



MEET THE STAFF 2021-2022



Janet Erlick, Executive Artistic Director

Janet is the Executive Artistic Director of award winning Florida Children's Theatre where she oversees both the administrative and artistic components of the theatre. She teaches, directs and acts in the community and developed the theatre's comprehensive outreach program that now serves over 25,000 people each year. That program includes *A Bridge From Me to You*, an anti-bullying and conflict resolution program and *From Page to Stage*, an in-school literacy and arts integration program. She created partnerships with many cultural and social service organizations throughout South Florida and frequently facilitates workshops throughout the Southeast region.

Currently, she serves as the Chair of the Broward County Cultural Executives Committee and is a member of the Broward Cultural Council and Broward Women's Alliance. She is a graduate of Leadership Broward and is active on many of their committees. A former recipient of the City of Hope Businesswoman of the Year Award, Janet also received the Remy Service Award from South Florida Theatre League and was an honoree of Spring for the Arts among many other awards. She is one of only two master teaching artists endorsed by the South Florida Cultural Consortium, and recently designed and implemented a pilot certification for teaching artists through the Consortium and Arts for Learning in Miami and is working with the Florida Alliance for Arts Education. She is a graduate of Swarthmore College with a double major in Theatre and Psychology, and is a Past-President of their Alumni Council.

Sean Cutler, Producing Director



Sean started his theatre career in elementary school as a member of the Pied Piper Players at the Ruth Foreman Theatre in Miami, where, at age 14, he earned his Equity card and a nomination for Best Actor playing Eugene in the Carbonell Award winning production of *Brighton Beach Memoirs*. He graduated from the New World School of the Arts as a Theatre Dean's Award recipient and received his B.F.A. in Film & TV Production (with a double major in Political Science) from New York University. As an actor, he has performed Off-Broadway and regionally in numerous productions. Sean served as a Company Manager for several Off-Broadway shows

including *The Donkey Show*, *The Karaoke Show*, *American Rhapsody: Songs of The Gershwins*, and *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living In Paris*, was a member of the management team of Blue Man Group's NYC production of *Tubes*, and was the Managing Director of the award-winning Colony Theatre Company in Los Angeles. As FLCT's Producing Director, Sean supervises all aspects of FLCT's production department including artistic, technical, and design components. As the senior resident show director, he has twice won the Broadwayworld.com Best Director Award for *Sweeney Todd* and *Side Show* and also received a Remy Award from the South Florida Theatre League for Outstanding Contribution to Children's Theatre. Sean is also an accomplished lighting designer who has designed shows for FLCT, Dreamyard Theatre, NYC Fringe Festival, Women's Theatre Project, West Boca Theatre Company and others. Along with Rick Kaydas, he is the author of *Snow White: An Original Musical Adaptation of the Grimm Fairytale*.



Lauren Formica, Program Director/ Camp Director

Lauren is an alumna of Florida Children's Theatre and is proud to say she has been a member of the FLCT family for almost 20 years. Lauren graduated from Florida State University with a Bachelor's degree in Humanities with concentrations in English, Education and Human Rights. While a full time student, Lauren taught in various middle and high schools in Tallahassee, including Rose Academy, an alternative school for children with learning issues. Lauren implemented a drama program at the school and served as their Fine Arts teacher specializing in art and theatre for three years. Lauren also taught preschool and drama at Happyland Day School in Fort Lauderdale for three years, leading an after school Creative Drama program for students 3-5 years old. Lauren has also served as The Sagemont Lower School drama teacher in Weston, directing *Seussical Jr.* and *Peter Pan Jr.* with their elementary students. In addition to her work in schools, Lauren facilitates annual arts infusion workshops through FLCT and The City of Coral Springs with local middle and high school students. Lauren has directed numerous productions throughout her years at FLCT, including *Aladdin KIDS* at FLCT in a partnership with Kids in Distress of Broward County, Summer Stage Camp shows: *Honk, Jr.*, *Pocahontas*, *Peter Pan, Jr.*, *Disney's Little Mermaid, Jr.*, & *Shrek, Jr.*, and many more. Lauren directed FLCT's December mainstages *Beauty and the Beast, Jr.* and *Elf the Musical, Jr.* and spring productions of *Honk! the Musical*, *Tarzan*, and *Tuck Everlasting*. She also serves as the staff liaison for FLCT's student leadership organization, Center Stage Youth Council.



Melissa Hahl, Education Director/ Circus Program Director

Melissa Sheffield loves calling FLCT home as the Theatre Education Director. She has a BS in Music Education from Hofstra University and a MA in Theatre Education from Emerson College. Melissa has worked in Wardrobe at the Maltz Jupiter theatre and puppetry at Universal Studios Florida. She also taught Elementary Music, High School Theatre/Music and Middle School Show Choir in Massachusetts for three years. During the school year Melissa is busy teaching classes at FLCT as well as directing FLCT's Circus Troupe which had the honor of performing for Disney Performing Arts. Melissa has directed numerous Performance Project and Second Stage productions including *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, *Once Upon a Mattress* and *How to Eat Like a Child*. She was also seen on the FLCT stage as Tiger Lily in *Peter Pan*. Melissa has performed throughout Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut. Some of her favorite performances include Gertrude Mcfuzz in *Seussical*, Marcy Park in *25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, and Luisa in *The Fantasticks*.



Melanie Hale, Business Manager

Melanie's two children are both alums of FLCT. She also was on the Board of Directors for FLCT for 20 years. After she retired from her full-time job as a supervisor at U.S. Customs and Border Protection at the Ft. Lauderdale Airport/Port Everglades Seaport, she joined FLCT's staff as the Business Manager but in a part-time status. Melanie received her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Nova Southeastern University. Melanie is also a retired Sergeant Major from the U.S. Army Reserve where finance was her specialty. Melanie loves to see the children arrive at FLCT and grow/transform themselves while they attend classes here at FLCT.



RESIDENT PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS



Ron Hutchins, Dance Instructor and Resident Choreographer

Ron's performance career has taken him across the country and the globe, and he has been honored to perform in major regional theatres from the Goodman in Chicago to Fords Theatre in Washington, DC. He has directed and choreographed national tours of Disney's *Aida*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, and *Footloose* and most recently choreographed for Cirque Dreams' production of *Pop Goes the Rock*. He now travels to China annually to choreograph American musical theatre style productions. Ron was twice nominated for Jeff Awards in Chicago and won Carbonell Awards for his production of *Five Guys named Mo* and for choreography for

West Side Story. Ron is currently the Artistic Director of *Destined to Dance* and teaches dance for numerous school programs, including the University of Miami.



Tyler Smith, Resident Scenic Designer

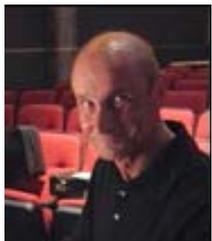
Tyler's experience as an art director and special effects designer has taken him through the worlds of television, feature film and special effects. His work has been seen on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno, Nickelodeon, MTV, Showtime and in Paramount, Touchstone, Columbia and Zenith films. Areas of expertise include sculpture, special effects makeup and robotic creatures as well as all aspects of design and illustration. As an arts educator, Tyler has taught in a variety of media at college programs including Rhode Island School of Design, Nova Southeastern University and Broward College. He frequently exhibits as a professional visual artist in a wide variety of media.



Karen Kang Hancock, Resident Costume Designer

Karen has been Costume Designer for FLCT since 2003. Originally from Berkeley, California, she has had a lifelong interest in the arts. She earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Northwestern University and was a professional musician in several symphony orchestras including the Florida Philharmonic Orchestra. She learned to sew at age 13, and further developed her interest in sewing and costume designing, starting as a parent costume volunteer for FLCT when her son Ross became involved in productions. Her designs have also appeared at Area Stage and Charlotte Players in North Carolina, and she served as an associate costume designer for American Heritage School.

Rick Kaydas, Resident Music Director



Rick has been playing music professionally since the age of 13. As a student, he was a founder and leader of the Las Olas Brass, a successful band that attracted the area's best young musical talent, including the late jazz legend JacoPastorius. After a number of project ventures with Florida Children's Theatre, in 2000 Rick began working with FLCT as music director and arranger/composer. In this capacity he has music directed over 50 productions, either arranging and tracking the entire score or conducting and directing a live band. He also serves as music director for a variety of other theatre companies, both in Boston and throughout

South Florida. His composing credits, Rick created original scores for FLCT, and won the ASCAP Benny Davis award for his work on *South of the North Pole*. He also composed original music for FLCT's production of *Hamlet* and wrote the score to the original *Snow White*.