

2ND STORY PRESENTS

# BITTER/SWEET



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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



**Jared Bellot** (he/him) is an educator, facilitator and multi-disciplinary artist whose interests lie at the intersection of storytelling, language, performance and community. His work focuses on curating community spaces that allow for moments of deep reflection, authentic curiosity, and intense joy. A fierce advocate of arts education and believer in the radical power of storytelling, Jared has served in various artistic, administrative and leadership positions at schools and cultural institutions of various sizes, and currently serves as the Walter Director of Education and Engagement at Goodman Theatre. As a freelance theatre artist and educator, Jared has worked extensively with organizations throughout the city including Definition Theatre (where he serves as Associate Artistic Director), Timeline Theatre (where he is an Associate Artist), and Jackalope Theatre (where he is a Company Member), in addition to Goodman Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Victory Gardens Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Northwestern University, DePaul University, University of Chicago, and 2nd Story.



**Lauren Kullman** (she/hers) is currently a CPS drama teacher to over 240 kindergarten to eighth graders in the Austin community. She has been a classroom teacher for the past 13 years. In her pre-teacher life she was a spa receptionist, a spice company office manager, a dog walker, a caterer, a waitress, a barista, and mostly an unpaid actress. Originally hailing from Long Island, New York, Lauren has now lived in the midwest for over 30 years. She has a BFA from Miami University of Ohio, an MFA from Cincinnati's College Conservatory of Music and a Masters in Teaching from Dominican University. Upon moving to Chicago, along with 3 friends from undergrad, she began a theatre company then called Serendipity. She is thrilled that things have come full circle and is now telling a story for its 25th anniversary season here today. Lauren is the extremely proud wife of Sean and mom to John (8) and Addie (5). Her first story for 2nd Story was likely sometime in or around 2002.



**Earliana "Earl" McLaurin** (she/her) is a licensed secondary education English teacher, writer, storyteller, teaching artist, actor, director; in short, anything that will allow her to manifest stories to create more understanding in the world. As a teaching artist, Earliana has worked with students aged 9 to 99 through her work with the former Rialto Square Theatre School, the Park District of Oak Park, Light Opera Works Summer Musical Theatre program, GeNarrations (a Goodman Theatre educational program), and is a facilitator and company member with 2nd Story. When she isn't creating stories she's using that same spark of creativity to teach others how to equitably integrate technology into public education. Earliana is a graduate of Truman State University, the University of Missouri, and is a K-12 Instructional Technology Specialist. (she/her/hers)



**Lexi Saunders** (she/they) is a director, writer, performer, and teaching artist originally from Los Angeles with a BA/BS in Theatre & Psychology from UC San Diego. She currently teaches storytelling, acting, playwriting, and performance art for both teens and adults at TimeLine Theatre, Silk Road Rising, and Camp Bravo. As a director in Chicago, Lexi has worked with Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens, American Blues, About Face, Steep, The Gift, Jackalope, Haven, Mudlark, and Chicago Dramatists. She is an Artistic Associate at About Face Theatre, and was selected for Victory Gardens' 2016 Directors Inclusion Initiative and Haven Theatre's 2017 Directors Haven. In both her art and teaching practice, Lexi is passionate about creating spaces for people to explore and expand their voices through vulnerability, empathy, imagination, creativity, and collaboration.

# 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.



**Julie Ganey** (she/her, Curator and Emcee) has been working with 2nd Story since 2008 and has performed in theaters all over Chicago for the last 30 years. Her stage work includes three original solo shows, *The Half-Life of Magic*, *Love Thy Neighbor...till it hurts*, and *Good Enough*. Through the improv comedy ensemble *Wavelength*, Julie has created workshops for educators and executives across the U.S. on communication skills, bridging conflict, and community building. She is an adjunct professor at The Theatre School at DePaul University, an instructor for the Goodman Theatre's *GeNarrations* program, and a consultant with The Morten Group, LLC, where she facilitates workshops around equity. Julie is an AEA and SAG-AFTRA member.



**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.



**Liz Rice** (she/her, Director) began working with 2nd Story as part of the 2013/2014 Directors Ensemble and fell in love with the company. Over the years, she has directed, produced, or curated over 25+ stories! These days, she supports 2nd Story as the Manager of Curriculum & Education and as the Company Manager.

On her artistic journey, Liz has worked with Lifeline Theatre, City-Lit Theater, a-squared theatre, amongst others. She is currently a board member for the Arts & Business Council. She's grateful to Amanda for her continual support and mentorship and for teaching her what french scenes were.

In her free time, when not rolling dice/slaying dragons, or learning about dystopian futures, Liz likes to feed people, cook, and eat. Always in that order.

# PRODUCTION TEAM



**Christine Thoren** (she/her, Producer) has worked in storytelling, directing, and community-building since 2011. In addition to multiple turns as a director at 2nd Story, she's proud to have shared her story with audiences & CultureBuilds. Her creative work has been seen onstage at Writer's Theatre, the House Theatre of Chicago, and more. A proud graduate of Loyola University Chicago, Christine is an unabashed advocate for joy, dogs, and adventure stories.



**Yongwoo** (he/him, Musician and Sound Designer) is a musician, teaching artist, actor, and filmmaker originally from Pittsburgh, PA. Along with appearing in on camera productions including Chicago PD, he teaches theatre and creative writing residencies throughout Chicago with Lookingglass Theatre and Playmakers Laboratory, and also occasionally works as a casting director. An avid martial artist, he trains in kyokushin karate, Dutch kickboxing, and Japanese and Brazilian jujitsu at Imazaki Dojo, tai chi with Sifu Rodrigo Trupp, capoeira at Grupo Capoeira Brasil, and holds a 1-0 record in amateur muay thai competition.

# 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

Pat Fries

Jenan Mohajir

Reshmi Hazra Rustebakke

Madeline Bourdenko

Julie Ganey

David Nabwangu

Megan Shuchman

Paula Carter

Martinique Hallerduff

Vince Pagán

Megan Stielstra

CP Chang

Jessica Kadish

Cameron Pentimone

Aimy Tien

Stephanie Chavara

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Ozzie Totten

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Sarah Zematis

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Dr. S. and Dr. Danielle Simmons  
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Brenda Strong  
Danielle & Hervé Zille

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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