

Season 2026 sponsored in part by **Harry Reagan**
THE 5 & DIME and **Eli & Martha Bekkum**,
with support by **Esther & Cam Estes**, present

BODY AWARENESS

a play by **Annie Baker**



directed by **AJ HEEKIN**

APRIL 10-18 2026 | in residency at the **FLORIDA BALLET**



A thriving creative economy enhances the quality of life for us all. Supported in part by the Merit-Based Cultural Service Grant Program, administered by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville with funding from the City of Jacksonville and our elected officials, we extend our gratitude to all partners who make this possible. Sponsored in part by the State of Florida through the Division of Arts and Culture and the National Endowment for the Arts.

LIVE THEATRE is the art of now.
What happens tonight will never happen again. Enjoy!



Join us for a ONE NIGHT ONLY fundraiser!

SUN, MAY 10 @ 5PM | A Night of Song and Stories Celebrating 15 Years

THE 5 & DIME SONGBOOK

Hosted
by
**JOSH
WALLER**



THE 5 & DIME tells stories that engage, inspire, entertain, and challenge audiences, nurturing a rich artistic culture in Jacksonville. **We believe that now, more than ever, it's important for theatre to be a space for bold and diverse stories** — the kind The 5 & Dime has brought to our community since its founding.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU

The following people and organizations helped in ways both large and small, but each has made a significant impact on the quality of this production. To them we offer our most sincere thanks.

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BODY AWARENESS

book by **Annie Baker**

directed by **AJ Heekin**

THE CAST

(in order of appearance)

PHYLLIS..... Cynthia Riegler
JOYCE Erin Barnes
JARED Tyler Lewis Wardle
FRANK Sam Cobean

This performance has no intermission.

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

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director..... AJ Heekin
Stage Manager Jillian Cote
Scenic Designer / Master Carpenter / Scenic Charge Maya Williams
Costume Designer..... Jenny Tammera
Prop Master Kate McManus
Lighting Designer Peter Guadagnino
Sound Designer..... AJ Heekin
Production Manager / Technical Director Ryan Walker
Crew Drew Bader, Miles Genaovargas, Jenny Tammera
Box Office Manager Krysten Bennett
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BODY AWARENESS is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc. www.concordtheatricals.com

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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

My relationship to this play began nearly twenty years ago, when I was almost cast in its New York premiere. It passed me by then, as so many things in a life in the theatre do. So when, by some strange coincidence, I was asked to direct it here at The 5 & Dime, it felt as though a long-dormant conversation had resumed. Some stray stars had aligned. And I found myself wondering: why this play, and why now?

“The unexamined life is not worth living.” You’ll excuse me for being Socratic, but theatre, at its best, is an act of examination. *Body Awareness* is an examination of that examination. It asks: What does it mean to be seen? How does being seen shape who we believe ourselves to be? And what responsibility do we carry when we truly see someone else?

The title suggests a focus on the physical self, but the play quickly reveals how inseparable our bodies are from identity, desire, politics, and love. These characters are not mouthpieces for ideology. They are people. Funny, flawed, yearning. Trying to live honestly inside complicated skins. They stumble toward connection. They misunderstand one another. They hurt each other. They try again. When they ask what it all means, the answers remain frustratingly elusive.

But the absence of easy answers is not a failure. It’s the point. The play invites us to sit in ambiguity, to notice how humor slips out of discomfort, and to recognize how often our longing to be understood collides with our fear of exposure.

As you watch, I encourage you to lean into the quiet moments. Notice what shifts when someone feels seen ... or unseen. And allow yourself the same grace we hope to extend to these characters. If, in witnessing them, you catch a glimpse of yourself or someone you love? So much the better.

— AJ Heekin

ABOUT THE CAST



CYNTHIA RIEGLER (*Phyllis*) finds this role uncomfortably familiar in all the right ways. By day, she works in real estate, where reading people (and rooms) matters as much as reading contracts. She appeared most recently as Leanne in *Puffs* here at The 5 & Dime and as Lizzy in *Packing Up Polly* at Theatre Jacksonville. She’s grateful to a director who trusts her (thank you, AJ!), a cast that pushes her to be her best, and a crew who makes everyone look great. And to Erin for the soup! Her performance is dedicated to her parents and biggest fans: her mother, cheering her on from beyond; and her father, proudly sitting this one out.



ERIN BARNES (*Joyce*) is delighted to be back at The 5 & Dime for *Body Awareness*, a play that gently (and hilariously) reminds us how complicated it is to be human in our own skin. Previous roles at The 5 & Dime include Harriet in *POTUS*, Tracey in *Sweat*, and a joyful whirlwind of characters, including Xavia, Hannah, and more, in *Puffs*.

By day, Erin is a music teacher, singer, pianist, and professional chaos coordinator (aka middle school teacher); by night, she's usually somewhere in the theatre, living her best life. Endless gratitude to the brilliant team bringing this story to life, and to her sweet husband Matt and their four amazing kiddos, who keep her grounded, laughing, and fully aware of what matters most.



TYLER LEWIS WARDLE (*Jared*) is thrilled to return to The 5 & Dime after several years away, having most recently worked with them on the crew of *The Walls* in 2018. He then went on to found Self Produced Theatre, an independent theatre company that was open from 2017 to 2020. After a five-year break from theatre, Tyler recently returned to the stage as Robert Martin in *Emma* and Caradoc in *Arthur's Stone: Merlin's Fire* (both at Artist Connection Theatre). He is now pursuing a career as a full-time entertainer, writer, drag queen, and DoorDash driver, so please see him after the show if he can borrow some gas money to get home.



SAM COBEAN (*Frank*) is from New Mexico and still hasn't figured out how people in the South dry off after a shower. Recent theatre credits include 12 different roles in *The Baltimore Waltz*, Major Marlowe in Jason Woods' *The Little Toy Shoppe*, Dr. Frank-N-Furter and Brad in *The Rocky Horror Show*, Truman Capote in *Tru*, and Charlie Brown in *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. Sam also enjoys working on camera as the potential for being blackmailed is quite thrilling. He's immensely grateful to his loves, Lisa and Little Bean, for their passion, support, and towels. Sam is accepting donations of electric hair dryers.

ABOUT THE CREATIVE AND PRODUCTION TEAMS

AJ HEKIN (*Director & Sound Designer*) AJ recently moved back to Jacksonville from NYC, where he was an actor, director, and playwright. He wrote and directed *Pocket Queens* there, which won first prize at the Bareknuckle Theatre Festival and was subsequently produced in Seoul, South Korea. He worked with esteemed playwrights at the Lark Play Development Center, and was a finalist for Soho Rep's Writer Director Lab. He received his BFA from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, where he wrote and directed his first full-length play, *Songs I Never Heard with You*. He sends his love and gratitude to his partner, Travis. Thank you for keeping the babies safe while I'm out making art.

JILLIAN COTE (*Stage Manager*) is ecstatic to be a part of another fabulous show at The 5 & Dime! Although you'll rarely see her on stage, you may have seen her in tech crews across North Florida: *Ride the Cyclone* (The 5 & Dime - stage manager), *Chicago* (GTC - stage manager), *The Baltimore Waltz* (The 5 & Dime - stage crew), *Bright Star* (Act II Players, production manager), *Ripcord* (PBTS - stage manager), *Alice by Heart* (The 5 & Dime - stage manager), and *Sister Act* (PBTS - stage crew). She is incredibly

grateful for her brilliant director, her unbelievably talented cast, and the next opportunity to cross her path. Does it smell like meatloaf and glitter in here?

MAYA WILLIAMS (*Scenic Designer / Master Carpenter / Scenic Charge*) is thrilled to work as the scenic designer, master carpenter, and scenic charge! This is her first realized scenic design, and she couldn't be more excited. You may have seen her work in other shows around Jax such as *Jekyll and Hyde* (scenic charge, PBTS), *The Revolutionists* (scenic artist, PBTS), or *Funny Girl* (scenic artist, PBTS). Some other credits include *Julius Caesar* (Scranton Shakespeare Fest, production stage manager), and *A Doll's House* (deck stage manager, Theatre Jax). She wants to thank everyone who helped her build this set, and who has supported her in theatre ... especially her mom!

JENNY TAMMERA (*Costume Designer*) is happy to be back at The 5 & Dime! You might have seen her ludicrous legs-in-a-box in *POTUS*, majestic money-fans in *Urinetown*, amazing afros in *the ripple the wave that carried me home*, horribly headless pigeons in *Lizzie*, delicious decoy-desserts in *The Baltimore Waltz*, plethora of painted-hats in *Gutenberg*, or piles of plucked pages in *Alice By Heart*! She can sling a mean paintbrush, sweet-talk a hot-glue gun, and build printing presses out of cardboard. Never underestimate the power of the arts!

KATE McMANUS (*Props Master*) is a Jacksonville-based actor, writer, and director who is excited to join *Body Awareness* as Props Master at The 5 & Dime. A longtime collaborator with the company, she previously directed *The Baltimore Waltz* and has appeared onstage in productions including *The Walls* and *Let Me Down Easy*. Her additional props experience includes *True West* with Whitmore Eclectic Theatre Co. in Los Angeles.

PETER GUADAGNINO (*Lighting Designer*) is a Pennsylvania native who has worked for the Florida Ballet as a facility manager and various technical aspects for productions for nine seasons. He has supported the The 5 & Dime for five seasons from volunteering to lighting designs and set construction.

RYAN WALKER (*Production Manager / Technical Director*) is a Jacksonville native who has worked for local community theatres and performance venues in the region over the last 10 years. He has experience working in every role in theatre that doesn't involve being on stage and has served as a production manager, stage manager, lighting designer, sound engineer, box office manager, board operator, and more but is fully enjoying putting his mixed skill set to good use while serving as The 5 & Dime's technical director. This is Ryan's third season working with The 5 & Dime but you may have previously seen him working events for Limelight Theatre, Sing Out Loud, Tale Tellers, Ancient City Poets, and various other organizations in the Northeast Florida area. You may also occasionally see his "assistant tech director" Maeve (AKA his daughter) following him around and insisting on helping with everything while she learns the tricks of the trade at a young age.

UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS

MAY 29 — JUNE 13 **THE LEGEND OF GEORGIA McBRIDE**

JULY 31 — AUGUST 8 **AMERICAN SON**

SEPTEMBER 18—27 **I AM MY OWN WIFE**

OCTOBER 23 — NOVEMBER 7 **CARRIE the Musical**

SUPPORT THE 5 & DIME

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 the Following Individuals and Entities Whose Generous Financial Contributions Have Supported The 5 & Dime in the Past Year

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** List reflects contributions received April 1, 2025 — March 31, 2026.*



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www.FloridaBallet.org