

For Immediate Release:
Live Arts Announces 2021/22 Season Opener
EVERY BRILLIANT THING



Rotating cast members (L to R) Ray Nedzel, Liz Howard, and Chris Estey. Photos by Will Kerner.

September 9, 2021

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Charlottesville, VA - The Live Arts reIGNITE Season launches with **EVERY BRILLIANT THING**, a gently humorous and uplifting solo show about depression and resilience where the audience becomes a part of the story. **EVERY BRILLIANT THING** by Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe will have 17 performances, October 15 through November 7, 2021, at Live Arts Theater, 123 E. Water Street in Charlottesville. Tickets are available for \$25 (or \$20 for students and seniors) through the Box Office at 434-977-4177 or online at livearts.org/tix.

Live Arts will host two special events for **EVERY BRILLIANT THING**: An Opening Night reception following the performance on October 15, 2021, and our post-show audience

talk-back on Thursday, October 21, 2021 (7:30pm curtain). **EVERY BRILLIANT THING** will be performed without an intermission. Audiences are welcome to enjoy drinks and concessions on the fourth floor balcony one hour prior to and following performances.

EVERY BRILLIANT THING at Live Arts is directed by longtime Charlottesville theater-maker Clinton Johnston, and showcases a trio of performers who will rotate in the role of the narrator: Chris Estey, Liz Howard, and Ray Nedzel. The production also features a top-notch creative team: Kerry Moran (scenic design); Mark Schuyler (lighting design); Becky Brown (sound design); Miriam Halpern (costume design); and Daryl O'Connor (properties design and scenic dressing).

About the Show

What does a six-year-old do to cheer up their mom after she's tried to kill herself? Starts making a list of everything that's brilliant about the world, everything worth living for, and leaves it on her pillow. *1. Ice cream. 2. Kung Fu movies. 3. Burning things. 4. Laughing so hard you shoot milk out your nose.*

As our narrator grows up and experiences new joys and curves, the list grows too, and takes on a life of its own. The narrator invites the audience to become part of the story by reading aloud one of the brilliant things on the list, or perhaps by playing a parent, a school guidance counselor, or the vet.

“...One of the funniest plays you’ll ever see about depression—and possibly one of the funniest plays you’ll ever see, full stop.” – *The Guardian*

Macmillan and Donohoe’s play sensitively blends sadness and humor, sweetness and honesty, silliness and poignancy, and takes on big subjects without sentimentality or judgment. In a unique Live Arts twist, three different performers will appear in rotating repertory during the run—bringing their own perspectives to the story just as new audiences will shape each evening's performance with their contributions.

Performance History

EVERY BRILLIANT THING was first produced in June 2013, by Paines, Plough and Pentabus Theatre at the Ludlow Fringe Festival, performed by Jonny Donahoe. Its North American premiere, also performed by Donahoe, was at the Barrow Street Theatre, NYC, in December 2014. **EVERY BRILLIANT THING** was a Lucille Lortel Award Nominee for Outstanding Solo Show.

About The Playwrights

Duncan Macmillan's plays include: *People, Places, and Things* (2015-2017 National Theatre/Wyndham's Theatre, West End); *1984*, adapted from George Orwell; **EVERY BRILLIANT THING**; *City of Glass*, adapted from Paul Auster; *The Forbidden Zone*; *Wunschloses Unglück*, adapted from Peter Handke; *Reise Durch Die Nacht*, adapted from Friederike Mayröcker; *Lungs*; and *Monster* (2006, Royal Exchange Theatre).

Jonny Donahoe is an actor, comedian, playwright, screenwriter, broadcaster, musician, orthodox off-spinner, decent slip-catcher, and capable swimmer. His one-man show **EVERY BRILLIANT THING** (which he co-wrote and originally performed), has played more than 600 times over four continents, including five months off-Broadway at The Barrow Street Theatre. The show was filmed by World of Wonder and screened as a special on HBO. He was nominated for a Drama Desk Award, Lucille Lortel Award and an Off-Broadway Alliance Award for his performance. He is the front man of musical comedy-satirists, *Jonny and The Baptists*, and a regularly performing stand-up in his own right.

About the Director

Clinton Johnston is a local theater artist who has worked with most area venues acting, directing, and doing whatever else he can get away with. He most recently appeared on the Live Arts stage in the 2018 production of THE LIAR. His last time directing for Live Arts was for a non-staged reading of local playwright Sean McCord's play-in-process, *Moving*, in 2016. Prior to that, Clinton directed the 2008 production of Suzan-Lori Parks' IN THE BLOOD. He is pleased to have a small part in the next stage of Live Arts' grand journey to forge theater and community.

About Live Arts

Live Arts is a nonprofit community theater in Downtown Charlottesville, powered by more than 1,200 volunteers. Founded in 1990, Live Arts is celebrating 31 years of forging theater and community. Live Arts is supported in part by the Virginia Commission for the Arts, which receives support from the Virginia General Assembly and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. The 2021/22 Season is also supported by the Bama Works Fund of Dave Matthews Band at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation, Albemarle County, and by philanthropic gifts from hundreds of theater lovers in our community.

For more information

Please contact Marketing & Design Coordinator Katie Rogers at katie@livearts.org or visit livearts.org.



Calendar Information for EVERY BRILLIANT THING:

WHO: LIVE ARTS presents

WHAT: EVERY BRILLIANT THING by Duncan Macmillan with Jonny Donahoe

CAST: Chris Estey, Liz Howard, Ray Nedzel

DATES: Friday, October 15 through November 7, 2021

SHOWTIMES: OCT. 15 – NOV. 7, 2021

- Wednesdays, Thursdays @ 7:30pm
- Fridays and Saturdays @ 8pm
- Sundays @ 2pm

WHERE: Live Arts Theater, 123 East Water Street, Charlottesville, VA 22902

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- October 15, 2021: Opening Night Reception
- October 21: Post-Show Audience Talk-Back

TICKETS: \$25 (\$20 discounts available for Seniors and youth)

BOX OFFICE: 434-977-4177 x123 or online at livearts.org/tix

INFO: katie@livearts.org or visit livearts.org.

SAFETY: Live Arts prioritizes the health and safety of our volunteers, patrons, and staff by requiring indoor masks and full vaccinations for all. Please visit livearts.org for our current COVID policies.

Special Thanks

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and the National Endowment for the Arts.*

