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Photo by Dan Norman



Fall Donor Update

See how your support drives us forward



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REPORT TO DONORS 2016 Fall Highlights

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STUDENTS RETURN TO CTC Target Cultural Experience Program

The start of a new school year means second grade students from Minneapolis Public Schools will be back at CTC for another season of the Target Cultural Experiences Program (TCEP). In partnership with Target, this program provides every second grader in Minneapolis public schools with a free field trip to the theatre to see one of our productions. Last year, more than 3,500 students from over 160 classrooms joined us for performances of *The Jungle Book* and *The Snowy Day and Other Stories by Ezra Jack Keats*.

This year, we've invited second graders to join us for a joyful vaudevillian romp through the world of *Elephant and Piggie's We Are in a Play!* Based on *The New York Times'* best-selling book series by Mo Willems and presented by the Kennedy Center Theater for Young Audiences. This hilarious musical is sure to leave students and teachers tickled pink.

The program began in 2011 as a part of Target's commitment to give \$1 billion for education by the end of 2015 in an effort to confront

America's dropout crisis. While Target has reached its goal, their support of the program continues this year with a renewed grant of \$225,000.



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2016-2017 PERFORMING APPRENTICE:

ELISE BENSON



Photo of Elise Benson by ZoeyJean Photography

CTC supports young artists and promotes careers in theatre with our premiere acting apprenticeship program and other educational and professional development initiatives. This season, we are thrilled to welcome Elise Benson as the 2016-2017 Performing Apprentice (PA).

“Being accepted into this program has reaffirmed that I can do theatre for a living, and I’m grateful for the opportunity,” Elise remarked. A native of Minnetonka, Minnesota, Elise graduated from the University of Minnesota, Duluth in 2015 with a BA in Music and a BFA in Musical Theatre. Though the coursework for her two majors was stressful, Elise is glad she persevered because the various disciplines allowed her to cultivate a diverse set of musical and performance skills. After graduation, Elise directed shows, participated in acting workshops, produced several cabarets, and even followed her dreams of being on stage all the way to New York City before returning to Minnesota to join CTC as a PA. Throughout her year at CTC, Elise will have the chance to be the understudy for several roles in CTC productions, work with student actors, and learn from CTC’s creative professionals and resident Acting Company Members. “I’m really excited to get back to the stage, to have a stage family, and to have time to devote to learning,” Elise said. You can support CTC’s PA program and the development of young artists and theatre professionals by making a gift to the Art Matters fund at childrenstheatre.org/givingmatters.

CTC AT THE IVEY AWARDS

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Each fall, Twin Cities actors, directors, designers, and theatre enthusiasts come together at the Ivey Awards dinner to celebrate our vibrant theatre community and honor exceptional contributions to the field over the past year. This year CTC’s Music Director Victor Zupanc was recognized for his work on this summer’s *Pinocchio*, and CTC’s production of *The Wizard of Oz*, directed by Artistic Director Peter Brosius was honored for overall excellence. We’re all gratefully humbled by the accolades and will continue creating work that educates, challenges, and inspires young people and our communities. Congratulations to Victor, the cast and crew of *The Wizard of Oz*, and all the other artists honored for their work!

BEHIND THE SCENE STEN SEVERSON,



At first thought, the creation of sound in theatre can seem like a purely technical task. Record some noises, program some machines, press some buttons, and voilà, all done! Right? Not quite. To hear Children's Theatre Company (CTC) Sound Director, Sten Severson, talk about sound design is to hear an artist discuss his craft. When Severson explains that sound in theatre can be used to “bring the show out to the people and then to draw them back into the human drama” simply by varying the aural intensity, it's impossible to ignore the artistry of sound.

As the Sound Director at CTC, Severson is responsible for everything the audience hears during a production. He ensures that actors' lines are intelligible, sound effects are properly layered, and music sets the appropriate emotional tone. He views sound as an integral component of storytelling and notes that, “Designing the sound for a show is a technical but also emotional process.” Sound is intangible, and it can be

combined with spoken lines, blocking, and visual cues to fully immerse audience members in the spectacle unfolding before them.

“DESIGNING THE SOUND FOR A SHOW IS A TECHNICAL BUT ALSO EMOTIONAL PROCESS.”

Severson's wisdom regarding sound design is born of an impressive career to date. After college, he spent time in New York and was involved in sound designing over 20 Broadway shows. He lists his work as the lead sound designer on the 2009 Broadway revival of *Hair* as one of his proudest achievements in theatre, and he also worked with now-superstar Lin-Manuel Miranda on *In the Heights* when Miranda was “just a kid we thought might make good.”

SEVERSON SPOTLIGHT: SOUND DIRECTOR



Photos by Dan Norman

As for his almost two years at CTC, Severson describes his role in producing *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* as one of his favorite experiences. (See photos) For this immersive show that took participants “into the bowels of the theatre” and through a maze of rooms and hallways, there was no single location for a booth or sound console, and each rendition of the show was slightly different, so it was impossible to set cues up on a timing system.

Despite this unpredictability, the show still needed some way to cue the lights, sounds, and effects, so Severson helped create a system of Ethernet-connected black boxes that allowed costumed stagehands to trigger the effects. They simply had to flip switches on the inconspicuous boxes at certain times during scenes, and computers in a different room would run the proper sequences. Meanwhile, the audience had no idea how the lights and noises were being generated!

And so it goes in the world of sound design; the unseen transmits significance, wonder, and emotion. As Severson says, “Theatre is about people,” and, really, so is sound design. It’s the act of turning what people feel into something they can hear, and Severson is right to call it art.





OH! THE TO-DO YOU'VE DONE!

This year's Curtain Call Ball is one we won't soon forget! Thank you to the more than 430 guests who joined us on Saturday, September 10, to celebrate and contribute to CTC's mission. Guests were greeted and entertained by Sneetches, dazzled by glitzy Truffula trees, and inspired by the energy and magic of a community dedicated to CTC's future. Together we raised \$845,000! A special thank you to our chair Abbi Rose, co-chair Liz Furman, and this year's honorary chairs John and Nancy Lindahl. We are extremely grateful to all who helped to make this night a tremendous success, and whose support will ensure that we continue to create extraordinary theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire.



TAT PRE-PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTE

This fall, a new program for teens joins our growing lineup of Theatre Arts Training (TAT) classes. The Pre-Professional Institute will prepare young actors for college and professional theatre careers. Nine high school freshmen began this four-year program this fall. Each year will begin with classes focusing on different skillsets: acting technique; voice and dance; classical acting; and finally, preparing for auditions. Each spring, students will prepare a showcase to highlight the skills they have built throughout that year, including one act plays; a musical revue; scenes and monologues. Year One will be taught by accomplished local actor H. Adam Harris, who may be familiar to CTC audiences as Baloo in last season's world premiere of *The Jungle Book*. Students will also have time to build their resumes through job-shadowing and hands-on opportunities in off-stage areas throughout the theatre.

INSPIRE MINNESOTA'S FUTURE ON GIVE TO THE MAX DAY

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All children deserve to learn, grow, and be inspired through art.

Consider a gift to support CTC's ACT Pass Program, which provides financial aid to productions and classes for low-income families across the state on Give to the Max Day, November 17, 2016. Help us reach our goal of raising \$30,000 to increase access to the arts in Minnesota and inspire the next generation of leaders and artists. Your gift will make a difference in a child's life today and in the future.

New this year, GiveMN is offering donors a way to maximize the impact of their gift. When you contribute on GiveMN.org, consider paying the processing fees to ensure that your entire gift will be put to use inspiring local children and families. Everyone who donates on Give to the Max Day will be entered to win CTC prizes! Visit childrenstheatre.org/inspire to learn more.

UPCOMING DONOR EVENTS

We're hosting a number of exclusive events at the theatre over the next few months, and we hope that you will join us. For questions or to RSVP, please contact Tom Kachelmacher at tomk@childrenstheatre.org or 612.872.5111.

Cinderella Opening Night Reception

Friday, November 11, 2016 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm | 3M Rehearsal Hall | For Donors \$1,000+

Grab your glass slippers and join us as we celebrate the return of a CTC favorite! Enjoy a magical evening of dinner and conversation with *Cinderella's* artistic and creative team. Children ages 4-12 are invited to enjoy a pizza party and activities in the Theatre Arts Training classroom during the event.

2017-2018 Season Announcement

TBD | Target Lobby | Free Event | For Donors \$500+

This is your chance to learn the line-up for our 52nd season before anyone else. Join other donors for refreshments before the big reveal. This season will be extra special, as we will also celebrate Peter Brosius's 20th anniversary as CTC's Artistic Director.

Dr. Seuss' The Sneetches Opening Night Reception

Friday, February 10, 2017 | 5:30 - 7:00 pm | 3M Rehearsal Hall | For Donors \$1,000+

Head to the beach for frankfurter roasts and marshmallow toasts with the Sneetches and friends. This pre-show adventure features dinner and conversation with the artistic team before the opening night performance. Join other CTC supporters for excitement before the world premiere of this beloved children's tale. Children ages 4-12 are invited to enjoy a pizza party and activities in the Theatre Arts Training classroom during the event.