

## For Immediate Release

DATE: February 2019

CONTACT: Kori Radloff, korir@rosetheater.org, 402-502-4641

### ***Matilda* cast to bring magic to Rose stage** ***Rose Theater announces cast of Matilda***

(OMAHA, Nebr.) The Rose Theater's summer musical, Roald Dahl's ***Matilda***, promises to bring magic and mischief to Omaha audiences this June. Packed with high-energy dance numbers and catchy songs, ***Matilda*** is a joyous girl power romp. Children and adults alike will be thrilled and delighted by the story of the special little girl with an extraordinary imagination. The show will run at The Rose, June 7-30, 2019.

Matilda is a little girl with astonishing wit, intelligence and psychokinetic powers. A brilliant girl born into a less brilliant family, Matilda is truly unloved by her cruel parents. She shines despite her family's attempts to put her down and squash her dreams.

Maddie Smith will play the title role of Matilda. Smith is currently performing in the lead role of Nora in *The Doll Maker's Gift* at The Rose. She is a seventh grader at Brownell-Talbot school. Previous theater credits include productions at the Omaha Community Playhouse, including Little Fiona in *Shrek The Musical*, James Trotter in *James and the Giant Peach*, Chip in *Beauty and the Beast* and *A Christmas Carol* (2015 – 2018) playing the roles of Girl with Sled, Belinda Cratchit and Fan.

Rose veterans Sarah Gibson and Zach Kloppenborg will portray Matilda's lackadaisical parents, Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood.

= MORE =

The Rose Theater  
2001 Farnam Street  
Omaha, NE 68102

t (402) 345-4849  
f (402) 344-7255  
www.rosetheater.org



## ***Matilda the Musical* - Cast Announcement**

**The Rose Theater**

**Page 2 of 5**

**Contact: Kori Radloff, 402-502-4641**

Gibson delighted audiences as Greenway in *Elf the Musical* this holiday season. Her previous Rose credits include *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever*, *Sherlock Holmes and the First Baker Street Irregular*, and *Peter Pan*. Additional credits include *Heathers* (Ms. Fleming), The Blue Barn Theatre; *The Light in the Piazza* (Signora Naccarelli), Ordway Center for the Performing Arts, St. Paul, MN; *Boeing Boeing* (Gretchen), Paul Bunyan Playhouse, Bemidji, MN; *Sunset Boulevard* (Norma Desmond), New Century Theater, Minneapolis, MN; *Carousel* (Nettie Fowler) Bucks County Playhouse (PA). In addition to performing, Gibson maintains a private voice studio and teaches Musical Theater for The Rose.

Kloppenborg was last seen on The Rose stage in *Return to Niobrara*. He is a director and costume designer, and a collaborator with The Colonel Mustard Amateur Attic Theatre Company in Lincoln, for which he has directed and designed five world premiere productions, including *Jurassic Park: The Musical: 3D*, and this summer's *The Brothers Karamazov (Unabridged)*. Favorite past on-stage credits include *Lancelot/French Taunter/Tim the Enchanter (Spamalot)*, *Annas (Jesus Christ Superstar)*, *Sam Byck (Assassins)*, *Gordon (Dead Man's Cell Phone)*, and *George Frideric Handel (Coram Boy)*.

Matilda is sent away to school at the terrible Crunchem Hall, which is led by the mean former hammer-throwing champion Miss Trunchbull, who will be played by Joey Galda, an Omaha favorite often seen on stage at the Omaha Community Playhouse and Blue Barn Theatre. Miss Trunchbull hates children and just loves thinking up new punishments for those who don't abide by her rules.

Matilda has a deep impact on her schoolteacher, the highly loveable Miss Honey. Over the course of her first term at school, Matilda and Miss Honey have a profound effect on each other's lives, as Miss Honey begins not only to recognize but also appreciate Matilda's extraordinary personality. Miss Honey will be played by Melissa King, who made her Rose stage debut in *Elf the Musical* this December. Beyond The Rose, King most recently performed as Mrs. Phagan in *Parade* at the Omaha Community Playhouse, as well as many other productions in the Omaha theater community over the past few years.

The cast of ***Matilda the Musical*** features a number of student actors who portray Matilda's schoolmates. Sixteen students are a part of the cast, ranging in age from 11 to 18 years old. Adult actors from throughout the Omaha community round out the remaining characters for a cast of 29 performers.

**= MORE =**

## **Matilda the Musical - Cast Announcement**

**The Rose Theater**

**Page 3 of 5**

**Contact: Kori Radloff, 402-502-4641**

**Matilda the Musical** is directed by Rose Artistic Director Matthew Gutschick, who most recently directed *Elf the Musical*. His original play, *Van Gogh & Me*, was featured during the previous Rose season. His Rose directing credits include *The Meaning of Maggie*, *Babe the Sheep Pig*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Peter & The Starcatcher*, *A Christmas Story*, *Mary Poppins*, *Robin Hood* and *Ramona Quimby*. His plays have been workshopped/produced by Wordsmyth Theatre Company, Horse Trade Theater Group (NYC), Reverie Productions (NYC), Tri Sate Actors' Theatre, and Magic Chicago. His work for MagicMouth Theatre won a New Horizons Playwriting Award and the company premiered a new magic-theatre piece, *A Christmas Carol In Prose* with Parallel 45 in Traverse City, MI. He is the former artistic director of the Children's Theatre of Winston-Salem and completed a fellowship with the Children's Theatre Company in Minneapolis. Gutschick is a former Managing Director of the Yale Cabaret where he produced over 14 world premieres. He is also the recipient of a Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation Fellowship in Entrepreneurship, a member of the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, and a graduate of the School at Steppenwolf. He holds a BA in Theater from Wake Forest University and received an MFA in Theater Management from the Yale School of Drama. Gutschick is in his sixth season as artistic director of The Rose.

The complete cast of The Rose's production of **Matilda the Musical** consists of:

Matilda .....	Maddie Smith
Amanda.....	Meghan Essner
Lavender .....	Eva Cohen
Alice .....	Chase Robinson
Hortensia.....	Summer Hurtienne
Eric .....	Artie Shaw
Bruce.....	Jonas Caruso
Nigel .....	Judson Cloudt
Tommy .....	Carter Pflug
Big Kids.....	Madison Nannen
	Olivia Hess
	Chisom Anyaebgunam
	Kaylee Lempke
	Noah Fowler
	Chuck Sams
	Elliot Kerkhoffs
	John Kinney
Miss Honey .....	Melissa King
Miss Trunchbull .....	Joey Galda

**= MORE =**

## ***Matilda the Musical* - Cast Announcement**

**The Rose Theater**

**Page 4 of 5**

**Contact: Kori Radloff, 402-502-4641**

Mr. Wormwood.....	Zach Kloppenborg
Mrs. Wormwood .....	Sarah Gibson
Rudolpho/Dad 1/Henchman/Big Kid.....	Fran Adrianto
Mrs. Phelps.....	Brissa Lopez
Escapologist/Dad 2/Henchman/Big Kid.....	Danny Enriquez
Doctor/Big Kid .....	Ben Adams
Michael Wormwood/Dad 4/Big Kid .....	Garrett Griffin
Acrobat/Mom 2/Big Kid .....	Kendra Ball
Sergei/Dad 3/Big Kid .....	Earl Spears
Henchman/Mom 4/Big Kid .....	Katie Aguilar

*Matilda* is a book by British writer Roald Dahl, published in 1988. In 2012 *Matilda* was ranked number 30 among all-time children’s novels in a survey published by School Library Journal. It was the first of four books by Dahl among the Top 100, more than any other writer. Worldwide sales have reached 17 million, and since 2016 sales have spiked to the extent that it outsells all of Dahl’s other works. The novel was made into the film *Matilda* in 1996. It starred Mara Wilson as Matilda, and was directed by Danny DeVito, who also portrayed Mr. Wormwood and narrated the story. Although the film was not a box office success, it received critical acclaim at the time of its release, and on Rotten Tomatoes has a score of 90% based on reviews from 21 critics. The musical version of the novel, ***Matilda the Musical***, written by Dennis Kelly and Tim Minchin and commissioned by the Royal Shakespeare Company, premiered in November 2010. It opened at the Cambridge Theatre in the West End in November 2011 and on Broadway in April 2013 at the Shubert Theatre. The stage version has become hugely popular with audiences and praised by critics, and won multiple Olivier Awards in the UK and Tony Awards in the US. One critic called it “the best British musical since Billy Elliot”. In November 2018, Netflix announced plans to create an animated series of Roald Dahl’s books, including *Matilda*.

***Matilda the Musical*** is recommended for all ages. The show runs June 7-30, 2019, with performances on Fridays at 7 pm, and Saturdays at 2 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm.

The show is approximately two hours long with an intermission. On Saturday, June 15, the performance will be interpreted for audience members who are deaf or hard of hearing. This performance will also feature audio description for audience members who are blind or have low vision. Call (402) 502-4637 for information on audio description services.

**= MORE =**

## **Matilda the Musical - Cast Announcement**

**The Rose Theater**

**Page 5 of 5**

**Contact: Kori Radloff, 402-502-4641**

Tickets for *Matilda the Musical* are \$27 Main Floor and \$22 Balcony. Discount ticket vouchers are available at all area Hy-Vee stores. Members of The Rose receive discounted tickets to the production.

*Matilda the Musical* is sponsored by Children's Hospital & Medical Center, Nebraska Furniture Mart, Mutual of Omaha, the Nebraska Arts Council and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment. Special opening night activities are sponsored by Kiewit Companies.

For additional information, or to purchase tickets, visit [www.rosetheater.org](http://www.rosetheater.org) or call The Rose Box Office at (402) 345-4849.

---

### **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.

###