

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Rose Theater celebrates 75 years of family fun in 2024-25

Nebraska's only professional children's theater announces upcoming season

(OMAHA, NE) After 75 years of serving area families, The Rose Theater is looking forward to building on its legacy of outstanding entertainment with a season of fun and lifelong memories. A mix of familiar favorites, stories with local ties, and world premieres will invite families to imagine new possibilities during The Rose Theater's 2024-25 season.

“As someone relatively new to this community, it is incredible to see a city lean into its values with its support of this theater. Children are the bedrock of our future, the cornerstones of our community, so to see a city value giving them transformative arts experiences is incredible. It makes Omaha stand out. I hear it from our peers across the country all the time,” says Rose Artistic Director Matthew Gutschick.

The 2024-25 Rose season consists of five hour-long mainstage shows included with membership, along with three premium mainstage shows featuring larger casts, more complex staging and an overall enhanced theater experience with reserved seating and an intermission.

The 2024-25 season features a wide variety of characters who are empowered to face challenges and find solutions. As Gutschick explains, “We sought plays and musicals that make us laugh, that inspire us and that make us see ourselves in a new light. It is important that every child in our city sees themselves onstage at The Rose, and we hope to provide a season that does that.”

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The complete 2024-25 season includes:

MEMBER SHOWS:

- Coraline** (Oct. 11-27, 2024)
- Secret Kindness Agents** (Jan. 17 - Feb. 2, 2025)
- Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical** (Feb. 14 - Mar. 2, 2025)
- Milo Imagines the World** (Mar. 21 - Apr. 6, 2025)
- Pete the Cat: The Musical** (Apr. 18 - May 4, 2025)

PREMIUM SHOWS:

- Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Musical** (Sept. 6 - 22, 2024)
- A Christmas Story: The Musical** (Dec. 6 - 22, 2024)
- Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo** (Theater for Young Audiences Version) (June 6 - 29, 2025)

The member shows included in The Rose's mainstage line-up are free with Rose membership or \$20 per ticket for non-members. Tickets to The Rose's three premium shows, **Diary of a Wimpy Kid: the Musical**, **A Christmas Story: the Musical** and **Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo** are \$37 main floor, \$32 balcony. Rose members receive discounts up to 20% off all non-member events.

Rose memberships are available now at www.rosetheater.org. Thanks to a generous donation from Ron & Chris Blumkin, 2024-25 Rose family memberships are available for a throwback price of just \$75 (regularly \$125), which includes four free tickets to six consecutive member shows, no matter when a family purchases a membership.

Individual tickets to **Diary of a Wimpy Kid** will be available on May 24; tickets to all other shows will be available to the general public on August 1, 2024.

A number of accommodations are made for audience members with exceptionalities, including American Sign Language interpretation for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing, audio description services for the blind, and sensory-friendly performances for families with neurodivergent children. Visit The Rose website for specific information for each show.

Each show in the Rose season is carefully selected to present families with familiar favorites as well as innovative new stories. Productions are designed to engage young audiences and introduce them to a wide genre of artistic styles, helping them develop a lifelong love of the performing arts.

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In particular, the 2024-25 season will offer audiences an unexpected journey of imagination. “Each of these productions will completely transform the stage so much between shows to fit these really different stories. Audiences are going to experience a journey full of surprises. Each time they walk through The Rose doors, audience members will be transported to a vibrant new world,” says Gutschick.

The Rose remains dedicated to its mission of inspiring young people and their families to discover the magic of theater, to find their voices and enrich their communities. Central to this mission has always been the understanding that theater has the power to transform the community. As Gutschick explains, “We are seeing so much data on the link between screen time and the decline in the mental health of our society’s children. The live performing arts are an antidote to this. I love the convenience of streaming *Bluey* at home with my son, but being connected to him at a theater event far eclipses anything we are able to do in front of a screen. He is more emotive, reacts more and seeks out connections with other people when we go to the theater. Those are all positive effects of taking your child to The Rose. It connects them to the world and to the possibilities of their imaginations.”

“We believe theater is essential to helping children develop the skills they need to lead a successful, fulfilled life,” says Gutschick. “This has been a core value from our early beginnings in 1949, and it is just as true 75 years later.”

2023-24 MEMBER EVENT SHOWS

Coraline

Oct. 11 - 27, 2024

Adapted from the novella by Neil Gaiman.

Book by David Greenspan.

Music and Lyrics by Stephin Merritt.

CORALINE is produced by arrangement with Creative Artists Agency, New York, NY.

Directed by Zach Kloppenborg



Based on Neil Gaiman’s frighteningly fun children’s novel and the luminous stop-motion animated film -- and featuring music by Stephin Merritt from the groundbreaking indie band The Magnetic Fields -- this is the spooky musical spectacular perfect for the Halloween season.

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Young Coraline Jones has just moved with her parents into an old house and is bored by her colorless surroundings and her busy parents. She discovers a secret door that leads to a parallel world, but with one key difference: all the grownups have black buttons for eyes. This new world seems to offer all she wants: parents who are keenly interested in her, toys that sing and dance, neighbors who get her name right. But as this parallel world becomes increasingly unsettling, Coraline must learn the true meaning of bravery to save her parents and herself.

“Coraline is a resilient and compelling heroine. She wishes to find a family that connects more with one another,” explain Gutschick. “She thinks she finds that in the fantastic parallel universe of the Other Mother. But Other Mother loves Coraline in a transactional way. Coraline has to fight for a more genuine form of affection.”

With plans for audiences to engage in onstage costume parades and other spooky fun, ***Coraline*** will be a perfect addition to Halloween plans, according to Gutschick. “We wanted to embrace the vibes of a Mickey’s Not-So-Scary Halloween and do something that families can enjoy in the leadup to the holiday,” he says.

The 75-minute production of ***Coraline*** will be presented Oct. 11-27, 2024, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm.

WORLD PREMIERE

Secret Kindness Agents

Jan. 17 - Feb. 2, 2025

Inspired by Dr. Ferial Pearson’s Secret Kindness Agents Project.
by Rose Playwright-in-Residence Brian Guehring



Directed by Matt Gutschick

Inspired by the work of Omaha educator Dr. Ferial Pearson and written by Rose playwright-in-residence Brian Guehring, The Rose will bring ***Secret Kindness Agents*** to the stage in a world premiere production, Jan. 17 - Feb. 2, 2025. Pearson’s Secret Kindness Agents Project has been implemented in over 500 schools around the world from preschool through university level.

“Dr. Pearson has had a long relationship with The Rose. She has generously shared her expertise with our staff for many years and her family has participated in Rose programming. When the idea of telling an original story about her *Secret Kindness Agents* came up, we were so grateful she said ‘yes,’” says Gutschick.

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In **Secret Kindness Agents**, when their school is overcome with the winter blues, excessive grumpiness, school testing stress, and an overall dark cloud of doom and gloom, Secret Agents Glitter Waffles, Chameleon, Stinger and Ringleader have been recruited to make a kinder place for all. Will these elementary school students succeed in their secret spy missions? Can they break the secret codes from headquarters? Will their secret agency be discovered? Will they make a difference in this school?

Secret Kindness Agents continues the legacy of Pearson's program. The idea behind Secret Kindness Agents, which Pearson has shared in a viral TEDx Talk and a book about the program, is to perform an anonymous act of kindness every day and spread kindness throughout the community. The program has been recognized by Teaching Tolerance Magazine, Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation, and Hallmark's Care Enough Initiative. It's been implemented in more than 350 schools, from preschool through University, throughout the United States and Canada.

Secret Kindness Agents will make its world debut on The Rose stage Jan. 17 - Feb. 2, 2025, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm and 5 pm, and Sundays at 5 pm.

Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical

Feb. 14 - Mar. 2, 2025

Adapted from the CAT KID COMIC CLUB series of books by Dav Pilkey.

Book and Lyrics by Kevin Del Aguila.

Music by Brad Alexander.

CAT KID COMIC CLUB: THE MUSICAL is produced by arrangement with TheatreWorksUSA (www.twusa.org).



Presented in partnership with TheatreWorksUSA

The Rose invites TheatreWorksUSA, one of the most renowned touring groups in the world, to Omaha for their delightful production of **Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical**. In this hysterical show based on the series of books by Dav Pilkey, Cat Kid and Molly Pollywog have started an epic club to teach 21 rambunctious baby frogs how to make their own comics! Their fishy father Flippy is overjoyed that his kids will learn to unleash their creativity, but when the frogs' constant bickering and outrageous imaginations send their comics comically off the rails, Flippy flips out! Will the club survive? Will the frogs ever get along? And will creativity finally save the day?

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Cat Kid Comic Club: The Musical promises an hour of raucous laughter and family fun. The show is 60 minutes long without an intermission and will be presented Feb. 14 - Mar. 2, 2025, Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 10 am, 2pm and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm and 5 pm.

WORLD PREMIERE

Milo Imagines the World

Mar. 21 - Apr. 6, 2025

From the book by Matt de la Peña. Illustrated by Christian Robinson.

Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons Books for Young Readers

Book by Terry Guest. Music by Christian Magby. Lyrics by Christian Albright.

A joint commission by The Rose Theater (Omaha, Nebraska) and Children's Theatre Company (Minneapolis, Minnesota)



Directed by Kathy Tyree

Milo Imagines the World is a collaboration with the Children's Theatre Company that brings the award-winning book by Matt de la Peña to life on The Rose stage.

"This show is from some of the best children's book authors in the world right now, Matt de la Peña and Christian Robinson, who also wrote *Last Stop On Market Street* and *Carmela Full of Wishes* together," says Gutschick. "It is based on Christian Robinson's personal story."

In the show, Milo is a young boy riding the train with his sister to visit their mom. Along the way, he creates vibrant fantasy worlds about each of the people he meets. He draws what he imagines their lives are like and those fantasies come to life onstage, like a boy he imagines is a king with a castle. This show features original music that covers genres from pop to blues.

"This is a quintessential "don't judge a book by its cover" show," says Gutschick. "Milo, in imagining what the lives of others are like, cannot fully appreciate their human complexity until the end of the piece when he learns something really important about one of his fellow train riders."

Milo Imagines the World will be presented Mar. 21 - Apr. 6, 2025, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is expected to run approximately 50 minutes.

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Pete the Cat: The Musical

Mar 22 - Apr 7, 2024

Apr. 18 - May 4, 2025

Based on the Pete the Cat series of books by Kimberly and James Dean
Originally Commissioned, Developed & Produced by TheaterWorksUSA.
Music Orchestrated & Produced by Frank Galgano & Matt Castle
Script and lyrics by Sarah Hammond. Music by Will Aronson.
PETE THE CAT: THE MUSICAL is produced by arrangement
with Concord Theatricals (www.concordtheatricals.com)

James and Kimberly Dean's ***Pete The Cat*** is strolling his way to The Rose stage!

For Pete the Cat, life is an adventure no matter where you wind up. So the minute the groovy blue cat meets The Biddles, he gets the whole family rocking. That is, except for young Jimmy Biddle, the most organized second grader on planet Earth.

“Audiences will see Pete drop in on a fairly uptight family where he teaches them how to relax and roll with the unexpected,” says Gutschick.

When Jimmy draws a blank in art class, Pete is the perfect pal to help him out. Together, they set out on a mission to help Jimmy, and along the way, they both learn a little something about inspiration. Join Jimmy and Pete on an adventure of friendship!

A favorite among the elementary-set, Pete the Cat is sure to be a hit among area families. “We know that Pete The Cat is such a popular character to so many children and we wanted to embrace his message onstage. He’s also already a really musical character, so we were excited to share this original story with music,” says Gutschick.

Pete the Cat will bring its madcap antics to The Rose stage Apr. 18 - May 4, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm and 5 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is expected to run approximately 60 minutes.

Purchasing tickets to Rose Member Shows

Rose members receive free tickets to the shows listed above and may make their reservations immediately after purchasing their membership. Non-members may purchase tickets for \$20 each after August 1, 2024. Memberships are available now at www.rosetheater.org.

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2024-25 PREMIUM SHOWS

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Musical

Sept. 6 - 22, 2024

Book by Kevin del Aguila.

Music & Lyrics by Michael Mahler and Alan Schmuckler.

Based on the "Diary of a Wimpy Kid" Book Series by Jeff Kinney and the 20th Century Fox Films.

Additional Orchestrations by Christopher Jahnke.

Originally commissioned and produced by

The Children's Theatre Company Minneapolis, Minnesota.

DIARY OF A WIMPY KID is presented by special arrangement with Broadway Licensing Global. (www.broadwaylicensing.com)



Directed by Isaiah Ruiz

Jeff Kinney's popular character takes center stage as Greg's cartoon diary becomes a hilarious and heartfelt musical.

"People who love the *Diary of A Wimpy Kid* books and Disney+ iterations will be thrilled with how faithful this musical is to the material. The projections will bring Jeff Kinney's drawings to life," says Gutschick.

Based on the popular *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* book series, this fun musical takes audiences on a ride through the middle school experience. Middle school might be the worst, but Greg is determined not to be at the bottom of the popularity chart. He'll leave that to his weird neighbor, Fregley. Or maybe Greg's best friend, Rowley Jefferson. But it's not going to be Greg...not if he has anything to say about it.

"This show is about Greg trying to navigate what it means to be a true friend. It teaches children to find authentic friendships and to be kind to all," says Gutschick.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid will open The Rose's 2024-25 season, Sept. 6 - 22, 2024, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is 2.5 hours long and includes an intermission.

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A Christmas Story: The Musical

Dec 6 - 22, 2024

Music and Lyrics by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul.

Book by Joseph Robinette.

Based on the motion picture A Christmas Story.

Produced by special arrangement with DRAMATIC PUBLISHING, Woodstock, Illinois.

Directed by Kathy Tyree

The Rose Theater triple-dog-dares audiences to see its holiday production of **A Christmas Story: The Musical**, playing Dec. Dec. 6 - 22, 2024. The fun-filled musical adaptation of the classic Yuletide film offers a stocking full of good, old-fashioned laughs sure to please the entire family.

A Christmas Story: The Musical invites audiences to join nine-year-old Ralphie Parker on his quest for the Holy Grail of Christmas gifts – a Red Ryder air rifle. The show is based off the popular 1983 movie adapted from the writings of radio humorist Jean Shepherd and includes all the favorite moments of its source: Flick getting his tongue stuck to a flagpole, Dad receiving his major award, a disastrous visit to Santa, and of course, Ralphie’s pink bunny pajamas Christmas present.

“**A Christmas Story** offers a hilarious account of one child’s quest to make sure the most perfect of gifts ends up under his tree,” says Gutshick. “In the process, he learns some universal truths that will stick with him for a lifetime.”

Audiences at **A Christmas Story** will be left with a true holiday gift: a sense of family togetherness and holiday memories.

A Christmas Story: The Musical will be performed on The Rose mainstage Dec. 6 - 22, 2024, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is 2.5 hours long and includes an intermission.

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PREMIUM EVENT

Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo

THEATER FOR YOUNG AUDIENCES VERSION

June 6 - 29, 2025

Book by David Greig. Music by Marc Shaiman.

LBook, Music and Lyrics by

Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez.

Book Adapted by Lindsey Anderson.

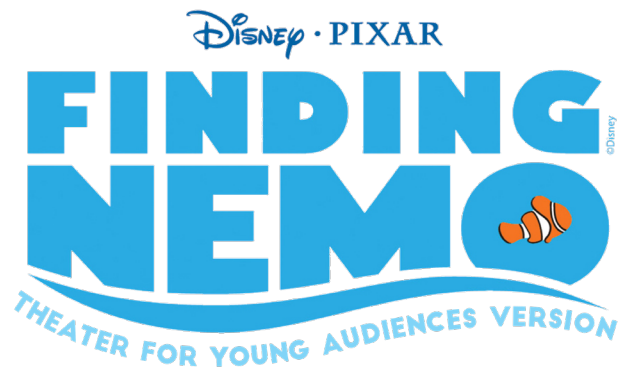
Music and Orchestrations Adapted and Arranged by Myrna Conn.

Based on the 2003 Disney/Pixar film Finding Nemo, written by Andrew Stanton, Bob Peterson, David Reynolds and directed by Andrew Stanton.

Disney's FINDING NEMO TYA. is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 423 West 55th Street, New York, NY 10019.

Phone: 212-541-4684. Fax 212-397-4684. www.MTIShows.com



Directed by Matt Gutschick

An underwater world of fantasy and adventure comes to The Rose with **Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo TYA**, running June 6 - 29, 2025. The show is a vibrant, puppetry filled, musical adaptation of the beloved 2003 Pixar movie *Finding Nemo*.

Gutschick shares that The Rose's production will feature the talents of What If Puppets, the company that delighted audiences in last season's *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*. "Almost every character in the show will be embodied by a puppet. This lets us embrace the magic of the underwater world Pixar/Disney created in the film *Finding Nemo*," he says.

In **Finding Nemo**, Marlin, an anxious and over-protective clownfish, lives in the Great Barrier Reef with his kid Nemo, who longs to explore the world beyond their anemone home. But when Nemo is captured and taken to Sydney, Marlin faces his fears and sets off on an epic adventure across the ocean. With the help of lovable characters such as optimistic Dory, laid-back sea turtle Crush, and the supportive Tank Gang, Marlin and Nemo both overcome challenges on their journey to find each other and themselves.

"This is a show based on my favorite Pixar film. I cry every time when Marlin is reunited with Nemo and tells his son about the sea turtles he met along his journey," says Gutschick.

Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo will be presented June 6 - 29, 2025, with performances Fridays at 7 pm, Saturdays at 2 pm, and Sundays at 2 pm. The show is expected to run 90 minutes without an intermission.

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Purchasing tickets to Rose Premium Events

Tickets to The Rose's premium shows, *Diary of a Wimpy Kid: The Musical*, *A Christmas Story: The Musical* and *Disney / Pixar's Finding Nemo TYA* are \$37 main floor, \$32 balcony. Rose members may purchase their discounted premium event tickets and select their seats immediately upon the purchase of their membership. Tickets for *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* will go on sale May 24, 2024; tickets for *A Christmas Story* and *Finding Nemo* will go on sale to the general public on August 1, 2024.

*Rose Theater memberships are on sale now at www.rosetheater.org
or by calling 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.

The theater strives to introduce young people to a mix of both traditional favorites and groundbreaking original productions. A number of plays and musicals have made their world premiere on The Rose stage, including *Giraffes Can't Dance*, *Carmela Full of Wishes*, *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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