

# Olivia O

THE MUSICAL



## **Diane Currie Sam**

### **Co-Librettist, Co-Lyricist, Co-Producer**

Diane Currie Sam is an award-winning essayist/writer, educator, and co-librettist/co-lyricist of Olivia O, The Musical. Her decades-long work as a counselor and retreat leader focused on the power of storytelling for healing and change.

As an award-winning freelance writer she has covered critically important social issues like mental health, sustainability, and the prevention of domestic violence. She is a graduate of the University of British Columbia (BSc) and Trinity Western University (MA, Counselling Psychology). She lives in Coquitlam, BC, Canada and was recently awarded the Adelphi University Sing for Hope Activism Award, The Adams Prize for Musicals at the Toronto Fringe Festival and the Tom Hendry award for Best New Musical for her work with Olivia O, The Musical. She is a member of the Playwrights Guild of Canada.



## **Jessica Carmona**

### **Co-Lyricist, Co-Librettist**

Jessica is a graduate of NYU Tisch School of the Arts (BFA in Acting), and the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theatre Workshop.

She has worked with the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, Red Monkey Theatre, and Blackfriars Theatre in Rochester, NY. She wrote Elvira -The Immigration Play, which was inspired by the life of Elvira Arellano and which has toured in several theatres and college campuses in the US. She is a graduate of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Lyricist Program.

She has written 3 short plays and 2 full length plays. She starred in the feature film "Millie and the Lords " which was featured on HBO (Best actress award The People's Film Festival in NYC) She recently appeared as a costar on CBS FBI Most Wanted and NBC New Amsterdam, and received the Adelphi University Sing for Hope Activism Award for her work with Olivia O, The Musical.



## **Jennica Carmona**

### **Director**

Jennica was born in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico and raised with her twin sister and older brother in Rochester, NY. Her mother was a Bilingual early childhood teacher and her father is a minister, and from each of them she learned the importance of hard work, helping others, and fighting for social justice.

After graduating from a performing arts high school, she attended the Tisch School of the Arts at NYU, where she received a BFA in acting. She has since performed at various local and regional theaters across the country. In 2013, she formed Si Se Puede

Productions, LLC, a theater and film production company whose mission is to produce artistic projects that raise awareness of social justice issues. Her first film, *Millie & the Lords*, won several awards on the film festival circuit and was acquired by HBO Latino. The film was inspired by the Young Lords Party, a Puerto Rican Revolutionary group that fought for civil rights for Puerto Ricans during the 60's and 70's.

She originated the role of Elvira in the theatrical production, 'Elvira-The Immigration Play', a two person show which highlights the life of Elvira Arrellano, known to many as the Rosa Parks of the Immigration Reform movement.

Jennica joined the Olivia O creative team as the Director for our 2024 festival productions in Philadelphia, PA, Dallas, TX and New York, NY.



***Deanna Mann***  
***Music Director***

Deanna is a proud music educator and multidisciplinary artist currently based in Toronto- though she is a Maritimer at heart, born and raised in Nova Scotia. She studied vocal jazz at St. Francis Xavier University and went on to study musical theatre performance at Randolph College for the Performing Arts (class of '21). She will be continuing her education at Wilfrid Laurier University this fall.

Though performing was her introduction to musical theatre, Deanna has found her passion in music directing. Recent credits include; *Hair* (Thaumatrope), *Seussical*, *The Lightning Thief* (Castbound Studios), *Catch Me If You Can* (TMTC), *Three Little Pigs* (TYT), *Ride The Cyclone*, *Little Women* (The Playhouse Collective).

Deanna is thrilled to be part of the team bringing Olivia O to Toronto, and hopes this touching and poignant piece will strike a chord for audiences in our current political climate.



***Alison Cohen***  
***Co-Producer***

Alison Cohen is a high school senior theater major based in Toronto, Canada. She is thrilled to serve as the publicist, marketing assistant, and producer for the upcoming Olivia O productions in Toronto and is deeply honoured to join this team and help shine a light on important stories told through theater.

Alison is the host and creator of *The Inspiration Show Podcast*, a virtual interview series spotlighting artists who have inspired her. She has now hosted over 100 episodes featuring Broadway and television professionals whose journeys continue to shape her own.

She created, directed, produced, and wrote *The Journey of Inspiration Through Theater* at The Green Room 42, a show about her creative journey. Sharing the stage with Broadway performers who had been guests on her podcast was a full-circle moment that deepened her love of theater even more.

Being part of this production marks an exciting new chapter in her lifelong journey of helping bring impactful narratives to the stage.



### **Gil Yaron**

#### ***Original Composer***

Gil Yaron is an award-winning performer/director/producer and the composer for “Olivia O”. Career highlights include the second national tour of Les Miserables (Mirvish Productions), Canadian Premiere of Stephen Sondheim’s Assassins and Jesse Richardson Award’s (Best Director/ Best Production) for the premiere of Barbara Nickel’s SchumannBrahmSchumann. Gil recently collaborated on the score for a new musical “Power”. He lives in Vancouver, Canada with his two children.



### **Angela Ortiz**

#### ***New/Additional Music Composer***

Angela Ortiz is a vocalist, pianist, arranger, orchestrator, composer, and lyricist based in Brooklyn, NY and joins the Olivia O team as the composer for the song "Good Morning, We're Alive".

Her songwriting and composition work have been featured on NPR and reviewed in All About Jazz, Cadence Magazine and TimeOutNY. She released her first album “All About You” on Random Chance Records (which was made available worldwide through City Hall Records), and independently released her second album, “Dismantle This Bomb”. Her writing heavily features original horn and woodwind arrangements, intertwined with electronic and acoustic percussion and piano. Her music arrangements and works have enjoyed airplay on radio stations in the US, Poland, Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Australia and New Zealand.

She has also composed music for several film shorts that have been official selections at film festivals throughout the country, as well as been commissioned to write music for the contemporary art song initiative, The Modern Collective. Angela has also composed numerous works for musical theater and is currently working on a musical that incorporates contemporary sounds with Bomba, Plena and Salsa - the sounds of her father’s native Puerto Rico.

She holds a Bachelor’s of Music degree from New York University and has also studied latin/jazz piano and at Berklee School of Music. She is also a member of the BMI Lehman Engel Musical Theater Composer/Lyricist Workshop.