

*VSU Theatre & Dance  
presents the 2023-2024 season:*

tiny  
beautiful  
things

Based on the Book by Cheryl Strayed

Adapted for the Stage by Nia Vardalos

Co-Conceived by  
Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos

September 26–28, 2024 at 7:30 PM  
Sunday, September 29, 2024 at 3:00 PM  
LAB THEATRE

*Tiny Beautiful Things*  
is an Associate Entry in

 The Kennedy Center  
American College  
Theater Festival



VALDOSTA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# Patron List *2024-2025*

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The patrons below have contributed to the Golden Circle Scholarship & Support Fund providing support to our production program but most importantly to the Theatre and Dance scholarships that help us attract outstanding students to our programs. The names below reflect those who have contributed through September 22, 2024.

## Platinum

Dr. Oscar & Lisa Aguero  
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Bonnie Rainey  
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## VSU Theatre & Dance Faculty and Staff:

Blair Andersen  
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Sarah Wildes Arnett  
Carol Bertho  
Dr. Susan Boddie  
Madison Grant  
H. Duke Guthrie  
Danielle Kimble  
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Katie Ludlow  
Joe Mason  
Ethan Parker  
Melissa Pihos  
Dr. Melissa Rynn Porterfield  
Hank Rion  
Kathy Raess-Young

# Letter from the President

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*Dear Friends,*

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Theatre and Dance season at Valdosta State University.

We are delighted to have you join us for this incredible lineup of shows, each with its own captivating, inspiring, and unforgettable story all centered around the theme of “change.”

Live theatre has long been viewed as an instrument of change, one that challenges the status quo, amplifies marginalized voices, sparks dialogue, drives action, instills a sense of agency, brings diverse people together, promotes literacy, and provides a safe space for audiences and actors to confront uncomfortable truths and complex emotions.

At VSU, we celebrate change as a challenge and an opportunity to strengthen our tradition of excellence in the classroom and on stage. That is why, at the beginning of this year, we announced our new strategic plan – VSU2030 – and our renewed determination to reignite our student-first campus culture and inspire the transformational change we believe is both necessary and possible.

The power to change is real and resides within each of us. Maybe today’s performance will be the first step in your journey to find new opportunities, feel more confident, and embrace change. VSU Theatre and Dance is committed to fostering excellence within its theatre performance, theatre production, theatre management, musical theatre, and dance programs while also contributing to the lifelong learning and cultural development of the citizens of South Georgia, North Florida, and beyond.

VSU Theatre and Dance attracts highly talented students from around the world and, over the course of four years, helps them develop critical thinking, problem-solving, planning, and organizational skills; perseverance; self-discipline; patience; physical stamina; creative abilities; a broad understanding of literature, history, and other arts, which helps them to interpret ideas and feelings; and an understanding of music, costuming, and staging.

Many of our VSU Theatre and Dance graduates go on to pursue careers as writers, dancers, actors, directors, managers, and more in the film and television industry, as well as on Broadway, Off-Broadway, in regional tours, at theme parks, and more across the United States and beyond.

We are deeply grateful for our Theatre and Dance students, faculty, and staff for their tireless dedication to the performing arts and their willingness to share their talents. We are also grateful for you – the many individuals, families, community leaders, and business owners who generously support, protect, and nurture VSU’s tradition of creative excellence.

Enjoy the show!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Carvajal'.

Richard A. Carvajal, Ph.D.  
President



# tiny beautiful things

Based on the Book by Cheryle Strayed  
Adapted for the Stage by Nia Vardalos  
Co-Conceived by Marshall Heyman, Thomas Kail, and Nia Vardalos

Original New York Production by  
The Public Theater  
Oskar Eustis, Artistic Director Patrick Willingham, Executive Director

## CAST

Sugar	<b>Adanna Moore</b>
Letter Writer #1	<b>Taiger Glenn</b>
Letter Writer #2	<b>Christina Gerber</b>
Letter Writer #3	<b>Adrian Davis</b>

## UNDERSTUDIES

Sugar	<b>Candice Pace</b>
Letter Writer #1	<b>Zion Johnson</b>
Letter Writer #2	<b>Addie Kyle</b>
Letter Writer #3	<b>Aiden Parker</b>

Scenic Designer  
**Madison Grant**

Lighting Designer  
**Caleb Spivey**

Costume Designer  
**Chalise Ludlow**

Sound Designer  
**Angel Gabriel Tirado Zepahua**

Technical Director  
**Madison Grant**

Stage Manager  
**Megs Cullen**

Director  
**H. Duke Guthrie**

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**Tiny Beautiful Things** is performed without an intermission.

**Tiny Beautiful Things** is an Associate Entry in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

**Tiny Beautiful Things** is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals  
on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.  
[www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)

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**The Kennedy Center**  
American College  
Theater Festival

**Tiny Beautiful Things** is an Associate Entry in  
The Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival

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## **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Assistant Stage Managers	<b>Allison Rooker</b>
	<b>Kowi Troupe</b>
Assistant Costume Designer	<b>Dr. Anna Rodgers</b>
Head Carpenter	<b>Shy'Tavian Jenkins</b>
Master Electrician	<b>Tyler Kent</b>
Props Artisan	<b>Torie Kanes</b>
Scenic Charge	<b>Grace Schaeffer</b>
Lightboard Operator	<b>Hannah Seyler</b>
Soundboard Operator	<b>Torriah Drake</b>
Wardrobe Supervisor	<b>Dr. Anna Rodgers</b>
	<b>Brianna Lauser</b>
Wardrobe & Makeup Crew	<b>Olivia Martin</b>
Shop Personnel	<b>Shy'Tavian Jenkins</b>
	<b>Tyler Kent</b>
	<b>THEA 2750</b>
	<b>THEA 3720 A</b>
Costume Shop Manager	<b>Kathy Raess-Young</b>
Scene Shop Supervisor	<b>Katie Ludlow</b>
Costume Shop Personnel	<b>THEA 3720 C</b>
Scene Shop Assistants	<b>Ella Risa Marroquin</b>
	<b>Aiden Parker</b>
	<b>Grace Schaefer</b>
	<b>Angel Gabriel Tirado Zepahua</b>
Costume Shop Assistants	<b>Ally Atkinson</b>
	<b>Torie Kanes</b>
	<b>Brianna Lauser</b>
	<b>Dr. Anna Ridgers</b>
	<b>Mia Washington</b>
	<b>Michaela Anderson</b>
Box Office Manager	<b>Bonnie Long</b>
Playbill Coordinator	<b>Carmen Mason</b>
Social Media Coordinator	<b>Gabriel Rodriguez</b>
House Manager	

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

VSU President, Dr. Richard Carvajal and Cabinet; Dr. Nicole Cox; Monika Meler, Sarah Wildes Arnett; Danielle Kimble; Amber Porter  
Programs and Offices of Valdosta State University: Advancement; Campus Mail; Creative Services; Department of Art; Department of Music; Financial Services; Foundation; Human Resources; Information Technology; Legal Affairs; Marketing & Communications; Parking & Transportation; Plant Operations; Police Department; Printing & Copy Services  
Theatre & Dance Faculty and Staff

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## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE

The letters are real... I thought, as I read Cheryl Strayed's incredibly moving book, *Tiny Beautiful Things*.

People wrote these letters.

A few years ago, author Cheryl Strayed gave advice as Sugar for the literary website, *The Rumpus*, and later collected the letters into a book. Journalist Marshall Heyman gave his friend, director Thomas Kail, the book and Tommy gave it to me suggesting it could become a play. As I read the letters exchanged, I wept, smiled, and was astonished by the raw and extraordinary candor Sugar and the writers of the letters reveal themselves and we find ourselves in their conundrums and sorrows, in their lives lived and roads traveled. I yearned to be as bold, audacious and willful. As I adapted the book into a play, I found the words so illuminating that I grieved and moved on from certain events of my own. Still, if I had one letter to write, it would be:

Dear Sugar,

I hope to be as brave as the writers of the letters and as open as Cheryl Strayed.

— Nia Vardalos



# The Kennedy Center

*The Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival, part of the Rubenstein Arts Access Program, is generously funded by **David M. Rubenstein.***

*Special thanks to The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust for supporting the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

*Additional support is provided by The Honorable Stuart Bernstein and Wilma E. Bernstein; and the Dr. Gerald and Paula McNichols Foundation.*

*Kennedy Center education and related artistic programming is made possible through the generosity of the National Committee for the Performing Arts.*

This production is entered in the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF). The aims of this national theater education program are to identify and promote quality in college-level theater production. To this end, each production entered is eligible for a response by a regional KCACTF representative, and selected students and faculty are invited to participate in KCACTF programs involving scholarships, internships, grants and awards for actors, directors, dramaturgs, playwrights, designers, stage managers and critics at both the regional and national levels.

Productions entered on the Participating level are eligible for invitation to the KCACTF regional festival and may also be considered for national awards recognizing outstanding achievement in production, design, direction and performance.

Last year more than 1,500 productions were entered in the KCACTF involving more than 200,000 students nationwide. By entering this production, our theater department is sharing in the KCACTF goals to recognize, reward, and celebrate the exemplary work produced in college and university theaters across the nation.

# COMING SOON

# 2024-2025 SEASON

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## Chicago

BOOK BY FRED EBB & BOB FOSSE

MUSIC BY JOHN KANDER

LYRICS BY FRED EBB

BASED ON THE PLAY BY MAURINE DALLAS WATKINS / SCRIPT ADAPTATION BY DAVID THOMPSON

OCTOBER 31- NOVEMBER 2 AND NOVEMBER 4-6, 2024 AT 7:30 PM

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 3, 2024 AT 3:00 PM

SAWYER THEATRE

Join us as we follow the story of two 'killer-dillers' in the Windy City as they sing and dance from crime to courtroom to vaudeville.

This production contains mature themes and language.

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## FUNDRAISERS SUPPORTING THE GOLDEN CIRCLE SCHOLARSHIP & SUPPORT FUND:

### Cinderella Ballet

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2024 AT 7:00 PM

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2024 AT 2:00 PM

VALDOSTA PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

The Annual Princess Ballet fundraiser in partnership with The Valdosta School of Ballet.

Tickets will be available at the door beginning 45 minutes prior to the performance. The Valdosta School of Ballet operates the box office for this event.

### A Christmas Carol

ADAPTED BY IAN ANDERSEN

BASED ON CHARLES DICKENS' TALE

DECEMBER 13, 2024 AT 7:30 PM

DECEMBER 14, 2024 AT 1:30 PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2024 AT 1:30 PM AND 6:00 PM

SAWYER THEATRE

The novella with the complete title of *A Christmas Carol. In Prose. Being a Ghost Story of Christmas*, and its many iterations is a holiday classic. You and your family will be transported to London and the timeless redemption story of Ebenezer Scrooge.

*Tickets for this event are not included in season membership packages.*