

Introducing . . .

Audience of One

A new musical inspired by a true story



BOOK, MUSIC & LYRICS BY ALISA BAIR

audienceofonemusical.com

alisabair@gmail.com | 717.823.1518

OVERVIEW

A church youth choir opts out of its summer choir tour in favor of a concert just for God on a mountaintop. While trusting that their trip is a holy invitation, a shoplifting incident and inclement weather threaten to derail their plans and challenge their faith.

Duration 2 1/4 hrs / Two acts with intermission. Family-friendly with messages most suitable for children over 8.

TIME AND SETTING

January–June, 2000. A church sanctuary in PA and various scenes in the Shenandoah Valley of VA, culminating at an overlook on the Skyline Drive. Some scenes occur on the bus during travel.



The Spirit of Doubt gets in the head of troubled teenager, Jade, at the Luray Caverns gift shop.



TONE

Prayer and worship focused, with strong themes of faith, doubt, forgiveness and redemption. Joyful with lively gospel moments and a budding romantic connection. Overall, deeply moving.

MUSIC STYLE

Chorally rich, accompanied by a 5-piece band including keys, cello, acoustic/electric guitar, bass guitar, and percussion. Song styles range from traditional choral and musical theatre, to soft pop and rousing gospel.

CHOREOGRAPHY

The Spirit Wind Dancer is the only specific dancer in the show, but there is plenty of room for choreography throughout with the choir members—particularly on the songs, “Five Months” and “No Rock Shoutin’ for Me!”

Synopsis

Having recently lost her brother, and just days after the world breathed a sigh of relief from Y2K, youth choir director Kendra senses that God has put the brakes on the choir's highly anticipated big summer choir tour. She calls the teenagers to communion and prayer to discern what God might be leading them to do instead. Two days later, she is stopped in her tracks when she hears a question from God well up in her spirit: "Will you and the choir give a concert just for Me?" At the next rehearsal, young choir member Gabi tells her that she's had a dream about exactly the same thing — of a concert on a mountaintop with only God as the audience.

The concept of a concert just for God takes hold but doesn't land well with some. Two thirds of the students drop out of the choir. A few parents complain. But church leadership blesses the idea, and preparations begin for a weekend trip to Virginia culminating in a concert on the Skyline Drive on Father's Day. Grieving newcomer to the choir, Patrick, is drawn to Jade, who struggles with dark thoughts. They develop a growing connection. The Spirit of Doubt, a conceptual character who has been gnawing away at Kendra from the beginning, continues to chip away at her faith.

After five months of preparation, and within 24 hours of leaving on the trip, Jade shoplifts from the Luray Caverns gift shop. She is given the option of staying on the trip if she returns what she has stolen and confesses to the store manager. But with a full schedule and the bus the only mode of transportation,

her infraction becomes everyone's problem and the focus of the rest of the trip.

At a church service the next morning, Jade responds to an altar call. Later in the day, she faces a stern store manager who forgives her and spares her from being reported to the police. But as the now-jubilant busload makes its way up the mountain, just as Patrick asks Jade to the Homecoming Dance, a severe thunderstorm comes out of nowhere. A park ranger at the tollgate on the Skyline Drive tries to talk them out of proceeding in the dense fog and driving rain, but they are undeterred, creeping forward in near zero visibility. Resigned to having to give the concert from the bus, they arrive at their destination. Youth Pastor Darren surveys the situation, then, emboldened, steps out into the middle of the soaked-in, soaking wet field and cries out to God to stop the storm. Miraculously, the rain stops and the fog begins to clear. The concert begins on time with barely a minute to spare.

The actual concert is sealed for all of time as a gift of love to the Audience of One. But the bus driver, the only witness to it, age-transforms 25 years and reflects back on it, recalling his days singing in a church choir and what his director told him—that the sound of praise goes on in heaven all the time: "We just join in, like stepping into a beautiful river. After we get out, it keeps on flowing, never ceasing. It was like that on top of the mountain that night. Worship the way it's meant to be—just an offering of love."

The choir unfreezes and returns to the moment to sing their thanks and benediction to God in "Live Our Lives Before You."

WHAT THE SHOW SAYS

Audience of One is more than entertainment—it's a call to live with integrity, to extend grace freely, and to offer everything we do as worship to the One who sees, knows, and loves us still. It challenges us to examine our motives and ask ourselves for what and for whom we're really living.



Old Bill, the age-transformed bus driver, reflects 25 years later on a trip he will never forget.



WHY THE SHOW IS RELEVANT

We live in an exasperatingly divisive political and religious climate. Many Christians feel poorly represented by media representations of their faith, and are weary of the dualistic thinking that polarizes us. Discerning truth and what's real has become tricky. We're hardened by the “resounding gongs and clanging cymbals that have not love” ringing in our ears day after day (1 Cor. 13:1). *Audience of One* is a disarmingly authentic whisper in the din, an invitation to rise above all of that. While it could rightly be called a “Christian” show, it is neither proselytizing nor denominationally specific. Its engaging story and deeply moving, memorable songs have appealed to people of nominal faith as well as to the most devoted.

PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

KENDRA—Youth Choir Director, sensitive to the Spirit, but who struggles hard against doubt.

SPIRIT OF DOUBT—(conceptual character) a sometimes playful, sometimes nefarious cynic of faith - speaks and sings

SPIRIT WIND DANCER—(conceptual character) embodiment of the Holy Spirit; personifies the wind of the Spirit (dances only)

JADE—troubled teenager who struggles with dark thoughts and feels like she has no real friends

PATRICK—grieving newcomer to the church choir who becomes attracted to Jade; backstory of losing his father

JAZMINE—worship leader who doubles as the Store Manager; the one who most exemplifies forgiveness

BILL—bus driver who transforms in age at the end the show and has a moving monologue giving perspective on the whole experience



ENSEMBLE

ADULT MENTORS

- **DARREN**—Youth Pastor with strong faith
- **CHARLOTTE**—Kendra's encouraging friend
- **EMILY**—the one who ministers tenderly to Jade
- **JOEL**—quiet, supportive

CHOIR MEMBERS

- **GABI**—has the dream confirming Kendra's vision
- **CELESTE**—wants to be a professional singer
- **SARA**—dreams of being a landscape designer
- **ZACH**—boisterous and exuberant
- **LASHAY**—adopted person of color; dreams of having a child who looks like her
- **BEN, ISAAC, BRIAN, HEATHER, BRANDI, ADAM, REESE**

OTHER

- **SONDRA**—entitled, complaining parent
- **VERONICA**—friend of Sondra's, devoted grandmother
- **PERCY**—praise singer at church who doubles as the Park Ranger
- **CADENCE**—praise singer at church



SONG LIST



ACT I

1. **Storm (Underscore)** – a preview of the ending scene of the show before the weather clears
2. **Where Are We Going?** – choir members eagerly anticipate the announcement of their summer choir tour destination
3. **The Wind, Where Is It Blowing Now?** – Kendra questions where the Holy Spirit is moving, calling the choir to pray and listen to the wind
4. **This Peculiar Meal** – the choir members wrestle with the meaning of Communion
5. **The Wind, Where Is It Blowing Now?** – Gabi tells Kendra about her dream
6. **Halle, Hallu-jah** – choir members rehearse to sing in a Sunday service
7. **We Want to Believe You** – those going on the trip reiterate the Spirit's tug they felt, asking the Spirit to help and fill them
8. **Five Months** – choir members dance and sing to show the passage of five months of preparation for their trip
9. **See Him in the Sky** – Patrick opens up about his grief, confessing his longing to see his dad in the sky at the concert on the mountain
10. **Finally, We're Going!** – choir members and mentors excitedly load their things onto the bus
11. **I Will Always Be Around** – the Spirit of Doubt emerges on the bus and makes Kendra question this whole trip, especially as storms are predicted
12. **Dream In a Box** – at the first night's campfire, choir members sing of their dreams and put symbols into a box to dedicate on the mountain
13. **Leaf and a Rock** – Jade and Patrick question each other about what they put in the box, confessing their brokenness to each other
14. **What Do We Do Now?** – news of the shoplifting has circulated outside a restaurant; the company wrestles with how this will affect the trip

ACT II

15. **If I Could Take Back What I've Done** – Jade sings her remorse about her actions
16. **No Rock Shoutin' For Me!** – Dynamic black gospel worship leaders welcome the choir at their morning church service
17. **I Will Always Be Around Reprise** – the Spirit of Doubt taunts Jade during the service, causing her to step outside and want to go home
18. **Prone to Wander** – Returning to the service at Emily's coaxing, Jade responds to an altar call about wayward sheep
19. **If I Could Take Back What I've Done Reprise** – Jade enters the gift shop to confess to the store manager
20. **What Great Love Requires** – After hearing Jade's confession, Jazmine embraces her and sings a song of forgiveness
21. **Prone to Wander Reprise** – choir members rejoice at Jade's merciful outcome
22. **Who Are These People?** – Percy questions the group's motives in wanting to travel in fog and rain with such a foreboding forecast
23. **I Will Always Be Around/Gabi's Dream** – Gabi steps off the bus in a moment outside of space and time where she confronts the Spirit of Doubt
24. **Storm Reprise (Underscore)** – this scene picks up where the opening scene left off. The foreboding music turns more hopeful as the sky clears.
25. **This Peculiar Meal reprise** – choir members take communion before they begin their concert, this time, with new appreciation for what it means
26. **Deer (Underscore)** – the choir pauses to reverently watch a single deer cross before them
27. **Live Our Lives Before You** – sung after Old Bill's monologue, the choir says its goodbye to their Audience of One and their time on the mountain
28. **One More Thing Before You Go/No Rock Shoutin' for Me** – Bows music with an invitation for the audience to join in singing

STAGE DESIGN

Audience of One can be beautifully realized with minimal staging and well-chosen projections. Movable stools serve as bus seats, choir chairs and church pews. Elevations at a variety of levels provide height and depth. The bus can be created by building a platform in the center of the stage with a simple wood frame for the grill and steering wheel on a post.

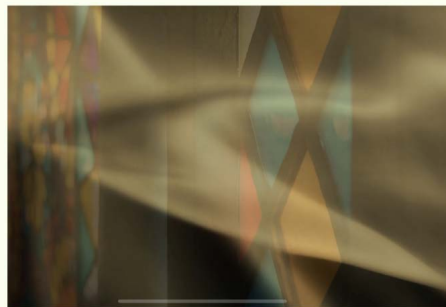


PROJECTIONS

Thoughtfully chosen projections greatly enhance the show. If there is a back wall LED screen, moving scenery combined with interior bus ambience sound effects can make it feel like the bus is really traveling.



A background overlaid with a translucent video of flowing fabric beautifully depicts the wind of the Spirit.

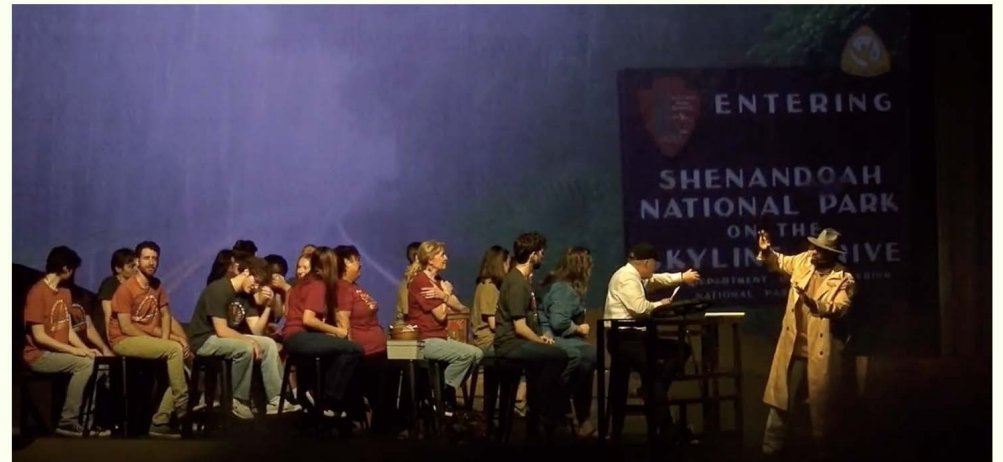


Sky scenes enhance the drama!



COSTUMES

Costumes are mostly everyday wear for adults and teenagers, with the exception of choir robes for the praise singers, a trenchcoat and hat for the park ranger, bus driver attire, and the official *Audience of One* tee-shirt, available for order in five colors from the musical's website (19 are needed for the cast).



Developmental status



~October 2023—first sing-thru, Landisville, PA
~February 2024—workshop, Lancaster, PA
~April 2024—staged reading, Elizabethtown, PA

June 27-29, 2025—world premiere production at Landis Hall at The Junction Center, Manheim, PA

Director: Bonnie Bosso; Stage Manager: Elsa Rogers; Stage Designer: Anne Flinchbaugh

Vocal Director: Jennifer Felty; Music Director: J.P. Meyer

Projections & Sound Effects by Alisa Bair

Available materials: Libretto, Integrated Music Director's score, Actors' score, Instrumental parts, and accompaniment tracks. The author is currently applying for a copyright registration and seeking licensing. We have a video for special permission viewing, and professional recordings of 16 of the songs.

NOTE: Some projections are available for use, but others were obtained from the author's paid subscriptions and cannot be used again. The producing venue is encouraged to find their own projections or subscribe to a service themselves.

***AUDIENCE OF ONE is looking for a next production opportunity!
Might that be you and your organization?***

Entertainment

THEATER



Director Bonnie Bosso watches the cast of the new musical "Audience of One" during rehearsal at Lancaster Church of the Brethren on Tuesday. For more photos from the rehearsal, visit this story on LancasterOnline at lanonline.com/news/AudienceOfOne.

A NEW 'AUDIENCE'

Hempfield grad's new musical recalls a 2000 mountaintop concert performed just for God

Laura Knowles | FOR LNP | LANCASTERONLINE

Andrea Heller was just a weekly of her 13th birthday, when she performed with a youth choir on a mountaintop in Virginia.

She was one of 23 young singers in the Hempfield United Methodist Church choir that was directed by Alisa Bair. Set against the stunning view from Naked Creek Overlook on the Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park, the choir performed for an audience of just one.

They performed for God.

Just for God, they presented a concert of contemporary Christian music, including Steven Curtis Chapman's "Be Still and Know" and Chris Rice's "Thalitha Dami." That was in June of 2000.

Full circle to June of 2025 and Bair, the choir director who directed the "Audience of One" concert 25 years ago is now the writer of a musical dedicated to that mountaintop concert.

And Heller, who was a youth choir member singing in the first "Audience of One" concert, is now portraying the choir director Kendra — a character who is most clearly based on Bair's experience as that one-time choir director.

The musical "Audience of One" is set to be presented Friday-Sunday, June 27-29, at Landis Hall at the Junction Center, home to Christian radio station WJTL.

"It seems like it was meant to be," Bair says. "When I was looking for someone to portray Kendra, I thought of Andrea. She was perfect for the role."

A special education teacher, Heller is used to being in front of people, but she had never acted in a play or musical. She had not been in touch with her music teacher for, maybe, 20 years. Then in 2024, the two reconnected through a Facebook message.

Bair asked her if she was still singing. "Yes, she was. A few months later, Bair gave Heller a call. She explained that she was casting the role of Kendra in "Audience of One" and felt strongly led to reach out to her. As they talked, Bair explained that she had already planned a vacation during the show dates.

"It felt truly God-ordained," Heller says. "Lisa couldn't shake the feeling that I should be Kendra, so she reached out again. That's when I began to wonder if this might be God nudging me. There were several hurdles to overcome, but one by one, God cleared the path."

So "Audience of One" had its lead role filled by a woman who had sung in the first choir under the direction of the person who had written the musical.



Alisa Bair, left, the writer of "Audience of One," sits at the piano with Andrea Heller during a rehearsal. Heller, who was part of a 2000 youth choir event on which the musical is based, portrays the choir director in the production that opens June 27 at the Junction Center in Manheim.

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IF YOU GO

What: The musical "Audience of One," written by Hempfield High School alum Alisa Bair

When: 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 27-28, and 3 p.m. Sunday, June 29

Where: Landis Hall at the Junction Center, 1875 Junction Road, Manheim

Admission: Adults, \$30; students and seniors, \$25; 12 and under, \$13. Group discount available.

Info and tickets: theaudienceofone.com/audience; phone or call 717-459-3701

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ENTERTAINMENT

Musical

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Weather threatened concert

"The experience was unforgettable," Heller says. "The idea of spending several months preparing to perform a concert on the top of a mountain, just for God, was an experience that set the tone for my relationship with God in such a beautiful way."

It was Heller's first year as a part of the church's youth choir. By the time the choir got to the mountain, it looked like the stormy weather would ruin the plan.

"Singing in the rain is a sweet concept until you are tasked with actually doing it," Heller recalls. "But as we began singing, all my apprehensions faded away and I was able to be present in that moment. It was incredible. I don't know if I'll ever truly be able to put words to what I felt. It was one of the first times that I felt God's presence."

That experience, and everything leading up to it, was what inspired Bair to write "Audience of One."

"For me personally, the invitation that welled up in my spirit came like the loveliest, most unexpected whisper of love," says Bair, now living in Towson, Maryland, as a bookwriter, lyricist and composer.

A Lancaster native and Hempfield High School graduate, Bair remembers that the weather was horrible that day and that there were lots of complications, including a shopping incident.

It was raining and thundering, and the choir was



Above, Bonnie Bosso, left, director of the musical "Audience of One," speaks with Maison Martin and other cast members during a rehearsal at Lancaster Church of the Brethren in Lancaster on Tuesday. Below, Alisa Bair, a Hempfield High alum who wrote the musical, plays the piano during the rehearsal.

resigned to doing the concert from the bus when the youth pastor went out into the center of the field and shouted a prayer to God.

"Within 30 seconds, I am not exaggerating, the rain stopped, the dense fog began to move, and slowly the mountain ranges in the distance became visible," Bair says. "And the miracle of all this timing is that we were able to step out of the bus and start our concert by 7:30."

Musical 25 years in the works

Turning that experience into a musical was a quarter-century in the works, at least in Bair's mind and heart. She says she had originally wanted to do a concert that was a departure from the usual youth choir performances. The idea of communing with nature on a mountaintop became the concept of performing for an audience of one — God.

"Audience of One" isn't Bair's first foray into writing



a musical.

As composer, co-bookwriter and lyricist, Bair wrote a full-length musical, "Georgia O'Keeffe: A Woman on Paper," now retitled "Hello Sky," which premiered with OperaLancaster in 2010. It took her three years to write "Audience of One."

"Audience of One" is being directed by Bonnie Bosso, with Jennifer Felty as vocal director, Marian West as choreographer, JP Meyer

as music director, Anne Flinchbaugh as set designer and Elsa Rogers as stage manager.

The cast ranges in age from 8 to adult, with 14 teens ranging in age from 12 to 19 playing the youth choir members.

There are more than 30 songs, with a five-piece band, and some dancing. It's not a recap of the original concert, but a story about everything leading up to it.

Audience responses



All of us in the audience were totally captivated with the story.

Woke up this morning thinking about last night's performance."

Kathryn R.

"A woman from our church told us on Sunday that her teenage son attended this show called 'Audience of One' the night before with his youth group. He got home late and woke them up.

They were shocked, because he's not the kind of kid who opens up. But he was so deeply affected that he had to talk about it."

Brian K.



"I was awestruck from beginning to end!!

The music was absolutely gorgeous and the voices of the actors blended together beautifully.

"We are going through an unspeakably hard time. From the moment the bus started up the mountain till the sun came out for the concert—when we both burst into tears, — it was like the show had been written just for us. It's the first time we've felt hope in a long time." B.R.



"I was FILLED with emotion."

Sue B.

"You poured your heart and talent into the show and it is beautiful."

Doris N



"Kept you captivated the entire time. The singing was outstanding, the story, of course, beautiful.

Loved, loved, LOVED it!"

Deborah D.



"Bro, not gonna lie, I'm impressed! I'm gonna walk into 4th grade and be like 'My grandma wrote a whole story!!'"

Holden, age 9

"What an awesome production capturing a powerful moment in time. God arrives in productions like this one to remind us again He is with us and wants more for us than we can imagine! This story needs to be told again and again."

Tim B.

From the author...

Without question, the four-day Audience of One trip I led with our church's youth choir and adult mentors back in June of 2000 was the most powerful event in all my decades of church music ministry. I've told our story numerous times since, and while people have always been moved, and a pastor or two even suggested I replicate the experience with new choirs in new congregations, absolutely no one said, "You should turn this story into a musical!" But doing so came like a holy invitation all these years later, much like the trip itself did.

On June 27-29, 2025, we enjoyed a successful world premiere production that left people deeply moved and springing to their feet after every performance. We were overjoyed by the responses, but also transformed ourselves by the experience.

My hairdresser, who's known me for only four years and doesn't go to church, traveled 50 miles with her husband and daughter to see the show because "we all need a little faith stuff now and then." Normally she books two people at a time in her salon, but at my next appointment after the show, it was just me. "I had to reserve this time just for you so we could talk about the show!" she gushed. "Honestly—and if you would speak to my husband and daughter separately they'd say the same thing—it's one of the best things we've ever seen."

Here's hoping a lot more people feel the same way. It's an experience quite like no other. We hope you'll take a chance on it and see for yourselves.

—Alisa Bair



ALISA BAIR

Bookwriter/Lyricist/Composer

Alisa received double undergraduate degrees in both Music Education and Music Therapy from East Carolina University, and her MFA from New York University's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program. She served a variety of churches in music, worship and arts ministry for over 30 years, with her music published by Columbia Pictures Publications, CPP/Belwin, Hope Publishing, Heritage Music Press, and Choristers Guild. She is also the author of *A Table for Two* (Good Books, 1998) and *Grief Is a Dancer* (Walnut Street Books, 2021).

She is the composer, with co-bookwriter/lyricist Dina Gregory, of *Hello Sky*, which premiered in 2010 with OperaLancaster, and librettist for *The Lost Son* (Neal S. Harnly, composer), which enjoyed a world premiere in 2010 with the renowned Indianapolis Children's Choir. *Audience of One* is her latest work, which premiered in June 2025 at Landis Hall at The Junction Center in Manheim, PA.

She is a member of Dramatists Guild of America, Inc.

Thank you!

...for taking the time to consider *Audience of One*. We honestly believe it could be one of the most unexpectedly refreshing and rewarding productions you've ever done.

Website

www.audienceofonemusical.com

Contact

alisabair@gmail.com

717.823.1518

