

2ND STORY PRESENTS

# CHANGING THE SUBJECT



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Chicago is the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: The Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi Nations. Many other Tribes like the Miami, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac, and Fox also called this area home. Located at the intersection of several great waterways, the land naturally became a site of travel and healing for many Tribes. American Indians continue to call this area home and now Chicago is home to the sixth largest Urban American Indian community that still practices their heritage, traditions, and care for the land and waterways. Today, Chicago continues to be a place that calls many people from diverse backgrounds to live and gather here. Despite the many changes the city has experienced, both our American Indian and the 2nd Story community see the importance of the land and this place that has always been a city home to many diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

## BLACK LIVES MATTER

This organization, and the people behind it, believe that Black Lives Matter. We believe that no one is free until we are all free. As an organization comprised of artists, advocates, staff, and board members, we believe that sharing and deeply listening to each other's personal stories opens the possibility of radical change that this moment calls for.

## LABOR ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the work that we do in community rests on the labor that has preceded us, much of which was done by Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and disabled activists, and this labor was frequently invisible, unacknowledged, and unpaid.

## ARTS WORKER CARE

2nd Story is proudly certified by the [Pay Equity Standards](#).

Developed by [On Our Team](#), The Pay Equity Standards are a system to establish and publicly recognize equitable pay practices within theatre companies, arts organizations, and not-for-profit organizations.



# TELLERS



**Courtney Kotloski** (she/her) is an award-winning writer, playwright, actress, speaker, and published author.

She is one of the founders of Serendipity Theater (now 2nd Story, Chicago). Her plays have been performed in every major city with performances at the New York Fringe Festival, Upright Citizens Brigade Theater, Strawdog Theater, Second City LA, and the Victory Gardens Theater. Courtney has performed in small theaters throughout Chicago and professionally at the Goodman and Steppenwolf theaters. She has voiced many radio and TV spots and received a best actress award for her performance at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland. Courtney has taught acting and improv for nearly 20 years. Courtney worked in a corporate agency setting for more than a decade as a Creative Director and Content Strategist. She has led writing teams, and has been the creative mind behind many campaigns and communication strategies. She currently works as the Director of Content Strategy for Milwaukee-based agency, Marie Daniel Group, which she founded with two colleagues.

Courtney is the author of the award-winning Gnat & Corky Series and The Ladybug Club. Her first book, *Addison the Light Catcher*, achieved the number one new release in children's special needs books on Amazon.

Courtney lives in Northern Illinois with her husband, two children, and two dogs. Most recently, Courtney directed and wrote *The Amaze Light Festival* and appeared on NBC as Officer Westfall on *Chicago Fire*.



A member of the 2nd Story community for nearly a decade, **Max Spitz** (he/him/his) produces the 2nd Story Podcast and crafts study guides for schools across Chicago. By day, you can find him walking his dog, relistening to his favorite podcasts for the umpteenth time, and overanalyzing the storytelling in whatever video game he's currently playing.



**Aaron Talley** (he/him) is a Chicago-based writer, activist, facilitator, and educator. His work has been featured in various news outlets, including *Colorlines*, the *Feminist Wire*, *The Advocate*, *Education Post*, and *Chicago South Side Weekly*. An alumni of the *Voices of Our Nations Arts Fellowship (VONA)*, he is currently working on a speculative fiction novel for young adults and teaches middle school on Chicago's South Side. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram: @Talley\_Marked and read more of his work on his blog *Newer Negroes*.

# PRODUCTION TEAM



**Michael Benedict** (he/him, Sound Engineer) is a Chicago-based digital designer. He got his start in sound design at a young age, creating and manipulating analog instruments to create unique soundscapes. Eventually, he gravitated into other aspects of digital design, and is now the co-founder and Creative Director of Tractatus Design Studio, where the focus is on progressive experiential designs in AR, VR, and other digital environments. Michael loves to cook and spend time with his wife and puppy.



**Justin Cavazos** (he/him) is a singer, guitarist, songwriter, and producer based in Chicago. He previously music directed and arranged the new musical, *Double Vision* for the Chicago Musical Theatre Festival. Originally from Texas, Justin received his BA in Music with a concentration in Vocal Performance from Stanford University. Why he moved to Chicago to finally experience winter remains a mystery. Justin's current focus is on authentic storytelling in songwriting and live performance with his original music projects.



**Aliza Feder** (she/her, Director) is a Chicago based director, writer, and makeup/sfx artist. Her areas of focus include new play development, adaptations of classics, and staging the supernatural. She was previously the artistic director of *Fermat's Last Theater Company* in Madison, WI, where she adapted and directed *Miss Julie*. Assistant Directing credits include *The Night Season* (Strawdog), *The Recommendation* (Windy City Playhouse), *Neighborhood 3: Requisition of Doom* (Bower Theatre Ensemble), *Slipper Tongue* (Violet Surprise: A FemSlash Festival), and *Ligabue* (Museum of Contemporary Art). Makeup/SFX credits include *Masque Macabre* (Strawdog Theater), *L'amante Anonyme* and *Poppea* (Haymarket Opera).



**Ema Kester** (she/they, Zoom Tech) is a recent graduate of Loyola University Chicago where she studied Theatre and Psychology. Post-grad she has had the opportunity to work in the professional theatre space in many different capacities—from acting to devising to producing! When Ema isn't working in theatre, she is a barista and baker at *Everybody's Coffee* in Uptown. Ema is originally from the south suburbs, but has since found a cozy spot on the lake in Edgewater with their cat, Sock.

# PRODUCTION TEAM



**Jenna Meyers** (she/her, Producer) is a senior producer at the creative and production agency August Jackson—coordinating and managing all manner of big events and meetings. When not working she can be found at a local Chicago craft brewery hanging with friends or on her bike. A theatre kid at heart—she loves producing at 2nd Story and being a part of the creative teams they bring together.



**Andrew Reilly\*** (he/him, Curator and Emcee) is a writer, editor, and photographer whose work has appeared in a number of fine publications including Crain's Chicago Business, The Houston Chronicle, The Chicago Reader, The A.V. Club, and Norman Einstein's Sports & Rocket Science Quarterly. He has also performed on a number of equally fine stages, including his solo shows "Paris Of The South Pacific" with the Lifeline Theatre's Filet Of Solo festival and "Running Free" at the Side Project Theatre. He lives in Chicago.

# ABOUT 2ND STORY

## MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

We believe that stories are what bind us to each other.

We want to live in a world driven by empathy.

Therefore, we create spaces where people can share and deeply listen to one another's stories.

Our Core Values are Inclusion, Craft, and Courage.

## STAFF

Amanda Delheimer\*, Artistic Director

Lilian Matsuda, Interim Managing Director

Carolyn Aguila, Manager of Relationships

Ali Drumm\*, Manager of Strategy and Operations

Liz Rice\*, Manager of Curriculum and Education

Jackie Snuttjer, Accountant

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Max Spitz, Podcast Producer

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## 2ND STORY COMPANY

2nd Story's company is comprised of story-makers working together to build community through the power of storytelling.

Liz Blondel

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Reshmi Hazra Rustebakke

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Megan Shuchman

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2nd Story is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency and by a CityArts Grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events.

If your name was left off in error, please accept our apologies and contact Lilian at [Lilian@2ndstory.com](mailto:Lilian@2ndstory.com)

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\*Denotes Current or Emeritus Company Member