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# EVERYTHING — IS — WONDERFUL



**Apr 19 – May 12, 2019**

By Chelsea Marcantel

Directed by Kelsey Leigh Ervi

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**WaterTower  
Theatre**  
PRESENTS

# EVERYTHING — IS — WONDERFUL

BY CHELSEA MARCANTEL  
DIRECTED BY KELSEY LEIGH ERVI

SCENIC DESIGNER	DONNA MARQUET
COSTUME DESIGNER	BECCA JANNEY
LIGHTING DESIGNER	LEANN BURNS
SOUND DESIGNER	RYAN SWIFT JOYNER
PROPERTIES DESIGNER	HILLARY COLLAZO ABBOTT
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	CAMERON CASEY
PRODUCTION STAGE MANAGER	CARON GITELMAN GRANT*
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	JESSICA UPDIKE
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER	RYAN BURKLE
ASSISTANT SOUND DESIGNER	ANDREW DAVIS
DIALECT COACH	ANNE SCHILLING
FIGHT & INTIMACY CHOREOGRAPHER	MITCHELL STEPHENS

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Originally produced at the Contemporary American Theater Festival  
in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, in July 2017, under the leadership of  
Ed Herendeen, Producing Director, and Peggy McKowen, Associate Producing Director.

# DIRECTOR'S NOTES

"Forgiveness is a choice. It happens in an instant. Reconciliation is a journey. It may take you the rest of your life. But forgiveness must come first."  
—Jacob, *Everything is Wonderful*

There is something awe-inspiring about the Amish's ability to "speak, forgive, and forget." It's a kind of mercy that I cannot fathom. It's a special kind of person who can offer unconditional forgiveness. I am not this kind of person. I regrettably admit that I'm inclined to hold grudges; I value loyalty above most things, and betrayal is not something I easily forget.

The Amish, however, believe in moving forward. Whether in grief, anger, bitterness, or pain, they are not a people who sit long in their emotions. Their faith has taught them this. Sulking infringes upon their ability to do their work. It infringes upon their relationship with God. Of course, the problem with this concept is that we all process emotions differently. If one is not allowed to experience their emotions fully and at their own pace then a path forward is not so easily accessible.

When I first read this play, I was struck by the betrayal that Miri feels. She feels betrayed by her family, her friend, and by God. Because of this, she's never felt more alone in her life. In rehearsal, I discovered that it's not just Miri who feels betrayed by God—it's every single character. To be betrayed by something so essential to your way of life is painful and undoubtedly disorienting. This pain weighs heavy on these characters. It's a pain they have tried desperately to overcome, often through distraction or denial, making unconditional forgiveness as elusive as ever. If you don't acknowledge the pain you're feeling or the pain that you've caused someone else, there is no path to forgiveness. There is no path forward.

Throughout rehearsal—thanks to the brilliant work of my actors—I realized that even with such betrayal, there is still so much love in this play. There is profound, aching, sometimes misguided, yet genuine love expressed in this play. This love does not excuse the betrayal or the pain, but it remains ever-present, bubbling to the surface in moments of tenderness, bursting forth through laughter and innocence, or disguising itself as a hard-learned lesson. It's in these moments of love that a path towards forgiveness truly reveals itself. It's in these moments that I see the presence of God.

Directing this play in a time when our culture is deeply engaged in an important conversation about the ways in which we acknowledge and support sexual assault survivors has been an impactful experience. It's stirred me to ask how—in a community of pacifists—someone who has experienced unimaginable tragedy can move forward? In a community of faith, how can someone who has experienced betrayal surrender themselves to the will of God? How can someone heal if their pain isn't given the validity it deserves?

Thank you for choosing to spend your time at WaterTower Theatre. I'm so proud of the work my actors and designers have poured into this production and I sincerely hope you enjoy the play.

Kelsey Leigh Ervi  
Director, *Everything is Wonderful*

# CAST

Miri.....	Kelsey Milbourn
Eric .....	Seth Magill*
Abram.....	Blake McNamara
Ruth.....	Haley Evans
Esther.....	Jenny Tucker*
Jacob.....	Steven Ponders*

There will be one 15 minute intermission.

Everything is Wonderful is presented by special arrangement with SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

Please join us for a post-performance conversation with the artists  
Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons.  
Information about additional INTERSECTIONS community engagement  
programming can be found at [www.watertow theatre.org](http://www.watertow theatre.org)

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## SEASON SPONSOR



## THEATRE NAMING BENEFACTORS

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and Gary Goodwin, Janiece and Jimmy Niemann, and Stan Graner

## OTHER MAJOR FUNDING



# WHO'S WHO



**KELSEY MILBOURN**, Miri

Kelsey's proud to be back at WaterTower! She is Kansas native and TCU graduate with a BFA in musical theatre and an independent study in modern dance. She's adjunct faculty for the BFA theatre program at TCU and is a dance/fight/intimacy choreographer in the DFW area. Some of her recent work includes projects at Circle Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Undermain Theatre, Stage West, Amphibian Stage Productions, Danspik NYC, and Cape Fear Regional. She's been artistic associate of the Trinity Shakespeare Festival for a decade and a proud recipient of the Tarrant County Theatre League award.



**SETH MAGILL\***, Eric

Seth Magill is thrilled to be making his main stage debut at WaterTower Theatre after participating in two staged readings and performing with his band Home By Hovercraft. He was last seen on stage as Hamlet in Shakespeare Dallas' Hamlet. Notable credits include Marlow in She Stoops to Conquer (Shakespeare Dallas); Maks in Ironbound (Kitchen Dog Theater); Earthworm in James and the Giant Peach (Dallas Children's Theater); and Fred in A Christmas Carol (Dallas Theater Center). Seth notably co-wrote and performed in the original musical On The Eve, playing Chase Spacegrove, with the Theatre Three and Theatre

C's rock review at Joe's Pub in NYC. He is represented by the Kim Dawson Agency and received his BFA in Acting from SMU.



**BLAKE McNAMARA**, Abram

Blake McNamara is thrilled for his debut performance at WaterTower Theatre! Blake has performed around DFW as Roy Cohn (voice) in Are You Now Or Have You Ever Been..., Isaac in Hir, Woodnut in The Nether (Stage West); Kyle in Haunted (Our Productions Theatre Co.); Nancy in Space Girl, Actor C in The Grown-Up (Flexible Grey Theatre Co.); Jerrod in Say You Love Satan (Uptown Players); Cassio in Othello (Second Thought Theatre); Officer in Tartuffe, Aemilius in Titus Andronicus, Aeneas in Troilus and Cressida (Shakespeare Dallas). He's also proud to have been a part of the first readings of Human

Resource(s) as Dylan, and Magnum's Opus as Young Magnum. Blake is represented by Kim Dawson Talent Agency. @theblakemcnamara



**HALEY EVANS**, Ruth

Haley is excited to be making her WaterTower Theatre debut! Her previous work includes Charlie's Aunt (Rover Dramawerks); Inherit the Wind (Shreveport Little Theatre); Romeo and Juliet, The Amish Project, The Pavilion, Story of a Marriage (Baylor University). Haley is a recent graduate from Baylor University with a BFA in Theatre Performance.



**JENNY TUCKER\***, Esther

This is Jenny's first appearance at WaterTower Theatre. She was most recently seen as Mrs. Lovett in Sweeney Todd (LIP Service Productions). Recent credits include Casa Mañana (Evita, Fiddler on the Roof, Les Miserables); Uptown Players (La Cage aux Folles, Titanic); and Jubilee Theatre. Jenny is a proud member of Actor's Equity.

# WHO'S WHO



STEVEN PONDERS\*, Jacob

WaterTower Theatre: The Grapes of Wrath, Spring Awakening, Cabaret, Dinner with Friends, Nocturne, Book of Days. Circle Theatre: Our Town, Mistakes Were Made, Bach at Leipzig. Stage West: Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike. Trinity Shakespeare Festival: Julius Caesar, Taming of the Shrew. Theatre Three: Defiance, Frozen. Contemporary Theatre: Sylvia. Theatre Britain: Macbeth, Betrayal, The Day After the Fair. Casa Mañana: 1776. Penfold Theatre (Austin): Red. Shamblyn Theatre (Nashville): Doubt. Cherry Lane Theatre (NYC): The Unseen. Resonance Ensemble (NYC): H4, Shakespeare's Slave, The Coffee Trees.

## CHELSEA MARCANTEL, Playwright

Reared by Cajuns in southwest Louisiana, Chelsea has lived and made theatre among the tribes of the Midwest, Appalachia, the Mid-Atlantic, and now the West Coast. In 2016, she completed a Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Fellowship at The Juilliard School. Her plays, which have been produced across the U.S. and Canada, include *Airness*, *Everything is Wonderful*, *Tiny Houses*, *Ladyish*, and *Devour*. She is currently a member of the inaugural Writers' Room playwrights' unit at Geffen Playhouse. Current commissions: San Francisco Playhouse & Delaware Theatre Company.

## KELSEY LEIGH ERVI, Director

Kelsey Leigh Ervi is Associate Artistic Director for WaterTower Theatre. WTT directing credits include *The Great Distance Home* (2017 & 2018), *The Last Five Years*, *Parade in Concert*, *Silent Sky*, *Lord of the Flies*, *The Spark*, *The Santaland Diaries*, *The Tom Sawyer Project*, and *Honky*. Locally, she has also directed *From the Table* (Cry Havoc Theater); *We. Women.* (Baylor University); *Dogfight* (Junior Players/University of Texas at Dallas); *Precious Little* (Echo Theatre); *Love Me, Tinder* (FIT Festival, world premiere); *Ask Questions Later* (Rite of Passage Theatre, world premiere); and *Dani Girl* (Greyman Theatre Company). Kelsey is also an accomplished actor, having worked with many area theatre companies including Dallas Theater Center, WaterTower Theatre, Stage West, Shakespeare Dallas, Uptown Players, Echo Theatre, and Shakespeare in the Bar. Kelsey received her BFA from Baylor University and this fall will be moving to Chicago to begin her first year in the MFA Directing program at Northwestern University. [www.kelseyleighervi.com](http://www.kelseyleighervi.com)

## CAMERON CASEY, Assistant Director

Cameron Casey is a Dallas-based actor, director, painter, stage manager, musician, and playwright. Their scenic art was most recently seen on the WaterTower stage for *A Doll's House*, *Hand to God*, and *The Last Five Years*. Their directing work was most recently seen in Kitchen Dog Theater's 2018 *One Minute Play Festival*. Their other work can be found at [camerongcasey.com](http://camerongcasey.com) and on Instagram @cameronthecasey.

## CARON GITELMAN GRANT\*, Production Stage Manager

Caron is delighted to be the resident Production Stage Manager at WaterTower Theatre for the past four years, stage managing on productions such as *Hand to God*, *Dogfight*, *Bonnie & Clyde*, *Hit the Wall*, and the world premiere musical *Creep*. Local credits include *A Christmas Carol* for Dallas Theater Center and several shows for the Shakespeare Festival of Dallas. She has been Equity Stage Manager for numerous theatres around the country, and spent seven years as a Production Manager aboard the ships of the Royal Caribbean fleet, managing their entertainment program at sea. Caron graduated from Hockaday and received her BFA from Southern Methodist University. She spent over ten years performing in shows before "retiring" to behind-the-scenes. She is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

## JESSICA UPDIKE, Assistant Stage Manager

Jessica is thrilled to be working with WaterTower Theatre again after previously assistant stage managing *Guadalupe* in the Guest Room. She recently relocated from Florida where she spent the last 11 years working at Universal Studios as a performer and backstage on various seasonal events.

# WHO'S WHO

## DONNA MARQUET, Scenic Designer

Donna's work has been seen locally at Shakespeare Dallas, Circle Theatre, Jubilee Theatre, Dallas Theater Center, Kitchen Dog, Theatre Three, and Cara Mía Theatre. She has also designed for South Coast Repertory Theatre, Theatre @ Boston Court, Center Theatre Group, and Open Fist Theatre in Los Angeles. Donna has her MFA from the University of California – San Diego and currently is a faculty member at the University of North Texas. [www.donnamarquet.com](http://www.donnamarquet.com)

## BECCA JANNEY, Costume Designer

Becca Janney received her BFA from Baylor University and is currently working as the costume shop assistant at Baylor Theatre. Her previous design credits include Peter and the Starcatcher, Godspell, and Dancing at Lughnasa for Baylor Theatre. She has also designed The Crucible for the October Theatre Company in Vermont. You can find more of her work at [www.beccajanney.com](http://www.beccajanney.com) or @nordicgoddess on Instagram.

## LEANN BURNS, Lighting Designer

Leann Burns received her BA from The University of North Texas and currently works as a Visual Arts Teacher at Irving High School. Her previous design credits include A Little Night Music (Theatre Three); Hir (Stage West); The Last Five Years, Silent Sky, Pride and Prejudice, One Man, Two Guvnors, The Grapes of Wrath, and Spring Awakening (Water Tower Theatre). In addition, Leann is an accomplished Jewelry Designer and artisan.

## RYAN SWIFT JOYNER, Sound Designer

Ryan Swift Joyner is excited provide the soundscape for this fantastic production, Ryan's fifth with WaterTower. As an assistant professor of Sound Design at Baylor University, Ryan has had the opportunity to design at venues around the country and abroad including London, Los Angeles, and DC. Ryan holds a BFA from Baylor and an MFA from Cal State Fullerton. More info on Ryan's Sound, Projection, and VR/AR endeavors can be found at [www.ryanswiftjoyner.com](http://www.ryanswiftjoyner.com)

## HILLARY COLLAZO ABBOTT, Properties Designer

Hillary is delighted to be returning to WaterTower Theatre for Everything is Wonderful. Past WaterTower Theatre credits include A Doll's House, Hand to God, The Last Five Years, Bread, Native Gardens, Creep, Sexy Laundry, Lord of the Flies, Lord of the Flies Project, The Big Meal, and Outside Mullingar. Favorite productions include Bus Stop, West Side Story, The Producers (Huron Playhouse, Inc.); Footloose, and The ONU Holiday Spectacular (Freed Center). Hillary holds a BFA in Musical Theatre and a BFA in International Theatre Production from Ohio Northern University.

## ANNE SCHILLING, Dialect Coach

WaterTower Theatre: Silent Sky; Outside Mullingar; The Gospel According to... Local credits: Dallas Theater Center; Undermain Theatre; Kitchen Dog Theater; Second Thought Theatre; Contemporary Theatre of Dallas; Trinity Shakespeare Festival. Representative national credits: La MaMa Experimental Theatre Club (NYC); East West Players (LA); Native Voices at the Atrium (LA). Associate Professor of voice and speech at SMU. Masters in Voice from The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. Specialized certifications: Associate Fitzmaurice Voicework® Teacher; Alba Method Instructor. Member of AEA and VASTA.

## MITCHELL STEPHENS, Fight & Intimacy Choreographer

Mitchell Stephens is a local actor, combat, and intimacy choreographer. His work has been seen across the entire Metroplex. Mitchell recently completed a course in Stage Intimacy with Tonia Sina and Claire Warden for Intimacy Directors International in Chicago, IL, and completed the Acrobat of the Heart Actor training under the legendary Stephen Wangh. Mitchell is a proud graduate of TCU.



# BOARD & STAFF

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## WATERTOWER THEATRE STAFF

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Delynda Johnson Moravec

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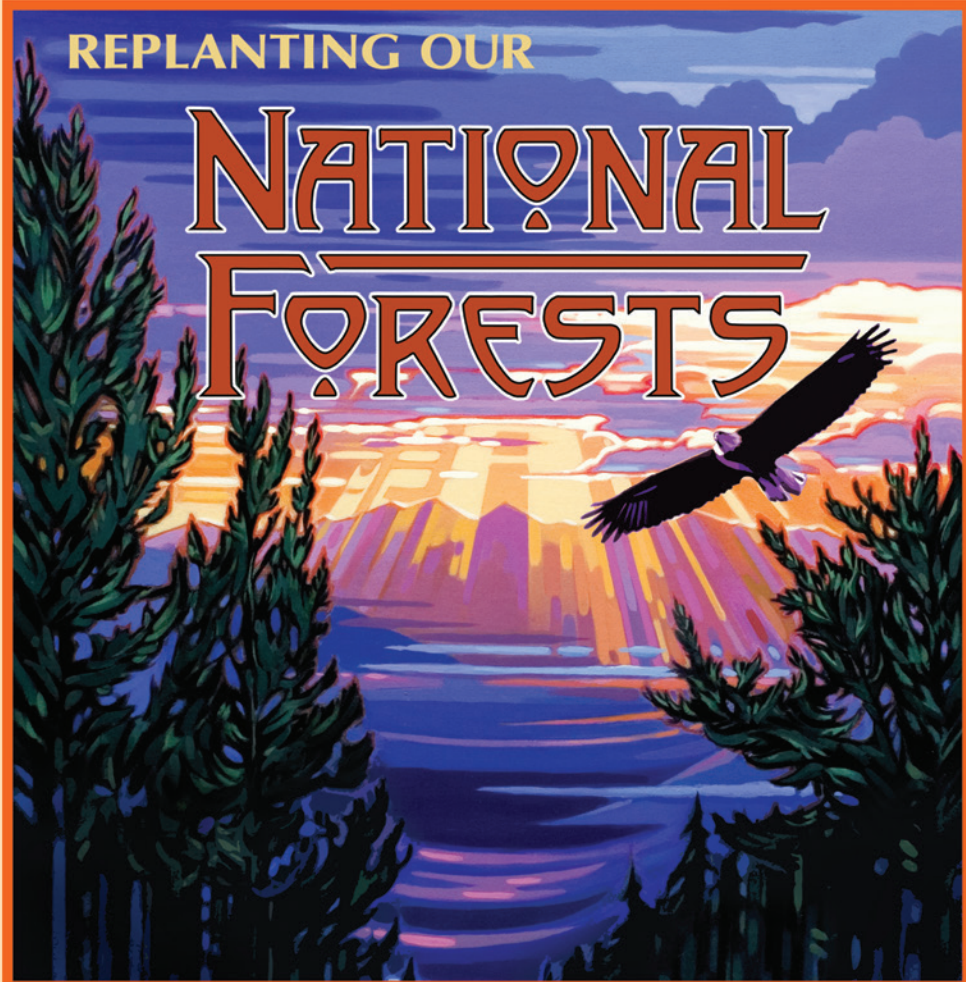
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