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CATCO is Kids, Columbus Children's Theatre Announce 2020 Collaboration

Central Ohio's premiere youth theatre companies to co-produce Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical

CATCO is Kids and Columbus Children's Theatre, the region's premiere youth theatre organizations, announced today they will co-produce *Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical*, winner of multiple Tony and Olivier awards, May 7-24, 2020. The collaboration is a first for the two groups and the beginning of what leaders of both organizations hope will pave the way for additional partnerships in the future.

"We believe our products for families and young audiences will be stronger and our opportunities to connect with our audiences will be greater if we work together, pooling our resources to create larger and bolder productions than what either of us would be able to produce individually," said Joe Bishara, who oversees all programming and production at CATCO is Kids. Bishara also is the associate producing director at CATCO, CATCO is Kids' adult theatre partner.

"The future sustainability and growth of our organizations and the broader arts community will be contingent on smart partnerships and efforts to eliminate program redundancy between organizations. This partnership will showcase the best attributes of Columbus Children's Theatre and CATCO is Kids for the next generation of arts patrons," said Susan Pringle, executive director of Columbus Children's Theatre. "We're excited to team up with CATCO is Kids on this Columbus premiere," she said.

During the fall of 2019, Columbus Children's Theatre will partner with Short North Stage on a production of *West Side Story*. Previously, CCT and Short North Stage have collaborated on *Jackie & Me* in 2016. CCT has been fortunate to collaborate with organizations across Central Ohio including the YMCA of Central Ohio, The Dublin Abbey Theater, The McConnell Arts Center, United Schools Network, and BalletMet.

In May CATCO is Kids will partner with Columbus School for Girls to co-produce *Haroun and the Sea*

of Stories. The two co-produced *Anne of Green Gables* during the 2016-17 season. CATCO is Kids also has collaborated with the McCoy Center For The Arts in New Albany last summer with the production of *Mary Poppins JR*. The two will partner again this summer to produce *Willy Wonka JR*.

Matilda The Musical, inspired by the genius of Roald Dahl, is the captivating masterpiece from the Royal Shakespeare Company that revels in the anarchy of childhood, the power of imagination and the story of a young girl who dreams of a better life. The tale of Matilda, a special child with an extraordinary imagination, has delighted audiences young and old since its premiere on London's West End in 2011 and on Broadway in 2013.

CATCO is Kids and CCT will generate awareness for the upcoming co-production through educational offerings and additional events through the rest of 2019 and the first half of 2020 leading up to the show. Details about these programs, as well audition and show information about *Matilda The Musical*, will be available in the coming weeks on the organizations' websites, catcoiskids.org and columbuschildrenstheatre.org.

All performances will be held in the Shedd Theatre, Columbus Performing Arts Center, 549 Franklin Ave.

Columbus Children's Theatre, CATCO, and CATCO is Kids seasons are supported by The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund both theatres with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and both are supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

In addition, the Columbus Foundation supports both Columbus Children's Theatre and CATCO and CATCO is Kids with the latter receiving support of the Helen E. Sandfort Arts-in-Education and Florence E.K. Hurd Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens.

Columbus Children's Theatre, CATCO, and CATCO is Kids each receive support from the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973, and additional support from The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

Columbus Children's Theatre would also like to thank PNC Arts Alive for presenting their accessible offerings for 2019.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids' season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library; and media sponsor is WOSU public media. CATCO is Kids' presenting partner is The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks.

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages with CATCO is Kids, CATCO's imaginative, captivating theatre program for central Ohio's young theatre lovers and their families. Together, the theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development

CATCO Mission Statement

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org.

COLUMBUS CHILDREN'S THEATRE Mission Statement

Transforming families through the power of the stage.

About COLUMBUS CHILDREN'S THEATRE

At Columbus Children's Theatre we educate and involve young people of all backgrounds in the theatre arts. Through our programs we foster self-esteem and self-discovery by emphasizing discipline, integrity, team-building, and communication skills in a positive and creative environment. We promote access to theatre arts for families who do not have regular opportunities to appreciate theatre in their lives because of either economic, cultural, or other barriers.

For more information, visit **ColumbusChildrensTheatre.org**