

chicago  
children's  
theatre

# CARMELA

## FULL OF WISHES



---

JACQUELINE RUSSELL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

---

chicago  
children's  
theatre

# CARMELA

## FULL OF WISHES

Adapted by **Alvaro Saar Rios**

From the book by **Matt de la Peña**

Illustrated by **Christian Robinson**

Published by **G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers**

Co-commissioned by **Chicago Children's Theatre** and

**The Rose Theater**

Directed by **Michelle Lopez-Rios**

Director of Production **Will Bishop**

Casting by **Erica Cruz Hernandez**

Lighting Design by **Jason Lynch**

Scenic Design by **Regina García**

Sound Design and Original Music by **Christie Chiles Twillie**

Costume Design by **Jazmin Aurora Medina**

Props Design by **Lonnae Hickman**

Program Book Art © 2018 by **Christian Robinson**



---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---

Adapted by **Alvaro Saar Rios**

Directed by **Michelle Lopez-Rios**

From the book by **Matt de la Peña**

Illustrated by **Christian Robinson**

Published by **G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers**

Casting by **Erica Cruz Hernandez**

Lighting Design by **Jason Lynch^**

Scenic Design by **Regina García^**

Sound Design and Original Music by **Christie Chiles Twillie**

Costume Design by **Jazmin Aurora Medina**

Props Design by **Lonnae Hickman**

Assistant Lighting Design by **Madeleine Reid**

Assistant Scenic Design by **Tara Huffman**

Assistant Props Design by **Camille Toshiko-Peotter**

---

## STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

---

Production Stage Managed by **Rebecca St. Hyss\***

Assistant Stage Managed by **Anastar Alvarez\***

Assistant Stage Managed by **Josh Ralph**

---

## CREW

---

Director of Production - **Will Bishop**

Scene Shop Director - **Ann Davis**

Scenic Supervisor - **Chas Mathieu**

Costume Supervisor - **Ian Liberman**

Wardrobe Crew - **Charlene Walkanoff**

Lighting Supervisor - **Raphael Grimes**

Assistant Lighting Supervisor - **Madeleine Reid**

Light Board Operator - **Jordan Montgomery**

Sound Supervisor - **Spencer Meeks**

Sound Cover - **Jake Hartge**

Sound Board Operator - **Alanna Young**



---

## CAST

---

Mami/Ensemble - **Jasmin Cardenas\***

Big Brother - **Juan Gonzalez Machain**

Carmela - **Maria Clara Ospina\***

Papi/Ensemble - **Christopher Alamo\***

Understudy Carmela/Mami - **Alix Rhode**

Big Brother Cover - **Alex Rocha**

Understudy Big Brother/Papi - **Jorge Aguilar**

\*Chicago Children's Theatre is a professional company employing members of Actors' Equity Association.

^Chicago Children's Theatre employs members of the United Scenic Artists.





---

## A NOTE FROM THE PLAYWRIGHT

---

I have an older brother who treated me very similar to the way Big Brother treats Carmela in the play. He didn't like taking me places and would threaten to leave me if I walked too slow. If I was lucky, he would tell jokes or stories about our parents. This was one of the reasons I chose to adapt Carmela Full of Wishes for the stage. I felt connected to Carmela and her big brother.

Along with this connection, there were two other reasons I wanted to adapt this story. One being that I believe it is important for my son to see stories about strong girls, especially those with brown skin. I want him to know that stories about fierce Latinas with awesome imaginations are just as important as the superhero stories he loves.

I also knew that this project would be a great opportunity to develop with my wife. This is our fifteenth time working together. For each one, our goal has been the same. To tell stories about the Latinx community. A community whose stories are not often told on the American stage but should.

I will always be grateful for Chicago Children's Theatre for first introducing me to Matt de la Peña's and Christian Robinson's beautiful picture book. It happened in early 2020 as the world was shutting down. During this unpredictable and scary time, adapting this book gave me something to look forward to.

We hope you enjoy this show as much as we enjoyed creating it.

No matter where you are from or how you identify, I have no doubts you will also find a connection with Carmela and her Big Brother.

We all have wishes and we all have hopes they will all come true.

—alvaro saar rios



---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---



**Jacqueline Russell** (she/her, Co-Founder and Artistic Director, Chicago Children's Theatre) served as the previous Executive Director of Lookingglass Theatre Company, during which time she led the company's build and move into Lookingglass' current performance space in the Water Tower Water Works. Prior to that, she served as Lookingglass' Director of Education and Outreach. Before joining Lookingglass, she spent five years as creator of Children's Programs at Old Town School of Folk Music. In addition to leading CCT's new play development, main stage, and education programs, Russell is the

creator of the Red Kite Project, a CCT program dedicated to bringing theatre into the lives of children with special needs. In 2010, she was appointed by the U.S. State Department to serve as Cultural Envoy to Canada, was honored with the 2013 "Hero of the Year Award" from the Chicago chapter of Autism Speaks, and was recently honored as one of 20 women who have shaped arts and culture in Chicago on the Kerry James Marshall mural at the Chicago Culture Center. She was named "Tastemaker" by Time Out Chicago Kids, and has three times been highlighted in New City's "Players" list of "People Who Really Perform for Chicago." Jacqueline is originally from Houston, Texas, and is a graduate of New York University. Her daughter, Shiri Nicole, attends the University of Chicago.



**Alvaro Saar Rios** (he/him, Adaptor) is a Texican playwright living in Chicago. His plays have been performed in New York City, Mexico City, Hawaii, Chicago, St. Louis, Milwaukee and all over Texas. He has received playwriting commissions from various organizations, including Kennedy Center, Chicago Children's Theatre, First Stage, Houston Grand Opera, Honolulu Theatre for Youth, Michigan's Purple Rose Theatre Company, The Zoological Society of Milwaukee and Omaha's Rose Theater. His award-winning play *Luchador!* is published by Dramatic Publishing Inc. Other plays include *On The*

*Wings of a Mariposa*, *The History of Mexicans in 10 Minutes*, *The Day the Music Came Back* and *Unmuted*, a virtual musical he co-created with composer Deborah Wicks La Puma. Alvaro is a Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists and Playwright-In-Residence at Milwaukee's First Stage. A proud veteran of the US Army, Saar Rios used to drive M1A1 tanks. Alvaro holds an MFA in Writing for the Stage and Screen from Northwestern University and teaches playwriting at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.



**Matt de la Peña** (he/him, Author of the book on which the play is based) is the New York Times Bestselling, Newbery Medal-winning author of seven young adult novels (including *Mexican WhiteBoy*, *We Were Here*, and *Superman: Dawnbreaker*) and six picture books (including *Milo Imagines the World* and *Last Stop on Market Street*). In 2016 he was awarded the NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award. Matt received his MFA in creative writing from San Diego State University and his BA from the University of the Pacific where he attended school on a full basketball scholarship. In 2019 Matt was

given an honorary doctorate from UOP. de la Peña currently lives in Southern California. He teaches creative writing and visits schools and colleges throughout the country.

---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---



**Christian Robinson** (he/him, Illustrator of the book on which the play is based) was born in Hollywood, California. He grew up in a small one-bedroom apartment with his brother, two cousins, aunt, and grandmother. Drawing became a way to make space for himself and to create the kind of world he wanted to see. He studied animation at the California Institute of the Arts and would later work with the Sesame Workshop and Pixar Animation Studios before becoming an illustrator of books for children. His books include *Gaston and Antoinette*, written by Kelly DiPucchio, and the

#1 New York Times bestseller *Last Stop on Market Street*, written by Matt de la Peña, which was awarded a Caldecott Honor, a Coretta Scott King Illustrator Honor, and the Newbery Medal. He presently lives in northern California with his rescue greyhound Baldwin and several houseplants. He looks forward to one day seeing the aurora borealis. Visit him online at [TheArtofFun.com](http://TheArtofFun.com).



**Michelle Lopez-Rios** (she/her, Director) is delighted to collaborate with Chicago Children's Theatre on this beautiful story. She is a teatrista, teacher and activist. Together with Alvaro Saar Rios, she co-founded the Royal Mexican Players in 2004 and the two have continued to collaborate on workshops and productions since then. She is an Associate Professor and Artistic Director of Chicago Playworks at The Theatre School at DePaul (TTS). Directing credits include *Luchadora! & Jane of the Jungle* (TTS); *The Mole Hill Stories* (First Stage); *Bocón!* (University of Houston); *Chapatti* (Milwaukee

Chamber Theatre); *Enfrascada* (Renaissance Theaterworks) and *A Trip Through the Mind of a Crazy Mexican* (Royal Mexican Players). Michelle will direct *Squirrel Girl Goes to College* this season at TTS.



**Erica Cruz Hernández** (she/her Casting Director) is a casting consultant, actor, and educator. She has overseen casting for the 2018 Latinx Theatre Commons Carnaval Festival of New Work, and served as the casting director for Chicago's Aguijón Theater Company specializing in the casting and representation of Spanish speaking, bilingual, Latinx identified actors. Prior to pursuing her MFA at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, she was a Chicago talent agent. Erica developed and booked actors for numerous films, theatrical productions, print projects, commercials, and television

shows for Netflix, HBO, Amazon as well as other shows such as *Chicago Fire*, *Med*, *PD*, *Justice*, *The Exorcist*, *APB*, *Empire* and *The CHI*. Erica also previously served as co-outreach membership manager & casting coordinator with the former ALTA Chicago (Alliance of Latinx Theatre Artists), an organization that served to advocate for Latinx/e artists in Chicago theatre. She is currently wrapping up her MFA at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign while teaching at Roosevelt University's Chicago College of the Performing Arts.



---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---



**Regina García** (she/her, Scenic Designer) is a Chicago-based scenic designer from Puerto Rico. She has had long standing relationships with the Latinx Theatre's renowned Teatros including Repertorio Español, the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Teatro Vista and Pregones Theater. She has also completed projects for the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Players Theatre, and the Goodman Theatre, amongst others. Upcoming shows include Chicago Children's Theatre, the Guthrie Theater, and Yale Rep.

Regina is a Fellow of the NEA/TCG Career Development Program for Designers and the Princess Grace Awards, USA; a Regional Associate member of the League of Professional Theatre Women; and company member with both Rivendell Theatre Ensemble, Chicago, and Boundless Theatre Company, San Juan/New York. She is the Head of the Scenic Design program at The Theatre School, DePaul University, and a founding organizational member of La Gente: The Latinx/é Theatre Production Network. [www.Garciaportfolio.com](http://www.Garciaportfolio.com)



**Jason Lynch** (he/him, Lighting Designer) is a Chicago-based lighting designer for theatre, dance, opera, and other live performance art and returns to Chicago Children's Theatre, where previous design credits include *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show* and *The Watsons Go to Birmingham - 1963*. Recent Chicago credits include work with Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Definition Theatre, Goodman Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Shattered Globe Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, TimeLine Theatre Company, Victory Gardens Theater, Windy City Playhouse, among

others. Regional credits include work with Alley Theatre, Alliance Theatre, American Players Theatre, Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Audible Theatre/Minetta Lane Theatre in NYC, Baltimore Center Stage, City Theatre Company, Dallas Theater Center, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Long Wharf Theatre, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Seattle Repertory Theater, and TheatreSquared. He is honored to have his recent work on the Goodman Theatre's real-time, online 'Live' series and an immersive 360° production of *The Wild Party* at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts featured in *American Theatre Magazine*. Jason was also the recipient of the 2019 Michael Maggio Emerging Designer Award which recognizes emerging theatrical designers within the Chicago area. He is a proud member of The Association for Lighting Production and Design and is represented by United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE and The Gersh Agency. [www.jasonlynch.com](http://www.jasonlynch.com)

---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---



**Christie Chiles Twillie** (she/her, Composer and Sound Designer) is a pianist, Music Director, Sound Designer and Composer.

Compositional credits include *Fireflies* (Northlight), *A Raisin in the Sun* (Invictus); *America 2.0* (Definition); *The Niceties* (Forward), *We Are Continuous* and *Vietgone* (Geva), *The Way She Spoke* (Milwaukee Chamber) and Milwaukee Black Theatre Festival productions *Black Butterflies*, *Pretty Fires*, *Kill Move Paradise*, *Stew and Home*. Film credits include *The Pandemic Trilogy*, *The Clearing* and *Alone*.

Christie won the 2019 Footlights Best Musical Direction Award for a Professional Production, and a Rachel Rockwell Fierce Women Behind The Table. She earned a BTAA nomination for Best Music Direction - Original Score (Yellowman) and was a Chicago Broadway World Finalist for Best Music Direction, (Big Fish). Regional musical credits include *Five Guys Named Moe*, *Newsies*, and *The Gospel at Colonus* (Skylight), *Hair* (Asolo Repertory), *Indecent* (Milwaukee Chamber) and *Minnie's Boys* (Porchlight). Christie is a member of the American Federation of Musicians; Musicians United for Social Equity, and MAESTRA.



**Lonnae Hickman** (she/her, Props Designer) grew up in Milwaukee, WI, but has adopted Chicago as her new home. She graduated from DePaul's Theatre School in Chicago with a double major in Theatre and History. She's worked as prop apprentice with American Players Theatre on a variety of shows, as well as Chicago Children's Theatre, Urban Theatre Company, Theatre Wit, and Milwaukee Chamber Theatre in the role of props artisan and lead. She hopes to continue to find ways of telling stories that not only need to be told but have slipped through the cracks of the

theatre world. You can find out more on her Linkedin website: [linkedin.com/in/lonnae-hickman](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lonnae-hickman)



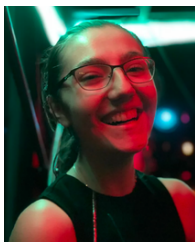
**Jazmin Aurora Medina** (she/her, Costume Designer) is a queer Chicana costume designer born and bred in Milwaukee, WI! This will be her first show with Chicago Children's Theatre, and she couldn't be more excited to be a part of this fantastic team. Current season professional credits include *Last Stop on Market Street* (First Stage Children's Theater), *Rose* (Renaissance Theaterworks), *The Book Club Play* (Third Avenue PlayWorks) & many more to come! Previously, Jazmin also had the honor of being selected as one of thirty-four young emerging costume designers for the 2019 Prague

Quadrennial. Her work on *Eurydice* (UW-Milwaukee at Waukesha) was featured in the US exhibition at PQ. Jazmin wouldn't be here without the support of her incredible family, friends and community, and would like to continually honor them through her work. Check her out on Instagram @jazminaurora or her website [jazminaurora.com](http://jazminaurora.com) for season updates, previous work and more! Bendiciones!

---

## CREATIVE TEAM

---



**Camille Toshiko Peotter** (they/them, Assistant Props Designer) is graduating this year with their BFA in Theatre Arts from The Theatre School at DePaul University. Notable props credits include *Fefu and Her Friends*, *Neighborhood 3...*, *Dance Nation*, and *Escape TTS: Newsbreak* (an escape room project). In Chicago, they are freelancing at theatres such as CCT and Gift Theatre. See more of their work here: [camilletoshiko.wixsite.com/portfolio](http://camilletoshiko.wixsite.com/portfolio)

**Maday Favela** (she/they, Assistant Director) is very excited and grateful to be a part of this project. She is a Mexican creator of ritual and story through directing, design, and playwriting. Currently based in Chicago, she strives to reimagine stories and immerse audiences into the worlds they help create on stage. Chicago credits include Assistant Stage and Production Manager for the 35th Annual Young Playwrights Festival, Playwright for *Something Marvelous' Night of New Works*, and 31st Annual Young Playwrights Festival, and Stage Manager for the Loop Player's Production of *Proof*. Maday is a student at The Theatre School at DePaul University.

**Madeleine Reid** (she/her, Assistant Lighting Designer) is a Chicago and Houston based Lighting Designer and Assistant Lighting Designer of theatre, dance, opera, and live events. This will be her first production with Chicago Children's Theatre. Previous Lighting Design credits include *The Chinese Lady* (Kitchen Theatre Company & Geva Theatre Center); *Mac Beth* (Sargent Conservatory of Theatre Arts at Webster University); upcoming: *Hurricane Diane* (Rec Room). Assistant Lighting Design credits include Rodgers + Hammerstein's *Cinderella* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival); *Mlima's Tale* (Repertory Theatre St. Louis); *Thanksgiving Play* (Repertory Theatre St. Louis); *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci* (Goodman Theatre); upcoming: *Clue*, *The Sound of Music*, *Trouble In Mind* (Utah Shakespeare Festival); *King John* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival). Madeleine is currently the Assistant Lighting Supervisor at Chicago Children's Theatre and works at Production Resource Group. [www.madeleinegreid.com](http://www.madeleinegreid.com)





---

## STAGE MANAGEMENT

---



**Rebecca St. Hyss\*** (she/her, Production Stage Manager) is honored to return to Chicago Children's Theatre for *Carmela Full of Wishes!* Past Chicago Children's Theatre credits include: *Wake Up, Brother Bear*; *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*; *Red Kite Green Mountain*; *The World Inside Me*; *X-Marks the Spot*; *Frederick*; *The Last Stop on Market Street*; *The Year I Didn't Go to School*; and *Harold and the Purple Crayon*. Additional credits include *Trevor the Musical* (Writers Theatre), *One Man, Two Guvnors*; *Long Day's Journey Into Night*; *Satchmo at the Waldorf*; *Agamemnon*;

and *Gem of the Ocean* (Court Theatre), *The Taming of the Shrew* and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), and *Season 57* (Grand Teton Music Festival). Much love to her husband Đông, baby Pip, and Cubby, the Maltese Poodle. Rebecca is a proud member of Actors Equity.



**Anastar Alvarez\*** (they/them, Stage Manager) is an artist, stage manager, production manager and dog trainer based in Chicago. They are thrilled to be returning to CCT! Previous stage management credits include *Wake Up! Brother Bear*, *Little Jams*, *This Ability!*, and *The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party* They have also had the pleasure of working on *Red Bowl at the Jeffs with The Sound*, *Meet Juan(ito) Doe* and *The Real Life Adventures of Jimmy de las Rosas* with Free Street Theatre, and *Refrigerator, I'm Gonna Pray for You So Hard, Sugar*

in *Our Wounds*, and *Vape Naysh* with First Floor Theater where they are also the staff production manager. Anastar is self and community taught and is grateful for all those who have helped them along the way.



**Josh Ralph** (he/him, Assistant Stage Manager) is a Percussion performer, stage manager, and recent graduate from The University of Texas at San Antonio. Josh has stage managed shows mainly in the San Antonio and Chicago Area, most notably stage managing the day-to-day operations of the Looney Tunes Characters at Six Flags Fiesta Texas.



---

## TECHNICAL STAFF & CREW

---

**Will Bishop** (he/him, Director of Production) has been with CCT since 2016, and is happy to call CCT his artistic home! In addition to overseeing more than a dozen productions with the company, he is also the director of CCT's recurring holiday show, *The Beatrix Potter Tea Party*, has designed scenery, props, costumes, and puppets for numerous productions at the theatre and on tour, and, during the pandemic, designed and directed a number of puppet short films. His work has been seen at the National Children's Theatre of China, in Beijing, at New Victory Theatre, in New York, and across the country. He is also a committee member of For the Group, an organization working to increase BIMPOC representation behind the scenes at theatres across Chicago. When not making theatre, he's a TTRPG GM, vegan sourdough baker and brewer, and spends his free time hanging out with his dog, Fawkes, and his cat, Goblin.

**Chas Mathieu** (he/him, Scenic Supervisor) has had the pleasure of working with Chicago Children's Theatre creating fun and exciting art behind the scenes this past season. Chas is also a scenic designer and artist working in the City of Chicago. In his free time, he enjoys painting with watercolors. Chas is a graduate of Columbia College Chicago.



**Ian Liberman** (he/they, Costume Supervisor) has had a passion for fashion history and storytelling from a young age. After graduating Illinois State University in 2018, they have been working, costuming theater, dance and tv around the Chicagoland area. Ian has been the Costume supervisor for CCT from 2019 and is excited to help create the rest of the 2021-2022 season.



**Charlene Walkanoff** (they/them, Wardrobe Crew) is excited to join the Chicago Children's Theatre team! Chicago: *King James*, *Bug* (Steppenwolf); *Sunset Boulevard*, *Minnie's Boys*, *Can-Can* (Porchlight Music Theatre); *Stick Fly*, *The Niceties*, *A Doll's House*, *Into the Woods* (Writers Theatre). Regional: *The Addams Family*, *Jekyll & Hyde*, *Cabaret* (College of Lake County).

**Alanna Young** (she/they, Sound Board Operator) is excited to be a part of this CCT production. They are a Peoria, IL native currently based in Chicago. Previous credits include stage management at Illinois Central College Performing Arts Center.

---

## TECHNICAL STAFF & CREW

---

**Jordan Montgomery** (he/him, Light Operator) is so excited to work with Chicago Children's Theatre for the first time! First professional theatre gig in lighting and can't wait to do more to come. Sending love to my Mom.

**Spencer Meeks** (they/them, Sound Supervisor) is a writer/performer/musician/technician /self proclaimed Chicago Native. They have previously sat behind the sound board at CCT for *Little Jams*, *Wake Up, Brother Bear!* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*. Around the city, their work includes sound design and music direction for The Neo Futurists, Haven Theatre, The Steppenwolf Garage, About Face Theatre, The Hypocrites, Theatre Wit, Playmaker's Laboratory, along with a wide variety of solo and devised work. They can be found most days making and cleaning messes with Blue Man Group Chicago.

**Jake Hartge** (he/him, Sound Cover) is thrilled to be back at CCT, after previously working on *The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party*. Recent credits include: *Always...* Patsy Cline (Raue Center), *9 to 5* (Dominican University), and *State Fair* (Percy Julian School). In his spare time, Jake teaches voice and lessons and loves spending time with his two dogs!



Artwork © 2018 by Christian Robinson



---

## CAST

---



**Maria Clara Ospina** (she/her, Carmela) is originally from Medellin, Colombia and a recent college graduate of North Central College. She is extremely excited to be doing what she loves most: helping kids find their dreams! This is Maria Clara's debut at Chicago Children's Theatre and some of her other Chicago credits include *Romeo + Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare), *Hamlet* (Invictus Theater), *Wellesley Girl* (Compass Theatre), *True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (ABS Productions) and *Covid Chronicles* (Corn Productions). She is passionate about sharing Carmela's story, a story that is ever so present in the lives of millions of immigrants in the United States. She hopes you enjoy Carmela's electric personality while thinking about her reality. To everyone she loves: "I will never stop pursuing this dream to share our stories!"



**Juan Gonzalez Machain** (he/him, Big Brother) is a proud Mexican immigrant and he is extremely excited to be making his post-COVID-shutdown re-emergence and CCT debut in Carmela's wonderful world of wishes! This summer, he will make his return to the musical theater stage as a Pit Singer (Jesus u/s) in *Godspell* at Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre. Pre-shutdown Chicago theater credits include: Caroler 6 (Tomas/Luis/Jose), *Xmas Cuento Remix* (16th Street Theatre); Alex, *La Ofrenda* (Adventure Stage); Featured Performer, "New Faces Sing Broadway 1956" (Porchlight Music Theater); and Pepe (u/s), *My Mañana Comes* (Teatro Vista). He has also performed in many of Silk Road Rising's EPIC readings, both in-person and virtually. He would like to thank Alvaro and Michelle for allowing him to be a part of Carmela's family, Maria Clara, Christopher, and Jasmin for making that family wonderful, Peter and Michelle for all of their familial encouragement, and Cassie for her wonderful love and support. He is represented by Shirley Hamilton, Inc.



**Jasmin Cardenas** (she/her, Mami/Ensemble) is thrilled to be making her Chicago Children's Theatre stage debut in their new west loop theater. Previously she performed in CCT's *Esperanza Rising* at The Goodman Theater. Recently Jasmin was Adaptor and Narrator of *Maybe Something Beautiful* the CCT co-production with Chicago Symphony Orchestra for both the puppet film and live performances. Also catch her CCT Walkie Talkie podcast for families *Butterflies*, *Aztec Gods* and *Puerquitos* (Piggie Bread) online. Young families will also enjoy *Project Rainbow* an early learning initiative of Cook County, on YouTube and local Channel 20. Jasmin is the show host and a writer for this co-production between CCT and Cook County. Other Chicago theater credits include: *The Compass* (Steppenwolf Theater), *The Blue House* (Adventure Stage Chicago), *True Story of the Three Little Pigs* (Lifeline Theater), *Electricidad* (Goodman Theater). A proud SAG-AFTRA member her TV Credits Include NBC's *Chicago Fire* & ABC's *Betrayal*. Jasmin is an Arts Educator and award winning Bilingual Storyteller that tours the country bringing folktales and personal tales to children, families and adults at storytelling festivals, schools and libraries all over the nation. To learn more: [www.JasminCardenas.com](http://www.JasminCardenas.com). Mil gracias a mi bella familia!!!

---

## CAST

---



**Christopher Alamo** (he/him, Papi/Ensemble) Having starred in a performance of *Bang Bang You're Dead* in high school, Chris returned to acting after serving one tour in Iraq with the Marines. He studied Shakespeare at William Rainey Harper College in Palatine, Illinois, where he played Orlando in *As You Like It* (directed by Kevin Long, who was nominated for the 2015 Tony Award for Excellence in Theatre Education and is the co-author of *Bring on the Bard*). Chris' talent won him an award from Harper as an up-and-coming actor. He is currently enrolled in several classes at the Chicago Actors Studio, where he studies voice, movement, and acting as a craft. He is also enrolled in online classes with Julliard graduate Sarah Tolan-Mee.



**Alex Rocha** (he/him, Big Brother Cover) is so thankful to be apart of this heart warming project! It's good to be back in the theatre! Alex was most recently seen in *Sub-Culture* (Interrobang Theatre Project). Other Chicago credits include *Bus Stop* and *Beyond Therapy* (Eclipse Theatre); *Six Degrees of Separation* (redtwist). Alex is a graduate of Oklahoma City University with a BFA in Acting. He would love to thank his loving family, as well as his new friends and mentors he has met along the way!



**Jorge Aguilar** (he/him, Understudy, Big Brother) is a Mexican-American Actor from Chicago, IL. He is a graduate of The Acting Lab at The Second City Training Center in Chicago. He has both written and performed in several productions at The Second City Training Center including *The Gallery* and *The Death of Public Access*.



**Alix Rhode** (she/her, Understudy, Carmela and Mami) is a native Chicagoland multi-disciplinary artist represented by Gray Talent Group. She graduated with a BFA in Musical Theatre from the Chicago College of Performing Arts at Roosevelt University and is also Co-founder & Director of Marketing and Communications for Latinx multimedia company Mi Latinidad. Alix has been seen in past productions such as *Maruja* in *La Havana Madrid* (Teatro Vista/Collaboracion), *Maria/Reconciliation* in *Oh, Colonizers!* (Collaboracion), as well as *Maria Elena* in *Buddy: The Buddy Holly*

*Story* and *Jean* in *Princess and the Pea* (Maples Repertory Theatre). Big thank you to her family, friends and amazing agents! Find Alix on all social media @alixrhode and [www.alixrhode.com](http://www.alixrhode.com).

---

# CHICAGO CHILDREN'S THEATRE

---



Since its launch, Chicago Children's Theatre has served more than half-a-million children and families with productions of the highest caliber and innovative classes and camps, including groundbreaking programming for children on the autism spectrum and young people with disabilities. We believe, and statistics support, that exposure to high quality arts experiences increase a child's capacity for empathy, ultimately cultivating a more inclusive community.

In 2020 and 2021 we continued to serve our community despite the heavy impact of COVID-19. Pivoting quickly when quarantine began, CCT transitioned online, offering live classes and camps via zoom, virtual productions, pre-recorded activities, and community building initiatives. We proudly offer financial aid and pay-what-you-can opportunities. We are thrilled to welcome patrons back to in-person programming at the theatre!

500,000  
Audience Members  
to Date

20  
World Premieres  
to Date

1st  
Children's Theatre to win  
American Theatre Wing Grant  
Award

Over 10,000  
Free and Reduced Price Tickets  
Provided to Under-Resourced CPS  
Schools Annually

Over 300  
Local Actors and Technicians  
Employed Annually



A black circle containing the text "chicago children's theatre" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

chicago  
children's  
theatre

# EDUCATION PROGRAMS

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF PLAY



**CLASSES | CPS SCHOOL'S OUT DAY CAMP  
SUMMER CAMP | RESIDENCIES | RED KITE**

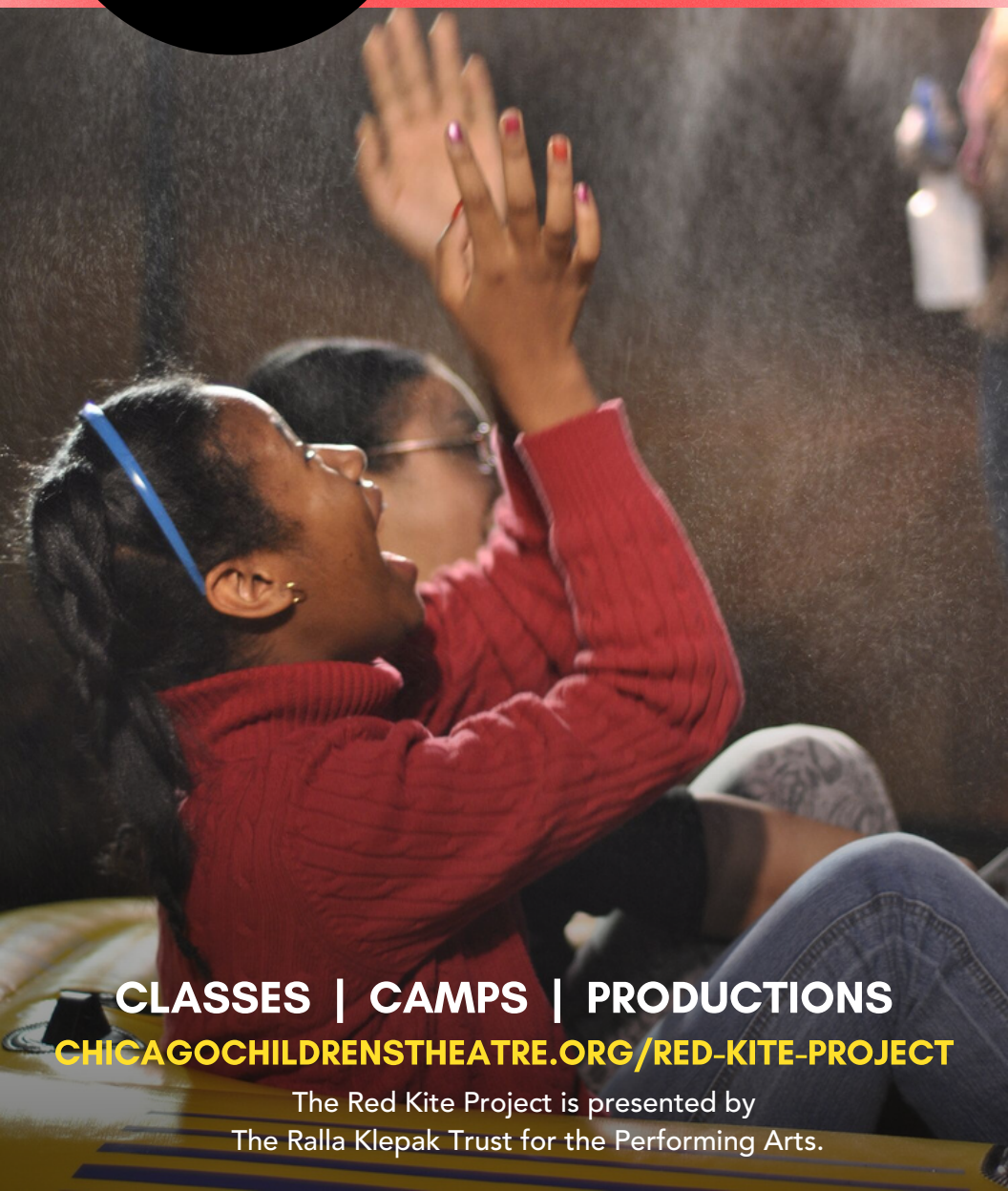
**[CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG/FAMILY-PROGRAMS](https://chicagochildrenstheatre.org/family-programs)**

A black circle containing the text "chicago children's theatre" in white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

**chicago  
children's  
theatre**

# THE RED KITE PROJECT

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN ON THE  
AUTISM SPECTRUM AND THEIR FAMILIES



**CLASSES | CAMPS | PRODUCTIONS**

**[CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG/RED-KITE-PROJECT](https://CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG/RED-KITE-PROJECT)**

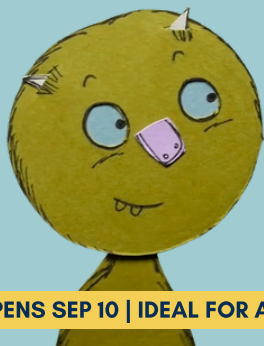
The Red Kite Project is presented by  
The Ralla Klepak Trust for the Performing Arts.



chicago  
children's  
theatre

22/23  
SEASON

IN-PERSON SHOWS



OPENS SEP 10 | IDEAL FOR AGES 5 & UP

MANUAL CINEMA PRESENTS  
**Leonardo!**  
A WONDERFUL SHOW  
about a  
**TERRIBLE  
MONSTER**

BASED ON THE BOOKS BY MO WILLEMS

The  
**Beatrix Potter  
Holiday Tea Party**

OPENS NOV 19 | IDEAL FOR AGES 2-6



A *Rockefeller* PRODUCTION  
**THE VERY HUNGRY  
CATERPILLAR**  
4 ERIC CARLE STORIES **SHOW** 75 MAGICAL PUPPETS

OPENS APR 15 | IDEAL FOR ALL AGES



# FREE CONTENT!

VIRTUAL SHOWS, ACTIVITIES, AND CRAFTS





# chicago children's theatre

---

## FOUNDERS

---

**Jacqueline Russell**

Co-Founder & Artistic Director

**Todd Leland**

Co-Founder & Board Chair

---

## BOARD OFFICERS

---

**Armando Chacon**

President

**David Saltiel**

Vice-Chair

**Jack Lavin**

Vice-Chair

**Anne Ray**

Secretary

**Ariel Knowles**

Treasurer

---

## BOARD MEMBERS

---

**Dori Bowling**

**Sharone Levy**

**David Chung**

**Mark Melendes**

**Brian Crouch**

**Eric Neveux**

**Deborah Decker**

**Beatrice "Bici" Pritzker**

**David Gaito**

**Alice Tian**

**Meridith Kaminski**

**Eric Winter**

**Dr. Joyce Dorsey Kenner**

# chicago children's theatre

---

## STAFF

---

### **Jacqueline Russell**

Artistic Director

### **Ben Koucherik**

General Manager

### **Matt Merrill**

Director of Development

### **Will Bishop**

Director of Production

### **Kay Kron**

Director of Communications  
and Events

### **Sam Mauceri**

Director of Education  
and Access Programs

### **Andrew Chien**

Theatre Manager

### **Meagan Dilworth**

Education and School  
Partnerships Manager

### **Ben Kaye**

Guest Services Manager

### **Jay Kelly**

Public Relations Consultant

### **Sivan Spector**

Education and Community  
Programs Manager

---

## GUEST SERVICES

---

### **Ben Kaye**

**Natalie Schlueter**

**Delaney Kennedy**

**Nick Validivia**

### **Jeff Gougis**

**Jordan Gleaves**

**Obi Ehn**



# Season Supporters



PAUL M. ANGELL  
FAMILY FOUNDATION



RALLA KLEPAK FOUNDATION  
FOR EDUCATION IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

Baxter International  
Beam Suntory  
BMO Financial  
CDW  
Chapman & Cutler LLP  
Chicago Saints  
CME Group  
Congregation Beth Shalom  
Credit Suisse  
Deloitte SPC

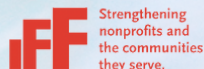
Four Seasons Theatre  
Keysight  
The Keywell Foundation  
The League of Chicago Theatres  
Mr. Tittle's Cupcakes  
Netflix  
Porte Brown Accounting  
Topo Chico  
Whirlwind Coffee  
William Blair & Co

# For Our Children:

## A Campaign for Chicago Children's Theatre

**State of Illinois**

**City of Chicago**



**The Leland Family**

**The Pritzker Family Foundation**

**The John & Kelly Waller Family**

**The Murphy Family**



**NORTHERN  
TRUST**

**Anonymous**

**The Neveux Family**

**Anonymous**



**The Saltiel Family**

**The Nolan Family**

**Michael & Pamela Gordon Family Foundation**

**Michigan Avenue Real Estate Group**

**The Hughes Family**

**The Lavin Family**





# Setting the Stage

## **Over \$500,000**

The Leland Family

## **Over \$40,000**

The Neveux Family

The Waller Family

## **\$20,000 - \$39,999**

Nancy & Erwin Aulis

Meridith &

Ron Kaminski

## **\$15,000 - \$19,999**

Ariel Knowles & Jason

Wortendyke

Michael & Barbara

Kraetsch

Mark & Christine

Melendes

The Winter Family

## **\$10,000 - \$14,999**

Anonymous

Stacy Jakobe

Jason &

Abigail Sussman

## **\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Armando &

Bridgette Chacon

The Crouch Family

The Gaito Family

Jack & Kathy Lavin

John Lee

Kasey Macha

The Ray Family

The Salitel Family

Robert Salitel

## **\$2,000 - \$4,999**

Dori Bowling

William Boyer

Stacey Gillett

The Levy/Marck Family

Eric Mansell

Netflix

Sarah Harper Nobles

Erin & Jason, Ben,

Bici & David Pritzker

Alice Tian

## **\$1,000 - \$1,999**

David Chung

Deb Decker

Sasha Duchnowski

Sophie Evanoff

Donnie Fitzgarrald

Tim & Jill FitzSimons

Joseph Graves

Mark Hytros

Dr. Joyce Dorsey Kenner

Kim Lopez

Shawn &

Anne Mansfield

Robert Taylor

## **\$500 - \$999**

Anonymous

Paul De Salvo

Nancy Hrubec

Lumi Ispas

The Merrill Family

Lolita &

Cian O'Mahoney

Tracy Sefl

Anne & Rich Stockton

Mischa Vanderkamp

## **\$200 - \$499**

TJ Dammrich

Denise Dell Isola

Tere Garate

Irving Harris

Foundation

Jacqui McGrew

Pete Pona

## **\$100 - \$199**

Emily Arch

Stephanie Castrounis

Donnie Fitzgarrald

Quinn Guan

Jennifer Hackney

International

Marketmaker's

Combination

Janessa Juarez

Laura Maheshwary

Anthony Moseley &

Sandra Delgado

# Individual Donors

## **\$50,000+**

The Leland Family  
The Susan M. Venturi  
Fund in Memory of  
James & Roslyn Marks to  
Support Theatre  
Education Access

## **\$10,000 - \$49,999**

Anonymous  
Nancy & Erwin Aulis  
Meridith & Ron Kaminski  
Ariel Knowles & Jason  
Wortendyke  
The Gaito Family  
The Neveux Family  
Erin & Jason, Ben,  
Bici & David Pritzker  
Jason & Abigail Sussman  
The Winter Family  
The Keywell Foundation

## **\$2,500 - \$9,999**

Cheryl Lynn Bruce &  
Kerry James Marshall  
The Crouch Family  
Chrysti & David Eigenberg  
Philip S. Harper  
Foundation  
Jack & Kathy Lavin  
The Levy/Marck Family  
Mark & Christine Melendes  
The Saltiel Family  
Robert Saltiel  
Brian Selznick &  
David Serlin

## **\$1,000 - \$2,499**

David Chung  
Ian Fleming in honor of  
Mark & Christine Melendes  
Dr. Joyce Kenner  
The Farver Needlman  
Charitable Fund  
Anne & Brent Ray  
Marty Russell  
Alice Tian  
Alexandra Walther

## **\$500 - \$999**

Anonymous (2)  
Paul De Salvo  
Carol Farver  
Chris Cerrato &  
Stan Kansas  
Samara & Gabriel Taylor

## **\$100 - \$499**

Anonymous (8)  
Darcy, Gavin, &  
Piper Addison  
The Adelson/Polito Family  
The Arch Family  
Andy Berthusen  
Ben Black  
Katherine T. Bowen  
William Boyer  
Rosalind Brownfield  
Alison Buchanan  
Scottie Caldwell  
Lara Compton  
Karen Cook

Patrick & Tamara Daley

M Delgado  
Jen Dlugosz  
Donna Disch  
Paul & Trina Eifert  
Four Seasons Theatre  
Ivanka Gajecky  
Lashana Jackson  
Seetal Kanter  
Alex Killough  
Genevra Knight  
Ryan Kutansky  
Bret Langefeld  
Evelyn & Richard Laurenzi  
Luke Lindstrom  
The Lomasneys  
Mahboobeh Mahdavinia  
Desmond Martin  
Nancy A. McDaniel  
Margot McKerr  
Emily Mulka  
Stacy Oczak Mytty  
Aditi Patil  
Robert Radford  
Willson Rasavongxay  
Andy Rosenband & Laura  
DuFour  
Olga Sanchez  
Monica Schrager  
Jonathan Sieg  
Frances Sisul  
The Sizemore Family  
Emily & Ryan Stoner  
Heidi Suprenant  
Samara & Gabriel Taylor

**\$100 - \$499 (cont.)**

Jason Tian

Jacob Trevick

Anne Van Wart

Paul Watkins

Michelle Weiner

Tom Williams

Julie Womack

Leslie York

Cathleen Cramer

Jill & Roy Dell'Aquila

Virginia Dollar in honor

of Harry Davis

Monica Dran & Paul Shadle

Bob Druker

Elyse & Hayden Engel

Gera Feigon

Kinley & Dakota Forehand

Denise Frank

Journei Gavin

Judith Glosto Getz

Jose Cruz Gonzalez

Marie Goss

Anne Grason

Natalie Graves

Jonathan Gross

Shefali Grover

Abbey Hambright

Julia Hamel

Diane Hansel

Kelly Hansen

Heidi Hayes

Margaret Hoover

Tal Howell

Nancy & Jeff Hrubec

Sadia Hussain

Julie Hutchins

Leslie & Michael B. Hyman

Christina Irland

Sara Joslyn

The Joyce Family

Suzanne Kelly

Heather Kinion

Tia Kostas

Jan V Kostner

Liz Kozak

Dr. Kimberly Krubeck

Tran La

Erin LaBarge

Laura Langes

Regina Leslie

Sabrina Laux

Kate Levin

Ronit Levy

Maureen Leyser

Thomas Long & Marisa

McMurrin

Kim & Derek Lopez

Michelle Lopez-Rios

Candice Lucas

The Lundeen-Chen Family

Katie Mack

Amy Markley

Megan Marquardt

Michael Martineau

Nancy McDaniel

Nancy McDonald

Marykay McPolen

Cristine Niv

Williams Nosek

John & Susan O'Connell

Stefanie Park

Sara Pastrovich

Jia Peng

Thone Phan

Tammy Pham

Charlie & Eleanor Pilat

The Poll Family

Katrina Prockovic

Jennifer Ptak

Kathleen Putnam

Howard Raik

Seth Reinick

Jean Marie Robbins

Yumi Ross

**\$25 - \$99**

Anonymous (27)

Eliana & Aria Acevedo

Michele Adams

Katie Alland

Stephanie Anderson

Salena Anderson

Margie Anich

Keisha Bandedaly

Theresa Benande

Sandi Bianchi

The Bidani-Dolik Family

Big Fan

Kate Birdwell

Marjorie Bransfield

Caitlin Brice

Sara Buttita

Michelle Calderhead

Sue Camins

Ann Carbonetto

Armando &

Bridgette Chacon

Bette & David Chwalisz


The Clarkin Family

Erika Cohen

Aimee Cole

The Collings Family

Denise Constantine



Margarita Ruiz  
Michelle Sakayan &  
Michael Wilkinson  
Henry Santos  
Heidi Schubert  
Cathy Schumer  
Erica Scott  
Lisa Scruggs  
Stacie Selinger  
Cian O'Mahony &  
Lolita Sereleas  
Ellen Shannon  
Lynda Sharpe  
Randy Shroyer  
Jonathan Sieg  
Elizabeth Sigale  
David Silverstein  
Kathleen Sitzer  
Tiffany Smith  
Rebecca Solano  
Gia Super  
Shana Swift  
Lauren Swift  
Tracy can Straaten  
Fred & Nikki Stein  
Stephen Tepper, Deloitte SPC  
Mary Jane Tancinco  
Jamie Tha  
Olivia Toben  
H Istvan Walker  
Samantha Wallace  
Sue-Ann Wan  
Christina Washington  
Colleen Wieden  
Wyeth & India  
Peter Yee  
Emily Zouras  
Laura Z





# SETTING THE STAGE

If you believe all children should have access to meaningful, high quality theatrical and educational experiences like *Carmela Full of Wishes*, please consider a donation. Your gift will support CCT's mission-driven programming as we emerge from the pandemic and "Set The Stage" for a big, bright future for decades to come.

VENMO: @ChiChildThtr | ZellePay: jrussell@chicagochildrenstheatre.org

**CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG**