



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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CATCO is Kids Presents *Garfield: The Musical with Cattitude* March 2-11

Musical features heartwarming story about beloved tabby cat

Garfield, the chubby and sarcastic tabby cat, wants to have the best birthday ever. But his friends, Arlene, Odie, Jon, and even his nemesis, Nermal, seem to have forgotten the special event. Meowch! Garfield runs away, but quickly learns an important life lesson – that “home is where the heart ... and the food is.”

Garfield’s birthday adventure filled with songs and dance, performed by adult and children actors, will be performed at CATCO is Kids March 2-11, 2018, at the Columbus Performing Arts Center, Van Fleet Theatre, 549 Franklin Ave. Tickets are \$15 for adults; \$10 for kids.

“Who doesn’t love Garfield? *The Musical with Cattitude* transports the beloved tabby cat of cartoon fame into a kid-sized musical full of entertainment and lessons about the importance of family and friends,” said Joe Bishara, CATCO producing director. “Though created with kids of all ages in mind, *Garfield* presents a wonderful opportunity to introduce young children to theatre.”

To familiarize children with the play before they attend and enrich their experience afterward, parents can access CATCO is Kids’ play guide for *Garfield: A Musical with Cattitude*, with book by Michael J. Bobbitt and Jim Davis and music and lyrics by John L. Cornelius II. The guide can be found at: <http://catco.org/catco-is-kids/2017-2018/garfield>

The role of Garfield will be played by Ben Hartwig, a former CATCO acting apprentice who performed in *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Wolf Tales*, *A Christmas Carol* and *Forever Plaid*. He also has performed at Actors Theatre, Weathervane Playhouse and Evolution Theatre Company.

He is joined by Annie Huckaba (Arlene), and Candice Kight (Odie) and Nolan Thomaswick (Jon), current CATCO art education apprentices for the 2017-18 season. Huckaba, a former CATCO acting apprentice, recently appeared in CATCO is Kids production of *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Musical*. Other recent credits include swing/vocal captain in *It’s a Wonderful Life*, and *Dreamland Drive-In* both at Dollywood. Kight, who recently appeared in CATCO is Kids’ production of *Daddy Long Legs* and *Madeline’s Christmas*, has performed with theatre companies throughout Ohio. Thomaswick recently appeared in CATCO is Kids’ production of *Knuffle Bunny: A Cautionary Musical* and *Madeline’s Christmas*.

They are joined by Bailey Richmond (Nermal), a fifth grader at Royal Manor Elementary in Gahanna. Credits include performances at Star Performance Academy, State of the Art Productions and her school drama club.

Directing *Garfield: The Musical with Cattitude* is Andrew Protopapas, CATCO and CATCO is Kids artist educator and a former acting apprentice at the theatre. Directing credits include *A Seussified Christmas Carol* and *The Kids on the Block* touring puppet programs at CATCO is Kids. Acting credits include

Honk!, The Jungle Book, Master Class, Les Misérables and Picasso at the Lapin Agile.

Show times for *Garfield* are Friday, March 2 and March 9, at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, March 3 and March 10, at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.; and Sunday, March 4 and March 11, at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids' 33rd season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the James W. Overstreet Fund of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city's artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids' season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library. CATCO is Kids' presenting partner is The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks; media partner is WOSU Public Media. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org.

CATCO is Kids remaining shows for the 2017-18 season are:

- ***The Throne of Oz***
Based on Frank Baum's *The Marvelous Land of Oz*
Adapted by Chris Leyva
May 4-13, 2018
Shedd Theatre, CPAC
549 Franklin Ave.

Remaining shows at CATCO for the 2017-18 season are:

- **The Realistic Jones**
By Will Eno
March 7-25, 2018
Studio One, Riffe Center
77 S. High St.
- **Educating Rita**
By Willy Russell
April 11-29, 2018
Studio Two, Riffe Center
77 S. High St.
- **Aspects of Love**
Book and music by Andrew Lloyd Webber
Lyrics by Don Black and Charles Hart
From David Garnett's novel
May 30-June 17, 2018
Studio One, Riffe Center
77 S. High St.

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio's professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org. Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. 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.

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