

PRESS RELEASE

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Children's Theatre Company Announces 2022 – 2023 Powerful Season Featuring World Premiere of *An American Tail the Musical*

Minneapolis, Minn.—Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is proud to announce the powerful and unforgettable 2022 – 2023 Season featuring the exciting world premiere of *An American Tail the Musical* written by Tony Award-winning playwright **Itamar Moses** (*The Bands Visit*) with music and lyrics by **Michael Mahler** and **Alan Schmuckler** (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*, *The Secret of My Success*), based on the hit award-winning animated film by **Universal Pictures** and **Amblin Entertainment**. The season also includes CTC's outrageously popular *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* and treasured original *Corduroy*, the electrifying American premiere of *Circus Abyssinia: Tulu*, and the stirring Minnesota premieres of *Carmela Full of Wishes* and *Locomotion*. This season is designed to inspire bravery and empathy, unleash the power of curiosity and imagination, and reflect CTC's commitment to our young people and community to center diverse voices and stories on our stage.

CTC's Artistic Director **Peter C. Brosius** shared, "We are thrilled to bring you a season of extraordinary experiences; from the amazing spectacle of *Circus Abyssinia* to the tenderness and charm of *Carmela Full of Wishes*, to Dr. Seuss's hilarious and touching *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*. And that's just the fall! We will also bring Jacqueline Woodson's acclaimed book *Locomotion* to the stage, along with the comic madness of *Corduroy* and finally the world premiere of *An American Tail the Musical*. It is a season that not only offers wildly different theatrical journeys, but also is part of our commitment to honor and celebrate the perspectives of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We can't wait to have you here and for you to see each and every one of these shows!"

The season kicks off with daring, fantastic feats of amazement! World-famous **Circus Abyssinia** returns by popular demand with ***Circus Abyssinia: Tulu!*** This fantastical celebration of athleticism and the power of speed is inspired by Ethiopian runner Derartu Tulu, the first Black African woman to win Olympic gold. Watch in awe as a dazzling spectacle of high-flying acrobatics, hand balancing, and juggling (sometimes with fire!) flashes before your eyes, backed by pulse-pounding music ranging from 1970s Ethiopian disco to modern Ethio-pop! Witness the energy and spectacle of the Olympic games, packed with extraordinary circus acts, and be amazed as the world of triumph and virtuosity comes to dynamic life! Best for all ages, this production runs September 13-October 23, 2022 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage.

"We're seriously over the moon to be coming back to Children's Theatre Company this fall," state the creators, **Bibi Tesfamariam** and **Bichu Shimellis**. "With our new show, *Tulu*, we'll be pulling out all the stops to celebrate the incredible story of Ethiopian Olympic legend, Derartu Tulu, the first black African woman ever to win Olympic gold. We're more excited than ever to perform with the wonderful audiences of Minnesota again!"

Next is ***Carmela Full of Wishes***, adapted by **Alvaro Saar Rios** from the book by **Matt de la Peña** and illustrated by **Christian Robinson**, and directed by **Tatyana-Marie Carlo** (Trinity Rep Resident Company)

Member and Associate, *Fade* (Trinity Rep), *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* (Public Theatre)). It's Carmela's birthday, and she's finally old enough to tag along with her big brother while he runs errands. Join them as they pass by the fenced-off repair shop, the busy bus stop, and Miss Maria's verdulería. Outside the laundromat, Carmela picks a dandelion and makes several birthday wishes: that she gets a candy machine, a big fancy bed for Mamí like the ones at the hotel where she works, and most importantly, that Papí will be able to come back home soon. When a sudden accident crushes her dandelion, can her brother help Carmela believe in the power of wishes once again? Running October 18 through December 4, 2022 in the Cargill Stage, this show is best for ages 5 and up.

Director **Tatyana-Marie Carlo** stated, "*Carmela Full of Wishes* allows us the opportunity to dream and revel in the world around us. Everything is new and exciting, and we get to go along for the ride as Carmela discovers the magic in every wish she makes. I am excited to bring wonder and curiosity to CTC audiences and a story told from a Latine lens written for everyone."

The holidays are never the same without the big, green grouch! The incredibly popular CTC original, ***Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*** is back! CTC's Artistic Director **Peter C. Brosius** will direct with choreography by **Linda Talcott Lee**. A miserly and miserable, ever-so-cantankerous Grinch has observed the despicable Christmas joy of the Whos with disdain, from a distance, for decades. Enough! In this favorite holiday story, filled with music and Seussian rhymes, he conceives a dastardly plot to destroy what they love. It's the smallest of the Whos, tiny Cindy Lou, who extends a hand. Through the combination of kindness and community, we witness not only a change in the course of Who-History, but the size and capacity of the old green guy's heart. Best for all ages, this musical adventure runs November 8, 2022 through January 8, 2023 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage.

"Since the moment I applied that first dab of green makeup, ten years ago, The Grinch has been my absolute favorite role to portray," states Acting Company Member **Reed Sigmund** who will be portraying The Grinch for a fifth time this season. "It's a character that's endlessly rich with opportunities to dynamically explore the full spectrum of human emotions. And I love stories of transformation. This story reminds us that fear and hate are easy, but difficult growth and change are more rewarding for ourselves and our communities. Plus, it comes at a time of year when I get to pound gallons of Christmas cookies. This is show I can't wait to celebrate once more!"

Winter ushers in a heartwarming tale of a young person's discovery of his love for poetry with ***Locomotion***, based on the book written and adapted for the stage by **Jacqueline Woodson** and directed by **Talvin Wilks** (*This Bitter Earth* (Penumbra), *On the Way to Timbuktu* (3 AUDELCO Award nominations including Best Director). Uprooted from his family, Lonnie couldn't feel more alone. But when his class learns to write poetry, his verses take him back to a time of togetherness. As he finds his voice as a poet, poetry will bring you closer to others and yourself. Running January 24 through March 5, 2023 on the Cargill Stage, this production is best for ages 9 and up.

"*Locomotion* is a very important work in our current era of more diverse storytelling," states Director **Talvin Wilks**. "The opportunity to see a young Black male's journey as a universal story of overcoming hardships and the challenges of adolescence is vital and revelatory. That CTC is making a commitment to diversifying the canon of young protagonists is an important and vibrant investment, not only for youths of color to see themselves and their experiences on stage, but for all youth to begin to broaden their understanding of universality, the act of seeing oneself through the lives of others. This opportunity is a great gift for our new era of awareness, and Jacqueline Woodson has created a story for everyone, a story that I am very excited to realize on stage."

Oh no, **Corduroy's** button has gone missing, and he can't go home with kindhearted Lisa without it! Join the beloved teddy bear as he takes a rollicking ride up the escalator and begins a delightfully destructive romp through every section of the department store. Will he find his button at the top of a teetering store display? Will Lisa ever get to bring him home, or will the bumbling security guard catch him first? Where, oh where, is Corduroy's **BUTTON**? Based on the *Corduroy* and *A Pocket for Corduroy* books by **Don Freeman** and adapted for the stage by **Barry Kornhauser**, this play had its world premiere at CTC in 2018 and has gone to be a highly produced production through our licensing house, Plays for New Audiences along with receiving the AATE Distinguished Play Award. Directed by **Peter C. Brosius**, this play runs February 14 through April 2, 2023 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage, this play is best for ages 4 and up.

"*Corduroy*, with its title character's quest for his missing button, is the story of a little toy bear's very real need to find a 'Friend' and a place to call home, along with that of a little girl's corresponding need to bring that bear home – as a Friend," states Playwright **Barry Kornhauser**. "I'm absolutely delighted that this little adaptation of that story has found a home once again with all of its 'Friends' at Children's Theatre Company where the play was first nurtured and produced. It is always a gift and a joy to work with Peter [Brosius] and his brilliant and passionate team as they bring classic children's literature to life so vividly, so imaginatively, and so lovingly. Corduroy may have lost a button, but *Corduroy* has found its way back to the CTC stage, and for that I am 'beary' grateful."

CTC rounds out the season with the incredible world premiere production, based on the award-winning **Universal Pictures/Amblin Entertainment** animated film, ***An American Tail the Musical*** with book and lyrics by Tony® Award-winning playwright **Itamar Moses** (*The Bands Visit*, *Boardwalk Empire*), music and lyrics by **Michael Mahler** and **Alan Schmuckler** (*Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*, *The Secret of My Success*), and directed by **Taibi Magar** (*We Live in Cairo* (A.R.T.), *Blue Ridge*, *The Great Leap* (Atlantic Theatre Company)). The film received critical praise and was nominated for an Academy Award and received two Grammy Awards for Song of the Year and Best Song Written Specifically for a Motion Picture or Television. An army of cats forces young Fievel Mousekewitz and his family to escape from Russia by boat. When a storm at sea separates them, Fievel arrives alone in the vast city of New York. In this riveting new musical based on the hit animated film, the steadfastly optimistic Fievel makes his way as a new immigrant, encountering friends and foes (including a few scene-stealing cockroaches!). In spite of everything stacked against him, Fievel clings to his dreams of a better life and reuniting with his family. Are they Somewhere Out There? Best for all ages, this musical runs April 25 through June 18, 2023 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage.

"A lot of people, and maybe especially people of my generation, remember *An American Tail* as one of the animated film classics of the 1980s, so getting to work on adapting it has been thrilling, first of all, on that level," stated Playwright **Itamar Moses**. "But looking at this material again through the lens of 2022 reveals the urgent timeliness—and indeed timelessness—of a story about America's fundamental origins as a place people, or in this case mice, came from all over the world seeking a better life, the imperfect place they found when they got here, but the potential for that place to be the beacon it's meant to be if only we can all work together. And, of course, it's also just the story of a small, but very resourceful mouse, who gets separated from his family and tries to find them again."

Full season subscriptions and renewals for the 2022 – 2023 Season are now on sale and can be purchased online at childrenstheatre.org/subscribe now or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400 starting Thursday. CTC's 2022 – 2023 Season of artistic and educational programming is supported by The Shubert Foundation, Inc. This activity is made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a Minnesota State Arts Board Operating Support grant, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.

2022 – 2023 Season

Circus Abyssinia: Tulu

Co-created and produced by Mehari “Bibi” Tesfamariam
Co-created and directed by Binyam “Bichu” Shimellis
Choreography by Tamerat Ejeta and Binyam “Bichu” Shimellis
A Children’s Theatre Company American Premiere Production
September 13-October 23, 2022
UnitedHealth Group Stage
Best for all ages
Proudly sponsored by Treat & Company

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
Directed by Tatyana-Marie Carlo
October 18-December 4, 2022
Cargill Stage
Best for ages 5 and up
Carmela Full of Wishes is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by TRW Plays; 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. www.trwplays.com

Dr. Seuss’s How the Grinch Stole Christmas!

Based on the book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* by Dr. Seuss
Book and lyrics by Timothy Mason
Music by Mel Marvin
Directed by Peter C. Brosius
Choreography by Linda Talcott Lee
A Children’s Theatre Company Original Production
November 8, 2022-January 8, 2023
UnitedHealth Group Stage
Best for all ages

Locomotion

Written and adapted for the stage by Jacqueline Woodson
Directed by Talvin Wilks
January 24-March 5, 2023
Cargill Stage
Best for ages 9 and up

Corduroy

Based on the *Corduroy* and *A Pocket for Corduroy* books by Don Freeman
Adapted for the stage by Barry Kornhauser
Directed by Peter C. Brosius
A Children’s Theatre Company Original Production
February 14-April 2, 2023
UnitedHealth Group Stage
Best for ages 4 and up

An American Tail the Musical

Book and Lyrics by Itamar Moses

Music and Lyrics by Michael Mahler and Alan Schmuckler

Based on the Universal Pictures/Amblin Entertainment animated film

A Children's Theatre Company Commissioned World Premiere Production

In association with Universal Theatrical Group

Directed by Taibi Magar

April 25-June 18, 2023

UnitedHealth Group Stage

Best for all ages

Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is the nation's largest and most acclaimed theatre for young people and serves a multigenerational audience. It creates theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire for more than 250,000 people annually. CTC is the only theatre focused on young audiences to win the coveted Tony Award® for regional theatre and is the only theatre in Minnesota to receive three Tony® nominations (for its production of *A Year with Frog and Toad*). CTC is committed to creating world-class productions at the highest level and to developing new works, more than 200 to date, dramatically changing the canon of work for young audiences.

CTC is the most significant provider of accessible theatre education opportunities in the region. Every year, thousands of children experience theatre for the first time at CTC. Our student matinees and education programs demonstrably benefit the community, from the intergenerational conversations sparked by our world premieres, to the sequential skill-building that happens in our Theatre Arts Training, to the pre-K focus of our Early Childhood Initiative. ACT One is CTC's comprehensive platform for access, diversity, and inclusion in our audiences, programs, staff, and board that strives to ensure the theatre is a home for all people, all families, reflective of our community. childrenstheatre.org

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