

PITTSBURG THEATRE COMPANY

Presents

Dreamgirls

June 11 - 19, 2022
El Campanil Theatre



Dreamgirls is produced by special arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

They say two heads are better than one and in this case, that couldn't be more true. Both of us (Dianna and LaTonya) worked closely together and collaborated to direct this amazing production. Usually about 12:30 am each night we spoke on the phone to plan the next day and make sure we were on the same page. Long story short – we made a great team and are thrilled with the results.

PTC continuously strives to bring diversity to the East Bay and we are happy to bring the Motown sound to the general audience. *Dreamgirls* is a show about a time in American music history when rhythm and blues blended with other styles of popular music creating a new American sound that still resonates today.

Working with such a talented cast really made our lives easy. It was a pleasure to come to rehearsal each day and watch these amazing actors. We are happy to present *Dreamgirls* and we are looking forward to our next collaborative project.

Enjoy the show!

Dianna Schepers and LaTonya Watts (Co-Directors)



Tux of Class



Gina Zbacnik

(925) 757-5020

43 East 18th Street
Antioch, Ca 94509
www.tuxofclass.net

contact@tuxofclass.net



PITTSBURG THEATRE COMPANY
Presents

Dreamgirls

Book & Lyrics by

TOM EYEN

Music by

HENRY KIEGER

Co-Directors

DIANNA SCHEPERS
LATONYA WATTS

Choreographer

LATONYA WATTS

Music Director

CARL PANTLE

Dreamgirls is presented through special arrangement with Concord Theatricals.

THANK YOU

*The Production Team wish to thank the following
who helped to bring this production to life:*

**The Management and Staff of the El Campanil Theatre
Pittsburg Community Presbyterian Church | Clayton Theatre Company
Elite Dance Studio | Dance Connection Performing Arts Center
The City of Pittsburg | PACF | New Hope Church, Concord
Mt. Diablo Resource Recovery | Gwendolyn Sampson Brown
Tux of Class & Gina Zbacnik | Betsy Kohler | Flo Buchanan | Don Stone**

WHO'S WHO—PRODUCTION TEAM

Carl Pantle (Music Director / Conductor) is a passionate, engaging musician, bringing confidence and heart to the musical table. As a collaborative pianist and vocal coach, he has brought to life dozens of operatic and musical theater scores, and his collaborations include Tony Award winners Patti LuPone and Laura Benanti. As a pianist, arranger, and orchestrator, in affiliation with the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus, he performed and recorded multiple commissioned works by Stephen Schwartz, Andrew Lippa and Jake Heggie. Carl maintains a successful voice studio in Oakley, CA, and is enthusiastically involved in the arts and arts education in his community. www.carlpantle.com

DIANNA SCHEPERS (CO-DIRECTOR) is a PTC Board Member and has been involved with PTC ever since her children began performing with PTC back in 2009. She has directed numerous productions with PTC, beginning in 2012 with *M*A*S*H* and *South Pacific*, and has since directed shows including *Into the Woods*, *Next to Normal*, *Once Upon a Mattress*, *Noises Off*; along with her favorites *Spamalot* and *Sister Act*. Her job on the board of directors includes publicity and graphics (and just about anything else that comes up). Her next production with PTC is *Addams Family* in October.

LATONYA WATTS (CO-DIRECTOR/CHOREOGRAPHER) has worked with several famous directors and choreographers to pursue her passion. She has directed and choreographed many theatrical performances for some of the Bay Area's popular theatrical companies. Her work with PTC includes *Fences* and *A Raisin in the Sun*. LaTonya's choreography for *Chicago* garnered her a 2011 SFBATCC and Shellie Awards nominee for Best Choreographer for *Chicago*; and winner of the 2016 Shellie Award for Best Choreography for *A Trip Down Broadway*. She also was honored with the 2018 Shellie Award for Best Director for *Moon Over Buffalo*.

CAST

In order of appearance

| | |
|--|--|
| The M.C. | KIRK WALLER |
| The Stepp Sisters | ASOULA JASMINE AVEGALIO, DESIREE CAPOTE, TAMMY JACKSON |
| Charlene | TIANA HESTER |
| Joanne | KATHERINE MORALES |
| Marty | JAMES BRADLEY |
| Curtis Taylor, Jr. | ADAM GREEN |
| Deena Jones | AUTUMN CARTER |
| Tiny Joe Dixon | ROBERT BROWN |
| Lorrell Robinson | RIA DIXON |
| C.C. White | JAMARI McGEE |
| Effie Melody White | VICKIA BRICKLEY |
| Little Albert and the Tru Tones | TEVIN WHACK, BEN BETIS, KYLE JACQUES |
| James Thunder Early | JUSTIN DAILY |
| Wayne | BEN BETTIS |
| Dave and the Sweethearts | LIAM CODY, SHELLY McDOWELL, KAIA STIMPSON |
| Michelle Morris | TIANA HESTER |
| Jerry | KIRK WALLER |
| Les Style Singers | ASOULA JASMINE AVEGALIO, DESIREE CAPOTE, TAMMY JACKSON, SHELLY McDOWELL, KATHERINE MORALES, KAIA STIMPSON |
| Stage Manager | KATHERINE MORALES |
| Film Executive | LIAM CODY |
| Mr. Morgan | KYLE JACQUES |
| Fans, Reporters, Stagehands, Party Guests, Photographers | ASOULA JASMINE AVEGALIO, DESIREE CAPOTE, LIAM CODY, TIANA HESTER, TAMMY JACKSON, KYLE JACQUES, TEVIN WHACK |

ACT 1—MUSICAL NUMBERS

TIME: The Early Sixties

Scene 1—The Apollo Theater

- “I’m Looking for Something”THE STEPP SISTERS
“Goin’ Downtown”LITTLE ALBERT and THE TRU-TONES
“Takin’ the Long Way Home”TINY JOE DIXON
“Move” (You’re Steppin’ on My Heart)THE DREAMETTES
“Fake Your Way to the Top”JIMMY EARLY and THE DREAMETTES
“Cadillac Car”CURTIS, JIMMY, C.C., MARTY & THE COMPANY

Scene 2—On the Road

- “Cadillac Car”THE COMPANY

Scene 3—A Recording Studio

- “Cadillac Car”THE COMPANY

Scene 4—Limbo

- “Cadillac Car”DAVE and THE SWEETHEARTS
“Steppin’ to the Bad Side” CURTIS, C.C., JIMMY, WAYNE,
THE DREAMETTES, and THE COMPANY

Scene 5—A Hotel in St. Louis

- “Party Party”THE COMPANY

Scene 6—Miami

- “I Want You Baby”JIMMY and THE DREAMETTES

Scene 7—A Dressing Room in the Atlantic Hotel

- “Family”C.C., CURTIS, JIMMY, DEENA, LORRELL

Scene 8—Cleveland

- “Dream Girls”THE DREAMS
“Press Conference”THE COMPANY
“Only the Beginning”CURTIS, DEENA and EFFIE

Scene 9—TV Studio

- “Heavy”THE DREAMS

Scene 10—San Francisco

- “Heavy”THE DREAMS and CURTIS

Scene 11—Las Vegas (backstage)

- “It’s All Over”CURTIS, EFFIE, DEENA, LORRELL, C.C.,
MICHELLE, JIMMY

- “And I Am Telling You I’m Not Going”EFFIE

Scene 12—Las Vegas (on stage)

- “Love Love You Baby”THE DREAMS

**THERE WILL BE ONE
FIFTEEN MINUTE INTERMISSION**

ACT 2—MUSICAL NUMBERS

TIME: The Early Seventies

Scene 1—The Las Vegas Hilton

Dreams MedleyDEENA JONES and THE DREAMS
and THE COMPANY

Scene 2—A Chicago Nightclub

“I Am Changing”EFFIE

Scene 3—A Magazine Photo Call

“One More Picture Please”THE COMPANY

“When I First Saw You”CURTIS and DEENA

Scene 4—National Democratic Fundraiser

“Ain’t No Party”LORRELL and JIMMY

“I Meant You No Harm”JIMMY

“Quintet”JIMMY, DEENA, LORRELL, C.C., MICHELLE

“The Rap”JIMMY, C.C., MARTY, CURTIS, WAYNE, LORRELL

Scene 5—A Chicago Recording Studio

“I Miss You Old Friend”EFFIE, MARTY, C.C., and LES STYLE SINGERS

“One Night Only”EFFIE

Scene 6—Los Angeles

“One Night Only”DEENA JONES and THE DREAMS
and THE COMPANY

Scene 7—Chicago

“I’m Somebody”DEENA JONES and THE DREAMS

“Faith in Myself”EFFIE

Scene 8—New York

“Hard to Say Goodbye, My Love”DEENA JONES and the DREAMS



The use of any recording devices, either audio or video, the taking of photographs, (with or without flash) is strictly prohibited.

Please turn off all electronic devices.

PRODUCTION TEAM

CO-DIRECTORSDianna Schepers & LaTonya Watts
CHOREOGRAPHYLa Tonya Watts
MUSIC DIRECTOR / CONDUCTORCarl Pantle
ASST. DIRECTOR / STAGE MANAGERKimberley James
DANCE CAPTAINTiAna Hester
REHEARSAL ACCOMPANISTSantiago Martinez
SET DESIGNDianna Schepers
COSTUME DESIGNGwendolyn Sampson Brown
ASSISTANT COSTUMES / STAGE MANAGER.....Flo Buchanan
PROPERTIESSharon Paz
LIGHTING DESIGNAiden Arreola
DECK CHIEFShara Main
DRESSERSMaria Coniglio, Maya Duran, Ava Duran,
Alice Lustre, Katie Rapolas, Josie Rapolas
Tiera Pinkston, Telicia Okechukwu, Michelle Rhine
STAGE CREWAlex Paz
SET CONSTRUCTIONDianna Schepers, Michael Wilson,
Teresa Wilson, Katherine Morales, Desiree Capote, Flo Buchanan,
Phillip Leyva, Ava Duran, Robert Brown, TiAna Hester and Carson
VIDEOGRAPHERMel Nash
PHOTOGRAPHERSara Leyva
RECORDING / MUSIC COMPLILATIONRonn Ton
MARKETING & PUBLICITYPhillip Leyva, Dianna Schepers

ORCHESTRA

CONDUCTOR, PIANO, VOCALS Carl Pantle
PIANO 2Heidi T. Kelly-Tuason
TRUMPETMichael Beveridge
GUITARRobert Brown
BASSNoah Gonzales
PERCUSSIONAdam Hudson
REEDSDiane Klaczynski
DRUMS.....Pablo Quintero Malpica
REEDSRichard Philbin
TRUMPETRoberto Ruiz
REEDSLiz Wohl-Sanchez
TROMBONETim Walker



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Chris Soukoulis

Tim Stone

Amanda Bishop Szakats

Karen Taylor

Terry Tracy

Vicki Victoria

Jennifer Wallig

Marijune Ward

David & Marlene Ward

Brenda Wener

Eric Wilkins

PWCL

WHO'S WHO



Asoula Jasmine Avegalio (Stepp Sister, Les Styles Singer, Ensemble) is a Marine Corps veteran, an author, and a mother to two vibrant Littles. After 14 years of being outside of the theatre, she is ecstatic to be participating in the musical production, *Dreamgirls*. Asoula, who we lovingly know as Jasmine, is honored to be living out her dreams with her children by her side in hopes that, by her own example, she will inspire them to never give up on doing what you love.

Ben Bettis (Wayne, Tru-Tone, Ensemble) is happy he was able to do this show as it has been a "blast" working with this talented group of people. Ben has learned a lot during the rehearsals and would like to thank Ms. Dianna. If not for her, he would not have known about the show and to have met this wonderful cast.

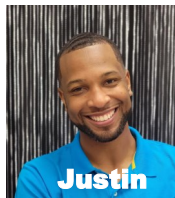
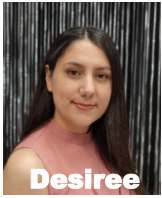
Vickia Brinkley (Effie) is a Bay Area native and is very excited to be portraying the part of Effie in this production of *Dreamgirls*! Vickia's theatre experiences include the role of Evilene in *The Wiz*, Sister in *Nunsense*, Principal in Langston Hughes' *Black Nativity*, Tracy in *Stained Glass* and of course is a repeat player in *Dreamgirls*, where she has played many roles from a Stepp Sister to Joanne, to the Dog Act and as a Chorus player. Vickia is also an accomplished and sought after Gospel recording artist whose work can be found on Apple I-Tunes, Spotify, Amazon and other outlets. Look out for her upcoming recording "Singing the Sermon," soon to be released.

Robert Brown (Tiny Joe Dixon, Bass in Orchestra) is new to the PTC stage, but not to performing. He has performed for many years as a guitarist in local bands. He is a California native, born and raised in Southern California. He likes gardening, cooking and tinkering around the garage. He hopes you enjoy the performance. Thanks to PTC for allowing me to participate with such an awesomely talented group.

Auti Carter (Deena) is a multi-talented singer, songwriter and actress. She has traveled the world and performed on many famous stages, including the Apollo Theater at the young age of 13 years old. She is the granddaughter of the late Bobby Brooks of the famous Bobby Brooks Quartet. She is also the granddaughter of Ruth Marion Foley who was the first Miss Bronze Los Angeles. Her latest projects include recording and writing records with Grammy Award winner Larrance Dopson of 1500 or Nothin. Her passion for music and the arts continues to grow as she takes on the role of Deena in *Dreamgirls*.

James Bradley (Marty) is thrilled to be back with PTC. James has performed with numerous companies in the Bay Area and was last seen with PCT as the Narrator / Father in *Into the Woods* and prior to that he was in *South Pacific*.

WHO'S WHO



Desiree Capote (Stepp Sister, Les Styles Slinger, Ensemble) is excited to be a part of her third production with PTC! She made her debut with PTC's production of *Sister Act*, her second show being *Oliver!* She has loved theatre since early high school and participated in productions such as *Once Upon A Mattress* (Deer Valley High School) and *Zombie Prom* (Deer Valley High School). Most recently she performed as Maggie in *A Chorus Line* with Pinole Community Players.

Liam Cody (Dave a Sweetheart Heart Throb) is absolutely ecstatic to be returning for another show with PTC. Favorite roles include Clifford Anderson in *Deathtrap*, Bobby Child in *Crazy for You*, J. Pierrepont Finch in *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, and Bill Sikes in PTC's *Oliver!*. He would like to thank his wife Shelly, and the rest of his family for their love and support.

Justin Daily (James "Thunder" Early) is excited to make his debut with PTC. Theater is a real joy in Justin's life and he loves playing Jimmy Early. He is thrilled to be part of this show and hopes you enjoy the production.

Ria Dixon (Lorrell) may be more familiar to Bay Area natives as Ria Zenobia with her captivating and soaring vocals, as she has performed with many local artists. Beyond the Bay, she's performed overseas where she graced the stages of China for several months, and her music also hit independent charts in Europe. In addition to her vocal performances, the lovely and graceful Ria is an accomplished actress, treading the boards and providing her voice to several productions. It's fair to say that -- nation to nation, crowd to crowd, person to person -- Ria's vibrant vocals still echo in the minds and hearts of the countless music and theater fans she's entertained.

Adam Green (Curtis Taylor Jr.) is excited to be in PTC's production of *Dreamgirls*. Most recently Mr. Green has been seen on stage in *Guys and Dolls* with Peninsula Ballet Theater, *Strange Courtesies* with San Jose Stage Company, Pacific Coast Repertory Theater's *West Side Story*, *Billy Elliot* and *Newsies* with Woodminster Summer Musicals, Stockton Civic Theatre's productions of *Hair*, *Mamma Mia* (Pepper) and as the Stag in Stockton Opera's Production of *Hansel and Gretel*.

WHO's WHO



TiAna Hester (Michelle, Charlene, Dance Captain, Ensemble) is a Pittsburg, CA native where she started her dance career at the age of seven. As a little girl she had a strong passion for performing. TiAna was introduced to the real world of dance by the age of eight where she began training professionally in a variety of dance styles such as Ballet, Jazz, Contemporary, and hip-hop under LaTonya Watts and vocally training with Professor Sylvester Henderson at LMC. In 2012, TiAna moved to New York City to pursue her dance career where she danced backup for various artists including Sean Kingston for the 49ers Pro Bowl Football game. Demi Grace, has opened up for Kevin Hart for his "Laugh at my Pain" stand up comedy show, choreographed for Sevyn Streeter, and has worked with Justine Skye, and many more! In 2018, she became a mother to a beautiful baby boy, Carson Charles, who she hopes to pass her creativity and artistry down to. TiAna is excited to be making her debut in her very first musical, and hopes to continue living out her dreams on stage!

Tammy Jackson (Stepp Sister, Les Styles Singer, Ensemble) is pleased to be in her first production with PTC. Her love for singing, dancing, and acting led her to train at Ohio State University's Department of Music Theatre where she made her stage debut in the hilarious musical *A...My Name Is Alice*. Her favorite roles were Ms. Mae and Honey Pot Watkins. Her performing career took a hiatus as she pursued a career as an Advertising Copywriter, where she wrote and directed national ad campaigns for TV, radio and magazines. Tammy has also enjoyed singing in bands, and once opened up for Angie Stone in San Francisco. In her spare time, she enjoys writing and performing original songs and poetry, as well as painting and interior design. She's excited for life's next creative adventure and wishes to thank her friends and family for their love and support.

Kyle Jacques (Tru-Tone, Ensemble) is glad to finally be back in costume. Kyle has been a fixture within PTC on- and offstage for nearly a decade, and the East Bay theatre community in general for longer. Recent credits include crew for *Hound of the Baskervilles* and *Oliver*, as well as performing in the Brothers' Chorus in the 2020 Shellie Award-winning production of *Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and as Yussel in 2018's *Fiddler on the Roof*. He is a firm proponent of the arts and their positive effects on society, and has long supported its inclusion into national STEM programs.

Shelly McDowell (Sweetheart, Les Styles Singer, Ensemble) is excited to be returning to PTC after playing Nancy in *Oliver!*, Amy in *Company*, choreographing *Sister Act*, and playing Mrs. Potiphar/Tango Dancer in *Joseph*. Previous musicals include *A Chorus Line* (Cassie), *Annie* (Grace), *Secret Garden* (Martha), *How to Succeed* (Rosemary), *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers* (Milly), *The Fantasticks* (Luisa), *Hello*

WHO'S WHO



Dolly (Irene), *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* (Marcy), and *Music Man* (Marian). When not performing, Shelly spends her free time choreographing and teaching dance for several local theater companies. She graduated from UC Irvine with a BA in Drama and was recently honored with two Shellie Awards in one evening for Outstanding Choreography (*Annie*) and Special Contribution to the Performing Arts. She wants to thank her husband, Liam Cody, and her mom, Jana McDowell for all their love and support.

Jamari McGee (C.C.) is thrilled to be back at PTC! He was last seen in Marin's Theatre Company production of *Rent*. Some of his most recent credits include *Guys and Dolls* as Harry the Horse, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling* as Chip Tolentino, *Urinetown* as Senator Fipp, *Once On This Island* as Tonton Julian and *A Raisin in the Sun* as Joseph Asagai with PTC. Other credits include, *Mamma Mia*, *Anything Goes*, *Into the Woods*, and more. Jamari is the assistant manager at KFC in SF and when he is not acting or working, he enjoys horror flicks and going to the amusement parks. Jamari is pursuing his degree in Theatre Arts at City College of San Francisco and after graduation he plans to finish his education on the east coast where he will continue to audition and grow as an actor. He would also like to dedicate this show to his grandfather who passed away February. He would of loved the show.

Katherine Morales (Joann, ABC Cavalcade Stage Manager, Les Styles Singer) is thrilled to make her debut with PTC. Katherine is originally from El Salvador and loves anything that has to do with art from theater to photography. She would like to thank PTC for this opportunity and hopes you enjoy the show.

Kaia Stimpson (Sweetheart) is so excited to be able to participate in *Dreamgirls!* Most recently, Kaia was seen in the ensemble of PTC's production of *Oliver*. Her favorite roles include Ronnette in *Little Shop of Horrors* and Micki in *A Chorus Line*. Enjoy the show!!

Kirk Waller (MC / Announcer, Jerry) was last seen in PTC's production of *Fences* and is thrilled to return and be part of his first musical with PTC. Kirk has spent the past 25 years as a solo performer and storyteller. He's performed nationally and internationally. His favorite moments include performing at the National Storytelling Festival, winning a Gold Award rating for his collection of stories and performing his original piece *Stagger Lee*.

Tevin Whack (Little Albert) greatest love is musical theatre. A graduate from PHS, he appeared in *Random Acts of Theatre* and *Pippin*, later studying drama at LMC. While living in SoCal, Tevin appeared in *Peter Pan* and *Westside Story*. He was part of the dance ministry at his church and also starred in *The Invisible*, a play about an autistic boy. He danced with LTW in Antioch and has performed on various stages including Great America and Disneyland. He has had roles in all of CTC's productions and aspires to star on Broadway. Tevin is a very determined young man who does not let autism stop him from pursuing his goals.



PTC USHERS IN NEW ERA, NOW PTC

It is with great excitement that we introduce the rebranding of our beloved theatre company. We are changing our name (just a little) from Pittsburgh Community Theatre to the Pittsburgh Theatre Company.

This change was brought about by our increasing awareness as a company that we are reaching an audience beyond our own community, in many ways, for the first time in our history. We have achieved a level of professionalism and quality in each of our productions, and our audiences have definitely taken note. The audience members and the performers who come to us now come from places we never would have anticipated, not only from all over the Bay Area, but in some cases from other states altogether.

Recently, we won the coveted Best Musical award at The Shellies for *Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, a feat that would have been almost unimaginable to pull off in PTC's early years. It is this renewed interest in excellence that has spurred us toward the decision to re-name our company.

Be assured, we are not abandoning the idea of community, and certainly not the community of Pittsburgh, whose name we still proudly display in our new name and logo. We all feel rooted to this town and the legacy of the theatre company that was started as an Adult Education class, 40 some years ago, by our founder Betty Brown. I believe I am qualified to tell you that she would be thrilled about this next chapter in our growth.

DREAMGIRLS AND SUPREME GIRLS

How Girl Groups Helped Change History

When *Dreamgirls* opened on Broadway in 1981, audiences were quick to draw parallels with the rise to fame of The Supremes. The creators of the show denied this was true, suggesting instead that the fictional girl group at the center of the show was a composite based on several bands like The Shirelles and The Marvelettes, and not meant to represent any singular group. It has been suggested that this was a reaction to a perceived threat of litigation by Diana Ross, who was not a fan of the show, or even the idea of the show.

The parallels are difficult to miss. As critic James Brewer has written: "Virtually every main character in *Dreamgirls* can be identified with a real-life counterpart. Deena Jones parallels Supremes lead singer Diana Ross, Curtis Taylor stands in for Berry Gordy, founder of Motown Records, and Effie White for Florence Ballard, the original lead singer of the Supremes, who was fired in 1967, at the height of the group's popularity. The character of James Early is not so clear-cut. He could be a cobbled together combination of Marvin Gaye and perhaps James Brown or even Junior Walker, for whom Gordy enjoyed early success as a songwriter."



Dramaturg Page

By Gregory Brown

Whoever the show is based on, the musical brings up a number of historic and culturally significant points about race relations and the pop music industry prevalent in 1960s and 1970s America. Again, according to Brewer: “A central issue in *Dreamgirls* is the existence of two music hit charts: the R&B, originally called “race music,” chart, and the pop chart, which listed the mainstream hits sold to largely white audiences. The music industry felt it necessary to keep its eye on the recordings popular among black listeners, but the separate charts were clearly a product of the official racism endemic to a certain epoch.”

Motown’s rise occurred during a time of significant upheaval and change in America, including, of course, The civil rights movement, but its meteoric success was also inextricably bound with the city of Detroit. According to Brian McCollum of The Detroit Free Press: “It wasn’t a fluke that Motown Records took flight in Detroit, part of a surge of creative energy that transformed the city into one of the world’s music capitals. The industrial boom sparked decades earlier by Henry Ford had drawn more than a million migrants — many of them Black southerners lured by the chance of prosperity and a fresh start. The Great Migration, as it came to be called, didn’t just fill northern cities with eager transplants. The new residents brought their customs with them, including the rich, musical traditions passed down through generations in the South.” Or, as Martha Reeves of The Vandellas said more explicitly: “We all owe our debt to the car manufacturing developing here in Detroit.”

Katy June-Friesen, writing in *The Smithsonian*, has suggested that girl groups like The Supremes and others are historically significant because of their gender, which allowed them to “crossover” into White American living rooms more easily than their male counterparts. More importantly: “the figure of the non-white teenage girl was being politicized in America. And the same non-threatening, pure quality that was letting black girl groups cross over into white culture was giving young women force in the civil rights movement.”

Of course, their look and overall demeanor was still carefully cultivated. June Friesen notes that “the success of girl groups had to do with more than harmony and lyrics. It was about the whole performance—how they moved, the clothes they wore, how big their hair was. In Motown, Gordy hired finishing-school teacher Maxine Powell to teach the girls how to walk and talk. He also brought in professional choreographers. All of this was part of his effort—embraced by the girls—to convey a middle-class respectability.”

The only girl group to go head-to-head with The Beatles (who were themselves obsessed with girl groups, covering their songs) was The Supremes. They were, arguably, the most important black recording act of all time (always a subjective call) and Motown’s most successful act. Their cultural impact cannot be underestimated. As Mary Wilson said in her 1986 autobiography *Dreamgirls: My Life as a Supreme*: “Blacks and Whites were making efforts to change things, and our music helped to bridge the gap.” The title of Wilson’s biography indicates that the Broadway show had a least one Supreme fan.



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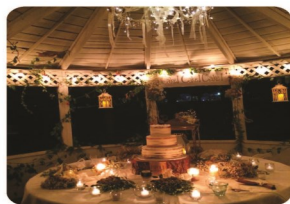
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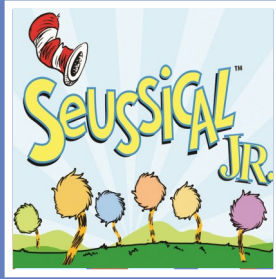
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Leshner Center | July 8—17, 2022

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Ghostlight Performing Arts Youth Academy | July 23, 2022

GUYS AND DOLLS

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SIDE BY SIDE BY SONDHEIM

Pinole Community Players | Community Playhouse | August 19—28, 2022