

TELLIN' TALES THEATRE PRESENTS

Diversity

Solo performances by artists,
writers, and advocates with disabilities

Refocusing Disability

June 9, 10, 11

ONE WEEKEND ONLY

Greenhouse Theater Center

2257 N. Lincoln, Chicago (The theater is completely accessible)



Directed By Tekki Lomnicki

Assisted by Ben Saylor

Graphics by Pete Benitez of Flight Byte Design

Stage Management by Charlotte Brown

Lighting Design by Stefan Brun

THE CAST

JANET ANNE. (*She Wished Me Dead More Than Three Time*) has been actively gay since 11, on a mission to normalize Lesbianism. Born and raised in Chicago. She previously was in Tellin' Tales Theatre's *Hands Up! Police*.

JOEL MARGOLIS (*Cutting Loose*) is a graduate of The University of Chicago (B.A. and M.A.). He worked for many years in housing, real estate management/development, and later, was a self-employed consultant in urban trend analysis, mostly for clientele from overseas. He taught sociology part-time at a few different colleges and in the 1990's, was a partner in a small-business venture in post-communist Romania. During the 1990's and early 200's, Joel made multiple trips to Europe and/or Brazil and lived in Romania and Hungary for several months at a time. He has been a disabled person since 2007 and since then, has focused on writing and a little singing. He volunteers for the TV program "Voice of the Disabled" (shown on public access station CAN-TV) in Chicago.

MARIE MCGEE (Hearing Tales of a Teacher) Born in Mississippi, raised in Los Angeles and Chicago, Marie is a writer and entrepreneur who loves to ski, write, read history, to listen to live music and model. She enjoys spending time with family and friends, and loves to laugh and inspire kids about their future. Marie's professional career has evolved from being an accountant, business manager, human resources director, insurance agent and now an elementary teacher. Her education achievements include a bachelor's degree in business administration, a master's degree in public administration and a master's degree in teaching. Marie currently resides in Córdoba Tennessee

MARK PELOQUIN (All It Takes is One Click) is a multi-dimensional adventurer with a knack for finding himself in unexpected places. Born and raised in southeastern Massachusetts, he began his career in Chicago working in photography and design. Today Mark works for a holistic chiropractor care company based out of Oak Brook. Mark first became actively involved with Tellin' Tales Theatre in 2002 with the production of *Six Stories Upside Down*. Mark dedicates this performance to his cherished friend Sarah Paweni. Sarah and Mark performed together in 2002 in the production of *Six Stories Upside Down* Sarah will be missed, she will be cherished, but she will never be forgotten.

BEN SAYLOR (Am I Gay Enough?) has grown up with Tellin' Tales Theater kicking off his acting career in 2005 at age 11. His first production was *Six Stories Up on Capitol Hill*. Since then Ben has been a student acting apprentice, student assistant director, and a mentor. He has also been in Porchlight Musical Theater's production of *Side Show* as the Littlest Cossack. Ben graduated from DePaul University with a BA in Relational Communications and double minored in LGBTQ Studies and Creative Writing. He now works in the compliance department for Avant LLC and is the Co-founder of LPA's Rainbow Committee, focusing on providing resources and acceptance for LGBTQAI+ little people within the organization.

KRUTI PARIKH SHAH, PharmD (Unmask the Truth of Accessibility) a Clinical Operations Pharmacist at RUSH University Medical Center, Chicago. She is a Disability Lead fellow, a Public Disabilities Employee Resource Group (DERG) at RUSH. During the pandemic, when medical masks became a barrier to lipreading, she advocated for clear masks to improve access to communication. Being a woman of color and having a disability of hearing loss, she is passionate about Disability, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in healthcare. She is an Indo-Canadian American, whose life has spanned in three different countries. She was raised by a single mom, who has inspired her to live a life filled with courage, confidence and gratitude. She is a mom of two, and enjoys biking, hiking and traveling with her husband and kids.

HUGO TREVINO (Daily Dose of Ableism) is a first generation Mexican American. As an activist, he has advocated for the rights of Latinxs, LGBTQIA, people with disabilities & other marginalized communities. He earned his B.A. at the University of Illinois at Champaign Urbana (UIUC) in 2014 and his Master of Education in International Higher Education in 2018, from Loyola University Chicago. His passions include helping people with disabilities in education, healthcare, and self-advocacy to name a few. This passion has led him to public speaking and working at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he makes sure students with disabilities have equal access to higher education and can achieve their full potential. Hugo joins Divercity, in hopes to be able to tell a small part of his life dealing with Ableism and the daily life that people with disabilities have to endure.

TEKKI LOMNICKI (Director) is the founder and Artistic Director of Tellin' Tales Theatre, a 27-year old company dedicated to shattering the barriers between the disabled and non-disabled worlds through the power of personal story. Tekki's two full-length plays *When Heck Was a Puppy: The Living Testimonies of Folk Artist Edna Mae Brice* and *Blurred Vision* were critically acclaimed by The Chicago Reader and The Chicago Sun Times. She has written and performed over 27 solo performance pieces, and starred in the award-winning film, *The Miracle* by Jeffrey Jon Smith. She taught youth at Chicago's Gallery 37 and After School Matters, and adults at the Victory Gardens Training Center, and Board Lead. She is a recipient of an Illinois Arts Council Artists Fellowship in New Performance Forms, the 2008 3Arts Award in Theater, the 2010 Grigsby Award for Excellence in Solo Performance, the 2014 Dan Van Hecke Award for outstanding leadership and service to the disability community and was named a 2016 Duke of Distinction at York Community High School in Elmhurst. Tekki also does disability awareness presentations for corporations. She is currently working on a new full-length musical spotlighting the disability experience.

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**WANT TO ENROLL IN THE NEXT EVERYBODY HAS A STORY
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YOUNG PERSON WHO WOULD ENJOY ONE OF OUR
WRITING/THEATER WORKSHOPS?
EMAIL: INFO@TELLINTALES.ORG**

UPCOMING SHOWS

**TELLIN' TALES IMPROV TEAM—June 13 & 20@ 8pm IO Theater
Our team will open for the Paisleys.**

**WANT TO BE ON THE TEAM? Come to auditions June 22 at IO Theater 6:30-9:30.
Book your slot now. Email Steve@tellintales.org.**

**YOUNG ADULT WRITERS READER'S THEATRE—July 23 Sulzer Library
Writers, college age and beyond, with and without disabilities share stories in a virtual
Reader's Theater presentation.**

**UNMASKED—August 18, 19, 20 Venue TBD
Seasoned Chicago solo performers and Live Lit writers reveal the stories under
the masks they show the world.**

**SIX STORIES UP IN THE ATTIC—November 5-14 Venue TBD
Middle school students and their adult mentors with and without disabilities discover
dusty family secrets and life lessons in a magical attic.**

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