



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Celebrate the Music of The Go-Go's and Love in Many Forms at CATCO's Musical *Head Over Heels***

***Recent Broadway musical combines '80s new wave, pop punk tunes, Elizabethan romance March 17-April 3***

The hits of The Go-Gos fuel a non-stop joyride in this lively new musical *Entertainment Weekly* calls “a giddy neon anthem of acceptance.” Set in the kingdom of Arcadia, *Head Over Heels* offers a fresh update on Sir Phillip Sidney’s classic romance, *The Arcadia*, challenging the boundaries of gender, class and social institutions and exuberantly celebrating love and gender in all of its forms.

The royal family and court take an outrageous journey to save their kingdom, only to discover “the beat” lies within each of them.

“What the royal family and court realize is that paradise cannot exist within narrowly defined boxes of gender norms and preconceptions about the nature of love. On their self-discovering journey they realize that life can be better when they are allowed to challenge the rigid structures of society and lead authentic lives that are true to themselves,” said Leda Hoffmann, CATCO artistic director and *Head Over Heels* director, who said the musical feels like the right show for the current moment. “The play is about how we can live in a better world and lead richer, fuller lives when gender is not binary, people can love whomever they want, and rigid, traditional gender roles don’t exist.”

*Head Over Heels* opened in June 2015 at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where it ran for five months. It premiered on Broadway in 2018. *The Guardian* described *Head Over Heels* as “*Xanadu* with fewer roller skates, *Mamma Mia!* with more corsetry.” *The Village Voice* called it “a cautionary tale directed at our toxic-rightward-hetero times.” Meanwhile, *The Los Angeles Times* praised: “This is a musical that celebrates the rebirth of a better and happier self, a welcome message as we emerge from this long pandemic. In jovially extending an inclusive embrace, *Head Over Heels* seeks and finds a new communal beat.”

*Head Over Heels* was conceived and written by Jeff Whitty, an award-winning playwright, screenwriter, poet and performer famous for co-winning a Tony Award in 2004 for best book of a musical for *Avenue Q*. *Head Over Heels* is recommended for ages 13 and up. The run time is approximately 2 hours and 15 minutes with one intermission.

Performing in the cast are:

- Luke Bovenizer (he/him/his) (Basilus), who is excited to be making his CATCO debut. Regional credits include *Matilda* (Miss Trunchbull), (Jebby and Central Ohio Theatre Roundtable awards);

*The Addams Family* (Fester); *Noises Off* (Freddie); *Spamalot* (Galahad); *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (Narrator); *Mamma Mia!* (Harry), (Jebby Award); *West Side Story* (Doc); *Aida* (Zoser); *Billy Elliot* (Mr. Braithwaite); *Young Frankenstein* (Victor/Ensemble); and *Sister Act* (Ensemble). He received a BFA in musical theatre from Otterbein University.

- Liam Cronin (he/him/his) (Dametas), who is thrilled to be back at CATCO after making his debut more than a decade ago in *It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play* and *Evil Dead: The Musical*. Other credits include Available Light Theatre and Whistling in the Dark Theatre, where he received a Central Ohio Theatre Roundtable Award for his portrayal of Bat Boy in *Bat Boy: The Musical*. Film and television credits include appearances on *Criminal Minds*, *The Middle*, *Black-ish* and others.
- Sha-Lemar Davis (she/they) (Mopso), a BFA acting graduate of Baldwin Wallace University, who is making their CATCO debut in *Head Over Heels*. Previous acting credits include *Weimar* (world premiere), *Let's Hope You Feel Better*, *American La Ronde*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Witness for the Prosecution*. The Dayton native has experience in the digital theatre world and community-based service fields.
- Brian C Gray (he/him/his) (Musidorius), who is happy to be back on stage at CATCO once again this season after appearing in *Mr. Burns: a post-electric play*. Previous credits include *The Addams Family* quarantine concert (Mal Beineke) at Short North Stage; *Dance Nation* and *Bootleg Radio* at Available Light Theatre; *Rent* (Collins), *Hairspray* (Seaweed) and *Sister Act* (TJ) at Imagine Productions; *Annie* (Rooster) and *1940's Radio Hour* (Neal) at SoArtsPro; and *Zanna Don't* (Arvin) at Evolution Theatre.
- Kendra Lynn Lucas (she/her/hers) (Gynecia), who is excited to be returning to her hometown of Columbus and CATCO, where she performed in *Working: A Musical* last season. She resides in New York City and works as a casting director. Previous theatre credits include roles in off-Broadway productions *SISTAS the Musical* (Dr. Simone) and *For the Girls* (Rosa), as well as regional credits in *Grease* (Teen Angel/Miss Lynch); *The Drowsy Chaperone* (Trix); *Disney's Alice in Wonderland* (Caterpillar); *CATS* (Grizabella); and *Hairspray* (Motormouth Maybelle).
- Caleb Mikayla Goins-Robinson (she/he/they) (Pythio), a local entertainer, who is making their CATCO debut and has experience on local, national and international stages, having won numerous awards in pageantry, modeling and entertainment, including Miss Gay Ohio 2018. They have also done many shows and benefits that have raised funds and awareness for the fight against HIV/AIDS, along with many other benefit efforts for other LGBTQI organizations.
- Jordan Shafer (they/them/theirs) (Pamela), a Columbus actor and musician, who is making their CATCO debut. Past musical credits include Tribe member in *Hair* (Short North Stage); Magenta in *The Rocky Horror Show* (Short North Stage); Mary Magdalene in *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Imagine Productions); Cordelia in *Falsettos* (Gallery Players); Marta in *Company* (SRO Theatre); Kate in *Zanna Don't!* (Evolution Theatre Company); and Silly Girl in *Beauty and the Beast* (Columbus Children's Theatre).

- Summit J Starr (she/her/hers) (Philoclea), who is a local artist making her CATCO debut. She is the lyricist/vocalist for FOX+RAM and COO of photography for RockDaddyDesign. She has traveled internationally with Teatro Travieso performing in *Women of Ciudad Juárez*. Past credits include Flotsam in *The Little Mermaid* (Beck Center for the Arts); Consuelo in *West Side Story* (Akron Symphony Orchestra); Waitress #1 in *Rock of Ages* (Shadowbox Live); and Peggy in *Godspell* and Fruma Sarah in *Fiddler on the Roof* (Schoenbrunn Amphitheatre).

Before joining CATCO in 2020, Hoffmann was the artistic director of Chicago-based Strawdog Theatre Company. She was a member of Milwaukee Rep's artistic staff for seven years, working in the education and literary departments and founding Milwaukee Rep's community engagement department. Also in Milwaukee, as the artistic director of Luminous Theatre, Hoffmann produced and directed site-specific productions of *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play* and *The Penelopiad*. Her work as a director has been seen nationwide at Milwaukee Rep, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Texas Shakespeare Festival, University of Miami, Door Shakespeare, Milwaukee Chamber Theatre, Renaissance Theaterworks, Jedlicka Performing Arts Center, Northbrook Theatre, The Alchemist Theatre, Max and Louie Productions, and Riverside Theater Iowa City. She has also been a teaching artist for more than 10 years, directing youth and teaching with Hartford Stage, Milwaukee Rep, Mudlark Theater, Northbrook Park District, and Skyline Studios. Her CATCO directing credits include *A Columbus Christmas Carol*, the reading of *George and the Hidden Dragon*, *An Iliad*, and *Mr. Burns, a post-electric play*.

Other members of the creative team are: Kaitlyn Pfeifer (stage manager); Hannah Berry (assistant stage manager); Hannah Pohlman (sub assistant stage manager); Que Jones (music director/costume designer); Lorii Wallace (choreographer); Dan Gray (set designer); Marly Wooster (lighting designer), Dave Wallingford (sound designer); Katherine Simon (props designer); Sarah Vargo (fight choreographer); Jessica Morgan (intimacy choreographer); Tabitha Abney (costume coordinator); Delaney Althausen (wardrobe); Becky Barger Amato (sound board operator); Tony Koehler (production manager/COVID safety manager); and Isaac Steinhour (technical director).

Members of the band are Ryan Patrick Jones (keyboard 2), Joel Steward (drums) and Drew Stedman (guitar).

Tickets for *Head Over Heels* are \$45 each and can be purchased [online](#). Thursday, March 17, 7:30 p.m., and Friday, March 18, are preview performances; opening night is Saturday, March 19, 8 p.m. Performances during the run are Thursdays, 7:30 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.; and Sundays, 2 p.m. Students may purchase \$20 tickets two hours before any performance at the Riffe Center box office, 77 S. High St., Fourth Floor. One ticket per valid student ID can be purchased based upon availability.

As part of our commitment to ensure our theatre is accessible to every member of the central Ohio community, CATCO is introducing a Pay-What-You-What (PWYW) ticket option this season for preview performances of every play at both mainstage and theatre for young audience productions. For *Head Over Heels*, those previews are Thursday, March 17, 7:30 p.m., and Friday, March 18. PWYC works like this:

PWYW tickets can be purchased in advance by calling 614.469.0939 or visiting the CBUSArts Ticket Center at 39 E. State St. Downtown. The ticket center is open Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.,

and the telephone center receives calls Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Same-day tickets are available two hours before the show in-person at the Riffe Center box office, 77 S. High St., Fourth Floor.

For the safety of our staff, actors and audience beginning in October, CATCO will require proof of COVID-19 vaccinations or proof of a negative PCR test within 72-hours of attending a production for all patrons 12 years of age and older. We will additionally require mask-wearing indoors at our theater for all audience members and staff until further notice.

The remaining show in CATCO's 2021-22 season is *Prima Donna*, April 29-May 15, 2022.

CATCO's 37th season is made possible in part by state tax dollars allocated by the Ohio Legislature to the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally, and economically. CATCO is also supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the William C. & Naoma W. Denison Fund of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc., Nationwide Insurance Foundation and LBrands Foundation.

#### **About CATCO**

CATCO is central Ohio's leading professional Equity theatre company, providing exceptional productions and educational programs for adults and young people, in response to our community's needs. We believe theatrical storytelling transforms people of all ages by immersing them into immediate, communal experiences. CATCO exists to harness the transformational power of theatre that engages with our current moment to inspire a community of empathy. For more information, visit [catco.org](http://catco.org).

#### **CATCO's Vision**

CATCO strives to become a nationally recognized, anti-racist contemporary theatre company that anchors a thriving Columbus theatre ecosystem in an empathetic, equitable world.

#### **CATCO's Purpose/Mission**

To harness the transformational power of theatre that engages with our current moment to inspire a community of empathy.

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