

FOOTLIGHTERS THEATER PRESENTS

DECEMBER 8-17



**ONCE
UPON A
MATTRESS**

The title is presented in a playful, bubbly font across four horizontal bands. The top band is yellow with the word 'ONCE'. The second band is red with a diamond pattern and the words 'UPON A'. The third band is orange with white polka dots and the word 'MATTRESS'. The bottom band is purple with a green circle at its base. A yellow crown with purple jewels sits atop the 'O' in 'ONCE'. The background is a purple and white geometric pattern.

**MUSIC BY MARY RODGERS
LYRICS BY MARSHALL BARER
BOOK BY JAY THOMPSON, DEAN FULLER,
AND MARSHALL BARER
DIRECTED BY BILL GILBERTSON**

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

When I first began working on this production I was immediately interested in the concept of “timeless fantasy.” Fables, fairy tales, and folklore seem to fit into many different times and places. This show suits that idea nicely as it can feel both classic and modern. I was also overwhelmingly drawn to the art of Marc Chagall (1887-1985) and the opera *Turandot* by Giacomo Puccini. As a child, I went to the opera many times with my father and was always mesmerized by Chagall’s pair of murals, *The Sources of Music* and *The Triumph of Music*, which were created in 1966 to frame the lobby of the new Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center.



The Sources of Music



The Triumph of Music

Both paintings combine music, theatre, and dance, portraying the power of humanity and the performing arts. This seemed to me a good starting place for *Once Upon A Mattress*. The essence of this production is the natural interaction of actors blended with music, dance, and vibrant color to create the timeless, magical realm in which they live.

Bill Gilbertson

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT I

“Overture”	Orchestra
“Many Moons Ago”	Minstrel
“An Opening for a Princess” .	Prince Dauntless, Lady Larken, Ladies, Knights
“In a Little While”	Sir Harry, Lady Larken
“In a Little While (Reprise)”	Sir Harry, Lady Larken
“On a Stormy Night”	Minstrel
“Shy”	Princess Winnifred, Knights, Ladies
“The Minstrel, the Jester, and I”	Minstrel, Jester, King Sextimus
“Sensitivity”	Queen Aggravain, Wizard
“The Swamps of Home”	Princess Winnifred, Prince Dauntless, Ladies-in-Waiting
“Normandy”	Minstrel, Jester, Larken, King Sextimus
“Spanish Panic”	Orchestra
“Song of Love”	Prince Dauntless, Princess Winnifred, Ladies, Knights

****15 minute intermission****

ACT II

“Entr’acte”	Orchestra
“Quiet”	Queen Aggravain, Ensemble
“Happily Ever After”	Princess Winnifred
“Man to Man Talk”	Prince Dauntless, King Sextimus
“Very Soft Shoes”	Jester and Ladies
“Yesterday I Loved You”	Sir Harry, Lady Larken
“Nightingale Lullaby”	Nightingale of Samarkand
“Finale”	Company

**ONCE UPON A MATTRESS is presented by arrangement
with Concord Theatricals. www.concordtheatricals.com**

CAST

Princess Winnifred.....	KAT LEMON
Prince Dauntless	KEVIN ALTMAN
Queen Aggravain.....	LINDA POLITO
Lady Larken.....	ERIN MARKHAM
Sir Harry	CHRISTOPHER BETZLER
King Sextimus.....	RON HAMADAY
Jester.....	JOSHUA STARCZEWSKI
Wizard	MEAGHAN HARPER
Minstrel	ROBERT JOSEPH HOFFMAN, JR.
Lady Rowena, Larken u/s.....	GINA POLETTI
Lady Merrill, Winnifred u/s.....	MORGAN WRIGHT
Lady Lucille.....	TIFFANY TATE
Lady H, Luce's Lady, Nightingale u/s	BECCA BEGNAUD
Lady Beatrice, Pantomime	MAYA MALOSKEY
Lady R	TRACY FLYNN
Lady K	SIENNA DIXON
Lady Mabelle, Princess No. 12.....	ERICA BELOVICH
Sir Studley, Sir Harry u/s	CHRIS HARPER
Sir Luce, Jester u/s.....	TROY GARTNER
Sir Harold, Minstrel u/s	RYAN POLITO
1 st Knight.....	CONNOR REDMOND
2 nd Knight.....	AJ KING
3 rd Knight	JOSH SMITH
Pantomine, Lady in Waiting.....	LEAH BRIGHTMAN, GIGI PROTHERO, CLAIRE TANNER
Nightingale of Samarkand	ELLEN COHN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Brigitte Rottman | Jeff Smith
Jon Powell | Dakota Adams
SALT Performing Arts - Lauren McComas
Eastern University | Emily Engel
Linda Polito | Stacey Ballard
Laurey Zoladz | Susan Dash

PRODUCTION STAFF

Producer	JOHN D. DIFERDINANDO
Director	BILL GILBERTSON
Music Director.....	NATHAN KENDRICK
Choreographer	KAREN DIXON, SIENNA DIXON
Stage Manager	HELENA VANNATTER
Assistant Stage Manager	MINA GRABOVE
Show Technical Director.....	CARMEN ROSSI
Scenic Design and Painting.....	JAMES WIER
Master Carpenters	JAMES WIER, DAVID CRAIG
Sound and Lighting Designer	CARMEN ROSSI
Props Designer.....	HELENA VANNATTER
Original Mural Design/Lead Painter.....	ERIN MARKHAM
Mural Painters	HELENA VANNATTER, LEAH BRIGHTMAN, CLAIRE TANNER, MEAGHAN HARPER, BECCA BEGNAUD, RON HAMADAY
Theater Technical Director	HUGH ABBOTT JR.
Season Graphics.....	ALESSANDRA FANELLI
Playbill	CARA GLATFELTER
Box Office/Front of House	SUE SCOTT

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WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KEVIN ALTMAN (Prince Dauntless) is happy to be back at Footlighters Theater, his temple away from the stresses of the world. He last appeared on the Footlighter's stage as Bob Cratchit in last year's production of *A Christmas Carol*. Previous productions performed recently in his living room and kitchen include *Sweeney Todd (Sweeney Todd)*, *Javert/Jean Valjean/Fantine (Les Miserables)*, *Max Bialystock (The Producers)*, and every single character in *Hamilton*. He would like to thank Annick and Niles for all the love and support they have given him over these last several weeks.

BECCA BEGNAUD (Lady H, Luce's Lady, Nightingale u/s) is happy to be back on the Footlighters stage in *Once Upon A Mattress!* Previous Footlighters roles include Mrs. Crachit in *A Christmas Carol* and Consuela in *West Side Story*. Other credits *Susie/Harry in Puffs!* (PCS), *Sabine in Ken Ludwig's Three Musketeers* (Colonial Playhouse), *Gargoyle/Ensemble in Hunchback of Notre Dame* (Barn Playhouse), *Ensemble in Fiddler on the Roof* (PCS), *Dance Captain/Ensemble in The Wizard of Oz* (Tiferet Bet Israel), *Ensemble in Big Fish* (MCT). When not onstage, Becca cosplays, runs around Renaissance faires, and tries to be somewhat decent at video games.

ERICA BELOVICH (Lady Mabelle, Princess No. 12) is thrilled to be part of her first show at Footlighters! Previously you may have seen her in the ensembles of *Big Fish* and *Matilda* at Methacton Community Theater. When she's not on stage, Erica enjoys crocheting, running, and hanging out with her cat, Cosmo. She would like to thank her fantastic friends and family for their endless support. She hopes you enjoy the show!

CHRISTOPHER BETZLER (Sir Harry) is excited to be making his Footlighters debut! Previous favorite roles include Stephen Kodaly (*She Loves Me*) at the Barn Playhouse, Aaron (*First Date*) at MCT, and Robert (*Drowsy Chaperone*) and Seymour Krelborn (*Little Shop of Horrors*) at NCT. Chris would like to thank the production team for their faith in him and for this opportunity. He would also like to thank his wife, Mary Beth, for all of her love and support. Chris dedicates his performance to his late mother, Helen Betzler.

LEAH BRIGHTMAN (Pantomime, Lady in Waiting) YMCA shows *Seussical*, *Matilda*, *Annie*, *Mary Poppins*, *Christmas Story*, and *Newsies* (ensemble); Footlighters shows *The SpongeBob Musical* (Pearl) and *Mean Girls*.

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ELLEN COHN (Nightingale of Samarkand) is thrilled to make a cameo in this beautiful show. You may have seen Ellen as Dr. Scott in the recent production of *Rocky Horror Show* here at Footlighters. You might also recognize her from *Eurydice* (Orpheus), *The Spongebob Musical* (Squidward), and *The Marvelous Wonderettes* (Missy). She also frequently performs with Third Space Theater in Lancaster, both as an actor in murder mystery shows, and as a singer in the recent *Tis the Season* cabaret. She is a passionate advocate for type 1 diabetes awareness, having just returned from the JDRF Ride to Cure diabetes in Florida. Huge thanks to Susan Dash, voice teacher extraordinaire!

SIENNA DIXON (Lady K) is so excited to make her Footlighters debut and to work with this incredible cast and crew! Recent credits include musicals produced by the Arts and Athletics Club, such as *The Tree of Prosperity*, *Dreamsavers 2*, *The Artist*, and *The Playground* (Coro). A huge thank you to her family and friends for supporting her passion.

TRACY FLYNN (Lady R) is married with 4 young adult children. She has loved performing since the 4th grade when she took her first dance class. While in HS she performed in shows at Archbishop Prendergast HS. She is an alum of Upper Darby Summer Stage where she performed in many children's theater and main stage shows. Her most recent show at UDSS was the 40th Anniversary Show. Recent theater experience is Terpsichore/Hermes in *Xanadu*, *Godspell*, *The Mikado* & *All Shook Up*. About 10 years ago she decided to try something new and started working in film/TV. Some of the shows she has worked on are *VEEP*, *House of Cards*, *Servant*, *Cabin in the Woods* & *CREED 1 & 2*. You can also see her in episodes of *Copy Cat Killers*, "Lizzie Borden" & "The Matrix", *Mysteries At The Museum* "The Tumbleweed Tycoon". She has also been in several commercials. BOSE - with Carson Wentz, Recovery Centers of America, and Rothman Institute. She is also a proud member of SAG. Tracy would like to thank her family for their support. She would also like to thank the cast and production team of *Mattress* for being so awesome!

TROY GARTNER (Sir Luce, Jester u/s) is thrilled to be back for another show at Footlighters. As a sophomore in high school, Troy commenced his tutelage with the Kim Russell Voice Studio, a privilege he continues to this day. Upon high school graduation, Troy matriculated at Millersville University, as a double major in music education and voice performance. Troy completed this nine-semester program in 2020, culminating in his graduation with two bachelor's degrees. Afterward, Troy went back to his passion for theater and performing in multiple

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

productions and cabarets. Previous roles include Mr. Fezziwig in *A Christmas Carol*, A-Rab in *West Side Story*, and Moonface Martin in *Anything Goes*.

RON HAMADAY (King Sextimus) decided not to list his theatrical involvements for this bio. Instead, he wants to thank Bill Gilbertson and the production staff for casting him in the role of King Sextimus. He auditioned for Sextimus because it is a different style of acting and he wanted to challenge himself with something new; he hopes he didn't disappoint. Also thank you to his fellow castmates for all of the energy, singing, dancing, and comedy that went into this show—it was a lot of fun. And finally, he thanks the entire production team for their dedication and professionalism in bringing this show to life.

CHRIS HARPER (Sir Studley, Sir Harry u/s) returns to Footlighters Theater for his sophomore performance! A seasoned vocalist, harmonica player, and songwriter, Harper has been performing with Philly-area music groups for nearly two decades. After an unforgettable run in last season's hit comedy *Disaster!* (Chad), Harper can't deny he's been bitten by the theater bug. He's excited to be back on stage with his darling wife Meaghan, and the many talented cast and crew involved in making this production possible.

MEAGHAN HARPER (Wizard) is happy to return to Footlighters for the second time this year. She was previously Traci/Ensemble in *Disaster!* in May. Meaghan has been on stages since she was four years old and is trained in many forms of dance from formal ballet to professional belly dance. She loves performing with her husband, Chris Harper, and all her friends.

ROBERT JOSEPH HOFFMAN, JR. (Minstrel) is a music teacher in South Philly who, after a long and lonely year away, is excited to be making his return to the Footlighters stage. If you see him after the show and don't know what to say, you're in good company! He doesn't know either. In fact, it took him over half an hour just to write this bio.

AJ KING (2nd Knight) is excited to be back on stage at Footlighters Theater. Outside of theater, AJ loves scare acting with his Pennhurst friends, reading comics, and adulating to the best of his ability. He thanks his mom and his lovely lady Marisa for being the most inspirational people in his life. He hopes you ate well and enjoy the experience of *Once Upon a Mattress*.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

KAT LEMON (Princess Winnifred) is honestly just so psyched to be playing this dream role. Many moons ago (1999), at age 13, Kat and her father saw a production of *Mattress* and, together, decided Fred was a perfect role for her. Three times over the next decade or two, Kat tried—and failed—to secure the role. In high school, she was cast as Queen Aggravain; at 26, she shined as Kitchen Wench #2 (out of 2) and the Nightingale u/s; and at 27, she played Lady Larken (opposite her bestie as Sir Harry, so no complaints there). It's been a long road, but Kat is thrilled to finally bring the dream she and her papa bear shared to fruition. This one's for him. Kat would like to thank her friends and family for their constant love and support and for being there “every step of the way.”

MAYA MALOSKEY (Lady Beatrice, Pantomime) is a senior at Great Valley High School. She has previously performed in the *Broadway in Berwyn* at Christmas time cabaret with Footlighters. Maya is extremely excited to be a part of a show with Footlighters Theater. She would like to thank the directors for the amazing opportunity and her cast mates for the wonderful experience.

ERIN MARKHAM (Lady Larken) is happy to be appearing in her second show at Footlighters. She would like to thank all of her friends and family for their constant support.

GINA POLETTI (Lady Rowena, Lady Larken u/s) is thrilled to return to Footlighters after playing Jackie Noelle in *Disaster!* Previous roles include Kate Monster (*Avenue Q*), Traci/Blind Woman (*Disaster!*), and Turn Back O Man soloist (*Godspell*) at the Wilmington Drama League; Baker's Wife (*Into the Woods*) at Bravo Theatre Company; Sherrie Christian (*Rock of Ages*), Jemima (*CATS*), Heidi (*title of show*), Celeste #2 (*Sunday in the Park with George*), and Rosalia (*West Side Story*) at Milburn Stone Theatre; Sarah (*Company*) at Chapel Street Players, and ensemble in *Sweeney Todd*, *Chess*, *American Idiot*. Love to Ray, and my (fur) babies Kaylee & Rogue. Gods of the theatre, smile on us!

LINDA POLITO (Queen Aggravain) is so excited to be in her second production at Footlighters Theater. She loved playing Mrs. Mops in *A Christmas Carol* last year, and is having a fantastic time keeping this super talented cast that includes her son Ryan QUIET!!! She would like to thank the production team for giving her this opportunity. Thanks to her family and friends for all of their support.

RYAN POLITO (Sir Harold, Minstrel u/s) is excited to be back at Footlighters for his fourth show! Some of his favorite roles have been

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

Gabe (*First Date*), Arpad (*She Loves Me*), Young Scrooge (*A Christmas Carol*), and Jehan (*Hunchback of Notre Dame*). He would like to thank the cast and production team for making this show such an amazing experience.

GIGI PROTHERO (Pantomime, Lady in Waiting) is a sophomore at Conestoga High School. This is her first show at Footlighters Theater, but she was in productions of *Beauty and the Beast* and *Frozen* in middle school as well as being involved backstage on set crew and deck crew for Conestoga's productions of *She Loves Me* and *The Play That Goes Wrong*. In addition to musical theatre, she has been performing at School of Rock Main Line for almost three years. Gigi would like to thank her amazing castmates and production team for their hard work towards an amazing show and her family and friends for always being so supportive.

CONNOR REDMOND (1st Knight) is making his Footlighters debut and is excited to work with this cast and crew. He hopes you enjoy the show.

JOSH STARCZEWSKI (Jester) is thrilled to be appearing on stage at Footlighters for the first time! His previous roles have included Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables*, SpongeBob in *the SpongeBob Musical*, Lumiere in *Beauty and the Beast*, and Dom Claude Frolo in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*. Josh is currently a student at Saint Joseph's University. Josh is very thankful to the entire cast and crew of this show for always being accommodating throughout this process. He would also like to thank his choreographer Karen for allowing him to learn vast amounts of dance knowledge from her. He hopes to return to the Footlighters stage very soon!

CLAIRE TANNER (Pantomime/Lady in Waiting) is thrilled to be in *Once Upon a Mattress* as her second Footlighters show! Claire is 15 years old and is a freshman at Conestoga High School. She was last seen at Footlighters in *A Christmas Carol* (Old Hag/Ghost of Christmas Future/Ensemble). Her past shows elsewhere include *Matilda* (Hortensia) at Methacton Community Theater; *13* (Simon) with Community Through Song and Stage; and *High School Musical* (Kratnoff) at Salt Performing Arts. In her free time, she enjoys coloring books, listening to music, making friendship bracelets, and playing piano. She would like to thank her family and her voice teacher, Nick Harmantzis, for all their support; her fellow cast mates for being so welcoming to her; and the OUAM production team for giving her the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful show!

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TIFFANY TATE (Lady Lucille) is so excited to be in her second production at Footlighters! She was also Levora Verona in Footlighters *Disaster!* When she isn't a lady in waiting or a diva, she teaches kindergarten in Philly. She wants to thank her husband Jon and son Myles for their continued support!

MORGAN WRIGHT (Lady Merrill, Princess Winnifred u/s) is excited to make her Footlighters Theater debut after a long hiatus from the stage. Previous roles include Ronette in *Little Shop of Horrors*, Marta in *Company*, Rosie in *Cabaret*, and June in *Chicago*. She wants to thank this talented cast and production team. She also wants to thank her friends, family, and amazing husband for their support and encouragement.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CREW

KAREN DIXON (Choreographer) is beyond thrilled to work with this amazing cast! Recent production credits include choreographer for *The Rocky Horror Show*, *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* and *A Christmas Carol* with Footlighters. Other recent credits include *Disaster!* (Shirley Summers) and *Meteor Shower* (Corky) with Footlighters and *Sandbag*, *Stage Left* (Dora Glockamora) with Barley Sheaf Players. A huge thank you to my family and friends for supporting my passion and for google maps for always telling me how far it is to Footlighters every time I get in my car. (she/her)

BILL GILBERTSON (Director) Recent productions include *Little Shop of Horrors* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Steel River Playhouse); *Disaster!*, *Parade*, *The Bad Seed*, *Moon Over Buffalo* (Footlighters Theater); and *Chess* (Bravo Theater Company). Two season ago he directed *Meteor Shower* at Footlighters Theater. Next up is directing *Broadway In Berwyn* in March. He currently serves as Treasurer of Footlighters Theater. Many thanks to this amazing cast, production team, and his singing teacher Susan Dash of Devon, PA.

MINA GRABOVE (Assistant Stage Manager) is a current senior at Conestoga High School and excited to put on this musical with all of you! Mina has done other behind the scenes work at school. She has done *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* with the deck crew, *A Wrinkle in Time* with the hair and makeup crew, and *The Play That Goes Wrong* as an usher. She is also an actor at the Y. She has been Ensemble in *Mary Poppins* and *Newsies Jr.*, and was just seen in *Matilda Jr.* She also performed in the Footlighters production of *Beauty and the Beast*.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CREW

NATHAN KENDRICK (Music Director) is originally from Bradford County in northeast Pennsylvania and now a musician and actor based in Chester County. Kendrick attended Susquehanna University where they studied music performance as a vocalist with secondary studies in keyboard instruments and joined the music fraternity Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia. After graduating, he attended the American Institute of Musical Studies in Graz, Austria where he studied and performed German Lieder and sang in a masterclass with baritone Bo Skovhus. Kendrick currently serves as Director of Music and organist at Paoli UMC and sings with Ama Deus Ensemble and The Brandywine Singers. Nathan has been seen on the Footlighters stage in *The Rocky Horror Show* (Dr. Frank-N-Furter), *Assassins* (Leon Czolgosz), and *Eurydice* (Loud Stone) and has music directed *A Christmas Carol*; *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*; and *Once Upon a Mattress*. Kendrick also music directed *Seussical The Musical* at Steel River Playhouse in Pottstown as part of the theater's Summer Bridge program for young performers.

HELENA VANNATTER (Stage Manager/Props Designer) is a 2022 graduate of Lafayette College, earning a bachelor's in English literature and women's, gender, and sexuality studies. Helena was the props manager for her college theater club for three years, working on productions of *Footloose*, *The Wedding Singer*, and *Legally Blonde*. She also ran stage crew for the club's production of *Heathers*. Prior Footlighters credits include stage manager and props designer for *Disaster!* Helena has also worked at Steel River Playhouse *Little Shop of Horrors* (ASM), *It's A Wonderful Life A Live Radio Play* (properties designer), and *Promise to Pottstown* (properties designer). You can next "see" Helena as the stage manager for an upcoming surprise project at Footlighters and stage manager for *Steel Magnolias* at SRP.

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