



ANNA DEVEARE SMITH'S

LET ME DOWN EASY

DIRECTED BY ZACH RIVERA • ASSISTANT DIRECTION BY RACHEL JONES

Additional Production Support from Rebecca & Fernando Farinas



MARCH 17 - 25, 2023

The 5 & Dime is funded in part by the City of Jacksonville and the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville, Inc., as well as the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture, the Florida Council on Arts and Culture, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



IN RESIDENCY AT



THE FLORIDA BALLET
JACKSONVILLE

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

“Cherish the moment”

These words appear in one of our monologues and it's something that I'd like everyone to take with them from this show. Let me tell you a story.

In February of this year my grandmother passed away. A few years ago it was my brother, and before that, my grandfathers and my uncle. When we grieve, we question life and its purpose. We ask things like “Why do bad things happen to good people?” and other things we'll never fully understand. The only thing we can do is to cherish those around us and the moments they share with us.

Have you ever been to a cemetery? We think of cemeteries and we think of death and the purpose of it all. It's not as gloomy as that, though. Frankly, it's full of LIFE. Trees, bugs, loved ones paying respect. Our play is the same. We see this play as relating to death, dying, and healthcare but just like a gravesite with a tree growing from it, it asks us to celebrate the moments of living we have with each other.

Please take these moments and celebrate your loved ones. We invite you to listen to these verbatim interviews by the illustrious Anna Deveare-Smith and enjoy the wonderful docu-theatre piece we've prepared for you. Enjoy!

Zach Rivera
Director

THE 5 & DIME PRESENTS

LET ME DOWN EASY

written by **ANNA DEVEARE SMITH**
directed by **ZACH RIVERA**
assistant direction by **RACHEL JONES**

Onstage **MARCH 17 - 25** in the Black Box at The Florida Ballet

This play is performed with one 15-minute intermission.

THE CAST

KATE MCMANUS

Lance Armstrong, Eve Ensler, Kiersta Kurtz-Burke, Peter Gomes

MARIELLA PERALTA

Brent Williams, Michael Bentt, Ruth Katz, Eduardo Bruera

MADELENE SKINNER

James Cone, Lorraine Coleman, Trudy Howell, Hazel Merritt

SHELBY ELLIS

Elizabeth Streb, Phil Pizzo, Joel Siegel, Matthieu Ricard

MA BONES

Sally Jenkins, Lauren Hutton, Susan Youens, Ann Richards

THE CREW

Director	ZACH RIVERA
Assistant Director	RACHEL JONES
Stage Manager	VALERIE FRETZ
Production Manager	SAM HANNIGAN
Scenic Designers	BRADLEY AKERS, SAM HANNIGAN & DEL WARD
Lighting Designer	GABE BARNERT
Costume Designer	BETHANY PAOLINI
Props Designer	ELIZABETH RIVERA
Technical Director	DEL WARD
Sound Designer	ERIK ANDERSON

LET ME DOWN EASY is produced through special arrangement with Dramatists Play Service.

The use of photography, audio, or video recording is ***strictly prohibited***.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

KATE MCMANUS is a Jacksonville native and Florida State University alum. This is her second production with The 5 & Dime, having previously played Lucy in *The Walls*. Kate works in the Simulation Center at Mayo Clinic, helping to train medical professionals by acting in various scenarios. Many of the simulations involve crying, and Kate finds this cathartic. Kate is honored to be performing in this production of this play by one of her favorite performing artists, and has thoroughly enjoyed deep-diving into her four characters, especially the late Reverend Peter Gomes.

MARIELLA PERALTA is a junior Theatre BFA Major studying at Jacksonville University. Some of her recent credits include Elizabeth Proctor in *The Crucible*, Lucy Westenra in *Dracula*, and Mrs. White in *Clue!* Mariella is happy to be involved in this production as it's given her an opportunity to share real stories like her own, and she hopes you enjoy the show!

A storyteller by trade, **MADELENE SKINNER** makes her stage debut on The 5 & Dime's stage. Her interest in theatre started more than twenty years ago. She is a seasoned marketing and communications professional who is passionate about community service. She currently serves on the Board as Secretary for The 5 & Dime and is also involved with professional organizations.

SHELBY ELLIS is making her 5 & Dime debut in *Let Me Down Easy*. At its opening, she will have just wrapped her role as Queen Guinevere in *Camelot and Camellittle* at Artist Connection Theatre. She has always loved acting, costuming, make-up, and directing; she taught Drama, wrote and directed performances, and sponsored Drama Club at Greenwood School for a few years. She still works at Greenwood teaching Financial Literacy, organizing events, managing social media, and helping out with the Drama program however she can. In her spare time, Shelby enjoys various arts and crafts, being outside, traveling, reading, playing video games, and spending time with her husband, Zach Bouchelle, and their 7 pets. She'd like to thank Zach for always supporting her pursuit of the arts and Zach

Rivera for casting her in this incredible show.

"MA BONES" is a locally published author and writing facilitator with "Hope at Hand". Ma has self produced a collection of short stories titled "A Gathering of Incandescence". Current projects include working on a collaborative anthology set to be released by "Deadlast Press" later this year. Outside of writing Ma has performed on stage with the 5 and Dime before, and is grateful to be part of such a phenomenal crew of fellow creatives.

ZACH RIVERA (Director) is a director, performer, and theatre educator based in Northeast Florida. Select directing credits include: *Pecking Order* & Climbing the *Good Walls* (29SPWC NYC), *Adapt or Die* (The Tank NYC), and *Native Gardens* (The 5&Dime). He is extremely proud to be working with The 5 & Dime on this important play. When he is not directing he is teaching grades 6-12 theatre at Greenwood School down the road. He wants to thank Bradley for the opportunity, Gabe for lighting his world (literally!), and his wife Elizabeth for supporting him in everything he does.

RACHEL JONES (Assistant Director) is thrilled to make her assistant directing debut with this cast and creative team of *Let Me Down Easy!* Rachel was last seen acting as Yvette in *CLUE* at Theatre Jax; dancing with the Bold City Contemporary Ensemble; acting, writing and directing in The 5 & Dime's very Short Attention Span theatre festival; and acting in *ART HEIST* at the Times Union Center. Rachel studied theatre at U Florida and DASOTA. Rachel recently earned her MBA (UNF) and MA in International Management & Intercultural Communication (TH Koeln & U Warsaw) and serves on the board of The 5 & Dime.

VALERIE FRETZ (Stage Manager) is in the Douglas Anderson School of the Arts performance theatre program. Her last work was as Assistant Stage Manager for DA's production of *Chicago*. She says watching this show evolve has been an unforgettable experience and she has learned so much from everyone involved. This is her very first 5 & Dime production, and she is thrilled to

ABOUT THE COMPANY

be doing what she loves with such a talented group of artists. She would like to thank her family, friends, and the entire creative team for this incredible opportunity and support. Valerie hopes you love this vital and moving show just as much as she does.

GABRIEL BARNERT (Lighting Designer)

excited to be working on his first show at The 5 & Dime, especially alongside his best friend and director, Zach! He is a recent Flagler College graduate where he received his BA in Theatre Arts and minored in Arts Administration. Gabriel's work spreads from stage management, lighting, set, and sound design. Some of his past favorite shows he's worked on are *Spelling Bee*, *The Mountaintop*, *SpongeBob Jr.*, and *The Revolutionists*. He would like to thank his family, extraordinary girlfriend, and Zach for this wonderful opportunity. Enjoy the show!

BETHANY PAOLINI (Costume Designer)

As a proud Theatre graduate of Florida

State University, Bethany has applied her theatrical design, direction and performance skills in local community theatres such as Limelight Theatre, Players by the Sea, The 5 & Dime and Act II Players. Some productions she has costume designed include *Cabaret*, *Heathers: The Musical*, *A Shayna Maidel*, *Fun Home* and *Oleanna*. Some of Bethany's more recent performance work includes the roles of Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd*, Heather Chandler in *Heathers: The Musical*, Myrrhina in *Lysistrata* and Cherie in *Bus Stop*. She also has over 10 years of directing and technical design experience, both in the community and professionally, with actors and artists of all ages. But most importantly, what makes Bethany most proud is her role of being the mother of two beautiful children, and the wife of the most supportive husband, Mr. Adam Paolini, to whom she owes her success.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Florida Ballet, Martha Lemire, Del Ward, Peter Guadagnino

Rebecca & Fernando Farinas

SET Studios, Jocelyn Geronimo

St. Augustine High School, Jill Tamillo

Daniel Starling

Krysten Bennett

Cathy Powers Jones



www.The5andDime.org

We tell stories that **engage, inspire, entertain, and challenge** audiences, nurturing a rich artistic culture in Jacksonville.

It's support from people like you that allows us to produce quality, thought-provoking theatre, and each and every contribution we receive ensures our ability to continue bringing change-making storytelling to the local stage.

Many thanks to those who have so generously given!

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**List reflects contributions received
March 16, 2022-March 15, 2023.*



The 5 & Dime tells stories that **engage, inspire, entertain, and challenge** audiences, nurturing a rich artistic culture in Jacksonville.

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Production Manager

Zach Rivera
House Manager

Elizabeth Rivera
Bar Manager

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A group of artists and friends came together with a common goal: to make a change in the Jacksonville cultural arts community. From this, THE 5 & DIME, a theatre company, was born. Founded with the hope of facilitating diverse opportunities and a supportive environment for collaboration, THE 5 & DIME is a group of passionate theatre artists who've come together in the urban core to develop a place where all kinds of art happens. The founding members and board of directors offer an invitation to all Jacksonville artists to join in the mission to stimulate this city's potential for the rich culture local audiences and art lovers have been craving and deserve. It started with a simple question, ***"Why not us?"*** And so we offer this: ***"Why not YOU?"***



THE **FLORIDA** BALLET

JACKSONVILLE

The Florida Ballet enriches and inspires the cultural landscape of our community through the education and art of classical ballet.



www.FloridaBallet.org