

## For Immediate Release

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## Dancing dragons two-step with tacos; light Rose stage on fire

Popular book *Dragons Love Tacos* provides hot entertainment at The Rose Theater

(OMAHA, Nebr.) Audiences at The Rose Theater's latest production, *Dragons Love Tacos*, will learn the lore of the carnivorous creatures and their favorite food: TACOS! The giggle-generating story will find audiences swept up into the "Dos and Don'ts" of serving tasty treats to big beasts April 26 to May 12 at The Rose, in a creature comedy with a truly fiery ending that all ages will enjoy.

Guest director Denise Chapman describes *Dragons Love Tacos* as "the coolest show that kids will ever see," with an over-sized world that looks like a picture book. "It is 45 minutes of joy and dragon sweat," she says. "It is dancing and tacos and music -- so much beautiful music!"

*Dragons Love Tacos* opens to find Boy, frustrated and overwhelmed with his math homework. When his mom leaves to pick up dinner, she suggests Boy take a break. His dog Leroy tries to cheer up Boy by bringing him the remote to watch some TV. After skipping past obnoxious infomercials and mushy telenovelas, Boy and Leroy suddenly comes across a sharp-suited spokesperson offering mind-blowing, earth-shattering, titillating dragon secrets. When the Dragonology documentary comes to life in their house, Boy and Leroy find themselves in for more than they bargained for: they come face to face with a bunch of dragons, curious creatures that enjoy tacos, parties, and taco parties!

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“We have spent a lot of time working on the ensemble work for this show,” says Chapman. “The beautiful part of this work has been to watch the ensemble grow, and to find each other, and to listen to each other, and to break out of their shell and find their sense of play. There is so much play and discovery in this show.”

It is that sense of play and discovery that is the reason Rose artistic director Matthew Gutschick tapped Chapman to lead the ***Dragons Love Tacos*** cast.

“Much like when you are going on a hike the map is never as interesting as the journey. The script is just the map to this show, so we wanted someone who was going to lead a process that would be full of discovery and delight, and make something really hilarious and fun and adventurous and exciting. Denise as an artist and as a person is the perfect director to bring this show to life,” says Gutschick.

In ***Dragons Love Tacos***, as Boy, Leroy and the dragons indulge in the tasty taco treats, costume designer Sherri Geerdes’ creations bring even more whimsy to the stage with Carmen Miranda-esque hats filled with taco toppings -- chese, tomatoes, lettuce and sour cream -- all made from found objects such as waste baskets, yarn and fabric scraps. Props mistress Devon Denn-Young has created an abundance of over-sized props to match Jeff Stander’s larger-than-life cartoon-style set.

“The set is this beautiful, oversized world that looks like a picture book,” says Chapman. (Stander actually got a little help on the plan from his daughter; she drew the overall look for the house, which Stander then incorporated into the design.)

It doesn’t take long before things take a destructive turn with four dragons in the house. During the Dragon Taco Party, Boy accidentally serves the one topping Dragons cannot stand and things get a little out of hand.

“You see, when you feed dragons spicy tacos, they have tummy troubles. And when they have tummy troubles, they spit out rainbow-colored fire,” says Chapman.

Creating the illusion of fire fell to the talents of Rose sound designer Christy Hernandez and lighting designer Craig S. Moxon. “It’s not every day you get to set The Rose’s stage on fire,” says Moxon. “It’s all done with a lot of special effects, smoke and haze. It’s basically massive chaos.”

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Chapman elaborates, “We have very thoughtfully worked out with the designers to create this beautiful world that flips and turns to become completely charred. Dragons are throwing out rainbow-colored flames from their mouths and flipping walls and wrecking stuff -- in this imaginary way -- and everything becomes completely destroyed.”

Parents need not fear about destructive dragons inspiring bad habits in impressionable children, though. “Because dragons have good manners, they come back and fix everything in the end,” says Chapman. “There is this beautiful transformation back to restoring the house.”

***Dragons Love Tacos*** is based on the best-selling children’s book by the same name, written by Adam Ruin and illustrated by Daniel Salmieri. The book has been a #1 New York Times bestseller and was named a New York Times Notable Book. It has more than one million copies in print in North America. Representatives from publisher Penguin Group attributes the success of ***Dragons Love Tacos*** to its “fresh zaniness and kid-focused humor” as well as to widespread word-of-mouth recommendation. “We loved the book here from the very start, and it was not a total surprise that it was such a hit, but we hadn’t really anticipated the extent of its success, or its growing popularity in its second year. It’s rare to find a book that gets so many belly laughs so universally—it has that fun special sauce,” says publishing representative Lauri Hornik.

This universal appeal is exactly why families of all ages will enjoy discovering the dietary delights and dilemmas of ***Dragons Love Tacos***. The show runs approximately 45 minutes without an intermission.

***Dragons Love Tacos*** runs April 26 - May 12, 2019 on The Rose Theater mainstage, with performances on Fridays at 7 p.m., Saturdays at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. Interpretation for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing will be offered at the 2 p.m. show on Saturday, May 4. Audio description services for audiences who are blind or have low vision will also be available at this performance. A sensory-friendly performance will be presented at the 5 pm performance on Saturday, May 4.

Tickets for ***Dragons Love Tacos*** are available for \$20 by calling The Rose Box Office at (402) 345-4849 or online at [www.rosetheater.org](http://www.rosetheater.org). Rose members receive four free tickets to the production. Discount ticket vouchers are available with purchase at area Runza stores.

***Dragons Love Tacos*** is sponsored by Children’s Hospital & Medical Center, Nebraska Furniture Mart, Runza, the Nebraska Arts Council, and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.

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**About the Book, Author and Illustrator**

*Dragons Love Tacos* was created by critically-acclaimed author/illustrator team, Adam Rubin and Daniel Salmieri. Previous collaborations include the New York Times bestseller, *Robo-Sauce*, *Secret Pizza Party*, *Big Bad Bubble*, *Those Darn Squirrels*, *Those Darn Squirrels and the Cat Next Door* and *Those Darn Squirrels Fly South*.

Adam Rubin is the New York Times best-selling author of eight critically-acclaimed picture books. He spent ten years working as a creative director in the advertising industry before leaving his day job to write full-time. Adam also has a keen interest in magic tricks, puzzles and optical illusions. In fact, he is the official “Director of Puzzles & Games” for the wonderful website, Art of Play. Adam currently lives in Barcelona, Spain where he is working to improve his Spanish and eat his weight in octopus.

Daniel Salmieri grew up drawing ninja turtles, fighter jets and 90’s Knicks players. He has since gone on to create illustrations for award-winning children’s books and the New York Times. Dan lives with his wife Sophia and their dog Ronni in Brooklyn, NY, where he was born and raised.

**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 *Van Gogh & Me*, *The Meaning of Maggie*, *Pete the Cat: The Musical*, *Sherlock Holmes & the First Baker Street Irregular*, *Zen Ties*, *Leo Lionni’s Frederick*, *A Palette of Possibility*, *Thumbelina*, *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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