

For Immediate Release

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The Rose Theater announces the cast of *The Jungle Book*



Aaron Ellis
Mowgli



Kevin Ehrhart
Baloo



Jonathon Smith
Shere Khan



Stephanie Jacobson
Kaa



Joshua Lloyd Parker
Bagheera

(OMAHA, Nebr.) A new twist on a beloved classic, The Rose's upcoming show, *The Jungle Book*, promises to weave together several stories from the classic Rudyard Kipling novel in a unique and memorable production. The show will run at The Rose, Oct. 28 to Nov. 13, 2016.

The Rose is proud to announce the cast of *The Jungle Book*. Each cast member plays multiple parts throughout the show, transforming before the audiences' eyes. Aaron Ellis (*Big Nate, Jackie & Me*) plays Mowgli, the young orphan raised by wolves in the Indian jungle. Rose artist educator Kevin Ehrhart (*The Reluctant Dragon, The Cat in the Hat, Jackie & Me*) plays Baloon the Sloth Bear. Baheera the Panther will be played by Joshua Lloyd Parker (*Pete the Cat, Peter & The Starcatcher, Elephant & Piggie: We Are In A Show*). Stephanie Jacobson (also a Rose artist educator) (*Honk!, Ivy + Bean: The Musical, The Borrowers*) will portray Kaa the Python, with Jonathon Smith (*The Little Mermaid*) playing the villainious tiger, Shere Khan. Rounding out the cast are Autumn Simpson and Madison Hoge, who play various parts, including Wolves, Monkeys and Vultures.

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the
Rose
Performing Arts
FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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The show is being directed by guest artist John Hardy of Abingdon, Virginia. Hardy is an associate artist with The Barter Theatre who has worked around the country as a playwright, actor and director for more than 30 years. He previously directed Jackie & Me at The Rose in 2014, and has been featured in his one-man show at Joslyn Castle. Over the course of his career, Hardy has directed more than 100 professional productions, including *Macbeth*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo And Juliet*, *Henry V*, *Julius Caesar*, *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, *Tartuffe*, *Oedipus The King*, *Man Of La Mancha* and others. As an actor, Hardy has played many of the great roles including Hamlet, MacBeth, Tom Wingfield in *The Glass Menagerie*, Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Teach in *American Buffalo* and many others. Hardy recently returned from a national tour, playing George in *Of Mice And Men*. As a playwright he has had over forty productions of fifteen plays produced across the country and overseas. He recently received the Sara Spencer Award for lifetime achievement from the Southeastern Theatre Conference.

The Jungle Book tells the story of Mowgli, a rambunctious and curious, scrappy and kind child. This adaptation by Greg Banks finds Mowgli lost in the Indian jungle, where he is adopted by Baloo the Bear, Bagheera the Panther, and all the beasts who call the mysterious wilderness home. The fast-paced retelling is packed with adventure as Mowgli comes face-to-face with sneaky monkeys, noisy vultures and his mortal enemy: the tiger, Shere Khan.

The complete cast of The Rose's production of ***The Jungle Book*** consists of:

Kaa/Narrator/Wolf	Stephanie Jacobson
Baloo/Narrator/Wolf	Kevin Ehrhart
Mother Wolf, Narrator, Monkey, Vulture	Autumn Simpson
Mowgli.....	Aaron Ellis
Narrator/Wolf/Monkey/Vulture	Madison Hoge
Bagheera/Father Wolf/Narrator.....	Joshua Lloyd Parker
Shere Khan/Narrator/Monkey	Jonathon Smith

The Jungle Book is recommended for families of children ages eight and up. The show runs Oct. 28 through Nov. 13, 2016, with performances on Fridays at 7 pm, and Saturdays at 2 pm and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is approximately 70 minutes long without an intermission. On Saturday, Nov. 5, the 2 pm performance will be interpreted for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Tickets for ***The Jungle Book*** are \$20. Discount ticket vouchers are available at all area Hy-Vee stores. Members of The Rose receive four free tickets to the production.

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The Jungle Book is sponsored by Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Nebraska Furniture Mart, Security National Bank, the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Special opening night activities are sponsored by Kiewit Companies.

About The Rose

The Rose Theater is one of the largest and most accomplished children's theaters in the nation, with a reputation for enriching the lives of children and families through top-quality professional productions and arts education. In 2016, *American Theatre* magazine named The Rose one of the 20 top children's theaters in the United States. The Rose is committed to making the arts accessible to all children, providing opportunities for thousands of children throughout the community to attend shows and participate in classes each year. Over the course of a year, approximately 70,000 people attend the public performances held at the theater, and nearly 30,000 students attend field trip shows annually. The theater strives to introduce young people to a mix of both traditional favorites and ground-breaking original productions. A number of plays and musicals have made their world premiere on The Rose stage, including *Pete the Cat: The Musical*, *Sherlock Holmes & the First Baker Street Irregular*, *Zen Ties*, *Buffalo Bill's Cowboy Band*, and *The Grocer's Goblin & The Little Mermaid*. We take pride knowing that The Rose is the place where children of all ages experience theater for the first time, and we are dedicated to helping them appreciate theater for a lifetime.

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