

## Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences on Tour presents *Me ... Jane: The Dreams & Adventures of Young Jane Goodall*

Based on the book *Me ... Jane* by Patrick McDonnell Adapted and written by Patrick McDonnell, Andy Mitton, and Aaron Posner Music and lyrics by Andy Mitton Co-arranged by William Yanesh

Choreographed by Christopher D'Amboise Music direction by William Yanesh Directed by Aaron Posner

Funded in part by the John M. Tiedtke 1930 Visiting Performing Artists Fund.

### Sunday • May 5 • 3 pm 2019 • Spaulding Auditorium • Dartmouth College

# Credits

Young Jane	Shinah Brashears
Mum	Liz Filios
The Pack	Phoebe Gonzalez, Harrison Smith, Michael Mainwaring
Understudies	Kaeli Patchen, Omar D. Cruz, Jessica Bennett

Scenic Designer	
Sound Designer	
Executive Producer	
Lighting Designer	
Properties Artisan	Kasey Hendricks
Costume Designer	
Projection Designer	5
Casting Director	
Dramaturg	Erin Weaver
General Manager	Harry Poster
Executive Producer	David Kilpatrick

Production Stage Managers	Samantha Wilhelm
Technical Director	Brian Debs
Lighting Supervisor, Assistant Technical Director	Amanda Kircher
Sound Supervisor	Garrett Seaton
Props and Wardrobe Supervisor	

Assistant Director	Jake Owen
Assistant Choreographer	Alyssa Sarnoff
Costume Design Assistant	Jeannette Christensen

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## **Program Notes**

Before she was a renowned humanitarian, conservationist and animal activist, Dr. Jane Goodall was a little girl with a very special toy chimpanzee named Jubilee. Together, Jane and Jubilee went on outdoor adventures and observed all the miracles of nature around them. As they learned more and more on their expeditions, Jane dreamed of spending the rest of her life living with and helping animals. And one day, she would go on to do just that. In this new musical adaptation, join young Jane and her special friend as they learn about the world around them and the importance of protecting all living species. With anecdotes taken directly from Jane Goodall's autobiography, this adaptation makes this very true story accessible for the young—and young at heart.

### **About the Artists**

**Patrick McDonnell (Writer)** is the author of a dozen children's books, including the Caldecott Honor winning *Me*... Jane, a biography of Jane Goodall, and the New York Times bestselling The Gift of Nothing. Both books have been adapted for the Kennedy Center stage, with Me... Jane premiering this fall. McDonnell is the creator of the comic strip Mutts, which debuted in 1994 and appears in over 700 newspapers in 22 countries. He won the National Cartoonists Society's highest honor, The Reuben, and is in development with Twentieth Century Fox for a feature-length Mutts animation.

He has collaborated with Eckhart Tolle on *Guardians* of Being: Spiritual Teachings from Our Dogs and Cats, and with poet Daniel Ladinsky for Darling I Love You, Poems from the Hearts of Our Glorious MUTTS and All Our Animal Friends. McDonnell is a member of the Fund for Animals and The Charles M. Schulz Museum.

**Andy Mitton (Composer/Lyricist/Writer)** previously teamed with Patrick McDonnell, Aaron Posner, Erin Weaver and the Kennedy Center on 2014's *The Gift of Nothing* (Helen Hayes winner for Outstanding Adaptation). He also composed for *Swing State: A Musical Fable*, book and lyrics by Dana Yeaton, featured in 2012's New York Musical Theatre Festival. Mitton also works as a filmmaker in the horror genre. Mitton's most recent film, *We Go On* (writer/

co-director/composer), is an award-winning indie thriller starring Annette O'Toole and released in the US through AMC's Shudder channel, and also released internationally. Other film/TV Credits: YellowBrickRoad (co-writer/director, 2010 Slamdance selection, Best Feature winner at NY Horror Festival), Chilling Visions: 5 Senses of Fear (co-writer/co-director for segment "Listen"), upcoming indie thriller The Vermont House (writer/director/composer). Selected LA theater: Lucid Sound (playwright/composer), Neal Bell's Monster (director/composer), The Jumping Frog of Calaveras County (director/songwriter/performer). Originally from Boston, a Middlebury College graduate and a Los Angeleno for 13 years, Mitton now lives in Connecticut with his wife Laura, sons Calvin and Asa, and cat Smush.

**Aaron Posner (Writer/Director)** is a playwright, director, teacher and co-founder of the Arden Theatre Company in Philadelphia. He has won numerous awards as both director and playwright, including two Barrymore Awards, six Helen Hayes Awards, an Outer Circle Critics Award, The John Gassner Prize, An Eliot Norton Award, A Bay Area Theatre Critics Award and many more. His play, *Stupid Fucking Bird*, has won numerous awards and had nearly 100 productions across the states and abroad. His other plays include *Life Sucks* and *No Sisters* (both re-inventions of other Chekhov plays), *District Merchants* (inspired by *The* 

Merchant of Venice), Who Am I This Time? & Other Conundrums of Love (adapted from Kurt Vonnegut short stories), The Chosen and My Name Is Asher Lev (adapted from the Chaim Potok novels), which have had more than 100 professional productions, and The Tempest and Macbeth (both with Teller of Penn & Teller). He has directed at major regional theaters from coast to coast, and he is an artistic associate at the Folger Theatre in Washington, DC. He lives outside of DC with his wife, actress Erin Weaver, and his amazing daughter, Maisie.

Christopher D'Amboise (Choreographer) is a former principal dancer at the New York City Ballet. He has worked extensively as a dancer, choreographer and director. He has choreographed more than 200 works of dance and theater, which have been performed worldwide. As a performer, he costarred with Bernadette Peters on Broadway in Song and Dance (Tony Award nomination). His television credits include two appearances on the Kennedy Center Honors where he performed in honor of his father Jacques d'Amboise, and a previous appearance in which he honored his mentor Jerome Robbins. D'Amboise wrote and choreographed The Studioan original play-with-dance that premiered in 2006 at South Coast Repertory and then at the Signature Theatre in 2007. He won the Helen Hayes Award for his work on Colossal at the Olney Theater and most recently directed and choreographed inaugural Lincoln Center Performing Arts Hall of Fame 2017 honoring Plácido Domingo, Hal Prince, Leontyne Price, Audra MacDonald and Yo Yo Ma.

William Yanesh (Music Director) made his Kennedy Center debut with the premiere production of *Me... Jane* last year. His music direction work includes Arena Stage's *Snow Child*, Signature Theatre's *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *The Last Five Years* (Helen Hayes nominee, Music Direction), 1st Stage's *Floyd Collins*, Round House Theatre's *Ordinary Days*, as well as Associate Music Director on Arena Stage's *Anything Goes, Dave* and *Carousel*. He was associate conductor on Passion, A Little Night Music and West Side Story at Signature; and Caroline, or Change at Round House. He has written music and lyrics for Blueberries for Sal at Adventure Theatre MTC; Caps for Sale (national tour and off-Broadway); and choral piece The Astronomer, featured on The Capital Hearings' record When the Night is New. Education: Carnegie Mellon University.

**Paige Hathaway (Scenic Designer)** is a freelance scenic designer located in the Washington, DC, area. She has recently designed *A Chorus Line* at the Muny in St. Louis, *Or*, at Round House Theatre, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Philadelphia's Arden Theatre, The Gulf at Signature Theatre, Another Way Home and The How and the Why at Theater J, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* at the Folger Theatre, and *Thurgood* and *Godspell* at Olney Theatre Center. She has an MFA in scenic design from the University of Maryland and a BFA in scenic design from the University of Oklahoma. She is a member of Local USA 829. www.paigehathawaydesign.com

Andrew Cissna (Lighting Designer) last designed Mockingbird for TYA, as well as American Scrapbook, Teddy Roosevelt and the Ghostly Mistletoe, and Blues Journey. DC Credits include 1984 for Catalyst Theatre Company (2008 Helen Hayes Nomination); The Gulf, The Flick, and Sex with Strangers at Signature Theatre (2014 Helen Haves Nomination); Cat on a Hot Tin Roof (2016 Helen Hayes Nomination), Ironbound, Father Comes Home from the Wars, Stage Kiss and Bengal *Tiger* at the Baghdad Zoo at Round House Theatre; One Destiny at Ford's Theatre; Copenhagen, After the Revolution and Yentl with Theater J; Passion Play at Forum Theatre; Murder Ballad, IWFTYA, and Silence! The Musical at Studio Theatre; Pinkalicious, Alexander, The Happy Elf and Holes for Adventure Theatre; and Blue/Orange, In On It and Gross Indecency at Theatre Alliance. Regional credits include Jitney at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park; Seminar at Playmakers Repertory Company; Noises Off and Harvey at Milwaukee Repertory Theatre; and Noises Off with Perseverance Theatre Company in Juneau, AK. Cissna

holds a BFA from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and an MFA from the University of Maryland.

Helen Q. Huang (Costume Designer) has credits that include Classic Stage Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Children's Theatre Company, Minneapolis, Guthrie Theater, Syracuse Stage, Seattle Repertory Theatre, George Street Playhouse Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Utah Shakespeare Festival. Disney Entertainment, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Arena Stage, Folger Theatre, Studio Theatre, Signature Theatre Company, Boston Lyric Opera and The Washington Ballet. International credits include set and costume design for National Opera House of China and the Central Television of China. Awards include Helen Hayes Award and Ivey Award. Other credits include costume design works that will be in the Exhibition Costume Design at the Turn of the Century exhibit to be held at the A. A. Bakhrushin Museum in Moscow, Russia. Huang is a professor in the MFA Costume Design Program, University of Maryland, College Park.

**Olivia Sebesky (Projection Designer)** designs video and projections for theater, dance, TV, concerts and special events. Recent projects include James Taylor's Summer Tour, Rap Guide to Consciousness (International Tour), Christian Cultural Center's Christmas Special for ABC Television, New Year's Eve at Soho House NY, *My Paris* (Long Wharf Theater), Nike Soho, NY, *Steve* (The New Group), *In Your Arms* (The Old Globe), *Ever After* (Paper Mill Playhouse), *The Spoils* (The New Group), *Fake-Off* (TruTV), *Alice and Olivia* (NY Fashion Week), *Sticks and Bones* (The New Group), *Vegas Nocturne* (Spiegelworld, The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas).

**Justin Schmitz (Sound Designer)** is ecstatic to be returning to The Kennedy Center's Theatre for Young Audiences having previously been the sound designer on *Darius and Twig* and *Me ... Jane: The* 

Adventures of Young Jane Goodall and the associate sound designer for *How To Catch a Star*, and *Elephant* and Piggie's We Are In A Play! New York credits: Cow *Play* (Dixon Place Theatre). Regional: The Kennedy Center and The Kennedy Center Theatre for Young Audiences, Signature Theatre, Round House, Olney Theatre Center, Theater J, Woolly Mammoth, Studio, Imagination Stage, Constellation, Keegan, Rorschach, Forum, WSC Avant Bard, Chautauqua Theatre Company, Triad Stage. Additional credits: The University of Maryland, Catholic University of America, and Gallaudet University, amongst others. Helen Hayes nominations: The Wild Party (Constellation) and *I Call My Brothers* (Forum). He is a proud member of the IATSE USA 829, USITT, and Theatrical Sound Designers and Composers Association. Fellowships: The Kennedy Center (2015) through the Kenan Institute, Chautauqua Theatre Company (2013) and The Orchard Project (2011). He holds an MFA from The University of North Carolina School of the Arts and a BA from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. www. justinschmitztheatre.com

Jake Owen (Assistant Director) is pumped to be joining Me ... Jane. He is a North Carolina School of the Arts alumnus and recent transplant from NYC to DC. Owen is currently a fellow at The Kennedy Center. New York: The Nina Variations, Richard III, Heart of Oak, Verona Walls, Sprinkles. Washington: Long Way Down, How to Keep an Alien, BergerAAC, Me ... Jane. Thanks to Aaron, The Kennedy Center, Gregg Henry, and Jane Goodall. thejakeowen.com or Instagram: the\_jake\_owen

**Alyssa Sarnoff (Assistant Choreographer)** is thrilled to be back at the Kennedy Center recreating *Me... Jane* with this incredible team. Recent theater credits include: Rob Ashford's *Carousel*, Susan Stroman's *The Merry Widow* at the Chicago Lyric Opera, Connecticut Repertory Theatre's *West Side Story* and *Newsies* (assistant choreographer and dance captain). Off-Broadway: *Neurosis* (associate choreographer). *GoNoodle/Harlem Globetrotters* at the Barclays center,

performance choreographer. She is a recent graduate of Northwestern University.

Jeannette Christensen (Costume Design Assistant) is currently based in DC. She holds a BA in theater design and production from Arizona State University and an MFA in Costume Design from the University of Maryland. Regional design credits include The Kennedy Center, Olney Theater Center, Theater Alliance—DC, Adventure Theater MTC, Imagination Stage, Mosaic Theater Company and The Keegan Theater. She has also worked as a costume design assistant with Wolf Trap Opera, Folger Theater and Studio Theater. jchristensendesign.com

#### **CAST & CREW**

Shinah Brashears (Young Jane) is delighted to be performing on tour again with the Kennedy Center Theater For Young Audiences. She was previously seen on the tour of *Elephant And Piggie's: We Are In A Play!* as the title character, Piggie. Credits include, Theater Latte Da: Assassins (Squeaky Fromme), Five Points (Mariah), Gypsy (Dainty June and Agnes) and Into The Woods (Little Red and Lucinda), Chanhassen Dinner Theater: Grease (Frenchy, u/s Sandy, u/s Patty), Holiday Inn (Ensemble, u/s Lila Dixon), Guthrie Theater: Music Man (Zaneeta), Ordway Theater: Mamma Mia (Ensemble, u/s Lisa and Ali) and 7th House Theater: The Great Work (Francesca). "All my love to Andrew." Instagram: @shinahhey.

Liz Filios (Mum) is an actor, musician, teaching artist and composer/sound designer. She loves making up songs, dancing silly dances and hiking through the mountains with friends. Television: *The Sunny Side Up Show*, PBS Kids Sprout. Regional theater: *The Winter's Tale* (Folger Shakespeare Theatre), *The Tempest* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Eurydice* (Wilma Theater), *Into the Woods* (Theatre Horizon), *Passion, Candide, Sunday In The Park with George* (Arden Theatre Co), *As You Like It, Red Velvet, An Iliad* (Lantern Theater), *Midsummer* (Inis Nua), *The Merchant of Venice* (Delaware Shakespeare), *Hamlet*, The Ice Princess, Shakespeare in Love (Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival), *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Cape Town Opera), *Nongeni*, the Rhino & the Cannibal (Khayelitsha School Tour, South Africa). BFA musical theater, University of Michigan. Thanks to Aaron, Andy, the entire production crew, Lindsay, Mom & Dad, and Jane for being Jane! www.lizfilios.com.

#### Phoebe Gonzalez (Mrs. Crouch/Maise/Hermione)

is delighted to be a part of this tour! Recent Chicago credits: *The Burn* (Steppenwolf), *The Late Wedding* (The Neighborhood Theatre), *The Bridges of Madison County* (The Marriott Theatre), *La Havana Madrid* (Teatro Vista), *You on the Moors Now* (The Hypocrites) and *Quixote* (Writers Theatre, understudy). Regional credits include: *Heartbreak House* (American Players Theatre). Film/TV: *Chicago Med.* She is a graduate of Northwestern University, where she studied acting, musical theater and playwriting. For Mom, Dad, and A.J., who have all offered kindness and encouragement much in the way Jane's Mum does.

Harrison Smith (Mr. Crouch/ Gigi/ Oscar/ Professor Scroop) is excited to bring this show across the country!! Regional: Signature Theatre: *Billy Elliot, Passion, Crazy for You, Jesus Christ Superstar*; Imagination Stage: You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown; Round House Theatre: *I'll Get You Back Again*; The Keegan Theatre: *Parade, American Idiot, Dogfight, Big Fish*; Toby's: *Disney's Newsies*; Constellation Theatre Company: *Urinetown*; 1st Stage: *Floyd Collins.* Education: CUA. Upcoming: Prologue Theatre: *The Explorer's Club.* 

Michael Mainwaring (Asa/Calvin/Rusty) has credits that include Imagination Stage: You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown; Olney Theatre Center: In The Heights, Godspell, Sweeney Todd; Arena Stage: Smokey Joe's Cafe; Kennedy Center: Lost in the Stars; Signature Theatre: Jesus Christ Superstar, U.G.L.Y., Dreamgirls; Ford's Theatre: Shenandoah, Freedom's Song; Creative Cauldron; Thunder Knocking on the Door; Adventure Theatre: Three Little Birds (world premiere); Harbor Lights Theatre Company: RENT; Voice: Kristin Halliday.

Kaeli Patchen (Understudy) is thrilled to be making her KCTYA debut! She is a recent graduate from American University, where she earned a BA in musical theater. She hails from Minnesota, where she performed with The Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis and the Minnesota Fringe Festival. Credits at American University include Assassins (Charles Guiteau) and Little Women (Beth). In 2018, she placed as a finalist in the American Pops Orchestra's NextGen: Finding the Voices of Tomorrow competition. In addition to performing, she works as a director (assistant directed Seven Brides For Seven Brothers at Montgomery College Summer Dinner Theatre) and teacher at Imagination Stage. Special thanks to family, friends and everyone in AU's Department of Performing Arts for their support!

Jessica Bennett (Understudy) is thrilled to be making her Kennedy Center debut! Previous credits include: Olney Theatre Center: *Elf the Musical, South Pacific*; Off Broadway: *Honestly Abe* (Jessie); National Tour: *We the People* (Dawn); Baltimore Center Stage: *Lookingglass Alice*; Keegan Theatre: *Chicago* (Velma Kelly); Artscentric: *Smokey Joe's Cafe, Chicago* (Velma Kelly); Stillpointe Theatre: *The Last Five Years* (Cathy); Iron Crow Theatre: *Fucking A* (Hester), *The Wild Party* (Kate). Entertainment: Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd. Education: Ithaca College, BFA musical theater.

**Omar D. Cruz (Understudy)** has credits that include in DC: (Upcoming) Constellation Theatre Company: *The Master and Margarita* (Ivan); Shakespeare Theatre Company: *Romeo & Juliet* (Apothecary), *A Mini-Summer's Night Dream* (Egeon/ Oberon/ Thisby); Keegan Theatre: *As You Like It*, a musical adaptation (Oliver); Academy for Classical Acting: *Hamlet* (Hamlet), *Pericles* (Lysimachus), *Julius Caesar* (Octavius). NYC credits include: (Off-Broadway) *Gym Shorts* (Small Male Understudy); Abingdon Theatre: *Tape* (Vince); Duplex, Cabaret Theatre: *Say You Love Satan* (Andrew); La MaMa ETC: *The Soul Ascending* (Carl); LAByrinth Theatre Company: *Hopping on Rooftops* (Jason). Education: MFA in classical acting, Academy for Classical Acting, GWU; BA in theater and psychology, Universidad de Sagrado Corazon; Maggie Flanigan Studio. www.omardcruz.com

Samantha Wilhelm (Stage Manager) is a DC-area stage manager. Her most recent credit is *Small Mouth Sounds* at Round House Theatre in Bethesda, MD. Other credits include *Come From Away* (2017 Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production), *Ragtime, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf, A Christmas Carol* and *The Glass Menagerie* at Ford's Theatre; *Handbagged, The Legend of Georgia McBride, The Book of Will* and *Uncle Vanya* at Round House Theatre; *Mad Forrest* and *The Dixon Family Album* at Williamstown Theatre Festival. She is a graduate of the University of Mary Washington. Love to MJEKA.

**Brian Debs (Technical Director)** is a New Orleansbased designer and technician. His credits include the Big Apple Circus tour, The American Dance Festival (Durham), Southern Rep Theatre (New Orleans), Le Petit Theatre (New Orleans) and Theatre Bizarre (Detroit), as well as music venues throughout New Orleans and the occasional Mardi Gras ball. He holds a BA in theater arts from Marquette University in Milwaukee. When he is not on a catwalk, Debs teaches the martial art, dance and music of capoeira to children in New Orleans's 7th Ward neighborhood. He is thrilled to be with the Theater for Young Audiences tour, and to share *Me*... Jane with friends and family around the country. He also thanks his wife Colleen and their dog Ernie for their support from down in the Big Easy.

Amanda Kircher (Lighting Supervisor, Assistant Technical Director) is a lighting designer and technician who has worked professionally in the theatrical, event and architectural lighting fields for over ten years. She served as the project manager for Pixelumen Lab in Alexandria, VA, where she was the project lead for M&T Bank Stadium (Baltimore, MD), commissioned Capital One Arena (D.C.), and programmed the skyscrapers in Philadelphia for the NFL Draft 2017. She held the title of assistant master electrician at the Folger Theater in Washington, DC, for four years. She has designed, assisted or programmed

over 200 productions. Selected credits: Synetic Theater, Alexandria, VA: The Wizard of OZ (Lighting Design), Dante (Assistant Lighting Design), Twelfth Night (ALD); Bowie State University: Godspell (LD); Live Garra Theatre, DC: Fools in Love (LD); Rorshach Theatre, DC: Forgotten Kingdoms (ALD); Riverside Theater, Vero Beach, FL: Sleepy Hollow (LD); Walnut Street Theater, Philadelphia, PA: Dino! (LD), Around the World in 80 Days National Tour (LD).

Garrett Seaton (Sound Supervisor) is an audio engineer based out of Phoenix, AZ. A graduate of the University of Arizona with professional experience working at the Post Playhouse Theatre and the Aspen School of Music and Music Festival, live music and musical theater have been his passion for as long as he can remember. He is excited that his first touring experience is through The Kennedy Center with Me ... Jane and is looking forward to taking his live audio career out on the road.

#### Ashley Mcbride (Props and Wardrobe Supervisor)

is grateful to be going back to her musical theater roots with the production Me ... Jane. She studied both business and theater performance at Wichita State University. After years as a performer she turned her focus on technical aspects. She has worked on a variety of shows but is best known for her work on Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus and being wardrobe supervisor for Moscow Ballet for two consecutive seasons. She hopes more people will follow Jane in her footsteps to take on careers that are viewed as masculine. She continues to be thankful for being able to bring this message to so many people throughout the United States on tour with KCTYA.

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