

**PRESS RELEASE****For Immediate Release: February 14, 2024****Media Contact:**

Jonathan White

[jwhite@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:jwhite@childrenstheatre.org)

612.872.5110

**Children's Theatre Company Announces Complete Cast and Creative Team for  
3-Time Tony Award®-Nominated Musical  
*A Year With Frog and Toad*  
A Children's Theatre Company Original Production**

**April 23-June 16, 2024**

**Minneapolis—February 14, 2024**—Children's Theatre Company (CTC) is delighted to announce the complete cast and creative team for *A Year With Frog and Toad*, the 3-time Tony Award®-nominated musical ("Best Book," "Best Score," and "Best Musical") that made its World Premiere at CTC in 2002 before moving to the New Victory Theater in New York, and then to the Cort Theatre on Broadway (now the James Earl Jones Theatre). Based on the "Frog and Toad" books by Arnold Lobel, *A Year With Frog and Toad* features a book and lyrics by Willie Reale, and music by Robert Reale. CTC's 2024 production will be directed by Artistic Director Peter C. Brosius, with music direction by Denise Prosek and Victor Zupanc, and choreography by Daniel Pelzig. The production will run from April 23-June 16, 2024 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage. Opening night is Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

"It is a joy to bring this tender, witty and utterly delightful story of a very special friendship to the stage," said director Peter C. Brosius. "These characters have endeared themselves to millions through Arnold Lobel's books and this musical which has gone on to be produced across the nation. It is an honor to direct this beautiful show with this fabulous cast and creative team."

*A Year With Frog and Toad* was originally presented on Broadway by Bob Boyett, Adrienne Lobel, Michael Gardner, Lawrence Horowitz and Roy Furman, featuring original direction by David Petrarca.

Meet Frog and Toad, best friends who embark upon a year's worth of adventures with great merriment, comedic agility, and joyful song-singing. Join them as they go swimming (and boy does Toad look "funny in a bathing suit"), rake leaves until they "ache, ache, ache", and send letters via a real live "Snail with the Mail!" Sing along while Frog and Toad bake "cookies, cookies, cookies" in the only show from Minnesota ever to be nominated for three Tony Awards®, including Best Musical!

*A Year With Frog and Toad* will be the final CTC production directed by Brosius, who will be departing the organization on June 30, 2024 after 27 years. It was recently announced that Rick Dildine, currently serving as Artistic Director of the Alabama Shakespeare Festival (ASF), will succeed Brosius as CTC's next Artistic Director, beginning July 1, 2024.

*A Year With Frog and Toad* runs from April 23-June 16, 2024 on the UnitedHealth Group Stage. This show is best enjoyed by all ages. Tickets may be purchased at [childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad](https://childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad) or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

The Cast of *A Year With Frog and Toad* features **Becca Claire Hart\*** as Bird/Turtle/Mother Frog/Mole/Squirrel, **Ryan London Levin\*** as Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole, **Janely Rodriguez\***

as Bird/Mouse/Young Frog/Mole/Squirrel, **Reed Sigmund\*** as Toad, and **John-Michael Zuerlein\*** as Frog.

The Understudies include **Antonisia Collins** as Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels, **Dean Holt\*** as Toad, **Autumn Ness\*** as Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels, and **Keegan Robinson** as Frog/Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole.

In addition to Denise Prosek, Victor Zupanc, and Peter C. Brosius, the Creative Team and Production Staff for *A Year With Frog and Toad* includes Adrienne Lobel (Scenic Designer), Martin Pakledinaz (Costume Designer), James F. Ingalls (Lighting Designer), Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen (Sound Designers), Irwin Fisch (Orchestrations), Sten Severson (Associate Sound Designer), Samantha Martinson (Assistant Director), Mathias Anderson (Assistant Choreographer), Ellie Simonett (Assistant Lighting Designer), Nate Stanger\* (Stage Manager), Kenji Shoemaker\* (Assistant Stage Manager), and Janae Lorick (Stage Management Fellow/PA).

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

### **Ticket Information**

Tickets may be purchased at [childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad](https://childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad) or by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400. Ticket prices start at \$15.

School groups interested in attending *A Year With Frog and Toad* can contact [schools@childrenstheatre.org](mailto:schools@childrenstheatre.org) for more information.

*A Year With Frog and Toad* has a run time of 2 hours with one 20-minute intermission.

This production is best enjoyed by all ages. Lap passes are available for children 3 and younger.

### *A Year With Frog and Toad*

is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI.

[www.mtishows.com](http://www.mtishows.com)

### ***A Year With Frog and Toad***

Based on the books by Arnold Lobel

Music by Robert Reale

Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale

Originally presented on Broadway by Bob Boyett, Adrienne Lobel, Michael Gardner, Lawrence Horowitz and Roy Furman

Original Direction by David Petrarca

Music Direction by Denise Prosek and Victor Zupanc

Choreography by Daniel Pelzig

Directed by Peter C. Brosius

A Children's Theatre Company Original Production

Now-June 16, 2024

United Health Group Stage

Best enjoyed by all ages!

### **Creative Team and Production Staff**

Scenic Designer | Adrienne Lobel

Costume Designer | Martin Pakledinaz

Lighting Designer | James F. Ingalls

Sound Designers | Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen  
 Orchestrations | Irwin Fisch  
 Associate Sound Designer | Sten Severson  
 Assistant Director | Samantha Martinson  
 Assistant Choreographer | Mathias Anderson  
 Assistant Lighting Designer | Ellie Simonett  
 Stage Manager | Nate Stanger\*  
 Assistant Stage Manager | Kenji Shoemaker\*  
 Stage Management Fellow/PA | Janae Lorick

### Cast

Bird/Turtle/Mother Frog/Mole/Squirrel | Becca Claire Hart\*  
 Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole | Ryan London Levin\*  
 Bird/Mouse/Young Frog/Mole/Squirrel | Janely Rodriguez\*  
 Toad | Reed Sigmund\*  
 Frog | John-Michael Zuerlein\*

### Understudies

Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels | Antonisia Collins  
 Toad | Dean Holt\*  
 Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels | Autumn Ness\*  
 Frog/Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole | Keegan Robinson

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

## CAST

Bird/Turtle/Mother Frog/Mole/Squirrel

### **Becca Claire Hart\***

Becca Claire Hart (she/her) leapfrogs and leaptoads back to the Children's Theatre Company! She previously worked at CTC with the casts of *An American Tail the Musical*, *Annie*, and *The Hobbit*. Other local credits include work at The Jungle Theater, The Guthrie Theater, and Theater Latté Da. For more, visit [www.BeccaHart.org](http://www.BeccaHart.org).

Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole

### **Ryan London Levin\***

Ryan London Levin (he/him) is so happy to be returning to CTC after playing Tony Toponi in *An American Tail the Musical* last summer! He has worked at many of the local stages including Chanhassen Dinner Theater, Theater Latté Da, Jungle Theater, History Theater, Yellow Tree Theatre, Park Square Theatre, MN Jewish Theater, Artistry, Trademark, SideKick Theater, Illusion Theater, and many others. FILM/TV work: *I Was There* (History Channel).

Bird/Mouse/Young Frog/Mole/Squirrel

### **Janely Rodriguez\***

Janely Rodriguez (she/they/he) hails from Miami, FL and holds a B.F.A. in Musical Theatre from Brenau University. She has enjoyed roles in *Alice in Wonderland*, *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, and *Annie* at Children's Theatre Company. They've also had the pleasure of working with other organizations throughout the Twin Cities including Theater Latté Da (*Hello, Dolly!*), Ten Thousand Things (*Iphigenia at Aulis*), and Artistry (*Shrek the Musical*, *Songs for a New World*).

Toad

**Reed Sigmund\***

Reed Sigmund is celebrating his 23<sup>rd</sup> season as a member of the CTC Acting Company, where he's appeared in shows such as *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas!*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and *Cinderella*. Recently, he's also been seen onstage at Jungle Theater and Theater Latté Da.

Frog

**John-Michael Zuerlein\***

John-Michael Zuerlein is happy to return to the CTC stage after 21 years, having last been seen here in *Honk!* in 2003. Credits include the National Tour of *Mamma Mia!* and regional productions of *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Falsettos*, *Smokey Joe's Cafe*, and various others. Proud member of Actors' Equity Association.

### UNDERSTUDIES

Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels

**Antonisia Collins**

Antonisia Collins is from Montgomery, Alabama. She has enjoyed roles in *Into the Woods* (Auburn University Department of Theatre and Dance/Gouge Performing Arts Center), *Detroit' 67* (AUTD), and *Four Little Girls* (Alabama Shakespeare Festival). She holds a B.F.A. from Auburn University.

Toad

**Dean Holt\***

Dean is excited to be swimming in the pond again for *A Year with Frog and Toad!* He is a member of CTC's Acting Company (1994-present), appearing in more than 120 memorable productions in his time at CTC, as well as a two-time Ivey Award winner and recipient of the St. John's University Alumni Achievement Award for outstanding work in his field.

Birds/Turtle/Mouse/Mother Frog/Young Frog/Moles/Squirrels

**Autumn Ness\***

Autumn Ness (she/her) is celebrating her 24<sup>th</sup> season as a member of the CTC Acting Company! A few of her favorite CTC shows include; *Babble Lab*, *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Annie*, *Cinderella*, *Road Dahl's Matilda The Musical*, *The Biggest Little House in the Forest*, *The Jungle Book*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Autumn is a recipient of the 2018 TCG Fox Foundation Fellowship, the 2020 MRAC Next Step Fund, and the 2022 MN State Arts Board Creative Support Grant.

Frog/Bird/Snail/Lizard/Father Frog/Mole

**Keegan Robinson**

Keegan Robinson (he/they) is thrilled to be rounding out his season as a Performing Apprentice with this delightful show. At CTC, he has previously enjoyed roles in *Alice in Wonderland*, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Corduroy*, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical*, and *Dr. Seuss's The Sneetches The Musical*. He holds a B.A. from the University of Minnesota.

### CREATIVE TEAM AND PRODUCTION STAFF

Book and Lyrics

**Willie Reale**

Willie Reale co-wrote *A Year With Frog and Toad* with his brother, Robert Reale, which premiered at CTC and moved to Broadway. Mr. Reale was nominated for two Tony Awards for book and lyrics. Willie was

nominated for an Academy Award and has won three Emmys. He has written and produced a number of television dramas including *Billions* and *The Sinner*.

Composer

**Robert Reale**

Robert Reale co-wrote *A Year With Frog and Toad* with his brother, Willie Reale, which had its premiere at CTC back in 2002 and subsequently moved to Broadway where it was nominated for three Tony Awards®. He has written numerous musicals with his brother, including *Johnny Baseball* (ART) and *Once Around The City* (Second Stage). He scores films, documentaries, and tv and his currently running main title themes include *Dateline* (NBC) and *What Would You Do?* (ABC).

Director

**Peter Brosius**

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.

Music Director

**Denise Prosek**

Denise Prosek is grateful to return to Children's Theatre Company. As co-founder of Theater Latté Da, she has music directed fifty productions as well as directing for Guthrie Theatre and Theater Mu among others. Denise was honored to be named a 2013-14 Playwrights' Center McKnight Theater Artist Fellow.

Music Director / Conductor

**Victor Zupanc**

Victor Zupanc has been the resident music director/composer at Children's Theatre Company since 1989, composing music and conducting orchestras for many of your favorite productions. He has worked on over 300 plays at countless theaters 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. [victorzupanc.com](http://victorzupanc.com)

Choreographer

**Daniel Pelzig**

Danny Pelzig returns to CTC having choreographed the original production of *A Year with Frog and Toad*. Broadway credits: *33 Variations* starring Jane Fonda, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, and the Kennedy Center Sondheim Festival production of *Sweeney Todd* starring Brian Stokes Mitchell and Christine Baranski. He has choreographed at the Metropolitan Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago and Los Angeles Opera and directed at Santa Fe Opera, Opera Philadelphia, and Houston Grand Opera. He served as Resident Choreographer for Boston Ballet and Joffrey II Dancers. He is currently a Professor of Dance, Theatre and Opera at Boston Conservatory at Berklee.

Original Direction

**David Petrarca**

David has directed over 40 world premieres in theatre, as well as extensive television and film work. He was resident director at the Goodman Theatre from 1988 until 2002. He directed the World Premiere of *A Year With Frog And Toad* on Broadway (Tony Nomination, Best Musical). He was one of only six recipients of a TCG/NEA Director Fellowship and has served as associate artistic director for the Cincinnati Playhouse and the Chelsea Theatre Centre in New York City, and on the NEA Theatre Panel. In 1996, Mr. Petrarca was chosen by the Chicago Tribune as a Chicagoan of the Year.

#### Scenic Designer

##### **Adrienne Lobel**

Adrienne Lobel was a preeminent stage designer for four decades. Her work has been seen on and off Broadway, at The Metropolitan Opera, and in theatres and opera houses all over America and Europe. In the year 2000, she decided to produce a musical based on her father's stories. She sent a script that she commissioned, a CD of five songs, and sketches of the set to Children's Theatre Company. Currently, she paints. [www.adriannelobel.com](http://www.adriannelobel.com)

#### Costume Designer

##### **Martin Pakledinaz**

Martin received two Tony Awards® for his work on the Broadway revival of *Kiss Me, Kate* and the original Broadway production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* and was honored with eight additional Tony® nominations. His other Broadway credits include: *Chaplin*, *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (Tony® nomination), *The Normal Heart*, *Anything Goes* (Tony nomination), *Lend Me a Tenor* (Hewes Award, Tony® and Outer Critics nominations), *Blithe Spirit* (Tony® nomination), and *The Pajama Game* (Tony® nomination).

#### Lighting Designer

##### **James F. Ingalls**

James F. Ingalls' recent work includes the lighting designs for *Anima Animus* (Dutch National Ballet), *Bespoke* (Houston Ballet), *Twyla Joyce!* (Joyce/New York), *Beatrice di Tenda* (National Opera of Paris), *Médée* (Staatsoper Unter den Linden/Berlin), *Music to Accompany a Departure* (LA Master Chorale tour), *Druid O'Casey* (Druid/Galway, Ireland).

#### Sound Design

##### **Rob Milburn and Michael Bodeen**

Broadway credits include sound for *Sweat*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *A Year with Frog and Toad*, *The Song of Jacob Zulu*, and *The Grapes of Wrath*. They have also created music and sound Off-Broadway, at many of America's resident theatres and at several international venues.

#### Associate Sound Designer

##### **Sten Severson**

Sten is delighted to return to CTC where he has designed many shows including *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*, *Last Stop on Market Street*, and *Sneetches*. Selected credits include *Hair* and *The Merchant of Venice* on Broadway; *In the Heights* and *Avenue Q* National Tours. *Hamlet* and *King Lear* at the Delacorte theatre; *The Total Bent* and *Venice* at the Public Theater; *Family Album* at OSF; *Othello* at San Diego's Old Globe; *Choir of Man* in the West End. Sten has taught sound design at the Yale School of Drama and NYU's Tisch School for the Arts. He is currently an Audio Video Consultant with the firm Schuler Shook designing the next generation of performance venues.

#### Assistant Director

##### **Samantha Martinson**

Samantha Martinson (she/her) recently directed staged readings of *Escapegoat* (Jungle Theater) and *Casey and Diana* (American Players Theater). She assistant directed *Artemisia* (Forward Theater) and *Ring Round the Moon* (APT). She has directed at Carthage College, Marquette University, Sunstone Studios, and Milwaukee Chamber. Learn more about her work at [samanthamartinson.com](http://samanthamartinson.com).

#### Assistant Choreographer

##### **Mathias Anderson**

Mathias Anderson (he/him) has worked at the Guthrie Theater, The Ordway, The Chanhassen Dinner Theater, History Theater, Denver Center, Stages St. Louis, Minnesota Orchestra, Children's Theatre Company, Public Theater, and The Actors Fund. He performed with the Rockettes in *The Radio City Christmas Spectacular*, and *Empire The Musical* (Broadway Workshop). Mathias holds a B.F.A. from the

University of Minnesota.

Assistant Lighting Designer

**Ellie Simonett**

Ellie Simonett (she/her) worked on *An American Tail the Musical*, *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* ('22, '23), *Bina's Six Apples*, and *Diary of a Wimpy Kid the Musical* at Children's Theatre Company, and is excited to return. She has also worked with New Native Theatre, the Minnesota Opera, and other organizations around the Twin Cities.

Stage Manager

**Nate Stanger\***

Nate Stanger (he/him), a long-time *Frog and Toad* fan, is honored to bring this CTC classic back to the stage. Favorite CTC credits include *Dr. Seuss's How the Grinch Stole Christmas (2017, 2018, 2023)*, *Corduroy*, *Cinderella*, *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

**Kenji Shoemaker\***

Kenji Shoemaker (he/they) is a stage manager and props designer based in Minneapolis. Recent credits include: Theater Mu, Guthrie Theater, American Players Theatre, Stages Theatre Company, and Pillsbury House Theater, among others. When not at CTC, Kenji also works in the shop at Minnesota Opera, and teaches at Macalester College.

Stage Management Fellow/PA

**Janae Lorick**

Janae Lorick (they/them) has created onstage, offstage, and even outside in *The Buddha Prince* (TigerLion Arts). Just finishing *Fargo Allegro* (Nightfall Productions), they are excited to work with Children's Theatre Company for their 2023-2024 Season. They hold a B.A. in Theater and Race and Ethnic Studies from St. Olaf College.

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

**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 nearly 250,000 people annually. CTC is the only theatre focused on young audiences to win the Special Tony® Award for Outstanding 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 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](http://childrenstheatre.org)

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** *A Year With Frog and Toad*

Based on the books by Arnold Lobel

Music by Robert Reale

Book and Lyrics by Willie Reale

Originally presented on Broadway by Bob Boyett, Adrienne Lobel, Michael Gardner, Lawrence Horowitz and Roy Furman

Original Direction by David Petrarca

Music Direction by Denise Prosek and Victor Zupanc

Choreography by Daniel Pelzig

Directed by Peter C. Brosius

A Children's Theatre Company Original Production

April 23-June 16, 2024

United Health Group Stage

Best enjoyed by all ages!

**WHEN:** Now-June 16, 2024 (Opening Night is Saturday, April 27, 2024 at 7:00pm)

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

**AGE RECOMMENDATION:** This production is best enjoyed by all ages. Lap passes are available for children 3 years and younger.

**RUNNING TIME:** 2 hours with one 20-minute intermission.

**TICKETS:** Starting at \$15 and available at [childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad](https://childrenstheatre.org/frog-toad) by calling the ticket office at 612.874.0400.

# # #