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Howie D: Back in the Day Cast Biographies

Howard Dorough (Howie D)

For 26 years, Howie has been a part of the Backstreet Boys, one of the most successful groups in music history, with countless #1s, record-setting tours, and worldwide sales in excess of 130 million. A multiple award winning and Grammy-nominated performer, Howie's work with BSB has gone gold and platinum in 46 countries, and BSB has continually delivered the finest pop music one has to offer, making them one of pop's most influential performers and the best-selling boy band in history.

In July of 2019, Howie released his debut family album "Which One Am I?"

Along with People Magazine, Parents Magazine, Sirius XM, Billboard, BuzzFeed and more, Red Tricycle raves "this Backstreet Boy Is Back with a Kids Album You'll Love" adding "music both you and your kids can agree on is a rare breed, but with Howie's new album that's exactly what you'll get."

Entertainment Tonight adds "Seamlessly spanning a variety of genres, from blues to reggae and rock, Howie's record explores issues both young and old can connect with, like dealing with worry, anxiety and growing up in the shadow of an older sibling, with humor woven in along the way."

Produced by Grammy nominee Tor Hyams, "Which One Am I?" is a collection of songs that offer musical reflections of Howie's own childhood and overcoming his insecurities to discover his true self. The songs also inspired an upcoming family musical theater production "Howie D: Back in the Day," which will have its world premiere this month at the famed Rose Theater in Omaha, Nebraska.

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Liam Brenzel (Carter/Prep)

Liam Brenzel is a student in limbo until he can decide what school he wants to learn at. Originally from El Paso, Texas, he is excited for his third performance at The Rose and hopes that the five audience members who know him are equally jazzed. Liam has been acting since seventh grade where he played Nicely Nicely Johnson in his middle school production of *Guys and Dolls Jr.* Since that standout performance, he has gone on to act in high school productions (Dr. Einstein-*Arsenic and Old Lace*-Mascoutah IL; Amos Calloway-*Big Fish*-Papio South; Papa Ge-*Once on This Island*-Papio South, etc.), community (Grimsby-*Little Mermaid Jr*; Sasha-*Fiddler on the Roof*, all Looking Glass in IL; George Gibbs-*Our Town* at the Bellevue Little Theater), and professional (Ensemble-*Mamma Mia*-The Muny St. Louis; Ensemble-*Madagascar*; Albert-*Newsies*, both at The Rose).

Cristina María Castro (Mrs. D/Abuelita)

Cristina María Castro is thrilled to be making her Rose Theater debut! A sought-after performer in both opera and musical theater, she spent the past summer as a young artist with Chautauqua Opera and returned to NYC to perform Monica in City Lyric Opera's production of *The Medium*. A lover of new music, she has had the honor of originating and creating two roles: Cristina Maria in Local Opera Local Artists' opera pastiche entitled *We Might be Struck by Lightning* and Catherine in a New York Theatre Festival new musical called *Bright is the Ring of Words*. She has also workshopped many compositions in Frontiers with the Fort Worth Opera Festival. Two of her favorite roles include Maria in *West Side Story* and Despina in *Cosí fan tutte*.

Marcel Daly (Oba)

Marcel Daly is excited to be returning to the Rose Theater in *Howie D: Back in the Day*. Born and raised in Bellevue, Nebraska, he has loved performing since elementary school. As an alumni from Bellevue West High School, he was selected to represent Nebraska at the Jimmy Awards as a national nominee in New York City. Since then he has performed around the Omaha area, and graduated from the University of Nebraska at Omaha with a degree in Vocal Performance. Marcel's credits include: Benny in *In the Heights* (SNAP! Productions), Davy in *Newsies* (Rose Theater), Prince Eric in *The Little Mermaid* (Rose Theater), and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* as Reuben (New Theatre Dinner and Restaurant). In the future, Marcel plans to pursue a career as an actor, composer, writer and lyricist.

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Shannon Duke (Polly Sidekick)

Shannon Duke grew up and trained in Southern California. After graduating from school she joined The Young Americans to train and travel all over the world. After participating as a guest artist and educator in the US, UK, and Japan, she then took off to finish her education. As of this May, she graduated from Midland University with a Bachelors Degree in Arts Management. During her time there, she had the opportunity to play some noteworthy roles. Some of which included Mrs. Peacock (*Clue on Stage*), Queen Aggravain (*Once Upon a Mattress*), Mrs. Meers (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*), and Aldonza (*The Man of LaMancha*). She joined the Rose last season for her debut at The Manager in *Elf the Musical*, and has since become a guest educator for Musical Theater Classes. She also recently joined the cast of *Ella Enchanted The Musical* as the bratty stepsister, Hattie.

Natalie Hanson (Pollyanna)

Natalie Hanson is a Chicago based performer from Seattle. A Creighton alum, she is ecstatic to be back in Omaha for *Howie D: Back in the Day!* Other noted Omaha credits include *Peter Pan* (Tigerlily) and *Newsies!* (Tommyboy) with The Rose Theater, and *Heathers the Musical* (Ensemble) with BlueBarn Theatre. She was last seen in *Hope: Part Two of a Mexican Trilogy* (Betty U/S) with Teatro Vista in Chicago. Next up, *West Side Story* with South Bend Civic Theatre.

Jay Hayden (Justin/Prep 2)

Jay Hayden originally hails from Hebron, CT. Jay is currently a Teaching Artist Fellow at The Rose, and is ecstatic to be working on *Howie D: Back in the Day!* Previous credits at The Rose include *The Cat in the Hat* (Thing #2/Kitten #2) and the touring casts of *NebraskaLand!* (Hummelsback) and *You and Me and the Land of Peas* (Kid). Before coming to Omaha, Jay worked as an Education Associate with the Lake Dillon Theatre Company, and as a Box Office Manager with Vermont Stage. Some other favorite credits include: *Spring Awakening* (Moritz), *Dog Sees God* (CB), and the titular boy-wonder in *Peter Pan*.

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Alphonse Kroeten (Charles/Prep)

Alphonse Kroeten made his acting debut in 2002 as “Ren” in *Footloose The Musical*. Since then, he has performed on over one hundred stages across the United States and Europe, including Disney’s Animal Kingdom, New York City’s David Geffen Hall, and Norte Dame de Paris. After attending Midland Lutheran College and attaining his B.A. in Music, under direct tutelage of nationally recognized composers/directors Dr. Eric Richards and Jim Elsberry, Alphonse began touring nationally, with Omaha Theater Company, in *The Little Engine That Could* (2010), *Three Merser Meyer Classics* (2011), and *Diary Of A Worm, A Spider, And A Fly* (2014). Alphonse is thrilled to be returning to The Rose Theater mainstage after appearing as Emile in *Goosebumps The Musical: The Phantom Of The Auditorium*, Tall Boy in *Judy Moody & Stink: The Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad Treasure Hunt*, Phinneas in *Curious George And The Golden Meatball*, King Julien in *Madagascar: A Musical Adventure*, as well as *Peter Pan* and *Harold and the Purple Crayon*.

Lauren Krupski (Pollyanna Sidekick)

Lauren is so excited to be back on stage at The Rose! Some notable roles at The Rose include Princess Fiona in *Shrek the Musical*, Miss Shields in *A Christmas Story*, Penny in *Honk!*, and Julia in *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs*. She also was a part of two world premiere productions at The Rose: *Prancer* and *Pete the Cat*. Lauren has also performed many times with the Omaha Symphony in their family and educational shows. She has been seen in their educational program Mission Imagination for two years, performing in *The Misadventures of Melvin the Explorer* and *The Symphonic School Bus*. Most recently she performed with the Omaha Symphony as concert host with the program *Link Up!* She has also been seen with the Sarasota Orchestra, Rochester Philharmonic, and soon to be seen with the Lima Symphony and San Diego Symphony in “Gold Rush” a family concert celebrating American Composers.

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Matthew R. Olsen (Mr. D)

Matthew R. Olsen is excited to join The Rose Theater for the first time! You may have seen him around Omaha with Bluebarn Theatre (*The Woodsman, Venus in Fur*), Brigit St. Brigit (*Bernhardt/Hamlet*), Shakespeare On The Green (*Much Ado, King John, Merry Wives, King Lear, Macbeth, Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, Othello*), Nebraska Shakespeare On Tour (*Hamlet, Romeo & Juliet, Midsummer, As You Like It*). Other select Regional credits include: *The Matchmaker, Both Your Houses* (dir. Frank Galati), *True West, School For Lies, How I Learned To Drive & Oleanna*. Matthew is an actor/director/educator. He holds a BFA from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and an MFA from Florida State University/Asolo Conservatory for Actor Training. Currently— Adjunct Faculty in Acting at University of Nebraska-Omaha and Lead Facilitator of In Process Actor Training, a monthly class in partnership with Bancroft Street Market.

Jake Parker (Tommy)

Jake Parker is proud to return to The Rose Theater with *Howie D: Back in the Day* as Tommy. His recent/favorite credits include: *A Christmas Carol* as Topper at Omaha Community Playhouse, *Go Dog, Go!* as Green Dog at The Rose Theater, *She Loves Me* as Arpad at Bellevue Little Theatre, *Hairspray* as Fender at the Papillion-La Vista Community Theatre, and *Newsies* as Crutchie at The Rose. He also toured with the Nebraska Theatre Caravan's *A Christmas Carol* as Peter Cratchit in late 2018. Jake is very excited and humbled to be back on The Rose's stage.

Roni Shelley Perez (Lucy)

Roni Shelley Perez was recently seen as Soonja Ma (u/s Goeun Kim) in New York City's Off-Broadway production of *Comfort Women: A New Musical* at Playwrights Horizons. Perez, originally from Nebraska, graduated from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

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Theresa Sindelar (Mrs. Schaefer)

A veteran of the local theater community, Theresa Sindelar's last Omaha theater experience was as Karl In *A Very Die Hard Christmas* at the Bluebarn Theater. Theresa has been in dozens of shows in the metro area and has been honored to receive many awards and nominations for her roles. Some of her favorite shows have been *Hummingbird*, *Mack and Mabel*, *Urinetown*, *Batboy*, *Parallel Lives*, and *Every Christmas Story Ever Told*. For five years Theresa performed for Holland America Princess in the Denali National park area at the Music of Denali dinner theater. She has also toured with the Nebraska Theater Caravan's *A Christmas Carol*. Theresa also works with WhyArts, a wonderful non-profit organization that brings the arts to underserved populations in our community.

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