

# About *Polkadots: The Cool Kids Musical*



Polkadots follows 8-year-old Lily Polkadot who just moved to the “Squares Only” small town of Rockaway. As the first Polkadot in an all Square school, Lily faces an almost impossible task of gaining acceptance from her peers. From daily bullying, to segregated drinking fountains, Lily’s quest seems hopeless until she meets Sky, a shy Square boy whose curiosity for her unique polkadot skin blooms into an unexpected pal-ship. Inspired by Civil Rights pioneers Ruby Bridges and The Little Rock Nine, Polkadots serves as a colorful history lesson for the world, reminding us that our differences make us awesome, not outcasts.

## **About Artistry Theater and Visual Arts**

Artistry formed from the 2009 merger of two nonprofit organizations: Bloomington Civic Theatre and the visual arts and education organization known as the Bloomington Art Center (not to be confused with the municipally-owned *facility* known as the Bloomington Center for the Arts, which opened in 2003 and serves as our home to this day).

Our organizational ancestors were founded in 1955 and 1976, respectively, by citizen artists committed to fostering creative expression and arts access in their rapidly developing community. More than six decades later, people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities continue to find opportunities as art-makers in Artistry’s arts education programs.

As a producer of theater, curator of exhibitions and related public programming, and facilitator of arts-based community development, Artistry has become a regional cultural asset serving more than 82,000 people per year.

A note about our name: Our first name as a newly merged organization back in 2009 was “Bloomington Theatre and Art Center.” To distinguish our identity from the public facility where we are located, convey our regional reach and impact, and reflect our commitment to artistic excellence, we rebranded to Artistry in 2015.

# About the Cast

## **DEIDRE COCHRAN (Mama Square/Mrs. Square)**

Deidre has been performing professionally in the Twin Cities since she moved from Georgia in 2016. Some of her favorite roles include Alexander T. Wolf in *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*, Mrs. Correy in *Mary Poppins* and Princess Elizabeth in *The Paper Bag Princess*. Deidre is so excited to share the story of *Polkadots* and hopes you're just as excited to see it!



## **MONTY HAYS (Lily Polkadot)**

Monty is thrilled to be a part of telling the *Polkadots: A Cool Kids Musical* story! They have been in shows around the Twin Cities such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Shrek the Musical* (Children's Theatre Company); *How To Succeed In Business Without Really Trying*, *Legally Blonde*, *Bye Bye Birdie* (Lundstrum Center for Performing Arts); *A Christmas Carol* (Guthrie Theater); *The Music Man* (Artistry Theater); *Anon(ymous)*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Saint Paul Conservatory for the Performing Artists), and many others. They would not be where they are if it weren't for their amazing support system, so they thank their friends, family, and mentors profusely.



## **JORDAN LEGGETT (Sky Square)**

Jordan is super excited to be a part of *Polkadots*! You may have seen him as Young Jelly in *Jelly's Last Jam* at Theater Latté Da. When he isn't performing, he enjoys singing karaoke and spending time with his partner and puppy.



# About the Cast

## **TYRA LEE RAMSEY (Penelope Square)**

Tyra is very excited to be a part of *Polkdaots* after being a part of *Memphis* at Artistry as a performing understudy. Prior to that, her most recent onstage appearance was in *Collidescope 4.0: Adventures in Pre and Post-Racial America* created and directed by Ping Chong and Talvin Wilks, portraying both Fannie Lou Hamer and Eliza Winston. Tyra graduated from the University of Minnesota: Twin Cities with a BA in Theatre Arts with an emphasis on Performance Creation and a minor in Spanish Language Studies. When Tyra is not on stage, she can be found decorating cakes, preparing to run a 5K, or playing with her two English Bulldogs (Oliver and Daisy Mae) and her cat (Bella). Tyra would like to thank her family, her mentors, and God for guiding her along her journey.



## **PAYTON SEACRIST (External Swing)**

Payton is super excited to be making her Artistry debut as well as her swing debut. Payton is from Apple Valley, Minnesota but currently resides in La Crosse, Wisconsin as she attends Viterbo University getting her B.F.A. in Music Theatre and her Minor in Dance. You may have seen Payton in *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Chicago*, or *Carrie* at The Children's Theatre. Payton is thrilled to be getting the chance to be a swing for the first time and can't wait for you all to see this beautiful show!

# About the Creative

## **TRACI SHANNON (Director)**

Traci Shannon is very excited and proud to be making her directorial debut. Traci has a long history of storytelling and art making, but Polkadots has been one of her favorite stories to tell. She dedicates this show to all the Cool Kids out there...you know who you are.



## **ANITA RUTH (Music Director)**

Anita has been the Resident Music Director at Artistry since 2005, working on over 65 productions. Prior to that, she was the Music Director at Chanhassen Dinner Theatres for 20 years and at Ruby's Cabaret for 13. She is a skilled arranger, orchestrator, and Finale copyist and loves working with these talented performers to bring Polkadots to life.

## **KELLEY YOUNT (Stage Manager)**

Kelley is excited to be a part of this production. She has also done Assistant Stage Managing and Spot Light Op. for Lyric Arts, Stage Managing for Old World New World Theatre, ASMinig with Anthem Theatre, and worked as a Spot Op. and backstage interpreter for Morris Park Players.



# About the Creative



**KATIE EDWARDS (Scenic/Properties Designer & Painter)**

**KYIA BRITTS (Lighting Designer)**

**BARB PORTINGA (Costumes, Hair, & Makeup Designer)**

**ALEX PIKIBEN (Audio Consultant)**

**OLIVIA SANDS (Wardrobe Manager)**

## **Artistry Theater Staff:**

General Manager & Associate Producer

Aaron Wheeler

Producing Manager

Sam Wend

Consulting Producer

Kelli Foster Warder

Production Supervisor & Properties Manager

Katie Phillips

Technical Director

Jared Shofstall

Head Carpenter

Will Rafferty

Costume Shop Manager

Rane Oganowski

Interim Costume Shop Manager

Anna Pikiben

**Find Artistry online!**

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

Instagram: [artistry\\_mn](https://www.instagram.com/artistry_mn)