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PRESENTS



CROSS STITCH BANDITS

WRITTEN BY

Sanam Laila Hashemi and Steven Burneson

DIRECTION BY **Sharon Ott**

WORLD PREMIERE

MARCH 9 - 19, 2023

at the Libby S. Gottwald Playhouse



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ANNA SENECHAL JOHNSON
Artistic and Managing Director Cadence

present

Cross Stitch Bandits

March 9 - 19, 2023

Libby S. Gottwald Playhouse

CENTERED STAGE

Join us for **Post Show Talkbacks** on Saturday, March 11
and Sunday, March 12 after the 1pm matinees.

Cross Stitch Bandits was conceived and developed through
Cadence's Pipeline New Works Fellowship Program.

Director
Sharon Ott[^]

Assistant Director
Molly Marsh

Scenic Designer
Faith Carlson

Costume Designer
Sarah Grady

Lighting Designer
Weston Corey

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Joey Luck

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Jeanne	Dorothy “Dee-D.” Miller
Drew	Cyrus Mooney
Neil	Landon Nagel
Kaija	Tatjana Shields

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Assistant Stage Manager	Grace Côté, Breanna Swain
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Scenic Painting	Faith Carlson
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Running Crew	Terra Comer, Lavina Lionne
ASM Production	Kaylin Corbin, Scott Nuckols, Emily Parker

SETTING AND TIME

2010, somewhere in a small city in the US.

The running time is approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

SPECIAL THANKS

ASM, Matt Beyer, Pattie Burneson, Weston Corey, Collegiate School, Philip Crosby, Rachel Dunaway, Fotochrome Design LLC, Julie Gallager, Scott Jones; Denise Daly Konrad and Otto Konrad, Chris and David Lindsay-Abaire, Sharon Ott, Red Summit Productions, Todd Schall-Vess, Alyssa Sutherland, Swift Creek Mill Theatre, Andrew Williamson, Virginia Repertory Theatre

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PLAYWRIGHTS' NOTES

No one would ever attempt to celebrate their spouse's 40th birthday by putting them into a coffin. No one would ever attempt to celebrate their spouse's 40th birthday by inviting over friends and family to recite eulogies. No one would ev-- Steven's dad has a unique sense of humor.

The birthday party 'that never was' (due to a firm rejection by Steven's mom) became a regular anecdote in the family. The first time Sanam heard the story, she immediately saw its potential as a framework for a script. The two of us carried that nugget around for years and waited for something to click.

Along came Pipeline and the insane opportunity to learn from David Lindsay-Abaire and develop a brand-new play. On day one of the fellowship, we pitched a few story ideas. "The Fake Wake" was our last pitch. The immediate reaction was, "That is a play." This is that play.

To us, *Cross Stitch Bandits* is an argument for family. These characters care for each other deeply. They want the best for one another. They just can't seem to communicate that. And that can be tragic and hilarious all at once.

- Steven & Sanam



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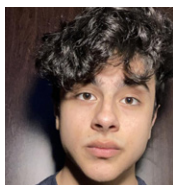
CAST



Otto Konrad, he/him, (David) is proud to be making his Cadence debut. Otto received his B.A. in Theatre Performance from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, with student credits such as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* and Artie in *The House of Blue Leaves*. Otto's professional credits include Roland in *Present Laughter* with the Clarence Brown Company. Otto also has his J.D. from the Washington and Lee University School of Law, and has been a practicing lawyer for 32 years. A partner with the Richmond law firm of Williams Mullen, Otto's extracurriculars have included hosting a decade of radio shows at 97.3 FM WRIR Richmond and working the performance stages of the Richmond Folk Festival as an announcer and artist presenter.



Dorothy "Dee-D." Miller, she/her, (Jeanne) is so excited to be part of the world premiere of *Cross Stitch Bandits!* Dee D. is currently in a production of *How Black Mothers Say I Love You* as Daphne, performing once again on the Richmond Triangle Players stage. Dee D's most recent projects include multiple film and stage works including performances with RTP. She was the voice of Aunt Mama in the award winning *Sugar In Our Wounds*, awarded Best Play in the 2021-2022 season and several other on stage performances in the tri-cities area. Dee D. began performing personal pieces at local poetry clubs and gatherings throughout RVA in 2010 and began acting in 2013. She is also a contemporary artist, and in her spare time she writes, paints, and sculpts.



Cyrus Mooney, he/him, (Drew) is amazed that he got the opportunity to perform in this new show, as he is still in school attending Virginia Commonwealth University as a Junior pursuing a B.F.A. in Theatre Performance. He has previously played John Faustus for Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre's production of *Dr. Faustus*. This is Cyrus's first paid opportunity to perform for the world. With many more to come in the future, he hopes you enjoy the show!



Landon Nagel, he/him, (Neil) was last seen on stage in 2019 as Torvald in *A Doll's House* with the TheatreLab. Previously, he played Hypnotist in *An Oak Tree* and Eben in *Desire Under the Elms* at the Firehouse Theatre. Other credits include Charlie in *Da*, Gaston in *Beauty and the Beast*, Bait Boy in *Airline Highway*, and Thomas Jefferson in *1776*, all with Virginia Repertory Theatre; Ophelia/Juliet in *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare, Abridged* (Quill Theatre); Dean in *Maple and Vine* (Firehouse Theatre); Sam in *The Flick* (Cadence); Vernon in *They're Playing our Song*, RTCC Best Actor in Musical nomination (Virginia Rep); and James in *Children of a Lesser God*, RTCC Best Actor nomination (Virginia Rep). Landon holds a B.F.A. in Acting from VCU School of Arts, and is currently working towards an M.F.A. in Theatre Pedagogy with a concentration in Acting and Directing at TheatreVCU. He is a professor of Theatre and Communications, teaching classes at Brightpoint Community College and VCU School of Business.

CAST



Tatjana Shields, she/her, (Kaija) is delighted to work with Cadence as they bring to life *Cross Stitch Bandits*. A recent Virginia Commonwealth B.F.A. graduate, her past credits include: *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* (Anne DeBourgh) Virginia Rep, *Everybody* (Somebody u/s) Cadence/Virginia Rep, *Intimate Apparel* (Mrs. Dickson) VCU, *Men on Boats* (OG Howland) VCU. She looks forward to performing with her *Cross Stitch* family and giving life to Sanam and Steven's words.

CREATIVE TEAM

Sanam Laila Hashemi, she/her, (Playwright) is an Iranian-American actor, writer, and producer based in NYC. She is thrilled to be back at Cadence for the world premiere of *Cross Stitch Bandits*. An inaugural member of Cadence's Pipeline New Works Fellowship, she has written two plays under the mentorship of David Lindsay-Abaire: *Cross Stitch Bandits* (co-written with Steven Burneson) and *Thursday*. Acting credits include: *The Who & The What* (TheaterWorks Hartford); *Pilgrims Musa & Sheri in the New World* (Mosaic Theater of DC); *Tiny Beautiful Things* (Lake Dillon); *The Christians* (Cadence/Virginia Rep); *Dance Nation* (TheatreLAB). Upcoming: *Dear Edward* (Apple TV+), *Full Circle* (HBO), and an Untitled HBO Series. She holds dual degrees in Theatre Arts and International Studies from Virginia Tech. Many thanks to Cadence/Virginia Rep, the Lindsay-Abaires, and Sharon for supporting this story. For my family and everyone who got me here – especially Steven, my partner through it all. www.sanamlailahashemi.com

Steven Burneson, he/him, (Playwright) is a filmmaker, video editor, and playwright based in New York City. His latest short film, *Beautiful Strokes*, the fictional tale of would-be tennis prodigy Pete Sampers, was a grant recipient of the 2020 Inwood Arts Works Filmmakers Fund. Steven has edited commercial video content for the likes of Chevrolet, Gillette, Walmart, and PayPal. He was an inaugural member of Cadence's Pipeline New Works Fellowship, through which he co-wrote and developed *Cross Stitch Bandits*. Steven is beyond excited for the play's world premiere and would like to thank the entire Cadence/Virginia Rep team, the Lindsay-Abaires, his family, and his partner for all things, Sanam, for giving him the tools and confidence to realize this dream.

Sharon Ott, she/her, (Director) is thrilled to be working on this wonderful new play at Cadence. In Richmond, she has directed *A Doll's House Part Two* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* at Virginia Rep, as well as several productions at Theatre VCU. She served as Chair of the Department of Theatre at VCU from 2017-2021, and is currently an Associate Professor and the Artistic Director of the department. She was the Artistic Director of the Berkeley Repertory Theater (for 13 years), and the Seattle Repertory Theater (for 8 years) and has won many awards for her directing and producing, including

CREATIVE TEAM

3 Bay Area Theater Critics' Awards, several Hollywood Dramalogue awards, and an Obie Award (with Theatre X, Milwaukee). During her final season as Artistic Director at Berkeley Rep, she accepted the Tony Award for Outstanding Regional Theater. Ms. Ott has directed at theaters throughout the country including Playwrights Horizons, the Public Theater, Manhattan Theater Club, Arena Stage, Roundhouse Theater, Milwaukee Repertory, the Huntington Theater, Utah Shakespeare Festival, La Jolla Playhouse, South Coast Repertory, Ford's Theatre and many others. She has also directed operas for San Diego Opera, Seattle Opera, and Opera Colorado. Prior to coming to Richmond, she was a Professor at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Sharon is a proud member of SDC (Stage Directors and Choreographers union) and served on the SDC Executive Board for 13 years. Currently, she serves as the Treasurer of the SDC Foundation (SDCF).

Faith Carlson, she/her, (Scenic Designer) is so grateful to be a part of this production team. When she isn't making a delicious meal or being active, she works in a wood-shop prepping fine carpentry projects for kids. Her recent credits include: Scenic Design for *The Niceties* and Scenic Charge for *How I Learned to Drive*, both at The Conciliation Lab; and Scenic Design for *I and You* at Virginia Commonwealth University. faithcarlson.myportfolio.com

Terra Comer, she/her, (Stage Crew) is an alumnus of Clark Atlanta University where she received a B.A. in Film/TV. During her time in Atlanta, some of her favorite roles included Jeanine in *Fat Pig*, Jessica in *This is Our Youth*, and Prix in *Breath Boom*. In college, she was able to direct her first short film titled *Salute Madness*. Previously, at Henrico's Center for the Arts, she had the opportunity to write and perform in her play *Belle da Bully* her senior year. Comer also trained in New York at the Bill Esper Studio and in LA with Meisner instructor Anthony Montes. She aspires to start her own theatre company one day. When not in the theatre, Comer is working in her studio creating Polaroid art with her favorite camera. She is so excited to work as an intern at Cadence!

Weston Corey, he/him, (Lighting Designer, Production Electrician) is a Richmond, Virginia native who has been working professionally in the lighting industry since 2012. True to his Virginian roots, he attended VCU's School of the Arts, and graduated with a B.F.A. in Lighting Design. After which, he spent several years working as the Lighting Director for the Sharon L. Morse Performing Arts Center in Central Florida where he was responsible for the lighting needs for over 250 shows a year. Currently, Weston is a Project Manager for Barbizon Lighting Company, where he helps implement stage lighting and rigging systems for new performing arts centers, schools, and houses of worship throughout the state. Additionally, he continues to freelance as a designer and technician for theatre companies and live entertainment entities in the Central Virginia area. Recent design work: *Escape to Margaritaville*, *VCU Dance Now '23* *Enouement Part 1*, *Riverside Christmas Spectacular*. www.wtcdesign.com

CREATIVE TEAM

Grace Côté, she/her, (Assistant Stage Manager) graduated from Marymount Manhattan College with a degree in theater arts with a directing concentration. While living in New York City, they served as a literary intern at several Off-Broadway theater companies including Women's Project Theater, The Working Theater, and Abingdon Theatre Company. She is currently working towards a master's degree in social work through Boston University's online program, while training to become a drama therapist. Keep supporting local theater!

Vinnie Gonzalez, he/him, (Technical Director) holds a B.F.A. from VCU. He has designed sets and lights for many theatre and dance companies in Richmond, including Quill Theatre, 5th Wall Theatre, Firehouse Theatre, Richmond Triangle Players, HATTheatre, The Latin Ballet of Virginia, Central VA Dance Academy, and Claves Unidos. He is also an actor and director, as well as an accomplished painter and photographer. He would like to thank the love of his life, Jennie, for all of her love and support and their daughter, Larawren, for being their special gift. Love you, loves!!!

Sarah Grady, she/her, (Costume Designer) is the Resident Costume Designer for Cadence. Recently, she was the Costume Shopper for Apple TV's *Swagger*, AMC's *The Walking Dead: World Beyond*, and is a proud member of IATSE. Before that, she was the Assistant Costume Director for Virginia Repertory Theatre for 17 years. Favorite designs include *Sister Act*, *West Side Story* (RTCC Award for Best Costume Design), *In the Heights* (RTCC Nomination for Best Costume Design), *Dreamgirls* (RTCC Award for Best Costume Design), *Junie B. Jones*, *The Music Man* (RTCC Nomination for Best Costume Design), *Spring Awakening*, *The Sound of Music* (RTCC Nomination for Best Costume Design) (Virginia Rep); *Fun Home*, *Violet*, *The Mountaintop*, *Caroline or Change*, and *Appropriate* (Cadence/Virginia Rep). For three lucky summers, Sarah traveled to Roma, Italy, to work with the Operafestival di Roma, where she coordinated the costumes for *The Magic Flute*, *Suor Angelica*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and *Die Fledermaus*. She has also worked at TheatreVirginia, Williamstown Theatre Festival, and Seaside Musical Theatre.

Shawanna Hall, she/they (Production and Stage Manager) is a stage and house manager with twelve-years professional experience in live entertainment. They have worked in several states in both equity and non-equity roles. Theme park shows and small cast straight plays are probably their favorite genres to stage manage. Recent credits include Folger Shakespeare Theatre's Reading Room, *Annie Jr.*, Kings' Dominions *Grand Carnivale 2022*, *Sugar In Our Wounds*, and *A Doll's House Part 2*.

Casey Henley, she/her, (Wardrobe Assistant) is thrilled to be a part of this wonderful production! Casey is currently a freshman at VCU, where she is studying to earn her B.F.A. in musical theater. Casey has performed in many different productions and is so excited to work behind the scenes!

CREATIVE TEAM

Lavina Lionne, she/her, (Stage Crew) has over 10 years of experience in the fashion industry, working with familiar brands such as Atlantic Records, Missy Elliott, NYFW, Grammy's, SXSW and many more. Lionne helps people profit from being unapologetically themselves. When she's not pursuing her passion in the arts, Lavina loves being surrounded by family, animals, and sports.

Joey Luck, he/him, (Sound Design and Music) is excited to be a part of this world premiere of *Cross Stitch Bandits*! Some of his recent theatre credits include: *After December* (Virginia Rep), *Everybody* (Cadence/Virginia Rep), and *James and the Giant Peach* (VCUArts Theatre). Joey has received an RTCC award in Sound Design for the following productions: *A Bright New Boise* (2013, Firehouse Theatre), *Cabaret* (2014, Richmond Triangle Players), *Psycho Beach Party* (2015, Richmond Triangle Players), *The Toxic Avenger* (2017, 5th Wall Theatre), *Sweeney Todd* (2019, TheatreLAB), and most recently for *Small Mouth Sounds* (2022, Cadence/Virginia Rep). Joey would like to thank his friends and family for their love and support!

Molly Marsh, she/her, (Assistant Director, Wardrobe Assistant) is so honored to be a part of *Cross Stitch Bandits*. She is a current junior at VCU, pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Theatre. She has previously directed Shafer Alliance Laboratory Theatre's *Romeo and Juliet* and performed as Hamlet in their production of *Hamlet*. She was also an assistant director for *Gross Indecency* with TheatreVCU. She would like to thank her friends and family for all their love and support, and Sharon Ott for her faith and guidance.

Rebecka Russo, she/her, (Technical Director) is excited to join the Cadence team for *Cross Stitch Bandits*. After graduating from JMU Theater, she relocated to Richmond and has since worked as a Scenic Designer and Stage Manager at the Weinstein JCC (*The Wizard of Oz* and *The Sound of Music*), Technical Director at Richmond Triangle Players (*A Christmas Kaddish*, *Stonewallin'*, *Sugar In Our Wounds*, and *How Black Mothers Say I Love You*). She also recently appeared on stage in *The Last Cyclist* and *Anything Goes* at the Weinstein JCC.

Breanna Swain, she/her, (Assistant Stage Manager) is a junior at VCU majoring in Stage Management and minoring in Sound Design. She is so grateful for the opportunity to work on *Cross Stitch Bandits* with Cadence Theatre. Bre is very thankful to work with Sharon, Molly, Shawanna, and the rest of the cast and crew. Enjoy the show!

Ellie Wilder, they/them, (Properties Master) is excited to be joining the inaugural crew of *Cross Stitch Bandits* for their ninth production with Cadence! Recent credits include: *Little Shop of Horrors* (Collegiate School), *Everybody* (Cadence/Virginia Rep), *Small Mouth Sounds* (Cadence/Virginia Rep), *La Rhonda* (Wishing Wind Creations), *Art of Murder* (CAT), *Gloria* (Cadence/Virginia Rep), and *Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England* (Richmond Triangle Players). Ellie has their B.A. in performance and technical theatre from Christopher Newport University. They currently work as a theatre and production technician at Collegiate School and as a props master in Richmond. Special thanks to their friends, family, and partner, Ian, for their love and support.

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