

Written & Composed by

Jason Robert Brown



Dear Austin Theatre & Ground Floor Theatre present

# The Last Five Years



## **THE LAST FIVE YEARS CAST**

Catherine Hiatt (ASL) ..... **KRISSY LEMON**

Catherine Hiatt (Eng)..... **CAROLYN O'BRIEN**

Jamie Wellerstein (Eng) ..... **JOHN CHRISTOPHER**

Jamie Wellerstein (ASL) ..... **SAÚL LÓPEZ**

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## **THE LAST FIVE YEARS ORCHESTRA**

**Conducted by Dr Ellie Jarret Shattles**

Piano..... **DR ELLIE JARRETT SHATTLES**

Violin ..... **DANIELLA LÁNCARA DE ESPINOZA**

Cello 1..... **HECTOR MORENO**

Cello 2..... **ISABEL TWERASER**

Guitar ..... **STEVIE TRUDELL**

Bass ..... **ALEX MENDOZA**



# The Last Five Years

Music, Books & Lyrics by  
**JASON ROBERT BROWN**

Directed by **DR. BRIAN CHESLIK & LISA SCHEPS**

Choreography by **MERVIN P. O'BRYANT**

Musical Direction by **DR. ELLIE JARRETT SHATTLES**

*Intimacy Director* ..... **ANDY GRAPKO**  
*Scenic Design* ..... **GARY THORNSBERRY**  
*Lighting Design* ..... **AMBER WHATLEY**  
*Costume Design* ..... **DESIREÉ HUMPRIES**  
*Sound Design* ..... **RODD SIMONSEN**  
*Properties Design* ..... **CB FELLER**  
*Production Stage Manager*..... **KELSEY MORINGY**  
*Stage Manager* ..... **TAYLOR FLANAGAN**  
*Technical Director* ..... **DEMETRI BELLINI**  
*Sound Board Operator* ..... **EZRA ROSE**  
*Graphic Design* ..... **ERICA MORENO**  
*Photographer* ..... **CINDY ELIZABETH**  
*Press Representative*..... **MOTLEY CREW MEDIA/NICOLE SHIRO**  
*Social Media Marketing* ..... **ANDREA NUÑEZ**  
*ASL Consultant* ..... **SANDRA MAE FRANK**  
*EDI Consultant* ..... **NICOLE BELL**

**December 2—18, 2022**

**THE LAST FIVE YEARS**

Originally Produced for the New York stage by Arielle Tepper and Marty Bell

Originally Produced by Northlight Theatre; Chicago, IL

Is presented with special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI)

**The videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.**



# MUSICAL NUMBERS

*Still Hurting (Year 5; Fall)*

*Shiksa Goddess (Year 1; Spring)*

*See I'm Smiling (Year 5; Summer)*

*Moving Too Fast (Year 2; Fall)*

*I'm A Part of That (Year 4; Fall)*

*The Schmuel Song (Year 2; Winter)*

*A Summer In Ohio (Year 3; Summer)*

*The Next Ten Minutes (Year 3; Spring)*

*A Miracle Would Happen (Year 1; Fall)*

*Climbing Uphill (Year 2; Spring)*

*If I Didn't Believe In You (Year 4; Spring)*

*I Can Do Better Than That (Year 1; Fall)*

*Nobody Needs To Know (Year 5; Spring)*

*Goodbye Until Tomorrow/I Could Never Rescue You*

*(Year 1 & Year 5)*

# ABOUT THE CAST



**KRISSY LEMON-She/They** (*Cathy—ASL*) is a Puerto-Rican descent multifaceted artist. American Sign Language is their household language; their immediate family - parents and sister - is Deaf as well. From Florida to Los Angeles, Lemon continues to perform and is involved in several film works. In 2020, they played as Azrael in Deaf West's spring production of *Orphée*. Lemon can be seen in a McDonald's commercial and a children show *MyGo! Sign Language for Kids* available on YouTube. Lemon is honored and grateful to be part of the cast, especially for DAT/GFT . I think you're really gonna like this show! [krissylemon.com](http://krissylemon.com)



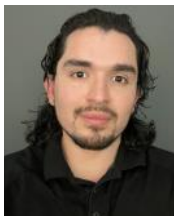
**CAROLYN O'BREIN-She/Her** (*Cathy—Eng*) was born and raised in Austin. She recently graduated from Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama in 2021. She is passionate about storytelling, writing, and creating art that honors those who came before her. Carolyn is beyond grateful for her parents, two sisters, and family for all their endless love and support as well as God for His many blessings. Carolyn can be heard singing on the Christmas album *Cello Wonderland* with cellist, Elaina Mosher, which can be found on Spotify and iTunes. You can enjoy a piece directed by Carolyn called *Out of Eden* on YouTube at the link <https://youtu.be/dTIPMISqgLI>.

This is Carolyn's first time with Ground Floor Theatre, and she would like to thank everyone involved in *The Last Five Years* for making this experience such a beautiful one.



**JOHN CHRISTOPHER-He/Him** (*Jamie—Eng*) is thrilled to be doing his third production here at Ground Floor Theatre. Originally from Austin, John studied theatre at the Los Angeles Theatre Academy. Upon returning to Austin he has participated in theatre productions at ZACH Theatre *The Beauty and the Beast*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Jungal Book*, and *The Tortoise and the Hare*. At Hyde Park Theatre he was in *It Is Magic* and *The Brothers Size* for which he won the Austin Critics Circle Award for Performer of the year. He's excited to be involved in this amazing musical production at Ground

Floor Theatre.



**SAÚL LÓPEZ- He/Him** (*Jamie—ASL*) learned American Sign Language in high school. Since then, his passion for ASL interpretation and his love of music have interlocked. Saúl hopes to provide an equivalent experience to Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing theatre fanatics and/or concert-goers, as he continues to attempt to blend both worlds. Saúl would like to thank the Deaf community, who have gracefully shared their language; mentors who have, directly and inadvertently, shaped his language skills; everyone who has believed in him, especially when he didn't believe in himself; his family and friends, and most importantly, Jacob Vega, his partner, who has been his rock through all past, present, and future experiences. Saúl would also like to thank Ground Floor Theatre, Deaf Austin Theatre, the whole cast, and everyone involved in making this production happen \_\m/

## ABOUT THE DIRECTORS & PRODUCTION TEAM

**LISA SCHEPS-She/Her** (Co-Director, Founder & Co-Artistic Director Ground Floor Theatre) Lisa is the founder and co-Artistic Director at Ground Floor Theatre and is thrilled to be co-directing with Brian for the second time. The incredible cast, designers, and crew of *The Last Five Years* have been a blast to work with and Lisa is honored to share the space with each of them. At Ground Floor Theatre (GFT), she has directed *Parade*, *Gibberish Mostly*, *Fun Home* (B. Iden Payne award for direction), *Next to Normal* (B. Iden Payne award for direction), *TRANSom*, *Unexpected Joy*, and many others. Lisa has a long history in theatre and has the unique distinction of playing the camel's rear end on Broadway. Besides running the theatre with Simone Alexander and Patti Neff-Tiven, Lisa hosts local radio show *Off Stage* and *On The Air* on KOOP community radio. She is honored and humbled to work in Austin and to be a part of the vibrant Austin Theatre Community. #ATXtheatre

**DR. BRIAN CHESLIK-He/Him** (Co-Director, Artistic Director Deaf Austin Theatre) originally from Ohio, has been involved in theatre for the past 20+ years and has performed every function in the theatrical hierarchy. Brian is the artistic director of Deaf Austin Theatre, where he co-directed the 2019 award winning Deaf/hearing collaborative production of *Next to Normal*. Some of his favorite productions include *Tribes* (Billy) at Le Petit Theatre in New Orleans, *Shakespeare's R & J* (Student 2), *Corpus Christi* (James), *Selkie* (Pa), *Drop Dead* (Chaz Looney), and *Lost in Yonkers* (Jay). In addition to theatre, Brian is a professor of ASL & Interpretation at the University of Texas RGV, where he is the program coordinator for the ASLI Program. Brian holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature from Gallaudet University, a master's and doctorate in Deaf studies & Deaf education from Lamar University. Next up, Brian will be co-directing a Deaf/hearing collaborative production of Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella* for Deaf Austin Theatre and the ZACH Theatre, opening January 25, 2023. "Break fingers to everyone involved in L5Y!! Love you all!"

**DR. ELLIE JARRETT SHATTLES-She/Her** (Co-Musical Director/Keyboard) is thrilled to be working with Ground Floor Theatre again after the 2019 success of *Next to Normal*. Ellie completed her DMA in opera from The University of Texas in 2018 and has been teaching private voice lessons, coaching musical theatre students and music directing shows ever since. In the Spring, Dr. Shattles debuted with Alchemy Theatre as "Ella", the piano player. This season, Ellie is music directing *The Last 5 Years* (Ground Floor), *The Lightning Thief* (St. Stephen's) and *The Baker's Wife* for Alchemy Theatre. She lives in Austin with her husband, cat and two chihuahuas.

**MERVIN P. O'BRYANT-They/Them** (Choreographer) This is Mervin's first time working with Ground Floor Theatre and is excited to be choreographing! Mervin would like to thank Brian, Lisa, Kelsey, and their husband Carl O'Bryant for supporting them through this process. He has traveled all over showcasing his work through dance and music at festivals, conferences, and local/main events. He also manages his company, MPO Foundation, and serves on the board as co-founder of Def Lens Media. SEVERAL CREDITS INCLUDE *The Music Man* (Maude Dunlap/Cast), *Quest Visual Theatre* (Assistant Director), *Gladys Knight & The Pips' Midnight Train to Georgia*, featured in Times Square on electronic billboards (Lead). REGIONAL: *Quest Visual Theatre* (Assistant Director), *VOCA: ISM* (Ensemble). VIRTUAL PRODUCTIONS: Deaf Austin Theatre: *A Better Place* (The Operator); *Disconnected: The Musical* (Andie/Ensemble) and Deaf Broadway: *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Dr. Frank N Furter). FEATURE DOCUMENTARY: MPO Foundations & Def Lens Media: *Hidden Gem* (Lead) EDUCATION: AA in Dance Performance & Choreography from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Instagram @mervinpobryant FB: Mervin Primeaux OBryant

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM (CONT.)

**ANDY GRAPKO-She/Her** (*Intimacy Director*) is an Intimacy Director and Coordinator. She is the Resident Intimacy Director for the Department of Theatre and Dance at the University of Texas at Austin, where she is also a member of the acting faculty. Her intimacy work includes training with Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, Theatrical Intimacy Education, and Intimacy for Stage and Screen. Her recent intimacy credits include *Anna in the Tropics*, *...but you could've held my hand*, *Venus in Fur*, *Dot*, *Murky as Hell*, *The Tasters*, *Unexpected Joy*, *rain falls special on me*, and the upcoming films *Clock* and *RAPS*. [www.andygrapko.com](http://www.andygrapko.com)

**GARY THORNSBERRY-They/Them** (*Scenic Designer*) is a freelance scenic designer with Ground Floor Theatre. They are also a visiting professor of theatre design at Berea College. They reserved the B. Iden Payne for scenic design in the 2020-2021 for *rain falls special on me* here at GFT. They have worked with the wonderful family at GFT for several years. They are a Disabled Non-binary Queer Appalachian Designer from Poverty. These intersectional perspectives push them to create work that is accessible to all. If you would like to start a conversation or see upcoming work please contact them at [garythornsberry.com](http://garythornsberry.com). Have a wonderful show and holiday season.

**AMBER WHATLEY-She/Her** (*Lighting Designer*) is a lighting designer for live performance. Her skills include lighting for theatre, dance, concert, and lighting for camera. Her technical strengths are programming and moving light programming. She was born and raised in Montgomery, Alabama. She then completed her BFA at Savannah College of Art and Design. Her MFA graduate studies in lighting design at The University of Texas at Austin led her to the creation of *Blackout*, a workshop and video series in which her objective is to bring lighting design and technology awareness to Black youth and under-supported communities. As a post MFA fellow at The Ohio State University, Amber enjoys teaching, freelance designing and furthering the development of *Blackout*.

**DESIRÉE HUMPRIES-She/Her** (*Costume Designer*) is an Austin native based in her hometown. She is a Texas State University-San Marcos Alumni and has a BFA in Theatre Design/Technology with an emphasis in Costume Design. Her recent credits include *Dot* by Colman Domingo at Ground Floor Theatre, *War of The Worlds* by Jarrott King with Penfold Theatre, and *Anna In The Tropics* for which she was awarded Outstanding Costume Design from the B. Iden Payne Council. She believes theatre can inspire people beyond the stage which is why she is passionate about theatre for young audiences, creating theatre that is accessible to all, and is motivated to make theatre that is diverse and inclusive. She is excited to be working with the diverse talent in this production *The Last 5 Years*.

**CB FELLER-They/Them** (*Prop Design*) Feller is thrilled to be doing props for Ground Floor Theatre. You might have seen their scenic art in *Anna and the Tropics* at Ground Floor. CB just finished directing *Junie B Jones* at Scottish Rite. Next up CB dons the performing hat in *Dragonfly Princess* at The VORTEX and *Pippi Longstocking* at Scottish Rite. CB is really for the whole family. When not doing theatre, CB is a graphic artist who loves to crochet and cuddle up with their pup.

**SANDRA MAE FRANK-She/Her** (*ASL Consultant*) is thrilled to be returning virtually as an ASL Consultant, providing ASL support to a musical about topics that we know well: love and loss. Cherish every moment. TELEVISION: *New Amsterdam*, *Zoey's Playlist*, and *Daybreak*. FILM: *Season of Love*, *Multiverse*, and *The Sound of Fear*. BROADWAY: Deaf West's *Spring Awakening*. REGIONAL THEATRE: Ground Floor Theatre's *Next to Normal* (Co-Produced by Deaf Austin Theatre) & *Fun Home*, Lyric Theatre's *Fiddler on the Roof*, and Deaf West's *The Solid Life of Sugar Water*. DIRECTING: Olney Theatre's *The Music Man* and Deaf West's *At Home at the Zoo*. UPCOMING: ZACH Theatre & Deaf Austin Theatre's *Cinderella* in 2023.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION TEAM (CONT.)

**RODD SIMONSEN-He/Him** (*Sound Designer*) works full-time as a Audio Visual Design Consultant. His experience includes sound design for film and theatre, video design for theater, and live streaming video production. Simonsen enjoys working with educational programs, including many area programs ranging from middle schools to university. He has worked with many community theaters including ZACH Theatre, Zilker Theater Productions, and Summer Stock Austin. Off the stage and screen, he enjoys music, cooking, cycling and keeping up with the latest technology.

**KELSEY MORINGY-She/Her** (*Production Stage Manager*) is a born & raised unicorn of Austin, TX. She studied Performance & Production at Texas State University with an emphasis in stage management & directing. Kelsey would like to thank Brian, Lisa, Mervin, Ellie, Taylor and our AMAZING cast for their passion and dedication on this show! Previous Ground Floor Theatre and Deaf Austin Theatre shows Kelsey has worked on include *Next To Normal* and *Love, Loss and What I Wore*. Previous Ground Floor Theatre shows Kelsey has worked on include *Fun Home*, *Single Black Female*, *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*, *Dex & Abby*, *TRANSom*, *There & Back*, and *Anna in The Tropics*.

**TAYLOR FLANAGAN-She/Her** (*Stage Manager*) is new to DAT, but is excited to be doing her second show at GFT with Lisa, Brian, and Kelsey after working with them on *Fun Home* (Medium Alison). This is her first foray into stage management, but she has been making theatre in Austin for over 25 years and is always learning something new. When she is not interpreting or performing, you can find her marketing productions at Penfold Theatre Company. She would like to thank her partner, their cats, her mom, her friends, and Penfold for being understanding and adaptive to her schedule. Although the cats weren't all that understanding actually.

**DEMETRI BELLINI-He/Him** (*Technical Director*) is a scenic designer and set builder from Houston, Texas. He moved to Austin in 2021 to pursue his career in theatrical design. Since then he has designed for such productions as *RAPUNZEL* by Jeremy Rashad Brown and *Malum Malus Burlesque*. He hopes to continue serving the arts community in Austin and advocating for transparency and equity for all artists.

**MOTLEY CREW MEDIA** Founded in 2006 by Amy S. Layton, Motley Crew Media is a full-service boutique marketing and public relations firm with a focused expertise in arts and entertainment. Made up of senior-level experienced PR and marketing specialists, the "Crew" helps clients bring their brand to life in the field through passion and commitment, alongside a keen ability to transform concept and vision into precisely executed reality. Sampling of clients include: aGLIFF, Austin Playhouse, Austin Shakespeare, Broadway Across America, Ground Floor Theatre, Hobby Center, Holland Taylor, Impact Arts, Jaston Williams, LTWA, LTZA, Penfold Theatre Company, Tapestry, Texas Performing Arts, The Lost Gonzo Band, and ZACH Theatre among many others. [info@motleycrewmedia.com](mailto:info@motleycrewmedia.com)





Ground Floor Theatre fosters an environment for creative thinkers and artists to produce works focusing on underrepresented communities, lifting voices that need to be heard to people who need to hear them. .

*We believe in theatre for everyone!*

For more information please visit [groundfloortheatre.org](http://groundfloortheatre.org)

Deaf Austin Theatre (DAT) is a non-profit organization, whose purpose is to enrich, inspire, educate, create and entertain the Austin community by producing live theatre experiences in American Sign Language (ASL), theatre workshops and acting camps

For more information please visit [deafaustintheatre.org](http://deafaustintheatre.org)



**GROUND FLOOR THEATRE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Susan McLeland, Chair  
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Sade Jones, Secretary  
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**DEAF AUSTIN THEATRE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Sandra Mae Frank  
Tarique "TK" Sylvester  
Yan Liu  
Heba Toulan  
JoAnn "Jo Rose" Benfield  
Russell Harvard  
Bellamie Bachleda

Just a small taste of some of the other  
theatre happenings in Austin.

#ATXtheatre

A theater poster for "The Gulf" by Audrey Cefaly, directed by Carlo Lorenzo Garcia. The poster features a collage of images: a man in sunglasses on the left, a woman's face on the right, and a central image of a forest at sunset. The title "The Gulf" is in large, bold, orange letters. Below it, the author and director names are in smaller orange text. At the bottom left, it says "Starring Kelsey Mazak & Natalie D. Garcia". At the bottom right, it says "Opens December 2nd Hyde Park Theatre".

**The Gulf**  
by Audrey Cefaly  
Directed by Carlo Lorenzo Garcia

Starring  
Kelsey Mazak &  
Natalie D. Garcia

Opens  
December 2nd  
Hyde Park Theatre

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

CLASSIC RADIOCAST

Adapted by Nathan Jerkins  
Directed by Carl Gonzales

Dec 8 - 23, 2022  
Old Settlers Hall & Driskill Hotel

PenfoldTheatre.org  
512-850-4849



This project is funded in part by  
the City of Round Rock





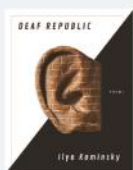
### CINDERELLA

Co-produced with the  
Zach theatre.  
January 25th- March  
5th, 2023  
Tickets on sale now.



### DEAF REPUBLIC ASL SLAM

April 2023



### SHORT PLAY FESTIVAL

July 2023

### THE LARAMIE PROJECT

September 7-15th, 2023



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[ATXtheatre.org](http://ATXtheatre.org)

**MOTLEY CREW**  
M E D I A



WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP  
SUPPORT  
*THE LAST FIVE YEARS?*

We need your help to help fund this show. If you'd like to support this production, click the QR code or Venmo (@GroundFloor) or Pay Pal (lisa@groundfloortheatre.org). Any amount helps.



We would like to acknowledge that we are on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America.

We would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

We would also like to acknowledge that East Austin has also been historically home to segregated and under resourced Mexican and Black communities.

As guests, we pay respect to these peoples, past, present, and future, here in their homeland.

**SPECIAL THANKS:**

Celia Hughes, Art Spark Texas, Diane Christopherson, Texas School for the Deaf, Claire Bugen, Kimberly KV Smith, Melissa March, Hannah Legler, Lee Godbold, Hannah Lewin Sharon Ploeger, Motorblade, Steve Barbin, ZACH Theatre, Austin Manning, TSD Performing Arts Program, Fred Demps, The VORTEX, Bohemian Theatricals, Calen Robertson, Susan Suarez.