

PRESS RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

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**CHILDREN'S THEATRE COMPANY ANNOUNCES CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR
CORDUROY
BASED ON THE BOOKS *CORDUROY* AND *A POCKET FOR CORDUROY* BY DON FREEMAN
ADAPTED FOR THE STAGE BY BARRY KORNHAUSER**

Back by popular demand

The beloved children's books return to the CTC stage
For the first time since 2018's World Premiere production

February 14 – April 2, 2023

Minneapolis— January 4, 2023 — Children's Theatre Company (CTC) has announced the cast and creative team for the return engagement of *Corduroy*, following the 2018 World Premiere production. Adapted for the stage by Barry Kornhauser, and directed by CTC's Artistic Director Peter C. Brosius, *Corduroy* is based on the classic children's books *Corduroy* and *A Pocket for Corduroy* by Don Freeman.

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?

The Star Tribune hails *Corduroy* as "ebullient...utterly delightful" and the St. Paul Pioneer Press raves that it "leaves its audience delightfully impaired by extreme laughter." Don't miss this delightful and wonderfully comic tale of friendship.

Winner of the American Alliance for Theatre & Education "Distinguished Play" Award

Corduroy will play from February 14 – April 2, 2023 at CTC's UnitedHealth Group Stage (2400 Third Avenue South Minneapolis MN 55404). Opening Night is Saturday, February 18 at 7pm. Tickets may be purchase online at childrenstheatre.org/corduroy or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

"*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," says 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."

“It is such a joy to bring *Corduroy* to our stage,” said *Corduroy* Director and CTC Artistic Director Peter C. Brosius. “This is a story that touches our hearts and has us rolling in laughter. Barry Kornhauser has brought his brilliant comic mind to this adaptation and created a truly delightful play of friendship, persistence and determination and what it means to never give up on your dreams. *Corduroy* inspires us all with his heart and his hope and we can’t wait to share it with you.”

The Adult Cast of *Corduroy* features longtime CTC Company Member **Autumn Ness*** as Nighttime Security Guard, former CTC Performing Apprentice **Alexcia Thompson*** as Lisa’s Mother, and longtime CTC Company Member **Dean Holt*** as Corduroy.

The Student Cast of *Corduroy* features **Ayla Porter** as Lisa, and **Luciana Mayer** and **Hugo Mullaney** as Mannequins.

The Understudies for *Corduroy* (in alphabetical order) include: **Truman Bednar** as U/S Mannequin, **Mathias Brinda** as U/S Lisa, **Erin Nicole Farste** as U/S Mother, **Taj Ruler** as U/S Corduroy and U/S Nighttime Security Guard, and **Harriet Spencer** as U/S Mannequin.

In addition to Mr. Kornhauser and Mr. Brosius, the Creative Team and Production Staff for *Corduroy* includes Torry Bend (Scenic Designer), Trevor Bowen (Costume Designer), Craig Gottschalk (Lighting Designer), Andrew Vance (Assistant Lighting Designer), Victor Zupanc (Composer and Sound Designer), Nate Stanger* (Stage Manager), Jicarra N. Hollman (Assistant Stage Manager), and Phenix Rock (Stage Management Fellow).

**Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers.*

Ticket Information

Tickets to *Corduroy* may be purchase online at childrenstheatre.org/corduroy or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

School groups interested in attending *Corduroy* can contact schools@childrenstheatre.org for more information.

This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 4 and up. Lap passes are available for children 3 years and younger.

Corduroy

A Children’s Theatre Company Original Production

Based on the books entitled *Corduroy* and *A Pocket for Corduroy* by Don Freeman

Adapted for the stage by Barry Kornhauser

Directed by Peter C. Brosius

February 14 – April 2, 2023

UnitedHealth Group Stage

This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 4 and up.

Lap passes are available for children 3 years and younger.

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Runtime: 90 minutes with one 15-minute intermission

Creative Team & Production Staff

Playwright | Barry Kornhauser

Director | Peter C. Brosius
Scenic Designer | Torry Bend
Costume Designer | Trevor Bowen
Lighting Designer | Craig Gottschalk
Composer and Sound Designer | Victor Zupanc
Assistant Lighting Designer | Andrew Vance
Stage Manager | Nate Stanger*
Assistant Stage Manager | Jiccarra N. Hollman
Stage Management Fellow | Phenix Rock

Adult Cast

Nighttime Security Guard | Autumn Ness*
Lisa's Mother | Alexcia Thompson*
Corduroy | Dean Holt*

Student Cast

Mannequin | Luciana Mayer
Mannequin | Hugo Mullaney
Lisa | Ayla Porter

Understudies

U/S Mannequin | Truman Bednar
U/S Lisa | Mathias Brinda
U/S Mother | Erin Nicole Farste
U/S Corduroy and U/S Nighttime Security Guard | Taj Ruler
U/S Mannequin | Harriet Spencer

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ADULT CAST

Corduroy

Dean Holt* is a member of CTC's Acting Company (1994-present), appearing in more than 100 memorable productions in his time at CTC. He is a two-time Ivey Award winner and the recipient of the Alumni Achievement Award from St. John's University for outstanding work in his field.

Nighttime Security Guard

Autumn Ness* (she/her) is celebrating her 22nd season with the CTC Acting Company! Some favorite shows include *Annie*; *Cinderella*; *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical*; *The Biggest Little House in the Forest*; *The Jungle Book*; and *Romeo and Juliet*. She is a recipient of the 2018 Fox Foundation Fellowship, the 2020 MRAC Next Step Fund, and the 2022 MN State Arts Board Creative Support Grant.

Lisa's Mother

Alexcia Thompson* (she/her) has enjoyed roles in *Jelly's Last Jam* (Theatre Latte Da); *Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Yellow Tree Theatre); *Lonesome Traveler* (Rubicon Theatre); *Cinderella*; *Matilda*; *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas*; *The Hobbit*; *Biggest Little House in the Forest*; *Last Stop on Market Street* at Children's Theatre Company. She has a B.F.A. from Howard University in Musical Theatre.

STUDENT CAST

Mannequin

Luciana Mayer (she/her) is thrilled to be making her Children's Theatre Company debut! Some of her favorite shows she has participated in are *School of Rock the Musical*; *Frozen Jr.*; and *Madagascar Jr.* (The Zephyr Theatre). Aside from acting she loves dancing and singing. She is currently in sixth grade at St. Croix Preparatory Academy.

Mannequin

Hugo Mullaney (he/him) is delighted to be returning to CTC. He has most recently performed in *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas*; *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical* and *Cinderella*. Recent credits include *The Music Man* (Chanhassen Dinner Theatres); *Be More Chill* (CTC TAT Summer Intensive); *The Addams Family*; *The Secret Garden* and *Mary Poppins* (Wayzata High School). Other credits are Spotlight Award Program (Hennepin Theatre Trust) and Twin Cities Tap Festival, Cowles Centre.

Lisa

Ayla Porter (she/her) has been singing, dancing, and acting since the age of three. Ayla enjoyed being an understudy in *Something Happened in Our Town* at Children's Theatre Company. And loved showcasing her many talents at the Capri Theater in a variety show and again in *The Wiz Jr.*

UNDERSTUDIES

U/S Mannequin

Truman Bednar experienced his first professional theatre role as Billy in *School of Rock* for the Zephyr Theatre in Stillwater, MN. Other productions include: *Frozen Jr* (Olaf); *Shrek* (Lord Farquaad); and *The Jungle Book* (King Louie). Truman also participated in Loyce Houlton's *Nutcracker Fantasy* at the State Theatre in Minneapolis for three years.

U/S Lisa

Mathias Brinda (she/her) has enjoyed roles in *Merrily We Roll Along*; *Seussical the Musical*; and Loyce Houlton's *Nutcracker Fantasy*. She has performed with several organizations, including Theater Latte Da, Morningside Theatre and Minnesota Dance Theatre and School. Mathias is currently a 5th grader at Lake Country Montessori in Minneapolis, MN.

U/S Mother

Erin Nicole Farsté (she/her) is making her CTC debut. Her previous credits include *Christmas at the Local* (Theatre Latté Da); *In the Next Room, Passing Strange* (Yellow Tree Theatre); *Not In Our Neighborhood*, *Teen Idol: The Bobby Vee Story* (History Theatre); *Dining With the Ancestors* (Guthrie Theater).

U/S Corduroy and U/S Nighttime Security Guard

Taj Ruler (she/her) is making her Children's Theatre debut! She has performed with several other theatres including The Brave New Workshop, Mixed Blood Theatre, Park Square Theatre, Girl Friday Productions, Theatre Pro Rata, Rough Magic Performance Company, Theater Mu, and HUGE Theater.

U/S Mannequin

Harriet Spencer (any pronouns) is excited for her Children's Theatre Company debut! They've enjoyed being in many productions including *The Lightning Thief*, *The Percy Jackson Musical*; *The World According To Snoopy!*; *Frozen Jr.* (Youth Performance Company); *Cinderella*; *State Fair* (Rosetown Playhouse); *PlayStation* (Flying Foot Forum); *The New Standards Holiday Show*.

CREATIVE TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF

Playwright

Barry Kornhauser (he/him) is delighted to have *Corduroy* resume his button search at CTC, where the stage adaptation of this beloved story premiered in 2018 before winning the American Alliance for Theatre & Education's "Distinguished Play Award" and moving on to further productions nationwide. Other of Barry's plays commissioned and first produced at CTC are Ivey Award recipient *Reeling; Bert & Ernie, Goodnight!; Madeline Joins The Circus*; and yet another AATE "Distinguished Play" winner *Balloonacy*. *Corduroy* wanted a friend and a home. Barry feels fortunate to have found those himself at CTC.

Director

Peter C. Brosius (he/him) has served as Artistic Director of CTC since 1997, directing the world premieres of *Dr. Seuss's The Sneetches The Musical; The Last Firefly; Seedfolks; Animal Dance*; and many others, all of which were commissioned and workshopped by CTC. Previously, he was the Artistic Director of the Honolulu Theatre for Youth and the Improvisational Theatre Project at the Mark Taper Forum.

Scenic Designer

Torry Bend designed *Animal Dance* at the Children's Theatre Company. She has designed nationally, including Playmakers Repertory Company, Detroit Public Theatre, and Southwest Shakespeare Company. She is also a puppet artist who has received a Drama Desk nomination, and has been a New York Times Critics Pick. Bend is a Professor at Duke.

Costume Designer

Trevor Bowen is proud to be a part of the team for *Corduroy*. *I Come From Arizona, Last Stop on Market Street, Three Little Birds, Spamtown U.S.A., Something Happened in Our Town* (CTC); *Weathering* (Penumbra); *Redwood* (The Jungle Theater); *BLKS, True West* (Steppenwolf); *The Day You Begin* (Kennedy Center). Trevor is a 2021-22 McKnight Theater Artist Fellow at the Playwrights' Center.

www.trevorbowendesign.com

Lighting Designer

Craig Gottschalk served as Lighting Designer for *The Best Summer Ever; Corduroy; 20,000 Leagues*; and *Animal Dance* (Children's Theatre Company). Regional credits include *Jelly's Last Jam* (Theater Latte Da); *Mary Poppins* (Artistry); *Blues in the Night; Always Patsy Cline; Bombitty of Errors*; and *Route 66* (Milwaukee Repertory Theater). Other CTC credits include projection design *Road Dahl's Matilda The Musical; Dr. Seuss's How The Grinch Stole Christmas!; The Wiz; Cinderella*; and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Assistant Lighting Designer

Andrew Vance (he/him) has previously worked on *Carmela Full of Wishes* at Children's Theatre Company. He is a Minneapolis based lighting designer who has designed all over the country. Recent credits include the Alley Theatre, Omaha Playhouse, Naples Players, 4th Wall Theatre, Classical Theatre Company, and A.D. Players. www.andrewvancelighting.com

Composer/Sound Designer

Victor Zupanc grew up in Victoria, British Columbia. He didn't have a favorite stuffed animal but he loved his sailor doll. Since 1989, Victor has been the resident Music Director/Composer at Children's Theatre Company composing music and conducting orchestras for many of your favorite productions. He has worked on over 300 plays at countless theatres across the country. He also composes for orchestras, choirs and films and his music has been performed in over a dozen countries around the world. www.victorzupanc.com

Stage Manager

Nate Stanger* is joyously returning after 3 years away. Select CTC credits include *Cinderella*; *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*; *The Abominables*; *Dr. Seuss's The Sneetches The Musical*; *Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*; and *The Jungle Book*. He has worked with such companies as the Guthrie Theater, the Ordway, and Perseverance Theatre in Juneau, Alaska.

Assistant Stage Manager

Jicarra N. Hollman has enjoyed roles in *Kumbyah: The Juneteenth Story* (Breck/Denfeld; Duluth, MN); *Secrets* (Capri Theater); and *The Energized Guyz*, a traveling show with the National Theatre for Children. Her love for theatre has also brought her into stage management. She is a Captain in the Air Force and founder of News On Purpose, a platform for Black and Brown Stories to be shared by Black and Brown bodies.

Stage Management Fellow

Phenix Rock (they/them) is a Perpich Arts High theatre grad and is excited to be a part of CTC's *Corduroy*, and to begin their professional theatre career. Phenix plans to pursue a B.A. in theatre at the University of Manitoba. Phenix has also directed *Coffee With God* at Perpich.

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's engagement and learning programs annually serve more than 93,000 young people and their communities through Theatre Arts Training, student matinees, Neighborhood Bridges, and early childhood arts education programs. 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

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Children's Theatre Company (CTC) presents *Corduroy*

WHEN: February 14 – April 2, 2023 (Opening Night is Saturday, February 18 at 7pm)

WHERE: CTC's UnitedHealth Group Stage (2400 Third Avenue South Minneapolis MN 55404)

RUNNING TIME: 90 minutes with one 15-minute intermission

AGE RECOMMENDATION: This production is best enjoyed by everyone age 4 and up. Lap passes are available for children 3 years and younger.

TICKETS: Starting at \$15 and available at childrenstheatre.org/corduroy or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400.

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