

2023-2024 PERFORMING ARTS SEASON

R

PLAYBILL

THE REIF

NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023
WILCOX THEATER

REIF THEATER ARTS
PRESENTS

ROALD DAHL'S

Matilda

THE MUSICAL JR.



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Music & Lyrics by
TIM MINCHIN

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Welcome to The Reif! We are so happy to have you join us for a dynamic live performing arts experience.

We have an exciting line-up of shows this fall and into the holiday season. It is my goal to create a diverse program selection so that there will be something for everyone. Our programming committee meets to look at touring shows and a great deal of thought and research goes into making the selections for our community each year. In addition to touring shows, we also feature local talent fostered right here at The Reif. This fall we are proud to present Matilda Jr. (Reif Theater Arts) and The Nutcracker (Reif Dance).

For the rest of our season (events through June), you will find family shows, Grammy award-winning musicians, holiday traditions, and some special selections that are sure to amaze you. It is our hope that you find something that interests you—or take a chance on something new!

Don't forget to come early so that you can hear the incredible pre-show talent in our Fireside Music series, shop in the Donna Marie Gift Shop in the lobby, and enjoy a snack and beverage from the Lakeside café (food and drink purchased at our café may be brought into the theater).

Enjoy your experience at The Reif and please let us know if you have questions or suggestions on how we can better serve you!



**Reif Executive Director
Shantel Dow**



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The Loggy Dome

ROALD DAHL'S Matilda THE MUSICAL JR.

Directed and choreographed by Katie E. Smith

Music Director Rachel Giebner
 Assistant Directors Glen Key & Mike Wagner
 Stage Manager Amy Stovall

CAST

Matilda Poppy Kreitzer
 Miss Trunchbull. Noah Jetland
 Miss Honey Anja Beck
 Bruce. Benny Jurvelin
 Eric Callan Rutherford
 Tommy Maddux Edminster
 Nigel Henry Sween
 Amanda. Ella Monson
 Lavender Addie Benes
 Alice Haivia Thoennes
 Hortensia. Gracelyn DeVries
 Mr. Wormwood Andrew Keating
 Mrs. Wormwood Dakira Dagenais
 Michael Wormwood Calvin Mann
 Mrs. Phelps Emma Coronado-Rands
 Acrobat Anna Kopacek
 Escapologist. Genevieve Mariano
 Rodolpho. Brayden Meyer
 Big Kid 1 Claire Reilly
 Big Kid 2 Sophie Kostiuik
 Big Kid 3 Makea Niewind
 Sergei. Linnea Ljosenvoor
 Mechanic. Peyton Litchke
 Cook Adriana Kabotoff

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ENSEMBLE

Mackenzie Almendinger	Luella Heldt	Brayden Meyer
Claire Anderson	Lucie Jackson	Lyla Michels
Emily Arbour	Kaiden Johnston	Brynn Mundahl
Jasper Aultman	Kinlee Johnston	Celeste Myers
Mavis Bujold	Kylie Johnston	Makea Niewind
Riley Churchill	Adriana Kabotoff	Marley Olson
Malayah Conner	Lucy Kabotoff	Natalie Oslin
Emma Coronado-Rands	Nina Karjalainen	Sky Payne
Anna Belle Daigle	Anna Kopacek	Samantha Pederson
Levi Daigle	Sophie Kostiuk	Canella Popham
Abigayle Edwards	William Kuehn	Claire Reilly
Robbie Elj	Olive L'Amie	Elsie Roberts
Graham Elsen	Paige Litchke	Sydney Rondeau
Gabby Emerson	Peyton Litchke	Avery Schultz
Alayna Felosi	Linnea Ljosenvoor	Analise Spahn
Karis Gambill	Lila Lowden	Kalea Story
Zelda Gephart	Goldie Lowney	Autumn Thompson
Addie Grife	Calvin Mann	Madelyn Trunt
Niyah Hayward	Ruby Mariano	Stella Tschida

REIF DANCERS

Kendall Gunderson	Ayden Schauer	Elisabeth Moberg
Genevieve Mariano	Elia Maki	Lillian Stark

Roald Dahl's *Matilda The Musical* JR. is presented through special arrangement with
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THE CREW

Set and Lighting Design.	John Miller
Audio Programming	Melanie McCoy
Video and Amanda Animation.	Kevin McCoy
Power Point Design	John Miller
Sound and Video Operator	Mila Adams
Student Techs	Kyra Dormanen & DeShawn Nason
Spotlight Operator.	Hunter Hemmila
Lighting Crew	Melanie McCoy, Crystal McCoy, Greg Johnson
Set Construction	Greg Johnson, Melanie McCoy, Buzz McCulloch
Prop Construction.	Alissa Tschida, Dave Kreitzer, Melanie McCoy
Fly Crew	Greg Johnson
Additional Set Crew.	David Martin
Photography	Jenni Mariano

SET PAINTING

Anja Beck	Lucie Jackson	Lucy Kabotoff	Makea Niewind
Katie Benes	Kinlee Johnston	Glen Key	Callan Rutherford
Emma Coronado- Rands	Kylie Johnston	Poppy Kreitzer	Ayden Schauer
Dakira Dagenais	Noah Jetland	Eric Ljosenvoor	Katie Smith
	Benny Jurvelin	Calvin Mann	Lucian Stratton
	Adriana Kabotoff	Nik McCluskey	

COSTUMES

Sammi Benson	Morgan Lowden	Sarah Spahn	Jenni Mariano
Dara Michels	Amy Savela	Amy Stovall	Cathy Shields
	Rachel Giebner	Nancy Kopacek	

SCENES

PROLOGUE: BIRTHDAY PARTY

Miracle

SCENE I: THE WORMWOOD HOUSE

SCENE II: MATILDA'S BEDROOM (& BATHROOM)

Naughty

SCENE III: THE LIBRARY (& CIRCUS)

SCENE IV: THE SCHOOL GATES

School Song

SCENE IV (b): MISS HONEY'S CLASSROOM

SCENE IV (c): TRUNCHBULL'S OFFICE

The Hammer

SCENE V: THE WORMWOOD HOUSE

Naughty/Superglue

SCENE VI: THE PLAYGROUND AT SCHOOL

Chokey Chant

SCENE VII: WORMWOOD MOTORS

SCENE VIII: THE WORMWOOD HOUSE

This Little Girl

SCENE IX: THE LIBRARY (& CIRCUS)

SCENE X: THE LUNCHROOM

Bruce

SCENE XI: THE LIBRARY (& CIRCUS)

— INTERMISSION —

SCENE XII: A PARK

When I Grow Up

SCENE XIII: THE WORMWOOD HOUSE (& STORY)

SCENE XIV: SCHOOL GYMNASIUM

The Smell of Rebellion

SCENE XIV (b): MISS HONEY'S HOUSE

SCENE XV: MISS HONEY'S CLASS ROOM

Revolting Children

SCENE XV (b): A FEW DAYS LATER

EPILOGUE

BOWS



What a delight it has been to see this show come together. This beautiful though slightly gloomy tale has brought together the energy of 76 young artists, the creativity of the most amazing tech crew. This production is a true testament to what can be accomplished when community minded people work together.

John Miller, our tech director, has created the most incredible set design we have ever had for one of our youth productions. It incorporates so many moving parts and special touches that make this show simply stunning. The entire tech crew of the Reif has poured hours and weeks into building this show. I am so grateful and proud to work with each of them. Greg, Melanie, Buzz, Crystal, and Eric. Thank you for everything you have done to make this show a masterpiece.

Of course I could not do this job without the undying support of the production team. Rachel Giebner has lead this cast to great musical heights. My assistant directors, Glen Key and Mike Magner have been by

my side to keep the kids focused and to make sure the pieces fit together. Amy Stovall keeps things running smoothly backstage and cares for these kids at all times. Amy Savela and the incredible team of volunteers who worked on altering, steaming, and polishing up the costumes have made the stage look so sharp and given the cast the final piece to become their characters. It takes a village and I have the best village around!

Finally, a youth theatre production would be nothing without an amazing cast of kids. I am blown away by the enthusiasm and dedication of these young artists. I am so proud of the work they have done and the progress they have made. Thank you kids, for being the best part of my job!

And thank you, the audience, for being here to support these young artists. Please enjoy the show!

Katie E. Smith



A promotional graphic for MPR News. The background is dark. On the left, a woman with dark, curly hair (Angela Davis) is looking towards the camera. On the right, a woman with short blonde hair and glasses (Cathy Wurzer) is wearing a headset and smiling. The text is overlaid on the image in white and blue.

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Santa's Village Get to know Greg Johnson

Behind the Scenes – November, 2023

by: John Miller, Technical Director



**Technical Director
John Miller**

I'm a Grinch! I have a lot more in common with Ebenezer Scrooge than Bob Cratchit. If I were in a Japanese monster movie I'd be Christmaszilla! I exaggerate (slightly), but when Shantel announced that she wanted to do a Santa's Village at the Reif Center, I was not enthusiastic at first.



Shantel has wanted to do a Santa's Village at the Reif Center for a long time. She says, "Santa's Village is a festive kick-off to the holiday season. The focus is on children and seeing the wonder and excitement in their eyes this time of year. It's fun to let the children choose their gifts for a parent or grandparent. When I first participated in an event like this many years ago, my 4 year old son chose a gravy boat for his dad. He heard the word 'boat' and he had to have that for his dad."

Santa's Village takes over the entire Reif Center. The heart of it is in the Ives Studio Theater where we set up the Kids Shoppe. This is where Santa's Elves help each child pick out a gift for a loved one and have it wrapped. Mom and Dad can take a quick walk through then enjoy a cup of coffee and a cookie in the lobby while they wait.

In the lobby kids can take a picture with Santa and Mrs. Claus and get a cookie

and lemonade from the café. In the theater classroom children can complete a craft project then head into the Wilcox Theater where Reif Dancers will greet everyone and pose for pictures on the Nutcracker set with the kids.

The crew's main responsibility is to turn the Ives into the North Pole, and I chose to delegate this important task to Greg and Melanie. Besides needing to set up tables for the gifts and a wrapping station they were given carte blanche to do whatever they wanted to do. They knocked it out of the park with string lights, gobos and giant inflatables.

Greg has really taken Santa's Village to heart. He's a big thrift store fanatic and all year long he's been buying up more Christmas inflatables and other surprises to make this year's village even bigger and better. What better time than an article about Santa's Village to learn a bit more about Greg!

Volunteers make the difference.

The Reif Arts Council is incredibly grateful to all of our volunteers. Our friendly and dedicated crew helps us as ushers, ticket-takers, greeters, café workers and more. Their time and commitment makes each performance at the Reif Center a success.



THANK
YOU!



How did you come to work at the Reif Center?

My journey to the Reif began in early 1980. I was watching a TV show on PBS called 3-2-1 Contact because my favorite band - KISS - was going to be featured on it. During the program, they were showing various parts of the load-in for a KISS concert. I was fascinated and thought it would be cool to do that someday. A few years later I graduated high school, did a stint in the Navy, and then worked in the restaurant industry for about 20 years. I met John, the Reif Technical Director, around 2006 or so. When I found out what he did for a living, I told him that I'd love to be a roadie for a day. I got my chance in Sept 2007 when John asked if I'd like to work the Pink Floyd Experience show. That was a great show to learn the ins and outs of being the local crew. They brought their own lights, sound, video, trussing, instruments, and other equipment and hauled it all in a huge 48-foot trailer. During the load-in and load-out, the driver of the semi-truck noticed my attire - a KISS hat and KISS shirt and asked if I was a fan. I replied that I was - I joined the KISS Army back in '76! He told me that he had been in Los Angeles a week or two before and knew someone at the KISS warehouse who gave him a tour of it. His son is a fan and the person who gave him the tour gave him some KISS merchandise. After chatting for a while the driver went to the truck and brought back a hoodie and a travel mug for me! I had an AWESOME time bein' a roadie for a day. Over the next couple of years,

I would come up several times during the season volunteering my time to work shows and learning a lot in the process.

What are some of your most memorable shows, experiences, stories?

KISSIt! A KISS tribute band. We had to create a KISS-like stage for their show. One of the things we did was to make the lighted logo. I got to keep the logo - minus the lights - after the show. I keep it in my KISS collection at home.

Paula Poundstone. Paula usually posts a picture on her social media pages of the green room chair at every venue where she performs. One time, a few months before she was scheduled to perform at the Reif, she posted a picture of the lighted mirror in a green room. All of the bulbs except for one were burned out. I mentioned to John that we've already got that green room beat - all of the light bulbs in our lighted mirrors were working. Somehow, we decided to go the extra mile and decorate the green room for her stay here. We found out she had 16 cats at home. To make her feel at home, I used a cat theme (along with her

cont. p. 16



favorite candy bars and some Ring Dings!) to decorate the green room. By the time her show date arrived, I had collected about 3 totes worth of cat decor. Paula loved what we did with our green room. A week after the show, we got a postcard from Paula thanking us for our great hospitality. The postcard was a picture of one of her cats. Paula appeared on our stage a couple of years later and by that time I had several more totes of cat decor to decorate the green room with. We got another postcard from Paula. Just a couple of months ago on X (Twitter), Paula responded to one of my comments on her post and said that she still uses the tea towels that were given to her from one of her visits here! Of all the artists I've worked with, she's always been my favorite.

With the help of the student dancers and a couple of instructors, I was given the opportunity to choreograph a dance piece for the Reif Dance Company Show in 2019. I was working backstage for that show and at one point during one of the performances of my dance piece, I heard an audience member say "WOW!" That felt AMAZING!

Most of my work is done backstage or out of sight of the audience. But there have been a few times when I've been on stage. For a Reif Dance production of *Aladdin*, I played the Magic Carpet. Once I was asked by the director of the Grand Rapids Players production of *The Music Man* if I'd make a small appearance, which I did—I was one of the people who brought trouble to town. Finally, I got to be a magician's assistant for a magic show.

What do you like about setting up for Santa's Village?

For most of the shows and other events that we work on, the set designs are clearly defined - stage plots, pictures, etc., but every once in a while, the techs get the chance to show off their creativity. For Santa's Village, Executive Director Shantel Dow and Marketing Director Amber Vanous had an overall vision of what they wanted each part of Santa's Village to be and look like but didn't know exactly what could or couldn't be done to accomplish some of it. A couple of weeks before the event, they had a meeting with a few of us on the tech crew where they talked about Santa's Village and walked us through each station. Between all of us, each of the stopping points in Santa's Village except for one became clearly defined as to how it was going to be set up and the decor needed for it. The biggest stopping point and the one I became most excited about was the Ives Studio Theater transforming into a North Pole shopping area. Shantel and Amber only had a few requirements





for the shopping area but other than that they basically told us to have fun with the room. That is music to my ears!

Along with some ideas brought up during our meeting, Melanie McCoy, Buzz M, and I brainstormed and came up with a plan for the room. It took us a day (or two?) to get everything set up in the Ive's. Well, everything except for one corner of the room. Because it was empty, it looked like a huge corner to fill. We had used just about everything we could find around the Reif that looked either Christmasy or wintery to help fill the room - old candy canes from Nutcracker performances gone by, periaktoi with storefronts on them, and some Christmas lights and a tree spinner from home, but that corner still went unfilled, the day before the event. I decided to go to a few stores in town and see if I could find some sort of Christmasy giant inflatable. I got a 12-foot snowman inflatable at the 2nd store I went to, brought it to the Reif, and set it up in the corner. That completed the shopping room! With Santa's Village being a great success, the Reif decided to do it again the following year. One of my hobbies is going to thrift stores, and garage and estate sales. Over the past year, I've found a dozen more inflatables for Santa's Village!

You're known as that KISS guy at the Reif? Any good KISS stories?

Because of working at the Reif, I was able to be on the local crew at the DECC in Duluth, MN for KISS in 2016 on their Freedom To Rock tour! Almost 40 years after first seeing 3-2-1 Contact, KISS performed on a stage that I helped put together. That's my favorite KISS story. That story slightly beats out the story of me talkin' to Paul at his house or the time I did a meet & greet with KISS!



Thanks for telling us more about yourself Greg! I can't wait to see what you and Melanie come up with for Santa's Village this year!

As for me, wish an old curmudgeon some Christmas cheer. Maybe I'll avoid a visit from the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Future and maybe my old shriveled heart will grow three times larger!



Santa's Village

Sunday, Dec. 3

1:00pm-5pm | The Reif

**Reif Dance Presents:
The Nutcracker**

Friday, Saturday, Sunday

Dec. 8-9-10, 2023 @ 2pm & 7pm

The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Rock & Roll Xmas Spectacular

Saturday, Dec. 16

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Canadian Brass

Friday, Dec. 22, 2023 @ 7pm

The Reif: Wilcox Theater

The Rainbow Fish

Friday, Jan. 12

6pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Water Street Dance

Thursday, Jan. 18

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Dead Man Winter

Friday, Jan. 19

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Davina & The Vagabonds

Saturday, Jan. 20

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Jen Kober

Thursday, Jan. 25

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Winter Dance Party

Saturday, Jan. 27

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

What's Going On?

Saturday, Feb. 3

2pm Matinee

The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Cirque Flip Fabrique - Blizzard

Wednesday, Feb. 7

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Dinosaur World Live

Friday, Feb. 9

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

Aaron Tippin

Thursday, Feb. 15

7pm | The Reif: Wilcox Theater

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**To stimulate arts in
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Underlying principles that guide this mission include the Reif Arts Council's responsibility to provide a healthy organization and a well-managed facility in which a wide variety of visual and performing arts may be experienced, exhibited, and taught.

2023 - 2024

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