

DalekoArts

# GODSPELL

MUSIC & NEW LYRICS  
BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

DIRECTED BY  
AMANDA WHITE

CONCEIVED AND  
ORIGINALLY  
DIRECTED BY  
JOHN-MICHAEL TEBELAK



SEPT 28 - OCT 14

W, TH, FR, SAT 7:30PM SUN AT 2:00PM

## OUR MISSION

DalekoArts (DELL-uh-koh), an ensemble theatre company, works with professional artists to pursue impactful, live performance in our community of New Prague, Minnesota and the surrounding region.

## OUR VISION

Our purpose is to decentralize professional theatre in Minnesota by increasing engagement and opportunity in New Prague and the surrounding area. It is our dream that New Prague will be a known destination for quality performing arts and arts education.

## OUR STORY

DalekoArts was founded in 2012 by theatre artists Ben Thietje and Amanda White as a way to help decentralize professional theatre in Minnesota.

New Prague was chosen as the company's home due to the community's extraordinary interest in theatre, the regional growth and development it has experienced in the last decade, its relative proximity to the Twin Cities, and its close ties to the founders.

"Daleko" — a Czech word meaning "far away" — reflects New Prague's strong bohemian roots, its spatial relationship to the cultural hub that is the Twin Cities, and the ensemble's desire to step back and examine the world from a new point of view.



This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Prairie Lakes Regional Arts Council, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.



DalekoArts is a member of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre and the Minnesota Theater Alliance.

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Friends,

Godspell opened off-Broadway in 1971.

That wasn't its origin story, though, by any means. It was originally created and performed by a group of students as John-Michael Tebelak's graduate thesis at Carnegie Mellon University. Then it moved to La Mama, an experimental theatre in New York's East Village, after which Stephen Schwartz (who you might recognize from his wildly popular musical *Wicked*) workshopped and re-scored it. It started to build popular acclaim, and the musical eventually found its way off-Broadway and into theatre companies and schools all over the United States. In 2011, a reorchestrated version hit Broadway, and that's when I fell in love with the show.

Many of you have seen this musical, and probably some of you "of a certain age" performed in it in your high school drama program. It's a story that has the potential to fall out of cultural circulation--not necessarily because the story of Jesus and his disciples gets tired, but because the show is just so 1970s. The original *Godspell* (from the Old English, meaning "good news") was about a group of clowns who stumble into a shared space, meet Jesus, and find purpose for their antics. They're in jeans, they chill with the Big Guy, it's all very new and "hip". There isn't really a narrative, in the traditional sense--Jesus guides them through retelling his parables, in new and quirky ways. He teaches them, shapes their actions, and in the end, leaves them to build a community without him. (You Episcopalians in the audience may recognize a format modeled after a traditional service, and even some familiar hymn lyrics.) While the show was very de rigueur in its aesthetic, we find ourselves in a similar ideological spot today: we have to apply a modern lens to his teachings in order to make sense of them. The notion is not novel, it's urgent. Why? In part, because so much of our modern life in this country is being shaped, right now, by communities, legislators, and leaders who say they speak on behalf of Jesus. And on behalf of what he taught us about how to live and treat each other.

So what you're about to see is a simplified version of the story. We took out a bunch of the props, bits, corny exchanges. There's still more than enough goofiness to go around, trust--but we've distilled this story in order to take a good look at what Jesus actually taught his disciples in this Book. The disciples are called by the actors' own names (except for Toby, who plays a blend of John the Baptist and Judas, arguably meeting Jesus at his pastoral beginning and end). There's no resurrection in *Godspell*, and it's been a much-debated issue in the show. Isn't that the whole point, you purists might ask? Schwartz and Tebelak would likely tell you that they believe the point is that Jesus was such a powerful teacher that he created a way of life that could be sustained in his physical absence. It became necessary for his community to form, grow, and move forward without him. And because so much of this script is from translations of the Bible itself, we can leave it to you to consider after you leave the theatre.

Who was this man? Do his words still apply? Admittedly, my perspective is biased: I identify in the strongest sense as a christian. My faith is deeply important to me, and I choose to use Jesus' teachings as a guide. Some of you are not operating from that space at all. Some of you are of entirely different, glorious, ancient faith traditions. Some of you have experienced deep trauma in a christian church. Some of you have found strength and hope there. Some of you don't feel that religion or spirituality is the answer. (And yet here we all are, together in this room--LONG LIVE THE THEATRE.)

I land here: in spite of the imperfect humans who carry his torch, the Book of Matthew and the framework of Jesus' life and legacy is about radical love. It's about building community, finding respite in those around you, wanting for others what you have and more, ceaselessly protecting and providing for those in need--and without judgment, offering safety and encouragement for all your fellow travelers. Letting your light shine as a beacon to the world in the time you have. And here today, a bonus: it's all accompanied by a rockin' score.

That's the story of this musical, and the central tenet of Jesus' story and sacrifice, his one big-picture message. Radical love and community. So says the Book of Matthew. And, of course, the cast of DalekoArts' *Godspell*.

Thanks for being here today, and much love,

Amanda and the *Godspell* team

# GODSPELL

CONCEIVED & ORIGINALLY DIRECTED BY

**JOHN-MICHAEL TEBELAK**

MUSIC & NEW LYRICS BY

**STEPHEN SCHWARTZ**

DIRECTED BY

**AMANDA WHITE \***

MUSICAL DIRECTION BY

**ANTHONY J SOFIE \***

CHOREOGRAPHY BY

**JOE CROOK**

CAST

JESUS

**JORDAN LEGGETT**

JOHN THE BAPTIST/JUDAS

**TOBIAS THIETJE**

ZACH

**ZACH GARCIA**

RYAN

**RYAN LEE**

JORDAN

**JORDAN MITCHELL**

RICKY

**RICKY MORISSEAU**

MAGGIE

**MAGGIE MAE SULENTIC**

NICOLE

**NICOLE THIETJE**

ALECIA

**ALECIA WHITE \*\***

TIME: NOW | PLACE: HERE

PRODUCTION STAFF

STAGE MANAGER

**CASEY WILLIAMS**

SCENIC DESIGNER

**SYDNEY ACHLER**

LIGHTING DESIGNER

**COURTNEY SCHMITZ**

COSTUME DESIGNER

**SAMANTHA KUHN STANEART**

SOUND DESIGNER

**JOSHUA STALLINGS**

PROPS DESIGNER

**SARAH SALISBURY**

CARPENTER

**ROBIN MCINTYRE**

SCENIC PAINTER

**LYNN ISAACSON**

MUSICIANS

PIANO

**ANTHONY J SOFIE \***

GUITARS

**JAKOB SMITH**

GUITARS

**MATT SIDDONS**

BASS GUITAR

**JONATHAN LARSON**

DRUMS

**JACK PIRNER**

\* DENOTES COMPANY MEMBER

\*\* DENOTES MEMBER OF

ACTORS' EQUITY ASSOCIATION

## JORDAN LEGGETT

*Jesus*

Jordan is elated to be here with everyone. Born and raised in Slidell, LA, this is his first production with DalekoArts. His past credits include Seymour Krelborn in Little Shop of Horrors, Agwe in Once On This Island, and Riff Raff in The Rocky Horror Show Live. Jordan would like to express sincere gratitude to his family and friends for the continuous support and unconditional love. He also thanks his educators and mentors for their constant belief in him as he strives for his dreams.

## TOBIAS THIETJE

*John the Baptist/Judas*

Toby is thrilled to be back performing with DalekoArts! Past credits include Forever Plaid (Jinx), Little Shop of Horrors (Audrey II puppeteer), and A Chris Smith Carol (Enok). He is currently the music specialist at Raven Stream Elementary School in New Prague. He lives in New Prague with his wife (Nicole) and three kids (Jude, Elijah, and Audrey). When not in a show, you can see him helping out DA in the house or on the pickleball/tennis courts! Toby would like to give a HUGE thank you to his parents (Daryl and Addie), Nicole, my three awesome and loving kids, and Megan Schoenbauer for being the best babysitter a parent could ask for!

## ZACH GARCIA

*Zach*

Zach is excited to be making his DalekoArts debut with this inspiring group of artists to tell this story. Zach's recent regional credits include Theatre Latte Da (Man of La Mancha), Park Square Theatre (Pirates of Penzance, The Palabras Project) Children's Theatre Company (Cinderella), Guthrie Theater (The Primrose Path), Frank Theatre (The Threepenny Opera), Walking Shadow Theatre Co. (Marie Antoinette, The Whale, A Midwinter Night's Revel), Artistry/BCT (Fiddler on the Roof, Carousel, Guys and Dolls, Proof), among others. Other credits include performances in Chicago and Falmouth, MA. Zach received his Bachelor's of Arts degree in Music and Theatre from Lawrence University. Zach would like to thank God, his beautiful wife Jessica, his family, friends, and this beautiful cast and crew for their unending support.

## RYAN LEE

*Ryan*

Ryan is absolutely thrilled to be returning to DalekoArts for the third time! He appeared in last season's production of She Loves Me, as well as the season 5 production of The Rink. Recently, Ryan has been fortunate to perform with several wonderful theaters around the Twin Cities including Lyric Arts (Guys & Dolls), Theater Latte' Da (A Christmas Carole Petersen), Theatre Elision (Ghost Quartet), and 11/11 Theatre (Enter the Narrator). Ryan is also a seasoned songwriter and musician, has released 5 albums of original music and toured nationally. Thanks for coming and enjoy the show!

## JORDAN MITCHELL

*Jordan*

Jordan is proud to be a part of Godspell with DalekoArts! Jordan was previously seen in the Twin Cities as Black Dude in The Toxic Avenger with Minneapolis Musical Theatre and as Ryan with SmartMouth Comedy's Director's Cut: Say Yes to the Dress. Jordan received his education at the University of South Dakota BFA Musical Theatre program and is glad to be working in his home state. Outside of theatre, Jordan can usually be found playing video games, practicing guitar, writing plays or short stories, or trying to make people laugh with his very dark sense of humor.

## RICKY MORISSEAU

*Ricky*

Ricky is from Delray Beach, FL where he earned his BA in Theatre Performance with a minor in Dance from one of the top Historically Black Universities Florida A&M University. This is his DalekoArts debut! He has worked with numerous companies in the twin cities such as the History Theatre, Guthrie Theater, Stages Theatre Company, CLIMB Theatre, and more. Ricky recently starred as Cleante in Imaginary Invalid with Combustible Company. He also starred as Joe Louis in David Feldshuh's world premiere play Dancing With Giants starring Tovah Feldshuh. When he is not on stage, Ricky is working with the youth. Taking his gifts and experiences and giving it back to the community. He runs an after-school program at Pratt Community School where he provides ac-

ademic and enrichment programs to the kids of the Glendale community.

### **MAGGIE MAE SULENTIC** *Maggie*

Maggie is an Iowa native who relocated to the Twin Cities after her graduation from the theatre program of Luther College in 2016. She was most recently seen as Vivienne Kensington in Artistry's production of Legally Blonde the Musical. Some favorite past roles include Penny in High Fidelity (Minneapolis Musical Theatre), Ronette in Little Shop of Horrors (Festival Theatre), Fiona in Flanagan's Wake (Actor's Theatre of MN), and the first time she played Vivienne Kensington in Legally Blonde the Musical with Paul Bunyan Playhouse. As always, she is eternally grateful to her family and her partner in crime, Caitlin, for their constant support. By day Maggie works in the Sets and Lighting department of Evine Live.

### **NICOLE THIETJE** *Nicole*

Nicole is thrilled to be in her first DalekoArts production. She is a native of Louisiana and settled in New Prague, MN about 10 years ago. She has been working behind the scenes of public school musical theater for 10 years as music director and choreographer. She studied Music Performance and Teaching at the University of West Florida where she played "Amalia" in UWF's production of She Loves Me. She was also seen onstage in La Boheme, The Magic Flute, and Gianni Schicchi with the Pensacola Opera. Currently, she is the Choral Director at New Prague High School, directs the Treble Choir with Northfield Youth Choirs, and sings with the "See Change" Treble Choir in St. Paul. She lives in New Prague with her husband Toby and three children (Jude, Elijah, and Audrey) and two dogs.

### **ALECIA WHITE** *Alecia*

Alecia is thrilled to be onstage in her first show at DalekoArts! Alecia is a founding board member of DalekoArts, and a founding company member of Alecia and Amanda Dance in the Basement to Musical Theatre Records, circa 1985-present, a co-production with Amanda White, Alecia's (ahem, older) beloved sister. Alecia is (at any given moment)

a stay-at-home-mom, professional actor (proud member of Actors' Equity Association), certified birth and postpartum doula, lactation counselor, childbirth educator, and licensed K-12 music teacher. She has been a doula since 2003 and is a passionate maternal-child health advocate. Alecia has worked as an actor regionally and in NYC. One of her favorite experiences was performing with John Cullum in The Dresser, directed by Gerald Freedman at the Clarence Brown Theatre. Alecia holds an MFA in Theatre Performance from the University of Tennessee and a Bachelor of Music from Butler University. She also holds her 4 incredible children and her actor/pediatric nurse-anesthetist husband Josh in Eden Prairie, where the 6 of them and their two dogs, Jolly and Josie, try to squeeze into the same bed each night. For Noah, Flora, Eve and Sabrina -- let your Light so shine!

### **CASEY WILLIAMS** *Stage Manager*

Casey is thrilled to be working with DalekoArts for the first time! She received her BFA from the University of Minnesota- Duluth and some other recent productions include Don Giovanni (Lyric Opera of the North in Duluth, MN), Spring Awakening (Normandale Theatre in Bloomington, MN). She is also excited to be working as Normandale Theatre's season Prop Master. She would like to thank her friends and family for their continued support.

### **SYDNEY ACHLER** *Scenic Designer*

Syd is thrilled to be designing another Daleko show! She is a Chicago based scenic designer and painter and an ensemble member with (re) discover theatre. Upcoming productions include Warrior Class and Dead Man's Cell Phone with The Comrades. Recent designs include She Loves Me, Middletown, A Chris Smith Carol, Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged), Stones in his Pockets, Our Town, DalekoArts; Clearing, Commission Theatre; Row After Row, The Comrades; For One, (re)discover theatre; Punk, The New Colony; Big Love, Apple Valley HS; Hamtown Races, Planet Ant Theatre. She received her BFA from Illinois Wesleyan University. Although based in Chicago,

Syd is so grateful to have a place to come home to in New Prague, MN, with Amanda, Ben, and the Daleko-Fam.

### **COURTNEY SCHMITZ** *Lighting Designer*

Courtney earned her MFA in lighting design from the University of Iowa in 2009. Since relocating to Minneapolis in 2012, she has designed locally with Yellow Tree Theatre, Collective Unconscious, Workhaus Collective, nimbus theatre, crash.dance productions, SPARK theatre + dance, 20% Theatre Company, Bucket Brigade Theatre, and Artistry. Previous designs with DelakoArts include Wait Until Dark, Stones In His Pockets, The Complete Works of Shakespeare (abridged), and She Loves Me. [www.cargocollective.com/schmitzlighting](http://www.cargocollective.com/schmitzlighting)

### **SAMANTHA KUHN STANEART** *Costume Designer*

At DalekoArts: Our Town, Urinetown, Little Shop of Horrors Representative Experience: At Pro Rata: Rocketman, Henry V, The Beauty Queen of Leenane, 1984; Lyric Arts: Guys and Dolls, She Loves Me, Always...Patsy Cline, Shrek the Musical, The Explorers' Club, Grease, Boeing Boeing, Into The Woods; Theater Unbound: Mere Trifles, Silkworms; Apple Valley High School: The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, 9 to 5; Actors' Theatre of Columbus, OH: A Comedy of Errors, The Merchant of Venice Training/Education: The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH: M.F.A. Costume Design and Construction; Hamline University, St. Paul, MN: B.A. Economics and Theatre Arts. Samantha is the the Makeup/Retail Buyer at Norcostco, Inc.

### **JOSHUA STALLINGS** *Sound Designer*

Joshua is excited to be returning to DalekoArts after sound designing She Loves Me last season. As a designer/composer his work has also appeared at History Theatre, SteppingStone Theatre, CLIMB Theatre, American Dance Festival, and Twin Cities Public Television, as well as music and corporate events across the Midwest.

### **SARAH SALISBURY** *Props Designer*

Sarah is overjoyed to be back for her fifth Daleko production. Past credits include Stones in His Pockets, The Rink, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged), Middletown, and She Loves Me. Sarah is also a stage manager for such companies as Jagged Moves, Rhythmically Speaking, Eclectic Edge Ensemble, Alternative Motion Project, as well as being an Assistant Stage Manager at Ted Mann Concert Hall. On top of all of that, Sarah is the Production Manager for The Haunted Basement.

### **ROBIN MCINTYRE** *Carpenter*

Robin graduated with a BFA and an MFA in Theatre Design and Stage Technology from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Since 1991 Robin has designed for a variety of local theatres including Lakeshore Players, Mounds View Community Theatre, Park Square Theatre, The History Theatre, Actor's Theatre, The Flying Foot Forum, North Star Opera, The Phipps Center for the Arts, local colleges, and many local high schools. For 10 seasons Robin created hundreds of sets for both main stage musicals and Black Box theatre productions at Bloomington Civic Theatre and Art Center. He is currently freelance designing in the Twin Cities and working with The University of Northwestern in St. Paul.

### **LYNN ISAACSON** *Scenic Painter*

Lynn is happy to be back working with DalekoArts! She has worked in the Twin Cities area for many years, recently with MN Opera, Great Theater, and Split Rock Studios. She last painted for DA on the Theatre L'Homme Dieu remount of The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged).

### **ANTHONY J. SOFIE** *Piano/Music Director*

Anthony is excited to return to the music director's chair for another DalekoArts production, a role he has held for Forever Plaid, Little Shop of Horrors, Always...Patsy Cline, Urinetown, The Rink, and She Loves Me, in addition to taking the stage as "Dino" in the Main Street Holiday series. Anthony is an active performer

in the Twin Cities area, assuming the roles of music director, accompanist, vocal coach, conductor, and dialect coach. As a singer and actor, Anthony has performed with Dale Warland Singers, St. Paul Chamber Orchestra Chorale, Minnesota Opera, Artistry, Minneapolis Music Theatre, and Chameleon Theatre Circle. He also currently serves as music director at St. Anne's Episcopal Church, and music director and accompanist for Park Center Senior High.

**JAKOB SMITH**  
*Guitar*

Jakob, currently active and residing in Chicago, Illinois, began his music career while attending the Main Street School of Performing Arts in Hopkins, Minnesota. He earned his Bachelor of Music in Performance at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Jakob has performed internationally with numerous bands, musical theater, and other projects, displaying versatility in Jazz, Rock & Roll, Blues, R&B, Country, Punk Rock, Pop, Funk, Bluegrass and many other styles.

**MATT SIDMONS**  
*Guitar*

Matt is excited to bring his talents to DalekoArts for the first time. A graduate of St. Thomas with a degree in Music Business, Matt studied the guitar under Chris Kachian and Joan Griffith, exploring the worlds of classical, jazz, improvisation, and what it means to be a musician. Outside of music, Matt is a Marketing Coordinator at the House Boardshop in Little Canada and enjoys hiking, camping, video games, and more music.

**JONATHAN LARSON**  
*Bass Guitar*

Jonathan has been a musician for over 20 years, and is delighted to be bringing his talents to the Twin Cities and DalekoArts for the second time (She Loves Me). Proficient in a wide range of instruments, he's played bass, guitar, percussion, and more for a wide range of groups in the Saint Cloud area, including the Minnesota Center Chorale and the Saint John's Boy's Choir, of which he is a former member. Aside from playing and writing music, Jonathan also enjoys acting, video games, and reading.

**JACK PIRNER**  
*Drums*

Jack is a recent graduate of the University of Minnesota, and is thrilled to be playing his sixth show with DalekoArts; the first five were Little Shop of Horrors, Always...Patsy Cline, Urinetown, The Rink, and She Loves Me.

**AMANDA WHITE**  
*Director*

Amanda is delighted and proud to have spent some time in the room with this group of musical artists. Past DalekoArts shows Amanda has directed include Our Town, Little Shop of Horrors, Barefoot in the Park, and DA's very first show, The Odd Couple. You may have seen her on the DalekoArts stage in Middletown, The Rink, The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged), Adventures in Mating, Our Town, the Main Street Holiday series, The Philadelphia Story, Rancho Mirage, and Proof. In addition to being a founding Artistic Director at DalekoArts, Amanda is a member of the Theatre performance faculty at Normandale Community College. She is a graduate of Columbia University's Program in Arts Administration, MSU Mankato's MFA in Theatre Performance, Truman State University's Theatre Arts program, and the School at Steppenwolf Theatre Company. This is for Aunt Pam, for lots of reasons...not the first of which is that it's her favorite.

**JOE CROOK**  
*Choreographer*

Joe Crook graduated from MSU Mankato, where he was selected to perform at the Kennedy Center three times in his career as both an actor and dancer in KC/ACTF and ACDF. Since graduation, he has worked both on and off stage for The National Theatre for Children, Off-Leash Dance, Paul Bunyan Playhouse, Way Off Broadway, Eclectic Edge Ensemble, Christopher Watson Dance, Black Label Movement, Continental Ballet, and The Ames Center. He is currently the Managing director of Starz Dance Competition. He has choreographed shows at St. Olaf, MCTC and The Children's Theater. This year, Joe is serving as adjunct faculty in the Department of Theatre & Dance at Minnesota State University, Mankato. In his free time, he is a plumber and active art maker.

# DalekoArts

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