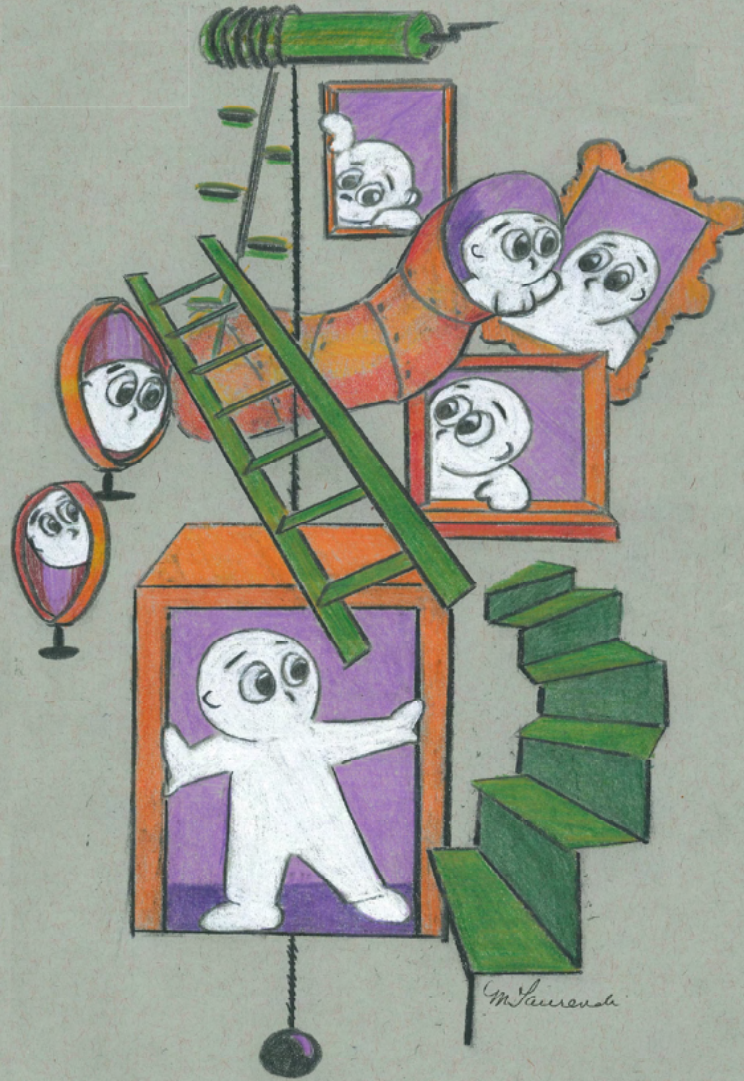


# unique productions

in collaboration with the subversive theatre collective

## presents



# FACE IT

by: **engelic everett & nick cacciotti**

directed by: **beth geyer**

general admission \$15  
box office 716-243-8889  
uniqueproductionsup@gmail.com

december 3rd thru 13th 2015  
thurs, fri and sat 7:30pm  
sunday matinee 2:00pm

subversive theatre \* the manny fried playhouse \* 255 great arrow ave buffalo 14207



GOOD EVENING!

Welcome to Unique Production's second season. Each time we gather as a group the lines between who is who and what is what becomes more blurred and one day I realized that those of us who think we are not disabled have a somewhat erroneous fascination with ourselves. We like to feel good about what we're doing without even thinking about how the recipient feels. This realization came to me when Vienna and I pondered how we would help folks learn their lines, how can we get them on stage in time? How, how, how! Before we would come up with an answer, more than half of the crew had their lines memorized by week three knew their cues on the 4th day.

In his book *Far from the Tree*, Andrew Solomon writes, "Many disabled people say that the social disapprobation they experience is much more burdensome than the disability from which they suffer, maintaining that they suffer only because society treats them badly and they have unique experiences which set them apart from the world—they are eminently special and in no way different."

Reading that was an epiphany for me. It confirms the nagging feeling I have had throughout my entire career in the human service industry. Disability is not about physical or mental limitations. It is about social repression. As the character in Act I of tonight's play *Sherry*, states, "We are all disabled. Don't be ashamed."

And Andrew Solomon brings the point home by writing, "If a majority of our society was as smart as Einstein, then our average intelligence would render us disabled. Disability is dependent on what each society values as important."

These plays tonight do not speak about disability in the old sense, they speak about identity. Dylan is fearful and Sherry has Down syndrome. Down syndrome, depression, anxiety, autism, are not illnesses, they are what identifies people. Just as you identify as a fun loving brown haired person, or you, as a bald cranky middle age man and what about you, as a shy, red head? Because many things that we use as identifiers-age, finances, mental balance, body type- all make us less able.

And while the characters in tonight's performances struggle with their identity please remember that all of life is enriched by struggles. It is where all the good stories come from. Tonight we celebrate identity and we hope that what you take home tonight is that the world is a better place with all of us in it, no matter what we can or cannot do.

Enjoy the show

Beth Geyer Artistic Director

Vienna Laurendi Haak Executive Producer

## FACE IT

Act I : Respect

By Engelic Everett

Act II : Day Tripper

By Nick Cacciotti

Director

Beth Geyer

Lighting Design

David Schwartz & David Licht

Sound Design

Nick Stroczkowski

Graphic Design

Maria Aldona Laurendi

Photography

Nick Cacciotti

Stage Manager

Vienna Laurendi Haak

Costume & Prop Design

Videography & Playbill

Stagehand

Illya Svec

UP! would like to thank the following supporters  
for whom without tonight's performance  
would not be a success:

The Subversive Theatre Collective

Kurt Schneiderman

Gary Earl Ross

People Inc & The Arts Experience

Ilene Garrison

And ALL of the volunteers, agency staff, family and friends who each and every day supported this production by providing transportation and snacks, enduring long waits in the lobby during rehearsals, and by simply 'being there' to lend a hand and listening ear.

## THANK YOU

## Biographies

**ENGELIC EVERETT** (Playwright/Act I Respect) Engelic was born with a developmental disability, which is Down syndrome. She is not ashamed to mention her disability because she knows that she is unique. She asks that everyone look at her as a person and once you get to know her, you will love her. This is her first play and writing is her passion. She is currently working on writing positive and uplifting books for children. She believes that bullying is a serious topic that needs to be heard. She loves to be creative and work with her hands. She once worked as stage crew in high school and was even a baton twirler for two years. Engelic attended Buffalo State College and graduated in 2005. "I thank God because he is my number one man in my life. I want to thank all my supporters and my mentors as well like Beth Geyer, James Jowsey and my personal staff Taja Kenney. I really want to give credit to Beth because without her, my play wouldn't even gotten chosen or performed on stage. All my hard work is finally being produced with cast and crew."

**NICK CACCIOTTI** (Playwright/Act II Day Tripper) Nick is a Life Quality Coach with People Inc. and also a Personal Trainer. He enjoys writing but didn't have the courage to share his work with others until Day Tripper (Act II of Face It). Nick appreciates individuality in everyone. When his wife works the evening shift, Nick is often hanging out with the People Inc. Guys Group or out hiking somewhere in the woods with two pugs, Zappa and Barrett.

**BETH GEYER** (Director) Beth has been working in the human service field for 30 years. Her work with people who have various ways of identifying themselves includes working in many departments from residential, service coordination to day services. She is a part time writer and playwright. This is her second debut as a Director having directed last years' Unique Production's play The Process. Beth has been conducting writing groups at People, Incorporated for over 5 years. Her goal has been to combine her love of writing with her work. She believes that when possible, everyone should have a voice on all the stages in life. She wants to thank People, Inc. for their continued support of allowing creativity in the workplace as well as Parent Network who with their production of Always October made the possibility of Unique Productions come alive. She would like to give a special shout out to the parents, staff who provide rides, support, and tolerance in rehearsal schedule changes! Vienna, I adore you.

## Cast, In Order Of Appearance

**VIENNA LAURENDI HAAK** (Momma) After 8 years of service in the USAF post high school Vienna became a wife to Dale & mother to Alicia and Austin, now ages 15 and 14. Vienna has been a full time real estate agent alongside Dale for the last decade. Their son's autism diagnoses provided Vienna with the inspiration to launch a non-profit support group in Grand Island servicing both Erie and Niagara Counties, which she has been actively running for the last 7 years on a volunteer basis. In a beautiful partnership with Beth Geyer, Vienna is co-owner of UP! This is Vienna's second acting experience on a Buffalo stage. Alongside selling homes, raising the awareness of Autism in her community, and co-managing UP!, Vienna enjoys fitness, playing piano, & spending time with her family. Tonight Vienna would like to thank Beth for her unwavering friendship, and Dale & Alicia for selflessly keeping their home & business in order while she devoted the last three months to this production.

**KELLER VOGELSANG** (Sherry) Keller is a very accomplished theatre professional having been in several local productions. She is also a playwright having written Donna, A Civil War Opera that was produced at Alleyway Theatre in which she also played Donna. She has been in the Parent Network production of Always October. She has played Dorothy in the People, Inc. Arts Experience production of The Wizard of Oz. This is her second performance with Unique Productions, first in The Process. Keller is very proud to be in this play Face It. Keller is very grateful and thankful to all those who support her love of the theatre especially to her step-mom Karen and her Dad, Chris. She thanks the support of her brother and her boyfriend and appreciates their love.

**DONALYN CAUDILL** (Mia) Donalyn's first play was the Wizard of Oz when she was a junior in high school. She was also in Donna, The Civil War Opera produced by People, Inc. Arts Experience making FACE IT her third play. She loves to act and it's something she is very good at. "It helps me express my feelings of every day. Instead of taking my anger out on people that I truly care about. This is the best substitute of all. I would love to keep doing this because it helps me put feelings of everyday life in good perspectives. Theatre helps me to be all I can be." Donalyn had a very special friend tell her that she would do whatever she wanted to do and to chase her dreams and owes him a big thank you for his encouragement and support.

**DAVID C. RYER** (Mr. Fox, Dr. Hurtz) David has always been a fan of the arts, however it was not until he started attending a writing group that met at the Ujima Theatre that the experience of acting really started to grab his attention. In fact, it was attending the writing group that introduced him to the opportunity to act for Face It. David starred in several plays while he was in high school and is currently a volunteer member of the Palace Theater in Lockport. As of last Spring David graduated from NCCC with an AS degree in the liberal arts and a teaching assistant certificate. He currently lives at home with his parents and two loving sisters, and has plans to get a job working with students and eventually move into his own apartment.

**AMY CAVAGNARO** (Auntie Angelica, Homeless woman) Amy graduated from Williamsville North High School in 2013. She is currently attending Daemen College through People Inc.'s Pre-Vocational Program. She is the daughter of Bob and Kathy, and sister to Brian and Michelle. She keeps herself busy through many hobbies and activities, including the Buffalo Sabres Junior Sled Hockey Team, Challenger Baseball, Bobcats Bowling, and now acting with Unique Productions. She also enjoys singing, watching her favorite TV show "The Voice," and spending time with her friends. Amy has previous acting experience in various talent shows, as well as 3 performances from her previous after school program, TLC. Her performances included "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas" as a Young Who, "Christmas Movie Scenes" as the mom from the movie "Elf," and "Frozen" as Princess Anna. Additionally, for the past 3 years, she has sung the National Anthem for the WNY DSPG Step Up For Down Syndrome Walk. This is Amy's first year with Unique Productions and is very excited to perform for you today!

**JACOB SIRACUSE** (Dylan) Jacob is animation. He was diagnosed with Autism at a very young age but never let his disability interfere with his determination to follow his dreams. As a recent high school graduate from Starpoint CSD in 2015, he is elated to now focus all his time on his hobbies of sound editing, storyboarding, acting and performing. He is thrilled to have landed the lead role in his first production with Unique Productions. Participation in Drama Club, talent shows and being the voice of Starpoint's afternoon announcements have only further supported his lifelong goal of becoming a voice actor, owning his own animation company and starring in animated films. Supported by his parents, two sisters, and extended family, Jacob hopes he one day can leave his hometown of Pendleton, New York and hit the 'big time.'

**RON WARD** (Steve) This is Ron's first appearance with Unique Productions as Steve. Besides his part time acting debut Ron works in a café. Ron would like to thank Beth and Vienna and Nick for getting him into theatre. He would also like to thank all his loyal fans who like him on Facebook and he thanks you all for coming!

**MATTHEW LEN** (Clifford) Matt is thrilled to be joining the cast of FACE IT as Clifford! Matthew began his love of theatre when he saw Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Phantom of the Opera at Shea's Performing Arts Center when he was ten. After seeing this magnificent show he longs to pursue an acting career in musical theatre. He furthered this when he volunteered as a stagehand in his high school production of Ragtime The Musical in 2013. Besides Phantom some of his favorite musical include Les Miserables and Wicked. Matt has been a volunteer at the Riviera Theatre in North Tonawanda since July of 2014. His future goes are to continue to build his acting resume and to perhaps one day perform on a professional level. He is looking forward to seeing Wicked in New York City soon. Matt would like to thank Unique Productions for this exciting opportunity and his friends and family for their support. To the audience he hopes you enjoy the show.

**AMANDA ROGERS** (Fitness extra, Party extra) Amanda is very excited to be in her first UNIQUE Production of FACE IT! No stranger to the stage, she has also participated in 2 theatrical works under the direction of John Waterhouse while in the YALT program at Daemen College, performed in the Lancaster High School women's choir for 4 years, and currently takes piano lessons at Twin Village Music Center. Amanda loves the theater-especially musicals and has been to Toronto and New York City as well as numerous local theater productions. She likes all genres of music and has a vast collection of scary movies. Amanda lives in Lancaster, NY with her parents Mark and Deborah, her younger sister Ashley and chocolate lab-Ruby! She is very grateful for this opportunity and is looking forward to future roles with UNIQUE Productions. She is enjoying meeting new people and loves new challenges. Amanda would like to thank her parents and sister Ashley, Grandma Joan, Aunt Marcia, Aunt Cindy and cousins Gabrielle, Alexa and Tommy for their support and dedication.

**RYAN CLIFFE** (Fitness extra, Party extra) Returning to the stage after a long hiatus, Ryan has joined the crew of Unique Productions, (UP). He was last seen as Herbert in W.W. Jacobs "The Monkey's Paw" and as a townsfolk member in the heartwarming, theatrical story of Stein's "Fiddler on the Roof". He was also a member of the creative and sounds effects team for the Niagara Wheatfield productions. Ryan also enjoys music, bowling and bocce. In October he traveled to Albany to represent Western New York in the Special Olympics Games where he and his teammates placed second in the state championships.



**STEPHANIE EDBAUER** (Fitness extra, Party extra) Stephanie is glad to be returning in her second production with UP! She was in last year's production of *The Process*. She has been in numerous musicals in the past at Williamsville East High School. (*Godspell*, *Cinderella*, *Oliver & Guys & Dolls*). Also she has been involved in the Amherst Youth Board summer musicals (*Sweet Charity*, *Godspell & Broadway Hits*). Stephanie participates in the Amherst CAPP program through People, Inc. Good Luck to all my Friends in the show!!

**MATTHEW SCOTT GARRISON** (Fitness extra, Party extra, Chuck Chattanooga, Street magician) "I am an 11th grader who attends North Tonawanda High School. My first performance was in the cast of 'THE MUSICAL 9 to 5' (2013). I was in the beginning and ending numbers, as well as a bit part as the 'Mail Guy'. It was nominated for 'The 2014 Kenny Awards' and we performed a small part on Shea's Theater stage.

I performed in Unique Productions (UP) 'THE PROCESS (2014) -- 'Minestrone', 'Benny', and 'The Rock Star'. In this year's production of 'FACE IT', I am 'Chuck Chattanooga', 'Street Magician' and an extra in the 'Work Out' and 'Party' scenes. I was honored in 2013 as a Soloist skater in SABAH's '2014 Celebration on Ice' at the First Niagara Center. Acting allows me to perform and feel alive, and my characters are colorful. I enjoy it in my life and do it for others. That is who I am, Matthew Scott Garrison!"

**JASON SOKODY** (Personal Trainer, Jax) Jason is labeled by many who know him as a Renaissance man. An adult educator at ECC and award winning realtor for Realty USA by trade, Jason also has professional experiences in modeling, bodybuilding, writing poetry and composing music. Jason completed his Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education and his Master's degree in Organizational Leadership. He is owner and creator of PulpFictionEDU.com and is in the process of publishing his first math textbook. In 2011, he was awarded NYACCE New York State Teacher of the Year. He has also published a book of poetry, *The Multifarious Conclusions of it Depends*. He is a devoted husband to his wife of 13 years and they have two beautiful daughters, Jada and Carmen. His favorite family pastimes are spending time outdoors, camping and four wheeling in as much mud as he can find.

**NATHANIEL WILLIAM WILKINS** (Dr. Feelright, wise old man) – Nathaniel is an American actor, voice actor, and puppeteer. He started acting in the summer of 2012 as a puppeteer for *The Kids on the Block Educational Puppets*. Since then Nathaniel's been in several plays and movies including *Always October*, *The Process*, *Loney Bananas* and *S.T.A.R.* Some of Nathaniel's inspirations are Frank Welker, Mike Yurchak, Denyse Tontz, Brian Donovan and Erin Sanders. In fact, it was Erin who got Nathaniel into doing yoga, which he enjoys and practices every day. Mike helped him with his voiceovers and Denyse has given him advice and words of encouragement to help improve his acting.

**STEVE BALLOW** (Dr. Shrinkhead, Comic man) Steve is a 22 yr old adult. He is a 2015 sophomore at Daemen College enrolled in the community pre-vocational program through People Inc. Steve's previous acting experiences include an usher in Man of La Mancha, and thanks to his professor Bob Waterhouse at Daemen college he received two roles in one play, Dr Stephen and an underwater bartender. Steve has a brother, Ryan who attends DePaul University College in Chicago. His parents are John & Anita. Steve loves sports and plays hockey for the Buffalo Thunder and he loves to watch the Boston Red Sox play.

**CHELSEY BRAUN** (Chloe) – Chelsey is 23 years old. She was born on May 27, 1992 in Rochester, New York and moved to Buffalo when she was 7 years old. Chelsey's passion is to become a talented actress; she loves and enjoys watching movies and seeing wonderful theatre plays and every time she watches plays and movies, they always make her dream of being in them in the future. In the past, she has taken summer acting class by Maureen Porter at Buffalo State College. She took an introduction to theater class at Buffalo State College that was run by Tim Joyce. In August 2014, Chelsey joined Unique Productions. She is looking forward to being in more play productions in the future.



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TRAVEL LIGHT:  
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Face it, nobody likes to be bullied and we all have a little anxiety. **FACE IT** is comprised of two separate plays. *Respect*, a short play written by Engelic Everett introduces the audience to Sherry, a young woman - proud of her Down Syndrome- who is bullied both at home and at school. How she faces and resolves her inner pain is heartwarming. *Day Tripper*, a play written by Nick Cacciotti has us traveling by elevator with Dylan, a young man with great anxiety who is fearful of just about everything. His day trip into a multi-level building allows him to work through his fears and anxieties and in the end find love. In both stories, each main character faces their fears and anxieties face on. Face it: we've all been there at one time or another.

Don't miss this two part production written by Engelic Everett & Nick Cacciotti, directed by Beth Geyer, and starring a fantastic cast loaded with fresh talent & charisma that will keep you captivated throughout all the comedy & drama that **FACE IT** promises to deliver!

About Unique Productions (UP!):

Proudly owned & operated by Beth Geyer & Vienna Laurendi Haak, Unique Productions (UP!) is a unique company of artists that aspires to promote community integration through the arts. UP! is dedicated to providing a venue where persons of all levels of ability can learn and express themselves through art, playwriting, and acting and more. UP! is comprised of aspiring and/or working playwrights and actors who have an interest in giving voice to persons with disabilities, as well as changing current cultural perceptions of what it means to be a person with disabilities.

[uniqueproductionsup.com](http://uniqueproductionsup.com)