



PRESENTS

# *Death of Kings*

BY BEN GRIMES



DEATH OF KINGS IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY THE ALICE L. WALTON FOUNDATION, ARKANSAS BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD, AND CARDINAL COUNSELING. MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT PROVIDED IN COLLABORATION WITH DR. JASON WILLIAMS AT ARKANSAS CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND CARDINAL COUNSELING.

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ANY VIDEO AND/OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

# SEPTEMBER 23 – 28, 2025

# ABOUT THE SHOW

[WATCH THE TRAILER](#)

*Death of Kings* traces the journey of an American soldier, from enlistment and deployment to reintegration into society. Written by a military veteran from Arkansas, this poignant piece explores the profound effects of war, trauma, and mental health, emphasizing how the art of storytelling can serve as a transformative tool for healing and resilience, both for soldiers and civilians. By weaving in moments and rhythms of Shakespearean text and drawing from advancements in neuroscience and drama therapy, he reveals a path to recovery and the true cost of freedom.

Following the performance, an interactive post-show discussion will offer a deeper exploration of techniques designed for healing and coping with trauma. This will be coupled with a brief talkback with individuals from the worlds of art and healing, allowing audience members a rich and thought-provoking experience.

RUNNING TIME: 50 MINUTES + 15-MINUTE PANEL DISCUSSION  
RECOMMENDED AGE: 12 AND UP

# ABOUT THE SHOW

“THIS PIECE IS NOT JUST ABOUT WAR—IT’S ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE DON’T CREATE SPACE FOR HEALING. IT’S ABOUT WHAT WE CARRY, WHAT WE BURY, AND WHAT WE LIFT UP.”

BEN GRIMES

## MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS



### **CARDINAL COUNSELING**

Nancy Mitchell, Psych APRN

Tara DeJohn, PhD, LCSW

Jamie Gordon, LPC-S



### **ARKANSAS CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL**

Leigh Ann Wilson, LCSW

### **CHAT WIT CHELS COUNSELING SERVICES**

Chelsea Taylor, LPC

### **DR. JEFFREY W. SWENSKIE II, PSY.D.**



# THEATRE ETIQUETTE

## **ARRIVE EARLY**

Arriving 30 minutes early allows time to make a final trip to the restroom and locate your seats.

## **TURN OFF ELECTRONICS**

Lights and sounds from phones and other electronic devices are distracting to other patrons as well as the performers. Photography is not allowed during the performance.

## **BE AISLE KIND**

Tuck your belongings under your seat to remove tripping hazards while seated and be sure to take all your belongings with you when you leave. Throw away any rubbish on your way out.

## **PLAY YOUR PART**

Watch and listen; laugh at funny bits; applaud at the spectacular. Be present and in the moment with the performers.



# MEET THE MAKERS



WATCH  
INTERVIEW

## MEET THE PLAYWRIGHT

Ben Grimes is a multifaceted theatre artist, administrator, and educator. He earned his BFA in Acting from The Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University and began his career as a professional actor, performing in regional theatre productions

across the country and New York City. After more than a decade on stage, feeling disconnected and lost, Ben made the life-altering decision to join the U.S. Army in 2006. He served as an Airborne Infantryman in the 82nd Airborne Division, deploying to Baghdad, Iraq in 2006 and again in 2017.

Following his final deployment, Ben turned to theatre as a means of healing from combat stress. He discovered a deeper connection to his craft and found that working in an ensemble helped alleviate feelings of isolation and depression. These realizations led him to pursue a master's in public service from the Clinton School of Public Service, where his research explored theatre as a vehicle for social impact.

Inspired by his studies, Ben founded Riverside Actors Theatre, a company dedicated to using theatre and storytelling to address trauma and the challenges faced by veterans and other at-risk populations. He has held artistic and administrative leadership roles in theatre companies in Chicago, New York, and Little Rock, earning recognition as both a director and actor from Broadway World and the Arkansas Times. A sought-after teacher and facilitator, Ben is committed to fostering creative communities that empower and uplift. In 2023, Ben was honored as an inaugural Catalyze Fellowship awardee by the Mid-America Arts Alliance and Windgate Foundation. Ben is currently the Managing Artistic Director of Market House Theatre in Paducah, Kentucky.

# MEET THE MAKERS



## MEET THE DIRECTOR

Chad Bradford is honored to have the opportunity to present this thoughtful and important piece of theatre. Chad is the Director of Children's Theatre and Performing Arts at AMFA and is a multi-disciplinary director, performer,

composer, and playwright. After over a decade in New York City, Chad joined the AMFA team and has directed *Dragons Love Tacos*, *Dr. Seuss's Cat in the Hat*, and written and directed all of the *Flurffy and Friends* productions. As a performer, Chad has acted Off-Broadway, on National Tours, and at notable regional theaters such as the American Shakespeare Center, Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Pennsylvania Center Stage, and Lexington Children's Theatre.

As a director and playwright, Chad's work—particularly his Shakespearean adaptations—has been seen on regional tours and stages across the country. He has served as the Managing Director for Arkansas Shakespeare Theatre and as Associate Artistic Director for SHAKE Theatre Company in western New York. Chad holds an MFA in Acting from Penn State and an MS in Leadership for Creative Enterprises from Northwestern University.

# MEET THE MAKERS

## AMFA CREATIVE TEAM

### **Director**

Chad Bradford

### **Asst. Director, Stage Manager**

Baleigh Almond

### **Technical Director and Scenic Designer**

Andrew Shelton

### **Costume and Props Designer**

Ben Grimes

### **Lighting Designer**

Griffen Birdsong

### **Sound and Projection Designers**

Ben Grimes and Chad Bradford

### **Scenic Artist**

Baleigh Almond



# MEET THE MAKERS



## CAST

**Quinn Gasaway** is an actor, musician, and hand soap enthusiast born and raised in Little Rock. He got his start in the Coen Brothers' film O' BROTHER WHERE ART THOU when he was just a wee lad, and after getting his BFA in Acting from

Oklahoma City University, he spent time in New York, Chicago, and nearly a decade in Los Angeles. He grew up acting on this very stage and is so honored to be returning to it after appearing earlier this year in AN UNLIKELY HERO. Other recent credits include THE THREE MUSKETEERS (UCA) and HENRY V (Shake on the Lake/AST). He'd like to thank Chad and Ben for putting their faith in him to tell this beautiful story. He sends love to his parents and his beautiful girlfriend Cozy for their unending support.

# ART AND WELLNESS

## COPING TECHNIQUES WITH BEN GRIMES

### MAKE AN ART JOURNAL

Instead of writing, use a different type of journaling — your artwork — to tell a story and represent your emotions as events, both positive and negative, take place in your life. The purpose of this exercise is to help deal with your emotions.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Find more Art and Wellness activities in our Educator Resources.

## EDUCATOR RESOURCES



# COMING SOON!



## **FLURFFY’S TALES FOR SALE**

Saturdays, October 18 –  
November 1, 2025

**AMFA EVENT LAWN | FREE**



## **JUNIE B. IN JINGLE BELLS, BATMAN SMELLS! BY ALLISON GREGORY**

December 5 – 21, 2025  
AMFA PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE



## **ELEPHANT & PIGGIE’S “WE ARE IN A PLAY!”**

BASED ON THE ELEPHANT & PIGGIE BOOKS BY MO WILLEMS

March 6 – 28, 2026  
AMFA PERFORMING ARTS THEATRE

**GET TICKETS & VIEW THE FULL CALENDAR**