

AUSTIN COLLABORATIVE THEATRE  
IN COORDINATION WITH MCCALLUM FINE ARTS ACADEMY

PRESENTS

# Ordinary People

Directed by  
Rod Caspers

By Nancy Gilsenan  
adapted from the novel  
by Judith Guest

**AUGUST 14 - 17**

**AUSTIN PLAYHOUSE THEATER  
405 W 22ND STREET**

**AUSTINCOLLABORATIVE.ORG**

# Ordinary People

## Director's Notes

### Passages to contemplate:

- This house. Too big for three people. Straining, he can barely hear the early-morning sounds of his father and mother organizing things, synchronizing schedules at the other end of the hall. It doesn't matter. He doesn't need to hear, and they would certainly not be talking about anything important. They would not be talking, for instance, about him. They are people of good taste. They do not discuss a problem in the presence of the problem. And, besides, there is no problem. There is just Phase Two. Recovery. A moving forward.
- And what about tomorrow then? And all the tomorrows to come? Why can't we talk about it? Why can't we ever talk about it?
- Music is his only escape. It makes the weight of his crimes bearable. The melody harmony rhythm a visible structure as it winds through his mind. He can concentrate completely in here as they practice obscure French carols for the Christmas concert, and Faughnan, pushing all the time, ignoring all protests – "Tenors! Too heavy on the 'Everlasting!' And save the 's' for 'sting,' will you? Don't be cute. Sopranos! Screeching again, what am I gonna' do with you girls? Everybody! Watch, for pete's sake, watch!" So, he watches. He never takes his eyes off Faughnan the whole hour as the music fills out the corners of his mind. Choir is the one time of day when he lets down his guard; there is peace in the strict concentration that Faughnan demands of all of them, in the sweet dissonance of voices in the chorus. He has sung in here since he was a freshman. Every minute of every hour that is spent there, they work, and there is only one way to prove yourself. You sing, and sing, and sing. All else is unimportant.
- Listen, what happened this morning was that you let yourself feel some pain. Feeling is not selective, I keep telling you that. You can't feel pain, you aren't gonna' feel anything else, either. And the world is full of pain. Also joy. Evil. Goodness. Horror and love. You name it, it's there. Sealing yourself off is just going through the motions, get it?

Revisiting Judith Guest's acclaimed novel, *Ordinary People*, through Nancy Gilsenan's effective adaptation has been a rich journey for all of us involved. First published in 1976, the story's themes and messages seem more important than ever. Judith Guest poses many important questions to her young protagonist, Conrad – and asks him/us to find the answers. One answer that I know is crystal clear – the present is not the time for government officials to be cutting crisis hotline funding for troubled teens or withholding funds from schools that provide life-saving arts programs. For all of us working on this production, the clarion call has been re-awakened -- to become fierce advocates for accessible and inclusive top-quality mental health care. It is my sincere hope that viewing the production awakens a similar call in you.

- Rod Caspers

# Ordinary People

## Cast

(in order of appearance)

Conrad Jarret.....Joseph Blackwood  
“Buck” Jarrett.....Gideon Adair  
Cal Jarrett.....Tim Blackwood  
Beth Jarrett.....Rebecca Robinson  
Stillman.....Eli Meshbane-Duke  
Joe Lazenby.....Lincoln Faber  
Coach Salan.....Max Green  
Jeannine Pratt.....Maggie Brown  
Dr. Berger.....Mark Pickell  
Karen Aldrich.....Samantha Panzer

## Production Team

Director.....Rod Caspers  
Stage Design/Build.....Holly Crowley  
Patrick Crowley  
Costume Design.....Cassidy Barber  
Lighting Design.....Kate Hazzard  
Sound Design.....David Olivares  
Fight Choreographer.....Mike Ooi

## Crew

Stage Manager.....Zwi Meza  
Asst. Stage Manager.....Isabella Robinson  
Asst. Costume Design.....Dede Reagins  
Asst. Lighting Design.....Katie Wiseman  
Asst. Sound Design.....Cole Wade

**Ordinary People** takes place in Lake Forest and Evanston, Illinois, suburbs of Chicago, from the autumn of 1978 to the spring of 1979.

The play will run in two acts with a one 15 min intermission

## Cast Bios



**Gideon Adair (Buck Jarrett)** - Gideon is so excited to be a part of Ordinary People! Educational: Tuck Everlasting and Freaky Friday(McCallum Fine Arts Academy Theatre). ZACH Theatre: Mean Girls. He would like to thank his whole family for supporting him so generously.



**Joseph Blackwood (Conrad Jarrett)** - Joseph is a senior in the McCallum Fine Arts Program. He has performed in many shows on the Mac stage and participated in the UIL one-act play competition twice. Recent shows include Cicada (Ace), Tuck Everlasting (Angus), Inherit the Wind (Drummond), Almost Maine (Phil), and Antigone (Haemon). He'd like to thank his family and friends for this opportunity and hopes you enjoy the show!



**Tim Blackwood (Cal Jarrett)** - Tim is excited to be doing this play for the second time. Some of Tim's recent performances include Grand Hotel and King of Hearts with the Alchemy Theatre; Jane Eyre, Enemy of the People, and O'Henry Stories with Austin Shakespeare. Tim is very excited to be performing with his son in this production.



**Maggie Brown (Jeannine Pratt)** - Maggie Brown is a senior at McCallum Fine Arts Academy, double majoring in Performance Theatre and Collaborative Piano. Recent shows: ZACH Theater: Out of My Dreams, Cicada, Inherit the Wind, Tuck Everlasting. Maggie would like to thank her friends and family for their support.



**Lincoln Faber (Joe Lazenby)**- Lincoln Faber is a rising senior in the McCallum Fine Arts program for performance theatre. He has been a part of numerous shows at Mactheatre over the last 3 years. Most recently he performed as Bertram Cates in Inherit the wind. He is so excited to get to work with Austin Collaborative Theatre and he hope you enjoy the show!

## Cast Bios



**Max Green (Coach Salan)** - (he/him) is excited to be working on this production of Ordinary People. Max is an Austin native. You may have seen him in things like: Grand Hotel (Sandor-Witt/Zinnowitz), Falsettos (Mendel), Inside/Outside (Boy), Lobby Hero (Jeff), Matilda: The Musical (Mr. Wormwood), Twelfth Night (Sir Andrew), & The Foreigner (Charlie). Max would like to thank Tim Blackwood for inviting him to be a part of this project. Additionally, a big thank you goes out to family and friends for their endless love and support. @meexverde



**Eli Meshbane-Duke (Stillman)** - Eli is very excited to make his ACT debut. He has done several productions on the McCallum Theatre stage and is thrilled to add this show to the list! Much love goes to his friends and family for their support in this process. Enjoy the show!



**Samantha Panzer (Karen Aldrich)** - Samantha attends McCallum High School. She is highly involved within the theatre program. She recently starred in the schools UIL competition piece “Cicada” as the role of Lily, winning multiple awards including Best Performer. She would like to thank her friends and family for supporting her theatrical dreams and hopes you enjoy the show.



**Mark Pickell (Dr Berger)** - Mark is an Austin-based, multi-disciplinary theatre artist with over 20 years of experience producing and developing dynamic works in the Austin theatre community. He served as the founder and artistic director of Capital T Theatre until 2021. He has earned multiple nominations and awards as a Director, Actor, Scenic Designer, and Lighting Designer, including a 1997 Austin Critics' Table Award for his performance in La Bête. At just 17, Mark had the honor of being directed by Rod Caspers in The Caucasian Chalk Circle—and now, 32 years later, he is delighted to collaborate with Rod once again.

## Cast Bios



**Rebecca Robinson (Beth Jarrett)** - Rebecca is a member of the Hyde Park Theatre Company and has appeared in numerous productions, most recently Caught, Wakey Wakey, The Realistic Joneses, Middletown, Marion Bridge and Circle Mirror Transformation. She has also appeared in Capital T productions of It Is Magic, Small Mouth Sounds, Detroit and A Lie of the Mind, which garnered her the B. Iden Payne award for Outstanding Featured Actress. She performed in two different productions of The Goat or Who Is Sylvia?, (Different Stages and Capital T) and received the B. Iden Payne Best Actress Award.

## Production Team



**Rod Caspers (Director)** - Rod Caspers served as Executive Director of Creative Services for the University of Texas System, where he and colleagues received five Lone Star Emmy Awards for creating/producing the PBS series, *State of Tomorrow*. Directing credits include *Merrily We Roll Along*, *The Secret Garden*, *Big River*, *Honk!*, *Ah, Wilderness!* and *The Bat* (a new adaption of *Die Fledermaus*). Stage managing credits include *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular* starring the Rockettes (seven seasons) and *Jim Henson's Musical World* at Carnegie Hall with the New York Pops, the Muppets and the casts of *Avenue Q* and *Sesame Street*. He has co-produced/directed the Texas Cultural Trust's Texas Medal of Arts Celebration since 2019. Rod staged the original production of *Conspirare's* *Considering Matthew Shepard* as well as subsequent productions across the country, including *Trinity Wall Street*, NYC; *The Mann Center*, Philadelphia; *Texas Performing Arts*, Austin and, most recently, *The Oregon Bach Festival*. For additional information, visit [rodcaspers.com](http://rodcaspers.com).



**Cassidy Barber (Costume Design)** - Cassidy is a recent graduate of St. Edwards University with a BA in costume design. Recent projects include wardrobe crew for *Waitress* at ZACH Theatre and *Moulin Rouge*, and *Hamilton* at Bass Concert Hall. Additionally, she was the Costume designer for *Elf the musical*, and *Tick...Tick...Boom* at Textarts.



**David Olivares (Sound Design)** - David is an audio creative and recent graduate of the Arts and Entertainment Technologies program at UT Austin. Though his creative journey began in music, he has expanded his artistry to include designing sound for media and live sound engineering. Most recently, in collaboration with UT's Department of Theatre and Dance, David composed music for dance in *Evolution 2025* and designed sound for UTNT's spring showcase. He is excited to bring his passion for shaping stories through sound to *Ordinary People* and looks forward to continuing to explore a wide range of creative projects.

## Production Team



**Kate Hazzard (Lighting Design)** - Kate Hazzard has been designing lights professionally in the Austin area since 2017 since graduating from Southwestern University with a BA in Theatre. Some of her regular shows are Conspirare's Christmas Tour, Trinity Valley Community College Cardette's Dance, and several high schools in the greater Austin area. She has worked for 8 years at Olden Lighting, where she now serves as the manager of the Service Department.



**Patrick and Holly Crowley (Set Design/Build)** - Patrick and Holly Crowley / DDP Productions – Fabrication and Design Company These two Austinites have graced many stages together designing and building sets for more than fifty companies over the past 17 years. Known for their professionalism and perseverance, this dynamic duo will leave you awestruck with their grace and simplicity. They have been nominated for several B. Iden Payne and Austin Critics Table Awards over the years for Set Design and Prop Design.



**Mike Ooi (Fight Choreographer)** - is delighted to be designing with Austin Collaborative Theatre. Mike and his fight partner Jason Graf were nominated for a B Iden Payne Award in 2023 for their work in Coldframe Collective's Romeo and Juliet. Other Austin fight credits include Pericles and Cyrano (Coldframe Collective); A Million More to Go and Dial 'M' for Murder (Jarrott Productions); The Illusionary Games of Edward Rye, Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Above the Fold and Antigone (Filigree Theatre). Mike has also performed in Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, Antigone, and The Lady From The Sea (Filigree Theatre); Dial 'M' for Murder, A Million More to Go and Pet Dick (Jarrott Productions); and The Spin (Street Corner Arts). TV credits include CHICAGO FIRE (NBC). He is represented by Pastorini-Bosby.



## Production Team



**Zwi Meza (Stage Manager)**- Zwi is a senior Technical Theater Major at McCallum Fine Arts Academy. She's been a part of many school shows, but this is her first production outside of McCallum, and she's had so much fun being Stage Manager for Ordinary People!



**Isabella Robinson (Asst. Stage Manager)** - Bella Robinson is a junior Technical Theatre major at McCallum High School. She has been a part of many shows at McCallum and she is so excited to be a part of the crew for Ordinary People!



**Dede Reagins (Asst. Costume Design)** -Dede is a rising junior at McCallum High School. Other roles include: Costume crew (Sweet Charity, Tuck Everlasting), Assistant Stage Manager (Seussical), Wardrobe Head (12 Angry Jurors, Inherit the Wind), and Stage Manager (Freaky Friday). She thanks her family for the support and her cast and crewmates for the fun!



**Katie Wiseman (Asst. Lighting Design)** -Katie is a current student at McCallum Fine Arts Academy. She has done multiple shows there and is super excited to work on this show!



**Cole Wade (Asst. Sound Design)** - Cole is going into his sophomore year of high school at McCallum as a tech-theater major. This will be his fifth production working on sound, and his third as a designer or assistant designer. He would like to thank his friends and family for supporting him throughout his journey in the fine arts.

## Special Thanks

Bonnie Brookby  
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Tapestry Dance  
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Susan Branch Towne  
Patty Moreno  
Cynthia Miller  
Jill Holmes  
Lisa Fischer  
McCallum Fine Arts Academy  
McCallum Royal Court Players  
McCallum Royal Theatre Society

If you, or anyone you know needs help, there is a local 24/7 hotline available at **512-472-HELP (4357)**

If you are looking for more information on how to get involved or to donate to local suicide prevention resources go to **[integralcare.org](https://integralcare.org)**

## Austin Collaborative Theatre

is a brand new theatre company dedicated to creating meaningful theatre experiences to enhance the community and work in collaboration with local Austin artists and theatres. We also firmly believe that artists should be paid for their work. If you enjoy this performance and would like us to continue producing experiences like this, please consider donating. More info can be found at the link below.



**[austincollaborative.org](https://austincollaborative.org)**