNER) is a scenic and video designer based in San Diego, CA. His design work has been seen internationally in both the United States and Asia. As a video designer, he has created content for numerous concert tours, corporate events and Las Vegas shows. As an assistant/associate he has worked with Robert Brill, John Lee Beatty and others on various commercial, regional and Broadway projects. Recent San Diego scenic design credits include: *Actually* (San Diego Rep), *Vietgone* (San Diego Rep), and *Voyeurs de Venus* (Moxie). Broadway credits include: *SUMMER: The Donna Summer Musical* (Associate Designer), *Ain't Too Proud: The Life and Times of the*

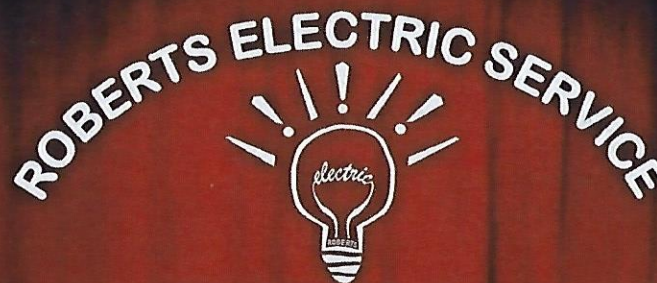
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Temptations (Associate Designer). Justin holds a BFA from Western Michigan University and an MFA from University of California, San Diego.
www.justinhumphres.com

ELISA BENZONI (COSTUME DESIGNER) is thrilled to be working again with Diversionary Theatre. Select credits include: *The Loneliest Girl in the World*, *The Happiest Place on Earth*, *Homos or Everyone in America*, *Ballast*, *Mystery of Love and Sex* (Diversionary Theatre), *Sex with Strangers* (Geffen Playhouse), *The Who and The What*, *Our Town*; *Tall Girls*; *Brahman/I*; *Sam Bendrix at the Bon Soir* (La Jolla Playhouse); *Constellations* (Old Globe); *Cloud 9*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, *Reckless*, *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Measure for Measure* (USD/Old Globe); *The Father*, *How the Other Half Loves*, *Of Mice and Men*, *Travels with my Aunt*, *The Illusion*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor*, *The Cocktail Hour*, *Fox on the Fairway* (Nominated for a Craig Noel Award), *Chapatti*, *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Great Nome* *Gold Rush* (North Coast Repertory Theatre); *Men on Boats*, *Secret Garden*, *Awake and Sing*, *Sylvia* (New Village Arts); Elisa holds a costume design MFA from UCSD. www.elisabenzoni.com

CURTIS MUELLER (LIGHTING DESIGNER) returns to Diversionary having designed *Bull in a China Shop*, *The Happiest Place on Earth*, *Cardboard Piano*, *Homos*, *Well*, *2.5 Minute Ride*, *Lizard Boy*, *Manhandled*, *Now or Later*, *A Civil*

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THE COMPANY

War Christmas, Amazons and Their Men, Man Clan, and A New Brain. Select local credits include: *Withering Heights, Margin of Error* (Roustabouts Theatre Company); *End of The Rainbow, Quality of Life, The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, I Hate Hamlet, All My Sons, Macbeth* (Intrepid Theatre Company); *Big River, The 1940s Radio Hour, Seascape* (New Village Arts); *Chess in concert, Next to Normal, Spring Awakening* (Cabaret at the Merc Summer Series). Curtis has also worked extensively with Coronado School of The Arts. Curtis holds a BFA in Lighting Design from California Institute of The Arts.

MATT LESCAULT-WOOD (SOUND DESIGNER) is excited to be back at Diversionary. Previous credits include; *Lizard Boy, The Moors, The Loneliest Girl in the World* (Diversionary); *Eurydice* [2010 San Diego Critics Circle Nominee], *Dead Man's Cell Phone, Hickorydickory, ENRON, Eternally Bad, The Kid Thing, Bliss, Voyeurs de Venus* (Moxie); *Sweeney Todd, Cabaret, Little Shop of Horrors, A Behanding In Spokane, Man of La Mancha, Assassins, Company, Spring Awakening, Pageant, True West, Fool For Love, Sons of the Prophet, My Fair Lady, Shockheaded Peter, Spamalot* (Cygnet); *Evita, Roz and Ray* [2017 San Diego Critics Circle Nominee], *Hand To God, Black Pearl Sings, Beachtown, Fun Home* (San Diego REP); *Seascape, Stage Kiss, Lord of The Flies, Big River* (New Village Arts); *Henry V* [2014 San Diego Critics Circle Nominee] (New Fortune). Matt has a Degree in Theatrical Design and Technology from SDSU.

BLAKE MCCARTY (PROJECTION DESIGNER) is an artist and educator, as well as the founder of Blindspot Collective, a theatre company devoted to transformative new work at the intersection of advocacy, education, and entertainment. He is thrilled to be making his Diversionary Theatre debut. Elsewhere as a designer: *Spamalot, On the Twentieth Century, and The Rocky Horror Show* (Cygnet); *Evita and Beachtown* (San Diego Rep); *Shadowlands, American Rhythm, and Oz* (Lamb's Players); *Cloud Tectonics, Buddy, and Return to Forbidden Planet* (New Village Arts); and *Sunday in the Park with George* (Ion). Upcoming projects: *Qulili*, a documentary play about refugees based on the exact words of real people; *Chasing Fear*, a musical based on Turkish folklore with composer Trevor Bachman; a new play in the style of Boal's Forum Theatre exploring the lives of non-binary and gender non-conforming youth that will tour to local schools later this year; and *Angels in America* with Cygnet. In addition to his work as a director and designer, Blake has developed educational programming for organizations that include The Old Globe, La Jolla Playhouse, The New Victory Theatre, Tribeca Film Festival, and Guggenheim Museum. He holds a BFA in Film Production and an MA in Educational Theatre, both from New York University.

ABOUT DIVERSIONARY



MATT M. MORROW (EXECUTIVE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR)

Since joining Diversionary, Matt has directed the World Premiere of Gordon Leary and Julia Meinwald's musical *The Loneliest Girl in the World*, Georgette Kelly's *Ballast* (Winner, 2017 Best New Play, San Diego Critic's Circle Awards), the San Diego Premiere of Bash Doran's *The Mystery of Love and Sex*, the West Coast Premieres of Jordan Harrison's *Amazons and Their Men*, and Christopher Shinn's *Now Or Later*. Matt recently directed Caryl Churchill's

Cloud Nine with The Old Globe/USD MFA program. Prior to joining Diversionary Theatre, Matt was the Associate Artistic Director of City Theatre Company, a LORT theatre in Pittsburgh dedicated to producing work written in the past five years. 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* (Pittsburgh Post Gazette & Tribune Review's Top Ten of 2012), and Kim Rosenstock's *Tigers Be Still*.

Matt is currently a Creative Catalyst Fellow with The San Diego Foundation and La Jolla Playhouse. He has developed new work with The Sundance Theatre Institute, The Old Globe, The Banff Centre, Center Theatre Group, American Conservatory Theater, Lincoln Center, PlayPenn, and Page 73 Productions in residence at the Yale School of Drama. He 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.matmmorrow.com



JENNY CASE (MANAGING DIRECTOR)

Jenny Case has 17 years' experience in working for non-profit theatre in San Diego, including 10 years as the Associate General Manager of La Jolla Playhouse. She also served as a Producer of the 2017 *WithOut Walls* (WOW) Festival and of the wildly successful *Accomplice: San Diego*, which was performed in Little Italy in 2013. She also line produced many of the La Jolla Playhouse's New York developmental workshops including *Escape to Margaritaville, Hands on a Hardbody, Bonnie and Clyde, Little Miss Sunshine* and many others.