

The background is a detailed, light-colored illustration of a Western scene. It features a cowboy on horseback in the upper right, a group of people in the upper left, a woman in a long dress in the lower left, and various other figures and structures in the distance. The overall style is reminiscent of classic Western art.

THE WAY WAY WEST

Created by DAN SHARKEY, MIKE ELDRED, CHRIS ROBERTS, and ROSS BRIDGEMAN
THE WAY WAY WEST is presented through special arrangement with Up On The Meadows, LLC. New York. © 2023

PG-13

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



*Salish Encampment on land that is now Missoula, Montana.
Photo Source: Indian Peoples of the Northern Great Plains Digital Collection*

MCT, Inc. acknowledges that the Missoula Children's Theatre is located on indigenous territory. As we gather together and celebrate theatre, we also want to honor the original stewards of this land and their descendants; many of whom continue to live, work, teach, volunteer, and learn in this community. We are committed to showing gratitude for the land and its indigenous people by respecting and remembering this in our thoughts and actions.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

We are looking to present something new and different with *The Way Way West*. With cowboy poetry and contemporary Americana Folk music, we want to tell the stories of the lost and forgotten voices of the Old West. We are inspired by the courage and strength of the people who faced every possible hurdle in their quest for a new and better life. For our purposes, we use a cast of one gender. This is to emphasize the storytelling and break the mold of “why aren’t the women playing the women’s parts?,” or vice versa.

MISSOULA CHILDREN'S THEATRE

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playbill on your mobile device.



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MCT accommodates accessibility upon request.
Some accommodations require advance notice.
Call the MCT Box Office for more information.
(406) 728 - 7529

MCT is a non-smoking establishment.
Please turn off or silence all electronic devices.
No flash photography or videotaping during performances.
Please take a moment to locate the nearest emergency exit.
In an emergency, do not use the elevator.



Restroom available, please see an usher.



PRODUCTION

Creative Team..... Dan Sharkey, Chris Roberts,
Mike Eldred, Ross Bridgeman
Director..... Dan Sharkey
Assistant Director Mike Eldred
Music Director Ross Bridgeman, Mike Eldred
Stage Manager Joanna Ward
Assistant Stage Manager.....Rae Scott
Scenic DesignerMike Monsos
Lighting DesignerMike Post
Sound Designer Gregory Boris
Costume Designer Jordan Draper
Properties DesignerMike Monsos
Set Construction and Painting Trevor Monsos, Wilder Ayer
Technical DirectorMike Monsos
Master Electrician.....Blain Radford
Production Manager..... Theresa K Jenson
Artistic Director Joseph Martinez
Light Board Operator.....Rae Scott
Sound Board Operator Gregory Boris
Vortek..... Joanna Ward

BAND

Piano.....Ross Bridgeman
Guitar..... Nick Spear, Nick Barr
Bass Wally Condon
DrumsTroy Bashor

JOIN THE CREATIVE TEAM FOR A
TALK-BACK AFTER THE SHOW

MUSICAL NUMBERS

FEMALE CAST

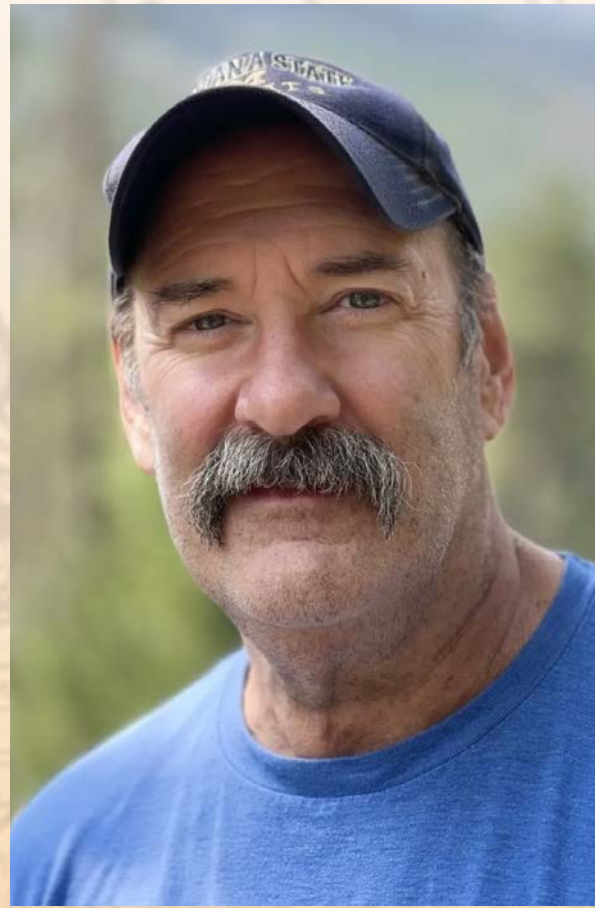
Actor 1 - Lucy Taylor
Actor 2 - Darci Monsos
Actor 3 - Hallie Racicot

MALE CAST

Actor 1 - Diego Kjelland
Actor 2 - Royce McIntosh
Actor 3 - Nick Monsos

Ghost Melody
Wayfaring Stranger
Too Still, Too Long (Movin' On)
Overland Express
The Way Way West
One Man's Pain
The Letters
Utah Territory
Hymn Of The Sheep
Requiem For A Tree
Find My Strength In You
Sink Like A Stone
In Billy's Blue Eyes
Far From This Meadow
Angels & Saints
Finale (One Man's Pain/Wayfaring Stranger)

B|O|S



DAN SHARKEY CREATIVE TEAM

Dan is an Actor/Singer/Director based in New York City and holds a B.A. in Theater Arts from Montana State University. His Broadway credits include *SpiderMan-Turn Off the Dark* (Green Goblin), Susan Stroman's revival of *The Music Man*, *Amazing Grace*, *The Bridges of Madison County*, and Hal Prince's *ShowBoat* on London's West End.

Sharkey's National Tours include Tommy Tune's *The Will Rogers Follies* (where he took over the role of Will Rogers from Keith Carradine at The Pantages Theater in Los Angeles), and also Tune's *Grand Hotel*. In James Hammerstein III's production of *The Sound of Music*, Dan played Captain Von Trapp opposite Marie Osmond. He was featured in Scott Schwartz's *Seven Brides For Seven Brothers*. Dan has performed in ten Off-Broadway shows (including over 1100 performances as Hucklebee in *The Fantasticks*) and many regional productions at theaters including The Guthrie, The Long Wharf, Actor's Theatre of Louisville, and The Shakespeare Theater of D.C. He can be heard on numerous original Broadway and Off-Broadway cast recordings.

As a singer, Dan has toured China, The Philippines, and Europe performing for Heads of State. He performed Sunday Mass at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Dan opened for Juice Newton as a guitarist/vocalist at the Wilson Theater in Bozeman. As a director, Sharkey's productions of *The Will Rogers Follies* and *Grand Hotel* won the Denver Critics Award for Best Musical in two consecutive years. He has also directed productions of *Bonnie and Clyde*, *On Golden Pond*, *The Producers*, *Fiddler On The Roof*, *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, and *Best Little Whorehouse in Texas*, to name a few.

Dan mastered the motion capture and voice of the character Avery Duggans in *Grand Theft Auto Five-Diamond Casino*. T.V. credits include *As The World Turns* (Hunter), *Boardwalk Empire* (Herb Crocker), *Prodigal Son* (Gary), *GIRLS5EVA* (Cowboy), *Livin' On A Prairie* (Bonnet Head), and he comes to an unfortunate end as Jimmy in the feature film *You Can't Run Forever*, directed by Michelle Schumacher and starring J.K. Simmons.

Dan is proud to sit on the board of the not-for-profit Amazing Place Music, a production company based in Whitefish, Montana, that brings national talent to the Flathead Valley to interact and perform with the local talent and community. Sharkey is also a two-time gold medalist in swimming at the Montana Senior Olympics and an avid skier and hiker.

BIO



CHRIS ROBERTS CREATIVE TEAM

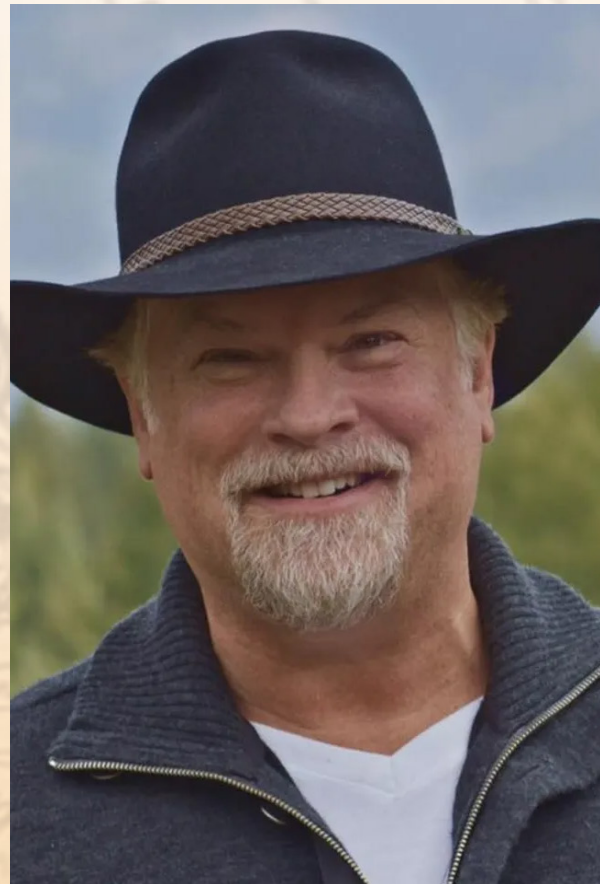
Chris is a Grammy-nominated, multi-instrumentalist songwriter from Nashville, TN. He has had songs recorded by artists like H.E.R., Ashley McBride, Matt Stell, Ashley Campbell, Lindsay Lawler, The Swon Brothers and many others. His songs have been used for film and TV in spots like The Super Bowl on NBC, Assassin's Creed, FOX Baseball, Nashville, Reign, Call of Duty, 12 Strong, AUDI, Batwoman and others.

Chris was a founding member of the band One Flew South. Signed to Decca/Universal, the band released its album *Last Of The Good Guys* in 2008 to much critical acclaim. The band played Farm Aid with Willie Nelson and Neil Young and the Newport Folk Festival with Jimmy Buffet and The Avett Brothers. Their song "Friends For Life" was featured as the opening song for *Disney's Fox and the Hound 2*.

Roberts was also in the original Broadway cast and National Touring company of *The Civil War* and performed with Sir Paul McCartney at Carnegie Hall. As a solo artist, he has released a Pop/Folk album harkening back to his Montana roots titled *The Way West*. His second release is *Mountain Standard Time*, an album of bluegrass tunes. His most recent project is a duo with Australian singer/songwriter Claire Wyndham called The Lonely Fighters.

Robert's writing for the theatre includes a musical commissioned by the Smithsonian for their D-Day museum in New Orleans called "The Boat That Won The War." His song catalogues are represented by Sony Music Publishing, Warner Chappell, Anthem Entertainment and The Bus/MusicLoft Entertainment.

B|O|S



MIKE ELDRED CREATIVE TEAM

Mike is an internationally acclaimed vocalist/actor/recording artist who has appeared on Broadway in the original production of *Les Misérables* as “Jean Valjean”, in the original cast of the Tony-nominated *The Civil War*, in the 25th anniversary tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and starred as “The Tenor” in the national concert tour of Handel’s *Messiah Rocks*. His starring role as “Tony” in the Nashville Symphony’s production of *West Side Story* has earned international praise as “arguably the best ‘Tony’ on record”, cast recording released by NAXOS International.

An artist of tremendous depth and reach, Mike’s diversity and generosity of spirit fuel the many facets of his career. He is increasingly interested in using his performances to raise awareness and funds for causes close to him. Mike produced and performed a benefit concert in Whitefish, MT, raised thousands for Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and kicked off a fundraiser bicycle ride, in which he rode nearly 400 miles over five days on a route stretching from Glacier National Park to Yellowstone National Park.

In addition to numerous appearances on recordings and DVDs, Mike has released five solo albums that have garnered critical and popular acclaim. His first two recordings, *Uncommon Love* and *Never Stop*, were chart toppers in the CCM world. His third album, *ME*, features favorites from the stage drawn from his years on Broadway. That record was followed by *Let It Begin*, a holiday album that features appearances from several of Mike’s friends including former touring partner Jim Brickman. The latest release is *Come Love Me Again*, a celebration of the music of John Denver and a companion to Mike’s newest symphonic pops show. An early inspiration for Mike’s life as a singer, John Denver’s music, his message and his passion for America’s open spaces resonates deeply with Mike and he enjoys sharing this with audiences all over the country. Mike’s non-profit Amazing Place Music presents a concert series “ON THE STAGE” and features national and local artists in Whitefish, Montana in an up close and personal concert setting.

Eldred is an online and in-person vocal and performance coach around the country. He has performed as a host and a soloist in concert with many of North America’s finest symphony orchestras including Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, Dallas, Detroit, Edmonton, Fort Wayne, Fort Worth, Glacier, Houston, Indianapolis, Jacksonville, Kansas City, Long Beach, Milwaukee, Modesto, Naples, Nashville, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Phoenix, Portland, San Diego, Seattle and Toronto.

As an author, Mike shares his opinions weekly on all things relevant and irrelevant on his blog MKECheck, powered by Substack.

B|O|S



ROSS BRIDGEMAN CREATIVE TEAM

Ross is a singer, songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, producer, actor, and award-winning arranger who lives in Whitefish, Montana. Originally from Phoenix, Ross began playing classical piano at the age of five and has not stopped creating and performing music ever since. After graduating from Belmont University in Nashville in 2011, Ross released his own debut

self-titled EP recorded and produced alongside Gregory McCubbin, showcasing Ross's talents as a pianist, singer, songwriter, and producer.

Having grown up in a musical theater household, Ross continued to pursue his love of theater, performing with Studio Tenn Theater Company in their productions of *Cinderella* (Ensemble), *Big River* (Young Fool/Ensemble/Musician), *My Fair Lady* (Freddie Eynsford-Hill), *Into The Woods* (Rapunzel's Prince), and *Les Miserables* (Feuilley/Lesgles). It was in that fateful production in 2014 that he met Mike Eldred (Jean Valjean), but they wouldn't reconnect until Ross moved to Whitefish in 2017.

Between those years, Ross lived in Los Angeles, writing and producing for artists. Some career highlights include playing keyboards with Nick Jonas at the '16 Billboard Music Awards, working in the recording studio with Verdeen White, and performing on the Today Show with Rayvon Owen.

Since moving to Whitefish, Montana has kept Ross busy professionally. He runs one of the top wedding bands in Montana, The MAC Band. He also performs with The Tobacco River Ramblers, helping produce their debut album in 2024, and this year performing at the Under The Big Sky Festival. Ross owns and operates Beargrass Studios, a premiere rehearsal and recording studio in Columbia Falls. He also performs with Alpine Theatre Project, as musical director, keyboardist, and actor. He has served as band leader, featured artist, and keyboardist for several Amazing Place Music Concerts. as well as with various artists and tribute shows, most notably alongside Craig A. Meyer in *Piano Men: A Tribute to Elton John and Billy Joel*. He still loves to get out into the mountains to hike and camp, especially with his wife Jill and dog Scout.

BIOS



LUCY TAYLOR ACTOR 1, THE WAYFARING STRANGER

MONTANA: *Cinderella* (MCT), *Into the Woods* (University of Montana), *Songs for a New World* (ZDK Arts), *Rent* (MCT), *Young Frankenstein* (MCT), *Men on Boats* (University of Montana), *Puffs* (MCT), *Spongebob: The Musical* (MCT). NEW YORK: *The Wolves* (PPAS), *Lord of the Flies* (PPAS), and *Annie* (Glendale Theater). READINGS: *How Did We Get*

Here? (Denman Theater & Dance Co.), *Ryan White* (Theatre Barn), and *Pretty to the Bone* (Theatre Barn). TV: *Tall Tales of Jim Bridger*, and *Into the Wild Frontier*. FILM: Michelle Schumacher's *You Cant Run Forever*. She is also an occasional keyboardist and background vocalist for the local band Beau Akimbo. Any other personal facts, don't ask her friends or boyfriend. They know too much. She is grateful for this opportunity and wants to thank Joe Martinez for continuously supporting her career. Much love to mom and dad for their love and support! Insta: @lucytaylor_hi



DIEGO SOLAN KJELLAND ACTOR 1, THE WAYFARING STRANGER

Diego is thrilled to return to his hometown for this special production of *The Way Way West*! Over the past two years, he has been an active member of Portland's theatre scene, starring in regional productions and serving as the Coordinator for the Bridgetown Conservatory of Musical Theatre. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre

from the University of Montana.

Recent Portland highlights include Clyde Barrow in *Bonnie & Clyde* (Bridgetown Conservatory), George Bailey in *It's a Wonderful Life* (Stumptown Stages), and Bob Gaudio in *Jersey Boys* at Lakewood Center for the Arts. Previous Missoula favorites include Jack Kelly in *Newsies* (Missoula Children's Theatre), Johnny in *American Idiot*, Phil Davis in *White Christmas*, and Melchior Gabor in *Spring Awakening* at the University of Montana.

When not on stage, Diego enjoys writing original plays and music. You can explore his work at diegokjelland.com.

BIOS



DARCI MONSOS ACTOR 2

Darci Monsos has been performing professionally for many years at numerous regional theatres around the country including the Bigfork Summer Playhouse for 9 seasons. Since moving to Missoula with her family 26 years ago, she has performed on the MCT stage in a variety of roles including: Baker's Wife in *Into the Woods* (2000),

Audrey in *The Little Shop of Horrors* (2000), Celia in *Calendar Girls*, Violet in *9 to 5* and Katherine in *Freaky Friday*. She has also performed at the Fort Peck Summer Theatre as the Narrator in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, Betty in *White Christmas* and Tanya in *Mamma Mia*. Darci has also performed in 4 different Odyssey of the Stars productions at the University of Montana and has been a member of MCT's Bits and Pieces since 2000. Darci is excited to be a part of this inaugural production with so many talented friends and family.



ROYCE MCINTOSH ACTOR 2

Royce is a proud alumni of the University of Montana where he received his BA in Music and his MA in Musical Theatre. He has performed on the MCT stage many times, his latest role being Robert Kincaid in *Bridges of Madison County*.

Some of his favorite professional credits include: three National Broadway tours (*South Pacific*, *Elf*

the Musical, and *Mamma Mia!*), regional productions throughout America, and as a featured soloist with symphonies - including The Missoula Symphony, where he will be performing this holiday season as featured soloist in *Holiday Pops!* with the Missoula Symphony Chorale. He is honored to be part of this production, bringing new music and content to an ever-supporting audience in this great community! Thanks to the writers of *The Way Way West*, the production team, and MCT

BIOS



HALLIE RACICOT ACTOR 3

Hallie is thrilled to be part of the world premiere of *The Way Way West*! She was last seen on the MCT stage as Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*, and had a wonderfully magical time. Over the bridge at the University of Montana, she's (perhaps a little too) excited to play Hope Harcourt in *Anything Goes* this fall. If you happened to be in Fort Peck

last month, you might've caught her as Katherine in *Newsies*. Hallie is entering her junior year as a Musical Theatre major and is beyond grateful to bring a brand-new story to life, created by and shared with such a phenomenal group of people. She'd like to thank her baby niece, Edith, and her golden retriever, Violet, even though neither of them can read this.



NICK MONSOS ACTOR 3

Nick is thrilled to be a part of the world premiere of *The Way Way West*! The last time he made an appearance on the MCT stage was in *Rent* as the squeegee man. He is currently a senior at the University of Montana about to get his BFA in Musical theatre. Throughout his career, Nick has had the chance to play some very fun roles, both

professionally and at the university. Including Mayor Dobbs in *Bright Star* and Jack in *Into the Woods* at the school, and Gabe in *Next To Normal* with AM Theatrical, and Jack Kelly in *Newsies* at the Fort Peck Summer Theatre. In October, you will see Nick as Billy Crocker in the University of Montana's production of *Anything Goes*. Nick is honored and would like to thank the whole creative team for letting him be a part of this truly incredible show.

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The creators of *The Way Way West* would like to thank our Beta Readers for taking the time to read and reread our script. And for their invaluable comments and critique.

THANK YOU

Kelley Pierre • Dan Erickson

Dan Cooney and The Encore Musical Theatre Company

Christy Bain • Michael Smith

George Dudley • Cara Wilder

Gia DesLauriers • Nick Sullivan

Kathy Pelowski • Kristie Dale Sanders

UM Theatre and Dance • Jason McDaniel

Ronnie Avansino

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OCTOBER 4TH, 2025

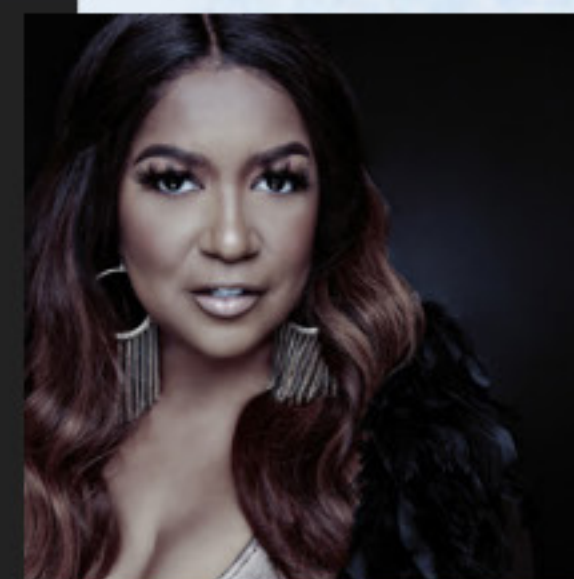
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