

chicago  
children's  
theatre

The  
Beatrix Potter  
Holiday Tea  
Party



Based on the Stories by Beatrix Potter

Directed by Will Bishop

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## JACQUELINE RUSSELL, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

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Co-creators- Will Bishop, Lara Carling, Kay Kron, Grace Needlman,  
and Ray Rehberg

Director- Will Bishop

Composers- Ray Rehberg and Charlie Malave

Puppet Design and Build- Grace Needlman

Production Coordinator- Anastar Alvarez

Original Costume Design- Jillian Gryzlak

Lighting Design- Becca Jeffords

Sound Design- Daniel Etti-Williams

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## CAST

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Performed by Felix Mayes, Charlie Malave, and Lily Emerson

Understudied by Quinn Rigg

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## CCT PRODUCTION STAFF

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Hunter Leach  
Assistant Sound Designer

Emilie Wingate  
Assistant Puppet Designer

Chas Mathieu  
Scenic Supervisor

Janelle Manno  
Costumes Supervisor

Hannah Wien  
Lighting Supervisor

Matt Reich  
Sound Supervisor

Dare Wedgeworth  
Assistant Lighting Supervisor

Spencer Meeks  
Assistant Sound Supervisor

Lynsy Folckomer  
Sound Board Operator

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## CAST

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**Charlie Malave** (Musician) aka Charlie Universe aka Charlie Wednesday aka Charlie Business, is a musician, multi-instrumentalist, performing artist, and video maker whose body of work has produced an array of unique instruments, compositions, music videos, and theatrical productions. He is the guitarist and current Artistic Director for Mucca Pazza (a performance-art, marching band/rock band/orchestra), and half of the Creative Weirdo team which produces Adventure Sandwich (a cartoon-ish cardboard-based family show). As Charlie Wednesday, he is the bandleader and co-host of Mr. and Mrs. Wednesday-Night (a mostly-improvised fever dream of music and variety).



**Lily Emerson** (Puppeteer) is a multifaceted performer, producer, collaborator, and all-around creative weirdo. She recently performed at the Chicago Children's Theatre with Manual Cinema's Leonardo!, and has been honored to work with both CCT and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra as a part of the Once Upon a Symphony program. Lily is the co-creator of Adventure Sandwich, a Chicago-based family-friendly performance collective. Previously, she served as the Artistic Director of Opera-Matic NFP and as founder of Lucid Street Theatre. Lily has performed throughout the US, the UK, Belarus, the Czech Republic, and France, and has been recognized with various awards and residencies, including Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events Individual Artists Program, the Lisa Dershin LinkUP Residency, the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum's Artist in Residence, and the Chicago Digital Media Production Fund. More information about Lily can be found at [creative-weirdo.com](http://creative-weirdo.com).



**Felix Mayes** (Puppeteer) is so excited to share these stories with you. They are from the East Coast where they worked in classical theater. Here in Chicago they've worked with companies like Rough House and Manual Cinema, exploring their love of puppetry.



**Quinn Rigg** (Understudy) is a Chicago-based actor, musician, writer, and storytime enjoyer. Recent credits include Kokandy Productions' The Spongebob Musical and Sweeney Todd, and Timber Lake Playhouse's Plaid Tidings. He can also be found writing musicals with best friend and writing partner Kelan M. Smith, or spreading even more holiday cheer with The Chicago Carolers throughout this holiday season. [qrigg.com](http://qrigg.com)

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## CREATIVE TEAM

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**Will Bishop** (Director, Co-Creator) is so pleased to return to this beautiful production for another year! As Chicago Children's Theatre's Director of Production, he has overseen the production of CCT's shows since 2016. He is proud that this show has played as CCT's holiday tradition for the past eight years, has toured to dozens of schools and libraries around Chicago, played in the Ninth Annual China Children's Theatre Festival, in Beijing and Jinan, and has been adapted into a hybrid film/live drive-in movie experience during the pandemic. He has also designed scenery, props,

costumes and/or puppets for Frederick (with Michael Shannon), Doll Face Has a Party! (with Brian Selznick), The Relocation of Nokwisi, The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show (2019 and 2023), The World Inside Me (Chicago, Miami, and New Victory Theatre, NYC), X Marks the Spot! (Chicago and Sarasota FL), My Wonderful Birthday Suit, Red Kite Green Mountain (Flynn Center, Burlington VT) and numerous collaborations with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.. He recently started teaching technical theatre at University of Illinois - Chicago. When not making theatre, he's probably playing tabletop RPGs, making and eating vegan food, or hanging out with his own animal friends - Fawkes the Chihuahua and Goblin the Cat.



**Grace Needlman** (Co-creator, Puppet Designer and Builder) is a cultural worker and maker preoccupied with questions of collective imagination and agency. Grace's puppet designs have appeared in theatrical productions across Chicago. As a company member at Rough House and Chicago Puppet Lab Coordinator, Grace works to create equitable pathways for puppeteers in Chicago. Grace graduated with a BA in fine art from Yale University and an MA in Contemporary Art Theory from Goldsmiths University of London.



**Kay Kron** (Co-creator) is a theatre maker and teaching artist with a special place in her heart for puppets. She was a performer in CCT's annual show The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party and toured across Chicago and in 2019, to China. Previous to CCT, she spent several years as a professional actor with credits at The House, Lookingglass, Haven, First Floor, Caffeine, Rough House, and Redmoon. Her written work includes The Stranger and The Shadow (co-production Rough House and Adventure Stage

Chicago); Constance and the Perpetual Motion Machine (co-author; Rough House); Dis-Placement, Winter Pageant, and Devil's Cabaret (various lyrics, narration, and dialog, Redmoon); and a handful of poetry chap books. She holds a BFA in Acting and a Masters of Nonprofit Management from DePaul University.

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## CREATIVE TEAM

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**Lara Carling** (Co-creator) has performed and taught with Chicago Children's Theatre for several years. She appeared in previous productions of *The Beatrix Potter Holiday Tea Party*, *The Very Hungry Caterpillar Show*, and numerous Red Kite shows.



**Ray Rehberg** (Co-creator, Composer) is so proud that this little show has become a 9 year tradition! Onstage CCT credits include *Frederick*, *The Year I Didn't Go to School*, and *Frog and Toad* - and as composer: *My Wonderful Birthday Suit*. Chicago credits include the Jeff-nominated *Verböten* (Jason's Dad) at the House, workshops of *Lucy and Charlie's Honeymoon* with Steppenwolf (Gabriel) and *Lookingglass* (Martin), and *Tybalt* in various productions of *Romeo and Juliet*. Ray is currently pursuing his on-camera career in Los Angeles.



**Daniel Etti-Williams** (Sound Designer) is an up-and-coming Sound Designer and Engineer local to Chicago. After Studying Acting at Oklahoma City University, they moved to Chicago to participate in Steppenwolf Theatre Company's Apprenticeship Program. Since then, they have had the opportunity to work all over Chicago making theatre and telling stories and expressing their passion through design.

Chicago design credits include *Run The Beast Down* (Strawdog Theatre Company); *Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins* (Strawdog Theatre Company); *Beatrix Potter's Holiday Tea Party* (Chicago Children's Theatre); *Haus of Atreus* (Mudlark Theater); *Peerless* (Northwestern University Graduate Directing Program); *On The Greenbelt* (Strawdog Theatre Company); *At The Vanishing Point* (The Gift Theatre); *Paris* (Steep Theatre); *Light Falls* (Steep Theatre); *Private Lives* (Raven Theatre); *The Island* (Court Theatre)



**Becca Jeffords** (Lighting Designer) is a Chicago based lighting designer, artist and storyteller. She is thrilled to be joining Mx Potter's tea party again. The winter holidays somehow didn't seem quite so cozy without this particular tradition. To find out more about Becca's work visit [www.beccajeffords.com](http://www.beccajeffords.com)

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## PRODUCTION TEAM

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**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.



**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.



**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 her dog, Lulu.

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## CHICAGO CHILDREN'S THEATRE

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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 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.

The logo for Chicago Children's Theatre, featuring the words "chicago children's theatre" in a white, lowercase, serif font inside a black circle.

chicago  
children's  
theatre

# EDUCATION PROGRAMS

EXPERIENCE THE POWER OF PLAY

A group of diverse children are gathered around a table, engaged in an art activity. They are using various art supplies like markers, crayons, and paint. One child is pointing at a drawing on a piece of paper. The scene is brightly lit, and the children appear to be having fun and learning together.

WINTER CLASS  
REGISTRATION OPENS  
NOVEMBER 13TH, EARLY BIRD  
UNTIL NOVEMBER 30TH!

SUMMER CAMP  
REGISTRATION OPENS  
DECEMBER 18TH, EARLY BIRD  
UNTIL DECEMBER 31ST!

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

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Up Next:

A YEAR WITH  
FROG AND TOAD

MUSIC BY ROBERT REALE | BOOK AND LYRICS BY WILLIE REALE

BASED ON THE BOOKS BY ARNOLD LOBEL



OPENS APRIL 13 | ALL AGES

The logo for Chicago Children's Theatre, featuring the text "chicago children's theatre" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font inside a black circle.

chicago  
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INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN ON THE  
AUTISM SPECTRUM AND THEIR FAMILIES

# THE RED KITE PROJECT

A photograph of a young girl with dark hair, wearing a red sweater and glasses, looking upwards with her hands raised in a gesture of excitement or participation. The background is dark and out of focus.

WINTER CLASS  
REGISTRATION OPENS  
NOVEMBER 13TH, EARLY BIRD  
UNTIL NOVEMBER 30TH!

CLASSES | CAMPS | PRODUCTIONS

[CHICAGOCHILDRENTHEATRE.ORG/RED-KITE-PROJECT](https://chicagochildrenstheatre.org/red-kite-project)

RALLA KLEPAK FOUNDATION  
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# Beatrix Potter Fun Facts & Discussion Topics

Beatrix Potter based her characters on animals she kept as pets. The “real” Peter was a rabbit named Peter Piper. Beatrix Potter loved her pet rabbit Peter, and he went everywhere with her for nine years. She even took Peter for walks on a leash! In her schoolroom at home she had rabbits, hedgehogs, frogs, mice, and even a bat! **What’s your favorite animal?**

Beatrix Potter originally wrote "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" as an illustrated letter to her friend’s son Noel, who was ill at the time, and needed some cheering up! It had lots of pictures of rabbits. **What’s your favorite thing to draw?**

Beatrix Potter published her first book, "The Tale of Peter Rabbit," all on her own when she was 36 years old. **What’s your favorite book?**

Beatrix Potter was an artist and a scientist, drawing and studying the world around her. She wrote a scientific paper on fungi (mushrooms), proposing her own theory on how they reproduce, which was presented on her behalf at the Linnean Society, which at the time did not allow women at their meetings. Mushrooms are delicious. **What’s your favorite food?**

In 1903, Potter designed and created the very first Peter Rabbit doll. She sewed the doll using cotton fabric and used brush bristles for whiskers. **Do you like to make things?**

In the show you are about to see, Charlie Malaver, plays 3 instruments. **Do you play an instrument? If not, what would you like to play?**

When Beatrix Potter was a little girl, games like jump rope, marbles, yo-yos, follow the leader, and tug of war were popular. **Do you have a favorite game or sport you like to play?**

Beatrix Potter was an award-winning sheep farmer and in 1943 was the first woman elected President of the Herdwick Sheep Breeders’ Association. A sheep could be a nice pet. **What kind of pet would you like if you could have any creature, real or imaginary?**

# Jokes!

**What kind of books do rabbits like to read?** Stories with hoppy endings!

**What do you get when you cross a frog and a bunny?** A ribbit!

**What kind of music do bunnies like?** Hip Hop!

**What do you call a rabbit who tells jokes?** A funny bunny!

**How do you know carrots are good for your eyes?** Because you never see rabbits wearing glasses!

# chicago children's theatre

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## STAFF

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**Ben Koucherik**  
General Manager

**Jacqueline Russell**  
Artistic Director

**Matt Merrill**  
Director of Development

**Will Bishop**  
Director of Production

**Sam Mauceri**  
Director of Education  
and Access Programs

**Ben Kaye**  
Guest Services Manager

**Sivan Spector**  
Education and  
Community Programs Manager

**Andrew Chien**  
Theatre Manager

**Anthony Whitson-Martini**  
Education and  
School Partnerships Manager

**Jay Kelly**  
Public Relations  
Consultant

**Maria Clara Ospina**  
Community Engagement  
Associate

**Cayla Jones**  
Education Associate

**Stephanie Muñoz**  
Marketing  
Associate

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## GUEST SERVICES TEAM

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**Andrew Chien**

**Spencer Diedrick**

**Rebecca Hurd**

**Ben Kaye**

**Stephanie Muñoz**

**Maria Clara Ospina**

**Gingy Róisín**

**Natalie Schlueter**

# chicago children's theatre

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## FOUNDERS

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**Jacqueline Russell**

Co-Founder & Artistic Director

**Todd Leland**

Co-Founder & Board Chair

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## BOARD OFFICERS

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**Armando Chacon**

President

**David Saltiel**

Vice-Chair

**Jack Lavin**

Vice-Chair

**Anne Ray**

Secretary

**Ariel Knowles**

Treasurer

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## BOARD MEMBERS

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**Dori Bowling**

**Sharone Levy**

**David Chung**

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