

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DALLAS CHILDREN'S THEATER CELEBRATES LANDMARK 40<sup>th</sup> SEASON  
WITH STORIES THAT INSPIRE AND EXCITE!**

(DALLAS, TX) – Dallas Children's Theater (DCT) is honored to present its landmark 40th season! At its heart, DCT is all about storytelling through the power of live theater, immersing young curious children in imaginative stories of heroes conquering the world and learning important life lessons. In the end, these are tales that inspire the young and the young-at-heart.

In a spectacular tribute to DCT founder and inaugural show director, Robyn Flatt, John Steptoe's beautiful Zimbabwe based Cinderella tale MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS: AN AFRICAN TALE returns to open DCT's 40th season – celebrating goodness and generosity with glorious African song and dance. Flatt, who announced her plans last October to step down from her leadership role at DCT after 40 years, is excited to be directing this production for a fifth time. She will co-direct with the show composer, S-Ankh Rasa.

In December, our favorite Peanuts characters Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Snoopy, and more will charm audiences with heartwarming nostalgia during the holiday season in A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS. After the hilarious antics of last season's Pigeon, DCT is thrilled to welcome Mo Willems' ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S "WE ARE IN A PLAY!" where everyone is invited to their fancy swim party.

In an exciting collaboration with three other children's theaters across the country, DCT is proud to be a part of the creation of LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME: I AM FEARLESS ROYALTY. This play, co-commissioned by Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Dallas Children's Theater, The Rose Theater of Omaha, and Children's Theater of Madison, stars four heroes as they conquer their fears using heart, soul, body, and mind. With original music from Grammy-nominated Kris Funn and themes inspired by actual students across the country, this show is a moving multicultural performing arts experience. This wonderful new play puts Dr. Maya Angelou's inspiring poem onstage in an inventive and creative way. The audiences' singing, dancing, and responses will be a key part of every performance when the show opens in March 2024!

And finally, audiences will take an exciting adventure with young Digory on his quest to save his mother and experience the birth of Narnia in C.S. Lewis' THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW, the prequel to *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

For teens and those who love them, DCT's Teen Scene Players will present THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS – the original show that launched DCT's internationally-acclaimed teen issue series – which takes an unflinching look into the world of mean girls and exposes the consequences that bullying creates.

Virtual offerings will also continue to be available for DCT's ANDI BOI, a play about gender identity and THE RAVEN SOCIETY, a play that imagines a midnight Poe-style meeting in the middle of the pandemic!

"We're thrilled to be back to share some wonderful, imaginative stories in these changing times," says Nancy Schaeffer, Artistic Director. "Many children are just now seeing their first play, so our role as a theater for young audiences is especially important. We're so proud to play our part in introducing this new generation to the truly magical world of live performance."

Schaeffer concludes, "This season of shows demonstrates that whatever age you are, there's always somewhere you can go to learn, to imagine, and to be supported. And we want that place to be DCT."

All tickets go on sale August 2nd.

John Steptoe's

**MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS: AN AFRICAN TALE**

Adapted for the stage by Karen Abbott

Music and Lyrics by S-Ankh Rasa

Directed by S-Ankh Rasa and Robyn Flatt

September 24 – October 14, 2023

Recommended for ages 5 and up

In a spectacular tribute to DCT founder and inaugural show director, Robyn Flatt, the beautiful Zimbabwe-based Cinderella tale returns to open DCT's 40th season. An African villager named Mufaro has two daughters whom everyone agrees are beautiful. But, they have their differences. Manyara possesses a bad temper and is self-centered (but never in front of Mufaro); Nyasha is kind and considerate to people and to animals. When Mufaro learns that the King is in the process of meeting all of the most worthy and beautiful women in order to choose a wife, he decides that both of his daughters should go. Celebrate goodness, generosity, and love with traditional dancing, rhythmic drumming, and glorious African song. Based on the 1988 Caldecott Honor Award book.

TEEN SCENE PLAYERS present...

**THE SECRET LIFE OF GIRLS**

By Linda Daugherty

Directed by Nancy Schaeffer

October 6 – 15, 2023

Not suitable for children under 12

Bullying in every form – from open tactics like gossiping and keeping secrets, to using friendship as a weapon – can become the prelude to dangerous behaviors like depression, cutting, and eating disorders. This show takes an unflinching look into the world of mean girls and exposes the consequences that bullying creates. Because that girl everyone is spreading rumors about...the one who just can't seem to fit in...chances are, you know who she is. This production by award-winning

playwright Linda Daugherty generated massive buzz and launched DCT's internationally-praised teen issue series. In DCT tradition, teens and those who love them are invited to see a performance, and then stay after for a conversation with local experts.

Content warning: Self-harm (Cutting), Eating Disorders, Intense Bullying

### **A CHARLIE BROWN CHRISTMAS**

by Charles M. Schulz

Based on the television special by Bill Melendez  
and Lee Mendelson

Stage Adaptation by Eric Schaeffer

By Special Arrangement with Arthur Whitelaw and Ruby Persson

Directed by K. Doug Miller

November 25 – December 23, 2023

Recommended for ages 5 and up

We're fortunate that Christmastime means Charlie Brown, Linus, Lucy, Snoopy, and friends are back at DCT by popular demand! Rediscover the true reason for the season while sharing laughs with the Peanuts Gang along the way. As a live combo fills your heart with music, merriment, and warmth, Charles Schulz's classic special makes you nostalgic for days gone by. Button up your coat, and meet us on the ice as the Baker Theater becomes a most awesome skating rink!

Mo Willems'

### **ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S**

**"WE ARE IN A PLAY!"**

Based on the *Elephant & Piggie* books by Mo Willems

Published by Hyperion Books for Children

Script and Lyrics by Mo Willems

Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma

Originally commissioned and produced

By the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Directed by Nancy Schaeffer

January 21 – February 25, 2024

Recommended for ages 3 and up

Mo Willems, author and creator of the #1 *New York Times* bestselling, Caldecott Honor award-winning *Elephant & Piggie* and *Pigeon* picture books, is at it again with ELEPHANT & PIGGIE'S "WE ARE IN A PLAY!". Get ready for the play to end all plays – led by two best friends – with *very* different perspectives. The ever-upbeat Piggie is thrilled to be on stage, while Elephant is a bit busy hoping nothing goes "terribly, horribly, best-friendship endingly wrong" during the duration of the performance. He's getting there... *Anything* can happen in this goofy, heartfelt show that is sure to have audiences laughing hard.

**LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME: I AM FEARLESS ROYALTY**

By Paige Hernandez with

Music by Kris Funn

Based on "Life Doesn't Frighten Me" by Dr. Maya Angelou

From the book *And Still I Rise*

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Directed by Paige Hernandez

March 16 – 30, 2024

Recommended for ages 5 and up

"Shadows on the wall / Noises down the hall / Life doesn't frighten me at all" begins Dr. Maya Angelou's famous poem which serves as the foundation for Paige Hernandez's LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME: I AM FEARLESS ROYALTY. This play, co-commissioned by Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Dallas Children's Theater, The Rose Theater of Omaha, and Children's Theater of Madison, stars four heroes as they conquer their fears using heart, soul, body, and mind. With original music from Grammy-nominated Kris Funn and themes inspired by actual students across the country, this show is a moving multicultural performing arts experience that reminds everyone that LIFE DOESN'T FRIGHTEN ME: I AM FEARLESS ROYALTY.

C.S. Lewis'

**THE MAGICIAN'S NEPHEW**

Dramatization by Aurand Harris

Adapted from the story by C.S. Lewis

Directed by Artie Olaisen

April 27 – May 25, 2024

Recommended for ages 7 and up

In this prequel to C.S. Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, young Digory wants nothing more than to save his ailing mother. When Digory's eccentric, bumbling magician uncle tricks him and his neighbor Polly into a world between worlds, they accidentally awaken Jadis, an evil queen who sets her sights on their own home of London. Realism and fantasy collide in this classic adventure story of good versus evil. Mythical kingdoms and deep magic await, and Narnia is born!

Photo caption: John Steptoe's MUFARO'S BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTERS: AN AFRICAN TALE returns to DCT as the 40<sup>th</sup> season opener in a loving tribute to the beautiful legacy of DCT founder and inaugural show director, Robyn Flatt. The show opens September 24.

**Season Sponsors are:** Texas Instruments, City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture, March Family Foundation, The Carlson Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, Lyda Hill Philanthropies, TACA, and CARES Act/American Rescue Plan. **General Sponsors Include:** Hearst Foundations, The Rosewood Corporation, The Holloway Family Foundation, The M.R. and Evelyn Hudson Foundation, The Theodore and Beulah Beasley Foundation, Inc., Harold Simmons Foundation, Sharron Hunt, Lara and Stephen Harrison, and the Carl B. & Florence E. King Foundation. **Additional Support is Provided By:** Dallas Tourism Public Improvement District, TXU Energy, Frost Bank, Joan Becker, Capital for Kids, Texas Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts, The Koz Foundation, Stephen M. Seay Foundation, Margot B. Perot, Maintenance Inc., Central Market, and Green Mountain Energy, DCT's official renewable energy partner. **Sensory-Friendly Sponsors Include:** Fichtenbaum Charitable Trust. **Building Fund Supported By:** The Carlson Foundation, The March Family Foundation, Laurie Sands Harrison, The Rosewood Corporation, Anonymous Family, Elizabeth & Bart Showalter, Karen & Ken Travis, The Hersh Foundation, and Everett & Becky Spaeth.

### **About Dallas Children's Theater**

Dallas Children's Theater features professional actors performing for an annual audience of 250,000 young people and their families through mainstage productions and an arts-in-education program. As the only major organization in Dallas focusing solely on youth and family theater, DCT builds bridges of understanding between generations and cultures, instilling an early appreciation of literature, art, and the performing arts in tomorrow's artists and patrons.

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