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A
COMEDY
BY
RICK
ABBOT

Sponsored by



Directed by
**Rachel Johns &
Daniel Austin**

A "zany love letter
to community theatre"
— THE SHOW REPORT

APRIL 17-MAY 3, 2026



SEASON 106

3rd PRODUCTION



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Play On!

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PLAY ON!

BY RICK ABBOT

Directed by
Rachel Johns
and Daniel Austin



CAST

AGGIE MANVILLE/Stage Manager Katie Cress
 GERRY DUNBAR/Director.....Daniel Locke
 HENRY BENISH/Lord Dudley..... Kenny Logsdon
 POLLY BENISH/Lady Margeret.....Natalie Primm
 MARIA "SMITTY" SMITH/Doris..... Kate McDermott
 SAUL WATSON/Dr. Rex Forbes.....Taylor Smith
 BILLY CAREWE/Stephen Sellers..... Tevin Washington
 VIOLET IMBRY/Diana LassiterOlivia Montalbano
 LOUIE PEARY/Technical DirectorBrent Mulberry
 PHYLLIS MONTAGUE/PlaywrightAbigail Hunger

PLACE: Somewhere in America
on a community theatre stage

TIME: Sometime in 1987

There will be two 10-minute intermissions.

*PLAY ON! is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French Inc. (www.concordtheatricals.com)*

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other pages reflect the period
April 1, 2025–April 1, 2026.*

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

“What’s it like being an actor?” is a question that every performer who has “trod the boards” has been asked. Audiences are curious about what exactly we do, how we memorize all those lines, and how a play comes to life.

Play On! is a wonderful depiction of the kinds of memories that run through an actor’s head when posed with these questions.

Being an actor is filled with fun, filled with stress, but most of all filled with love. A love for the kinds of worlds and the kinds of people that can only be created on stage. A love for the process of bringing these worlds and people to life! There is a very good reason a show such as this is called a “play.” To play is to do something merely for the fun of it, for the amusement it brings you. The joys and wonders of the theatre never cease to amuse, especially in comedy. And the laughter goes threefold for a show that is so relatable to the actors on stage.

The truth is that every character an actor ever plays is based on someone real, someone we know, someone we’ve met. Every scenario is one we’ve been through, more or less. Every emotion is one we have felt. To act is to draw from life experience and tonight’s show is no exception. As actors, we’ve all worked with the many characters and personalities you will get to know as this show unfolds. We’ve all been those people, too. As someone who has been onstage since a young age, I certainly can remember moments when I was the diva, the space cadet, the try-hard, the cast clown, and many more! Perhaps that is why I have come to love this show so much: because behind every punchline and mishap, I see myself and the many friends I’ve made through the theatre. I see the stress, the laughter, the bonding, and of course, the love of theatre that always keeps you coming back for more.

Play On! captures just what it’s like being in a community theatre production, for better or for worse. Whether you, too, are an actor, we hope you enjoy stepping into the realities of the theatre world. It may not always be perfect, but the joy of creation— and your joy in witnessing—keep us all coming back. Hold on to your heads: you’re in for a wacky ride!

— Rachel Johns, April 2026

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Meissner
Sandra Myers
Farah Nesargi
Mildred Gloria Pepe
Janet Perry
Laura Jane & Buck
Pittman

COMPANY BIOS

DANIEL AUSTIN (Co-Director) is always happy to return “home” to Theatre Jacksonville, after previously directing *Desperate Measures* and *Pippin*. Other directing credits include *Small Mouth Sounds*, *How I Learned to Drive*, *Puffs*, (The 5 & Dime), *Circle Mirror Transformation* (MOCA Jacksonville), and more. Stage credits include *Something Rotten!*, *Clue*, *Peter and the Starcatcher*, *Mame*, (Theatre Jacksonville), *Assassins* (The 5 & Dime), *Angels in America*, *HAIR* (PBTs), *Merrily We Roll Along* (ABET), and others. He has been the host of “Hometown” on WJCT and chosen as “Best Actor” in Folio Weekly. Daniel teaches and directs shows at The Bolles School (Go Bulldogs!) and is currently appearing in *The Pillowman* with Lumen Repertory Theatre. He has felt joy and gratitude for the opportunity to support Rachel with this production and looks forward to being directed by her one day. He thanks the wonderful team at TJ, the dedicated cast members for trusting his ideas, and his loving partner, Ron.

KATIE CRESS (Aggie Manville/Stage Manager) still can’t quite believe she is making her stage debut. While this may be her first time on the stage, Katie has been volunteering backstage around the Jacksonville theatre community for many years. You may have seen her in productions such as *Packing Up Polly* (TJ), *Puffs* (5&Dime), *A Doll’s House* (TJ), *Dracula: A Comedy of Terrors* (TJ), and many more. She would like to thank Rachel and Daniel for giving her the opportunity to be onstage. Most of all, she would like to thank her husband, Adam, for all the patience and support he provided through it all.

ABIGAIL HUNGER (Phyllis Montague/Playwright) is trembling like an inbred Chihuahua with joy at the opportunity to appear on the Theatre Jacksonville stage once again! You may have seen her in *The Last Night of Ballyhoo*, *Wolf Hall*, *Savannah Sipping Society*, *I Hate Hamlet*, *Guess Who’s Coming To Dinner*, *Mame*, or *Picasso at The Lapin Agile*. But in case you haven’t, don’t worry—you’re here tonight, so she forgives you! When she isn’t playing an insufferable brat on stage, you’ll find her doing pretty much the same thing in real life. She enjoys laughing vigorously at her own jokes, wrecking people’s diets with her culinary endeavors, and going to bed early. Though difficult to rival her love of appallingly stinky cheese, loud florals, and the sound of her own voice, Abi’s true love is the theatre—a hobby she has indulged in from the tender age of three, thanks to the unwavering support of her saintly parents, Kevin and Wendi Hunger.

She has also been supported in her performing habit by her fiancé Mike who, though somewhat later to the party than her parents, is nonetheless making a valiant effort to compensate for his lack of tenure with enthusiasm. She would like to thank Taylor Smith for being willing to put up with her nonsense for the last 11 years (and counting) and honoring her by agreeing

to do yet another show with her. She is humbled and immensely grateful to Daniel and Rachel for this opportunity and their invaluable tutelage. And lastly, but not least-ly, she would like to heap her gratitude and admiration on each cast and crew member involved in this show – every single one of them is hilarious, talented, and slightly unhinged in the best way possible, and have made the rehearsal process a true joy!

DANIEL LOCKE (Gerry Dunbar/Director) is thrilled to return to the stage at Theatre Jacksonville. He has long loved the energy, humor, and community of live theatre. Daniel was last seen onstage as Rev. David Marshall Lee in *The Foreigner*, James and 5 other characters in *On the Market* and as Mr. Kraler in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Offstage, when not volunteering at TJ, Daniel is an ordained pastor serving St. Mark's Lutheran Church, where storytelling, creativity, and community are also at the heart of his work. He is grateful to Rachel and Daniel for this opportunity to join an incredible cast for an honest and comedic look inside the beauty and chaos of live theatre. He is especially grateful to his wife, Sarah, as well as his two amazing children for their encouragement and support! All right, positions, everyone. Let's take it from the top.

KENNY LOGSDON (Henry Benish/Lord Dudley) This is Kenny's 11 ½ performance at Theatre Jacksonville (from 2005's *God's Man in Texas* to 2023's *Four Weddings and an Elvis*) and he is truly honored to be cast in such a fun play-within-a-play. When not on stage, Kenny's passion is to work in film and commercials, usher, volunteer, and act like a City Planner (thank you CoJ - HCDD). He would like to thank the directing team of Rachel and Daniel for putting such a great cast with fantastic people in the right spot with the right attitude! It is all Fiddlesticks and Balderdash...

KATE MCDERMOTT (Maria "Smitty" Smith/Doris the Maid) is thrilled to be performing in their first show at Theatre Jacksonville as Smitty in *Play On!* They have played roles such as Susan in *Tick, Tick...Boom!*, and Elle Woods in *Legally Blonde*, and are so happy to now be a part of the community at TJ. When they aren't at rehearsal they enjoy spending time with their friends, sister, and cat, Peaches. Kate would like to thank their friends, partner, and family for the support, as well as everyone at TJ for making this show a possibility. Break a leg to the cast and crew!

OLIVIA MONTALBANO (Violet Imbry/Diana Lassiter) This is Olivia's first show with Theatre Jacksonville, and she is elated to take part in this city's longstanding pillar for the arts. Miss Montalbano graduated with her BFA in Theatre Arts from Jacksonville University. When she's not performing she takes pride in costuming local productions and spending her mornings as a barista. Her previous acting credits include Charlotte in Orange Park Community Theatre's production of *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella*, as well as Jacksonville University's production of *The Crucible* in which she played Abigail Williams. Her costuming could be seen onstage during *The 5 & Dime Theatre's* productions of *Urinetown* and *POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive*. She would like to thank her big sister, Jenna, for her unwavering love and support. She would also like to thank her partner, Dalton, for being her biggest cheerleader. She wouldn't be here without his steadfast belief and encouragement.

BRENT MULBERRY (Louie Peary/Technical Director) is a storyteller, educator, and creator whose work spans stage, screen, and internet. A YouTuber and podcaster, he creates content that blends humor, fandom, and thoughtful conversations, bringing creativity and curiosity into everyday life, shaping both lessons and laughter in equal measure. In the theater world, Brent serves as the sound designer here at Theatre Jax where he enjoys crafting immersive experiences and helping performers shine.

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This season, he has been thrilled to be able to step out from behind the sound board and into other roles here at TJ, having most recently been seen on stage in *Barefoot in the Park* and directing *Packing Up Polly*. Brent is beyond thrilled to blend his worlds stepping into the acting role of a tech director in this play within a play. He would like to thank his family for their constant support, especially the love of his life, Penny; and he hopes you enjoy the show!

NATALIE PRIMM (Polly Benish/Lady Margaret) is thrilled to be making her first appearance on the Theatre Jacksonville stage! She wants to thank the directors for giving her this amazing opportunity, and all the *Play On!* cast and crew for their spectacular talents, patience, and sweet spirits. Her previous performances in Jacksonville include Vernadette Sims in *Sweet Delilah Swim Club*, Sister Berthe in *The Sound of Music*, Ozelle Meeks in *Southern Fried Funeral*, Dorothy Fry in *Southern Fried Funeral* and *Southern Fried Nuptials*, Ruth Bridgers in *Beware the House on Haunted Hill* and Sister David in *Sister Act*. She is so grateful to her husband David, and her phenomenal family and friends for their encouragement and support! Natalie is living proof that God answers prayer and dreams can come true—even at 70!! Colossians 3:23-24

TAYLOR SMITH (Saul Watson/Dr. Rex Forbes) is excited to be back with his Theatre Jacksonville friends for his first performance of 2026! Last year, he performed onstage as Bill Livingston in *The Women of Lockerbie*, where he met then-castmate Rachel Johns. Rachel's infectious enthusiasm and love of theatre was immediately apparent, and after learning she and Daniel Austin were directing *Play On!* together, Taylor knew he had to join in on the fun. He is grateful to his friends and family for always encouraging (or tolerating...) his constant silliness, as well as his magnificent dog Maxwell, whose boundless energy is rivaled only by his affection. Lastly, Taylor would like to dedicate his performance to his lovely sister Mikayla and her wonderful husband Matthew as they celebrate the arrival of their very first child, Arden Bowen! Uncle Tay can't wait to meet his favorite niece!!

TEVIN WASHINGTON (Billy Carewe/Stephen Sellers) is thrilled to be making his Theatre Jacksonville debut alongside such an immensely talented company! Theatre credits include Cord Ellam in *Oklahoma*, Alan Adale in *A Somewhat True Tale of Robinhood*, Warren Sheffield in *Meet Me in St. Louis*, Dr. Max Wilson in *Memory Lane*, and Dr. Grimwig in *Oliver!*. Offstage, he enjoys fashion illustration, design, and garment construction with an affinity for the art of tailoring. He also spends his time exploring the intersection of science and creativity through baking. By pairing different flavors and textures, he hopes to create experiences that bring comfort, joy, and inspires others to be a bit more advantageous with desserts. He would like to thank Theatre Jacksonville for this incredible opportunity, both

directors Rachel and Daniel for the wisdom and support they've provided, as well as his fellow cast mates for such a memorable experience.

SUSAN ROCHE (Stage Manager) is excited to be working at Theatre Jacksonville again after a few (too many) years, but this time she's backstage instead of on stage. She was last seen on TJ's stage back in 2020 in *Something Rotten* (ensemble); her favorite role at TJ, however, was that sarcastic, rapping, sunglass wearing nun, Sister Mary Lazarus, in *Sister Act*. With more than 20 years in the Northeast Florida theatre community, Susan has become an expert at navigating theatrical chaos—which made *Play On!* feel more like a professional homecoming than a challenge. She has worn just about every hat possible in a theatre: actor, stage manager, sound technician, board member, house manager, assistant director, photographer, and videographer. If something goes wrong onstage, backstage, offstage, or in the parking lot... she's probably dealt with it.

Her experience surviving real-life last minute script rewrites, cue mishaps, and actors spontaneously "improvising" prepared her well for this production's joyful tribute to everything that shouldn't happen in a rehearsal or show. When she is not chasing props or solving problems no one admits they caused, she can be found at home playing with her pups, Midget and Kiera. She is thrilled to help bring *Play On!* to life—and grateful that, for once, all the chaos was actually in the script. Many thanks to her friends and family, to TJ for saying "welcome back," and especially to her folks for their support.

TECHNICAL PRODUCTION TEAM

Co-Directors	Rachel Johns & Daniel Austin
Production Manager	Michelle Leigh
Lighting Design	Johnny Pettegrew
Sound Design	Brent Mulberry
Costume Design	Classic Costumes
Graphic Design	Green Onion Creative LLC
Stage Manager	Susan Roche
Assistant Stage Managers	Kaleigh Ervin, Aspen Krill
Light Board Operator	Squirrel Pitts
Sound Board Operator	Mark Rubens
Wardrobe Crew	Lourdes Acosta
Set Crew	Aspen Krill, Daniel Locke, Johnny Pettegrew

JUNIOR Mainstage

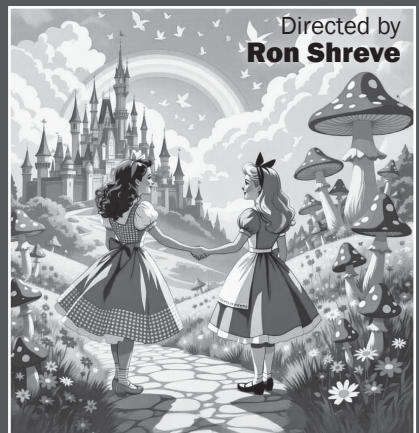
Theatre Jacksonville Education Department Presents

The WIZARD of WONDERLAND

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All shows 6:30pm



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Adapted by Patrick Barlow

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January 16, 17*, 21, 22, 23, 24*, 28, 29, 30*, 31*, 2027

"Ingenious! A dizzy delight!"

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