



The Public Theatre was founded to bring high quality professional theatre to the people of Maine, at an affordable price. We strive to make our presentations accessible to all, especially those less likely by tradition or inclination to attend live theatre. In choosing our season, we look for plays that speak from the heart; that are life-affirming and uplifting even when the subject matter is dark or painful; that use our language in powerful and provocative ways; that invite the audience to see their world in a new way. Artistic excellence is central to the mission of The Public Theatre.

The Public Theatre is a member of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.

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The Last Romance

by Joe DiPietro

Directed by
Janet Mitchko

Stage Manager
Lisa Bragdon*

Costume Design
Kathleen P. Brown

Set Design
Judy Staicer

Lighting Design
Bart Garvey

CAST

(In order of appearance)

Young Man	Jason Phillips
Ralph Bellini	P J Benjamin *
Rose Tagliatelle	Andrea Gallo *
Carol Reynolds.....	Louisa Flaningam *
Peaches	Charlie

SETTING

Hoboken, New Jersey. The present.

There will be one fifteen minute intermission.

The premiere production of *The Last Romance* was presented by
Dennis D. Hennessy and Richard Carrothers
At The New Theatre, Overland Park, KS.

The Last Romance is presented by special arrangement with
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P J BENJAMIN (*Ralph Bellini*) has spent the last 5 years as the Wonderful Wizard of Oz in the smash hit musical *Wicked* both on Broadway and across the country. For more than 6 years, audiences enjoyed his performance as the lovable Mr. Cellophane in the long running Broadway show *Chicago* where he played opposite such stars as Melanie Griffith and Brooke Shields. Other Broadway shows include: *Pippin*; Duke Ellington's *Sophisticated Ladies*; the Tony Award winning play *Torch Song Trilogy*; the role of Charlie in the musical *Charlie and Algernon* (Los Angeles critics award); *The Pajama Game* directed by George Abbott; *Wind in the Willows*; *Ain't Broadway Grand and Sarava*. At The New York City Center he played Old Joe in *Damn Yankees*. Celebrating his 43rd year as a professional actor, Mr. Benjamin has portrayed a variety of roles in his career ranging from the troubled Joe Keller in *All My Sons* to the flamboyant drag queen Albin in the musical *La Cage aux Folles*. On television, he has appeared in *Law and Order*, *Law and Order SVU*, *Person of Interest* and most recently, a singing Police Captain on *The Good Wife*. He is the voice of Sergeant Dodo Bird in the animated film, *Ice Age*. PJ is happily married to the wonderful woman he is playing opposite to in this play. Together they share a passion for history and old houses and that all came together in their restoration of The Captain Timothy Hill House, a circa 1800 log plank house on Chincoteague Island off the Eastern Shore of Virginia. captaintimothyhillhouse.com



LOUISA FLANINGAM (*Carol Reynolds*) is excited to return to The Public Theatre and appear alongside her husband, PJ Benjamin. She was last seen here in *Southern Comforts*. In her 40 plus years "on the boards", she's played a variety of roles from Ma Joad in *The Grapes of Wrath* to Fastrada in Bob Fosse's *Pippin* (National Tour). Louisa toured as the overbearing matriarch, Aunt March, in the National Tour of *Little Women*. On Broadway, she was Cleo in the 1979 revival of *The Most Happy Fella*, also telecast on PBS; General Cartwright in the 1992 revival of *Guys and Dolls*; *The Magic Show* and *Play Me a Country Song*. City Center Encores: Mrs. Brady in *Juno*. New York City Opera: Meg in *Brigadoon*. Off-Broadway: *Opal*, *The Knife* and *The Wonder Years*. National Tours: Laurel in Harvey Fierstein's *Torch Song Trilogy*, *I Love My Wife* with The Smothers Brothers and Marta in *Company*. Highlights: Daisy in *Driving Miss Daisy* at Delaware Theatre Co. and a Barrymore Award Nomination; Bea in *Queen of the Stardust Ballroom*; Meg in *Damn Yankees* with Tony Randall; the premiere of William Kennedy's *Grand View*; *Pal Joey* with Lena Horne; Madame du Rosemond in *Les Liaisons Dangereuse* and Mattie Fae in *August Osage County*. However, Louisa's favorite role is Mrs. PJ Benjamin and her favorite production is their restoration of The Captain Timothy Hill House, placed on The National Register of Historic Places and currently a museum on Chincoteague Island, Virginia.



ANDREA GALLO (*Rose Tagliatelle*) is very happy to be returning to The Public Theatre after appearing in *The Language Archive* and *Over the River and Through the Woods*. Andrea's other regional credits include *Good People* (The Rep in St. Louis), *Murderers* (Hudson Stage), *Temp Odyssey*, *Tilt Angel*, *Evie's Waltz* and the one-person play *Donna Orbits the Moon* (NJ Rep), *Italian American Reconciliation* (Emelin Theatre), *As Bees in Honey Drown* (Northeast Theatre), *A View From the Bridge* (Nevada Conservatory Theatre), *Escape From Happiness*, (Schoolhouse Theatre), *The Sweepers* (Seven Angels Theatre), *What Every Woman Knows*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Noises Off*, *Lettice and Lovage* and *I'm Not Rappaport* (Horse Cave Theatre). In New York, Andrea has also appeared in the NYC International Fringe Festival, as a member of the Pillars ensemble, creating new work (with director Terrence Mann) in *Hidden Voices* at the Minetta Lane Theatre, *The Respectful Prostitute* at HERE, *Ring Round the Moon* at Theatre 3, *The Winter's Tale* at the Village Theatre Co., and several world premieres, including *Strings*, starring Keir Dullea and Mia Dillon, *Frankie* at the Irish Arts Center, *The Chaos Theories* and *Undivulged Crimes* with Shotgun Productions, and *Coney*. Film and TV work includes *Law and Order: SVU* and the

independent films *Across Dot Ave.*, *Brooklyn Battery*, *The Query*, and *Metronome*. She is a frequent narrator of recorded books. Andrea received an M.F.A. from Temple University and was a recipient of a Fulbright grant for study in France. She has completed 12 marathons.



JASON PHILLIPS (*Young Man*) is elated to make his professional theatrical debut at The Public Theatre. He is trained in classical vocal technique and majored in music education at The University of Southern Maine. He studied eastern classical music at Rissho University in Japan while teaching English as a Second Language to Japanese high school students. He has performed roles in oratorio, opera, musical theater, contemporary a cappella, rock opera and barbershop. Jason has appeared in productions of *Gypsy*, *Blood Brothers*, *Hair* (City Theater), *RENT* (Lyric Theater), *Trial By Jury* (Maine Oratorio Chorale), and *HMS Pinafore* (LCCT). He would like to thank all of the people who have helped make this dream a reality for him.



CHARLIE (*Peaches*) is a 6 year old Chihuahua. He likes taking walks and getting treats. He loves to snuggle with people and sit in the sun. He is a lovable dog that enjoys meeting new people, and he is looking forward to being in his first play. He lives in Lewiston with his owners Rick and Jada and a sister Lucy



JANET MITCHKO (*Director, Co-Artistic Director*) Over the past seasons Janet has directed numerous TPT productions including (*Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Around the World in 80 Days*, *Beau Jest*, *Animals Out of Paper*, *Visiting Mr. Green*, *Over the River and Through the Woods*, *Dinner with Friends*, *The Nerd*, etc.) Regional productions include *Our Son's Wedding* at Florida Studio Theatre, *The Heiress* at The Theater at Monmouth, among others. Many moons ago, before her life in Maine began; Janet lived in midtown Manhattan where she earned her living as an actress, acting teacher and director. She is a graduate of the acting program at Carnegie-Mellon University, and the proud mother of Emily.

JOE DIPIETRO (*Playwright*) grew up in Oradell, NJ and graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Rutgers University with a bachelor's degree in English. His first produced work was *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change* which ran for 12 years off-Broadway. He followed that with *Over The River and Through The Woods*, which played the John Houseman Theatre for 800 performances over two years. DiPietro won Tony Awards for Best Book and Best Score for *Memphis*. His most recent plays include *Creating Claire* and *The Last Romance*.



CHRISTOPHER SCHARIO (*Executive/Artistic Director*) has been Artistic Director of The Public Theatre since 1993. His adaptation of *A Christmas Carol*, published by Dramatists Play Service in 1996, was developed for The Public Theatre and has enjoyed successful productions at professional and amateur theatres throughout the world. In New York he has directed for Roundabout Theatre, Westbeth Theatre, Spectrum Stage, American Academy of Dramatic Arts, Drama Project and Madison Avenue Theatre. Regional theatre directing includes Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Boulder Ensemble Theatre, Kentucky Repertory Theatre, Toledo Repertory Theatre and Millbrook Playhouse. He has acted Off-Broadway, on national tours, regional theater, summer stock, dinner theater, films, soaps and commercials. He has taught at Carnegie-Mellon University, University of Colorado, University of Tennessee, American Academy of Dramatic Arts, as well as privately in New York. He received a BFA in Acting from Ohio University and an MFA in Directing from Carnegie-Mellon University.

LISA BRAGDON (*Stage Manager*) is back at The Public Theatre after taking 6 years off to have her son Elijah. She spent 18 years as a Stage Manager in live professional theatre and has worked at The Public Theatre off and on at least that long. She has also worked at Arena Stage, the Huntington, Portland Stage, the Barter, The Theatre at Monmouth, and Mad Horse. She spent the last 20 years guiding wilderness canoe trips everywhere from the Rio Grande in Texas to the Gaspe' Peninsula. She lives in West Gardiner with her husband Jeff raising the next generation of guides! She is grateful to be back doing a job she loves.

JIM ALEXANDER (*Technical Director*) has worked on theatre, dance, and opera productions from Maine to Missouri, and toured nationally and internationally. He lives in Harpswell with his partner Dawn and their sons, Max and Ewan, of whom they are abnormally proud. He has served as production manager for The Washington Revels and as master electrician at the Shakespeare Theatre Co., Washington Ballet, and Portland Stage. He has toured as lighting supervisor and production manager with theatre and dance companies including The Flying Karamozovs, Netherlands Dance Theatre, Suzhuo Kunju Opera of Jiangsu Province, the National Ballet of China, and the Ballet Nacional de Cuba.

JUDY STAICER (*Set Designer*) is delighted to be designing again at The Public Theatre, where she designed the sets for *Skylight*, *Dinner with Friends*, *Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged)*, *Italian-American Reconciliation*, and *Dracula*. She most recently designed the set for *Time Stands Still*. After a long career teaching stage design at Tufts University in Massachusetts, she made a career change to architectural lighting design, and now works as a software specialist at an engineering firm in Boston. In her free time she is an avid knitter and photographer. Judy has an MFA in Scene, Lighting and Costume Design from Carnegie Mellon, and is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829.

BART GARVEY (*Lighting Designer*) has served The Public Theatre in one capacity or another since its first season. He holds degrees from The College of William & Mary and The University of Iowa. He is particularly proud to have worked building sets here for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *Indoor/Outdoor*, *Miss Witherspoon*, *Rough Crossing*, *Communicating Doors*, *Three Days of Rain*, and *Dracula*. He has designed lights for over 50 professional productions and is particularly proud to have designed for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*; *The Book Club Play*; *Red*; *The Language Archive*; *Around the World in 80 Days*; *Humble Boy*; *Indoor/Outdoor*; *Magnetic North*; *Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde*; *The 13th of Paris*; *Almost, Maine*; *The Woman in Black*; *The Wind in the Willows*; *Red Herring*; *An Infinite Ache*; *Proof*; and *The Pavilion*. Bart has also worked on productions at The Theater at Monmouth, Deertrees, Boothbay Opera, St. Lawrence, King's Bridge, and Bates College. He thanks his beautiful and multitalented wife, Julie, for subsidizing this unplanned and otherwise impossible career in theater.

KATHLEEN P. BROWN (*Costume Designer*) has been designing costumes for The Public Theatre for 11 seasons! Favorite designs include *Beau Jest*, *Humble Boy*, *The Last Mass at St. Casimir's*, *The 13th of Paris*, and *Enchanted April*. Her costume designs have frequently appeared at Portland Stage, and at the University of Maine at Orono, where she is an Adjunct Faculty member for the School of Performing Arts. Other design credits include Bates College Theater, Colby College Theater, Northport Music Theater, The Belfast Maskers, The Huntington Theatre Co., the Lyric Stage Co., and the NJ Shakespeare Co. She holds a BFA in Theatrical Design from Ithaca College. She also works for the Camden International Film Festival and the Camden Conference. Kathleen lives in Camden with her husband and 2 teenage sons, and would like to thank her family for their love, support and patience.

SARA STURDIVANT (*Musical Accompanist*) is a voice teacher in the southern Maine area and serves as the music director of St. Mary Parish in Georgetown and Rowley, MA. She returned from New York City in 2009, where she received a graduate degree from the Mannes Conservatory and worked as a

vocal consultant for the Metropolitan Opera Guild. She is an accomplished opera singer and regionally recognized voice teacher. She made her Carnegie Hall debut in December of 2009 as the alto soloist in *Messiah*.

ADAM P. BLAIS (*Company Manager*) received his B.A. in Theatre from The University of Maine, Orono in May 2011. He has since gone on to work in a variety of amateur and professional theatre companies throughout New England, as a Director, Choreographer, Stage Manager, Designer, and Performer. When not working in the theatre, Adam is the Supply Chain Coordinator for St. Mary's Regional Medical Center and the Drama Director at both Mt. Ararat High School and Middle School. Much love to his Family, The Public Theatre and Nate.

LARRY FRENCH (*Sound Engineer*) is very excited to be back for his second season working on the technical crew with The Public Theatre. He began with The Public Theatre as the Sound Operator for *Around the World in 80 Days*, and has worked on nearly every show since then. He has also had the opportunity to do technical work for several other local theaters including the Lewiston/Auburn Community Little Theatre, Lyric Music Theatre, Freeport Players, and Freeport Factory Stage. Through these theaters, he has worked on over a dozen other incredible performances including *Rent*, *Jekyll and Hyde*, *Cinderella*, *The Mikado*, and *Peter Pan* in lighting; sound design, operation, and installation; and videography and post-production technology.

PAULA R. CLARKSON (*Intern/ASM*) is so excited to be doing her first show with The Public Theatre! Previous credits include *All in the Timing* and *Olive and the Bitter Herbs* at Primary Stages (Production Assistant), *Warrior Class* and *The Bad Guys* at Second Stage Theatre (SM Intern), *Shooting Star* at Dreamcatcher Repertory Theatre (ASM). Starting this fall she will be a Stage Management Apprentice at Syracuse Stage. She holds a B.A. in Drama from Ithaca College.

GLYNNIS NADEL (*Intern/Stage Crew*) is a recent graduate of Bates College, where she received a B.A. in theater. Last year she was the intern for artistic development at the L/A Community Little Theatre, where she has assistant directed, produced, and most recently was the set designer and stage manager for the production of *The Wiz*.

AUSTIN BURTT (*Light Board Operator*) was a student in The Public Theatre's Young Actors Summer Program for several years. Last summer he helped in the booth with sound and lights for the closing performance of *Revolving Rhymes II*. He most recently ran the lights for *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

MEGAN SALISBURY (*Sound Board Operator*) helped run the lights in this season's production of *A Christmas Carol* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Megan has also participated in The Public Theatre's Young Actors Summer Program.



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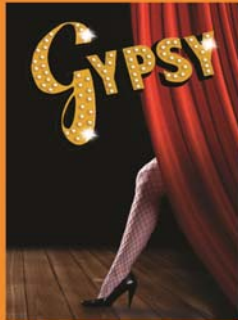
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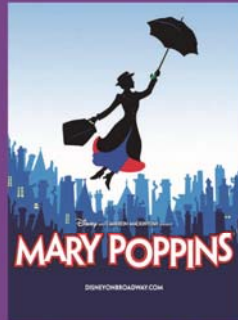
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Our Town
by Thornton Wilder
directed by Davis Robinson

The Taming
of the Shrew
by William Shakespeare
directed by Sally Wood

The Year
of Magical Thinking
by Joan Didion
directed by Dawn McAndrews

FAMILY SHOW

The Velveteen Rabbit
by Margery Williams

FALL MUSICAL

Patience
by Gilbert & Sullivan
directed by Bill Van Horn

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