

chicago
children's
theatre



MESMERIZED

A Ben Franklin
Science & History Mystery



A WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTION ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY
SUZANNE MAYNARD MILLER

BASED ON THE BOOK "MESMERIZED: HOW BEN FRANKLIN SOLVED
A MYSTERY THAT BAFFLED FRANCE" BY MARA ROCKWELL

DIRECTED BY TOMMY RAPLEY

JACQUELINE RUSSELL ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Adapted by **Suzanne Miller**
From the book by **Mara Rockliff**
Illustrated by **Bruno Lacopo**
Published by **Candlewick Press**

Commissioned by **Chicago Children's Theatre**
Directed by **Tommy Rapley*****
Scenic Design **Collette Pollard****
Props Design **Bren Coombs**
Costume Design **Mieka van der Ploeg****
Wig Design/Associate Costume Design **Megan E. Pirtle**
Composer & Sound Design **Matthew Muñiz**



** Denotes member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE

*** Denotes member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

Supported in part by a grant from the League of Chicago Theatres and ComEd



CAST

Marie Antoinette/Ensemble - China Brickey*

Mesmer - Tony Carter*

Charles/Ensemble - Kasey Foster*

Sarah - Rika Nishikawa

Ben Franklin - Shawn Pfautsch*

King/Ensemble/Ben Cover - Dustin Valenta

Charles/Second King Understudy - Johnny Arena

Mesmer/King Understudy - Jordan Tannous

Sarah/Queen Understudy - Kandace Mack



*Denotes member of Actor's Equity-Professional Union for Actors and Stage Managers

STAGE MANAGEMENT STAFF

Production Stage Manager **Anastar Alvarez***
Assistant Stage Manager **Shannon Golden-Starr***
Assistant Stage Manager **Zachary Crewse**

PRODUCTION STAFF

Director of Production **Will Bishop**
Associate Scenic Designer **Lauren M. Nichols**
Scenic Supervisor **Chas Mathieu**
Scenic Construction **Lookingglass Theatre Set Shop**
Costume Supervisor **Janelle Manno**
Wardrobe Supervisor **Laura Holt**
Stitchers **Riley Sullivan, Ashley Berg Pagano,**
Mia Thomas
Costume Crafts **Melissa Bochat**
Wig Knotters **Jennifer Lightfoot, Dylan Rodriguez,**
Finnegan Chu
Assistant Lighting Design **Nick Chamernik**
Lighting Supervisor **Hannah Wien**
Assistant Lighting Supervisor **Dare Wedgeworth**
Sound Supervisor **Matt Reich**
Assistant Sound Supervisor **Spencer Meeks**
Sound Operator Cover **Abbey Nettleton**
Program Book Art **Grace Needlman**

Special thanks to, **Jamie Auer, Nick Chamernik, Heather Gilbert,**
Mick Marcott, Lauren M. Nichols, Nathan Rohrer,
University of Chicago Theatre and Performance Studies, Writers
Theatre, and Dominican University.



* Denotes member of Actors' Equity - Professional Union for Actors and Stage Managers

CAST



China Brickey (she/her, Marie Antionette/Ensemble) is so excited to be making her Chicago debut here at Chicago Children's Theater! Currently based in the Twin Cities, China was born and raised on Chicago's Northside. Selected Regional Credits include: *Murder On the Orient Express*, *A Christmas Carol* (The Guthrie Theater); *Hello, Dolly!* (Theater Latté Da); *Murder on the Orient Express* (Cincinatti Playhouse); *Redwood* (Jungle Theater); *Today is my Birthday* (Theater Mu); *Pride and Prejudice*, *Romeo and Juliet* (Park Square Theater); *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, *Mamma Mia* (The Ordway); *Matilda*, *The Wiz*, *A Snowy Day* (Minneapolis Children's Theatre Company); *A Snowy Day* (Seattle Children's Theater); *Girl Shakes Loose* (Penumbra Theater). TRAINING: B.F.A. Acting, Music Minor, Millikin University. AWARDS: City Pages Best Actor of 2020. UPCOMING: (Minneapolis) The Guthrie Theatre: *A Christmas Carol*

W: ChinaBrickey.com

IG: China.Brickey



Tony Carter (he/him, Mesmer) is excited to be making his Chicago Children's Theatre debut! Tony has been living and working in Chicago for 8 years now! His Chicago credits include: Lumiere in *Beauty & the Beast*, *Saturday Night Fever*, *Joseph and the Dreamcoat*, and *An American in Paris* (Drury Lane), Oliver in *As You Like it* and *Kowalski in Madagascar* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Oliver* (Marriott Theatre), *Hilaire in Can-Can* (Porchlight Music Theatre), Carl in *Ghost*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (Theatre at the Center), *Guys & Dolls* (Music Theatre Works) and *Demetrius* in *Midsummer Night's Dream* as well as Lucentio in *Shrewd* (First Folio Theatre). Some favorite roles include Chris in *The Play that Goes Wrong* (Oregon Cabaret Theatre), and Freddy in *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels* (Actors Theatre of Indiana). He has also worked across the country at the Utah Shakespeare Festival, California Theatre Center, Pickleville Playhouse, and the Utah Festival Opera. You can follow him (and his ongoing quest to eat his own body weight in Nutella) on instagram @tonyscarter.



Kasey Foster (she/her, Charles/Ensemble) Performer, producer, choreographer, singer, puppeteer, and Mom. She is an Ensemble Member and Artistic Lead at Lookingglass Theatre and is the Events Manager at Actors Gymnasium. Most recent acting credits: *The Notebooks of Leonardo Da Vinci* (Goodman, STC, and The Old Globe), *Steadfast Tin Soldier* (Lookingglass), and *Mr. Dickens Hat* (Northlight). Television: "Chicago Med," IFC's "Documentary Now!" Foster sings with bands Babelon 5, Nasty Buoy, Old Timey, and This Must Be the Band. She has created and directed over 50 original works in Chicago. Her 6yo daughter is the coolest. Website: kaseyfoster.com



Rika Nishikawa (she/her, Sarah) is thrilled to make her Chicago Children's Theatre debut in *Mesmerized!* She has previously been seen on Broadway as Young Nala in *Disney's The Lion King*. Her Chicago area credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Goodman Theatre), *The King and I* and *Macbeth* (Lyric Opera of Chicago), *The King and I* (Marriott Theatre), *The King and I* and *South Pacific* (Drury Lane Theatre), and *Annie Warbucks* (Theatre at the Center). She was the first-place winner of the 2023 NATS Central Region

vocal competition, a semi-finalist at the 2023 NATS national vocal competition, and a finalist at the 2022 CS Music vocal competition. She has sung the national anthem at the US Open Tennis, and at multiple fundraisers and cultural events. She loves reading and writing, and has received awards from the EPA, UNESCO Center For Peace, US District Court, The New York Times, and more. Proudly represented by Gray Talent Group. IG: @rikanishikawa



Shawn Pfautsch (he/him, Ben Franklin) is happy to return to the Chicago Children's Theatre stage and is excited to play a human for the first time here! In the past, Shawn has played snails, birds, lizards and frogs (*A Year With Frog and Toad* - 2013 & 2017) and a mouse called Ernest (*Frederick* - 2014 & 2018). CCT audiences may have also heard Shawn in their podcast feeds in the Walkie Talkie series, where he created four episodes with his wife, Jessica Ridenour - *The Green Heron*, *Saving Solstice*, *The Night Heron*, and *Welcome to Me: a Montrose Point Walkie Talkie*. He was also the

producer of the 2022-2023 Walkie Talkie season.

A Chicago resident for nearly 25 years, Shawn has also been seen on stages all around the USA - New York, California, Massachusetts, Florida, Texas, Kentucky, Maryland, and most recently, his fourth summer acting with the Michigan Shakespeare Festival. In Chicago, he's been on stage with companies such as: Steppenwolf, The Hypocrites, The House Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare, Signal Ensemble, and most recently as the narrator of *Stone Soup* at the Chicago Symphony Orchestra's "Once Upon a Symphony" children's series.



Dustin Valenta (he/him, King/Ensemble/Ben Cover) is thrilled to be making his CCT debut. He was born in Vermont and grew up in Minnesota. As a traveling yoga teacher, Dustin spent four years living all over the world from Australia to Italy, and he is the 2019 USA Yoga National Champion. Education: MFA DePaul University, The School at Steppenwolf and the Stella Adler Physical Theatre training program. Select professional credits: *The Secret Lives of Coats* (Red Eye Theatre, Minneapolis) *The History of Invulnerability*

(Six Points Theatre, St. Paul), *The Cabinet* (Redmoon Theatre, Chicago and Brazil), *The Feast: An Intimate Tempest* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre). Dustin is represented by the great team at DDO Artists Agency. Love to Marbles.

UNDERSTUDIES



Johnny Arena (he/him, Charles and Second King Understudy) is originally from Miami, Florida where his theater teacher thought he would be a great Hamlet at the age of 16. Video evidence proves otherwise but his hair was amazing. He graduated from the Theater Program at SMU in 2001, moved straight to Chicago and never looked back. He's very excited to be a part of this scientifically magical show! Theater credits include: *The Defamation Experience* (Canamac Productions), *United Flight 232* (Vanessa Stalling), *The Nutcracker* (Tommy Rapley), *Death and Harry Houdini* (The House Theatre), *A Tragical Comedy for Mr. Punch* (Kara Davidson/Shade Murray), *The Sparrow* (The House Theatre). TV credits include Chicago Fire "Down is Better" and Proven Innocent "In Defense of Madeline Scott, pt.1"



Kandace Mack (she/her, Sarah and Queen Understudy) is a Chicago-based actor originally hailing from Omaha, Nebraska. She graduated from Northwestern University where she studied Theatre and Creative Writing. Recent credits include new works *Round Yon Virgin* and *The Underworld* produced at the Factory Theatre, *The Mall The Mall The Mall* in the Once and Future Festival, and understudying *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* at Steep Theatre. She's thrilled to join the Chicago Children's Theatre team in Mesmerized!



Jordan Tannous (any/all, Mesmer and King Understudy) is ecstatic to be making their Chicago Children's debut with this stellar company! As a Houston native, their past credits include work at Stages Repertory, Houston Grand Opera, Landing Theatre, and Main Street Theater. Endless love to family and friends for their endless support!! Education: BFA Baylor University. @jordan.tannous

CREATIVE TEAM



SUZANNE MAYNARD MILLER (She,her, Adaptor) is an award-winning playwright whose work has been seen in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Singapore, Hong Kong, and throughout the UK. Aside from *Mesmerized*, Miller has written musical stage adaptations of David McKee's *Elmer* and of the popular children's book series *Pete the Cat* (both with composer Allison Leyton-Brown), as well as a musical adaptation of Leo Lionni's *Frederick* (with composers Sarah Durkee and Paul Jacobs, "Distinguished Play

Award," American Alliance for Theatre & Education, 2016). New projects include the original plays *Stuck*, *TOEhold*, and *Young Love*. Miller is the Chair of the English Department at the New York City College of Technology/CUNY. In the past, she has taught writing and theater courses at Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, and Hunter College/CUNY. In addition, Miller has been an artist-in-residence in Seattle, Providence, and New York City public schools, and at the Adult Correctional Institution in Rhode Island. She received her MFA in playwriting from Brown University, where she studied with Paula Vogel. Miller was an original company member of Annex Theatre in Seattle.

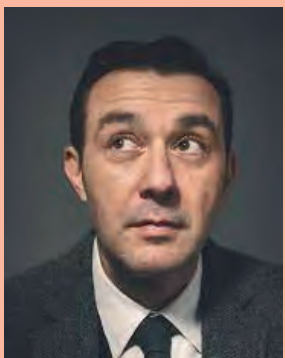
She would like to thank her husband, Bruce, and daughters Maggie and Ellie for their help and encouragement with *Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science & History Mystery*



Mara Rockliff (Book Author) is the author of many lively historical books for children. Among her best-known titles are *Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved a Mystery that Baffled All of France*, winner of the Cook Prize and an Orbis Pictus Honor; *Around America to Win the Vote: Two Suffragists, a Kitten, and 10,000 Miles*, distributed to schools and libraries across the country by the Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission; and *Sweet Justice: Georgia Gilmore and the Montgomery Bus Boycott*, which in 2023 received a Sibert Honor from the American Library Association.

Under the pen name Lewis B. Montgomery, she also wrote all twelve books in the popular *Milo & Jazz Mysteries* chapter book series.

She lives in western Massachusetts, a great place for outdoor fun, so chances are you won't find her at home. But you can visit her online at mararockliff.com.



Iacopo Bruno (Illustrator) is a graphic designer and illustrator. He is also the illustrator of the acclaimed books *Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved a Mystery that Baffled All of France* and *Anything But Ordinary Addie*, both by Mara Rockliff. He lives and works in Milan, Italy, with his wife, Francesca. Learn more about Iacopo at www.theworldofdot.com and www.iacopobruno.blogspot.it.



Tommy Rapley (he/him, Director) is thrilled to be returning to Chicago Children's Theatre with *Mesmerized* after directing *Frederick* in 2018. Notable Chicago credits include *The Nutcracker* and *The Great and Terrible Wizard of Oz* (The House Theatre of Chicago), *Big Fish* (Associate Director—The Marriott Theatre), and *Sweet Charity* and Andrew Lipka's *The Wild Party* (The Wirtz Center at Northwestern University). His choreographic work has been seen around Chicago and the United States at: The Goodman, Steppenwolf, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Olney Theatre Center, Kansas City Rep., Actors Theatre of Louisville, Writer's Theatre, The Court Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis and The New Vic (NYC). A passionate educator, Tommy is a part of the acting faculty at Northwestern University where he also serves as Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Theatre.



Collette Pollard (she/her, Scenic Design) is thrilled to debut at Chicago Children's Theatre. Recent and upcoming Chicago credits include *Gypsy*, *Big Fish* and *The Sound of Music* (Marriott Theatre), *Describe the Night*, *Lindiwe*, *HIR*, *The Fundamentals*, *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Head of Passes*, *1984*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *FEN*, *Orlando* and *The Illusion* (Court Theatre), *Fannie*, *Roe*, *The Wolves*, (Goodman Theatre), *Smart People* (Writers Theatre), *The Lehman Trilogy* and *A Shayna Maidel* (Timeline Theatre) where she is a company member and artistic associate. Recent and upcoming regional credits include *Little Women* (Seattle Repertory Theatre and Milwaukee Repertory Theatre), *Fannie* (Indiana Repertory Theatre), *What the Constitution Means to Me*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Eclipsed* and *The Chinese Lady* (Milwaukee Repertory Theatre) and *The Cake* (The Asolo Repertory Theatre). Collette was recently nominated for a Jeff Award for her scenic design for *The Garbologists*, and is a recipient of several Jeff Awards. She is an Associate Professor of Design at the School of Theatre and Music at UIC. Many thanks to the endless support from her family.



Lauren M. Nichols (she/her, Associate Scenic Designer)

Lauren is a freelance designer, scale model builder, and draftsman. Design credits include *Tiger Style* (Writers); *Cinderella* (Village Theatre- Seattle); and *In Every Generation* (Victory Gardens). She has also designed for Steppenwolf (Young Adults), Shattered Globe, UIC, DePaul Opera, Glass Apple, Remy Bumppo, The Gift Theatre, Firebrand, Hell In a Handbag, BoHo, and Rivendell. As an assistant she has worked with Julliard, NY Theatre Workshop, St. Louis Opera, Goodman, Milwaukee Rep, The Alliance, and Oregon Shakes among many others. She currently teaches drafting and digital design at The Theatre School-DePaul University. MFA Northwestern. laurenangeldesigns.com



Bren Coombs (they/them, Props Designer) is a nonbinary designer and producer of theatre, film, events, and social media content. Recent prop work: *The Who's Tommy* (Goodman); *Birthday Candles* (Northlight); *The October Storm* (Raven); *I Promised Myself to Live Faster* (Hell In A Handbag); *A Mile in The Dark* (Interrobang/Rivendell); *Albert Herring* (Chicago Opera Theater); *Dreamgirls* (Paramount); *Miz Martha* (Steppenwolf). RadBren.com



Mieka van der Ploeg (she/her, Costume Designer) Theatre credits include designs with Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Steppenwolf, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Great Lakes Theater, Idaho Shakespeare Festival, American Players Theatre, Court Theater, People's Light, Writers Theatre, Lyric Opera Unlimited, Lookingglass Theatre, Paramount Theatre, Marriott Theatre, Remy Bumppo, Second City, Redmoon, The Hypocrites, Chicago Children's Theatre, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, About Face Theatre, Steep Theatre, Theater Wit, Albany Park Theater Project, Manual Cinema, and the Under the Radar Festival at The Public Theatre. She won a non-Equity Jeff award in 2020 for *First Love is the Revolution*, at Steep Theatre. She is proud to be a member of USA829.



Megan E. Pirtle (She/her, Wig & Make-up Designer). Megan is excited to be making her design debut at Chicago Children's Theatre! Selected wig design credits include *Trouble in Mind*, *Relentless*, *Rutherford & Son* (TimeLine), *Marc' Antonio e Cleopatra*, *L'incoronazione di Poppea*, *L'amant Anonyme* (Haymarket Opera), *The Last Pair of Earlies*, *Crumbs from the Table of Joy* (Raven), *Gypsy*, *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*, and *The Princess & the Pea* (Marriott). She has also worked as the Lead Wig/ Hair Coordinator & Artisan for *Villette*, *Her Honor Jane Byrne* (Lookingglass), *Two Trains Running* (Court), *Dear Jack*, *Dear Louise*, and *Georgiana & Kitty* (Northlight). Megan is also a licensed cosmetologist of Illinois. And in 2023, she was the recipient of the Michael Merritt Emerging Technical Collaborator Award. For more, visit meganpirtledesign.com.



Nick Chamernik (he/him, Assistant Lighting Design) is excited to be back at Chicago Children's Theatre for his second production with the company. Previously, he served as the Associate Lighting Designer for Manual Cinema's production of *Leonardo!* Other recent credits include *The Who's Tommy* at Goodman Theatre (Projections Operator), *Blues for an Alabama Sky*, *Galileo's Daughter*, *Anna in the Tropics*, and *Passage* at Remy Bumppo Theatre Company (Head Electrician), and *Radial Gradient* and *This Wide Night* with Shattered Globe Theatre (Head Electrician).



Matthew Muñiz (he/him, Sound Designer and Composer) is a pianist, composer, game designer and educator. Matthew's music has been featured on Chicago artistic projects and on stages for twenty years. His music direction and stage arrangement skills have been met with rave reviews, often featuring the multi-instrumental talents of the vibrant performers this city produces. His work has been called "exhilarating" and "glorious," by print publications, and not just his mom. His music has been featured in plays, podcasts, an experimental audio book, in short films and in one feature-length zombie horror flick. In his wild youth, he released an album and played most of the 'cool' (some might say 'small') stages in

Chicago with his former bands, Voodoo & Valentine and The Live Debate! He was an ensemble member at the House Theatre of Chicago, where composed music for *The Last Defender*, (an escape room created with Cards Against Humanity) and where his music direction and performance credits also include *The Nutcracker*, *Verböten*, and *Hatfield & McCoy*.

Matthew is currently developing a musical and a podcast with his friends in the Ice Core Collective, and is developing two games: *Divination RPG* and *Apocalypse Meow*.

When Matthew isn't making things, he's enjoying time hanging out with his husband, Vincent.

www.matthewmunizmusic.com

STAGE MANAGEMENT



Anastar Alvarez (they/them, Stage Manager) is a self and community taught stage and production manager born and raised in Chicago. They are thrilled to be returning back to CCT where they have previously worked on *Wake Up! Brother Bear*, *This Ability!*, *Carmela Full of Wishes*, and *The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party*. Other stage management credits include *Red Bowl at the Jeffs* (The Sound), *Meet Juan(ito) Doe*, *The Real Life Adventures of Jimmy de las Rosas* (Free Street Theatre), *Refrigerator*, *I'm Gonna Pray For You So Hard*, *Sugar in Our Wounds*, *Vape Naysh*, *House of Audacity* (First Floor Theater), *The Fly Honey Show at Thalia Hall*, and *The*

Wizards (Concrete Content). They are also the Director of Production for First Floor Theater. They are committed to creating an equitable, safe, and inviting collaboration space.



Shannon Golden-Starr (she/they, Assistant Stage Manager) is thrilled to be returning to Chicago Children's Theatre where they have previously worked on *Frederick* and *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*. Selected previous credits include work with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre Company, Goodman Theatre, and A Red Orchid Theatre. All the love and thanks to Henry, Mac, and Ravioli



Zachary Crewse (they/them, Assistant Stage Manager) is a stage manager and producer for theatre, dance, music, and events whose work has brought them behind the scenes of Mercury Theatre, Writers Theatre, Lookingglass Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, A Red Orchid Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, Madison Ballet, Barrington Dance Ensemble, Grant Park Orchestra, Chicago Opera Theatre, and Lollapalooza. They are the Associate Producer and Resident Stage Manager for Collaboraction, and are a company member and producer with Queer Dance Freakout. BFA, DePaul University.

CCT PRODUCTION STAFF



Dare Wedgeworth (they/them, Assistant Lighting Supervisor) is a multifaceted Theatre and Dance Artist-born and raised in Chicago. As a Theatre Technician they primarily focus on electrics and stage management. Dare is currently Assistant Lighting Supervisor at Chicago Children's Theater(CCT) for the 2023-2024 season. Some of their notable past experiences in the field include: Designing and running lights for the Chicago Circus and Performing arts Festival, being Master Electrician with Pegasus Theatre Chicago, and teaching for the August Wilson New Voices Outreach Program as a Lead Design Teaching Artist. Dare has previously worked with CCT as a Sound Board Operator and Assistant Stage Manager and is excited to return!



Matt Reich (He/Him, Sound Supervisor) Matt is so thrilled to be working with Chicago Children's Theatre again. He has been Sound Supervisor for Chicago Children's Theatre since 2022 and was AI for The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show with Chicago Children's Theatre. Recently he was the AI with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre for Disney's Beauty and The Beast. He is also the Audio Video Director at Porchlight Musical Theatre. A graduate of The Theatre School at Depaul University with a degree in Sound Designer for Theatre, Matt is an Audio engineer and Sound Designer in Chicagoland, he has designed over sixty theatrical productions and has two Jeff Award nominations for his sound design.



Chas Mathieu (he/him, Scenic Supervisor) Is excited to be back at Chicago Children's Theatre this season. Chas is also a scenic designer and artist working in the city of Chicago. In his free time, he enjoys exploring the city and painting with watercolors.

CHICAGO CHILDREN'S THEATRE CREATIVE TEAM



Jacqueline Russell (Co-Founder and Artistic Director, Chicago Children's Theatre) served as the 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. 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 is in the New City's "Players Hall of Fame" of "People Who Really Perform for Chicago." Jacqueline is originally from Houston, Texas, and is a graduate of New York University. She has a grown up daughter, Shiri, a turtle named Leonard, two cats— Nucci Noodles and Lottie— and Lulu the dog.



Will Bishop (He/him, Director of Production) has overseen the production of CCT's shows since 2016. He is also the director and co-creator of CCT's holiday tradition, *The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party*, and has designed scenery, props, costumes and puppets for dozens of CCT shows - online during the pandemic, in Chicago, and on tour across the country and the world. He recently started teaching technical theatre at University of Illinois - Chicago. When not making theatre, he's probably playing tabletop RPGs, baking, cooking and brewing, or hanging out with his chihuahua, Fawkes, and cat, Goblin.

ABOUT CCT

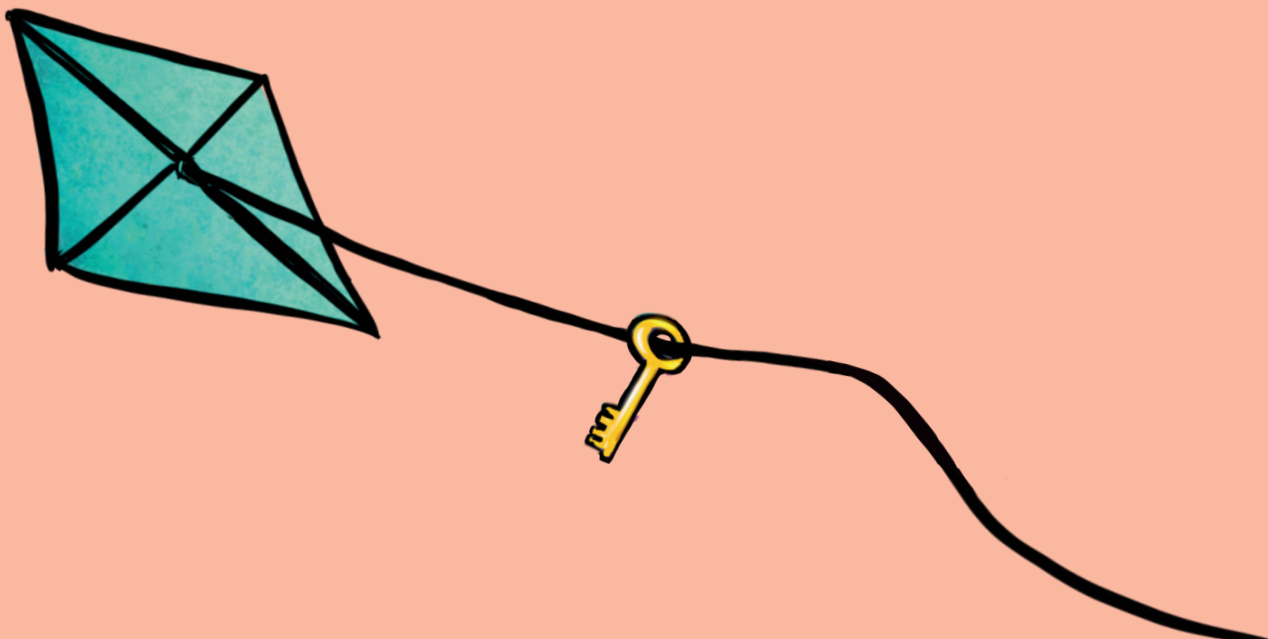
Chicago Children's Theatre was founded in 2005 with a big idea: Chicago is the greatest theater city in the world, and it deserves a great children's theater. Today, Chicago Children's Theatre is the city's largest professional theater company devoted exclusively to children and families, with emphasis on access and inclusion.

Led by Artistic Director Jacqueline Russell and Co-Founder Todd Leland, Chicago Children's Theatre has built its national reputation on new work, producing 22 world premieres and over 1,000,000 community members served.

In January 2017, the company celebrated the opening of its new, permanent home located in a former police station at 100 S. Racine Avenue in Chicago's West Loop community.

CCT provides tens of thousands of free and reduced-price tickets to under-resourced schools each season in partnership with Chicago Public Schools. CCT also continues to grow its education programs emphasizing student authorship, youth empowerment, and community leadership.

In 2019, Chicago Children's Theatre won the National TYA Artistic Innovation Award from Theatre for Young Audiences/USA. In addition, Chicago Children's Theatre has garnered seven NEA Art Works grants, and in 2017, became the first theater for young audiences in the U.S. to win a National Theatre Award from the American Theatre Wing, creators of the Tony Awards.



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

chicago
children's
theatre

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF PLAY

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A high-angle photograph of five diverse children sitting around a light-colored wooden table, engaged in an art project. They are smiling and looking towards the camera. On the table are various art supplies: a watercolor palette, a cup of water, a box of colored pencils, and several sheets of paper with colorful drawings. One child in the foreground is holding a red marker and pointing it towards the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

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

CHICAGOCHILDRENSTHEATRE.ORG/FAMILY-PROGRAMS

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

**chicago
children's
theatre**

INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN ON THE
AUTISM SPECTRUM AND THEIR FAMILIES

THE RED KITE PROJECT

A photograph of a young girl with dark hair and glasses, wearing a red sweater, reaching her hands up towards the ceiling. The background is dark and textured, possibly a wall or a large screen. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the girl's face and hands.

CLASSES | CAMPS | PRODUCTIONS

CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG/RED-KITE-PROJECT

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FOR EDUCATION IN THE PERFORMING ARTS

chicago children's theatre

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