

Children's Theatre Company

BEHIND THE CURTAIN BEYOND THE STAGE

SPRING | 2025

Photo of Toussaint Francois Battiste in *Milo Imagines the World* Kaitlin Randolph

Meet Olaf and Sven!

How two beloved Frozen characters came to life at CTC

Children's Theatre Company has transformed into the magical kingdom of Arendelle this spring! Through our original production of Disney's Frozen, audiences of all ages are experiencing the magic of ice castles with Queen Elsa and adventure with Princess Anna and Kristoff. They are also giggling with two particular fan favorites: Olaf the snowman and Sven the reindeer.

Thanks to the generosity of friends and donors like you, CTC has the tools and resources needed to build expertly crafted puppets like Olaf and Sven entirely in-house. Read on to learn more about how your support helped our Props and Costumes/Crafts teams bring these puppets from a single sketch by designer Eric Van Wyk to fully developed characters!

Olaf

Before Olaf was melting our hearts on stage, his original prototype design started as a combination of seed bags for his body and an ice cream bucket for his head! Since then, Eric Van Wyk and CTC Props Artisan Amy J. Reddy have refined him into the loveable snowman we see during the show. The final



puppet is built with a thick Minicel foam and covered in a stretchy white velour fabric to give Olaf his shimmery snowy texture. Olaf's legs and lower section are attached to parts of puppeteer Laura Marie's costume, while it takes both hands to operate Olaf's head and arms. This makes it easy for Olaf to move and dance across the stage—and maybe rearrange himself every so often!



FUN FACT

Olaf's head was shaped around a large plastic Easter egg, and his eyes were created using recycled Christmas ornaments and vintage glass buttons!

Sven

To create Sven, Kristoff's loyal reindeer friend, it took the work of multiple team members in CTC's shops to build the combination of a puppet and full-body costume for puppeteer Adam Jones.

CTC Props Artisans Christopher Engstrom and Laura Wilhelm created Sven out of 1/4" steel rod, a backpack, wood, and mesh fabric to blend Jones into the body of the reindeer. Meanwhile, Jones uses his right arm to control Sven's head movements while his left arm maneuvers Sven's back legs.



FUN FACT

Designer Eric Van Wyk pulled inspiration from traditional Nordic folk art to incorporate into the details of Sven!

See both characters in action at CTC's production of Disney's *Frozen*!
Tickets are selling fast, so visit childrenstheatre.org to save your spot today!

Costume sketches by Erik Van Wyk, photos by Kaitlin Randolph and Glen Stubbe Photography

Empowering Young Artists

How CTC utilizes student acting coaching to support youth performers

Our mission at CTC is to create extraordinary theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire young people and their communities. It is at the core of every production on our stage, every lesson in our classrooms, and every day of our rehearsal process, where we have the privilege of working with young actors throughout the season.



Amanda Espinoza
Theatre Arts Training Manager

For many student actors, a production at CTC may be their first step into the world of professional theatre, and we have the opportunity to provide them with the tools they need to feel empowered and confident on and off stage. We caught up with Student Acting Coach Amanda Espinoza to learn more about how she serves as a collaborator and resource for young actors in the rehearsal room.

What does your role as Student Acting Coach entail, and how are you utilized during the rehearsal process?

My role is to teach and guide students' acting, voice, and physical skills to create a compelling performance. I work with the creative team and director to set goals and ensure the actors' interpretations align with the overall vision of the play.

How long has CTC offered this as a resource to young actors?

I began this work in the 2022-2023 Season. Company members and performance apprentices would fulfill these roles, but you can imagine they get very busy when they're also working on the show. This way, I can come in and support the production team and young artists without adding more to a full plate.

What are some common practices you use to support young actors throughout the rehearsal process and during the run of a show?

First, our stage management teams here at CTC are phenomenal. It's incredible to be part of what they have established in the room to support young artists, and I follow much of their foundation—check-ins, warmups, and cool downs. Doing eight-10 shows a week while balancing school can be draining, and it's vital we check in with students on what they need to feel successful to complete show duties and their goals outside of the theatre. CTC helps develop fantastic young artists, but also well-rounded individuals.

How do you hope student acting coaching benefits the young performers on our stages—both now and in their futures?

Student acting coaching is educational for our young artists. Each new show and director come with change, and providing guidance in various approaches to plays or musicals will always be beneficial. I constantly remind myself and the students that we will always be learning, and that I hope they move as tourists through life; to see, listen, question, and challenge themselves.

A Word from Our 2024-2025 Season Student Actors and Parents



Olivia Lampert in *Drawing Lessons*

"It has been exciting to see how **Olivia** has grown as an actor through her work at CTC. She has had the benefit of working with and learning from amazingly talented staff actors and other actors in the industry. They have been her teachers, mentors, and coaches over the years, not just helping her become a better performer, but also as she has navigated college applications and auditions. She has taken what she has learned from the acting and creative staff, and used those skills as a teaching artist, high school acting mentor, and student director."

- Renee and Mark Lampert,
CTC student actor parents

"I learned how to engage with the crowd and had a great experience performing and singing with the other cast members."

- **Cortlan** Gosa, Milo understudy,
Milo Imagines the World



Cortlan Gosa in *Milo Imagines the World*



Mars Niemi in *Drawing Lessons*

"**Mars** got to work with top notch professional actors and directors in a professional theatre company and the staff they got to work with were excellent! Mars had the opportunity to learn from Amanda; the illustrator, Blue Delliquanti; and the stage management team, who were all very supportive of Mars' growth as an actor. Mars is a senior now, graduating soon from high school, but this experience helped Mars gain so much confidence as they embark on further studies in a B.F.A program in college. We are forever grateful!"

- Momoko Niemi,
CTC student actor parent

Currently, you can see the work of several young performers in Disney's *Frozen*, and this summer, teen performers in CTC's Theatre Arts Training camps are preparing to collaborate with Espinoza on the upcoming Triple Threat production of *Twelfth Night*. Keep an eye out on childrenstheatre.org for tickets!



A Theatre for Everyone

Your generosity is providing low-cost experiences for local children and families

As the national leader in theatre for young people and their communities, we at CTC firmly believe that the arts have the power to build connections, strengthen bonds, and transform lives through the stories we are privileged to share. Whether children are seeing a show or taking a theatre class, young people can rely on the arts to develop critical life skills like teamwork, empathy, and compassion—skills that will empower them to become our next generation of leaders and changemakers.

Every child and family deserves to have access to these life-changing experiences—and **thanks to you, that's possible every day at CTC.** Your generosity is supporting CTC's ACT Pass program, ensuring our theatre remains a place of welcome for every member of our community.

Student Matinees

Thanks to you, CTC can host student matinees at reduced ticket prices for schools across the region. This season, 95 performances ensured nearly 60,000 children could access the arts at little to no cost to schools and families.

"My students have had the opportunity to attend plays at CTC. They have benefited enormously! I am grateful for all you do in expanding their minds and exploring important issues in their lives."

—Twin Cities public school teacher

Low-Cost Tickets

Your continued support ensures 11,000+ children and families receive \$5 tickets to CTC productions throughout the season, helping us to eliminate barriers to experiencing the magic of live theatre.

"The ACT Pass has made theatre affordable. It's given me the opportunity to take my children (and the children in my care) to see themselves represented on stage. We've taken the opportunity to see a variety of shows and the kids really look forward to it."

—CTC patron

Scholarships

From our earliest learners to high school students, every child and teen can find a Theatre Arts Training camp at CTC that sparks their creativity. And because of you, we can provide scholarships of up to 80% off tuition for 150+ students every year.

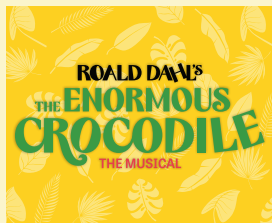
"My kids really enjoyed camp and would not have had the experience if it weren't for scholarship. We have amazing experiences thanks to the ACT Pass."

—CTC summer camp parent





Thanks to your generosity, we are thrilled to present these seven legendary theatre experiences in our **2025-2026 SEASON!**



Help us spread the joy! Share this lineup with your community, buy a ticket subscription for the season, or even gift tickets for each show to those who love the magic of theatre as much as you do.

Visit childrenstheatre.org to learn more.

We hope to see you at the theatre again soon!



CELESTIAL TIDES

2025 CURTAIN CALL BALL

Save the Date!

September 6, 2025