



**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Plays for New Audiences (PNA),  
Children's Theatre Company's Script Licensing Division,  
Announces New Title  
*Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science and History Mystery*  
By Suzanne Maynard Miller**

**Minneapolis, Minn.**— [Plays for New Audiences](#) (PNA), the script licensing division for the Tony Award-winning® Children's Theatre Company—the flagship theatre for young audiences in North America—is pleased to announce the availability of [Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science and History Mystery](#) by Suzanne Maynard Miller. *Mesmerized* premiered in fall 2023 at Chicago Children's Theatre, and is based on the book *Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved A Mystery that Baffled All of France* by Mara Rockliff.

"We always love the work created by our partners at Chicago Children's Theatre, but this one is especially electrifying!" said Karli Twedten, Director of Plays for New Audiences. "Suzanne expertly puts a modern spin on a historical tale while incorporating the scientific method, S.T.E.M, and critical thinking skills."

"*Mesmerized* is an imaginative adventure story that combines mystery, history, the scientific method, and the fight for female equality to bring its story to vivid life," said Children's Theatre Company Artistic Director Peter C. Brosius. "Quick witted and filled with surprises, you will never think of Benjamin Franklin the same way again!"

"A goal of any playwright is to reach the widest possible audience," said Suzanne Maynard Miller. "Because PNA excels at bringing new work to new audiences, it is thrilling and an honor to have them championing *Mesmerized!*"

**Now Available:**

[Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science and History Mystery](#)

Adapted for the stage by Suzanne Maynard Miller

Based on the Book *Mesmerized: How Ben Franklin Solved a Mystery that Baffled All of France* by Mara Rockliff

Through fabulous storytelling and fast-paced comedy, Ben Franklin and his want-to-be-inventor niece, Sarah, travel to France where they use the Scientific Method to test a mystical man's magical cure-all in *Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science and History Mystery*. Kids will laugh as they engage their minds to solve this mystery, fueled with stories about Ben Franklin's many scientific discoveries and electrifying inventions.

"... it reminds audiences, especially children, to be critical and think scientifically. It reminds us all to trust facts and not rest on belief ... In other words, be careful, so you don't find yourself mesmerized." - *Chicago Tribune*

"Suzanne Miller's lovely adaptation is a bonafide hit. The play, with its delightfully humorous characters, completely holds the attention of even the youngest theatergoer." - *Around the Town Chicago*

"...the play is a romp, with laughs for children and grownups coming from callback audio gags, knowing winks to the audience and plenty of puns." - *Block Club Chicago*

"There's a great show about a founding father onstage right now in Chicago who is not named Alexander Hamilton. *Mesmerized* offers valuable lessons on everything from the scientific method to American and French history ... delivered with smarts and empathy." - *Chicago Reader*

The World Premiere of *Mesmerized: A Ben Franklin Science and History Mystery* took place at Chicago Children's Theatre.

### **About Suzanne Maynard Miller**

Suzanne Maynard Miller is an award-winning writer whose work has been seen in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Singapore, Hong Kong, and throughout the UK.

Aside from *Mesmerized*, other projects include the musical stage adaptation of David McKee's *Elmer* (with composer Allison Leyton-Brown); Leo Lionni's *Frederick* (with composers Sarah Durkee and Paul Jacobs, "Distinguished Play Award," American Alliance for Theatre & Education, 2016); and the musical stage adaptation of the popular children's book series *Pete the Cat* (with composer Allison Leyton-Brown).

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 the Seattle, Providence, and New York City public schools, and in the Adult Correctional Institution in Rhode Island.

After graduating from University of Pennsylvania, Miller was an original company member of Annex Theater in Seattle, and went on to receive her MFA in playwriting from Brown University.

### **About Plays for New Audiences (PNA)**

Plays for New Audiences (PNA) licenses quality scripts for multigenerational audiences and actors. Written by some of the world's most extraordinary playwrights including 4 of the top 10 most-

produced Theatre for Young Audiences playwrights, PNA's 300+ show catalog features plays and musicals for any programming need. A division of [Children's Theatre Company](#), PNA offers contemporary stories and reimaged classics that are topical, relevant, and even fantastical. As a non-profit licensing company, all profits are invested back into supporting artists and creating new work.

### **About Children's Theatre Company (CTC)**

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, 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](http://childrenstheatre.org)

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